

Barnsley, Sidney Howard 1865 - 1926



Sidney Howard Barnsley [commonly known as Sidney Barnsley] was born in Birmingham, England on 25 April 1865. His family owned a local building firm, John Barnsley & Sons. After studying at Birmingham Municipal School of Art, he was articled to [Richard Norman Shaw](#) (1831-1912) in London from 1885 to 1888. He also attended the Royal Academy Architectural School in London. After leaving Shaw, he spent two extended study tours of Greece with his friend and fellow architect [Robert Weir Schultz](#) (1860-1951), later known as Robert Schultz Weir. He also attended the British School at Athens.

Following his return to England in November 1890, he lodged for a period with [Ernest Gimson](#) in London and established an office with Schultz at 14 Gray's Inn Square, London in 1891. He also became a partner in Kenton & Co., a short-lived cabinet-making workshop established in London by Gimson, [Mervyn Macartney](#), [Reginald Blomfield](#), Stephen Webb, and his older brother, [Ernest Barnsley](#) (1863-1926). A table designed by Sidney Barnsley for Kenton & Co. is in the permanent collection of the William Morris Gallery in London.

In 1892 Barnsley designed his first significant architectural commission, the Church of the Wisdom of God at Lower Kingswood in Surrey, built by the local building firm Mees & Sons. The cloister with its floral mosaic apse and Byzantine-inspired gold mosaic dome, show the influence of the churches he visited in Greece.

Kenton & Co. closed in 1892 and the following year Barnsley along with Gimson moved to Ewen in the Cotswolds, and established a furniture workshop at Pinsbury Park, a few miles away. In 1902 they relocated their workshop to the nearby village of Sapperton, however, because of a disagreement between Gimson and Ernest Barnsley, the partnership between the three designers dissolved.

Sidney Barnsley remained in Sappertom where he built Beechanger, a house for himself and his family, and continued to design and make furniture from a workshop in his garden. He and Gimson remained close friends and met up more or less daily in their respective workshops.

From 1913 onwards Barnsley received more commissions for architectural work and he designed extensions and additions for a number of large houses in the Cotswolds.

Following the death of Gimson in August 1919, he saw to the completion of his outstanding work. This included the chancel screen at Crockham Hill Church in Surrey and furniture for G. F. B. de Gruchy in Jersey.

Sidney Barnsley participated in the 4th (1893), 5th (1896), 6th (1899), 7th (1903), 8th (1906), 9th (1910) and 11th (1916) exhibitions of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society in London.

Towards the end of his career, Sidney worked on the interior furnishing of Rodmarton Manor in Rodemarton, south of Cirencester designed by Ernest Barnsley and commissioned by Claud Biddulph, a banker, in 1909.

Sidney Barnsley died in Sapperton Gloucestershire on 25 September 1926. He had two children, (Emily) Grace Barnsley (1896–1975), who became a pottery decorator, and (William) Edward Barnsley (1900–1987) who was a designer-craftsman.

Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum has more than 250 designs for furniture and architecture by Sidney Barnsley.

Worked in

UK

Works

St. Sophia's church, Lower Kingswood, Surrey (1891); Beechanher, Sapperton, Gloucestershire (c.1901); and Gyde Almshouses, Painswick, Gloucestershire (c.1913);

See also: [Historic England](#) - contains over 30 records of work by Sidney Barnsley

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Links

- Alan Crawford, 'Barnsley family (per. 1885-1987)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [Subscription service] <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66113>
- Historic England - contains over 30 records of work by Sidney Barnsley <https://historicengland.org.uk/sitesearch?searchType=site&search=Sidney%20Barnsley&>

- Vads. The Online Resource for Visual Arts
<https://www.vads.ac.uk/digital/collection/DCSC/id/11850/rec/1>
- The Church of Jesus Christ and the Wisdom of God, Lower Kingswood, Surrey, by Sidney Barnsley <https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/byzantine/2.html>
- British and Irish Furniture Makers Online (BIFMO)
<https://bifmo.history.ac.uk/entry/barnsley-sidney-howard-1865-1926-0>
- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980
http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=203312
- The Cheltenham Trust <https://www.cheltenhammuseum.org.uk/collection/arts-and-crafts-designers-sidney-barnsley/>
- Greensted, Mary. The Arts and Crafts Movement: exchanges between Greece and Britain (1876-1930). M.Phil. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2010
https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/1110/1/Greensted10MPhil_A1a.pdf
- Wikipedia - Barnsley Brothers https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barnsley_brothers
- RIBA - Palazzo Dei Badoari Partecipazzi (Palazzo Gritti Badoer), Venice: detail of decorative stonework and marble above a Gothic arched window painted by Sidney Barnsley https://www.ribapix.com/Palazzo-Dei-Badoari-Partecipazzi-Palazzo-Gritti-Badoer-Venice-detail-of-decorative-stonework-and-marble-above-a-Gothic-arched-window_RIBA29564?ribasearch=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cucmliYXBpeC5jb20vc2VhcmNoP2Fkdj1
- Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sidney_Howard_Barnsley
- William Morris Gallery - Table designed by Sidney Barnsley for Kenton & Co.
<https://wmgallery.org.uk/collection/artists-64/barnsley-sidney-howard-1865-1926/initial/b/page/1/object/table-g64-1890-1892>
- British Listed Buildings - Church of Jesus Christ and the Wisdom of God, Lower Kingswood <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101029052-church-of-jesus-christ-and-the-wisdom-of-god-reigate-and-banstead-kingswood-with-burgh-heath-ward>
- Jisc Archives Hub. Crafts Study Centre Archives, University for the Creative Arts. Sidney Barnsley and Ernest Gimson archive
<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/cab2a103-fe41-3ad9-ad82-b2b5b01c9765>