

Burges, William 1827 - 1881



William Burges was born in London, England on 2 December 1827. He began studying engineering at King's College, London in 1843, but left after a year to take up articles in the London office of Edward Blore (1787-1879), surveyor to Westminster Abbey. In 1849 he moved to the office of Matthew Digby Wyatt (1820-1877) as an 'Improver' and assisted Wyatt in preparations for the Great Exhibition in 1851, and in the production of two books by him - 'Metal work and its Artistic Design' (1852) and 'The Industrial Arts of the Nineteenth Century' 1853-54)

Between c.1851 and 1856 he was in an informal partnership with Henry Clutton (1819-1893), who, like Burges, was an enthusiast and a follower of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852). During these years, Burges travelled extensively on the Continent.

In 1856 Burges ended his partnership with Clutton and established his own architectural practice in London at 15 Buckingham Street, The Strand. In 1863 he was given his first significant commission, St Fin Barre's Cathedral in Cork, Ireland. Two years later, in 1865, he met John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, 3rd Marquess of Bute. The encounter was to lead to Burgess's two most important commissions, the rebuilding of Cardiff Castle, begun in 1868, but not completed until several years after Burges's death; and the reconstruction of Castell Coch, near Cardiff, begun in 1875, but not completed until the early 1890s, ten years after Burges's death.

Other important architectural commissions undertaken by by Burges included the redecoration of the hall of Worcester College, Oxford (1873-79); the Skilbeck Warehouse at 46 Upper Thames Street, London (1866); Knightshayes Court at Bolham, Tiverton, Devon (begun in 1869 and completed by John Dibblee Crace after Burges was sacked from the project in 1874); Park House in Cardiff(1871-75); Church of Christ the Consoler in Skelton-on-Ure, Harrogate, Yorkshire (1870-75); St Mary's in Studley Royal Park, Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire (1870-78); and The Tower House, Burges's own house at 29 Melbury Road, Holland Park, London (1875-81).

In 1868 [Horatio Walter Lonsdale](#) (1844-1919) began working as Burges's assistant. They subsequently collaborated on numerous commissions and following Burges's death, he worked on a number of commissions for the Marquess of Bute.

In addition to his work as an architect, Burges designed jewellery, art metalwork, stained glass, and furniture. Many of his designs, particularly his painted furniture, anticipate the Arts & Crafts movement.

Between 1852 and 1880 he exhibited at the Royal Academy in London and in 1881 was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy (ARA). He died at his home in London on 20 April 1881.

Worked in
UK
Works

See:

[Wikipedia - List of Buildings by William Burges](#)

[British Listed Buildings](#) - over 100 entries on William Burges

[Historic England](#) - over 120 entries on William Burges

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