

The Rhodes Building at Oriel, 1904–2011: Dynamite or Designate?

EDWARD IMPEY

SUMMARY

The Rhodes Building was designed by Basil Champneys for Oriel College in 1904–9 and completed in 1911. The result, though loathed for decades, has been appreciated more in recent years; listed in 1972, it was re-graded at Grade II in 2011. Its merits lie largely in its combination of originality and adaptation of seventeenth-century models, and its significance in its departure from the ‘Jacksonian’ model from which it sprang. Its boldness fits it both to its prominent site and as a memorial to Rhodes. It deserves recognition as one of Oxford’s better buildings of the period.*

The Rhodes Building was formally opened amid great pomp on 28 September 1911. But while the Provost’s address lauded its importance as a ‘monument to the generosity ... of Cecil John Rhodes’, on its architecture he was silent. The fact was that the college hated it, and for decades, it seems, so did everyone else. Evelyn Waugh suggested blowing it up (1930) and W.J. Arkell regretted its construction in anything more durable than mud brick (1947).¹ In 1972, however, the building was recognised as being of ‘special architectural and historic interest’ and listed at Grade II. Since then its qualities and those of its architect have been recognised more fully, and its upgrading to Grade II* in 2011 put it in the top 8 per cent of England’s listed buildings. The coincidence of re-grading, its centenary year, and proposals to add an extra floor, mark a new phase in the building’s history. This year, therefore, is an appropriate moment to present a short account of its origins and creation, and examine the qualities of a structure which, love it or loathe it, has lent its massive presence to Oxford’s High Street for a hundred years (Plate 7).

The building’s origins lie in the generosity of Cecil Rhodes,² intermittently an Oriel undergraduate between 1873 and 1881, whose £100,000 legacy to the college included £40,000 ‘for the erection of an extension to the High Street of the college buildings’; £22,500 was to be for building, the rest to replace income from tenements to be destroyed.³ The proposed extension presumably derived from the list of ‘wants’ presented to Rhodes by A.G. Butler (Fellow and friend), following the conversation in 1899 which prompted the legacy itself.⁴ While the college had no urgent need for accommodation, it had long intended to re-absorb St Mary’s Hall and its site, in other words the buildings around what is now St Mary’s or the ‘third’ quad (Fig. 1).⁵ At Rhodes’ death in March 1902 annexation was blocked by the continued tenure of St Mary’s Principal, D.P. Chase, but it swiftly followed Chase’s death a few months later.

Later sources hint at an initial preference for the architect Thomas Graham Jackson (1835–1924),⁶ but on 12 October 1904 the college appointed Basil Champneys (1842–1935), whose work for New College in the 1880s had impressed them.⁷ The site of the new building was occupied by a picturesque assortment of re-fronted tenements and (at the rear) by parts of the Gothic

¹ M. Amory (ed.), *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh* (London, 2009), p. 59; W.J. Arkell, *Oxford Stone* (Oxford, 1947), p. 28.

² S. Marks and S. Trapido, ‘Rhodes, Cecil John (1853–1902)’, *ODNB*, online edn (accessed June 2011).

³ W.T. Stead (ed.), *The Last Will and Testament of Cecil J. Rhodes* (London, 1902), p. 21.

⁴ G.N. Clark, ‘Cecil Rhodes and his College’, *Oriel Record*, (1980), p. 21.

⁵ *VCH Oxon.* 3, pp. 129–30.

⁶ Implicit in G.C. Richards, ‘An Oxonian Looks Back (1885–1945)’, unpublished typescript, Bodl. G.A. Oxon, Quarto, 769 (1960), p. 21.

⁷ Richards, ‘An Oxonian’, p. 21; OCA, Gov/4/C4, p. 148.



Fig. 1. View of the quadrangle of St Mary Hall – since 1902 Oriel's third quad – published by George Hollis in 1838. The west range (left), remodelled in the late eighteenth century and again c.1826, remains largely as shown. All the buildings on the north side of the quad (facing) were replaced by the Rhodes Building.

Principal's house of c.1833, projecting well into the current area of St Mary's Quad (Fig. 1).⁸ The building contract was let to John Wooldridge and George William Simpson of Frenchay Road, Oxford, in July 1909.⁹

The initial scheme (Scheme 1), presented as plans and a sketch elevation before 15 February 1905, would have included a loggia extending across the full north–south depth of the new building's central section. The scheme omitted the gate and central feature of the later schemes, and included new lodgings for the Provost.¹⁰ The inclusion of a loggia, his recent use of such a feature at Somerville (library range, 1902–3), and his subsequent resistance to change throughout the whole commission, suggest that Champneys had already chosen the Jacobean-inspired variant of 'Free Style' which was to remain the basis of his later designs. The style itself had been pioneered in Oxford by Jackson, particularly at the Examination Schools (1876–82) and Trinity College (1883–8).¹¹ It was swiftly adopted by others, including Champneys himself (Indian Institute, 1883–96).¹² Whether the college had a style in mind is unknown, although the New College precedent implies, if anything, a diluted Perpendicular.¹³ Champney's early dismissal of Gothic,

⁸ OCA, FB/5/B3/1; *VCH Oxon.* 3, p. 131; M. Bool, 'The Buildings of Oriel', in J. Catto, *Oriel College: a History* (forthcoming).

⁹ OCA, Gov/4/A6 p. 100; personal communication from Brian Cox.

¹⁰ OCA, MPP/C/2/1, nos. 1, 5, 24.

¹¹ D. Watkin, *The Architecture of Basil Champneys* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 35–6; W. Whyte, *Oxford Jackson. Architecture, Education, Status and Style, 1835–1924* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 104–6, 126.

¹² A. Service, *Edwardian Architecture* (London, 1977), pp. 38–42; R. Dixon and S. Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture* (London, 1978), pp. 176–80.

¹³ Richards, 'An Oxonian', p. 21.

however, when suggested by 'one member' implies that this was not his brief, and that style, so far, had been left to him.¹⁴

The full-depth loggia, however, was soon deemed an extravagant use of space, and on 26 April 1905 Champneys supplied revised plans and 'a front elevation...somewhat further developed', showing a street-facing loggia of reduced depth and 'carriage or cart access' between the High Street and the quad (Scheme 2), followed by a southern elevation and perspectives.¹⁵ All but the perspectives survive. The elevations loosely belong to the Jacobean 'Free Style'. The street frontage (Fig. 2) has overall affinities with E.W. Mountford's Sheffield Town Hall of the 1890s. The detailing is based on a variety of sources: the rusticated pilasters flanking the newly introduced gateway and the bow window and niches above are heavily indebted to the Old Court gatehouse at Clare College, Cambridge (1638–40); the paired pilasters and pedimented niche of the third stage recall Canterbury Quadrangle at St John's College, Oxford (1632–6) and Kirby Hall (1572 and 1638). Above this was to be a fourth stage and a cupola, loosely referring, perhaps, to Tom Tower. The window design has similarities to Jackson's Grove Building at Lincoln (1880–3) and his own Indian Institute.

The loggia survived in vestigial form on the north front as two open-fronted arched bays, now occupying a third of the building's depth and flanking the carriage access; at the rear it had metamorphosed into straight-mullioned arched windows of a standard late Victorian and Edwardian type (as at Oxford Town Hall and Sheffield Town Hall). At the top was to be a balustrade, interrupted by pedimented dormers (to the wings only on the street side), an arrangement with good Jacobean precedent (for example at Rushton Hall (Northants.), 1595–1627) and used successfully by George Gilbert Scott at Pembroke College, Cambridge (1878–82), but here with banal detailing of Champneys's own.¹⁶ Inside, the main floors of the east wing and much of the central section were given over to the Provost, including a five-windowed first-floor 'gallery' on the street front. On the south front (Fig. 2) a stair tower stood in a starkly asymmetrical position at the west end of the quad. The elevations, let down by the weak balustrade, interrupting dormers, clumsy detailing, and the incongruous mansards, were not wholly successful, but Champneys was led to believe 'that the general features and character of the elevation were approved'.¹⁷

However, the resolution made in November 1905 by the new Provost, Charles Lancelot Shadwell, to retain the old Provost's Lodgings in the First Quad, was to have a major impact on progress and the eventual result.¹⁸ Matters stalled for nearly a year, in which time further reflection turned tacit acceptance to rejection, and in October 1906 the committee agreed that a 'new design' should be produced 'in accordance with the character of the existing front quadrangle of the college'.¹⁹ Given the quadrangle's mixture of richness and simplicity, the committee's intentions are not wholly clear, but, as suggested by subsequent comments and by Champneys's response, it probably envisaged a High Street front akin to that of University College's or of Oriel's to Oriel Square (though without the tower).²⁰ The ambiguity, however, was deftly exploited by the architect, who rejected any suggestion that 'the main front on the High could be satisfactorily designed by any mere grouping of the ordinary features of the subordinate parts of the quadrangle', and pointed, not surprisingly, to the elaboration and symmetry of the hall and chapel front as the appropriate cue. 'Some form of regular composition', he added, 'is not only essential to an adequate design ... but it is beyond question that the seventeenth-century architect would have

¹⁴ OCA, MPP/C/2/1, no. 24.

¹⁵ Ibid. MPP/C/2/1, nos. 5, 24.

¹⁶ By 1905 an abundance of drawings and photographs of English 'Renaissance' architecture had been published: Rushton is illustrated in J.A. Gotch, *Architecture of the Renaissance in England*, 2 vols., 6 parts (London, 1891–4), vol. 1, part 3, plates 51 and 52.

¹⁷ OCA, MPP/C/2/1, no. 24.

¹⁸ Ibid. MPP/C/2/1, no. 8; Gov/4/C4, p. 164.

¹⁹ Ibid. Gov/4/A6, p. 7.

²⁰ Ibid. MPP/C/2/1, no. 28.

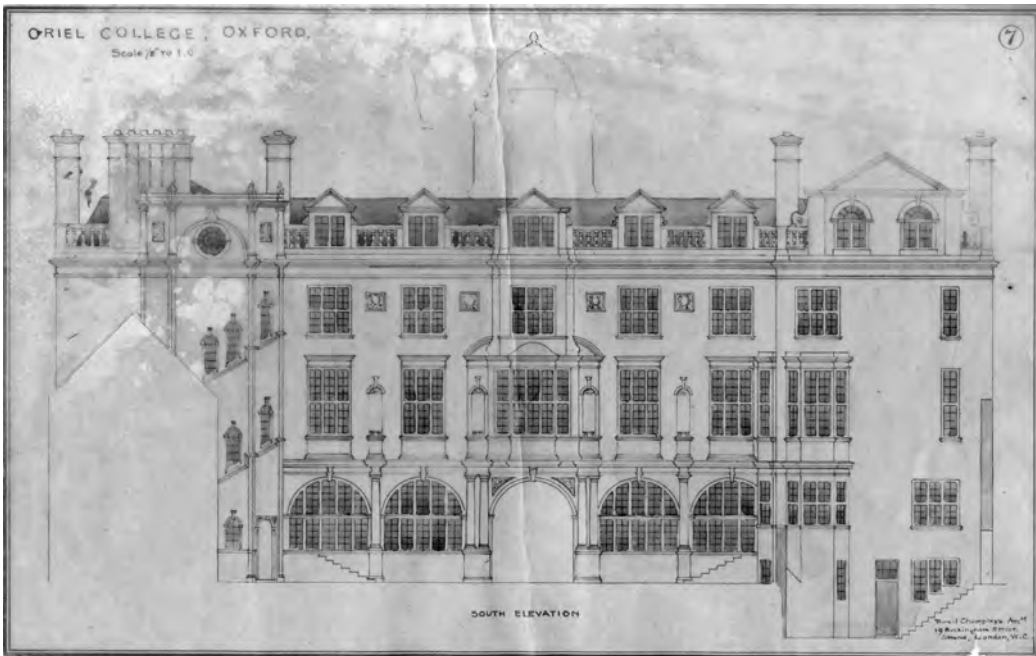


Figure 2. The proposed High Street and southern elevations presented in April 1905 (OCA, FB 5 B2/1).

adopted such a scheme.²¹ The college's immediate response made no reference to style, although capped the cost to £15,000, limited 'as much as possible the amount of architectural ornament', and ruled out the High Street entrance.²² Early in 1907, however, a request was made for new plans,²³ followed by a demand for sketched elevations to be considered on the 16th February.²⁴ These drawings (Scheme 3) do not survive, but can have differed little from those of April 1905 (Scheme 2), as is shown by Champneys's defiant explanation:

In developing this elevation thus modified by the change in plan, I have endeavoured in the detail to introduce some features more or less reminiscent of what I think are the best features of the old work in the college.... Otherwise I should deprecate any considerable deviation from what appears to me and what I had supposed had seemed to the committee the treatment most suitable to the conditions of the scheme.²⁵

The response, however, provoked further and more fundamental criticism. A special meeting on 2 March 1907 saw the previous year's resolution that the 'traditional style of the college buildings' reaffirmed, and a motion proposed that 'a façade in the style indicated by Mr C's plans would not be suitable', being both 'out of harmony with its surroundings' and depending for effect on expensive and unnecessary statues. The motion was lost, but it was then unanimously agreed that new elevations should be prepared 'more in accordance with the style which has become traditional in Oxford for buildings used for college rooms', to bestow (it was later recorded) 'an academical character'.²⁶ What they had in mind was, on the face of it, clarified in the Provost's recapitulation a few days later that the model was to be 'Oriel, University, Exeter, and other seventeenth-century buildings'.²⁷ However, their acceptance of the final design reveals a degree of confusion between the products of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, and perhaps an unwitting preference for the 'Free Style' of Jacksonian type over the original.

Amended plans had been submitted by 25 April, and further exchanges followed.²⁸ On 27 April 1907 Champneys submitted a scheme for the High Street front that the committee deemed to agree 'in character with the front quadrangle of the college' (Scheme 4) and recommended for adoption.²⁹ Triumphant, Champneys swiftly pressed home his advantage, seeing off lingering objections to his tower and abundant rustication to both fronts.³⁰ Final designs (Scheme 5) were signed off by the County Borough Council on 23 June 1909 and work began that summer (Fig. 3).³¹

The college's assent and three intervening schemes notwithstanding, comparison of the completed building (Scheme 5) with the Scheme 2 elevations of spring 1905 (Figs. 2 and 4) reveals both fundamental similarity and important differences: the basic plan, massing, bay system to both fronts, position of the stairs, gateway, and tower were all retained, although the whole was reduced from four floors to three. How far then had Champneys actually responded to the college's demands? Change was most conspicuous in the treatment of the upper parts, where, on both fronts and the wings, a parade of massive curlicued and pedimented dormers replaced the balustrading. True to his principle of avoiding 'slavish archaeological imitation',³² these owe little

²¹ OCA, Champneys's report accompanying letter of 2.11.06, item 10.

²² *Ibid.* MPP/C/2/1, no. 15. The eventual cost was £23,136 (OCA, Gov/4/A6, p. 178).

²³ *Ibid.* Gov/4/A6, p. 19.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 23.

²⁵ *Ibid.* MPP/C/2/1, no. 24.

²⁶ *Ibid.* Gov/4/A6; ETC A8/4 (motions before a special meeting of the 2 March 1907); Anon., 'College Notes', *Oriel Record*, vol. 1, no. 6 (March 1910), p. 77.

²⁷ OCA, MPP/C/2/1, no. 28 (note from the Provost, 4.3.07).

²⁸ *Ibid.* Gov/4/A6, p. 32 (1.5.07).

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 39 (27.6.07).

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 48 (6.11.07).

³¹ Oxford City Council Building Control Archives, 1492.

³² Report accompanying letter from Champneys to Shadwell of 2.11.06: OCA, MPP/C/2/1, no. 13, item 10.



Fig. 3. The Rhodes Building under construction, as viewed from St Mary's Quad. The High Street and the front of St Mary's church can be seen through the forest of poles (OCA, FB 5 B3/2).

to Oriel's seventeenth-century work, but rather to components of the type found at Raynham Hall (Norfolk, 1622–35) or the Riding House at Bolsover (Derbs., 1630s), and combine the so-called 'Dutch' and 'shaped' forms. Loose Front Quad precedent can also be claimed for the centrepiece's statuary (below). Meanwhile, Champneys had also removed the central feature's topmost section and cupola, perhaps as the exasperated Shadwell had personally crossed it out on an earlier drawing.³³ Elsewhere the adjustments were relatively minor. The pediments to the first-floor windows of the north front wings were replaced by curvilinear cartouches – again, of acceptably seventeenth-century style (as at Cobham Hall, Kent),³⁴ but owing nothing to Oriel. At ground level the loggia had gone, if still vestigially expressed by the deeply recessed arched bays flanking the gateway, and the inside was the same as in 1905. Similar alterations were made to the south front, which also gained a more emphatic central feature, culminating in an aedicule breaking through the pediment, as in the porch of St Mary's church (1637).

Overall, however, the changes transformed the building's character from sub-Jackson feebleness to something much bolder and more original, an unwitting consequence of the college's attitude and perhaps the architect's own development and absorption of other influences since 1905.

The more strictly architectural features of the building, meanwhile, were accompanied by an ambitious decorative and commemorative programme, envisaged in some form since 1905. Expressed in heraldry, statuary, and inscription, this points to the history of the college, proclaims the building's origins and creation, and commemorates its donor. The choice of the people represented was the Provost's (a serious historian of the college), although without a common theme beyond Oriel associations and eminence. Most conspicuous are the life-size Portland stone statues by Henry Alfred Pegram (1862–1937). On the north side these represent (from east to west) William Allen (Fellow 1550–65, Principal of St Mary's 1556–60), Walter Lyhert (Provost 1435–46), King Edward VII, King George V, John Hals (Provost 1446–9) and Henry Sampson (Provost 1449–76). On the south are (west to east) Adam de Brome (founder of Oriel, d. 1332), A.G. Butler (Fellow 1856–8, 1877–95), Cardinal Newman (Fellow 1822–45), and Archbishop Arundel (Oriel 1369–70, 1373–4). Pride of place, on the north side of the tower, was given to Rhodes himself, flanked by twisted columns under a shell canopy.³⁵ At his feet a relief inscription reads E[X]: **LARGA: MVNIFICENTIA CAECILII:RHODES** ('Out of the splendid generosity of Cecil Rhodes'), the raised letters (here in bold) forming the laboured chronogram LMVHCICCLIID (reshuffled, MDCCCLLVIII, 1911).³⁶ The pediment above is interrupted by

³³ OCA, Gov/4/A6, p. 32 (1.5.07).

³⁴ Gotch, *Architecture of the Renaissance*, vol. 2, part 5, plate 107.

³⁵ OCA, Gov/4/A6, p. 134 (30.11.10); Clark, 'Cecil Rhodes and his College', p. 15.

³⁶ Anon., 'The New Buildings', *Oriel Record*, vol. 1, no. 6 (September 1911), p. 183.

Rhodes's posthumously granted arms flanked by cornucopia and swags. Beneath this eulogy, side by side, stand the figures of Edward VII and George V, deliberately alluding to those of James I and Charles I facing the Front Quad, although there they stand at the feet of the Virgin Mary. G.C. Richards's advice against 'placing Rhodes above the kings' fell on stony ground.³⁷ The Virgin does appear, however, on the south, overlooking the former quadrangle of St Mary's Hall.

Given Champneys's intransigence throughout the commission, and in spite of the college's acceptance of Scheme 5 in 1909, it is not surprising that the building received a frosty reception from his clients. The *Oriel Record* for March 1910 describes it as a 'compromise'.³⁸ Soon after completion the Treasurer, L.L. Price, noted that 'most people would I think agree that the compromise ... is unpleasant'.³⁹ The *Record* of September 1911 comments that 'the new buildings are now a *fait accompli*, and all that remains is to get accustomed to them'.⁴⁰ G.C. Richards recalled in 1960 that 'the new building on the High did not please Oxford, and did not satisfy the majority of the Fellows' with its 'commonplace' design.⁴¹ Public and professional opinion, even in the mid 1920s, when Jackson's work and the broadly Jacksonian style were still admired,⁴² made a damning exception for the Rhodes Building, thanks, presumably, to the boldness and proclamatory nature of its design (see below). In 1935, Champneys's obituaries either criticised it or ignored it,⁴³ although in 1936 H.S. Goodhart-Rendel ranked it 'crude' but 'less stale than ... most of Oxford's disorderly mock-Renaissance'.⁴⁴ By then, though, the whole genre was losing favour – Evelyn Waugh's tirade in 1930 was aimed not just at the 'High Street front of Oriel', but at the Indian Institute, the Town Hall, and 'the whole of Hertford' and other near-contemporaries. By the 1950s, when late Victorian Gothic was being favourably re-assessed, the style now pejoratively termed by Goodhart-Rendel as 'bric-à-brac', to which the Rhodes Building broadly belongs, was subject to unprecedented ridicule.⁴⁵ The next decade brought at least indifference – Jan Morris describing the former 'outrage' as something which, in 1965, 'most of us scarcely notice'.⁴⁶

The first recognition of quality came with the 1972 listing, although, as was usual, the three-line entry is confined to description and fact. Sherwood and Pevsner's *Oxfordshire* of 1974 describes the building variously as 'gargantuan', 'pompous', and 'a mighty piece', but is on the whole appreciative, and notes 'original touches'.⁴⁷ Since then, in the context of increased understanding and appreciation of turn-of-the-century architecture, Champneys's work as a whole has received more favourable attention.⁴⁸ A graduate thesis by Jérôme Coignard (1984), John Maddison's article on the John Rylands Library (1985), David Watkin's *The Architecture of Basil Champneys* (1989), and Susan James's article in *The Victorian* (2003) all hint at underrated genius.⁴⁹ At his best, these re-assessments agree, Champneys was a gifted architect, master of a range of styles, with grasp of function and technology as sound as his obvious rivals, and some originality.

³⁷ OCA, Gov/4/A6, p. 137 (25.1.11); Richards, 'An Oxonian', p. 21.

³⁸ Anon., 'College Notes', *Oriel Record*, vol. 1, no. 3 (March 1910), p. 77.

³⁹ OCA, FB/5/B1/12, p. 3.

⁴⁰ Anon., 'The New Buildings', *Oriel Record*, vol. 1, no. 6 (September 1911), p. 184.

⁴¹ Richards, 'An Oxonian', p. 21.

⁴² H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'The Works of Sir T.G. Jackson', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 33 (1926), pp. 467–77.

⁴³ R. Blomfield, 'Obituary: Basil Champneys', *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 42 (1935), pp. 737–8; Anon., 'Obituary', *The Builder*, 148 (12 April 1935), p. 682.

⁴⁴ H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'The Architecture of Oxford, II', *The Architect and Building News*, 165 (1936), p. 14.

⁴⁵ Whyte, *Jackson*, p. 3; H.S. Goodhart-Rendel, *English Architecture since the Regency* (London, 1953), p. 177.

⁴⁶ J. Morris, *Oxford* (London, 1965), p. 146.

⁴⁷ J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner, *Oxfordshire* (London, 1974), pp. 60, 175, 180.

⁴⁸ Whyte, *Jackson*, p. 5.

⁴⁹ J. Coignard, 'Basil Champneys, Architecte (1842–1935)', 2 vols., *Mémoire de Maîtrise*, Université de Paris-Sorbonne Paris-IV (1984), extracts kindly supplied by Peter Howell; J. Madison, 'Basil Champneys and the John Rylands Library', in J. Archer (ed.), *Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester, 1985), pp. 230–49; Watkin, *The Architecture of Basil Champneys*, p. 35; S. James, 'Basil Champneys. An Underrated Victorian', *The Victorian*, 12 (2003), pp. 12–15.



Fig. 4. The High Street and southern elevations as built, 1908–10 (National Monuments Record).

The Rhodes Building, although not ranked by these authors amongst his best work, bears this out. Its scale and boldness (emphasised by its facing of hard-wearing Weldon and Clipsham stone) suits its position, rising to the challenge of its prominent site on one of England's most famous streets. In this context, Pevsner and Sherwood's comments, and those in the same vein are essentially of approbation.⁵⁰ Importantly, it avoided replacing its regretted and undoubtedly picturesque precursors with something negligible; it faces St Mary's with respectful dignity ('picking up' on the twisted columns) and holds its own with nearby late nineteenth-century rivals in flair and prominence, particularly the Town Hall (Henry Hare, 1893–7) and the Examination Schools (T.G. Jackson, 1876–82). In the main elevations, the austere classically derived rustication, eclectic centrepieces, and Jacobean dormers form successfully integrated compositions in spite of their varied sources. Overall symmetry, meanwhile, is attractively offset by the polygonal stair tower facing St Mary's Quad, while the street front respects the traditional collegiate 'flat-front with tower' format but enlivens it with the projecting wings of the 'E'-plan house (if subtly expressed).

In general intent and effect the Rhodes Building can also be said to represent, in its 'beefiness', a substantial and original departure from the Jacksonian style under which it is usually classified: whereas Whyte and others have suggested that it was 'almost wholly Jacksonian',⁵¹ both this building and his near-contemporary and similarly reviled Warden's Lodging at Merton display a three-dimensional massing (the tower and projecting porch of the Lodging), large-scale, heavily-drawn detailing (Oriel's massive dormers, rusticated ground floor), and hints of deliberately scholarly classicism arguably foreign to either Champneys's or Jackson's other Jacobean essays.⁵² In this approach he was probably influenced by the 'neo-baroque', popular between 1910 and 1914,⁵³ and his building may be said to hint at a transition between the two styles. If so, as the 'neo-baroque' was one of the main successors to the 'Free Style', it is fitting that this was the 'last monument of the Jacobean Revival in Oxford'.⁵⁴ Sadly, given its demonstration of Champneys's continued vigour and adaptability, it was also his final major commission.

Alongside its merits and impact purely as architecture, some mention should be made of its importance as a monument of commemoration. This lies partly in its proclamation of the college's longevity and distinction through stately and heraldry, as found elsewhere in its buildings. More obviously and successfully, however, it is, overall (beyond the statue and dedication), a monument to Rhodes. This was neither Rhodes's intention nor a primary aim of the college, for whom it remained, until the 1920s, the 'New Building'. But while Champneys's views on Rhodes are unknown, commemorative intent clearly influenced his design. And however Rhodes's achievements and legacy may be viewed today, Champneys's robust design makes for a more fitting and successful commemoration than that of his formal and institutional memorial at Rhodes House (Herbert Baker, 1929).

In conclusion, it is fair to say that in 2011, facing a generally more receptive audience, the very real architectural merits of the building are better appreciated, a trend which it is hoped this article may encourage. Were Shadwell to make his speech today, we can be confident that his praise would have extended beyond Rhodes to his building.

⁵⁰ Watkin, *The Architecture of Basil Champneys*, p. 35 ('beefy'); G. Tyack, *Oxford: An Architectural Guide* (Oxford, 1998), p. 277 ('a massive pile').

⁵¹ Whyte, *Jackson*, p. 226

⁵² P. Howell, 'Oxford Architecture, 1800–1914', in M.G. Brock and M.C. Curthoys (eds.), *Nineteenth-Century Oxford. History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 7, part 2 (Oxford, 2000), p. 755 and n. 82.

⁵³ Dixon and Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*, pp. 180–1; Service, *Edwardian Architecture*, pp. 140–57.

⁵⁴ H.M. Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford* (Oxford, 1983), p. 157.

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Plate 7. The Rhodes Building from the High Street. Photograph by Marcus Beale Architects. [Impey, p. 95]