

# John Ritchie Findlay (1824–98): architectural patron and philanthropist

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## ABSTRACT

*John Ritchie Findlay (1824–98) was the leading proprietor of The Scotsman which he developed into a flourishing and influential newspaper with a national circulation. Although Findlay disliked publicity or self-promotion, he was an active liberal philanthropist, a friend of art and of Scottish culture, patron of two of Scotland's most talented architects of his time – Robert Rowand Anderson and A G Sydney Mitchell – and father of another prominent Edinburgh architect, James Leslie Findlay. He was also an active fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, as secretary (1882–8), and vice-president (1878–80, and again 1888–90). This article seeks to appraise the career of that influential figure who has left a strong, if today under-appreciated legacy to Edinburgh's built environment, and to Scotland overall. His architectural work reflects his politics, and that of the country at the turn of the 20th century.*

## INTRODUCTION

John Ritchie Findlay died in 1898 aged 74 and, shortly after his death, Lord Rosebery said of him: 'Edinburgh can scarcely have had a citizen of more truly public spirit' (Rosebery 1921: 209). It was elsewhere acknowledged that 'Mr. Findlay exerted a greater and more stimulating influence upon national culture, in the wide and true sense of the word, than any non-academic Scotsman associated with Edinburgh, with the single exception of Rosebery'.<sup>1</sup> Although Findlay disliked publicity or self-promotion – he declined a baronetcy offered to him in 1896 – he was an active liberal philanthropist, a friend of art and an influential newspaper businessman. The most significant examples of Findlay's architectural patronage include his own Edinburgh town house at 3 Rothesay Terrace, his philanthropic work at what now is the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and at Well Court, a model housing development within Edinburgh's Dean Village. These interventions, for which he chose two of Scotland's most talented architects – A G Sydney

Mitchell (1856–1930) and R Rowand Anderson RSA (1834–1921) – are considered here in turn, but first, it is important to consider briefly his early years, his interests and his career.

## BACKGROUND

Findlay was the leading proprietor of *The Scotsman*. His wealth at his death was, in contemporary terms, the immense sum of £299,332 4s 3d.<sup>2</sup> When he joined the family newspaper business in 1842, aged 18 (his grand-uncle John Ritchie had been one of the newspaper's founders and an active member of the Town Council), *The Scotsman* was a modest sheet, published from a humble office in the High Street of Edinburgh. Initially, it had been a weekly newspaper published every Saturday, before it became a bi-weekly in 1823, and a daily in 1855, when the newspaper stamp duty was abolished. Findlay's fortune therefore derived from success in the publishing industry. In 1864, that is in Findlay's time, and no doubt on the back

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ILLUS 1 The Scotsman, 26–30 Cockburn Street. (© Clarisse Godard Desmarest)

of increased sales and profits following stamp duty's abolition, the newspaper relocated to a purpose-built office at 26–30 Cockburn Street. This was a completely new street, constructed as a link between Waverley Station and the High Street, designed in the Scottish Baronial style by the architects Peddie and Kinnear (1860–7), and its construction presented the newspaper with the opportunity to gain both enlarged premises and a more conspicuous presence. This new headquarters (Illus 1) was identified by a comparatively modest-scaled development on which gilt letters of 'THE SCOTSMAN' were inscribed on a ribbon in a long horizontal panel and, in a shield above, thistles with a relief of a lion rampant, a national symbol. It backed on to the original offices on the Royal Mile and was afterwards superseded by new offices facing onto North Bridge, designed by Dunn and Findlay and constructed 1899–1902.

Findlay had been educated in Liberal principles, in political and in ecclesiastical affairs. He was a UK Unionist in politics because he believed Unionism to be in accord with Liberal principles. He was in favour of toleration in religious matters and favoured Church Disestablishment. In the Irish Home Rule controversy of 1886, Findlay, and *The Scotsman*, took a very strong unionist line and opposed Gladstone's plan for Ireland. This stance from the leading Scottish newspaper of the day had a strong impact in Gladstone's constituency, and contrasted with the time the newspaper had supported him in his first and dramatically successful Midlothian campaign of 1878–80.

Outside publishing, Findlay had numerous interests. He was an archaeologist in the modern sense, not a Jonathan Oldbuck-type antiquarian, who encouraged the Scottish History Society and other kindred associations – social, educational and benevolent institutions. He was appointed a Director of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution in 1883, and he was associated with the Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh, the Morningside Asylum and the Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor. He was also a supporter of the movement for the opening up of universities to women. He was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees

of Manufactures in 1882, and it was through it that his anonymous gift was made to the nation of what today is the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Findlay became a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1873, following the ballot of 9 December 1872, at which he was referred to as John R Findlay, Esq, his address being 8 Rutland Square.<sup>3</sup> He was elected to the positions of secretary (a function he occupied from 1882 to 1888), and as vice-president (first from 1878 to 1880, and again from 1888 to 1890); and in such positions he took a great practical interest in the promotion of antiquarian science and of conservation. For instance, he engaged in the debate when people cited Robert Billings and his observation that architectural and ecclesiastical remains were increasingly subject to loss with insufficient being done to address the problem.<sup>4</sup> On his own estate of Aberlour, in Banffshire, which he acquired in 1885,<sup>5</sup> he had Joseph Anderson, assistant secretary and Keeper of the Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, carry out excavation of prehistoric cairns.<sup>6</sup> Findlay donated to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland a scraper and three worked flakes of flint found on his property in 1889, and a flint-flake knife from near Benrinnes, beside Aberlour.<sup>7</sup> His interest in flint implements of high quality workmanship was underlined by a visit he had made to the Nile Valley, following which, in 1894, he presented his collection of Egyptian flints to the Scottish Antiquarians for their museum.<sup>8</sup> Findlay's presentation to the Society's museum of archaeological discoveries testified to a strong sense of national pride, showing the value he placed on Scotland's heritage. He submitted a paper to the Society concerning the discovery of a hoard of groats from the reign of Robert III, found enclosed in a ewer of brass, buried in the Cathedral Green, Fortrose. He also described the discovery of a medieval brass pot discovered on a dig near Edmonstone House, in Biggar.<sup>9</sup> Findlay acted to expand the collection of the museum – and also the library – of the Society, based then in the William Playfair-designed Royal Institution, situated on the Mound (renamed the Royal Scottish Academy); before their transfer to the bespoke new building in Queen Street.

Findlay was presented with the Freedom of the City in 1896, in recognition of his providing the building for housing both a new Scottish National Portrait Gallery and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, with its museum. The new building was opened on 15 July 1889 after a design by Anderson, and the sums donated (mostly secretly) by Findlay by the 1890s amounted to over £60,000.<sup>10</sup> His idea of collecting portraits of significant Scots for display in a purpose-built building goes back to David Steuart Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan (1742–1829), founder in 1780 of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Findlay might well have been aware of Buchan’s ‘Temple of Caledonian Fame’ at Dryburgh and his ‘Temple of the Muses’.<sup>11</sup> We shall return to Buchan’s role shortly.

Findlay’s artistic, literary and antiquarian interests were many; he composed poems and sonnets for private circulation and published in 1886 his *Personal Recollections of Thomas De Quincey* (1785–1859), a writer with whom Findlay shared an affection for walking. A memorial tablet, paid for by Findlay and designed by Sydney Mitchell, was placed on De Quincey’s Edinburgh house, 42 Lothian Street, in 1887 (NRS GD492/67). In the 1870s, Findlay rented Hatton House, West Lothian, one of the great Renaissance houses of Scotland, expanded from an original tower and later Renaissance courtyard by Lord Charles Maitland, brother of the Duke of Lauderdale. This stay prompted Findlay to write both a paper on an ancient stone cross there,<sup>12</sup> and more importantly, a history of the house and of the Morton family, who were its owners.<sup>13</sup> For this latter task, Findlay was lent John Slezer’s c 1690 engraving of Hatton House (misnamed by its engraver as ‘Argile House’) by his friend the antiquarian David Laing (1793–1878).<sup>14</sup> That work on Hatton House shows Findlay as a ‘proper’ historian who used documentary sources and relied on first-hand observation. He was also the friend of historian John Hill Burton and of physician John Brown. Above all, Findlay’s clear fondness for Hatton House shows yet again the cultural value he placed on Scotland’s historic buildings, and of the culture which created them.

In Edinburgh, Findlay was a member of the congregation of St Giles’ Cathedral – he

presented for the Moray aisle a delicately carved wooden pulpit designed by Rowand Anderson, to commemorate the resumption of Daily Service in the Church in 1884, after an interval of 200 years.<sup>15</sup> In the same aisle, a Gothic screen designed by John Matthew was afterwards added, in 1931, in memory of John Ritchie Findlay, gifted by Jane Findlay and her sisters in memory of their brother.<sup>16</sup>

Outside Edinburgh, Findlay, as already noted, owned the estate and mansion house of Aberlour in Banffshire and later he acquired the adjoining properties of Edinville and Craigellachie. He took a deep interest in the welfare of his tenantry and was involved in agricultural improvements and cattle breeding.<sup>17</sup>

#### JOHN RITCHIE FINDLAY’S HOUSE AT NO. 3 ROTHESAY TERRACE, AND WELL COURT

John Ritchie Findlay had both a philanthropic ambition and a lot of money to spend. He lived latterly at No. 3 Rothesay Terrace (Illus 2) – one of the last terraces to be built within the exclusive 19th-century housing development known as Edinburgh’s Western New Town. For his architect, Findlay chose the 27-year-old A G Sydney Mitchell (1856–1930), who had just completed his training at Rowand Anderson’s office, Anderson & Browne, and left to set up his own firm. Mitchell must have been known to Findlay, for his father, Sir Arthur Mitchell (1826–1909), was a particularly active Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and Professor of Ancient History at the Royal Scottish Academy, as well as being a Commissioner of Lunacy.<sup>18</sup> Sydney Mitchell had been a trainee under Anderson when he transformed Mount Stuart on Bute from a Classical pile into a Venetian Gothic palace for the third Marquess of Bute, the leading connoisseur of the day. Mitchell was also young and Findlay liked to encourage young talent, as shown in 1893 when he employed (the future Sir) Robert Lorimer to make alterations at Aberlour House.

Mitchell was engaged to remodel Findlay’s Edinburgh house (originally built for him in



ILLUS 2 No. 3 Rothesay Terrace. (© Clarisse Godard Desmarest)

1876) in 1883. The reconstruction designs were illustrated in *The Building News* in 1884.<sup>19</sup> The façade, with its prominent bay windows, distinctive glazing patterns and wrought iron balconies, is impressive. Mitchell installed neo-Scottish multi-paned windows such as Lorimer and Mackintosh were later to do almost ubiquitously. A carved wooden porch in the Renaissance style (the only one in view in the area; a rarity in the New Town and rather more a feature in suburban villas) – originally closed in by an exquisite delicately ornamented wrought iron ‘grille’ of Italian workmanship<sup>20</sup> – is reached by steps over the basement, and, unusually for New Town houses, the attic has dormer windows. This already large, new and then reconstructed house was the perfect residence to impress, without an overly ostentatious display of wealth; his previous house on Rutland Square had comprised of three full storeys, a basement and a semi-basement, but was of identical design to its neighbours in a terraced row. The Rothesay

Terrace house was already much bigger – wider – than its otherwise similar neighbours to its west, and bespoke (Illus 3); yet sufficient of its original form was retained to ensure that it also continued to fit in with its neighbours.

The usual plan for a terraced Edinburgh house (as in Drumsheugh Gardens, alongside) placed the ground floor dining room and first floor drawing room at the front, and smaller rooms, such as perhaps a library, at the back. But here this arrangement was reversed; the large dining room and drawing rooms were at the back, superimposed as was usual, with views not to the street but across the valley of the Water of Leith, to the Forth and the hills of Fife. The design for ‘A dining-room in Rothesay Terrace, Edinburgh’ by Sydney Mitchell was exhibited at the 1884 Royal Academy of Arts.<sup>21</sup>

Findlay wrote an account of Sydney Mitchell’s visit to his new home in 1887 and reported that Mitchell ‘admired [...] the design, the work, the sanitary and other arrangements,



ILLUS 3 View of Rothesay Terrace. (© Clarisse Godard Desmarest)

and said finally that it was the next perfect house he had ever seen'.<sup>22</sup> It was in this same spirit of fashionable excellence that views of the interior were taken *c*1890 by the architectural photographer Harry Bedford Lemere.<sup>23</sup> These views show typical Victorian clutter, the interior being lavishly decorated with carved panelling in a variety of fine timbers, marble fireplaces and painted ceilings. Much of that interior survives today – minus the 'clutter'. The ground floor dining room, decorated in a Franco-Italian style, is dominated by a huge chimneypiece.<sup>24</sup> There is a beamed ceiling and an elaborate plasterwork frieze with cherubs and garlands. The oak dado has round brass frames for displaying a collection of China plates. Three panels of glass windows bear the intertwined initials 'JRF', the date '1885' and – for his wife, 'SLF'. Findlay was married to Susan Leslie, the daughter of an Edinburgh civil engineer, and they had a family of three sons and seven daughters. Evidently, as was then the norm in Scotland, she kept her own name; here combining it with her husband's. Family portraits including those of Findlay and his wife had hung on the walls, and a painting of their daughters, Florence, Dora and Hannah, by the artist Sir George Reid had been framed within the chimneypiece.

In the hall, and still seen today, is an elaborate staircase, entered through an intricately carved walnut arcade, with broad low steps of cipollino marble and wrought brass balusters. The drawing room on the first floor has a ceiling divided into elaborate painted panels (with classical scenes) and a magnificent alabaster Italian Renaissance chimneypiece at one end. It also has an elaborate window arrangement, with the letter 'F' on a glass panel in the centre and classical imagery in foliage in the side panels. Also on the first floor, and impressive, is the wood-panelled library (reminiscent of that in Walter Scott's Abbotsford House), facing the street, its gallery protected by wrought iron railings; a collection of Tassie medallions once stood above the library fireplace, with tiled panels representing the Arts and Sciences.

In the foreground of Findlay's view from the north drawing room was the Dean Village, and central, as seen from Findlay's windows, were

derelict buildings known as Brown's Court (not to be confused with the similarly named Brown's Place in the Old Town).<sup>25</sup> This slum was swept away and reconstructed as model housing by Findlay upon both picturesque and modern sanitary lines. The new development, which he named Well Court after the well on its front terrace, was designed by Mitchell and financed by Findlay in 1884, as a means of helping Dean Village recover from losing part of its milling trade. Findlay was therefore a social reformer interested in improving the dwellings and the lives of working people.

On 4 July 1885, at a meeting of Well Court residents in the hall at the Well Court, Findlay made the following statement:

Six years ago, my neighbour, Mr Edward Blyth, above the Water of Leith, and I were the only inhabitants of the opposite (ie, north) bank above the Water of Leith, and I daresay many of you will remember the two tall isolated houses that stood there for a long time. One morning Mr Blyth came to me to say that the block of buildings that occupied the site where we are now assembled was for sale; and he represented that it would be a great evil for us, and for the locality, if they were bought up by some speculator and used in a way that might cause of nuisance to the neighbourhood. He said that if I would join him we might buy the old houses, and see that at least nothing worse was put down under our very noses in the bottom of the valley here.<sup>26</sup>

Edward Blyth and Findlay had jointly purchased the dilapidated buildings and, when Blyth left Rothesay Terrace, Findlay purchased his half of the Dean Village property and thereafter pulled the tenements down. His intention was to have respectable buildings for himself and the neighbourhood. Although he was not 'to throw away money in mere ornament',<sup>27</sup> Findlay confessed that economy was a little sacrificed to style in his new development, and that the rents he would be able to get for these houses would hardly repay him. The details for Well Court were carefully considered by both architect and client: for instance, in planning the bedrooms, considering exactly where a bed would stand. Sanitary conditions were also focused upon because Findlay had a recollection

of past epidemics – the village of the Water of Leith had a bad reputation. Findlay therefore strove to ensure that his tenants would be safer at Well Court than in nine-tenths of the best houses in the New Town of Edinburgh.

Well Court was intended to surpass the recent developments in the east end of London made by the Earl of Southesk in Shadwell.<sup>28</sup> The Earl had carried out demolitions and built new housing, as had Findlay, but Findlay guaranteed his tenants a view, air and space, thanks to a sizeable open court and picturesque open views from most of the windows. To protect the property against troublesome tenants, Findlay devised a set of rules that were inspired by an American philanthropist, George Peabody (who had left a million pounds to the city of London to build houses for the working classes), and by Sir Sidney Waterlow for their housing schemes. These rules were meant to ensure respect for both the property and the other tenants.

The development of Well Court fits into a contemporary concern for social well-being, better sanitation and housing, when the damaging effects of poverty and industrialisation were widely felt. The 1867 City Improvement Act in Edinburgh was largely motivated by the above-mentioned William Chambers of Glenormiston (1800–83), who as Lord Provost 1865–9 had the opportunity to implement his ideals. He was interested in social and civic improvement, he visited London where he viewed the housing situation and he published his ideas on the topic in 1855; his ideas were explicitly aimed at surpassing provision in London, New York and other densely populated cities. Like Findlay after him, Chambers wanted to improve people's living conditions while keeping Edinburgh's distinctive architectural character. Slums were cleared and streets widened in the Old Town, at St Mary's Street and Blackfriars Wynd, and the same Baronial formula was repeated, but in a generally plainer way than at Cockburn Street where, as we saw, *The Scotsman* had at this time its headquarters.

According to Chambers:

Latterly, as may be seen from the annexed wood-engraving, some buildings have been erected in

the more picturesque style of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and everything connected with architecture in Scotland may well be said to be undergoing a rapid improvement.<sup>29</sup>

The caption of the engraving referred to is 'Revival of Picturesque Street Architecture in Edinburgh'. Contemporary housing developments in both the Old Town and the New integrated the principles of the picturesque and the concern for celebrating the historic urban past (this was clear in the 'Old Edinburgh' section, designed by Sydney Mitchell, at the Edinburgh Exhibition of 1886, as detailed below).

At Well Court, which was also something of a 'social experiment' that reconciled modernity and tradition in a picturesque way,<sup>30</sup> Sydney Mitchell was again the architect and he produced designs in 1883–4; these soon being altered to heighten the picturesqueness of the buildings, which were finished in 1886 at a cost of £14,000. The contractor was James Slater who was based in Young Street in the New Town.<sup>31</sup> The architecture (following, intentionally or not, Chambers's ideals of 1855) was Scottish Renaissance in its character. And yet stylistically it was innovative insofar as it stepped decisively away from the neo-castellation that characterised the Baronial of David Bryce (1803–76), because here, the key models were domestic urban tenements and tolbooth architecture, while castellated features were reduced to a minimum. As is noticed again below, Scottish Baronial architecture was finding a new flexibility which, by the turn of the 20th century, would embrace classicism.

Like its predecessor, Well Court was built round a courtyard. But there the similarity ends; the courtyard at Well Court was left clear of buildings so as to provide a fresh open area that would double as a drying green for the tenants. The main phase of work comprised a big and lofty courtyard block of tenements that enclosed three sides of an open courtyard and part of a fourth side (with a garden backing onto the playground of the next door Dean School), referencing the foursquare tenements of early classical Edinburgh (Riddle's Court, Mylne's Court, or James' Court) rather than the more



regularised and lower courtyard tenement blocks of contemporary Glasgow and Edinburgh.

A free-standing rectangular hall block occupied the south-east corner, with a steeple, meaning it resembled a tolbooth. The steeple even had a leaded bell-profile belfry – such as had existed on the Tron Kirk until the fire of 1824 and as seen still on the tolbooths of Stirling and Dumfries. The block's south end (facing Mitchell's house) (Illus 4) was given twinned polygonal corner turrets, much-corbelled<sup>32</sup> and with stone mullions and transoms, their design based on the oriels of the early 17th-century Earl's Palace in Kirkwall; while a projection on the west flank created an intimate space between it and the neighbouring tenement, suggestive of the antiquity experienced in Edinburgh's old closes and courtyards. The factor's house was placed on the ground floor, the hall itself hoisted above. Its flank windows cut above the eaves and carry pediments, while continuous guttering runs across

them below the roof structure. This arrangement, seen at, say, Castle Fraser's 1620s low wings, was later picked up by Lorimer (for example on both the main block and lodges at Formakin) as a feature today often considered 'Lorimerian', but with precedent here. On the tympana of the west-facing hall window pediments, in carved roundels, are a thistle, monogrammed initials, a rose and a fleur-de-lis. These details, and features such as the historicising roll-moulding of the tenement windows, the intentionally anti-Classical designs of the ironwork on railings and the door furniture of the individual flats, were all conceived in such a way as would signify Scottish antiquity. The hall block emphasised the development's Scottish Renaissance character, having a combination of specific historicising references, while its martial symbolism was emphasised by convincingly located dummy gunholes. The theme was continued westwards from the hall along the riverside, where a stone-



ILLUS 4 Well Court, viewed from the south. (© Clarisse Godard Desmarest)

parapeted terrace and castle-like corner tower overlooked the Water of Leith – a little piece of semi-rural idyll within the city.

In the hall, a gallery opened onto the club room below, which was large enough to hold 200 people. A text over the mantelpiece, below an elaborate clock (produced by H R Millar, Edinburgh), read: ‘Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves’ – the quotation being adapted from the Gospel according to Matthew 10:16. The hall was intended for males, mainly as a place for reading, as in a gentleman’s club; and the Well Court Association was in charge of deciding its purpose. The hall was devoted to religious service on Sundays (and would welcome Presbyterians and Episcopalians), and to social purposes in the course of the week for concerts and lectures – such as the meetings of the young working men’s club which met to hear lectures from such figures as Findlay’s friend, the high-profile Professor John Stuart Blackie. Findlay saw no contradiction between religious and comic songs happening there. Due to the close proximity of the Dean Church, Findlay did not consider that the building should be consecrated. In the contemporary context of religious revivalism, he was concerned too that ecclesiastics and missionaries might intrude on the property and bother its inhabitants.

The plans for Well Court were reproduced in *The British Architect* of 23 August 1889 under the heading: ‘Modern Architecture in Scotland. The Well Court, Edinburgh. A Block of Workmen’s Houses, for J R Findlay, Esq. by Sydney Mitchell Architect. 13 Young Street, Edinburgh.’ By then, 52 dwellings, a shop, a hall and a factor’s house were built. In each dwelling the living room and kitchen were combined, and in all except the two-room dwellings a separate scullery was provided. An innovation for working class housing was the provision of a toilet for each flat, a valuable precaution against the spread of still endemic diseases – such as typhoid.

On the main tenement block, the low pend which admits entry to Well Court from the north – closed originally by an elaborate wrought iron gate (since removed) with a prominent thistle finial – follows the standard historic arrangement, as still seen, for instance, at George

Heriot’s Hospital, in having a door set into a side wall. The semi-octagonal off-centre stair tower in the courtyard was directly inspired by those of the 1610s and 1620s at Edinburgh Castle and Linlithgow Palace.

Findlay then purchased property to the north of Well Court in order to obviate any risk of the arrival of troublesome neighbours, and there he built a separate tenement, which he named Dean Path Buildings. It was designed for his father by the young 17-year-old architect James Leslie Findlay in 1885. James Findlay had been educated at Harrow and apprenticed to his father’s architect Sydney Mitchell, before entering partnership with James Bow Dunn (1894–1905) for the purpose of building *The Scotsman*’s new buildings (begun 1898), as is discussed below. This new tenement was presumably designed by him while he was still in Mitchell’s office, and it matches the Well Court tenement well, being similarly crow-stepped and using similar materials – the fact that its east gable is in contrasting harl indicates that the intention had been to continue the building eastwards. In 1896, Well Court, as enlarged with the separate tenement, was described as follows:

There are in all seventy-five dwellings grouped round the court, thirty-five having two rooms, twenty having three rooms, and twenty-five with superior accommodation, several having bathrooms in addition to the conveniences of various kinds supplied to all the rest.<sup>33</sup>

The view from Findlay’s house in Rothesay Terrace was a critical element in determining Well Court’s design. The whole development, including the immediate Water of Leith and the Dean Orphanage in the distance, could be seen from the drawing room window of the house on the ridge high above. The complexity of the roof structure, steeply pitched and red tiled (Broseley tiles), and the warmth of the red Corsehill sandstone wall detailing of Well Court is striking, and the overall composition, as viewed from Findlay’s house, is tilted on its plan (Illus 5), the courtyard sufficiently deep to display the height of its lofty stair turret – all to increase the picturesque drama. The north front of Findlay’s house with its symmetrical arrangement was of course also in clear view



ILLUS 5 Well Court seen from No. 3 Rothesay Terrace. (© Clarisse Godard Desmarest)

from Well Court, signalling to the tenants Findlay's benign surveillance – its viewing terrace above its projecting square window bay had the same purpose as that built later at *The Scotsman* building, as we shall see.

Patrick Geddes considered Well Court the 'best modern addition to the City'.<sup>34</sup> And in fact, Findlay's experiments in sanitary development were later successfully pursued by Geddes in his urban regeneration projects in the Old Town (such as Riddle's Court or Ramsay Gardens). The main courtyard block resembles traditional Scottish tenement architecture, but Well Court was also compared to a German medieval castellated style, by an anonymous journalist for *The Madras Mail* of 3 June 1885 who wrote in praise of young Sydney Mitchell, 'our rising architect', and who went on to say:

I encountered Mr Mitchell's work ... in the beautiful and quaint bit of Nuremberg ... in the old village of Dean (now absorbed in the city) and designed as a

set of model dwellings for the artisan class. This is an admirable bit of work, complete in giving each house a complete independence, with every modern sanitary protection studied, and yet at rents low enough to suit the working class, and high enough to give a profit to the owner. Now Mr Mitchell has been commissioned by Mr Gladstone to rebuild the old 'Mercat Cross' of Edinburgh, which the Premier is to gift to the city.<sup>35</sup>

Discussion on the site and the form of the original Mercat Cross was to engage the Scottish antiquarians, who included Findlay.<sup>36</sup> Sydney Mitchell was interested in this Scottish national style to which Well Court belongs, and he designed a reconstruction of 'Old Edinburgh' in 1886 for the Edinburgh International Exhibition – that same year his design for Well Court, a 'block of workmen's houses', was exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy<sup>37</sup> and Sydney Mitchell's 'Workmen's Club, Dean Village, Edinburgh' was exhibited the year before in the

Architectural Room at the 1885 Royal Academy of Arts, London.<sup>38</sup> This exhibition, held in the Meadows, belongs to a series of historic-city exhibitions in Scotland and elsewhere in Europe – a reconstruction of Old London was first shown at the International Health Exhibition in the

summer of 1884 and its immediate successor was Old Edinburgh in 1886, followed among others by Old Manchester in 1887, *Oud Antwerpen* in 1895, *Alt Berlin* in 1896, *Gamla Stockholm* in 1897 and *Vieux Paris* at the Paris Exposition of 1900. Well Court and its historicising appearance



ILLUS 6 View of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street, Edinburgh, from York Place showing elevations to Queen Street and North St Andrew Street, c 1900. (© Courtesy of HES (Bedford Lemere and Company Collection))

must be placed in the context of late Victorian Scotland when administrative demands for devolution (the Scottish Office was founded in 1885) paralleled an appeal for traditional architecture that was stimulated by Romanticism and promoted by archaeologists, historians and men of letters – including Walter Scott early in the century and Robert Stevenson later in the century.

Well Court's function of providing good housing for the industrious working class, 'without breaking with the spirit of the scene and of the past' in John Geddie's words,<sup>38</sup> was eclipsed in the next century by the state-driven huge estates of Craigmillar, Pilton and Oxcgangs. The buildings were sold by the Findlay Trust possibly in 1937 and since then there has been an increasing ownership of flats – at the expense of renting tenants.

## NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

In terms of direct social impact, Well Court was Findlay's greatest architectural work because it improved the lives of many people. However, in terms of the wider cultural environment, his greatest impact and legacy was surely the creation of the building now known as the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (Illus 6), also in Edinburgh (Queen Street). There through his insistence, relentless determination and willingness to spend his own money where government uninterest or parsimony was strong, he achieved the creation of not one, but two of Scotland's greatest cultural assets of our time: the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and what now is called the National Museum of Scotland.

The Scottish National Portrait Gallery building was designed by Robert Rowand Anderson and built 1885–90<sup>40</sup>; by comparison, the National Portrait Gallery in London was founded in 1856. The construction of a purpose-made national gallery in Scotland's capital, for the joint use of both the new Portrait Gallery and the rehoused Society of Antiquaries of Scotland plus its museum – which was rebranded as the National Museum of Antiquities – was

funded largely through a series of donations by Findlay (£50,000), supplementing funds provided by the government through the Board of Manufactures.<sup>41</sup> In 1884, the Committee of the Board of Manufactures<sup>42</sup> had under consideration the investment of £10,000 voted by Parliament towards the foundation of the Portrait Gallery.<sup>43</sup>

The idea of collecting portraits and busts goes back to the Earl of Buchan. While proposing the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1780, he wrote:

I move, Gentlemen, that with a view to inspire our fellow citizens with that generous love of fame which produced the triumphs of antiquity, the Society do resolve to collect the best original portraits, or, where such cannot be procured, the best copies of portraits of illustrious and learned Scots; and from time to time, do, after mature consideration, place and affix them in a room or gallery, to be denominated *The Temple of Caledonian Fame*.<sup>44</sup>

Buchan led by collecting portraits, and he assisted John Pinkerton's publication of *Iconographia Scotica* in 1797. His Temple of Caledonian Fame was set within the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, with busts of heroes.<sup>45</sup> This aspect of Buchan's Dryburgh project was a truly – and exclusively – national project, as indicated by an inscription there which read 'None can enter that are not true Scots'.<sup>46</sup> In 1848, the promoters of the revived project for the National Monument on Calton Hill envisaged a hall 'set apart as a Gallery of Honour, for the reception of busts and statues [...] of eminent men, whether statesmen, warriors, men of science, poets, artists, etc, not limited to Scotland, or even to Great Britain, but extending to all nations'.<sup>47</sup> In 1855, the concept of a national exhibition of portraits was highlighted in the Society's *Proceedings*, but with little or no consequence at that time; historian Thomas Carlyle wrote, 'Historical Portrait Galleries far transcend in worth all other kinds of National Collections of Pictures whatever'.<sup>48</sup> However, a Hall of Heroes had more recently been created within the National Wallace Monument on Abbey Craig, near Stirling (1861–9).<sup>49</sup> The Scottish National Portrait Gallery was therefore the result of a century-long, if intermittent, endeavour or mission of collecting pictures or busts of national

heroes, an initiative which began with Buchan, and possibly gained its greatest direct stimulus from the Wallace monument project which, at this time, was being fitted up with busts of heroes; symbolic leaded glasswork was added in 1885, and a huge statue of Wallace by D W Stevenson was placed in an external corner niche of the building in 1887.

The object of a National Portrait Gallery was to celebrate Scotland's heroes of the past but the style chosen was not Scottish. It was Venetian Gothic and symmetrical, both of which connected it to England's Gothic Revival, while distancing itself too, being 'foreign' – possibly one element contributing the choice of style was John Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, published in 1851–3. The spirit of the design is seen in published drawings made in France and Italy by Anderson, on a tour he undertook in 1859–60 after he trained in London as an assistant to Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811–78), as well as at his work at Mount Stuart for the Marquess of Bute (from 1878); and in the work too of Scott to whom Anderson dedicated his six-volume publication: 'To Professor G G Scott, RA, this work is, by permission, most respectfully dedicated, with feelings of most profound esteem and admiration for his great achievements in art.'<sup>50</sup> Scott was one of England's greatest architects of his time, the architect of famous structures such as the superlative St Pancras Station (1866–76) and the Albert Memorial (1864–76); and in Edinburgh, St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral (1874–80). The arrangement of the arcaded first floor windows for the Scottish National Portrait Gallery is almost exactly identical to that of the 12th-century arcade and tracery of the Abbey of Cluny, 15 miles from Mâcon, measured and drawn by Anderson – although the centre shafts in Anderson's work are polished granite, unlike the French prototypes which are not in a contrasting material.<sup>51</sup> In the design of the Gallery, both the Marquess of Bute and Sir Joseph Noel Paton (1821–1901), a painter, a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland as well as a friend of J R Findlay, were amongst the many who took a great interest and very possibly contributed ideas to its design.

Superficially, it would seem logical that a building dedicated to Scotland's cultural heritage

would be in a correspondingly Scottish historic style. At this time, for his own home, Allermuir (1879–82) Anderson chose Scottish Baronial. The choice of Venetian Gothic for the National Portrait Gallery was, though, clearly a decision that suited the client. It may have been due to Anderson's suggestion, given his interest, as we saw, in that style (this was repeated in Anderson's Medical School and McEwan Hall for Edinburgh University); though why Baronial was rejected as an option is unclear. Project drawings show that a more Baronial option had been considered because Anderson had, at one point, designed conical-roofed big corner turrets for his building, reminiscent of either Renaissance Scotland or France; but in execution, these were reduced by Findlay to highly sculptural corbelled turrets, and the main block filled its entire foursquare site.<sup>52</sup> The façade of the Gallery was designed so that sculpture and architecture, as was seen in more ancient buildings (notably in Europe's great Cathedrals, such as Amiens), might be combined. Findlay and the Board of Manufactures had hoped that representatives of ancient Scottish families and public bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Merchant Company, the University, the College of Physicians and the College of Surgeons might supply these empty niches with effigies of eminent Scotsmen and women. Findlay had to commission some of those statues personally by making an additional gift (£10,000), which of course gave a powerful stimulus to Scottish sculpture.<sup>53</sup>

After the statuary scheme was adopted by the Board in 1889, the first statues of red stone erected in the niches on each side of the central doorway were those of King Malcolm Canmore and his wife Queen Margaret – models of both were exhibited at the RSA in 1891.<sup>54</sup> The queen was represented

supporting in her left hand, and pointing to it with her right, a small model of a church (perhaps a representation of the chapel constructed for her in Edinburgh Castle) in the style of architecture of her time to indicate the important part she took in the introduction of Christianity into Scotland and of the various abbeys and ecclesiastical buildings founded under her influence.<sup>55</sup>

Above all, the statues of the two great martial heroes of Scotland's Wars of Independence, Sir William Wallace and King Robert I (both erected 1895, designed and executed by Birnie Rhind RSA), flanking the centre entrance show the intention to make the building a national celebration; the statues were to 'offer an opportunity to any patriotic Scotsman to distinguish himself by presenting figures of these great men'.<sup>56</sup> An armorial of the pre-union Scots monarchy (taken from a 14th-century heraldic MS, the *Armorial de Gelre*, preserved in the Royal Library at Brussels) and the royal motto *Nemo me impune lacessit*, in a roundel set directly above the main entrance door of the Gallery (and below a personification of 'History' at the wall head), further underlined the point, as did the inscription on the building's front. It used Celtic lettering, and was another reference to the ancient past of the nation:

Dedicated to the illustration of Scottish history  
· this edifice · the gift to his native country of ·  
John Ritchie Findlay · was erected anno domini  
1890 by the honourable the board for manufactures  
R Rowand Anderson LLD architect

The tympanum of the central doorway was filled with sculpture in alto-relievo designed by Anderson and carved by Birnie Rhind (executed 1893). This allegorical sculpture represented the Fine Arts, the Ruder Arts and the Sciences, and a panel contained a life-sized figure of Caledonia (a name used by the Romans, and then used by the Scots to refer to Scotland), crowned, holding in her left hand a flag, bearing the cross of St Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, and in her right, the orb of sovereignty.<sup>57</sup> Figures filling the niches in the façade, at a cost of about £200 each, represented eminent Scottish figures, royal, ecclesiastical and otherwise. The list includes such names as Alexander III, James I, James V, the Regent Moray, James VI; Lord James Douglas, John Knox, George Buchanan, Cardinal Beaton and John, Duke of Argyll; the poets John Barbour, William Dunbar, Gawain Douglas and David Lindsay; Napier of Merchiston, Lord Stair, James Hutton, John Hunter and James Watt; Admiral Duncan, Sir Ralph Abercromby, David Hume and Adam Smith.<sup>58</sup> The eastern front of

the Gallery, facing North St Andrew Street, was dominated by a group statue of Mary, Queen of Scots, with Bishop Lesley of Ross and Maitland of Lethington sharing a niche, executed at the cost of the women of Edinburgh by sculptor Birnie Rhind, and unveiled in June 1896.<sup>59</sup>

Inside, the plan was primarily symmetrical around a two-level centre hall which, again, offered a pictorial glorification of the past; a frieze of heroes beneath the upper gallery, and on the gallery, enormous mural paintings of historical scenes and battles, all painted by William Hole (1846–1917) RSA (who went on to produce similarly scaled murals for St James' Episcopal Church, Edinburgh c 1892–1902).<sup>60,61</sup> The dates of the paintings range from 1887 to 1901, but from their consistency of theme, and the fact they accord with Findlay's ideas for the exterior, it seems fair to conclude that Hole was continuing Findlay's programme very closely.<sup>62</sup>

The frieze including over 150 figures was a timeline, from the Stone Age to Carlyle, these two separated by a giant personification of Caledonia, seated, regal, and feminine – the counterpart to Britannia:

Caledonia, arrayed in green and purple draperies – the colours of the grass and heather of the land. She is seated in a megalithic or antique stone temple, and draws aside a curtain unfolding the past and revealing the future ... She wears golden armour and a golden helmet, the golden shield of Scotland with the red lion rampant is at her side, and on her knee is a red book in which the History of Scotland has been written.<sup>63</sup>

The other cardinal points of the frieze have David I and the MacMalcolm dynasty; Thomas Cochrane, James III's alleged architect, beside one of his assassins; Archibald Douglas 5th Earl of Angus (nicknamed 'Bell the Cat' for his daring), with Wallace's biographer Blind Harry alongside; and lastly, a Jacobite and anti-Jacobite grouping of 1745–6. There was a 'gender-aware' theme too of the Stuart kings, for the wife of each was represented, up to Mary of Modena, James VII's queen. A memorial to Findlay, designed by Anderson, was afterwards installed c 1900 beneath the gallery, in the hall's south-east corner. It points to his significance with

regard to the building – if in a characteristically understated way.

As for the murals, the two main historical scenes were the Battles of Largs (1263) and of Bannockburn (1314) – the point being that the first saw off Norwegian attempts at conquest, the second, England’s attempts. Both these events recalled Scotland’s martial valour and independence. Other topics included the Battle of Stirling Bridge (1297), where Wallace was the victor; and the marriage procession of James IV and Margaret Tudor, which led to the eventual union of the Scottish and English monarchies; it faces Saint Columba’s mission to the Picts, denoting the Christianising process within Scotland. The deeds of King David I, builder *inter alia* of Holyrood, are also present. There is also a painting of ‘The Pibroch’ (bagpipe music, here in a martial context), and a random-looking battle scene. Over each of the 12 pillars in the hall is a shield on which is emblazoned the arms of some medieval royal burghs; they are Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Kirkwall, Dunfermline, Linlithgow, Jedburgh, St Andrews, Stirling and Perth. Selected students of the School of Applied Art were invited to submit designs for the decorative treatment of the staircase ceilings and the intention was that the walls would otherwise be hung with portraits.<sup>64</sup>

Space was allocated too, to the east side of the hall, for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, their library and their museum. The latter was set out with ranks of display cases (all now gone), while the library was an inflated version of those at Abbotsford or Rothesay Terrace, having a similarly iron-railed gallery. (Today, the library has been relocated from the top floor of the Antiquaries’ east wing to the west wing.) The stained glass window (erected 1895) in the Society’s museum, at the top of the east staircase, was designed by Anderson and executed by W G Boss, and commemorates the opening of the museum (31 August 1891).<sup>65</sup> It includes numerous portraits in stained glass. Between the points of the two arches was a portrait medallion of Queen Victoria and, below, in medallions, the royal arms and the arms of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Beneath all these, portrait medallions in sets of two of

the office bearers of the Society in 1891: on the left, the Marquess of Lothian and J R Findlay; Sir Noel Paton and Sir W Fettes Douglas; R Rowand Anderson and T Dawson Brodie; James Macdonald and Dr David Christison; Thomas Dickson and Sir Arthur Mitchell; Gilbert Goudie and Adam B Richardson. On the right, the Marquess of Bute and Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell; Professor Sir William Turner and R W Cochrane Patrick; Eneas J G Mackay and Reginald McLeod; Dr Robert Munro and Joseph Anderson; Robert Carfrae and Professor Duns; John Taylor Brown and a medallion of a female head with ears of wheat (symbolising harvest – the period of year when the museum was opened). The body of the window was in cathedral glass.

In total, the building celebrated Scotland as an ancient and accomplished nation and little appears to have been remarked on publicly at the time about Findlay’s architectural endeavours. Most comments were in praise of his gift for the nation; no critical commentary seems to have been written on the design of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The choice of a Venetian Gothic style, contrasting soft red sandstone, which was later to prove inadequate to the Scottish climate, all intentionally contrasted with the architectural style and materials of the surrounding New Town, built uniform in a durable Craigleith sandstone. This cheaper red sandstone was also used in the Caledonian Hotel (1898–1903), for the Lauriston Fire Station (1897–1901) and for Edinburgh College of Art (1906). The new building’s political symbols also contrasted with the symbolism of British monarchy used in the street names of the New Town – which is precisely the message Findlay wanted to signal. His building also celebrated monarchy – but Scotland’s own monarchy.

### THE SCOTSMAN BUILDING

The first issue of *The Scotsman* had been on a Burns’ day, 25 January 1817. It later became acknowledged that the birth of *The Scotsman* was an important event in the history of Scotland. Its founders



were associated by the strongest spirit of resistance to the all-pervading, narrow-minded Toryism of the day. In their prospectus they protested against the servility of the Edinburgh press ... They and their successors, through good repute and through ill repute, have held firmly by those principles of liberty and moderation, formerly identified with the Whig party, but which under various names have now become almost the common property of the nation.<sup>66</sup>

*The Scotsman* had strong principles which it defended firmly, in addition to its formal commitment to impartiality and independence: it favoured widening of the franchise, free trade and opposition to limitations founded upon religious differences (it refused to take part in the anti-Catholic movement). By supporting the campaign of Gladstone in Midlothian, which Lord Rosebery had masterminded, *The Scotsman* participated in the rise of the Liberals in Scotland. But following Gladstone's adhesion to the policy of Irish Home Rule, *The Scotsman*, under its then editor Charles Cooper, showed opposition to Gladstone's scheme in the spring of 1886. The architecture and decoration of the Portrait Gallery can therefore be understood as an expression of cultural nationalism rather than political nationalism.<sup>67</sup> Although he did not think in terms of 'cultural nationalism', Findlay fitted that description, meaning that it is nonetheless viable to the historian to use the term. Findlay and Rosebery were Liberals whose agenda was to guarantee a recognition of Scotland's identity but more importantly safeguard the Union, and so oppose Home Rule for Ireland, and indeed Scotland. As noted above, Findlay was a friend of Blackie, and both shared an interest in the Celtic Revivalism of the late 19th century; which is reflected in the Gallery's frieze, and its use of Celtic lettering.<sup>68</sup>

The owners stated clearly in 1917 what the newspaper's politics were, and had been in Findlay's time:

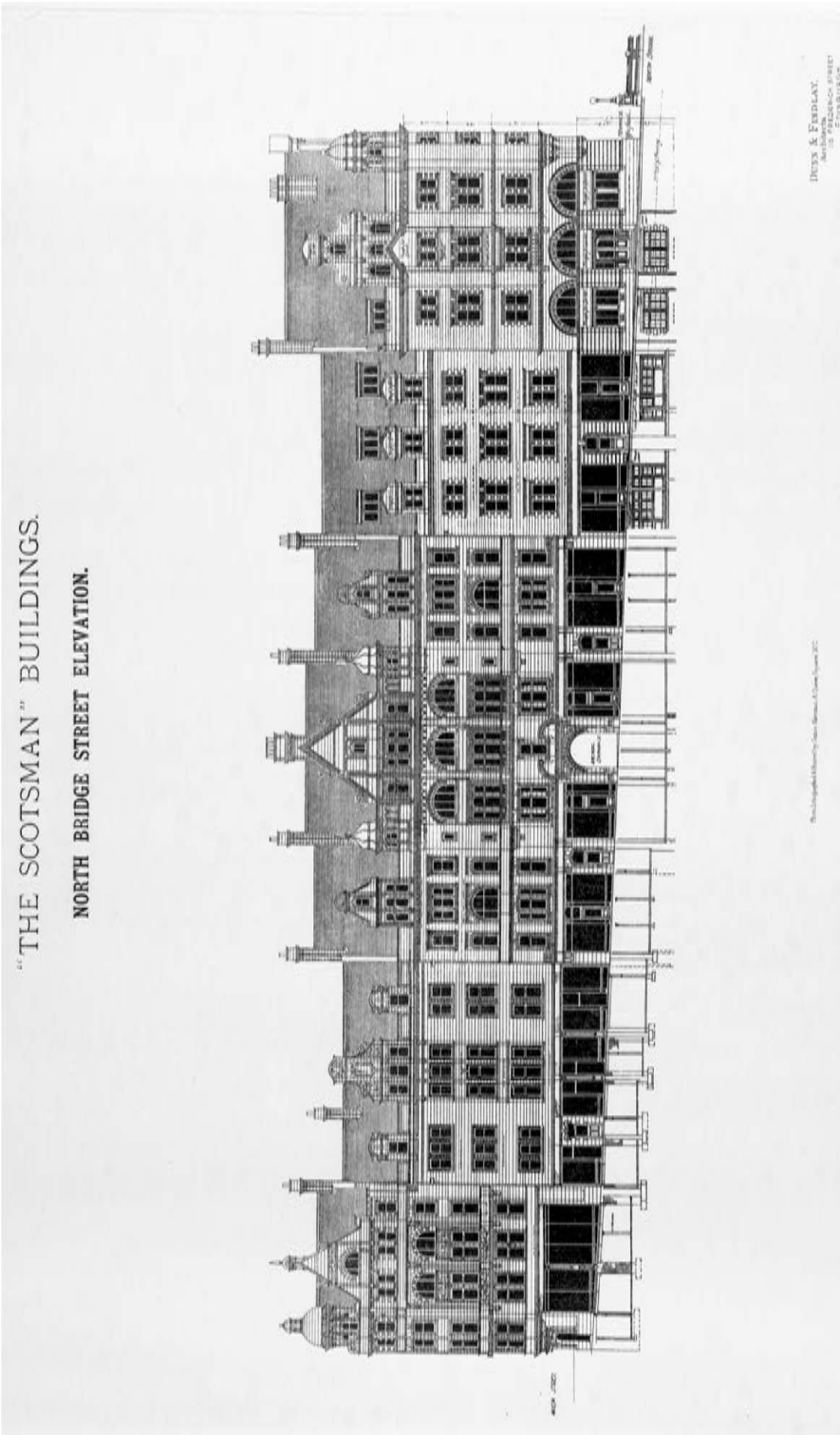
*The Scotsman* consistently and unflinchingly opposed all acts or proposals which would have the effect of weakening or destroying the control and authority of the Imperial Parliament within these islands, and of thereby weakening the unity

and power of the Empire ... It was due in no small measure to the influence and support of *The Scotsman* that Mr Gladstone chose Midlothian as the scene of his triumphant campaign of 1880, which had the result of placing a Liberal Government in power.<sup>69</sup>

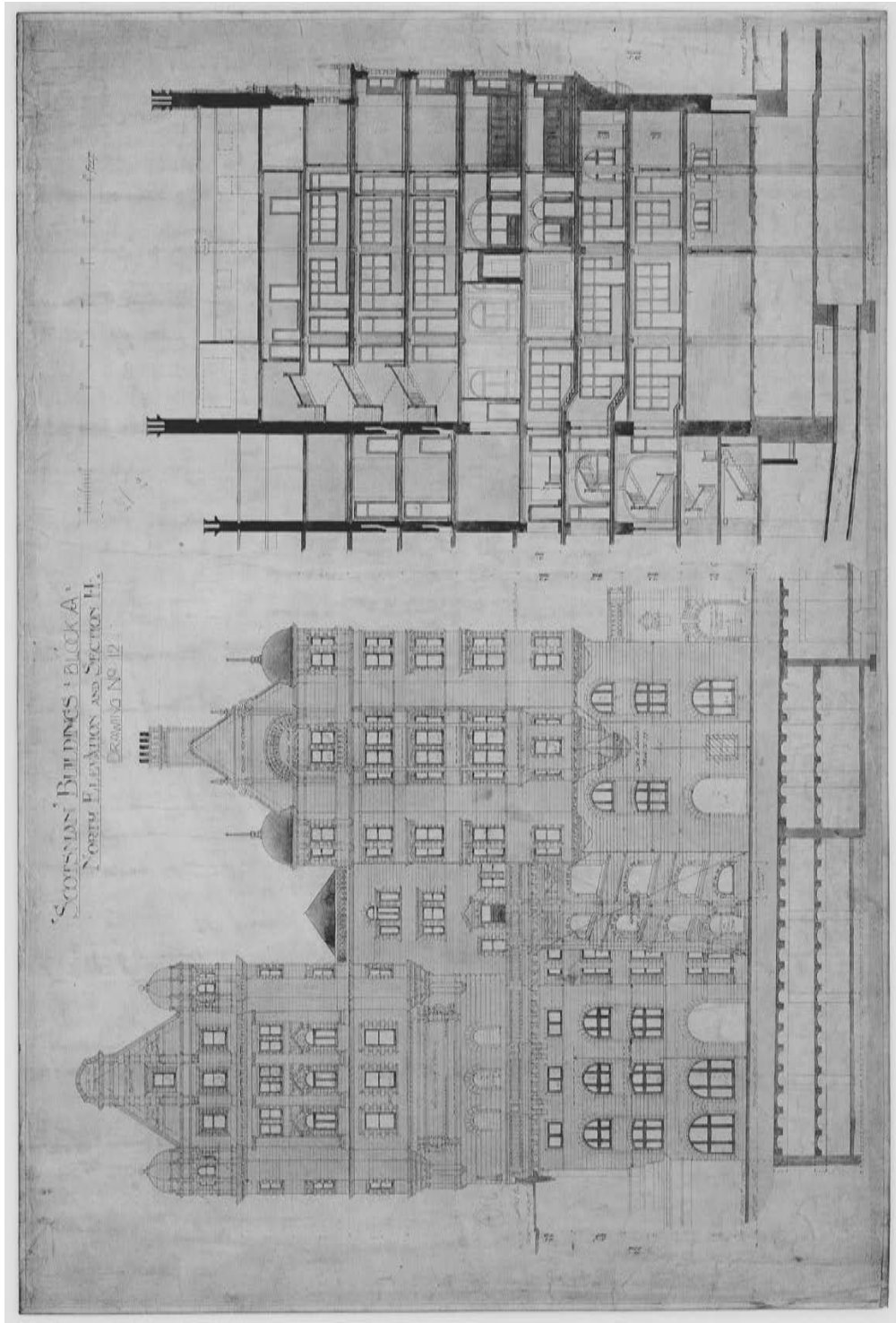
This was in the newspaper's centenary celebration volume, which also boasted that *The Scotsman* had 'grown up with the Empire'.<sup>70</sup> This book was written during the Great War when Scots' attitudes were overwhelmingly pro-union in solidarity when facing an enemy. At that time, and also at that of Findlay, the newspaper's agenda was, as we saw, pro-union, pro-empire and anti-Home Rule. Ten years later, at the Scottish National War Memorial (formally opened in 1927) at Edinburgh Castle, Scotland's ancient royal symbols were used by Lorimer (whom we met above as one of the young architects Findlay had patronised in the 1890s – now knighted as Sir Robert Lorimer) for commemorating the war dead. The intention was again not to display martial independence but to highlight and to memorialise Scotland's separate contribution – and indeed death toll – in the War.

John Ritchie Findlay died at Aberlour House on 16 October 1898, four years after James Bow Dunn entered into an architectural partnership with James Leslie Findlay, younger son of *The Scotsman*'s proprietor. *The Scotsman* building (20–52 North Bridge), designed by Dunn and Findlay and built 1899–1905, was a fulfilment of John Ritchie Findlay's vision. Following the reconstruction of the North Bridge and the demolition of the tenements on the North Bridge Street, as part of the extensive scheme of municipal improvement, the whole of the west side of the street, extending as far back as the Fishmarket Close, was bought in 1898 as one area<sup>71</sup> by the proprietors of *The Scotsman* for £120,000.<sup>72</sup> The adjoining site to the west, being the site on which the Fishmarket stood, was also bought from the Town Council.<sup>73</sup>

The stately *Scotsman* offices, all in dressed ashlar, with a frontage overlooking the Princes Street valley, constitute the largest building ever erected by private enterprise in the city; its cost (half a million pounds sterling) and



ILLUS 7 The Scotsman Buildings, North Bridge Street elevation, 1902. (© Courtesy of HES (Dunn and Findlay Collection))



ILLUS 8 The Scotsman Buildings, north elevation and sectional elevation, c 1900. (© Courtesy of HES (Dunn and Findlay Collection))

splendour was reported even in China.<sup>74</sup> The ‘Scotsman Buildings’ premises were advertised in 1902 (Illus 7 and 8); their central location, within distance from the General Post Office and Princes Street, ‘render the premises most desirable for high-class businesses of all kinds, shops, offices, warehouses and showrooms’.<sup>75</sup> It further enjoyed:

Railway Facilities: The Market Street Buildings have direct access to a private Railway Siding in the Waverley Station of the North British Railway, on which there is a convenient loading bank, from which, by means of electric lift for passengers and goods, there is thus direct communication to all the warehouses above. Fire-Proof construction: The latest methods and most approved materials have been employed throughout in the construction of these buildings with a view to securing safety from fires and otherwise. Architecture: The style of architecture adopted is a free treatment of Renaissance, with French Chateau features. Access: Great importance attaches to the convenience of access, and this point has especially been kept in view with regard to floors above street level. The Arcade between North Bridge Street and Cockburn Street supplies a direct communication between two important thoroughfares. Electric lighting is installed throughout ... Electric lifts are provided wherever requisite. All the most modern improvements in construction and equipment are adopted with a view to comfort and convenience, and the Buildings architecturally are unsurpassed in Edinburgh.<sup>76</sup>

The development was also Scotland’s biggest setpiece of Scotch Baronial development at the turn of the 20th century.<sup>77</sup> The tall new building was emblazoned in prominent symbolic sculpture and numerous Mannerist elements, illustrating the extending range of possibilities added by then to the now more flexible lexicon of the Baronial. On the north wall, facing the Bridge, a 10m-long panel inscribed ‘The Scotsman’, is enriched with thistles, replicating the newspaper’s masthead, and the big armorial crest above the shopping arcade (east face of *The Scotsman* building) is the pre-union Scottish royal arms; with two unicorns, and no English lion. The choice of a unicorn reminds us that, on the lawn at Aberlour, an estate purchased in 1885 with pleasant grounds and

fine gardens, a heraldic unicorn was re-erected by John Ritchie Findlay (1888) in replacement of the original, collapsed ‘large globe of polished granite’ which surmounted a ‘Doric column of Aberdeen Granite, 84 feet high’<sup>78</sup> – the beast clasping an iron staff with iron pennant pierced by the letter ‘F’. Of course, sprays of thistles and roses, lion and unicorn heraldry elsewhere on *The Scotsman* building denotes a united Britain but a union of two, implicitly equal nations.

## CONCLUSION

It seems, therefore, that Findlay used Scottish symbols to convey his sense of a distinct Scottish identity, as expressed at Well Court, the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and *The Scotsman* building. The style he favoured, referencing Scottish Renaissance architecture, was to appeal to a Scottish audience, and to *The Scotsman*’s readership. Politically, this attitude coincided with fuller governmental representation for Scotland, and the establishment of the Scottish Office in 1886, under the Secretary (later Secretary of State) for Scotland. But more strongly, Findlay’s agenda was to celebrate the even stronger pride of being British, thereby illustrating the ‘concentric loyalties’ of contemporary Scots (Smout 1989: 4); a devotion to Scotland and Scottishness, which is trumped by a devotion to Britain. Similarly, Anderson’s Scottish nationalism was expressed in cultural terms, and the use of neo-Venetian style may deliberately reference the economic and intellectual success of the Venetian state in the Renaissance. But possibly, the real message that Findlay wanted the viewer of his building to draw was that in using a non-British but European architectural style then Scotland, and Scottish culture, was outward-looking and cosmopolitan – implicitly, perhaps, more so than it had become by his own day.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## NOTES

- 1 *The Speaker: The Liberal Review* 1898: 484.
- 2 Prothero & Matthew 2014.
- 3 Soc Antiq Scot 1874: 5.
- 4 ‘There has been more destruction among this class of antiquities within the last hundred years, in Scotland, than ever there was before ...’ (Billings 1852: 4).
- 5 ‘We (Elgin Courant) understand that in the lands of Edinville, Kinermony, and others, in the parish of Aberlour, have been purchased from the Earl of Fife by Mr J R Findlay of Aberlour. This beautiful estate embraces the extensive range of grouse shootings presently rented by Mr Findlay from Lord Fife, together with upwards of two miles of salmon fishings on the Spey. It adjoins Mr Findlay’s estate of Aberlour, the fine mansion upon which is a conspicuous object in the valley of the Spey, and the whole will now form one of the finest residential and sporting properties in the Highlands of Banffshire, embracing, as it does, some of the best agricultural farms in the district, and extending from the top of Benrinnes to the Spey’ (*The Scotsman*, 7 July 1886; NRS, GD492/67: 68).
- 6 Anderson 1891: 20–4.
- 7 Soc Antiq Scot 1889: 94; Soc Antiq Scot 1890: 145.
- 8 Findlay 1894: 226–30.
- 9 Findlay 1882: 26.
- 10 *The Scotsman*, 17 October 1898: 7.
- 11 MacKechnie 2020.
- 12 Findlay 1880: 94–5.
- 13 Findlay 1875a; Findlay 1875b: 124–39.
- 14 NLS La.IV.17 fols. 3192–4.
- 15 Marshall 2009: 140.
- 16 Chambers 1879: 25; *The Scotsman*, 30 April 1932: 12; Marshall 2009: 157.
- 17 There was no ‘crofter question there’ – crofter agitation having been diminished by the 1886 Act (Macleod 1896: 749).
- 18 *The Scotsman*, 1 December 1898: 5.
- 19 27 June 1884; 4 July 1884; 7 November 1884.
- 20 Macleod 1896: 745.
- 21 Royal Academy 1884: 47.
- 22 NRS GD492/67: 106.
- 23 Canmore SC 695275.
- 24 Canmore SC 695276.
- 25 Gifford et al 1984: 227.
- 26 Findlay 1885: 3.
- 27 Findlay 1885: 4.
- 28 Findlay 1885: 6–7.
- 29 Chambers 1855: 8.
- 30 Chambers 1855: 2.
- 31 *The Building News*, 2 January 1885; 23 August 1889; and 1 November 1889.
- 32 The arrangement of polygonal turrets with multi-corbelling was again used by Mitchell and Wilson for the Earl of Rosebery at Hawes Inn, South Queensferry.
- 33 Macleod 1896: 749.
- 34 Glendinning & MacKechnie 2019: 223.
- 35 NRS GD492/67: 2.
- 36 Miller 1886: 377–89.
- 37 *The Builder*, 1886: 432.
- 38 Royal Academy 1885: 64.
- 39 Geddie 1896: 140.
- 40 McKinstry 1991: 110–12.
- 41 Gifford et al 1984: 283–4.
- 42 This was a government body, founded in 1727, to encourage Scottish industry.
- 43 NRS NG7/1/1: 5.
- 44 Smellie 1782: 24.
- 45 Fraser 2019.
- 46 Erskine 1836: 65.
- 47 Gifford 2014: 75.
- 48 Laing 1855: 284–94; Macleod 1896: 746.
- 49 The monument was conceived in 1851 and designed by John T Rothead in 1857. The delay in its completion was due to differing opinions regarding the monument’s symbolic meaning (Gifford & Walker 2002: 623–5; Coleman 2014: 151–68).
- 50 Anderson 1870–5.
- 51 ‘France n°2. Plate n°2–3: Monastery of St Benedict. These two plates illustrate a portion supposed to be the “Salle des Hôtes” of the ancient Abbey of Cluny. The building faces one of the streets in Cluny, and is a very beautiful specimen of 14th-century work. The clever treatment of the wall space below the windows cannot fail to be observed, as well as the arrangement of the windows, which fully express the idea of a spacious and well-lighted hall’ (Anderson [1870–5]).
- 52 Thomson 2011: 30–1.
- 53 *The Scotsman*, 17 October 1898: 7.
- 54 *The British Architect*, 20 December 1889: 451–2; *The Builder* 1890: 115; *The Building News*, 1890: 250; Mackay & Rinder 1917: 335.
- 55 *The British Architect*, 1 January 1892: 6.
- 56 *The British Architect*, 1 January 1892: 15; *The Building News*, 1895: 898.

- 57 *The Building News*, 1892: 590; Mackay & Rinder 1917: 259–60.
- 58 *The British Architect*, 1 January 1892: 15.
- 59 Discussion on the statue of Mary, Queen of Scots to be erected started in 1892, and was exhibited at the RSA in 1896 (*The Building News*, 1892: 418; *The Building News*, 1896: 258, 880; Mackay & Rinder 1917: 336).
- 60 The idea of producing mural paintings was already current in Edinburgh, following Phoebe Traquair's work (1885) at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children.
- 61 Gifford et al 1984: 571.
- 62 Gifford et al 1984: 284.
- 63 *The British Architect*, 27 May 1898: 374.
- 64 Smailes 1985: 49; Thomson 2011: plates 17 & 21.
- 65 *The Builder*, 1895: 33.
- 66 Cooper 1897: 220.
- 67 Coleman 2014: 152.
- 68 Dewey 1974: 30–70.
- 69 *The Scotsman* 1917: 43.
- 70 *The Scotsman* 1917: 45.
- 71 ECA, Town Council Minute of 13 May 1898 (SL1/2/23).
- 72 *The Building News*, 10 March 1899: 339; *The British Architect*, 2 June 1899: 393.
- 73 ECA, Town Council Minute of 13 May 1898 (SL1/2/25).
- 74 *Peking Gazette*, 27 February 1917: 5.
- 75 NRS GD282/13/337.
- 76 NRS GD282/13/337.
- 77 Glendinning & MacKechnie 2019: 222.
- 78 Groome 1884: 27.

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- NRS GD492/67, 'Postscript of letter from Mr Findlay, 3 Rothesay Terrace, Edinburgh, 6 June 1887'.
- NRS NG7/1/1: 5. 'Minute of the Board of Manufactures, Edinburgh, 29th January 1884: present the Lord Justice General, Lord Kinnear, Arthur Halkett, Baronet, John

Ritchie Findlay, Esq. Investment of £10,000 in Government Securities'.

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- SL1/2/25, Town Council Minutes 1899–1900 (pp 214, 359, 390), Minute of 8 May 1900: recommending general approval of plans of Scotsman buildings in North Bridge Street. Minute of 22 May 1900: recommending general approval of elevation plans of buildings to be erected on the west side of North Bridge Street and the High Street (Mitchell Thomson, Lord Provost).

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