

**Building a Scottish Canada?**  
**Five Architects in Montreal 1883 – 1914**

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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The legacy of Scots in Canada is well documented, but there has never been a comprehensive study of Scottish architects in Canada. This thesis examines the careers of five architects from Scotland, assessing their contribution to the development of Canadian architecture at the dawn of the twentieth century. The links that were consequently created between Scottish and Canadian architecture are also analysed. The main focus of the thesis falls on five architects: Andrew Thomas Taylor, Robert Findlay, James Robert Rhind, John Smith Archibald and Stewart Henbest Capper.

These architects varied in age, background and training, and their work also differed considerably. In spite of this diversity, their careers are linked by common threads that can be traced back to their Scottish training. All five were progressive architects who made significant contributions to Canadian architecture and helped to shape the development of the architectural profession in Canada.

Four of them were acquainted prior to their arrival in Canada, either through friendship, family or professional contacts, which may explain why some of them chose to move to Montreal. The bonds between the architects and friends and colleagues still in Scotland were equally important. From 1900 an increasing number of architects emigrated to Montreal from Scotland, and specifically from Glasgow. This flow from Glasgow to Montreal seems to be connected with the five architects named above. The transfer was not only in one direction, however, as some Scots returned to Glasgow from Montreal, opening a new chapter in the history of both Scottish and Canadian architecture.

Dedicated to

*Isabella Kinnear & Charles Carr Brown*

## Regulation 2.5

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- a) that the thesis has been composed by the candidate; and*
- b) either that the work is the candidate's own, or if the candidate has been a member of a research group that the candidate has made a substantial contribution to the work, such contribution being clearly indicated.*

I, Holly Elizabeth Barbara Kinnear, confirm that this thesis is the product of my own work and that I am the sole author of its content.

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## Abbreviations

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The following abbreviations have been used in the text, throughout the notes and bibliography:

<i>CAB</i>	<i>Canadian Architect and Builder</i>
CCA	Centre of Canadian Architecture
OAA	Ontario Association of Architects
PQAA	Province of Quebec Association of Architects
JBCAC	John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection
<i>JRAIC</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada</i>
<i>JRIBA</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects</i>
RIAS	Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
SSAC	Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada

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## Introduction

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**The Scots who have come to Canada and their descendants have been an influential factor in Canadian history. It has not been because of their large numbers, but primarily because of their historical inheritance.**

W. Stanford Reid, 'The Scot and Canadian Identity'  
*The Scottish Tradition in Canada*, 1976

Andrew Thomas Taylor (1850–1937), Robert Findlay (1859–1951), James Robert Rhind (1853–1918), John Smith Archibald (1872–1934) and Stewart Henbest Capper (1859–1924) were five architects who began their architectural careers in Scotland and subsequently moved to Montreal between 1883 and 1896. This thesis examines their architectural biographies from the early stages of their careers in Scotland to their maturity in Canada. There are a number of key themes at the core of the thesis, which are investigated in each of the chapters: how important were the architects' Scottish backgrounds to the development of their Canadian careers; did Scotland remain a static influence in their pasts or was she a continuous influence throughout their careers; was the imperial context significant to their work; what did these five architects contribute to the development of Canadian architecture and the architectural profession? Some of their built work is already well represented in the current literature on Canadian architecture, but their Scottish backgrounds are largely ignored. Similarly, very little is known about their Canadian work in the literature on Scotland's architecture; in fact, very little is known of the work of any Scottish architect who emigrated to Canada in Scotland. This thesis examines the overlapping territories in these men's careers for the first time. The significance of the work is different for the two countries: in Canadian literature it offers a fresh perspective and new information on men whose names already grace the chronicles of Canadian architectural history. In Scotland, it introduces a new story in the history of her architecture.

The legacy of the Scots in Canada is well recorded and a substantial body of literature has developed celebrating their prodigious influence in modern Canada. In the 1940s, the historian James Roy argued

that 'it is not too much to claim that the influence of the Scots has been felt in practically every branch of Canadian life and achievement'.<sup>1</sup> Thirty years later, W. Stanford Reid endorsed Roy's claim, writing that 'the history of Canada is to a certain extent the history of Scots in Canada'.<sup>2</sup> A decade later the historian D. S. MacMillan argued that 'of all the areas affected by Scottish emigration and enterprise in the last three centuries, Canada stands out as that where the impact has been greatest and the cultural and psychological side-effects the most pronounced'.<sup>3</sup> It is not only historians who have acknowledged and praised the influence of the Scots. Many of the men celebrated in the literature were also well aware of their importance to the development of the modern Dominion. At the 1889 Montreal St. Andrew's Society Ball, the President of the Society delivered a speech celebrating Scottish achievement in Canada:

At a time such as this it may be appropriate to recall to mind the prominent part that Scotchmen have taken in shaping the destinies of Canada. A Scotchman, Sir William Alexander, founded Nova Scotia in 1621; another Scot, Sir David Kirk was Champlain's foe and the first governor of Quebec; there were Scotch Highlanders on the Plains of Abraham, many of whom afterwards settled down on the Banks of the St. Lawrence and became the founders of many of our distinctly French families; a Scot, General Murray, completed the work of Wolfe, and was the first Governor of Canada; Sir Hugh Allan, a Scotchman, founded the first distinctly Canadian Steamship line, Scotchmen were foremost in the negotiations for the Confederation of the Provinces; four Scotchmen – Sir George Stephen, Sir Donald A. Smith, Mr. Duncan McIntyre, Mr. R. B. Angus – carried the Canadian Pacific Railway project through to completion in a manner that astonished the World; a Scot, Mr. Sandford Fleming, was the engineer of that project; another Scotchman, Hon. John Young, was the father of Montreal's progress as a seaport; and in politics, the Dominion, ever since it has been a Dominion, has had a Scotchman for its Premier.<sup>4</sup>

British historians are also beginning to acknowledge the contribution of Scots in Canada. In 2003 Jenni Calder, an Edinburgh historian, published *Scots in Canada*, which sets out the extensive cultural contribution the Scots have made to the creation of the Canadian nation:

The map of Canada is peppered with Scottish names. They have been given to rivers and mountains, towns and counties, bays and inlets. Canada's telephone directories are filled with them. Wander along the street of almost any community in Cape Breton and check the names on the mailboxes: you may find yourself thinking that it hardly seems possible that there can be Macleods or Macdonalds still in Scotland. Formative aspects of Canada's history were done by Scots, in particular the Hudson Bay Company which determined so much of

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<sup>1</sup> James Roy, *The Scot and Canada* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1947) pp. 5-6

<sup>2</sup> W. Stanford Reid, 'The Scots and Canadian Identity', ed. W. Stanford Reid *The Scottish Tradition in Canada* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1976) p. 303

<sup>3</sup> D. S. MacMillan, 'Scottish Enterprise and Influences in Canada 1620 – 1900', ed. R. Cage *The Scots Abroad: labour, capital, enterprise 1750 - 1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1985) p. 46

<sup>4</sup> 'St. Andrews Ball', *Montreal Gazette*, 117 (December 2, 1889) p. 5

the character of British North America, and the Canadian Pacific Railway which made the vital coast-to-coast connection. Scottish names are prominent in the government of Canada. There are nearly 5 million people of Scottish descent in Canada, while Scotland's population is not a great deal more than that, and declining.<sup>5</sup>

The publication of this book coincided with an exhibition of the same name that was opened at the McCord Museum in Montreal and the National Museum of Scotland, indicating the continuing interest in and celebration of the Scottish contribution to Canadian history, politics and culture.<sup>6</sup> Given the acknowledgement of the Scots' contribution to the development of modern Canada it is surprising that little attention has been given to the work of Scottish architects in the Dominion, especially as the influence of builders and architects from Scotland must have as long a history in Canada as Scots generally.<sup>7</sup> The subject has not been completely ignored and one Scottish architect has received significant coverage in the literature of Canadian architecture, the Edinburgh-trained architect Percy Erskine Nobbs. The most widely referenced work on Nobbs is Susan Wagg's monograph *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*, which discusses the significant effect his Edinburgh Arts and Crafts training had on his work in Canada.<sup>8</sup> He is considered by other authors to be one of the fathers of a Canadian national architecture; his contribution to the development of a Canadian national style received considerable attention in Kelly Crossman's work *Architecture in Transition: From Art to Practice 1885-1906*.<sup>9</sup> He has also been a subject of a number of articles on architectural education in Canada, as he was the second Professor of Architecture at McGill University, having succeeded to the Chair following Capper's departure in 1903.<sup>10</sup> In this role Nobbs helped to embed the British Arts

<sup>5</sup> Jenni Calder, *Scots in Canada* (Edinburgh: Luath Press Ltd, 2003) p. 2

<sup>6</sup> The exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland was called 'Scots in Canada' and opened in September 2003. The McCord Museum's exhibition, 'The Scots – dyed-in-the-wool Montrealers', opened a month later.

<sup>7</sup> Luc Noppen, 'The British Contribution to the Architectural Identity of Old Quebec', *SSAC Bulletin* 21, 1 (March 1996) p. 6 In this article Noppen describes the plan of Scots in eighteenth-century Quebec to build a new Edinburgh using a similar geometrical plan and classical architecture as the Edinburgh New Town; Percy E. Nobbs, 'Canadian Architecture', Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty (ed.), *Canada and the Provinces*, Vol. 12 (Toronto: Glasgow, Book and Company, 1914) p. 671 In this chapter Nobbs describes how 'in the Maritime Provinces and Ontario old houses may here and there be seen that afford illustration and plain evidence of seventeenth-century Scottish tradition'.

<sup>8</sup> Susan Wagg, *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artisan, Craftsman* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982)

<sup>9</sup> Kelly Crossman, *Architecture in Transition: From Art to Practice 1885-1906* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987) Nobbs was the only architect to be the subject of a whole chapter, 'Percy Nobbs and a National Theory' pp. 122-135

<sup>10</sup> Kelly Crossman, 'The Influence of Scotland on Architectural Education in Canada', *The Education*

and Crafts theory into Canadian architecture. As the former assistant of the Scottish Arts and Crafts doyen, Robert S. Lorimer, Nobbs' interest in the vernacular architecture of Quebec – which he admired because it 'evinces distinctive character, invention and true style' - and his drive to establish a national Canadian style of architecture is unsurprising.<sup>11</sup> He supported the Province of Quebec's Architectural Association's Sketching Club, which encouraged the study and measured drawing of Quebec's historical architecture, and provided the monies for a prize for the best drawing by a student.<sup>12</sup> His domestic designs also displayed his loyalty to the British Arts and Crafts movement.

His friend from Edinburgh, and his successor at McGill University, Ramsay Traquair was another advocate of the Arts and Crafts theory and was a pioneer in the study of the vernacular architecture of Quebec.<sup>13</sup> Unlike Nobbs, Traquair did not put his ideas into practice during his time in Canada, but he did publish on vernacular architecture in articles such as 'The Cottages of Quebec' and 'The Old Architecture of French Canada'.<sup>14</sup> The impact of their Edinburgh training has consequently been commented upon by a number of authors:

Nobbs' and Traquair's Scottish legacy had an impact on their search for a Canadian style, drawing from the country's national past. Having both worked for Robert Lorimer, they were fully aware of the Second Scottish Revival. Devised in reaction to the excess of the Baronial style, this movement took its cue from seventeenth-century religious and domestic vernacular architecture. In the same way, for Nobbs and Traquair, architecture suitable for Montreal and Canada should rely on the 'long French cottages' and 'older churches' of rural Quebec.<sup>15</sup>

Crossman provides a more extensive description of Nobbs' formative experience in Edinburgh, particularly in the office of Lorimer:

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*of the Architect*, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians in Great Britain (1993) p. 27-32; Isabella Gournay, 'The First Leaders of McGill's School of Architecture: Stewart Henbest Capper, Percy Nobbs and Ramsay Traquair', *SSAC Bulletin*, 21, 3 (September 1996) pp. 60-66; Norbert Schoenauer, 'McGill's School of Architecture: A Retrospection', *SSAC Bulletin*, 21, 3 (September 1996) pp. 67-29

<sup>11</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, 'Canadian Architecture' in Short and Doughty (ed.), *Canada and the Provinces* p. 665

<sup>12</sup> 'The Sketch Club, P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 18, 10 (October 1905) p. 157

<sup>13</sup> Schoenauer, 'McGill's School of Architecture' p. 7

<sup>14</sup> Ramsay Traquair, 'The Cottages of Quebec', *Canadian Homes and Gardens* (1926) pp. 13-60; 'The Old Architecture of French Canada', *Queen's Quarterly*, 38, 4 (Autumn 1931) pp. 589-608

<sup>15</sup> Isabella Gournay, 'The First Leaders of McGill's School of Architecture: Stewart Henbest Capper, Percy Nobbs and Ramsay Traquair', *SSAC Bulletin*, 21, No. 3 (September 1996) p. 63 Other authors who have made this point include Susan Wagg in *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982) and Kelly Crossman in *Architecture in Transition*.

It was in the midst of ... experimentation and development along Arts and Crafts lines that Nobbs, in Lorimer's office, received his training. For Nobbs, the heart of Lorimer's work and that branch of the Arts and Crafts movement of which he was a part was its nationalist impulse and the desire to draw upon the vernacular architecture of the past. Calling Lorimer "the last of the great romantics, with a name to put beside that of Philip Webb and Norman Shaw," Nobbs saw Lorimer as a man who had been able to express through architecture his country's spirit...For Nobbs, the nationalism implicit in Lorimer's work was characteristic of the Arts and Crafts as a whole.<sup>16</sup>

Crossman goes on to argue that Nobbs brought this sentiment to Canada where he was determined to cultivate support for a national Canadian architecture based upon the traditional architectural forms of rural Quebec.<sup>17</sup> As Nobbs and Traquair were consecutive Professors of Architecture at McGill University attention has been drawn to a connection between Edinburgh and Montreal. This has been awarded greater significance because of Nobbs and Traquair's shared experience in Lorimer's office but also because the first Professor of Architecture at McGill University, Capper, also arrived from Edinburgh. Moreover, all three architects came with the recommendation of Professor Baldwin Brown, who was Professor of Fine Art at Edinburgh University, as well as a close friend of McGill's Principal, William Peterson.<sup>18</sup> These circumstances have led Crossman to argue that 'for almost fifty years, from Capper's arrival in 1896 to Traquair's retirement, architectural education at McGill was based on ideas and traditions current in late nineteenth-century Edinburgh'.<sup>19</sup> This analysis provokes the question, if Edinburgh was a significant formative experience for Nobbs and Traquair, how important was Scotland to other Scottish architects working in Canada? The assertion of a bond between Edinburgh and Montreal also raises the question of broader architectural connections between Canada and Scotland: were there any other links between the two countries or was this the only one?

Crossman claims that the work of Nobbs and Traquair drew 'a line of understanding from one country well-versed in the difficult art of living significantly at the margins of metropolitan culture to another only then finding its way'.<sup>20</sup> This concept of Scotland and Canada as two countries overwhelmed by metropolitan cultures and Crossman's emphasis on the construct of a national identity is a post-

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<sup>16</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 126

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. pp. 130-131

<sup>18</sup> McGill University, Office of the Principal, William Peterson Papers, Faculty of Architecture 1903-1913, RG2 C22 2221D (68) Letter from Baldwin Brown to Peterson recommending Nobbs for the post of Professor of Architecture; RG2 C33 2221E (59) 2/P/4/2/21 Letter from Peterson to Baldwin Brown asking for his view on Traquair's suitability for the Chair of Architecture.

<sup>19</sup> Crossman, 'The Influence of Scotland on Architectural Education in Canada', p. 29

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 32

colonialist reading of Nobbs and Traquair's work which undermines the imperial context that was at the heart of the relationship between Scotland and Canada. The legitimacy of post-colonialism as a method for this subject needs to be questioned, as arguably the British Empire was an unavoidable reality for the two architects and their contemporaries.

Post-colonialism emerged in the late 1970s from the writings of Edward Said, in particular his work *Orientalism*. In this work Said describes Orientalism as 'a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and "the Occident"'.<sup>21</sup> He goes on to observe that it is 'a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient'.<sup>22</sup> The result of this has been that 'European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.'<sup>23</sup> Although it began as a critical discourse for analysing literature, and specifically those works concerned with or originating from the European colonies, it became an increasingly mainstream methodology and has been used across other disciplines. The literature on Canadian architecture felt its effect from the 1970s onwards and it helped to draw attention to the merits of the country's heritage without constant comparison to European or American architects, to which it had been deemed inferior and unworthy of note.

In 1968 the Canadian architectural historian Alan Gowans despaired of the lack of interest shown in Canadian architecture:

If I were to begin this essay by saying that Canada is fortunate in possessing a good many buildings of great historical and artistic significance, few readers would believe me, and many may read no further; no conviction is more firmly fixed in the Canadian mind than that expressed in William Colgate's observation in *Canadian Art*: 'Very few of our building can by any stretch of the imagination be considered good architecture, or even architecture at all.'<sup>24</sup>

Attitudes remained the same into the 1970s provoking Harold Kalman (architectural historian) to conclude that comparison with European architecture had devalued the achievements of architects in Canada: 'one is led to ask what constitutes "greatness" or "originality" and why the architecture of

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<sup>21</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1995) p. 2

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3

<sup>24</sup> Alan Gowans, 'The Canadian National Style' in William L. Morton (ed.) *The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968) p. 208

one region (i.e. Canada) must be implicitly judged by criteria established elsewhere (i.e. Western Europe').<sup>25</sup> He believed that as a consequence of these blinkered criteria, Canada, and Quebec in particular, had a very restricted literature on and view of her architecture.<sup>26</sup>

Since the 1970s, however, there has been a renaissance in the literature of Canadian architecture that has drawn attention to her architects and their architecture. The Canadian Parks Authority has published a range of books on Canadian architectural styles that highlight good quality Canadian architecture within a Canadian context, rather than in a comparative framework. The titles include, *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture*,<sup>27</sup> *Second Empire Style in Canadian Architecture*,<sup>28</sup> *Palladian Style in Canadian Architecture*,<sup>29</sup> and *Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture*.<sup>30</sup> There have also been a number of publications that focus on Canada's architecture and the development of the Dominion's national identity, for example Angela Carr's book *Toronto Architect: Edmund Burke – Redefining Canadian Architecture*.<sup>31</sup> The climax of the renaissance of Canadian architectural history was undoubtedly the publication of Harold Kalman's two volume *A History of Canadian Architecture*, which was the first comprehensive history of the nation's architecture.<sup>32</sup> Crossman's work sits within this literary group of works. Whilst post-colonial thought has undoubtedly helped to drive interest in Canadian architecture, as a methodology to study late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Canadian architecture it seems flawed. It is in essence a *non sequitur* with relation to the white colonies, as there is not a historical point of *post-colonialism* in their histories, and the culture established in these countries was that of Western Europe, therefore

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<sup>25</sup> Harold Kalman, 'Recent Literature of the History of Canadian Architecture', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 31, 4 (December 1972) p. 315

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 320

<sup>27</sup> Mathilde Brosseau, *Gothic Revival in Canadian Architecture* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1980)

<sup>28</sup> Christina Cameron and Janet Wright, *Second Empire Style in Canadian Architecture* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1980)

<sup>29</sup> Nathalie Clerk, *Palladian Style in Canadian Architecture* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1984)

<sup>30</sup> Leslie Maitland, *Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture* (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1990)

<sup>31</sup> Angela Carr, *Toronto Architect: Edmund Burke – Redefining Canadian Architecture* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995)

<sup>32</sup> Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, Vols. 1 and 2 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999)

there was never an ‘Other’ created.<sup>33</sup> By downplaying the imperial influence in Canada during the period, Crossman is arguably downplaying its impact, especially as Nobbs appears to have been a loyal Imperialist: ‘The ideal of a British Imperial Architecture as a ubiquitous outward symbol and monument of our political system and cultural heritage has a certain attraction’.<sup>34</sup> He urged architects to look towards England and Scotland for models rather than Quebec’s vernacular architecture. On one occasion he exclaimed that ‘it is extraordinary how little direct Scottish and English influences there is in the architecture of Canada...it is high time more attention was bestowed upon them by those willing to learn from the “old fellows” what can be learned from on other source’.<sup>35</sup> Lorimer was in sympathy with this view too. In a letter to Nobbs he urged his former assistant to ‘send us some men...what better experience for an imaginative young Canadian than to come to Edin [*sic.*] for a few years and mop up the traditions’.<sup>36</sup> These quotations make it clear that neither architect saw Canada as an independent country with her own traditions and heritage, but rather that her heritage and tradition were those of the mother country. This undermines Crossman’s assertion that Nobbs helped rescue Canada from the ‘margins of a metropolitan culture’, as the metropolis that Canada and Scotland were on the periphery of was the British Empire to which he remained loyal. A recent revisionist study of Nobbs and Traquair’s careers argues that rather than endorsing a Canadian national style based upon Quebec, Nobbs’ architectural influences actually ‘remained overwhelmingly British’ and that the two architects actively reasserted the cultural authority of the Anglo-Canadian elite in the face of an increasing non-British population.<sup>37</sup> Their work, it is argued, depended wholeheartedly on constructs that were familiar and recognisable to the British people and enhanced the British heritage of Canada.<sup>38</sup> It is only by accepting the imperial context and re-inserting it into the histories of Scotland and Canada that a more contemporary perspective can be obtained, rather than a view influenced by our own cultural perspectives.

<sup>33</sup> Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge, ‘What is Post(-)Colonialism?’, *Textual Practice*, 5, 3 (1991) pp. 399-414

<sup>34</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, ‘The English Tradition in Canadian Architecture’, *Architectural Review* 55 (June 1924) p. 236

<sup>35</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, ‘Montreal Letter III’, *CAB*, 17, 6 (June 1904) p. 99

<sup>36</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, P. E. Nobbs Collection, Box 13 F. Private Correspondence (1893-1953), F13-7 R. S. Lorimer – Correspondence 1904-1924, Letter 19 August 1909

<sup>37</sup> Nicola Spasoff, *Building a Social Power: Percy Erskine Nobbs, Ramsay Traquair and the Project of Constructing a Canadian National Culture in the Early Decades of the Twentieth Century*, unpublished PhD thesis, Queen’s University, 2002, p. 245

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p. i

The importance of bringing the history of the British Empire back into cultural histories of the countries that formed the empire, as well as the concept of replication and resemblance are arguments proffered by David Cannadine in his recent work on Britain and the Empire, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*.<sup>39</sup> In this work Cannadine examines ‘the outlook of the dominators and rulers and fellow travellers – their sense of how this empire they dominated and ruled and supported and went along with actually *worked* and what it *looked like*’.<sup>40</sup> He argues that this was a critical element of the British imperial experience and that the British replicated and created resemblance between the various outposts of the Empire. His subject is specifically the political and social framework and he demonstrates how the various mechanisms of British life, such as the class system, were exported to the colonies and dominions. Cannadine’s notions of what the empire *looked like* to the British, and therefore their expectations of what it *should look like* relates well to architecture, as buildings can embody abstract ideas such as the Nation. This was a particularly distinctive characteristic of Victorian architecture:

The novelty of Victorian architecture did not lie in eclecticism – for all architecture, and indeed all art, must to a greater or lesser extent draw on what has gone before. Neither was it in the use of applied rather than organic ornament; that too is characteristic of all historical styles, to a greater or lesser degree. It was – the point is worth emphasis – in the idea of using borrowed forms for purposes of specific extrinsic symbolism, in valuing and employing forms not necessarily for any aesthetic pleasure or functional appropriateness (though that may be involved), but primarily for the ideas associated with them: Roman for strength or republican virtue; Greek for liberty; Gothic for the traditional Christian past; and so on. One of the ideas most eminently expressible in this way was that of the Nation.<sup>41</sup>

For Nobbs, Britain provided the best model for Canadian architecture, but what about other Scottish architects working in Canada: were they also influenced by the imperial relationship and concepts of replication and resemblance, did they try to encapsulate a sense of Canadian identity in their works, what role did Scotland play in creating this? The notion of national identity and style is a complex and intricate one. It is far too simplistic to assume that there was one easy model that could be transplanted. Scottish architecture, for example has a multitude of styles: the Greek Revival of the ‘Athens of the

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<sup>39</sup> David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism – How the British Saw Their Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 2001)

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* p. xx

<sup>41</sup> Alan Gowans, ‘The Canadian National Style’ p. 211

North'; the romanticised baronial of Sir Walter Scott and Abbotsford; the seventeenth-century country houses of Sir William Bruce, which were used by Lorimer in his domestic designs. In Montreal, for example, there are two buildings that are directly modelled on Scottish buildings, yet are quite different from one another: the Head Branch of the Bank of Montreal, John Wells (1845) which is a copy of David Rhind's Commercial Bank, Edinburgh (1847) and the Royal Victoria Hospital, Henry Saxon Snell (1890) which was inspired by Alexander Seton's Fyfie Castle (1596) [Plates 1-4]. These two models must have been chosen for a reason, and probably because of the Scottish connection, yet the Scotland they represent varies quite considerably. When examining the work of Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper, therefore, this thesis looks carefully at their early careers in Scotland to learn what Scotland meant to them architecturally, rather than relying upon general criteria of Scottishness. The thesis also explores how they responded to the Canadian context individually and how their responses compared: did they rely upon replication; if so what did their work resemble and were their Scottish connections important?

The Scottish links in their works are not just important to the architectural history of Canada. The narratives of these five architects should remain part of the architectural history of Scotland too. In 1991 *Architectural Heritage* ran an issue devoted to Scottish architects abroad and the editorial acknowledged that 'Scotland's architecture has not evolved as a neatly wrapped, impermeable package, but as if loosely bound in a net, *through which ideas filtered in both directions*' [my italics].<sup>42</sup> Authors who contributed to the issue demonstrated the influence and work of Scottish architects and builders in the Far East, Ireland, Jamaica, Russia, and Sweden.<sup>43</sup> On the whole the architects examined in the individual chapters did take Scottish models with them over the seas. Jamaican eighteenth-century plantation houses were heavily influenced by the Classical country houses of Scottish architects, such as William Bruce.<sup>44</sup> The Scottish architect James Souttar is shown

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<sup>42</sup> Deborah Howard, 'Editorial: The Export of Scottish Architectural Talent' in *Architectural Heritage: Scottish Architects Abroad*, 2 (1991) p. 2

<sup>43</sup> Articles include Sophie Drinkall's 'The Jamaican Plantation House: Scottish Influence', Anna von Ajkay's 'James Souttar in Sweden', Hideo Izumida's 'Scottish Architects in the Far East: 1840 – 1870' and Dimitri Shvidkovsky's 'Classical Edinburgh and Russian Town Planning of the late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries'.

<sup>44</sup> Sophie Drinkall, 'The Jamaican Plantation House: Scottish Influence', pp. 56 - 69

to have used Scottish models for his Gothic church designs in Sweden;<sup>45</sup> and the town planning designs of William Hastie in late eighteenth-century Russia were clearly responses to the Edinburgh New Town and his house designs were the offspring of William Chambers and Robert Adam.<sup>46</sup>

Considering the strong relationship that exists between Scotland and Canada it is somewhat surprising that this edition of *Architectural Heritage* did not include an article on architects who had emigrated to the Dominion. One of the few pieces that have been written in Scotland on the subject is a very brief description in an introductory essay to *Scottish Architects' Papers: A Source Book*:

Nowhere was Scottish influence were [*sic.*] dominate than in Montreal. The leading practice was that of Ross and Macdonald, an American Beaux Arts firm but of Scottish extraction rather than Scottish themselves, who were always ready to admit Scotsmen from offices of which they approved. More importantly, William Peterson, principal of McGill University, came from University College Dundee, and his appointments to the chair of architecture were all from Edinburgh on the advice of Baldwin Brown: Stewart Henbest Capper, 1896, Percy Erskine Nobbs, 1903, and Ramsay Traquair, 1912.<sup>47</sup>

This is one of the most extensive pieces published on Scottish architects in Canada by Scottish architectural historians, yet it mentions only three men who emigrated to Scotland, only one of whom is included in the cast of this thesis. The brevity of the passage provokes a number of questions: who were the other Scottish architects who apparently had such an influential impact on architecture in Montreal, what did they do over there, how important was their Scottish training and Scottish heritage to their work, and which Scottish offices did the Canadian architects approve of? The answers to these questions can only be achieved by reconstructing the narratives of Scottish architects working in Montreal and bridging the gap that exists in the literature of Scottish and Canadian architecture. Cannadine in his introduction to *Ornamentalism* writes that 'there can be no satisfactory history of Britain without empire, and no satisfactory history of empire without Britain...[this book] seeks to put the history of Britain back into the history of empire, and the history of the empire back in the history

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<sup>45</sup> Anna von Ajkay, 'James Souttar in Sweden', pp. 84 - 92

<sup>46</sup> Dimitro Shvidkovsky, 'Classical Edinburgh and Russian Town Planning of the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: The Role of William Haste 1755 - 1832', pp. 69 - 78

<sup>47</sup> Charles McKean and David Walker, 'The Professorial on the Professional: A History of the Scottish Architectural Profession', Rebecca Bailey (ed.), *Scottish Architects' Papers: A Source Book* (Edinburgh: Rutland Press, 1996) pp. 43 - 45

of Britain'.<sup>48</sup> In some ways, but on a much smaller scale, this thesis argues that there can be no satisfactory study of Scottish architects in Canada without putting the history of Scottish architecture into the history of Canadian architecture; and vice-versa.

A similar methodology has been applied in Geography, particularly within the relatively new area of globalisation. It has been argued by a number of geographers that if a European city is to be properly understood, critics must give consideration to the broader global context, including the empire.<sup>49</sup> They regard European cities as a spatial collaboration, or even confrontation, between the home nation and the imperial colonies. Anthony King questions 'whether the real development of London or Manchester can be understood without reference to India, Africa and Latin America any more than can the development of Kingston (Jamaica) or Bombay be understood without reference to the former'.<sup>50</sup> Authors like King are concerned with what they refer to as 'overlapping territories and intertwined histories'.<sup>51</sup> To an extent this is the central theme of this thesis too: the degree to which the Scottish background of the architects collided with the Canadian context. The notion of overlapping territories is pertinent as the architects kept in touch with their friends, family and colleagues at home, and also made trips back to Britain. Scotland and Canada were not the only territories that overlapped; the intertwined imperial histories of the two countries cannot be overlooked. The influence of America is an important consideration too: from the 1880s her architects had an increasing presence in the Dominion. The changing landscape of architectural ideas and influences in Canada over the period of this thesis is discussed in the first chapter which provides the background for the architects' careers in Canada.

During the initial research for this thesis, documents were found for forty-nine architects who

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<sup>48</sup> Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, p. xx

<sup>49</sup> Doreen Massey and Anthony King are two of the leading theorists in this field arguing that the identity of places in the modern world needs to be examined in relation to other places.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony King, *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System* (1990) quoted in Felix Driver and David Gilbert (ed.), *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999) p. 5

<sup>51</sup> Driver and Gilbert, 'Imperial Cities: Overlapping Territories, Intertwined Histories', *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, pp. 1 - 17

emigrated to Canada from Scotland between 1883 and 1914.<sup>52</sup> This was too large a group for a detailed analysis and the five architects finally selected were chosen because they all moved to Montreal, they all arrived prior to Nobbs and their careers coincided with the final Imperial fervour. The focus on only five architects enabled, and required, detailed searches of primary sources, as there are few published sources on these five architects, which uncovered information never previously published and offered fresh perspectives on the men's work. The John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection was of particular help, as it holds documents on all the five architects, the only repository to do so. Contemporary journals *Canadian Architect and Builder (CAB)* and *Construction* were invaluable sources of information, as were the British journals *The Builder*, *Academy Illustrated* and *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects (JRIBA)*. Since the 1980s Montreal has amassed literature on her architectural heritage that has been enormously helpful. Some of the key texts are the six volumes of Guy Pinard's *Montréal: Son Histoire, Son Architecture*; Isabella Gournay and Frances Vanlaethem's *Montreal Metropolis 1880-1930* and Jean-Claude Marsan's *Montreal in Evolution*.<sup>53</sup>

Although Montreal is a bi-cultural city, very little reference has been made to French-Canadian architects in the thesis. The French-Canadian element would have added another layer to the overlapping territories; however, the decision to omit reference to the French sector of Montreal was made in light of contemporary descriptions that suggested that little interaction between the Anglo and French Canadians would have occurred beyond the Province of Quebec's Association of Architects (PQAA) meetings. These descriptions included one by the English architect, Charles Reilly, who visited Nobbs in Montreal on a couple of occasions:

It amused me to find that there was the leading Scottish architect – one is either a Scotsman or a Frenchman in Montreal – and there was the leading French one, both with great practices, both doing excellent works and both admiring each other's up to a point, but both resolutely refusing to enter each other's homes. Time after time I brought one or the other to the door only to be met at the last

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<sup>52</sup> The information that was collected on the other architects has been passed to the Dictionary of Scottish Architects and most of it is now available on the internet, [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk). The Dictionary of Scottish Architects has been a joint venture between the University of St. Andrews and the Arts and Humanities Research Board. It includes biographical information for all known Scottish architects who worked in Scotland between 1840 and 1940.

<sup>53</sup> Guy Pinard, *Montréal: Son Histoire, Son Architecture*, Vols. 1–6 (Montréal: La Presse, 1986–1987); Isabella Gournay and Frances Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis 1880-1930* (Toronto: Stoddart and Center of Canadian Architecture, 1993); Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution: Historical Analysis of the Development of Montreal's Architecture and Urban Environment* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981)

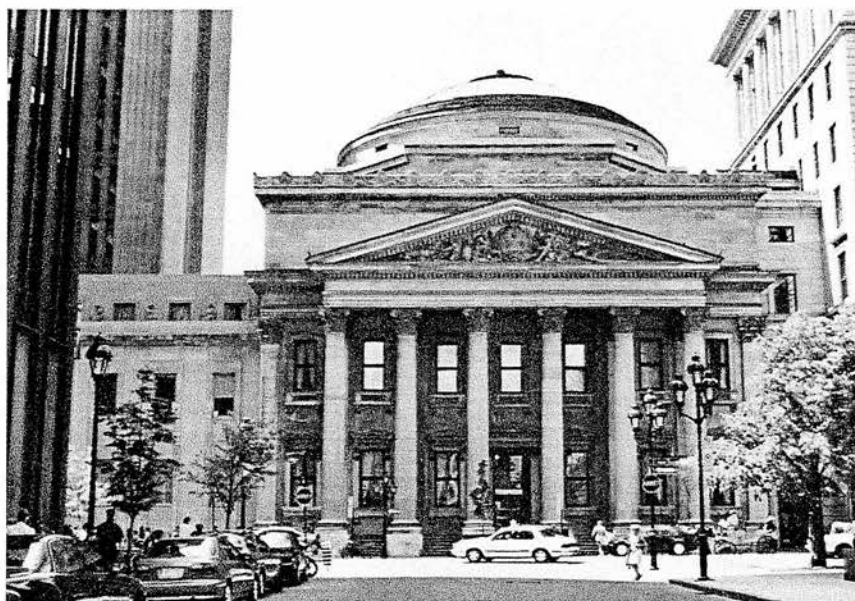
moment with an excuse for turning tail. It was the same with the two universities in the town. No one at McGill seemed to know anyone at Laval, and vice versa. With language added to race and religion, the division seemed deeper even than in Ireland.<sup>54</sup>

The intricacies and complexities raised by the various questions and themes outlined in this introduction will provide a fresh perspective on the subject and it is also one reason why a biographical structure was chosen for the thesis. It allows a detailed study of every architect's career without broad generalisations. It also takes into account Gramsci's concept that 'the starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is'.<sup>55</sup> He stresses the importance of compiling an inventory of the processes that have produced an individual. This thesis forms part of the inventory of the lives and careers of Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper. It is not a complete inventory because it stops with the outbreak of the First World War and does not examine every design that they drew up to that point, preferring to concentrate on a selection of pertinent examples. It is, however, the most up-to-date and comprehensive architectural biographical study of these five Scottish architects. Without this as a foundation, particularly the Scottish years of their careers and the imperial context, it is difficult to truly understand the work of these five men. From this starting point, others can take the stories further, add more narratives or challenge the conclusions I draw. The point of this thesis is to start a dialogue between Scottish and Canadian architectural history that has been silent for too long.

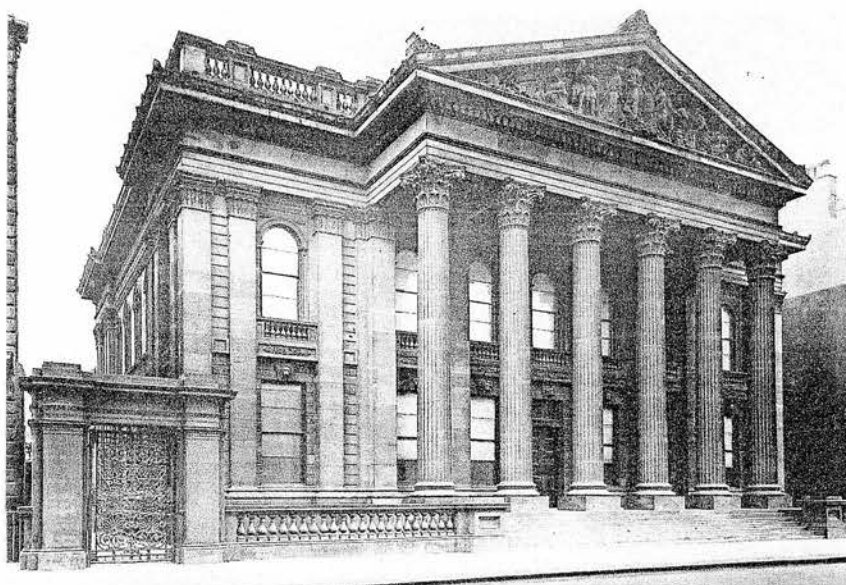
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<sup>54</sup> Charles Reilly, *Scaffolding in the Sky: A Semi-Architectural Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 1938) p. 219.

<sup>55</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks: Selections*, quoted in Said, *Orientalism*, p. 25



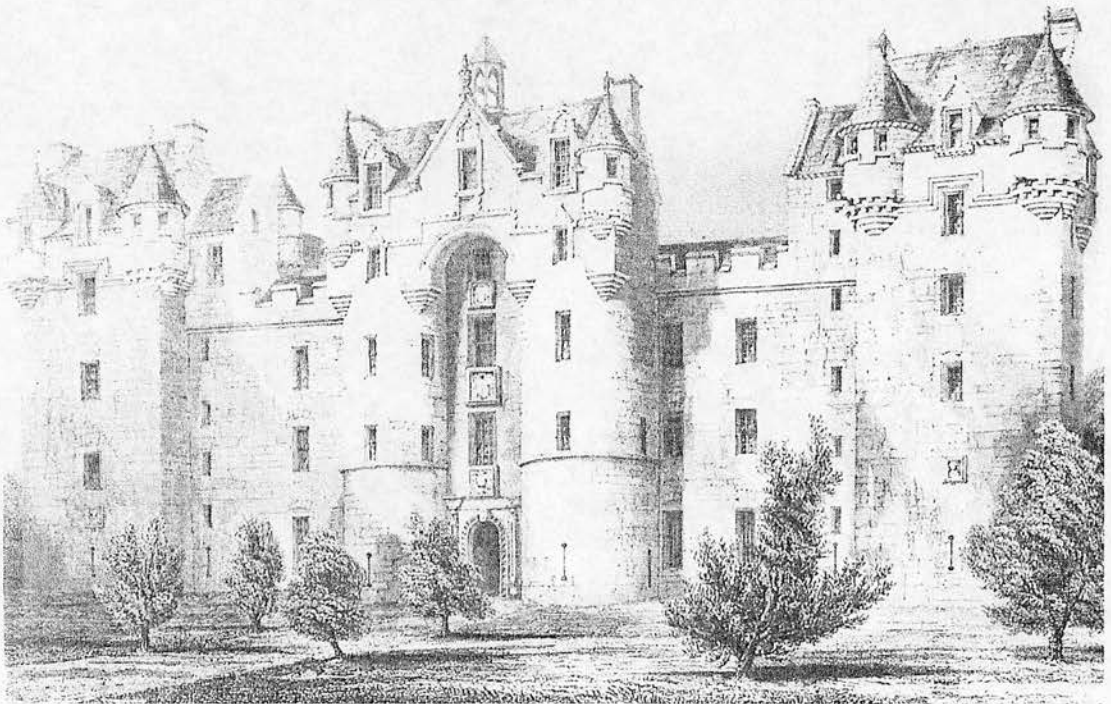
1. John Wells, Bank of Montreal, Head Office, Montreal (1845)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



2. David Rhind, Commercial Bank, Edinburgh (1843)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes and MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



3. Henry Saxon Snell, Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal (1890)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



4. Alexander Seton, Fyfe Castle (1596)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackenzie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)

## Architecture in Canada 1880–1914

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Architecture has its political uses, public buildings being the ornament of a country, it establishes a nation, draws people and commerce, makes a people love their native country.

Sir Christopher Wren<sup>1</sup>

The years between 1880 and 1914 were a period of great change in the history of Canada's architecture. At the start of the 1880s, the British held an architectural hegemony that was completely unchallenged by America; in 1881 Canada had been praised in the British press because 'the tone of thought and sentiment remains English in its essence.'<sup>2</sup> By 1914, the skyline of Canadian cities was punctuated with soaring silhouettes of tall buildings and American Beaux-Arts academicism had become a very popular style with patrons and architects, consequently it would have been difficult to categorise the tone of the Dominion's architecture. One architect, when trying to describe Canadian architecture after the War concluded that 'to English eyes Canadian architecture is very American, while to American eyes it often appears a little English.'<sup>3</sup> This was also true of the years leading up to the War. These years of change and shifting architectural identities were the background to the Canadian careers of Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper.

The year 1867 marked the birth of the Dominion of Canada, with the signing of the British North America Act in the recently completed Palace of Westminster.<sup>4</sup> At this stage in her history, as the name of the Act and the place where it was signed clearly demonstrates, the Dominion of Canada was

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The Province of Manitoba Legislative Building*, Commemorative Pamphlet (July 1910) p. 14

<sup>2</sup> Robert G. Moyles and Doug Owram, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities – British Views of Canada 1880–1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1988) p. 28 In 1881 *The Times* encouraged potential emigrants to chose this Dominion as their destination because 'the tone of thought and sentiment remains English in its essence; the qualities which bring respect and prosperity here will bring them there.'

<sup>3</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, *Architecture in Canada* (London: The Royal Institute of British Architects, 1924) p. 11

<sup>4</sup> In this year the Dominion was composed of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada, which was formed by Quebec and Ontario. Over the next six years the Dominion gradually increased to include Manitoba, the North Western Territories, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island. Manitoba and the North West Territories joined in 1870; British Columbia in 1871 and after much debate Prince

firmly entrenched in the British Empire: a position that was fully expressed in the Parliament Buildings that were opened in the same year of the Dominion's birth. The Parliament Buildings became the first tangible symbol of the new Dominion and consequently set the first national architectural style for Canada [Plate 5].

The Parliament Buildings were designed by the English architect Thomas Fuller (1823–1898) and his Canadian partner Chilion Jones (1835–1912) in the High Victorian Gothic and were intended to present 'a dignified, elegant and also cheerful appearance, and ... should tend more to the Palatial than the Castellated'.<sup>5</sup> The link between palatial architecture and parliament that the architects draw in this sentence immediately draws an association with the British Parliament, whose home was the Palace of Westminster [Plate 6]. The choice of a gothic style by Fuller and Jones may have been a symbolic gesture demonstrating the origins of Canada's government and law; the architectural historian, Alan Gowans clearly believed this in his analysis of the buildings:

The architects hardly had an alternative. It was practically mandatory on them to express the country's close ties with Britain by taking as their model Westminster New Palace, home of the 'Mother of Parliaments' in London, which had begun in 1840.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst Charles Barry's (1795–1860) Houses of Parliament had certainly set a precedent for the coupling of Gothic and Government, his Perpendicular Gothic was a far cry from the eclecticism of the High Victorian Gothic used by Fuller and Jones. The key influences on their design were George Gilbert Scott (1811–1878) and Alfred Waterhouse (1830–1905). In the notes that accompanied the Ottawa design, the architects wrote that they 'endeavoured not slavishly to copy the Gothic of any particular period or country, but the noble civic buildings of the Low Countries and Italy have afforded them suggestion'.<sup>7</sup> This is a direct quotation from Alfred Waterhouse's winning entry for the Manchester Assize Courts competition, which had been published in May 1859 [Plate 7].<sup>8</sup> His design also appears to have been very influential, as does Thomas Deane (1828–1899) and Benjamin

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Edward Island joined the Dominion in 1873.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Harold Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 371

<sup>6</sup> Alan Gowans, *Looking at Architecture in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1958) p. 145

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 374

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 374 Kalman acknowledges this finding to the research of Carolyn Young

Woodward's (1816–1861) University Museum, Oxford (1855–1860) [Plate 8]. Equally inspirational was George Gilbert Scott's abortive design for the Foreign Office (1857) with its muscularity and central tower [Plate 9].<sup>9</sup> The architects alluded to Scott in their accompanying notes, arguing that a gothic design would be a cheaper solution to the problem, which was the argument Scott had used to persuade the British government of the merits of his gothic design for the Foreign Office over their preferred classical style.<sup>10</sup> The Ottawa Parliament Buildings certainly reflect the Civic Gothic so popular in Britain during the 1850s and 1860s demonstrating the bond that tied Dominion to Mother Country. The Parliament Buildings quickly became a potent image of the emerging Canadian nation and her British roots and established a model for architects to follow.

In 1881 Fuller became Chief Architect of Canada and the High Victorian Gothic became further entrenched in Canadian architecture. His impact was mainly seen in the architecture of the country's Post Offices, a seemingly prosaic genre but the Post Office was a very important institution before the advent of widespread telecommunications and the design of post offices was the chief function of the Dominion architect. As the post offices were built across the country, it has been argued that they, perhaps more than any other genre of building, were the most important in presenting a national image, which was firmly rooted in British models.<sup>11</sup> Fuller's post offices have been described as 'a forceful mixture of massively proportioned blocks with roughly textured surfaces incorporating rhythmically varied but strongly grouped elements.'<sup>12</sup> The same is true of the design that won the competition for the British Columbia Legislative Buildings, which was held in 1892, although work commenced in 1893 and it was completed in 1897.

The winning design was by the English architect Francis Rattenbury (1867–1935) and was entitled 'For Our Queen and Our Province', a title that flaunted the imperialist views of its author, as well as

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<sup>9</sup> Roger Dixon and Stefan Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978) p. 164. Dixon and Muthesius believe that Fuller and Jones' Houses of Parliament are 'the most important derivative' of Scott's design,

<sup>10</sup> Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 374

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Thomas, 'Architectural Image for the Dominion – Scott, Fuller and the Stratford Post Office', *Journal of Canadian Art History*, 3 (1976) p. 83

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

the bond between British Columbia and Britain [Plate 10].<sup>13</sup> The design itself is an example of the Victorian eclecticism that became increasingly popular as an alternative to the High Victorian Gothic in Britain. The specific models for Rattenbury's design seem to have been Waterhouse's Natural History Museum, London (1873–1881) and Thomas Colcutt's (1840–1924) Imperial Institute, London (1887–1893) [Plates 11-12]. Colcutt had been given the task of encapsulating the spirit and identity of the British Empire in his design for the Imperial Institute, therefore it was particularly appropriate that Rattenbury used his building for inspiration.<sup>14</sup> Rattenbury had been in Canada less than a month when he entered the competition, so it is unsurprising that his design favoured recent British buildings.<sup>15</sup>

It was not just civic and public architecture that expressed the Imperial relationship between the new Dominion of Canada and Britain during this period. Domestic architecture was also a powerful transmitter of identity, perhaps because the home provided a personal memory of the mother country. By the 1880s, the most common style for domestic architecture was the Queen Anne style made popular in England by John James Stevenson (1831–1908) and Richard Norman Shaw (1831–1912).<sup>16</sup> It was a hugely successful style in Canada because 'the very Britishness of the style was seen as culturally and historically correct for English Canada, as architect and client alike cherished their ties to Britain.'<sup>17</sup> Haddon House, Toronto (1883) was designed by the Toronto architects Henry Langley (1836-1907) and Edmund Burke (1850-1919) and is very characteristic of the picturesque composition of houses back in Britain [Plates 13-14]. Toronto sits on a large clay bed, so red brick was a popular building material which emphasised the commonality between Canadian Queen Anne and British Queen Anne buildings. Not every city in Canada, however, had easy access to red brick; the indigenous material of Quebec was limestone, which could give houses an acerbic quality so many

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<sup>13</sup> Anthony Barratt and Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe, *Francis Rattenbury and British Columbia: Architecture and Challenge in the Imperial Age* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983) pp. 12-21. Rattenbury had trained with his uncles, William and Richard Mawson in Bradbury, before emigrating to B.C. in 1892. The British Columbia Legislative Buildings were his first major commission in his new home.

<sup>14</sup> G. Alex Bremner, 'Some Imperial Institute': Architecture, Symbolism and the Ideal of Empire in Late Victorian Britain 1887-1893', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 62, 1 (March 2003) pp. 50-74

<sup>15</sup> Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 389

<sup>16</sup> See 'Robert Findlay (1859-1951)', chapter 4, for further details on the Queen Anne Style.

<sup>17</sup> Leslie Maitland, *The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture* (Ottawa: National

of the richer patrons imported brick from Ontario or used red sandstone for their houses to enable their architects to replicate the ‘sweetness and light’ of home.<sup>18</sup>

Although regional variations developed between the various provinces, the essence of the style remained the same. The Atlantic regions and British Columbia were heavily forested, so timber became a characteristic feature of their houses. The Laurels (1890) which the English architect Thomas C. Sorby (1836–1924) designed for the wealthy British Columbia politician, Robert Ward, demonstrates how the Queen Anne style could be interpreted using timber and shingle [Plate 15]. Sorby’s first hand experience of the Queen Anne in England must surely have eased his transition from brick to wood. The Queen Anne style was certainly born of the bond between the Dominion and Britain, yet the material flexibility of the style was also critical in helping to develop provincial identities in Canada.<sup>19</sup>

Although the ‘Englishness’ of Canada was represented in the Dominion’s architecture from the 1860s through to the 1890s, it was beginning to be challenged by her southern neighbour. In 1886 two celebrated American architects were commissioned to design two landmark buildings: the Ontario Legislative Building, Toronto, and Windsor Station, Montreal which had an immediate impact on the development of Canadian architecture. The two architects were Richard Waite (1848–1911) and Bruce Price (1845–1903).

In 1886 the Commissioner of Public Works for Ontario, C. F. Fraser, appointed Waite as the architect for the province’s new legislative buildings.<sup>20</sup> Waite’s design drew heavily on the work of the American architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886) [Plate 16]. This ended the reign of High Victorian Gothic, which had been so popular in Canadian civic architecture since 1867, and began a

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Historic Parks and Sites, 1990) p. 29

<sup>18</sup> Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement 1860-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977)

<sup>19</sup> Locality and materials were central to the tenets of the Arts and Crafts movement which became a guiding light in the search for a Canadian national style at the turn of the twentieth century.

<sup>20</sup> The project for the new Ontario Legislative Building began in 1880 with a design by the Provincial architect Kivas Tully, but this was rejected as too parochial. In the same year a competition was held, which the Toronto architects, Darling and Curry, won with a High Victorian Gothic design. However, Waite, who was appointed as a consultant to the competition, decided that all the plans were

trend for the Richardsonian Romanesque. In 1890 the Canadian architect, Edward J. Lennox (1855–1933), followed Waite’s lead in his design for Toronto City Hall, which was based on Richardson’s Allegheny County Court House of three years earlier [Plates 17-18]. His choice of an American style signals a shift in the importance of the British association in Canadian civic architecture.

In the same year that the Ontario Legislative Building was constructed, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) commissioned Bruce Price to design their main terminus in Montreal, Windsor Station (1886), which also became an icon of the Richardsonian Romanesque [Plate 19]. In 1880 Canada had been bare of any examples of Richardsonian Romanesque, or any other overtly American architecture, but in the last five years of the decade it flourished, becoming one of the most dominant styles in Canada. As well as being popular for large civic and public buildings it was also adapted for domestic architecture, and became a popular alternative to the Queen Anne style [Plate 20]. The architectural historian, Henry-Russell Hitchcock has remarked that in 1886 the ‘suppression of English by American influences in Canadian architecture’ began.<sup>21</sup> The sudden increase in the presence of American architects and architecture in Canada from the late 1880s certainly had a remarkable impact on the country’s architecture, affecting style, building technology, professional organisation and education. The reasons for the sudden American phenomenon were numerous.

The Confederation of 1867 had led to numerous government commissions across the country, which opened up new opportunities to Canadian but also American architects. The increasing wealth of Canadian businessmen during the economic boom that was driven by the confidence of the new Confederation created a new group of patrons with their own architectural demands. The extension of the railway and the reduced journey times between Canadian and American cities were also paramount causes of change in Canadian architecture. By 1880 New York could be reached in 14 hours during the day, the night service took 17 hours.<sup>22</sup> The subsequent ease of travel brought the two countries closer together. Canadian businessmen could visit American colleagues more frequently;

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unsuitable and subsequently received the commission himself.

<sup>21</sup> Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 4th edition, 1977) p. 316

<sup>22</sup> David B. Hanna, ‘The Importance of Transportation Infrastructure’, Gournay and Vanlaethem (ed.) *Montreal Metropolis 1880 – 1930*, p. 46 To reach Boston during the day took 10 hours, or 14 hours on

delivery of mail, including newspapers and professional journals, became faster; Canadian tourism to the United States increased.<sup>23</sup> This fed a growing fascination with and appetite for American culture; in effect a substitute for the mother country had become accessible, one that was closer and had common geographical, commercial and cultural links. The 'opening-up' of Canada to Americans was also significant. American businesses realised the commercial potential offered by the wealthy Canadians and branches of American companies began opening in Montreal and Toronto.

In 1888 the New York Life Insurance Company commissioned the New York firm Babb, Cook and Willard to design their Montreal offices, which had the distinction of being the first tall building in Canada (it is eight storeys high) [Plate 21].<sup>24</sup> Tall buildings had developed in America in response to the introduction of the passenger elevator in 1868 with the erection of the Equitable Building in New York by Arthur Gilman (1821-1882) and Edward Kimball. The replacement of iron and masonry construction with steel was critical to the soaring heights of American buildings, such as George Post's (1837-1913) Western Union Building, New York (1873), which had ten storeys making it one of the tallest buildings on the American continent.<sup>25</sup> The height potential of buildings was taken even further with the development of 'skyscraper construction', where the external masonry was carried on metal shelves bolted to the internal steel skeleton. Chicago was the city where this step was first taken by Jenney with his Home Life Insurance Building (1883). The technical advances made in the American cities during the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s were staggering and their introduction into Canada by Babb, Cook and Willard was striking.

At eight storeys the New York Life Insurance Company building dwarfed all the surrounding buildings on Place D'Armes, with the exception of the nearby Church of Notre Dame, which rose up on the adjacent side of the square. The inspired siting of the building on a corner of Place d'Armes enhanced its presence; furthermore its steel skeleton was dressed in Scottish red sandstone, which blazed next to the grey limestone of the surrounding buildings. Whilst it certainly made a physical

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the over night service. Detroit was a full day away, and a trip to Chicago would clock up 35 hours.

<sup>23</sup> John Bland 'Overnight trains to Boston and New York made Montreal "American"', *Journal of the Society for Study of Architecture in Canada*, 2 (1977) pp. 46-64

<sup>24</sup> The architects who formed the partnership were George Babb (1836-1915), Walter Cook (1846-1916) and Daniel Willard (1849-after 1902)

impression in the city, its constructional advances laid down a gauntlet to Canadian patrons and architects: this is what Americans can do, can you compete?

The sudden arrival of tall buildings in Canada and patrons' desire to emulate their American rivals meant that Canadian architects had quickly to learn the new technologies if they were to compete against the arriving Americans, but they were reliant upon their rivals' models. This gave the Americans the commercial advantage. Some patrons, however, were loyal to Canadian architects such as the Toronto businessman, Robert Simpson. When his store burned down in 1895 he commissioned his regular architects, Burke and Horwood (1864-1938), to design a replacement [Plate 22]. The new Robert Simpson Store in Toronto had the distinction of being the first truly self-supporting metal-framed building in Canada.<sup>26</sup> It was, however, a building wholly dependent on American precedents. Horwood had worked in America between 1892 and 1894 where he had learned the new building techniques and wrote detailed letters to Burke explaining the new technology.<sup>27</sup> The steel-frame of the building was an American invention, as was its functional stripped style. Jenney, the inventor of the 'skyscraper construction', was the first architect to express the structural character of his architecture on the exterior of a building at the Leiter Building, Chicago (1889 – 1890) [Plate 23]. Burke and Horwood's grid facade at the Simpson Store was clearly inspired by both the structural and stylistic developments in American architecture. Similarly, when Alexander Dunlop (1842–1923) designed the Queen's Hotel, Montreal (1891-1893), he used the new building technology to design the first fully fireproof building in Montreal [Plate 24].<sup>28</sup> These two buildings were uncommon examples of the new building types designed by Canadians at the time. On the whole, Canadian patrons preferred to commission American architects to design their new commercial buildings, even though some Canadian architects had clearly proved their capabilities in learning the new techniques. The reputation and experience of American architects were very persuasive factors upon patrons.

In 1888 the Toronto Board of Trade held a competition for a new building and invited Waite and Post to submit designs, in exchange for \$400, because the Board wanted 'plans from architects of

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<sup>25</sup> Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, p. 243

<sup>26</sup> Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 402

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

established reputation and experience of such buildings'.<sup>29</sup> In the event neither Waite nor Post were placed. The first prize went to the Kansas city firm James and James, and two Canadian firms received second and third place, Darling and Curry, and Gordon and Helliwell, demonstrating that the more famous architects did not always deliver the best designs, but this did not appear to alter patrons' perceptions that American architects were better than Canadians.

A couple of years later, in 1890, the Montreal Board of Trade held a similar competition for their new building, which favoured American architects also. An article in *CAB* reported that 'the president and secretary have recently made a tour through the States, examining the various Boards of Trade buildings, and have returned to the city fully convinced that no Canadian architect will be found fit to erect their building.'<sup>30</sup> While they were in the States, the President and Secretary invited six American architects to submit proposals for which they would receive \$300 expenses and they appointed the New York architect, Richard Morris Hunt (1828-1895), as assessor.<sup>31</sup> Back in Canada they opened the competition to Canadian architects, but refused to pay them a submission fee.<sup>32</sup> Disgusted and disgruntled by this prejudice, some Montreal architects refrained from entering and architects in Toronto supported them by boycotting the competition too. The eventual winners of the competition were the Boston firm Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge [Plate 25].<sup>33</sup>

The appeal of American architects to Canadian businessmen was presumably partly rooted in status. By employing the best architects and commissioning the most up-to-date buildings, they hoped to demonstrate their wealth, status and power to American businessmen. Their wealth meant that they could afford to do it, and the buildings in turn reflected their wealth to the outside world. Whilst it may have provided business kudos for the patrons, most Canadian architects regarded it as prejudiced and unpatriotic. Writing about the Montreal Board of Trade competition, *CAB* commented that 'it is impossible to conceive of a committee of American businessmen under similar circumstances

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<sup>28</sup> 'Montreal Notes', *CAB*, 6, 8 (August 1893) p. 85

<sup>29</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 20

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> 'Montreal' *CAB*, 3, 8 (August 1890) p. 89 For a more detailed discussion of the two competitions see Crossman *Architecture in Transition*, Chapter 1 'Developments 1885 – 1890', pp. 9 - 27

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> The partners were George Shepley (1858-1903), Charles Rutan (1851-1914) and Charles Coolidge

discriminating against their own countrymen'.<sup>34</sup> When James Ross commissioned Bruce Price to design a mansion for him on Peel Street in 1890, a local architect commented that 'when Canadians have any money to spend they always avoid local men and prefer to employ alien architects.'<sup>35</sup> No matter how unpopular the commissioning of American architects made patrons, the commissions continued and American architecture gained a stronger foothold in Canada. This was not simply the result of American architects coming to Canada. Young Canadians began going to America, primarily 'to study the architecture of our neighbours in order to meet the popular demand and craze of today for Americanism'.<sup>36</sup> The advances in architecture also made it critical for Canadian architects to study the new techniques, just as Horwood had done. The fame of some of the American offices must surely have appealed to young men too. It was not, however, just a reaction to current architectural fashions, technical advances and celebrity that led young Canadians to America. The lack of a formalised education system and the largely inferior training they received as apprentices at home were also critical factors. The Montreal architect, Alexander Cowper Hutchinson (1838-1922), admitted that he 'often advised young men who wished to obtain a knowledge of architecture to go to the United States and obtain an education there.'<sup>37</sup> The impact of the flow of aspiring architects to the United States perpetuated interest in, demand for and influence of American architecture, particularly commercial architecture.

In 1888 the young Montreal architect Edward Maxwell (1867-1923) joined the elite Boston office of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, the heirs of Richardson's practice, as an assistant. He was joined by fellow Montrealer David R. Brown (1869-1946).<sup>38</sup> The timing of their departure coincided with the first wave of Canadian enthusiasm for American architecture and must surely have been influenced by the sudden American boom, but more specifically the enthusiasm for the Richardsonian Romanesque. In 1892, after four years of working for a leading American firm, they both returned to Montreal. Maxwell returned to the city as the supervisory architect for Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge's latest commission, the controversial Board of Trade building. The influence of this design, and of the three

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(1858-1936).

<sup>34</sup> 'Montreal: New Board of Trade Building', *CAB*, 2, 4 (April 1890) p. 38

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Crossman *Architecture in Transition*, p. 17

<sup>36</sup> 'Montreal', *CAB*, 9, 1 (January 1896) pp. 2-3

<sup>37</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 54

American architects generally, can be seen in one of Maxwell's first commissions as an independent architect, which was for the Bell Telephone Company (1895-97). His office design for the company was very similar to the Board of Trade Building [Plate 26].

The collaboration of Canadian architects on American commissions as supervisory architects was quite common and brought the Canadians into greater contact with developments in American architecture; it was generally, although not always, architects who had assisted in American offices who received these commissions. In 1903, Post was commissioned to design the new Stock Exchange Building in Montreal. The supervising architects on this occasion were the brothers Edward and William Maxwell (1874–1952). George Ross (1878–1946), who had worked in the office of Carrère and Hastings between 1903 and 1904, was appointed supervisory architect for their Transportation Building in 1911. William Maxwell, like his brother Edward, had gone to Boston where he was apprenticed to the firm of Winslow and Wetherell between 1895 and 1896. Whilst there, William took evening classes at Boston Architectural Club which developed his own training and introduced him to the Beaux-Arts system.

The Beaux-Arts education system was highly respected in America. Richard Hunt had introduced the system into America upon graduating from the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris; he was the first American to enrol at the school in 1848. Upon returning to America he was convinced of the need to establish a similar system there and he opened his own atelier to teach the planning theories and meticulous design methods of the *École*.<sup>39</sup> From this small seed grew the architectural departments at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Columbia University. William Ware (1832–1915) was the father of these departments and their Beaux-Arts curriculum in 1866 and 1881 respectively.<sup>40</sup> He had been a student of Hunt, and like him, had realised the significance of the formalised system to the improvement of American architecture. By the 1900s the Beaux-Arts theory had permeated almost all of the major architectural practices, in which some young Canadians worked, such as Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge's office.

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<sup>38</sup> Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis 1880-1930*, pp. 205-206

<sup>39</sup> Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, p. 239

<sup>40</sup> Norbert Schoenauer, *Stewart Henbest Capper: First Macdonald Professor of Architecture*

The benefits of a Beaux-Arts education to American architecture soon became clear to Canadians, and some Canadians followed Hutchinson's advice and went to American universities to study architecture. Hugh Vallance (1866–1947), a young architect from Hamilton, Ontario, enrolled at MIT in 1883 and George Ross also studied there between 1900 and 1902.<sup>41</sup> An alternative to studying at the American universities was to enrol at evening classes with the American Architectural Clubs, such as the Boston Architectural Club, where both Vallance and William Maxwell studied. These clubs were organised along the lines of the Beaux-Arts ateliers.

Some of the more fortunate aspiring Canadian architects actually went to Paris to study in the ateliers of the École des Beaux-Arts. John Lyle (1872-1945) spent four years at the École, working in the ateliers of Jules Godfrey, Jacques Freynet and Paul Blondel between 1892 and 1896;<sup>42</sup> Vallance was in Paris in the late 1890s;<sup>43</sup> William Maxwell studied in the atelier of Jean Louis Pascal in 1900,<sup>44</sup> and George Ross was a student in the atelier of Gaston Redon between 1904 and 1905.<sup>45</sup> Lyle and Maxwell were so impressed by the École des Beaux-Arts and dismayed by the lack of a similar system in Canada that they opened their own ateliers in Montreal and Toronto.<sup>46</sup> The Beaux-Arts, to many, seemed to be the only way to drive forward the success of Canadian architecture. This was further emphasised by the introduction of American Beaux-Arts Classicism into Canada; although the Beaux-Arts is a theory of architecture based upon the classical tradition, by the twentieth century American architects, such as Post, had interpreted the classical principles into a style that became known as Beaux-Arts Classicism. In 1903, Post received the commission for the Montreal Stock Exchange, which was a perfect expression of the American style that rose from the École des Beaux-Arts Classicism [Plate 27]. The Maxwells were the supervisory architects for the commission and the influence of the building may be seen in their later design for the Montreal Fine Arts Museum (1911)

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(Montreal: McGill University, 1996) p. 3

<sup>41</sup> Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*, pp. 207-208

<sup>42</sup> Geoffrey Hunt, *John Lyle: Towards a National Canadian Architecture* (Kingston, Ontario: Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, 1982) p.12

<sup>43</sup> Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*, p.208

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p. 206

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. p. 207

<sup>46</sup> Hunt, *John Lyle*, p. 32; Rosalind M. Pepall, *Building a Beaux-Arts Museum* ((Montreal: Museum of Fine Art, 1986) p. 109

[Plate 28]. The style was popular throughout Canada and particularly for bank architecture. The Manitoba branch building of the Merchants' Bank of Canada (1907) by Taylor, Hogle and Davis has been described as a 'graceful, modestly scaled examples of Beaux-Arts Classicism' and many of their bank designs of this period could be described thus [Plate 29].<sup>47</sup> The Toronto firm, Darling and Pearson were superb exponents of the new Beaux-Arts Classicism, and created 'one of the country's finest examples' of the style with their design for the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Winnipeg (1910–1912) [Plate 30].<sup>48</sup>

Whilst the Beaux-Arts Classicism struck a note with some Canadian patrons and architects, the continued commissioning of American architects during the 1900s and 1910s was dispiriting for many architects. The editor of *CAB* lamented the loss of a commission from Canada to America when the Bank of Montreal appointed the American firm McKim Mead and White as the Bank's new architects:<sup>49</sup>

This again is a lost opportunity for our architects, as it has been thought fit, as in the case of many of our prominent modern buildings, to call upon foreign architects to design the structure. Messrs. McKim, Mead and White, of New York, being in this instance the fortunate firm.<sup>50</sup>

This was obviously not a new sentiment. Resentment against the commission of Americans started in the 1880s and climaxed with the Board of Trade competitions, which triggered the establishment of architectural associations in Ontario and Quebec. The Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) was founded on 21 March 1889 and received Royal Assent on 7 April of the same year.<sup>51</sup> Eighteen months later, on 10 October 1890, the first meeting of the Province of Quebec Architectural Association was held (PQAA).<sup>52</sup> The catalyst for the establishment of both of these Associations were the Board of Trade competitions and the subsequent realisation that the condition of the profession in Canada had to improve if her architects were going to compete effectively.

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<sup>47</sup> Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 414

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* p. 413

<sup>49</sup> The partners of the firm were: Charles McKim (1847-1909), William Mead (1846-1928) and Stanford White (1853-1906)

<sup>50</sup> *CAB*, 15, 1 (January 1902) p. 4

<sup>51</sup> 'The Ontario Architects' Act', *CAB*, 3, 4 (April 1890) pp. 40-42

<sup>52</sup> 'An Act to Incorporate the Province of Quebec Association of Architects', *CAB*, 4, 3, March 1891,

One of the first things that both the OAA and the PQAA hoped to achieve was the registration of architects to help raise standards in Canadian architecture.<sup>53</sup> By the end of the century the PQAA had successfully campaigned for statutory registration.<sup>54</sup> The OAA were less successful, as they met with constant resistance by some architects who thought that architecture was an art rather than a profession.<sup>55</sup> Equally important to the architects was the establishment of a formalised system of architectural education.<sup>56</sup> The Toronto-based architect, Burke, was very eloquent and persuasive on the need for formal education during a meeting of the OAA in 1895:

The coming Canadian architect needs a better education for [a] more sordid reason, but a very present one nevertheless, and one which we have severely felt in this country of late years, namely – the competition of foreign architects.<sup>57</sup>

As well as discouraging young men from going to America to receive their training, it was hoped that a better training system would also reassert the public's confidence in local architects, whose reputations had suffered due to the continuous employment of American architects by the wealthy and powerful.<sup>58</sup> One method introduced was the qualifying examinations for architects wishing to join the architectural associations. The PQAA wanted more and campaigned for a Department of Architecture at McGill University, which was opened in 1896 under the Professorship of Stewart Henbest Capper, who established a curriculum based on the curriculum of the *École des Beaux-Arts*.<sup>59</sup>

The appeal of a Beaux-Arts curriculum as taught in America was dual fold. It was the system that clearly produced high calibre architects, but furthermore it had 'risen on an experience of the good or the faults and failings of the old world systems; and it seems to be as perfect as any scheme can be in a new country where examples of the works of all centuries do not exist'.<sup>60</sup> The argument that a system created in the new world was a good choice for Canada appeared to support the growing influence of American architecture in Canada. It is a significant point that the OAA and the PQAA

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pp. 35-36

<sup>53</sup> See 'John Smith Archibald (1872-1934)', chapter 6 for a detailed discussion on statutory registration.

<sup>54</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 47

<sup>55</sup> See 'John Smith Archibald (1872-1934)'

<sup>56</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7 for further details on the Macdonald School of Architecture.

<sup>57</sup> 'O.A.A.', *CAB*, 8, 2 (February 1895) p. 21

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)'

had arisen in response to the employment of and competition from American architects rather than the rising popularity of American styles and technologies. The new architectural associations meant that by the new century Canadian architects were more confident than they had been in the 1880s when the Americans had first arrived, a confidence that would help them strive towards an architecture that best suited Canada. In the words of one architect:

In the last ten years of the century...has begun a change so marked in the relation of architects to one another that there must come from it some result. Time was when the entrance of an architect in the office of another was a signal for covering up the drawings on the drawing board with newspapers. Now there are associations in three provinces and architects freely discuss in meetings and in each others' offices the problems about which they are thinking. In addition to this, as part of the work of their associations, the architects are furthering the education of students. So there are signs that the development of architecture in this country is going to begin with the new century.<sup>61</sup>

Although Canadian architects may have become increasingly equipped to compete with American architects and many patrons desired American buildings, the influence of the United States was not universally welcomed in Canada. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, annexation to America became a critical political question in Canada and dominated the General Election of 1891. To some of the electorate a federation with America seemed much more appropriate than a continued bond with Britain, because 'geography, commerce, identity, race, language, and institutions, the mingling of population and constant intercourse of every kind, acting in ever increasing intensity, have brought about a general fusion.'<sup>62</sup> To others in Canada this idea was perceived as a threat to the Imperial identity of the country, which was considered to be much more significant than any demographic or geographic connection with the United States. For that sector of the electorate the main question was whether Canada was 'to vanish from history...lose her identity, her individuality, her possibilities, by absorption into the United States'.<sup>63</sup> The winner of the election was the Conservative candidate John A. MacDonald, whose campaign centred on a very clear affirmation of imperialism: 'A British subject I was born – a British subject I will die.'<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> R. W. Gambier-Bousfield, 'Architectural Education in Canada', *C.A.B.*, 4, 4 (April 1891) p. 46

<sup>61</sup> 'A Century's Review', *CAB*, 14, 1 (January 1901) p. 2 British Columbia was the third province to have an association of architects.

<sup>62</sup> Goldwin Smith quoted in Moyles and Owrap, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities*, p. 30

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p. 29

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p. 31

The new century began with a renewed imperialist fervour, which was triggered by MacDonald's success but more importantly by Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897.<sup>65</sup> In the same year, a new Chief Architect of the Dominion was appointed, David Ewart. Ewart wanted to reassert Canada's position within the Empire through her architecture and was seduced by the new English Baroque and Free Classic style celebrated in buildings such as John Brydon's (1840–1901) Government Offices, London (1898–1912) and William Young's (1843–1900) War Office, London (1898), both of which adorned Whitehall [Plate 31]. The attraction of the English Baroque was summed up by Brydon in his appraisal of the work of Inigo Jones (1573-1652) and Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723). He proclaimed that these two men had created an architecture that was 'English as distinct from, and in some respects superior to, even the Italian Renaissance...leaving it to us as a precious heritage to keep and to guard and, above all things, to study and maintain'.<sup>66</sup> The period that Brydon had chosen was also one that had created iconic monuments of British nationality such as St Paul's Cathedral and Blenheim Palace; its style was a quintessentially English interpretation of Continental Classicism. It was also the public architectural style of the Queen Anne Period, which made it a natural choice considering the continued popularity of the Queen Anne style in domestic architecture.

It was this English spirit that Ewart brought to Canadian public architecture in the new century, in direct contrast to the Beaux-Arts Classicism loved by the Americans. The first monumental example of the new style was a Post Office designed for Vancouver in 1905 [Plate 32]. This was clearly inspired by the government buildings of Whitehall and, as with Fuller's post office designs, helped to reaffirm British architecture as the true model for Canada's official architecture. Ewart was supported in his mission to create an Imperial Canadian image by the arrival of the new Professor of Architecture at McGill University, Percy E. Nobbs. When he arrived in Montreal, Nobbs was appalled at the American influence on Canadian architecture:

We...strenuously opposed the spread of their influence in Canada [Beaux-Arts societies in America], on the grounds that our history and tradition is different from that of the United States, and should be expressed in our architecture...the political aspect of the "Americanization" of our arts, where they might just as well as based on National and Imperial tradition is, we venture to think, one which

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> John Brydon, paper to the Architectural Association (1889) quoted in A. Service, *Edwardian Architecture – A Handbook to British Design 1890–1914* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977) p. 13

need only be pointed out to be appreciated by those at the helm of State.<sup>67</sup>

Instead of the Beaux-Arts, Nobbs wanted the application of the English Free Classic. The architects whom he respected were Brydon and John Belcher (1841–1913).<sup>68</sup> Nobbs admired these men because their work struck ‘a note of natural evolution along the lines set by our forefathers...on the Lyre of Nationalism’.<sup>69</sup> That Nobbs wanted their architecture to be used as models in Canada strongly indicates that he believed Canada’s architecture should be part of the same evolution as Britain.

The genre where the English Free Classic was best adapted were the legislative buildings of the provinces, as demonstrated in the Maxwells’ design for the Saskatchewan Legislative Building, Regina (1908–1912) [Plate 33]. The entrance façade is very similar to Wren’s palace fronts at Hampton Court and Greenwich. In their notes, which accompanied the designs, the Maxwells emphasised the Englishness of their work: they described it as ‘a free adaptation of English Renaissance work...that marks it unmistakably as representative of the British sovereignty under which the Province is governed.’<sup>70</sup> The materials they used were also expressive of the British sources for the style, as they chose a combination of red brick and pale buff stone. This was the colour combination that had been used at Hampton Court by Wren. In the conclusion of the article it was commented that ‘the dignity, simplicity and purity of style have been combined with a monumental treatment of the best period of British architecture’.<sup>71</sup>

The political links between Canada and Britain influenced other architects who designed legislative buildings, but rather than use the English Free Classic, they wished to resurrect the gothic:

In considering the design of this proposed building [the Saskatchewan Legislative Building] the fact that it is to be erected within a province of the British Empire has been regarded as of paramount weight. It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that the tradition of Gothic architecture is inherent in the Anglo-Saxon race and is the natural form of expression of the British Empire

<sup>67</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, ‘State Aid to Art Education in Canada’, *Construction*, 1, (April 1908) p. 45

<sup>68</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, P. E. Nobbs Collection, C. Addresses, Reports, Papers (899-1924), Box 8, C. 8-4, Addresses on Art and Architecture 1906-7/9: ‘The Architectural Revivals of the Nineteenth Century in England’, paper read to the PQAA Sketching Club, January 1907, pp. 15-17

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17

<sup>70</sup> ‘Architectural Review: Winning Design in Regina Competition’, *Construction*, 1, 4 (February 1908) p. 40

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

and its provinces.<sup>72</sup>

The gothic did not reappear in the legislative architecture of the twentieth century, although it did become very popular for collegiate architecture. One of the most impressive examples of this was Hart House, University of Toronto (1911–1912), by the Toronto partnership Sproatt and Ralph [Plate 34]. This followed in the footsteps of the Philadelphia firm of Cope and Stewardson, who designed buildings for a variety of American universities including Princeton between 1895 and 1903.<sup>73</sup> Gothic collegiate architecture was soon popular across Canada: the Universities of McGill and Saskatchewan both constructed new departments using the style. The gothic revival could be regarded as another example of the increasing influence of America in Canada. To an extent this would be true, but the reasons for its popularity in America were its English roots. In his article ‘A Study in the Tudor Style’, the American architect Edgerton, asked ‘What is more natural, then, that we in America, whose traditions are so largely English, and whose country life is more and more becoming like that in England, should find this Tudor style suitable to our needs?’<sup>74</sup> It was arguably an even more appropriate style for Canada, whose politics and culture were still inextricably linked to Britain, and whose government was accommodated in a gothic building.

By the 1910s there was a plethora of styles converging in Canada: Beaux-Arts Classicism, English Free Classic, neo-Gothic, Queen Anne and the rational sky-scraper. Each of these came with an association of identity for Canada that was recognised by contemporary commentators: Beaux-Arts Classicism had evolved in the New World and was representative of the continent’s modernity and Canada’s location in North America; the Free English Classic celebrated the ongoing imperial relationship between Canada and Britain; the neo-gothic honoured the parliamentary roots of the nation. Whilst all representing different things, they were representative of the same thing: Canada’s identity in relation to another country.

There was another alternative: the development of a Canadian national style independent of these

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ralph Cram, ‘The Work of Cope and Stewardson’, *The Architectural Record* (November 1904) pp. 407-438

<sup>74</sup> Edgerton, ‘A Study in the Tudor Style’ *The Architectural Record*, 34, 4 (October 1913) p. 274

external links. In 1890 Hutchinson called for ‘the stamp of originality which we hope will be placed on our buildings [and] prove that Canada is a nation’, which he hoped would be achieved through better education and training.<sup>75</sup> A group of architects in Toronto, the Toronto Eighteen Club, similarly wanted to develop a national Canadian architecture and they supported the domestic Arts and Crafts philosophy of English architects such as William Morris (1834–1896) and Philip Webb (1831–1915), which focused on vernacular architecture, indigenous materials, climate and geology as the only guiding principles that an architecture should follow.<sup>76</sup> The main obstacle for Arts and Crafts enthusiasts in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada was the ‘absence of centuries-old heritage of domestic building.’<sup>77</sup> This meant that they were ‘forced to select an external tradition that had appropriate meaning’, which in many cases was the English tradition.<sup>78</sup> Many of the houses built under this ‘national’ umbrella, therefore, bore remarkable similarities to houses ‘back home’ and reasserted British identity rather than Canadian [Plates 35-36].

One possible route to a national style was to study the old colonial architecture of the original French and British settlers. A Quebec architect, Charles Baillargé (1826–1906), was one of the first to suggest that these buildings could be used to solve the problems of a modern architectural style for Canada:

The Quebec architect should build not because this or that style is fashionable, but with proper regard for the requirements of climate and surrounding circumstances, to produce such a building as will without question assert itself to be of a type suitable to the climate and other conditions of the locality in which it stands...the old buildings of Quebec did; let us not despise them, but so improve and embellish them and adapt them to modern notions, that in the new production we shall have, if not a national, at least a local style of architecture.<sup>79</sup>

The roots of the vernacular revival in Quebec are understandable, as the French Canadians, more than any group in Canada, must have longed for an architectural style that represented their identity surrounded as they were by British and American architecture and architects. It was only after the First World War that greater attention was paid to a Canadian national style of architecture however. Up until 1914, the models influencing architects in Canada were predominantly those of their

<sup>75</sup> ‘Proceedings of the P.Q.A.A.’, *CAB*, 4, 9 (September 1891) p. 91

<sup>76</sup> The Eighteen Club was a key reason why the OAA had failed to gain statutory registration, because they argued that architecture was an art not a profession.

<sup>77</sup> Kalman, *A Concise History*, p. 446

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Charles Baillargé, *Notes on Quebec Architecture*, quoted in Crossman, *Architecture in*

neighbour and the mother country.

By 1914 the hegemony of Britain that had existed almost unchallenged from 1763 - when she had won the Seven Years' War and seized control of the then French colony - to 1886, when the Richardsonian Romanesque erupted in Canadian cities, had been replaced with a new dynamism, with a number of styles colliding and coalescing in architects' *oeuvres*. Canada's architects were also more confident. They had joined ranks in Ontario and Quebec; their training was improving; they were more competitive, and there seemed to be an increasing desire to find a Canadian style of architecture. In 1913 the artist Arthur Chapman reflected that 'we have been unconsciously maturing ... it now seems that a new light is breaking in upon the architecture of the country'.<sup>80</sup> Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper arrived in Canada during this period and brought with them an architectural past that interchanged with their new present. The nature of their response to their new home will be examined in the following chapters.

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*Transition*, p. 116

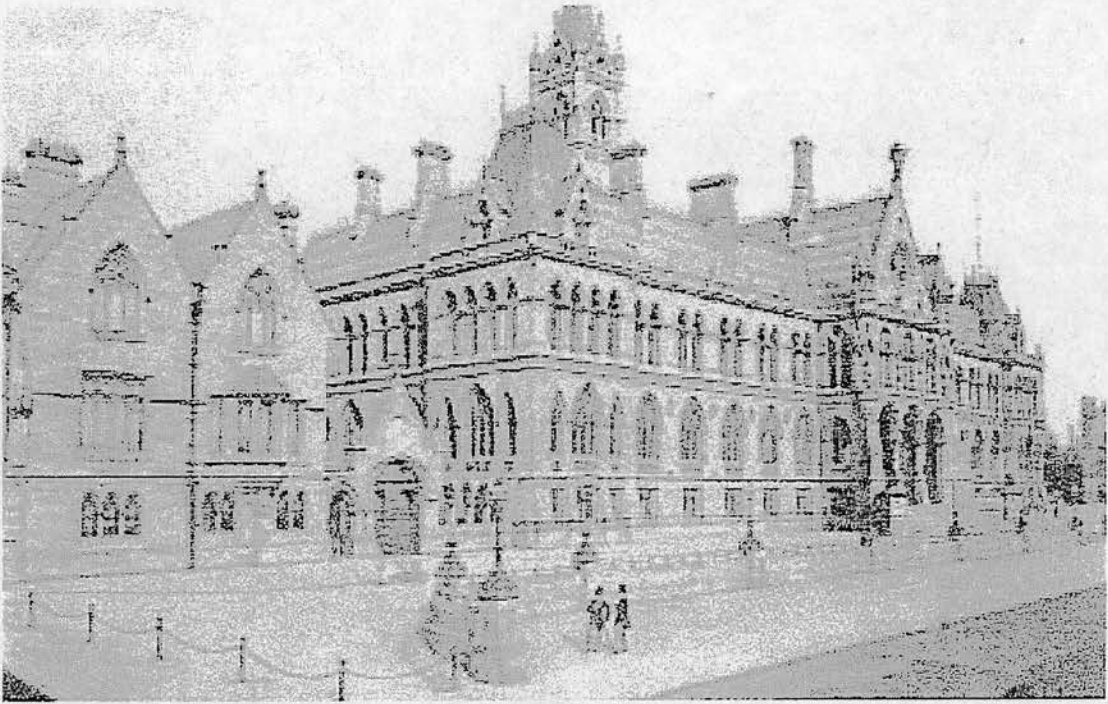
<sup>80</sup> Arthur H. Chapman, 'Architectural Development in Canada' in *The Yearbook of Canadian Art*, 1913, reprinted in Geoffrey Simmins (ed.) *Documents in Canadian Architecture* (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 1992) p. 267



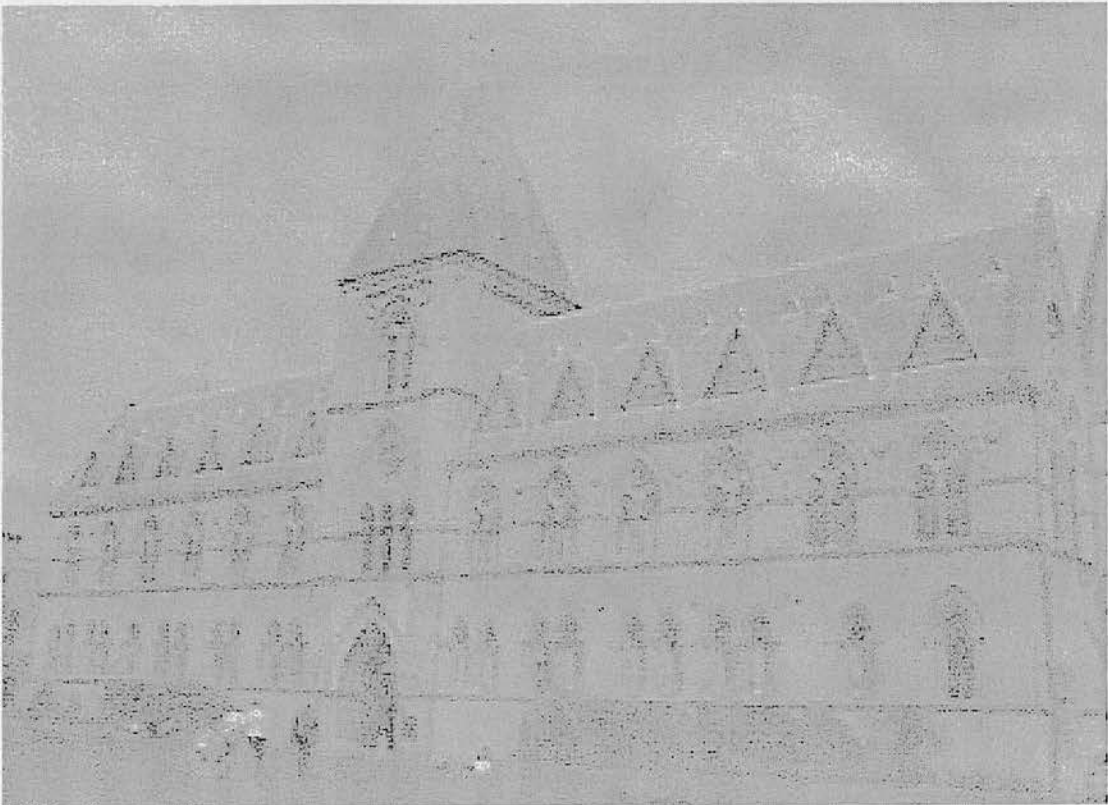
5. Fuller and Jones, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa (completed 1867)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



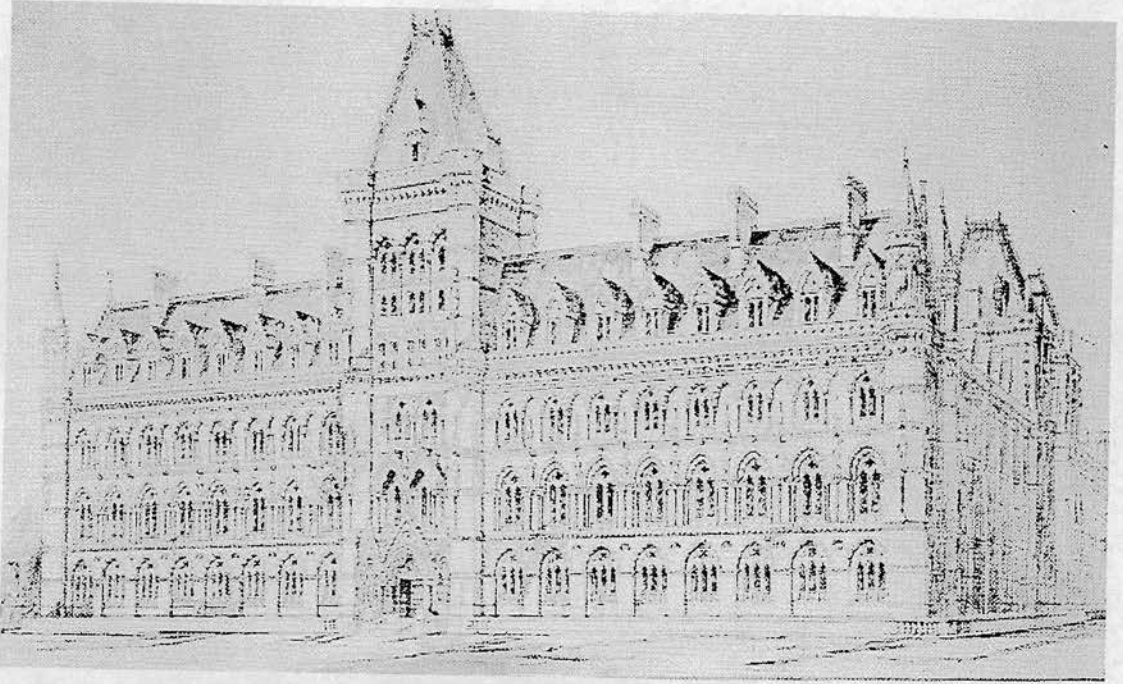
6. Barry, Palace of Westminster, London (1837-1867)  
(Dixon and Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*)



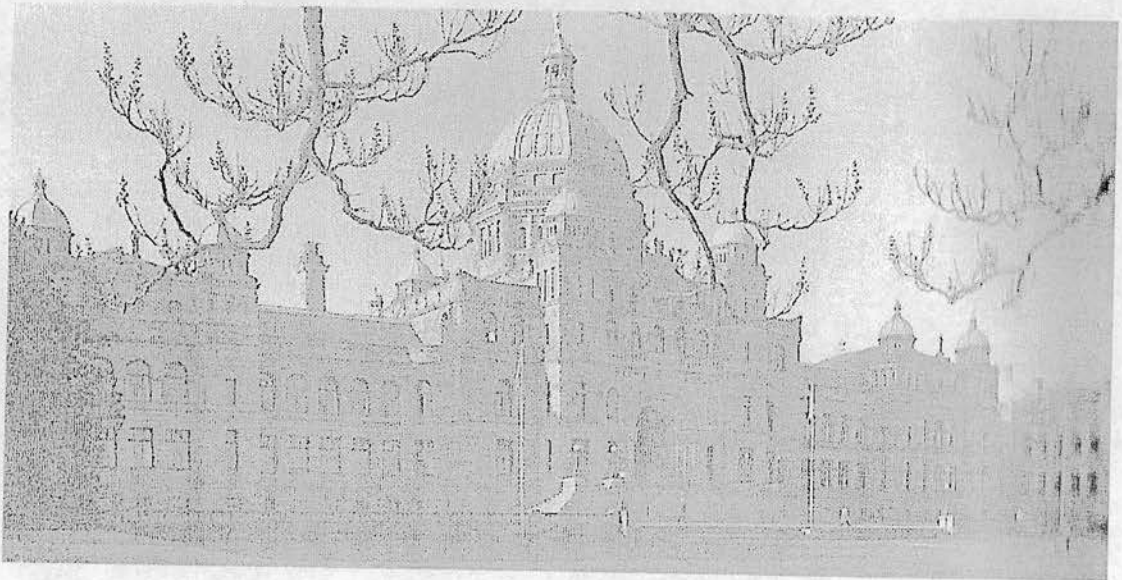
7. Waterhouse, Manchester Assize Courts, Manchester (1859)



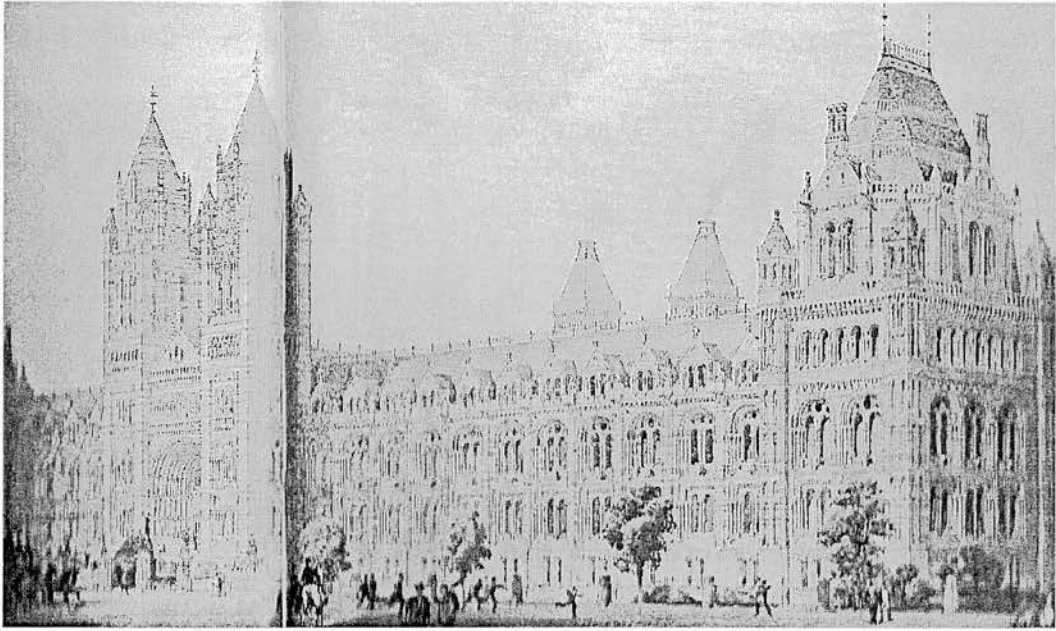
8. Deane and Woodward, University Museum, Oxford (1855-60)  
([www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org))



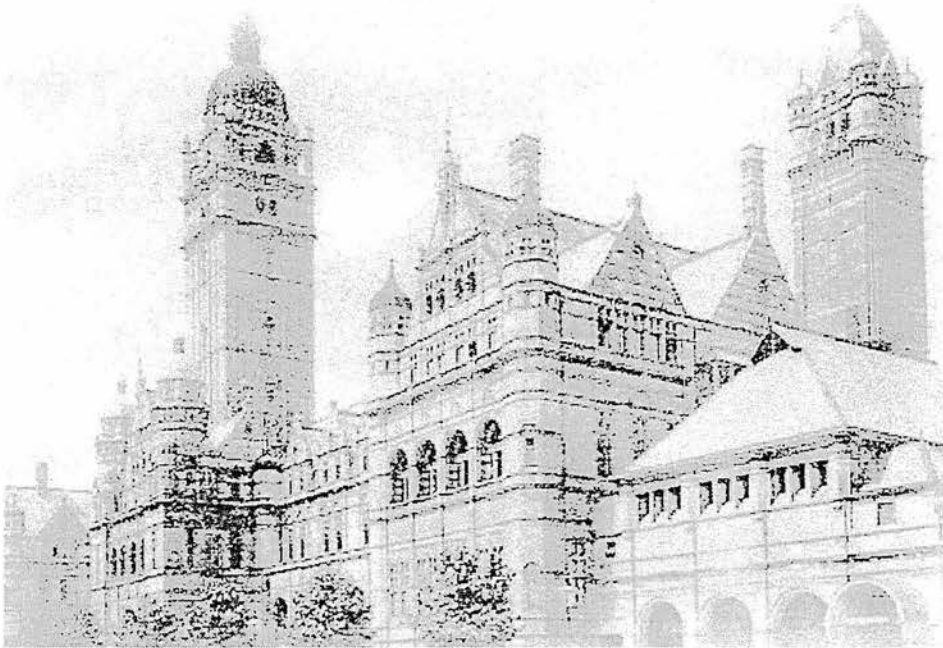
9. Gilbert Scott, Design for Foreign Office, London (1857)  
(Dixon and Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*)



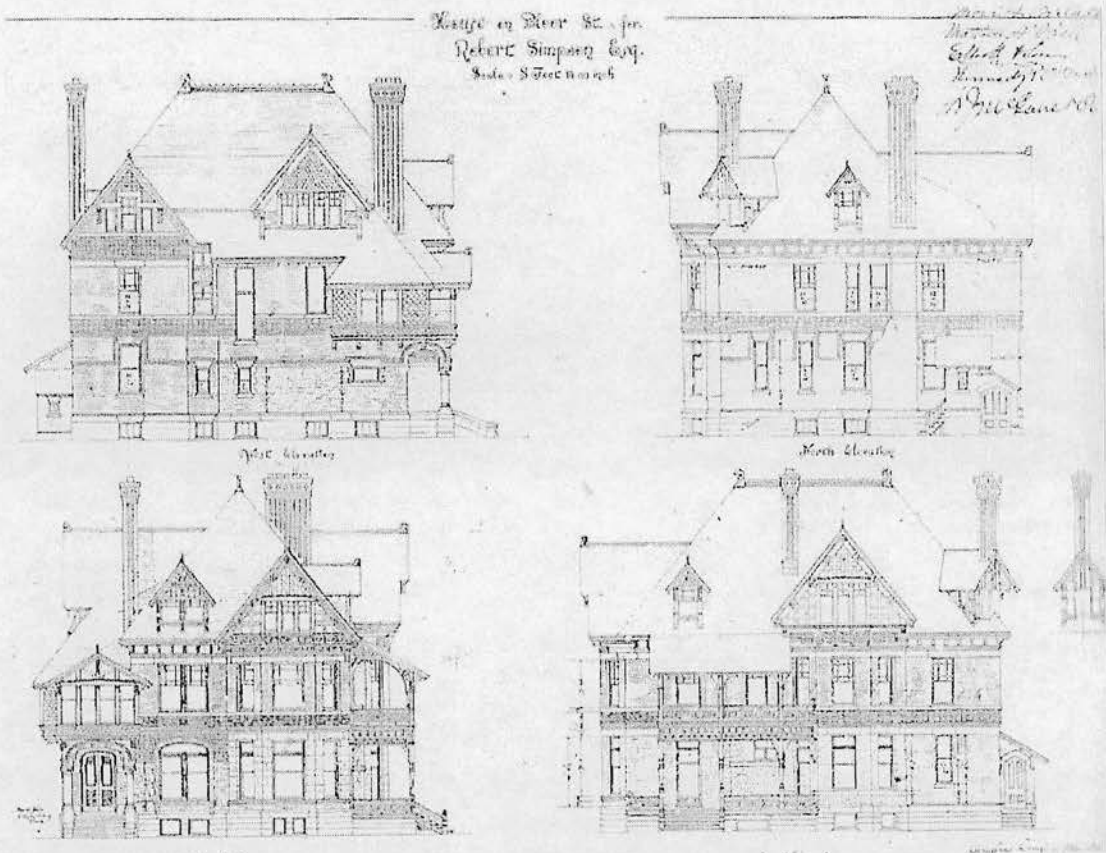
10. Rattenbury, British Columbia Legislative Buildings, Victoria (1893-7)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



11. Waterhouse, Natural History Museum, London (1873-81)  
(Girouard, *Alfred Waterhouse and the Natural History Museum*)



12. Colcutt, Imperial Institute, London (1887-1893)  
([www.victorianweb.org](http://www.victorianweb.org))



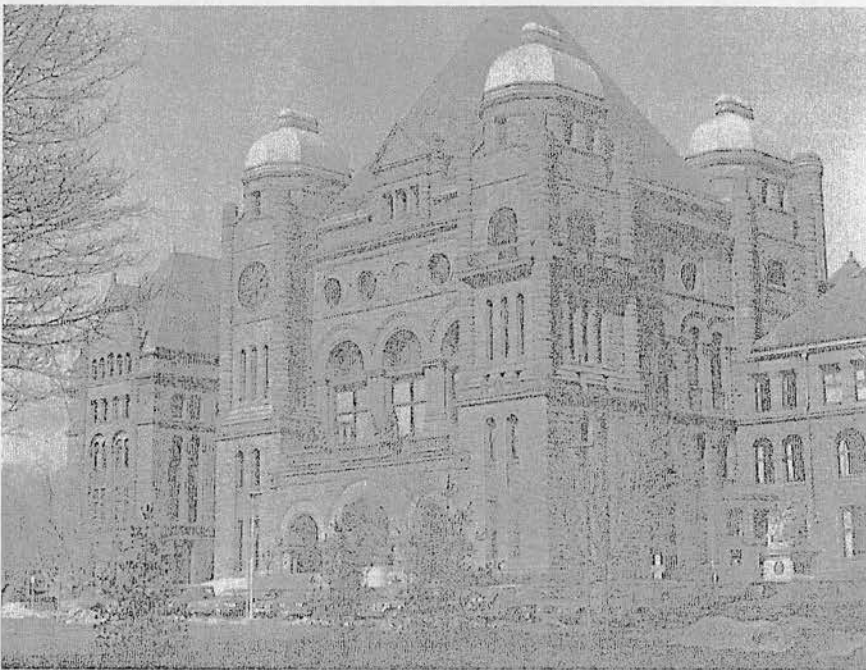
13. Langley and Burke, Haddon House, Toronto (1883)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



14. Nesfield, Stowford Cottages, Cheshire (1865)  
(Dixon and Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*)



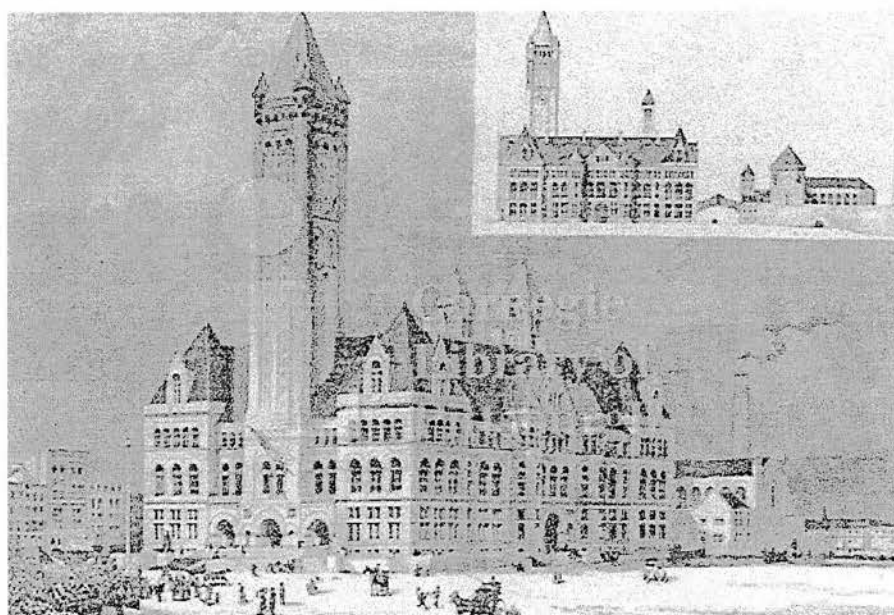
15. Sorby, The Laurels, British Columbia (1890)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian History*)



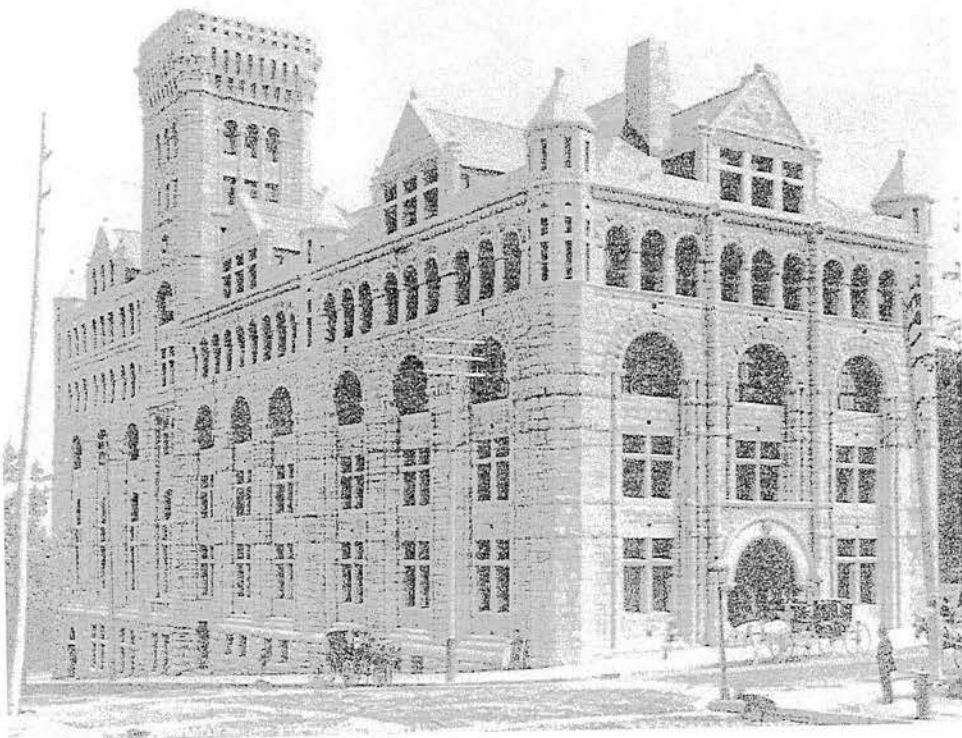
16. Waite, Ontario Legislative Buildings, Toronto (1886)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



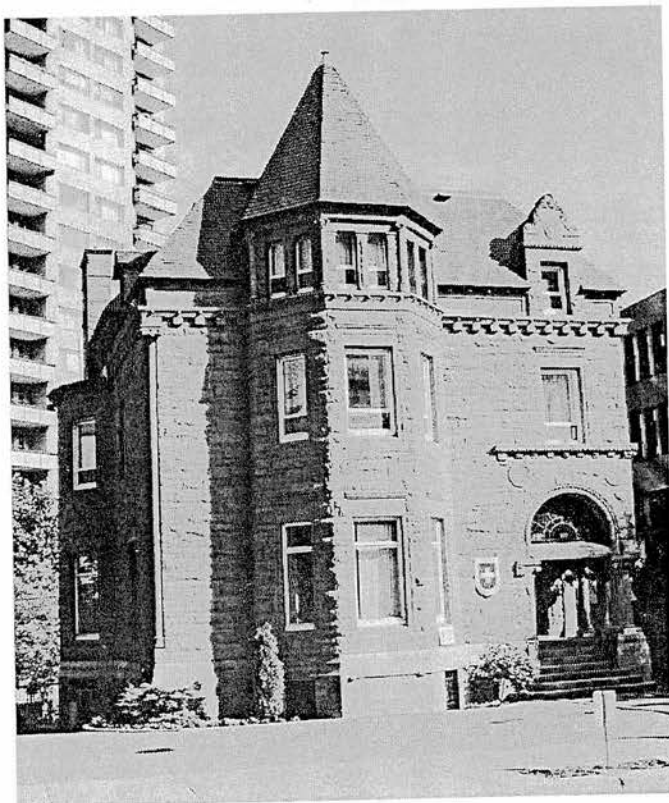
17. Lenox, Toronto City Hall, Toronto (1890)  
([www.fineart.utoronto.ca](http://www.fineart.utoronto.ca))



18. Richardson, Allegheny Court House, Pittsburgh (1887)  
([www.fineart.utoronto.ca](http://www.fineart.utoronto.ca))



19. Price, Windsor Station, Montreal (1886)  
([www.fineart.utoronto.ca](http://www.fineart.utoronto.ca))



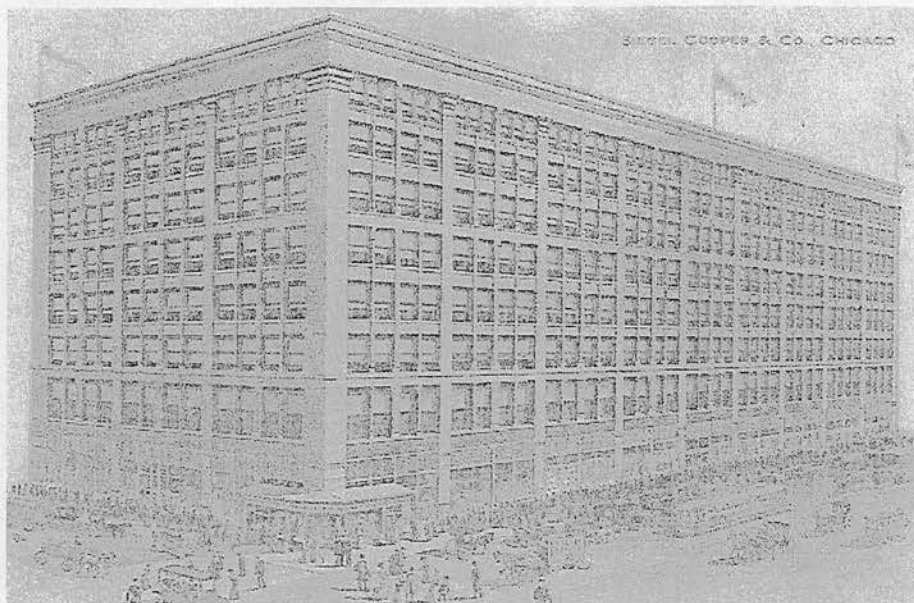
20. Maxwell, James Crathern House, Montreal (1892-3)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



21. Babb, Cook and Willard, New York Life Insurance Building Co. Montreal (1888)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



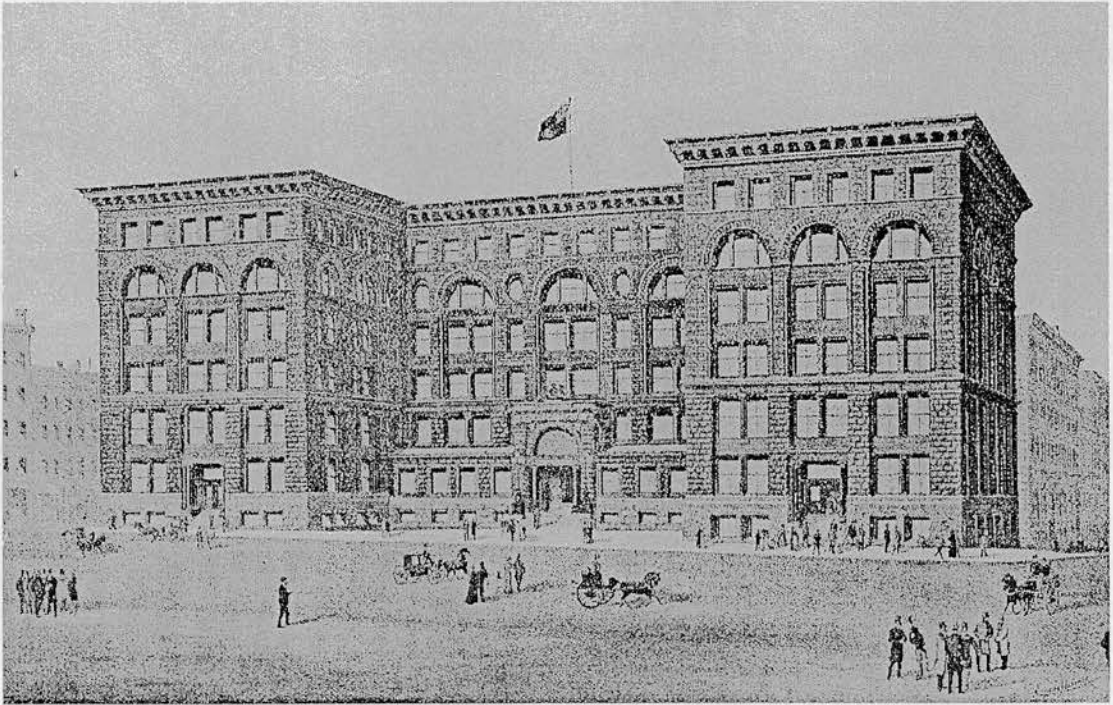
22. Burke and Horwood, Robert Simpson Store, Toronto (1895)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



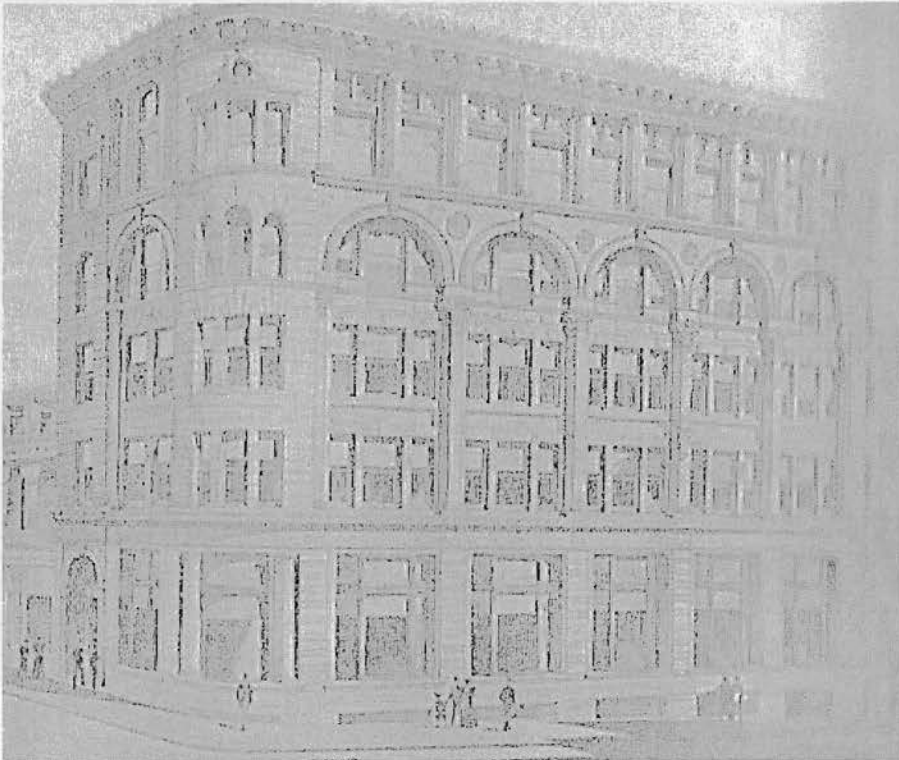
23. Jenney, Leiter Building, Chicago (1889-90)  
([www.bc.edu](http://www.bc.edu))



24. Dunlop, Queen's Hotel, Montreal (1891-93)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



25. Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, Board of Trade, Montreal (1890-92)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



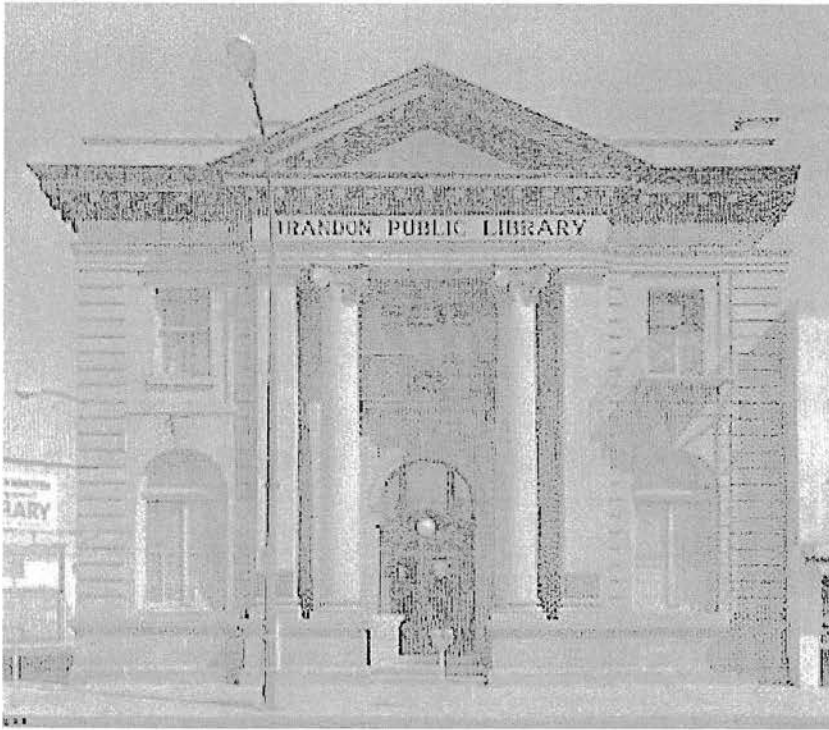
26. Maxwell, Bell Telephone Company Building, Montreal (1895-97)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



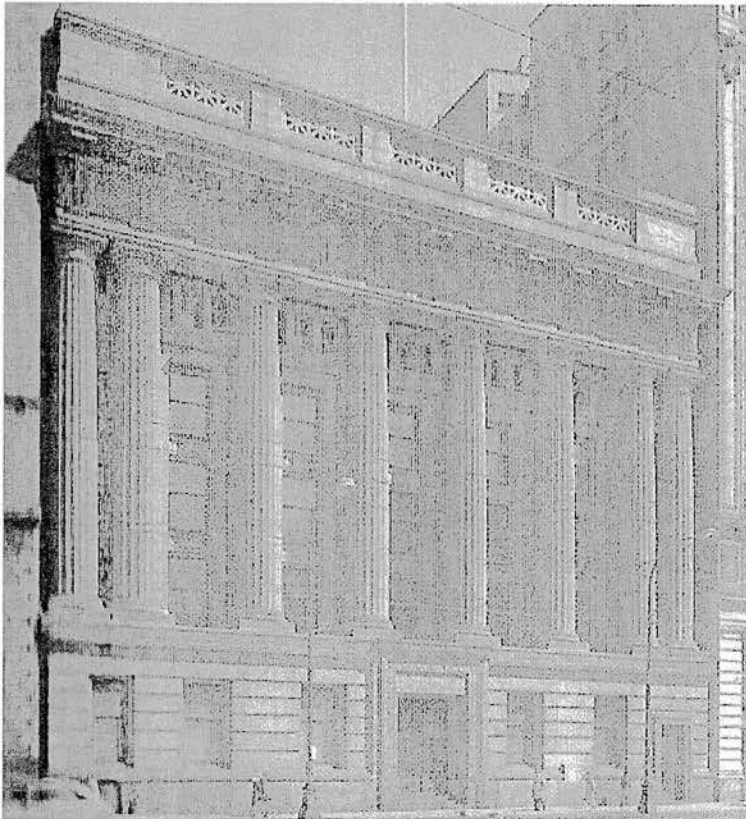
27. Post, Montreal Stock Exchange, Montreal (1903-04)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



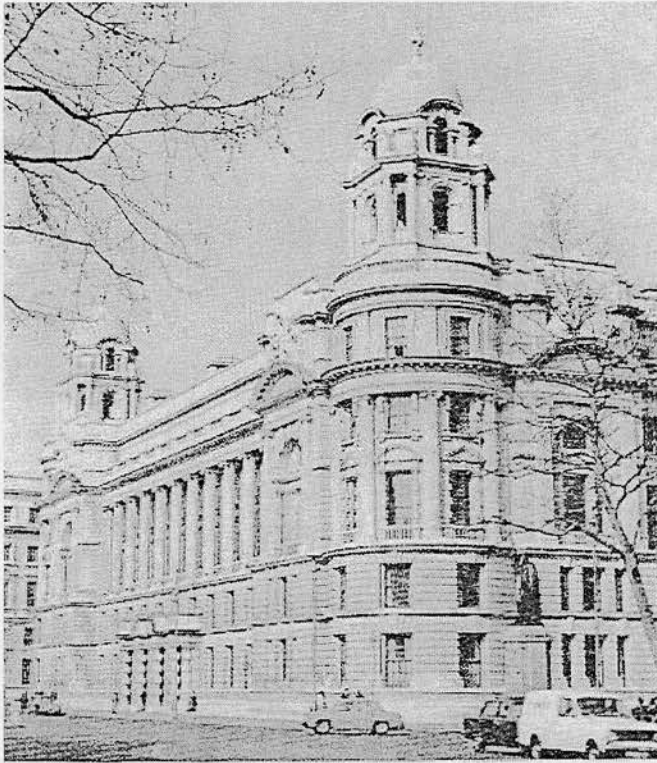
28. Maxwells, Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Montreal (1911-12)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



29. Taylor, Hogle and Davis, Merchants' Bank of Canada, Manitoba (1907)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



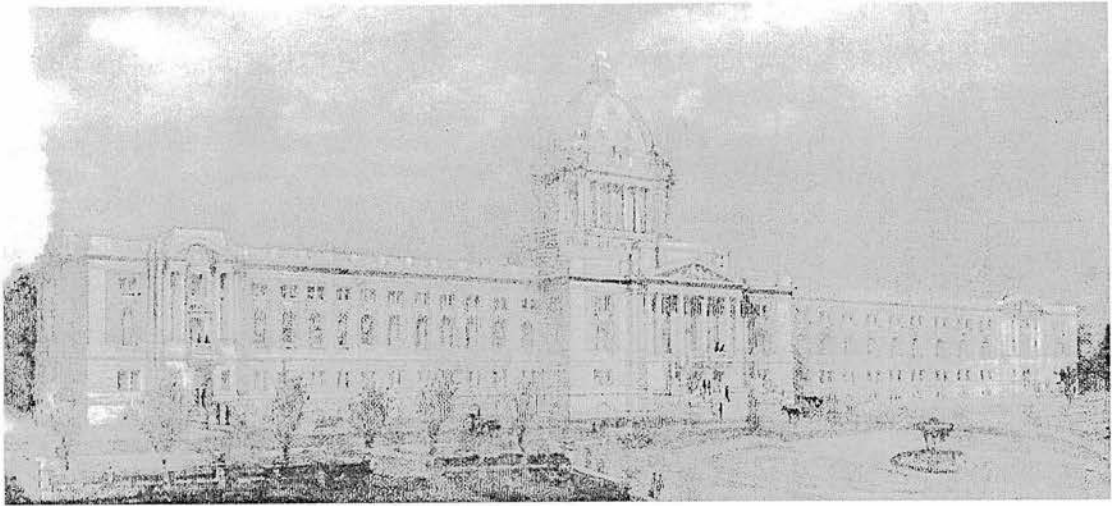
30. Darling and Pearson, Canadian Bank of Commerce, Winnipeg (1910-12)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



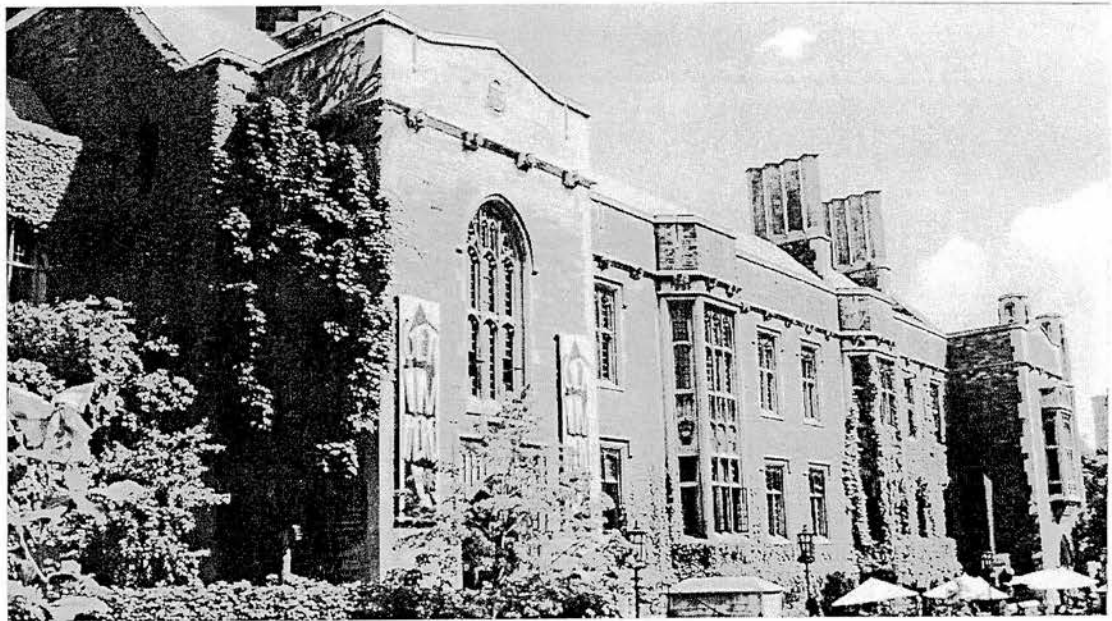
31. Young, War Office, London (1898)  
(Service, *Edwardian Architecture*)



32. Department of Public Works, Post Office, Vancouver (1905)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)

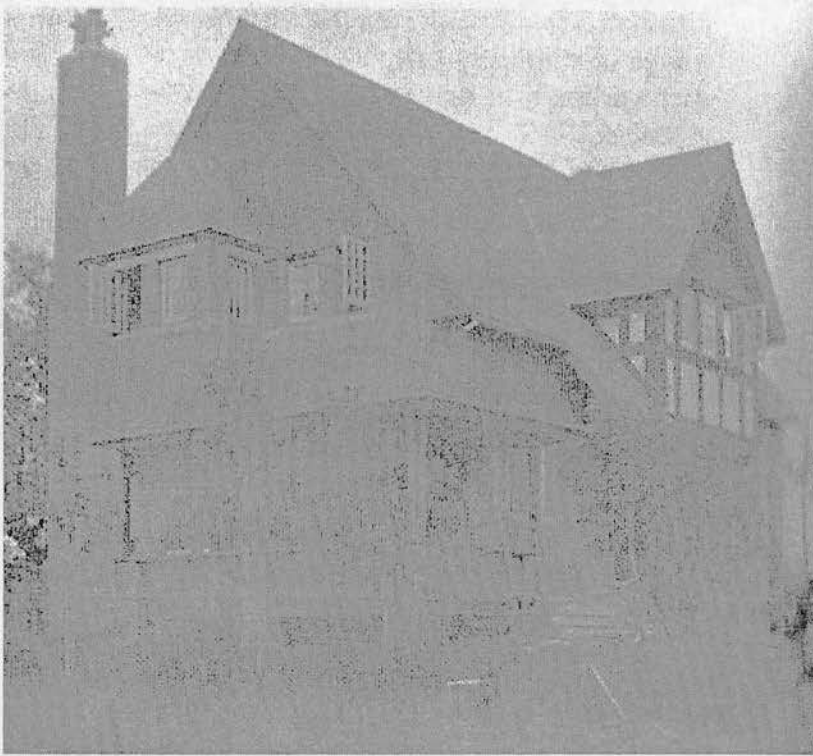


33. Mawells, Saskatchewan Legislative Buildings, Regina (1908-12)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



34. Sproatt and Rolph, Hart House, University of Toronto (1911-12)  
(Photograph, Kinneer)





35. Smith, Eden Smith House, Toronto (1896)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)



36. Nobbs, Percy Nobbs House, Westmount (1913-15)  
(Kalman, *A Concise History of Canadian Architecture*)

## Andrew Thomas Taylor (1850–1937)

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**We would take this opportunity to record the loss our Association has sustained in the departure, from our midst, of Mr. Andrew Thomas Taylor. Mr. Taylor was at all times an indefatigable worker in the interests of the profession and Association, sparing neither time nor trouble in order to advance the interests of all. His loss to our Association will be hearty felt.**

‘P.Q.A.A.’, *CAB*, 18, 2, 1904

Born in Edinburgh at the nineteenth century’s midpoint, Andrew Thomas Taylor began his architectural career at the age of fourteen when he entered the Edinburgh office of Pilkington and Bell in 1864 [Plate 37].<sup>1</sup> By the time that he moved to Montreal in 1883, aged thirty-three, Taylor had had nineteen years of architectural experience in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and London. His early career was largely inauspicious and only fully blossomed once he had reached the fertile soil of Canada where he enjoyed twenty years of very successful practice. As well as running a very profitable business in Canada, Taylor made significant contributions to the development of better practice in the profession, especially with regards to architectural education. His dedication to the cause of Canadian architecture was highly regarded and in 1896 he was elected the sixth President of the P.Q.A.A. Less than a decade later, in 1904, Taylor retired and returned to London. His architectural career spanned forty years which were almost equally divided between Britain and Canada. Arriving in Canada with nineteen years experience and fully fledged ideas on design and style, Taylor may be considered typical of the Imperial flow of influence from the mother country to the Dominion embedding ideas from home in Canada’s architecture. Another aspect of his career that should be considered is the impact, if any, that his twenty-one years in Canada had on the development of his ideas.

As an apprentice in the office of Pilkington and Bell, Taylor’s introduction to architecture was dramatic.

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<sup>1</sup> RIBA Membership Records, Andrew Thomas Taylor, Fellow Application to RIBA, May 1889

Frederick T. Pilkington was an Englishman who had moved to Edinburgh in 1853 with his parents and had established a practice in the Scottish capital, which soon caught the attention of critics. An article in *The Builder* described his buildings as ‘never commonplace, though frequently wild and eccentric’.<sup>2</sup> Pilkington later became famous as one of Henry Goodhart-Rendel’s (architect and critic) ‘rogues’: nineteenth-century architects who ‘whether respectable or naughty, were continuously in disaccord with the conventions of their time’.<sup>3</sup> None of the architects were completely in disaccord with contemporary ideas, however, as they largely took inspiration from John Ruskin and gothic architecture.<sup>4</sup>

During the 1860s, the period that coincided with Taylor’s apprenticeship, Pilkington created some of his most Ruskinian designs.<sup>5</sup> His work of this period was largely characterised by colour, geometric forms, strong masonry and sublime asymmetry, yet his designs were by no means typical of Ruskinian architecture. The principal way his designs differed from the norm of nineteenth-century gothic architecture was through his interpretation of Ruskin’s theory on the nature of gothic. In *Stones of Venice* Ruskin outlined the six characteristics of gothic architecture: Savageness; Changefulness; Naturalism; Grotesqueness; Rigidity and Redundance.<sup>6</sup> The trait that had the greatest impact on Pilkington’s designs was ‘rigidity’. In his definition of this tenet of gothic architecture Ruskin wrote:

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<sup>2</sup> *The Builder*, 9th March 1867, quoted in R. Turner *Frederick T. Pilkington, His Influences and His Legacy*, M.A. Honours dissertation, University of Edinburgh (1992) p. 385

<sup>3</sup> Henry S. Goodhart-Rendel ‘Rogue Architects of the Victorian Era’, *JRIBA*, 61, 6 (April 1949) p. 251 The other rogues were: Edward Buckton Lamb, Joseph Peacock, John Shaw, James Wild, Thomas Harris, Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson, R. L. Romieu, E. Bassett Keeling, Edward Prior and James Maclaren

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Mourdant Crook, *Dilemma of Style – Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern* (London: Murray, 1987) p. 133 Their work has been described as the ‘harshes, most primitive interpretation of Gothic’. The one exception was Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson who favoured Greek and Egyptian architecture.

<sup>5</sup> The Dictionary of Scottish Architects describes Pilkington’s churches as ‘all of Ruskinian inspiration’. [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk); Craigend Park [Kingston Clinic] has been described as ‘powerful but nonetheless charming Ruskinian Gothic’, John Gifford, Colin McWilliam and David Walker, *Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984) p. 586; in one description of the houses at Park End, Penicuik it is written that ‘Ruskinian carving abounds, and Ruskinian diversity’, Colin McWilliam, *Buildings of Scotland: Lothian except Edinburgh*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) p. 383

<sup>6</sup> John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: Part 2 – The Gothic Period* (London: Smith, Elder, 1858-67, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition) p. 160

I mean, not merely stable, but *active* rigidity; the peculiar energy which gives tension to movement, and stiffness to resistance, which makes the fiercest lightening forked rather than curved, the stoutest oak-branch angular rather than bending, and is as much seen in the quivering of the lance as in the glittering of the icicle.<sup>7</sup>

The force of energy that Ruskin describes can be perceived in the majority of Pilkington's architecture, particularly his churches. His design for the Free Church, Penicuik (1862), for example, has the tension Ruskin describes [Plate 38]. The triangular form is omnipresent in this design, perhaps as a spiritual reference to the Holy Trinity; the geometric form also enhances the sense of energy. Similarly, his more famous, or infamous church, the Barclay Free Church, Edinburgh (1862 – 1864) is a taut design [Plate 39]. One of the harsher critics of the church, Professor Blackie, described it as 'a congregation of elephants, rhinoceroses and hippopotamouses [*sic.*] with their snouts in a manger and their posteriors turned to the golf players in the links'.<sup>8</sup> This paints a very lumpy, ponderous image but the energy that would be released if the elephants, rhinoceroses and hippopotamus stampeded across the Bruntsfield links would be phenomenal. It is this 'pent-up' energy that is contained in all Pilkington's church designs. His designs have the rigidity in form and composition that Ruskin so admired in gothic architecture. They are also savage in their mountainous forms and rock-faced masonry.

Pilkington's domestic architecture was similarly dramatic and fantastic. Craigend Park, Kingston Avenue, Edinburgh (1869) [now Kingston Clinic] shares the rigidity of his churches, with a corner tower rocketing up through the first storey [Plate 40]. At his own house, Park House [Egremont] on Dick Place, Edinburgh (1865-70), Pilkington downscaled the drama of his roofline but experimented far more with variety, and paid particular attention to light and shadow [Plate 41]. Pilkington was a creative user of glass and designed areas of glass that contrasted with the heavy masonry of the walls. He also loved to play with shadow, so that the appearance of his designs differed according to the time of the day. On the south side of Park House he designed a two-storey arcade that supported a balcony on the second floor and also framed three arched windows on the first floor. As the sun moved across the sky during the day the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 173

shadow cast over the façade would vary. The glazed corner towers of this façade gave an illusion of a glass-of-wall because of the skeletal proportions of the masonry. The main entrance in contrast was dominated by bull-faced masonry. The effects of the variety of material, light and shade in this design were very sculptural. This was highly appropriate for an architect inspired by the works of Ruskin who maintained that ‘*a great architect must be a great sculptor or painter*. This is a universal law. No person who is not a great sculptor or painter *can* be an architect. If he is not a sculptor or painter, he can only be a *builder*’.<sup>9</sup>

Adding to the sculptural quality of Park House were the carved decorations that Pilkington frequently used to ornament his designs. Carvings were a way that he could add texture, chiaroscuro and variety to smaller properties which were built to smaller budgets than either Park House or Craighend Park. Variety was very important in Pilkington’s design. This was also fundamental to the ideas of Ruskin, who disliked and distrusted the regular symmetry of classical architecture:

As you walk up or down George Street, for instance, do you not look eagerly for every opening to the north or south, which lets in the lustre of the Firth of Forth, or the rugged outline of the Castle Rock? Take away the sea-waves, and the dark basalt, and I fear you would find little to interest you in George Street by itself.<sup>10</sup>

The glassy lustre of the Firth of Forth and the ruggedness of the castle rock that Ruskin mentions could be metaphors for Pilkington’s domestic architecture with its strong masonry forms coupled with large windows. The commonality between Ruskin’s words and Pilkington’s works indicates the strong respect that the architect held for the architectural historian. It was in this environment that Taylor was first introduced to architecture.

The Ruskinian leanings of Pilkington’s work were an important formative experience for the young Taylor. Pilkington’s work has been described as befitting a ‘Grimm fairy tale’ and it must have appeared

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<sup>8</sup> *British Architect*, 1888, p. 51 quoted in Glendinning, *A History of Scottish Architecture*, p. 371

<sup>9</sup> John Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture and Painting delivered at Edinburgh in November 1853* (London: Smith, Elder 1855) p. 2

quite fantastical to the young Taylor who had grown up in a city admired for its classicism.<sup>11</sup> It is unclear how Taylor's training was structured in the office. It is certainly doubtful that he learned much about the design process as Pilkington was famed for his intuitive method of designing: he 'worked as inspiration came to him, often getting up in the middle of the night to sketch ideas'.<sup>12</sup> The lack of a structured training may have been pivotal to Taylor's fierce desire to improve education and training for young architects later in his career. Regardless of any possible failings in training, there is little doubt that the sublimity of Pilkington's Ruskinian romanticism remained a guiding principle during Taylor's later career.

After five years in the office of a 'rogue' Taylor moved to Aberdeenshire, joining the office of the Aberdeen architect William Smith (1817-1891), Superintendent of the Town's Works, as an assistant in 1871.<sup>13</sup> Smith is most famous for his design of Balmoral Castle, which he undertook with the patronage of Queen Victoria's Consort, Prince Albert, in 1852 [Plate 42].<sup>14</sup> Smith's work for the Royal family was part of the mid-century fashion for Baronial architecture that suited a romanticised image of Scotland.<sup>15</sup> As architect to the Prince Consort, William Smith's architecture had the stamp of respectability that was missing from the 'wild and eccentric' work of Pilkington and it was also far more restrained than Pilkington's designs. At Balmoral there is a sense of control; it is a precise and polished design, a total contrast to Pilkington's work. A comparison between Craigend Park and Garthdee House, Peterculter (1872) spectacularly reveals the differences between the architects [Plate 43]. In comparison to Pilkington, Smith was by no means an exciting rogue and the contrast between their design temperaments must have

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pp. 112-113

<sup>11</sup> Charles McKean, *Edinburgh An Illustrated Architectural Guide*, (Edinburgh: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, 1992) p. 137

<sup>12</sup> Dictionary of Scottish Architects, F. T. Pilkington. Taylor's applications for Associate and Fellow membership of the RIBA reveal very little about the five-year apprenticeship he served with Pilkington & Bell.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, Fellow Application to the RIBA

<sup>14</sup> Smith's father, John Smith, had previously enlarged an existing house on the estate between 1834 and 1839, but this was superseded by the royal couple's commission of a new house and other estate buildings between 1852 and 1859 in the prevailing Scottish Baronial style.

<sup>15</sup> Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackechnie, *The History of Scottish Architecture*, p. 277 This trend had begun with Sir Walter Scott's home at Abbotsford, which was an attempt to create 'an old fashioned Scotch residence, full of rusty iron coats and jingling jackets...the old fashioned Scotch style which

been as striking to the young Taylor as their designs were. William Smith has been described as ‘reticent to the point of shyness’.<sup>16</sup> Little is known about Pilkington’s private persona, but his designs were certainly never reticent. Smith’s baronial work would not have been a huge surprise for Taylor however, as it was a popular style in the capital too.

Edinburgh underwent a lot of urban expansion and architectural improvement during the 1850s and 1860s, which Taylor would have witnessed. Just over the meadows from where Pilkington’s Barclay Church was being erected on Bruntsfield Place, the Warrender Estate was being developed and tenements were quickly rising. The feuing guidelines for the development were drawn up by David Bryce, who was one of the stars of the Scottish baronial style. He stipulated that the architects had to use baronial features in their designs, which they duly did.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, the City Improvement Act for Edinburgh wanted ‘inner-urban street architecture based on Scotch baronial’ and one response was the baronial curve of Cockburn Street (1856–1864) by Peddie and Kinnear [Plate 44].<sup>18</sup>

At the end of his assistantship with Smith in 1872, Taylor moved to London, where he became assistant to Joseph Clarke (1819-1888), architect to the diocese of Canterbury.<sup>19</sup> Taylor worked with Clarke until 1879. In the seven years Taylor was there he assisted with the restoration of churches, such as All Saints’ Church, Inworth (1876-1877) [Plate 45] and St. Mary’s, Cheshunt (1872–1873) [Plate 46]. In Clarke’s office, Taylor worked directly with historic architecture and he developed a deep appreciation for the built heritage. Whilst working on alterations and expansions to existing churches, Taylor had to learn to pay sympathetic attention to the fabric and context of the existing building. The synthesis between site and building and the relationships between buildings subsequently became a driving force in his designs.

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delighted in notch’d gable ends and all manners of bartizans’.

<sup>16</sup> Dictionary of Scottish Architects, William Smith

<sup>17</sup> Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackechnie, *A History of Scottish History* p. 273

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 274; the partners in Peddie and Kinnear were John Dick Peddie (1824-1891) and Charles Kinnear (1830-1894)

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Clarke became a Fellow of the RIBA in 1850 and is best known for his work as Diocesan Surveyor to Canterbury.

During his assistantship with Clarke, Taylor had little professional contact with any other genre of architecture and it was perhaps this seclusion, as well as his lack of a formal training, that took him to the Royal Academy. There he studied under Phené Spiers, the *École des Beaux-Arts* trained Professor of Architecture.<sup>20</sup> Under Phené Spiers' tutelage, Taylor was introduced to the classical ideals of architecture, an influence that appeared only occasionally during his career, most famously in his 1882 competition design for the Glasgow City Chambers, where he came second to William Young. In 1878 Taylor, whilst still with Clarke, became an Associate of the RIBA, having passed the Institute's examinations. Four years earlier he had won an RIBA medal, which was followed by another in 1881. The second medal was awarded for an essay he wrote on the tower and steeple designs of Sir Christopher Wren, which was published in 1881 under the self-explanatory title, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren: a descriptive, historical and critical essay with numerous illustrations*.<sup>21</sup> This was Taylor's first published expression of his own architectural ideas, as well as being a critique of one of England's greatest architects.

The choice of an ecclesiastical subject makes perfect sense considering Taylor's recent work with Clarke. It may also have been provoked by the contemporary 'vandalism' that Taylor witnessed as parish churches in London were demolished. His reaction to the 1860 Union of Benefices Act,<sup>22</sup> under which ten of Wren's churches were demolished, is fiercely displayed in the essay: 'to deliberately raze them to the ground, is surely the grossest Vandalism'.<sup>23</sup> In light of the recent demolitions Taylor ensured that his book included the demolished churches, so it is as much a record of historical monuments as a critique of Wren's churches [Plate 47]. The passion for historic architecture that this essay demonstrates resurfaced when Taylor was in Montreal and witnessed the demolition of old buildings:

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<sup>20</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7, for a more detailed examination of Phené Spiers.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew T. Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren: a descriptive, historical and critical essay with numerous illustrations* (London: Batsford, 1881)

<sup>22</sup> The Union of Benefices Act gave statutory authority for the demolition of unused parish churches.

We are a comparatively new country. We have few antiquities of any kind, whether historical or architectural. What we have got it is our bounden duty to jealously guard and preserve...permit my humble voice to say: Cling to everything that makes your city interesting from an antiquarian point of view. "Grapple them to yourselves with hooks of steel".<sup>24</sup>

Taylor's essay was much more than a polemic against the destruction of London's architectural and ecclesiastical heritage. It laid the foundations of the ideas that influenced his later architectural designs in Canada. The opening three paragraphs of the essay are the best surviving summary of Taylor's architectural theory:

Nature abhors uniformity: there is infinite variety in all her phases. The sea, now calm, reflecting the beauty of cloudland, and anon surging and leaping with great crested waves in irresistible power; the sky, now wrapt in mantle of purest blue, now lit up with golden glory, and anon black with mountains of piled-up vapours; the landscape, with hill and valley, rock and tree, ever varying and changing as the lights and shadows pass – all demonstrate this fact. A flat, level expanse of country is not beautiful in itself, although it may be useful – it is the prose of Nature: the poetry and majesty and power is in her uplands, her deep dells, her hills and her mountains.

It is almost a trite saying, that if we would not err, we must study the laws and the principles of Nature; yet is one which cannot be too often reiterated and kept in remembrance. Our cities are the outcome of our needs and pursuits; and we shall best consult their fitness and beauty, by applying to them those elements which Nature displays in her realm.

Imagine, if possible, a city composed of buildings of an [*sic.*] uniform appearance, size and height. However well proportioned, the gain there might be in dignity would be much more than counterbalanced by the great loss in play of fancy, in light and shade, in poetry, in that large element of the beautiful produced and governed by the law of contrasts; there would be a monotony which would soon become oppressive. A greater calamity, aesthetically considered, could not befall a city, than to be robbed of all its towers, spires, and monuments – the features which give character and nobility.<sup>25</sup>

There is much here that betrays Taylor's training in Scotland. His reference to variety and contrast; his description of changing light; the despair of monotony and his references to nature could all be used to describe Pilkington's attitude towards architecture and consequently reveal the influence of Ruskin. Taylor's reference to the oppression of monotony and his description of a city 'composed of buildings of an uniform appearance, size and height' is almost a paraphrase of Ruskin's criticism of George Street. It

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<sup>23</sup> Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 4

<sup>24</sup> 'The Proceedings of the P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 10, 10 (October 1897) p. 192

<sup>25</sup> Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 1 - 2

should not be assumed, however, that Taylor was deaf to criticisms of Pilkington. Later in the book when he is discussing the proportional beauty of Wren's steeples, Taylor wryly remarks: 'We can hardly apply to any of them the just stricture which Professor Blackie applied to an Edinburgh steeple of not ungraceful outline and feature, but which rose from the roof of a plain, round, and very ugly church – 'an angel riding on a beer barrel'.<sup>26</sup> It is perhaps safe to assume, in light of the earlier quotation by Professor Blackie, that the 'very ugly church' in question was Pilkington's Barclay Church. So whilst Taylor clearly admired the same architectural traits as Pilkington, he was not as favourably disposed towards the more roguish elements of his former employer's designs.

Taylor left Clarke's office in 1879, as a newly registered Associate of the RIBA and set up his own practice. The publication of his Wren essay was probably an attempt to advertise his office. In the same year that he published his book he designed a Memorial Hall and School in Dover for a Baptist congregation [Plate 48]. This design was published in *The Builder* and reveals the influence of the gothic on Taylor. Taylor also entered a partnership in 1882 with George W. Hamilton Gordon (b. 1854).<sup>27</sup> The Eton-educated Gordon had entered the office of Waterhouse straight from school in 1873 as an apprentice, progressing to assistant in 1878 and he remained there until joining Taylor. How the two men met is unclear, although it is likely that they were students together at the Royal Academy. What is more certain is that they shared common ideas about architecture due to their training in offices of gothic-inspired architects.

Waterhouse had adorned Manchester with colourful examples of Ruskinian gothic, such as the Town Hall (1868–1877), before moving to London. Once in London, he gradually developed a more generalist historicism as the gothic began to lose favour. His most famous example of this is the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, which was erected between 1873 and 1881, which were years that coincided

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 9

<sup>27</sup> George W. Hamilton Gordon, Fellow Application to the RIBA, 1906. The partnership between Taylor and Gordon ran until 1903. In 1904 Gordon was asked by the President of the RIBA to take the position of

exactly with Gordon's training and employment in the office [Plate 11].<sup>28</sup> Many of the aspects of the design are similar to the tenets of the gothic revival. Its polychromatic walls, constructed of yellow and grey terracotta were enlivened with naturalistic carvings of fauna and foliage [Plate 49]. Moreover, Ruskin, the father of gothic, approved of the Romanesque:

The Romanesque, or round arch, is beautiful as an abstract line, its type is always before us in the apparent vault of heaven and horizon of the earth, the cylindrical pillar is always beautiful, for the stem of every tree has been so moulded that it is pleasant to the eyes.<sup>29</sup>

Along with most of the architectural fraternity and the majority of the general populace of London, Taylor would have been aware of Waterhouse's new addition to the South Kensington complex, and no doubt took the opportunity to discuss it and perhaps visit it with Gordon, who must have been quite intimate with the design. Although the two architects brought to their partnership good connections and many years of experience, they achieved little of any note in Britain.<sup>30</sup>

The apparent lack of commissions may have been one reason why Taylor decided to leave Britain for Canada, although he ensured that he maintained a presence in Britain even when he was on the other side of the Atlantic. His early designs in Montreal were published in *The Builder*, probably to draw attention to the London office of the practice, attract new clients and also impress Canadian patrons. Designs that were illustrated in the British journal included the houses Taylor designed for Messrs. H. C. Scott and H. G.

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Director of Public Works in Orange River Colony, South Africa, which he accepted.

<sup>28</sup> Mark Girouard, *Alfred Waterhouse and the Natural History Museum* (New Haven and London; Yale University Press, 1981) Waterhouse's choice of the Romanesque for the Natural History Museum was determined by a number of factors: he had inherited the Renaissance design of Captain Fowkes, and it was easier to adapt the design to Romanesque than to gothic; the Romanesque was more suited to the use of terracotta; carvings were an intrinsic characteristic of Romanesque architecture and Sir Richard Owen, the creator of the Natural History Museum, wanted the design to incorporate carved decorative of flora and fauna. The style also shared many traits with the gothic: it predated the 'pagan' renaissance, it centred around colour and it included carvings.

<sup>29</sup> John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London: Smith Elder, 1885) p. 189 Articles on Romanesque architecture began to appear in the architectural press from 1880 onwards, for example 'The Cradle of Romanesque Architecture', *The Builder*, 39, 1964 (September 1880) pp. 371-373

<sup>30</sup> Taylor and Gordon's FRIBA application forms record very little work that they completed as a partnership between 1882 and 1883. They may both have wished to draw attention to their most recent

Strathy and another design for a house, simply entitled 'A House near Montreal' [Plate 50]. These designs reveal the influence of the Queen Anne style and display the importance of the British links to both clients and architect.<sup>31</sup> Although Taylor's practice in London appears to have been relatively small, once in Montreal he quickly rose to become one of the most successful and highly respected architects in the Dominion; in 1892 he was one of two assessors who judged the British Columbia Legislative Buildings competition, which was won by Rattenbury's High Victorian design that had close similarities with Waterhouse's Natural History Museum and Collcutt's Imperial Institute [Plate 12].<sup>32</sup>

Talent was one reason for Taylor's success in Canada, but he also had influential family connections that proved most helpful. It is highly likely that it was his family in Montreal that persuaded him to emigrate to Montreal. His uncle, George Drummond, had emigrated to Montreal in 1854 to manage the Redpath sugar refinery and had risen to become one of the pre-eminent businessmen in the city. In 1882 he became a Director of the Bank of Montreal, becoming its Vice-President in 1887 and later its President in 1905; he was President of the Montreal Board of Trade between 1886 and 1883; in 1888 he was appointed to the Canadian Senate; between 1896 and 1899 he was President of the Montreal Art Association, and amassed a personal art collection that included works by Turner, Corot, Velazquez, Van Dyck, Rubens and Lorrain, and in 1904 became K.M.C.G.<sup>33</sup> He had also married Helen Redpath, daughter of John Redpath, who was a formidable businessman; he in turn had taken Drummond's sister, Jane, as his second wife. A connection such as this must have been very useful to an architect trying to build a career.

Taylor was clearly very confident about the move to Canada as he was accompanied by an assistant, A. J. Cooke, and his contacts did prove very lucrative.<sup>34</sup> In 1884 he was appointed architect to the Bank of

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work when applying to be a Fellow of the RIBA, which could account for the lack of earlier commissions.  
<sup>31</sup> See 'Robert Findlay (1859-1951)', chapter 4, for further discussion of the Queen Anne style in Montreal.

<sup>32</sup> CAB, 6, 3 (March 1893) p. 33

<sup>33</sup> William Atherton, *Montreal 1535 – 1914* (Montreal: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1914) p. 483

<sup>34</sup> 'Obituary: A. J. Cooke', CAB, 16, 3 (March 1903) p. 52 Although Cooke arrived in Montreal as

Montreal, a hugely profitable contract to receive as the Bank was opening up branches across Canada.<sup>35</sup> That Drummond was a Director of the Bank of the Montreal in 1884 was surely no coincidence. This commission was a great advertisement for the architect; Taylor's first project for the Bank of Montreal was the alteration of the banking halls of Head Office. This was a tremendous coup and received much attention in the contemporary press. One glowing report described how 'the whole of the bank has been decorated in a style quite new to this part of the world...The banking rooms were originally painted white, picked out with gold, and the change from that to the present style of decoration is most striking.'<sup>36</sup>

To describe the change as 'most striking' is rather a restrained manner of describing the massive alterations that were made by Taylor to the bank's interior. In the main banking hall he created a single room that reached the limits of the building's walls, sweeping away the existing vaults and offices in the process to open up an expansive space. This newly enlarged space was then decorated in extravagant, kaleidoscopic opulence. The floor was laid with a highly colourful mosaic and the ceiling was decorated in silver to disseminate light around the banking hall. The white and gold of the original decoration was replaced with dark green for the woodwork and a deep red for the walls. Running along the frieze were panels of fresco work representing the history of Canada.<sup>37</sup> The new banking room must have been dazzling after the previous white and gold scheme. Colour is a core feature of Taylor's architecture and at the Bank of Montreal he was clearly given a budget that allowed him to indulge this passion:

Imagine if you can all colour taken out of the World, we would still have the same beautiful shapes which are lavishly strewn around us in mountain and valley, in tree and rock, in wild flower and tree, in bird and fish and animal, but with what a

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Taylor's assistant in 1890 he set up his own architectural practice which proved very successful. He was particularly well known for his domestic designs and designed upwards of one hundred houses in the wealthy, Anglo-Protestant suburb of Westmount. He died exactly twenty years after leaving London, just a year before his former master retired and returned to the U.K.

<sup>35</sup> Merrill Denison, *Canada's First Bank: A History of the Bank of Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965)

<sup>36</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, A. T. Taylor Vertical File, 'The Bank of Montreal, Sketch of Recent Improvements for the Building', *Montreal Gazette*, clipping, undated

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. The scenes that were to be represented were: the Death of Wolfe, the Old Church of Notre Dame, Meeting of General Brock and Tecumseth, Champlain at the Chaudiere Falls, The Landing of Jacques Cartier at Montreal, La Lalle Leaving Lachine on his Journey of Discovery to the Northwest, and Simcoe Founding Toronto

difference – the light would have died out of them; the whole surface of nature would be neutral tint – an ashen grey.<sup>38</sup>

It was unfortunate that Taylor had an aversion to grey, a theme that rises quite frequently in his lectures and articles, as the local Montreal stone was limestone so he had moved to ‘an ashen grey’ city. Where he was able, he avoided the local stone preferring red sandstone and he loved to use copper for his roofs because ‘when allowed to colour naturally and not artificially they have a beauty of their own’.<sup>39</sup> Taylor’s next major landmark in the city was a sandstone house he designed in 1888 for his uncle, which like his bank received plaudits for its architectural calibre.<sup>40</sup> Drummond House and the interior of the Bank of Montreal were praised for introducing progression in Montreal’s architecture [Plate 51]:

The building which proves beyond question how great the advance in architecture as an art has been in Montreal is the house which is being erected at the corner of Sherbrooke and Metcalfe streets for Senator Drummond. This beautiful house is ... to be enriched by a wealth of carving and ornament, every detail of which has been thought out by the architect with as much care as if he were working out his ideal in marble instead of sandstone...The material of the two street fronts of the house is a very rich and beautifully textured sandstone, and not only are capital and panel to be richly carved, but these belts of carven ornament are to sweep about the house; and richly carved and ornamented porch, oriel window, and balcony add beauty and expansion to the whole.<sup>41</sup>

The writer of this description emphasised the sculptural quality of Taylor’s design, which is in perfect accordance to Ruskin’s definition of an architect as ‘*a great sculptor or painter*’.<sup>42</sup> There were also references to Pilkington in this design. The rough-hewn stonework added a muscularity and textural quality that is similar to Pilkington’s Barclay Church designs; the cavernous porch and large cantilevered balcony provided the characteristic chiaroscuro contrast of light and shade; the corner tower injected an energetic rigidity similar to the tower at Craighends and there was the omnipresent carving too. Although Pilkington is the most obvious source for this design, there is also a hint of Stevenson, one of the fathers

<sup>38</sup> Andrew T. Taylor, ‘The Harmony and Functions of Colour in Art’ *CAB*, 7, 5 (June 1894) p. 56

<sup>39</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, Percy E. Nobbs Collection, Box 13, F. Private Correspondence (1893–1953), F13 – 1: Correspondence from Andrew T. Taylor, Archibald MacMechen, Paul Cret and Charles H. Reilly (1922–1937), Letter from Taylor to Nobbs, dated 19th May 1937.

<sup>40</sup> Drummond House was demolished in the 1950s.

<sup>41</sup> Contemporary description quoted in Julia Gersovitz, *The Square Mile, Montreal 1860–1914*, unpublished master’s thesis, Columbia University (1980) p. 83

of the Queen Anne style and another advocate of the gothic.

In his book *House Architecture*, Stevenson advised architects that the ‘more powerful means of producing grandeur is by shadow – from great projecting cornices, or under deep porticoes, or in the dark recesses of great arches’.<sup>43</sup> Taylor would have been familiar with the ideas of Stevenson, as they permeated British domestic architecture of the period and had featured in the architectural press; the design for ‘A House in Montreal’ which Taylor published in *The Builder* reveals the influence that the Queen Anne style had on his work. It is a very similar design to the Drummond House, but appears more feminine. The influence of British sources is quite evident in this design, however the tactility of the Drummond House may have been a concession to the Canadian context. There is some similarity to the Romanesque style in the design. As the Romanesque had only been introduced to Montreal recently, the Drummond House could be an example of Taylor’s willingness to keep abreast of architectural fashions and to adapt to his new country, although he chose a style that suited his preferences and also had associations with Britain.

One of the characteristics of Taylor’s architecture, which was also common to both Pilkington and the Romanesque, was the use of carvings. The porch at the Drummond House had exquisite carvings that represented Architecture, Music, Painting and Sculpture [Plate 52].<sup>44</sup> The union of the Arts represented here was very important to Taylor and was core to his architectural ideas. He believed that:

Architecture, Painting and Sculpture, like the three graces, should be intertwined in inseparable bonds in our monumental art. Each may live apart and be beautiful in itself, but the perfect life can only be consummated in conjunction with each other.<sup>45</sup>

The architectural and sculptural aspects of the design are clear, but painting is less obvious in the design, but it is certain that some of Drummond’s art collection would have been exhibited in the house. As a rule

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<sup>42</sup> Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, pp. 112-113

<sup>43</sup> John J. Stevenson, *House Architecture Vol. 1: Architecture* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1880) p. 28

<sup>44</sup> ‘Letter to the Editor’, *CAB*, 2, 4 (April 1890) p. 40 Following the publication of photographs showing close-ups of the capitals in *CAB*, Taylor wrote to the journal explaining the emblems and symbols of them: ‘the capitals of the porch columns, which you illustrated, are the embodiments of Architecture, Music, Painting and Sculpture’.

Taylor disapproved of hanging pictures in houses because ‘pictures are brought and hung on our walls that are out of touch and tone with their surroundings, and consequently there must result considerable incongruity.’<sup>46</sup> This comment about the touch and tone of surroundings was a very important doctrine for Taylor’s architecture. He saw buildings as part of the larger city rather than just as one building, and some of his most critically successful designs were those sited on corner plots, like Drummond House, which enabled him to think about the whole external composition rather than just a single street facade. To maximise the potential of the corner plots Taylor frequently used sandstone for these buildings, which enhanced their presence on the street, as did his decorative styles. His West End Branch building for the Bank of Montreal, (1892) is a dramatic Romanesque design with lots of carving and a two-tone pattern with stripes of white sandstone breaking up the larger areas of red sandstone, which reveals the influence of Waterhouse and an increasing fondness for the Romanesque [Plate 53]. This candy-stripe effect enlivened the building, enhancing its presence on the street. Different in tone, but no less theatrical, was his Dutch Pont Street Branch Building, also for the Bank of Montreal (1894), which shows the strong tie back to the mother country, albeit through a style more generally associated with domestic architecture [Plate 54]. For his branch building for the Bank of Toronto Taylor used red sandstone and was ‘congratulated on having made good use of the opportunity offered by the location for the erection of an imposing and pleasing structure’.<sup>47</sup> Taylor’s willingness to play with colour, materials and styles demonstrates the importance of Ruskin’s ideas to his architecture and there is a clear association between his architecture and home. Taylor’s attention to the architectural context of his designs is equally critical to understanding his designs. In his essay on Wren’s churches he rhapsodised that:

There is hardly a finer sight than to look from above the Dome of St Peter’s, or from the top of the Monument, over the sea of houses stretching on every side, until they vanish into the smoke and mist, - pierced and punctuated by the steeples and towers of varied design and beauty.<sup>48</sup>

The bird’s eye view that Taylor took in this description reveals the various ways he perceived architecture.

He clearly saw the three-dimensional aspect of the individual building, but the description demonstrates

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<sup>45</sup> Andrew T. Taylor, ‘The Sister Arts’, *CAB*, 5, 11 (November 1892) pp. 112-113

<sup>46</sup> Andrew T. Taylor, ‘Colour in Art’, *Montreal Gazette* (28th February, 1888) p. 2a

<sup>47</sup> ‘Montreal Notes’ *CAB*, 7, 5 (June 1894) p. 66

that he was also aware of the role one building could play in the pattern of a city. This is a theme that is often raised in Taylor's lectures. In one lecture, Taylor made clear his view on city planning, which he believed should be governed by two guiding principles. The first was wise guidance on by-laws; the second was 'wise and artistic guidance in the laying out and beautifying of its conformation, its buildings and their surroundings, and general embellishments'.<sup>49</sup> Later in the lecture, Taylor lamented the current trend amongst architects to ignore 'the relation of a building to its site and the relation of the site to its building'.<sup>50</sup> The closest Taylor came to influencing 'the laying out and beautifying of its conformation' of an area of land was his work for McGill University, which predominantly adhered to these principles.

McGill University was borne out of the generosity of James McGill.<sup>51</sup> In 1811 he donated \$10,000 and his estate, which was a substantial forty-six acres, to the Royal Institute for Advancement of Learning with the proviso that they used this gift to establish a university. By 1890, the year of Taylor's first commission for the university, this large area of farmland had begun to mature into a respected seat of learning housed in the classically composed Art College. Alongside John Ostell's Art College (1839-43) was the Redpath Museum (1882) by Hutchinson and Steele, which was modelled on a Greek temple, and the recently altered gothic Presbyterian College (1880).

Taylor's first commission for McGill University was a dual one for the Workman Workshops and Macdonald Engineering Building. The commission began with the death of Thomas Workman, who had been a very successful financier in Montreal. He left a bequest of \$120,000 to McGill University for the specific purpose of establishing a department of mechanical engineering.<sup>52</sup> Once the generous gift had been announced, other donations were received by the university: \$25,000 was received to go towards the Workman building and William Macdonald donated a generous gift and 'signified his wish to erect a

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<sup>48</sup> Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 5

<sup>49</sup> Andrew T. Taylor, 'Notes on some aspects of the city of the future' in *CAB*, 7, 10 (October 1894) p. 130

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Cyrun MacMillan, *McGill and its Story 1821-1921* (London: J. Lane, 1921)

<sup>52</sup> McGill Archives, Harrington Papers, Applied Science Building, RG35, C32, F2083a (432) *New Applied*

technical building, containing thermodynamics, hydraulic, and electrical laboratories, laboratories for testing the strength of materials, museum, library, lecture rooms and drawing rooms'.<sup>53</sup> Thus it was decided that Thomas Workman's bequest would be used to build workshops to support the teaching and research that would be undertaken in the Macdonald Engineering Building.<sup>54</sup>

The requirements of these two buildings were very practical and quite different to any thing else Taylor had been asked to design in Canada at that date. Taylor's design for the Workman Building showed little concern for anything other than practicality. It was three storeys high with the machine shop on the ground floor. This contained lathes, drills, planer and milling machinery. The upper two floors were to be used for woodwork. There was also a foundry and smithy at one end of the building.<sup>55</sup> The building that Taylor designed was accordingly very plain. As the workshops were to be completely hidden from the campus by the Macdonald Engineering Building, it was probably considered an unnecessary expense to provide any extraneous ornament to the design.

In comparison to the Workman Workshops the Macdonald Engineering Building was a much grander five-storey building [Plate 55]. The first two floors accommodated the various laboratories that were required, including one for the testing of cement. The second floor was for teaching and included lecture halls and a library [Plate 56]. On the third floor was a museum, which contained 'the most complete and valuable collection of models of mechanical movements' in North America, which had also been given to the university by Macdonald.<sup>56</sup> The top floor was devoted to drawing. The building that Taylor designed to accommodate all these requirements was a classical one. This was a surprising choice considering his pronounced disdain for the main characteristics of classicism, i.e. symmetry and regularity, however it did complement the existing buildings on the campus. The practicalities of designing a building with

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*Science Buildings, McGill University, Montreal, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1890* (Montreal: s.n., 1890) unpaginated

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Both buildings were destroyed by fire in 1907.

<sup>55</sup> *New Applied Science Buildings*

<sup>56</sup> *New Applied Science Buildings*

workshops and lecture halls required a simple plan, which corresponded with classical regularity. He did not completely adhere to the rules of classical architecture but introduced contrast on the exterior where he could. The balconies on the entrance facade provided the characteristic shadow; Taylor also included a balcony on the east face of the building. The plan shows that this balcony was a totally functionless feature, but it did add decorative distinction to the façade, which was perhaps more important to Taylor than symmetry and regularity. The lack of commitment to consistency was anathema to classicism and revealed Taylor's gothic spirit. Ruskin praised gothic architects for ignoring rules of 'outside symmetries and consistencies':

If they wanted a window they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance, knowing (as indeed it always happened) that such daring interruptions of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry than injure it.<sup>57</sup>

Taylor, however, inverted this virtue: he did not interrupt the organisation of his plan he simply added extraneous details where he wanted them. The older man admired the variety of the gothic school because on the whole it resulted 'from practical necessities' and never from 'mere love of change'.<sup>58</sup> Yet for Taylor the spirit of his architecture was a love of ornament and theatre, regardless of necessities; this was clearly something that he had absorbed in the office of Pilkington and Bell. Crowning the building was a cupola which appears to have served no purpose according to the plan, although it may have been for ventilation, but it did add interest to the skyline. In his book on Wren's steeples Taylor remarks that 'a greater calamity, aesthetically considered, could not befall a city, than to be robbed of all its towers, spires and monuments – the features which give character and nobility'.<sup>59</sup> Thus the cupola may have been Taylor's attempt to imbue the campus with some character and nobility.

Both buildings were constructed from the local grey limestone, which surely disheartened Taylor. He once commented that 'the monotony and dullness of the average streets of cities are very depressing...we do

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<sup>57</sup> J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, pp. 168-169

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* p. 168

<sup>59</sup> Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 1

not want the exterior of our houses to be like harlequins, but neither do we want them to be like quakers or grey nuns'.<sup>60</sup> When his first buildings for McGill University were officially opened on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1890 the campus favoured 'harlequins' rather than 'grey nuns':

At three o'clock a procession was formed to the site of the new building, which was prettily decked with bunting, the acting secretary leading the way, followed by the Governor-General and Sir Donald A. Smith, behind whom came the other members of convocation, their various coloured gowns and hoods lending brilliancy to a scene which a leaden sky and sodden ground made particularly sombre, the students bringing up the rear.<sup>61</sup>

The rainbow procession and colourful bunting against the grey limestone and dark sky appealed to Taylor's artistic eye and love of bright colour. His next building for McGill University was also constructed out of the local limestone. Whilst the preponderance of grey on the campus may have clashed with Taylor's own preference for colour, he must also have realised that it meant that the buildings complemented one another and created a coherent whole. In his third design for McGill University he did, however, ensure that variety and contrast were given sufficient attention.

The new commission was another generous gift from William Macdonald and was to house the School of Physics (1892-1893) [Plate 57].<sup>62</sup> Because of the function of the building Taylor ensured that no iron or steel was used in its construction to minimise any magnetic interference.<sup>63</sup> Instead he used wood and masonry for the structure with copper, bronze and brass fixtures.<sup>64</sup> In style the Macdonald Physics Building was almost beyond comparison with the earlier Macdonald Engineering Building.

The classicism of the earlier building was replaced by a picturesque style much more in keeping with Taylor's Ruskinian background. This is a design of contrasts, as may be expected from Pilkington's

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<sup>60</sup> Taylor, 'Some Notes of the Relation and Application of the Sister Arts, Painting & Sculpture, to Architecture' *CAB*, 5, 11 (November 1892) p. 112

<sup>61</sup> McGill University Archive, *New Applied Science Buildings*

<sup>62</sup> The building is perhaps most famous today for being the place where Sir Ernest Rutherford made his investigations into radio-activity.

<sup>63</sup> Ramsay Traquair, 'The Building of McGill University', *JRAIC*, 2, 3 (March – April 1925) p. 53

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

former apprentice. The approach to the building was on a different axis to the Macdonald Engineering Building as the building was aligned north-to-south, with the entrance on the east front, rather than east-to-west. By altering the approach Taylor guided visitors through the campus along curved paths rather than less picturesque, straight avenues. The use of the curved line was very much in tune with his ideas on town planning:

Charming effects in cities are often obtained by curved streets of large radii. Who has not delighted in the windings of the Strand and Fleet Street in London, or endorsed Wordsworth's ecomium on the beautiful High Street of Oxford, when he described it as "The Stream – like windings of that glorious street"?<sup>65</sup>

Taylor's choreography of visitors through the campus was married to the theatre of the design itself.<sup>66</sup> The most impressive feature of this design is the cavernous centre of the entrance façade. Walking up the stairs to the main porch gives the impression of entering a deep cave and the projection of the porch heightens the sense of depth. The proportions of this central composition are similarly startling. The arches of the upper storey appear too small compared to the recessed wall space below; the huge console brackets supporting the upper ledge are mammoth in comparison to the short columns that they support; the overall impression of this façade is muscular. The rear elevation presents a similar brutish masculinity to the entrance elevation, although the straight line replaces the curved in an almost obsessive attempt to create contrast. Taylor also seems to have been guided by the sublimity of Nature when creating this design, in particularly the poetry and majesty and power of her uplands, her deep dells, her hills and her mountains.<sup>67</sup> This was a design that would be 'ever varying and changing as the lights and shadows pass', just as nature is.<sup>68</sup>

References to Pilkington's architecture are equally unavoidable when examining this design with its dramatic chiaroscuro, muscular details and contrasting features; the influence of Park End is particularly

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<sup>65</sup> Taylor, 'Notes on Some Aspects of the City of the Future' p. 130

<sup>66</sup> The building has been altered and expanded since the 1890s, however the critical features of Taylor's design are still very clear.

<sup>67</sup> Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 1

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4

noticeable on the entrance elevation. There are also echoes of Richardson's Austin Hall at Harvard University (1881) in Taylor's design [Plate 58]; a choice that may have been associational as much as architectural. Taylor was an admirer of the Romanesque style, most probably because it shared many of the tenets of Ruskin's gothic but it also had the muscularity that is associated with Pilkington's work. Taylor would have encountered this at the Natural History Museum, but by the 1890s his main source for ideas was most likely Richardson's Romanesque designs, which Taylor would have been familiar with through the professional journals. In a lecture he gave as President of the PQAA, he described the Romanesque style as 'one of the most hopeful developments of this time...and in the hands of such a master as Richardson, gave not only promise but fruition of great charm'.<sup>69</sup> The general tone of the Macdonald Physics Building is quite similar to Richardson's work, and the gradual increase of the Romanesque can be seen in Taylor's work from small seeds at Drummond House, through to buildings such as the West Branch of the Bank of Montreal. There can be little doubt that it was the texture, colour, variety and picturesque expression of the Romanesque that appealed most to Taylor, as well as its obvious links to both Britain and America. It was, perhaps, the style that perfectly embodied Canada's position on the periphery of the British Empire and her situation in North America. It is noticeable that the only time Taylor appears to have sought inspiration for a university building, he focused on Richardson's work at Harvard, rather than following the more contemporary collegiate-gothic models. His next commission for McGill University revealed the further influence of the Romanesque.

The Redpath Library (1893) was Peter Redpath's second gift to the university [Plate 59].<sup>70</sup> A very proactive benefactor, Redpath was not satisfied with simply providing funds for a university library. Instead he approached the university with the funds and a prepared design:

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<sup>69</sup> 'The Proceedings of the P.Q.A.A.' *CAB*, 10,10 (October 1897) p. 192

Dear Sir Donald Smith,

I have had a plan prepared for a library building, which, with the consent of the Governors, I propose to have erected on the grounds of McGill University and for its use. The plan has been adapted to the site immediately below the Presbyterian College, which I have been led to understand is available for the purpose. I have endeavoured to make provision for all the requirements of a university library.

If the proposal be accepted by the Governors, I venture to suggest that they should appoint a small committee of members of the university to examine the plans on the return, at Christmas, of Mr. Taylor, the architect, now absent from the city. Should any modifications be suggested, I shall be glad to consider them. If the report be favorable, as I trust it will, arrangements will be made for commencing to build as early as possible next spring.

The control of the building and its contents will rest, of course, absolutely with the authorities of the university.

Yours very truly,  
Peter Redpath<sup>71</sup>

Although the University had previously employed Taylor, this letter implies that on this occasion he was Redpath's choice, rather than receiving the commission in his capacity as the University's architect. During the opening ceremony of the Redpath Library, Peter Redpath paid tribute to his architect in front of a vast crowd that included the Governor-General of Canada and his wife:<sup>72</sup> "I do not think I could have had a professional man, either on this side of the Atlantic or the other, who could have taken more interest in the matter, or produced a better result".<sup>73</sup>

In drawing up his designs for the library, Taylor paid considerable attention to the function of the building and researched recent developments in library architecture. Redpath acknowledged that in preparation for his generous gift to McGill 'the plans of many other libraries were examined, and many other libraries were visited by myself and the architect, with a view to arriving at the best possible plan for this building on this site'.<sup>74</sup> Whilst Redpath summed up their objective as 'the best possible plan', Taylor's description of their aim was more extensive: 'to obtain on the site a commodious, convenient, well-planned, well-lit

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<sup>70</sup> Redpath's first architectural bequest to McGill University was the Redpath Museum in 1882

<sup>71</sup> *Opening of the New Library, McGill University, Montreal: containing the addresses delivered on the occasion with a description of the building: Some points in the history of the university: In Memorium: October 31<sup>st</sup> 1893* (Montreal: s. n., 1893) p. 9

<sup>72</sup> The Governor-General was the Earl of Aberdeen.

<sup>73</sup> *Opening of the New Library* p. 19, Speech delivered by Peter Redpath

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10

library, which would also allow of easy expansion, and be at once collegiate, dignified, monumental and beautiful'.<sup>75</sup> The final four adjectives of this description reveal the importance of aesthetics to the architect: functionality and practicality were clearly insufficient in themselves. This is unsurprising as Taylor always revelled in adorning his buildings with sculptural ornaments and colour where possible, which was the influence of the British gothic and picturesque traditions in which he had been trained. When his thoughts turned to the practical requirements of the scheme, however, he turned away from the 'magnificent, hoary and time-honoured library buildings in the Old World' towards the United States because 'great interest has recently been taken in the planning and fitting up of library buildings, and considerable ingenuity and skill have been displayed in the designing of such'.<sup>76</sup> Taylor chose for the Redpath Library the relatively new stack system, which separated the books away from the reading rooms and provided fireproof protection for the books. This separation between the spaces directed Taylor's plan of the building, leading to an inverted L-plan with the offices and reading rooms on the long axis and the stack system on the shorter one [Plate 60].<sup>77</sup> This layout also gave easy scope for future expansion of the stack area, which Taylor, being very perceptive and with an eye to a future commission no doubt, was keen to point out to the senior officers of the University:

This stack room has four storeys, with straight stairs, and a lift for books; on each storey there is a wide bay window, back and front, for special privileged readers, where they can consult any of the books on the spot, and not obstruct the passage ways between the books. On the future, when the stack room requires to be enlarged, these bays will form the centre of the stack and the accommodation will be thus nearly doubled.<sup>78</sup>

The plan was a very functional, practical and modern solution to the task set by Peter Redpath; the design of the building in contrast played to Taylor's more traditional picturesque preferences and he turned once more to the 'hoary traditions' of the mother country. His inclusion of two corner towers on the south side of the library is a good example of this. On the plan their function is unspecified implying that their only role was their picturesque value. They certainly add interest and variety to the appearance of the building

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p. 25, A. Taylor, 'Description of New Library Building'

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. p. 25

<sup>77</sup> This plan shows the 1901 extension to the left of the stacks

and perhaps refer back to Taylor's belief that towers, steeples and monuments add variety to cities and prevent aesthetic calamities.

His choice of style was the Romanesque style because it was 'at once dignified and yet picturesque'.<sup>79</sup> It has been suggested that Taylor's model for the Redpath Library was Richardson's Trinity Church, Boston (1872), although this was not confirmed in any of the contemporary articles on the design [Plate 61].<sup>80</sup> His choice of the Romanesque attests to his continued loyalty to the architectural tenets first learned with Pilkington and Bell and set out in his book on Wren. Having chosen the modern American stack system, it might have been assumed that Taylor would choose a modern, American library for the design of the building too, such as McKim, Mead and White's Boston Public Library [Plate 62]. Taylor was critical of this library, however, because he felt it to be 'very unsatisfactory in relation to its environments': it was erected opposite Richardson's Trinity Church, to which it could have hardly been more different.<sup>81</sup> The Redpath Library, therefore, could be considered a complimentary collision of new world and old world influences; a perfect representation, perhaps, of the development of Canada.

The built context of a piece of architecture was very important to Taylor and the clash between the American Beaux-Arts Classicism and the Romanesque in Boston clearly upset his sensibilities. He was careful with his own buildings to try to harmonise them with their surroundings. The ecclesiastical interpretation of the Romanesque style for the Redpath Library, therefore, may have been a response to its position opposite the Presbyterian College. Whatever the reason, the ecclesiastical quality of Taylor's design is quite obvious: he even decorated the main entrance with carvings of the four evangelists. The reference to the gospels may be linked to the function of the building as a house of words; St John's Gospel opens with the words 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God'. In one of his many

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p. 26

<sup>79</sup> 'New Library Building, McGill University, Montreal – A. T. Taylor, F.R.I.B.A., Architect', *CAB*, 8, 8 (August 1895) p.96

<sup>80</sup> Ramsay Traquair, 'The Building of McGill University', p. 52

<sup>81</sup> Taylor, 'Notes of Future Cities', *CAB*, p. 130

lectures on the Arts, Taylor expostulated that architects should aspire to use ‘the sister arts, painting and sculpture, to clothe great clerical truths in immortal shape’.<sup>82</sup> The elevation of thoughts and behaviour through architecture is perhaps more particularly related to ecclesiastical buildings. It is, however, also arguably appropriate to the architecture of learning. Taylor certainly noted the association and the Redpath Library has a plethora of mottos and images that celebrate learning in an almost idolatrous manner. Proverbs and literary quotations adorned the walls and windows, including: ‘Cease not to learn until thou cease to live’; ‘Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that geteth understanding’; ‘Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them’; and ‘and out of olde bokes in good faith, cometh all this newe science that men lerne’.<sup>83</sup>

In the main reading room the ‘saints of learning’ watched over the students and professors from their stained glass windows. The three-light window that faces out over the main campus includes portraits of famous artists, poets and musicians. At the opposite end of the room was a five-light window dedicated to Law, History, Philosophy, Astronomy and Medicine. The reference to church architecture is unmistakable and clearly deliberate. It is the most overtly iconographic and symbolic building in his *oeuvre* and consequently the one most similar to Waterhouse’s Natural History Museum, which was overlaid with references to the natural world, just as Taylor’s library was laden with references to learning. It responded to his stylistic ideals that were inspired by Ruskin, and was the antithesis of the emerging functional architecture in America.

Taylor loathed the new tall buildings; in a discussion at a meeting of the PQAA he poured scorn on the buildings and their enthusiasts: ‘never in the world’s history has [*sic.*] so many important and costly buildings been erected of so outrageously ugly a character’.<sup>84</sup> He regarded them as an affront to

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<sup>82</sup> Taylor, ‘Some Notes on the Relation and Application of the Sister Arts, Painting and Sculpture to Architecture’, *CAB*, 5, 11 (November 1892) p. 113

<sup>83</sup> A. Taylor, ‘Description of New Library Building’, *Opening of the New Library*, p. 26

<sup>84</sup> ‘Proceedings of the P.Q.A.A.’, *CAB*, 10, 10 (October, 1897) p. 191. In the same speech he expressed his hope, and belief, that ‘before long a more enlightened judgment, not to say taste, on the part of the public

architectural traditions and a betrayal of future generations because they lacked the ‘noble heritage’ that his generation had inherited from their ancestors and had a duty to pass on.<sup>85</sup> Nor did he regard them as serious contenders: he believed that ‘before long a more enlightened judgment, not to say taste, on the part of the public will condemn all such’, an opinion which proved to be unfounded.<sup>86</sup> Taylor’s dislike of the new architecture reveals the extent of his love for ornament and decoration, and it is conceivable that the exuberance displayed at the Redpath Library was a deliberate architectural snub to the emerging functionalism and a celebration of tradition. His own *oeuvre*, however, did begin to change with his next and final design for McGill University, when classicism reasserted itself at the Macdonald Chemistry and Mining Building (1896) [Plate 63].

The entrance elevation displays the ubiquitous symmetry and regularity expected of classical architecture and the design at first glance appears to lack the characteristic interrupted skyline, the play with light and shade, and the sharp contrasts that were associated with Taylor. Yet it is not as simple as it may initially seem. The east elevation has a central five-bay projection and a buttress separates each bay.<sup>87</sup> In the angle corners created by the projection Taylor placed semi-circular bows, which break up the flat planes of the walls. On the west elevation there is another bow and also the characteristic Taylor balcony. It is a far more subtle design in many ways than the Macdonald Physics Building, which is to the east of the Macdonald Chemistry and Mining Building but the essentials of a Taylor design are still quite evident, including carved decoration. The entrance is particularly elaborate [Plate 64]. The design is similar to the English Free Classic and it is one of the earliest examples of the style being used for civic architecture in Montreal. The choice of the Free Classic by Taylor is a sharp contrast to his earlier buildings on the campus that are much more in keeping with his published views on architecture. By the late 1890s,

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will condemn all such’.

<sup>85</sup> Taylor, ‘Some Notes on the Relation and Application of the Sister Arts, Painting and Sculpture to Architecture’, p. 113

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> The plan for the building has not been seen and changes have been made to the interior over the years.

Taylor's ideas were beginning to adapt and he encouraged a move towards the Free Classic.<sup>88</sup> His appreciation for the Free Classic may have been a response to the increasing American influence in Canada, as the Free Classic was a particularly English style that fed into the Imperial Baroque. There is a corresponding change elsewhere in his *oeuvre* too. His Marlborough Apartment Buildings (1894), the design for the Diocesan Theological College (1896) and his Notre Dame Street Bank of Montreal branch building are all more resoundingly English in character than his work at the McGill campus and took inspiration from the Queen Anne domestic style and Victorian ecclesiastical architecture [Plates 65-66]. The Diocesan Theological College was even highlighted in the contemporary press for its obvious relation to the architecture of the mother country.<sup>89</sup> In light of his comments on the new generation of American architecture, Taylor's designs in the late 1890s may have been a conscious attempt to display the British heritage of Canada in the face of encroaching American influence.

The fact that Taylor's work for McGill University was assembled relatively *ad hoc*, and was not part of a planned expansion, displays the changes that occurred in his *oeuvre* during the 1890s, including the notice he took of the developments in American architecture – the good and the bad. There are clear differences between the buildings, yet they all stand as tribute to Taylor's architectural tenets that centred on contrast and variety. Taylor was sensitive to the composite context of architecture and may have realised that a group of buildings all built in one style was in danger of being repetitive and monotonous. Variation within and amongst buildings is what provided interest to an area. This was an opinion that Taylor first voiced in his essay on Wren and his work at McGill University was the idea constructed in stone.

The burgeoning McGill campus also demonstrates the increasing importance awarded to Higher Education at the time; the surge undoubtedly benefited Taylor's practice, but it was not merely as the commissioned

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<sup>88</sup> 'P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 10, 10 (October 1897) pp. 190-194. In his retirement speech Taylor railed against some of the recent architecture in Canada, and particularly the increased interest in Academic architecture and the rising height of tall buildings. He was therefore please to note that 'at last the tide is setting all over the world for a free classic style, a renewed renaissance, with adaptations from Italian Florence, French François premier and English Elizabethan'.

architect that Taylor was interested in the developments at the university. From the time of his arrival in Montreal Taylor campaigned for better training and education facilities for young architects. His own experience as an apprentice and assistant in Britain no doubt influenced his views and ideas. From the establishment of the PQAA in 1890, of which Taylor was one of the founding fathers, there was an increasing clamour for a formal, established training programme for architects.<sup>90</sup> In the absence of a formal training course, classes were held at the PQAA and also at the Presbyterian College and Taylor was a frequent lecturer at both.<sup>91</sup> It was also important for the PQAA to establish a good library for its members and young architects studying for the Association's examinations. This was supported by a subscription fund that Taylor made at least one contribution to.<sup>92</sup> His own training had benefited from his time at the Royal Academy and he presumably wanted to ensure that the younger generation was given access to high quality architectural education. In a letter to the editor of the *Montreal Gazette* he put his views on Canadian architectural training plainly:

Here where there is no system of artiled pupilage and no college curriculum, the neophyte has either to pick up haphazard what knowledge he can in an office, the principal of which feels in most cases little obligation to teach him anything, or he is sent off to some college in the States to take the course in architecture, there to learn what his own country ought to teach him.<sup>93</sup>

In this letter Taylor's dissatisfaction with the training available to young men is very evident. It was not simply a matter of improving training for architects, there is also national pride in the letter. The phrase 'what his own country ought to teach him' implies that Taylor believed Canada could and should provide

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<sup>89</sup> 'Building in Canada in 1896', *CAB*, 10, 12 (January 1897) p. 36

<sup>90</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7, for further details on the Macdonald School of Architecture

<sup>91</sup> Henry J. Morgan, *Canadian Men and Women of The Time* (Toronto: Briggess, 1899), p. 999 The entry for Taylor reads: 'Lecturer in drawing at McGill University; Professor of Architecture in Presbyterian College; examiner in architecture for the Quebec Association of Architects; member of Board of Trade, Montreal; member of Council of Art Association; director of Boys' Home; academician of Royal Canadian Academy; life-governor of Montreal General Hospital; Fellow and Honourary Secretary for Canada of R.I.B.A.; President of P.Q.A.A.'

<sup>92</sup> Archives Nationale de Quebec, PQAA, Cote P124, Contenant 1979 – 09 – 006/1, Descriptions du contenu de l'unité de rangement P124/1-1 à P1241/4, Letterbook August 22th, 1892 to May 22nd, 1897, page 35, Letter from Taylor to J. Z. Reather, Treasurer, November 28th, 1892 donating \$25 to the P.Q.A.A.'s Library Subscription fund.

<sup>93</sup> 'Letter to Editor – The Study and Practice of Architecture', *Montreal Gazette* (April 30th,

an equivalent, if not a better, education to her architects than America and it was disgraceful that this was not happening.

It was perhaps his dismay at Canada's apparent inferiority to and dependence upon America that persuaded Taylor to contact the RIBA with the aim of establishing a professional tie between the mother country and the colony. In 1889 he wrote to the RIBA informing the Institute that: 'I shall be glad at all times to do anything for the Institute that I can here in Canada. I do not know whether you have any representatives here or not. Should there not be one in the great Dominion?'<sup>94</sup> The sentiment expressed in this letter suggests that Taylor desired a tighter bond between Canada and Great Britain. This may have stemmed from the increasing and encroaching American influence on both Canadian architecture and the quality of education and training of Canada's architects. It could also have been a response to the lack of architectural organisations in Canada, which meant that architects worked independently with no collaborative spirit and no qualitative standards.

The establishment of provincial organisations in 1890 was a significant step in bringing the Canadian profession together. For Taylor it was a missed opportunity to have a Dominion-wide organisation. In another letter to the RIBA he explained the situation in Canada:

I may say that we are now trying to form an Assoc. of Architects from the Province of Quebec similar in character to the one recently formed in Ontario. I am arguing however the strong advisability of having an Assoc. or Institute for the whole Dominion so that general practice may be brought more in accord and a better professional feeling engendered. We have special differences here to contend with and jealousies hard to overcome but we are making progress.<sup>95</sup>

In the event, Taylor was unsuccessful in his attempt to foster a Dominion Association during his time in Canada. After his return to London the idea was mooted once more and gained greater support, leading to the establishment of the Institute of Canadian architects in 1906. Nevertheless, in 1890 he was appointed

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1890) p. 2

<sup>94</sup> RIBA Archives, LC/31/1/15, Letter to William White from Andrew T. Taylor, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1890

<sup>95</sup> RIBA Archives, LC/31/4/22 Letter to William White from Andrew T. Taylor, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1890

Honorary Secretary to the RIBA. In this role Taylor helped to establish a system whereby architects in Canada could apply for membership of the RIBA and sit the examinations for Associate membership to the Institute in Canada. The scheme finally began at the end of the century and Taylor's earlier suggestion of stronger ties between the two countries was formally laid out in a letter from the RIBA to the PQAA:

9 Conduit Street  
London

19<sup>th</sup> March 1899

Dear Sir,

A Committee of the Royal Institute is at present considering the question of holding the R.I.B.A. examination in the Colonies so that Members of the Profession residing there can have the opportunity of joining the Institute as Associate. The Committee proposed, as a preliminary experiment to hold only the "Special" Examination to which Architects in practice of not less than 25 years of age and chief assistants over 30 are admitted without going through the "Preliminary" and the "Intermediate". The Examination would be absolutely the same as the home Examination, under the same conditions, and the Candidates papers would be marked by the home Examiners.

The question now, is, - Would your Institute be willing to enter into such relations with the Royal Institute of British Architects as to conduct these Examinations on our behalf?

The chief functions would be as follows:

To be responsible for the integrity of the Examinations, to advertise in the local papers, follow the instructions of our Council as to probationary drawings etc., arrange for places of Examination, receive the papers, examine the Candidates orally, report thereon, send the Candidates answers to the institute to be marked and present a statement of expenses incurred, which would be defrayed by the Institute.

I am sending you a copy of the last November Examination papers. The "Special" papers are printed on pages 10 - 16.

Would you think it necessary for special papers to be set on 'Materials' and 'Professional Practice', to suit the practice in your particular Colony?

You will be doing the Committee a favour if you would also let me know whether there are many in the province of Quebec who would be likely to take advantage of the scheme. Any suggestions on other points I have not raised would be welcomes cordially by my Committee.

The Committee feel that if such an experiment as this "Special" Exam in the Colonies be successful, the whole scheme of the R.I.B.A. progressive exams, which have been found of such inestimable benefit to the cause of Architectural Education at home, might possibly, later on, be applied throughout the Empire and by these means those aspiring to the Profession might qualify themselves for the Associateship.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully

William Locke  
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<sup>96</sup> Archives Nationale du Quebec, PQAA Fonds, File 1899, Letter from the RIBA to the PQAA 19<sup>th</sup> March

Taylor initially took responsibility for organising the examinations and notices for the examinations were published in *CAB*. This was an important initiative, as a common qualification across the Empire would give architects greater flexibility to leave Britain and still be eligible to work with their RIBA qualification. It also enabled young apprentices who had left Britain before joining the Institute to gain a British qualification later if they wished. A number of younger Scottish architects, who emigrated to Canada in the new century, took advantage of the examinations. One of these young men was Thomas McLaren, who was one of Taylor's assistants. McLaren had trained in Glasgow with Thomas Lennox Watson and had attended the Glasgow School of Art before immigrating to Montreal in 1902, when he joined Taylor's office.<sup>97</sup> The following year, undoubtedly encouraged by Taylor, McLaren sat the examination to become an Associate of the RIBA and passed.<sup>98</sup> Until his retirement in 1904, Taylor remained in charge of the examinations; however it continued after he left Canada. By 1910 the decision had been made to expand the examinations to other colonies, thus 'drawing together into the central organisation every member of the profession throughout the United Kingdom and the Empire, whether now or not yet in practice'.<sup>99</sup> Centralisation to some may have been considered a very colonial move, ensuring that the mother country retained control over her colonies. It was also a means of ensuring that standards and opportunities were as equal as possible and prevented inequity between the mother country and colony, as Locke first suggested in 1899. Taylor had retired from practice and had returned to London six years before this later initiative commenced. Nevertheless he would have known about the proposal, as he remained an active member of the RIBA and maintained contact with his Montreal colleagues.<sup>100</sup> As a man who seemed to delight in the brotherhood of architecture he would no doubt have supported the proposal for an Empire-wide initiative; he may even have taken secret delight in knowing that the seeds of

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1899

<sup>97</sup> Application form for Associate membership of the RIBA, Thomas McLaren, ARIBA 2 March 1903

<sup>98</sup> 'R.I.B.A. Examinations', *CAB*, 16, 2 (February 1903) p. 36

<sup>99</sup> Letter from Ian MacAlister, Secretary, RIBA, to the editor of *Montreal Gazette*, (November 4th, 1910) p. 2

<sup>100</sup> Taylor kept in touch with Nobbs, as previously discussed, and in 1906 he hosted a dinner for architects attending the Seventh International Congress in London, where three Canadians were delegates.

the idea had been sown in the letter he had written in 1889.

Taylor's retirement from architecture and his return to London coincided with the completion of alterations to the Head Office of the Bank of Montreal in 1904 [Plate 67]. It was a neat twist of fate that the last commission Taylor was associated with was the same as his first. He did not work alone in this last commission for the Bank of Montreal. In 1900 McKim, Mead and White were appointed architects to the Bank of Montreal. An article in *CAB* suggested that this appointment was a snub to Taylor.<sup>101</sup> It was Taylor, however, who invited McKim, Mead and White to assist with the renovation of the Bank's head quarters, which were very extensive, costing nearly a million dollars.<sup>102</sup> Taylor had criticised the American firm almost a decade earlier, with specific reference to their Boston Library design. Why he decided to choose this firm to collaborate with, therefore, is uncertain, but he became very good friends with McKim and Mead and a great admirer of their work. In an obituary of McKim he wrote:

We were appointed joint architects in conjunction with Mr. Mead for a large and important building in Canada, and in the course of collaboration I came greatly to admire Mr. McKim's many-sided admirable qualities and genius. On my numerous visits to New York I always received the most kindly reception, and the charming feeling of comradeship with which he always treated me was keenly appreciated...Of the three, Mr. Mead only is left, and of him also I saw a great deal during nearly three years of our most pleasant collaboration. An extremely able architect himself, he was more practical than either of the others, and kept them from soaring too far out of sight. Personally he is a most delightful man, and I am glad of this opportunity of paying this tribute to a friendship that will always be dear to me.<sup>103</sup>

This passage, with its words 'I came greatly to admire Mr. McKim's many-sided admirable qualities and genius', confirms that Taylor had not been a great fan before his collaboration with the firm, as his earlier criticism of their Boston Library attests. His recommendation of the firm to the Bank of Montreal seems to

<sup>101</sup> 'Montreal Notes', *CAB*, 15, 1 (January 1902) p. 4

<sup>102</sup> 'A Correction', *CAB*, 15, 2 (February 1902) p. xi; Taylor had been asked by the Bank to recommend American architects to assist with the commission. The fact that the Bank wanted Americans involved may have been considered a snub to Taylor, but at least he was given the responsibility of choosing the firm he wished to collaborate with rather than losing the commission altogether. Taylor's choice of McKim Mead and White was probably influenced by their Bowery Savings Bank, New York City (1895) which 'marked a turning point' in bank architecture. I. Gournay, 'Prestige and Professionalism', *Montreal Metropolis*, p. 126

have been pragmatic. They were a very highly regarded firm with experience of designing large banks, for example the Bowery Savings Bank, New York City (1895) [Plate 68]. This was critical for the architects given responsibility for the extension of the Head Office of the Bank of Montreal, and it was a coup for the Bank of Montreal to commission them. It was also an advantageous contract for the American architects to win, as it was their first commission in Canada, thus introduced them to new sources of patronage. It was also a significant point in Montreal's architectural history. From the 1900s onwards their presence had an immediate impact on architecture in the city with a sudden and swift introduction of the Beaux-Arts Classicism that became core to the city's architecture in the following decades. Taylor's influence in introducing them to the city, therefore, must not be overlooked: he was directly responsible for aiding the introduction of American Beaux-Arts Classicism into Montreal.

His decision to retire in 1904 probably took into account the changing face of Canadian architecture, as well as other factors. The fact that the Bank of Montreal wanted to employ American architects was a clear sign that times were changing; Taylor disapproved of the new tall buildings that were an increasing presence in Montreal; the fashion for ornamental decoration was dying and he was fifty-four. Plus, he had just completed a collaborative project with McKim, Mead and White. The year 1904, therefore, provided an opportunity to bow out gracefully.

The twenty-one years that Taylor had worked in Canada were remarkable ones for the architect. Essentially, nothing changed in his personal architectural tenets: variety, contrast, ornament, tradition and heritage all remained key. The buildings he designed fitted their context, not merely the campus environment or the street but also the broader context of Montreal and Canada, accepting the relevance of some American architecture but always prioritising the British influence. Taylor also became a proactive professional in Canada, helping to improve the training and quality of Canadian architects and their architecture, as well as ensuring greater co-operation between Britain and Canada.

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<sup>103</sup> Andrew Taylor 'The Late Charles Follen McKim', *JRIBA*, (20 November 1900) pp. 88 - 89

Back home Taylor entered politics and in 1926 received a knighthood in recognition of his efforts. Architecture, however, remained his passion. The portrait that was commissioned to commemorate his knighthood, taken twenty-two years after he had retired from architectural practise, is entitled, Sir Andrew Taylor, Architect. His pride in his architectural achievements was not misplaced. Upon learning of his imminent retirement from practise and return to England, the editor of *CAB* wrote the following tribute to one of the early leaders of Canadian architecture:

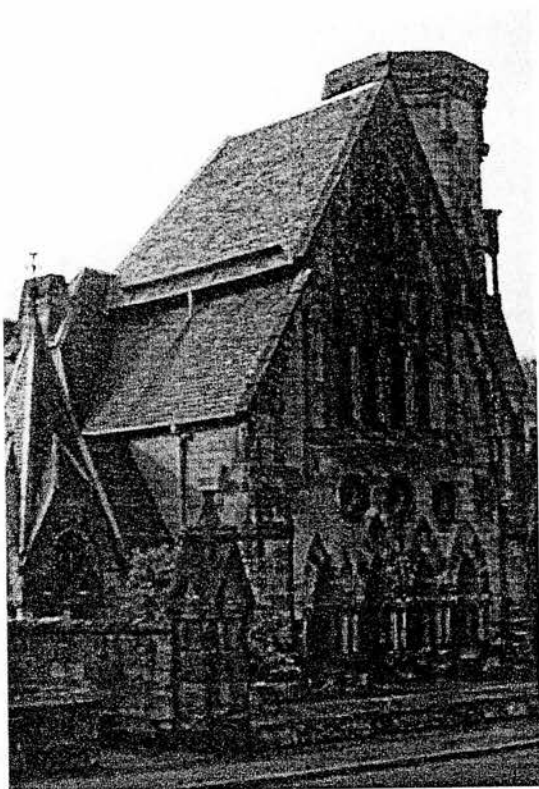
It is understood that Mr. Andrew T. Taylor, F.R.I.B.A., has decided to remove from Montreal and take up his residence in England. The announcement will be received with regret by Canadian architects, among whom Mr. Taylor was one of the recognized leaders. A thoroughly trained architect himself, he cherished high ideals, and constantly strove for their realization by seeking to provide improved educational facilities for students and advocating measures calculated to elevate the status of the profession. He did much valuable work in connection with the Province of Quebec Association of Architects of which he was an ex President. His ability as an architect is attested by the many public buildings of an educational and financial character erected from his designs and under his supervision.<sup>104</sup>

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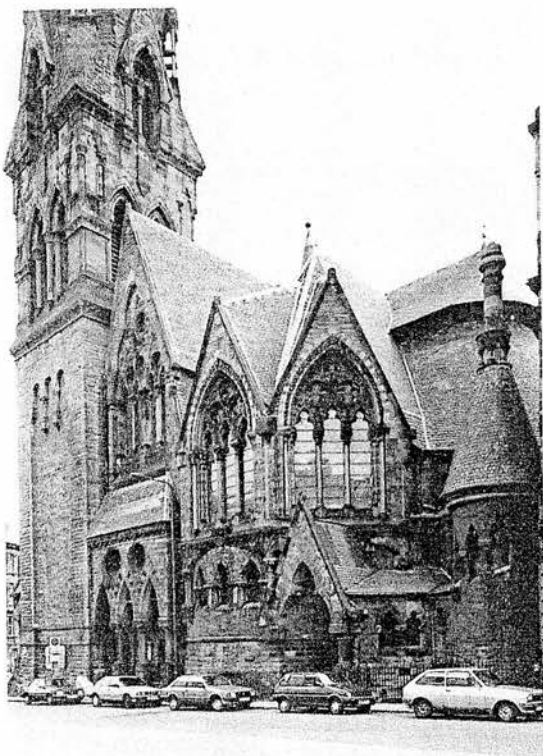
<sup>104</sup> 'Personal', *CAB*, 17, 2 (February 1904) p. xi



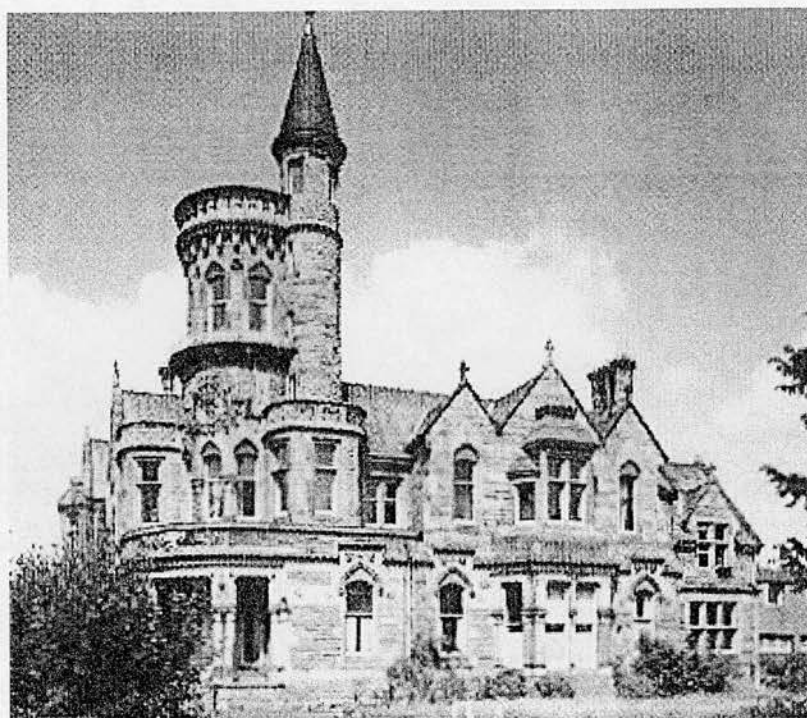
37. Andrew Thomas Taylor (1850-1937)  
(CAB)



38. Pilkington, Free Church, Penicuik (1862)  
([www.sran.ac.uk](http://www.sran.ac.uk))



39. Pilkington, Barclay Free Church, Edinburgh (1862-64)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackenzie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



40. Pilkington, Craigend Park, Edinburgh (1869)  
(McKean, *Edinburgh: An Illustrated Guide*)



41. Pilkington, Park End, Edinburgh (1865-70)  
([www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk))



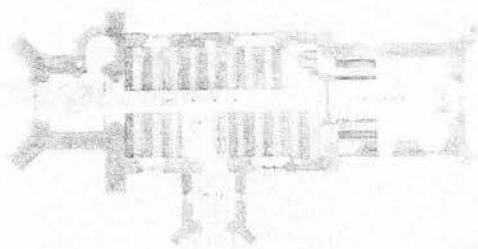
42. Smith, Balmoral Castle, Aberdeenshire (1852)  
([www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk))



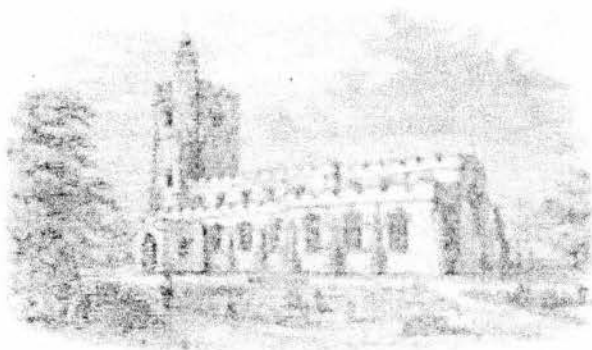
43. Smith, Garthdee House, Peterculter (1872)  
([www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk))



44. Peddie and Kinnear, Cockburn Street, Edinburgh (1856-64)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackenzie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



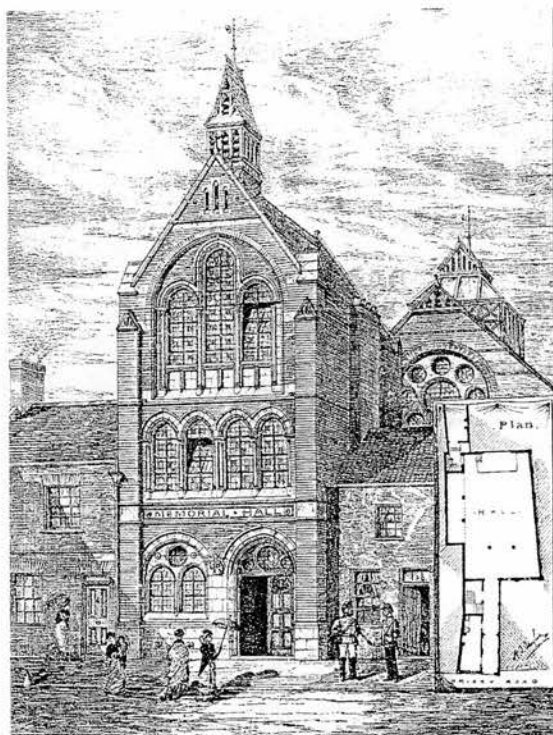
45. Clarke, All Saints Church, Inworth (1876-77)  
([www.churchplansonline.org](http://www.churchplansonline.org))



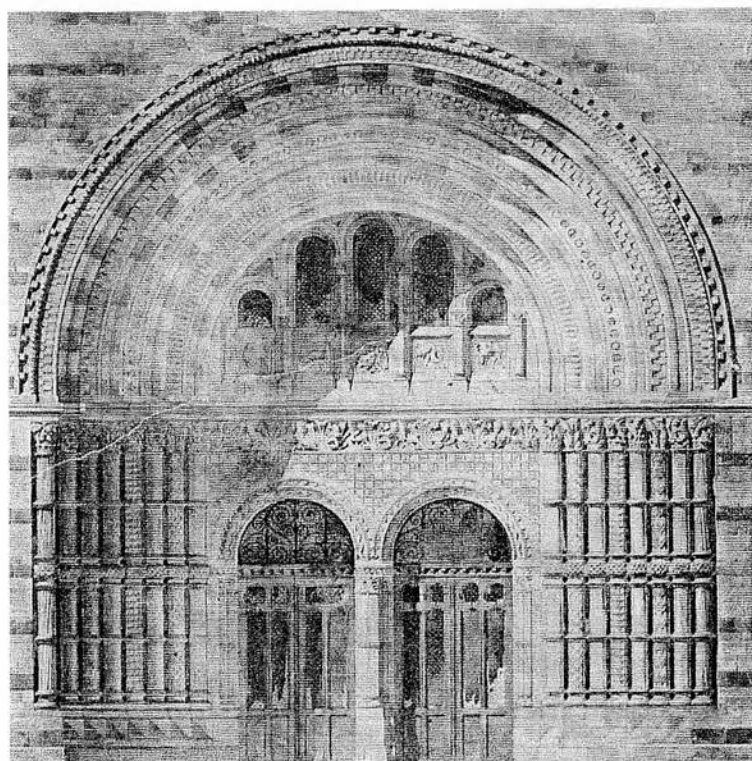
46. Clarke, St. Mary's Church, Cheshunt (1872-73)  
([www.churchplansonline.org](http://www.churchplansonline.org))



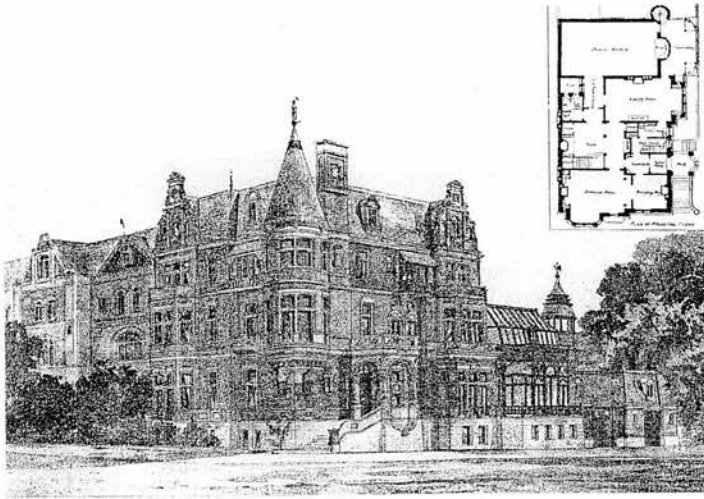
47. Taylor, Sketches of Church Steeples designed by Wren (1882)  
 (Taylor, *The Towers and Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*)



48. Taylor, Memorial Hall and School, Dover (1882)  
(*The Builder*)



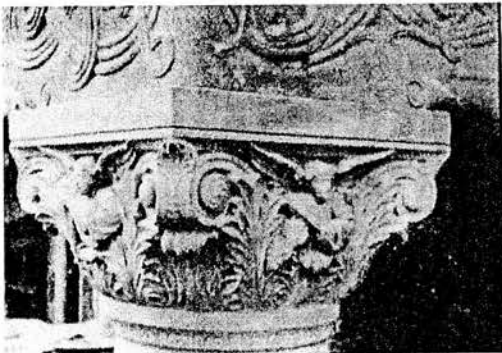
49. Waterhouse, Natural History Museum, Detail of Door (1873-81)  
(*Girouard, Alfred Waterhouse and the Natural History Museum*)



50. Taylor, A House near Montreal (1886)  
(*The Builder*)



51. Taylor, Drummond House, Montreal (1888) (demolished)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, A. T. Taylor Collection)



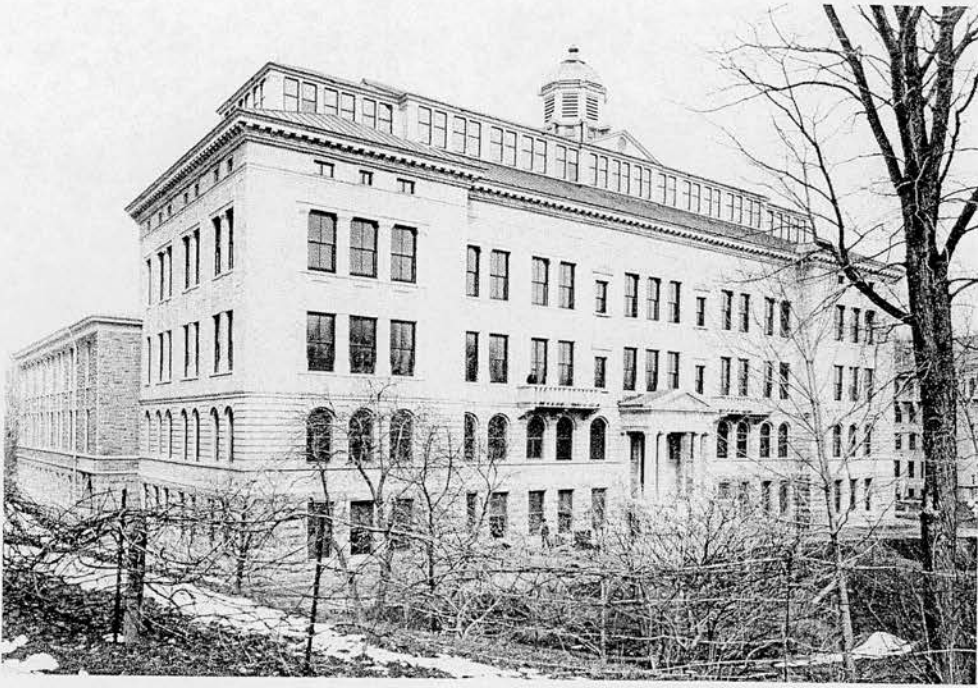
52. Taylor, Drummond House, detail of porch  
(CAB)



53. Taylor, Bank of Montreal, West End Branch, Rue Ste Catherine (1892)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



54. Taylor, Bank of Montreal, Seigneurs and Notre Dame Streets Branch (1894)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, A. T. Taylor Collection)



55. Taylor, McGill University, Macdonald Engineering Building (1890)  
(McGill University Archives)

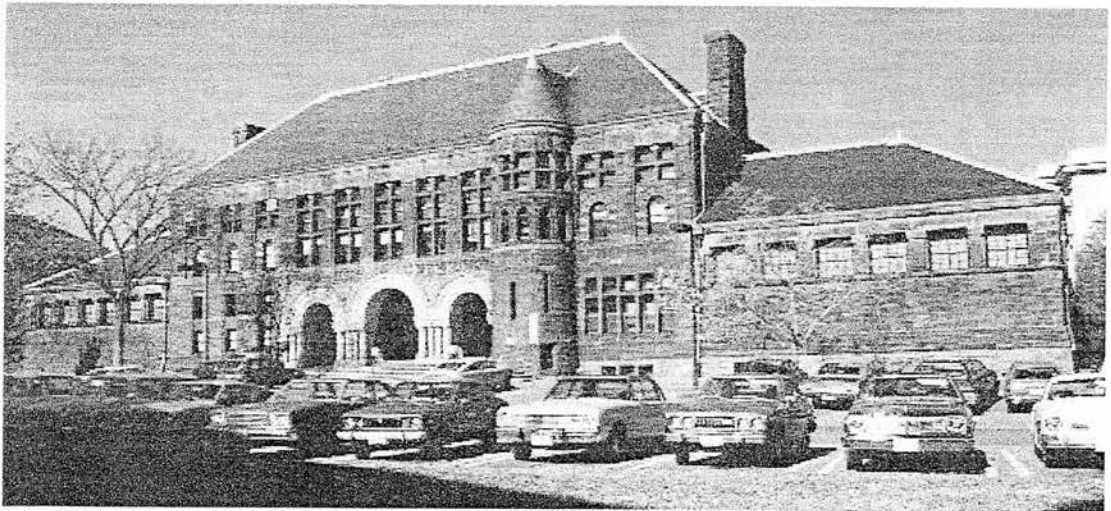


..SECOND FLOOR PLAN..

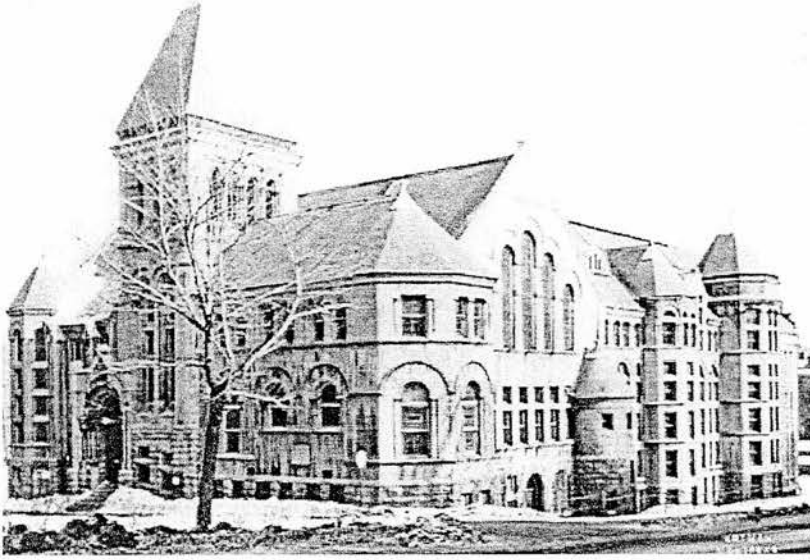
56. Taylor, McGill University  
Workman Building and Macdonald Engineering Building  
Second Floor Plan  
(*New Applied Science Buildings*)



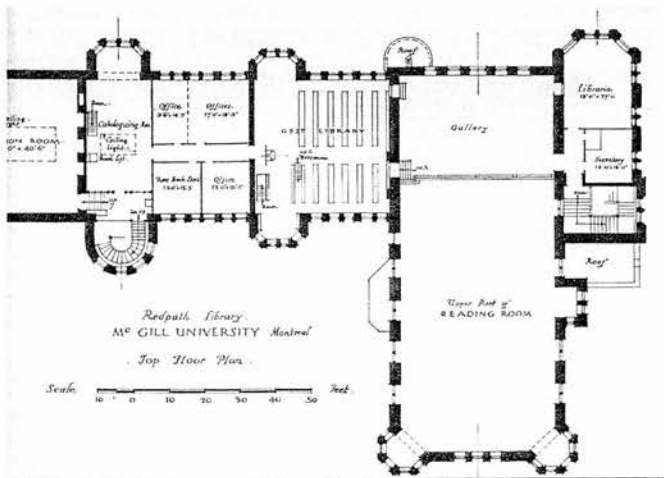
57. Taylor, McGill University, Macdonald Physics Building (1892-93)  
(McGill University Archives)



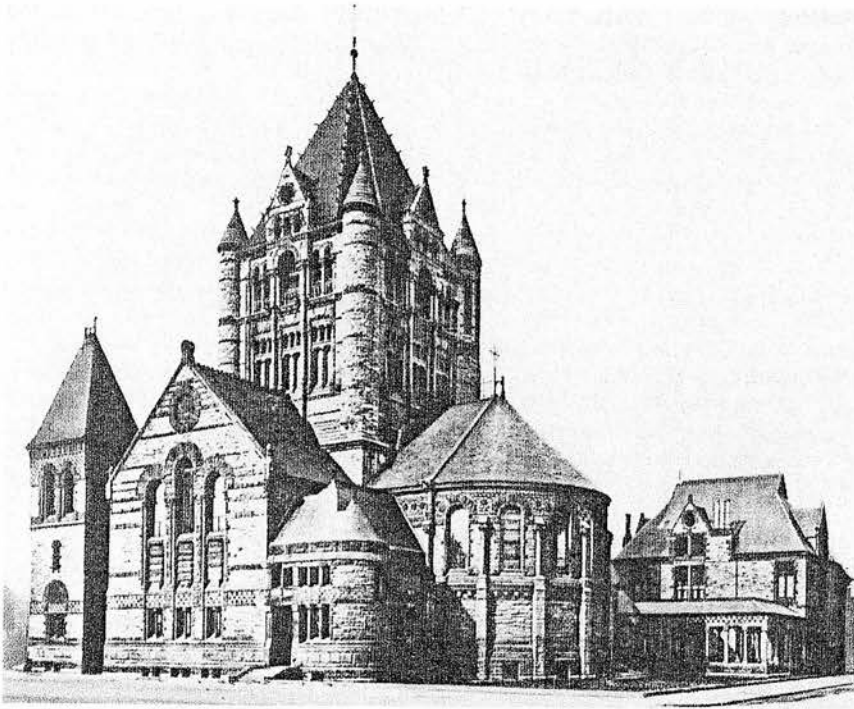
58. Richardson, Austin Hall, Harvard University (1881)  
([www.bc.edu](http://www.bc.edu))



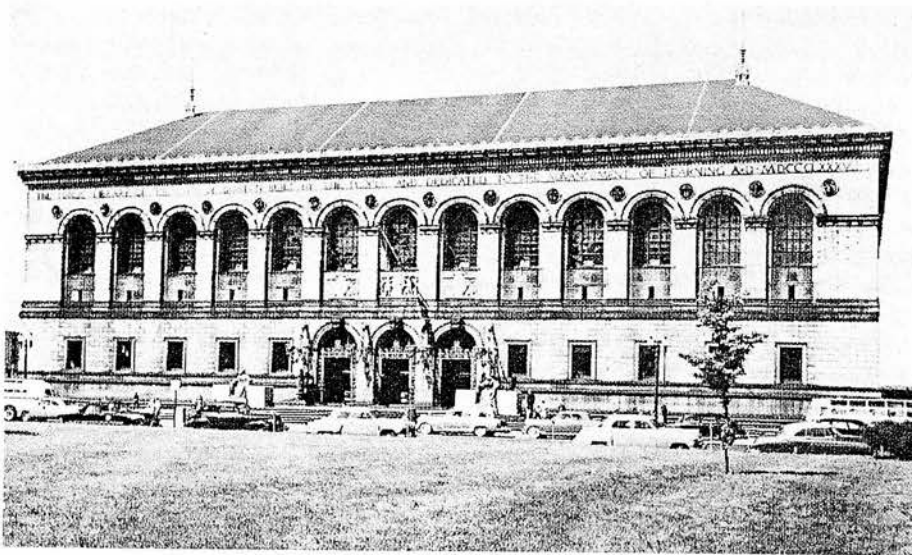
59. Taylor, McGill University, Redpath Library (1893)  
(McGill University Archives)



60. Taylor, McGill University, Redpath Library, Plan after 1901 extension  
(McGill University, JBCAC, A. T. Taylor Collection)



61. Richardson, Trinity Church, Boston (1872)  
 (Hitchcock, *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture*)



62. McKim, Mead and White, Public Library, Boston (1888-1892)  
 (Hitchcock, *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture*)



63. Taylor, McGill University, Macdonald Chemistry and Mining Building (1896)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



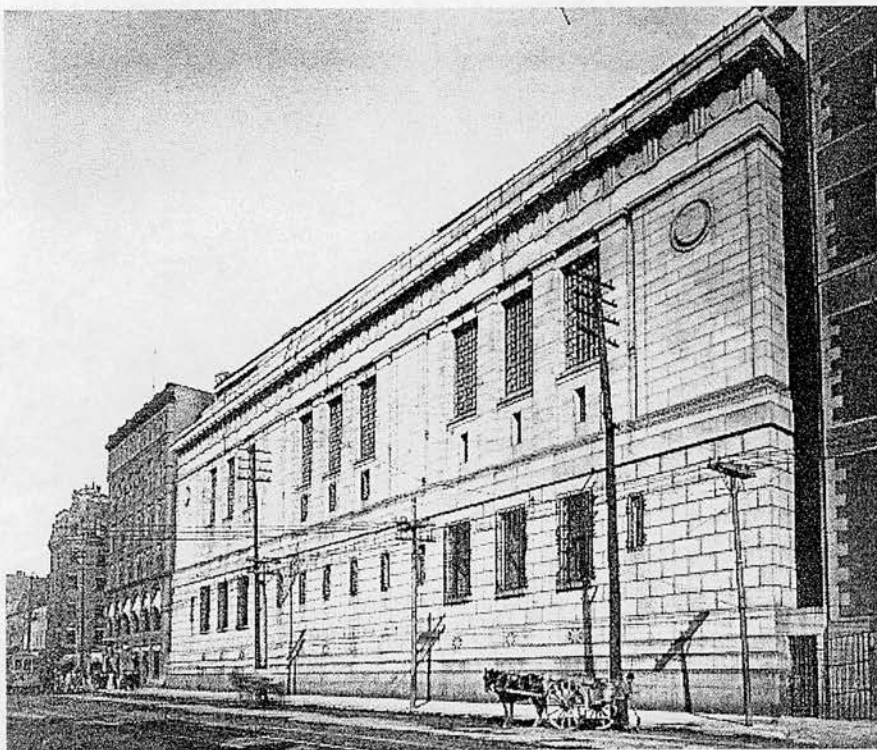
64. Taylor, Macdonald Chemistry and Mining Building, detail of entrance door  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



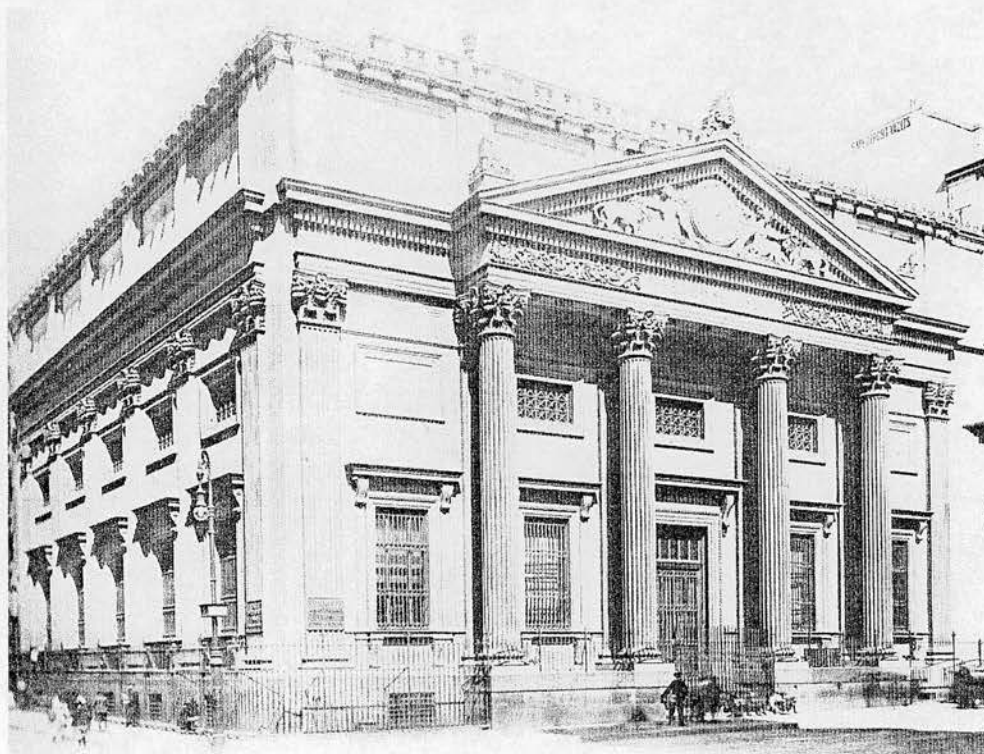
65. Taylor, Marlborough Apartments, Rue Milton, Montreal (1894)  
(CAB)



66. Taylor, Diocesan Theological College, Rue Universitié, Montreal (1896)  
(CAB)



67. McKim, Mead and White; Taylor, associate architect  
 Bank of Montreal, Head Office Extension, Montreal (1901-1904)  
 (Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



68. McKim, Mead and White, Bowery Savings Bank, New York (1895)  
 (McKim, Mead and White, *The Architecture of McKim, Mead and White in Photos, Plans and Elevations*)

## Robert Findlay (1859-1951)

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**“Robin, I know will yet make his mark in Canada. ‘He’ll be a credit t’us a, we’ll be proud o’Robin!’”**

Letter, Jack Findlay to Rodderick MacDonald, 15<sup>th</sup> November 1890  
(Findlay family Papers)

In 1876 the seventeen-year-old Robert Findlay decided to become an architect because he loved and had a talent for drawing [Plate 69].<sup>1</sup> There is nothing remarkable in this; what is special is that this young artist from Inverness became one of the most highly respected and successful domestic architects of his generation in Montreal.<sup>2</sup>

Findlay made his career in Canada designing residences for the rich Anglo-elite. He was a prolific architect and many of his designs still adorn the avenues of Westmount and the ‘Golden Square Mile’ in Montreal.<sup>3</sup> A quiet, unassuming man, Findlay preferred to focus on his designs and rarely became involved with other duties within the profession. Unlike other architects in this study, Findlay never became President of the PQAA and it was a position that he never sought. He served on the Council on the PQAA between 1896 and 1897 and was one of the founding members of the Association, but besides this he seems content to have concentrated on his practice.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File: R. Findlay, *Robert Findlay: A Biography*, unpublished manuscript, 1951, unpaginated

<sup>2</sup> Laureen Sweeney, ‘An Evening of Pride and Remembrance as City Honours Five Great Citizens’, *The Westmount Examiner* (April 19th, 1990) p. 6. In 1990 Findlay received a posthumous award for his outstanding architectural contribution to Westmount. The Mayor of Westmount described him as ‘the one architect who could be said to have built Westmount. One can hardly walk down the street without knowing Findlay.’

<sup>3</sup> Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, p. 191 A contemporary description of the Golden Square Mile observed that ‘there is perhaps no wealthier city in the world than that comprised between Beaver Hall Hill and the foot of Mount Royal, and between the parallel lines of Dorchester and Sherbrooke Streets in the West End’. There are still some very good examples of Findlay’s designs in Westmount and Montreal, although some have been demolished and others have received additions and alterations over the years. Few of his original drawings have survived; ever a frugal Scot, his daughter Edythe would wash the linen sheets after a project was completed, so that they could be re-used. Interviews with Helen Findlay October 2002.

<sup>4</sup> ‘P.Q.A.A.’, *CAB*, 9, 7 (July 1896) p. 91

Findlay began his architectural career as an apprentice to the Inverness architect John Rhind in 1876, who was one of the key architects in Invernessshire but it was by no means a parochial practice. Rhind had trained in the Glasgow practice of Campbell Douglas (1828-1910) and Stevenson between 1854 and 1863. The practice was typical of the era, designing gothic churches and Scottish Baronial houses. Their practice was a very lively and communal place to work. Campbell Douglas lived above the office with his wife and the staff were treated 'as a larger family'.<sup>5</sup> It was an inspiring work place and Rhind blossomed into a very enthusiastic architect. He joined the Young Architectural Association of Glasgow, rising to become its Vice-President.<sup>6</sup> Through the association he kept himself informed of all the changes and developments in architecture; it is probable that the association organised lectures by respected architects in the city, men such as Alexander 'Greek' Thompson and John Burnet Snr, as a means of developing the education of the young architects.<sup>7</sup> In 1863 Rhind left Glasgow to take over his father's architectural practice in Inverness. The change in his surroundings must have required some adjustment from Rhind, as he was moving from a cosmopolitan architectural city to a small Highland town, but he probably kept abreast of architectural trends in the city through the architectural press. The move did have the advantage of elevating his status, since he became one of the key architects in the Highlands and won many country house commissions, as well as being responsible for high-profile public buildings in Inverness.<sup>8</sup>

When Findlay joined the practice in 1876 domestic commissions dominated Rhind's workload, providing Findlay with a solid grounding for his future career as a specialist in house design. Rhind's preferred style for domestic designs was the Scottish Baronial: his work has been described as 'dotty Baronial and quietly picturesque'.<sup>9</sup> One such building that he was working on during Findlay's apprenticeship, which the apprentice was heavily involved in was Moy Hall (1870s) for Mr. Fraser

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<sup>5</sup> [www.codexego.co.uk/dsa/architect\\_full.php?id=M000794](http://www.codexego.co.uk/dsa/architect_full.php?id=M000794). Dictionary of Scottish Architects, Campbell Douglas entry (August 2006)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, entry for John Rhind

<sup>7</sup> Lectures were a common event in architectural circles as a means of disseminating ideas in an era of fewer books and publications. They were also an important part of a young architect's training, as there was no formal education provided for the young apprentices.

<sup>8</sup> Country House commissions formed a large proportion of Rhind's work, however he also designed commercial buildings, such as Union Buildings in Inverness, and Hotels, for example Invergarry Hotel and the Imperial Hotel, Inverness.

<sup>9</sup> John Gifford, *Buildings of Scotland: Highland and Island* (London: Penguin Books, 1992) p. 213

Mackintosh [Plate 70].<sup>10</sup> This was a baronial re-modelling of an existing house and was quite a bombastic display of the style with its tournelles, corbelled oriels and castellated turret. It certainly provides an impression of a wealthy, patriotic and stoic man.

A grander house that Findlay assisted with was Ardverikie House (1874-1879) for Sir John Ramsden [Plate 71].<sup>11</sup> This was a commission that Rhind received through Fraser-Mackintosh's recommendation; the importance of referrals to an architect's reputation and success cannot be underestimated, particularly with relation to domestic architecture and in such a remote part of the country as the Highlands. In this design Rhind once more created a picturesque composition, but he omitted the overt characteristics of the baronial, such as the corbelling, crowsteps and castellations. Consequently, the design has been described as 'rather more *cottage orné* than Baronial'.<sup>12</sup> The one exception to this was the east tower, which was 'Baronial with a vengeance'.<sup>13</sup> The impact of the house approached from the drive is another image of grandeur, wealth and importance, but on a much larger scale than Moy Hall.

As well as learning about domestic design, the Ardverikie House commission also introduced Findlay to the importance of the business of architecture. From the start of the rebuilding of Ardverikie, the project was beset with problems. The main contractor left; there were problems receiving another tender; the materials were more expensive than Rhind had estimated, and the final bill was far more than the original quotation. The payment for the commission was surrounded in acrimony. Rhind had failed to draw up a contract with Ramsden and assumed that he would receive five per cent of the cost of the commission; Ramsden, however, thought that he owed the architect three per cent of the original quotation. In the event, Rhind took Ramsden to court to settle the pay dispute, but he died

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<sup>10</sup> Rhind's commitment at Moy Hall began in c. 1871 but seems to have lasted through most of the 1870s. It was Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, the owner of Moy Hall, who recommended Rhind to Ramsden.

<sup>11</sup> Giles Worsley, 'Ardverikie, Inverness-shire', *Country Life*, 35, 36 (September 1991) pp. 90-93 Rhind had just completed a house on the site for Ramsden in 1873, but disaster struck when a fire broke out in the kitchen and the house was destroyed. The rebuilding project lasted from 1874 until 1883, and it ended extremely acrimoniously in the courts. As an apprentice in the office during the middle years of the project Findlay would have witnessed the ups-and-downs of the profession.

<sup>12</sup> Gifford, *Buildings of Scotland: Highland and Island*, p. 78

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

before the case had concluded.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps in light of this, Findlay became a member of the legal committee of the PQAA and drafted a template of a contract for architect and client to sign at the beginning of a commission.<sup>15</sup>

From the very start of his career Findlay worked on large, domestic projects for rich men whose ambitions and social status were translated into their homes. This was an experience that proved invaluable when he began practising in Canada. Before leaving Scotland, Findlay headed south to Glasgow. This move was probably part desire and part need to develop his experience but perhaps also a realisation that Inverness could not offer the opportunities for work that a larger city could; two of his brothers, Thomas and John, had left Inverness to pursue careers in Glasgow and Edinburgh.<sup>16</sup> It is also likely that Rhind advised his young apprentice to go to the city where he himself had trained.

In Glasgow, Findlay was fortunate to receive a position as assistant in the office of John Burnet and Son, one of the more advanced practices in Glasgow at that time, due in part, but not exclusively, to the younger Burnet having recently returned from Paris and his implementation of Beaux-Arts principles into his father's practice.<sup>17</sup> Whilst working for the Burnets, Findlay received a solid grounding in Beaux-Arts design theory. He also consolidated his knowledge of domestic architecture. The house designs that Findlay would have been familiar with whilst in the Burnet office were Edinbarnet, Edinburgh (1881–1882), Deanston House, Perthshire (1882–1883) and Kilneiss House, Moniaive (1884).

Edinbarnet (1881–1882) was one of the earliest houses where the younger Burnet played a key design role [Plate 72].<sup>18</sup> It was a baronial design, but an interesting departure from the Scottish style was the

<sup>14</sup> Worsley, 'Ardverikie', pp. 90-93

<sup>15</sup> *CAB*, 8, 10 (October 1895) p. 199

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Helen Findlay. Thomas, the elder brother, worked in Glasgow as an engineer, and was living there in 1880 which may have been a consideration behind Findlay's own decision to move there. John moved to Edinburgh in 1886 and began working as a clerk for a shipping agent.

<sup>17</sup> David Walker, 'Scotland and Paris: 1874-1887', John Frew and David Jones (ed.), *Scotland and Europe: Architecture and Design 1850-1940* (St. Andrews: University of St. Andrews, School of Art History, 1991), pp. 15-40

<sup>18</sup> David Walker, 'The Country Houses, Larger Villas and Related Hotel Designs of Sir John James Burnet', Ian Gow and Alastair Rowan (ed.), *Scottish Country Houses 1600-1914* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998) pp. 298 - 324

use of timber barge-board eaves for the porch, which were more English in tone. In contrast to Edinbarnet was Deanston House, Perthshire (1882–1883) [Plate 73]. This was a late Georgian mansion which the Burnets were commissioned to extend and did so with classical picturesqueness. They honoured the original classicism of the house, with the three-storey drum-fronted wing, and the wing at the other end of the entrance façade. These were mixed, however, with picturesque details of a Tudor tone. The five-storey entrance tower is reminiscent of Tudor gatehouses, especially with its oriel window on the third floor. The Burnets also added gabled dormers to the attic storey. The design is a pleasing one that offers variety without exuberance or excess; the mix of Tudor motifs with classicism demonstrates Burnet's knowledge of and enthusiasm for the emerging Free Classic in England.

Yet another very different house again was Kilneiss House, Moniaive (1884). This had been a single-storey-and-attic cottage, but was extended at the request of the patron to become a suitable marital home for his son.<sup>19</sup> The cottage had a long wing added to the rear, which gave an extra storey to half of the original cottage. The vernacular appeal of the original cottage was retained with the addition of half-timbering on the new upper storey. So whilst it was now a much larger family home to a rich merchant's son, it retained the rural charm of a cottage.

Although these designs were all different from one another stylistically and different again from the domestic work of John Rhind, almost none of the houses that Findlay would have seen erected were overtly opulent or decorative, yet all managed to display the wealth and status of their owners. This restraint in Scottish domestic architecture was, according to the architect Alexander Nisbet Paterson (1862-1947), due in part to the Scottish character which was:

Cautious yet pushing; logical, humorous and imaginative, yet parsimonious or at least averse to lavish display; enthusiastic especially in hero-worship, yet in matters of everyday life undemonstrative – such are some of the outstanding qualities of the people which did and still should find an echo in its architecture'.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 303 The client was Andrew Paterson, a wealthy manufacturer who was a personal friend of Burnet Snr. The child for whom the house was intended was James Paterson, an artist recently returned from Paris. A younger son, Alexander Nisbet Paterson, was at the time studying at the *École des Beaux-Arts* on the advice of Burnet.

The exposure that Findlay had to domestic design in his early career coincided with the 'era of the house' that began in the 1880s. The economic booms of the 1860s and 1870s had delivered an excess of wealth that was spent on bespoke houses for rich clients. Moreover, the cost of building materials decreased in the 1880s and the real value of income increased.<sup>21</sup> The effect of this was that the client base of domestic architecture increased, so whilst one-off houses had originally only been the prerogative of the very rich, there emerged a growing group of patrons from further down the social scale.<sup>22</sup> The impact of this new wealth and client base coincided with the emergence of a new style: the Queen Anne Style.

The style grew out of an increasing dissatisfaction with the dichotomy of the mid-nineteenth century architecture when an architect was a gothicist or classicist, along with an emerging desire for an 'English' architecture which was also accompanied by nostalgia for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Queen Anne style almost immediately became associated with the artistic and literary circles in London during the 1870s and 1880s. There was never a polemic or theoretical dogma at the root of the style, although Stevenson, formerly of Campbell Douglas and Stevenson and one of the leaders of the new fashion, attempted to root the movement in some theory by emphasising its national associations:

The springing up of a taste for some form of free Classic architecture is not unnatural, but was to be expected in those who had drunk deeply of Gothic; and the form of free Classic which thus arose was naturally determined by local additions. Englishmen working in brick, and using sliding-sash windows, according to the custom of the land...found the natural expression of their feelings in the brick architecture of the restoration of Queen Anne and the Georges.

This architecture has neither the exquisite grace and refinement of Greek, nor the romance and high aspirations of Gothic, but it is perhaps not therefore the less suited for the common daily wants of English life.<sup>23</sup>

The *Building News* had a slightly different perspective, and perhaps a very astute one: 'the characteristics of the style do not go very deep and the new affection for it at this time represents

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<sup>20</sup> Alexander N. Paterson, 'Style, Individuality and Tradition', *JRIBA*, 2 (1895) pp. 246 – 249

<sup>21</sup> John Hume, 'The Scottish Houses of William Leiper', Gow and Rowan (ed.), *The Scottish Country House*, p. 288

<sup>22</sup> Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light, The Queen Anne Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) p. 66

<sup>23</sup> John J. Stevenson, 'On the Recent Re-action of taste in English Architecture', *The Builder*, 32 (June, 1874) p. 540

rather an increased cultivation of the picturesque than any original convictions regarding constructive excellence'.<sup>24</sup>

It was certainly its picturesque quality and its apparent Englishness that made the style so popular with architects and clients alike, and it was not restricted to architecture. The literary and artistic patrons of the Queen Anne, such as Kate Greenaway for whom Shaw designed a house in Hampstead between 1884 and 1885 [Plate 74], helped to promote the style and win new enthusiasts.<sup>25</sup> Greenaway, along with the illustrator Walter Crane, took inspiration from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for their pictures for children books [Plate 75]. The clothes that their characters wore, the furniture and other accessories all resurrected the fashions of the era of Anne and the Georges. Their pictures have been described as 'aesthetic bombs [that] scattered sweetness and light beyond the nursery into every corner of the house'.<sup>26</sup>

In some ways the Queen Anne was the first popular movement that sold a life-style to its consumers, and this continued to seduce architects and patrons into the twentieth century, although stylistically it had various permutations that included 'a little genuine Queen Anne...a little Dutch, a little Flemish, a squeeze of Robert Adam, a generous dash of Wren, and a touch of Francois 1er'.<sup>27</sup> It certainly helped to seduce the German architectural historian Muthesius who left England with a very idealised image of English architecture:

The English house lies in the midst of flower-gardens, facing far away from the street, looking on to broad green lawns which radiate the energy and peace of nature; the house lies long and low, a shelter and a refuge rather than an essay in pomp and architectonic virtuosity.<sup>28</sup>

Although the Queen Anne was initiated in England and promoted Englishness, it also proved very popular in Scotland, particularly in Ayrshire, where there was a preponderance of rich clients eager to

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Macleod, *Style and Society – Architectural Ideology in Britain 1835–1941* (London: RIBA Publications, 1971) p. 36

<sup>25</sup> Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*, p. 139

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 1

<sup>28</sup> Hermann Muthesius, *The English House*, translated, Janet Seligman (London: Crosby, Lockwood, Staples, 1979) p. 63

patronise architects.<sup>29</sup> Helensburgh, a coastal town on the West Coast that became a popular suburb and retreat for Glasgow's rich and powerful, was particularly responsive to the new style. William Leiper, who had been an assistant in the Campbell Douglas & Stevenson office at the same time as Rhind, was one of the architects responsible for introducing the English Queen Anne into Scotland. Leiper spent many years in London where he fell increasingly under the influence of men like Stevenson and Shaw. Leiper's use of half-timbering and shingle, and tall chimney stacks at Brantwoode, Helensburgh, (1895) reveals this distinctly and is particularly reminiscent of the work of Shaw [Plate 76]. The picturesque Drumadoon, Helensburgh (1901–1903) reveals the continued influence of the Queen Anne in the west coast suburb [Plate 77].<sup>30</sup> Arts and Crafts purists would have shuddered at the sight of English features, such as half-timbering, in a Scottish town, however the Queen Anne was essentially an aesthetic style and life-style choice rather than a theory of architecture, in spite of Stevenson's theorising attempts.

In its English form the Queen Anne was never a complete success in Scotland because the Scots already had their picturesque Baronial houses and began searching for their own seventeenth-century equivalent. There would have been few examples, therefore, for Findlay to see first hand in Scotland. However, the Burnets were very keen for all their apprentices and assistants to read regularly and widely as part their training. The practice had a very good library that all apprentices and assistants were supposed to familiarise themselves with.<sup>31</sup> There would have been a preponderance of classical treatises, as a result of the younger Burnet's Parisian training, but British architecture would have been well represented too. Findlay later amassed his own large library of books and journals, which ran the gamut from Spanish Renaissance architecture to modern American interior design, and it was probably Burnet who convinced Findlay of the importance of such a resource.<sup>32</sup>

Although Findlay seems to have had most association with domestic designs during these formative

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<sup>29</sup> Mike Davis, Millionaire's Mansions, *Architectural Heritage*, 2 (1992) pp. 74-82

<sup>30</sup> The Queen Anne was most popular on the west coast, as by the 1890s the east coast architects, particularly those around Rowand Anderson and Lorimer, had begun following the lead of the English Arts and Crafts architects who preached vernacular forms and vernacular materials or were searching for their own seventeenth-century equivalent of the Queen Anne.

<sup>31</sup> David Walker, 'Scotland and Paris' p. 23

<sup>32</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File, 'Architectural Books shelved in

years, his time in Glasgow was not restricted to domestic architecture. Shortly before Findlay's arrival in Glasgow, Burnet had completed his Royal Glasgow Fine Art Institution (1879), which was described as 'severe and refined Greek blended with the full flowing lines of the Renaissance in order to get a full share of dignity'.<sup>33</sup> Another classical building of the period was the Clyde Trust Building (1882–1886), although this one was resplendent with French details, which befitted a graduate of the *École des Beaux-Arts*. The designs that perhaps held most importance from Findlay's point of view, however, were Burnet's entries for the Glasgow City Chambers competitions (1880–1883) [Plate 78]. From this competition Findlay would have learned how large, civic competitions worked, how guidelines were provided to the participants, how they could be interpreted and the process by which the architects devised their plans. Watching a *Beaux-Arts* graduate preparing for a high profile, civic competition must have been exciting for the young architect; it was clearly very useful too, as Findlay's first independent commission in Canada was won in a competition.

The Glasgow City Chambers were also an embodiment of Glasgow's imperial role in the British Empire [Plate 79].<sup>34</sup> Findlay would have interacted with images and symbols of the Empire almost daily during his time in Glasgow, which regarded itself as the 'Second City of the Empire'. Glasgow's economy was deeply entwined with imperial fortunes, which was highly visible in the various imported products available to buy in the city's grocers and also in the transport of goods to ports for export.<sup>35</sup> Glasgow was also one of the 'doors' to the Empire with ships coming-and-going regularly, therefore the Empire would have been more familiar to Glaswegians than to Scots in any other part of the country. The flow of people from the port to the various outposts in the imperial periphery would have been a common sight, as would the notices and posters advertising the colonies and fares. The Empire was not an abstract concept for Findlay therefore. Furthermore his uncle, Rodderick MacDonald had emigrated to Australia, where he worked as an architect.<sup>36</sup> Findlay's decision to leave

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Robert Findlay's Private Office'

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Glendinning, *A History of Scotland*, p. 320

<sup>34</sup> John M. Mackenzie, "'The Second City of the Empire': Glasgow – imperial municipality', Felix Driver, *Imperial Cities* (1999) p. 217 The City Chambers have been described as 'destined to display the city's imperial wealth and significance'.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* p. 223 The North British Locomotive Company built locomotives for the entire empire and the shipment of engines was highly visible as the engines were drawn through the city's streets on the way to the port.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Helen Findlay

Scotland, therefore, was not out of the ordinary, however he left for Mexico rather than a British colony or dominion.

After only eighteen months in the Burnet office, Findlay resigned his position to join a Scottish construction engineer in Mexico.<sup>37</sup> The engineer who offered him the opportunity may have been a colleague of his father or brother, who were both engineers, and a chance to travel and make money in the New World would have been very tempting. Whatever the reasons for his departure, he left with a very good testament from the office of John Burnet and Son:

167 St Vincent Street  
Glasgow, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1884

We have great pleasure in this opportunity of testifying to Mr. Robert Findlay's ability as an architect's assistant.

Mr. Findlay has been with us for 18 months and during that time has taken office charge of several works, making out the working drawings & carrying out the scheme to our entire satisfaction, & relieving us to an extent that can only be done by an assistant who takes a thorough interest in his employer's work. he [*sic.*] is very obliging and very industrious, has considerable knowledge of construction & carries out his work with order and expedition.

It is with great regret that we part with him & must cordially wish him success in his work whether as an assistant or as master.

John Burnet & Son,  
Archts. [Plate 80]<sup>38</sup>

The younger Burnet was known to have been fastidious about drawings, so the fact that Findlay was given responsibilities for making out working drawings reveals his competence.<sup>39</sup> Although Findlay had secured a job before resigning from his post, his reference from the Burnets became very useful when he received the news that the engineer who had employed him had died. It seems that Findlay had already left Scotland and had arrived in Canada en route to Mexico when he learned of the engineer's demise. Upon reflection of his situation Findlay decided to stay in Montreal.<sup>40</sup> Fortunately, the 1880s was a period of boom in Montreal, so Findlay was very fortunate in his timing.

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<sup>37</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File: F. Findlay, *Robert Findlay: A Biography*. The identity of the Scottish engineer is unknown, but it is possible that it was an acquaintance of Findlay's father.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* Testament written for Robert Findlay by John James Burnet, 31st May 1884; this is one of a rare number of examples existing of John J. Burnet's handwriting, so is an invaluable document on various counts.

<sup>39</sup> Walker, 'Scotland and Paris', p. 23

Having made the decision to stay, Findlay joined the office of Alexander F. Dunlop in 1885, a man who was 'a recognised architect in designing the best class of heavy structures and the larger class of residential work' in Montreal.<sup>41</sup> Dunlop had undertaken his apprenticeship in the Montreal office of the brothers George and John James Browne before seeking opportunities further a field. In 1870 he set up independently in Detroit where he became immersed in the latest developments in American architecture. He returned to Montreal in 1874, principally because of the 'Scare of 1874', when there was a very sharp decline in American economic investment.<sup>42</sup> Back in Montreal he set up his own practice becoming very successful and attracting talented young architects who matured into some of the most distinguished architects in Montreal's history, including Edward Maxwell and David R. Brown.<sup>43</sup> Maxwell and Brown followed their time in Dunlop's office with years in the Boston office of Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge. Their decisions to go to America were no doubt influenced by Dunlop and by the lack of formal training opportunities in Canada. Dunlop was one of the older generations of Canadian architects who acknowledged the paucity of architectural training in Canada in comparison to that available over the border. Furthermore, he had prospered during his four years in the United States, so would have supported any young man's decision to go there. The two young architects no doubt envied Findlay's training, especially if they had learned of Burnet's École des Beaux-Arts training, as the Paris School was held in very high regard in North America, much higher than it was in Britain.

Dunlop was very impressed with his new assistant and in 1887 announced that Findlay would be the Clerk of Works during the construction of the new St James Methodist Church, a very high profile project in Montreal and a very important commission for Dunlop. In support of this decision Dunlop told the Church Trustees that Findlay was 'an architect of experience in whom he had the utmost

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<sup>40</sup> Findlay, *Robert Findlay – A Biography*

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in Stephen Robinson, *An Architect Discovered: The Work of A. F. Dunlop*, unpublished master's thesis, Concordia University (1992) p. 5 This was originally written in an article in *The Montreal Herald* and subsequently quoted in Henry J. Morgan, *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1912 (2nd edition))

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13

<sup>43</sup> Both men went on to have very successful careers. Edward Maxwell, like Findlay, became a very popular and highly prolific house architect, but was also architect to the CPR. David Brown's career is less well documented, but he was President of the PQAA in 1908 and President of the RAIC between 1920 and 1922.

confidence'.<sup>44</sup> Findlay's experience of supervising work in the Burnet office was clearly invaluable to his progress in Canada.

During his time in Dunlop's office Findlay consolidated his knowledge of Canadian architecture and the various factors that influenced it, none more important than the climate. The Montreal climate was critical to architecture, for winters in the city are particularly fierce. In an article from 1890 Dunlop offered some advice on how best to deal with it:

The style of architecture in Montreal to-day has a decided tendency toward the Romanesque; this style is very suitable to our stone and climate, as it can be treated in a very broad manner, with the judicious introduction of well-grouped carving. The general desire is for more substantial work, more stone and less wood, and, in fact, less brick, as the latter (unless pressed brick is used) is very inferior, of a soft porous nature, and apt to chip off with the frost.<sup>45</sup>

After a couple of years with Dunlop, Findlay, confident in his own ability, and perhaps eager to start making more money, entered into partnership with James Wright.<sup>46</sup> There are no records of any work that the partnership executed however, and the first time that Findlay was properly introduced to the Montreal populace as a practising architect was in 1890 with his design for the Head Office for the Sun Life Assurance Company, which he won in an open competition [Plate 81].<sup>47</sup>

The title he chose for his entry design was 'Well Considered', which proved very fortuitous; the judges commended Findlay's design for its 'very good plan...laid out with great care and knowledge of the requirements...the design is well-considered'.<sup>48</sup> This was hardly unexpected from a former assistant of the Burnet practice, but it must have been gratifying for Findlay to win the first competition he had entered. His design also reveals his assimilation of recent trends in American architecture. It was one of the earliest examples of a tall building by a Canadian architect in Montreal and was one of the first buildings in Canada to have an electric elevator.<sup>49</sup> When designing the building Findlay was clearly inspired by the composition of the New York Life Assurance Building

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<sup>44</sup> St James Methodist Church Trustees Minute Book, May 10th, 1887 quoted in Robinson, *An Architect Discovered*, p. 21

<sup>45</sup> Alexander Dunlop, 'Architectural Wealth', *Montreal Gazette* (January 3rd, 1890) p. 7

<sup>46</sup> 'Notice', *CAB*, 1, 8 (August 1888), p. 6

<sup>47</sup> 'Sun Life Assurance Co. Building Competition – Experts' Report' in *CAB*, 3, 1 (January 1890) p. 5

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Although Findlay was a Scot, he has become accepted as a Canadian architect. In terms of this

by Babb, Cook & Willard, which had been erected at Place d'Armes only a few years earlier in 1888 [Plate 21]. The style of the building, however, was quite different. Rather than adopting heavy masonry or imitating the Romanesque style that was so in vogue at the time, Findlay preferred a more elegant and restrained approach, yet it was neither staid nor traditional. Findlay choose to express the steel frame of the building rather than hide it behind masonry and ornament, thus, at the right-hand corner of the main façade, the steel frame projects its corner angle beyond the cylindrical oriel which was wholly contained within it. This is an early example of direct structural expression in Canadian architecture, and reveals Findlay's knowledge of the work of Sullivan and Adler, and Root and Burnham in Chicago.

Findlay exaggerated the height of the building by dividing the already narrow frontage into three vertical sections, which differed from one another; this was very similar to the technique that Burnet and Campbell (1859-1909) used in their first tall building, the Athenaeum Theatre, Glasgow (1891) [Plate 82]. As the two designs were only separated by one year, it is possible that the architects corresponded to each other about them. Burnet and Findlay did remain in touch throughout their careers, so it is a highly likely possibility that they were both aware of each other's first tall building.<sup>50</sup> Their designs, however, differed quite dramatically. The Athenaeum Theatre has Baroque theatre and throttle. Findlay's is understated in comparison, and takes the English Free Classic for its stylistic inspiration. This helped to single the building out in a neighbourhood where American-inspired designs were beginning to dominate. His choice certainly caught the attention of the judges:

The author has selected a type of Renaissance architecture for his elevations. The selection is good, for, owing to the narrowness of the principal frontage, a bold or heavy style would not be so suitable; the design is well considered, and has a rich and handsome aspect.<sup>51</sup>

No one from the company was included in the judgement of the competition entries; yet Findlay had pitched his design very well with regards to the President of the company, Robertson Macaulay, who had expressed his wish that the Head Office should be 'modest, not pretentious...in keeping with the

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competition it was his status as a non-American which was significant.

<sup>50</sup> Letters dated 1907 and 1916 in private family collection.

<sup>51</sup> 'Sun Life Assurance Co.', *CAB*, p. 5

company's character'.<sup>52</sup> He was not disappointed: the Macaulay family was so impressed by Findlay that he became their regular architect for both professional and personal commissions.<sup>53</sup>

His first private commission for the family was a house for Thomas B. Macaulay, son of R. Macaulay in 1891 [Plate 83]. It is a restrained design with hardly any decorative elements. The entire building depends upon form and composition for its interest; the roof particularly has strong pyramidal and prismatic geometric forms. This house for Macaulay with its picturesque roofline, staggered composition and gabled attics would have fitted comfortably in Helensburgh next to Leiper's designs. The red brick of the house contrasts with the dark slate of the roof suggesting the influence of Queen Anne aestheticism, and the house could have adorned a Greenaway illustration. This was quite different to the prevailing trends in Montreal for rockfaced masonry and elaborate ornamentation. Taylor's Drummond House is a very good example of both these characteristics and was very well received in the contemporary press. Findlay's former colleagues from Dunlop's also revealed a predilection, either their own or their clients', (or perhaps both) for decorative designs. Maxwell's design for Hugh A. Allan, Stanley Street (1896) has very intricate brickwork on the top floor and the carving around the entrance porch looks quite Iberian [Plate 84]. Findlay's design for Macaulay may have been different to the prevailing fashion but it dovetailed perfectly with Findlay's own opinion on architecture:

The moment attention is concentrated upon the leading forms of any of the most sublime works of nature, the primitive idea of Geometry force themselves upon the attention...from nature's delight and simplicity, man probably derived his earliest perception of Geometrical figures...the thin clouds that sweep along the sky at sunset, hanging over the distant blue line of the ocean, form exquisite parallels, and when cut by the line of trees and plants, suggest square and oblong, rhombus and parallelogram.<sup>54</sup>

Whilst Taylor regarded geometry as monotonous and dull, Findlay saw its beauty and its variety and these are reflected in the Macaulay house. It may lack decorative carving, but viewed from different angles the house provides variants of itself through Findlay's considered, picturesque composition.

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<sup>52</sup> Joseph Schull, *The Century of the Sun: The first 100 years of Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971) p. 33

<sup>53</sup> Helen Power, *Robert Findlay and Macaulay Family Architecture*, unpublished master's thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1993

<sup>54</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File, unpublished lecture, unpaginated

Findlay's love of the geometric was probably formed during his time at Burnet & Son and especially through the Beaux-Arts enthusiasms of the younger Burnet and the resultant rectitude of Macaulay's house seems to be the perfect accompaniment to Paterson's description of the Scottish character, as does the house he built for the elder Macaulay twenty years later [Plates 85a-85b].

This was an even more restrained design. The roofline is unbroken; there are large expanses of plain wall, yet Findlay still created movement and 'delight' by the addition of the semi-circular porch that gives the entrance a baroque note. It lends itself to a comparison with Ernest Newton's (1856-1922) architecture, especially houses such as Steeplehill, Jersey (1902-1904) [Plate 86]. Newton's was a romantic architecture with a highly tender, sentimental view of historic architecture and life, which he tried to recapture in his work:

Let us picture to ourselves the old Elizabethan house, quiet, dignified, and stately, as befits the age.

It is early morning on a bright summer day; the master of the house paces the long alley guarded by yew and box, or turns into the flower-garden, where the flowers, drenched with dew, give out a sweet, fresh scent; or is it late afternoon, and we see the head of the house sitting with his wife in the shaded arcade, while the children play on the terrace. The air is full of the scent of roses, and musical with the hum of bees; the shadows lengthen, the rooks sail slowly through the air; part of the house is in deep, cool shadow, and chimneys and gable-tops begin to glow like burnished gold. There is a sense of perfect rest and contentment; cares are forgotten for a time.<sup>55</sup>

The quiet timelessness that Newton describes in this passage is quite similar to the air of the Macaulay house. The nostalgia for the dignified, stately past was something that Macaulay shared with Newton, but despite the English source of the design, Macaulay called his house Ardincaple, in honour of the Macaulay ancestral seat in Scotland.

Findlay certainly nurtured a very good relationship with the Macaulays founded on what seems to have been a common taste for simplicity and restraint. If he were to be a successful domestic designer, he had to ensure that he was equally adept at meeting the needs of other clients.

The majority of Findlay's patrons came from the upper and middle classes of Montreal society, and

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<sup>55</sup> Ernest Newton, 'Home-like House', *The Builder*, 58 (May 1891) p. 430

for the most part were Anglo-protestants.<sup>56</sup> Correspondingly, his houses adorned the Golden Square Mile and Westmount. Both of these areas, one in central Montreal and the other a small suburb to the west of the city, were small enclaves that were 'forever England'.<sup>57</sup> Between 1850 and 1930, 85% of the residents of Montreal's Golden Square Mile were Anglo-Saxons, and this was further broken down into 70% Scottish, 15% English, 10% American and 5% Irish.<sup>58</sup> These figures were similar to Westmount's demography:

National Origin	1881	1891	1911
Total pop. (no.)	884	8, 856	14, 579
British total %	87.9	88.3	82.8
1 English	41.6	45.3	41.0
2 Scots	31.1	27.3	26.2
3 Irish	15.2	15.4	15.1
French	10.0	7.9	9.1
Other European	0.3	3.0	5.1
Other	1.8	1.0	2.0

Table 1. Westmount Population by National Origin, 1881-1911<sup>59</sup>

The overwhelming British presence in both areas is very evident and the comparative low percentage of French Canadians living in Westmount throughout the decades demonstrates the racial demarcation that existed. The demography of the two areas was demonstrated in their residents' manners and mores:

*Le Mille carré doré vivait à l'heure et dans le plus pure tradition anglaise. Il a atteint un degré de raffinement inégalé au Canada, avec ses nombreux clubs très sélects, ses équipes sportives, les célèbres collections de tableaux de certains de ses membres, ses réceptions grandiose et ses maisons de ville et de campagne avec leur personnel stylé.*<sup>60</sup>

This description demonstrates the social and economic strata of Montreal society, as well as the model

<sup>56</sup> Anglo, like England and English, was used indiscriminately at the time for those of English, Welsh and Scottish descent.

<sup>57</sup> S. A. Thomas, *Three Montreal Residences by Architect Robert Findlay* (Student Paper, Concordia University, 1980) p. 2. In *The Canadian Establishment*, Peter Newan informs his reader that 'from 1860 until the stock market collapse of 1929, there was created within these chilly boundaries a non-Canadian enclave that was forever England'.

<sup>58</sup> Frances Rémillard and Brian Merit, *Demeures Bourgeoises de Montréal, Le Mille Carré Doré 1850-1930* (Montréal: Éditions du Méridien, 1986) p. 18

<sup>59</sup> Published summaries of census returns quoted in John S. Bryce, *The Making of Westmount, Quebec, 1870-1929*, unpublished master's thesis, McGill University, December 1990, p. 58

<sup>60</sup> Rémillard and Merit, *Demeures Bourgeoises de Montréal*, p. 19

that the city was following; during a visit to Canada in 1873, the author Trollope was thankful to report home that the country was 'a repetition of England'.<sup>61</sup> The importance of the mother country was significant to the majority of the elite in Montreal and visits to Britain were commonplace for them. A journal kept by Olsa Clouston during a trip to London reads like a Who's Who of British Society; Olsa was the daughter of one of the wealthiest, and hence most important, men in Montreal.<sup>62</sup>

In 1902 during a trip to London, she recorded all her important dates in her Engagement Book:

June 8 <sup>th</sup>	Colonial Troops Club, 9.30am
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs L Drummond 4.00–7.00pm
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Duchess of Devonshire, 4.00pm
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Lady Windsor, 10.45am
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	in Cambridge Lunch with Anguses, Scotts and Cloustons Lady Battersea, 4.00-7.00pm
June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Lord Salisbury, Hatfield, 3.30-5.00pm
June 21 <sup>st</sup>	Lady Mount-Stephen
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs H Chamberlain, 5.00-7.00pm
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	review Indian troops by P of Wales and the Queen, 11.30am
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	Countess of Jersey, 5.00pm
July 7 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Stanley Smith, 1.00pm L de Rothschild, 4.00pm–7.00pm Mrs Chamberlain
July 8 <sup>th</sup>	Merry Wives of Windsor, Lady Howard de Walden, 10.30pm
July 9 <sup>th</sup>	Countess Cowper, 4.00–7.00pm
July 11 <sup>th</sup>	Countess of Aberdeen <sup>63</sup>

Whilst Olsa did not record her thoughts on these events, her Engagement Book provides an insight into the high society the Montreal elite moved in. Olsa also kept newspaper cuttings that commemorated the highlights of the Montreal calendar, one such occasion was a ball given by her parents:

Last night one of the most fashionable and successful dances of the season was given by Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Clouston, at their beautiful house on Peel Street. The handsome hall and dining room, en suite, were used as a ball room, the polished floors proving admirable for dancing. The whole house was thrown open, the upstairs hall, boudoir and library, with their artistic furnishings, forming delightful sitting out rooms between the dances. Shaded lights and many flowers added to the beauty of the effect. Supper was served in the big dining room at the end of the hall itself. One big table was placed in the centre, on which stood a bowl of American beauties, while small tables for little parties were decorated with the same blossoms in tall vases. The billiard room, with cosy piles of cushions and rugs, was also called into requisition for a sitting-out room. The orchestra, stationed in the large alcove, in the drawing room, went through a programme of eighteen dances and extras, large cards being placed in

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, p. 39

<sup>62</sup> Her father was Edward Clouston, who was one of the key businessmen of his generation.

<sup>63</sup> McGill University, McCord Museum Archives, Clouston Family Collection, P007-A/4-/11D 22 Olsa Clouston Engagement Book, London, 1902

each room. The floral decorations throughout the house were particularly effective and artistic. The great carved fire place in the hall was banked with flowering plants in which red predominated, whole palms were also housed. In the drawing room and dining room yellow and white chrysanthemums were chiefly used, and the lights were softly shaded in yellow, while everywhere there were palms and flowering plants and cut flowers. Mrs. Clouston received in a beautiful gown of black crepe de chine and jet, Miss Clouston [Olsa Clouston] was in pale blue crepe de chine, and Miss Marjorie Clouston wore a dainty white point d'esprit with spangles. Many beautiful gowns were worn.<sup>64</sup>

As well as describing the event, this report also provides an insight into contemporary domestic architecture by describing the various rooms that were opened up to accommodate the guests: dining room, boudoir, library, billiard room, drawing room and a hall with a great carved fireplace. These are all rooms that were typical of any large British mansion in the nineteenth century.

Although this dance was feted as one of the most successful events of the 1902 Season, the main event of the Montreal Season was the annual St Andrews Ball. A list of all attendees was always printed in the *Montreal Gazette*. To a large extent it was a repetition of many of the families that were invited to the Clouston Ball. These were the patrons a domestic designer needed to attract if he were to be successful. Findlay was incredibly successful in attracting rich patrons; a number of the guests at the Clouston Ball commissioned Findlay at some point during his career.<sup>65</sup>

A display of competence in commercial architecture was one way that architects attracted private commissions, as seen in the relationship that grew between Findlay and the Macaulays. Contemporary

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid. This cutting is pasted on the page for the week 19th – 23rd November 1902

<sup>65</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Index of Drawings in Vaults, CAC 3.02 015 0013, undated. The names in bold are patrons, or relatives of patrons, that Findlay designed houses and additions for during his career:

‘Among the invited guests, most of whom were present, were Major and Mrs. Maude, Mr Arthur Guise, **Capt. Bell**, ADC Capt. Hughes, ADC, and Mr. A Sladen, Mr. and Mrs. Adam Beck, **Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Allan, Mr. and Mrs. Forbes Angus, Mr. and Mrs. George Hooper**, Mr. and Mrs. H V Meredith, Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Paterson, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Campbell, Dr and Mrs. H B Yates, Miss Gormully, Mr. R Gormully, the **Misses Stephens, the Misses Angus, the Misses Stephen, the Misses Bond, Mr. L Stephens**, the Misses Burnett, Miss Cassels (Washington), Miss Sibyll Seymour, Miss Van Horne, the **Misses Scott**, the Misses Gillespies, Miss Stikeman, **Miss Muriel Greenshields, the Misses Stearns, Miss J Grant**, the Misses Howard, **Miss Porteus**, Miss Hingston, Miss Peterson, the **Misses Hays, the Misses Dury**, Miss Alice Sutherland, the **Misses Boyer, Mr. H M Allan**, Mr. Clarence Bogert, Dr Chipman, Mr. Travers Allan, the **Messrs Angus**, Mr. Gaudet, Mr. Glassco, **Mr. Hamilton Gault, Mr. Angus Hooper**, Dr Skinner, **Mr. F E Meredith**, Dr Turner, **Mr. M Ogilvie**, Mr. Counsell, **Mr. Graham Drinkwater, Mr. Porteous**, Mr. Woods, Mr. Van Horne, the Messrs Witherspoon, Mr. Skinner, Mr. W Kirkpatrick, **Mr. Stewart, Mr. Stephens**, Mr. A Macdonald, Mr. Stikeman, Professor Owens and a number of others.’

publications, such as the *Dominion Illustrated*, were another method of promoting architects' reputations. The 1891 volume dedicated to Montreal said the following of Robert Findlay:

Architect and Valuator, Room 704 New York Life Building. – The importance and responsibility of first-class architects, who are indispensable to any community, more especially in centres of activity, where buildings are being constantly erected cannot be overrated. In Montreal one need only look about him and see standing evidences in the handsome churches, cathedrals, public buildings and private residences, that there are here productions of superior skill in architectural designs. There are necessarily many A1 architects in the city, and it is exceptionally pleasing to make special notice of one of the most prominent representatives in this connection in the person of Mr. Robert Findlay, whose office and headquarters are admirably located in Room 704 New York Life Building. This well and favourably known gentleman studied his profession on the “old sod” under men of the highest rank in the profession. He entered the profession seventeen years ago and has had a varied experience in all classes of work. He settled in Montreal in 1885, and though having to compete with older established architects, he has met with a flattering degree of success during the whole of the intervening period. Mr. Findlay has achieved this honourable reputation by carrying out with the highest credit to himself important architectural contracts in this city. He is the architect for the Sun Life Assurance Company's Building on Notre Dame Street, his design being chosen out of a competition of fifteen competitors from both the United States and Canada, but it suffices to say all his work is the very best and unsurpassed in design and taste in this city. Mr. Findlay is esteemed by all who know him and retains the good will and confidence of a host of friends.<sup>66</sup>

This advertisement drew on various selling points to attract new clients. It mentions ‘important architectural contracts’ that Findlay had executed in the city. His Sun Life Assurance Company Building is singled out for special attention and his work is described as the ‘very best and unsurpassed in design and taste in this city’. Another key point that the advertisement drew out about Findlay was that he was from the mother country and had studied architecture ‘under men of the highest rank in the profession’. As so much of the wealth in Montreal was held by the Anglo-elite, the availability of a ‘home-grown’ architect in their city would have been a huge attraction to them and a valuable selling point for the Scotsman.<sup>67</sup>

Findlay's Scottish origins would have been equally invaluable in finding new patrons. The St Andrews Society, which hosted the annual St Andrews Ball, was not an elite club. Findlay joined

<sup>66</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File, ‘Robert Findlay, Architect and Valuator’ in *Dominion Illustrated, Montreal Number* (1891) photocopy

<sup>67</sup> Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, p. 190 When describing the behaviour of the Anglo-elite, Marsan observed that they ‘looked towards the mother country, the “Land of Hope and Glory” for architectural forms which would best express their nostalgia and sense of belonging’.

the St Andrews Society in 1896, as did other Scottish architects.<sup>68</sup> It is likely that they met patrons through this society. Findlay also played golf, which may have helped him meet new patrons, although it is not known if he was a member of the Montreal Golf Club.<sup>69</sup> Although Scottish roots were paramount to many of those who could claim them, few of his patrons wished to build traditional Scottish baronial houses. The majority of Findlay's patrons seemed to prefer styles that were more English in tone, in particular the Queen Anne style and all the permutations that existed beneath this umbrella term. Its popularity was no doubt affected by sentimentality and nostalgia.

In 1896 Findlay designed a house for W. R. Miller, which was considered 'one of the best residences in the city' [Plate 87].<sup>70</sup> With its half-timbered detailing on its gables and extending down some of the bay windows the influence of English architecture is apparent. The design as printed in *CAB* shows the house sitting within a pretty garden with green lawns, flowerbeds and mature gardens. It seems a perfect illustration to Muthesius' description of the English house sitting 'in the midst of flower-gardens, facing far away from the street, looking on to broad green lawns which radiate the energy and peace of nature'.<sup>71</sup> The newness and modernity of the house is cleverly disguised by the use of the mature garden setting in the design and once more attests to an observation that Muthesius had made about the English, and implies the creation of a life-style not just a house: 'The Englishman's existence is far more old-fashioned than modern...it bears the marks of a peaceful traditional culture grounded in old established prosperity'.<sup>72</sup>

In the same year Findlay designed a very similar property for W. M. Knowles in Westmount, which was in the suburban environment than the Golden Square Mile and Findlay exploited the setting in his design [Plate 88]. A glowing commentary of the house, that accompanied an illustration of the design published in *CAB*, reported that:

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<sup>68</sup> Letter from St Andrew Society to Holly Kinnear, November 2001

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Helen Findlay. His granddaughter, Helen Findlay, recalls that her grandfather enjoyed golf but has no recollection of his skill or any membership to golf clubs.

<sup>70</sup> 'Residence for Mr. W. R. Miller, Stanley Street, Montreal, Robert Findlay, Arch.', *CAB*, 9, 12 (December 1896) p. 199

<sup>71</sup> Muthesius, *The English House*, p. 63

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

This building recently erected occupies a magnificent site upon the mountain slope. In the arrangement of plan advantage has been taken of the extensive view of the city, river, rapids and lake, and every effort made to secure comfort and convenience combined with all the advantages of this commanding position. The superstructure is composed of pressed brick with sandstone dressing and half-timbered work. A large staircase-hall forms the central feature of the house, from which the principal rooms are reached; and the interior has been handsomely furnished throughout in hardwood. The lighting, heating and sanitary applications and fittings are first-class in every respect.<sup>73</sup>

The location of the house supports Muthesius' observation that the English man prefers to have his house 'hidden somewhere in the green countryside remote from any centre of culture'.<sup>74</sup> The English influences on these properties are undeniable and sources for them can be sought in the work of Norman Shaw, for example Sunninghill, Berkshire [Plate 89]. The purpose of these designs was surely to present a bond to the mother country and it was clearly a sentimental image of England that was being created, a nostalgic innocence akin to the illustrations of Crane and Greenaway. Findlay also used timbering and brick to enhance the English tone of the designs, although he did follow Dunlop's advice by ensuring that the brick he used was pressed brick in light of the severe Montreal winters.

The houses were not without some New World influence. The sweeping verandah of the Knowles house, for example, is a characteristically American feature and was likely to be a response to the climate. The Romanesque entrance porch of the Miller House was clearly more an aesthetic choice, rather than a practical consideration. These features demonstrate Findlay's increasing knowledge and assimilation of American architecture but he integrated the American features within an overall English composition.

When designing houses for his Anglophile clients, Findlay depended a lot on publications, as he had very little first hand knowledge of the Queen Anne that was so popular in the Anglo enclaves of Montreal.<sup>75</sup> His library included Henry Shaw's *Elizabethan Architecture* (1834), Charles J Richardson's *Elizabethan Architecture and Ornament* and *The Domestic Architecture of*

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<sup>73</sup> 'R. F. Findlay, Residence for W. M. Knowles, Westmount', *CAB*, 9, 4 (April 1896) p. 57

<sup>74</sup> Muthesius, *English House*, p. 63

<sup>75</sup> The Queen Anne style was popular throughout Canada, particularly for domestic architecture, from the 1880s and into the twentieth century.

*England during the Tudor Period*, and Ernest Newton's *A Book of Country Houses* (1903). Books such as these would have been useful for any architect trying to emulate the architecture of home.<sup>76</sup> It is also likely that Findlay's clients received knowledge of architecture in England from journals and other publications. The Miller and Knowles houses, for example, are similar to the British Delegation Buildings at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876, by Thomas Harris [Plate 90]:

The façade of the large building is occupied by three large gables, which express their construction with all possible frankness, and have that air of picturesqueness which is found in the old half-timber houses of Chester and other parts of England.<sup>77</sup>

If this were the image of England that was being displayed in America and Canada, its popularity can be better understood. Although houses in Westmount and the Golden Square Mile displayed nostalgia, they also exhibited wealth and social status. Frederick Molson, a key shareholder in the Molson Brewery and also a member of the banking family, was a man who clearly wanted his house to stand out. The Molson family had a very distinguished history in Montreal as both businessmen and benefactors, and Findlay nurtured a fruitful relationship with the Molson family throughout his career, designing houses for a number of its members.<sup>78</sup> Findlay's design for Frederick Molson was one of his most flamboyant house designs, an almost eccentric example of the Pont Street Dutch style and unlike any other that he designed, suggesting that the client had the upper hand in the creative process [Plate 91]. It lacks the quiet, restrained dignity of other Findlay designs. With its picturesque roofline, contrived asymmetry and recessed entrance façade it was a design that seems more suited to Taylor. It was perhaps a true illustration of the Queen Anne style, however, as the arcaded porch was a feature of eighteenth-century country house design, the dormer gables a Jacobean motif and the curvaceous gables a seventeenth century feature and the whole was made of red brick. According to Girouard's definition of the Queen Anne style, the only thing that seemed to be lacking was 'a touch of Francois Ier'.<sup>79</sup> A similar house, although more restrained and with more overt to the gothic, was the house that Findlay designed for George Smithers (1902) [Plate 92]. Smithers was the President of the Bank of

<sup>76</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, 3.02, 015, List of books in Findlay library

<sup>77</sup> 'British Commissioners' Buildings, *American Architect and Building News*, 1, 7 (12th April 1876), n.p. Quoted in Maitland, *The Queen Anne Revival Style* p. 115

<sup>78</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, B.6 D6 – 4 CAC 3.03 009 053028. Letter to Francis R. Findlay, from John H. Molson, 21st May 1946: 'I remember your father well and the fact that he built houses for my father'. It is not clear from this letter whose son John Molson was.

<sup>79</sup> Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*, p. 1

Montreal when he commissioned Findlay to design this house, and it has an appropriate grandeur and dignity for one of the city's leading businessmen. As a design it is self-consciously asymmetrical, and owes something to the London designs of architects such as Shaw and Bodley [Plate 93]. From the late 1890s through to 1900s there was a clear influence of the Queen Anne on Findlay's work, there were also some differences between the houses. Those in Westmount took most inspiration from the country house designs of architects such as Devey and Newton, whereas his houses in the Golden Square Mile were more influenced by the urban interpretation of the style.

The differences between the separate houses are testament to Findlay's desire and ability to create homes to suit his clients' needs. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of the contribution made by his clients, although most likely they would have approached Findlay with some thoughts. An article published in 1915, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec', suggests that a client's input could be plentiful, but not altogether useful:

It will almost invariably be found that if an architect of good standing is given a free hand, the house he designs will be a real success – harmonious in all its parts, being carried out as a single scheme in obedience to the direction of one trained mind. But it is seldom that an architect has a free hand, and as Guy Dawber, one of England's foremost domestic architects has so aptly said: "His art is usually a thing of compromise and what can be more disheartening to a man of genius than compromise in an essential of design and art?"<sup>80</sup>

The article continues to say that 'the problem of the home is not confined to the desire of shelter only, but rather to express the individuality of the owner', which certainly seems to have been a key concern for Findlay, and the F. Molson House is a particularly good example of this. Whilst the Macaulay, Miller, Knowles, Molson and Smithers designs were all very different from one another they all pertained to a sense of England. The adoption of the Queen Anne style in Canada by architects such as Findlay and Maxwell certainly seems to have been a response to their clients' imperial sentiment, which was underpinned by nostalgia for the mother country and the qualities she stood for. Advertisements for new homes in Westmount and Mount Royal sometimes used childhood imagery that appealed to the nostalgia of adults and reflected the childhood innocence that proliferated Kate Greenaway's books, which were arguably vital to the popularity of the Queen Anne in England [Plate 94]. Nostalgia was a key reason for the Queen Anne style's popularity in England, although this

was not necessarily how the leading British architects regarded their new style.<sup>81</sup> In his article 'On the recent re-action of taste in English Architecture', Stevenson described 'an awakening in the minds of some men, who formerly cared nothing for any style but Gothic, to the interest and merit in Queen Anne architecture'.<sup>82</sup> It seems to be the case, however, that this 'awakening' did not apply to those architects in Canada who were busy creating, or rather replicating, an imagined community for their clients based upon an image of 'the land of hope and glory'.<sup>83</sup> By designing these houses, architects like Findlay were helping to perpetuate the desire for the Queen Anne and embed the imperial character of Montreal. The early 1900s, however, brought a subtle shift in Findlay's *oeuvre*.

In 1905 Findlay received another commission from the Molson family, this time for William A. Molson [Plate 95]. Unlike Frederick, William was not actively involved in the family brewery. He had pursued his own career and had trained to be a doctor, studying and working in Vienna, Edinburgh and London.<sup>84</sup> William Molson's house, therefore, served as his surgery as well as his home. To accommodate both the public and private side of the house, Findlay devised a plan that was influenced by the double-pile plan developed in the eighteenth-century by Sir Roger Pratt at Coleshill. The spinal corridor, which was composed of a vestibule, entrance hall and rear hall, neatly divided Molson's consultancy rooms from his private space. The waiting room, consulting room and servants' pantry accommodated the left-hand side of the house, whilst the corresponding space on the right-hand side was reserved for the drawing room and living room.

The fact that this was a business premise as well as a private residence must have been taken into

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<sup>80</sup> Phillip Turner, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec', *Construction*, 8, 6 (June 1915) p. 265

<sup>81</sup> Gavin Stamp and Andre Goulancourt, *The English House 1860 – 1914, The Flowering of English Domestic Architecture* (London: Faber, 1986). In their introduction Stamp and Goulancourt comment that 'nostalgia can be a creative force' and the various articles and speeches that were produced during the period certainly supports this with their frequent lyricisms about the golden eras in Britain's history. Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991) observes that most nations wish to create an identity that is based upon the 'hoary traditions' of the past rather than to embrace the present and future in their construct of nationality and national identity. This is precisely what appeared to be happening in Montreal; rather than embrace the youth of the Dominion, the Anglo-elite wished to display their common British heritage with the imperial metropolis.

<sup>82</sup> Stevenson, 'On the recent re-action of taste in English architecture' in *Builder*, 32 (June 1874) pp. 539 – 540, p. 539

<sup>83</sup> Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, p. 190

<sup>84</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File, unpaginated biography of W. A.

consideration when choosing the style, which presented graceful dignity. Findlay composed a very precise Jacobean design, to which the local limestone was perfectly suited. The symmetry of the façade and the use of seventeenth-century architectural motifs could once again be evidence of the Queen Anne influence. In this instance, however, America was Findlay's source. A house in Philadelphia by Frank Miles Day (1897–1898) is almost identical to the W. A. Molson house [Plate 96]. The Day house was published in a 1904 issue of *The Architectural Record*, which was the year before Molson commissioned Findlay.<sup>85</sup> The similarities between the two houses are so obvious that it is inconceivable that Findlay had not seen the Philadelphia design.<sup>86</sup> The *Architectural Record* was a journal that Findlay read and it is probable that he showed this particular issue to Molson during the preliminary stages of the commission. The accompanying text to the illustration may have persuaded Findlay and Molson that this was the perfect design: 'it is an architecture for gentlemen, it breathes good breeding and marks good blood.'<sup>87</sup> Despite their similarities, there are differences between the designs. The entrances are at different levels; the window pattern has been reversed in the Molson design, and Findlay emphasised the central axis with Jacobean decorative architraves for both the door and window. Jacobean features like this were currently in vogue and numerous historic examples were published in architectural folios of the period and architectural journals.<sup>88</sup> Having chosen the Day design as a template, Findlay was keen to search for ways to make it individual for his client.

The American precedent for this design could indicate that attitudes were beginning to change in the Golden Square Mile, moving away from the distant mother country to the closer neighbour. Associations with modern America were considered more appropriate to some Canadians, rather than the traditions of Britain.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, by 1905 Findlay had been in Montreal for twenty years. After two decades living in Canada, it is understandable that his *oeuvre* had begun to take increasing

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#### Molson

<sup>85</sup> The Frank Miles Day house was illustrated as part of an article that was written by R Cram, 'The Work of Messrs Frank Miles Day and Brother', *The Architectural Record*, 15, 5 (May 1904) pp. 397 – 421. This journal is one of the ones that appear on the record of Findlay's library.

<sup>86</sup> Robert Lemire, 'Tudor Gothic in Downtown Montreal 1900-1929', *SSAC Bulletin*, 12, 1 (March 1987) 13-18, p.16; the similarities between the two houses was identified in this article.

<sup>87</sup> Cram, 'The Work of Messrs. Frank Miles Day and Brother', p. 410

<sup>88</sup> Batsford was one of the publishers who published large Tudor and Jacobean folios during the period.

inspiration from American architecture. The American Gothic revival, of which the Day house was an example, however, fed off Anglo-Saxon sentiment. This design does not necessarily suggest any dent in enthusiasm for English architecture but merely a change of source; there were contemporary works in Britain that were guided by similar stylistic sources, such as William Kerr's Liberal Club, Alloa (1904), therefore it is too simplistic to argue that the influence came directly from one source or the other [Plate 97]. In this case, however, the similarities with the Day house are so pronounced that it must have been the model for Findlay. In an article for the *Boston Architectural Review* in 1904, Langford Warren (1857-1917) conceded that America's 'best work, like that of England, will be done by founding it on the sound traditions of England's past, modifying these traditions frankly and fearlessly in the spirit of the old work to meet our new wants and conditions.'<sup>90</sup> This sentence could easily be used with reference to Canada and would be an excellent description of domestic architecture in the Dominion between 1880 and 1914. It also confirms an observation Muthesius made during his study of English houses: "It has become characteristic of the lower middle-classes in England that they have no mode of life of their own but style their lives on an imitation of the *mores* of the rich'.<sup>91</sup>

This appears to be a perfectly sensible summation of the Anglo-elite in Montreal too, although they would probably have been horrified to think they had similar aspirations to the lower middle-classes in Britain. But their manners, the style of living and their houses were all closely modelled on 'home'. The continuing aspiration of the Montreal Anglo-elite to model themselves on the English may have been driven by the new home and life style journals that began publication during the 1890s such as *Country Life* and *The Studio*. If the Montreal elite had read these publications, it is clear where their ideas came from for their houses.

Not everyone, however, was determined to perpetuate the image of England. There were patrons in the city who preferred American references in their houses and Findlay was one of the first architects in Montreal to design a house in the new Beaux-Arts Classicism. In 1905, the same year that he

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<sup>89</sup> See 'Canadian Architecture and Architects 1880-1914', chapter 2

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in P. Davey, *Arts and Crafts Architecture* (London: Phaidon, 1995) p. 104

<sup>91</sup> Muthesius, *The English House*, p. 130

produced the elegant Jacobean house for William Molson, Findlay designed 1029 Pine Avenue West for Mortimer B. Davis, a tobacco magnate [Plate 98]. The severity and sobriety of the American Academic design was enhanced by the choice of Indiana limestone which added an acerbic crispness to the design. The classical grandeur of this property outflanked the neighbouring houses, which was probably deliberate. Whilst the houses that Findlay built clearly had a practical purpose of accommodating a family, the promotional value of residences was also critical to some, if not many or all of his clients. This could explain the flamboyancy of the Frederick Molson design and it was certainly true of the Davis House. In 1909 a description of the house was included in the *Board of Trade Illustrated Edition of Montreal*, a sure advertisement opportunity:

Mortimer B. Davis – On one of the highest and prettiest sites along that grand thoroughfare, Pine Avenue, to the north facing Mount Royal Park, and to the south commanding a full view of the city, the River St. Lawrence and the country and mountains beyond, stands, in classic architecture, the newly-erected home of Mr. Mortimer B. Davis, President of the Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, Director of the Union Bank, and identified with many other corporations.<sup>92</sup>

It was exactly the type of ‘modern mansion’ that Newton despised and ridiculed. In the same paper that he eulogised the Elizabethan house – quiet, dignified, and stately – he mocked the owner of the modern house:

Wealthy he undoubtedly is, and the house is apparently designed to advertise the fact to the world in general. The enormous conservatory is an outward and visible sign the priceless orchids are grown within, and many tropical plants, whose names and natures are unknown to anyone but the gardner.<sup>93</sup>

Davis was certainly wealthy, the estimated cost for the house and stable was \$83,000, and the house was clearly a display of his riches and social status.<sup>94</sup> The design was similar to McKim, Mead and White’s design for the Mount Royal Club, which was also erected in 1905 [Plate 99]. Davis was a member of the Mount Royal Club and it is very probable that he deliberately wanted the American Beaux-Arts Classicism to be used. There were other classical houses built in the vicinity, which also responded to the growing popularity of the American classicism, such as Maxwell’s residence for John Kenneth Ross (1909–1910) [Plate 100] and a house for Joseph Marcelin Wilson at 3501 Museum Street by Saxe and Archibald (1911). But Findlay was the first architect in Montreal to use

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<sup>92</sup> *Board of Trade Illustrated Edition of Montreal*, 1901, quoted in S. A. Thomas, *Three Montreal Residences of Architect Robert Findlay*, p. 2

<sup>93</sup> Newton, ‘Home-like Houses’, *Builder*, 58 (May 1891) p. 430

this stripped classicism for a domestic commission and he executed it with finesse worthy of McKim, Mead and White. The choice of this particular form of classicism may have been Davis' choice, but the quality is testament to Findlay's skill. The roots of the design were almost certainly planted during his assistantship in Glasgow; the dexterity demonstrated by Findlay at the Davis House illustrates his knowledge of Beaux-Arts architecture. The crisp lines emphasising the underlying structure, the simple yet emphatic detailing and the overall confidence of the piece relates to the Beaux-Arts training that he received in the Burnet office. It is perhaps the first house that truly matched his theories of architecture, which were grounded in geometry. The fact that he was one of the first architects to use this style in Canada reveals his personal confidence in meeting the challenge of the commission as well as his willingness to lead the field.

The year 1905, therefore, brought changes to Findlay's architecture. The William Molson and Davis houses were very different from one another, but they were also different from earlier designs which had nearly all been designed with the picturesque in mind. The change could simply have been coincidental and entirely client-fuelled. The presence of McKim, Mead and White were certainly a factor, however Findlay also took on a new partner, John MacGregor, in 1905. MacGregor had originally trained as a stonecutter in Quebec and had worked for five years in Boston for a contracting firm before returning to Canada. Whilst he had been working in Boston, MacGregor had started studying architecture-related courses at Harvard, which seems to have fuelled a new career ambition. His career history before 1905 is rather mysterious but his arrival in Findlay's office seems to have made an impact.<sup>95</sup> Prior to the partnership with MacGregor, Findlay infrequently worked in limestone, preferring pressed brick and sandstone for his domestic designs. In both the William Molson and Davis designs, however, he used limestone. It is possible that he was inspired by MacGregor's technical knowledge to use stone. The use of American sources for the two designs also appears to be more than circumstantial in view of the new partnership and MacGregor's recent experience in Boston.

Whilst the American classicism was a radical change in Findlay's domestic designs, British

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<sup>94</sup> 'Montreal Notes', *CAB*, 19, 8 (August 1908) p. 122

architecture remained a significant influence on interior decoration. The original interior of the Davis house, for example, was a startling contrast to the exterior. It was an amalgam of varying British styles and periods, from a dark Jacobean Hall with imposing fireplace to the Georgian delicacy of the dining room [Plate 101]. At Cairnbrae, a house that Findlay designed for Thomas Macaulay in 1911, there was a similar mix of styles: a Jacobean Library, a Georgian dining room and an Elizabethan stair. During the decoration of the house Findlay made a note 'to get drawings or pictures to choose from, send books to Mr. Macaulay's house'.<sup>96</sup> This demonstrates clearly that it was the client who was responsible for deciding the interior decoration of the house. The fact that the client was given books and drawings to choose from indicates the importance of these resources to Findlay. The process of looking through books to choose a style displays consumerism of historic styles and it would be easy to dismiss this as colonial pastiche. This 'pick-and-mix' approach to design, however, was also a trend in Britain. Lord Leverhulme's approach to interior design was remarkably similar to that of Davis and Macaulay:

I prefer Georgian dining rooms as the rooms in which to give large dinner parties. For small dining rooms I prefer Tudor. For drawing rooms I prefer what is called the Adam style; for entrance halls the Georgian.<sup>97</sup>

The influence of English architecture on Findlay's designs only appears to have wavered twice. Firstly with the Davis House in 1905, and then only on the exterior, and secondly in 1911 when he was commissioned by Tancrede Bienvue to design a new house in Westmount [Plate 102]. This was Findlay's only Scottish baronial house in Montreal. It is perhaps unusual that he had not designed one earlier, however he even chose the Queen Anne for his own house [Plate 103]. The disinterest in the Scottish Baronial is surprising considering the large presence of Scots in the city and it reflects the priority given to the imperial identity by Anglo-Canadians. The other houses that Findlay designed in 1911 clearly displayed the Imperial-English heritage of Canada. One of these commissions was from Herbert Molson, cousin of Frederick and William. Molson commissioned this house in the year that he became President of Molson's Breweries Ltd, thus it was a celebratory gift to himself and was built as a status symbol [Plate 104]. The design that Findlay created for him was a baroque interpretation of

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<sup>95</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, Vertical File, undated typescript

<sup>96</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection, CAC 3.02 / 015 017 131, T. B. Macaulay Residence, Memo dated January 15th, 1913

<sup>97</sup> Joseph Mourdant Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveau Riches – Style and Status in Victorian*

the Queen Anne with an emphatic piend roof, tall end stacks, giant Ionic pilasters and stone details contrasting with red brick. To make the design distinctive Findlay added decorative François Premier details at the attic windows, which was quite unusual as he generally shied away from ornament. The combination of the red brick and copper roof added further vibrancy to the design. It was certainly a house that commanded attention. In total contrast to the Molson house was the noble rectitude of Findlay's design for Duncan Maclaren, which had much in common with the quiet, dignified Robertson Macaulay house of the same date [Plate 105].

From the Miller House in 1896 to the Herbert Molson House in 1911, there is an undeniable Englishness in Findlay's domestic *oeuvre*. However, the Queen Anne was not just an English style. It was perhaps the closest to an Imperial style that the British Empire had. The similarity between Westmount and the Golden Square Mile in Montreal and Helensburgh, for example, belies the great expanse of ocean that separates them. The Queen Anne style in both places was used to house the wealthy men who had benefited from imperial commerce; it is with good reason that Ayrshire has sometimes been called 'Millionayrshire'.<sup>98</sup> Findlay's domestic designs in Montreal helped foster an imperial identity that also encompassed Glasgow and the west coast of Scotland. Architecture in Edinburgh, in contrast, preferred the Arts and Crafts ideal for domestic architecture and Nobbs had brought this theory to Montreal in 1903.

Findlay, despite his interest in domestic architecture, was not influenced by this new trend in Montreal. His priority was to design houses that matched the needs and wants of his clients and the Arts and Crafts seemingly held little appeal to the Anglo-elite of Montreal or their architect. It is probably fair to assume that during the 1900s and 1910s few of the elite wished their homes to be modelled on the vernacular houses of the Quebec countryside, especially with their connection to the French regime.<sup>99</sup> The Queen Anne style satisfied their Imperial sentiments, and with its nostalgic connotations of 'the home and the hearth' was particularly well suited to be the style of the 'Imperial

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*and Edwardian Architecture* (London: John Murray, 1999) p. 59

<sup>98</sup> Davis, 'Millionayrshire Mansions', *Architectural Heritage*, 3 (1992) pp. 74-82

<sup>99</sup> After the war the importance of Canadian identity increased and Montreal architects increasingly used features of Quebec architecture in their designs, but it was by no means a rapid development. Findlay's practice was one that embraced the Quebec vernacular in domestic designs after the war.

family'. The nostalgia of the Queen Anne style was quite similar to the romanticism of the Scottish Baronial, as both were attempts to construct an identity based upon national nostalgia, or in Canada's case imperial nostalgia. The replication of a style clearly suited Findlay and seems to have been a common process throughout his career.

The influence of Findlay's earlier career in Scotland was significant in shaping his later career in Montreal, with the early emphasis on baronial mansions, experience of the delicate equilibrium of the architect-client relationship and the interplay between architecture and imperialism. His connection with Glasgow was particularly robust. Burnet and Findlay remained in contract over the years and his son Francis visited the Burnets on at least two occasions. In 1906 he visited London, where he was given a tour of the British Museum's Edward VII Galleries site, and in 1916 he spent an enjoyable evening with the architect and his wife, who were by then Sir and Lady Burnet.<sup>100</sup> Findlay also visited Scotland on occasion and it can be assumed that if his son had visited Burnet, Findlay did too. Burnet had family in New York, whom he visited in 1896; his uncle was a stockbroker with a successful office in the American city and also had an office in Montreal, thus Burnet may also have visited Montreal, especially as by the late 1890s two of his former assistants were working there: Findlay and Capper.<sup>101</sup> The continued contact between the Burnet and Findlay was based upon personal regard for one another, however their relationship also retained a professional edge.

In 1900 Findlay employed a new head assistant, Andrew Sharp (1871-1929), who arrived in Montreal directly from Burnet's office where he had worked from 1896 to 1900.<sup>102</sup> It is very likely that it was Burnet who directed Sharp to Montreal and persuaded Findlay to employ him. After two years with Findlay, Sharp moved to the Toronto office of Darling and Pearson, which was one of the principal Beaux-Arts firms in Canada and specialised in commercial and public commissions, rather than domestic architecture, which probably appealed more to the young Glaswegian used to working in the

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This coincided with the partnership of father and son.

<sup>100</sup> Private Findlay family papers, the letters were written to Findlay and his wife and expressed Francis' delight in being in Britain and of the splendid hospitality he had received from the Burnets.

<sup>101</sup> Burnet's family connections in New York and Montreal were told to me by David Walker, who knew his niece, the architect Edith Hughes Burnet.

<sup>102</sup> RIBA Records, Application for Associate of RIBA 22 November 1901, A v15 p40; Application for Fellow of RIBA 3 December 1923, Andrew Sharp

commercial atmosphere of the burgeoning Burnet office. A year after Sharp moved to Montreal he was joined by a friend and fellow Burnet assistant, Edward Martin (b. 1879).<sup>103</sup> Sharp and Martin had worked together at Burnet's between 1896 and 1898. Martin had then moved to John Archibald Campbell's office.<sup>104</sup> In Montreal he joined the office of Hutchison and Wood, rather than Findlay's but he became a close friend of the Findlay family and Findlay presumably helped Martin to get a position with Hutchinson and Wood.<sup>105</sup> Martin and Sharp were then joined in Montreal by their friend Thomas McLaren, who became Taylor's assistant.<sup>106</sup> McLaren had worked with Thomas Lennox Watson in Glasgow and never with Burnet, however he attended classes at the Glasgow School of Art at the same time as Sharp and Martin, which is probably how they met. The quick succession of their arrival in Montreal suggests that the three men stayed in touch and encouraged one another to emigrate. They remained firm friends during the first decade of their time in Canada: Sharp and McLaren shared an apartment for the first couple of years in Montreal,<sup>107</sup> and Sharp and McLaren were Martin's nominators on his Licentiate application to the RIBA. Sharp and McLaren took advantage of Taylor's initiative to hold the RIBA associateship examinations in Montreal almost immediately after arriving in Montreal; Sharp was one of the first architects to sit and pass the examinations.<sup>108</sup> Both Sharp and McLaren later set up their own practices and were part of the next generation of Scottish architects in Canada.<sup>109</sup>

The Burnet / Glasgow – Findlay / Montreal connection was not restricted to these three architects. In 1905, the same year that Findlay was joined with McGregor, the firm took on a new assistant, David

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<sup>103</sup> RIBA Records, Application for Licentiate of RIBA 3 December 1910, Edward Martin

<sup>104</sup> Campbell and Burnet were partners between 1886 and 1897. When the partnership ended it appears that assistants and apprenticeships were shared amongst the two partners, usually with agreement from the men. When Findlay worked with Burnet, Campbell was also there as an assistant so the two men would have known each other quite well.

<sup>105</sup> Private family collection. Letters in the family collection reveal the friendship that existed between the Findlays and Edward Martin. Helen Findlay also recalls her grandfather and father speaking of him.

<sup>106</sup> RIBA Records, Application for Associate of RIBA 20 March 1903, A v15 p111; this Thomas McLaren should not be confused with the brother of James MacLaren who emigrated to America around the same time.

<sup>107</sup> According to their ARIBA Application forms they both resided at 61a Victoria Street when they arrived in Montreal.

<sup>108</sup> 'R.I.B.A. Examinations', *CAB*, 15, 1 (January 1902) xi; 'R.I.B.A. Examinations', *CAB*, 16, 2 (February 1903) 36

<sup>109</sup> Sharp's partner in Toronto was James Brown. McLaren set up in partnership with Frank Peden. Their most famous design was the Loyola College Campus (1912). No reference has been found concerning Martin's later career.

Morton Brown (b. 1879), who wanted to work in Canada ‘to study colonial architecture’.<sup>110</sup> Whether this was old colonial architecture or modern colonial architecture is unclear; however he had opportunities to do both. His arrival coincided with the establishment of the PQAA’s Sketching Club, which was organised by two other Scottish architects, Cecil Burgess (1870-1971) and John Roxburgh Smith (b. 1881), to promote the historic architecture of Quebec.<sup>111</sup> If Brown had been a member he would have had ample opportunities to study the old colonial architecture in Quebec. Brown had previously worked for Campbell, whose office was one of the leading Beaux-Arts firms in Glasgow. Thus an opportunity to come and work in the city where McKim, Mead and White were working must have been an attraction for Brown too. There is no record of Findlay engaging with the PQAA Sketching Club and he had little sympathy for the Arts and Crafts ideas that some of its members, such as Nobbs and Burgess, promoted. However, he did deliver a paper on ‘Old Colonial Architecture’ to the PQAA, which suggests that he had some interest in Canada’s historic architecture and would have supported Brown in his extra-curricular activities.<sup>112</sup> Brown only went to Montreal for one year; his vacated position was soon taken by another Campbell assistant, Alexander Cameron Todd (b. 1879).<sup>113</sup> He joined Findlay in 1906, arriving straight from Campbell’s office, where he had been an assistant since 1900.

Findlay has always been celebrated as a domestic architect, however he did much more than design homes. His work helped to consolidate the imperial image of Canada, especially in Montreal and Westmount. The houses he designed for men such as the Macaulays and Molsons reveal the desire his clients had to display their position in Montreal society and business, and also the Empire. There is little sense that he moved from one country striving to escape a metropolitan culture to another; instead he moved from one imperial city to another one.<sup>114</sup> There are a number of similarities between Glasgow and Montreal: as ports they provided the means to reach other parts of the Empire; they were

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<sup>110</sup> RIBA Records, Licentiate Application for the RIBA, 28 February 1911, David Morton Brown

<sup>111</sup> Cecil Burgess was a close friend of Nobbs and accordingly was an Arts and Crafts enthusiast. He taught at the Macdonald School of Architecture before heading the University of Alberta to establish a school of architecture there. John Roxburgh Smith moved to Montreal from Glasgow, where he had attended the Glasgow School of Art. Upon arriving in Montreal he joined the Maxwell practice.

<sup>112</sup> *CAB*, 9, 10 (October 1896) p. 159

<sup>113</sup> RIBA Records, Licentiate Application for the RIBA, 22 April 1912, Alexander Cameron Todd

<sup>114</sup> Whilst Glasgow was known as the Second City of the Empire, Montreal defined herself as the Imperial City of British North America.

two cities that thrived on imperial commerce; they were rapidly expanding commercial centres and their leaders were self-made men.<sup>115</sup> He certainly helped to establish a new bridge between the two cities, which was a very different one to the one that Nobbs and Traquair built between Edinburgh and Montreal. Findlay's architecture encapsulated an imperial image of Canada, which was appropriate as his career was essentially the product of the British Empire.

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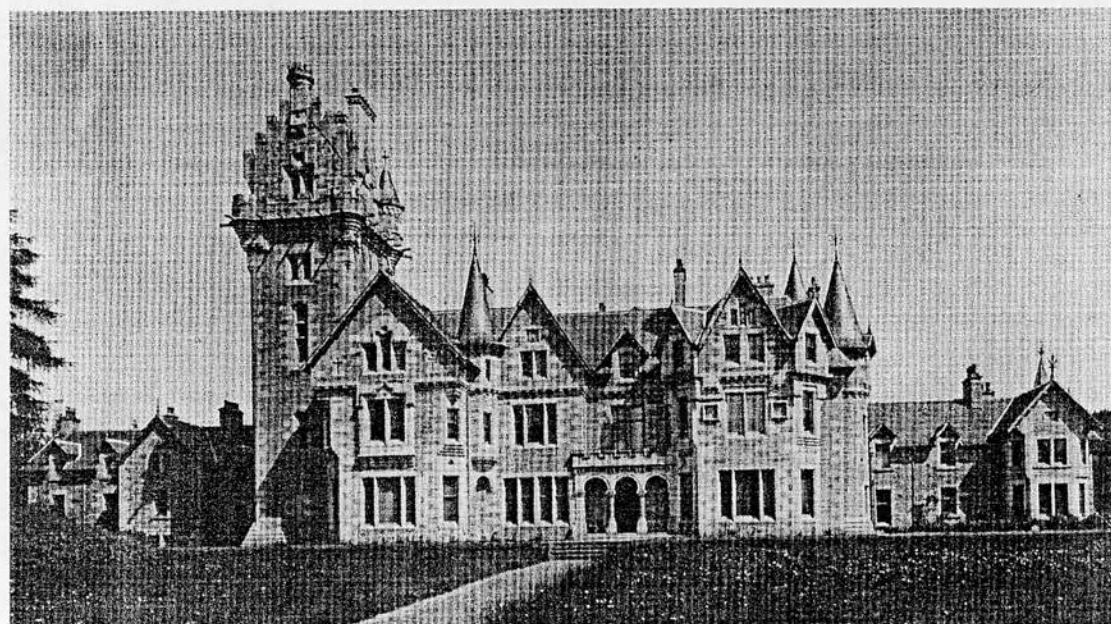
<sup>115</sup> A recent conference at the University of Glasgow examined the many themes that connect Glasgow and Montreal. The papers were collated and recently published: Bill Marshall (ed.), *Montreal Glasgow* (Glasgow: (Glasgow: University of Glasgow French and German Publications, 2005). The author contributed a paper that investigated the architectural connections between the cities, see Holly Kinnear, 'Mutual admiration: Beaux-Arts architecture in Glasgow and Montreal', pp. 1-12



69. Robert Findlay (1859-1951)  
(*Westmount Examiner*)



70. Rhind, Moy Hall, Invernessshire (1870s)  
([www.scran.org.uk](http://www.scran.org.uk))



71. Rhind, Ardverikie House, Invernessshire (1874-79)  
(RCAHMS)



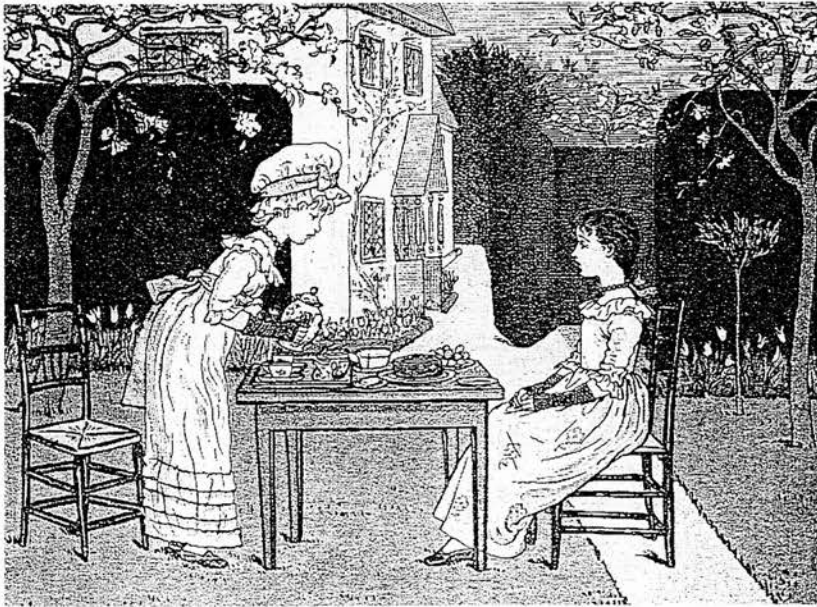
72. Burnet & Son, Edinbarnet, Edinburgh (1881-82)  
([www.scran.org.uk](http://www.scran.org.uk))



73. Burnet & Son, Deanston, Perthshire (1882-83)  
(Gow & Rowan, *Scottish Country Houses*)



74. Norman Shaw, House for Kate Greenaway, Hampstead (1879)  
(Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*)



75. Kate Greenaway, Illustration from *Under the Window* (1879)  
(Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*)



76. Leiper, Brantewood, Helensburgh (1893)  
([www.scran.org.uk](http://www.scran.org.uk))



77. Leiper, Drumadoon, Helensburgh (1901-1903)  
([www.scran.org.uk](http://www.scran.org.uk))



78. Burnet, Design for Glasgow City Chambers (1880)  
(Walker, *Scotland and Paris*)



79. Young, Glasgow City Chambers, Glasgow (1882)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes & MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)

Mr Robert Findlay

107 St Vincent Street

Glasgow 31<sup>st</sup> May 1884

We have great pleasure in this opportunity of testifying to Mr Robert Findlay's ability as an Architect's assistant

Mr Findlay has been with us for 18 months & during that time has taken office charge of several works, making out the working drawings & carrying out the scheme to our entire satisfaction & returning us to an extent that can only be done by an assistant who takes a thorough interest in

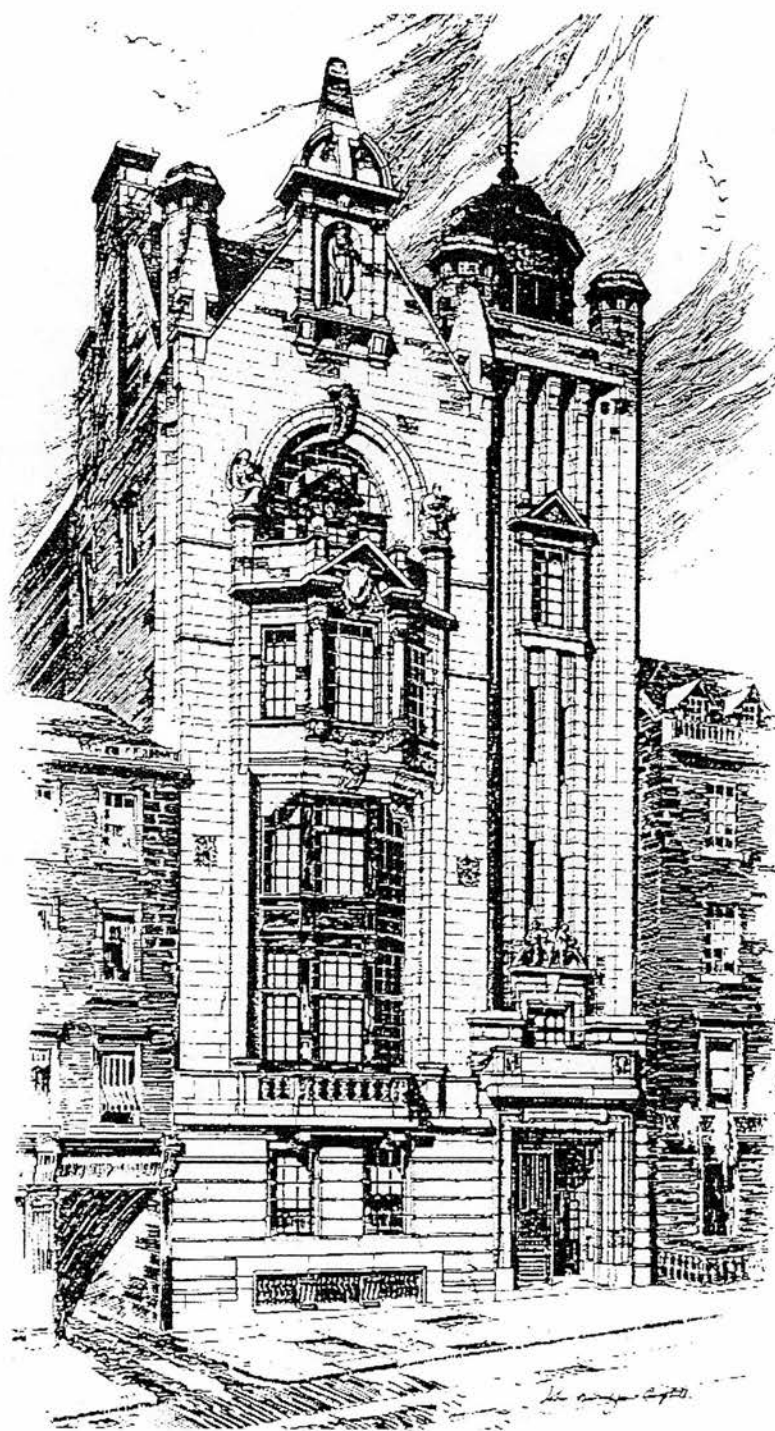
his employer's work. He is very obliging & very industrious has considerable knowledge of construction & carries out his work with order & expedition

It is with great regret that we part with him & must cordially wish him success in his work whether as an assistant or as an architect

John Burnet & Son  
Archts



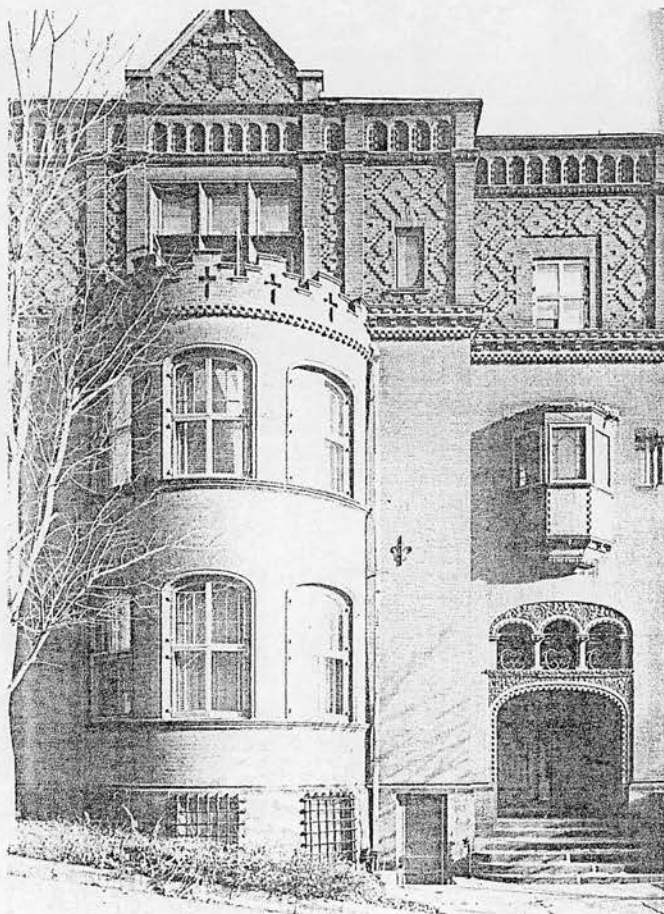
81. Robert Findlay, Sun Life Assurance Company, Rue Notre Dame, Montreal (1890)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



82. Burnet & Campbell, The Athenaeum Theatre, Glasgow (1891)  
(Walker, *Scotland and Paris*)



83. Findlay, House for T. B. Macaulay, Boulevard Dorchester, Westmount (1891)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



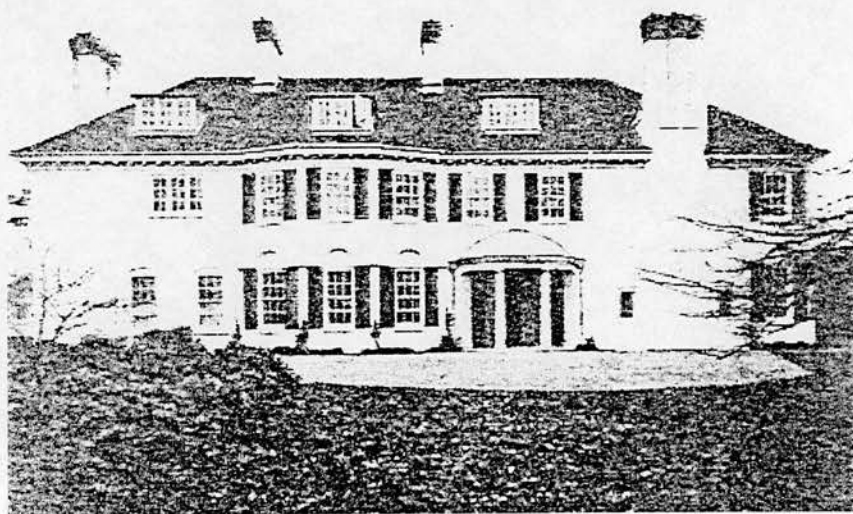
84. Maxwell, House for H. Allan, Rue Stanley, Montreal (1896)  
(Rémillard, Demeures Bourgeoise de Montréal)



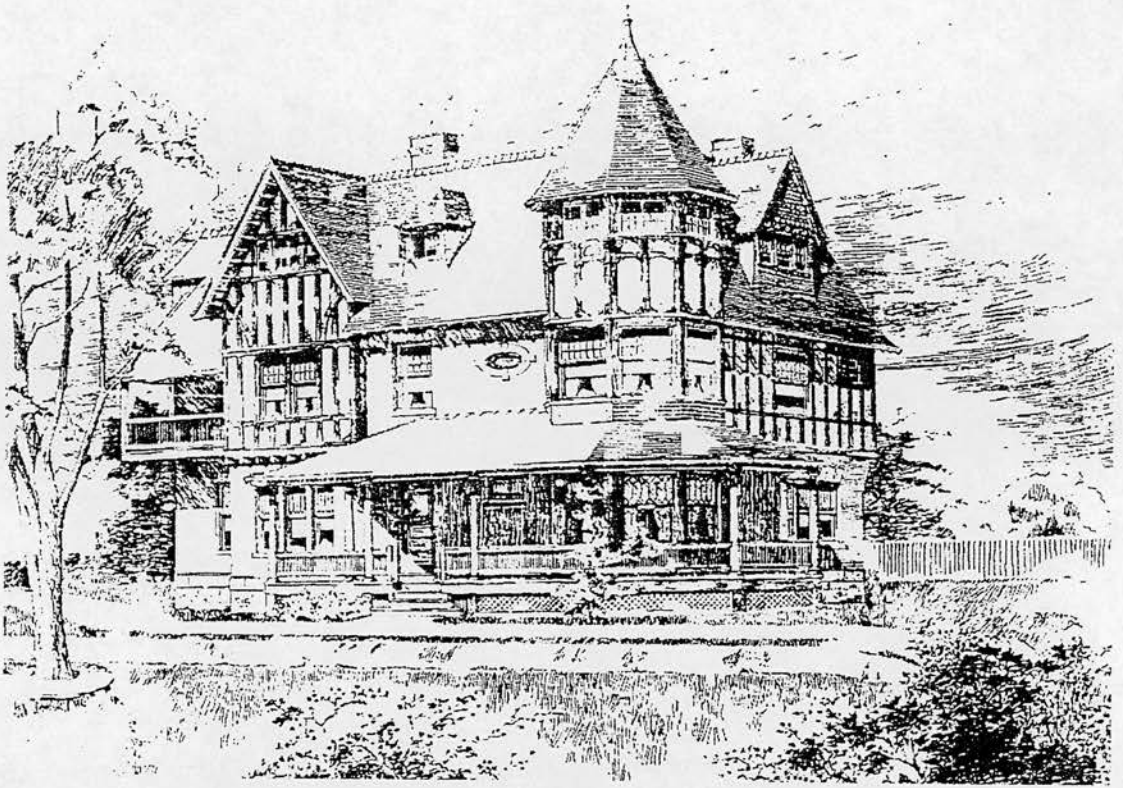
85a. Findlay, House for R. Macaulay, Avenue Cedar, Westmount (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



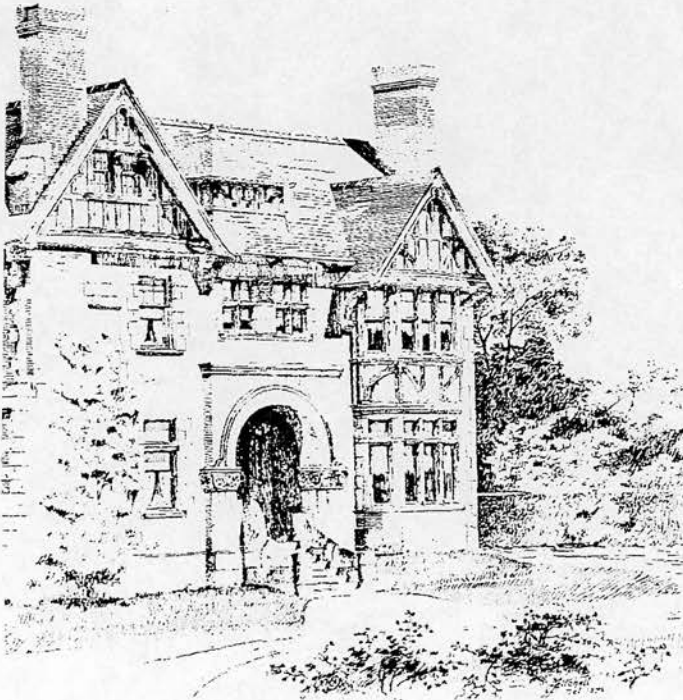
85b. Robert Findlay, House for R. Macaulay, Westmount (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



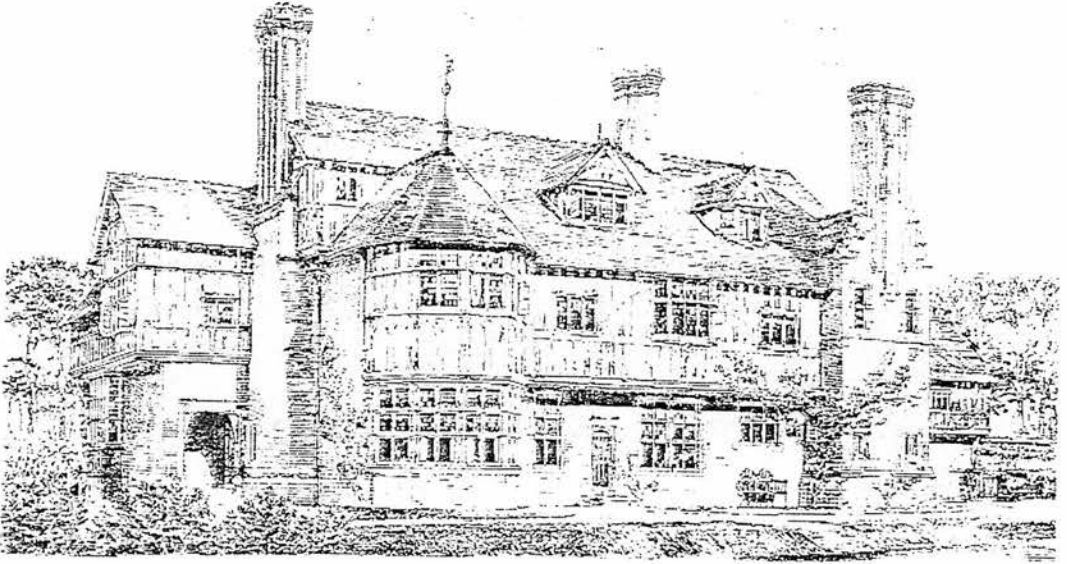
86. Newton, Steeple House, Jersey (1902-04)  
(Muthesius, *The English House*)



87. Findlay, Design for House for W. R. Miller (1896)  
(CAB)



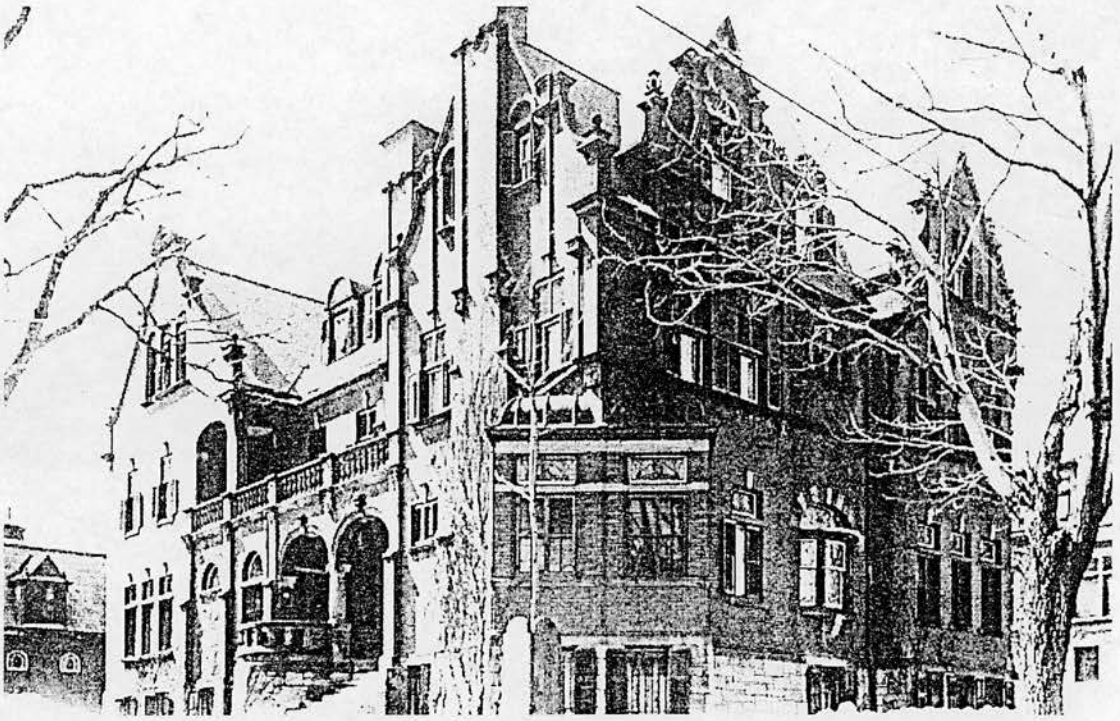
88. Findlay, Design for House for W. M. Knowles (1896)  
(CAB)



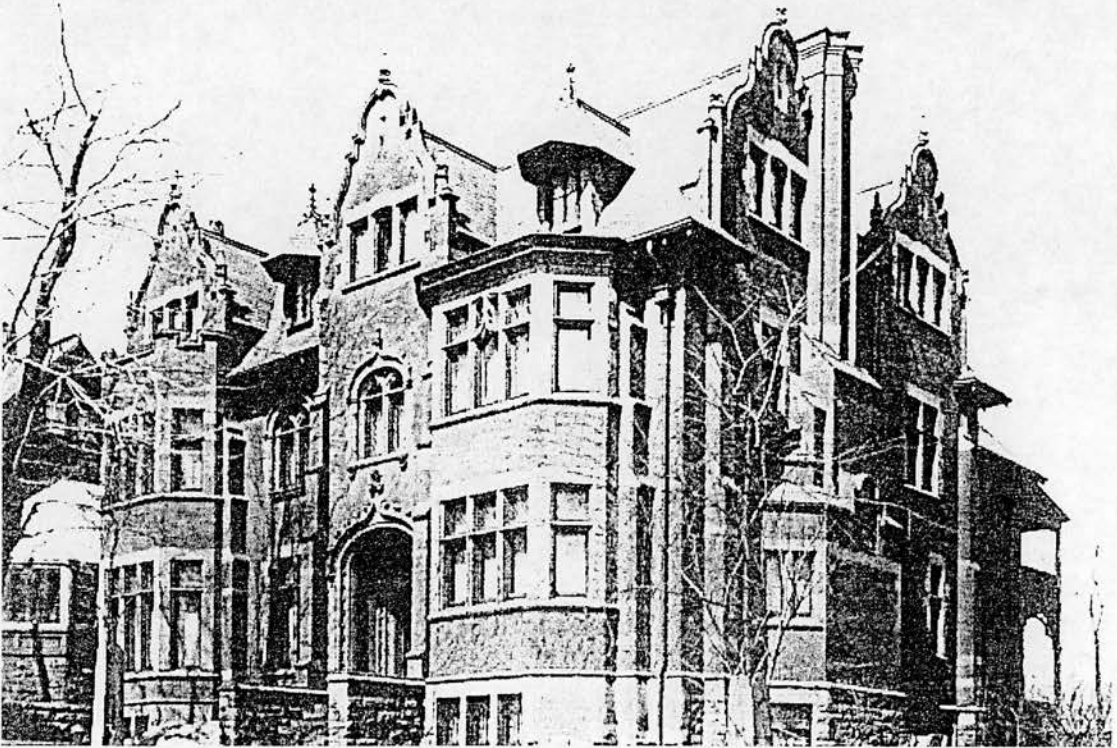
89. Norman Shaw, Sunninghill, Berkshire  
(Muthesius, *The English House*)



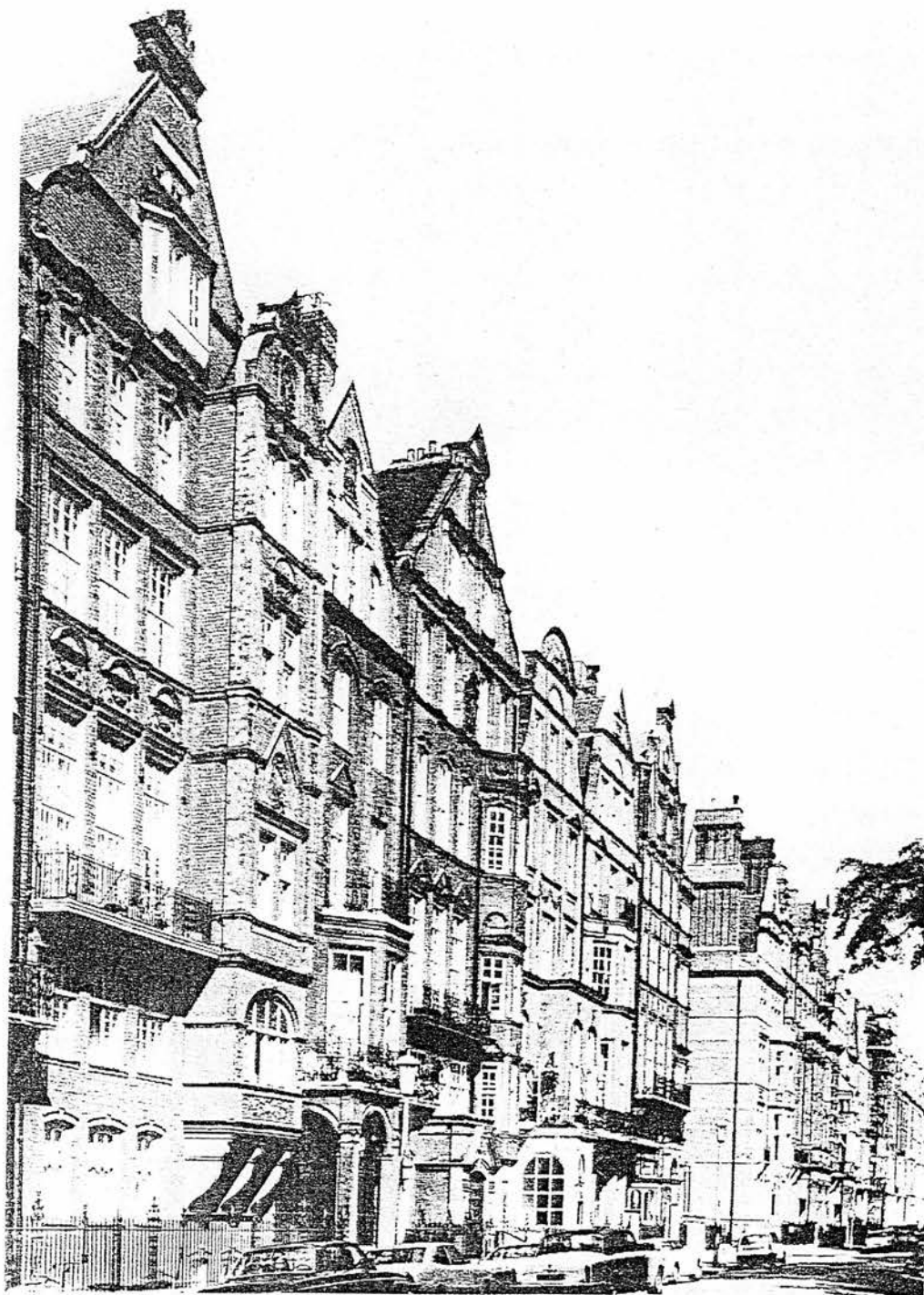
90. Harris, British Delegation Buildings, Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition (1876)  
(Maitland, *The Queen Anne Style*)



91. Findlay, House for F. Molson, Montreal (1901 – demolished 1957)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection)

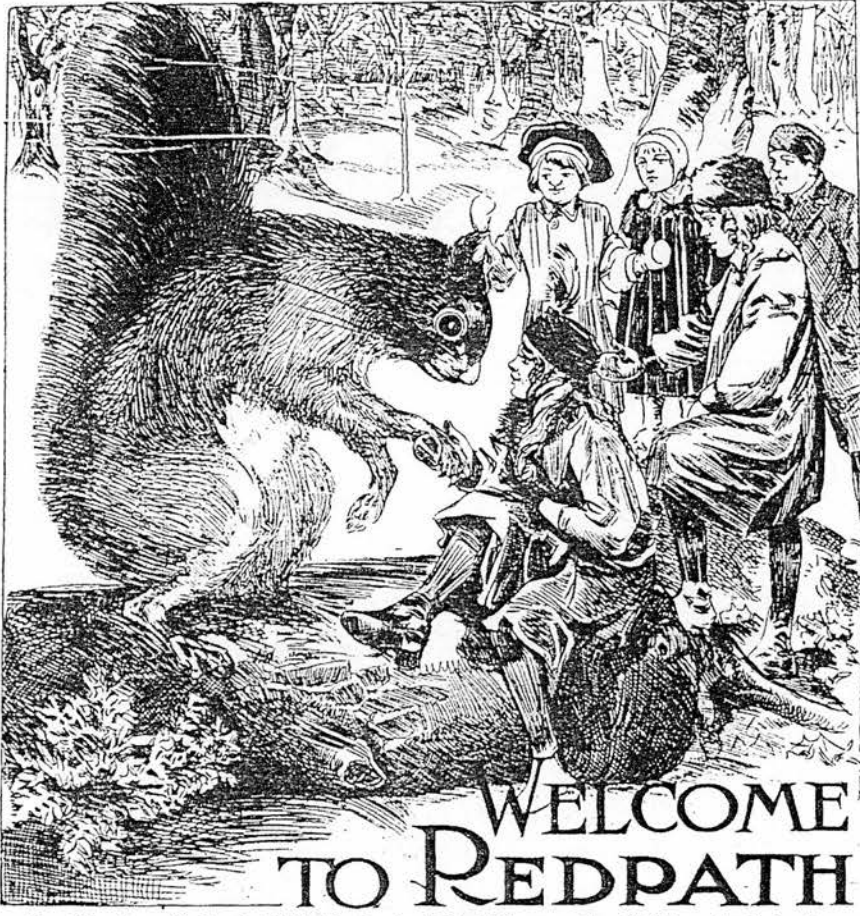


92. Findlay, House for G. Smithers, Montreal (1902 – demolished 1974)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection)



93. Cadogan Square, Chelsea (1880s)  
(Girouard, *Sweetness and Light*)

# REDPATH RECEPTION



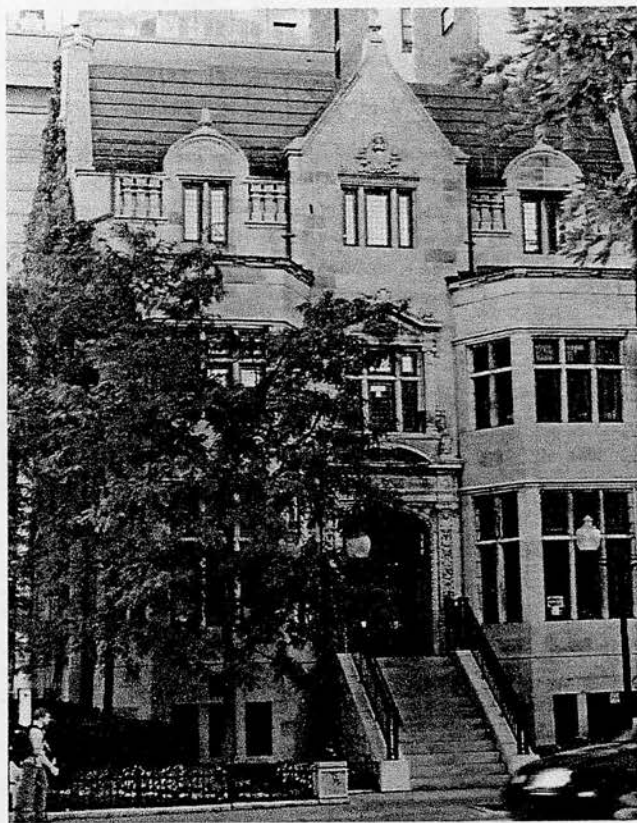
## WELCOME TO REDPATH

The Big Grey Squirrel, With Its Bushy Tail, Welcomes the Children to Redpath

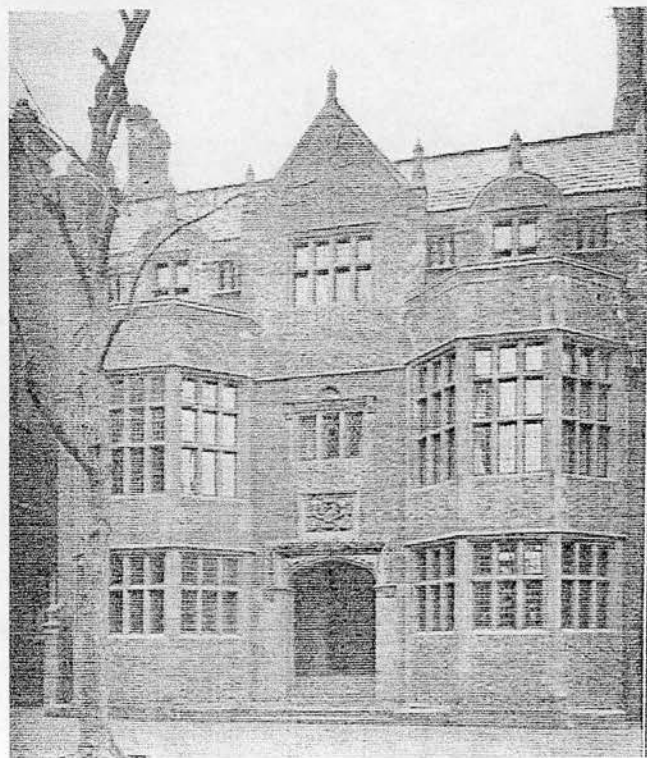
TELEPHONES:  
MAIN 7579  
MAIN 4156



151 NOTRE DAME  
STREET WEST  
MONTREAL, QUE.



95. Findlay, House for W. A. Molson, Rue Sherbrooke, Montreal (1905)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



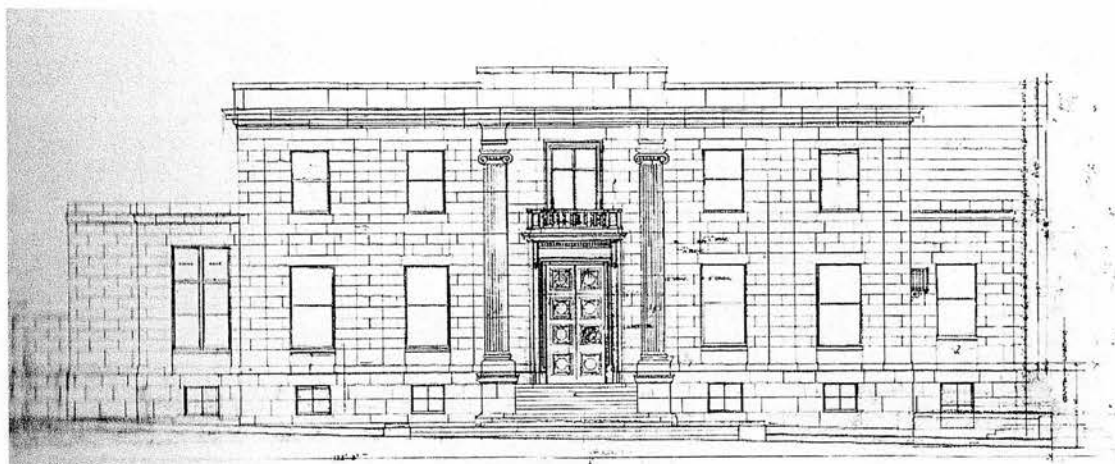
96. Frank Miles Day & Brother, House in Philadelphia (1904)  
(*Architectural Record*)



97. Kerr, Liberal Club, Alloa (1904)  
([www.clacksweb.org](http://www.clacksweb.org))



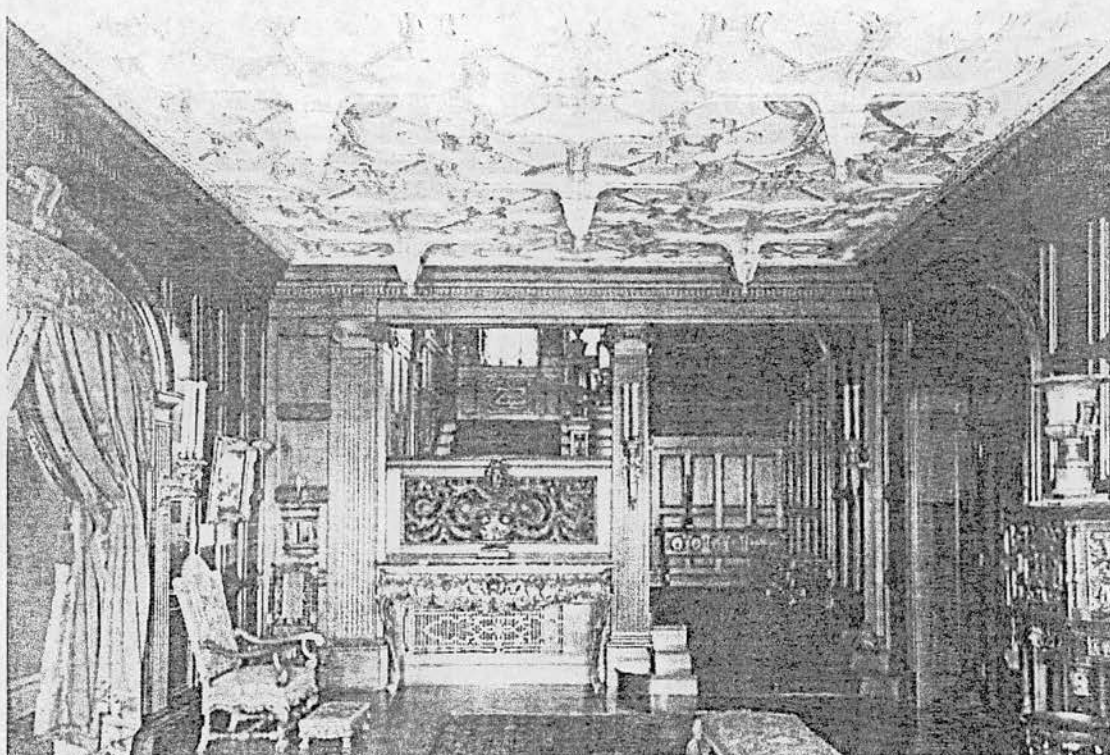
98. Findlay, House for M. B. Davis, Avenue des Pins, Montreal (1905)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



99. McKim, Mead and White, Design for Mount Royal Club, Rue Sherbrooke, Montreal (1905)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



100. Maxwells, House for J. Ross, Corner of Rue Musée and Avenue des Pins, Montreal (1909), (Photograph, Kinnear)



101. Findlay, M. B. Davis House, Hallway, Montreal (1905)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, R. Findlay Collection)



102. Findlay, House for T. Bienvenu, Mount Pleasant, Westmount (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



103. Findlay, House for Findlay family, Avenue Lansdowne, Westmount, (1895)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



104. Findlay, House for H. Molson, Rue Musée, Montreal (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



105. Findlay, House for D. McLaren, Avenue Westmount, Westmount (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)

## James Robert Rhind (1853–1918)

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**Mr. James Rhind, in search of a wider sphere of operations, went to Canada, and in the city of Montreal competed successfully for a number of years with the leading architects in America.**

*'Obituary: James Robert Rhind, Architect, Inverness and Montreal'*  
*Inverness Courier* (1918)

James Robert Rhind's career is the most difficult of the five architects to examine as there are so few surviving documents and his reputation has not lived on like that of Taylor and Findlay [Plate 106]. His career in Canada seems to have been more of a struggle than it was for any of the others, although its origins were very similar. Like Findlay and Archibald, his career started in Inverness, where he trained with his brother John, whom he later assisted.<sup>1</sup> Having completed his apprenticeship, and perhaps eager to escape his brother's shadow, he moved first to Glasgow and then to London. From the English capital he journeyed to Montreal 'in search of a wider sphere of operations.'<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to gauge how successfully Rhind exploited the potential of the 'wider sphere of operations' owing to the lack of documents about his time in Montreal. That there are only limited records about his Canadian career, plus the fact that he stayed in Montreal for seven years, implies that he was relatively unsuccessful in establishing a practice there. Hence, in 1895, he headed home to Scotland, where he established a practice in Inverness. At the break of the twentieth century he found success in Glasgow, where his library designs can be favourably compared with those of Burnet. The central questions to ask of Rhind's career, therefore, are how did his early training in Britain influence his architecture in Canada, and to what extent did his Canadian experience influence his designs back in Scotland?

In 1868, aged fifteen, Rhind began his architectural career in the practice established by his father. His

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<sup>1</sup> 'Obituary: James Robert Rhind, Architect, Inverness and Montreal', *Inverness Courier* (January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918) p. 3

decision to enter the family business was probably one made for him rather than by him. His elder brother, John Rhind, had also joined the family firm and served his apprenticeship with his father before heading for Glasgow in 1854. He had returned to Inverness in 1863 to take over the family practice. It was under his elder brother that Rhind served most of his apprenticeship. Consequently his training would have been very similar to Findlay's: Scottish Baronial houses and gothic churches. His apprenticeship in Inverness must have ended in circa 1873, as five years was the normal duration; what he did upon completing his apprenticeship is not documented. He was certainly in London by 1880, but his whereabouts in the seven intervening years are unknown. It is more than likely that he spent some of this time with his brother, especially as John had undertaken some large domestic commissions in the recent years, including Ardverikie House. From Inverness he may have headed for Glasgow, possibly in the later 1870s.<sup>3</sup> His brother had gone to Glasgow upon completing his apprenticeship and would surely have recommended that his younger brother do the same, just as he subsequently advised Findlay.

In Glasgow, Rhind would have seen the erection of buildings of 'highly eclectic monumental classicism' such as Thompson's Egyptian Halls (1871–1873) [Plate 107].<sup>4</sup> Thompson dominated Glasgow architecture during the 1860s and 1870s with designs of extraordinary massing influenced by Greek and Egyptian architecture, although by no means imitative of the ancients' works. In fact, as President of the Glasgow Institute of Architects, during the early 1870s, he compelled his colleagues to abandon 'accumulated human tradition' and he spurned the archaeological approach of previous generations.<sup>5</sup> The main characteristic of his works was a trabeated horizontality, which was sometimes off-set by a dynamic vertical element, such as towers in his church designs. His work defines Victorian Glasgow and his

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The two most prominent sources to support the suggestion that Rhind spent some time in Glasgow are the Dictionary of Scottish Architects ([www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk)) edited by Professor David Walker: [www.codexego.co.uk/dsa/architect\\_full.php?id=L000341](http://www.codexego.co.uk/dsa/architect_full.php?id=L000341), and [www.glasgowsculpture.com](http://www.glasgowsculpture.com), which is a website co-produced by Gary Nisbet and Tim Gardner. There is no mention of Glasgow, however, in his obituaries, nor in any of the notices published in the Canadian press. It is possible that the period in Glasgow was short enough to be considered insignificant in comparison to London and Montreal. (August 2006)

<sup>4</sup> Glendinning, MacInnes and Mackechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*, p. 253

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

influence can be seen on other architects, such as Sellars' St. Andrew's Halls (1873–1877) [Plate 108], which had a monumental façade articulated by a massive Ionic colonnade. Compared to his brother's pretty Baronial and gothic designs, buildings such as these must have impressed Rhind.

Rhind's move to London in 1880 brought him into further contact with classical ideals, in terms of style and also design methodology. His first position in London was as an assistant to Lewis H. Isaacs (1830–1908) and Henry L. Florence (1841–1916).<sup>6</sup> Florence was one of the few English architects who had trained at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, where he would have received a traditional classical architectural education, as well as experience in designing large, complex projects.<sup>7</sup> This training proved invaluable for the architects when they won the commission to design the Victoria Hotel, Northumberland Avenue, London (1885) [Plate 108]. This was a very prominent commission and the planning of the hotel received particular praise in the architectural press [Plate 110]:

The internal planning has been devised to provide as compactly as possible all the accommodation required for a modern first-class hotel. The main entrance, which is in the centre of the building, leads into a large vestibule, and out of this a grand marble staircase, with return flights on each side, rises to the first floor. The upper floors can be reached by a staircase at each end of the building, and by a double service of hydraulic lifts placed conveniently near the front entrance...At a short distance from the entrance-hall, along the main corridor, an open vestibule affords access to the grand *salle-à-manger*, which is 100 ft. long by 42 ft. wide, exclusive of the apse at the further end and the wings at each side. This room rises through two floors, and is about 30 ft. in height. In addition to this spacious dining-room there has also been provided on the ground floor a coffee-room, 56 ft. by 30 ft.; a smoking room, 53 ft. by 36 ft.; reading-room, reception-room, ladies' drawing-room, several private sitting-rooms, general lavatory accommodation and a range of bedrooms. Including those on the ground-floor there are about 500 bed and sitting rooms in the hotel. The electric light, in the form of incandescent lamps, will be used throughout the ground-floor and on all the upper floors...Beneath the marble staircase a wide flight of steps leads to a billiard-room in the basement, which is 80 ft. long, 40 ft. wide, and 16 ft. high. In this room there will be ample space for five billiard-tables. In close connexion there is a bar, and also a lavatory, for the use of players. The other rooms in the basement include bed rooms, bath-rooms, general servants' quarters, store and wine cellars, and a large engine and boiler house.<sup>8</sup>

The site for this first class hotel was an awkward one, almost fitting the footprint of an isosceles triangle.

<sup>6</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, J. R. Rhind Collection, Vertical File: 'J. R. Rhind, Architect', *Montreal Illustrated* (1892 edition) unpagged photocopy

<sup>7</sup> 'Obituary: Mr. H. L. Florence', *The Builder*, 110 (February 1916) p. 160

<sup>8</sup> 'The Northumberland Avenue Hotel', *Builder*, 1886 (1st May) p. 638

Issac and Florence's ability to accommodate all the necessary rooms and services in a convenient manner pays tribute to their skill and demonstrates the advantages of Florence's Parisian education. In spite of the awkward site the elevations of the hotel were a regular and symmetrical design. The hotel had seven storeys plus basement and attic; each storey was carefully distinguished from the others by pediments, decorative panels, rustication and dormer gables. It is a schematic design that follows the careful planning of the interior and confirms with the Beaux-Arts classical tradition. Following on from his experience in Glasgow this type of work would not have surprised Rhind, in fact it may have embedded the notion that classical architecture was the most appropriate one for civic and public architecture.

Having completed a few months with Isaacs and Florence, Rhind joined the practice of Boulnois and Warner as an assistant supervisor and appears to have remained with their practice until 1888 when he moved to Canada. Very few records survive relating to the Boulnois and Warner practice. William Allan Boulnois (1823–1893) had been the pupil of Sydney Smirke (1798–1877) in the early 1840s, therefore would have been well versed in classical architecture from the start of his career and may have assisted with the design and erection of buildings such as the Carlton Club, Pall Mall (1845).<sup>9</sup> Having trained with a master of classical architecture, it is probable that Boulnois remained predisposed to the classical rather than the gothic style, which was increasingly popular during the mid-nineteenth century. Boulnois took as his apprentice and assistant his nephew, Alfred Ernest Warner (fl. 1877–1914), who also attended architectural classes at University College London, where he would have received further instruction in classical architecture<sup>10</sup>. No list of Boulnois and Warner's work has survived so it is impossible to gauge the extent to which their classical training impacted on their work. What is apparent, however, is that during his time in London, Rhind worked in two practices that had been founded on classical principles and his time in the Capital coincided with the resurgence of classical architecture for public buildings, especially the appearance of neo-Baroque designs, such as Shaw's New Scotland Yard (1887–90)

[Plate 111]

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<sup>9</sup> *Dictionary of British Architects 1834-1914*, Vol. 1 (London: Continuum, 2001), William Allan Boulnois entry

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. 2, Alfred Ernest Warner entry

Rhind stayed with Boulnois and Warner for eight years, and it is possible that he considered setting up his own practice at various points during this time. Later notices certainly imply that Rhind had worked independently before arriving in Montreal but there is no concrete evidence of this (either way).<sup>11</sup> In 1888, Rhind decided to leave Britain and go to Montreal. His decision was perhaps motivated by a desire to have his own practice, which was very difficult in the highly competitive environment of London, which seems to have been one of the reasons why Taylor also decided to leave London. There can be little doubt that Rhind chose Montreal because he had received good reports from Findlay either personally or indirectly from his brother who remained in Inverness and would have had contact with the Findlay family.

Immediately upon arriving in the Canadian city Rhind set up his own practice, rather than seek out a position as an assistant or a partner to an established architect in the city. This determination to strike out on his own in a strange city where he had no important contacts may be seen as a sign of confidence or even arrogance, but in fact Rhind was known to have suffered from shyness and reticence that inevitably crippled his career in the city where connections counted.<sup>12</sup> It was remarked in one of his obituaries that he was 'of a modest, almost retiring disposition, [and] did not perhaps make the most of his professional skill and success, in the commercial sense. To seek for the often useful aid of influence was foreign to his nature'.<sup>13</sup> A lack of supportive contacts would have been a hindrance to any architect trying to establish a practice in competition with local architects, such as Dunlop and Hutchinson, and well-connected British men such as Taylor. Rhind certainly seems to have struggled to attract patrons and was therefore reliant upon competitions to gain work and promote himself. To be successful in just one competition could open the doors to a fruitful career, as was the case for Findlay and the Sun Life Assurance Company.

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<sup>11</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, J. R. Rhind Collection, Vertical File, *Montreal Illustrated* (1892) unpagged: A profile of Rhind in *Montreal Illustrated* commented that 'Mr. Rhind was established in London as an architect eight years'. It is a rather ambiguous remark as it is unclear what is meant by 'established': does it refer to an independent practice or is it simply a more grander expression than Mr. Rhind worked in London'?

<sup>12</sup> Taylor's career is certainly testament to the importance of contacts, however Findlay who arrived in Montreal knowing no-one soon established a group of loyal patrons who commissioned him for commercial projects as well as private.

<sup>13</sup> 'Obituary, James Robert Rhind', *Inverness Courier*, p. 3

Unfortunately, Rhind was frequently unsuccessful, either coming a frustrating second place or being unplaced. Two examples of this were his abortive designs for a Protestant Orphan Asylum, Montreal (1894) and the Montreal Masonic Temple (1895).

The competition for the Protestant Orphan Asylum would have been difficult for any architect to prepare for, as the budget of \$30,000 was slim for the accommodation required; thus the architect had to design a building that would attract the attention of the judges, adhere to their planning requirements and also match their purse. Rhind's design was subsequently rather plain although with a picturesque skyline with French dormer gables, a baroque inspired flèche and paired arch-linked stacks [Plate 112]. His plan for the Protestant Orphan Asylum was similarly extremely simple. It was an inverted U-plan with a wing attached to the side. On the ground floor this wing housed the kitchen, pantry and serving area and on the first floor was the Infirmary, with its own balcony. The detachment of the Infirmary from the main building was no doubt due to considerations of hygiene and the balcony would provide the fresh air that is often associated with good health and convalescence. Over all, therefore, Rhind's plan seems to have been a practical and functional answer to the judges' requirements. Why it was awarded second place rather than first is unclear, not least because the winning design was unpublished and if built has not been identified.

The third place design was published, however, allowing a comparison with Rhind's design [Plate 113]. The author of this design was David R. Brown, who had studied with Dunlop and in the Boston office of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, so was in a much a better position to understand the current trends in Canadian architecture. His design consequently borrowed heavily from the fashionable Romanesque of Richardson with its entrance turreted towers, large yawning arched porch and carved details. Compared to Rhind's design it is grander with more robust vitality. The footprint of the plan is simpler, as all the accommodation is housed in a rectangular plan, without any wings. In comparison, Rhind's proposal to add a wing could have been regarded as a costly extension. The judges may equally have perceived the wisdom of having an infirmary that was isolated from the main dormitories. As a building Brown's design was more impressive and it certainly fitted in with contemporary architectural trends in the city. Its

decorative features, however, would have cost more, which would have counted against it, especially as they were extraneous to the purposes of the building. It also demonstrates that Rhind was not disadvantaged by his lack of knowledge of contemporary American and Canadian Architecture.

Rhind's scheme for a Masonic Temple was similarly considered a very good solution to the needs of the commission but once again he came second place in the competition [Plates 114-115]. His plan matched the criteria of the competition, which were set by the Masonic Temple Company: he made sensible use of the narrow site, placing the stage and chairs across the width of the building to accommodate a wide enough stage. The winner of the competition in contrast seems to have taken the liberty of deviating slightly from the guidelines. This no doubt annoyed Rhind who was very particular in providing everything that a competition asked for, which Hutchinson, who was the assessor of the Montreal Masonic Temple competition, acknowledged:

After a careful and minute examination of these designs and a comparison of the merits of each, I came to the conclusion that the design bearing the motto of a shield should be ranked first in merit, and the design bearing a red seal with the inscription "Touch Not the Cat but a Glove" should rank second.

In arriving at this conclusion I have taken into consideration that the author of the second design adhered strictly to the conditions respecting the placing of the two largest lodge rooms in the rear of the upper storey of the building, and the smaller in the front, while the author of design No. 1 took the liberty of placing one of the large lodge rooms in front; this change, however, gave him no advantage over the author of design No. 2, and the selection of his design as first is made without awarding him any superiority for this arrangement.<sup>14</sup>

Whilst Hutchinson's assessment implies that the alterations made to the winning plan did not sway his judgment, it is clear that the architect was not penalised for failing to adhere to the instructions nor does Hutchinson explain why the winner won. The design was not published so it is impossible to make a judgment today, but it must have been irritating for Rhind.

Rhind was a very punctilious individual and disapproved of architects interpreting competition guidelines as they saw wished. This is highlighted in a series of letters that he exchanged with the Secretary of the

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<sup>14</sup> 'Masonic Hall Competition' *CAB*, 7, 7 (July 1894) p. 87

Toronto Board of Trade following the announcement of the winner of the competition for its new building, which was held in 1888:

Dear Sir [The Editor of *CAB*], - Would you please publish the following correspondence in your valuable paper? Not having yet received a reply from the Board, I consider that the whole matter ought to be made public.

What I state is correct, and the plans of Messrs. James & James have therefore no claim to be accepted, without doing an injustice to the other competitors who kept within the carefully prepared and well considered conditions by Professor Ware.

Yours faithfully,

James R. Rhind

*Edgar A. Willis, Secretary of Board of Trade, Toronto*

Dear Sir, - I see the plan and design accepted for the Board of Trade building illustrated in the *CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER* [*sic.*], and find that it does not comply with your instructions to architects, and ought not on that account to be even placed on the list of three, much less to be the design adopted.

The reading room is about 115 square feet less than the size given in the instructions. The space occupied by the rooms for the secretary, clerks, grain inspector and Board room [*sic.*] is at the very outside not more than 982 square feet, instead of 1,220 square feet. The room for telephone is about 80 square feet and carried up two stories, where one is sufficient - in all 160 square feet, where 25 or 30 square feet is ample. There are 275 square feet lost at the external corner, the most important and valuable part of the building, and this space on six stories is equal to 1,650 square feet. A bank is no doubt very desirable in such a building, but there is no mention in the instructions for such a room to be provided. The entrances to the bank and the offices are the same, and on a busy day of the Board, these entrances would be uncomfortably crowded by those doing business in the bank, the offices, and the Board. A separate entrance to the bank would therefore be an advantage. No windows are shown in the perspective, lighting the janitor's rooms. The parapet in front of the sloping roof is not desirable for the climate of Canada, and a sloping roof without a parapet would be dangerous in a street building, because of the large quantities of ice and snow that would fall from it. A flat roof is therefore the correct form for a street building in this climate. The corridors are all dark. Glass panels in the doors or fanlights would not be sufficient to give light.

In my design "Utility", I give in every case the full size called for. All the rooms for the use of the Board are on the same floor, and all the corridors are amply lighted direct from the area.

I consider it my duty to point out all the foregoing facts to the Board.

Yours faithfully,

James R. Rhind

Dear Sir, - Replying to your favor of the 27<sup>th</sup> ult., I beg to inform you that the building committee are in no way responsible for the illustrations appearing in the *Canadian Architect and Builder*.

Yours truly,

Edgar A. Willis [Secretary]

Dear Sir – Re. Board of Trade Building, your favor of yesterday's date just to hand, and in reply beg to state that the illustrations I refer to in *Canadian Architect and Builder* are photo lithographs, and therefore exact *fac similes* [*sic.*] to a smaller scale of the original drawings, and the *Canadian Architect and Builder* is not responsible for their correctness, but the architects, Messrs. James & James, who drew them.

Yours faithfully,

James R. Rhind

P.S. – I trust that you will lay this matter before the Board<sup>15</sup>

This correspondence draws out a number of points that concerned architects at the time. Clearly Rhind was aggrieved at the apparent disregard shown by both the architects and the Board in choosing to flout the guidelines of the competition. The knowledge that architects could win commissions whilst deviating from the brief must have been disconcerting to many Canadian architects, especially as competitions were one of the few ways that architects could win work. There was also a view, however, that it was important that architects retain some liberty with regard to the plan and could thereby create a much better arrangement than anything conceived by the patron.<sup>16</sup>

The apparent disregard that the Board of Trade showed to Rhind's letters also annoyed the architect, and may have been regarded as yet another snub to Canadian architects, hence his decision to publish them. The Board of Trade competition was controversial from the very start of the project as the Board had invited and paid two American architects to enter the competition: Richard Waite and George Post were offered \$400 to enter the competition.<sup>17</sup> This was looked upon unfavourably by Canadian architects, as it was iniquitous as well as unpatriotic; the Board of Trade was eventually persuaded to invite and pay two Canadian firms to enter the competition.<sup>18</sup> The eventual winners of the competition were an American firm James and James; the second prize was awarded to the Toronto firm, Darling and Curry. One architect, F. Rastrick, upon seeing the first and second-placed designs wrote a letter to *CAB* questioning the sense of the decision to appoint an American firm to design a building for Canada:

<sup>15</sup> 'Board of Trade Building Competition', *CAB*, 2, 5 (May 1889) p. 53

<sup>16</sup> 'Competitions', *CAB*, 2, 12 (December 1889) p. 134 One architect commented that the proposal that 'the literal meaning of conditions must be adhered to' was 'absurd and unreasonable'.

<sup>17</sup> See 'Architecture in Canada 1880-1914', chapter 2, p. 25

I can see that Professor Ware must have had doubts which was best in plan. The one he favored was in accordance with American requirements (hence his decision) and would have been biased him [*sic.*] on that account. There is a difference in American and British planning. Messrs. Darling and Curry's plans are good, and more consistent with our British ideas, and I think would have suited the members of the Board of Trade better, and as a paying concern, would have been found in all respects more to their interest.<sup>19</sup>

Rastrick's comments on the different requirements of American and British planning are intriguing and it is a shame that he does not elaborate on this, but it does suggest that an American firm won because an American was judging the competition. He indicates that there were differences between the design of American and Canadian offices, which Ware, as an American, failed to comprehend when choosing his winner. Thus James and James' design was chosen by Ware in spite of their deviations from the competition guidelines, which Rhind had noted. It is also noteworthy that Rastrick clearly defines Canada within British terms underlining the Imperial context of the time and the close ties between mother country and periphery.

Rhind had one further criticism to make of James and James' design besides those of the plan. He noted the inappropriateness of the sloping roof for the Canadian climate and recommended that a flat roof was by far the better solution. This seems to go against the architectural traditions of other countries that suffer from harsh winters, such as Switzerland, where the sloping roof is the preferred option. There was nevertheless a contemporary debate concerning the best roof type for Montreal's winters, with some preferring the flat roof over the sloping:

The flat-hopper type of roof...is considered by some Montreal people to be the only form of roof to be used for the cold and heavy snow-falls experienced in the district. From a practical point of view the flat pitch and gravel roof is certainly satisfactory. We know the objection, if not danger, of occasional avalanches of snow from a sloping roof, also of icicles falling from the eaves when melted by the sun.<sup>20</sup>

Rhind was, therefore, clearly informed about discussions and debates in the Canadian profession less than a year after arriving in the country. It is noticeable, however, that not many architects seem to have

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<sup>18</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 20

<sup>19</sup> F. J. Rastrick, 'Notes on Architectural Matters', *CAB*, 2, 5 (May 1889) p. 53

<sup>20</sup> Philip Turner, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec', *Construction*, 8, 6 (June 1915), p. 267

subscribed to the idea that the flat roof was better than the sloping one, and nor did Rhind in practice: all of his surviving designs have sloping roofs.

Rhind's disappointment at the result of the competition could have been generated by his failure to win or even be placed. The time and energy invested in competitions was costly and failure to win resulted in a loss of income. Rhind did savour a little sweet revenge as the Toronto Board of Trade faced the ignominy of watching their chosen design collapse leading them to employ a Toronto firm to erect a new building.<sup>21</sup> Rhind's entry to the Toronto Board of Trade competition was one of his first designs upon arriving in Canada and he was the only architect from Montreal to enter the competition, although it is unclear why that was. Other architects may have decided to boycott the competition because of the obvious prejudice shown towards Canadian architects: out of the twenty designs that were received by the building committee fewer than half were from Canadian architects, and this included the two firms invited and paid to participate.<sup>22</sup> Canadian architects did organise a boycott of the competition held by the Montreal Board of Trade for a new building because of similar prejudicial conditions surrounding the competition.<sup>23</sup> The Board had asked six American firms to submit designs for the new Board of Trade building for which they would receive \$300. When questioned about their motives for doing this, the members replied that 'the six American architects were elected because they know more about such a building as was proposed than any Canadian architect'.<sup>24</sup> Some Canadian architects ignored the boycott but later petitioned against the decision to award the commission to Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, because they felt that the Canadians had been unduly disadvantaged because of the obvious preference the Board had shown for American architects from the beginning.<sup>25</sup>

Although there was regular criticism of contemporary competitions, they were widely used because of the advantages they offered. For developers, a competition allowed the selection of the best design for a

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<sup>21</sup> *CAB*, 3, 5 (May 1890) p.53

<sup>22</sup> Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, p. 20

<sup>23</sup> *CAB*, 3, 12 (December 1890) p. 134

<sup>24</sup> PQAA Minute Book, 21 November 1890, p. 33, quoted in *ibid.* p. 24

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

building, without being limited to one architect and consequently risking an inferior design. The competition process even offered the option of merging two designs together, providing the architects agreed to collaborate.<sup>26</sup> There were also advantages to architects to enter competitions, although to some the disadvantages were more obvious: 'No man who has an assured practice, and plenty of work, is going to throw away a part of his time in competition anymore than a sound, intelligent businessman will buy lottery tickets, or deal in bucket shop speculations'.<sup>27</sup> For those architects who did not have plenty of work, however, competitions were one way of attracting patrons. They were also an opportunity for architects, new or seasoned, to display their talents and competitions also provided wide publicity for new architectural designs. It was obviously the advantages of competitions that persuaded Rhind to continue to compete for commissions, despite continued failure to win. The promotional aspect of competitions must have been the key reason why he entered the American competition for the St James the Divine Cathedral during his first year in Canada.

The status of this competition ensured wide-spread interest and attention, and the size of the commission gave architects an opportunity to show off their talents in a once-in-a-lifetime design opportunity. It was an incredibly ambitious project for Rhind and he must have been realistic about his chances, but he must also have relished the possibility of starting his Canadian career 'with a bang'. The competition attracted a lot of attention. In total, sixty-eight designs were received by the assessors from around the world, although only fourteen firms had officially been invited to participate.<sup>28</sup> Rhind's design was ambitious, sumptuous and awe-inspiring [Plates 116-117]. A description of the dome claimed that 'it would take St Peter's at Rome inside, as St Peter's will take St. Paul's, London, and it would be the largest and loftiest

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. The Toronto Board of Trade had originally suggested that James and James work with Darling and Curry to reach a design that matched the superior plan to the superior elevation, however the two firms failed to work harmoniously together.

<sup>27</sup> 'Competitions by Critic', *CAB*, 1, 3 (March 1888) p. 3

<sup>28</sup> The fourteen firms invited to tender designs were: J. C. Cady & Co.; C. C. Haight; Frederick Clarke Withers; Robert W. Gibson; Henry M. Congdon; Richard Morris Hunt; Renwick, Aspinwall & Russell; McKim, Mead & White; Potter & Robertson; Henry Vaughan; Van Brunt & Howe; W. Halsey Wood; Frank Furness; and Carrère & Hastings. For a discussion of the competition see Robert A. M. Stern, Thomas Mellins and David Fishman, *New York 1880, Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1999) pp. 334 - 366

dome in the world'.<sup>29</sup> The references to St. Peter's and St. Paul's are immediate clues to the tradition Rhind followed in his design: the baroque. The basic form of a single bay nave and huge domed area may even have been inspired by Wren's design for St. Paul's. The English Cathedral was certainly the cathedral that Rhind would have been most familiar with and the whole of his design, not just the dome, is a baroque monument. The baroque possibly appealed to Rhind because of its historic associations with an English cathedral. The neo-baroque that was beginning to sweep through London's architecture may also have guided him.

Other architects also entered classical designs, much to the apparent surprise of the assessors who had expected gothic designs.<sup>30</sup> Amongst the other architects who entered classical designs were a Scottish architect, Malcolm Stark, a French architect, Alphonse Gosset, and two American firms, Edward Pearce Casey and Carrère and Hastings [Plates 118-119]. Rhind's design was no doubt a reflection of his career since leaving Inverness, which had embraced the classical and had also introduced him to the principles of Beaux-Arts planning. The notes that accompanied the illustration of the design in *CAB* mention that 'the dome is to be on a line with 112<sup>th</sup> street'.<sup>31</sup> This demonstrates that Rhind had thought about the urban context of the Cathedral and the axial relationship between the building and its immediate environs, which is a feature of design that École students were taught in preparation for designing grand, monumental public buildings. Whilst so few designs by Rhind survive, those that do indicate that he was an attentive planner of buildings who incorporated every element of the brief, which was probably a legacy from his time in Isaacs and Florence's office. His failure to win competitions may have been due to his inability to match his planning talents with artistic skill. In his competition entries he tended only to illustrate the main façade and the plans. He made little attempt to place them in a setting that might present them more attractively; other architects, such as Findlay, illustrated their house designs in garden settings and Brown's design for the Protestant Orphan Asylum is set amongst a landscape with two figures

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<sup>29</sup> 'Our Illustrations: Competitive Design for Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York – James R. Rhind, Architect, Montreal, Quebec', *CAB*, 3, 2 (February 1890) p. 16

<sup>30</sup> Stern, Mellins and Fishman, *New York 1880, Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*, (1999) p. 348

<sup>31</sup> 'Our Illustrations, Competitive Design for Cathedral of St John the Divine, New York – James R.

approaching the main door. Rhind's designs in contrast appear dour and dowdy, which could have affected assessors' reactions to them.

The designs that have survived display a varied stylistic *oeuvre*. His design for the Protestant Orphan Asylum had no particular style due to its rationalist cost-effective planning and styling, and a more extreme comparison to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine could hardly be found. The Masonic Temple revealed some Scottish Baronial details but also a French tone that possibly places it quite close to David Bryce's Scottish-Franco style, which he used at Fettes College, Edinburgh (1852). It could equally have been a response to the Canadian Château style that Price had created for the CPR, although the title Rhind gave the design suggests that a Scottish source is more likely. 'Touch Not the Cat but the Glove', which was the design's title, is the clan motto for the MacPhersons, Mackintoshes and the Grants of Ballindalloch; it may also have had held a special reference for the Masons.

Rhind was very fond of the Scottish history of Montreal; he was a member of the St. Andrew's Society and also joined the Caledonian Society.<sup>32</sup> He was surprised that there were so few Scottish Baronial buildings in the city. The most impressive example of the style was the Royal Victoria Hospital, which was designed by Henry Saxon Snell in 1889, which was the hospital closely modelled on the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary by David Bryce (1870). In spite of the building's Scottish credentials, Saxon Snell was English. This was a paradox that Rhind could not resist commenting upon:

It is strange that in this good city of Montreal, in which there are so many wealthy Scotsmen, that the Royal Victoria Hospital should be the only building in the Scottish Baronial style of architecture, and that it should be designed by an Englishman.<sup>33</sup>

Saxon Snell was chosen because of his specialism in hospital design, yet he still found the commission rather challenging.<sup>34</sup> In an interview that he gave during a visit to Montreal he commented that:

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Rhind', *CAB*, 3, 2 (February 1890) p. 16

<sup>32</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, J. R. Rhind Collection, *Montreal Illustrated*

<sup>33</sup> Quoted at <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/hospitals/case-study/background>

<sup>34</sup> 'Montreal' *CAB*, 2, 4 (April 1889) p. 44 A notice in *CAB* described Snell as 'a specialist on hospital construction and arrangement, and has built many of the largest and most important hospitals in the Old

I have had more difficulty in designing the plan for this hospital than any other I ever built. This is accounted for by the peculiarity of the Canadian climate, its intense heat and cold. For instance, hospital buildings in the south of France would in nowise do here. There they are built upon the hut plan, and of course that is the proper plan for all hospitals. But were that plan followed here, it would cost a fortune every winter for fuel alone; for in that system the hospital is scattered over a large tract of land and is only one storey high, and consists of a number of separate buildings. So it will be seen how difficult it would be to build such an hospital as that in Montreal, as each buildings has to have a separate heating apparatus. It is always difficult to prevent foul air from reaching the upper storeys in hospitals not built on the hut plan, as it always travels by the stairway. I have taken means in my plan of the present hospital to prevent this, by detaching the stair case, and outing on each floor short bridges, so that there will no staircase for it to ascend. I intend to press for the erection of one or two detached buildings for the purely infectious cases. This of course will be costly, but I consider it worth the expense. When completed there will not be another hospital in the world built on the same design as the Victoria.<sup>35</sup>

The proposed site of the hospital also posed difficulties for Snell, as it was on a steep gradient, was an irregular shape and was on uneven ground. The resulting design was, therefore, highly commended in the press: one report commented that ‘by the skill of the designer [the site has] actually been turned to advantage, whereby the bottom storey of one wing is on a level with the top storey of the other’.<sup>36</sup> Whilst this must have been a complication during the planning process, Snell turned the site to great use in his presentation drawings of the hospital which evoke a highland castle nestling in a glen [Plate 120].

Rhind’s involvement in the design was announced in a notice to *CAB*: ‘Mr. James R. Rhind, Montreal, has been appointed assistant architect to H. Saxon Snell, Esq.’<sup>37</sup> His work involved designing the details for the design and he was also responsible for superintending the construction of the design in Snell’s absence. Rhind’s appointment to the position of assistant architect seems to have been one of the few occasions when he took advantage of personal contacts. Earlier in 1889, John Rhind prepared plans for the Leancoil Cottage Hospital, Chapelton Moir, Forres, a project that Donald Smith (Lord Strathcona) contributed £8,238 towards. Having drawn up his designs, Rhind’s plans were forwarded to Saxon Snell

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Country’, although it does not give any examples of these important hospitals. He was commissioned to design a new ward block for the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in 1887, and it may have been this that brought him to the attention of Smith and Stephens, the two patrons of the Royal Victoria Hospital, who had both been born in Aberdeenshire and maintained philanthropic links to the area.

<sup>35</sup> ‘The Victoria Hospital, Montreal’, *CAB*, 2, 5 (May 1889) p. 52

<sup>36</sup> ‘Montreal Notes’, *CAB*, Vol. 5, Issue 10 (October 1892) p.100

<sup>37</sup> *CAB*, 2, 4 (April 1889) p. 44

for comment. Rhind died before Saxon Snell had replied to his request and the commission was subsequently handed over to the English architect.<sup>38</sup> In the same year, James Rhind was appointed the supervisory architect to Saxon Snell's commission in Montreal, which seems rather coincidental. The advantage that Rhind reaped from his brother's connection with Saxon Snell contradicts the obituary notice, referred to earlier, that suggested Rhind was too shy to take advantage of contacts. This was clearly an exception.

As well as supervising the erection of the Administrative Block, the Medical Wing and the Surgical Wing, which were the three parts of Snell's design, Rhind was also responsible for the design of the Laundry Building and Lodge (1893) [Plate 121]. These are both elegant Scottish renaissance designs; the Laundry Building, with its columned and pedimented entrance and decorative gables, has a dignity that contrasts with the more over baronial buildings on the site, such as Taylor's Power Plant (1900) [Plate 122]. This design suggests an architect who is sensitive to composition and also the architectural heritage. The Royal Victoria Infirmary, with its obvious relation to Bryce's Edinburgh Infirmary, provides stylistic parameters for architects employed to design other buildings for the site. Rhind rose to the challenge much more gracefully than he did with any of his other known designs, which suggests that he did have hidden architectural talents, but needed clear stylistic guidelines to steer his work.

The possible talent of Rhind is also potentially revealed by one other commission, albeit an unknown design, discussed in a profile of Rhind that was published in *Montreal Illustrated*.<sup>39</sup> Rhind appears to have designed a house for a man called R. Heneker.<sup>40</sup> This may be significant as the patron could have been Richard William Heneker (1823–1912). Heneker was a businessman and politician and was particularly active in the Eastern Townships, where he was involved in ensuring the 'vitality of the English-speaking

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<sup>38</sup> The involvement of John Rhind and Saxon Snell at the Leancoil Cottage Hospital is recorded in Historic Scotland's listing for the hospital.

<sup>39</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, J. R. Rhind Collection, Vertical File, *Montreal Illustrated*, unpagged photocopy

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

population'.<sup>41</sup> He appears to have been quite an imperious and authoritative figure. To win his patronage, therefore, would certainly have been quite an achievement. Moreover, he had trained as an architect. In 1842 he had assisted in the office of the English architect Charles Barry and by the 1850s he was an associate of the RIBA.<sup>42</sup> A trained architect would have been quite selective in the architect he commissioned to design his personal residence, therefore if this was the same R. Heneker mentioned with relation to Rhind, it stands as testament to the latter's quality and reputation. In fact the whole of the piece testifies to his architectural ability. There is every chance that he wrote the notice himself, though there is little reason to suppose that he exaggerated his credentials outlandishly, not least because he knew that Findlay would have known the truth:

Among the prominent architects in this city is Mr. James R. Rhind, who, prior to coming here, acquired a wide reputation in London for his great skill and artistic conceptions. Mr. Rhind was born in Inverness, Scotland, and in early life acquired a thorough, practical as well as artistic and theoretical knowledge of the science of architecture in the office of his brother, Mr. John Rhind, in his native city. He subsequently went to London and was principal assistant, superintendent and designer with Messrs. Isaacs & Florence, head architects of the Victoria Hotel, Northumberland, [sic] one of the finest hotels in that great city. He was also assistant superintendent for Boulnois & Warner, who erected a large hall with a seating capacity for 6,000 persons. Mr. Rhind was established in London as an architect eight years, and since 1888 had been active in his profession in this city and designed the detail and superintended the construction of the Royal Victoria hospital [sic.] for H. Saxon Snell, F.R.I.B.A., London; the residence of R. Henecker, [sic.] and many others. His office is No. 405 Board of Trade Building, Mr. Rhind is recognized as a gentleman of marked professional attainments, and is a prominent member of the Quebec Association of Architects, and also a member of the St Andrews and Caledonian Societies.<sup>43</sup>

Rhind's contribution to the PQAA is raised in this piece, and he is described as 'a prominent member of the Quebec Association'.<sup>44</sup> He joined the PQAA almost immediately upon arriving in Montreal and became a Committee Member of the Association.<sup>45</sup> Unlike Taylor, Rhind was not a prolific speaker or writer; however he held clear views, as his letters to *CAB* indicate, and he was happy to express them. The most revealing record of his opinion on architecture is a paper he read to the PQAA, which was

<sup>41</sup> *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, www.biographi.ca

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Montreal Illustrated*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> 'P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 4, 4 (April 1891) p. 51

subsequently published in *CAB*.<sup>46</sup> In this paper Rhind asserted that an architect had three key roles to play in his professional life and these were, in order of importance: the architect must be a good businessman; he must be very practical; and he has to be an artist. The emphasis that Rhind seems to have placed on the professional side of architecture is illuminating, as the concept of architecture as a profession was a relatively recent one: the ‘Architecture: A Profession or An Art?’ debate raged in London during the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>47</sup>

The reasons why Rhind prioritised business over art were well argued in the paper:

The first [business] is necessary to the drawing up of agreements, and conducting and negotiating for the carrying out of work, so that extras or omissions, should any occur, may be settled in a fair and just manner, and so that the employer may be protected from any loss by the failure of the builder to fulfil his contract. The want or lack of a business way of settling work, drawing up agreements and specifications, or badly drawn and insufficiently illustrated plans, are primary causes of misunderstanding and disagreement, lead to litigation, entailing serious loss of time and giving much worry and trouble – and worry will kill a man in half the time that hard work will.<sup>48</sup>

His reference to worry killing a man and his general point that architects must pay attention to the business of their practice was probably prompted by the death of his elder brother John Rhind, with whom he and Findlay had trained. It was a premature death and most of the contemporary obituaries explained his sudden demise with reference to the court case he was pursuing against Sir John Ramsden, of Ardverikie House:

A feeling of painful surprise was caused in Inverness on the Sabbath, by the announcement that Mr. John Rhind had died in Perthshire. The circumstances are peculiarly distressing. That week an action the deceased had raised against Sir John Ramsden [owner of Ardverikie House] came on for proof, and he was subjected to a prolonged examination in the witness box, with the result that he became very much excited, and ultimately broke down in health.<sup>49</sup>

In the context of his brother’s death, Rhind’s assertion that architects needed to pay greater attention to the

<sup>46</sup> James R. Rhind, ‘The Architect as a Business Man and Artist’, *CAB*, 5, 11 (November 1892) p. 111

<sup>47</sup> See “John Smith Archibald (1872-1934), chapter 6, for further details.

<sup>48</sup> Rhind, ‘The Architect as a Businessman and Artist’, p. 111

<sup>49</sup> ‘Death of Mr. John Rhind Architect, Inverness’, *Ross-shire Journal* (August 1889) p. 4 See ‘Robert Findlay’, chapter 4, p. 11 for further details.

legal and financial contracts of their commissions is quite comprehensible. He did not, however, agree that art should consequently be overlooked. Although he argued that an architect needed to be a businessman before all else, he also considered artistic talent to be 'the indispensable quality' a man needed if he were to be an architect, as this distinguished him from the engineer and builder. Rhind also aired his views on architectural training in this paper, which was supportive of the view that called for a European education for those men away in the Dominions:

If this Association is to attain to the highest degree of usefulness in the architectural profession in Canada and has at heart the raising of the profession to the highest and most respected position in the land we must endeavor to do all in our power to this end. Let us begin with the training of our students who are our future architects of the Dominion, and determine that they shall have every opportunity and facility to gain a true and correct knowledge of architecture and the many branches of knowledge with which the architect of today is familiar, especially the highest training of an artist in its broadest sense. Let us have a traveling studentship to be won in competition to enable the most capable of our students to enjoy the inestimable privilege of studying in Europe. I say privilege, because it does not matter how clever one may be, he is heavily handicapped in the race for excellence unless he studies in Europe the glorious works left to us by our fathers.<sup>50</sup>

His proposal for a traveling scholarship was one that Taylor also frequently made, although Taylor was never as prescriptive as Rhind in insisting that the scholarship should be used to visit Europe. Given his own interest in heritage and tradition, it is very likely that Taylor would have agreed with Rhind, who seemed to regard Canada's architectural heritage to be that of Europe, therefore young architects had to go to Europe:

The best way to study detail and design is from the actual building, not only to stand and look at it, but to measure and draw it, transfer it to your sketch book and make it your own, and you will discover as you draw fresh beauties which you did not before observe. I do not mean the buildings on this continent, but those of Europe. One to get the purest water must go to the fountain's head; in the same way one must study the works of the old masters.<sup>51</sup>

With this attitude it is unlikely that Rhind would have looked favourably upon the increasing influence of American architecture in Canada, particularly tall buildings. In his appraisal of good and bad architecture, Rhind favoured architecture that disguised its construction with ornament: 'when construction became the

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<sup>50</sup> Rhind, 'The Architect as a Businessman and Artist' p. 111

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

main object and the architect tried to see with what little support he could erect his buildings they began to have an accentuated appearance, and though strong enough as time has proved, these buildings can never satisfy the artistic feelings within us'.<sup>52</sup> Rhind does not specify which period he is talking about in this assessment of 'construction-led' architecture. Nevertheless, his words could be easily applied to the new tall buildings from America and would adhere to the contemporary thoughts of his colleagues, such as Taylor. Rhind and Taylor actually had much in common. Taylor was a much more successful architect, mainly due to his connections which Rhind seemingly failed to attract, with the exception of Saxon Snell. Taylor, however, like Rhind regarded architecture as an art, lavished ornament on his buildings and despaired of the fashion for rational, functional design he saw emerging in the United States.

In 1895, Rhind left Montreal. The reasons for his departure were probably connected to his practice, which does not seem to have experienced the same level of success as Findlay's, the architect with whom Rhind's career is perhaps best compared.<sup>53</sup> Rhind's father and brother had both died during his time in Canada, therefore he probably returned to Inverness to revive the family practice. He certainly had a more productive practice in Inverness than he seemingly had in Montreal. His fortunes finally changed in the twentieth century when he won a series of competitions in Glasgow.

These competitions were all for small branch libraries in various districts in Glasgow. The motion to erect branch libraries had been first considered in 1898. In 1901 Andrew Carnegie offered the monies by which the scheme could be realised:

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Their early careers were remarkably similar: they both served their apprenticeships with John Rhind, they then went to Glasgow and both worked for Beaux-Arts graduates, before heading across to Canada.

Knockderry Castle, Cove  
Dumbartonshire, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1901

My Dear Lord Provost,

It will give me great pleasure to provide the needed one hundred thousand pounds for Branch Libraries, which are sure to be of great advantage to the masses of the people. It is just fifty-two years since my parents, with their two little boys, sailed from the Broomielaw for New York in the barque *Wiscassett*, 800 tons, and it is delightful to be permitted to commemorate the event upon my visit to you.

Glasgow has done so much in municipal affairs to educate other cities and to help herself that it is a privilege to help her.

Let Glasgow flourish, so say we all of us Scotsmen throughout the World.

Always yours,  
Andrew Carnegie<sup>54</sup>

This generous gift from Carnegie paid for fourteen branch libraries to be erected in the city, rather than just the eight that were originally planned. The first library that opened was the Kingston District Library, in September 1904 [Plate 123], closely followed by the Anderston Library. The first was designed by Alexander MacDonald, the City Engineer, and the second was a design by the firm Stewart and Paterson. The third library in the scheme was Rhind's first contribution to the project. The commission for Woodside District Library was awarded to Rhind in 1902, and was opened to the public in 1905 [Plates 124-125]. Described as his 'grandest and most classical branch library', Rhind's design is a fine Beaux-Arts building. The façade of the Woodside District Library perfectly mirrors the internal plan of the library, which was characteristically practical and convenient. The entrance elevation is almost perfectly symmetrical with the exception of the two doors: the one on the left is much wider and grander. This disparity between the two entrance doors corresponds to the division of the library between adults and children. The library was also divided along gender lines. The women's reading rooms were at the far end of building, which gave them privacy and peace away from the general reading room. The reading room was articulated on the façade by a three-bay Ionic arcade. The perfect correlation between plan and design became a standard characteristic in his library designs. What makes them stand out even more is Rhind's refusal to allow the classical tenets of symmetry overrule the plan, which follows the programmatic principles of the Beaux-Arts planning theory.

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<sup>54</sup> *Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries* (Glasgow: Glasgow Corporation, 1907) p. 20

A contemporary library design was his Maryhill District Library, which was also opened in 1905 [Plates 126-127]. This was one of his smaller libraries and was built on an irregular site. Through skilful planning Rhind maximised all the space available, whilst ensuring that all the rooms had a regular shape. He added a second storey to this library to allow both adults and children to have access to their own library space. As at Woodside, there were two entrances, one for the adults and another for children. The children's entrance opened onto a staircase which led up to the children's library on the first floor. The design of the building is French classicism, which was increasingly common in Glasgow because of the increasing enthusiasm for the Beaux-Arts, led in part by the new French Professor at the Glasgow School of Art, Eugène Bourdon, who was a graduate of the *École des Beaux-Arts*, and also veteran architects, such as Burnet and Campbell.<sup>55</sup>

His next library, Govanhill Library (1906) was also built on an awkward site and required good planning skills to make the most of the space available [Plates 128-129]. The site for this library incorporated a curved street frontage but Rhind rose to the challenge. He divided the site into two sectors and treated them separately. The General Reading Room occupied a rectangular space to the left of the site. On the façade it is expressed as a single story building with arches springing from channelled piers and was decorated in a very French Beaux-Arts manner. Juxtaposed with the reading room is the rest of the library fronted by a two-storey building with a curved classical façade articulated on the first floor with arched windows and columns. He managed to conceal the awkwardness of the site by using a semi-elliptical apse for the Library. In conception this is very similar to his plan for the Masonic Temple, where he was able to accommodate a stage and seating in a relatively small room by setting them at right angles to the building's main axis. He also ensured that the most awkward spaces were reserved for the less important rooms, such as the Filing Room and the children's entrance hall.

Other Glasgow architects also designed some of these small branch libraries, but they addressed the varying elements of the commissions quite differently. Architects, such as Thomas R. Gilmore, wanted to

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<sup>55</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7, for further details

preserve the classical symmetry of their facades thus had two identical entrance doors next to each other [Plate 130]. Most of the designs were classically inspired but seemed a little lack-lustre in comparison with Rhind's sculptural designs. This ties in to his love of ornamentation, which he had expressed in Canada and also displays the baroque tendency he had revealed in his St. James the Divine design. Rhind has been marked out as being 'especially adept' at designing these small buildings and it is easy to see why.<sup>56</sup>

It would have been difficult from the records of his Canadian career to predict that Rhind would become a commended architect. By the time of his return to Scotland, he certainly had had practice at working out competition designs to suit differing sites and budgets, an experience that seems to have proved invaluable. The designs of the libraries, however, bear little relation to anything that he designed in Montreal, although there is some similarity to contemporary buildings in Montreal, for example the Maxwells' Museum of Beaux-Arts (1911-12) [Plate 28].

The Beaux-Arts influence on Rhind's libraries is interesting. It interlocks with his early training in London with Florence and Isaacs and fits with the contemporary architecture in Glasgow. His designs in Montreal seem unconfident in comparison, perhaps because he was confused about what style was most appropriate for Montreal's architecture. He supported the use of the Scottish Baronial, but there was little interest in the style and in the few designs that have survived he seemed unable to reconcile his impression of Montreal with any other architectural style. His one known built design, the Laundry Building at the Royal Victoria Hospital, was designed within quite clear, precise stylistic definitions. Rhind, consequently, seemed able to produce a building that expressed his architectural ability. Back in Scotland his architecture was more self-assured. In Inverness he designed Scottish Baronial houses and gothic churches, that matched the architecture of the region,<sup>57</sup> and in Glasgow he produced beautiful, little Beaux-Arts libraries that suited the classicism of the city. Rhind's work, therefore, appears to have been

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<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth Williamson, Anne Riches and Malcolm Higgs, *The Buildings of Scotland: Glasgow* (London: Penguin Books, 1990) p. 63

<sup>57</sup> Gifford, *The Buildings of Scotland: Highland and Island*, p. 184

dependent upon a firm stylistic direction and local architectural traditions, which he did not find in Montreal.

Rhind's story is a cautionary tale about emigration. It demonstrates that the perceived opportunities of the New World were not available to everyone; although his obituary suggests that he was more successful than surviving records demonstrate.<sup>58</sup> Whether his seven years in Montreal had any impact on his architecture is difficult to tell, however it is impossible to determine if Rhind would have become the same architect if he had never left Britain. The transference of architectural ideas, unless it is simple visual replication, can be complex to identify. One of Rhind's sons stayed in Montreal, so the family must have had some good experiences over in Canada and it meant that the city remained an important presence in Rhind's life until his death.<sup>59</sup>

Rhind's connections with Canada may have had some significance beyond his own designs. Whilst working on the libraries, Rhind rented some office space in Hope Street, Glasgow and became a fixed presence in the city for a couple of years. This coincided with the emigration of younger architects to Montreal, for example Sharp, Martin and Brown. Their decision to leave Glasgow and go to Montreal has already been examined in the context of Findlay, however other young architects also went to Canada during the early twentieth century, including Alexander Wright, John Roxburgh Smith and Alfred Lochhead.<sup>60</sup> It would be unrealistic to propose that Rhind's presence in Glasgow was one of the main contributory factors to the Glasgow-Montreal migration, however it seems inappropriate to cast it aside as merely coincidental. His library designs appear to have received a lot of attention, and it is likely that other architects became aware of his time in Canada. This, together with other factors, such as the connections

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<sup>58</sup> His obituary remarks that Rhind competed successfully against American architects. Without any further evidence to support this claim, Rhind will remain an enigmatic figure who found success once he had come home, rather than in the land of promises.

<sup>59</sup> 'Obituary' p. 3 In the obituary of Rhind, it was recorded that two of his sons had returned to Scotland with their parents. A third son, had remained in Montreal and was currently serving with the Canadian army.

<sup>60</sup> Alexander Wright emigrated to Canada in 1903, where he became an assistant to Edward and William Maxwell; John Roxburgh Smith also joined the Maxwell practice, but a year after Wright, and Alfred Lochhead left Glasgow in 1913 and found a position with Ross and MacDonald.

between Findlay, Burnet and Campbell, possibly helped to heighten awareness of and interest in the possible opportunities available in Montreal. The young architects who went to Canada all found positions very quickly with the most prestigious architects, such as Findlay, the Maxwells, and Ross and MacDonald. This implies that they knew which were the best firms to apply to for positions; could Rhind have been a source of information and advice for these young men?

For an architect who had a relatively inauspicious career, to judge from surviving records, the final years of Rhind's career are intriguing. His designs for the Glasgow libraries reveal a mature architect with astute planning capabilities and a skilful manner of designing small yet grand buildings. His return to Glasgow coincided with the decision of other aspiring architects to move to Montreal, which further nurtured the bond between the two countries. To argue that he played a significant role in extending the connections between Glasgow and Montreal may seem unconvincing without supporting evidence, but it is nonetheless a compelling thought.



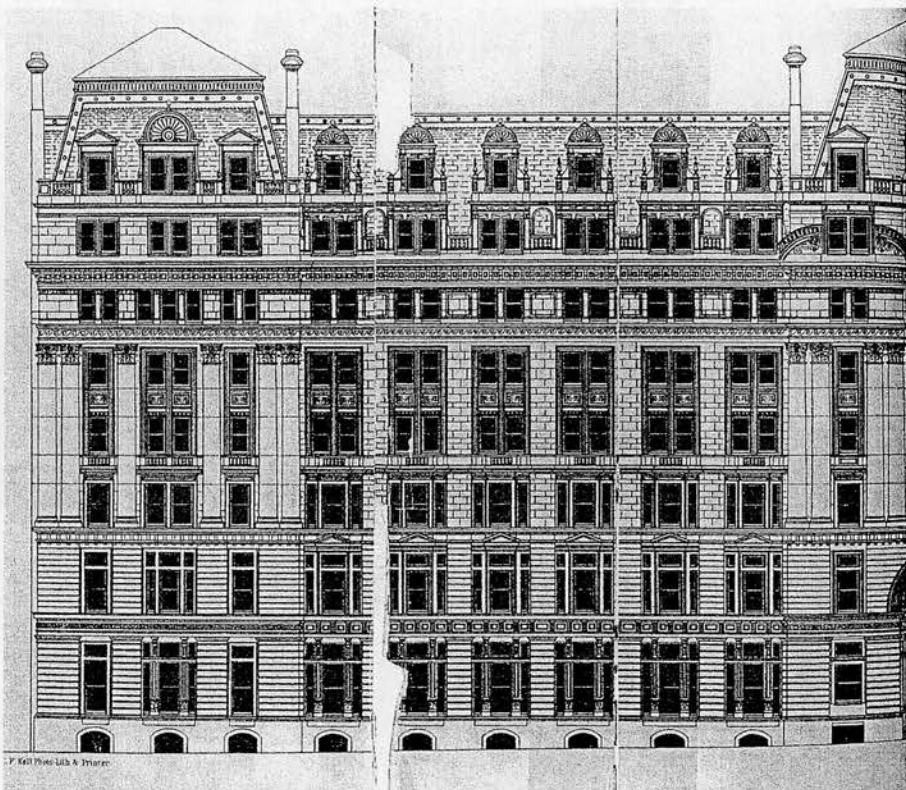
106. James R. Rhind, standing at the back (35)  
(Meeting of the PQAA, CAB)



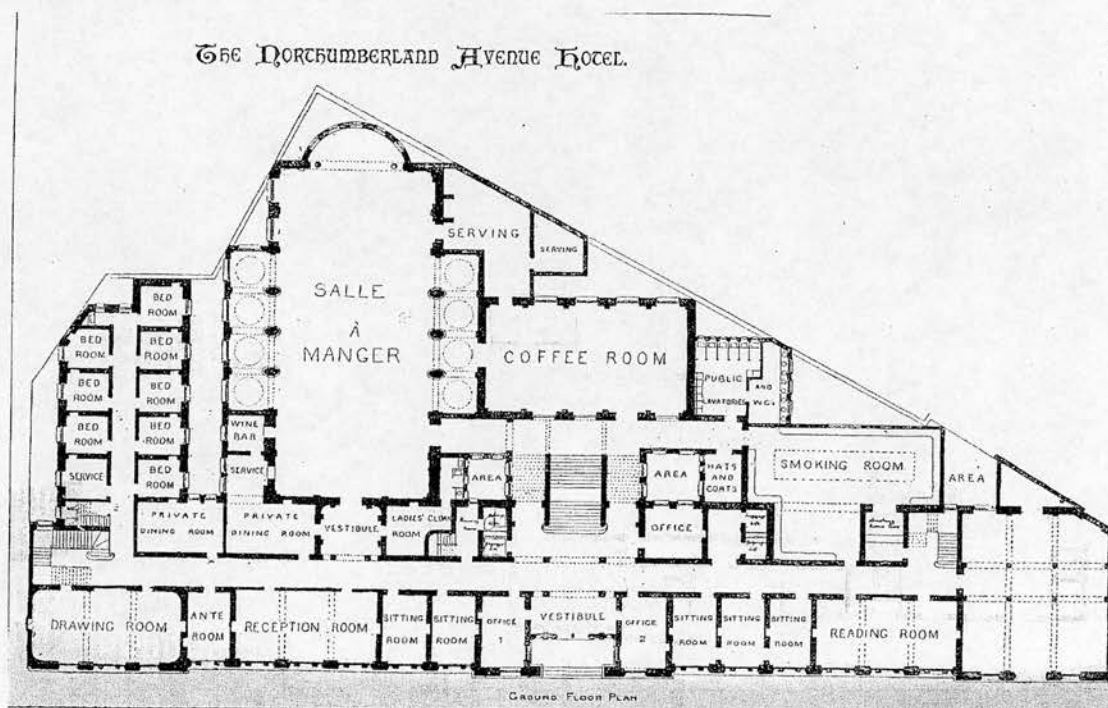
107. 'Greek' Thompson, Egyptian Halls, Glasgow (1871-73)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes & MacKechine, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



108. Sellars, St. Andrew's Halls, Glasgow (1873-77)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes & MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



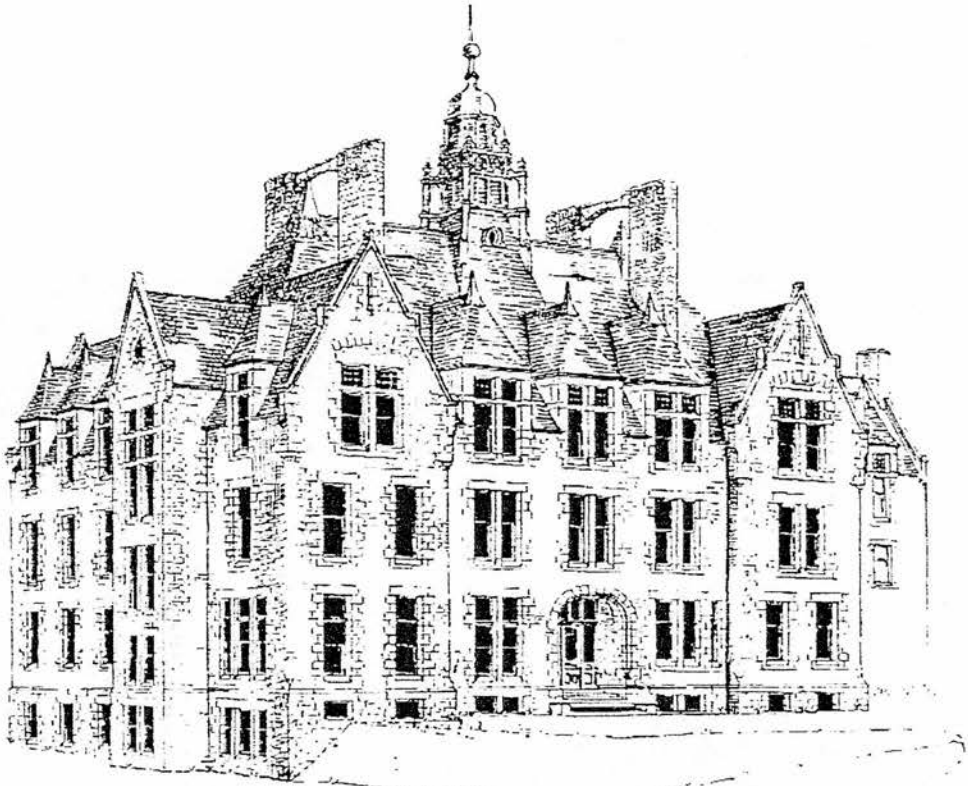
109. Florence & Isaacs, Northumberland Avenue Hotel, London (1885)  
(*The Builder*)



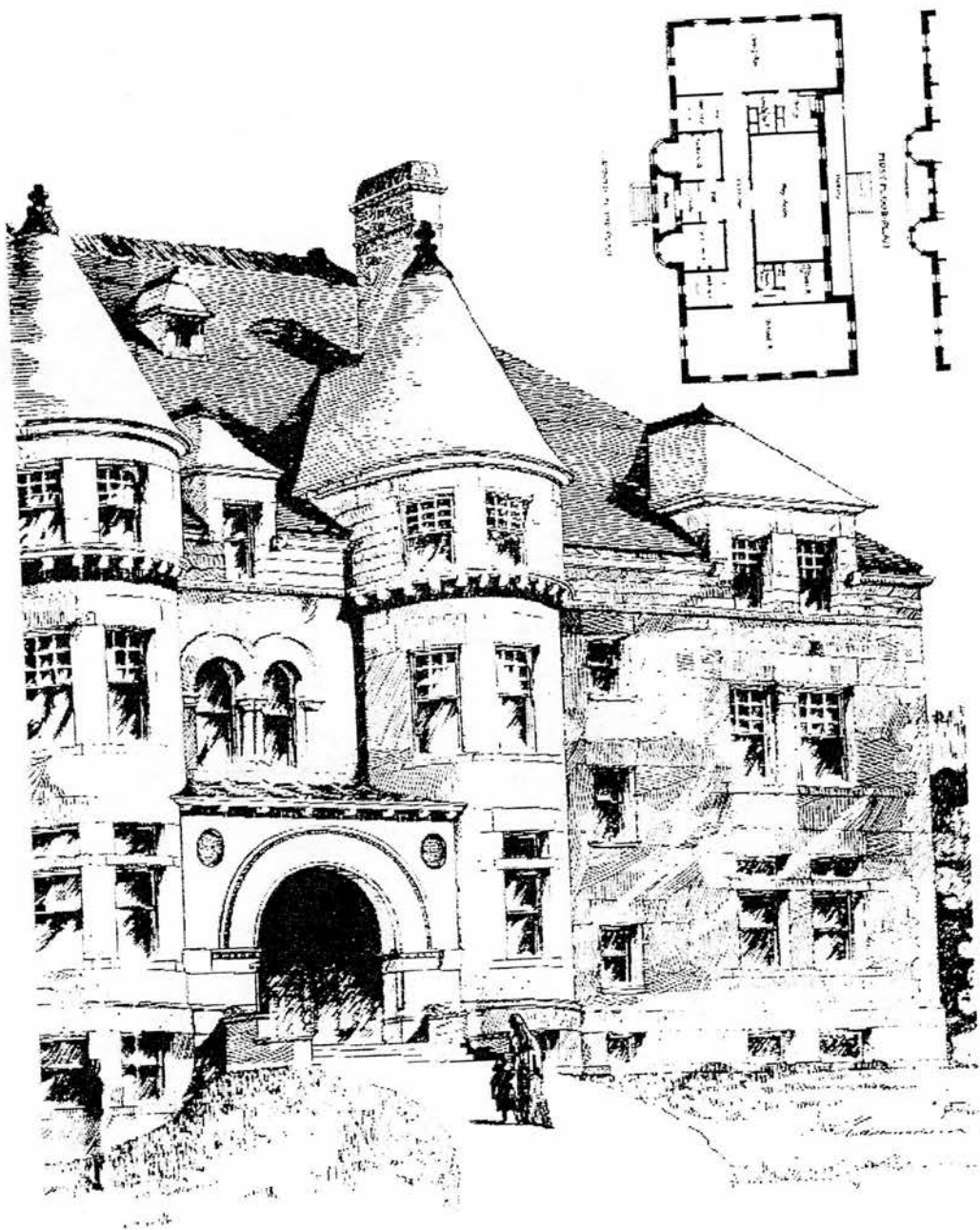
110. Florence & Isaacs, Northumberland Avenue Hotel, London (1885)  
(*The Builder*)



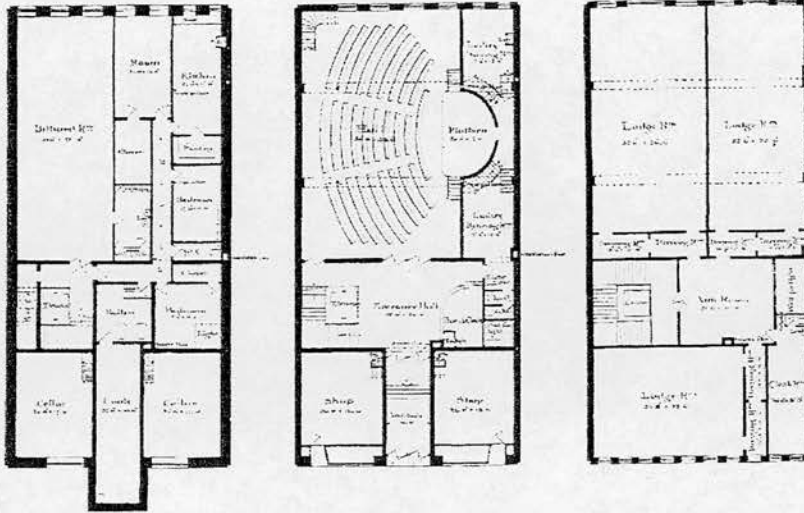
111. Norman Shaw, New Scotland Yard, London (1887-90)  
(Dixon & Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*)



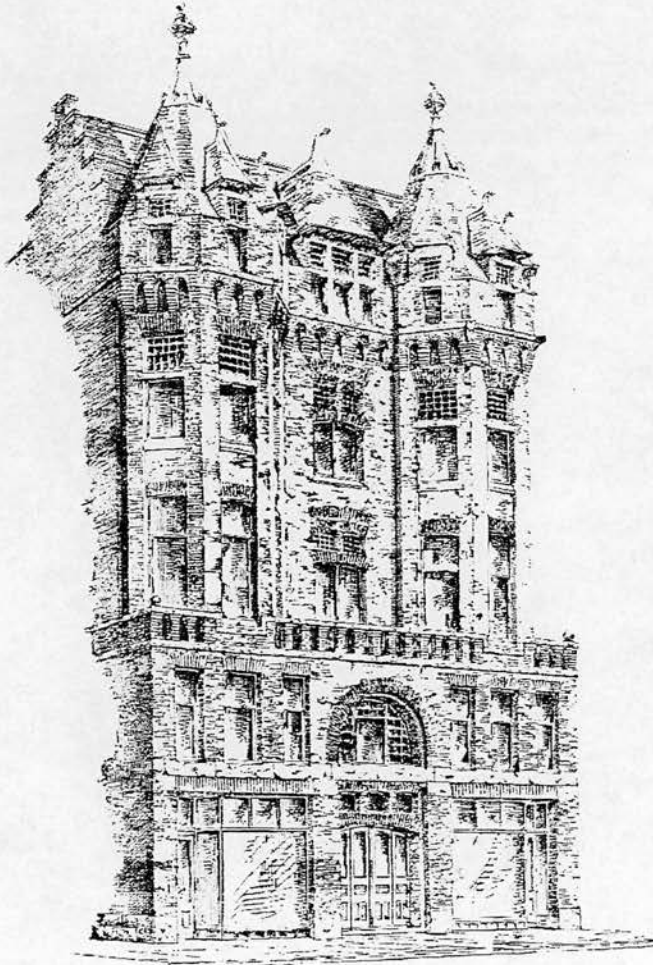
112. Rhind, Design for Protestant Orphan Asylum, Montreal (1894)  
(CAB)



113. Brown, Design for Protestant Orphan Asylum, Montreal (1894)  
(CAB)



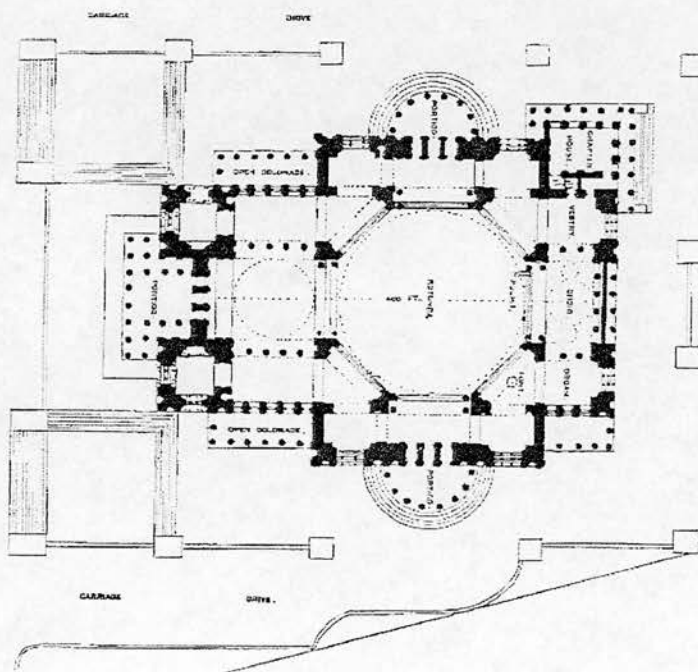
114. Rhind, Design for a Masonic Temple, Montreal, Plan (1896)  
(CAB)



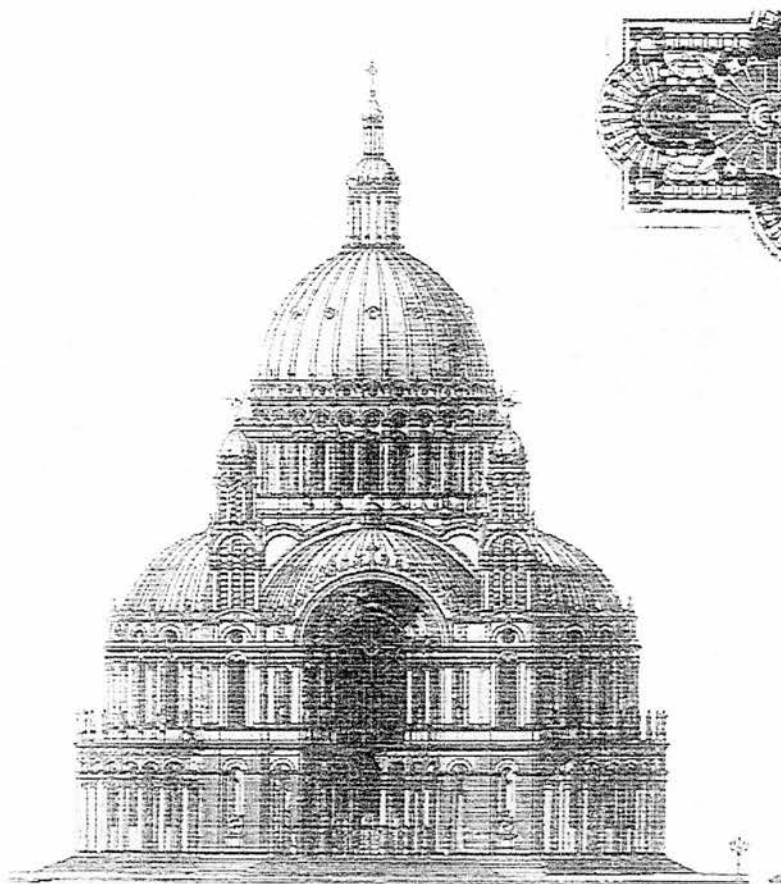
115. Rhind, Design for Masonic Temple, Montreal (1896)  
(CAB)



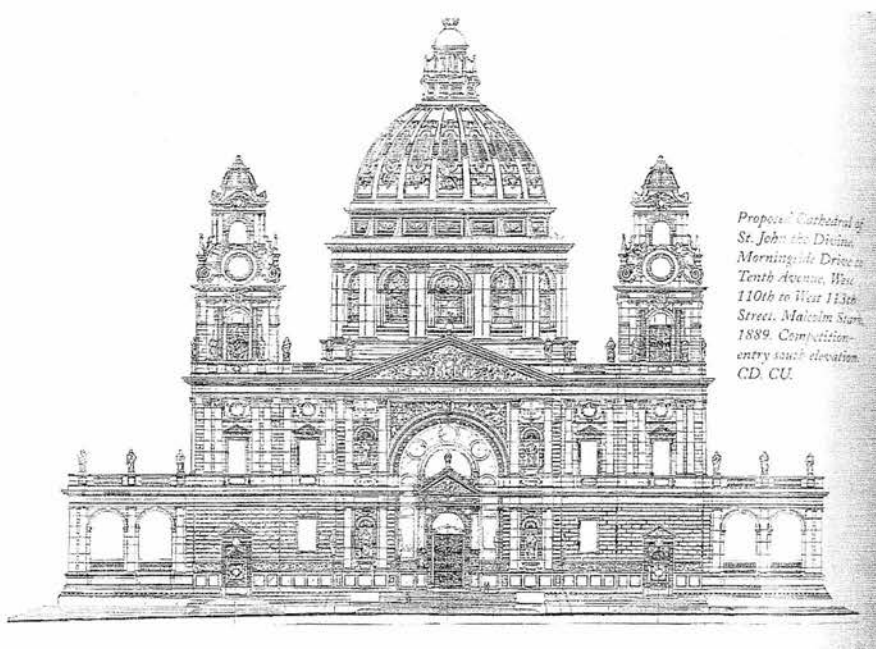
116. Rhind, Design for St James the Divine Cathedra, New York (1888)  
(CAB)



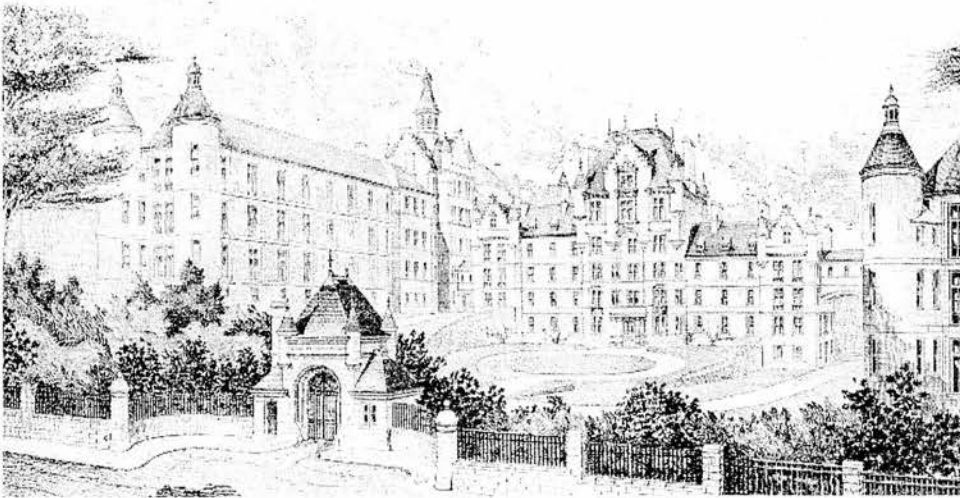
117. Rhind, Design for St. James the Divine Cathedral, New York (1888)  
(CAB)



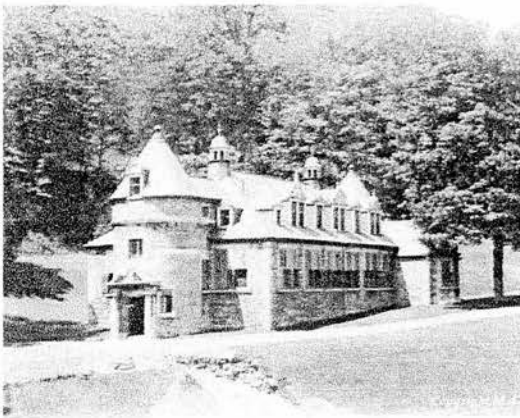
118. Gosset, Design for St. James the Divine Cathedral, New York (1888)  
(Stern, Mellins and Fishman, *New York 1880*)



119. Stark, Design for St. James the Divine Cathedral, New York (1888)  
(Stern, Mellins and Fishman, *New York 1880*)



120. Saxon Snell, Presentation Drawing, Royal Victoria Hospital, Mount Royal, Montreal (1889), (CAB)



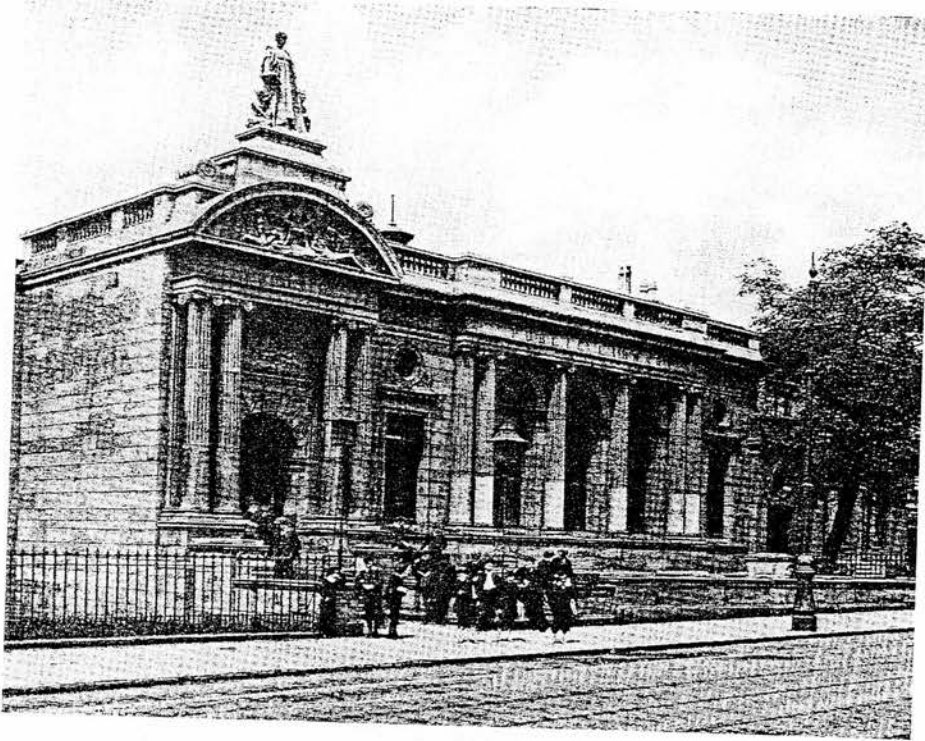
121. Rhind, Laundry Building, Royal, Victoria Hospital, Montreal (1893) (McGill University Archives)



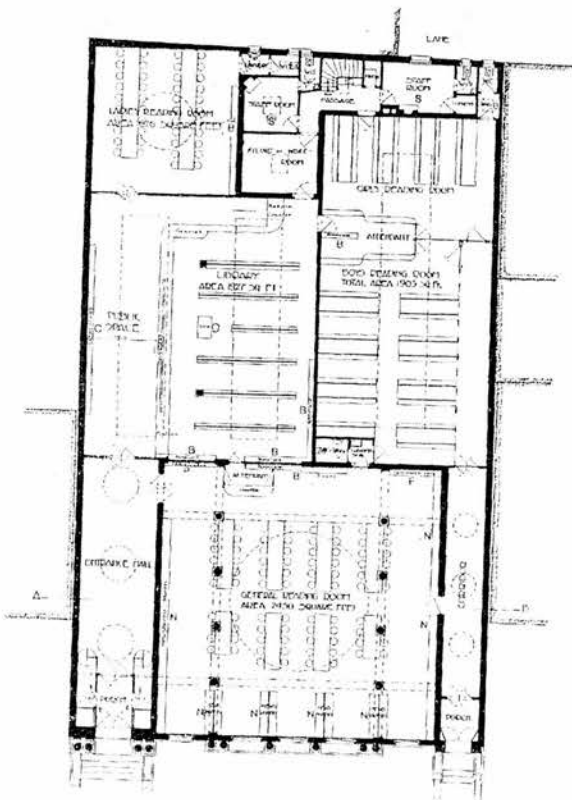
122. Taylor, Power Plant, Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal (1900) (McGill University Archives)



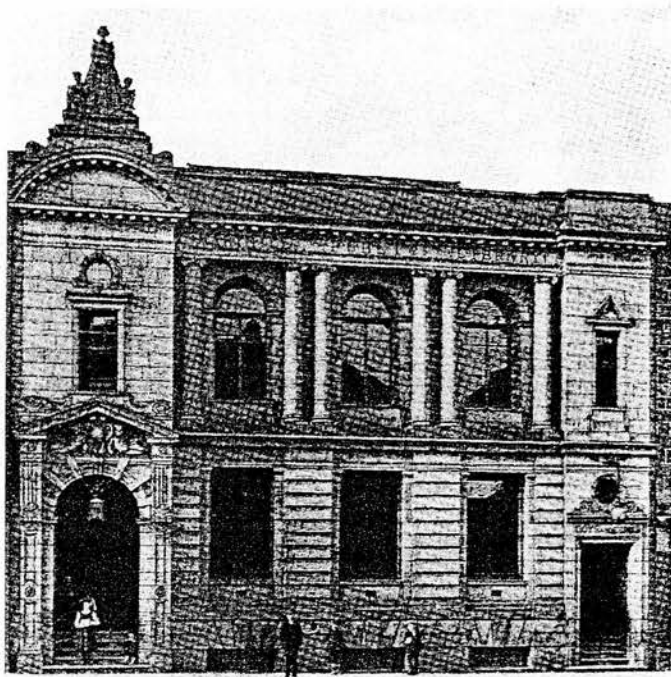
123. MacDonal, Kingston Halls and Library, Glasgow (1902-04)  
(*Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries*)



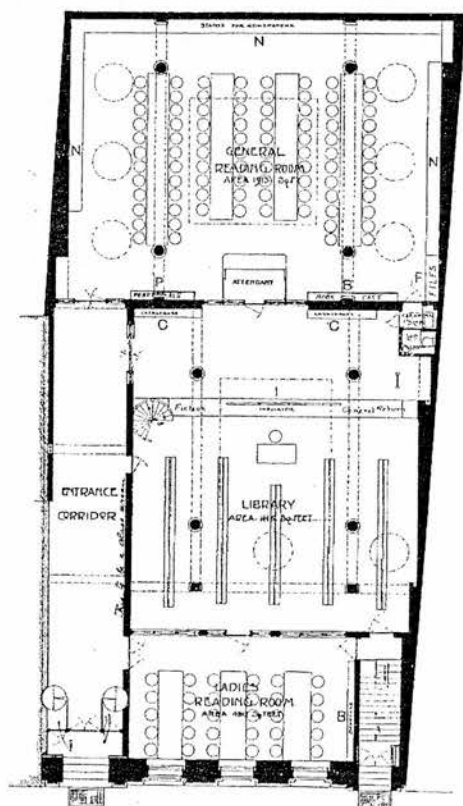
124. Rhind, Woodside District Library, Glasgow (1905)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



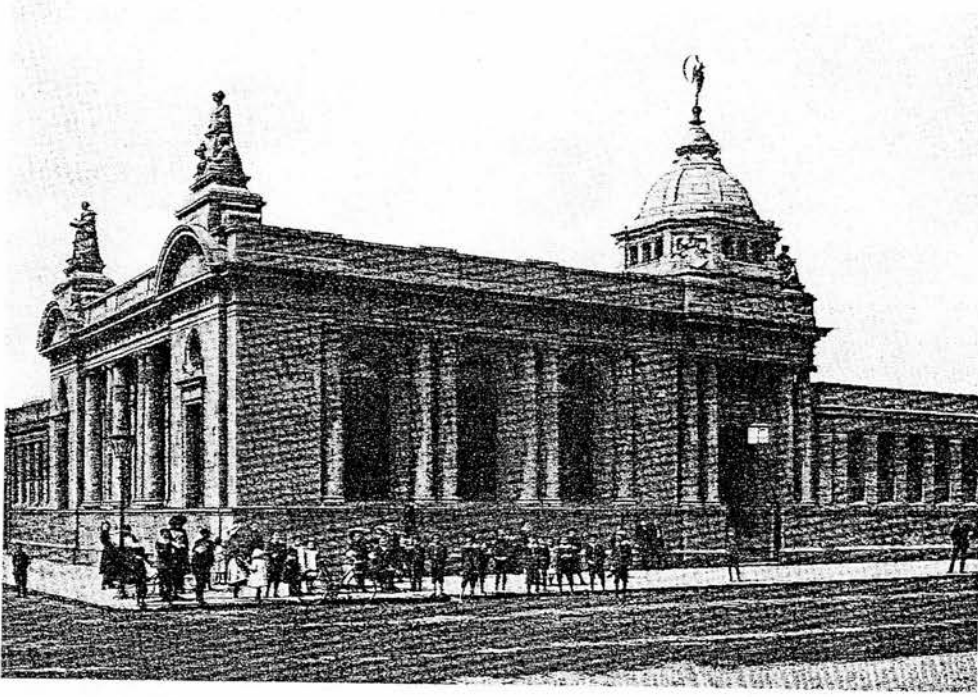
125. Rhind, Woodside District Library, Glasgow, Plan (1905)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



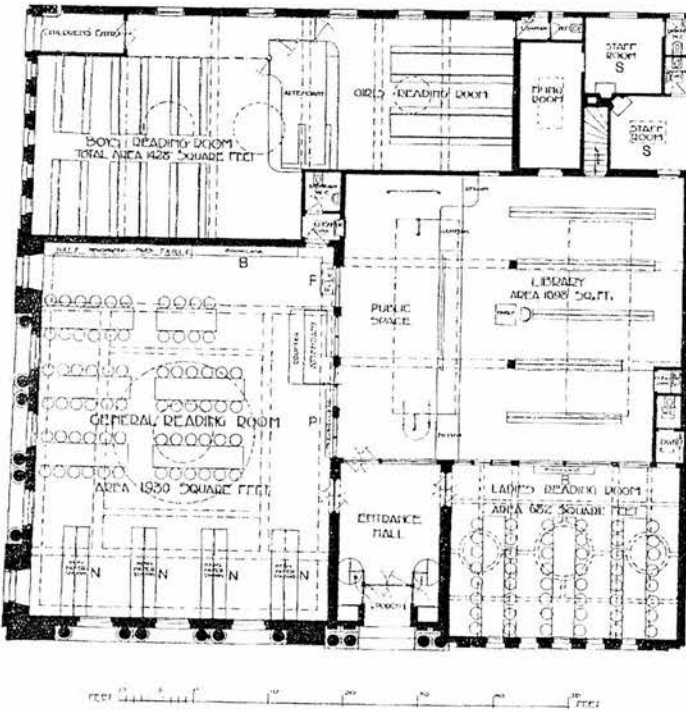
126. Rhind, Maryhill District Library, Glasgow (1905)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



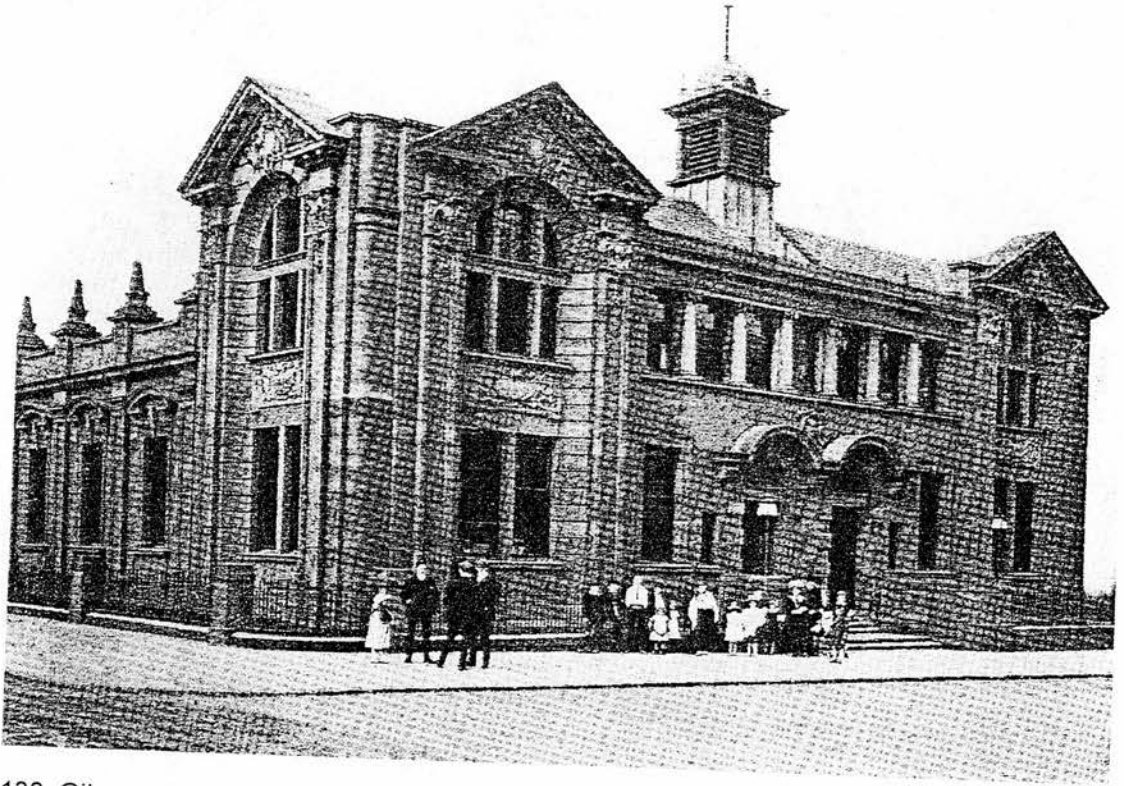
127. Rhind, Maryhill District Library, Glasgow, Plan (1905)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



128. Rhind, Govanhill and Crosshill District Library, Glasgow (1906)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



129. Rhind, Govanhill and Crosshill District Library, Glasgow (1906)  
*(Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries)*



130. Gilmore, Pollockshields District Library, Glasgow (c.1906)  
(*Descriptive Handbook of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries*)

## John Smith Archibald 1872–1934

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**In the passing away of John Archibald the Institute loses a distinguished member, whose attendance at our meetings added to the wisdom of the discussions. To the social aspect of our reunions he contributed a quality of good hearted fellowship which it will be hard to replace.**

W. Maxwell, 'John S. Archibald 1872 – 1934', *JRAIC* (1934)

John Smith Archibald, like Findlay, began his career in Inverness and rose to become a prolific and highly respected architect in Canada [Plate 131]. He designed modern buildings that adhered to the emerging international modern architecture and contributed substantially to the development of the profession in the Dominion. His work before World War One was designed in partnership with Charles J Saxe, whom he met during his first year in Canada when they were both draughtsmen in Edward Maxwell's office.<sup>1</sup> Their buildings represent a blossoming Dominion in contrast to the works of Taylor, whose roots were firmly entrenched in Ruskinian Britain, and the houses of Findlay, which created an image of 'home' in Montreal. Archibald also helped to propel the profession into a new, dynamic model. For these contributions he has been described as 'a culminating figure in the pre-modern phase of Canadian architecture'.<sup>2</sup>

Born in Inverness in 1872, Archibald entered the office of local architect William Mackintosh when he was sixteen years old.<sup>3</sup> Little is known about Mackintosh, but it seems that, unlike John Rhind, he had only trained in Inverness and never worked in any of the larger Scottish cities. This isolation from the

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<sup>1</sup> Charles J. Saxe was born in America, but trained in the Montreal office of Edward Maxwell. He enjoyed a prosperous career, although his career post-Archibald has been overshadowed by the more prolific Archibald who was an active member of the profession in terms of administration and professional development, as well as a designer of buildings.

<sup>2</sup> John Bland, *John S Archibald and His Associates: A Guide to the Archive* (Montreal: McGill University 1990) p. 4

<sup>3</sup> The earliest published biographical information for Archibald was printed in *CAB* on the occasion of his election to the position of President of the PQAA in 1905, 'P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 18, 2 (February 1905) p. 27

main cosmopolitan centres means that he was probably largely dependent on architectural journals for inspiration and models; descriptions of his work certainly indicate that he was largely an imitative architect who showed little individuality or creativity. These descriptions include ‘ungainly Gothic’, ‘stodgy Wrenaissance’ and ‘lumpy Gothic’.<sup>4</sup> Many of his designs were for houses, a number of which have not been identified. It is very difficult, therefore, to create a clear image of his *oeuvre*, beyond the written descriptions. There are only a few identified examples that provide an insight into Archibald’s earlier architectural career, but they support the suspicion that it was not an inspiring start.

Mackintosh’s design for the Bank of Scotland, Nairn, (1874) is a Renaissance palazzo, of the type popular for commercial architecture from 1850s onwards [Plate 132]. The design, however, lacks the proportion, harmony and fluency that are usually associated with the genre. It seems as if Mackintosh identified features that he wanted to use and applied them with little thought for the relationship between the parts. Similarly, the Old Church Manse, Nairn (1898) is a plain, gauche gothic design with little evidence of true understanding of the characteristics of gothic architecture [Plate 133]. Instead there are clichéd features applied to the underlying structure. Like other architects of his generation, Mackintosh recycled historic styles in his architecture, however he was not as sophisticated as others were in applying these styles. Archibald’s initial training, therefore, was rather parochial. This was a feature of Mackintosh’s own training and locality rather than his fault. Without frequent access to the larger cosmopolitan centres, Mackintosh would have depended on journals such as *The Builder*, for his knowledge of developments and trends in British architecture, which in the later nineteenth century was entering a period of transition.

In the 1880s and 1890s a few architects in Britain and Northern Europe began to decry the use of historical styles in favour of restrained simplicity. One of the English architects who followed this new idea was Charles F. A. Voysey (1857-1941) whose designs combined the refinement of the Aesthetic

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<sup>4</sup> John Gifford, *Buildings of Scotland Series: Highland and Islands* (Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1992) pp. 148, 281 and 404. These are the opinions of the architectural historian John Gifford on three buildings by Mackintosh, the Parish Church, Ardersier (1880), the Town and County Hospital, Nairn (1904 – 1906) and Castle Street Church, Digwall (1909).

Movement with an elegant simplicity.<sup>5</sup> He began designing houses in 1888 and from 1889 his designs were regularly published in *The British Architect* and from 1893 in *The Studio* as well.<sup>6</sup> One example of his country house designs is Perrycroft, Herefordshire (1893–1894) [Plate 134]. The form of this house is characteristic of his work with its emphatic horizontal composition, a band over the ground floor windows, buttresses, a simple hipped roof and plain planes of stonework, which were painted white to enhance the overall simplicity. Unlike some of his contemporaries, Voysey was not sympathetic to the local styles and materials of an area, and he wholeheartedly avoided any reference to style of any age. In his career he never faltered from his objective of erasing historicism in architecture:

The myriads of conflicting schools and catechisms fade away into insignificance and we begin to feel the invigorating sensations of being alone with Nature and our own intelligence...The fact is that we are overcoated...Begin by casting over all the useless ornaments and remove the dust-catching flounces and furbelows...Eschew all imitations. Strive to produce an effect of repose and simplicity.<sup>7</sup>

Similar words were beginning to resound across Europe. In Vienna, Otto Wagner beseeched architects to free themselves from imitation. To his students he said that ‘Modern Art must offer us modern forms that are created by us and that represent our abilities and actions...all too often [today’s artists] strive to reproduce the old’.<sup>8</sup> Similarly in Belgium, Henry Van de Velde made the distinction between ornamentation and ornament in his work. The distinction, in his view, was that the former was attached whereas the latter revealed the functional identity of a form: ‘it is only because I understand and marvel at how simply, coherently a ship, a weapon, a car or wheelbarrow is built that my work is able to please the few remaining rationalists’.<sup>9</sup> In Scotland the lead was taken by the young Glasgow architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) whose design for the Glasgow School of Art (1896) dispensed with

<sup>5</sup> Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture: A handbook to building design in Britain 1890 – 1914* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977) p. 28

<sup>6</sup> William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982) p. 25  
*The Studio* was particularly critical to the spread of new ideas in the 1890s and 1900s, so it is possible that if it were available to Archibald during his years in Inverness he may have realised the alternative forms that architecture could take.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Voysey, ‘The Art of Today’, which was published in *The British Architect* (18 November 1892), quoted in Service, *Edwardian Architecture* p. 22

<sup>8</sup> Otto Wagner, *Modern Architecture, A guidebook for his students to this field of art*, Introduction and Translation of 1902 Edition Harry F. Mallgrave (ed.) (Santa Monica: Getty Centre for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1988) p. 75

<sup>9</sup> Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, p. 25

historical motifs and moved towards an abstraction that also characterised his later designs, including Hill House, Helensburgh (1902 – 1904) [Plate 135].<sup>10</sup> These men were not characteristic of the majority of architects at the time but they revealed that a new ideology was forming that proposed creating architecture that took inspiration from the present day, rather than the past.

How aware the young Archibald would have been of these developments up in Inverness is debatable. Perhaps if he had been training in a large city he would have had greater access to emerging ideas. He was, in these early years of his career, a victim of his locality. The disparity that existed between architects and the varying quality of the architectural training available to young men began to receive greater attention in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The quality of the training was an important issue and there was increasing desire within some quarters to improve the quality of architectural education.<sup>11</sup> The other concern some architects had with poor quality training was the competence of practising architects, as there was no system by which a man's ability to design a sound building could be determined. This became a central concern of Archibald's later in his career, but it was also an issue that began to split the profession during his apprenticeship in Inverness.

A campaign that proposed examining the ability of architects began in the 1860s with the introduction of a voluntary examination for architects wishing to become members of the RIBA. Although this was voluntary, it provoked arguments within the profession about the nature of architecture; how it should be taught and whether it was appropriate to examine it at all. Ruskin, perhaps predictably, argued that architects should study with sculptors and artists rather than engineers, because architecture was an art, not a science - consequently it was a subject that would not be compressed into examinable criteria.<sup>12</sup> Robert Kerr (1823-1904) completely disagreed, arguing that 'architecture, as an art, [is] the beautifying of that

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<sup>10</sup> Heinz Geretsedder and Marc Peintner, *Otto Wagner 1841 – 1918, The Expanding City, The Beginning of Modern Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1979) p. 16 There was a fraternity of architects that emerged as the concept of Modern Architecture developed: Mackintosh and Wagner became personal friends.

<sup>11</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7, for further details.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Crinson and Jules Lubbock, *Architecture, Art or Profession: 300 Years of Architectural Education*

which is constructive; but, first and foremost, the subject must be constructive'.<sup>13</sup> For architects who agreed that architecture was a technical subject it was relatively easy to make a connection to examinations. In the 1860s the argument remained, for the most part, relatively low key. The debate began to intensify in 1882 when the RIBA decided to make the voluntary membership examination obligatory. These examinations tested the technical competence and other measurable skills of new architects; they also had the impact of increasing membership to the RIBA, as it was the only way an architect could prove his ability against others calling themselves architects.<sup>14</sup> For a small group of architects the next step from obligatory examination was statutory registration.

Some of those architects in favour of this established The Society of Architects in 1884. Two years after its establishment, the Society introduced a Registration Bill before Parliament, but it was returned. The same thing happened in 1888, and yet again in 1891. One key reason for the failings of the Bill was the lack of support it received from the RIBA, which argued that registration depended on good quality architectural education and before this was established registration would be a deterrent to aspiring architects. In place of registration, the RIBA promoted its own examination system which allowed the public to distinguish between architects, as only those who had passed the examinations were permitted to use the initials ARIBA. It was argued that this was a sufficient measure until a more rigorous and formal education system was established. Without the support of the RIBA it was almost impossible for the Society of Architects to proceed with their Registration Bills. It was not only the RIBA, however, that proved an obstacle to the success of the registration bills.

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*in Great Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994) p. 58

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 59

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* p. 60 In 1841 membership of the RIBA was less than one tenth of men calling themselves architects. By 1882 this had risen to a fifth, a significant increase which gave the RIBA increased presence

In 1892, in response to the third Bill, a group of angry architects and artists wrote a memorial to *The Times* protesting explicitly at the actions of the Society and of the RIBA implicitly.<sup>15</sup> They argued that it was impossible to examine architecture because it was an art; they deplored all attempts to create professional protocols and they believed that registration was an attempt to introduce a caste system into architecture.<sup>16</sup> The Memorialists, as they became known, were so incensed that they published a set of articles that poured scorn on the arguments used by supporters of examinations and registration. This book, edited by Thomas G. Jackson (1835-1924) and Shaw, was appropriately entitled *Architecture: A Profession or An Art?*<sup>17</sup>

In the introduction to the book, Jackson describes the Society's campaign to introduce registration as a 'chimerical project' and proceeds to undermine their three key arguments:

1. *As to the protection of the public from bad architecture.* This we maintain to be impossible in the nature of things, for the qualities which make the architect do not admit of the examination test. To certify that a man is a passable architect is to give him a fictitious value: only his works can prove whether he is worthy or not. It puts a misleading and unworthy aim before the student; and it damages the position of architecture by conferring a legal right to the title of architect on persons who may have no actual right to it whatever.
2. *As to the protection of the public from bad building.* This is shifting the whole ground, and practically giving up the case for registration and diploma. At the utmost the security they would afford would only apply to the numerically small proportion of architected buildings. If the Registrationalists and the Institute [the RIBA] have the security of the public in matters of sanitation and construction really at heart, let them open their examination and give certificates of efficiency to all who plan buildings, be they architects, builders, or engineers. The Institute have repeatedly been challenged to take this view of examination and diploma, but have met the challenge with a dead silence. Of course they have: they have no reply. Such an opening of their doors would break down professional barriers between architect and builder and destroy the professional ideal.
3. *The professional advancement of the architect.* This we maintain is the real and scarcely disguised object of the movement, though the protection of the public forms a convenient stalking-horse. The Registrationalists and the Institute desire to entrench the architect behind the barriers of a closed profession, guarded by legal privileges and monopolies; - to form in fact a caste of architects.

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and leverage within the profession.

<sup>15</sup> The group included 44 architects and 24 artists.

<sup>16</sup> Crinson and Lubbock *Architecture, Art or Profession*, p. 62

<sup>17</sup> The full title of the book was *Architecture: A Profession or an Art? Thirteen Short Essays on the Qualifications and Training of Architects*, and was edited by Jackson and Shaw.

It is this notion of caste that we wish to break down. We see in it the perpetuation and exaggeration of the worst faults of the present system. The architect suffers at present through his isolation from the sister arts of painting and sculpture; to tighten the bonds of professionalism would be to shut him off from them entirely and to smother what little of the artist is left in him.<sup>18</sup>

Other contributors to the book expanded on these points, as well as adding their own: Shaw insisted that a man who wished to be an architect had to be 'endowed by nature with the special gift', which could not be acquired through study and application;<sup>19</sup> in a similar vein, Bodley urged that architects be recognised as 'cultivated artists';<sup>20</sup> Blomfield criticised the RIBA's 'assumption that architecture is a business and must be handled as such';<sup>21</sup> and Jackson brought the book to a close with the withering statement that 'the profession of architecture is an absurdity.'<sup>22</sup>

In the event the Memorialists won the battle, but the issue did not disappear; in 1907 an older Archibald was invited to London to speak on Statutory Registration at the Seventh International Congress of Architects and he proved very adept at undermining the arguments of Jackson, Shaw et al. However, in 1892 he was in Inverness, training in a parochial practice and his future probably did not look very inspiring.

In lieu of a formal, organised system of architectural education, Archibald, like many other young architects, sought other means of improving his training and like Findlay he decided to leave Inverness. Unlike Findlay, however, Archibald went directly from the Highlands to Montreal. The reasons for this choice of destination are unknown, but as Inverness was a relatively small town at the end of the nineteenth century it is probable that he had learned of Findlay's recent success in the Canadian city.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Thomas G. Jackson and Richard N. Shaw (ed.) *Architecture: A Profession or An Art? Thirteen Short Essays on the Qualifications and Training of Architects* (London: Murray 1892) pp. xxvi - xxviii

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. pp. 3-15 Richard N. Shaw, 'The Fallacy that the architect who makes design his first consideration, must be unpractical', p. 9

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 57-69, Godfrey F. Bodley, 'Architectural Study and the Examination Test' p. 62

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pp. 35-53, Reginald Blomfield, 'The Institute Examination and Architecture', p. 36

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. pp. 207-228, Thomas G. Jackson, 'On True and False Ideals in the Education of an Architect', p. 228

<sup>23</sup> Findlay had won the Sun Life Assurance Company in 1890, three years prior to Archibald's emigration.

The traditional emigration path between Scotland and Canada was surely a factor too, and that Montreal was a thriving Imperial city must not be overlooked either. Whatever the motives for Archibald's decision, his move to Montreal brought him professional success and he rose to the highest ranks of Canadian architects.<sup>24</sup>

Aged twenty-one, Archibald began his new life in Canada and entered the office of Edward Maxwell, which was 'considered to be one of the best in which to receive a sound all around [*sic.*] experience'.<sup>25</sup> Maxwell's practice was in its infancy when Archibald joined as a draughtsman. Having spent five years in Boston, working with Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, Maxwell had returned to Montreal in 1891 and had only established his own practice in 1892, but it very quickly became popular with patrons, his American connections probably playing no small role in his rapid success.<sup>26</sup> His design for the jewellery firm, Henry Birks and Sons (1892–1893) [Plate 136] reveals the influence of his Boston years, as does his design for the Bell Telephone Company (1892) [Plate 26]. This would have been quite a different environment from Mackintosh's office, notwithstanding the urban context of a rich commercial centre compared to a Scottish Highland town. Although Mackintosh was quite a well-established architect in Inverness when Archibald joined him as an apprentice his architecture suggests that he lacked design creativity. Maxwell in contrast was a newcomer to the profession. He was only in his second year of practice when Archibald arrived in Montreal, but had already attracted some very good clients. In contrast to Mackintosh, the young Maxwell must have seemed very progressive.

Archibald worked in the office for four years, from 1893-1897, and in that time worked on a range of

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James R. Rhind was also in Montreal by 1893.

<sup>24</sup> William S. Maxwell, 'John S. Archibald 1872 – 1934', *JRAIC*, 11, 3 (March 1934) p. 44 Archibald was elected President of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1924 and again in the following year.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Ellen James, 'The Education and Training of Edward Maxwell' initially published in *The Architecture of Edward and William S Maxwell* (Montreal: The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1991) and also published at [www.cac.mcgill/maxwells/essay/02](http://www.cac.mcgill/maxwells/essay/02) Maxwell's five years in America were important formative years. In the scrapbook that he kept during these years he preserved a copy of H. H. Richardson's signature, his wax seal and also several signed floor plans.

projects from house designs through bank buildings to station buildings and hotels for the CPR.<sup>27</sup> One of the key houses that Archibald worked on during his time in Maxwell's office was the Allan House, Pine Avenue (1894) [Plate 137]. This house was a large mansion in the heart of the Golden Square Mile. Its tall chimneys, decorative brick work and amalgamation of varying styles were all common features of Maxwell's domestic designs, which were, on the whole, much livelier and more decorative than Findlay's. The house is an expression of Victorian historicism and eclecticism, a very appropriate design for the Anglo enclave in Montreal, but one that was also inspired by his recent Bostonian experience.<sup>28</sup> Another house that Archibald was heavily involved in was a country retreat called Inverneck for Dr. Charles McEachran (1895–1897) [Plate 138]. The long, timber-framed house was typical of vernacular log cabins, although there was also an element of the American shingle style in the design too, in particular the wrap-around porch and stone-facing on the entrance façade.

The work that the office did for the CPR further demonstrates how American influence became entwined with Canadian architecture in Maxwell's *oeuvre*. The CPR signature château style, created by Bruce Price for Château Frontenac (1892), was very romantic architecture based upon the historic architecture of Scotland and France that appealed to the fashion for historicism in architecture and created an imagined identity for Canada [Plate 139].<sup>29</sup> It was an identity that proved very resilient and became a potent element in 'advertisements for the magnificence and sublimity of Canadian scenery'.<sup>30</sup> Maxwell's work helped to embed the style in the national conscience. In 1896, Archibald was given increasing supervisory responsibility for the CPR work: in November 1896 he recorded 1700 hours for a CPR commission, which was probably the CPR Vancouver Station, B.C. (1897) [Plate 140].<sup>31</sup> In the same year he was also

<sup>27</sup> McGill University, John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection, Maxwell Collection, Box 13, C: Office Records, C.6 K1, Maxwell's Draughtsmen's Hours Book for the years 1894 – 1901 records the projects each member of staff was involved in and how many hours they spent on the project each month. Records exist of the projects Archibald worked on in the Draughtsmen's Hours Book 1894 – 1901.

<sup>28</sup> The tall, ribbed chimney stacks were taken from English architecture, as was the decorative brickwork. The tower is from the Loire Valley. Renaissance architecture provided the inspiration for the Serliana. The decoration around the arcaded windows was Iberian and the overall composition seems quite American.

<sup>29</sup> Rhodri Windsor-Luscombe, 'Nationalism or Cultural Imperialism' *Architectural History*, 36 (1993) pp. 127-144

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 135

<sup>31</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, Maxwell Collection, Box 13, C: Office Records, C.6 K1, Draughtsmen's

employed on commissions for the Bell Telephone Company, which was just one of the large commercial businesses that commissioned Maxwell as its main architect.<sup>32</sup>

Maxwell's American experience certainly served him well at the start of his career and greatly helped his young assistants too, who gained experience of working on a broad range of high profile commissions and received up-to-date knowledge of American architecture. Maxwell's years in Boston also exposed him to something else as equally significant as architecture: architectural education. Maxwell's five years had been spent in the office of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, who had been educated at MIT and had trained with the *École des Beaux-Arts* graduate Richardson. Maxwell's subsequent mentoring of younger architects was strongly affected by this training. It is uncertain whether he actually attended classes at MIT, but he certainly held the MIT system in high regard. In his library Maxwell had a copy of Henry Van Brunt's article 'The Education of the Architect', which was published in a periodical by MIT.<sup>33</sup> In this article Van Brunt advised that the ideal architectural course should include the history of architecture, as well as the theory and practice of design. He also recommended a bibliography that included works by Viollet-le-Duc, Leon Chateau, John Ruskin, James Fergusson and George E. Street, who were all authors represented in Maxwell's library.<sup>34</sup>

In place of a department of architecture at McGill University, it is likely that Maxwell was keen to import into his office some of the training practices he had encountered in Boston. One example of his encouragement of young men was his own library, which he considered to be a working resource available to all the men who worked there.<sup>35</sup> Maxwell was eager that young men should receive better training and in 1891 he was one of the few architects who agreed to deliver lectures and classes in the evenings to

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Hours Book 1894 – 1901

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> James, 'The Education and Training of Edward Maxwell'. Henry Van Brunt was the former partner of William Ware, who had founded MIT's education department.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Irena Murray, 'The "Old Craze of Buying Books": The Libraries of Edward and William Maxwell' initially published in *The Architecture of Edward and William S. Maxwell*, (Montreal: The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1991) and also published at [www.cac.mcgill/maxwells/essay/02](http://www.cac.mcgill/maxwells/essay/02)

apprentices and assistants wishing to sit the PQAA examination.<sup>36</sup> The fact that he was prepared to support this educational initiative suggests that he encouraged his assistants to make use of all the opportunities of training and learning offered in Montreal. Unfortunately, the education initiatives begun by the PQAA in the early 1890s failed to ignite interest immediately, both in teachers and students. Maxwell's enthusiasm and dedication in light of this apathy reveals the importance he gave to the improvement of training, even if others did not share his opinions. As well as joining one of the up-and-coming architectural practices, therefore, Archibald had also joined one of the most progressive offices in terms of training, which would have been an exciting second tier to his architectural training, and a long way from his isolated experience as an apprentice in Inverness.

In 1898 Archibald sat and passed the PQAA examinations becoming a member of the Association, which gave him the right to practice architecture in the Province. In the same year, he was elected a member of the Council, a position he kept until his election as President in 1905. His immediate interest in getting involved with this aspect of the profession reveals the passion he had for improving the profession, which remained important to him throughout the years. The changes he had seen since arriving in Montreal in 1893 must have galvanised his spirit and shown him that with determination and collaboration improvements were possible and he became a very progressive member of the Association and in the wider architectural community too.

The years between 1890 and 1898 had been critical ones for the PQAA. The establishment of the Association in 1890 saw the architectural community unite for the first time ever and the following years saw combined efforts to improve the nature of the profession. Education and training was a huge area, and in 1896 McGill University established a Chair of Architecture.<sup>37</sup> Another key consideration was statutory registration. Like the Society of Architects in the 1880s, the PQAA was determined that statutory registration was vital to improving the profession and in January 1898 a Bill was passed which made it obligatory for all men who wished to practice architecture in Quebec to be registered with the PQAA. This

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

was quite a major achievement for the Association, as they had beaten Britain to statutory registration, even though the Society of Architects had begun the battle in 1886, and the PQAA had also succeeded where the OAA had failed.<sup>38</sup> The Society of Architects were impressed by the PQAA's achievements and wrote to the Association asking for help with their campaign in Britain.<sup>39</sup>

The profession certainly became more organised in the first five years of Archibald's time in Montreal, and he was very keen to keep improving the situation. It was not just the Province of Quebec that interested him, he was pro-active during the debates surrounding the establishment of a Dominion wide association, an idea that Taylor had first pressed in the 1880s, and in 1906 he became a member of the International Congress of Architects, thus contributing to world-wide discussions on the future of architecture. At the turn of the century, however, his ambitions were focused on establishing a private practice with Charles Saxe, his fellow draughtsman in the Maxwell office.

During their time in that office, they had emerged as leading architectural talents with complementary strengths. Archibald's administrative and business talents had surfaced and Saxe's artistic talent had been developed.<sup>40</sup> It would be unfair to assume, however, that Archibald played no role in the practice's artistic ventures, as he enjoyed a very successful career as an independent architect following the dissolution of Saxe and Archibald in 1915.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, even if Saxe did have the upper hand in the creative output of

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<sup>37</sup> See 'Stewart Henbest Capper (1860-1924)', chapter 7, for further details.

<sup>38</sup> Crossman, *Architectural Transition*, p. 46 The OAA strove for statutory registration from 1890, the year of its foundation, yet only achieved it in 1931.

<sup>39</sup> Archives Nationale de Quebec, P124, 1979-09-006/1, P124/1-1 à P124/1-4, File 1: 1899. Letter from C. McArthur Butler, January 14<sup>th</sup> 1899 'I understand that the architects of Quebec are Regulated, and I shall be much obliged for any information you can afford me as to such Regulation and the manner in which it is carried out'. In answer to the request, the PQAA sent copies of 'The Constitution of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects as incorporated in 1891', the amendments that had made to the Charter in 1892 and the latest Bye-Laws of the Association,

<sup>40</sup> Maxwell, 'Archibald', *JRAIC*, p. 44 In his obituary of Archibald, William Maxwell describes the talents of the young architects who became partners: 'His [Saxe] talents tended strongly in the artistic direction and those of our newly arrived Scotch friend proved to be along constructional, administrative and business lines'.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* In his obituary of Archibald, Maxwell wrote of his friend's career post-1915 that 'the firm had been unusually successful and from the mass of important work done mention may be made of the hotels carried out for the Canadian National Railways. The extensive additions to the Chateau Laurier [*sic.*] in Ottawa and the Canadian National Railways Hotel in Vancouver stand out as representative achievements

the practice, Archibald must surely have supported his partner in the creative path he took. Whilst it may be difficult to ascertain with any clarity or reliability the extent to either man's input into individual designs, one key influence in their early work is indisputable and that is Maxwell.<sup>42</sup>

The house that Saxe and Archibald designed for Francis Manhire, Westmount (1898) has many hallmarks of the Maxwell office [Plate 141]. The brick diaper decoration of the first floor, the gothic frames of the first floor bay and gothic hoodmould of the entrance porch are all characteristic of Maxwell's houses of the 1890s. As this was one of the partnership's earliest works, it is understandable that the influence of their former employer is apparent. By the 1900s, however, Saxe and Archibald had begun to develop their own style, which was distinct from any other Montreal practice and displayed the architects' progressive design ideas.

One of their most famous designs from the 1900s is the Bishop Court Apartment building of 1904 [Plate 142]. This was one of the earliest apartment buildings in the city<sup>43</sup> and one of the first examples of the neo-Tudor style that came from America and proved very popular for apartment design.<sup>44</sup> Saxe and Archibald's interpretation of the style was very innovative. In their design the entrance, which is usually expected to be a prominent feature of a design, is dwarfed by the solid massing of the wings: the three-storey, central canted bays with splayed mullions emphasises their comparative height. The mullioned canted bay was clearly Saxe and Archibald's modern interpretation of the oriel, which was a common feature of Tudor architecture and became a popular motif in contemporary neo-Tudor architecture. It was

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in the first order, carried out efficiently and to the satisfaction of the client. The residence of Mr. Noah Timmins in Westmount, P.Q., the Masonic Temple in Montreal, the Forum and the Baseball Stadium in Montreal are mentioned as indicating able achievements of a varied type.'

<sup>42</sup> There were occasions when the two men did work independently from one another and these have been recorded. For example, Saxe designed a house for Clarence de Sola (1913) and Archibald worked with Maurice Perrault on the *École Polytechnique* (1909-1911).

<sup>43</sup> Irene Pulchaski, 'Bishop Court Apartments: Symbol of a Lifestyle', *SSAC Bulletin*, 17 (March 1992) p. 78 Apartment living was introduced to Montreal by Roswell C. Fisher. He believed that people could live more comfortably in apartments rather than individual houses. In support of his argument he erected the first apartment building in 1888 on the corner of Crescent Street, called The Old Sherbrooke, and it was extended in 1905, in view of its popularity.

<sup>44</sup> Their design has been described as 'reminiscent of the Great Gatehouse, Hampton Court, [with] the strength and dignity of an English manor house', R. Lemire, 'Tudor Gothic in Downtown Montreal 1900 –

usually only a storey, or at most two-storey height, but Saxe and Archibald regularised the feature giving the six apartments equal dimensions and equal light. Another interesting deviation in the design is the classical round-arched entrance door to the main lobby, demonstrating that the architects were not doggedly pursuing one particular style. Saxe and Archibald's apartment building should be regarded as an abstraction of the Tudor Gothic rather than as a derivative form.

The design was warmly received by the profession and was printed in *CAB*; nevertheless Saxe and Archibald did not pursue the neo-Tudor in their *oeuvre*, preferring to search for a signature style that set them apart from the rest of the profession. In the same year that they designed the Bishop Court Apartment Building, they designed a house for F. Anson, which was described in the contemporary press as 'an unusual house in Montreal' [Plate 143].<sup>45</sup> In this work Saxe and Archibald once again interpreted historical styles to create an extremely novel house design. The large Jacobean gable, the tall ribbed chimney stacks and the half-timbering are all characteristic features of the English Queen Anne but the house is a far cry from the Miller or Knowles' residences by Findlay. Instead the younger architects reinvented the traditional features of English architecture to design a modern house, just as they had reinterpreted the gothic at the Bishop's Court Apartment Buildings. Enhancing the 'twist' they gave to the traditional, Saxe and Archibald preferred to use 'run of kiln' common brick rather than the bright red brick more commonly preferred by architects using English features in their designs.<sup>46</sup> The half-timber effect of the first floor seems to have influenced the interior decoration of the house. A contemporary article informs the reader that 'the dining room, living room and hall are finished in oak, the remainder of the house being in white enamel'.<sup>47</sup> This very simple, dual-tone interior was surely as unusual as the exterior of the house and in comparison to the interior opulent fashions, these rooms must have appeared extremely fresh and clean.<sup>48</sup>

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1929', *SSAC Bulletin* 12 (March 1987) 13-19, p. 15

<sup>45</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, J. S. Archibald Collection, Vertical, article for *Construction*.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> 'Bishop's Court Apartment Building, Montreal, Messrs. Saxe and Archibald, Architects', *CAB*, 18, 6 (June 1905) p. 85 Their interior design for the Bishop Court Apartment Buildings seems to have been similarly two-tone with a contrast between light and dark: 'the entrance halls, vestibules and staircase, to

These two designs were the beginning of increased abstract leanings in Saxe and Archibald's domestic designs, which gradually evolved into rational architecture breaking away from British and American stylistic influences. The house they designed for Arthur Fiske (1908) is an example of this increased abstraction [Plate 144]. Like the Anson House, the source for the Fisk house appears to have been the Queen Anne style; there is a slight trace of a curved gable, but it has been severely reduced. Similarly, the chimneybreast has been minimised to a slight projection and the stack is a simple rectangular form. The hierarchy of the elevations is also non-conformist, as it is difficult to gauge the entrance façade immediately. The façade on Milton Street with its gable and chimney breast and line of chimney stacks appears to be an inferior façade to that on University Street, which appears a much more uniform façade. Yet the main door is actually on Milton Street, with stone classical dressings. This seemingly non-conformist approach to the elevation design suggests that the two architects were striving to break ties with tradition, which was the very thing that Taylor and Findlay perpetuated in their designs.

The increasing abstraction of historical style continued in another design of 1908, a pair of semi-detached residences on Forden Avenue, Westmount [Plate 145]. It is an extraordinarily simple design composed of red brick, stone, slate and glass. It is essentially domestic architecture stripped back to the bare minimum of wall and window with no extraneous details. The strip effect of wall and window is very dramatic on the projecting bay yet so simple in its conception. It reveals how far the young architects had moved beyond their former employer. The houses on Forden Avenue fit more easily into the international context of modern architecture rather than anything that was being built in Montreal at the time. Designs such as Voysey's Studio Cottage, Bedford Park, London (1891) [Plate 146] and Edgar Woods design for Upmeads, Suffolk (1908) [Plate 147] provide a much better context in which to consider Saxe and Archibald's domestic designs. Both these designs are very similar to the Forden Avenue Houses as they are all stripped back to the bare minimum, yet none of them loses any impact for their lack of

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level of first floor, are finished in white marble. The whole finish throughout the suites is of chestnut. The woodwork in the dining rooms and living rooms has been stained dark brown; that in the bedrooms is finished in silver grey.'

ornamentation; in fact they probably invite more attention and have increased impact because of their total simplicity. A contemporary said of Upmeads that it 'cannot fail, by its logical qualities and ... originality, to rivet the attention of everyone and the admiration of not a few'.<sup>49</sup> A similar comment could be made about Saxe and Archibald's designs.

One of their houses that was even more similar to Upmeads, was a house on Cedar Avenue (1913) [Plate 148]. Like Upmeads it has a box-like quality enhanced by the flat roof. A description of Upmeads praises the use of the flat roof because 'it removes the needs for gables or sloping tiles and gives the architect new freedom in interior planning'.<sup>50</sup> A different reason is given for the use of the flat roof in Montreal:

The flat-hopper type of roof, with the down-pipe taken through the house is considered by some Montreal people to be the one and only form of roof to be used for the cold and heavy snow-falls experienced in this district. From a practical point of view the flat pitch and gravel roof is certainly satisfactory. We know the objection, if not danger, of occasional avalanches of snow from a sloping roof, also of icicles falling from the eaves when melted by the sun.<sup>51</sup>

This may make sense, and Rhind had made a similar remark about the appropriateness of flat roofs in Montreal, but how big a factor the climate actually was in Saxe and Archibald's design process is hard to judge. They also designed houses with pitch roofs and the majority of houses erected at that time had pitched rather than flat roofs.<sup>52</sup> Aesthetic considerations, therefore, do seem to have been as important as the weather when choosing the roof profile, as a flat roof enhanced the rectangular outline of the house.

The move towards rectangular design in their houses also tied in with events in Europe where Van de Velde and Wagner were encouraging a new focus on the linear form of architecture with less dependence on traditional styles. Saxe and Archibald's confidence to be bold in their architecture, as they were by far amongst the first architects, if not the first to pursue this line of design in Canada, may have actually come

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<sup>49</sup> This was the view of Lawrence Weaver, who was the editor of *Small Country Houses of Today* (London, 1910) quoted in Service, *Edwardian Architecture* p. 97

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Phillip J. Turner, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec', *Construction*, 8, 6 (June 1915) p. 267

<sup>52</sup> Of the nine houses illustrated in the article by Turner, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec', only one by Saxe

directly from these European sources. In 1906 Archibald was a delegate at the London International Congress of Architects and spoke at the same session as Otto Wagner; it is possible that they conversed about other aspects of architecture other than statutory registration, which was the session they both participated in. A report on the Seventh International Congress by a Canadian correspondent actually made the point that ‘such a Congress as this is probably more valuable from a social than an educational point of view in that it affords architects opportunities of becoming personally acquainted with their brethren of other countries’.<sup>53</sup> The correspondent goes on to write that ‘the exhibition of architectural drawings and pictures was so good and so well arranged that one wishes it could be made permanent’.<sup>54</sup> This would have been the perfect opportunity for Archibald to discover what was happening architecturally in other countries by talking to men and looking at their designs. Saxe and Archibald’s work after 1906 certainly cast off any overt references to style and embraced a new rationalism that displayed a collective view of architecture, rather than a limiting national or imperial view. It is also indicative of Archibald’s interest and passion for design, in spite of the common assertion that Saxe was the creative designer and Archibald was the administrative talent, because as far it is known Saxe did not go to London.<sup>55</sup>

The pinnacle of their rationalism came in the house designed for Archibald in 1915, the year that the partnership was dissolved [Plate 149]. As it was for Archibald, the resultant design must have been a clear indication of his architectural taste. The house marries together many of the features of the practice’s earlier designs. There is a complete reduction of elements creating a rectangular façade that is separated into three bands by a band course on the first floor and one at the traditional cornice height. It is a very compact, clean design that declares its modernity. The design demonstrates indifference to style, an

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and Archibald had a flat roof.

<sup>53</sup> A Correspondent, ‘The Seventh International Congress of Architects’, *CAB*, 19, 8 (August 1906) p. 118

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> There are no references to Saxe going to London with Archibald in 1906 in any of the works on Archibald. As an American born architect the trip would not have borne the additional advantage of ‘going home’ as it would have done for Archibald, although it is unclear how long Archibald spent in Europe. The Archibald archive at the John Bland Canadian Architecture Collection at McGill University has quite a large collection of photographs and postcards from Western Europe, so it is possible that he had taken advantage of a European study trip whilst in London.

indifference that had gradually evolved from the Bishop Court Apartment Building. It is a building that surely belongs to the early part of the Modern Movement.

The architects did depart from their simple abstraction and rationalism on occasion. In 1911 they were commissioned to build a large mansion for Joseph-Marcel Wilson on the corner of Museum and Pine Avenues [Plate 150]. This design is clearly classically inspired, although the architects have done as much as possible to par down any essence of grandeur that may be associated with such a large mansion. They chose the plain Doric order and used pilasters rather than columns. The garlands are elegant; the entrance is flush against the wall, and whilst the entrance façade is symmetrical, as dictated by the rules of classicism, the side façade to Pine Avenue is not. There is nothing of any great distinction about the Pine Avenue façade, despite the fact that it was one of the most exclusive streets in the Golden Square Mile. This example of a classical design was an exception in their domestic *oeuvre* and was almost certainly a response to their clients' wishes. It was also one of the few houses that they constructed in the Golden Square Mile, which may have influenced their choice of style.

In their domestic designs Saxe and Archibald displayed true inventive creativity: rather than adhere to stylistic rules they chose to reinvent the syntax. One contemporary described how their designs always displayed 'true artistic individuality'.<sup>56</sup> They, and their patrons, certainly did not subscribe to the prevailing view, held by others, that Westmount and the Golden Square Mile were havens of the home country. In fact their houses seem to portray the opposite of the nostalgic sentiment demonstrated in the houses by architects such as Findlay. Their architecture was modern and progressive and arguably much more appropriate for the young Dominion as a result. This is equally true in their commercial buildings, which was a genre that allowed rationalisation much more readily than domestic architecture, in large part because its main model, the tall building, was a new and radical architectural breed.

Saxe and Archibald's commercial designs are rational and functional structures: emphatic statements that

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<sup>56</sup> Turner, 'Houses at Montreal, Quebec' p. 267

declare their independence from their neighbouring buildings. The virility of their designs is demonstrated in the Sauvegarde Building, 150–152 Notre Dame Street (1911) [Plate 151]. The first two floors of the building form a typically classical composition with four pilasters and entablature; however, from this base eight floors escalate upwards. It appears that every element of the design is intended to emphasise the stature of the building. The central arched recess accentuates the sense of throttle in the design, which reiterates the height of the building. The heavy cornice and console brackets suggest that the peak has been reached, but then a further storey pushes through. A couple of years later, they designed The Yorkshire Building, St James Street (1913), which is a much more rational design [Plate 152]. Once again the underlying steel frame is expressed but much more functionally in the grid-face design of the main elevation. As at the Sauvegarde Building, the bottom part of the design uses a classical form, with very slender pilasters supporting an entablature. This time all the decorative elements are also focused on this section of design with baroque stone awnings over the two entrances. Above this, it is pure rationalist architecture.

These two buildings were totally dependent upon the advances of building technology and the functionalism of the two designs seems to salute the technical innovations that underpin them. As well as being tall, these buildings are quite narrow, only three and four bays wide. This accentuates their height and marks them out in the commercial centre, as many of the tall buildings in the surrounding area were much wider, around six or seven bays, such the Maxwell's design for the Dominion Express Company (1910-1912) [Plate 153]. Both the width and height of buildings were affected by the size of the plot and the requirements of the client, but there is little doubt that by having a narrower frontage, Saxe and Archibald were able to emphasise the height of their designs. Their work was also extremely restrained, almost stripped bare, in comparison to contemporary tall buildings in the city, but it fitted neatly into the Chicago School of Burnham and Root, and Adler and Sullivan. Saxe and Archibald's commercial designs are perfect illustrations of Sullivan's theory for planning a skyscraper, which determined that the external form should follow the internal plan:

Beginning with the first storey, we give this a main entrance that attracts the eye to its location and the remainder of the storey in a more or less liberal, expansive,

sumptuous way – a way based exactly on the practical necessities, but expressed with a sentiment of largeness and freedom. The second storey we treat in a similar way, but usually with milder pretensions. Above this, throughout the indefinite number of typical office tiers, we take our cue from the window-cell, which requires a window with its separating pier, its sill and lintel and we, without more ado, make them look all alike because they are all alike. This brings us to the attic which, having no division into office cells, and no space requirement for lighting, gives us the power to show by means of its broad expanse of wall and its dominating weight and character, that which is the fact – namely, that the series of office tiers has come definitively to an end.<sup>57</sup>

The rationalism and restraint of their works was probably reflected in relatively lower costs, especially in comparison to more lavish houses, such as Findlay's for Frederick Molson, or more decorative commercial buildings, such as the Maxwells' Dominion Express Building. Budgetary control and economic prudence were hallmarks of the practice, and probably very attractive to prospective clients. Archibald was a respected administrator and took command of the business side of the practice. He also applied his administrative skills to the broader profession as well. His sharp business acumen was dramatically revealed in 1923 when he and Saxe sued the Canadian government for breach of contract and requested over \$100,000 in damages. Although the case was brought against the Government in 1923, the roots of the case began with the 1907 competition the Government held for new Departmental and Justice Buildings for Ottawa.

When the competition was first announced in 1907, it was warmly welcomed by the profession because entries were restricted to architects residing in Canada.<sup>58</sup> One writer described the regulation as 'the best encouragement which could be offered Canadian Architects'.<sup>59</sup> The four winning designs helped to seal the approval of the Government's decision to limit the competition to Canadians: 'taken altogether, the

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<sup>57</sup> Louis Sullivan, 'The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered', *Kindergarten Chats* (New York, 1947) p. 203, quoted in Leonardo Benevolo, *History of Modern Architecture Vol. One: The tradition of modern architecture*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971 edition) pp. 236 - 248

<sup>58</sup> National Archives of Canada, Majors Park Hill Property Department and Justice Buildings, RG11, Vol. 4239, File 1298-1 *Report of the Assessors*, pp. 2 - 3 This was the fourth regulation in the competition guidelines: 'Limited to resident Canadian Architects, designs must be accompanied by a declaration signed by the competitor affirming legitimacy.'

<sup>59</sup> An Architect, 'The Ottawa Competition', *CAB*, 20, 10 (October 1907) pp. 201 - 202 The qualifying nationality seems to have a principle of residence rather than birth, as neither Saxe nor Archibald were Canadians, the latter having been born in America and Archibald in Scotland.

exhibit is good and shows that Canada has within her borders many good architects who are capable of carving out such a great scheme with character and individuality'.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately only three of the twenty schemes submitted to the competition were published and these are the only designs for the competition which are known today, as all the original drawings were destroyed by fire during their exhibition in Toronto.<sup>61</sup> The three that did survive were all gothic designs, which was in line with the recommendations made in the competition guidelines, and adhered to the architectural identity established by Fuller in 1867. The Maxwell brothers won the competition with a design simply described as 'a type of Gothic architecture' [Plate 154].<sup>62</sup> Darling and Pearson, who were placed second, looked back to the Victorian gothic of the original Parliament Buildings by Fuller and Jones for inspiration. The third and fourth placed designs were not published, which is particularly frustrating as Saxe and Archibald were placed third with a design that had a 'tendency toward the Art Nouveau'.<sup>63</sup> This fits perfectly with what else is known about their work, and the fact that a contemporary highlighted this *avant garde* aspect of their design reveals its contrast to the other designs, which are all discussed in relation to gothic architecture; the design placed fourth was a 'modern adaptation of perpendicular Gothic', by Brown and Vallance.<sup>64</sup> Without illustrations it is impossible to know the extent to which Saxe and Archibald's design differed from the other prize winners and what features of their design tended towards the Art Nouveau, yet the very fact that this was highlighted by a contemporary critic reveals the novelty of their design and further attests to their personal modernism in architecture. The extent to which they departed from the gothic style could be revelatory, as a significant departure would have been a dramatic statement, considering the identity of the Canadian government with gothic architecture, in line with Westminster.

Despite the quality of the four winning designs, which were well received by the critics and for which the

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<sup>60</sup> C. McLaughlin, 'The Competitive Designs at Ottawa', *CAB*, 20, 10 (October 1907) p. 211

<sup>61</sup> National Archives of Canada, Department of Public Works, RG11, Vol. 4239, File 1298 – 1. Letter from Edward and William S Maxwell to Hon. Frederick D. Monk, KC, DCL, Minister of Public Works, January 18th, 1912: 'It has occurred to us that possibly you have no illustration in your possession of the designs, as the original perspective drawings were destroyed by fire at a Royal Academy Exhibition in Toronto'.

<sup>62</sup> 'Design for Ottawa', *CAB*, 20, 9 (September 1907) p. 174

<sup>63</sup> McLaughlin, 'The Competitive Designs at Ottawa', *CAB*, 20, 10 (October 1907), p. 210

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

Government paid a total of \$15,000, the Department of Public Works decided not to go ahead with the project.<sup>65</sup> One of the reasons given for the change of plan was that the architects should have used the classical style rather than the gothic, yet when the competition had been announced the guidelines had specifically advised architects to use the gothic style.<sup>66</sup> The abortion of the scheme and the reasons given enraged the profession. A statement of petition, signed by the RAIC, PQAA, OAA and other interested bodies, was sent to the Government railing against its judgment and its intention to hold another competition:

When the competition for these buildings was inaugurated in 1907 we hoped a new day for architects had dawned and that we would receive the consideration by government which the country and the profession so much need, and surely we are not now to suffer disappointment'.<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, the profession was disappointed in 1913 when the Government announced the new competition. On this occasion advice was sought from the home of Parliaments: London. The English designer Edward White (1873-1952), with the assistance of Sir Aston Webb, was asked to design a scheme for Ottawa Hill [Plate 155]. His proposal was a grand English Free Classic design, which would have pleased Ewart, whose priority as the Chief Architect of the Dominion was to establish this as the national style of Canada. It was, however, an obvious snub to Canadian architects and it also failed to impress the Canadians. The editor of *Construction* was very scathing about White's design:

Word comes that the Government will shortly call for a general competition of British and Canadian architects to submit plans based on the general design submitted by E. White. Is it possible that the men in charge of this work will allow the need of accommodations to blind them to every other consideration? Can they be so foolhardy as to accept a scheme which is absolutely incongruous to the design of the Parliament Buildings.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> *General Report of the Minister of Public Works, Canada* (Canada: Department of Public Works, 1907) pp. 6-7. The Maxwells received \$8,000, Darling and Pearson \$4,000, Saxe and Archibald \$2,000 and Brown and Vallance \$1,000. One of the reasons that the architects received monies for their work, was that the designs became the 'absolute property of the department'.

<sup>66</sup> National Archives of Canada, Majors Park Hill Property Department and Justice Buildings, RG11, Vol. 4239, File 1298-1 *Report of the Assessors*, p. 3 The fifth regulation of the competition guidelines reads: 'Any style of Architecture may be submitted but it is suggested that some phase of Gothic would better harmonize with existing structures.'

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. *Petition Statement from RAIC, PQAA and OAA*, November 1909

<sup>68</sup> 'New Departmental Buildings at Ottawa – Advisability of Competitions – the Irreparable Mistake of Following the Proposed Scheme', *Construction*, 6, 5 (May 1913) p. 169

Nor was he the only one to vent his anger. An Ottawa architect decried White's plans because they were 'wrong in style, being a very modern Renaissance, and would not harmonise with the Gothic architecture of the Parliament Buildings; which naturally form the keynote to the whole composition'.<sup>69</sup> Even the British, Beaux-Arts educated architect, Frank Worthington Simon who won the competition for the Manitoba Legislative Buildings with a classical design admitted the error of White's proposal:

Your present Parliament Buildings are wonderful, both as regards architecture and natural situation. I understand you are going to add new ones; I have, in fact, seen sketches of the proposed buildings and I am strongly of the opinion that they should be designed in harmony with the present structures. As proposed, they would challenge these latter in a disastrous way. I do not, consequently, approve of Edward White's plans.<sup>70</sup>

The Minister of Public Works seems to have taken on board some of these criticisms because when the new competition, which was open to all British subjects in order 'to obtain the best results', was announced in 1913 no guidelines were given to style.<sup>71</sup> From the sixty-two entries, six entrants were chosen to compete in the second stage of the competition and only one of these was from outside Canada, namely Thomas Moodie (1875-1948) from London. This must have pleased the Canadian contingent who must have felt vindicated, as it proved that 'the best results' could be found within the Dominion. The six finalists were: Hutchinson, Wood and Miller; MacFarlane and Raine; Robb and Mitchell; Saxe and Archibald; Thomas A. Moodie; and W. E. Nolfke. The success of Saxe and Archibald as the only finalists in both competitions reveals their skill in large civic commissions as well as small domestic designs. It also suggests that once more their design had caught the attention of the judges; the omission of any style guidelines in the competition's conditions makes it even more intriguing and frustrating not knowing what the firm designed. In the event the final stage never took place due to the outbreak of the First World War. This was not, however, the end of the contest as far as Saxe and Archibald were concerned.

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<sup>69</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, E. and W. Maxwell Collections, Vertical File, 'The Replanning of Ottawa' *Construction*, pp. 178 – 179, p. 179

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 'The Replanning of Ottawa – Proposed Scheme by E. White severely criticised by architects in general', p. 169

<sup>71</sup> *General Report of the Minister of Public Works, Canada* (Canada: Department of Public Works, 1913) pp. 6-7

In 1923, the two architects, now working independently of one another, sued the Government for breach of contract. The 1913 competition rules had stated that the five finalists who were asked to submit working plans but were unsuccessful would be paid an honorarium of \$3,000 each.<sup>72</sup> This was never paid, probably because the competition did not run its full course because of the war. Regardless of the circumstances that prevented the completion of the competition and in light of the Government's failure to pay the £3,000 'Messrs Charles J. Saxe and John S. Archibald ... brought suit in the Exchequer Court for breach of contract on the part of the Dominion Government, and claimed damages to the extent of \$100,200 this being 1/10 of the estimated cost of the proposed buildings which was stated in the petition of right to be \$10,020,141'.<sup>73</sup>

At first the Government offered to pay \$3,000 to all six finalists 'but without admitting any legal right thereto on their part'.<sup>74</sup> This was not good enough for Saxe and Archibald, nor for the other five finalists who all rejected the offer on the following grounds: (1) their plans had not been sketches and \$3,000 would not cover the cost of draughtsmen's hours; (2) one architect had spent \$9,000 preparing his plans, which had included incidental costs incurred by studying the problem on site; (3) their work had been done prior to April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1914, therefore they had waited nine years for payment, and \$3,000 with interest was \$5,000; (4) the plans had presented a conception of an idea and were not simply working drawings; and (5) each entrant had entered to compete for the commission not for a prize of \$3,000. They proposed that the one per cent should be divided equally between the six finalists, a suggestion that the Government no doubt balked at. Finally, after what appears to have been intense discussion and negotiation, both sides finally agreed that \$5,000 should be paid to each finalist.<sup>75</sup>

In light of the arguments put forward by the architects for rejecting \$3,000, the offer of an extra \$2,000

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<sup>72</sup> Certified Copy of a Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, Approved by his Excellency the Governor General, date stamped August 4th, 1923, photocopy at McGill University, JBCAC, Maxwell Collection, 2.02 243.0 B8-1

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

does not appear to have answered their grievances, however the court case appears to have been a matter of principle rather than an attempt to extract \$100,200 from the Dominion's Government. It was perhaps a warning to the Government not to underestimate or disrespect the architectural profession. For many years architects had been dissatisfied with competition rules and other obstacles they felt stood in the way of their gaining stature and developing a reputation on par with the legal and medical professions. This was something that Archibald was particularly passionate about and he strove throughout his career to raise both professional standards and respect for architects; the case against the Government was just one example of his determination.

Another key issue that concerned Archibald in the years leading up to the Great War was statutory registration. Quebec had had this since 1898, which suggests that there was little for Archibald as a member of PQAA to do, but he believed that it needed to be universal if architecture in Canada was to improve; furthermore it became a hotly debated topic in 1907 during discussions of whether the profession in Canada should create a Dominion Institute of Architects. The twentieth-century debate amongst Canadian architects echoed many of the familiar arguments that had been used in the British 'A Profession or An Art' debate. Archibald was very much on the side of the 'profession'.

He argued persuasively on many of the points that Jackson had derided in his introduction to the Memorialists' manifesto. Archibald saw the protection of the public as one of the more critical reasons why architects should be examined before being permitted to use the title architect:

The public requires to be protected. At present they are indifferent. How are they to know whether an architect is qualified or competent to be entrusted with the erection of buildings. As a rule "time" is the judge but ere "time" has passed his verdict the trouble has been done, structural weakness becomes apparent, or, what is sometimes even worse, another abortion is raised, before the eyes of an unsuspecting public, to wield its baneful influence, unwittingly it may be, over the moral temperament of its unhappy beholders. A man should not be permitted to endanger lives and property neither should he be permitted to offend the higher sense of mankind.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

In these paragraphs Archibald throws back the argument initiated by the Memorialists that the 'public can look after themselves' and that by-laws should be the means by which to safeguard them from unsafe buildings. With regards to existing by-laws Archibald observed that if 'architects are compelled to erect buildings under the direct superintendence and dictates of law; the logical sequence would be that the law would make provision that all who enter on the practice of the profession would be found fully competent to carry out the spirit and dictates of such enactments'.<sup>77</sup> He also had little faith in the quality of the by-laws that were supposed to safeguard the public from poor buildings and damned them more than once:

What is the use of crying for such improvements in our water and fire fighting services when a man can erect any old firetrap he likes in a city; when a man can erect on Notre-Dame Street, right in the heart of our city, a building three stories high the front of which is constructed entirely of wood and covered with galvanized iron. In that building we have a standing monument to the inadequacy of our building by-laws.<sup>78</sup>

In the light of the inadequacies of the by-laws it is clear to see why some men wished to see architects' abilities to construct sound buildings examined before being allowed to practice. Archibald was similarly dismissive of the suggestion that registration was a means of creating a closed network of professions, although he recognised that it was a real prejudice against registration that its proponents had to overcome:

Those of us who belong to such associations know that the question of the *number* presenting themselves for examination has no influence whatever on the minds of the examiners or associations when it comes to the question of how many they shall pass...[but]...we must not forget that it [statutory qualification] can only be obtained by proving to the general public that we are not acting from selfish motives, that we do not desire to bar the profession to all, irrespective of ability, that we are not endeavoring to form another "close corporation" but that we are actuated simply by our interest in the public good.<sup>79</sup>

Although Archibald was clearly focused on the professional standards of architecture he also regarded the art of architecture as important. He failed to comprehend why some architects felt that the two had to be mutually exclusive when he saw the profession and the art as two halves of the whole. He was insistent that an architect should not be permitted 'to offend the higher sense of mankind' and that one of the

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<sup>76</sup> John S. Archibald, 'A Statutory Qualification for Architects', *CAB*, 19, 9 (September 1906) p. 138

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> 'Province of Quebec Association of Architects', *CAB*, 18,12 (December 1905) p. 191

<sup>79</sup> Archibald, 'A Statutory Qualification for Architects', pp. 138 - 140

objectives of good architecture was to raise 'the moral temperament of the community'.<sup>80</sup> These were sentiments that the Memorialists would have supported yet he mentioned them with reference to examination and registration, which would have been anathema to the Memorialists. They categorically denied the ability to test design, whereas Archibald regarded this as nonsense:

With respect to the aesthetic side of the professional practice, we meet with a more difficult proposition. We are told it is almost impossible to make a standard for design. We are told it is a question of appropriateness, that there is great room for difference of opinion, that it is purely a matter of "taste", and that "good taste" is simply a question of fashion. Such arguments are mere nonsense.

There is a basis of design which no one should be permitted to evade...a sense or perception of the beautiful is to be found within the soul of every human being...It should be our pleasure to encourage it, at all times, to influence our community with its leaven of goodness and it should be the duty of the state to recognize such influences and to grant a statutory qualification to prevent influences other than that of the good to be over her people...Is it not therefore incumbent upon the state to foster all influences that make toward beauty, and to restrict the practice of the art to those who prove themselves capable of teaching the lesson of "sweetness and light".

The standard should not be difficult to set. The basic principles underlying good design are well known. If the principles are sound, the application should be comparatively easy.<sup>81</sup>

Archibald shared his ideas on statutory registration persuasively at the Seventh International Congress of Architects, which was held in London in 1906. At the end of the session, at which Wagner also gave a paper, the committee concluded that it was 'desirable in the interests of the public of all nations and of the profession of Architecture, that all practitioners should have a statutory qualification'.<sup>82</sup> In spite of the resolution, however, registration was not immediately forthcoming in either Britain or in Canada, with the exception of Quebec where it was well established. The subject remained one of controversy in Canada, with the proposal to establish an Institute of Canadian Architects.

The Institute of Canadian Architects was inaugurated in 1906 and there immediately followed a heated debate surrounding the issue of registration. Archibald's paper, which had opened the session in London, was published in an issue of *CAB* as a defence of registration. There followed a number of letters in *CAB*

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid. p. 138

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. pp. 139 - 140

<sup>82</sup> 'The Seventh International Congress of Architects: A Statutory Qualification for Architects', *JRIBA*, Congress Number (1906) p. xlvii The other speakers in favour of statutory qualification were Louis

and *Construction* that criticised the proposals and took umbrage at some of the points raised by Archibald, one letter was particularly vitriolic:

Do not, Mr. Editor, imagine I am opposed to a Canadian architects' organization. I am not. I think we stand in absolute need of one, but the pity is that having established an organization – a good thing in itself – we proceed at once to make an exceedingly bad use of it by seeking such legislation.

The old threadbare argument that it is desirable to do this for the safety of the public is really no better argument than to contend that a student of engineering at the end of his preliminary education, which included several years' office experience, should have a certificate given him by some incorporated engineering society which, in effect, said he was "qualified" to design a "Quebec bridge." But we all know the public do not urge methods such as these to guard their safety. These are the methods usually adopted by certain groups of individuals seeking private benefits from the government.

One reason why the proposition is fundamentally wrong is that, if the safety of the public in any community is a matter to be looked after, and it undoubtedly is, the law in relation to the erection of buildings should provide, not that the man be examined, but rather that each and all designs for his proposed buildings should be examined and passed upon by competent Government inspectors of buildings before being allowed to proceed with their construction.<sup>83</sup>

In this letter and Archibald's paper, there is the resurrection of the 'Profession or Art' debate which fired up England during the 1890s. A letter from Eden Smith, a Toronto Arts and Crafts architect, similarly paraphrases some of Jackson's arguments from 1892. He was extremely dissatisfied with the registration proposal because it would 'monopolize the title architect [and] endeavor to close the profession', which he believed 'would be quite ineffective in safeguarding the public, and would most effectively fossilize the profession'.<sup>84</sup> Nobbs was similarly anti-regulation, as may be expected considering his architectural ideology. His reasoning was slightly different however. He was sceptical whether the quality of architecture and architectural education in Canada were sufficient to warrant registration and argued that there was a risk that the standard would be lowered in order to bestow the title of architect on enough men to sustain the profession. He also believed that the motive for the legislation was a protectionist one, rather than a qualitative issue, that aimed to prevent architects from Britain and the United States from practising in Canada, which he considered foolish and short-sighted in view of the inequities surrounding

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Bonner, Robert Walker, Virgil Nasy, and A. North

<sup>83</sup> 'Objectionable Phases of Registration Act' a letter from J C B Horwood, *CAB*, 20, 10 (October 1907) p. 202

<sup>84</sup> 'Would Regulation of Architects be a Menace to the Profession?', *Construction*, 1, 3 (January 1908) p. 39

architectural quality in the three countries:

Up until now we have depended for the successful running of offices upon lads trained in the Old Country, or Canadian youths who have had sufficient enterprise to go to the United States to wider experience...Under these circumstances it seems to me in vain to initiate legislation for the express purpose of keeping out architects from the British Islands and the United States (where better conditions of education obtain), until we have shown ourselves capable of producing the breed required.<sup>85</sup>

Nobbs may have been suspicious about the true nature of the desire to introduce statutory registration across Canada, but other architects seemed genuinely concerned with quality. William Maxwell feared that the new Institute and its proposal to introduce a statutory qualification across Canada would lead directly to 'certain lowering of the standard now established in the Province of Quebec...We have in Quebec a hard standard for all entering the profession. Men in other parts who have not access to the same facilities for study cannot reasonably be expected to pass such a standard.'<sup>86</sup> This argument is similar to the opposition the RIBA had to the Society of Architects plan to introduce a Registration Bill, namely that architects could not be assessed for a statutory qualification unless they all had access to an equal standard of education. This argument sounded too protectionist for Archibald. The logical conclusion of Maxwell's argument, for him, was that the public outside the Province of Quebec, which was the only province with statutory registration for architects, were unprotected from incompetent practice, hence the reputation of the profession would continue to falter. Archibald's view was that statutory registration should require the other provinces to raise their standards; it was not for the PQAA to lower its bar. His was perhaps the more logical argument, for without the incentive to improve training and education why should the government and profession invest large amounts of money? Similarly, why would a young man invest time and money in his training without statutory requirement to do so? Archibald foresaw only one problem with Dominion-wide statutory registration; one that seems to have been missed by other participants in the debate - the cost:

If a Dominion licensing body were established they [the architects] need to be prepared to undertake the expense of enforcing its decisions. During the past year alone the maintenance of their charter rights had cost the P.Q.A.A. \$500. The enforcement of registration over the entire Dominion was therefore something not to

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid. p. 40

<sup>86</sup> 'P.Q.A.A. Discuss Architects' Registration' *CAB*, 22, 1 (January 1908) p. 15

be lightly undertaken.<sup>87</sup>

This attention to detail was characteristic of Archibald's administrative and pragmatic professionalism; he was after all the architect who sued the government for breach of contract. The business of architecture, as well as its science and art, was core to Archibald's interests in the profession and he regularly wrote and spoke on the economic and legal aspects of his job:

This is a matter of fact world and with little room for sentiment and tradition. Architecture is a nice word for the university, but in everyday life it means the materialistic investment of filthy lucre. Utility, economy and profit are the watchwords.

The first duty an architect is called upon to fulfill is to prove to his hesitating client that the money he intends to invest in building will assure him a good profit. Anything that doesn't lend itself to this must be eradicated. If we suggest imported methods of buildings we must show adequate financial compensation.<sup>88</sup>

This is a far cry from Taylor's lectures on the Sister Arts and the architect's role as an artist, but it is similar to Rhind's proposition that architects needed to pay greater heed to the business side of their practices. Archibald pursued rationalism in his office as well as in his designs. Some of his ideas went against the commonly held view. In 1904, for example, a government ruling on architectural tariffs provoked outrage when it recommended three per cent, which was far lower than some had wanted. Archibald approved of the ruling, even if he may have wished to dispute the figure with the ministers:

To my mind, the tariff as amended is a standing lesson to architects to be more businesslike in their methods. Who among us would give out work amounting to any considerable amount, unless the contractor is tied hard and fast by a written contract. In the name of common sense therefore, why should not all architects be compelled to enter into a written contract with their clients so that all possible future difficulties would be removed at the outset.<sup>89</sup>

He saw in this tariff an opportunity for opening up negotiations with patrons and asking for more favourable fees. Archibald identified ways of continuously improving the situation for architects and refused to relax just because he had made some progress. One area that was particularly close to his heart was the education and training of young architects. In a report he delivered on the PQAA's achievements

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* p. 15

<sup>88</sup> 'Synopsis of address by J. S. Archibald in reply to toast of P.Q.A.A.' *CAB*, 18, 12 (December 1905) p. 191

<sup>89</sup> 'The Work of the Association' *CAB*, 17, 4 (April 1904) p. 75

in architectural education - which included the establishment of a Chair of Architecture at McGill University, a scholarship scheme for young architecture students and a large library at the PQAA quarters - he was praised but also warned against complacency because 'if we are to live up to our ideals and to our duty we have to go much further'.<sup>90</sup>

As the Association is dependent upon the ranks of our students and draughtsmen for its coming practitioners, we should endeavor to inculcate in their minds such feelings of self-interest and good fellowship as will make them aspire to the ranks of our membership. As a parent body, we must take an interest in their educational welfare and we should therefore endeavor to bring them together in our rooms, to bind them together by some junior Association and to undertake courses of systematic lectures.<sup>91</sup>

This seems to be a very heartfelt plea and his memories of an insufficient and probably isolated apprenticeship were clearly at the root of these ideas. *L'entente cordiale* was very important to Archibald and he truly believed in the professional collective. In one of his papers he concluded that 'architecture belongs to no particular country; it is universal'.<sup>92</sup> His belief in the collective quality of architecture may explain his and Saxe's early modernism. Archibald's perception of Canada was equally significant to the development of his ideas. In the works of Taylor and Findlay, Canada had very much been regarded as an off-shoot of Britain and there was a concerted effort by both men to create a sense of tradition and heritage in their architecture. Archibald's approach to architecture was driven by the fact that Canada's architects were colonists, but his attitude was arguably more post-colonial than Imperial in outlook.<sup>93</sup>

There are many reasons to which we can ascribe the present condition of affairs [in architecture] and without going into them all, may I touch on a few. And the first is, that we are Colonists. Now I do not use this word in any deprecatory manner, but merely to describe the conditions and circumstances under which we undoubtedly labor. I mean by this, that we belong to a country comparatively in its infancy, whose population is composed of people gathered from the four winds of heaven or of descendants of those who only a generation or two ago, made this the land of their adoption.<sup>94</sup>

This attitude is quite different from the views of his contemporaries quoted in this thesis; he acknowledges the diversity of Canada and her promise rather than her Imperial tie to Britain and British history. This

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Archibald 'A Statutory Qualification for Architects', *CAB*, 19, 9 (September 1906) p. 140

<sup>93</sup> 'The Work of the Association', p.75

helps to explain Saxe and Archibald's move to omit historical styles in favour of increased rationalist architecture. Archibald's attitude to the profession similarly seems to have taken advantage of the fact that essentially Canada was a young country and did not need to be kept back by tradition and precedent. It was the virility of youth and the promise of the future that seemed to drive Archibald's ambitions.

Archibald's early years in Inverness, therefore, appear to have had very little impact on his mature career. In some respects it is more sensible to consider his career within the Canadian context. He finished his training in the office of Maxwell. His arrival in Montreal coincided with the establishment of the PQAA and the consequential improvements in the professional standards of the profession and a growing *l'entente cordiale* amongst architects; he registered as an architect with the PQAA in 1898. The emerging interest in American architecture in the 1890s shaped the future of Canadian architecture, changing the styles and the profession irreversibly; this directly impacted on Archibald through his assistantship with Maxwell. The International stage was also critical to his career development. His designs were situated within the Early Modern movement; he successfully participated in international competitions and engaged in cross-continental forums alongside some of the western world's greatest architects. His career was an amalgamation of these two threads: the international stage provided the architectural framework for his designs; the infancy of Canada and her freedom from centuries of architectural heritage made her the perfect vehicle for his ideas and Montreal had the verve to push forward innovation in the profession. The notion that the young seventeen-year-old apprentice from Inverness would rise to become a modernising vehicle in Canada may have seemed incredible if his future had been foretold. Perhaps it was the quiet, isolated and uncreative apprenticeship that formed his desire to search for alternatives and improvements. No matter what the motive, the young Scotsman became a modernising presence in a Dominion still strongly tied to the Imperial family.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid. p. 76



131. John Smith Archibald (1872-1934)  
(JRAIC)



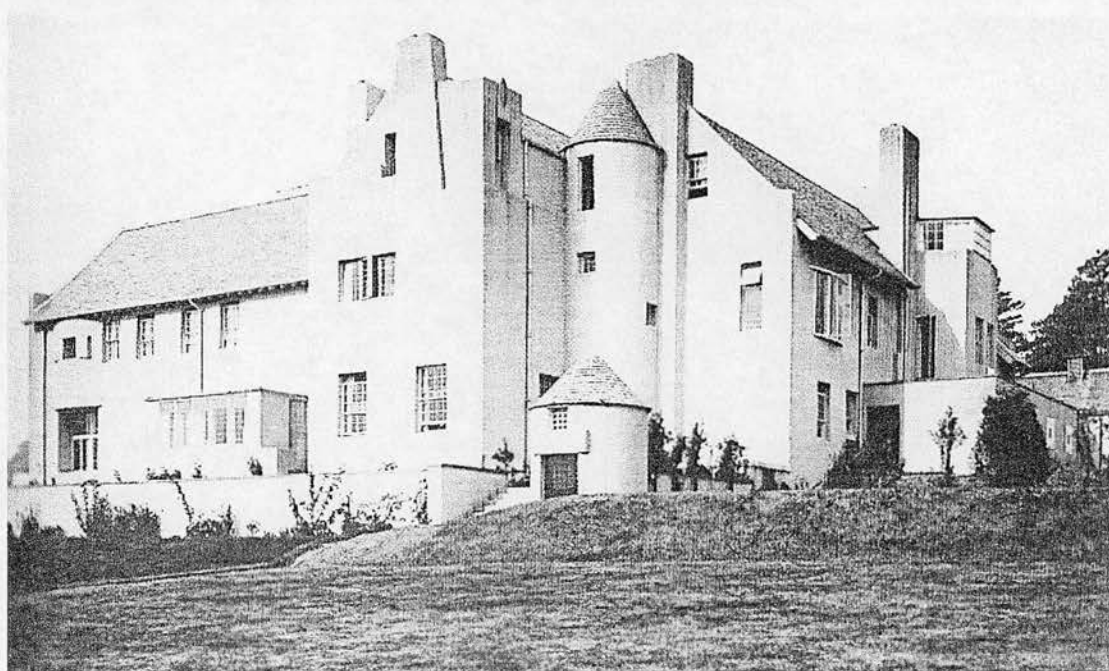
132. Mackintosh, Bank of Scotland, Nairn (1874)  
(RCAHMS)



133. Mackintosh, Old Church Manse, Nairn (1898)  
(RCAHMS)



134. Voysey, Perrycroft, Hereford and Worcester (1893-4)  
(Davey, *Arts and Crafts*)



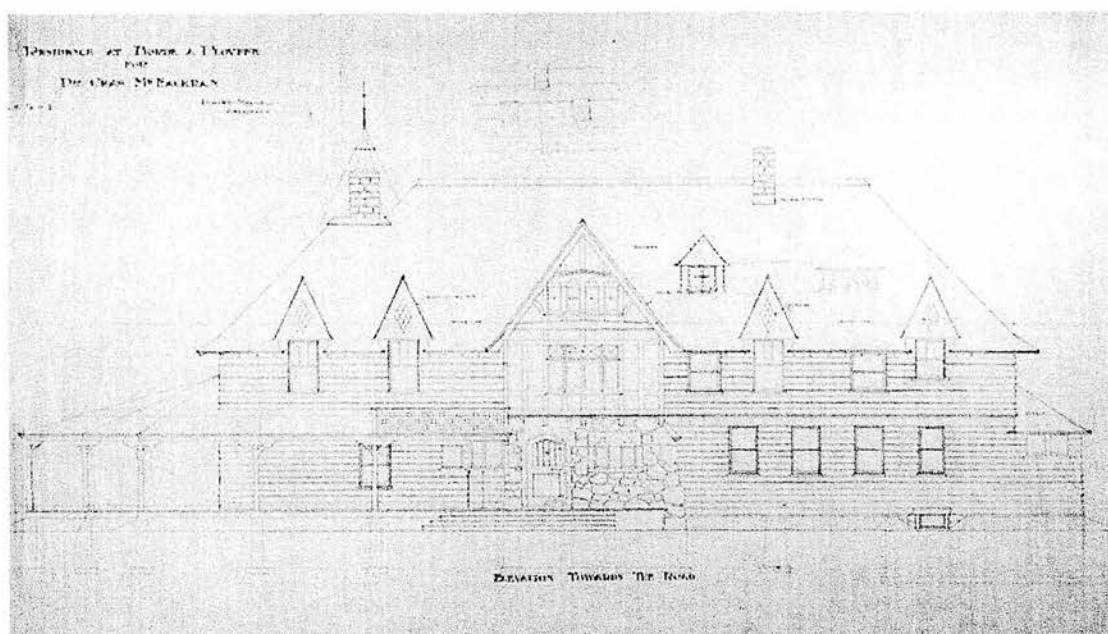
135. Rennie Mackintosh, Hill House, Helensburgh (1902-04)  
(Glendinning, MacInnes and MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*)



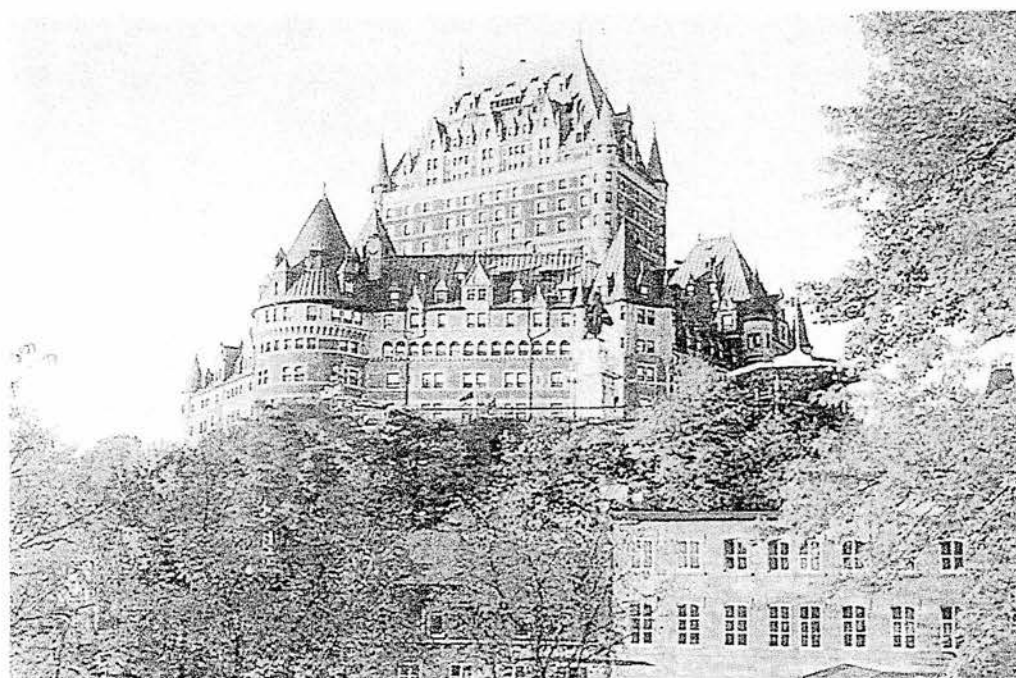
136. Maxwell, Henry Birks and Sons, Montreal (1892-3)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



137. Maxwell, House for Isabella Allan, Avenue des Pins, Montreal (1894)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



138. Maxwell, House for C. McEachran, 'Inverneck' (1895-97)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, Maxwell Collection)



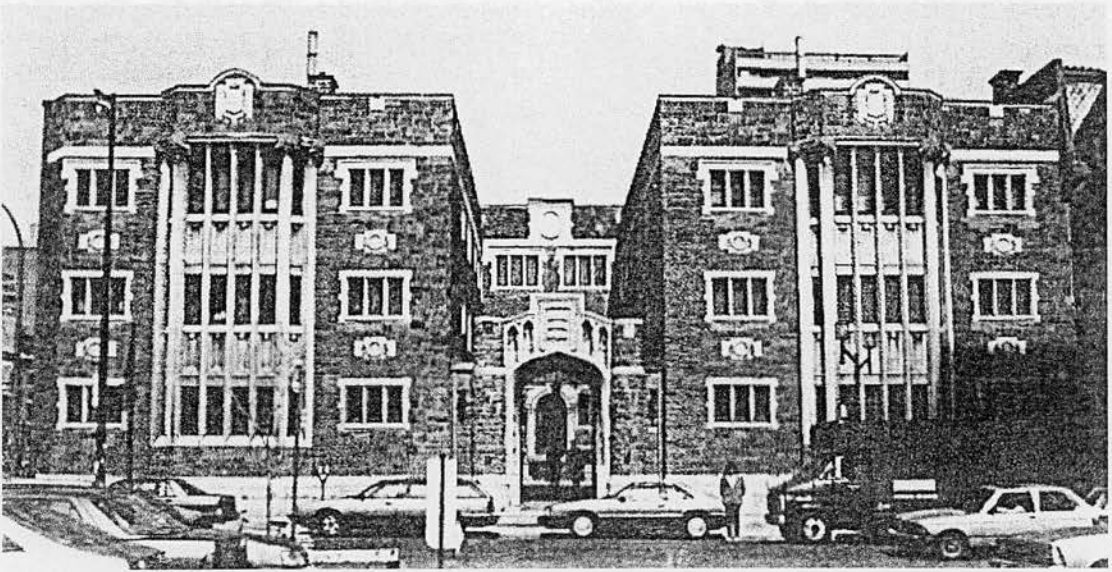
139. Price, Château Frontenac, Quebec City (1892)  
([www.dam.brown.edu](http://www.dam.brown.edu))



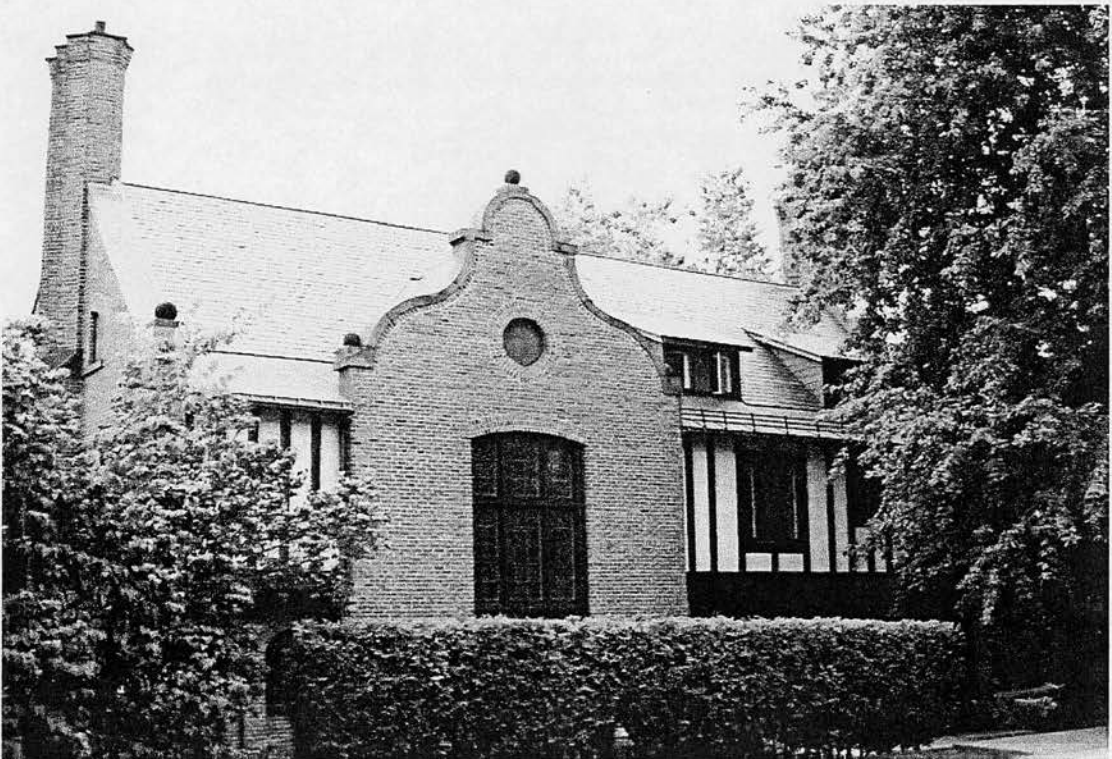
140. Maxwell, CPR Station, Vancouver (1897-98)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, Maxwell Collection)



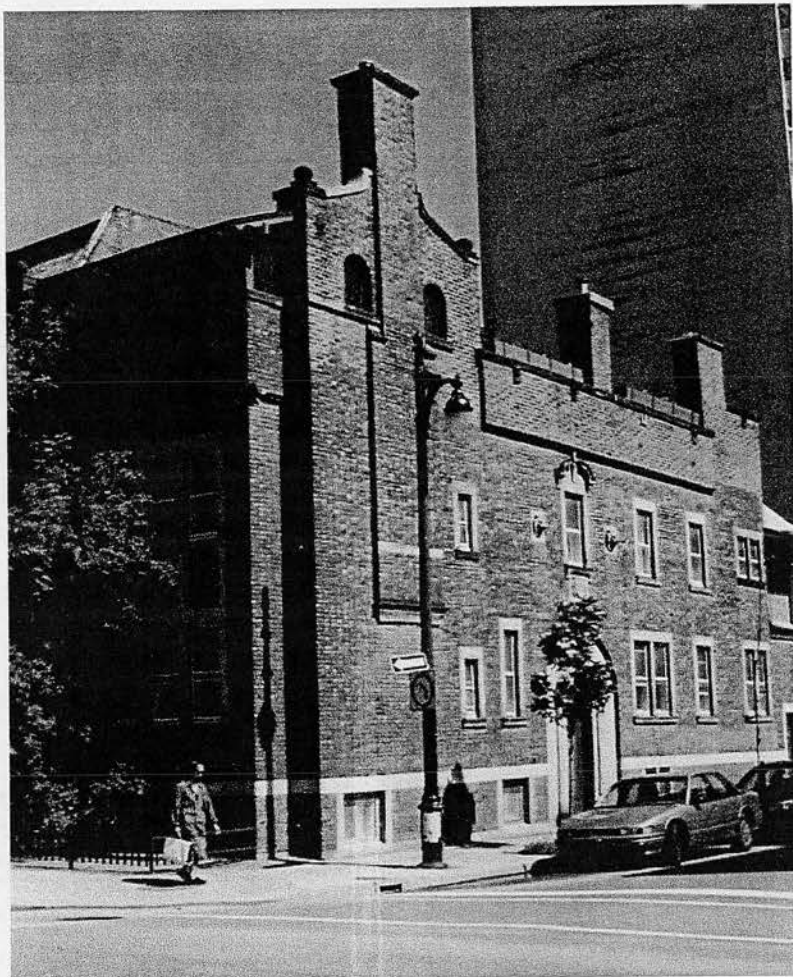
141. Saxe and Archibald, House for F. Manhire, Rue Grovesnor, Westmount (1898)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



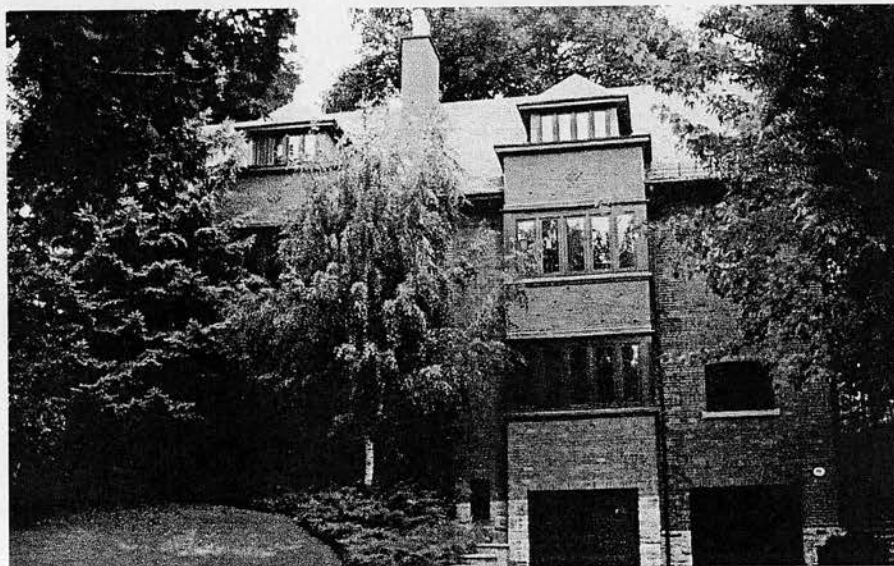
142. Saxe and Archibald, Bishops Court Apartments, Rue Bishop, Montreal (1904)  
(Pinard, *Montréal: Son Histoire, Son Architecture*)



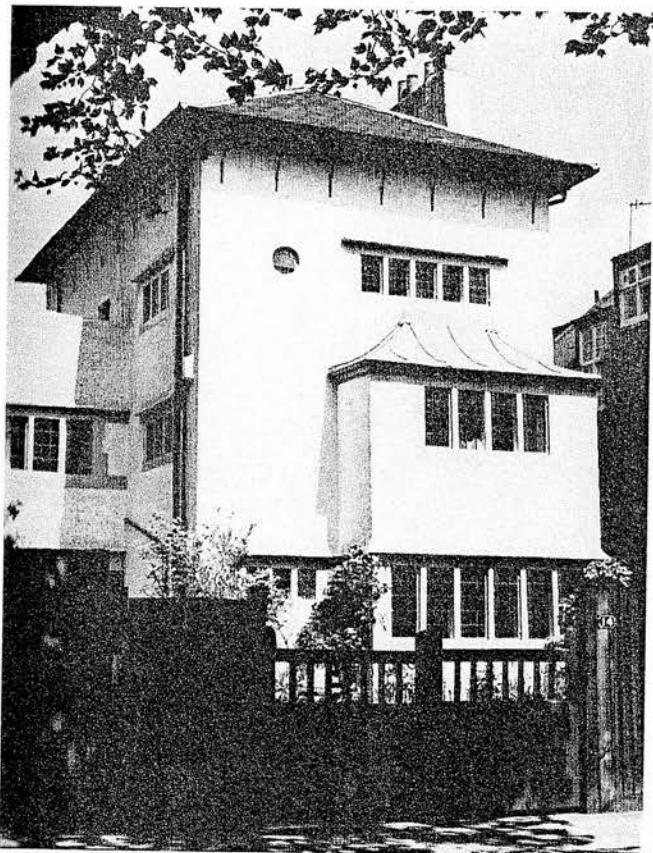
143. Saxe and Archibald, House for F. Anson, Côte de Chemin-St-Antoine, Westmount (1904), (Photograph, Kinnear)



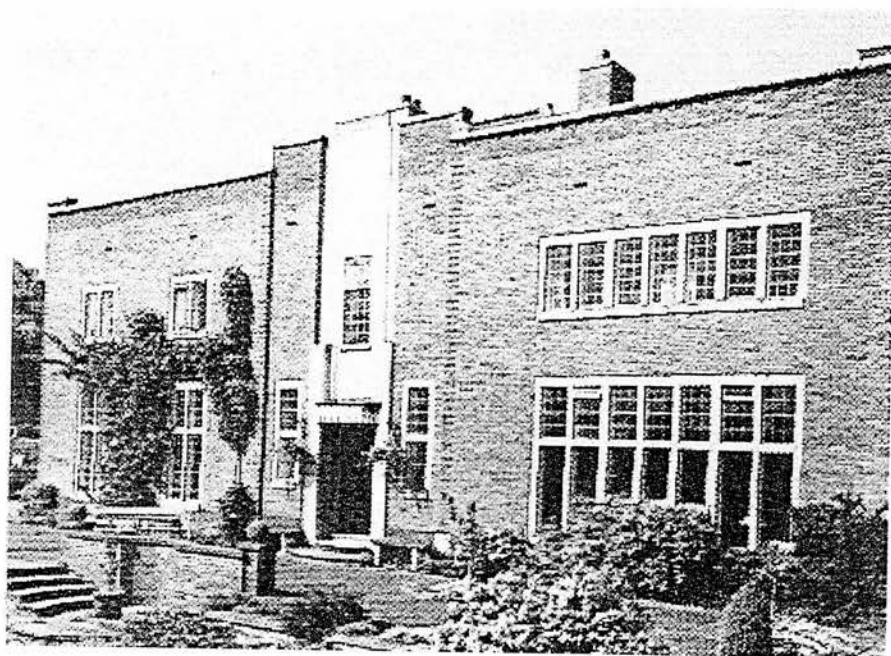
144. Saxe and Archibald, A. Fiske House, Rue Milton, Montreal (1908)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



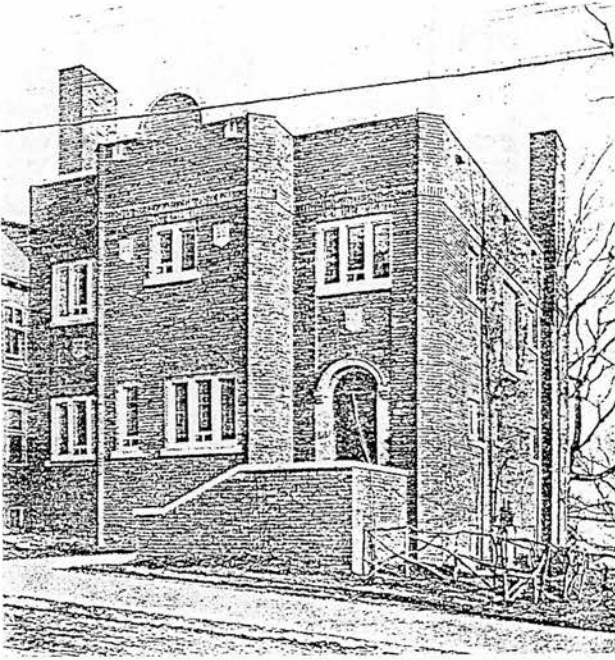
145. Saxe and Archibald, 9 Forden Avenue, Westmount (1908)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



146. Voysey, Studio Cottage, Bedford Park (1891)  
(Service, *Edwardian Architecture*)



147. Woods, Upmeads, Suffolk (1908)  
(Service, *Edwardian Architecture*)



148. Saxe and Archibald, House, Cedar Avenue, Montreal (1913)  
(Construction)



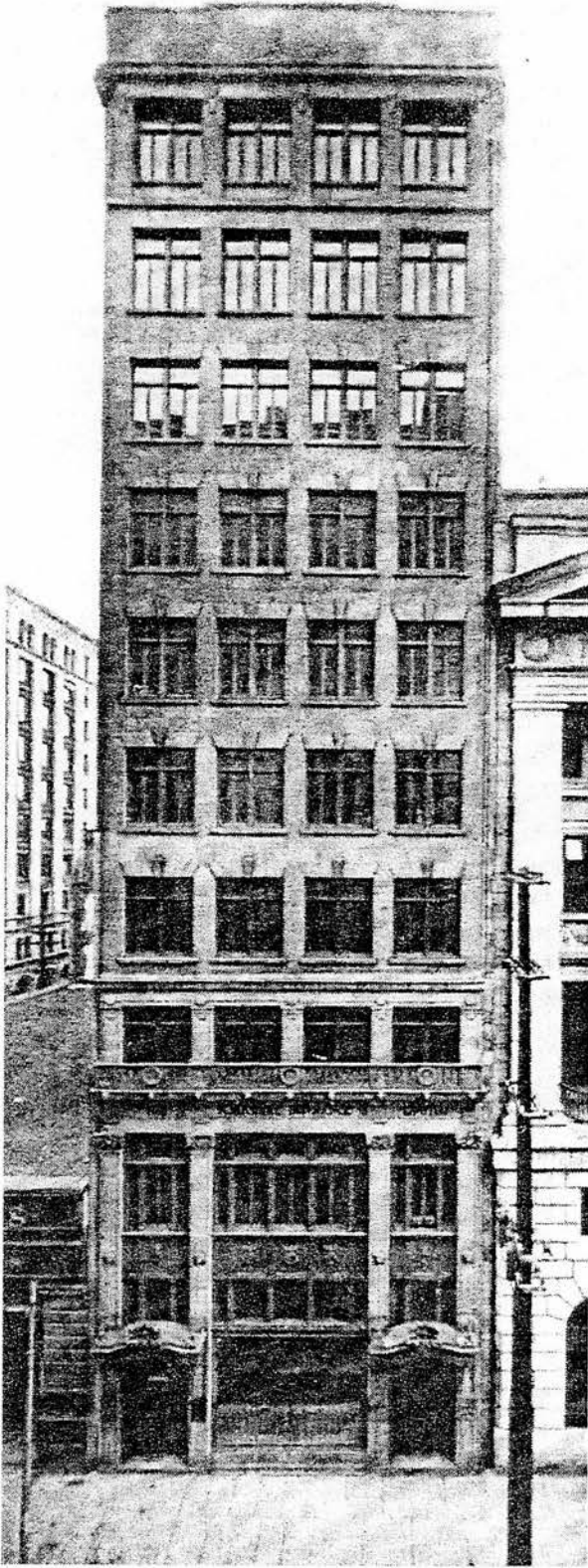
149. Saxe and Archibald, House for Archibald, Rue Dorchester, Montreal (1915)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



150. Saxe and Archibald, House for Joseph-Marcel Wilson, Rue du Musée Montreal (1911)  
(Photograph, Kinnear)



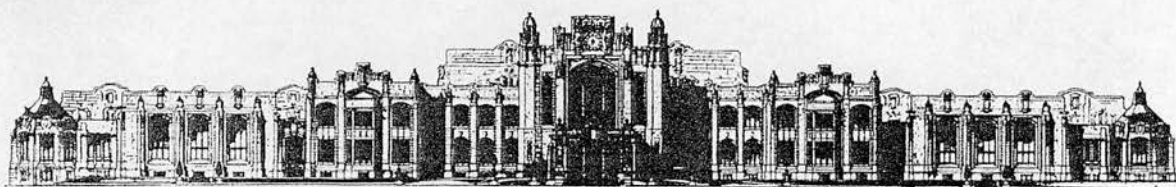
151. Saxe and Archibald, Sauvegarde Building, Rue St Jacques, Montreal (1911)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, Archibald Collection)



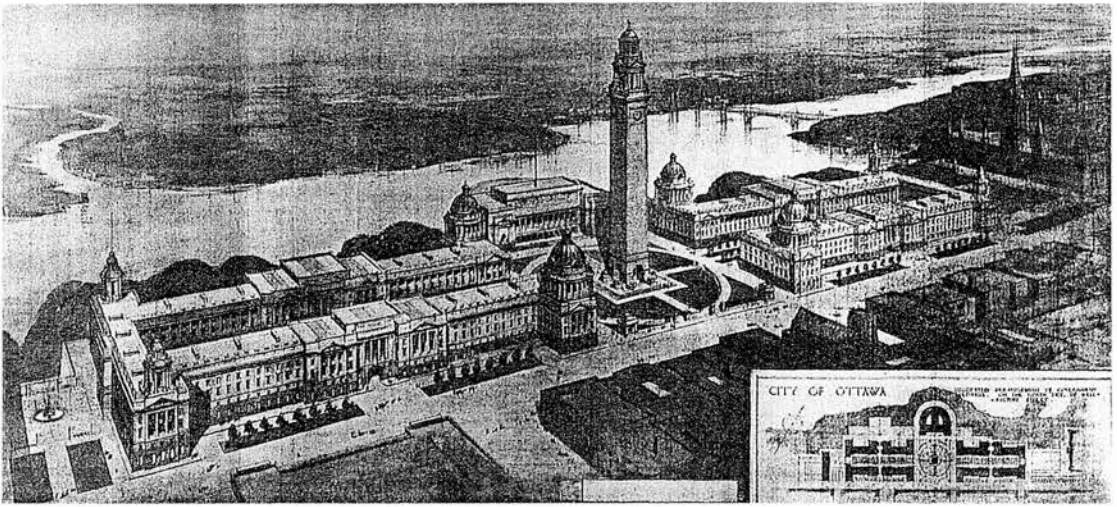
152. Saxe and Archibald, Yorkshire Building, Rue Notre Dame, Montreal (1913)  
(McGill University, JBCAC, Archibald Collection)



153. Maxwell, Dominion Express Company Building, Montreal (1910-12)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)



154. Maxwell, Design for Departmental and Justice Buildings, Parliament Hill, Ottawa (1907)  
(CAB)



155. White, Proposed Scheme for Parliament Hill, Ottawa (1913)  
(Wright, *Les Biens de la Couronne*)

## Stewart Henbest Capper (1859 – 1924)

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**We have had the privilege of seeing copies of the testimonials presented by Prof. Capper to the governors of McGill University. They bear the signatures of men of the highest educational attainments in the universities and professional societies of Great Britain, France and Spain, and leave little room to doubt the qualification of the gentleman who has been chosen to instruct the rising generation of Canadian architects.**

‘Prof. S. H. Capper’, *CAB*, 1896

Stewart Henbest Capper was born in Greater London in 1859 [Plate 156]. From the age of nine, however, he resided in Edinburgh, and he was forty-four when he eventually returned to England in 1903.<sup>1</sup> The thirty-five years in between his departure from and return to England were lived in a range of countries and cities, including Glasgow, Lisbon, Paris and Montreal. The most formative years, however, were spent in Scotland. He was educated there, becoming Dux (Head Boy) at the Royal High School in Edinburgh before matriculating at the capital’s celebrated university. It was in Scotland that he was inspired to make architecture his profession, and where he was guided by two of the greatest Scottish architects, Burnet and Rowand Anderson. Scotland was most definitely a significant element in Capper’s career.

Like Taylor, Findlay, Rhind and Archibald, Capper left Britain for Canada during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Whilst he was there he made a significant contribution as an educationalist. He was the first Professor of Architecture in Canada, appointed to the Macdonald Chair of Architecture at McGill University in 1896. In this role he was the first architect to introduce formally the teachings of the *École des Beaux-Arts* into Canada and to express fervently the importance of a university education. This is particularly significant as he did this at a time when Britain did not have a university-based school of architecture dedicated to *Beaux-Arts* ideas thus he helped to reverse the

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. G. Baldwin Brown, ‘Obituary: The Late Major Stewart Henbest Capper M.A., F.S.A [A.]’, *JRIBA*, 32 (January 1925), p. 200; Alexander N. Paterson, ‘Obituary: The Late Major Stewart Henbest

traditional mother-child bond that existed between Great Britain and Canada.

An exceptionally able and dedicated scholar who studied in Edinburgh, Heidelberg and Paris, it was probably inevitable that Capper was destined to make his greatest achievement in education.<sup>2</sup> At Edinburgh University the Classical World was his passion and he immersed himself in studying its history and its languages, and graduated with First Class Honours in 1880. As a young Classics student, Capper joined a team of archaeologists who travelled to Athens eager to identify the remains of the original Cimonian masonry at the Acropolis. One of his companions on this trip was Professor Baldwin Brown, who, in his obituary of Capper, recalled the jovial company of the young, inquisitive Classicist.<sup>3</sup> During this trip to Athens Capper's interest in architecture began to blossom; his conversations with Baldwin Brown no doubt encouraged his enthusiasm.

Whatever the spark, in 1880 Capper abandoned scholarly pursuits to pursue architecture as his career and was offered a position in the Glasgow practice of John Burnet and Son.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, Capper was plagued with a sickly constitution and ill-health prevented him from taking up the position.<sup>5</sup> Instead he joined the household of Sir Robert Morrier, British Ambassador to Portugal, and later Spain. Capper was initially employed as private secretary to Sir Robert, but almost immediately he also began to act as tutor to Morrier's young son, beginning a life-long interest in teaching. Whilst in the Iberian Peninsula, Capper studied the architecture of the region, becoming extremely knowledgeable on the subject; the fruits of his study were published in his book *Masterpieces of Spanish Architecture* (1909).<sup>6</sup> Although he enjoyed his time in the Morrier household and his role as tutor, Capper remained determined to pursue architecture.

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Capper M.A., F.S.A [A], *JRIBA* (January 1925), pp. 200-201

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. A first class Classicist, Capper was also an exceptional linguist. By his mid-twenties he was already fluent in Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. When he was in his fifties he added Arabic to the list, having been assigned an intelligence job in Egypt during the First World War. After the war, he chose to stay in Egypt working for the Ministry of the Interior and he died there in 1925.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 200

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 201. Capper's close friend Alexander Paterson observed that by 1880, the year Capper graduated, he had already decided that architecture would be 'his life work'.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. In his obituary of his friend, Paterson also explains that Capper emigrated to Canada 'partly from health reasons', and describes a further 'breakdown in health' during the late 1910s.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Naismith 'Dash of Genius on City Skyline', *Scotsman* (December 1991)

After four years in Morrier's employ, Capper returned to Scotland in 1884 and joined the Glasgow practice of John Burnet and Son. By the 1880s, the younger Burnet had helped to establish the practice as one of the leading ones in Scotland and had brought the Beaux-Arts to Scotland.

The École des Beaux-Arts began to receive greater publicity in Britain in the 1880s subsequent to the RIBA's decision to introduce obligatory examinations for architects wishing to become Associates of the Institute. Having passed this rule in 1882, the Institute had not provided any provision or guidance for the training of aspiring architects, thus a debate on architectural education began in earnest. Focus immediately sprang onto the École des Beaux-Arts, because it was one of the few formal systems of architectural education in Europe focused on design, composition, the classics and the idea of function guiding form. There were few graduates of the École in Britain at that time, but those who existed, such as the younger Burnet, were quite evangelical in their praise of the French system and were very keen to introduce its features into Britain in the hope of improving the traditional apprenticeship system that existed for the training of young architects.

The most active advocate of the Beaux-Arts system during the 1880s was the architect Phéné Spiers. He had trained in the atelier Questel between 1856 and 1861, and had returned to Britain eager to establish a similar system of education in London. The year 1870 seemed to be his opportunity to achieve this, as he was appointed the first full-time architectural master at the Royal Academy. In this role he attempted to introduce a modified version of the Beaux-Arts curriculum, but the apprenticeship system prevented its success for 'the pupils came only in the evenings, and they came with all sorts of differing ideas which it was impossible to reduce to uniformity.'<sup>7</sup> Phéné Spiers did not let this dampen his enthusiasm nor hamper his determination to see a Beaux-Arts curriculum established in Britain however.

In May 1884 he presented a paper to the RIBA entitled 'The French Diplome d'Architecte and the German System of Architectural Education' in which he established the ways in which the French system was superior to the British:

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<sup>7</sup> Phéné Spiers *The Builder*, 52 (1889), p. 6 quoted in Alan Powers, *Architectural Education in Britain*

There is one great difference between the French system and our own, and it not only applies to architecture but to every other art, and that is, the entire absence in England of any study of composition, and of the complete way it is taught in France...the English student makes no sketch-designs; he begins at once with his two-foot rule to put the exact size of every feature in the building, without going one single step further in the study of design...it is impossible to get him to understand that, if he wants to arrive at any proper standard of excellence, he should make five or six different studies...before he can digest all its details.<sup>8</sup>

He did praise certain aspects of England's practice, such as 'the extraordinary enterprise shown in the publication of drawings of actual modern buildings and of composition in the professional journals of the day'.<sup>9</sup> He also stressed, however, that this was no substitute for geometry, stereography and mechanical drawing methods all of which were taught in France but in which English students received no instruction during their training.

Phené Spiers was supported in his promotion of the *École des Beaux-Arts* by William White, the Secretary of the RIBA. In his paper, 'A Brief Review of the Training and Practice of Architecture in France since the Year 1671', White concluded that 'the difference between a body of architects trained under an academic system such as that which flourishes in Paris, and a body of architects left to pick up knowledge in a speculative scramble for employment, is not unlike the difference between an army of soldiers fit to take the field, and a scratch gathering of men with muskets.'<sup>10</sup> The orderly, systematic methodology of the *École des Beaux-Arts* with its emphasis on design and composition certainly made an attractive comparison to the British system, which seemed rather *ad hoc* in comparison, at least to architects such as Phené Spiers and White.

The Memorialists, however, were vehemently opposed to the idea of a centralised system of architectural education.<sup>11</sup> They believed it would teach a curriculum that matched the newly imposed examination system thereby stifling any creativity; they also disputed the argument that design could

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1880–1914, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Cambridge University (1982), p. 10

<sup>8</sup> Phéné Spiers quoted in R McLeod, *Style and Society: Architectural Ideology in Britain 1835 – 1914* (London: The Royal Institute of British Architects, 1971) p. 214

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> William White, 'A Brief Review of the Education and Practice of Architecture in France since the Year 1671', *The Builder* (February 1884) quoted in McLeod, p. 90

<sup>11</sup> See 'John Smith Archibald (1872–1934)', chapter 6, for further details on the Memorialists and their opinions on architectural education.

be taught. In a paper to the Architectural Association, published in *The Builder*, Jackson emphasised the importance of teaching the craft of architecture, stipulating that this could only be achieved through studying buildings rather than through books and lectures. He passionately believed that schools of architecture would stifle the craft 'under the dull weight of professionalism.'<sup>12</sup> These arguments were similar to those that the Memorialists had put forward against registration and they believed that registration and a formal system of education were attempts to squeeze architects into a 'one-fits-all' frame.

Although Phené Spiers took a contrary position to the Memorialists, he did admit that the Beaux-Arts was not a panacea, acknowledging that it was a very academic training with little exposure to the practical side of architecture.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Francis Hooper, another architect who called for the introduction of systematic instruction of the *École* into Britain, admitted that 'a very real defect of the French system is that little enthusiasm is created amongst students, for the study of actual buildings.'<sup>14</sup> These disadvantages, however, were considered insignificant compared to the advantages the Beaux-Arts system could bring to British architectural education.

By the beginning of the twentieth century a small number of schools of architecture had opened, however, the Memorialists and their Arts and Crafts ideas won through, as the majority of the courses established were supported by architects such as Jackson, Lethaby and Shaw.<sup>15</sup> In 1895, the Architectural Association opened a School of Design and Handicrafts, which was run by Owen Fleming, the name of the school immediately indicating its Arts and Crafts philosophy. In the same year Liverpool University introduced a full-time course in architecture, the first in the UK, under the leadership of F. W. Simpson, who had been a pupil of Bodley. Lethaby gave his support to the Arts

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas G. Jackson, 'The Training of Architects to the Pursuit of Architecture', *The Builder* (December 1891) p. 464

<sup>13</sup> Phené Spiers quoted in McLeod, p. 93 "We find in France men who study, I will say, up to the age of twenty-eight or thirty, for the *Grand Prix*, and then go to Rome for four years, and come back at the age of thirty-two to thirty-four, without, I may say, any practical knowledge or any knowledge of construction beyond its theory, and certainly without any economic knowledge of material."

<sup>14</sup> Francis Hooper, 'Some Notes on Architectural Education and Practice in France', *The Builder*, 61 (January 1889) p. 66

<sup>15</sup> See Alan Powers, *Architectural Education in Britain* for the full details of the various schools of architecture that were established in England during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

and Crafts course at Birmingham when he became its examiner in 1900.<sup>16</sup> This trend of Arts and Crafts courses was to be expected as the Arts and Crafts was the dominant architectural style and philosophy in the latter nineteenth-century; the classicism, the formality and the academic basis of the Beaux-Arts were the very antithesis of the Arts and Crafts.

Nevertheless, attitudes began to change gradually. More and more schools of architecture were opened and they established increasingly formal courses of architectural education that concentrated on the classical tradition. In 1913, *The Builder*, in a special edition, celebrated the advances that had been made in English schools of architecture:

The modern Universities of Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield, among others, and the old University of Oxford have recognised architecture as a subject of University education, and it is amongst these new education factors that we look for that development in the future of architectural method and thought which will enable the student to master the principles which must lie behind all really successful architectural design if we are to have a real improvement in the quality of architectural design which will permeate and count as a factor in this century.<sup>17</sup>

The architectural method which most of the schools preferred was the Beaux-Arts. The most celebrated school of architecture in England was the School of Architecture at Liverpool University under the Professorship of Charles Reilly, who took over the Chair of Architecture from Simpson in 1904. Reilly's believed that a school of architecture should:

Aim at being a school of thought in the finer sense of the term. It should represent a compact body of opinion and practice. It should strive to produce a consistent philosophy of the art it teaches in order that the student may find therein the principles sufficiently wide and true to enable him to approach with confidence any problem, from town planning to furniture design, that architecture may present.<sup>18</sup>

Reilly's philosophy of art centred on the classical tradition, as he believed that this was the basis of Western civilization and was 'more likely to form a safe foundation for our own work'.<sup>19</sup> The move to classical architecture was not unique to Liverpool; from 1900 it was an increasing phenomenon in British architecture. There was a growing dissatisfaction among some architects that a generation had arisen that was 'untrained in the orders and systems of proportion of the art of architecture' and some

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> 'Our Schools of Architecture' in *The Builder*, 105 (August 1913) p. 213

<sup>18</sup> Charles Reilly, 'The Liverpool School of Architecture', *The Builder*, 105, (August 1913) p. 217

of the schools of architecture aimed to reverse this by focusing on the classical tradition.<sup>20</sup> In a paper published by *The Builder* W. Seton, Secretary of the School of Architecture at University College London, outlined the importance of classicism to the school's curriculum:

Without a thorough knowledge of the 'Orders' and the principles of Classic Design students cannot pass to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year or to the Academic Design course. Unity in architectural expression is essential if architecture is to advance, and students should not have their minds distracted by being called upon to study closely and work out exercises in different styles.<sup>21</sup>

By the 1910s the Architectural Association and Manchester School of Architecture were also broadly following similar ideas of formal education and the classical tradition, which was a major swing from the 1890s and 1900s when the Memorialists had guided education ideas. There was one city, however, that had always remained consistently and persistently classical, regardless of other stylistic trends in Britain: Glasgow.

The Scottish city had long established itself as the home of British classicism; its buildings, from the work of Alexander 'Greek' Thompson to the more recent City Chambers, were all testament to the city's classical identity. In 1895, William J. Anderson was appointed Professor of Architecture at the Glasgow School of Art and he set about establishing a new course of architecture. He founded an evening course that supplemented the office training that architects received as part of their apprenticeships; they also attended classes in construction at the Technical College.<sup>22</sup> The curriculum that he wrote followed his personal enthusiasm for classical architecture. In the introduction to his book *Architecture of the Renaissance in Italy*, Anderson wrote that his work was intended to be 'a contribution to the teaching of the traditions of the Western arts of design.'<sup>23</sup> Anderson believed that learning the classics was critical to young men because 'we are all Romans, as our language, religion, and law, as well as our arts remind us.'<sup>24</sup> Thus whilst other young architecture students were studying the Arts and Crafts, those in Glasgow studied examples of classical architecture.<sup>25</sup> The classical

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 218

<sup>20</sup> John Clayton in *Architecture, A Profession or an Art?*, quoted in A Powers, *Architectural Education in Britain*, p. 94

<sup>21</sup> W. W. Seton, 'The School of Architecture at University College', *The Builder*, 105, p. 222

<sup>22</sup> Hugh Ferguson, *Glasgow School of Art: The History* (Glasgow: 1995) p. 136

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Powers, *Architectural Education in Britain*, p. 100

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 78. Alan Powers believed that the Glasgow School of Art's focus on classicism made its

curriculum continued under Alexander McGibbon, who was one of Burnet's *protégés*.<sup>26</sup> In 1904, faced with the dilemma of appointing a new Professor of Architecture to succeed McGibbon, Burnet suggested Pascal be invited to Glasgow to give a report on architectural education in the city.<sup>27</sup> In the event Pascal was unable to come and sent Eugène Bourdon in his place.<sup>28</sup> Bourdon's insightful observations and recommendations endeared him to the Board of Governors and he was duly offered the position of Professor of Architecture, which he accepted.<sup>29</sup>

Bourdon, like most *École* graduates and teachers, believed staunchly in a classical education, although he made the distinction between a classical education and the classical style, a subtlety that teachers who were non-*École* graduates, such as Reilly, did not identify.

I make a departure between Art and Art education. Art may be classic or not, national or not; the decision stands with practicing national Artists; but in all cases, the Art education, like any education, should be classic i.e. based upon the tradition...I have brought here, in Architecture, not French architecture as a few fancy, but the architectural tradition, the old Greek tradition, transplanted to Rome, modified in the Gothic, renewed in the Renaissance. My students in practice make 'classic' or 'modern Art', that is their own affair.<sup>30</sup>

His first objective was to unite the two schools in Glasgow, the Technical College and the School of Art, to create a more comprehensive curriculum for young architects. He also advised that young architects follow a six-year composite course which involved one year at day classes, three years in an office followed by a further two years at day classes. This was a year longer than the traditional apprenticeship, but Bourdon believed that during the six years 'the student will get enough of both theory and practice to fit him for his profession.'<sup>31</sup>

Bourdon's appointment in 1904 consolidated the influence of the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Glasgow, which had started in 1878 when John James Burnet returned from Paris with the *Diploma due*

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teachings 'more efficient and consistent than that offered almost anywhere else in the 1890s, partly because there was no artificiality forced search after enlightenment through craftsmanship or through the escape from conventional styles.'

<sup>26</sup> Gavin Stamp, 'An architect of the *Entente Cordiale*: Eugène Bourdon (1870–1916) – Glasgow and Versailles', *Architectural Heritage* 15 (2004) pp. 87-89

<sup>27</sup> Ferguson, *Glasgow School of Art*, p. 137

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Stamp, 'An architect of the *Entente Cordiale*' p. 90

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p. 94 Minutes of the Sub-Committee on Design, 9th May 1910

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

*Government* in both Architecture and Engineering.<sup>32</sup> Like Phené Spiers, who returned from Paris brimming with ideas, Burnet's return to Britain was confident and enthusiastic. His talent soon attracted attention and became a perfect advertisement for the Beaux-Arts system:

I have been much struck with Mr. Burnet's drawings displayed on the walls, drawings which afford an apt example of the French method of teaching the art of delineating vaults and other constructional parts of a building in plan and section...Mr. Burnet affords a very happy instance of the advantages to be derived from the course of studies which he has undergone at the École des Beaux-Arts ...His natural ability has been developed and guided by his studies at the École, and those who visit Glasgow can hardly receive a greater pleasure than by inspecting a work by him, the Fine Arts Gallery in Sauchiehall Street.<sup>33</sup>  
[Plate 157]

Burnet was determined to draw attention to the Beaux-Arts and spread its ideas in Glasgow. Much to his father's alleged annoyance, Burnet rearranged his father's practice into a pseudo-atelier.<sup>34</sup> He persuaded his father to invest heavily in the practice's library and he decorated the draughtsmen's rooms with sculpture and paintings; these were all intended to be studied by every apprentice and assistant to ensure they had a sound knowledge of the classics, which would assist their work.<sup>35</sup>

Burnet also introduced into his father's practice the meticulous process of design that he had learned in Paris, a process which seemed fastidious to and exasperated many assistants:

He was a master in the art of designing on tracing paper, which means that his fastidious taste was never satisfied till he had gone through a process of trial and error that to his draughtsmen seemed inexhaustible; and he never expected any tracing – however slight – to be destroyed until all possible use for it had disappeared. This and his insistence on *scale* by rigid adherence to the most minute factors of the small scale in the preparation of half-inch and so on to full-size drawings were the mainsprings of his design methods: which obviously meant meticulous accuracy on the part of the draughtsmen.<sup>36</sup>

It was in this enlightened practice that Capper began his architectural career in 1884, and it left an indelible mark on his career. Within a few months, however, Burnet had persuaded his new assistant that Paris would offer better preparation for an architectural career. For many of the apprentices and assistants in the Burnet office the price of studying in France was prohibitive; Capper was luckier than

<sup>32</sup> David Walker, 'Scotland and Paris 1874-1887', John Frew and David Jones (ed.) *Scotland and Europe 18450-1940* (St. Andrews: University of St. Andrews School of Art History, 1891) p. 21

<sup>33</sup> McLeod, *Style and Society*, p. 93

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Tait, 'Obituary: Sir James Burnet', *JRIBA* (July 1938) p. 894

<sup>35</sup> Theodore Fyfe, 'Obituary: Sir James Burnet', *JRIBA* (August 1938) p. 942

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

most and could act upon his mentor's advice. Burnet encouraged and inspired other men to enrol at the Parisian school, from which they all returned to Glasgow to establish successful practices. For example, the wealthy and charismatic John Archibald Campbell left the Burnet office in 1880 for Pascal's atelier, where he stayed for three years. In addition, Alexander Nisbet Paterson joined Pascal's atelier in 1883, having asked Burnet for advice on the best way to train as an architect. A couple of years later, a young apprentice in the firm of Campbell Douglas and Sellars, John Keppie, spent eighteen months in the atelier Pascal, although he did not formally register with the *École des Beaux-Arts*. Robert Douglas Sandilands also trained in Paris, but unlike the others he was attached to the atelier of the theorist Julien Guadet between 1880 and 1885, rather than the atelier Pascal.<sup>37</sup>

In 1884 Capper became part of this 'Glasgow group'. In Paris they all received an identical training that was based upon the classics. The syllabus they studied included the main rules of composition; the proportions of interiors; the principles of structure; building types; circulation; façades and professional practice.<sup>38</sup> The curriculum was intended to prepare the students for the professional life of an architect, although they received little practical training whilst in Paris:

The architect conceives, then studies, then constructs: most of his professional time given over to precise drawings to enable his design to be realized perfectly by others since he is no longer the master builder: the first duty of the architect is to the client and to the programme.<sup>39</sup>

During his time in Pascal's atelier, Capper formed a friendship with Paterson that lasted his lifetime.<sup>40</sup> This meeting was probably orchestrated by Burnet and led to an immediate rapport. Paterson wrote very fondly of the years he and Capper shared in Paris:

We were at once brought into close communion, made closer a little later by our taking rooms in common and by various jaunts together *en province* for sketching or refreshment after strenuous days and nights at the atelier and *en loge*. When not so engaged, many were the evenings spent with music, Capper at the piano – for he was a delightful executant and had an endless repertoire among the classics, with a special fondness for the Beethoven Sonatas.<sup>41</sup>

Capper graduated from the *École* in 1887, a year after Paterson, and returned home to Scotland. On

<sup>37</sup> For further details about the links between Glasgow and Paris see D. Walker, 'Paris and Scotland'.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p. 21-22

<sup>39</sup> Guadet quoted in D. Walker, 'Paris and Scotland' p. 22

<sup>40</sup> Paterson, 'Obituary', *JRIBA* p. 201; the friends were extremely close and Paterson later visited Capper in Montreal.

this occasion he chose Edinburgh over Glasgow; a choice perhaps influenced by familial connections rather than professional ambitions, as Edinburgh had little interest in or liking for the *École des Beaux-Arts*. At this juncture in his career Capper had had a very classical and scholarly education, Edinburgh would introduce him to a very different school of architectural ideas and opinions.

His first appointment was in the office of George Washington Browne (1853-1939) who was entering a Francophile stage with his François Premier design for the Edinburgh Carnegie Library (1887) [Plate 158]. Capper was given specific responsibility for the detailing of the design, a role which made the best use of his recently acquired skills at the *École*. Capper would have soon discovered, however, that Browne did not share the same ideals as Burnet and Pascal. Browne had started his career in Glasgow and had journeyed south to London, just as Burnet had. Whilst Burnet joined the atelier Pascal in 1875, Browne, in the same year, joined a leading Queen Anne practice, the office of Stevenson and Edward Robson (1835-1917).<sup>42</sup> During his time in London, Browne also worked with Sir Arthur W. Blomfield and William E. Nesfield, an architect who delighted in the English seventeenth-century sources of the Queen Anne style.<sup>43</sup> When Browne returned to Scotland four years later, in 1879, he arrived with the ‘sweetness and light’ of his London training, which soon made an appearance in his designs. Designs such as his Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh (1892) [Plate 159] sparked a search for a Scottish variant of the Queen Anne Style. This participation between the modern architect and the country’s illustrious past sought by men such as Browne and Rowand Anderson was helped by the illustrated histories of Scotland’s architecture that became increasingly popular during the later nineteenth century.

Robert Billings’ *Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland* (1841) was one of the most influential and inspiring books studied by young architects of the period. Rowand Anderson was a particularly ardent admirer of Billings’ work and extolled his contribution to modern architecture:

The greatest value to the Architect of the work in these volumes is the accumulated experience of centuries of builders in meeting all the problems that from time to time arose, and it is only by following in their footsteps that the

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Deborah Mays, ‘A Profile of Sir George Washington Browne’, *Architectural History*, 3 (1992) p. 52

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Architect of to-day will produce buildings as thoroughly national in character, and representative of the social and political state of the time, as any building illustrated in this valuable work.<sup>44</sup>

A firm believer that modern architecture's success depended upon knowledge of the country's historic architecture, Rowand Anderson followed Billings' example and began to survey and draw historic buildings in Scotland. He made sure that the collection of drawings he amassed was always available in his office for his assistants to study. For those who were not in Rowand Anderson's employ, there were other sources that they could consult.

David MacGibbon (1831-1902) and Thomas Ross (1839-1930) shared Rowand Anderson's interest and passion for the vernacular architecture of Scotland; between 1887 and 1892 their five-volume inventory of the secular architecture of Scotland's Renaissance *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* was published. MacGibbon firmly believed that until the seventeenth century Scottish architecture had been 'peculiarly and markedly national' and modern architects should adopt this 'Golden Age' of Scottish architecture as a source for inspiration.<sup>45</sup> Many younger architects used publications such as Billings and MacGibbon and Ross as springboards for their designs: for example, Sydney Mitchell (1856-1930) and Wilson (1845-1912) in their seventeenth-century palatial Edinburgh Student Union (1887-1888) skilfully learned from the past [Plate 160].

The interest in Scotland's national architectural style also inspired regeneration and restoration of Scotland's revered past. Patrick Geddes was a leading figure in urban regeneration and initiated a programme of urban regeneration in Edinburgh to rejuvenate the Old Town after centuries of abandon. As part of his plan to regenerate the High Street Geddes commissioned Capper to help restore some of the existing houses there and to design new dwellings. Whilst he was endeavouring to help regenerate Scotland's lost heritage, Capper was elected Associate of the RIBA, a nomination which Burnet proposed, which reveals a continuing correspondence between the two architects.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Robert Rowand Anderson, 'An Appreciation', in Robert Billings, *Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1901 edition) pp. 1 – 3, p. 3

<sup>45</sup> MacGibbon quoted in Glendinning, MacInnes & MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture From the Renaissance to the Present Day*, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 335

<sup>46</sup> 'Stewart Henbest Capper' Associate of the RIBA Nomination Form, Number 87, signed by Burnet, William Leiper and Phené Spiers on 20 April 1891.

Capper's work in the Lawnmarket received plaudits from critics and demonstrates remarkable sensitivity for the original buildings he was working with. One of his first schemes was the formation of Wardrop Court (1892), which he achieved by joining two tiny sixteenth-century courts, Wardrop's and Paterson's. Rather than mar the façade with extraneous ornament, Capper respected the traditional architecture and allowed the form of the composition to speak for itself, ensuring that the design reflected the original timber-faced building [Plate 161]. In the same year he restored the former house of Bailie John MacMorran, who had been one of the richest merchants in Edinburgh during the late sixteenth century. The property had also been a venue for the wedding celebrations of Anne of Denmark, thus it had a historic value as well as architectural significance. Capper's executed scheme, which became Riddles Court (1892) was highly praised by the *Builder* for 'rescuing from squalor and preserving to the city old Bailie MacMorran's house, one of the most interesting and historical of the old Edinburgh dwellings' [Plate 162] <sup>47</sup>

Capper's most famed work for Geddes, however, was the design for University Halls [Ramsay Gardens] (1893) [Plate 163]. This scheme for seven apartments was conceived by Geddes to seduce University Dons back to the Old Town. It was an ambitious scheme which required all the skill in planning which Capper had been taught in Paris. The site was strikingly irregular, with a forty-foot drop to one side. To add to the complexity, the seven apartments planned ranged in size from six to twenty rooms, so once he had outlined the building's footprint Capper still had to incorporate seven different plans [Plate 164]. The third floor apartment was destined to be the home of Geddes, so he had direct input into the arrangement of his apartment, which helps to explain the connecting door between the main bedroom and the dining room which is quite an idiosyncratic feature.

Capper cleverly designed a footprint that could be easily divided into three distinct spaces. This helped incorporate different size apartments on one floor, and it also helped spatial and social planning in the larger apartments. Thus the ground floor apartment has distinct nursery and servants' area, as well as allocations for business and entertaining. The differing plans are also reflected on the

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<sup>47</sup> 'University Hall Extension', *Builder*, 65, (August 1893) p. 141

external composition: oriels only appear when the plan determines a need for more light; balconies provide the inhabitants of the higher apartments with some outside space. Capper was again determined that the internal composition should not be masked on the external walls.

By the end of this project, which was well received, Capper was firmly established within the architectural community of Edinburgh.<sup>48</sup> As well as collaborating with Geddes on the rejuvenation of the Old Town, he had embarked on a partnership with another *École* graduate, Frank Worthington Simon, who had come to Edinburgh as Professor of Architecture at the recently established School of Applied Art and Capper quickly joined Simon on the teaching staff.<sup>49</sup>

The School of Applied Art was the child of Rowand Anderson, who was a visionary educationalist as well as a talented architect. He had been a consistent champion for a new school of arts in Scotland for many years, detesting the existing system which was based on the South Kensington School. Rowand Anderson criticised this system for being ‘more for the benefit of the teacher than the student’, as the teachers’ salaries were based upon the number of prizes their students won.<sup>50</sup> In 1892 Rowand Anderson was given the opportunity of introducing a new educational system into Scotland with the formation of the School of Applied Arts. As Honorary Director of the school, Anderson was able to rid Edinburgh of the Kensington system, but more importantly to give formal expression to his architectural and educational ideas that to-date only his assistants had benefited from. He was determined from the very start that the school’s objective was to provide training across the range of applied arts, and was not just for architectural students. This democratic embrace of all applied arts together within one school was testament to the Arts and Crafts philosophy that permeated Edinburgh’s artistic circles at the time, and followed the trend of the English schools in London, Liverpool and Birmingham.

As well as providing equal footing for all the arts, Rowand Anderson was also committed to ensuring that the School and its products were distinctly Scottish in character. Using his own collection of

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> ‘Stewart Henbest Capper’, Associate of the RIBA Nomination Form (April 1891)

<sup>50</sup> Ian Gow, ‘Sir Rowand Anderson’s National Survey of Scotland’. In *Design and Practice – Architectural History*, p. 27 (1984) pp. 543 – 554 This article traces the history of the School of Applied Art through to the evolution of the Edinburgh College of Art.

measured drawings as inspiration, he wanted to build a great collection of drawings of Scotland's artistic heritage, giving students contact with their heritage and inspiring them to create buildings fit for their country. He agreed that his own drawings of Scotland's architecture could form the basis of a collection of drawings, on the condition that the school would establish bursaries for students to go out to study the artifacts of Scotland's past. This work was the start of the National Art Survey, which in turn became the foundation of the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historic Monuments (RCAHMS) collection. The first scheme that the scholars worked on was the survey of the Duke of Hamilton's collection of Scottish Stuart and Georgian furniture, reflecting Anderson's vow that the School and the Survey was to give equal importance to all the applied arts.

The actual curriculum taught to architectural students at the School of Applied Art is unclear, but it was a course shared by Heriot Watt College, which provided technical instruction, and Edinburgh University, where Professor Baldwin Brown provided lectures on architectural history. The part of the course taught at the School of Applied Art focused upon design and composition. Keen to ensure the highest standard of training, Anderson appointed Simon to the post of Professor of Architecture. The appointment of an *École des Beaux-Arts*-educated professor by Anderson seems contradictory in light of his other architectural values. The superiority of the *École* system in teaching design and composition was, however, increasingly acknowledged from the 1880s and the appointment of Simon suggests that Rowand Anderson had accepted the superiority of the *École's* training in design. The courses at Heriot Watt and Edinburgh University, as well as the National Art Survey, ensured that the *Beaux-Arts* system could not dominate the entire training received by architectural students. The students also worked in architectural offices, so would have been influenced by their employers' ideas too. The students attended classes at the school between eight and ten o'clock in the morning, before going to the offices where they were apprentices and assistants. The combination of practical work and study established in Edinburgh seems to have sensibly addressed some of the failings of the existing apprenticeship system and the National Art Survey ensured that the students nurtured enthusiasm for the built environment, thereby addressing one of the main failings of the *École* system. The innovation of Anderson's education initiative, with its fusion of practical and academic features, British and French influence, was astounding for the time.

Whilst Rowand Anderson was drawing up his plans for the School of Applied Art, William J. Anderson was writing the curriculum for the architecture course at the Glasgow School of Art. The emergence of two architectural courses in cities less than a hundred miles apart reveals the increasing importance of architectural education in the 1890s. The development of their curriculums, one grounded in Arts and Crafts philosophy and the other in classicism, demonstrates the different methodologies that could be adopted.<sup>51</sup> They also represent the start of a new career option for architects: education and teaching. Capper was one of the new generation of architects who encountered this alternative career route.

By 1895 Capper had joined the teaching staff at the School of Applied Art. He was also a member of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Edinburgh, appointed by Professor Baldwin Brown to lecture and examine for the department of archaeology and art history, as well as to lead a course in architecture.<sup>52</sup> There is little record of what Capper actually implemented and achieved at either the School of Applied Art and at the University, but it must certainly have impressed, because it was this experience that launched Capper on the next journey of his career: the Macdonald Chair of Architecture at McGill University, Montreal.

The call for a formal course of architectural training in Montreal had begun in 1890, following the establishment of the PQAA. The first president of the association, Hutchinson, used the occasion of his first speech to speak out on the need for architectural education:

It should be one of the early objects of the Association to establish some means of founding a college or providing other ways of giving young men a systematic training in architecture, and until that is done, our profession will never be what it should be. It is true that we have a College of Technology in Montreal, but I do not think it any part of the subjects taught there. It might be made part of the course and now that our McGill College here has, through the munificence of some of citizens of Montreal, been so largely endowed in the Science Department, and where there are so many subjects that would be common between architecture and engineering, I hope the time is not too far distant when we shall have a Chair of Architecture or lectures in architecture in connection with the Science and Art Departments.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Neither of the courses in Edinburgh and Glasgow was a degree course.

<sup>52</sup> 'Prof. S. H. Capper', *CAB*, 9, 11 (November 1896) p. 175

The main motivators for a formal system of architectural education were the unsatisfactory apprenticeship system, increased competition from American architects and the advance of new building technologies that required specialist knowledge. Following repeated petitions from the PQAA to establish a course in architecture, McGill University finally endorsed the idea when William Macdonald agreed to provide the necessary funds of \$50,000. Thus a Department of Architecture was established at McGill University as part of the School of Engineering. This was the first university architecture department in Canada and therefore very significant, especially as it prompted the important question of who would be Chair of the new department.

William Peterson, the Principal of McGill University, appealed almost immediately to Baldwin Brown, a close friend, for help in appointing this new member of his staff; the use of friendships when appointing new members of staff was a common practice for Peterson, and probably for many other university principals.<sup>54</sup> Upon receiving Peterson's request for help, Baldwin Brown seems to have little hesitation in recommending Capper for the Chair. Having known Capper from the latter's undergraduate days, Baldwin Brown was very familiar with Capper's architectural work in Edinburgh and impressed by his talents, he had employed him as a lecturer and examiner. He probably also respected the *École des Beaux-Arts* training, for it provided a rigorous, intellectual training similar to a university education. The letter of recommendation from Brown has not survived to explain exactly why Brown recommended Capper, but clearly the younger man had impressed the elder.

None of the testimonials received by McGill University for Capper have survived, however an article in *CAB* introduced the new Professor of Architecture to its readers and revealed that the editor had seen them and could happily report that 'they bear the signatures of men of the highest educational

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<sup>53</sup> 'Proceedings of the PQAA', *CAB*, 3, 10 (October 1890) p. 115

<sup>54</sup> McGill University Archives, Office of the Principal, RG2 / C32 / 221D Principal Peterson Letter books, Letter book April 1902 – April 1903, p. 275, letter dated January 15th, 1903. Peterson's appeal to colleagues 'back home' seems to have been a relatively common practice. If he received news of appointments at British universities he would invariably contact the university and ask for any recommendations from the 'unlucky' candidates. On one occasion, upon learning of the resignation of a lecturer from the University of St Andrews, he wrote to his 'dear Ritchie' [Professor D G Ritchie], 'I note that you are calling for applications, and I should be very much obliged indeed if you would keep me posted as to what is going on. If you take the best candidate, I should be ready to select the second best; or if by mistake – as sometimes happens in the best regulated Universities – you take the second best, I am lying in wait ready to snap up the best.'

attainments in the universities and professional societies of Great Britain, France and Spain, and leave little room to doubt the qualifications of the gentleman who has been chosen to instruct the rising generation of Canadian architects.<sup>55</sup> Noting the countries listed, Capper's referees must have included Jean Louis Pascal and Sir Robert Morrier. The British references would surely have included Professor Baldwin Brown, whether fourth or fifth referees were required is unclear but they would surely have been selected from Burnet, Browne, Geddes and Phené Spiers. Regardless of who supported his candidacy, as a highly educated man, a practising architect and a university lecturer Capper was a very well qualified candidate for the post. Capper's own reasons for applying for the post and accepting it, are a little enigmatic. Paterson, in his obituary of his close friend, suggests two:

Partly for health reasons, partly from his interest in education and young men and boys of all ranks and classes (a special characteristic throughout his life), he took up the appointment of Professor of Architect at McGill University, as then offered to him.<sup>56</sup>

Thus in 1896, Capper boarded a ship bound for Montreal, disembarking on the other side of the Atlantic as Professor Stewart Henbest Capper.

When Capper departed Scotland for Montreal only one full-time course for architectural students in Britain existed, which was at Liverpool University under the directorship of F. W. Simpson, who had been appointed in 1895, only a year before Capper's own appointment to the Macdonald Chair of Architecture. The Liverpool course, however, was not a degree course, unlike the one to be established at McGill University. The models available to Capper were, therefore, extremely limited. He had his own university experience to call upon, but his training at the *École des Beaux-Arts* was the only systematic architectural course of which he had thorough knowledge. He may have read about the courses established at some of the American universities, such as Cornell and Pennsylvania, which adapted many features of the *École des Beaux-Arts*. Other than these examples, he could draw upon Rowand Anderson's School of Applied Art and William Anderson's architectural course at the Glasgow School of Art, but neither of these were a suitable model for a four-year degree.

Rather than being daunted by his task to establish the first degree course in architecture in Canada,

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<sup>55</sup> 'Professor S H Capper', *CAB*, 9, 11 (November 1896) p. 175

Capper was very proud of the honour that had been bestowed upon him and also on McGill University. Upon his arrival in Montreal he made clear the significance of the event, announcing that 'to the list of those that embrace Architecture in their curricula, McGill University must now be added'<sup>57</sup>. As it was a list that included only three English universities and four American universities, the importance of McGill's inclusion was obvious.<sup>58</sup>

As a newly appointed Professor, and probably because he was the first Professor of Architecture, Capper was invited to give the annual opening University lecture to McGill students at the start of the 1896 session. He chose as his subject, predictably, 'Architecture in the University'.<sup>59</sup>

In his maiden lecture, Capper focused on architecture's right to be included within the university system. He was at pains to contrast the university to the technical school. Both Toronto and Montreal had Technical Colleges, so it was important for Capper to demonstrate that a university would offer something different to the aspiring architect. He summarised that the objective of the technical schools was 'to fit the student for conducting on approved lines and with success the business of life – whether commercial, or manufacturing, or professional.'<sup>60</sup> In contrast to this seemingly prosaic goal was the enlightenment of a university education:

The university aims at a higher standard of equipment and of life. Its ideal is more than a livelihood made, however successful. Its ideal is the man, quickened and developed in all the resources of his intellectual and moral being, with the avenues of knowledge opened out to him and harmoniously correlated, even though it is possible for the individual to take but one or other of these avenues for his own special walk in life.<sup>61</sup>

The intellectual rhetoric of his speech was welcomed by his university audience, even met with cheers at some points, especially when he addressed the common criticism that universities were 'unpractical', failing to 'fit a man for the practical business of life':

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<sup>56</sup> Paterson, 'Obituary', *JRIBA*, p. 201

<sup>57</sup> Stewart H. Capper, 'Architecture in the University', *CAB*, 9, 11 (November 1896) p. 179

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. The universities that Capper mentioned were: King's College, London; University College, London; Victoria University, Liverpool; Cornell University, California; Harvard University, Boston; Pennsylvania University and Columbia College, New York.

<sup>59</sup> Capper's complete speech was published in *CAB*, 'Architecture in the University', *CAB*, 9, 11 (November 1896) p. 179 - 182

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. p. 179

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

It seems to me, on the contrary, that the university of to-day, properly equipped and working with modern methods on many lines, enriched by the inclusion in its curricula of all those subjects which modern life embraces and demands, is the only practical training ground for life in its fullest and noblest sense...to be educated is not to be unpractical.<sup>62</sup>

These were clearly the sentiments of a man who had enjoyed the fruits of a university education, which was a privilege for only a minority rather than the majority. This is a factor that Capper never seemed to fully appreciate; not only had he been a student at the University of Edinburgh but he had also spent three years at L'École des Beaux-Arts. In his first Canadian audience he faced men of similar privilege and background, who could not help but support his defence of the university system. Having defended the relevance of a university education, he went on to justify architecture's place within the university curriculum. First of all he attacked the 'monstrous fallacy' that 'the function of architecture is to ornament'.<sup>63</sup> This attitude, Capper believed, relegated architecture and art to 'an effete tradition' in comparison to 'living subjects as Mechanical and Civil and Electrical and Mining Engineering'.<sup>64</sup> He proceeded to dispel this notion in the hope of elevating architecture above mere decoration:

Our modern distinction between fine arts (by which we mean mostly painting and sculpture) industrial arts and mechanical arts and applied arts is a wholly fictitious one, unsubstantial and based on nothing at all in nature or in life around us...Art in architecture, as in everything else, consists in that fitness and adaptation to a purpose, that appropriateness in function, in form and expression which, I most sincerely believe, are not only inseparable from, but are the essence of, our appreciation of the beautiful.<sup>65</sup>

To demonstrate his point about beauty, art and appropriateness Capper used the example of a modern racing yacht:

Take a modern racing yacht and compare it with a craft of olden days – the latter is picturesque enough in hull, with poop and forecastle, in its bellying sails falling naturally into curves that please the eye. But is the modern yacht one whit less beautiful? To me it is infinitely more lovely, yet every line of hull is calculated for a purpose – speed – and every sail is stretched to suit mechanical laws. The beauty – and I know of no more graceful outcome of modern scientific design – is due to fitness and absolute appropriateness; it is most truly art. Take many a modern engine – the same holds good. Can anything more perfectly express and emphasize its function and its purpose than a modern, well-equipped machine?<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p. 179

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. p. 180

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

The democratisation of art and industry, and the beauty that arrives from form following function described by Capper reveals the influence of Rowand Anderson on him; during his lecture he actually referred to Rowand Anderson as ‘the most eminent of living Scottish architects’.<sup>67</sup> His paragraph on the modern yacht was very similar to Rowand Anderson’s Presidential Address at the 1890 meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Art and its Application to Industry:

The designing of machinery, whether for peace or war, has now reached such a high standard of excellence in function, form and expression that one is justified in saying that these things are entitled to rank as works of art as much as a painting, a piece of sculpture, or a building, and also that machinery is the only true constructive art that has been produced since the decline of mediaeval architecture.<sup>68</sup>

There was one critical difference however between Capper and Rowand Anderson; whereas Rowand Anderson focused on art, Capper also stressed the importance of science. He realised, along with Hutchinson, that architecture was ‘at once the most artistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the arts.’<sup>69</sup> This was remarkably close to a comment that Burnet had made in 1892, when he had observed that the modern architect was a ‘poet of modern necessity’, which meant being ‘versed in the science of building’.<sup>70</sup> One of the new requirements of the modern architect in the 1890s was an increasing knowledge of applied sciences due to the emerging new building technologies, such as steel frames. The advent of steel-framed buildings enabled architects to push the boundaries of their designs, building ever taller, but they had to be secure in their knowledge of the materials so that they would design safe buildings. Technical changes in architecture added momentum to the architectural education debate, as this knowledge had to be learned somewhere and it was highly technical information. The ever-insightful Hutchinson realised this in 1893 and told his fellow architects that ‘there is so much steel and iron entering our buildings that an architect requires a knowledge of the quality, strength and resisting power of these materials which thirty years ago would not have been thought of.’<sup>71</sup> In light of these developments in architecture and also his training in Paris, Capper

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Robert Rowand Anderson, ‘Presidential Address’, *National Association for the Advancement of Art and Its Application to Industry* (London: 1890) p. 153

<sup>69</sup> Capper, ‘Architecture in the University’ p. 179

<sup>70</sup> John James Burnet in *British Architect* (April 1892) p. 225 quoted in Glendinning, MacInnes & MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*, p. 318

<sup>71</sup> ‘Proceedings of the PQAA’, *CAB*, 6,10 (October 1893) p. 110

made a point of drawing together architecture and engineering in his lecture. He was well aware, however, of the prejudices that existed between architects and engineers. In a moment of humour, Capper revealed his wit with a wry congratulation to his engineering colleagues on gaining a department of Architecture:

I cannot but hope that ere long through them the salutary influence of Architecture may be felt, and may insensibly raise those engineering ideals, which, at present, with all their boasted scientific advance, have succeeded – can anyone deny it? - in afflicting the world with some of the most gigantic monuments of ugliness that as yet man has ever achieved.<sup>72</sup>

The ‘gigantic monuments of ugliness’ that Capper referred to may have been the new American tall buildings, but Capper subsequently proved to be an admirer rather than a critic of this new genre. He had immense admiration for skilful engineering and was unashamed to admit the relationship it shared with architecture, arguing that:

Only in the due co-operation of these two great branches of construction, only by loyally accepting each other and working in harmony together, can we, I believe, achieve in these later days the best results. And it is with no ordinary feelings of satisfaction and hope that I enter upon the work of teaching of Architecture in McGill University, where in the Faculty of Applied Science to a greater extent than in any other university with which I am acquainted, these two departments are knit together, working side by side, so as to acknowledge and appreciate and supplement each other.<sup>73</sup>

Whilst Capper’s lecture demonstrated respect for engineering and science, he was an artist by training and inclination and could not ignore architecture’s artistic side. At the end of his lecture he rhapsodised about the Faculty of Arts, praising it for its:

Broad, true education in the fullest sense, for its humanizing influence on all our after lives, for its catholic, vitalizing inspiration that does not pass away – affection for its serene disinterested ideals, which we fain would cling to through storm and stress of after years – in the Faculty of Arts there is scarcely a subject, I am thankful to claim, with which Architecture has not a close and abiding kinship.<sup>74</sup>

The subject which had the greatest kinship to architecture, according to Capper, was history because ‘Architecture is the great “object lesson” of history. Without its eloquence of storied stone, history would be shorn of its most poetic, its most impressive and oftentimes its only witness’.<sup>75</sup> These

<sup>72</sup> Capper, ‘Architecture in the University’ p. 179

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p. 180

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. p. 181

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

sentiments were clearly inspired by his earlier training as an archaeologist, there is also a hint of Edinburgh's influence, as there the vernacular heritage was revered by architects and had inspired the National Art Survey. A couple of years later Capper called for an illustrated volume of Old Colonial Architecture in Quebec, demonstrating once again the influence of Rowand Anderson.<sup>76</sup> There is no evidence, however, that he actively began a survey himself.<sup>77</sup>

In this lecture, his first as Professor of Architecture, Capper deftly wove together the two cores of a university – science and arts – via architecture, revealing its indebtedness to them, but also their relationship to it. It brought together the various threads of his own training in Paris and Edinburgh and on the whole was a good defence of architecture as an art, a science and a subject worthy of inclusion within the university curriculum and was very well received. His audience on this occasion, however, was lecturers and undergraduates who supported his defence of university education and his erudite definition of architecture. Others were not so sympathetic and during his seven years in Montreal, university training for architects remained a controversial issue for Capper and student numbers were low; the first intake was only three students.

At a meeting of the PQAA in 1899 Capper acknowledged his challenge and tried once more to defend his belief that architects needed a university education:

There are some, I know, who oppose such training as theoretical and academic, and therefore, worse than useless; there are others who say such training stifles genius; there are even others, I am afraid, who are in blissful ignorance that training is needful to a modern architect at all.<sup>78</sup>

Capper was aware that they were not prejudices fed merely by ignorance but genuine scepticism: these points of criticism were exactly those that were thrown at Phené Spiers by renowned architects such as Norman Shaw. When faced with these accusations Capper, like Phené Spiers, was at pains to stress that the objective of a university training was an 'important education on the scientific and aesthetic side, which cannot be acquired in offices or workshops; which can only be acquired by

<sup>76</sup> 'P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 2, 10 (October 1899) p. 192

<sup>77</sup> The old Macdonald School of Architecture burned down in 1905 and many records of Capper's work were lost, therefore, he may have started a survey, but it was not mentioned in any of Nobbs' reports on the department's resources, nor was it mentioned in *CAB*.

<sup>78</sup> 'Proceedings of Province of Quebec Association of Architects', *CAB*, 13, 9 (September 1900)

academic study.<sup>79</sup> Included in this academic study, Capper cited the principles of construction, advanced applied mechanics, mathematics, the theory of structures and the nature of materials. More important than any of these, however, was design:

In design ... architecture pre-eminently asserts its right to be called an art and to rank with the other arts that minister to the aesthetic needs of man. It is in design that an architect undoubtedly shows his own artistic individuality and power (or feebleness); in a sense all the other branches of his study and practice are but accessory to design; they are the means to an end which the design expresses and embodies in permanent, vital form.<sup>80</sup>

In his retiring address as President of the PQAA, Capper was less esoteric in his explanation of the importance of design, using the state of architecture in Canada to express his ideals.<sup>81</sup> He argued that as a 'new and young country' Canada should have 'a freshness and vigor of design sufficient to give character and value to architectural work.'<sup>82</sup> Instead, Capper described her as a country laden with 'poverty-stricken designs' and that the only way to avoid future 'frantic abortions on architecture',<sup>83</sup> was to ensure that design was 'from the first to the last the main and paramount subject for architectural training'<sup>84</sup>. As Canada's architecture was modelled on British and American fashions Capper's call for 'freshness and vigor' may be interpreted as a need for the young country to find architecture that suited her situation, rather than to mimic that of the old country.<sup>85</sup> He certainly believed that nothing would be achieved unless the design of Canadian architecture was tackled head-on, and the best way to do this was through formal education.

For design, I venture to claim that academic training is the surest road for most, at any rate to the achievement of success; that in no other way can the student readily obtain the grasp of the subject the breadth of view, necessary to attain to the best use of the power that may be his.

With design, then, the architecture student's preparation should begin, and with design it should continue to the end, not (of course) to the exclusion of other necessary studies, but in conjunction with them. Design, it seems to me, should form the basis, the backbone (so to speak), of his course of study from the

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p. 174

<sup>79</sup> Stewart H. Capper, 'University Education of Architects', *CAB*, 15, 1 (January 1902), pp. 9-12

<sup>80</sup> Stewart H. Capper, 'Architectural Training for Canadian Students', *CAB*, 14,1 (January 1901) p. 6

<sup>81</sup> Capper was President of the PQAA for the 1900-1901 Session

<sup>82</sup> Stewart H. Capper, speech at end of term in office as President of the PQAA, 'P.Q.A.A.', *CAB*, 13, 12 (1900), p. 174

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> Archibald had made a very similar point in his speech when he had referred to himself and his compatriots as 'Colonists', see page 235

earliest moment possible, and around it the rest of his subjects should, so far as possible, be grouped. And I base my plea for university training for architects precisely on the ground of the pre-eminent importance of training in design. And upon the special facilities a university course affords for carrying out such training, consistently in full measure.<sup>86</sup>

Capper's reiteration of the priority of training in design clearly expressed his training at the École, as did his insistence on an academic education. Bourdon in his post as Professor of Architecture at Glasgow School of Art found himself defending this methodology too:

It might be objected that the Beaux Arts education is too high in its aims, and that it keeps a young man too much out of practice; that the problems dealt with are too lofty, that there is no need to design 'palaces' in order, afterwards, to make alterations in cottages. And there is certainly something in this. But let us consider that this education is merely a training, and an academical one – something to form the mind, and not be applied directly. So in architecture let the student live a little in youth, a life of noble dreams; he will soon enough come down to earth, and spend his manhood there.<sup>87</sup>

Although Bourdon had similar ideas to Capper, as did Reilly, it must be remembered that they were both appointed to their Chairs in 1904, the year after Capper left Montreal. Capper was the first Professor of Architecture in Canada to introduce the Beaux-Arts system and there were no precedents for his work in either Canada or Britain. He worked hard to establish a course soundly rooted in Beaux-Arts philosophy. He organised the department along the lines of a Parisian atelier too and built up an impressive library and collection of casts.

The Greek casts that Capper bought included ninety feet of casts from the Parthenon frieze; three metopes from the same monument; bas-reliefs from Ancient Egypt, Ancient Assyria and Medieval Africa. There were also casts of the Venus of Milo, the Victory of Samothrace, the Madrid Museum Faun, the British Museum's Diadumenos, the Louvre Mars and the Discobonus from the Vatican Gallery which were displayed in the museum room.<sup>88</sup> A second studio housed more casts which were specifically used for architectural drawing and were organised into four categories: Greek, Roman, gothic and Renaissance.<sup>89</sup> The ratio of classical casts to gothic casts definitely demonstrates Capper's

<sup>86</sup> Capper, 'University Training in Architecture' p. 9

<sup>87</sup> Eugène Bourdon, 'The Training of the Architect on Beaux Arts Lines', *The Journal of the Society of Architects*, 6, 65 (March 1913) pp. 164 – 165 quoted in Stamp 'Eugène Bourdon', *Architectural Heritage*, p. 93 - 94

<sup>88</sup> 'Architecture Department' *Old McGill*, 3 (1900) p. 30

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

personal priorities and reveals his determination to teach his students, as he had been taught, through the classics. The manner in which Capper chose to organise and equip his department clearly reflected his experience in Paris. It was also similar to, albeit grander, than Burnet's re-arrangement of his father's studio when he returned from Paris. Capper did not, however, invest in drawings of buildings in spite of his knowledge of Anderson's National Art Survey. The lack of drawings, particularly of vernacular buildings, at McGill, was one of the few things that his successor, Nobbs, criticised about the department's resources upon his arrival in 1903.<sup>90</sup> Capper was acknowledged as a very poor draughtsman, however, which may explain the lack of drawings.<sup>91</sup>

The influence of the Beaux-Arts was also evident in Capper's curriculum. He introduced *en loge* exercises, defending the meticulous and lengthy process by insisting that by 'studying out an architectural design the young architect would develop his ideas so as to bring out of them the best result he can'.<sup>92</sup> The academic curriculum he introduced at McGill was similarly very loyal to his Parisian education:

The full curriculum embraces four years, of which the first is preliminary, devoted chiefly to Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Drawing, with the very useful addition of practical instruction in the workshops designed to impart some knowledge of the nature of the materials of construction, to familiarize the student with the more important tools, and to give him some manual skill in their use. Only in the second year is the more special work in the different departments of architecture and engineering began with us.<sup>93</sup>

This first year was a foundation year for both architecture and engineering students. Capper's view that architecture and engineering emerged from the same roots speaks volume about his respect for engineering and the kinship that existed between the two subjects; Nobbs disagreed totally and immediately stopped this collaborative year in 1903.<sup>94</sup> Capper's first year at the École was evidently

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<sup>90</sup> McGill University Archives, Office of the Principal, Peterson Papers, RG2 C22, 2221D (68) 2P/641/68, 29, Faculty of Architecture 1903 – 1913, Percy E. Nobbs, 'Report on Department of Architecture, McGill University, Montreal, October 1903'. In his report on the department of architecture, written in 1903, Nobbs complained that 'I find my work somewhat handicapped for want of diagrams and drawings, indeed it is upon my private portfolio that I am forced to rely. There is an urgent need of a collection being made'.

<sup>91</sup> Paterson, 'Obituary' 201 Capper was described by Paterson as 'never a brilliant draughtsman', see 'Obituary: The Late Major Stewart Henbest Capper' p. 201

<sup>92</sup> Capper, 'University Training in Architecture', p. 9

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. p. 10

<sup>94</sup> McGill University Archives, Office of the Principal, Percy E. Nobbs, 'Report on Department of Architecture, McGill University, Montreal, October 1903'

the model for the programme he introduced at McGill University. He had to pass papers in architectural composition; drawing of a head; modelling of a piece of ornament; mathematics; descriptive geometry and history before proceeding into the second year.<sup>95</sup> Burnet believed that those subjects studied in the first year were some of the most crucial for his later development: ‘the most important part of the course at L’ École des Beaux-Arts, seemed to me then, and still seems to me, to have been the lectures attended on History, Higher Mathematics, Stereotomy and Construction.’<sup>96</sup> These were also subjects that Bourdon was keen to introduce to the Glasgow School of Art.<sup>97</sup>

The following three years of Capper’s curriculum introduced more time for architectural history, but he was keen to impress that the purpose of architectural history was to inspire students to design for their own times, rather than to repeat episodes from history:

The student is thus placed in touch, so far as may be, with the broad lines of the subject, and the present is linked with the past in continuous development. This, it seems to me, should have an important influence on the student’s attention; for, fashionable though the archaeological side of architecture may be, it is not as archaeology but as architecture that the modern student should regard it.<sup>98</sup>

Capper’s emphasis on the difference between architectural history and archaeology made by Capper was significant to his way of thinking. He wanted students to regard their objective as adding to the continuum of history. The inspiration to go and design for the present day and all that it entailed was the goal of Capper’s history teaching and he believed that ‘only by knowing the best that has been done can we do the best that can be done today’.<sup>99</sup> It was a sentiment shared by Burnet:

I early discovered that an architect must not think of his buildings as an archaeological monument. If he has cultured his mind, and rendered his eye critical of proportion, form and colour, by careful study of past work in all countries, before entering the field of service, the passion and enthusiasm to ‘dare’ is aroused, not by memories of what he studied, but by his study and appreciation of the purpose of the building he is called upon to design.<sup>100</sup>

The best and only way to cultivate an architect’s mind and render his eye critical of ‘proportion, form

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<sup>95</sup> Hooper, ‘Some Notes on Architecture Education and Practice in France’ p. 66

<sup>96</sup> ‘Allied Societies, Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, Dinner to Sir John James Burnet, A.R.A., R.S.A., LL.D., Royal Gold Medallist’, *JRIBA*, 31, 8 (February 1924) p. 259

<sup>97</sup> Stamp, ‘An architect of the *Entente Cordiale*’, p. 91-95

<sup>98</sup> Capper, ‘University Training in Architecture’, p. 10

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> ‘Allied Societies, Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, Dinner to Sir John James Burnet’, *JRIBA*, 31, 8 (February 1924), p. 259

and colour', according to the École methodology, was through the Classics. In his lectures on design Capper always stressed the vitality of the Classical Orders as 'the best primer...the most reasonable and effective introduction to architectural form'.<sup>101</sup>

The classical education of the Beaux-Arts must have appealed to Capper as it was the bridge between his younger enthusiasm as a classicist and his desire to be an architect. The Beaux-Arts principle of teaching through the Classics was not to teach the style nor to entice students to designs replicas of ancient buildings. Its objective was to introduce students to proportion and form, as stressed by Burnet. The logic of the classical tradition should enable architects to design according to proportion and fitness of function. This notion of 'nothing without reason' was central to Capper's ideas as both architect and teacher; he favoured any architecture that was fit for its purpose, such as the new American skyscraper.

His admiration for these buildings was uncommon; many in Canada held prejudices against them. The Toronto architect Curry was scathing in his appraisal of them commenting that 'the buildings were to all intents and purposes, in a sense, the works of engineers rather than architects.'<sup>102</sup> It was disparaging remarks like this that annoyed Capper:

We must, I hold, put aside definitely the criticism one so often hears: "These tall monstrosities are not architecture at all; they are only engineering, with a stone veneer." They are buildings of our modern streets; and if these be not architecture, where indeed is modern architecture to find her place. She is bound to find her own solutions for novel problems, however difficult, and to achieve a harmony between the requirements of today and the accepted canon of artistic sense. It is essentially in responding to the needs of modern complex life, in interpreting them and meeting, them, that the art itself is modern and living.<sup>103</sup>

With these words Capper revealed himself to be of the same mind as Burnet, who argued that 'an architect is here to serve his day and generation'.<sup>104</sup> A correlation can also be found with the Austrian architect Wagner, who argued in 1895 that 'the whole business of the views of architecture today must be displaced by the recognition that the only possible point of departure for our artistic creation

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<sup>101</sup> Capper, 'University Training in Architecture' p. 10

<sup>102</sup> S. G. Curry, 'Some Observations on Fireproof Buildings in New York', *CAB* 6, 3 (March 1893) p. 38

<sup>103</sup> Stewart H. Capper, 'The American Tall Building', *CAB*, 11, 1 (January 1898) p. 5

<sup>104</sup> Quoted in Gavin Stamp, 'Mackintosh, Burnet and Modernity', *Architectural Heritage*, 3 (1992)

is modern life.<sup>105</sup> This also reveals a common ideology to Archibald, whose rationalist designs cast off the traditions of historical styles. Capper did not produce any designs during his time in Montreal, so it is difficult to know how he would have designed for the modern day, but he did advise practising architects how they should approach contemporary architecture. Speaking on tall buildings Capper stressed that the composition of the buildings should form the basis of the design. The buildings' forms, he believed, required no enrichment due to their scale, and that any decorative elements that were added were essentially superfluous.<sup>106</sup> To illustrate his point Capper compared New York to the 'lands' of Edinburgh Old Town:

In the "lands" of the historic High Street of Edinburgh are a good many instances of distinct architectural value and impressiveness depending wholly on sheer repetition of ordinary window openings, storey above storey. It is noteworthy, moreover, that these comparatively "tall buildings" of Edinburgh, somewhat famous in their own way, are totally devoid of architectural ornament, though singularly effective in the fair city architecture of the "Modern Athens".<sup>107</sup>

This was one of the few occasions when Capper referred directly to Scotland, and specifically its historic architecture, but the point he made was inherently modern rather than historic. As with the yacht example, he was eulogising about the beauty of an object that perfectly demonstrates its purpose. Both the skyscraper and Edinburgh tenements were buildings that maximised space on small plots, so accordingly they should embrace that function within their composition by emphasising and rejoicing in their height rather than masking it. His ideas on the execution of tall buildings were very similar to Sullivan's ideas and further demonstrate Capper's *avant-garde* thoughts on modern architecture:

What is the chief characteristic of the tall office building? And at once we answer, it is lofty...it is tall. The force and power of altitude must be in it, the glory and pride of exultation must be in it. It must be every inch a proud and soaring thing, rising in sheer exultation that from top to bottom it is a unit, without a single dissenting line.<sup>108</sup>

Capper's praise for the skyscraper and its potential to be beautiful architecture was met with

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p. 9

<sup>105</sup> Otto Wagner, *Moderne Architektur* (1895 edition), quoted in W. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (London, 2000) p. 53

<sup>106</sup> Capper, 'The American Tall Building' p. 6

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Louis Sullivan, *The Tall Building Artistically Considered*, 1896 quoted in Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, p. 47

scepticism from his audience. Hutchinson described them as ‘no more nor less than gigantic and monstrous boxes’,<sup>109</sup> the very view that Capper had been trying to suppress. Hutchinson also dithered over what sort of treatment tall buildings should receive, criticising those architects who fell back to copying a column with its base, shaft and capital.<sup>110</sup> Capper never publicly praised architects by name, but it is likely, given his views on tall buildings, that he would have been a fan of Sullivan and of buildings like the Guaranty Building, New York (1894–1895), with its arched recesses accelerating skywards, a building which no doubt was Hutchinson’s definition of a gigantic, monstrous box [Plate 165]. Capper’s introduction to American architecture, in particularly the tall buildings, actually preceded his arrival in North America. Burnet was an admirer of the new elevator buildings and the commission for the new Athenaeum Theatre (1891) presented him with the opportunity to design his first tall building [Plate 81]. The verticality of the façade is inescapable and gives perfect expression to the building’s radical height in Glasgow’s city centre. This building might have fed Capper’s own ideas on modern tall buildings and their form, although the decorative element of the façade would not have found favour with Capper, as he preferred simple façades. Nevertheless, it provided an early example that tall buildings were an answer to the modern dilemma of reduced urban space and could add drama to the skyline. Whatever the source for Capper’s enthusiasm for tall buildings, it was certainly at odds with the view of other Canadian architects, including Taylor, who saw little promise in the new genre and was repulsed by their functionalist designs.

By the 1900s attitudes had begun to change towards American architecture. By 1910 the tall building had become a characteristic landmark in the commercial centres of Canadian cities; in fact the firm Hutchinson and Wood were the first Canadian practice to construct one of these ‘monstrous boxes’ in 1900 for the Canadian Express Company [Plate 166]. Capper’s admiration of and declared support for the tall buildings was certainly in vogue by the 1910s, although he had championed these buildings in the late 1890s. In Canada, Capper was something of a radical and it is a pity that his ideas were never translated into designs. It is easy to imagine that as a practising architect he would have become the champion of the tall building. If Capper had faithfully translated his ideas into steel and stone, his tall buildings may have been among some of the most progressive architecture in North America and

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<sup>109</sup> ‘The P.Q.A.A.’, *CAB*, 10, 10 (October 1897) p. 193

would certainly have been some of the earliest examples of tall buildings in Canada.

Capper, however, did not set up a practice in Montreal, embracing instead a role within Montreal's architectural circle as speaker, an examiner for the RIBA, contributor to *CAB* and President of the PQAA, though it was his interest and enthusiasm for the development of young architects that remained most dear to him. His enthusiasm for modern architecture and also the Beaux-Arts appealed to younger architects and won him their respect and admiration. At the close of the century he was chosen by a group of young architects to be the Honorary President of the Renaissance Club.<sup>111</sup> William Maxwell established this club in 1899, having recently returned from America where he had joined the Beaux-Arts Society and he wanted to stimulate a similar forum for young architects in Montreal. Other young architects who assisted William Maxwell were George Hyde, one of Capper's students, Charles Saxe, David MacFarlane and David Jerome Spence.<sup>112</sup> Their objective was the 'promotion and study of architecture and the sister arts'.<sup>113</sup> Their invitation to Capper to be their Honorary President demonstrates the respect they held him in. Whilst the Renaissance Club was the idea of Maxwell, it seems certain that Capper helped to shape it into a pseudo-atelier, where young architects could bring drawings for his critique, although there do not appear to have been set exercises characteristic of a true atelier.<sup>114</sup> Capper's support of the Beaux-Arts and his advice was particularly influential on Maxwell's career.

Maxwell had developed a great admiration for the Beaux-Arts whilst in America and this was fostered by Capper when he returned to Montreal. Other enthusiasts of the Beaux-Arts, such as Maxwell's brother Edward, were content to experience its teachings second-hand by visiting and working in the United States, but in 1899 William made the decision to go to Paris. It is possible that he may have

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> 'The Renaissance Club', *CAB*, 12, 3 (March 1900) p. 64

<sup>112</sup> As well as the Renaissance Club, Capper took on responsibility for delivering lectures to help young architects who wished to sit the RIBA examinations and organised evening classes for those who were not matriculated students at McGill University. Alongside his architectural interests, Capper was also an officer in the British Army. Following the Boer War he joined the Canadian Field Artillery and helped to train young soldiers. Later in Manchester he organised the university's O.T.C.

<sup>113</sup> 'The Renaissance Club', p. 64

<sup>114</sup> Capper's role in Montreal seems to have been quite similar to that of Phené Spiers. Like Capper, Phené Spiers did not have his own practice, so whilst he did all he could to encourage young architects and to implement a Beaux-Arts course he was limited in what he could achieve by

been content to remain in Montreal if he had not met Capper. Just as Burnet had persuaded Capper, who had the means, to grasp the opportunity to go to Paris, it is likely that Capper was the mentor encouraging William Maxwell to do the same thing. In 1899 Maxwell wrote to Capper, in his capacity as President of the PQAA, requesting a leave of absence from the association. In the same letter he asked Capper for help in finding a suitable position in Paris.

Dear Sir,

In the Fall I am going to Paris to spend a year or possibly more, studying and traveling; and I am writing you this letter to find out if you will grant me a leave of absence for the coming year.

Also would you be so kind as to give me a letter of introduction stating that I am a member of the P.Q.A.A. in good standing, this letter would be useful to me and very much appreciated. I expect to leave in September,

Yours truly

William Maxwell<sup>115</sup>

The letter of introduction written by Capper was probably addressed to Jean-Louis Pascal, for in October 1899 William Maxwell enrolled at the atelier Pascal. The influence Capper had on Maxwell's Paris trip could be incidental, yet William Maxwell became one of the most influential exponents of the Beaux-Arts in Canada in the twentieth-century and it is tempting to think that Capper may have been instrumental in fostering this passion and enthusiasm. Furthermore, it was William Maxwell who continued the legacy left by Capper, as Nobbs, the next Professor of Architecture at McGill University, was a vehement critic of the Beaux-Arts. He protested against the introduction of Beaux-Arts ideas in Canada because the school 'repudiates medievalism, both French and English, as having no contribution of tradition to offer to our modern architecture and particularly ignores the building achievement of England to a negligible quantity.'<sup>116</sup> Nobbs further developed his point to argue that if 'architecture and design are to be allowed to degenerate into third-hand imitations of Parisian academic models, they will not ring true'.<sup>117</sup> On one occasion he referred specifically to Glasgow as a model of the disadvantages of the Beaux-Arts:

I will challenge any man who has worked in an architect's office to look at some of the new buildings in Glasgow and not feel his nostrils assailed by the delicate aroma of tracing paper and seem to hear the rip of the pencil up the T square and

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circumstances outside of his control.

<sup>115</sup> Archives Nationale de Quebec, Archives des PQAA, P124; 1979-09-006/1; p124/1-1 à P124/1-4, File 1 1899, Letter to President of PQAA (Stewart H Capper), from William Maxwell, July 20th 1899

<sup>116</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, 'State Aid to Art Education in Canada', *Construction*, 1 (April 1907) p. 45

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

the rattle of the sets. The technique pervading these and many more designs of the Art Nouveau adherents is not the rational technique of stone or even steel. It is the technique of the draughtsman and his tools not of the builder.<sup>118</sup>

Nobbs makes it quite clear that the Beaux-Arts ideas would not be priorities in his curriculum. Maxwell opposed Nobbs' ideas and his 'aims to directly foster in the students an appreciation of the fact that our architecture should have its roots in the English school'.<sup>119</sup> Maxwell called for greater attention to be given in Canada to the *École des Beaux-Arts* with its emphasis on design, echoing Capper's argument of a decade earlier. To protect the Beaux-Arts in Montreal in light of the changes at McGill, Maxwell established an atelier in 1909, which was affiliated with the Society of Beaux-Arts in New York. It was a very successful system primarily because it helped those young men who needed it the most:

The greatest movement to assist draughtsmen who cannot afford to attend college is that instituted by the Society of Beaux-Arts of America. This society aims to help the man who is not in a position to go through college...Programmes are sent out from headquarters to the different patrons and then given to the men who are studying in their ateliers. The *équisse* principle is followed and the men study the problems during their spare time and receive criticism from their patrons. In some cases they work part of the day in an office and part in the atelier. The drawings are sent to New York and are exhibited and judged by a jury of architects, mentions and medals are awarded.<sup>120</sup>

Maxwell's paper revealed one of the weaknesses of the McGill degree, which was its failure to help aspiring architects who could not afford to go to university. This was not, however, Capper's fault. He had been employed to establish a degree programme, which he did. The Beaux-Arts curriculum that he set up was adopted in Canadian universities from 1906 onwards. The problem was not the degree programme, but the failure of the profession to adapt quickly to the changes by not providing the appropriate framework for the degree; throughout the 1890s it remained an alternative form of training for the young architects, but not a very appealing one.

In 1896, the cost of Higher Education was prohibitive for many young men, and the lack of scholarships closed down access to the degree even further. The need for a university training was also a much debated topic, as Capper discovered, and without the profession's wholehearted support

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<sup>118</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, 'The Delineation of Architecture', *CAB*, 17, 2 (February 1904) p. 38

<sup>119</sup> William Maxwell, 'Architectural Education', *CAB*, 22, 1 (January 1908) p. 25

prospective students must have been uncertain about embarking on an architecture degree programme. There were many architects who did support the Macdonald School of Architecture. Prior to the establishment of the School in 1896, they had consistently 'advised young men who wished to obtain a knowledge of architecture to go to the United States and obtain an education there.'<sup>121</sup> Having been advised for at least six years prior to the establishment of the Macdonald School of Architecture to go to the United States, young men in the later 1890s may have continued to favour established American courses over a newly-founded Canadian department; the American universities also had the advantage of having important alumni in Montreal, such as George Ross.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, the McGill degree did not guarantee registration with the PQAA; the PQAA insisted that anyone wishing to practice architecture in Quebec had to pass the Association's examinations regardless of qualifications held.

The obstructions to the degree's success were all noted by Nobbs when he arrived in Montreal to take over the Chair of Architecture following Capper's resignation and he made their elimination one of his priorities:

It is extremely desirable that the P.Q.A.A. be brought to recognize the McGill degree. To this end I have the honour to ask for a Sub-Committee of the Faculty, with powers to confer with a Sub-Committee of the P.Q.A.A.

Under present arrangements the McGill degree is taken as equal to three years of the four years pupilage and the P.Q.A.A. examination is still required to be undergone by a McGill graduate before admission to the close corporation. Until the Association has discussed this matter with us it is difficult to say what would be acceptable.

The objective we should have in view is not that a graduate should be recognised as a practicing architect immediately on leaving here, but that he should not be required to undergo what is at present a thoroughly elementary examination.<sup>123</sup>

Capper admitted his disappointment at the low number of students that had matriculated 'after toiling

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. p. 23

<sup>121</sup> Alexander C Hutchinson, 'Proceedings of PQAA', *CAB*, 3, 4 (March 1890) p. 76

<sup>122</sup> Francis Findlay, Robert Findlay's son, chose to study in Pennsylvania instead of at a Canadian university. The reasons for this decision are unknown, however considering his father's Glasgow Beaux-Arts training, Francis may have been encouraged to seek out a course that was based on the Beaux Arts theory – the department at Pennsylvania had been established by the French architect Paul Cret – rather than attending McGill which, from 1903, was rooted in Arts and Crafts ideology.

<sup>123</sup> McGill University Archives, Office of the Principal, Peterson Papers, RG 2, C22, 2221D (68), Faculty of Architecture 1903–1913, Acc No. 2P/641/68 Ref 29 Report to Principal Peterson from Professor Nobbs, October 1903

hard to organize as good a course of training as possible' in a letter to Nobbs.<sup>124</sup> He also describes William Macdonald's disillusion with the School of Architecture, as he had 'expected a large and immediate return for this endowment'.<sup>125</sup> Capper's immediate legacy in Canada consequently seems to have been rather limited, and he obviously left Montreal downhearted, which was unfortunate as within a few years he was proved right. By the year of his departure, architects in Canada had begun to realise slowly the importance of supporting formal education as well as the significance of the Beaux-Arts model:

[The United States of America] is full of architectural colleges, a course at the École des Beaux-Arts is an ordinary thing now for an aspiring young architect. It has come to be recognised in the United States that office practice alone is not enough; that it is necessary to study design theoretically, and to train the mind to powers of creative imagination, by exercising it in consecutive courses of study, designed expressly to develop these powers.<sup>126</sup>

This is precisely what Capper had argued for the past seven years and it formed the premise of his department at McGill University. As the first architect to introduce these ideas to Canada and to passionately defend his views in face of opposition Capper should be regarded as one of the leading educationalists in Canadian architecture. His legacy may have been more apparent if his successor had been someone other than Nobbs; upon receiving Capper's letter of resignation Principal Peterson wrote to Professors of Architecture at Columbia University, Cornell University, Harvard University, MIT and University of Pennsylvania for recommendations of men to take over the MacDonald Chair of Architecture.<sup>127</sup> These were all universities renowned for their Departments of Architecture which followed the Beaux-Arts principles. If one of their candidates had been appointed, the Beaux-Arts school that Capper had established in Montreal may have become one of the leading Beaux-Arts departments in Canada.

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<sup>124</sup> McGill University Archives, JBCAC, Percy E. Nobbs Collection, Box 6: McGill University Correspondence (1904 – 1960), B6-3 McGill University: Appointment of P E Nobbs and R Traquair, Letter from S H Capper to P E Nobbs, July 15th 1903

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> W. Langton, 'Proceedings of the OAA', *CAB*, 15, 1 (January 1902) p. 11

<sup>127</sup> McGill University, University Archives, Office of the Principal, Peterson Papers, RG2, C22, 2221D (68): Faculty of Architecture 1903–1913, letters 125, 130, 169, 172, 176 Letters to Professors Ware, Columbia University; Trawbridge, Cornell University; Chandler, MIT; Laird, University of

The similarity of Capper's course to Bourdon's curriculum at the Glasgow School of Art and Reilly's course at Liverpool University, which were highly praised, demonstrates its quality. Yet Capper's curriculum was written eight years prior to Bourdon's appointment; in fact Capper had left Canada the year before Bourdon's arrival in Glasgow and Reilly's appointment at Liverpool. Capper's innovation as an educationalist therefore deserves to be recognised. He may have had more immediate success if he had had the liberty to set up a course that provided time for practical training, such as Bourdon's six-year composite course. It is also unfortunate that he did not have the opportunity to establish his own atelier, which would undoubtedly have been an inspiring place for young architects; the Renaissance Club was the closest he came. The reason he did not have an atelier was because he did not set up his own practice in Montreal, although he had hoped to. In his letter to Nobbs, Capper makes it clear that this was one reason why he had decided to leave Montreal:

The opportunities for outside work are small, much smaller than you would expect ... with the architecture profession somewhat crowded in Canada, and with the strong undercurrent of professional jealousy between the French and English sections of this province, it would not have been possible, I saw, for me to engage in practice and retain – as was most important – the confidence of my colleagues in the profession here...[but] after a few years divorced from practice, one begins to feel out of touch with the practical side of one's profession and to feel one's teaching suffer from this lack.<sup>128</sup>

Capper loved his time in Montreal, even the infamous harsh winters, and seems to have been disappointed that he was leaving.<sup>129</sup> Although he was not very complimentary about the city's architecture in his correspondence with Nobbs, describing Montreal as a handsome woman who does not know how to dress.<sup>130</sup> Nine years later he did think of returning when he learned of Nobbs' resignation from the Chair of Architecture, however he never returned to live or work there.<sup>131</sup>

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Pennsylvania; Warren, Harvard University, dated May 1903.

<sup>128</sup> Letter from Capper to Nobbs, July 15<sup>th</sup> 1903. In 1911 Nobbs resigned the Chair for the same reason. He wanted to practice and had believed that he would be permitted to do so, but the University thwarted various schemes. Rather than leave Montreal, however, he negotiated a new position for himself and the Chair was advertised.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. Of Montreal's architecture Capper wrote: 'The city is disappointing, like a handsome woman who doesn't know how to dress; Montreal emphatically has not known "how to dress" architecturally'.

<sup>131</sup> McGill University, JBCAC, Percy E. Nobbs Collection, Box 6: McGill University Correspondence (1904 – 1960), B6-3: McGill University: Appointment of Percy E. Nobbs and Ramsay Traquair. In a letter to Nobbs, Traquair acknowledged his own interest in applying for the Chair of Architecture. He also wrote of Capper's intention to apply: 'Capper would like the Chair again and will apply if it is vacant. Of this I am certain from what he said when I saw him here. If it is a certainty for Capper (in the case of his applying) I will not apply.'

Although he never again taught at McGill University, Capper remained very attached to his old department and to architectural education as a whole; when he died in 1924 part of the residue of his estate was left as stipends for teachers at the Macdonald School of Architecture.<sup>132</sup>

Capper's contribution to and support for architectural education was a significant one to Canadian architecture. His appointment and his ideas fuelled the architectural education debate; he was an eloquent and erudite defender of a formal training. He helped to foster increasing enthusiasm for university education and the pedagogy of the *École des Beaux-Arts*. It is an irony that in the end the Macdonald School of Architecture was the only one in Canada not to follow a Beaux Arts curriculum in the early twentieth century; it is, however, a testament to Capper's ideas and belief in the Beaux-Arts system that other Schools of Architecture in Canada did follow his lead. In some ways Capper may be regarded as one of the 'fathers' of Canadian Architecture. By supporting the establishment of schools of architecture and the Beaux-Arts philosophy, he helped to break the traditional mother-child bond between Britain and Canada. For one of the first times Britain trailed behind one of her dominions. The establishment of architectural schools provided Canada with a young generation of architects who could bring the 'vigour and freshness' which Capper had mourned in the 1890s. By the early 1900s Canada seemed to be breaking away from Britain and seeking her own architectural identity. Capper was very much a part of this process and his contribution should be acknowledged.

Capper's work in Montreal also helped to establish a strong connection between Montreal and Glasgow. The Macdonald School of Architecture is often regarded as a link between Montreal and Edinburgh because the three professors - Capper, Nobbs and Traquair - all arrived from the Scottish city with recommendations from Baldwin Brown. This was certainly the case; furthermore Nobbs and Traquair brought with them the Arts and Crafts ideology. Capper, however, was instinctively drawn to the classical ideals of the Beaux-Arts. His love of classics had started at school; his faith in university education fed of his humanist training; the *École des Beaux-Arts* had further instilled in him the beauty of the classics and a classical education. In Edinburgh he was introduced to an alternative

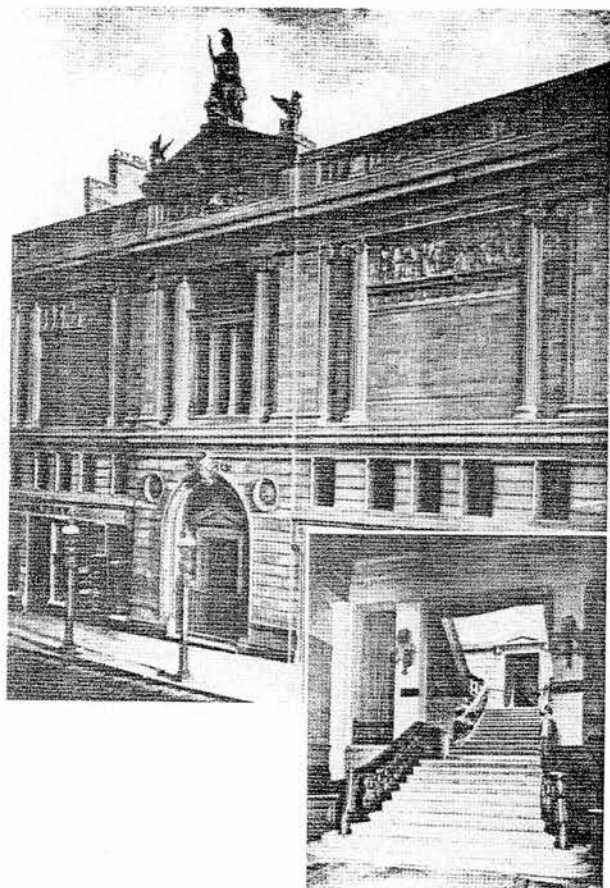
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<sup>132</sup> Norbert Schoenauer, *Stewart Henbest Capper: First Macdonald Professor of Architecture*

concept based on the vernacular and he became an admirer of Rowand Anderson's ideas on the beauty of applied arts and sciences, but he only adopted the modern concept of 'fit for purpose' and rejected the emphasis that the Edinburgh school placed on traditional and vernacular architecture. Capper's work in Canada and the ideas he expressed there were much more aligned to those of the Glasgow School; the two cities, Glasgow and Montreal, held a common admiration of and enthusiasm for the Beaux-Arts. In the 1900s, this connection between Glasgow and Montreal became even more apparent.



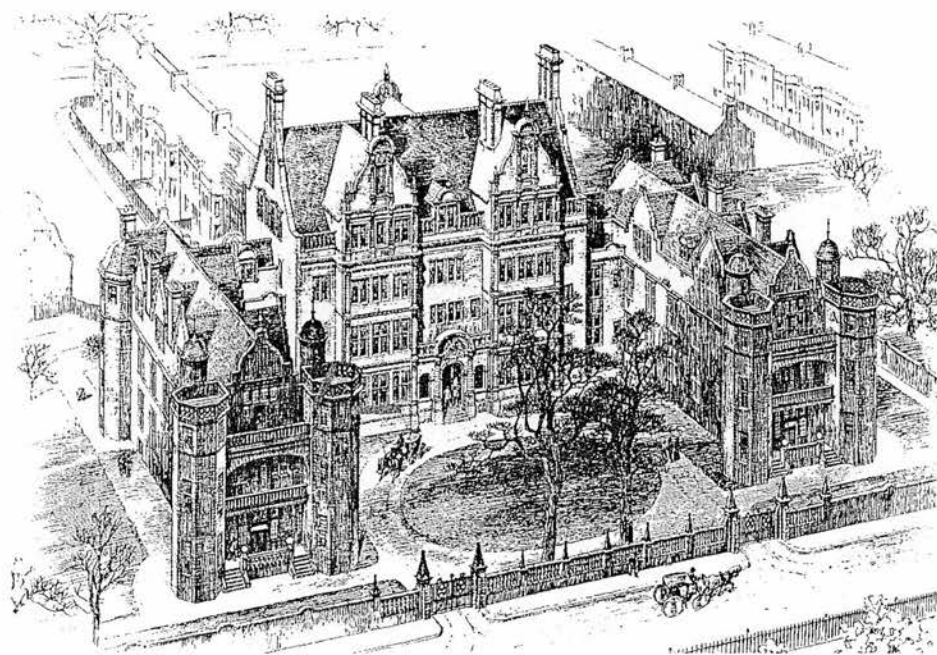
156. Stewart Henbest Capper (1859-1924)  
(McGill University, JBCAC)



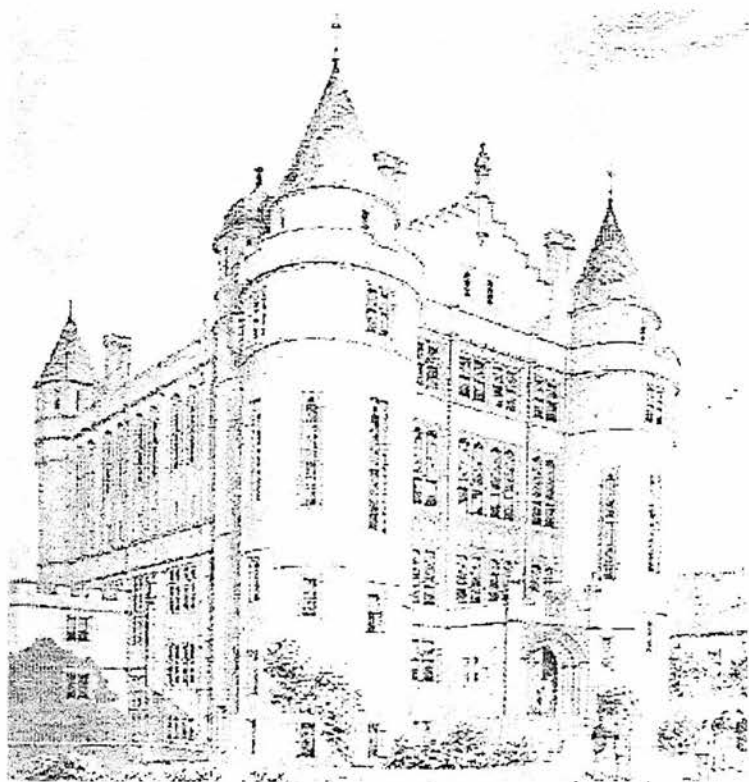
157. Burnet, Fine Art Institute, Glasgow (1878-9)  
 (Frew and Jones, *Scotland and Europe: Architecture & Design 1850-1940*)



158. Washington Browne, Carnegie Library, Edinburgh (1887)  
 (*Architectural Heritage 3*)



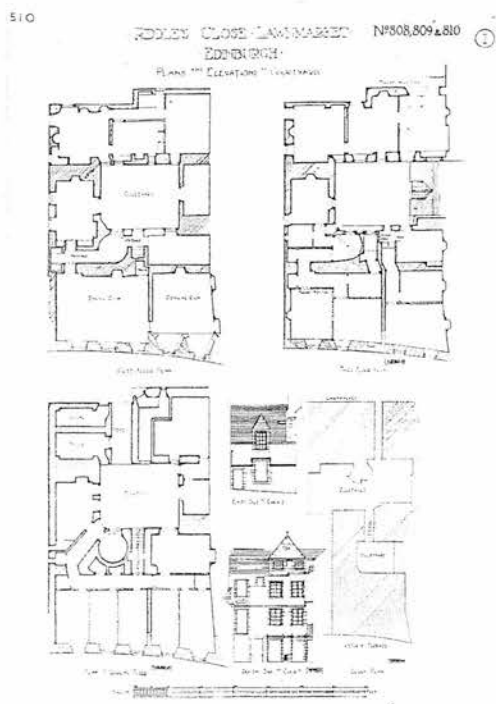
159. Washington Browne, Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh (1892)  
(*Academy Architecture* 1893)



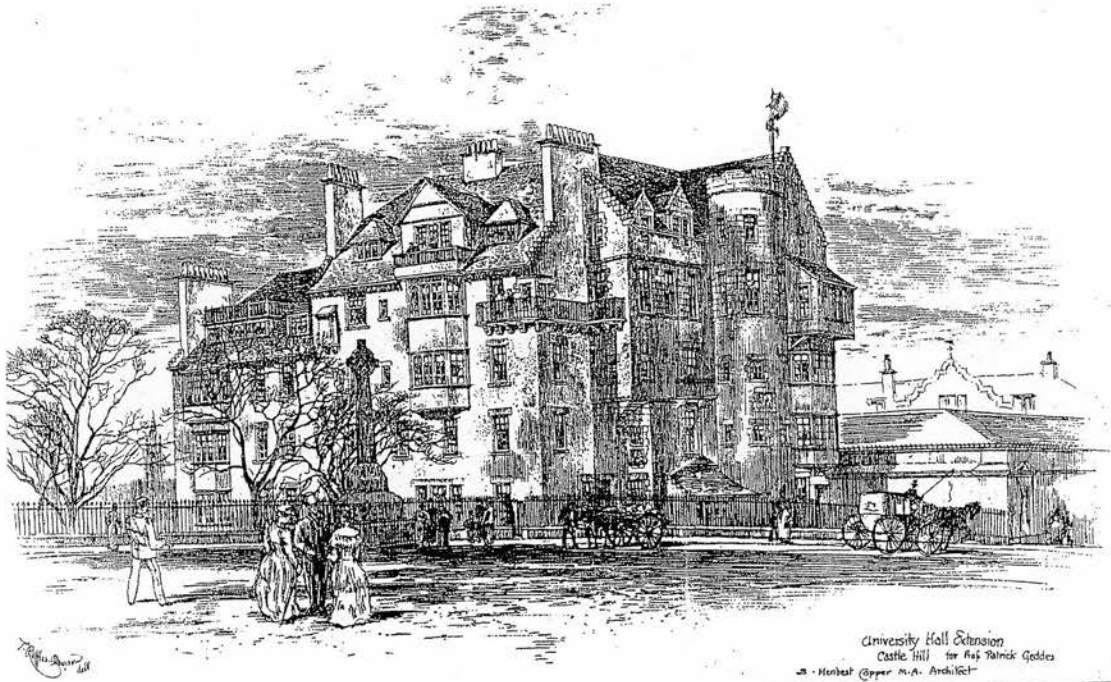
160. Sydney Mitchell & Wilson, Students' Union, University of Edinburgh (1887-88)  
(McKean, *Edinburgh: An Illustrated Guide*)



161. Capper, Wardrop Court, Edinburgh (1892)  
(RCAHMS)

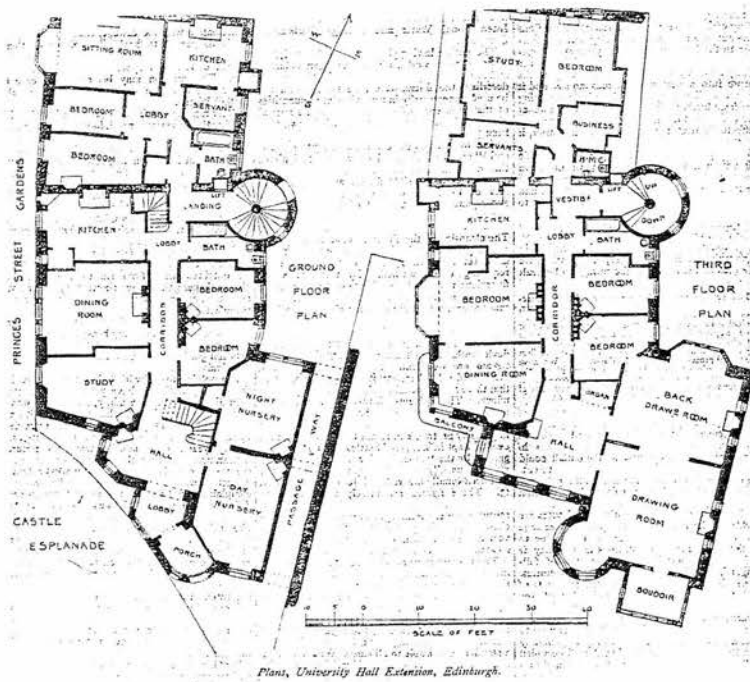


162. Capper, Riddles Court, Edinburgh (1892)  
(RCAHMS)



University Hall Extension  
Castle Hill for Mrs Patrick Geddes  
— H. H. Capper, M.A. Architect

163. Capper, University Hall (Ramsay Gardens), Edinburgh (1892)  
(Builder, 1892)

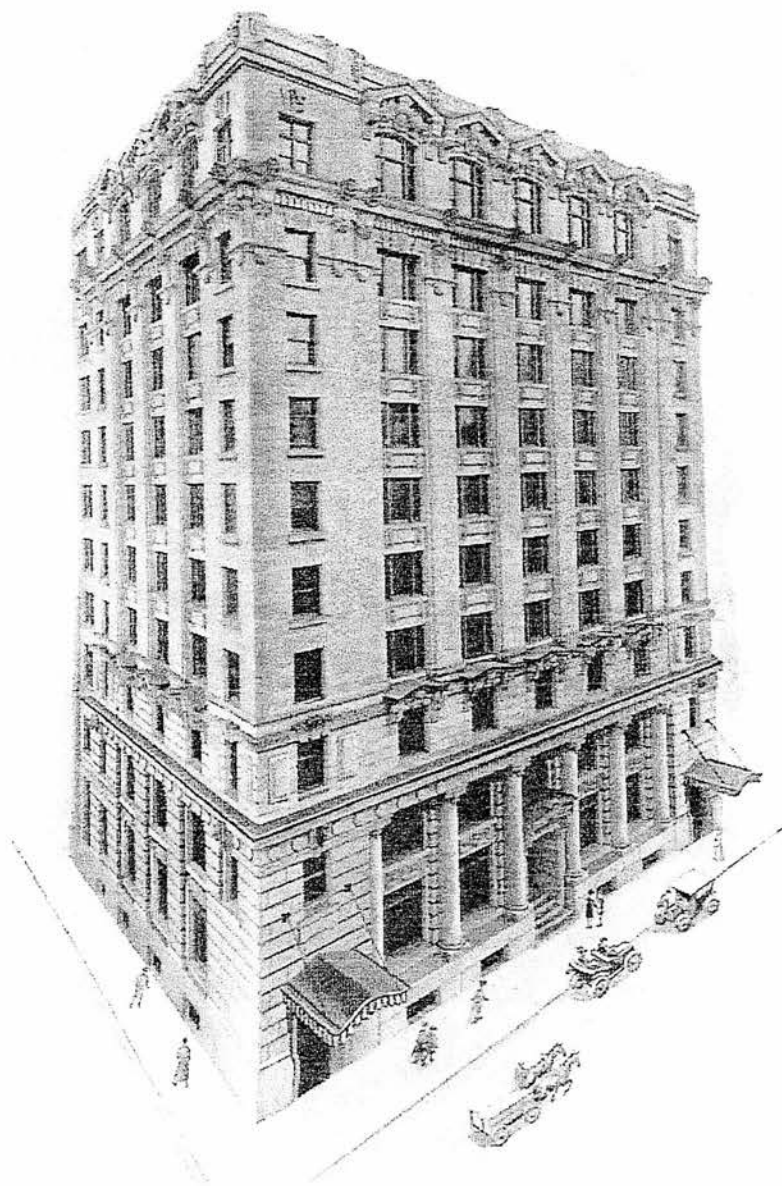


Plans, University Hall Extension, Edinburgh.

164. Capper, University Hall, Plans  
(Builder, 1892)



165. Sullivan and Adler, Guaranty Building, Buffalo (1894-5)  
(Curtis, *Modern Architecture*)



166. Hutchinson & Wood, Canadian Express Company Building, Montreal (1900)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)

## Conclusion

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**Things, men and art, being what they are, it happens that there are no more interesting fields for the study of transmitted architectural ideas than colonies – Greek, Spanish, Arab, French and our own.**

Percy E Nobbs, 'The English Tradition in Canada'  
*Architectural Review*, June 1924

The preceding chapters have examined the work of Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper focusing on the impact of Scotland on the development of their ideas, their response to the imperial context and the image of Canada they embodied in their designs. In this chapter, these five narratives are brought together to examine any similarities or differences that existed in the architects' careers. The picture that has been drawn is intricate and complex, with a number of influences interacting together. Stylistically the significance of Scotland seems limited, but that depends on the interpretation of Scottish architecture. None of the architects embraced baronial nostalgia and romanticism, although one came close, but that does not mean that they turned away from Scotland once they had landed in Canada. The imperial influence also ebbed and flowed in their works. Some of their work served to strengthen the bond between the imperial heart and the periphery, others seemed to sever the bond or reverse the flow of influence. The image of Canada presented in their works varied considerably as a result. The diversity of their works demonstrates the dynamism of imperial architecture, where many influences came together and manifested themselves in different ways in the designs of architects; the liberty of arriving in a young Dominion enabled these five architects to create their own design parameters without the boundaries of tradition and fashion that could constrain architects who remained at home. It is difficult to imagine that Archibald would have developed into the same architect if he had stayed in Inverness; even in Findlay's work, which may appear the most traditional, there is a fluidity of ideas from Britain and the United States that coalesce in his house designs. Their stories are not simple ones of replication and resemblance, as might be assumed, instead they emphasise the complexity and dynamism of the transfer of architectural ideas.

The experiences of the architects also help to explain why architects left Scotland, and suggest the wide range of reasons for the choice of Montreal. They demonstrate the different paths and fortunes of architects in the New World, and how architects continued to interact with 'home'. There emerges, for example, evidence of a Glasgow-Montreal Beaux-Arts bond that challenges the Edinburgh-Montreal Arts and Crafts connection. The five designers certainly challenge the existing perception of the Scottish influence on Canadian architecture, and draw the histories of Scotland and Canada's architecture even closer together.

The decision of the architects to emigrate to Montreal centred on the lack of opportunities for architects at home, not only in Scotland but also in England, as both Taylor and Rhind left from London. Taylor's decision was helped by his family connections in the city, as was his early career in Montreal. Capper was also in a good position as he left Edinburgh to take up a job in Montreal, therefore it was not the leap of faith that it must have been for the others. The circumstances of Findlay's decision to live in Montreal were outside his control, as he was supposed to be taking a job in Mexico. His subsequent success, however, may have one of the factors that persuaded Rhind and Archibald to move to Canada too. The opportunities on offer in Canada were frequently lauded in the British press, but the knowledge that a fellow architect from Inverness had made a successful start in Montreal must have been an important reason for their choice of destination.<sup>1</sup>

Once in Montreal the architects followed quite different paths. Capper's was already mapped out for him, to an extent, but he also embraced other opportunities to become more involved in the profession. He delivered lectures, contributed to *CAB*, became an active member of the PQAA and was elected President in 1900. Taylor and Archibald were equally very proactive in the profession, striving to improve the conditions for Canadian architects and both duly became the President of the PQAA too. Capper and Archibald had the most progressive ideas for the profession, which was mirrored in their attitude towards Montreal's architecture. Capper's view of Montreal's architecture

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<sup>1</sup> *The Builder*, 62 (April 1891) p. 273 The British press frequently published notices of the opportunities offered by the colonies and dominions, the architectural press was no different: 'It is important to note that this is the best month in the year for emigrants to go to Canada, where, besides the usual demand for female servants, there is now a demand for farm hands and for men in the building trades, which is likely to continue during the spring and summer.'

was not complimentary, mainly because he believed her architects did not know how to design for the city. To help remedy the situation he urged them to throw aside their historical styles and to embrace the modern instead. This is precisely what Archibald did with Saxe. Having worked with a Scottish and a Canadian architect who used historicist and associational architecture, Archibald rebelled and produced designs that matched the vigour and youth of the Dominion, rather than bound her to either Britain or America. Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities*, questions why nations insist on basing their identity on hoary traditions rather than on their present and future selves.<sup>2</sup> Archibald and Capper were two architects who rebuked tradition and broke the national and imperial boundaries that inspired their contemporaries.

Taylor and Findlay, in contrast, helped to perpetuate the British lineage of Canada by relying on the established traditions of the mother country. Taylor arrived in Montreal directly from London and immediately opened a Canadian branch of the London practice of Taylor and Gordon. He gave himself little opportunity to assimilate any architectural influences from Canadian architects; even later in his Canadian career he showed little interest in architectural styles that did not fit his Ruskinian tenets. Despite the British connotations in his work, Taylor was arguably the architect whose architecture displayed the most influence of his Scottish training, as he rarely faltered from the characteristics he had learned from Pilkington. Some of his work has even been described as having 'Ruskinian freakishness', which brings him quite close to being a rogue.<sup>3</sup> Rhind, however, was the only architect who ever voiced an opinion that the Scottish legacy of Montreal should be embodied in her architecture, which to him meant the baronial of the Highlands, and he was very pleased with Saxon Snell's design for the Royal Victoria Hospital. His own designs are too few to gauge if he would have translated his ideas into stone. Findlay in contrast was purely English in his designs and created a corner of Canada that would be 'forever England'.

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<sup>2</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1984)

<sup>3</sup> Percy E. Nobbs, 'Architecture in the Province of Quebec during the Early Years of the Twentieth Century', *JRAIC*, 33 (November 1956) pp. 418-419

More than any of the other architects Findlay's *oeuvre* displays replication and resemblance of the mother country, with England as his model rather than Scotland. Having moved from the 'margins of a metropolitan culture', he created houses for patrons who aspired to live in the image of the imperial metropolis.<sup>4</sup> The partnership between architect and client makes it hard to determine how representative Findlay's designs were of his own ideas and the extent to which he was guided by his patrons; he did, however, build a Queen Anne house for his bride, which implies that he too was seduced by the English tie rather than the Scottish legacy.

The architects' interaction with the city and Canada clearly contrasted considerably. Their different styles suggest that they would have diametrically opposed views on the profession too. It would be expected that the Ruskin advocate and the Queen Anne architect would support the view that architecture was an art rather than a profession. The progressive, modernist architects would be expected to argue the case for architecture as a profession. The five architects, however, all supported initiatives to drive the profession forward including statutory registration, formal university education and a better professional training. The implication of this is that Taylor and Findlay were influenced by the associational traits of their chosen architectural style rather than the ideas behind them. This was certainly the case for Findlay, who showed little interest in the notional theories underpinning the Queen Anne style. Taylor, however, appeared as interested in the theoretical tenets of Ruskin, as the stylistic, which indicates that his ideas on education and training were contradictory to this. His architecture and his plans for the profession, nevertheless, had the same result: to strengthen the bond between Canada and Britain.

Taylor's RIBA initiative helped to seal the bond between the mother country and her Dominion by drawing their architects closer together in one architectural association. It also gave increased prominence and status to Canadian architects putting them on a par with their British colleagues. Membership to the RIBA never became compulsory in Canada but the architects who joined and

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<sup>4</sup> Crossman, 'The Influence of Scotland on Architectural Education in Canada', p. 29 In this article Crossman argues that Scottish architects were well-suited to working in Canada, because both countries were marginalised due to their location north of metropolitan cultures. See 'Introduction', p. 5

became Fellows reveal the importance they invested in the RIBA and its recognition of Canadian architects.<sup>5</sup> It was perhaps no coincidence that the first architect from a British Dominion to be awarded the RIBA Gold Medal was a Canadian architect, Frank Darling. His acceptance cablegram reveals the importance of the imperial bond to Canadians at the time and the enduring relationship that Taylor helped to establish:

I am a Canadian born and bred, and an Imperialist from the bottom of my heart. I welcome everything that tends to bring more closely together the Mother Country and the great Dominions beyond the Seas, and can think of no better calculated to help bring about in its own way such a desirable result than this gracious action on the part of the Royal Institute of British Architects. That a body of such eminence should have singled out a Canadian as the first of the Overseas Dominions to receive the Gold Medal will, I know, be valued by the Architects of this country as a very great honour paid to a profession not hitherto overburdened with public recognition, though striving manfully to uphold, often against very adverse conditions, the standing and dignity of the profession.<sup>6</sup>

This signals quite clearly the feelings of some Canadians that they wanted to be part of the imperial metropolitan culture, revealing the significance of Taylor's suggestion to the RIBA that they needed greater presence in Canada. The establishment of the RIBA membership scheme in Canada supports Cannadine's supposition that the British were interested in establishing similarities between the various parts of the empire and underlines the importance of giving attention to the imperial context of the period.

Archibald's appeals to the profession to make changes to their practices were much more progressive and controversial in comparison. His business acumen and constant championing of the Canadian architectural profession helped to raise its profile and encouraged respect from the public. He was interested in giving Canadians the confidence as architects to take control of their destinies, as his court case against the Canadian government illustrates. His progressive outlook on architecture and professional practice arguably gives him a much better claim to the title of father of Canadian architecture than Nobbs, who seemed intent on concreting the relationship with Britain.

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<sup>5</sup> All of these men were appointed Fellows of the RIBA: Ross in 1902; Darling in 1915; Maxwell in 1928; MacDonald in 1930; Lyle in 1938. Andrew Taylor also became a Fellow during his time in Canada, he was appointed Fellow in 1889.

<sup>6</sup> Cablegram from Frank Darling, 'The Royal Gold Medal: Presentation to Mr. Frank Darling [F] of Toronto, at the General Meeting, Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June 1915', *JRIBA*, (July 1915) pp. 405 - 415

There was certainly not a shared ideal between the five architects on the identity of Canada and her relationship with either Scotland or the broader empire. Archibald and Capper preferred the youthful, fresh, modern image of the Dominion moving away from the influence of the mother country. Taylor and Findlay in contrast favoured the imperial image. In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that nations are constructed ideas created through the legitimacy of government, invented traditions and shared perceptions.<sup>7</sup> Whilst this may be true, it should be acknowledged that individuals have their own narratives that will collide with the shared perceptions on occasion.

Before this thesis was started, the awareness of Scottish architects in Canada was extremely limited. It was restricted to the three Professors of Architecture at McGill University, with the result that it could only be assumed that the Scottish influence on Canadian architecture was restricted to university education and Arts and Crafts theory, which in turn provided a connection to Edinburgh. This is certainly one aspect of the shared architectural histories of the two countries, but it is now evident that this is not a representative argument. Before the arrival of Nobbs in 1903 there were Scottish architects making important contributions to Canadian architecture. Most significantly, perhaps, a flow of architects commenced between Glasgow and Montreal.

Findlay and Capper are two architects who are most clearly connected with this movement, as both were assistants in the office of Burnet during the early 1880s. The significance of the Glasgow link is only really apparent from 1900 onwards when a small number of younger architects moved from the city to Montreal, many of whom had worked with Burnet, or with one of his former assistants, or were graduates of the Glasgow School of Art. The names of some younger Scottish architects have already appeared earlier in the thesis: Sharp, McLaren, Martin and Brown. Very little is known of the activities of Martin and Brown, but Sharp and McLaren became active members of the younger architectural community joining the PQAA and the Sketching Club. Their sketches and drawings drew commendations from the older architects, usually William Maxwell, Archibald and Nobbs. Other young Glasgow architects who ventured to Montreal were Alexander Wright and John Roxburgh

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<sup>7</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991)

Smith, who had graduated from the Glasgow School of Art together.<sup>8</sup> Both found work with the Maxwells and immediately began to receive praise from Canadian architects for the quality of the work and their participation in the profession.

The leading Montreal firms, of which the Maxwell practice was a principal one, only took on men with references from known architects and a good quality education.<sup>9</sup> This implies that they must have heard of the some of Glasgow's architects; the success of Findlay and Capper's prominent position in the community undoubtedly helped to secure confidence in the quality of Glasgow's architects. The growing reputation of the Glasgow School of Art was an important consideration too. Nobbs, for example, was very impressed with Wright's calibre and asked Peterson if he could be appointed to the staff of the Macdonald School of Architecture:

I have been fortunate in finding a man who might accept a demonstratorship. Mr. Wright was a demonstrator with the late Mr. W. J. Anderson of Glasgow, the finest architectural scholar of our time. He has been some years with Messrs. Maxwell of this city. Mr. Wright would not be bettering himself at all by accepting a demonstratorship. He is desirous of an opportunity to work for the RIBA finals to be held at Toronto in the future and of doing some independent designing by way of study. He has been secretary of the Architectural Sketch Club here since its inception, and the success of this organisation is largely due to the work of Mr. Burgess and himself. He is a first class draughtsman.<sup>10</sup>

Anderson had taught at the Glasgow of School and published on classical architecture. His books would have featured in the libraries of the PQAA and the Macdonald School of Architecture, as well as the libraries of the larger practices too; Findlay certainly had a copy. Wright's experience of working with Anderson put him in a very favourable position when applying for work in Montreal.

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<sup>8</sup> RIBA Records, Alexander Wright, Application for Licentiate of RIBA, 20 July 1911, L. v21 no. 1689; 'J. Roxburgh Smith, President PQAA', *JRAIC*, 19, 1 (January 1942) p. 10; Glasgow School of Art Archives, Alphabetical Register 1892 – 1903: 1894/5, 1895/6, 1896/7, 1897/1898, 1899/1900, 1900/1901

<sup>9</sup> In a discussion with David Walker, the Glasgow architect Alfred G. Lochhead explained that when young architects were applying for jobs in Canada it was a great advantage to have worked in a practice that Canadian architects had heard of, and a good reference from a well-known architect was also very helpful. This may help to explain why so many architects with connections with Burnet applied to Montreal, as from 1885 his name became associated with good quality training and practice through the work of Findlay.

<sup>10</sup> McGill University Archives. RG2, Office of the Principal and Vice Chancellor. Office of the Principal, William Peterson, 1895 – 1919, RG22, 2221D (68), Faculty of Architecture 1903 – 1913. Accession No. 2P/641/648 Ref. 27, Letter from P. E. Nobbs, May 28<sup>th</sup> 1906

The Glasgow School of Art was increasingly recognised as a high quality school in Canada from 1904, when Professor Bourdon's Beaux-Arts curriculum was introduced. In 1908 William Maxwell, the doyen of Montreal's Beaux-Arts enthusiasts delivered a rare lecture in which he made reference to the good work occurring in Glasgow:

In Glasgow, that home of the "Modern in Art", they have secured the services of a French architect to conduct a course in architectural design in the School of Art. The effect of the system on the ambitious and modern Scotchman will be interesting to follow. In all probability the infusion of reasonable discipline which the Ecole System will supply will result in individual work, which can bear the tests of criticism.<sup>11</sup>

His knowledge of the Glasgow School of Art was probably gleaned from his assistants, and his enthusiasm was undoubtedly based upon his admiration for the Beaux-Arts; in the following year Maxwell established an atelier in Montreal with the help of his assistant Smith. The dialogue that existed between employers and assistants was surely very important in spreading information about architecture in Scotland and Canada.

From 1903 onwards, the young architects arriving from Glasgow, who had graduated from the Glasgow School of Art, almost all joined Canadian Beaux-Arts offices. This illustrates the mutual admiration that Glasgow and Montreal architects had for one another. Montreal offered the young architects great opportunities to study the Beaux-Arts, particularly built examples. One of Wright's happiest memories of this period of his career was visiting the construction site of the Head Office of the Bank of Montreal site.<sup>12</sup> The work of such eminent architects in the city must have been a major reason why architects chose to go to Montreal, and why they may have been advised to go to Montreal by older architects with knowledge of the city.

In 1909 James Steel Maitland approached Burnet to ask for a position in his office, but there were no vacancies. Later that year, Maitland joined the office of Brown and Vallance; the coincidence of his move from Glasgow to Montreal following a conversation with Burnet is intriguing and suggests that

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<sup>11</sup> William Maxwell, 'Architectural Education', *CAB*, 22, 1 (January 1908) 25

<sup>12</sup> Wright frequently recalled the Montreal part of his career with pleasure and enthusiasm in conversation with Professor Walker, and his trip to the Bank of Montreal site remained his favourite memory.

once again Burnet played a role in advising young men to go to Montreal. At Brown and Vallance, Maitland was given responsibility for the Southam Building, a Beaux-Arts design that utilised the characteristic neo-Gothic of Brown and Vallance [Plate 167]. To receive this job so early in his appointment reveals the quality of his work but also the confidence his employers had in his Glasgow background.<sup>13</sup>

Alfred Lochhead was the last graduate of the School of Art, as well as the last assistant of Burnet, to arrive in Montreal before the outbreak of the First World War. He joined the office of Ross and MacDonald, an unsurprising appointment considering the Beaux-Arts credentials of the practice and the fact that one of the partners, MacDonald, was Findlay's nephew. The Burnet and Findlay connection in the careers of some of these young men is intriguing, but it is only one factor that emerges in an examination of the flow of architects from Glasgow to Montreal. Rhind's return to Glasgow may have helped to develop dialogue between the two cities. He was not, however, the only architect who returned to Scotland and worked in Glasgow. In 1906 Wright decided to go home and was employed by Burnet as head assistant in the practice's Glasgow office. Burnet's decision to appoint an architect recently returned from Montreal cannot be a coincidence. It proves the admiration that he had for the Montreal architects, suggesting that a greater dialogue existed between the cities than has previously been suggested. In Burnet's office, Wright must have impressed the younger architects with stories of his time in Montreal, particularly those concerning the great McKim, Mead and White. Having previously worked at the Glasgow School of Art with Anderson and McGill University with Nobbs, it is likely that he applied to assist Bourdon at the newly organised Glasgow School of Art, where other young architects would hear about Canada. It is unlikely that the presence of Rhind and Wright in Glasgow encouraged other architects to emigrate to Montreal, however between the 1900s and 1910s, a dialogue was certainly taking place between the two cities. This was extended into the 1920s when Wright, Maitland and Lochhead all set up practices in Scotland after the

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<sup>13</sup> Laura Hamilton, 'James Steel Maitland F.R.I.B.A. - An Unrepentant Traditionalist', unpublished M.A. Honours dissertation, University of St. Andrews, 1982, p. 12 During his time with Brown and Vallance he was brought into direct contact with the Beaux-Arts, as the two architects frequently referred to Julien Guadet's *Elements et Theories d'Architecture* (1902) when designing new commissions. They were also great fans of McKim, Mead and White, and encouraged their young Scottish assistants to study their work.

First World War.<sup>14</sup> Could their later work have been influenced by their Montreal experience? The movement of architects between Glasgow and Montreal during the early twentieth century accentuates the concept of overlapping territories in Scottish and Canadian architectural histories which is at the heart of this thesis.

The relationship between the two countries was far more intricate and complex than Crossman's assertion about a 'line of understanding' between Edinburgh and Montreal suggests. The Nobbs and Traquair link is attractive and comprehensible because it was neat and tidy, demonstrating an orderly transfer of ideas from one country to another. The perception of the Scottish connection with Canada as an impermeable bond and a one-way flow of ideas is, however, inappropriate. It is the fluidity of the relationship between the two countries that is significant. It is the dynamics of the intertwined territories and shared histories of the two countries that are expressed in the work of Taylor, Findlay, Rhind, Archibald and Capper. The complexity of the topic is embodied in Capper: his career is an example of the Edinburgh and Montreal connection, but he is also a link in the Beaux-Arts bond between Glasgow and Montreal. This is a much more honest representation of the subject than the linear analogy of cultural transfer suggested by Crossman. Any attempt to compartmentalise or homogenise the influence of Scottish architects in Canada will inevitably fail to take into account the dynamic dialogue that took place between Scotland and Canada during 1883 and 1914.

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<sup>14</sup> Maitland and Lochhead both left Montreal to join the British Army in 1914 and never returned to the Canadian city. Both had planned to do so after the armistice, but family commitments took them back to Scotland.



167. Brown and Vallance, Southam Building to left of picture (1913)  
(Gournay and Vanlaethem, *Montreal Metropolis*)

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