

# Shakespeare Reading Class (Toynbee House, University Settlement Association)

## Overview

This society was one of several classes, clubs and societies formed by the University Settlement Association, Toynbee House, which was located at 130 Parson Street, Townhead, Glasgow. (For more information on this area, see the entry for '[Townhead Glasgow. Cathedral Precinct](#)' on the [ScotCities](#) website).

The University Settlement Association was the University of Glasgow branch of Toynbee Hall in London, which was founded in 1884. (For a history of and details of the current work of Toynbee Hall, see their website ('Our History', *Toynbee Hall* <<http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/our-history>>). For a more detailed discussion of settlement houses during this period, see Lucinda Matthews-Jones, 'Centres of Brightness: The Spiritual Imagination of Toynbee Hall and Oxford House, 1880-1914' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2009)).

A 'Memorandum' written in 1889 by the Honorary Secretary, W. S. M'Cormick, provides a good summary of the history of the association, and gives further details on its work. Modeled on the work of social work being conducted by Toynbee Hall in London, in 1886, the Glasgow University Settlement Association hired two rooms at 130 Parson Street (located in the Townhead area, in the north of the city) in which to hold discussions and serve tea. Working-class people from the area were invited every fortnight for social evenings.

The same 1888-1889 report gives an account of the Shakespeare Reading Class. This group had thirteen members that met every two weeks during the winter months to discuss their readings on Shakespeare's life and on English drama more generally.

## Date of Existence

1888-?

## **Source of Information**

Toynbee House (Glasgow), *Report of the University Settlement Association, Toynbee House, 130 Parson Street, Glasgow, 1888-90* (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, [1889?])

## **Repository**

University of Glasgow Library

## **Reference Number**

Research Annexe, Store MacLehose 762

## **Additional Notes**

See also [Toynbee House Literary Society \(University Settlement Association\)](#).