

Architectural resources in Special Collections

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QG HCOL014

The Wolfson Reading Room

Special Collections Centre

The Sir Duncan Rice Library
University of Aberdeen
Bedford Road
Aberdeen
AB24 3AA

Introduction

Many individuals, families, organisations and businesses have deposited their papers with the University and as a result, it has acquired an unrivalled collection of material, not solely relating to the history and culture of the north-east of Scotland but of national and international importance.

The papers of architects can often comprise diaries, journals, correspondence, drawings, maps/plans and photographs.

Archival collections

University institutional papers

The University's collection of plans relating to King's College, King's College Chapel, Marischal College and the University of Aberdeen is a rich resource relating to the history of the University's buildings. The plans range from the detailed architectural drawing by James Cromar Watt to utility plans used by the estates teams. This extensive collection dates from the 1850s through to the mid 1960s; unfortunately many of the items are not dated: 1850s – 1960s (UNIVERSITY 1494).

Collection of prints, drawings, photographs and plans of buildings at King's College and Marischal College: 19th century – 20th century (MS 2920).

Building plans for King's College by John Adam and James Byres: 1773 (KINGS/2/2/1)

Family and estate papers

Papers including plans for Cairness House prepared by James Playfair, architect: 1773 - 1793 (MS 1160/28).

Organisation papers

Survey of buildings of architectural or historical interest by the Scottish Development Department: c.1965 (MS 2490).

Business papers

George Washington Wilson and Co., photographers: 1850 – 1905 (MS 3792).

The principal archive map collection can be found in the records of F.A. MacDonald and Partners, engineers and surveyors (incorporating Walker & Duncan, Aberdeen). This is an extensive collection of maps and plans amassed by the firm Walker & Duncan and date primarily from the late 19th century. It consists of approximately 5000 maps, specifically of the different wards of the city of Aberdeen and parishes in Aberdeenshire stretching from Kincardineshire to Banffshire but also including maps and plans of areas across Scotland: 18th century – mid 20th century (papers MS 2626, maps and plans MS 3860).

William Ramage, architect, plans of Skene House: 1847 – 1850 (MS 2628).

Personal papers

Carmichael, Charles: plans and drawings: late 19th century (MS 3059). There is also a volume of architectural drawings by Carmichael (MS 2920).

Clyne, Arthur, architect: papers: 19th century (MS 3898)

Dryden, Sir Henry, antiquarian: plans, sketches and other notes of architectural interest, mainly in Orkney and Shetland: 1846 – 1890 (MS 2323).

Kelly, William, architect and antiquarian: papers, 1805 – 1944 (MS 2380 and MS 3859).

Logan, James, artist and antiquarian: drawings of St. Machar's Cathedral: early 19th century (MS 3598).

Nicol, J.B., architect: sketch book of architectural drawings: 1893 – 1897 (MS 2207).

Ross, Dr Thomas, architect, architectural historian and author: papers: c.1890 – 1921 (MS 2820, MS 2910 & MS 3169).

Rourke, Peter, amateur photographer, slide collection of Scottish Castles: c.1960 – 1994 (MS 3498).

Simpson, William Douglas, historian and archaeologist, papers including collection of archaeological, monumental and architectural plans, 19th century – 20th century (MS 2729, MS 2818 and MS 3759).

Slade, Harry Gordon, architectural historian: papers: 1971 – 2001 (MS 3127).

Smith, William, architect: sketches made in Italy and Greece, 1843 (MS 926).

Wilson, Dr Robert, surgeon and traveller, portfolio of original paintings, drawings and prints, 19th century (MS 3849).

Aberdeen architects papers: John Smith, senior and junior, William Kelly and William Douglas Simpson: 1841 – 1961 (MS 2393).

Printed collections

The Local Collection, accessible via the Reading Room, contains relevant printed material and has an open access collection of local reference maps and plans.

There are numerous other printed collections of, or containing material of, particular relevance, such as books by Robert Adam, James Gibbs, Owen Jones and Humphrey Repton.

There are also named collections of relevance:

Dr William Douglas Simpson Collection

For the most detailed bibliography relating to the Universities, including relating to buildings, see:

Anderson, P.J. (ed) *Studies in the History and Development of the University* (Aberdeen University Press, 1906).

Access

Materials are available, upon request, for consultation in the Reading Room. Please search online catalogues to identify individual items.

Further reading

For further reading please also see the studies of a number of manuscripts, printed books and collections in the journals *Aberdeen University Library Bulletin*, *Aberdeen University Review* and *Northern Scotland*.

Bailey, Rebecca, *Scottish architects' papers: a source book* (Edinburgh, 1996).

Brogden, W.A., *Aberdeen: an illustrated architectural guide* (Edinburgh Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, 2012).

Geddes, Jane (ed.), *King's College Chapel 1500-2000* (Leeds, Northern Universities Press, 2000). This book also contains an additional bibliography on published works about the Chapel.