

## Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849–1932): the recording and preservation of monuments

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Gerard Baldwin Brown was born on 31 October 1849 in London. He was the only son of James Baldwin Brown, a prominent Nonconformist Minister of liberal tendencies, and his wife Elizabeth, the daughter of William Gerard Leifchild and sister of the sculptor Henry Stormonth Leifchild (who amongst his other commissions designed the extraordinary but now destroyed Robertson mortuary chapel at Warriston Cemetery).

Sir George Macdonald (1935) in his detailed obituary in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* suggested that Baldwin Brown inherited from his father:

not only vigour of intellect and force of character, but also a certain strain of austerity which remained with him to the end, manifesting itself chiefly in a singularly high sense of duty. The artistic element in his mental equipment seems rather to have come from his distaff side.

The young Gerard was sent to school at Uppingham. Oriel College, Oxford, followed. He rowed and ran for the university and it was possibly as a result of these extra-curricular activities that he only gained a second in Classical Moderations in 1871. However, this was followed by a first in *Litterae Humaniores* two years later and the award of the Chancellor's English Essay Prize in 1874. This was published in the same year under the title *The short periods at which art has remained at its zenith in the various countries*. (This clearly written essay no doubt played a significant part in his choice as Professor of Fine Art in Edinburgh five years later.)

The subsequent election to a Fellowship at Brasenose was appreciated by his family not just in its own right but because it was only recently that Dissenters had been granted equality of treatment at Oxford and Cambridge. Baldwin Brown's first decision for a career was to become a practising artist. Accordingly he enrolled at the South Kensington School of Art. The experience he gained there was of value to him in his eventual career, as was the work which he undertook in his uncle's studio during these years.

On 16 July 1880 the University of Edinburgh appointed Baldwin Brown, one of eight candidates, to the newly endowed Watson-Gordon Chair of Fine Art. This was the first chair of its nature in Britain, founded as a memorial to Sir John Watson-Gordon, former President of the Royal Scottish Academy. It was established for 'the promotion and advancement of the Fine Arts and prosecution of the studies of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, and other branches

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ILLUS 1 Pilkington Jackson's medallion of Baldwin Brown, 1925

of Art connected therewith, in Scotland'. The incumbent was required to teach but the university took care to specify that they were not merely seeking to teach a technical discipline:

the Watson-Gordon Class-room is by no means to be employed as a technical school: it is not to be used as an academy for the practice of drawing, or any other branch of manual dexterity on the part of the students . . . the object of the Chair will be to import full knowledge and correct ideas with regard to 'the History and Theory of the Fine Arts'.

When he took up the appointment in 1880 he was just 30. He was to hold that chair for 50 years, resigning at the time of his jubilee in 1930. He died on 12 July 1932. In 1882 Baldwin Brown had married Maude Annie Terrell of Exeter. There were no children of the marriage. She died in 1931 after nearly 50 years of marriage (illus 2).

Baldwin Brown was elected a Fellow of this Society in 1884. He first became a member of Council in 1903 and from 1913 until his death he served as one of the Secretaries of Foreign Correspondence. He gave the Rhind Lectures in 1910 on the subject of 'Art of the Period of the Teutonic Migrations'. In the brief notice of his death in the *Proceedings* (67 (1932-3), 5) it was recorded that 'though a man of wide knowledge and scholarship, was of a modest and gentle nature, which endeared him to a very large circle of friends within this Society and throughout the city'.

This Society was not the only such body of which he was a member. Baldwin Brown also worked hard for the Old Edinburgh Club and the Scottish Ecclesiological Society. In time, his publications brought him many honours, including Honorary Fellowship of his old Oxford college, honorary degrees and honorary membership of societies throughout Europe.

In 1880 all that was still to come. 1880 is from one perspective not long ago. Three of my four grandparents were alive in 1880 and I knew them all, though when I add that one



ILLUS 2 Mrs Maude Baldwin Brown

remembered campaigning for Gladstone in a pony and trap, we are reminded that 1880 was indeed a very different world. The Edinburgh to which Baldwin Brown came was still reeling from Gladstone's Midlothian campaigns of 1879 and 1880. At the general election of March and April 1880 Disraeli was defeated and Gladstone swept to power with a majority of 137 over the Conservatives: this was the start of his Second Ministry.

#### RESTORATION AND REACTION

It was during Gladstone's Second Ministry that the Act for the Protection of Ancient Monuments was passed in 1882, 11 years after the Bill was first prepared and at the seventh attempt. This was the first conservation measure passed by a British government, and it is therefore perhaps not surprising that it took several years to reach the statute book, though it did post-date the earliest Swedish measure by over 200 years! Nor was it on the statute book when Baldwin Brown arrived in Edinburgh. The National Trust was still 15 years into the future, though the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings had been founded three years before.

The 40 years before Baldwin Brown's appointment had seen considerable debate about the restoration of buildings, particularly churches and castles in Britain and Europe (for a recent discussion of this debate see Jokilehto 1999). In 1845 the newly-founded Ecclesiological Society had as one of its aims the restoration of English churches to their former glory. In achieving this aim, later modifications to churches would be swept away in order to create a restored building in one style, preferably the Early English or Decorated. This often entailed destroying not only later parts of the building, but also wall plaster in order to expose the 'natural clean surface', as well as removing box pews, galleries and other modern fittings. It was specifically stated that the better choice was to 'recover the original scheme of the edifice as conceived by the first builder' rather than 'retain the additions and alterations of subsequent ages' (*The Ecclesiologist*, 1 (1842), 65). In this way a building appropriate to the correct liturgy might be created and if this meant destroying the work of earlier centuries, so be it.

This destruction — for that is what it was — produced a reaction. Those opposed to restoration insisted that a building belonged to a specific historic and cultural context and that it was not possible to recreate this with the same significance at another time. What should be undertaken was the protection and conservation of the historic fabric. In the final analysis, the historic buildings formed the cultural heritage (Jokilehto 1999, 159). These years gradually saw the clarification of the principles of architectural conservation, but not before much ink was spilt on the way. In 1846, for example, one proposal offered different approaches including the so-called 'eclectic' approach, 'where the building was evaluated on the basis of its distinctive qualities and its history, and repaired or remodelled accordingly in order to reach the best possible result' (Freeman 1846).

One of those most closely associated with the debate, and indeed one of the most famous restorers, was George Gilbert Scott. Although his restorations were criticized by some, he participated vigorously in the debate and contributed towards a better understanding of the principles of conservation. In 1850, for example, he identified what we would now call ancient monuments: 'ancient structures or ruins that had lost their original function, and could now be mainly seen as testimonies of a past civilisation'. John Ruskin's contribution was to argue against any restoration and in favour of maintenance in order to retain the original structures as long as possible (Ruskin 1880, VI, XVIII). His *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* was published in the year of Baldwin Brown's birth. By 1865 the debate had advanced to the position whereby the RIBA could produce guidelines, *Conservation of Ancient Monuments and Remains*.

This discussion is not of mere antiquarian interest, but vitally important to understanding how Baldwin Brown came to choose his area — or rather areas — of study. How could ancient buildings be protected if we did not understand them properly and know what was ancient? — a particular problem as the restorers themselves did not distinguish between the original structure and their own work. The necessity to understand ancient buildings was one of the threads running through so much of Baldwin Brown's writings.

## THE MAN AND HIS ACADEMIC WORK

Having examined the background to Baldwin Brown's world of monuments, it is now time to turn to the man himself. It is difficult for the historian to determine the motives of any person in the past. Autobiographies or memoirs can too often be *post hoc* justifications. Few people set down at an early age their career aspirations, and even when they did, those aspirations might change as they matured. Furthermore, to paraphrase Dr Johnson, the memory is 'improved' with the passage of the years.

In the case of Baldwin Brown, however, we do have several statements of his philosophy and his aspirations. In his essay for the Chancellor's Prize published in 1874, for example, he argued for the close relationship between art and national life:

The life of a nation exhibits itself in various deeds and works and recorded thoughts. We study these in history and monuments, and compare, correct and enlarge, as we study, our conceptions of the true aims and of the strength and weakness of the people . . . The Art of a nation is thus an organic product of its life (Baldwin Brown 1874, 6, 7).

In his inaugural lecture he elaborated, arguing that the history of art was not a continuous development but a series of periods and what was important was the connection between the artist and his age (Baldwin Brown 1880). Baldwin Brown thus recognized and emphasized the social relationships between art and the artist. Buildings, sculpture and paintings all had to be related to the social conditions within which they were conceived: they illustrated the ideals and life of the people who built them. In short, art was part of society.

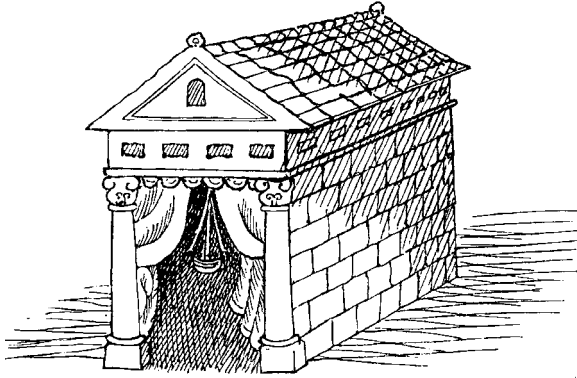
His early book *From Schola to Cathedral* (Baldwin Brown 1886) can be said to exemplify his approach and this is emphasized by the sub-title: *A Study of Early Christian Architecture and its Relation to the Life of the Church*. In this book he sought to understand the origins of Christian church buildings and the derivation of Christian art, exploring his thesis with relationship to the architecture of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and the Jews as well as to that of the Romans, and to church liturgy and always with the relevant literary sources to hand. The scope is very broad and is based upon wide reading of Roman, Christian and Talmudic sources as well as contemporary discussions (illus 3 & 4).

Baldwin Brown's earliest lectures focused on Greek art, but he steadily moved forward in time, and west and northwards in space, through the Romans, as we have seen, to northern Europe and the Middle Ages. His range of interest was very wide, extending from the art of the cave-man to art and industry, and from Greek sculptures in country houses in Scotland, glass beads found in a cist at Dalmeny, and the Birrens Roman altars to Mesoamerican art.

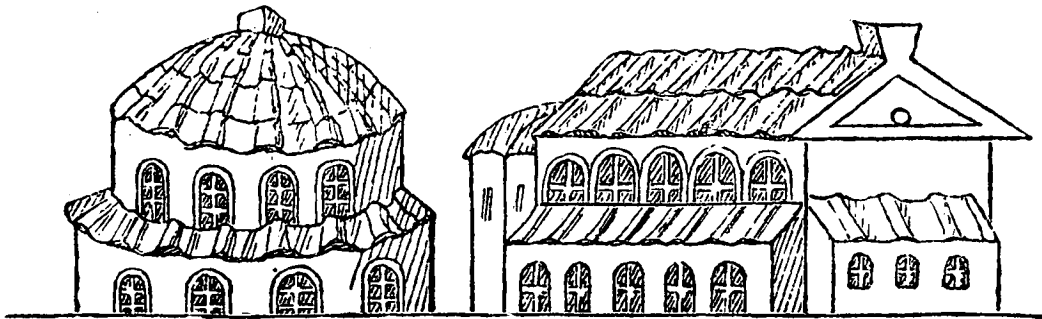
His magisterial treatment of Anglo-Saxon England is his major work, upon which his reputation rests, as was recognized at the time (Macdonald 1935; Talbot Rice 1949). The first volume of his *The Arts in Early England* appeared in 1903 (illus 5), with the second half of the sixth and final volume being prepared after his death by Eric Hyde Lord Sexton and published in 1937.

The range of *The Arts in Early England* is enormous, encompassing architecture, sculpture, furniture, artefacts, painting and manuscripts. It looks back to Roman predecessors and trespasses into Scotland to examine *inter alia* the Ruthwell Cross, which together with the Bewcastle Cross and the Lindisfarne Gospels were considered in a single volume. After his analysis of material culture, Baldwin Brown sought to place art in its wider setting, examining the shape of society and why it was that way, the settlement of the country and place-names, the origin of towns, the conversion to Christianity (which incidentally brought Ireland into the frame), the organization of the church and its relationship to society; and that was just one volume. Two volumes consider artefacts and their manufacture, but always in relation to their use, in cemeteries for example, which led into a discussion of location of cemeteries, types of burials, orientation, tomb furniture and the funeral feast. These last two volumes remain the starting point for any research into Anglo-Saxon artefacts.





ILLUS 3 Baldwin Brown's drawing of a synagogue in *From Schola to Cathedral*

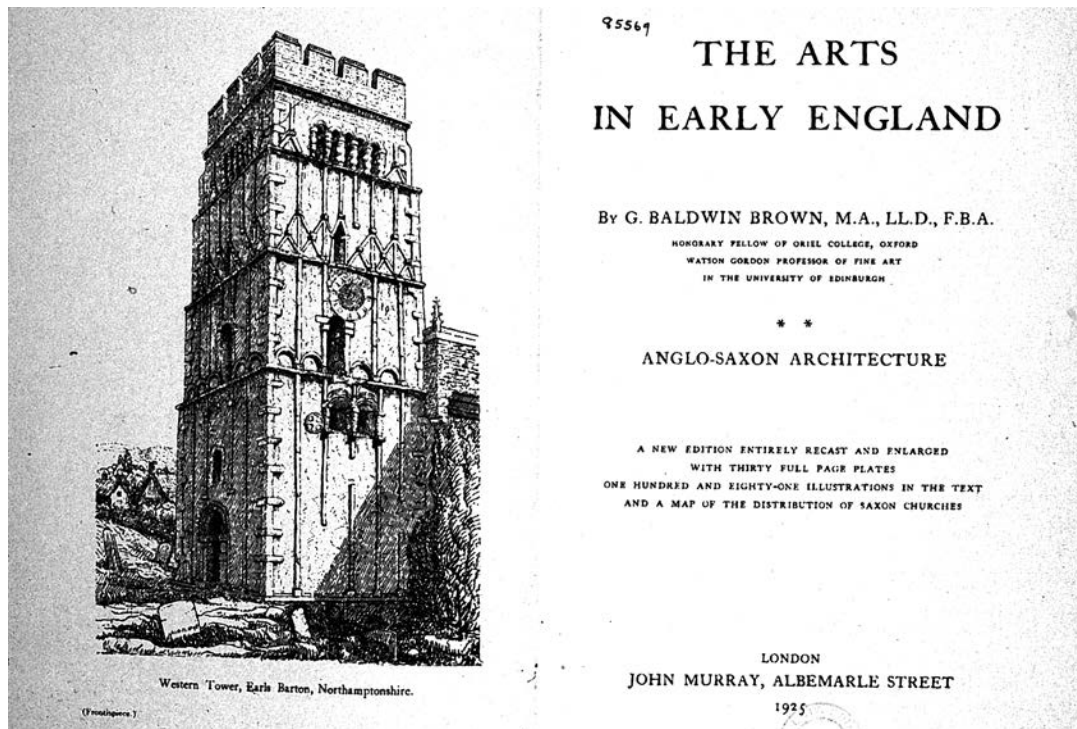


ILLUS 4 Baldwin Brown's drawing of two churches in *From Schola to Cathedral*

As one of Baldwin Brown's successors, our Fellow Eric Fernie, stated in 1983, the volume on *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* is still the only treatment of the subject to combine attention to detail with an attempt to see it as a whole, a fact which may go some way to explaining the number of his conjectures which have subsequently been substantiated (Fernie 1983, 8). His contemporaries, we may note, were less charitable. Edinburgh University's official obituary (*University of Edinburgh Journal*, 5 (1932–3), 178–80) recorded that 'he worked leisurely but persistently on this great task' and while acknowledging that it was too early for a final estimate of *The Arts in Early England*:

as a repository of all the essential facts . . . it must remain a standard work for many years. Its theoretical aspects are more in doubt. It has already been said that Professor Baldwin Brown worked in an obscure field; in a sense he worked in a limited field, finding the material in England and Scotland sufficient to absorb his energies.

The writer clearly preferred other areas and other eras. Baldwin Brown's *The Arts in Early England* is more than a study of buildings and artefacts; it is nothing less than a history of Anglo-Saxon England, written from the point of view of an art historian. The title *The Life of Saxon*



ILLUS 5 The title page of *The Arts in Early England*

*England in relation to the Arts* adequately encapsulates his social history treatment of Anglo-Saxon England. *The Arts in Early England* also indicates the strong relationship which Baldwin Brown saw between knowledge and preservation. In the second edition of the first volume, published 23 years after its predecessor, Baldwin Brown included a preface drawing attention to how much his choice of subject was determined by his need to understand ancient buildings. The volume, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, contains a list of all known Anglo-Saxon churches: 182 examples in the first edition rising to 240 in the second. His first edition, as he notes in the preface to the second, had encouraged others to look more closely at their buildings and, moreover, to inform Baldwin Brown of their discoveries. Baldwin Brown recognized the limitations of his approach and looked forward to the creation of a definitive list through the work of the Royal Commission, the Ancient Monuments Commission as he called it. Baldwin Brown went on to say 'it is really a duty of national moment to make understood and valued by local authorities and the public at large the priceless treasure that time has spared to us in our older buildings both monumental and domestic' (Baldwin Brown 1925, xiii): it could not be said better today.

#### THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

It is now time to turn to Baldwin Brown's political activities in the fields of monument recording and protection. I have already mentioned that he was appointed to his chair in Edinburgh before the passing of the first Act for the Protection of Ancient Monuments. By 1880, the Bill had already been introduced six times by Sir John Lubbock, but the government eventually took the Bill under its wing and it duly received the Royal Assent on 18 August 1882. Eighteen years later

its provisions were extended under the 1900 Act. By this time, however, the pressure for a better protective measure to be passed was growing. In 1896 David Murray had re-issued his Presidential Address to the Glasgow Archaeological Society in the form of a booklet entitled *An Archaeological Survey of the United Kingdom: The Preservation and Protection of Our Ancient Monuments* (Murray 1896).

This linking of survey and protection was taken up by Baldwin Brown in his magisterial review *The Care of Ancient Monuments* published in 1905 and dedicated, incidentally, to his long-time friend Canon Rawnsley, one of the founders of the National Trust 10 years before. *The Care of Ancient Monuments* opened by offering very practical definitions of monuments which are as relevant today as they were then. Indeed his opening statement would serve well as the mission statement for a policy document relating to sustainability and the built heritage. It reads:

[Monuments] are heirlooms from the past and appeal to the piety and patriotism of the present. Their number can never be increased, but on the contrary as time goes on they must necessarily become fewer. As the decay or destruction of any one of them involves an increase of value in those that endure, so the care of them will become every year a matter of more and more urgent duty (Baldwin Brown 1905, 3).

He also quoted with approval (1905, 29) Montalembert's phrase 'To preserve the fabrics which testify to the glory of the land, is to make its past live again for the profit of its present and of its future'.

Baldwin Brown acknowledged the importance of ancient monuments and historic buildings in providing a sense of place:

The chief immovable objects are buildings, including the rude stone monuments of prehistoric times. The interest of these again may be historical or artistic, or may partake of the nature of both, but apart from this there is a practical distinction between two classes of architectural monuments that plays an important part in monument legislation. There are on the one side, in every district and in every ancient town, certain outstanding buildings or other structures of which every inhabitant could give off-hand a general list, and which would be included in any limited inventory of the chief historical and artistic treasures of a state. But there are also on the other side a much larger number of humbler domestic relics of the older days, in the shape of town houses, country cottages, street fountains, rustic bridges, sign boards, and the like, which would never find a place in any state inventory, but which combine to give their picturesque charm to our more ancient towns and hamlets. The preservation of these is a matter of local rather than of national importance (Baldwin Brown 1905, 23).

This division between national and local importance underlies the classification of listed buildings today while the creation of a sense of place is fundamental to our attempts to define and protect the historic landscape or environment.

*The Care of Ancient Monuments* ranged widely over ancient monuments and historic buildings, artefacts and Treasure Trove. He defined monuments as 'roughly speaking all old structures, and all the objects we preserve in museums': a view that would not be recognized today. This definition brought him to consider Treasure Trove. He investigated the history of the protection of ancient monuments. He discussed why monuments should be protected, and asked



the very pertinent question, '*quis custodiet ipsos custodes*', answering that it was public opinion. However, he went on to say that as 'public opinion, when left to itself, is in its very nature an unorganized force, acting spasmodically upon stimulus supplied by some striking event, or by the initiative of individuals who can magnetize their fellows', he proposed the establishment of 'some permanent agency representing the public mind at its best' (Baldwin Brown 1905, 32). Thus he foreshadowed the formation of the Ancient Monuments Boards created by the 1913 Ancient Monuments Act, and he correctly acknowledged that protection cannot run far ahead of public opinion. Yet he raised the possibility of compulsory purchase and approved of the licensing of excavations, the latter still not undertaken today. He recognized the role of national and local archaeological societies and their publications. He distilled the arguments about restoration into 10 pages and had some sharp words to say about bad repairs to historic buildings (Baldwin Brown 1905, 46–56). His arguments throughout were framed within a review of legislation for the protection of monuments in a wide range of foreign countries, as had Murray's. Today this is a fascinating glimpse into a different, and lost, world of German principalities and Balkan provinces, and this is matched by his language, at times closer to that of Jane Austen than our own. It also mirrors our changed place in the world for, to Baldwin Brown, we are 'buyers rather than sellers' in the art world (Baldwin Brown 1905, 66). Yet *The Care of Ancient Monuments* remains a vitally important book with many messages as relevant today as they were when first consigned to paper nearly a century ago. For those now working in this field, it stands with the Office of Works statement of 1913 on the rules to be applied to the conservation of ruins as the twin rocks on which our approach to the care of ancient monuments is founded today.

Baldwin Brown castigated the present state of the protective legislation and proposed the establishment of a Royal Commission to 'inventorise' across the wider field of ancient monuments and after this process of 'inventorisation, which would secure us definitive information as to the artistic and historical treasures we at present possess, would come measures of protection'. At that point Baldwin Brown revealed his vision for he emphasized what the mere act of publication could do 'to bring owners to a proper sense of the value of the monuments under their control . . . even without legal powers of compulsion' (Baldwin Brown 1905, 11). But, keeping his feet firmly on the ground, Baldwin Brown clearly saw the powers of 'inventorisation' and protection placed within the same body, just one of his aims which he was not to achieve.

Baldwin Brown's views on the necessity to create an inventory of ancient monuments as the first step in their protection found a ready ear in Sir John Sinclair, the Secretary of State for Scotland. Support came from within Scotland and, as we all know, the Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historical Monuments were founded in 1908, the first, the Scottish, being formally inaugurated by Letters Patent on 7 February 1908 with Wales following on 10 August and England on 27 October (Dunbar 1992, 15–17). The integration of recording and protection so favoured by Baldwin Brown was underlined by the composition of the Scottish Commission. The Chairman was Sir Herbert Maxwell, a Galloway landowner, President of this Society, friend of Pitt Rivers (the first Inspector of Ancient Monuments), and a great benefactor, placing in state care several monuments on his estate. He was supported not only by Thomas Ross of MacGibbon and Ross fame and Baldwin Brown himself but also by W T Oldrieve, principal architect in the Scottish Office of Works, physically demonstrating the unity of recording and protection which Baldwin Brown had preached and which he saw as two sides of the same coin. The Secretary was of course A O Curle, the subject of a separate treatment in this series.

John Dunbar's review of the first 80 years of the Scottish Commission records Baldwin Brown's involvement. He served as a Commissioner from 1908 until 1932, the year of his death, and chaired the committee which supervised the preparation of the reports on the architectural

structures (Dunbar 1992, 22). As Dunbar carefully notes, ‘in the absence of a fixed target-date, the timescale for completion was bound to lengthen as soon as Curle’s fieldwork’ demonstrated that the number of monuments was ‘found greatly to exceed in number and importance those previously known to exist’. The possibility of protecting monuments at one stroke through their inclusion in a revised Schedule to a new Act of Parliament as Baldwin Brown had hoped (Baldwin Brown 1905, 11) was disappearing into the future and this was one reason for the passing of a new Ancient Monuments Act in 1913.

### THE RESTORATION OF BUILDINGS

There is another area where Baldwin Brown’s practical approach found expression, his attempt to square the circle of restoration and the relationship of new build to old buildings. He acknowledged the deep divisions in respect to restoration and after consideration of the problem declared himself an ‘opportunist’ acknowledging that ‘each case . . . must be dealt with on its merits’ (Baldwin Brown 1905, 46–7). He accepted that there was a case for restoration when ‘there is a demand on the part of a community for accommodation in an ancient building that in its original or its impaired condition cannot supply what is needed’, citing as an example the desire of a congregation to recognise the antiquity of the site of its church and restore a ruined part of it or erect a new aisle rather than move to a new site. He rejected the division of ancient monuments into two classes, ‘*dead monuments*, i.e. those belonging to a past civilisation or serving obsolete purposes, and *living monuments*, i.e. those which continue to serve the purposes for which they were originally intended’ (Baldwin Brown 1905, 48), a division which, incidentally, nevertheless broadly corresponds to that division between ancient monuments and historic buildings which is enshrined in today’s legislation and working practices. He feared that approach might lead to the sterilization of many buildings and preferred:

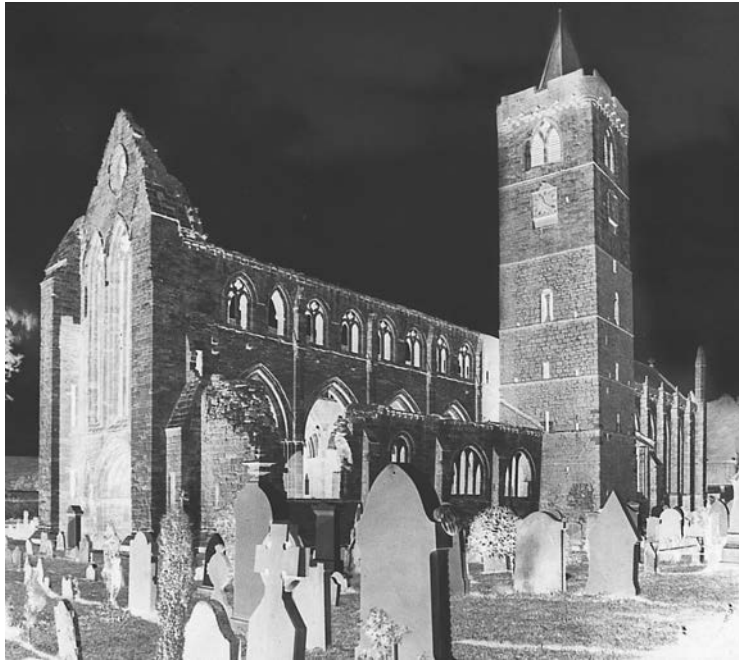
to make our ancient monuments as far as possible all living ones, and so to link the present to the past by imperishable bonds. To secure this . . . one must be prepared for some sacrifice on the aesthetic side.

He thus rejected what he saw as the purist view of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and embraced the restoration of the naves of Dunblane Cathedral (illus 6) and Hexham Abbey, while acknowledging that, in the case of Hexham:

to one who has loved the place it can never be the same again. Still the loss must be accepted, for the sake of feeling that the life of the building, in its relation to the growing town of which it is the centre, will be quickened and made more real, and its extended spaces will promise accommodation to generations of citizens yet unborn.

One can only admire the manner in which Baldwin Brown wrestled with these most difficult problems, openly acknowledging the loss to his own personal appreciation of a building through the necessity to accept what he saw as a wider good.

Baldwin Brown was, as might be expected from someone who had wrestled with these problems, forthright with projects of which he disapproved, such as the restoration of Iona



ILLUS 6 Dunblane Cathedral before restoration (above) and after. (Crown copyright: Historic Scotland)

Abbey (illus 7), ‘the hand of the restorer has come to be laid on a fabric that only asked to be properly supervised and then let alone with its romantic memories about it . . . The restoration is for restoration’s sake, and is in every way to be deplored’ (Baldwin Brown 1905, 50). Not all might agree, but at least we know where Baldwin Brown is coming from. Wherever possible, Baldwin Brown preferred to retain the past in all its imperfections and let it speak for itself, yet when new build was necessary the architect should be ‘trusted to express himself with freedom in the new work while preserving a harmonious relation between the new and the old’ (Baldwin Brown 1905, 56).

There were other areas where Baldwin Brown was free with his opinions. He wrote on ‘Urban legislation in the interests of amenity’ deploring the lack of a:

Ministry of Fine Arts, or some consultative committee on art, who could advise when sites come into the market, or buildings are pulled down, as to the form the building should take, or about improvements or modifications in the design would conduce to the future dignity and beauty of the city (Baldwin Brown 1904, 69).

He clearly liked commissions and committees and here anticipated the Royal Fine Art Commission.

His paper on ‘Industrial Museums in their Relationship to Art’ delivered to the Museums Association in Edinburgh in 1901 allowed him to express trenchant views on the Great Exhibition of 1851, ‘in looking back, one doubts whether any such collection of horrors in the form of objects exhibiting every conceivable artistic fault was ever brought together in the world’. He had caustic words for many of the museums of the day, in particular those in South Kensington, where he had commenced his working life, suggesting that they often displayed the wrong objects. More displays were needed of objects which could demonstrate to the modern world what former craftsmen had achieved through the application of simple, natural styles and materials, though he did acknowledge ‘everyone who came into a museum thus disposed should have his sense of beauty in form delighted, and hence refined and educated, by one or two reproductions of selected pieces of Greek plastic and decorative work that represent in this department the very perfection of which art is capable’ (Baldwin Brown 1901, 13). This is Baldwin Brown at his best, seeking relevance of the past for the future, seeking to improve on the present, polemical, yet with his beloved Greek art not far away.

#### BALDWIN BROWN’S LEGACY

It is necessary to consider the legacy of Baldwin Brown. What impresses me most is his scholarship, his ability to think, his forthrightness in expressing the results of this cerebral activity, the lucidity with which he expressed these views and the constructive and innovative actions he proposed, all the while seeking to harness and mould public opinion. He was not always right but more often than not he was. Anyone who has grappled with the philosophical and practical problems of protection and conserving ancient monuments and historic buildings can only marvel at his clarity of thought.

He appears to have formed no school of followers. The *History of the University of Edinburgh* (1933, 228), however, did note that ‘no Professor of his time has been more effective in opening new windows in the minds of Scottish students’. Indeed all his obituarists agree that he was a good teacher. I suspect his single-minded devotion to his own voyage of discovery precluded





ILLUS 7 Iona Abbey before restoration (above) and after. (Crown copyright: Historic Scotland)



the possibility of encouraging the same level of research in others. Baldwin Brown's enduring legacy is, of course, the Royal Commission, in the establishment of which his publication, authority and, in the classic manner, contacts, were so important. But Baldwin Brown did have other legacies.

First, there is his legacy of publications, a substantial and wide-ranging collection. It would be fair to say that not all his judgements have stood the test of time, but the revisions would not have been possible without his pioneering work.

Second, there is his approach to his subject, perhaps characterized as the writing of social history from the point of view of the art historian. Here his monumental *The Arts of Early England* stands as his exemplar.

On what might be termed the practical side, there are I think two further legacies. First, he sought to make his subject relevant, exploring such questions as the relationship of old buildings and new work, and publishing several papers justifying the study of art and architecture, including 'The Place of Art in Human Life', delivered at Aberdeen University on 18 October 1918, in which he did not shirk the problem of seeking to make relevant his subject at a time of great personal suffering for so many people. Although not in the same league as John Ruskin and William Morris, Baldwin Brown shared many of their concerns, including the importance of craftsmen and craftsmanship and an interest in establishing institutions to further their aspirations. Finally, there is his approach to monuments and their protection. He saw study, understanding, knowledge and protection as a continuum. I doubt if the person who saw both ruins and artefacts as monuments and inventoring and protection as the proper work of the same body would have approved of our present compartmentalization. Here, as in so many areas, Baldwin Brown's views and approach still offer us a challenge and a relevance today. That in itself is not a bad legacy.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my colleagues Richard Emerson and Richard Fawcett for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this paper and the staff of the University of Edinburgh library for their assistance with the Baldwin Brown papers.

#### POSTSCRIPT

Our Fellow Mr John Higgitt has directed my attention to Baldwin Brown's cousin, Mrs Ella Armitage, whose research interest was castles (Counihan 1997).

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