

Mackmurdo, Arthur Heygate 1851 - 1942



Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo [also known as A.H. Mackmurdo] was born in Edmonton, Middlesex, England on 12 December 1851 and was articled to the architect Thomas Chatfield Clarke (1829-1895) in London. In 1873 he moved to the London office of James Brooks (1825-1901), a Gothic Revival architect, to whom Mackmurdo later acknowledged his debt "as an exemplar of methodical thoroughness".

In 1875 Mackmurdo set up his own architectural practice at 20 Southampton Road, London. He relocated the office to 20 Fitzroy Street, London in 1888 and was in partnership with George Hornblower (1858-1930) and E. S. Walters as Mackmurdo, Hornblower & Walters from 1891 to 1893..

Mackmurdo was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1882, however he left in 1885 and his architectural output was very limited and scattered over several years. It included a few houses in London and the Manchester area, a cold-storage warehouse in Charterhouse Street in the City of London (1900), and the village hall in Great Totham, Essex (1929-30). It is as a designer and craftsman and for his contribution to the development of the Arts and Crafts movement that Mackmurdo is better known.

In 1882, with Selwyn Image (1849-1930), and Herbert P. Horne (1864-1916), one of his protégés, Mackmurdo founded the Century Guild of Artists. The aims of the Century Guild were outlined in a prospectus for the Guild's magazine 'The Century Guild Hobby Horse' [later The Hobby Horse]. These were ". . . to render all branches of Art the sphere, no longer of the tradesman, but of the artist. It would restore building, decoration, glass-painting, pottery, wood-carving and metal-work

to their rightful place beside painting and sculpture. By so placing them they would once more be regarded as legitimate and honoured expressions of the artistic spirit, and would stand in their true relation not only to painting but to the drama, to music, and to literature. In other words, the Century Guild seeks to emphasise the Unity of Art . . ."

Mackmurdo practised by example and as a Guild member mastered several design and craft skills. He designed wallpaper for Jeffrey & Co., furnishing fabric for Simpson & Godlee, as well as art metalwork, furniture, book plates and book covers. The cover he designed for his book *Wren's City Churches* (1883) Nikolaus Pevsner asserted was "the first work of Art Nouveau which can be traced" [Pioneers of Modern Design (1975)]

In the early 1890s The Century Guild disintegrated mainly due to the "the underlying amateurishness of the organization" [DNB entry on Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo] and *The Hobby Horse* ceased publication in 1894.

Mackmurdo participated in the 1st (1888) and 3rd (1890) exhibition of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society at the New Gallery in London, otherwise he exhibited little.

By 1900 Mackmurdo had all but abandoned architecture and design. He subsequently largely devoted his energies to his utopian schemes for social and economic reform, a subject on which he wrote extensively. He died in Great Totham, Essex on 15 March 1942

Worked in

UK

Works

Halcyon, Enfield, London (1874–76); Brooklyn, Enfield, London (1883); 16 Redington Road, Hampstead, London (1890); 12 Hams Road, Knightsbridge, London (1891); 25 Cadogan Gardens, Chelsea, London (1893-94); Old Swan public house, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge, London (1899); Cold storage warehouse, 109-113 Charterhouse Street, Smithfield, London (1900); Little Ruffins, Wickham Bishops, Essex (c.1900); Great Ruffins, Wickham Bishops, Essex (c.1904); the village hall in Great Totham, Essex (1929-30); and a few houses in Manchester.

See also

[British Listed Buildings](#)

Bibliography

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. The Arts and Crafts movement in the North West of England: a handbook. Wetherby, England: Oblong Creative Ltd., 2006

Architect-Designers from Pugin to Mackintosh. London: The Fine Art Society with Haslam & Whiteway Ltd., 1981 [Exhibition catalogue]

Davey, Peter. Arts and Crafts Architecture. London: Phaidon, 1997

Doubleday, John. The Eccentric A.H. Mackmurdo. Colchester: The Minories, 1979. [catalogue of an exhibition held at the Minories, Colchester in 1979]

Catalogue of A.H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild Collection. London: William Morris Gallery, 1967

Evans, Stuart. Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo 1851-1942 and the Century Guild of Artists. MA thesis, Manchester University, 1986

Evans, Stuart and Liddiard, Jean. Arts and Crafts Pioneers: The Hobby Horse Men and their Century Guild. London: Lund Humphries Publishers Ltd, 2021

Grainer, Hilary J. 'Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo'. in Encyclopedia of Interior Design vol. 2, M-Z, edited by Joanna Banham. London and Chicago: Fitzroy Desrbourn Publishing, 1997 pp. 763-765

Hamilton, Alec. Arts & Crafts Churches. London: Lund Humphries, 2020

Haslam, W. M. P. A. H. Mackmurdo's Artistic Theory. M. A. thesis, Coutauld Institute, University of London, 1968

Haslam, Malcolm. 'Pioneers of Art Nouveau: Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942)'. Country Life 27 February 1973 pp. 504-506 [Part one of a two-part article]

Haslam, Malcolm. 'Pioneers of Art Nouveau: Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942)'. Country Life 6 March 1973 pp. 574-579 [Part two of a two-part article]

Horne, H. P. 'The Century Guild'. Art Journal September 1897 pp. 295-298

Lambourne, Lionel. Utopian Craftsmen: The Arts and Crafts Movement from the Cotswolds to Chicago. London: Astragal Books, 1980

Mackmurdo, Arthur Heygate. Plain Handicrafts. London: [publisher not known], 1892

Pevsner, Nikolaus. 'Arthur H. Mackmurdo: a pioneer designer'. Architectural Review vol. 83, 1938 pp. 141-143 [Reprinted as 'Arthur H. Mackmurdo' in Pevsner, Nikolaus. Studies in Art Architecture and Design vol. 2. Victorian and After. London: Thames & Hudson, 1968 pp. 132-139]

Pevsner, Nikolaus. 'Mackmurdianum'. Architectural Review vol. 132, July 1962 pp. 59-60 [In the article Pevner reproduces a letter sent to him by Mackmurdo in 1941 in which he reminisces about he contemporaries including Richard Norman Shaw]

Pond, Edward. 'Mackmurdo gleanings'. Architectural Review vol. 128, December 1960 pp. 429-431. [Reprinted in The Anti-Rationalists, edited by Nikolaus Pensner and J. M. Richards. London: Architectural Press, 1973 pp. 111-115]

Stamp, Gavin. The English House 1860-1914. Catalogue of an exhibition of photographs and drawings. London: InternationalArchitect and the Building Centre Trust, 1980 p. 24

Stansky, Peter. Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985 [Contains a chaper on The Century Guild pp. 69-118]

Vallance, Aymer. 'Mr. Arthur H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild'. The Studio vol.16, no. 73, April 1899 pp. 183-192

Links

- Peyton Skipwith, 'Mackmurdo, Arthur Heygate (1851-1942)', rev. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004 [Subscription service] <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37715>

- Stuart Evans. A. H. Mackmurdo. Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online [Subscription service]

<https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T052913>

- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Heygate_Mackmurdo

- Victoria & Albert Museum, London

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?q=Mackmurdo&page=1>

- Victorian Web - Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, 1851-1942, and the Century Guild <https://victorianweb.org/art/design/mackmurdo/bio.html>

- Victorian Web. Aymer Vallance. 'Mr. Arthur H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild' [reprinted from The Studio vol.16, no. 73, April 1899 pp. 183-192

<https://victorianweb.org/art/design/mackmurdo/vallance.html>

- Mapping the Practice & Profession of Sculpture in Britain & Ireland 1851-1951

https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/mapping/public/view/person.php?id=ann_1286912207&search=

- ART UK <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/arthur-heygate-mackmurdo-18511942-135400>
- Index Rerum - Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo
<http://keridavies.blogspot.com/2014/07/arthur-heygate-mackmurdo.html>
- Claudia Pritchard. The pathfinder of modernism. The New European
<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/brexit-news-arthur-heygate-mackmurdo-7317404/>
- Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Arthur_Heygate_Mackmurdo
- William Morris Gallery <https://www.wmgallery.org.uk/collection/artists-64/mackmurdo-arthur-heygate-1851>
- Internet Archive. Writings by and about A. H. Mackmurdo
<https://archive.org/search.php?query=%28%28subject%3A%22Mackmurdo%2C%20Arthur%201942%22%20AND%20Mackmurdo%29%29%20AND%20%28-mediatype%3Asoftware%29>
- National Art Library Catalogue <https://nsl-vam.on.worldcat.org/search?databaseList=&queryString=Mackmurdo%2C%20Arthur>
- Google Arts & Culture <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/arthur-heygate-mackmurdo/m093q16?hl=en>
- Historic England - One Oak, Camden, London
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1130370>
- Historic England - Beacon Cottage, Little Braxted, Essex
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1350399>
- Historic England - Beacons, Great Totham, Essex
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1309017>
- Historic England - 12, 14 and 16 Hans Road, London
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1190898>
- Historic England - Entrance Gates, Great Ruffins, Great Totham, Essex
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1166216>
- Historic England - Peter Jones Store <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1080730>
- Historic England - Sandhills Cottages, Formby
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1198986>
- Historic England - Brooklyn, Enfield, London
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1189207>
- Historic England - 111 Charterhouse Street, Islington, London
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1195530>
- Historic England - Pownhall Hall (School)
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1222471>
- Historic England - Great Ruffins, Great Totham, Essex
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1111087>

- British Listed Buildings <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/site-search/?q=Mackmurdo>