

The Regent Street Polytechnic's St George & Dragon logo

If you look around 309 Regent Street and 4-12 Little Titchfield Street, the University's oldest buildings, you will see many examples of the Polytechnic's St. George & Dragon logo. In the entrance hall at 309 Regent Street the logo is in a mosaic on the floor and over the two ornate lift entrances. At 4-12 Little Titchfield Street you will find it over the main entrance.



The Polytechnic's original logo, when it was the Youths Christian Institute and based in Hanover Street (Covent Garden), was a turreted castle. This was used with the motto 'The Lord is our Stronghold'. The St. George & Dragon appears for the first time in 1879 – 3 years before the YCI moved into the 309 Regent Street (formerly the home of the Royal Polytechnic Institution).

We give below a wood-cut fac-simile of the medals presented to the chief prizemen in the recent exhibition. I thought it would specially interest some of our fellows abroad, who could not be present to join in our gathering. The blank space left under St. George and the Dragon is for the insertion of the name of the winning candidate and the date.



After moving to 309 Regent Street, the YCI – by then known as the Young Men's Christian Institute - adopted the name of its new building and became the Polytechnic Young Men's Christian Institute.

In 1883, the St. George and Dragon appeared on the title page of the institution's newsletter, *Home Tidings*. It was accompanied by the motto 'The Lord is our stronghold'. The St George was facing right with a Roman short sword in his hand – discussing the design in 1959, the newsletter said this 'presupposes that the design was copied from the gold sovereign'.



In Dec 1885 a member wrote to the Notes & Queries column of *Home Tidings* asking why the castle had been replaced for the St. George & Dragon 'when the former seems much more appropriate to accompany our motto, " The Lord is our Stronghold."'. Unfortunately he does not seem to have received an answer. In 1888 *Home Tidings* became *The Polytechnic Magazine* and St. George & Dragon appeared with "The Lord is our Strength" as the revised motto.



The design of the St. George & Dragon used by the Polytechnic changed several times over the years, as did the one on the Sovereign (see: <http://www.royalmintmuseum.org.uk/exhibition-and-events/online-exhibitions/st-george-and-the-dragon/index.html>). In 1906 the Poly was gifted a new die by Mr. Alderman Tom Nixon and Mr. W. J. Cooper of Sheffield.



This is very similar to the current mosaic in the Regent Street foyer and also to the George & Dragon design by William Wyon for the Royal Mint in the 1840s. You can see William Wyon's George & Dragon design here: <http://www.royalmintmuseum.org.uk/exhibition-and-events/online-exhibitions/st-george-and-the-dragon/index.html#panel-9>

In later years, the *Polytechnic Magazine* continued to use the St George & Dragon, but changed to a more modern design.



Photographs of the foyer at 309 Regent Street suggest that there was a St George & Dragon mosaic on the floor from at least 1895. The clearest image we have of it is this one from 1899.



In 1910 309 Regent Street was knocked down and re-built, leaving only the cinema, gymnasium and swimming pool in place. This image taken shortly after the new building opened shows the current mosaic in place – however this is substantially different to the 1899 design.



The Archive team have been unable to find any evidence as to who designed or created either mosaic.



