

Mackay, George

Reference and contact details: GB779 [RCSEd GD/7](#)

Location: RS R5

Title: Papers of George Mackay

Dates of Creation: 1856-1967

Held at: The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Extent: 3 series; 30 items

Name of Creator: George Mackay

Language of Material: English.

Level of Description: item



Administrative/Biographical History:

The son of Surgeon-General Mackay of the Indian Army, George Mackay (1861-1949) was born near Madras in 1861. He was educated at Clifton and Inverness Colleges and graduated M.B., C.M. with honours from Edinburgh University in 1883 and M.D. in 1888. He became M.R.C.S. England in 1883 and **F.R.C.S. Edinburgh in 1886**. Mackay specialised in ophthalmic surgery and held several appointments including Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, Lecturer on Diseases of the Eye at Edinburgh University, Consulting Surgeon to the Royal Blind Asylum and Surgeon to the Deaconess Hospital.

After his retirement from hospital practice he continued to be active with an extensive private practice and became a Manager of the Royal Infirmary and **President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh** from 1919 - 1921. He was renowned for his precision and success in performing cataract operations with the very limited technical aids then available and published several reports of interesting cases. He also took a keen interest in Celtic affairs, was a founder member and subsequently President of the Clan Mackay Society and was a member of the Royal Company of Archers. Mackay died at his house in Edinburgh on 10th May, 1949, survived by a wife and three sons.

This deposit relates mainly to Mackay's commission of **Dorofield Hardy to copy Oules' portrait of Lord Lister** which he presented to the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and which is in the Fellows' Library. It also contains items alluding to his interest in history and in Gaelic culture.

GD7/1/1-24

Correspondence

Dates of Creation: 1919-1921

Extent: 24 items

GD7/1/1 [1919]

Typed extract on the respective merits of the portraits of Lord Lister by Oules and Lorimer from Sir Richman Godlees's Life of Lord Lister.

GD7/1/2 1919, May 7th

Letter to Dr Mackay, PRCSEd, from B. Forrest Cowell, secretary to the R.C.S., London, notifying him that the copy of the portrait of Lister by Oules which hangs in Lincoln's Inn Fields was executed by Dorofield Hardy for the Lister Institute.

GD7/1/3 1919, May 8th

Copy letter from Dr Mackay to Mr Cowell thanking him for the information contained in the above.

GD7/1/4
1921, February 18th

Copy letter from Dr George Mackay to Mr Cowell thanking the London College for the invitation to the Hunterian Oration and requesting permission to commission a copy of the portrait of Lister by Oules and to employ Mr Dorofield Hardy, the same artist who executed the Lister Institute copy.

GD7/1/5
1921, February 19th

Letter from Mr Forrest Cowell to Dr George Mackay in reply to the above.

GD7/1/6
1921, March 11th

Letter from Mr Cowell to Dr Mackay informing him that Council has agreed to allow a copy of Oules's portrait of Lister to be executed.

GD7/1/7
1921, March 12th

Copy letter from Dr Mackay to Mr Cowell conveying his thanks to the College for permitting their portrait to be copied and agreeing that it should not be reproduced for publication without permission from the R.C.S. of England.

GD7/1/8
1921, March 15th

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay accepting the commission to copy Oules's portrait of Lister and suggesting a fee of £10 or £15 an advance on the £55 charged for the copy made in 1912.

GD7/1/9
1921, March 18th

Copy letter from Dr Mackay to Mr Cowell informing him that Dorofield Hardy has definitely undertaken the commission to copy the portrait and requesting that the English College afford him every facility for executing his work.

GD7/1/10
1921, March 20th

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay announcing that he will begin the painting directly after Easter.

GD7/1/11
1921, March 21st

Letter from Mr Cowell to Dr Mackay expressing willingness to provide the necessary facilities for the artist and enquiring as to the opinion of the Edinburgh College with regard to a proposal by the British Dental Association for the institution of a Diploma in Public Dentistry.

GD7/1/12
1921, May 3rd

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay reporting on the progress he has made with the painting and on Sir John Bland and Sir Anthony Bowlby's favourable opinions and attempting to secure the commission should Glasgow also wish for a copy of the Lister portrait.

GD7/1/13
1921, May 6th

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay with notification that the portrait may arrive by train in a few days and with instructions to apply a mixture to the painting if it dries dull.

GD7/1/14
1921, May 13th

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay with directions on how to apply the medium to refresh the portrait, thanking Dr Mackay for the commission and informing him that Sir John Bland Sutton had commissioned him to copy a portrait.

GD7/1/15
1921, May 14th

Letter from Dorofield Hardy to Dr Mackay respecting his account.

GD7/1/16
1921, May 14th

Letter from Sir Charles Ryall, 62 Harley Street, to Dr Mackay thanking him for his hospitality in Edinburgh and notifying him that the copy of Lister's portrait had been taken away by the artist to be packed.

GD7/1/17
1921, May 18th

Acknowledgement of payment of £65 by Dr George Mackay to Dorofield Hardy for copying the portrait of Lord Lister by W Oules.

GD7/1/18
1921, July 13th

Printed intimation of the meeting of the R.C.S.Ed to take place on July 19 at which the portrait of Lord Lister is to be presented to the College by the retiring president, Dr Mackay. Copy of the above with agenda and proceedings typed in. [2 items]

GD7/1/19
1921, July 6th

Letter from R J Godlee, Coombe End Farm, Whitchurch, Oxon, to Dr Mackay regretting that he is unable to attend the ceremony.

GD7/1/20
1921, July 15th

Copy letter from Dr Mackay to Professor Chiene to say how greatly he should appreciate his presence at the presentation of the copy of Oules's portrait of Lister to the College, as it was from Chiene that he (Mackay) learned the theories which Lister had taught.

GD7/1/21
1921, July 21st

Letter from George Chiene to Dr Mackay on behalf of Chiene's father who is unable to be present at the meeting.

GD7/1/22
1921, July 18th

Letter from T.M.Caird, 13 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, to Dr Mackay regretting that he may be unable to be in time for the presentation of the Lister portrait.

GD7/1/23
1921, July 18th

Telegram from Dr Cheyne to Dr Mackay regretting his absence.

GD7/1/24
1921, September

Dr Mackay's account with Doig, Wilson and Wheatley, fine art dealers, printsellers, picture restorers and framers, for work done in framing and hanging the Lister portrait.

GD7/2/1-5
Correspondence

Dates of Creation: 1904-1929

Extent: 5 items

GD7/2/1
1904

Proof of "Ancient Gaelic Medical Manuscripts", the presidential address delivered by George Mackay, M.D., F.R.C.S.Ed, to the members of the Caledonian Medical Society and published in the Caledonian Medical Journal, Vol VI, 1904 - 1906.

GD7/2/2
1904, October 21st

Letter from Alan Anderson to George Mackay with names and addresses of Gaelic scholars.

GD7/2/3
1929, March 7th

Copy letter from George Mackay to William Dickson of the National Library of Scotland offering the library nine blocks illustrating ancient Gaelic medical manuscripts which were used in 1904 to illustrate his presidential address published in the Caledonian Medical Journal, and some of which were reproduced by Dr Comrie in his History of Medicine.

GD7/2/4
1929, March 7th

Letter from William Dickson to George Mackay thanking him for the donation.

GD7/2/5
1929, March 7th

Letter of formal acknowledgement to Dr Mackay from the National Library of Scotland.

GD7/3/1

[N.D.]

Draft Inventory of the Johnston Papers drawn up by George Mackay

Dates of Creation: unknown

Extent: 1 item

Draft inventory of the Johnston papers drawn up by George Mackay, M.D., F.R.C.S.Ed, including act of admission of Henry Johnston to the Royal College and Corporation of Surgeon Apothecaries of Edinburgh, 1791, commissions as military surgeons, burgess tickets, certificate of indenture, Fellowship diploma, and appointment of Henry Johnston as Surgeon of Medical Establishment under the Residency of Bombay, 1835. Johnston papers not in RCSEd.
