



## James Donald (1852–1917)

The son of a Paisley farmer, James Donald worked at an early age for the great Glasgow architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson (1817–75) before setting up his own practice in Paisley in 1881.

Donald's first major commission was the Liberal Club in 1886. Active in the Liberal Party, he was also in a good position to get the commission for Dunn Square from the town's Liberal MP, Sir William Dunn, and for as many as 87 tenements along new widened streets. The best of these have memorable corner towers, with wide arched ground floor windows to public houses, shallow bay windows, sometimes divided by heavy stone mullions and transoms. He also designed numerous villas in Paisley's suburbs.



## Paisley Townscape Heritage and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme

Paisley Townscape Heritage and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme 2 (TH.CARS2) aims to improve historic properties and streetscape and help regeneration in Paisley.

Building repair and shopfront improvement grants are available to property owners in a defined area of Paisley town centre focusing on High Street, New Street, Shuttle Street and George Place.

A programme of heritage education, training and events aims to engage diverse audiences with the culture and heritage of Paisley. The emphasis is on learning through making, particularly around traditional building skills and textiles.

More information about the scheme is available online at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/THCars2](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/THCars2)



## Getting here

Whatever your mode of transport, you'll find it very easy to explore Paisley.

### By road

Paisley town centre is only a five minute drive from Glasgow Airport and is less than 15 minutes from Glasgow city centre.

Paisley sits just off the M8 motorway—with lots of surrounding areas to explore. Take M8 Junction 27 westbound coming from Glasgow, or M8 Junction 29 eastbound coming from Greenock/Loch Lomond.

→ [www.trafficscotland.org](http://www.trafficscotland.org)

### By rail

Regular trains run between Paisley and Glasgow Central and Ayrshire/Inverclyde. It is just a 12-minute train ride from Paisley Gilmour Street Station to Glasgow Central.

→ [www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk)

[www.paisley.is](http://www.paisley.is)



# Four Paisley Architects



Paisley



## Paisley is home to stunning architecture, nowhere more apparent than in its town centre...

Iconic buildings adorn the town's skyline, an enduring legacy of the town's time at the centre of the global textile trade and the civic altruism of the textile magnates.

A number of Paisley architects were engaged in its redevelopment and expansion, and gave Paisley its enduring, self-confident and prosperous character.

Four architects stand out for the number and quality of buildings they designed for the town between 1880 and 1940. This architectural trail map is your guide to these four men and the remarkable buildings they created.

You can read more about the trail and Paisley architecture online at [www.paisley.is/four-paisley-architects](http://www.paisley.is/four-paisley-architects)



**William Daniel McLennan**  
(1872–1940)

The son of a Paisley manufacturer, McLennan emerged as one of Scotland's most original architects active around the turn of the 20th century.

His Renfrewshire output includes the country's best Art Nouveau pub interior (The Bull Inn) and a church (St Matthew's) which bears comparison with Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Queen's Cross church. His five villas in Thornly Park (1899–1910) are in a free and fantastical English Arts and Crafts half-timbered idiom. However, his Crosslee Mill (1916, now demolished) rationally expressed the building's concrete structure, and justifies him calling himself an engineer as well as architect.



**James Steel Maitland**  
(1887–1982)

Maitland was apprenticed at age 14 to William Leiper and attended the Glasgow School of Art. In 1908, he emigrated to Canada and, working for Brown and Vallance in Montreal, designed three accomplished multi-storey commercial buildings. Maitland returned to Britain to serve as a pilot in the Great War, and settled in Paisley in 1919.

TG Abercrombie took him on in 1921, immediately recognising his abilities by giving him the plum job of designing the Russell Institute. The large public housing estates he laid out for Renfrew Burgh from 1931 are among the best in Scotland. The one, two and three storey blocks freely blend Art Deco and Scottish Arts and Crafts elements, and the Beaux Arts layouts of squares, streets and alleys give each area identity within unified structures.



**Thomas Graham Abercrombie**  
(1862–1926)

TG, as he was known locally, set up Paisley's most prolific and long-lived architectural practice in 1886 at the age of 24.

His first notable building was the rather plain Gothic Greenlaw Church. With the collaboration of William Kerr of Houston between 1890 and 1903, designs flowed from the practice for buildings in a variety of styles, usually carried out with great confidence and panache—Scots Baronial, Arts and Crafts, and Renaissance, with Art Nouveau influences developed into a Free Style, drawing on various historical styles. The practice's most substantial commission was the Royal Alexandra Infirmary (1894–1901). Some later suburban house commissions were in an English Arts and Crafts idiom.

# Four Paisley Architects

Follow us and tag @paisleyis in your photographs on Instagram, or submit your photos of buildings to the TH.CARS2 online StoryMap via the link at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/THCars2](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/THCars2)

## James Donald

1. Liberal Club, High Street/Churchill Avenue, 1886  
(Altered in 1901 by Peter Caldwell) Greek-Thompson-like superimposition of arcaded ballroom over heavier first floor facade.
2. Sherwood Church, Glasgow Road/Greenlaw Drive, 1891  
Free perpendicular Gothic (copper rocket roof to truncated spire by Page and Park, 1993).
3. Dunn Square, High Street/St Mirren Street, 1894  
Formal Italianate setting for statues, complementing the town hall and the connecting bridge.

Also by this architect:

4. 20 Smithhills Street (Old Swan Inn), 1897
5. 19–21 Moss Street/Meeting House Lane, 1897–99
6. 67 Causeyside Street & 4 Gordon Street, 1901–02
7. 70–76 Causeyside Street (The Afton Public House), 1902
8. 33–35 Gauze Street (Gabriel's PH), 1904–05
9. 9 Orchard Street (Mr Bathrooms), 1904–05

## Thomas Graham Abercrombie

10. Paisley Grammar School, Glasgow Road, 1895  
Scots Renaissance style, grand but welcoming (side extensions 1961).
11. Territorial Army, 76 High Street, 1896  
Swaggering Scots Renaissance in polychrome sandstone with Art Nouveau bellcote.
12. Parish Offices, 20–22 Back Sneddon Street/Maxwell Street, 1898  
Asymmetrical Scots Renaissance full of inventive formal combinations.

13. University of the West of Scotland, 42 George Street, 1898  
(Former Technical College) Competition winning Free Renaissance palazzo, with swept eaves and finials giving lighter touch.
14. YMCA, High Street/New Street, 1908  
Beaux Arts with corner dome and giant pilasters
15. Wallneuk Church, North Croft Street/Abercorn Street, 1913  
Perpendicular Gothic, calm and powerful, one of TG's best works.
16. Upper Rotunda (and Art Galleries 11–V) in Paisley Museum, High Street, 1913.  
Beaux Arts with sweepings steps inserted between Honeyman's sculpture and picture galleries, gracefully resolving the awkward change of direction.
17. Brough Nurses Home, 56 Oakshaw Street, 1897  
Converted to residential.

Also by this architect:

18. Abbey Mission Halls, Lawn Street, 1892
19. Middle Church Hall, Church Hill/School Wynd, 1895
20. Greenlaw Church, Greenlaw Avenue, 1889 (designed with RS Symington)
21. Mrs A Coats Girls Home, Weighhouse Close (off New Street), 1900
22. 41–43 Causeyside Street/Johnston Street, 1903
23. 45–47 Causeyside Street/Johnston Street, 1903
24. 33 Causeyside Street/Orchard Street, 1905
25. 46–60 George Street, 1906–07
26. High Church Hall, 19 Oakshaw Street, 1911

## James Steel Maitland

27. Russell Institute Causeyside Street/New Street, 1923  
Monumental Beaux Arts former children's healthcare centre, rich with bronze sculptures by Archibald Dawson. Stone clad reinforced concrete. Marble clad memorial hall and flying staircases.
  28. Former Arnotts Department Store, Gauze Street, 1924  
Handsome facade with bronze framed canted windows and the architect's lion head signature.
  29. 35 High Street, 1932  
Emphatically horizontal Art Deco office facade above shops.
  30. 50 High Street, 1934  
Shops, offices and flats with elegant Art Deco corner.
  31. Kelvin House, Riverside Walk, off Forbes Place, 1937  
Strongly symmetrical Art Deco office facade
- Also by this architect:
32. 26–28 Moss Street, 1921
  33. 14 St James Street, 1926
  34. Janitor's Lodge, Paisley Grammar School, Glasgow Road/Crossflat Crescent, 1938

## William Daniel McLennan

35. 4 Glen Street, 1899  
Curious close entry upsets symmetry of this quirky 4 storey red sandstone tenement.
36. Ralston East UP Church, Cyril Street/Violet Street, 1899–1904 (now offices)  
Art Nouveau Gothic with steeply pitched porch roofs flanking great north window.
37. Bull Inn, 7 New Street, 1900–01  
Restlessly asymmetrical Free Style tenement with witch's hat roof. Inside Art Nouveau pub with cosy snugs.
38. St Matthew's Church (Church of the Nazarene), Gordon Street, 1905  
McLennan's masterwork, Art Nouveau version of perpendicular Gothic with stunning interiors.

