

9 Into the Country

"There is still much of the peasant in every Englishman", wrote Muthesius, "although in England, of course, the peasant as a class has practically disappeared from the scene. But the natural, unaffected intelligence, the generous dose of common-sense, that we find in the Englishman, his fondness for his native place with its fields and ploughed land, his love of fresh air and open country—all this shows that some of the best qualities of the country-dweller have persisted in him. In no country in the world has so strong a sense of the natural and the rural been passed down to modern times as in the land of the greatest traditional wealth . . . Naturalness makes up the best part of the Englishman's character. And we see this character in its present-day form reflected in the English house more truly and clearly, perhaps, than in any other manifestation of English culture."¹

Nowhere is Muthesius's idealized portrait of the English country house as the flower of national culture more true than in the work of Lethaby, Prior and Voysey, their contemporaries and followers. Their patrons were the upper middle classes; they rarely built big houses for really grand aristocracy or for the most flamboyant members of the new plutocracy. Nor were they often hired by the burgeoning late Victorian public and private institutions. The irony of Morris and Webb, both convinced socialists, being forced to work solely for the rich was echoed in the lives of their disciples, however much some of the younger men lacked their masters' political commitment.

They had to work for the most economically free people. For late Victorians one of the greatest freedoms was cheap and efficient public transport which had enabled the middle classes to move away from town centres, so their architects were usually required to build in the country or the suburbs. It is most unusual to find an Arts and Crafts house more

than a couple of miles from a Victorian railway station. When Holmes and Watson were not wheeling up to a real medieval house in the station fly, they were approaching an Arts and Crafts version.

For the landed class, employing an Arts and Crafts architect to modernize country houses was a matter of course, unless a big ostentatious splash was wanted. For instance, in 1888, when Lord Redesdale, the grandfather of the Mitfords, decided to renovate his country seat, he employed Arts and Crafts forerunner Ernest George. But in his exhaustive memoirs, in which no opportunity of dropping a name was lost, Redesdale merely remarked, "I was now a free man, and . . . I sold my London house, took possession of Batsford and made up my mind to become a country squire."² There is no mention of the architect or his works.

Yet for less grand people, the image of the Arts and Crafts house with its calm, uncluttered interiors and rambling, steep-roofed exterior, quietly fitting into the countryside, was more important. It was exactly appropriate for a middle class aspiring to the landed values of the aristocracy. Vera Ryder was brought up in Copeham at Esher, a house which her father, a wealthy city businessman, had ramblingly altered by Guy Dawber.* A new nursery wing [was] added, with schoolroom, pantry and servants' hall. The old dining room and the drawing room . . . [were] made into one big dining-room. Finally a music room . . . was built at right angles to the drawing room and gave an imposing delightful finish to the place.

"The music room was a good room for sound with its high vaulted ceiling, and it was the focal point of our activities, both solemn and frivolous. Mother had no use for a drawing room as such, it would have

* Dawber was incidentally Sir Ernest George's site clerk at Batsford before starting his own practice (p. 103).

cramped her style. For Mother . . . had big ideas; there was nothing immature about her inspirations. She needed a place to entertain her friends with no restrictions and no cluttering up with the usual drawing-room knick-knacks."³

Another, less relaxed aspect of middle class Arts and Crafts living was satirized by E. F. Benson in his description of the home of his heroine, super-snob Lucia Lucas, whose house, The Hurst, was in a village which suspiciously resembles Broadway in the Cotswolds. It "presented a charmingly irregular and picturesque front". It was formed of three cottages: "Two were of the grey stone of the district, and the middle one, to the door of which led the paved path, of brick and timber. Latticed windows with stout mullions gave illumination to the room within [which had panelled walls and a white-washed ceiling with exposed beams] . . . To the original windows certain new lights had been added; these could be detected by the observant eye, for they had a markedly older appearance than the rest. The front door, similarly, seemed amazingly antique, the fact being that the one which Mrs Lucas had found there was too dilapidated . . . She had therefore caused to be constructed an even older one made from oak planks in a dismantled barn, and had it studded with large worn nails of antique patterns fashioned by the village blacksmith . . . Over the door hung an inn-sign, and into the space where once the sign had swung was now inserted a lantern, in which was ensconced, well hidden from view by its patinated glass sides, an electric light."⁴ Lucia Luca's rich husband was, incidentally, the founder of a hand printing press at "Ye Sign of Ye Daffodil" on the village green which existed mainly to print his prose poems "in blunt type on thick yellowish paper". This kind of behaviour was enough to give the Arts and Crafts movement a bad name; for several decades after the First War, "Arty Crafty" was synonymous with twee gentility.

The Arts and Crafts country house image was immensely influential on the upper middle class, and not only at home. In America, the great nineteenth-century cities all have their complement of Arts and Crafts suburbs. In 1904, Langford Warren commented in the *Boston Architectural Review* that "it is not too much to say that no other nation has succeeded in developing a domestic architecture having the subtle and intimate charm which in the English country house makes so strong an appeal to the love of home as well as to the love of beauty." Warren's article, which showed the work of Ernest George,

Voysey and other contemporary English architects, praised the "notable revivification of the old traditions and . . . application of the old forms to the needs of modern domestic life."⁵ And he was quite clear that "our own best work, like that of England, will be done by founding it on the sound traditions of England's past, modifying these traditions frankly and fearlessly in the spirit of the old work to meet our new wants and new conditions."⁶

The blend of English tradition and modernity had its adherents on the Continent too. Muthesius worked for years on his monumental book which so thoroughly expounded British domestic architecture to the German speaking world. The book's influence can be seen all over northern Europe in country houses reminiscent of England.

Even in provincial little Switzerland, industrialist Theodor Bühler was so impressed with the style that he hired the English architect Baillie Scott to create a house which "should have the charm of a country seat . . . the general aspect of the house I should like to be simple, quiet and yet artistic, the facade not too irregular."⁷ The result was a perfect Arts and Crafts manor complete with gables, half-timbering, rough-cast, ashlar, leaded lights and a tall tiled roof which still stands at Uzwil today, a piece of turn-of-century England transported to east Switzerland.

At home, the relaxed changeable Arts and Crafts country houses eventually became so closely identified with the values of the upper middle class that they became anathema to anyone with a claim to being in the forefront of taste. When H. G. Wells commissioned Voysey to design what Henry James called his "stately treasure house on the sea shore"⁸ in 1899, it was as a rebellion against the "small snobbish villa residence". But, a dozen years later, when Roger Fry, the critic and art impresario who mounted the first post-impressionist exhibition in London, was showing Virginia Woolf the Surrey landscape, he burst out, "My house is neighboured by houses of the most gentlemanly picturesqueness, houses from which tiny gables with window slits jut out at any unexpected angle." Their path "avoided these gentlemanly residences, but his talk did not altogether avoid the inhabitants of those houses—their snobbery, their obtuseness, their complacency and their complete indifference to any kind of art."⁹

If the clients were obtuse and indifferent, the architects did not follow them. Quietly they fostered the ancient traditions of craftsmanship; faithfully they followed Ruskin's injunction to let appearance

be determined by the plan; sensitively they obeyed Pugin's dictum that architecture should reflect its locality.

If between 1900 and 1910 you had taken a balloon from Brighton and floated north-west above England, you would have seen drift after drift of Arts and Crafts buildings: first the large houses of wealthy City men on the Surrey ridge between Guildford and Redhill, then, passing the metropolis, there was another belt of brick and tile houses in south Hertfordshire and Middlesex. Further north, a pattern emerged, each large town had a crescent of suburbs, usually running from south-west to north to take advantage of the prevailing winds which blew urban smoke away to the east. In north Oxford, the more adventurous dons were living in Arts and Crafts houses, and little Naomi Mitchison was envying the newest houses "with lower ceilings and more bay windows with smaller panes which I thought much nicer than our own big sash windows."¹⁰

In Birmingham, rich business men were building some of England's most beautiful suburbs at Four Oaks and Sutton Coalfield. Away to the east, a strong telescope might have picked out the summer cottages of Leicester magnates built on the edge of the Charnwood forest. Near Manchester, there was Middleton and in Leeds the newly developed suburbs of Adel and Roundhay. Then north again to the wastes of the Scottish border with a glance at the retreats of rich Lancashire cotton men in the Lakes. Beyond, in Glasgow, the same pattern was repeated, with new, adventurous houses springing up to the north west and on the banks of the Clyde.

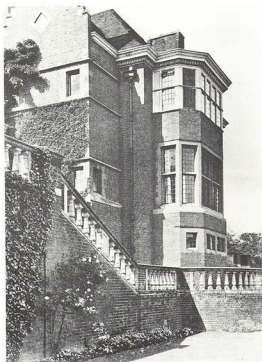
Between these major cities, and always near to the knots of the Victorian railway network which knitted the country in a ravelled pattern, were the larger country mansions, the artists' houses and the estate cottages from which so many Arts and Crafts architects derived their income. Here and there was a new church or a village hall, the public works of the richer private house patrons.

In this chapter, the balloon, taking a much more errant course in space and time, descends now and then to give closer glimpses of the country work of the Arts and Crafts men. Ernest Newton leads, partly because his career, as a founder-member of the Art Workers' Guild who developed a flourishing practice, shows the pattern for many successful architects of his generation, and partly because his work is brilliant and its delicacy, respect for tradition and gentle

country. After Newton, the glimpses are alphabetical.

Ernest Newton (1856-1922) was Lethaby's predecessor as Norman Shaw's chief clerk and one of the founder members of the Art Workers' Guild. His work spans from the year he left Shaw, 1879, to the War, and virtually all of it was in the country. He started with quite small suburban houses in Shaw's Old English style, but as his practice grew he adopted two styles, one derived from Tudor and vernacular models, the other from Georgian.

Buller's Wood at Chislehurst, Kent (1889) is an early and large example of the first manner. He surrounded a stuccoed early Victorian house with a brick building with strong stone string courses; leaded, stone mullioned windows; crow-stepped gables and tall rectangular chimneys. At Redcourt, near Haslemere, Surrey (1894) he was much more formal with round-topped sash windows set into a Georgian brick carapace. The elevations are at first glance symmetrical, and only a vestige of almost wilful Ruskinian changefulness keeps them from being totally so.



90 Ernest Newton. Buller's Wood, Chislehurst, Kent



91 *Newton. Redcourt, Haslemere, Surrey (1894)*

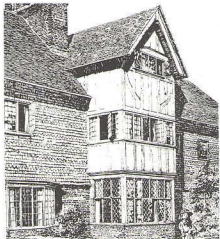
In the next decade Newton was producing completely symmetrical elevations, for instance at Luckley, Wokingham, Berkshire (1907), a charming mixture of Wrenian roof and cornice on top of low brick walls relieved by leaded lights in wooden casements. Yet Luckley retains the thin room-and-corridor Arts and Crafts plan, cunningly bent into an H shape, and the symmetry is relieved by a service wing which cranks round from the main entrance to the west.



92 *Newton. Luckley, Wokingham, Berkshire (1907)*



93 *Luckley, ground floor plan*



94 *Newton. Upton Grey Manor, Hampshire (1907)*

Newton was at his most relaxed when adding to old houses—for example Upton Grey Manor, Hampshire (1907), built for the editor of the *Studio*, where he added traditional half-timbering and tile hanging in exactly the spirit of the original building. He did the same at Oldcastle, Dallington, Sussex (1910) to produce a late (for Newton) irregular, asymmetrical complex of breathtaking horizontal sweep and simplicity; the brick ground floor is topped by a tile-hung first floor, with the tile roof cramming hard down over the eaves and sometimes swooping down to top the bricks. Again, it was an extension to an old house from which Newton adapted idioms. At Oldcastle, the servants' quarters were cranked right round a courtyard with the corridor on the inside. Newton used this device again in his most formal house—Burgh Heath, Surrey (1912) where, without an old model to develop, he created an almost Palladian front for the main rooms in totally symmetrical ashlar relieved by knapped flint wings. But the house is as usual thin, and all the offices are stuck out in a great quadrangular block at one side surrounding a glazed courtyard.

However symmetrical, however Palladian, Newton became, the plan was always paramount; Pugin's principles were never forgotten. "I emphasize the plan," he wrote "as that is really the house . . . Building must fall into some sort of style—memory, inherited forms, and ideas. But this must be accepted, not sought. Pass all through the mill of your mind and don't use forms unmeaningly, like the buttons on the back of a coat."¹¹

BEDFORD & KITSON

The firm of Bedford and Kitson was as influential in creating the new suburbs of Leeds as Bidlake in Birmingham or Wood in Manchester. Muthesius commented that "their exteriors are more or less traditional in design, but inside they experiment in more independent ways, though without becoming fantastic . . . and give an impression of quiet refinement."¹² They were free eclectics, drawing on both local and southern models and were early into the game of reintroducing classical idioms.



95 Bedford & Kitson. Red House, Chapel Allerton, Leeds (before 1904)

Francis W. Bedford (1866–1904) was articled in Leeds and was an assistant to Ernest George & Peto before returning there. After his early death Sydney Kitson (1871–1937) gradually devoted himself to scholarship and collecting. He retired young.

WILLIAM BIDLAKE

"There is probably no architect in Birmingham who has influenced and guided the younger men of his profession to the same extent as Mr W. B. Bidlake," reported the *Studio* in 1902.¹³ By then, Bidlake (1862–1938) had been teaching at Birmingham's architecture school for ten years after training in Bodley's office and being Pugin Scholar in 1885.

He set a tone of simplicity and restraint in the great suburban expansion of Birmingham round the turn of the century. His models were vernacular but he avoided "the suburban villa with samples of every manner of building—brick, half-timber, tile hanging and roughcast."¹⁴ His houses had strong shapes, usually restricted to a combination of two main materials:



96 William Bidlake. Woodgate, Four Oaks, Birmingham (1902 or before)

brick and stone; roughcast and brick; tile hanging and half-timbering. His St. Agatha's church at Sparkbrook has this same restraint in the use of materials but is relieved by bands of joyous carving.

REGINALD BLOMFIELD

Reginald Blomfield (1856–1942), though he became the arch-protagonist of classicism in the early years of this century (chapter 12), was much involved in the Arts and Crafts movement. He was one of the young men who gravitated to the Lethaby/Prior circle in the '80s and he was involved, with Lethaby, in Kenton & Co, the short-lived Arts and Crafts furniture firm (Chapter 11). For all his love of classical architecture he was prepared to compromise in the country. Even as late as 1909, long after he had started to preach the virtues of the Beaux Arts, he designed Wyphurst near Cranleigh, Surrey, a very complicated mixture of an existing house with a large new wing, all in diapered brickwork and half-timbering. It is a symmetrical Victorian Tudor building struggling to emerge from a vernacular complex of gables and hung tiles.

DETMAR BLOW

Detmar Blow (1867–1939) met Ruskin as a young man and was introduced to the Morris circle. He was Pugin Scholar of the Institute in 1892. In the late '90s



97 Detmar Blow. Happpisburgh Manor, Cromer, Norfolk (1900)

he was Gimson's site clerk on the wonderfully rustic Stoneywell cottage (Chapter 11). In 1900 he built Happpisburgh Manor on the sea-front near Cromer in Norfolk, a butterfly plan which geometrically out-Priors Prior's nearby (and slightly later) butterfly house at Holt by making the house angled on all four sides like an X with a stretched centre. Incidentally, Blow claimed that the inspiration for Happpisburgh did not come from Prior's Exmouth Barn but "originated with my friend Mr Ernest Gimson who sent the little butterfly device on a postcard".¹⁵

He was as faithful to local materials as Prior but used them in a more conventional local fashion—thick flint walls are patterned and quoined in brick and capped by a thick thatched roof.

Blow's work during the next decade moved from a free interpretation of local idioms towards classicism of various kinds. By the '20s he had an extremely successful practice which built throughout the Empire—for instance Government House in Salisbury, Rhodesia. He was surveyor to the Grosvenor Estate for seventeen years, encouraging creeping neo-Georgianism over Mayfair. He died as the Lord of the Manor of Painswick, Gloucestershire.

W. H. BRIERLEY

Walter Henry Brierley (1862–1926) was articled to his father in York and his mature practice was conducted there. He ranged from country houses which freely interpreted local idiom through neo-classical banks to Gothic churches and to racecourse buildings. His obituary in the *Builder* aptly summarizes the influence of Arts and Crafts thinking on a successful provincial practitioner: "He was a master of detail,

and upheld the principle that no single item, however small, in the composition of a building was outside the scope of the architect's most scrupulous care and consideration. He insisted on the employment of the very best materials and workmanship that the means placed at his disposal allowed. He had a great admiration of the craftsmanship of the past, and skilfully



98 W. H. Brierley. Bishops Barns, Yorkshire, from south-east

employed and adapted old methods. . . directing and interesting the workmen, and encouraging them to revive forgotten details of their craft, in order to secure that harmony between the design and execution of it on which the successful portrayal of his ideas so much depended."¹⁶

WALTER CAVE

Walter Frederick Cave (1863–1939) was an archetypal hearty Edwardian. The son of a baronet, he was articled to Sir Arthur Blomfield (Reginald's uncle). He built many robust country houses, usually in local materials. Muthesius likened him to Voysey and thought that "the external appearance of his houses is almost more successful than Voysey's; his



99 Walter Cave. Dixcote, Streatham

surfaces have a broader sweep and the whole is more expressive."¹⁷ His furniture was highly regarded.

His practice became very large and he had much urban work as well as the country houses for which he was best known.

GUY DAWBER

A King's Lynn man, Edward Guy Dawber (1862–1938) attended the Royal Academy Schools. He served his articles in Lynn and became an assistant to Ernest George & Peto, by whom he was sent, during a fit of bad sight in 1887 to be site clerk for building Batsford Park, Gloucestershire.¹⁸



100 Guy Dawber. Caldicote Manor, Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire

One of the first Arts and Craftsmen to discover the Cotswolds, he started his own practice two or three years later at Bourton-on-the-Hill, from where he walked miles to his first jobs—all informed by the vernacular building of the district and built on long, thin Arts and Crafts plans.

He went to London in 1891 but retained his Gloucestershire connection and became one of the most successful country house architects in England, well into the '20s, often adapting local idioms as well as the classical forms he increasingly preferred.

He was president of the RIBA in 1925–7 and founded the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

W. A. FORSYTH

William Adam Forsyth (?–1951) was a distinguished preservationist and a devoted custodian of notable buildings like Salisbury Cathedral and St. George's Chapel, Windsor. His original work was often for

public schools ranging from Eton to Oundle where he usually offered heavy handed stripped variants of the Cotswold style. As a young man, he was inventive in garden design, and his work was illustrated by Mawson and Muthesius.

P. MORLEY HORDER

Percy Morley Horder (1870–1944) was trained in George Devey's office. He designed many large country houses and was a darling of the *Studio*. Some of his houses have characteristics in common with the work of Voysey—another product of the Devey office. But though Horder's buildings often have sweeping roofs, low eaves and rows of casement windows, houses like Spyways, Hartfield, Sussex, are more



101 P. Morley Horder. Spyways, Hartfield, Sussex

lush and jumbled that Voysey's and they are usually executed in local materials rather than Voysey's ubiquitous roughcast.

Horder's practice was varied and included much work for universities.

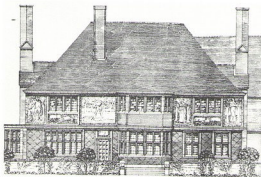
GERALD HORSLEY

The youngest of Norman Shaw's young men who founded the Art Workers' Guild, Gerald Callcott Horsley, the son of a painter, was born in 1862 and died early, in 1917. After being with Shaw, he worked for Sedding for a year before travelling to Italy and France in 1886 and to Sicily 1887–1888 (under RIBA studentships). He was a fine draughtsman and illustrated, among other books, Prior's *History of Gothic Art in England*. His own architectural work (1889 to his death) varied from romantic Old English country

houses to Queen Anne buildings in town. As Arthur Keen, a fellow pupil in Shaw's office, remembered: "His regard for his master amounted almost to veneration and it led him, perhaps, into following the actual forms of Norman Shaw's work in preference to breaking new ground for himself, but he invested all that he touched with his own sense of beauty and fitness."¹⁹

His delicate individual touch is clear in his design for a country house (published in the *Builder*, LXVI, February 3, 1894) where sweeping hips and gables top walls of diapered brickwork, hung tiles and stone mullioned windows with leaded lights all relieved by large relief panels of Pre-Raphaelite pastoral scenes—few designs are closer to Morris's image of the Hammersmith Guest House.

The St. Paul's School for Girls, Hammersmith, (1904–1907), his chief London work, is Queen Anne at its most relaxed—ample, generous and much encrusted with the reliefs that his country clients could not afford.

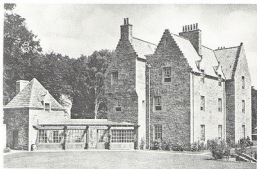


102 Gerald Horsley. Design for a country house (1894)

ROBERT LORIMER

"Scotland will not achieve what England has already achieved—a completely national style of house-building based on the old vernacular architecture—until it follows the lead given by Lorimer."²⁰ Muthesius was as usual right. Robert Lorimer (1864–1929) was the father of a school of Scottish vernacular building much less original than Mackintosh's work but more faithful to traditional seventeenth- and eighteenth-century models.

Laverockdale, on the Pentlands near Edinburgh, is typical of Lorimer's large country houses. It is like a large border tower complete with crow-stepped gables and steep slated roofs, and small sash windows poking the massive walls of local rubble. It has long thin Arts and Crafts wings.



103 Robert Lorimer. Laverockdale near Edinburgh (before 1904)

GEOFFREY LUCAS

Essentially a suburban architect, Thomas Geoffrey Lucas (1872–1947) built up a successful pre-War domestic and ecclesiastical practice north of London, where he built in Hampstead Garden Suburb, Ponders End and Broxbourne. In this period, he largely followed Gothic and vernacular forms. After the War, he went into partnership with the very successful H. V. Lanchester and was involved in designs for mighty classical civic buildings such as the University of Leeds. He left Lanchester for obscurity because, as the latter said, "the extent of our activities did not offer T. G. Lucas the scope he desired for giving an intensive study to specific undertakings."²¹



104 Geoffrey Lucas. Housing (now Lucas Close), Hampstead Garden Suburb, north London

MERVYN MACARTNEY

The least Ruskinian of Norman Shaw's young men who founded the Art Workers' Guild was Mervyn Edmund Macartney (1853-1932). The son of a Northern Irish doctor, he entered Shaw's office a year before Lethaby, with whom he was to be associated in Kenton & Co.

He started in practice in 1882 with a design for an Old English country house, Kent Hatch, and this vein persisted well into the 1900s with soft, gentle houses like Rosebank, Silchester Common, Hampshire. But he became a strong protagonist of conventional neo-Georgian, rarely achieving Newton's inventiveness in the style.



105 Mervyn Macartney. Rosebank, Silchester Common, Hampshire (c. 1905)

His *annus mirabilis* was 1906 when he beat Blomfield to the post of Architect to St. Paul's Cathedral and became editor of the *Architectural Review* in succession to a board which included Blomfield. The *Practical Exemplar of Architecture*, a series which showed "correct" eighteenth-century detailing, was published in the *Review* between 1906 and 1913 and became one of the most influential forces in the movement towards classicism.

CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH

"The real driving force of the Scottish movement is Charles Rennie Mackintosh". According to Muthesius, the essence of the art of the Glasgow group "in fact rests in an underlying emotional and poetical quality. It seeks a highly charged . . . atmosphere of a mystical symbolic kind. One cannot imagine a greater contrast in this respect than that between the London architects working in the new

forms, the most sedulous of whom is Voysey, and the Scottish architects round Mackintosh."²²

Yet, according to F. H. Newbury, under whom Mackintosh studied at the Glasgow School of Art, Voysey was the young Mackintosh's chief inspiration.* Voysey himself disliked the work of the Glasgow artists and called them the "spook school", but elements of his work are clear in Mackintosh's country houses.



106 Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Windyhill (1899-1901)



107 Mackintosh. Hill House, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire (1902)

The life of Mackintosh (1868-1928) has been so excellently told²³ that the career of the Glasgow policeman's son, who rose to such heroic European stature that he was dragged by students through the

* There is certainly a continuity in decorative elements like the long tapering verticals capped by wafer thin finials that stretches from Mackmurdo through Voysey to Mackintosh.

streets of Vienna in a flower covered carriage, does not need to be covered here.

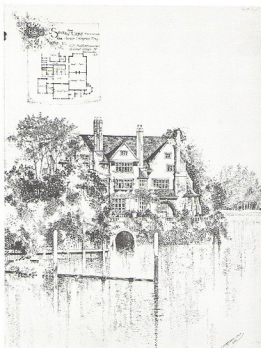
His architectural genius flowered for only ten years from 1896 to about 1906, when it faded under the combined influence of work and whisky. During this period he built two outstanding country houses: Windyhill, Kilmalcolm, Renfrewshire (1899-1901) and Hill House, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire (1902). Both derived much from Scottish eighteenth-century models and had slate roofs, white harlinged walls, drum stair towers and sash windows. Both had long thin Arts and Crafts plans. And both incorporated Voyseyish details—tall chimney stacks with sloping sides, strips of dormer windows (Windyhill only) and polygonal, projecting bay windows with leaded lights.

Yet the result was more changeful than anything Voysey ever wished to achieve after he had started to build. Hill House, particularly, achieved a stark vertical grandeur that is wholly Scottish yet quite original. The rooms were good but not especially remarkable for their period except that they were made magical by Mackintosh's incomparable furniture and ornament.

It was the sort of furniture and decoration that Mackintosh, his wife Margaret Macdonald and her sister Frances exhibited at the 1896 Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society show (the only time they entered). They were met with English incomprehension. The *Studio* commented that "no doubt in Glasgow there is a Rosetta stone, which makes clear the tangled meanings of these designs . . . One thing however is clear, that in their own way, unmoved by ridicule, or misconception, the Glasgow students have thought out a very fascinating scheme to puzzle, surprise and please."²⁴

C. E. MALLOWS

A Bedford architect, Charles Edward Mallows (1864-1915) was deeply interested in garden design as well as building. He illustrated *Gardens for Small Country Houses* by Gertrude Jekyll and Lawrence Weaver and worked with Thomas Mawson on *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*. In partnership with various architects at different times, principally G. Grocock, Mallows executed numerous new country buildings as well as alterations and extensions to existing country houses all over the south of England. His work, as draftsman and architect, was always delicate and sensitive with deep respect for local tradition.



108 Charles Edward Mallows. Design for a country house near Severn Upton (1888)

ARNOLD MITCHELL

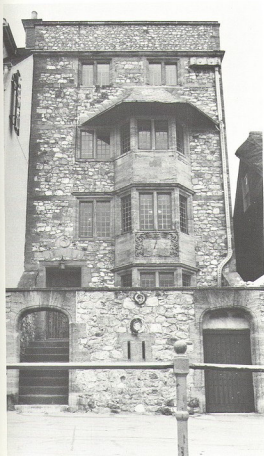
Arnold Mitchell (1863-1944) was trained under Sir Ernest George. He was a darling of the *Studio* in the first decade of this century, showing large country houses in England, Wales and Scotland, mostly with symmetrical elements, though he preferred variations on the typical Arts and Crafts plan. He moved from free interpretations of Tudor and vernacular motifs to almost proper Wren.

His practice became very large; he put up the main stations for the (British financed) Argentinian railways as well as buildings in Germany, Austria, Belgium and at the Asswan Dam. And he designed Lotts playbricks.

When he retired to Lyme Regis in the '20s, Mitchell returned to his first love and built himself one of the last, most beautiful and original small Arts and Crafts houses. A tall, thin five storey building in local limestone rubble, with a flat top, it is dominated by a hooded bay window with neat, stone dressed mullions and leaded lights. A big ornamental sundial enriches the lower part of the oriel which has a broad,



109 Arnold Mitchell. *Design for a house at Harrow* (c. 1902)



110 Mitchell's own house, *Lyme Regis, Dorset* (1908)

shallow hipped slate hat tying it to the rest of the fenestration.

It is the house of a grown-up who has never forgotten childhood; a sea shore tower studded with superb examples of the local fossil ammonites.

NIVEN AND WIGGLESWORTH

Herbert H. Wigglesworth (1866–1949) trained under Ernest George and Peto and went into partnership with the Scot, David Barkley Niven (1864–1942), an Aston Webb man. The firm produced elegant and changeable house designs in the '90s, many of which were presented in Niven's beautiful perspectives in the *Studio*. After the turn of the century, the practice acquired a good deal of City work which was mostly neo-Georgian—for instance Hambro's Bank, Bishopsgate (1925). The partnership was dissolved in 1927.



111 Niven and Wigglesworth. *Design for a country house at Wrotham, Kent* (c. 1902)

ALFRED POWELL

G. F. Watts, the painter, described Alfred Powell's Long Copse at Ewhurst as the most beautiful house in Surrey. It was a combination of an existing thatched



112 Alfred Powell. *Long Copse, Ewhurst, Surrey* (1897)

cottage and a new wing covered in stone slates. The iron casement windows with leaded lights were divided by simple stone mullions. The plan was similar to Gimson's Stoneyhurst cottage (p. 149), a series of rooms linked in line which cranked round a curved staircase. The austerity was relieved by a *sggraffito* picture of peacocks in light red and white in the veranda.

Powell was both architect and contractor, and "the craftsmen (save the plumbers—an entertaining exception) were University men who worked with him".²⁵ Powell did little architecture but he was active in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, producing pamphlets explaining how country buildings should be restored and repaired.

EDWARD TURNER POWELL

Edward Turner Powell (1859–?) was a moderately successful country house architect. Much of his work was in Surrey and Sussex, though he had some foreign clients. He had a lush Old English touch. Fond of local materials, he used clapboarding, patterned hung tiles and brick in the home counties. He was inventive with gables.



113 Edward Turner Powell. West Court, Limpsfield Surrey (before 1909)

A. N. PRENTICE

Alfred Noble Prentice (1866–1941) was a Scot, articulated in Glasgow, after which he worked for Colcutt. He built up a prosperous practice which included interior decoration for some of the large early twentieth-century steamships. Though an early advocate of classicism (he published *Renaissance*



114 Alfred Noble Prentice. Design for stables at Cavenham Hall, Suffolk (before 1904)

Architecture and Ornament in Spain in 1893), he was happy to adopt vernacular models in the country—for instance in his unexecuted design for a house at Willersey, Gloucestershire (1908) which has all the local characteristics.

C. H. B. QUENNEL

Muthesius described Charles Henry Bourne Quennell (1872–1935) as one of the architects "for the most part concerned with interior decoration and furniture design" and the "master of pen-and-ink drawing."²⁶ As a young man he worked at a joiner's shop. Like Baillie Scott, he designed standardized Arts and Crafts furniture (particularly inglenooks and fire places) for J. P. White of Bedford, but he had quite a large architectural practice as well, mostly devoted to small country and suburban houses based on vernacular and Georgian models.

Quennell is most widely known for his *History of Everyday Things in England* (1918) in which, with his wife Marjorie, he gave an endlessly entertaining story for children of the development of English design, ranging over everything from architecture to jewellery from the Norman Conquest to 1799 (it was supplemented by later volumes taking the story back to the Stone Age and up to the '30s). The book's exposition of the interaction of everyday life, symbolism and design must have delighted Lethaby.

After the War, Quennell became a devotee of industrialization and designed work in Essex for Crittalls, the steel window manufacturers.

SMITH & BREWER

The practice of Smith & Brewer is best known for the Passmore Edwards Settlement in Bloomsbury (chap-



115 *Smith & Brewer. Fives Court, Pinner, Middlesex*

ter 10) but Arnold Dunbar Smith (1866–1933) and Cecil Brewer (1871–1918) built some distinguished country houses. For example, Fives Court, near Pinner, Middlesex was a roughcast, deep-roofed version of Voysey without his pronounced horizontality; Acremead, Crockham Hill, Kent, was a rubble house with fine cut stone dressings and many gables, some banded. Both had long thin plans.

HALSEY RICARDO

The son of a Bristol banker, Halsey Ricardo (1854–1928) was rich enough to take only the commissions he really wanted; he worked entirely by himself at home. After Rugby, he was articled in Chelmsford and worked for Basil Champneys, after which he fell under Philip Webb's spell. He started on his own in 1881 and went into partnership with William de Morgan, the Arts and Crafts potter, between 1888 and 1898. He was devoted to glazed tiles (p. 122).

Ricardo alternated between classical and vernacular idioms. In the country, he tended towards many-gabled houses in brick, stone or stucco with wooden casement windows. His radical ideas on town building, where he was mostly classical, are described in chapter 10.



116 *Halsey Ricardo. House for William Chance (1898)*

After training in Scotland under Rowand Anderson (whose office provided Lorimer with his first steps in architecture), Robert Weir Schultz (1860–1951) moved south to join Norman Shaw in early 1884. There he befriended Lethaby and his circle: the founders of the Art Workers' Guild, Gimson and the Barnsley brothers. In 1886, he moved to Ernest George & Peto, where he overlapped with Dawber and Baker. Evening study at the R. A. schools won him a scholarship which he used for study in Italy. In 1889 he was in Greece studying Byzantine architecture with Sidney Barnsley. A common interest in Byzantine architecture was probably the point of contact between Schultz and the third Marquess of Bute,²⁷ perhaps the most fantastic builder of Victorian times, who had commissioned some of Burges's best work. Bute became Schultz's patron, giving him work in rural Scotland, where, in the early '90s, the architect adopted local traditional building techniques—though when necessary (for instance when adding to the Adams' Dumfries House) he was not averse to adopting a more classical approach.



117 *Robert Weir Schultz. St. Anne's Hospital, Canford Cliffs, Bournemouth, Dorset (1909–1912)*

A strong taste for symmetry permeated Schultz's mature work but it was usually leavened with an affection for local vernacular motifs and, where necessary, a freedom in planning which would have upset strict classicists. His largest—and perhaps best—building was St. Anne's Hospital, Canford

Cliffs, Bournemouth (1909–1912), almost perfectly symmetrical with two lines of room-and-corridor cranked to get the best views from the top of the cliffs; the two banks are linked by chains of rooms to form courtyards. The building was certainly institutional but with its bending, changeful, light-filled corridors and its careful maximization of sun and view for patients, it demonstrated what freedom the Arts and Crafts movement could bring to large buildings when it was given the chance. The exterior is (like some other Schultz buildings) in an austere Queen Anne with big Dutch gables topping bays, all executed in simple, straightforward brickwork with stone dressings.

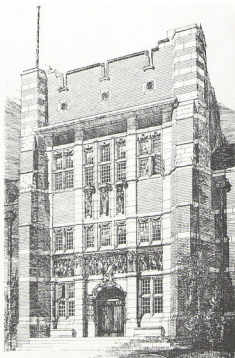
Schultz built the Khartoum Cathedral between 1906–1928, carefully executed on the principles laid down in Lethaby's *Cosmos* and with techniques suitable for local builders, many of which were based on Byzantine models.

Schultz changed his name by adding another Weir to R. W. S. Weir during the anti-German hysteria of 1914. His practice declined during the War and afterwards it gradually faded away. On retirement in 1939 he went into nominal partnership with his more successful friend Troup (p. 112). He had always refused to accept full-blown classicism, and, like those of his contemporaries who stuck by their early beliefs, he paid dearly for his devotion to Arts and Crafts freedom.

LEONARD STOKES

Leonard Stokes (1858–1925) was one of the most successful Arts and Crafts architects. He started in practice in 1883 after working for Street, Collcutt and Bodley. He was irascible and swore much, despite which he did a lot of work for Roman Catholic institutes. His most notable country work was All Saints Convent, London Colney, Hertfordshire, a free interpretation of late Tudor models in brick, strongly gridded in stone. There is a fine sculpted frieze over the main door in the tower.

His country houses usually followed the Arts and Crafts plan. He obtained many telephone exchanges (see chapter 10) and, in towns, felt the need to adopt free classical forms which were increasingly carried into his country work. Muthesius commented that "in his non classicizing houses at least, he also treats the few details entirely as he pleases, in a free and witty manner that is attractive in its mixture of forcefulness and charm."²⁸



118 Leonard Stokes. *All Saints Convent, London Colney, Hertfordshire (1899–1903)*

CHARLES HARRISON TOWNSEND

Though the most interesting work of Charles Harrison Townsend (1851–1928) was in London and is discussed in the next chapter, he was a successful and original designer in the country too. Articled in Liverpool, he moved to London about 1880 and had set up on his own by the end of the decade.²⁹

In his larger country houses, he favoured the Arts and Crafts plan but his elevations—as for instance at Blatchfield, Blackheath near Guildford (probably about 1894) are more changeful than most, with many variations of plane and materials; it is Shaw and Nesfield's Old English style stretched out in a long line. Some of his later large houses, like the design for Cliff Towers, Salcombe, Devon, retained the long plan and the variety of materials but are more unified.

Muthesius thought that if he had had more opportunities to build houses, he would have been the most important of the post-Shaw domestic architects.³⁰ In fact, his practice withered in the first decade of this century because he refused to bow to neo-classicism.



119 Townsend. Blatchfield, Blackheath, near Guildford, Surrey (c. 1894)



120 Townsend. St. Mary the Virgin, Great Warley, Essex (1902-1904)



121 Townsend. Cliff Towers, Salcombe, Devon (design c. 1898)

Before defeat set in, Townsend designed a triumph of the Arts and Crafts spirit. St. Mary the Virgin, at Great Warley, near Brentwood, Essex (begun 1902) could at first glance be taken for a typical Essex country church with low, ample proportions, apsed end and buttressed roughcast walls pierced by simple, undecorated stone window surrounds; tiled roofs sweep down into broad eaves, and, at the west end, they are crowned by a little stubby square shingled bell tower and spire. All is quite in the local tradition, done with a simplicity and humility that would have delighted Pugin and Morris. The external unconventionalities are in the west front (which faces away from the road) with its big rose window floating over slits set in plain ashlar (the latter theme being a hallmark of Townsend's town work—see chapter 10.)

The inside is big, welcoming and simple, like Prior's early churches. Only a small change of level separates nave from chancel, and at first the small chapel that emerges on the south side cannot be seen. The space focuses on the figure of Christ in the centre of the silvered apse onto which the force of light from the rose window shines.

As the eye becomes accustomed to the comparative gloom of the interior, great richness gradually unfolds: angels and flowers are everywhere. Most of the ornament is by William Reynolds-Stephens (1852-1943), Townsend's collaborator. The simple boarded roof is supported on wide ribs decorated with white York roses on silver stems and foliage. The ribs terminate in panels of white lilies on a silver ground.*

Everywhere, the church is a mixture of plain setting and pearl ornament—squares of mother of pearl in Townsend's walnut panelling and in the mother of pearl flowers which, with glowing ruby glass pomegranates, decorate the building's glory—its rood screen. The flowers and fruits are set amongst the glittering and green foliage of six stiff brass Arts and Crafts trees. From the crown of each tree emerges an angel—a subject which, judging by its frequent occurrence in the rest of the church, was a favourite of Reynold-Stephens at the time.

All the church's ornament, however luxurious, is stiff, heraldic and symmetrical. Like the surrounding

* When the church was first built the effect must have seemed even more strange and exotic for the silver is achieved in aluminium, a metal that had been in commercial production in Britain only since 1896. The lily panels are cast; the silvering of the ribs is done in aluminium leaf.

garden of rest with its straight axial gravel paths, cypress avenue and pleached lime groves, the ornament expresses the Englishness, the Arts and Crafts nature, of a building that has too often been claimed to be a triumph of the Art Nouveau. Townsend and Reynolds-Stephens could not compromise with the advancing wave of neo-classicism nor could they embrace the *risqué* "squirm" of continental Art Nouveau.

At Great Warley, the Arts and Crafts movement achieved the integration of ecclesiastical art that Sedding's Holy Trinity had sketched on a much larger scale ten years before. But, by 1906, when Reynolds-Stephens had completed the decorations, few clients wanted such a humble yet gorgeous building. Taste was beginning to turn to the more obviously prestigious results of one form or another of neo-classicism.

F. W. TROUP

"This dour, uncompromising Scot, who clucks like a hen and roars like a lion yet seldom seems to have anything to say"³¹ was Ashbee's picture of Francis William Troup (1859–1941).^{*} He was an Aberdeenshire man, apprenticed to a Glasgow firm before he went to London, setting up on his own in 1890.

Troup was a close friend of Henry Wilson. His early work was heavy with Gothic; for instance the walls of the heavily gabled Sandhouse (now Kingwood), Sandhills, Surrey (before 1903) are so strongly diapered that it is difficult to see the overall

^{*} Mrs Levson, Troup's niece, tells me that the roaring and clucking was her uncle's party trick.



122 Francis William Troup. Sandhouse, Sandhills, Surrey (1902)

massing. And his little village hall at Wootton Fitzpaine, Dorset (1906) has splendid simple timber arches and a remarkably complicated angular chimney. He was very fond of lead, "the English metal", and got excellent leadwork—in drainpipes everywhere and, at Wootton, in frilly little friezes over the door canopy. Even as early as Sandhills, the plan is symmetrical and there are classical columns supporting the entrance porch. His hall for the Art Workers' Guild (1913) in Queen Square is an inventive, free neo-Georgian style.

Troup became immensely respectable: supervising architect for rebuilding the Bank of England, and consulting architect to official bodies like the Home Office and Metropolitan Police.

THACKERAY TURNER

Hugh Thackeray Turner (1850–1937) followed Morris as the secretary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, a post he occupied from shortly after SPAB's foundation in 1876 for twenty-nine years. In that capacity he helped save many notable buildings from excessive "restoration". His practice (with Eustace Balfour—a brother of A.J.) was partly urban; they were architects to the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair which involved much neo-Georgian work. Of his extensive country house practice, his own Westbrook, overlooking Godalming in Surrey was, according to Troup,³² the most notable. "Here . . . is shown Turner's intimate knowledge of the building crafts and his desire to make and his success in making every part of the structure not merely equal to its task, but to look sufficient for its work."



123 Hugh Thackeray Turner. Westbrook, Godalming (1900–03)

GEORGE WALTON

A Glaswegian, George Walton (1867–1933) was mainly an interior and fabric designer. He trained at the same school as Mackintosh, with whom he had affinities. But he studied in the evenings, for he was a bank clerk until middle life. Muthesius called him “the artist who has understood the interior as a work of art best”.³³ He moved to London in 1897 and had an international practice. He designed at least one complete house, the Leys at Elstree, Hertfordshire, a show case of his art.

RANDALL WELLS

Randall Wells (1877–1942) was a model Arts and Crafts architect. He worked as site clerk for Prior at Holt and Roker and did the same for Lethaby at Brockhampton. His little church at Kempey, built for Lord Beauchamp in 1904, is near Brockhampton and, in it, Wells took the principles of Pugin and Ruskin further than Lethaby ever did.



124 Randall Wells. Kempey Church, Hereford and Worcester (1904)

The great roof of Forest of Dean stone (local stone roofing had fallen into disuse) is carried on mighty oak trusses cut from trees from the Beauchamp estate and used green. The eaves are about shoulder height and the walls of reddish local sandstone. There is no decoration in the stonework, apart from a few mouldings round the openings to throw off water and a relief sculpted into the tower over the door by the architect. The tracery of the great window at the end of the nave is even more simple than Prior's at Roker. It is a regular diagonal grid of stone.

Inside, there is a feast of Arts and Crafts work. The simple pews, prayer desk and altar were designed by Wells. Ernest Barnsley made the lectern and the main



125 Kempey Church. The rood principal is original but the figures are modern

candelabra were designed by Ernest Gimson. All these pieces are fine, but the glory of the church is its rood screen—an elaborate ornamented truss.

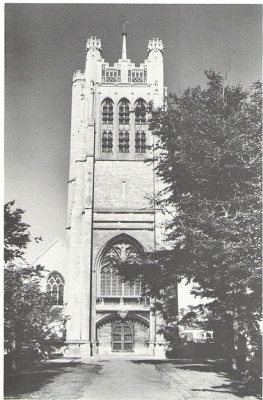
The *Architectural Review* reported that “the edges of the Rood principal were ornamented by the carpenters with draw-knife and chisel in the traditional village manner. The pattern was gouged and cut into the oak by the architect, assisted by his brother, Mr. Linley Wells, so that it could be easily repainted by the village painter. After gouging the whole principal was given a thin coat of ivory black, the pattern was then grounded in with broken white and the colours were filled in on top. The colours used were Chinese vermilion, ruby madder, golden ochre, chrome yellow, chrome green, permanent blue and indigo.”³⁴ Figures on the beam were carved by the only ships’ figurehead carver left in London but were removed by a priggish Bishop of Gloucester. Their modern replacements are crude without being vigorous.

Wells was not prolific. He designed a few cottages

and a country house or two. He ran off with Lady Noble, the wife of one of his clients, and married her in 1917. The two set up a late Arts and Crafts guild, the St. Veronica's Workshop. During and after the War, Wells designed large reinforced concrete buildings for London sites, using the expertise he had acquired with Prior. None was built. He did manage to put up a bank at Teddington and a church at Halton near Leeds. Most of his buildings incorporated concrete and everything he did was individualistic.³⁵

HENRY WILSON

Henry Wilson (1864–1934) studied under John Oldrid Scott and Belcher and became John Dando Sedding's chief assistant, inheriting the practice after Sedding's death in 1891. Most of his architectural work was ecclesiastical (he finished Sedding's Holy



126 Henry Wilson. Tower, St. Clement's, Bournemouth, Dorset (1895)

Trinity Church, Chelsea in 1900, p. 54) and added the splendid tower to St. Clement's in the Bournemouth suburbs (1895). His domestic work was rare; his main job was for the library and chapel of Welbeck Abbey (1890–96) for the Duke of Portland.

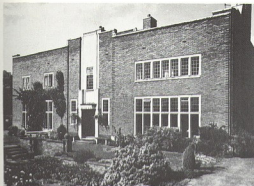
His career was very varied. He was the first editor of the *Architectural Review* (1896–1901), which he made an Arts and Crafts magazine. Increasingly, from the early 1900s, he concentrated on metalwork, church plate, enamelwork and jewellery (he was the first designer to introduce small electric batteries into jewellery). He designed the immense sculpted bronze monument to Bishop Elphinstone in King's College, Aberdeen and the bronze doors of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York. Perhaps his greatest work was the gorgeous Byzantine interior of St. Bartholomew's, Brighton.

Wilson was associated with Lethaby in the Liverpool Cathedral competition design (p. 64) and taught with him at the Royal College of Art. Refusing to compromise with neo-Georgianism, he retired to France in 1922.

EDGAR WOOD AND HENRY SELLERS

The leading Mancunian Arts and Crafts architects were Edgar Wood (1860–1935) and J. Henry Sellers (1861–1954). Both were born near Manchester and trained in local offices. Wood started his own practice in about 1885, and his work spread over south Lancashire and west Yorkshire—mostly country buildings with a great feeling for locality. Inside, they were sensitive too. Muthesius said of Wood's rooms that they “do not merely interest or stimulate, they transport one into an agreeable, warm atmosphere to which one is glad to submit. Every room has its extremely attractive fire place in the form of an angle-nook, in which a sculptured overmantle is the *pièce de résistance*.”³⁶

After he was joined by Sellers in the early 1900s, Wood's work became more formal and axial and his rooms less cosy. And it was probably under Sellers's influence that Wood took the radical step of introducing flat roofs to some of his later houses. The first of these, Upmeads at Stafford (1908), was described by Lawrence Weaver in *Small Country Houses of Today* as “fortress like. It not only lacks anything approaching prettiness, which is all to the good, but presents an air of austerity, which shows the designer's devotion to extreme simplicity and restraint.”³⁷ In fact the effect now seems comical, as if the whole top hamper



127 Wood and Sellers. Upmeads, Stafford (1908)

of a rather austere brick-and-stone-trim Arts and Crafts house had been raggedly sliced off with a celestial razor, for to make the skyline less than boringly horizontal, Wood had to introduce uneasy little jumps in his perimeter walls.

Wood had moved the concrete first floor, so loved by Prior, up to the roof and justified the innovation to Weaver by explaining that, with a flat roof, it was much easier to cover a complicated plan shape than with conventional roofs. In fact, Wood's plans of this period are simple assemblies of rectangles, very easy to roof under pitches. At Upmeads, the roof was a simple slab of concrete with neither insulation nor weatherproofing. Only with hindsight can we pity the owners who must have had to face vast maintenance and heating bills.

The entrance elevation of Upmeads is symmetrical but the others retain Ruskinian changefulness. Wood was spared the necessity of adopting neo-Georgian, to which, in an eccentric manner, he was tending, by coming into a legacy in 1910 which allowed him to devote the latter part of his life to painting.

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- 3 Ryder, Vera *The Little Victims Play*, Robert Hale, London 1974 pp. 18-19
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- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 12
- 7 Medici-Mall, Katharina *Das Landhaus Waldbühl*, Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, Bern 1979, p. 85
- 8 Henry James in conversation with Ford Madox Hueffer. Ford, Ford Madox *Ford Madox Ford*, Vol. V, The Bodley Head, p. 416
- 9 Woolf, Virginia *Roger Fry, a Biography*, Hogarth, London 1940, pp. 163-164
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- 13 *Studio*, Vol. XXV, 1902 p. 245
- 14 *Ibid.*
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- 16 *Builder*, Vol. CXXXI, 1926, p. 365
- 17 Muthesius *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44
- 18 Reilly, C. H. *Representative British Architects of the Present Day*, Batsford, London 1931, p. 86
- 19 Keen, Arthur *RIBA Journal*, Vol. XXIV, 1917, p. 221
- 20 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 62
- 21 *RIBA Journal*, Vol. LV, p. 39
- 22 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 51
- 23 Principally in Howarth, Thomas Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1952 and Macleod, Robert Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Hamlyn, Feltham 1963
- 24 *Studio*, Vol. IX, 1897, p. 204
- 25 Weaver, Lawrence *Small Country Houses*, First Series, Country Life, London n.d., p. 122
- 26 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 46
- 27 The best published study on Schultz so far is by Ottewill, David in *Architectural History*, Vol. XXII, 1979, pp. 88-115. This account is based on that essay
- 28 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 45
- 29 A detailed account of Townsend is given in Service, Alastair *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins*, The Architectural Press, London 1975, pp. 162-182
- 30 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 41
- 31 Ashbee, C. R. *Memoirs*, typescript in Victoria and Albert Museum library, Vol. VII, p. 332
- 32 *RIBA Journal*, Vol. XLV, 1938, p. 258
- 33 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 53
- 34 *Architectural Review*, Vol. XVI, 1904, pp. 184-185
- 35 The best published description of Wells's work is Pevsner, Nikolaus and Enid Radcliffe, "Randall Wells" *Architectural Review*, Vol. CXXXVI, 1964, pp. 366-368
- 36 Muthesius *op. cit.*, p. 47
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