

STOP 11 – OLD CITY OF TORONTO COUNCIL CHAMBER

On May 18, 1897, G.A. Reid sent a letter to the Mayor with a proposal to paint panels in the soon-to-be finished Council Chamber. Sketches were included by E. Wyly Grier, W. Cruickshank, and F. S. Challenger. The work would be similar to work now in Town Halls, Public Libraries, Parliament Houses and other public buildings in England, France and the U.S.A.

He proposed 100 life sized figures. On the south end would be three panels illustrating the city's motto: Industry, Integrity, and Intelligence. In the centre of the west wall would be a panel representing Government, which is flanked by panels representing Peace and Prosperity. As well, Art and Science are featured in entrance panels.

Each of the eight panels cost \$1000. Reid also stated: "The mural paintings of a similar character in the Manchester Town Hall cost per square foot six times this amount."

There was a final reminder to the city fathers that "the artists are willing to make the effort to do their part at what is merely a living rate." They would start the work after they received \$4,000.

G.A. Reid's offer to decorate the panels was accepted and approved by the City Council on December 15, 1897.

The City Council Chambers is 50 feet by 40 feet (15 m by 12 m). The ceilings are 30 feet (9 m) high and rise two storeys in the middle of the east side of the building on the second and third floors.