

Stonemasonry and brickwork are dealt with in great detail in these books, and they remain valid source books for information of this kind. Architectural stonemasonry is covered in all the principal pre-war textbooks, including the construction of medieval stone vaults – groin, rib, lierne and fan. In contemporary construction the 102 mm facing of brick cavity wall has led to the supremacy of stretcher bond. There is a wealth of other brick bonds which are ignored nowadays. Looking at construction textbooks from the late nineteenth century onwards, the history of the cavity wall can be traced. It was introduced as a means of reducing dampness, but quite soon its thermal insulation qualities were recognised as a way of equalising the effects of the extremes of summer and winter temperatures.

By the end of the Second World War, there was a palpable change taking place. New materials and wartime economy were having their effect. R. Greenhalgh's *Building Repairs* was published in 1945. By then, Portland cement mortar was the favoured product, asbestos cement corrugated sheeting and rainwater goods were popular – and steel tube had largely replaced fir poles for scaffolding. One would not argue the case for keeping timber scaffolding, but the other changes in the post-war years heralded the industrialisation of the process of building. More standardised components and the loss of traditional skills have led to many unfortunate repairs to historic buildings, and it is only in the last decade that this problem is being addressed, and the shortage of traditional skills is beginning to be reversed.

Volume 1 of McKay's *Building Construction* covers masonry and brickwork, carpentry and joinery, slating and plumbing at the elementary level. Volume 2 goes into greater detail on masonry and brickwork, and covers drainage. Drainage details have changed substantially over the last half-century, but McKay describes the drainage systems the practitioner will often find. Volume 3 covers carpentry and joinery in greater detail, including the conversion of timber. Roof coverings are covered, including tiling, stone slating and shingling.