



*Souvenir of the
Opening of Caird Hall*

by

His Royal Highness

The Prince of Wales

H. G. M. C.

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d.e.

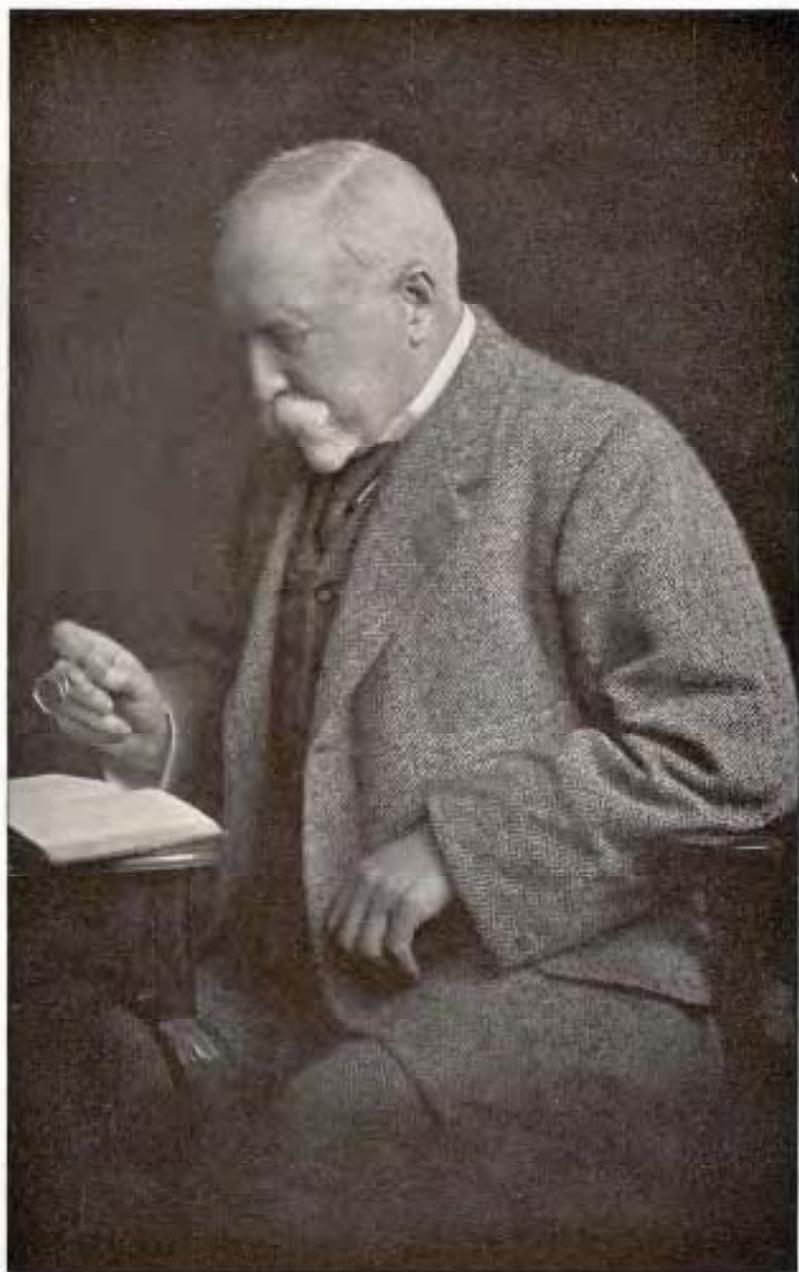
Dundee.

26th October, 1923.

1914 — 1923.



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G., M.C.



Sir JAMES KEY CAIRD, Bart., LL.D.



Mrs EMMA GRACE MARRYAT.



Lord Provost ALEXANDER SPENCE, O.B.E.



Sir JAMES URQUHART, D.L., LL.D.



Sir WILLIAM DON, K.B.E., D.L.



SITE PRIOR TO CLEARANCE

Intimation of a Gift of £100,000 by the late Sir JAMES K. CAIRD, Bart., Manufacturer, for the erection of a City Hall and Council Chambers, was made to the Citizens of Dundee on April 9th, 1914.

At a special meeting of the Town Council on that date the following letter was read:—

"Dear Lord Provost,

If the plans of the proposed City Hall and Council Chambers, which have been prepared under my direction, meet with your entire approval, and that of your Council, I would be willing to defray the cost of the building as it proceeds to the amount of £100,000 if the work be carried out by the City Architect and completed within three years, and providing the cost of the site be balanced by the rents of business premises included in the design."

I am,

Yours very truly,

James Caird.



NORTH VIEW OF SITE



SHORE TERRACE PRIOR TO CLEARANCE.

ment and progress of his native city. Applied to him, the title "a princely giver" was strictly true. In many branches of its work the Royal Infirmary is a shining memorial of the generosity of Sir JAMES CAIRD.

He erected the Maternity Hospital at the cost of £6,000: the Cancer Hospital at a cost of £24,000: and by a gift of £10,000 saved the Sidlaw Sanatorium for the community. Sir James also provided £2,400 for the establishment of a new Out-Patient Department, and by other gifts to the City's greatest charitable institution, he revealed the depth of his sympathy for the sick and suffering in our midst, while the same tenderness of feeling prompted his gift of £5,000 which provided Spring Grove Home of Rest for old men. But the years 1912 to 1914 marked a new epoch in Sir JAMES CAIRD'S benevolent



NORTH CORNER OF SITE.

The Council accepted the gift which was indeed a dazzling climax to a wonderful record of public benevolence extending over a period of nearly thirty years. While his outlook was by no means parochial, as his list of benefactions prove, Sir JAMES CAIRD gave first place in his thoughts to the improve-



CENTRE OF SITE.

enterprises. These years witnessed the realisation of his desire to do something for his native city in the benefit of which all the inhabitants would participate. In June 1912, he purchased for £15,000 the Den of Mains and surrounding lands, as a pleasure ground for the public, and a year later he gave an additional £10,000 to complete the great gift of the Caird Park and Golf Course. Next there came the crowning announcement of £100,000 for the City Hall. The foundation stones were laid on Friday, 10th July, 1914, by Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary. It was a unique ceremony. Their Majesties simply touched electric buttons at Ashton Works, Hawkhill, in presence of the donor, and by an ingenious application of science their touch re-acted on the ponderous stones in the Greenmarket, more than a mile away. Sir JAMES CAIRD, unfortunately, did not live to see the building completed, and unforeseen circumstances, arising out of the European War, created problems which might have been difficult of solution but for the fact that Mrs MARRYAT by a magnificent gift of £75,000, cleared the way for the fulfilment of her distinguished brother's desires. In other directions Mrs MARRYAT has nobly maintained the example of



WESTWARD OF SITE



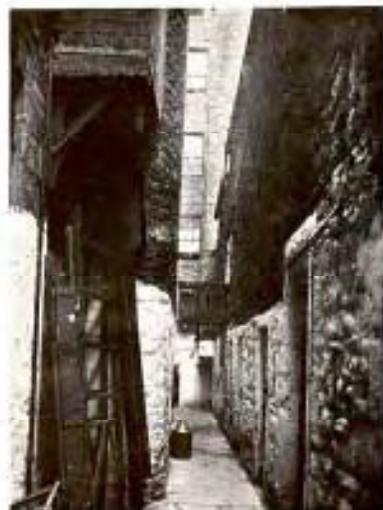
WEST END OF SITE.

is not too much to say, had been regarded with affection by many generations of Dundonians. A large part of it was formerly the Greenmarket, overlooked on the east by towering tenements and a well-known hostelry. Business and pleasure made a bewildering combination in "the market," but in the work of progress familiar landmarks must needs disappear, and the demolitions further east included properties in Tindal's Wynd dating back to 1546, in which Provosts of the old-time burgh had resided.

The Greenmarket was a densely populated area. Narrow closes formed the gateways to a network of stairs and passages, which were scarcely in accordance with the modern conception

Sir JAMES CAIRD. Her gift of Belmont Castle and Grounds was proof that she, too, has the common weal at heart and when, within recent months, Mrs MARRYAT provided £20,000 to enable the Directors of the Royal Infirmary to build a New Operating Theatre, the Citizens of Dundee were furnished with another instance of splendid philanthropy which will for all time redound to the credit of the giver.

The Caird Hall and Council Chambers occupy a site which, it



WEST END OF SITE.



WEST END OF SITE.

Unlike some of the buildings in its immediate vicinity, this hive of houses and shops had no distinguished historic associations. It was, comparatively speaking, a modern growth, illustrating a phase of the City's development, but it was a unique bit of "Old Dundee."

The Building of the Caird Hall and Council Chambers was impeded by the war, but the inevitable delay had at least one satisfactory result. It enabled three Lord Provosts of the City, viz: Sir James Urquhart, Sir William Don and Mr Alexander Spence to be directly associated with the scheme, and each of them has displayed a keen practical interest in its development under the direction of Mr James Thomson, City Architect.



LAYING FOUNDATION STONE - DEPOSITING CASKET

of housing requirements, but the tenement on the east side and the properties in Castle Lane were living links with the historic fairground, for the occupants of the houses were mainly an industrious and enterprising class of "market people," who catered in many ways to the requirements of the public. Apart from sentimental reasons, the clearance in the Greenmarket which the erection of the Caird Hall and Council Chambers necessitated, created a problem of rehousing at an acute period, and the difficulties were gradually overcome.



WILLIAM H. BLYTH MARTIN D.L., TOWN CLERK.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HALL.

THE height and weight of the Hall Buildings, the unequal nature of the site, and the nearness to sea level necessitated the use of reinforced concrete piles, and the skeleton of the building, also of reinforced concrete, is carried on these piles. There are sill beams between the heads of the piles carrying the main walls. Many of these piles rest on the walls of the old docks. The concrete pile is of course imperishable and immovable even in the waterlogged ground underlying the site.

The superstructure is entirely carried on a reinforced concrete framework which supports walls, floors, staircases, balcony, gallery, organ chamber and roof, and this framework has been so arranged that throughout the whole area of the Hall there are no columns to obstruct vision. Much of this structural work has been tested up to twice the load it will be required to carry so that there is no doubt as to the strength of the building.

The main roof is supported on steel trusses of 84 feet span and the disposition of these trusses is reflected in the design of the ceiling and walls of the Hall interior. The steel roof was erected by means of cranes on a travelling scaffold, which was wheeled from one end of the hall to the other as the erection of the roof work proceeded. An integral part of the roof is the metal ventilation duct 10 feet wide by 6 feet high with outlets to the great openings in the ceiling. There are 40,000 rivets in the metalwork of this duct.

Above the ceiling also are the winches for lowering the electroliers down to the floor level for cleaning. When in position these electroliers hang by chains as well as by a steel cable providing absolute safety against accident.



THE FOUNDATIONS.

through the ceiling openings. The foul air is extracted through openings in the steps of the balcony and gallery, and in the wall under the balcony ceiling. The side walls of the Hall are hollow up to the sills of the windows and thus a maximum area of foul air upcast shaft is gained. A ring duct under the windows collects the foul air, and it passes through the exhaust fan out to the open. The Hall is thus heated by the ventilating air. The Marryat Hall, the corridors and the retiring rooms are heated by radiators. There is a bioscope room at the back of the Hall, and the screen on a roller lies in a trough under one of the Chorus seats in front of the organ. Ropes can be lowered from the ceiling and hooked to the batten of the screen, the whole process of raising taking only a few minutes. The screen is over 30 feet wide and the throw is 220 feet. Satisfactory results have been



THE NORTH FRONT.

The system of ventilation and heating of the Hall is known as the balanced Plenum System. At the inlet chamber there is a complete series of air filters and washing apparatus, and the filtered air is driven by a large fan with a 20 horse-power motor through the heating battery into the duct already mentioned, and into the Hall



THE SOUTH FRONT.

of handling. The platform has a central entrance which can be closed at will for choral and orchestral performances.

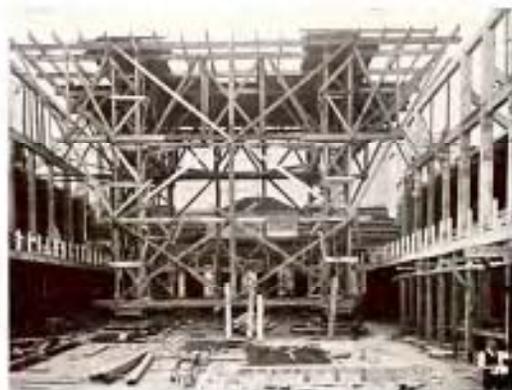
There is a kitchen above the Marryat Hall which, by means of lifts, serves both this lesser hall and the Lord Provost's Room below.

The floors in the Hall are wood, covered in the passages with cork carpet; the corridor floors are terazzo with marble insets and roman mosaic bands; the Main Entrance Vestibule is floored with marble.

The wood finishings of the Hall are mahogany, darkened and dull polished. The window sashes are steel. Automatic Fire detectors are installed all over the building, any fire at once causing an alarm at the Fire Station. There is a complete installation of fire Hydrants and Extincteurs, and in the caretaker's room there is a Medical Cabinet, so that first aid may be rendered in case of accidents or illness.

got with special wide aperture lenses. A set of shutters is provided so that the windows can be darkened and the bioscope used by day.

Under the Chorus seats is a piano room reached by removing three of the steps, the piano being placed on the platform with the minimum



THE INTERIOR.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HALL.

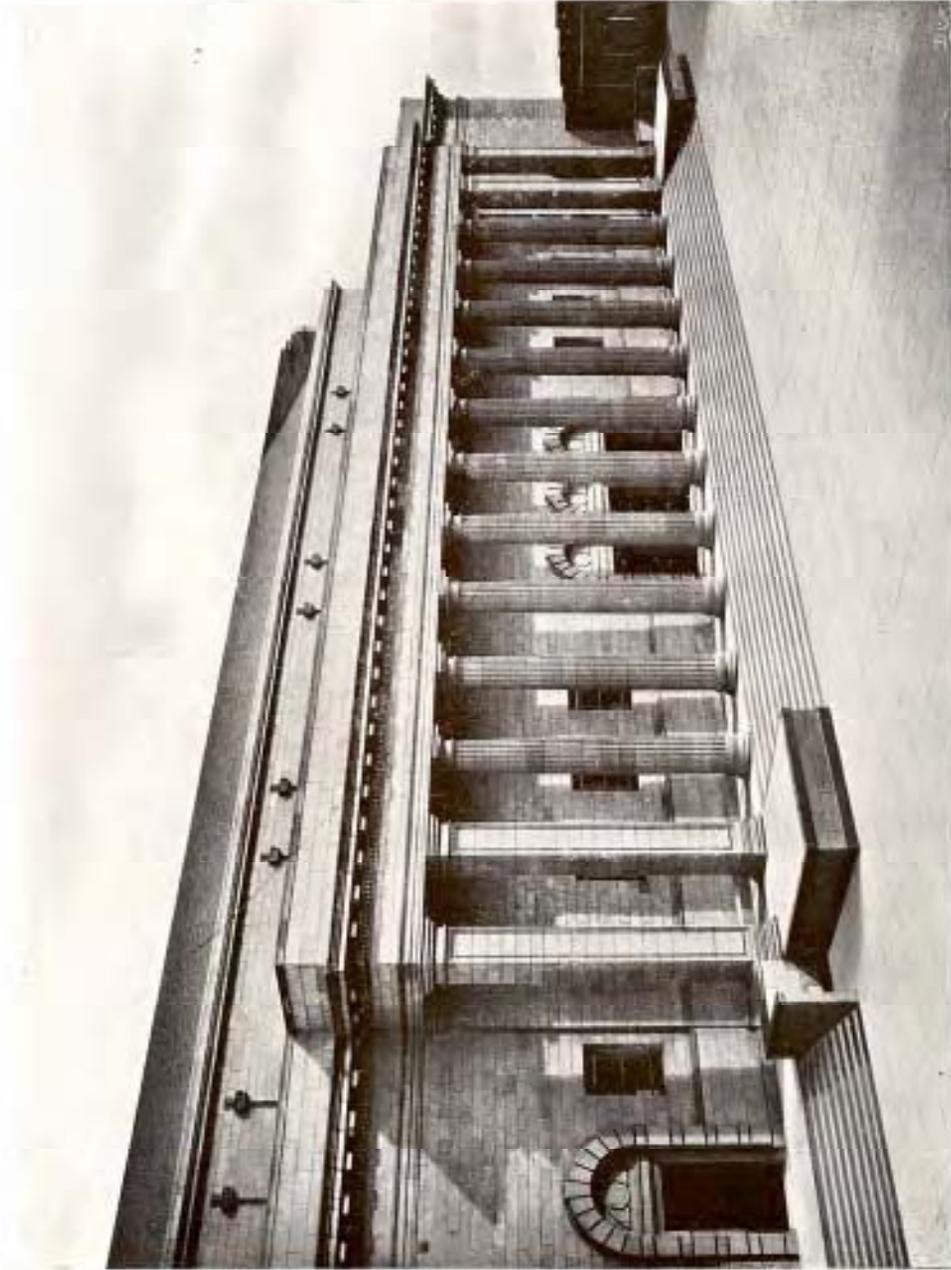
THE Caird Hall occupies the entire south frontage of a future square: the square at the heart of the busy life of the City of Dundee. The two wings, yet to be built, form the east and west sides of this square, and the north side is open to the High Street.

In the future the Hall will have its entrance from this square, and the colonnade will be the dominating feature of the square. Statuary groups are proposed for the large pedestals terminating the steps and these groups will be on the centre line of each of the footways of the square. The colonnade has been left plain and severe, of monumental aspect and of great scale, as befitting its commanding position.

There are ten Doric columns in the colonnade, each 4 feet diameter and 32 feet high, the bases being of a somewhat novel design so that circulation of crowds may not be impeded. The square pillars terminating the colonnade form the background for the statuary groups. The doorways are plain with circled heads filled with stone panelling, the rustication and the shadow cast by the circular recess being in keeping with the colonnade. The columns are each in seventeen stones, the bases weighing nearly two tons each.

The lighting of the Colonnade is by lamps in the ceiling which cast a pleasant glow on the wall behind and emphasise the outlines of the columns. The yellow stone of the building lends itself well to this effect.

This method of lighting will be seen at its best in time to come when the square is complete. From the High Street the points of light will not be visible, but only the glow behind the columns.



THE FRONT.



THE MAIN ENTRANCE VESTIBULE.

Through the three doorways in the centre of the front is reached the Main Entrance Vestibule, a hall 60 feet long, 24 feet wide and 26 feet high, floored with marble and enclosing a handsome marble stairway. The ceiling decoration here is noteworthy: there are five coffers with fine moulded cornices handsomely enriched with modelled work. The capitals to the pilasters are good examples, being based on one of the best classical Roman models. The Vestibule is lit from the roof with a soft pleasant effect. Special care has been given to the appearance of the Ticket Boxes which are of Mahogany with enriched mouldings all dull polished.



THE INTERIOR LOOKING EAST.



THE INTERIOR LOOKING WEST.

The corridors are of ample width and are carried round three sides of the Hall. At the four corners of the building are staircases leading to exits, and thus each corridor has a means of exit at both ends. From the north corridor the wide main stairs to the balcony are reached. Adjacent to these upper and lower north corridors are the Cloakroom Suites, four in all. Each suite contains a Cloak space with counter and an ample public space not in any way encroaching on the corridors, and Dressing Room units for Ladies and for Gentlemen. The ample corridors form excellent promenading spaces during concert intervals.



In the south wall of the north corridor facing the central main entrance is placed the bust of Sir JAMES K. CAIRD, Bart., LL.D., with the following inscription on the bronze record plate below.

THE CAIRD HALL
WAS GIFTED TO THE CITIZENS
BY SIR JAMES K. CAIRD, BART., LL.D.
& HIS SISTER MRS EMMA GRACE MARRYAT.
THE FOUNDATION STONE WAS LAID BY
KING GEORGE V. & QUEEN MARY
10TH JULY 1914.
LORD PROVOST SIR JAMES URQUHART, LL.D.
WORK CARRIED ON DURING 1914 - 1920
LORD PROVOST SIR WILLIAM DON, K.B.E.
THE HALL WAS FORMALLY OPENED
ON OCTOBER 26TH 1923
BY H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.
LORD PROVOST ALEXANDER SPENCE, LD. LIEUT.
JAMES THOMSON, F.R.L.B.A., ARCHITECT.
Wm. H. BLYTH MARTIN, D.L., TOWN CLERK.



THE MARRYAT HALL LOOKING WEST.

The corridors are designed on simple lines with deep mahogany base, plaster walls broken with pilasters and the ceilings coffered and moulded. The effect is intended to be quiet and pleasing, rather than striking. The total area of the corridor space is nearly a quarter of an acre.

To the Hall itself there are sixteen doorways, eight from the lower corridors into the Area and eight from the upper corridors to the Balcony and Gallery, and two of the doorways on the lower floor are convenient to the platform.



THE MARRYAT HALL LOOKING NORTH.



THE MARRYAT HALL.



THE ORGAN.

The interior of the Hall is spacious and monumental. The feature immediately attracting the attention is the ceiling, divided into three great panels or coffers in which are the Ventilating grills, and heavily moulded and enriched. The design of the ceiling was suggested by the lay-out of the steel work supporting the roof.



BALCONY EXIT.

The walls of the Hall reflect the ceiling in that the enriched doorways correspond to the beams in the ceiling, and the panel between the doorways to the ceiling panels. The positions of the doorways are again accentuated by the enriched panels in the Balcony front. The dimensions of the Hall are as follows:— Length, from facade of Organ to back wall, 230 feet; breadth, 82 feet; and height from platform, 50 feet. In view of these dimensions, the natural lighting by clerestory windows is very pleasant and effective. The artificial lighting is direct. Electroliers are suspended near the ceiling and in themselves form part of the decorative scheme. The organ case is another noteworthy feature. The main part of the case is wood, the modelled ornament being in fibrous plaster. All the pipes shown are speaking pipes. In the centre of the case, above the console opening, in the most distinctive position in the Hall, is set a representation of the Coat of Arms of Dundee.

The Hall is seated with tip-up chairs, upholstered in grey corduroy. The chairs are 1 foot 8 inches wide and the rows are nearly 3 feet apart, giving a very comfortable spacing. The seats are well sprung and intentionally made softer than usual, this also with comfort in view. Every seat in the Hall is numbered so that all can be booked in advance.

The seating in the area is all removable, in the event of it being necessary to clear the floor at any time. The chairs are secured in groups of five or six for speedy handling, and the floor can be cleared in six hours.

The chair stores are below the platform, and a doorway in the platform front can be opened out, and a small light railway laid down, extending further into the area as the clearance of the floor proceeds.



ENTRANCE TO CITY CHAMBERS.

The platform can accommodate 75 of an orchestra, and in addition a choir of 300 voices can be seated in the Chorus seats.

There are five entrances to the platform from behind, including the central entrance which may or may not be left open.



THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Perhaps the greatest triumph of all is that the acoustics of the Hall are practically perfect. In a chamber of such dimensions the acoustic qualities are a matter of much difficulty. In this Hall a good speaker can make himself heard with effect to an audience of 3,300, and singers, instrumentalists and choral masters have been loud in their praise of the ease with which their many and varied musical effects can be produced, and the way in which the Hall helps their efforts.

It has been stated both by Pianists and Organists that their instruments are as well heard at the back of the gallery as any-



THE LORD PROVOST'S ROOM.

where in the Hall. This acoustic clarity is attributed to the hollow walls of the Hall and the sound absorbing fibrous plaster internal finish, in conjunction with the proportion of width to height of the Auditorium.

An excellent impression of the Hall can be got from the promenade passage in front of the gallery and behind the centre balcony. From here can be appreciated the broad simple lines of the composition leading to the focus of the Organ case and the City Arms.

It is anticipated that at a future time the Hall will be worthily decorated in colour, and the great panels behind the side balconies and elsewhere will be filled with scenes relating to the history of Dundee. It can be imagined how this will enhance the purely architectural value of the interior.

From the west corridor, by the curtained doorways, is entered the Marryat Hall. This is an imposing room, 82 feet by 45 feet, decorated in a carefully designed scheme of the Louis XV or Regency period, with mirrored ends prolonging the room, and adding to its brilliance. This is intended for the City receptions and banquets, and has also come into use for private dances and semi-public functions. This Hall can be seated for chamber concerts, accomodating 550 of an audience. The ventilation is managed by means of inlets under the windows, and outlets through the enriched grills in the ceiling.

Behind the platform there are two floors of retiring rooms; on the platform level, an artistes suite and a platform assembly room. The suite consists of two dressing rooms for the principal artistes, entered from a sub-corridor, and a parlour where they may meet and rest and receive their friends after a performance. The assembly room is intended for a platform party, or an orchestra. On the upper floor are two large cloakrooms for chorus, and an assembly room where the choir may be arranged in order before filing on to the Chorus space of the platform. All the five platform doors are convenient to these retiring rooms by corridors and staircase.

A special corridor and entrance is arranged for artistes, and the main corridors are also in communication with the retiring room section.

From behind the platform may be entered the Organ Chamber, of ample size, wherein is housed what has been described as one of the finest concert organs in the Kingdom.

Beneath the Marryat Hall is the Lord Provost's Room and the Council Chamber, both splendid examples of the Adam Period of decoration, the carpets having been specially designed in that style.

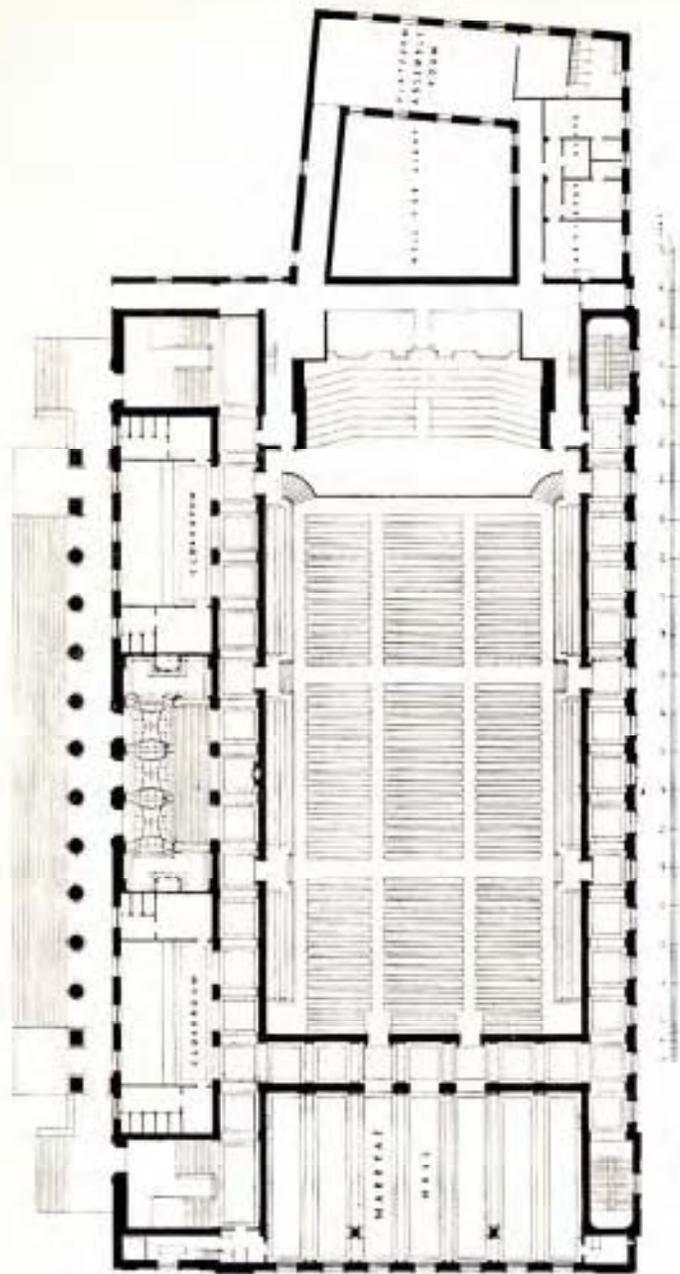
Mr James Thomson, F.R.I.B.A., the Architect, was assisted by Mr Vernon Constable, A.R.I.B.A., who had general charge of the work, including the decoration of the Hall; by Mr James M'Lellan Brown, A.R.I.B.A., who had charge of the Council Suite and Public Offices; by Mr Percy Tomey, engineer for the reinforced concrete work, and by Mr John Darge, Clerk of Works.



VESTIBULE TO CITY CHAMBERS



STAIR TO CITY CHAMBERS





Mr JAMES THOMSON, F.R.I.B.A., CITY ARCHITECT.

