

The Victorian Society in Manchester

Registered Charity No.1081435

Winter Newsletter 2013

EDITORIAL

CRIMEAN WAR: Commemoration and the adjustment to reality.



John Bell's Crimean War Memorial, Waterloo Place, 1861.

As we look ahead to 1914, powerful forces have decided that we should commemorate in that year the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. Many believe it would be more appropriate to wait four years and commemorate only the end of the war which claimed one million British lives. We are now in that time of year deemed appropriate for reflection on the losses arising from originally the First World War and the memorialisation of the dead in that and later conflicts. However, with commemoration in mind, let us turn to an earlier war, the Crimean War which Britain entered in 1854 and was involved in until 1856. Despite 22,000 British deaths in a total of three quarters of a million it is a war that, apart from tangential references to Florence Nightingale, is largely forgotten in comparison with the two great wars of the twentieth century and more recent conflicts. The Crimean War occupies in European

history a mid-point between the Napoleonic Wars and the mechanized carnage of the First World War. In common with that war, its causes are inexplicable if you leave out meticulous observation of international treaty obligations. Essentially the Crimean War was a religious war between the Christian Russian and Islamic Ottoman Empires with Turkey having as its allies the British and the French. Our involvement in the war was strange enough but so was the war itself. It combined some up-to-date technologies with medieval chivalric codes, for example, truces to clear the battlefields of the wounded and the dead. It was the first war which left a photographic legacy, images taken by mainly British and French photographers.

The Crimean War was hugely significant because it further established a number of firsts in the technology of warfare. It was the first conflict in which steamships, railways and the electric telegraph played an important part. Sections of railway were even constructed during the war itself to move ammunition and supplies. Battle orders were cabled from Whitehall directly to the theatres of war. The same invention carried back almost real-time dispatches from the journalist William Howard Russell which were printed in *The Times*. These reports covered the inadequacy of hospital facilities and catering arrangements for the troops along with deficiencies in their clothing, equipment and resources. More sensitively for Whitehall, they covered the incompetence of the by-and-large aristocratic leaders of the campaign. Some of these leaders had paid staggering sums of money for their commissions. The Earl of Cardigan who led the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava (immortalised in Tennyson's poem) had paid, it is said, £40,000 – not money equivalent now, but cash then. This astonishing system

was abolished in the decade following the conflict.

All the contemporary *Times* reports from the war front had immediate and dramatic consequences including the eventual fall of the then British Government. One of the less exalted outcomes of these reports of the privations at the front was the appearance in the Crimea of an army of black market privateers willing and able to supply every need at a price. More famously, Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole fled to the war zone to attend to the sick and the injured. The chef Alexis Soyer went to improve the lot of the troops with his newly devised field stove and to bring a more professional approach to military catering.



Boer War Memorial, Manchester, Hamo Thornycroft, 1907.

One of the most efficient military style operations of the war was a feat of civil engineering: the construction of a railway in a matter of weeks from the port of Balaclava to Sevastopol to aid ending the siege. This was masterminded by Thomas Brassey and recorded in his biography written

by his great-great-grandson Thomas Stacey: *'By mid-December, the advance party of 54 of Brassey's navvies had embarked on the clipper Wildflower each with his own waterproof bag, a 'painted' suit, 3 cotton shirts, 2 flannel shirts, a flannel belt, a pair of moleskin trousers, a serge-lined moleskin vest, a Fearnought slop (a kind of loose overgarment), a woollen coat, a pair of drawers, 2 cravats, a pair of leggings, stockings, regular boots, waterproof long boots, fisherman's boots, and hob-nailed boots, a bed, a pillow, 3 blankets and a rug, 2 pounds of tobacco and a portable stove'.*



Boer War Memorial by George Frampton Bury 1905,

The navvies' equipment and organization made a sharp contrast to the efforts of the military. Major-General Sir Henry Clifford wrote in a letter home that the navvies had the appearance of *'unutterable things'* yet, *'did more work in a day than a regiment of soldiers did in a week'*.

The Government (influenced among others by Prince Albert) dispatched the photographer Roger Fenton, in what we would call today a public relations campaign, to produce images to counter the impression of *The Times'* reports which presented the military in a very bad light. Modern research indicates that the reports of the Light

Brigade's charge exaggerated the scale of the casualties and diminished the importance of what was, at least technically, a military victory. Queen Victoria echoed the nation's sentiments at the end of the war when she wrote in her journal *'I own that peace rather sticks in my throat'*. There was a feeling that the victory had been incomplete and less than ideal. The British Imperial Lion had been shown possibly to have feet of clay. Some of these feelings would be replicated in the twentieth century arising from the Suez Crisis one hundred years later.

The year following the end of the Crimean War saw the introduction of the Victoria Cross – the supreme award for valour under fire which, uniquely for the time, could be awarded to any recipient regardless of their rank or class. The medals, struck from metal from a Russian gun captured at Sevastopol, were awarded to 62 veterans of the Crimean campaign in a ceremony presided over by Queen Victoria. In a twist that appeals to the 21st century, it is now thought that the bronze cannon that produced the medals was actually an antique Chinese model. Queen Victoria also commissioned photographs of injured soldiers convalescing at Chatham military hospital. The most famous of these shows three veterans, one injured and two having suffered leg amputations due to frostbite. As is well-known, more lives were lost to disease and the severe cold of the 1855 winter than to gunshot.

One of the results of all the post-war soul-searching was that, when the Government came to commission a memorial from John Bell the sculptor to mark the victory and its sacrifice, the style and substance of that monument was unprecedented for the time. Whilst both Trajan's column in Rome and Nelson's column in London depict ordinary troops and their actions, there can be no doubt as to the heroes being commemorated. However as Richard Barnes, the biographer of John Bell, points out, the Guards Crimean War Memorial was the first to depict the ordinary soldiers as heroes. Unveiled in 1861 it commemorates over 2,000 Guardsmen killed in the war and stands in Waterloo Place, just

off the Mall in London. (In 1914 the monument was moved back slightly so that it could be flanked by statues of Florence Nightingale and Sidney Herbert, Secretary of State for War during the Crimean campaign.)

The three Guardsmen depicted on the main face of the monument represent the Grenadier, Fusilier and Coldstream regiments. They stand in solemn pose in front of their regimental colours holding their rifles and wearing their greatcoats and bearskins against the Crimean cold, a less than accurate picture of the real circumstances of the campaign. Above them on the top of the monument stands an allegorical figure holding laurel wreaths aloft. Interestingly, when the sculpture was erected, this figure was called Honour, perhaps reflecting uncertain views about the outcome of the war. It is now usually referred to as the figure of Victory in common with many later representations of its type on war memorials. The figures were cast in bronze from Russian guns captured at Sevastopol and some of the actual guns are placed on the back of the monument. The substantive part of the memorial, the emphasis on the depiction of ordinary soldiers in uniform bearing arms, arguably became an influential model for many Boer War memorials such as the examples in Manchester, Salford and Bury. Later this style was copied for many First World War memorials although in that case it was largely overtaken by the convention for cenotaphs (the empty tombs of classical antiquity) especially following the erection of the Edwin Lutyens model in Whitehall. The nation, overwhelmed and stunned by the scale of the losses in the Great War, could not merely follow previous commemoration responses.

David Astbury David Harwood
November 2013
photographs courtesy David Astbury

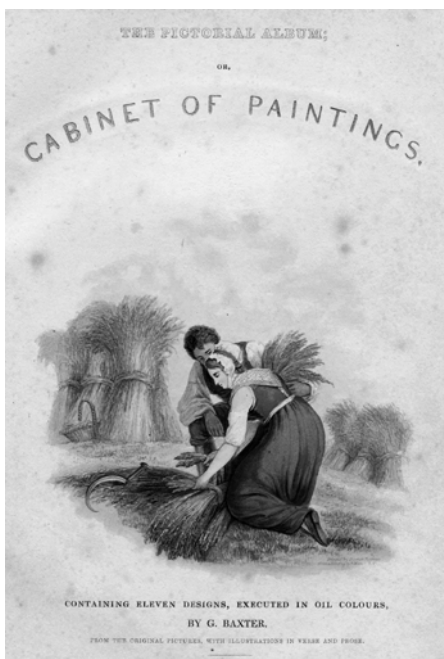
The Victorian Society Manchester
c/o Portico Library
57 Mosley Street
Manchester M2 3HY

*The Victorian Society is the champion
for Victorian and Edwardian buildings
in England and Wales*

NEWS

A Chromatic Revolution: the search for affordable colour in 19th century British book illustration.

An exhibition of books and prints from the MMU collections, including the Mary Butcher Collection of Baxter prints, exploring commercial and technical developments in colour printing throughout the 19th century, from hand-coloured woodblocks to the earliest photomechanical printing processes.



The Victorian Album or Cabinet of Paintings. London, Chapman and Hall, 1837. MMU Special Collections.

27th January – 16th May 2014
MMU Special Collections
Sir Kenneth Green Library
Manchester Metropolitan University
All Saints
Oxford Road
Manchester
M15 6BH

Monday-Friday 10am-4pm
Thursdays 10am-7pm (term time only)
Saturdays 12noon-4pm (term time only)

Admission is free and open to all.

Group guided tours of the exhibition can be arranged by contacting Louise Clennell tel 0161 247 3333 email: L.Clennell@mmu.ac.uk <http://www.specialcollections.mmu.ac.uk/>

Ancoats Hospital

As members may have read in the press, there is renewed hope for the conservation of this building. An HLF Start-Up Grant has been awarded to the project, essentially a small sum of money to finance an up-dated option viability study. It may be that the altered economic climate will allow possibilities not envisaged some years ago.

The Manchester Group of the Victorian Society must pay tribute to the determined and focussed work of Linda Carver and her dedicated team, mainly residents, all passionate about the heritage of Ancoats.

From the roadside vigil onwards, when demolition was imminent, belief tempered with realism has never been lacking. There is still a long way to go, now is not the time for rejoicing but it may be time for that most Mancunian of sentiments – cautious optimism.

Ancoats : a pause for thought

Recently I took advantage of an opportunity for the public to enter what is now Hallé - St Peters church in Blossom Street, Ancoats. The Federation of North West Art Societies held an exhibition there. The conservation and possible re-use of this long redundant 1859 Isaac Holden & Son Anglican church was always envisaged in the Ancoats Conservation Area regeneration plans drawn up more than twenty years ago.

A major restoration of St Peter's church took place fifteen years ago and it is now used by the Hallé Orchestra for rehearsal purposes. Certain necessary (and reversible) modifications have taken place such as suspended overhead lighting and internal textile wall-hangings to prevent the sounds of a hundred musicians bouncing straight back from four brick walls. Those original plans, for what it was hoped the district of Ancoats would become, included images of what we would now cynically call the usual suspects - architectural perspectives of shops, bars and restaurants mostly including open-air piazzas. The redundant, and dramatically derelict, Georgian and

Victorian mills would be transformed into luxury living spaces which it was assumed would sell like hot cakes. Initially some did but, as the demand for city-centre apartments slackened off and the recession bit five years ago, expectations were not entirely realised. In particular the organic growth of the Northern Quarter to the south-west of Great Ancoats Street has probably removed the chances of shops, bars and restaurants appearing in the Ancoats Conservation Area itself. However, as required by the locals, part of the renovated Victorian former food warehouse on Blossom Street does now house a mini-supermarket.

The eternal property boom and bust cycle is now trending upwards once more and on speaking to several Ancoats residents I found that what has actually happened there is very much appreciated. They can sleep at night in peace and silence and when they want noise and excitement they simply cross Great Ancoats Street to enjoy the delights of the Northern Quarter.

So, in terms of the original vision and conservation, the question is whether not planning and letting things evolve works out better than planning? Discuss.

David Astbury.....5 October 2013

Trollope Meeting

As announced at our October meeting, the Committee of the Manchester Group has allowed the admission price for certain meetings to rise above our usual £5.00. The additional revenue from this is intended mainly to allow us to entice speakers who may have significant travel or other expenses.

The first of these will be our joint meeting with the Trollope Society on Wednesday 19th February next year, admission price £7.00 This will take place at the recently refurbished Friends Meeting House.

Whilst this venue enjoys excellent public transport links, car drivers should bear in mind that the city's parking meters now operate until 8.00 pm every evening.

DOBROYD: A Tale of Love, Tragedy and Ambition

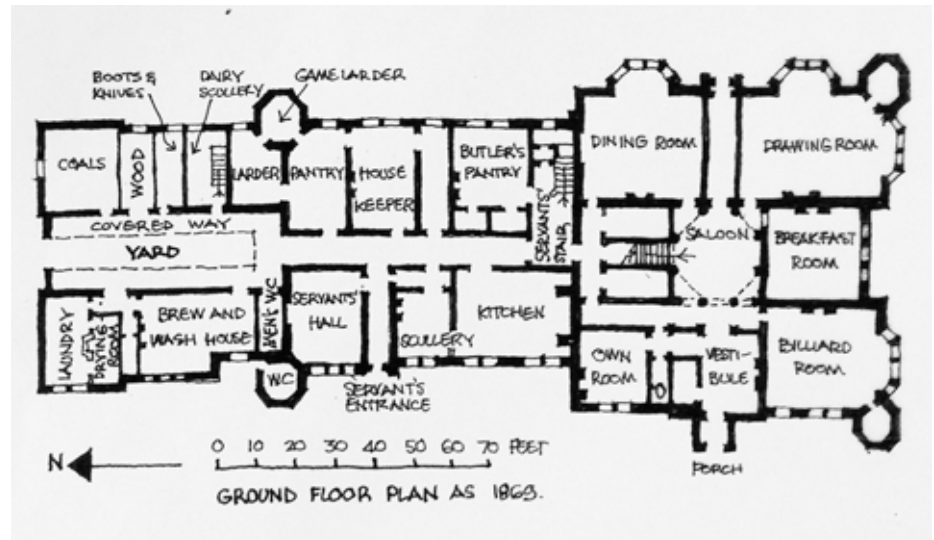
The story of Dobroyd Castle, built by John Fielden (1822-93), millionaire mill owner, is that of both a love story and a tragedy. Ruth Stansfield was a weaver in one of the Fielden mills and John Fielden fell in love with her. The story goes that she agreed to marry him if he built her a castle and they were married in 1857. It seems the castle was a long time in gestation, taking three years to build and the couple took up residence in 1869. It was a big household with five maids, a footman, a porter, a groom, a coachman, a gardener and a butler. However, it seems that the increasingly intense social and public life of John led to estrangement and Ruth went to live in the Swiss chalet on the estate. It is said that in her unhappiness she took to alcohol and died (officially of jaundice) in 1877 aged fifty. Eight months later John married Ellen Mallinson and they shared their life together at Dobroyd but also at Grimston Park Estate, near Tadcaster in Yorkshire, acquired by John in his move to become a country gentleman.

Dobroyd was built at a cost of £71,589 to a design by John Gibson, then an architect of national stature. Gibson had designed the National Westminster Hall, (1862) for the bank, in Bishopgate, London, and the Church of St Margaret, Bodolwyddan, Denbighshire, (1860). His other buildings locally include the listed Town Hall, Todmorden, (1875), and the elegant Unitarian Church, (1869). The Castle was designed on two axes, one running east-west and the other north-south through the tower and entrance. The formal entrance to the Castle is on the east façade through the porch at the foot of the rather forbidding tower. The architectural style is neither convincingly fortified nor pleasantly domestic. There is no Norman revival as at Penrhyn in North Wales nor clear domestic character as with Lutyens' Castle Drogo, in fact the detail and the style externally could be described as thuggish and heavy without any of the quality to be found in the Todmorden Town Hall. The latter is Roman in feel

with a character like the Maison Carrée in Nîmes, a separate building elevated above the urban space around it. The castle massing is designed to emphasise the principal accommodation with the tower behind the porch projection and the strength of the vice spiral stair to the left of the entrance corbelled

design basis for the principal rooms is that of a central circulation space, the Saloon, from which all the main owner's rooms are accessed.

The Saloon, at the heart of the design is the most opulent space and is reached from the porch via the vestibule. It has a bifurcated



Ground Floor plan of Dobroyd Castle (top) and detail of the Slave Trade Tympanum: Slaves with slave master, drawings by Frank Williams, 2013.

from the first floor. On the façades to the east and west the main block breaks forward of the service wing. Overlooking the west lawn there are large bay windows on both ground and first floors with virtually floor to ceiling windows. There is no sense of heavy base and *piano nobile*, perhaps that would have been a conceit too far for John Fielden. The windows are all of similar proportion with sliding sashes and are very large. As Pevsner says 'The windows, however, have a typically Victorian shape : straight heads connected with the jambs by quarter circles '.

Considering the plan of the Castle (see sketch of ground floor) the



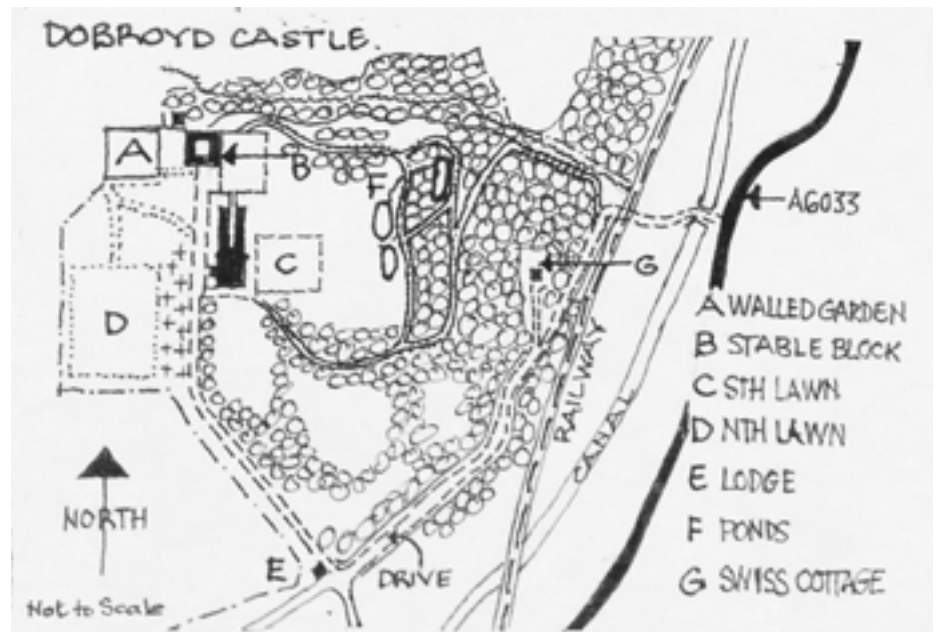
John Gibson: architect of Dobroyd Castle, from 'The Builder' 1870.

stair which would not be amiss in a cinema and includes column supports of Derbyshire marble, and there is a magnificent fireplace on the axis of the stair with mirror over-mantel. This really is an attractive space, very well lit from the glazed roof light with oak board floor and great solid oak doors to all the rooms off this space: the dining room; drawing room; breakfast room; billiard room and down the corridor the master's own room.

The door openings to these rooms have a relieving arch above with a carved panel in the tympanum, each representing an activity in the cotton manufacturing business. (See the sketch of the Slave tympanum). The column capitals too have arts and craft style carvings depicting country scenes in the nineteenth century. The first floor of the saloon has an encircling gallery logically served by the bifurcated stair, and twin column supports springing from the solid balustrade and with double arches over. The transition from square to the circle of the roof light is managed well with squinch arched areas in the corners. The first floor of the saloon is as rich as the ground floor but also has the sturdy oak doors to the surrounding main bedrooms. The gallery leads round the back of the wall enclosing the upper part of the stair to the corridor leading to the access to the servants' bedrooms

and the servants' stair. On both levels the principal rooms are fairly simply designed with attractive fireplaces, (some of which have disappeared) with decorative cornices, and very well lit by the large windows.

the railway in the valley. So John Fielden was able to drive in his coach, or possibly ride on horseback, from the mills in the valley up to his castle home some 230 feet above. To the east, presumably still within the



The ancillary buildings include the stable block with its own tower and courtyard on the axis of the drive, the walled garden to the east, and the gardener or groom's house to the extreme north east with its garden. In an attempt to illustrate the disposition of these buildings and a large service court, a sketch plan is included (above) to show the garden as it might have been and the long drive which crossed the canal and

then estate, a model farm was built with farm buildings round a courtyard and houses for the farm workers. At present the condition of these buildings is not good.

Dobroyd Castle was listed Grade II in 1966 because:

- it is an impressive country house built in local materials, has a distinctive castellated style, occupies a prominent hilltop position and was built by a local mill-owning family;
- the interior, particularly the entrance hall, is architecturally and materially opulent;
- the series of Caen stone tympana have particular historic interest for the way they represent the process of cotton production.

The castle has gone through an amazing range of educational uses. The Home Office bought it in 1942 for £10,000 and it became an approved school for up to 80 boys. These lads were taught gardening and building skills and worked in the community as well as at Dobroyd. In 1979 the school closed but reopened as a privately run school for 20 boys with emotional and behavioural problems. It closed in 1989. The castle was bought in 1995 by the monks of the New Kadampa Tradition for £320,000



Dobroyd Castle: the saloon lantern: photograph Frank Williams 2013



Dobroyd Castle from the East

for use as a Buddhist residential college and meditation centre. After 12 years the centre closed and was in need of much repair. In 2008 Dobroyd was bought for £2.1 million by Robinwood Activity Centres for tuition to primary school children. Under Robinwood's care it is in good use and adequately maintained although the stable block is in a poor state and the walled garden is hardly used. English Heritage have allowed a number of temporary buildings and training structures which provide a full programme of activities for up to 800 children each week on two and three day courses.

The two visits made to the Castle have been of primary importance in sensing the architectural quality, ambience and conservation of the whole. Flexibility of use, and new uses, within the constraints of maintenance of the architectural and historic character is the key to successful conservation of our heritage and in particular Dobroyd Castle.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~todmordenandwalsden/johnfielden.htm>

Frank Williams

October 2013

Frank Williams is a member of the Victorian Society. Until his retirement Frank was a conservation architect.

HERETICAL HISTORIES

Part 1. Lane and Alley: The Partnership that Never Was?

And it came to pass that Richard Lane did enter into partnership with Peter Bradshaw Alley under the style of Lane and Alley, for thus it is written by Alfred Darbyshire and so too is it written in *The Times* obituary of Alfred Waterhouse, and in *The Grove Dictionary of Art*.

For over a century the Lane/Alley partnership has formed a cornerstone of Manchester's architectural history, a fundamental truth beyond doubt. And yet there has still to be found any contemporary evidence for the existence of such a partnership. (See Clare Hartwell - *Making Manchester*, p.33). Significantly, the contract notices inviting tenders for building work - the classified advertisements that appeared in the Manchester Guardian - were always published by Richard Lane in his sole name.

This continued throughout the 1840s, realistically the only time that a partnership between the two men could have existed. Peter Alley was born in 1811. Thus, when Richard Lane commenced his architectural practice in Manchester in 1822 he was but ten years old. In 1833 he was recorded as attending classes at the Mechanics Institution and even in 1840 would have been under thirty.

Directory entries indicate that by 1850 Peter B Alley had commenced practice on his own account with offices in Cross Street, later moving to Prince's Court, off Market Street, Manchester. In 1855 he took Alfred Darbyshire as an articled pupil at Prince's Court and it was in this office that the work was 'prosaic but lucrative,' including the design of monumental cotton mills at Narva, Estonia. Despite claims to the contrary, Alfred Darbyshire never in fact worked in the Chapel Walks office of Richard Lane.

Thus the supposed partnership between Lane and Alley noted by Alfred Darbyshire in his book, *'An Architect's Experiences'*, published in 1897, relates to events of half a century before; events which were outside Darbyshire's personal experience.

The source of his information (or misinformation) must therefore be assumed to be Peter B Alley. Although the claim that Alfred Waterhouse had been a pupil of P B Alley rather than Richard Lane was withdrawn in the Manchester press a few days after publication of Darbyshire's book, and was not included in Alley's subsequent Manchester Guardian obituary, numerous biographical entries for Alfred Waterhouse still continue to maintain that he was articled to Lane and Alley.

The alternative (and perhaps more plausible) version of events is revealed in two letters hidden in the correspondence columns of the Manchester City News. Published in January 1898, immediately following the publication of *'An Architect's Experiences'*, these indicate that while P B Alley was employed as an assistant by Richard Lane during the 1840s, he never became Lane's partner. The first letter, by John Lowe, Richard Lane's pupil and eventual successor, reads as follows:

'Sir - Permit me to correct an error which appeared in the paragraph relative to Mr Darbyshire's new book 'An Architect's Experiences' which appeared in the Manchester City News of Saturday last. As it mentions Mr P B Alley (now residing at Southport) I may state that Mr Alley was in 1844 an assistant in Mr Richard Lane's offices and shortly afterwards started practice in Manchester with whom Mr Alfred Darbyshire was a pupil. Mr Alfred Waterhouse (now RA) and the late Mr Popplewell Pullan FRIBA together with myself were contemporary pupils in the office of Mr Richard Lane, architect. A few years afterwards Mr R Lane retired from business and it was purchased and carried on by myself for upwards of twenty-two years at the same offices in Chapel Walks, Manchester, until the erection of the now existing Guardian Assurance Building. JOHN LOWE. 15 January 1898

A letter published the following week, signed 'Set Square', generally supported Lowe's recollection of events but was in parts obscurely phrased, as follows:

Sir, - Mr Lowe's letter in your last

issue is partially true and partly (unintentionally doubtless) misleading. As one who knows, I may say that it was not 'shortly' but many years afterwards (certainly nine at least) that Mr P B Alley started individual practice at Prince's Court. The other statements in your editorial notes are substantially correct. I am unwilling to take up valuable time and space over a matter so purely personal, but in this particular instance it seems desirable that the details should be, once for all. SET SQUARE, Manchester.

However, one mystery remains - who was 'Set Square,' if not Peter Bradshaw Alley?

Part 2. Wigan Public Hall, 62 King Street, Wigan: Richard Lane, architect

'The Market (sic) Hall at Wigan, for which Lane's designs were reported to have been adopted in the Builder xi 1853 p327, was not in fact built.'

Howard Colvin: A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600 -1840. (Third Edition 1995)

It is generally considered that Colvin's Dictionary of British Architects provides the definitive list of works by Richard Lane. The exclusion of a specific building for which there is documentary evidence is, therefore, particularly unusual. However, in

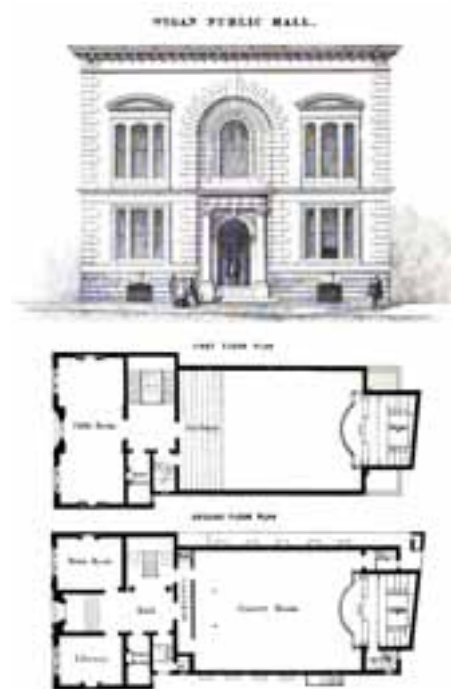
making this claim, Colvin lacked ready access to the vast wealth of information now made available through the internet. An examination of a wider range of contemporary sources now suggests that Richard Lane's designs for a Public Hall at Wigan were indeed fully implemented and, further, that the building survived until the 1970s.

In April 1852 *The Builder* reported: *'The committee to carry out the erection of the proposed public hall at Wigan have unanimously chosen the plans drawn by Mr R Lane of Manchester, architect.'* Tenders were returned on 22 July and on 11 of August 1852 Nathaniel Eckersley Esq, mayor of Wigan, laid the corner stone of a new Public Hall in King Street. The following month the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* published a detailed

description and plate illustration of Lane's design (below). Unusually, this was stated as being in the 'Italian style', a style far removed from the 'Greek Revival' style for which Richard Lane is better known.

Construction was completed by October 1853 when the Mechanics' Institution (which was to occupy the building for over thirty years) held an inaugural soirée. A later description, fully in accord with the plans of 1852, recorded that the Public Hall contained the Mechanics' Institute, Library and News-rooms, and two large rooms adapted for concerts, balls, or public meetings. [Worrall's Wigan and District Directory 1881].

When the Mechanics' Institute vacated the building is unclear. Wigan Town Trail suggests that the architectural



Richard Lane's Public Hall, Wigan in the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* 1852

NEW TOWN HALL, WIGAN.
R. LANE, Esq., Architect.
(With an Engraving, Plate XXXIII.)

ON the 11th August last, the foundation stone of this public hall was laid by N. Eckersley, Esq., the Mayor, in the presence of the corporation, the members for the borough, the local clergy, and a large number of persons. It is to be erected from the design of R. Lane, Esq., architect, of Manchester, by Mr. Fairclough, contractor, at a cost of 3240*l.*; but the expenses of lighting, warming, and fitting up the hall are anticipated to be about 700*l.* more.

The facade is of an Italian character, the lower compartment being of stone, with a granulated rustic basement, terminating with a deep fascia and moulded stringcourse. The upper compartment is of stock brickwork, with stone quoins and dressings to windows, surmounted by a bold modillion cornice, fascia, and neck-mould. In the centre is a circular-headed recess in stone, formed with quoins corresponding with those at the external angles of the building, inclosing a door-case with Doric columns, and entablature with triglyphs and dental cornice, having a circular-headed doorway with moulded imposts and archivolt, carved spandrels and key-stone. The central window over is circular-headed, and ornamented with a carved scroll band. The whole front, though simple in its forms, is rich and effective.

In the internal arrangements, a flight of steps, 13 feet wide, leads to the vestibule and principal staircase. On the right and left of the entrance is the library and news-room, and committee room, and from the centre of the vestibule are the doors leading to the large public room, 80 feet long by 40 feet wide, and 30 feet high, fitted up with a spacious orchestra at the end, adequate for concerts on a large scale. Over the library and news-room is a large saloon, 40 feet by 30 feet, for balls, public meetings, lectures, &c. The space below the large room is intended to be appropriated to the purposes of a mechanics' institution.

practice of Heaton Ralph and Heaton had some involvement in 1898 but gives no further details. By 1905 the Public Hall was the property of Messrs Roger and Rennick, and had been converted into publishing offices for the *Wigan Examiner*. At some stage the ground-floor frontage was also altered to incorporate shop units on each side of the original main entrance doorway.

The newspaper closed in May/June 1961 after which the building seemingly remained unoccupied until its demolition in the 1970s. Rodney House, a modern office block, now stands on the site. Photographs of the 1960s and 1970s (www.wiganworld.co.uk/album/photo) show the building in its last years. Notwithstanding a century of pollution, the later alterations, and a general air of dilapidation, the building still retained a quality of monumental grandeur not immediately apparent in the plate illustration. It was a building of considerable originality, and one certainly worthy of inclusion in any list of Richard Lane's known works.

Neil Darlington September 2013

Until his retirement, Neil Darlington was an architect in private practice for almost forty years. He is a contributor to Historic Scotland's on-line database, the 'Dictionary of Scottish Architects,' and for the past fifteen years has been researching the lives of architects working in Greater Manchester between 1820 and 1940.

MANCHESTER GROUP - EVENT REVIEWS

Blackpool: a Victorian Iron World,
Paul Dobraszczyk 11 April 2013 YHA

Paul Dobraszczyk's talk on the significance of cast iron in Victorian seaside resorts focused on Blackpool, which by the end of the 19th century was exceeded in size only by Brighton. Having grown from nothing, faster than the Lancashire textile towns, it exemplified the influence of the railways in bringing the masses to the coastal resorts, of which 106 were recognised by 1900. Previously the seaside had played a secondary role to the spas, nearly all inland, which were patronised mainly by the leisured classes.

Paul started by discussing decorative railings, first used at St Paul's Cathedral but only becoming ubiquitous during the Victorian period. He saw railings as symbolic of the boundary between the sea and the man-made environment of the town. The promenades thus created (Blackpool's in 1870) were promoted as health-giving and became extremely crowded, with their use highly ritualised. Railings could, however, also be markers of exclusion, for example by delineating private parks.

Moving on to piers, Paul explained how these evolved from utilitarian landing stages or breakwaters, which were already being used for recreation by the early 19th century. The first ornamental pier was Brighton's Chain Pier, built in 1823 on the suspension bridge principle. It was constructed on wooden piles and later collapsed. Blackpool's first pier (the current North Pier) was built in 1863 by Eugenius Birch, with ironwork supplied by Robert Laidlaw & Co. Like all such piers it charged for admission. The second pier (the South Jetty, now the Central Pier)

terrace on top. It was surrounded by a covered walkway which provided a refuge from the rain, as well as the crowds, for those who could afford the entrance fee. The concept of pavilions was taken to its extreme by Peregrine Birch with the Brighton Pavilion, built in 1893 with the aim of attracting winter visitors. Pavilions introduced an element of frivolity to the health-giving aspects of resorts.

Iron-and-glass structures also appeared within the resort towns. Blackpool's competitor, Southport, acquired a huge Winter Gardens in 1874, incorporating a concert hall and a large glasshouse. Blackpool's own Winter Gardens, built by Thomas Mitchell (1877) with a 140 foot -high dome and a 3000-seat concert hall, appealed to a lower class of visitors than Southport's, although it still charged for admission. The town had recently been incorporated as a borough and many of the investors in the project sat on the council. The complex was opened with much ceremony, including a torchlight procession to which the mayors of 68 towns were invited.



Blackpool Pier from Porter's Guide to Blackpool, Fleetwood, Lytham, 1870

was built in 1868 to siphon off the poorer patrons, with a charge of 1d instead of 2d. The ironwork was from the same manufacturer and the similarity of the scrollwork in the seating helped to give Blackpool a coherent image.

It was not long before pavilions were added and in 1874 Blackpool's North Pier acquired one in Indian style, with a roof

Seaside ironwork in Blackpool reached its zenith in the Blackpool Tower (1891-4, Maxwell & Tuke), modelled on the Eiffel Tower. Its ironwork is surprisingly utilitarian although the crown appears ornamental from a distance. Among its many features was a circus whose floor could be filled with water for aquatic events. The Tower has always been emblematic of Blackpool, but it also symbolised hope for the working

classes that there was an escape from drudgery. It was the first of six such projects in the country and the only one to succeed.

Paul estimated that perhaps a quarter of Victorian seaside ironwork survives today. Piers and their pavilions were notoriously prone to destruction by fire, as happened with the original Blackpool North Pier pavilion in the 1920s. However, the bulk of the losses have been due to the decline of the seaside resort and the desire to modernise. Examples are the Winter Gardens in Southport (demolished) and in Blackpool (rebuilt in the 1920s), and all the seaside towers apart from Blackpool's. It is the present generation's responsibility to preserve what is left.

Roger Barton

April 2013

Gutters and Gulleygrates with Simon Gudgeon, 8 May 2013

'Longbottoms are a specialist manufacturer and supplier of Cast Iron Pipes and Fittings for Rainwater and Soil drainage systems. We have maintained traditional methods of manufacture in our foundry at Holmfirth, West Yorkshire for nearly one hundred years.'



Manchester Group visit to Longbottoms, May 2013, photograph Mark Watson

That's the description from the on-line catalogue. It's not the most glamorous business but one that survives in this age of plastic and quick fixes because of Longbottoms' expertise and adherence to traditional manufacturing methods.

The firm started manufacturing in 1919. The incorporation of the larger firm of Sloan and Davidson of Leeds

increased the range of designs enhancing Longbottoms' ability to respond to the specifications of conservation architects, councils and homeowners wanting to preserve the appearance of buildings.

Simon Gudgeon, the son of the current managing director, assisted by his foreman, conducted a guided tour of the Bridge Foundry premises. We donned safety glasses to watch two young men carry out the traditional casting process. Their jeans and sweat shirts seemed out of place. Moleskin trousers, flat caps and hob-nail boots would not have been anachronistic. Green sand - black with coal dust and slightly tacky to the touch - was packed round a wooden pattern of one half of the form set in a wooden flask. Each pattern was removed and the two flasks were matched together, one on top of the other, ready for the pouring of red-hot molten metal. During the tour we were shown machinery used for casting different products, more modern and mechanised, but everything was an anticlimax after the spectacle of the pouring of glorious, glowing, liquid iron. Minutes later, a dull grey gutter shape was pulled from a scattered pile of black sand.

Other areas of the foundry complex house the stocks of rainwater pipes, gutters and gulleygrates, the wooden patterns ready for use in casting and the scale drawings. Simon pointed out the 300 patterns of gutter stock, the decorated hoppers. Of course, there are hundreds of standard patterns in the catalogue, but how satisfying to have a personal design made up - a coat of arms on the rainwater

headers of the ancestral pile, perhaps? Longbottoms don't undertake structural, load bearing work, as Simon explained; they do what they know and know what they do. A formula that serves well.

The initial purchase of cast iron is undeniably expensive but this material, properly installed and maintained, outlasts cheaper alternatives by many years.

Thank you to Simon and colleagues for giving the Victorian Society the chance to see products being made in a way that the Victorians would have known and providing a fascinating insight into the work of this traditional firm. It's impossible to visit Holmfirth without some mention of Last of the Summer Wine and, after knocking the green sand off our boots, the group repaired to Compo's Cafe for fish and chips. Pensioners' portions all round.

Paula Moorhouse

June 2013

Stitch and Stone: the collaboration between six leading Victorian architects and the Leek Embroidery Society, Dr Brenda King, 19 June 2013 YHA

This was Brenda's third talk to the Manchester Group: ongoing research into Thomas and Elizabeth Wardle and their impact on the town of Leek in the later years of the nineteenth century. This latest chapter, on the relationship between the Leek Embroidery Society and leading architects of the day, has, under Brenda's scholarship, been subjected to greater scrutiny than before, uncovering and documenting many pieces hidden away in church vestries and furthering understanding of the working practices involved in the provision of church furnishings at a seminal point in Anglican Church history. Spurred on by the Ecclesiology Movement and the demand for suitable and appropriate textiles for Anglican worship centred on the altar, Leek produced church textiles of a distinctive character within the framework of arts and crafts principles and the requirements of the liturgy. The embroideries often utilised locally designed fabrics and silk threads, important historic documents in themselves, and were stitched by highly skilled needlewomen to designs

provided by architects including G G Scott Jnr, R Norman Shaw, John D Sedding and Gerald Horsley, drawn to the town and surrounding area to reorder, restore or build new churches. Given the convention of providing altar furnishings in sets for each of the four church seasons (including frontals, super frontals, burses, pulpit falls *et al*) the number of pieces involved is considerable. Today, many are cherished and cared for by dedicated parishioners in full knowledge of their local and national significance but some are unappreciated and at risk of decommissioning, damp environments and inappropriate storage. Leek, then, provides a snapshot of many Victorian and Edwardian church textiles across the land. These pieces, hidden from view, many well over a century old, are textile relics recognized by a minority as worthy of care and conservation. Whilst they remain outside the museum sector they are at potential risk but their location within the interiors for which they were designed must be maintained and a mechanism established to ensure their long-term survival *in situ*. Brenda's talk and the exhibition 'The Extraordinary Leek Embroidery Society' at the Nicholson Museum and Art Gallery in Leek during the summer of 2013 establish the credentials of church textiles as worthy candidates for further enquiry and conservation.

Beryl Patten

August 2013

An Afternoon Walk around Withington with David Rydeheard, 13 July 2013

A party of over 30 Victorian Society and Withington Civic Society members overcame the torpor induced by a very warm day to join this walk led by David Rydeheard, leader of the Heritage Group of the Civic Society. David explained that Withington expanded from an agricultural village (as shown on the 1840s tithe maps that we were all given) to an urban area during the Victorian era. Wilmslow Road, which had existed from mediaeval times, became a turnpike and was greatly improved. Large new houses were built to the east of it and smaller ones to the west, and when Palatine Road was built as a turnpike in 1863 it too acquired fine villas, many of which have been lost. Withington

was incorporated into the City of Manchester in 1904.

The tour started with a 1927 building, Withington Public Library, designed by the City architect Henry Price. We later saw an earlier example of his work, the Public Baths (1911), in a mixed style incorporating elements of art nouveau and arts and crafts, and featuring ceramic work and stained glass inside. There were separate entrances for men and women but no segregation into first and second class; the superintendent's flat was upstairs. Both buildings are still used for their original purpose, but the future of the baths is uncertain as it is to be superseded by a new baths at Hough End. The Civic Society is trying to find ways of keeping the building open.

Many of the other buildings on the tour have had a change of use. We saw two of the three banks that once existed in Withington: the Manchester and County Bank (Mills & Murgatroyd, 1890; Grade II) is still a bank (branch of NatWest) but Barclays Bank (1904) is now a bar. Withington's pubs have fared a little better. The Red Lion (over 200 years old; Grade II), Albert Hotel (1820s; oldest building in 'village' centre), Victoria Hotel (built by Hydes' in 1905), Orion (named after a ship) and Turnpike are still in business, but the White Lion (1880) is now a supermarket. The conversion has been done sensitively, preserving much of the interior. As regards churches, St Cuthbert's RC Church (W T Gunson & Son, 1881; extended 1902) is still in use but the associated school is not; the Methodist Church (1865) has been much altered inside and has lost its Sunday School, while the Primitive Methodist Church (1891) is now an adult learning centre. Other buildings that we saw included the Public Hall and Institute (1861), still in use as a private members' club, and William John Priday's forge (1881), redeveloped as flats.

As a concession to the weather, the walk was truncated and ended with an unprecedented double tea stop. We first called in at the Fire Station (1931), which was holding an open day and offering refreshments. The official tea stop followed at St Paul's Church (Hayley & Brown, 1841) next door.

This was enlarged by John Lowe in 1863 and reordered in the 1970s, with removal of the gallery, replacement of the pews with seats and relocation of the organ (which Felix Mendelssohn once played). It still has two Walter Pearce windows, one depicting the young Queen Victoria – one of only two stained-glass windows in the country to do so.

We are very grateful to David for keeping us stimulated with his enthusiasm and knowledge. We took away with us notes written for a longer tour by Louise Kane, which can be found on <https://sites.google.com/site/withingtonhistory/guided-tour>.

Roger Barton

August 2013

Leek Churches and Embroideries with Dr Brenda King, 16 August 2013.

This trip, the first by coach for several years, took members to the Leek Embroidery exhibition and several of the churches housing work by the Leek Embroidery Society. We started at St Edward's Church, Leek (C14-17, with chancel by G E Street, 1867; Grade II*). Street was also responsible for the pulpit, stalls, lectern and screen, while the glass was mostly by Morris & Co. However, our focus was on the church's collection of textiles. Brenda King gave us an introduction to the Society's work, represented in churches by altar hangings, pulpit cloths, chalice veils, burses and other furnishings advocated by the Ecclesiologists. (The Society produced much domestic work as well.) Most of the Society's embroideries were worked on tussler silk printed at the Leek works of Thomas Wardle, who had done so much to promote the use of this material. The underlying printed patterns formed the basis for the embroidery, the silk thread of which was specially dyed at Leek.

A few doors away is the Nicholson Institute (William Larnar Sugden, 1884; Grade II*), where the embroidery exhibition was based. We had an introductory talk by Cathryn Walton, who helped set it up and is writing a book on the Leek embroiderers. She explained that Joshua Nicholson, director of the silk company Brough,



Manchester Group members at the Nicholson Institute in Leek, August 2013

Nicholson & Hall, had the Institute built as a way of compensating for missed education in his youth. He and the architect were members of SPAB and in accordance with its principles the C17 house in front, Greystones (Grade II*), was preserved; Nicholson lived in it before moving to Highfield Hall (demolished) next door. We toured the Institute, which was and still is a library-cum-art gallery. The library today is very different from the original, which was non-fiction only with books in stacks (still there today) accessible only to the librarians. The School of Science and Technology (also Sugden; 1898) is next door. Although in a plainer style than the Institute, with its domed tower and Flemish gables, it has some fine parquetry.

Once inside the exhibition, Cathryn explained that the members of the Leek Embroidery Society were all women in church congregations who had some connexion with Thomas Wardle's wife Elizabeth, the founder. Those women who were traceable

had professional, clerical or trade backgrounds and none were ordinary mill workers. The designers included

well-known architects such as J D Sedding, R N Shaw, G G Scott Jnr, G E Street and Gerald Horsley, and also Wardle's son Thomas Wardle Jnr and his brother-in-law George Y Wardle, who became manager of Morris & Co. It is often not known who designed particular pieces. In addition to the designers and embroiderers, the Society's work involved craft workers such as woodblock carvers and dyers, about whom very little is known.

From Leek we moved on to Cheddleton, where an efficiently organised lunch in the community centre was followed by a visit to St Edward's Church (Grade II*). Barbara Hutchinson, curator of the textiles, explained that the mediaeval building was restored by George Gilbert Scott Jnr in 1863-4 while Wardle was churchwarden. The focus was changed from pulpit to altar and a rood screen was added. The church features stained glass by Morris & Co with designers including Burne-Jones and Madox Brown. The collaborations between Mrs Wardle and the embroidery designers started here, and there were further displays of embroidery in the church.

We saw more embroidery at St Leonard's, Ipstones (Grade II*), designed by G G Scott Jnr. Started around the turn of the nineteenth century, the church was completed in 1877 by Scott. In 1902 Gerald Horsley built the chancel and installed a striking rood screen, which became framed by paintings by J Eadie Reid in 1917. Introducing us to the textiles on display, Cath Hayes said a lot of pieces had been discarded in the 1960s, possibly because they were worn out.

We finally returned to Leek to see the innovative Arts and Crafts church of All Saints, Compton (Richard Norman Shaw, 1887; Grade I), with a remarkably wide nave, superb fittings by W R Lethaby and Robert Edgar, chancel wall and ceiling paintings by Gerald Horsley and windows by Morris & Co, including a large Burne-Jones east window (1923). The large collection of textiles at the church was on display and included an altar frontal of 9 panels, designed from Indian patterns by Thomas Wardle Jnr.

We were very grateful not only to the speakers and leaders for a most informative day but also to Mark Watson for his usual impeccable arrangements.

Roger Barton

August 2013

Lost Libraries of Liverpool: the Buildings of Thomas Shelmerdine with John Tiernan, 21 September 2013

This second coach tour of the season, led by John Tiernan, retired Assistant Director of Liverpool's libraries, started by viewing the £50M refurbishment of Liverpool Central Library behind the mostly unaltered classical façades of the Brown Library and the Picton Reading Room. The 1950s and 1970s buildings built behind those facades have been demolished and in their place is now a visually stunning, asymmetrical domed multi-level atrium of laminated oak and glass designed by Austin-Smith:Lord. The upper level leads to a roof terrace offering views over the city and the lower levels link into the original historic library interiors. These include the Grade II* Hornby Library dating from 1906

designed by Thomas Shelmerdine and housing Richard Hornby's bibliographic collection gifted to the city. Shelmerdine was born in 1845 and was Liverpool Borough architect from 1871 to 1914. In common with many other Edwardian libraries that he designed for Liverpool, the Hornby boasts an elaborate copper Art Nouveau plaque commemorating its opening. The huge circular domed 1879 Picton Reading Room with three tiers of bookshelves rising to 30 feet owes an obvious debt to the reading room of the British Museum made by modifying S. Smirke's original Great Court – a debt made manifest by the black plaque to Antonio Panizzi on the outside of the Liverpool building.

On the tour of Shelmerdine's branch libraries we first visited the 1902 Toxteth example which has recently had a £1M restoration. It is a minor classic of the Edwardian Baroque



Shelmerdine's Kensington Library, Liverpool 1890/1897

style, a grand entrance flanked by two hooded Venetian windows. It also has its copper Art Nouveau plaque commemorating the opening by Andrew Carnegie, although it was not financed by him. Sefton Park library, half-timbered Tudor/bethan on a stone base, was the gift of Carnegie. Garston library 1909 was listed Grade II only last year. It is a large and airy barrel-vaulted room flanked by two smaller equivalents. Kensington library of 1890 and extended in 1897 (Grade II) is also a large and well-lit space. The exterior

has an unusual octagonal tower provoking much discussion as to the function of the miniature flying buttresses.

The tour ended with the day's saddest Shelmerdine sights, Lister Drive library of 1902 closed for ten years and barely visible through dense overgrown shrubbery and the disused Everton library (1896) known to locals as 'The Jewel on the Hill'. Mark Watson's photograph of it on the cover of the March 2013 *The Victorian* captures its decayed glory.

David Astbury September 2013

Thomas Fairbairn (1823-1891), the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition and his patronage of the pre-Raphaelites with Richard Byrom, 21 October 2013

Richard Byrom followed up his fascinating talk about William Fairbairn in 2011 with an equally interesting account of the life of his second son Thomas (1823-91). Their lives were very different and Thomas's was more contradictory, a mixture of successes and failures.

Thomas initially followed in his father's footsteps as an engineer. Instead of university he was sent to the Millwall shipyard, which was in trouble in the 1840s (it closed in 1844). He later assisted with the construction of the pioneering Britannia Bridge, an engineering success but tainted by Thomas's 'wheeler dealing' over competitive tendering. His ruthless streak was again evident in his role in the collapse of the 1852 engineers' strike. Thomas and his younger brothers became owners of Fairbairn & Sons when William retired from the business in 1854, but his brothers backed out and left Thomas the sole owner. He himself lost interest and moved to London in 1861. The company was floated on the Stock Exchange in 1864 and continued to fulfil challenging contracts. However, Thomas's attempts at bribery led to loss of orders for the Great North of Scotland Railway, and in 1865 locomotive building ended. The firm went into liquidation in 1875. Richard Byrom had been unable to find any evidence of external pressures and

concluded that the failure was due to lack of investment and leadership.

Thomas's interest in the arts seems to have started with a long visit to Italy in his early twenties. He acquired his first painting in 1847 and started to commission works. He evidently had good taste, as all the nine works he loaned for the 1857 exhibition ended up in major galleries. A meeting in 1851 with Holman Hunt started a life-long friendship, which included the commissioning of *The Awakening Conscience* (later modified at Thomas's behest) and *The Children's Holiday* (including five of Thomas's children). Thomas later had his portrait painted by Holman Hunt and bought *The Scapegoat*.

Thomas's involvement with the 1857 Art Treasures Exhibition in Manchester arose from his meeting the art collector John Dean at the 1853 Dublin Exhibition. Their aim was to present a chronology of painting. They were astonishingly successful in raising money, obtaining guarantors (of whom Thomas was chairman) and procuring exhibits (there were 16,000). They gave themselves a 50-week deadline, but all was ready in time for the opening by Prince Albert. The façade was designed by Edward Salomons and interior decoration was by J G Crace. There was a total of 136,000 visitors, including Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

This success was not initially maintained; three subsequent projects failed, including one for a free art gallery in Manchester. However, Thomas was then invited to be a commissioner of the 1862 London Exhibition. Again this was very successful, with the building erected in 11 months and 29,000 exhibits displayed. Thomas was now mixing with the highest echelons of society. Surprisingly, he turned down the offer of a knighthood, although he later inherited his father's baronetcy. Thomas continued to have business interests, in partnership with his friend John Pender. They were involved in the failure of the Consolidated Bank, but their participation in the Atlantic telegraph project was much more successful. Thomas

was a director of cable-laying and overseas telegraph projects and at the time of his death controlled one-third of the world's underseas cables.

Thomas's family life also had its share of misfortune. He married in 1848 and had nine children, but two died young and two were deaf and dumb (there is a beautiful sculpture of them by Thomas Woolner). The family moved to successively larger properties, culminating in Brambridge House near Eastleigh, with 23 bedrooms, in 1866. However, there was a serious fire there in 1872; Matthew Digby Wyatt was employed to rebuild. Thomas died in 1891, soon after losing money through his stockbroker son Thomas Gordon Fairbairn, who had been convicted of speculating with shareholders' money.

Roger Barton

October 2013

MANCHESTER GROUP 2013-2014 Events

SATURDAY 14 DECEMBER 2013

***Christmas Excursion to Liverpool
An Xmas Lunch and talk at the
Florence Institute, Toxteth.***

Our 2013 Christmas Celebration will take place in Toxteth, Liverpool. We will assemble at Store Street, below Piccadilly Train Station at 9.15 am for departure by coach to Liverpool at 9.30 am. Our first stop at 10.30 am will be at Toxteth Park Town Hall where we will have tea/coffee and biscuits and a talk on the Town Hall by Joshua Terry. At 11.45 am we take the short walk to the 'Florrie' where we will have a tour of the building from 12.00 to 12.30 pm. Lunch will take place between 1.00 and 2.30 pm. After lunch there will be a presentation on the history and conservation of the building by Rob Chambers. We depart for Manchester at 4 pm.

The Florence Institute is one of the earliest youth clubs in Britain, a purpose it served admirably for over a century before slum clearance and a diminishing local population resulted in closure in the late 1980s.

A variety of attempts to save the building came and went, and were followed by a severe fire in 1999, leaving the building in a parlous state.

Purcell have been involved with the Florrie since 2002 through initial feasibility work for the Merseyside Building Preservation Trust and the Friends of the Florrie. The talk will briefly discuss the history of the Florrie and its significance, before looking at the inspiring community-driven campaign to save it. Then we will journey through the period of dereliction and discuss some of the technical challenges encountered in bringing the building back to life.

Robert Chambers is an Associate with Purcell, working in Liverpool, the North-West and across North Wales. An AABC accredited conservation architect, he has delivered a range of high-profile projects across the country including, locally, St. George's Hall in Liverpool and a variety of projects at the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

The booking form for the Xmas Event can be found on page 17

Lunch menu choices are on page 18

SATURDAY 25 JANUARY 2014

Annual General Meeting followed by an illustrated talk ***'Little Holland House' or 'Frank Dickinson and Me'*** with Andrew Richardson

Andrew first visited Little Holland House, lovingly built and furnished by the remarkable Frank Dickinson (1874-1961) and his wife, in 1983. Situated in Carshalton Beeches, the house is a goldmine of original Arts and Crafts features and paintings by Frank which Andrew has researched and recorded for this talk. The Grade II* interior, created entirely by Dickinson between 1902 and 1904, is inspired by the ideals of John Ruskin and William Morris and contains Dickinson's paintings, hand-made furniture, furnishings, metalwork and carving. Now in the care of Sutton Libraries, the house is open to the public free of charge but is relatively unknown.

Andrew will also show us some of his own arts and crafts inspired woodwork.

1.45 pm to 4.30 pm
YHA Potato Wharf, off Liverpool Road,
Castlefield Manchester M3 4NB

Attendance at the AGM is free but there is a charge of £5 for the talk
No need to book in advance

The AGM agenda and nomination form can be found on page 16

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2014

An illustrated talk
***The Victorian Postal System and
Anthony Trollope***
with Julian Stray: Curator British
Postal Museum and Archive

The Victorian era was witness to dramatic and far ranging changes to the postal system in the UK. Not only was Postal Reform introduced, whereby the cost was greatly reduced and simplified, but the sender became also responsible for postage costs instead of the recipient. Such was the increase of the service that a centuries old system struggled to adapt. The very necessary countrywide alterations and refinement were largely suggested and implemented by a body of Post Office Surveyors. Possibly the most innovative of these men, certainly the most famous, was the novelist Anthony Trollope, a Post Office employee at the time. This fascinating talk will cover elements of postal history that touched everyone's life; not least a growing state dependence on the railways, the introduction of a national Parcel Post and the first appearance of the now familiar pillar box.

Julian Stray is Senior Curator at The British Postal Museum & Archive. He is an authority on postal history, has written countless articles on the subject and has authored books on mail trains, Post Offices and the transport of mail by road.

6.15 for 6.30 pm at the
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, Manchester M2 5NS:
cost £7

TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2014

An illustrated talk

Lancashire to L.A : the Legacy of John Parkinson, Bolton Architect with Jamie Ryan-Ainslie: independent researcher

A joint event with the Manchester Modernist Society

John Parkinson (1861-1935) was a British-born architect who grew up in Scorton in Lancashire and was apprenticed to John Bradshaw in Bolton. Working for Bradshaw and attending the Bolton Mechanics Institute Parkinson was able to develop his skills in practical construction. At the age of 21 Parkinson moved to North America where he eventually made his name designing numerous public buildings, particularly in Los Angeles in the late 19th and early 20th century, most notably Los Angeles City Hall (1928)

Jamie's talk will cover the development of Parkinson's career from the 1870s including his early years in Scorton and Bolton, work in Canada, Napa and Seattle in the 1880s and the development of the firm in Los Angeles up to his death in 1931.

Jamie has studied Parkinson's life and architectural career for his Master's Degree in History, Film and Television. Since then he has worked in broadcasting at the BBC and NHS

in Birmingham, where he currently lives.

7 pm for 7.15 pm YHA
YHA Potato Wharf, off Liverpool Road,
Castlefield Manchester M3 4NB
Cost: £5.00 per person.

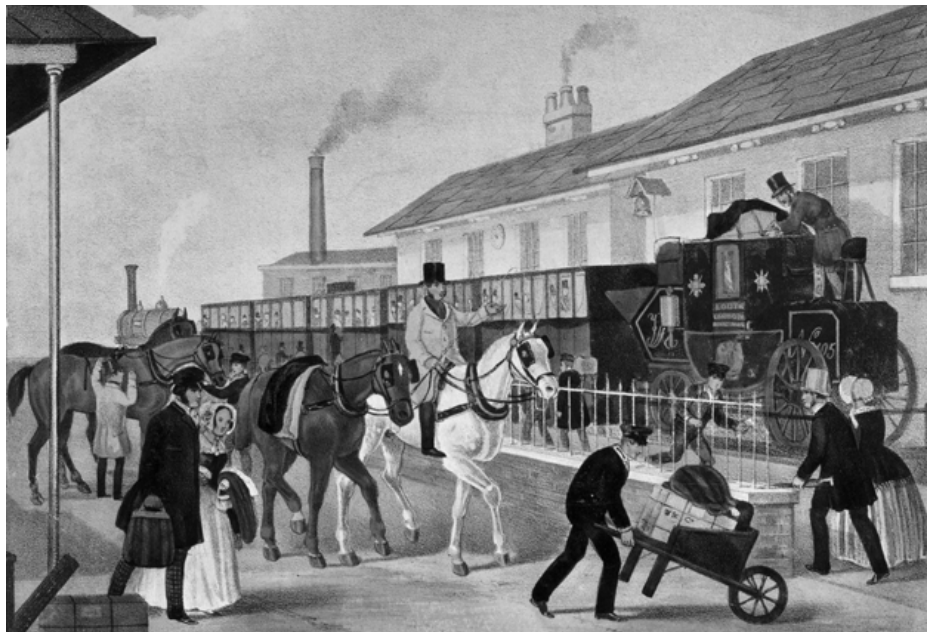
No need to book in advance

WEDNESDAY 30 APRIL 2014

An illustrated talk

Harold Peto: Architect, Garden Designer, Collector and Aesthete. with Hilary J Grainger
Chair of the Victorian Society

Harold Ainsworth Peto (1854-1933) is perhaps best known for his eighteen year partnership with the late Victorian architect Sir Ernest George, during which time they became one of the most sought after practices.



The move of mail from road to rail during the Victorian era. Last day of the Louth-London mail coach, leaving Peterborough on the newly opened Peterborough to Blisworth railway. 1845. Image: BPMA H1396

Peto, however, the fifth son of the celebrated mid-Victorian public works and railway contractor, Sir Samuel Peto (1809-89) was to become widely accomplished in his own right as an architect, interior designer, landscape gardener and collector, but is perhaps best remembered for his significant contribution to the development of the Italian School of Edwardian gardening at the start of the twentieth century.

Peto began his architectural training in 1871 with J. Clements before moving to the workshops of Lucas Brothers, both based in Lowestoft. Later that year he was briefly in the offices of Lewis Karslake & Mortimer in London. He joined George in partnership in 1876 at the age of 21, providing a direct entrée into the London building world, historically through Sir Samuel, and contemporaneously through Harold's older brothers Morton Kelsall and William Herbert, whose building operations, Peto Brothers, were also to be of immense importance to the development of George & Peto's practice.

Peto emerges as a highly significant but hitherto overlooked figure in late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture and design. Despite possessing his father's business acumen, Harold appears

from an early age to have reacted against mid-Victorian business values and religion. He developed an abhorrence of London and what he termed 'the squalor and rush of modern life'. His father had been a patron of the arts where Harold was to become an aesthete with a sensitivity to art, a fastidiousness, a horror of vulgarity and a form of aestheticised cosmopolitanism. His perfectionism and concern to cultivate highly developed senses and faculties led him into an almost overriding obsession with good taste and refinement, which deepened as he grew older.

Henry Avray Tipping considered Peto to be the '*British aesthete in pose, appearance and voice*'. This lecture explores Peto's architectural work - in particular his villa and garden practice in the South of France - and his interior design work.

Professor Hilary J Grainger is a Dean of the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London, having taught the history of architecture and design for over thirty years at the Universities of Leeds, Northumbria, Staffordshire, Keele and Wolverhampton. She is a leading authority on Sir Ernest George and also on the architecture of British crematoria. Her book *Death Redefined: British Crematoria, History, Architecture and Landscape*

was published in 2005 and *The Architecture of Sir Ernest George* was published by Spire Books Ltd in late 2010. Hilary is the Chair of The Victorian Society and a council member and Trustee of The Cremation Society of Great Britain.

7 pm for 7.15 pm
YHA Potato Wharf, off Liverpool Road,
Castlefield Manchester M3 4NB
Cost: £5.00 per person.

No need to book in advance

SATURDAY 10 MAY 2014

An illustrated talk and visit
Imperial Gothic: William Butterfield and the Development of Colonial Ecclesiology
with Alex Bremner
Architectural Historian, University of Edinburgh

In this talk Alex Bremner will consider the contribution William Butterfield made to the rise and development of Anglican church architecture in Britain's empire during the late nineteenth century. He will discuss Butterfield's colonial designs in the context of contemporary ecclesiological theory and the conditions, both social and material, for which they were intended. What is revealed is an approach by Butterfield that consciously engaged concerns over cultural and environmental adaptation, leading to an experimental form of architecture that pushed the boundaries of Anglican architectural convention.

Alex Bremner is Senior Lecturer in Architectural History at the University of Edinburgh. He specialises in the study of British imperial and colonial architecture, particularly during the Victorian era, and has recently published a book with Yale University Press entitled *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire c.1840-1870* (2013).

2 pm
Venue: Saint Cross Church,
Clayton,
Manchester M11 4UA
Cost: £10

POTATO WHARF YHA

Our usual venue for talks in 2013-2014 will be the YHA, Potato Wharf, Castlefield, Manchester M3 4NB (tel: 0161 839 9960)

Directions to the YHA by public transport

From Deansgate Castlefield or Manchester Central (Metrolink) stations: turn right along Deansgate, then left along Liverpool Road as far as Castlefield Hotel (also known as the Y club – note this is not our venue). There, turn left along Potato Wharf. The youth hostel is on the left after you go under the railway bridge. This is approximately a 700 yard walk.

From Piccadilly station: take a train to Deansgate or a tram to Manchester Central then follow the above directions. Alternatively, catch the number 3 free bus which runs every 10 minutes (the last bus is 19.00) from the forecourt - get off at the second stop on Quay Street (after the Opera House). From there go back along Quay Street and right along Lower Byrom Street to Liverpool Road. Turn right and proceed as above. This is approximately a 600 yard walk.

From Piccadilly Gardens: catch the number 33 bus which runs every 20 minutes to the second stop on Liverpool Road (opposite the Science Museum). Then go back to the Castlefield Hotel and follow the above directions. This is approximately a 200 yard walk. Currently (December 2013) this bus is diverted owing to sewerage works.

From Oxford Road station: catch the number 2 free bus (times as for the number 3 above) from the forecourt to Liverpool Road (first stop only). From there follow the directions above. This is approximately a 400 yard walk.

From Victoria station: catch the number 2 bus outside and get off at the second stop outside the Great Northern complex; continue down Deansgate, turn right along Liverpool Road and follow the directions as above.

NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL

Thank you to those members who have agreed to receive the Manchester Newsletter by email. This has allowed us to reduce postage and copying costs.

If you lose your email copy or it disappears from your computer a pdf of the Newsletter can now be found on the Manchester page of Victorian Society's main site at victoriansociety.org.uk/manchester/ as can the current talks and visits. If you would like to receive an email version of the Newsletter please email beryl.patten@virgin.net.

MANCHESTER GROUP

The next Manchester Group Newsletter will be published in April 2014. The next Events Card (June 2014 to October 2014) will be published in April 2013.

If you wish to make a contribution to the Newsletter, such as an article, news item or event review, please email beryl.patten@virgin.net. compiler of this Newsletter

Disclaimer: *You participate in events at your own risk and neither the Society nor its officers or servants accept any liability of any kind whatsoever howsoever arising. The Victorian Society reserves the right to cancel, alter or postpone events if necessary. The Victorian Society is a Registered Charity No 1081435 and a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England No 3940996*

Please note that buildings we visit may present a variety of hazards including uneven surfaces, stairs, low head heights, low lighting, building and demolition works. We would like all our events to be accessible to everyone, but there may be stairs or uneven surfaces which cannot be avoided, and long periods of walking or standing.

Should you have any questions about your ability to participate in an event, please contact us. Some of our events are unsuitable for children. If you have any special needs or ideas about how we can improve our events, please let us know.

Remember to let us know if you change your email address.

Manchester Group of the Victorian Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 25 January 2014

1.45 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. YHA Potato Wharf, Castlefield, Manchester. M3 4NB

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. Membership Secretary's report
5. Conservation report.
6. Treasurer's report.
7. Chairman's report.
8. Election of Officers and Committee.
9. AOB

All members are entitled to attend the AGM. Cost £5 to include refreshments and illustrated talk.

NOMINATION FORM FOR A COMMITTEE MEMBER:

NOMINEE

Name of nominee:

Address:

.....

Tel:Email:

Nominee's signature of acceptance.....date.....

please give reasons for nominating this person to the Manchester Group Committee

.....

.....

Your contact details:

Name:

Address:

.....

Tel: Email:

Return to:

The Secretary,
Manchester Victorian Society,
c/o The Portico Library,
57 Mosley Street,
Manchester M2 3HY

or bring along to the AGM.

Booking form : Manchester Victorian Society - Liverpool Xmas Lunch

SATURDAY 14 DECEMBER 2013

A visit by coach to Toxteth to see the Florence Institute, "The Florrie", a recently restored Victorian Lads' Club. Lunch will take place at The Florrie followed by a presentation by Robert Chambers, conservation architect, on the history of the Florrie and the successful campaign to save it. Further details on page

Join the coach at Store Street under Piccadilly Station at 9.15am for a 9.30 am prompt departure.

Cost including three course Christmas lunch and coach travel from Manchester: £45.00 per person (excluding drinks).

CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKINGS: TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2013

First name..... Surname.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

telephone numbers*.....

*mobile number preferable - please switch on your mobile and bring with you to the event

email address*.....

*please add your email address if you have one, this will be used for confirmation of booking and receipt of payment

Names of others attending

First name..... Surname.....

First name..... Surname.....

First name..... Surname.....

Confirmation and travel arrangements will be sent in good time. Enclose your completed form, menu choices, a stamped self-addressed envelope and a cheque (if no email given) for **£45.00** per person made payable to: *The Victorian Society* to: **Mark Watson, 18 Thomas Telford Basin, Manchester M1 2NH. Tel 07831 267642**

Disclaimer: You participate in Victorian Society events at your own risk and neither the Society nor its officers or servants accept any liability of any kind whatsoever, howsoever arising. The Victorian Society reserves the right to cancel, alter or postpone events if necessary. Victorian Society Manchester Group Committee Secretary email: manchester@victoriansociety.org.uk

✂

Manchester Victorian Society Christmas Lunch in Liverpool 14 December 2013

MENU CHOICES Please return **one** separate form for **each** attendee

Forename.....Surname.....

STARTER

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Roast tomato and basil soup ()

or

Chicken liver parfait on toasted brioche with chilli jam ()

or

Smoked salmon with caper berries ()

MAIN COURSE: CARVERY

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Roast turkey and stuffing ()

or

Roast rump of beef ()

or

Vegetarian option ()

With roast potatoes, carrots, cabbage, parsnips gravy and condiments

DESSERT

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Traditional Christmas Pudding served with Rum Sauce ()

or

Sherry trifle ()

Followed by Coffee and Tea

A bottle bar will be available – not included in the price of the Dinner.

Please return your menu choices with your booking form and your cheque made payable to *The Victorian Society*.

✂.....✂

Forename.....Surname.....

STARTER

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Roast tomato and basil soup ()

or

Chicken liver parfait on toasted brioche with chilli jam ()

or

Smoked salmon with caper berries ()

MAIN COURSE: CARVERY

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Roast turkey and stuffing ()

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Vegetarian option ()

With roast potatoes, carrots, cabbage, parsnips gravy and condiments

DESSERT

(choose **one** and please tick your choice)

Traditional Christmas Pudding served with Rum Sauce ()

or

Sherry trifle ()

Followed by Coffee and Tea

A bottle bar will be available – not included in the price of the Dinner.

Please return your menu choices with your booking form and your cheque made payable to *The Victorian Society*.