

The Victorian Society in Manchester

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EDITORIAL

THE BATTLE OF THE STYLES CONTINUED?

Anyone with more than a passing interest in Victorian architecture will know about the 'battle of the styles' that began at the start of the Queen's reign and reached its climax with the commission for new government offices on Whitehall between 1856 and 1860. The three-section competition, launched during Lord Palmerston's first administration, resulted in victories for little-known architects peddling versions of contemporary Parisian architecture. The block-plan section was even won by a Beaux-Arts-trained architect, Alphonse Crépinet. The ensuing debate about British national identity, which centred on the appropriateness of neo-Gothic precedents for secular as well as for sacred buildings, resulted in the insertion of George Gilbert Scott as architect for the government offices in 1858, during the brief Tory administration of Lord Derby.

On his return to the premiership in 1859, however, Palmerston would have nothing to do with Scott's Gothic Revival designs. Scott declined to take Gladstone's advice that he should resign the commission. Instead, he attempted to retain his neo-medieval principles by switching the style of his design from Gothic to 'Italo-Byzantine'. In 1860 Palmerston's patience ran out and he ordered the architect to abandon that 'regular mongrel affair' and make 'a design in the ordinary Italian' - or face the sack. Swallowing his pride, Scott (with the assistance of the East India Company's architect, Matthew Digby Wyatt) went on to produce the magnificent neo-Renaissance building that is today's Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The story is very well known and

has, indeed, been the subject of monographic books by Ian Toplis (1987) and Bernard Porter (2011) – as well as of a number of scholarly articles, beginning with David Brownlee's 'That regular mongrel affair' in 1985. Brownlee conceptualized the contretemps as the moment when the High Victorian movement in architecture was derailed by an elderly survivor (Palmerston was 76 in 1860) of the earlier nineteenth-century Reform movement, whose architectural ideas were retrogressively late Georgian. Although more nuanced interpretations have emerged subsequently, that idea has basically stuck.

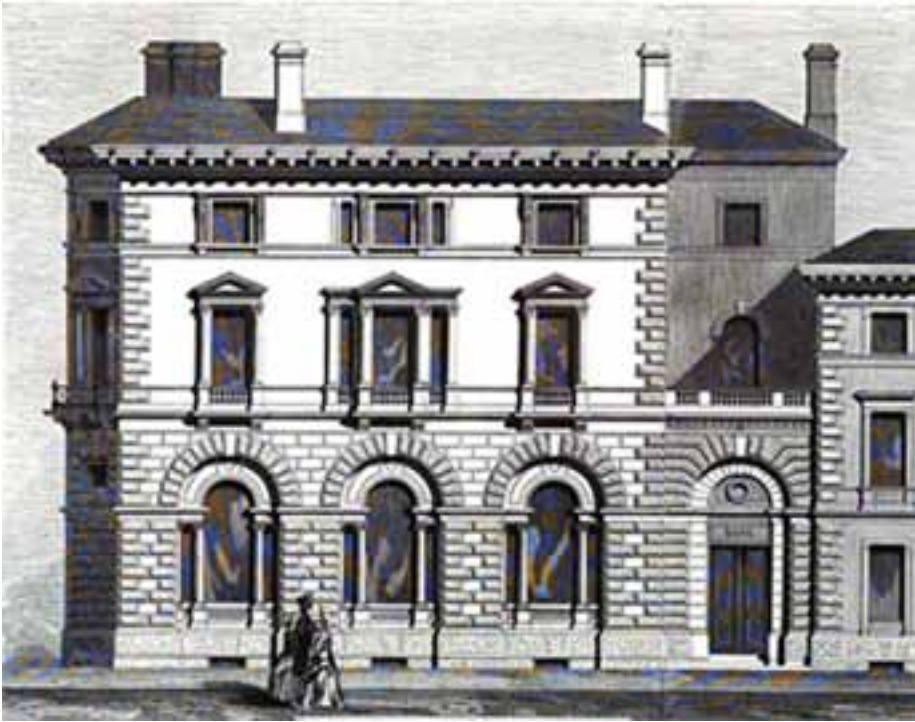
for in other comments on the question he clearly distinguished between the 'Greek' idiom of the ancient world and the 'Italian' of the Renaissance. What he surely meant was a building in the Victorian Italianate style which, by the end of the 1850s, had become the expressive idiom for a far greater proportion of British architecture than was encompassed by neo-Gothic churches, educational buildings and the like. It was an idiom that had just as much right as the Gothic Revival to claim to represent 'the modern school of English architecture', as W.H. Leeds called it in the title of his 1839 monograph on Charles



Burnley Mechanics Institute (1854-55) architect James Green

It is not, however, Palmerston's remark on Scott's 'regular mongrel affair' that catches my eye, but rather his subsequent instruction to the architect to make 'a design in the ordinary Italian'. What did the Prime Minister mean by this? Not, of course, that he wanted a mundane building and not, I believe, that he wanted an old-fashioned building. Neither did he mean a generically classical building,

Barry's Pall Mall Travellers' Club in Pall Mall. Joint stock and private banks, insurance buildings, clubs and mechanics' institutes, hotels and suburban villas are all building types in which the Italianate predominated, at least up to the 1860s (much later outside London). The warehouses of Charlotte Street in Manchester exemplify it, as they do in Bradford and Glasgow. There is also good



Heywood's Bank, Manchester (1849-50): architect John Gregan

representation in public architecture - with Edward Walters' Free Trade Hall in Peter Street and Blackburn Town Hall as prime examples. Indeed, the outcome of the government offices competition set Whitehall on a path of neo-Renaissance and neo-Baroque architecture that would only come to an end with William Whitfield's retiring neo-Elizabethan building opposite for the Department of Health of 1987

The Italianate has been forced to play second fiddle to the Gothic Revival for too long in our understanding of early and mid-Victorian architecture. Even in James Stevens Curl's magisterial 2007 history 'Victorian Architecture: Diversity and Invention' it is largely bundled up within a single chapter (among twelve), significantly titled 'Some Styles other than Gothic'! There are many reasons for this, of course. Even now we are still engaged in a process of reclaiming the validity of Victorian architecture from a twentieth-century view that, insofar as it recognized the nineteenth century at all, chose to see the Gothic Revival and its Arts and Crafts progeny as the antecedents of its own Modernism (though members of Victorian Societies tend to take a more catholic view!). Then there are the texts, from Pugin to Ruskin to Eastlake to Morris, that make powerful polemical arguments - so attractive to scholars and journalists - for the role of the

medieval and vernacular in nineteenth-century architectural design. There are really no equivalents for the 'ordinary' Italian. The source books for Italian Renaissance architecture used by Victorian architects were French, not English. More than half of the non-French subscribers to Paul-Marie Letarouilly's *Edifices de Rome moderne* in 1840 were British - including Manchester's own Edward Walters. The copy of Letarouilly now in the Deansgate Library belonged in 1855 to James Stevens, an architect who lived and worked in Macclesfield but kept an office at 32 Princess Street (and was later, in 1882-83, President of the Manchester Society of Architects). Then there are the lacunae in the secondary literature: for Walters we have never had a monographic study, and the same is true for most of the other greatest exponents of the Italianate in Victorian Britain, such as David Bryce and David Rhind, both in Edinburgh, Charles Lanyon in Belfast, Yeoville Thomason in Birmingham, the London City architect James Bunstone Bunning, and even Sir Charles Barry.

As these examples indicate, the Italianate story is a truly nationwide one and we lose essential aspects of it if we view Victorian architecture centripetally, from the capital outwards. Indeed, northern England is - along with Scotland - probably the major region for the idiom. With the County

Courts Act of 1846, responsibility for the erection of new buildings for hearing small debt cases was handed by the Home Office to the Metropolitan Police architect, Charles Reeves. From his London base he designed over sixty County Courts across England and Wales. Almost all of them were Italianate palazzi and the finest examples are found in the growing towns of south and west Yorkshire, where they evidently became representative of civic rivalry and pride. Salford's handsome County Court dates from c.1865 and was thus probably designed by Reeves' assistant and successor, Thomas Charles Sorby. The strong commitment to the Italianate in the north-west can be seen further in buildings like Burnley's Mechanics' Institute, erected in 1854-55. Its architect, James Green of Todmorden, had evidently been studying John Gregan's bank for Sir Benjamin Heywood in St Ann Street, Manchester, completed in 1849/50. No history of banking architecture in Britain would be complete without this stellar Mancunian example, although the building has not yet been fully understood. Only the basement and ground floor of the stone section housed banking activities. The two upper floors provided palatial accommodation for the Manager and his servants, whilst the brick section to the south, generally referred to as the Manager's House, in fact contained service quarters above a pair of ground-floor reception rooms for the use of Sir Benjamin and Lady Heywood.

Most of the buildings mentioned so far have been versions of the astylar 'palazzo' manner pioneered by Charles Barry at the Travellers' Club in 1830 and reiterated at the Athenaeum on Princess Street in 1837. It must be recognized, however, that this represents only one genre within the overall idiom that can be defined as 'Italianate' in Victorian Britain. Indeed the term itself seems first to have been associated with those earlier nineteenth-century villas, also astylar but given belvedere towers, of which the Queen's own Osborne House was to become the most iconic example. At Ellel, near Lancaster, the Liverpool whisky merchant and Mayor William

Preston built himself one of the best Osbornes-in-miniature in 1857-59, but there are many others nationwide, especially when one includes the middle-class suburban villa.

Other genres of 'Italianate' architecture in Victorian Britain must include derivatives of Florentine or Venetian Quattrocento architecture, such as J.A. Picton's Hargreaves Buildings of 1859 in Chapel Street, Liverpool - a good reinterpretation of what Ruskin called 'Early

In an essentially pluralistic age like that of Victoria's Britain, it would be perverse to claim that Italianate architecture can be conceived as a clearly defined and 'pure' stylistic alternative to the logic of the Gothic Revival. Hardly any architect worked solely in the Italianate style; the exclusive use of a single architectural style is only found among some Gothic revivalists. Moreover, the Gothic and Italianate idioms both became submerged in the neo-vernacular and eclectic approaches of late Victorian

remarkable, as John Booker pointed out in his 1990 study 'Temples of Mammon: The Architecture of Banking', that so many hundreds of banks across the country were erected in the Italianate idiom, often as the most prominent and distinctive buildings in town centres, without any indication at all in directors' minutes of stylistic debate or uncertainty at the point of commission. That's just what the image of a bank was to the average Victorian in 1860 – a building in what even the Prime Minister recognized as 'the ordinary Italian' style.

Dr Frank Salmon

Frank Salmon is Senior Lecturer in History of Art at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. He taught at the University of Manchester from 1989 to 2002, initially under the guidance of John Archer. One legacy of that time is the book he is currently working on about Italianate architecture in Victorian Britain.

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



County Courts, Encombe Place, Salford (c.1865).

Renaissance' in 'The Stones of Venice'. It should be recalled that Ruskin did not despise this type of architecture, reserving his famous comment on the 'foul torrent of the Renaissance' for what we would recognize as the later developments of Mannerism and the Baroque. None the less, both Mannerist and Baroque buildings in Italy did come to serve as models for Victorian architects, as did the richly sculptured 'High Renaissance' work of Sansovino in Venice (which the Victorians rather confusingly tended to call 'Palladian'). As Richard Jenkyns has observed, when we consider William Gingell's fabulous West of England and South Wales District Bank, begun on Bristol's Corn Street in 1854, the year after the third volume of *The Stones of Venice* appeared, 'it is as though [Ruskin] had never written'.

architects – although Robert J. Johnson's Hodgkin, Barnett, Pease and Spence Bank on Collingwood Street in Newcastle shows that the palazzo genre was still alive and healthy into the 1890s. Nevertheless, there is a case for re-conceptualizing Italianate architecture – not as the conservative choice of a Liberal Prime Minister foisted onto an unwilling nation, but as a new approach to the classical tradition originating in the early 1830s that, by the end of the 1850s, had become more or less ubiquitous and was deemed symbolically appropriate for the burgeoning Victorian nation. We see this most clearly in the architecture of banking, effectively a new industry in the nineteenth century with the advent of Joint Stock and Savings Banks, but with roots stretching back to Medicean Florence and maritime Venice. It is

NEWS

The Victorian Society Waterhouse Lecture

At a meeting earlier this year, the Manchester Group Committee unanimously endorsed a proposal to institute an annual special lecture which will, thanks to the support of the Society's National Trustees, be called *The Victorian Society Waterhouse Lecture*. The purpose of the lecture is to attract eminent scholars and researchers to present their latest thoughts on any aspect of our areas of interest. Whilst our pre-eminent interests are architecture, engineering, design and the decorative arts those areas may also range through social history, science and medicine. Because of the fashion for referencing all historical periods by the dates of

royal sovereigns and the fact that changes in taste, styles and fashions don't always synchronize precisely with those dates, these lectures may sometimes deal with periods slightly outside 1837 – 1914.

Alfred Waterhouse is the architect associated with Manchester who has acquired the most significant national reputation. He moved his practice to London whilst still in his mid-thirties. However, as John Archer pointed out in his *Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester*, his two early buildings in the city, both demolished, were seminal influences on other architects and buildings. The Chorlton-on-Medlock warehouse for Binyon and Fryer was an archetype for Ruskinian Venetian Gothic and in the Assize Courts, Strangeways can be seen the genesis of his design for Manchester Town Hall, built a decade later.



Alfred Waterhouse by Ralph Winwood Robinson 1889 © National Portrait Gallery, London

We trust that our loyal and enthusiastic Manchester group endorses the concept and name of *The Victorian Society Waterhouse Lecture* and will support the initiative. Your committee will be very happy to receive suggestions for future topics, speakers and venues regarding this significant development for the Manchester Group.

David Harwood
Chair: Manchester Group of the Victorian Society

1897-1903 SALFORD NORTHERN CEMETERY, AGECROFT

Among the Victorian Society's list of the most endangered buildings of 2012 was included the former Church of England Mortuary Chapel at Salford Northern Cemetery. Although listed Grade II the building has been unused since the 1970s and, with no obvious alternative use, faces an uncertain future. The background to the creation of this, the last of Salford's municipal cemeteries, provides a fascinating insight into the workings of municipal authorities at the end of the Victorian era

By the mid-1890s Salford's first municipal cemetery at Weaste was filling rapidly, with almost 200,000 interments. Simple mathematics indicated that within twenty years additional burial provision would prove necessary. Thus in 1897 Salford Corporation purchased a 45 acre site including the farm buildings of Agecroft Grange from Robert Dautesey of the nearby Agecroft Hall ⁽¹⁾, the last surviving member of the ancient family.

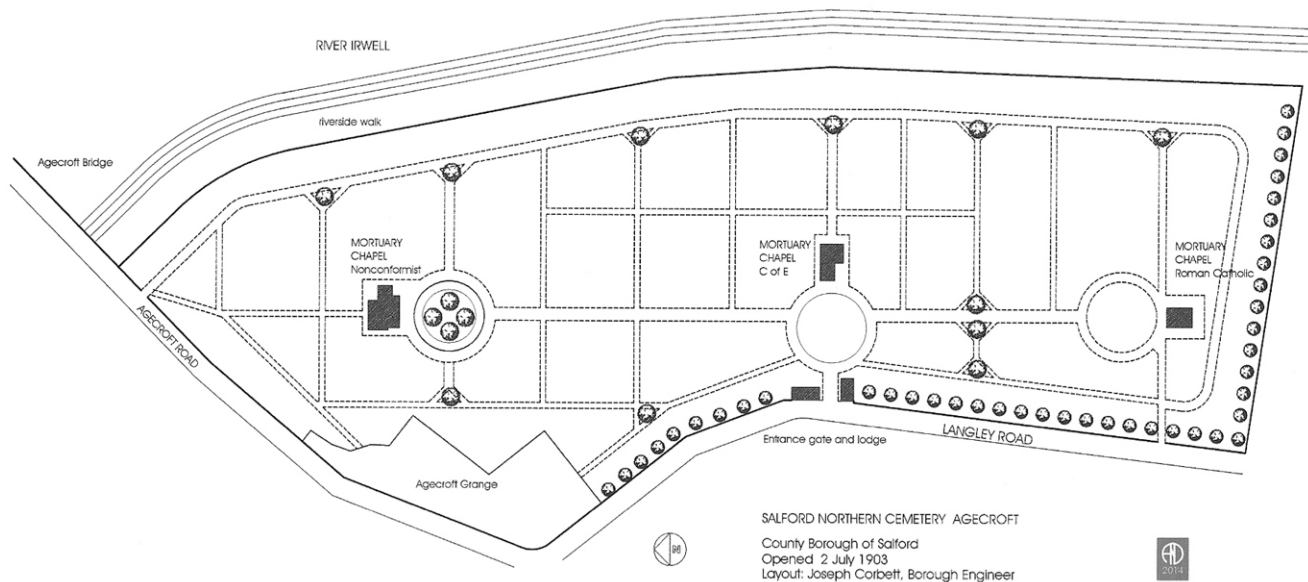
Situated on the west bank of the River Irwell close to Agecroft Bridge, the site of the proposed cemetery was one well-known to Salford's borough engineer, Joseph Corbett, who had been a member of the nearby Agecroft Rowing Club since 1864. Born in 1842, Joseph Corbett was the son of the architect Edward Corbett, and was formerly a member of the firm of Corbett and Roby, later E. Corbett and Sons. Works designed by the practice included Barton Arcade and Hayward's Building in Deansgate, Manchester. Five years a member of the Salford Corporation, Joseph Corbett resigned and was appointed Borough Engineer of Salford in 1892. Corbett saw the Agecroft site not merely as a burial ground but one that offered several additional advantages to further both his professional and personal ambitions.

The site was outside the municipal boundary, in the adjacent borough of Pendlebury. By its purchase Salford had not only resolved the difficulty of providing a suitable site within its own municipal boundaries, but,

"de facto," extended its boundary northwards. Later purchases of the Drinkwater estate in Prestwich for an isolation hospital and land to the north of Agecroft for Salford's second electricity generating station further increased its land holding outside its formal boundaries. For Corbett this had the additional advantage of giving the municipal authority control of the river bank, allowing appropriate flood control measures and denying the opportunity for further factory building (with associated pollution) along the banks of this stretch of the river, an area still at the time essentially rural. Corbett had personal dreams of restoring the river to its condition in the 1840s and at the same time creating a water park through Salford.

Joseph Corbett prepared plans for the Cemetery in 1899, and in the same year a competition was held for the design of the chapels, lodge and office buildings, a competition won by local architects Walter Sharp and Fred Foster. The cemetery layout was a simple grid-iron pattern with the three chapels positioned on a central north-south axis, the Anglican Chapel in the centre, opposite the entrance gates, the Non-conformist Chapel to the north and the now demolished Roman Catholic Chapel to the south. The creation of a crematorium was also considered but the idea was rejected. Only in 1957 was the non-conformist chapel converted into a crematorium. The design also provided a strip of land ten yards wide between the boundary wall of the cemetery and the river to allow works on the river bank and the creation of a riverside walk.

Notwithstanding his architectural background, this was one of Corbett's few opportunities as a designer. For the most part, his schemes were more prosaic, including flood prevention measures on the River Irwell in Lower Broughton, and plans for complete installation of electric tramways in place of horse car system. For eight years Corbett conducted extensive experiments in sewage purification, resulting in a scheme for completing the Salford Sewage Works, including aerated filters, etc. One last piece of this jig-saw remained – the disposal of the solid waste – giving rise to



Corbett's most unusual commission, the design of the 600-ton twin screw steamship, "County Borough of Salford," destined to spend its life transporting the sludge from the sewage works at Mode Wheel along the Manchester Ship Canal and River Mersey to the dumping grounds in Liverpool Bay. This somewhat crude method of disposal was also adopted by Manchester Corporation at their Davyhulme sewage works on the opposite bank of the Ship Canal and only ceased when a pipeline was opened in 1988. In 1999 EU directives finally prohibited dumping the waste at sea.

The cemetery was officially opened on 2 July 1903 to mixed reviews. The Manchester Guardian, intent, it would seem, on perpetuating the myth of the grim industrial North, described the district as one which at one time was of considerable natural beauty but was now surrounded by tall chimneys and manufacturing works, whilst the Mayor of Salford claimed that no area in the neighbourhood could excel that of the Northern Cemetery for suitability and picturesque surroundings. Of course there was industry in the valley, particularly to the south of the cemetery, with coal mining which would eventually extend to the gates of Agecroft Hall, to the west. However, there was still extensive farm land to the north and east, the nearby valley sides well-wooded. ⁽²⁾

Much of the heavy industry in the district has now disappeared. Agecroft colliery, the last deep pit in the

Lancashire coalfield, closed and the site has been cleared, as has Agecroft power station and the Thermalite concrete block works, built on the site of Agecroft Hall. Water quality of the Irwell continues to improve and plans have been drawn up for the Red Rose Forest, a park stretching from central Manchester to the West Pennine Moors. A century after his death, Corbett's dreams are perhaps now closer to fruition.

Regrettably the same cannot be said of the redundant and decaying Mortuary Chapel building in the Cemetery.

Notes:

1 *Agecroft Hall: a mediaeval half-timbered hall set round a courtyard, the ancient home of the Langley and Dautesey families. By the 1930s the hall had had enough of the encroaching mining industry and emigrated to the United States in boxes. Here it was rebuilt on the banks of the James River at Richmond, Virginia, where it remains.*

2 See also Joseph Corbett: "The River Irwell," published in 1907, which contains a number of contemporary photographs of the upper reaches of the river in the vicinity of Agecroft Cemetery (with not a factory chimney in sight).

Neil Darlington

April 2014

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.

AGECROFT HALL: FROM ELIZABETHAN MANOR TO VICTORIAN COUNTRY HOUSE: PART ONE

"A house that has crossed the ocean is presumably an object of some reverence. If we may picture Agecroft Hallin ample meadows with bright sunshine, and with its rafters echoing again to the sounds of a home, the rebirth will have had its compensation."

The Manchester Guardian 1926

Evoking an image of Elizabethan splendour, Agecroft Hall, originally located in Lancashire, England, has been a Virginia landmark since it was disassembled and brought to Richmond by American banker Thomas C. Williams Jr. in the 1920s. Williams had the house rebuilt on a grassy hill overlooking the James River just west of the city. And so, 400 years after its original construction, Agecroft Hall began a new life in the New World. Ironically though, the house had already experienced another, earlier rebirth in England during the mid-nineteenth century.

Starting in the 1850s, Agecroft's owners went to great effort and expense to restore the hall's Elizabethan look and character. Reflecting the contemporary fascination with the "Old English" style, they added newer, grander Tudor-style architectural features and trans-

formed the venerable dwelling into a Tudor-style showplace. Agecroft Hall became more “Elizabethan” with each passing year. During the nineteenth century, no-one had any qualms about taking an authentic Tudor manor house and touching it up a bit to make it look even more “authentic.” Surviving period drawings and photographs captured this evolution. Photos from the 1880s show the interiors lavishly adorned with deeply carved oak furniture, exotic palms, porcelain, and armour, suggesting the accumulation of centuries. The architectural press started to take notice. Agecroft was featured three times in *Country Life* magazine as well as in the book, *In English Homes*. Agecroft provides a fascinating case study of the Tudor, or Elizabethan, Revival of the nineteenth century as well as the English Aesthetic movement, which dominated interior design during the 1870s and 1880s.

Agecroft's Early History

Agecroft was located about four miles northwest of Manchester in Salford Hundred near the River Irwell. Between 1199 and 1925, the



Agecroft, Richmond, Virginia in 2013: photograph courtesy Chris Novelli

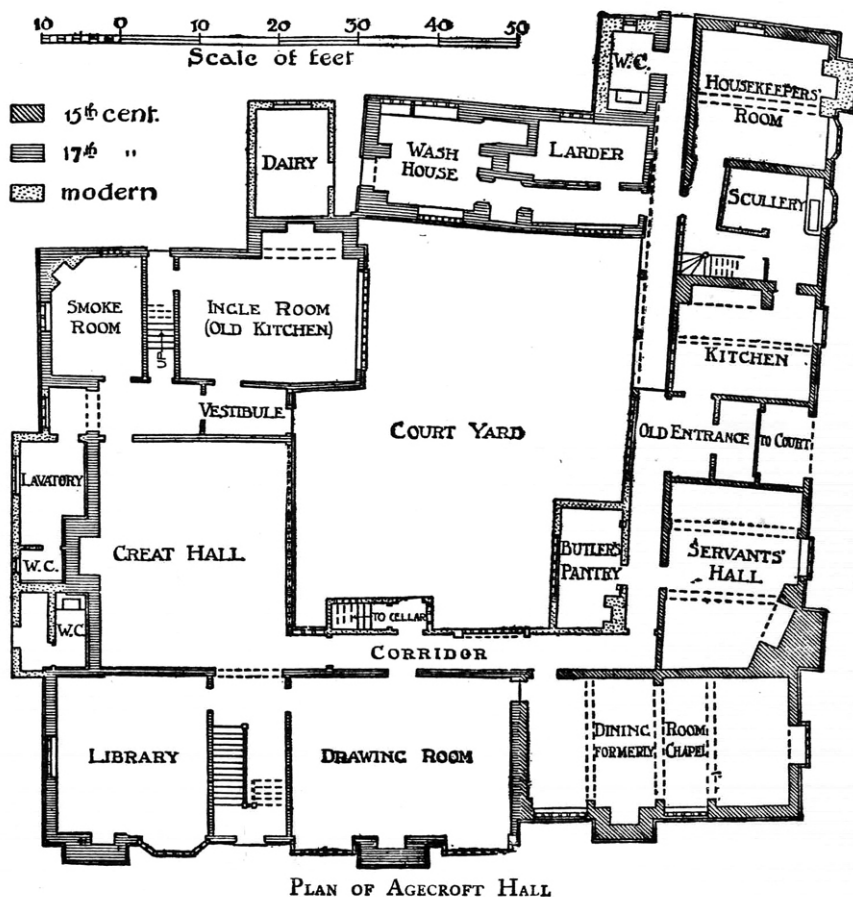
Agecroft estate was owned by five families: the Prestwiches, the Langleys, the Dauteseys, the Hulls, and the Bucks. The earliest part of the original house, before its removal, was the east range, or wing, believed to date from around 1500. Whether this replaced or incorporated elements of an earlier structure is unknown. In 1527, Robert Langley III (1506-1561) inherited Agecroft from his grandfather. King

Henry VIII granted lands to him in 1545, and in 1547 King Edward VI made him a knight. The fortunes of the Langley family reached their zenith during Robert's lifetime. During this period, the house appears to have comprised what later became the east range, including a hall and a domestic chapel. This earliest part of the house was built using traditional timber-frame construction, with wattle and daub between the timbers.

The Elizabethan Era

When Sir Robert Langley died in 1561, his estates were divided among his four daughters. Without a male heir, his death meant the end of the Langley line at Agecroft after nearly 200 years. Robert's daughter, Anne (1536-1618), received Agecroft Hall. She married William Dautesey (c1542-1622) of London and Wiltshire around 1570. Agecroft then passed into the Dautesey family. William Dautesey, a first son, was a man of wealth and property and a member of the rising gentry class. His family's wealth was derived from the wool trade.

Even though William Dautesey inherited properties in London, Wiltshire, and Essex, he made Agecroft his family seat. After his marriage, he added three wings onto the original range, giving the house a fashionable quadrangular plan with a courtyard. William built a new great hall and kitchen across from the original house and connected them with a new family wing on the south



side and new servants' wing along the north side. William Dautesey's newly enlarged residence was an excellent example of a traditional Tudor courtyard house. With its decorative half-timbering, diamond-pane casement windows, and chimneys, it reflected the latest architectural fashions and improvements in building technology. Whereas the east range had been built using wattle and daub, William Dautesey's new work featured brick infill between the timbers.

As visitors passed through Agecroft's arched entranceway, their gaze was directed across the courtyard to the hall entrance opposite and the new hall range with its impressive display of glass windows and ornately patterned gables. This was the primary facade and the most decorated part of the house. During the Elizabethan period, decorative half-timbering reached its highpoint in the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, and it essentially became a vernacular art form, featuring intricate patterns of stars, crosses, and quatre-foils.

After crossing the courtyard, visitors entered the house proper, passing through the screens passage to the great hall. Whereas medieval great halls had high, open-beam ceilings, William Dautesey's new great hall was one storey, as was the current fashion, and featured a fourteen-foot plaster ceiling adorned with a grid of oak beams. Great halls were still a status symbol in Elizabethan England and the traditional setting for feasts and great occasions, but were no longer used for everyday dining by the family.

From this point, Agecroft passed through successive generations of the Dautesey family. Although alterations were made over the years, none of these were great, and the house retained its basic quadrangular form. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, the family began to experience the financial troubles that would plague them into the nineteenth century. Following the English Civil War, financial problems appear to have been endemic among the Lancashire gentry.

The Nineteenth Century

The earliest existing image of Agecroft is an engraving thought to be from the early nineteenth century. It shows the south and east ranges as they looked before their Victorian refurbishment. The image shows that at some point (probably in the eighteenth century) the exterior of the house was covered with plaster stucco. This treatment would have reflected Georgian tastes and also protected the timber framing from the elements. The casement windows on the east range were small and asymmetrically arranged.



Agecroft Hall in c1865-75 courtesy of the Director of Agecroft Hall, Richmond Virginia.

The last direct Dautesey heir was Reverend John Dautesey, who had inherited Agecroft in 1748 and who died unmarried in 1813. At this point, Agecroft passed to a distant branch of the family, the Hull family of Chorley, the nearby Lancashire town. Since so many members of the Hull family died either unmarried or childless during the nineteenth century, the house was bounced around between brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, and second cousins. Two individuals appear to have been responsible for most of the nineteenth-century work at Agecroft, barrister John Buck and his second cousin, Captain Robert Hull-Brown. John Buck received a quarter share of the Agecroft estate in 1841 and was the full owner between 1862 and 1868. Captain Robert Hull-Brown owned it from 1878 until his death in 1904.

After Reverend John Dautesey's death in 1813, Agecroft passed to

John Hull, a surgeon and distant cousin, who died later the same year. John Hull, in turn, left Agecroft jointly to his two sisters—Margaret, who was John Buck's mother, and her sister, Elizabeth, John's spinster aunt. Upon inheriting Agecroft, John's parents moved there and assumed responsibility. John was a year old at the time. He had an older brother, Robert, and two sisters, Catherine and Margaret. John's father, Reverend Richard Buck of Fletton (1761-1845), held three separate church livings—one in London and two in Huntingdonshire.

The years of Margaret and Richard Buck's ownership during the early nineteenth century were a time of dramatic transformation for the entire Manchester region. The area around Manchester, in particular, underwent the drastic changes associated with the worst of the industrial revolution and went from bucolic pasture and arable fields to coal pits and factory smoke which could blot out the sun at noon. By the middle of the 19th century, Manchester was at the height of industrialization.

In 1826, the Reverend Richard Buck sold leases for coal mines at Agecroft to Andrew Knowles, and large-scale coal mining began on the estate. This brought an infusion of much-needed capital to the manor. Margaret Buck died in 1830, and in June 1834 her sister, Miss Elizabeth Hull (1779-1862), moved to Agecroft. In May 1841, at the age of eighty, Richard Buck conveyed his half share of the estate to his sons

John and Robert, who then became joint owners with their aunt, Elizabeth Hull. In the 1841 census, Robert and John were both recorded as living at Agecroft with their aunt and three servants. In 1843, for some unknown reason, John Buck sold his quarter share of Agecroft to his aunt for £9,000. His brother, Robert, conveyed half of his quarter share to Elizabeth, as well, leaving him with an eighth share in Agecroft. Elizabeth now owned seven-eighths of the Agecroft estate. Reverend Richard Buck died in 1845 at the age of eighty-four.

By the early 1850s, the family had started renovating Agecroft Hall in the fashionable "Old English" style, as it was then known. The second oldest image of Agecroft that survives is a drawing in John Booker's 1852 book *Memorials of the Church of Prestwich*. This rendering shows the east range seemingly frozen in mid-metamorphosis. A number of cosmetic alterations intended to restore the original Elizabethan character of the house are evident. Most noticeable is the removal of most of the plaster stucco to reveal the underlying timber framing. Large casement windows have been installed across the facade and the smaller windows eliminated, giving the east range a more uniform appearance. An oriel window appeared for the first time above the arched entranceway, and the chimney was redesigned. It does not seem likely that either Reverend Richard Buck or Elizabeth Hull would have been responsible for these changes; Richard was in his eighties when he died in 1845, and Elizabeth would have been seventy-three in 1852. John Buck, on the other hand, was a barrister in London during the 1850s and 1860s and would seem a more likely candidate. He would have been forty in 1852. There is the question, though, of why he would be paying for alterations to a house of which he no longer owned any share . . . unless he thought he might be inheriting it later. It is also possible that the idea for restoring Agecroft may have originally come from Elizabeth and then have been implemented by her nephew, John.



Agecroft Hall Courtyard: courtesy of the Director of Agecroft Hall, Richmond, Virginia.

Of course, remodellings of country houses had been going on since the Middle Ages. During the Victorian period, however, remodellings were more frequent and on a larger scale. This was not so much because needs and tastes were changing rapidly, but that money was coming in faster. The Industrial Revolution generated a tremendous amount of wealth, which affected all levels of society. Older landed families often found their incomes increased as coal was found under their fields or towns spread over their property. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Agecroft estate was being heavily mined for coal. A circa 1850 map shows three separate collieries in the immediate vicinity of the house.

That Agecroft was being renovated in the Elizabethan half-timbered style in 1852 demonstrates that its owners were very much aware of current architectural fashions. In fact, Elizabethan manor houses in Lancashire had begun to be renovated as early as the 1820s. Manchester's first Gothic Revival buildings were erected in the 1850s, and a revival of half-timbered architecture began in nearby Cheshire that same decade.

Elizabeth Hull died in 1862 at the age of eighty-three. In a gesture of fierce family pride, she stipulated in her thirteen-page will that all heirs must take the name and arms of

Dautesey by Act of Parliament or Licence from the Crown in order to "prevent the extinction of the name." This stipulation required that heirs not merely add the name Dautesey to their own surname, but that they use it "alone instead of his or her usual surname." Elizabeth bequeathed her seven-eighth shares of Agecroft, first, to her nephew, Robert Buck, then, in case that failed, to his brother, John, and then to their sister, Catherine, and if she had no issue, to Elizabeth's other nephew, Reverend Robert Pennyman Hull-Brown, and finally in case that failed, to his eldest son, Robert Hull-Brown. Over the next sixteen years, this proved to be the order of succession at Agecroft. Unfortunately, Elizabeth's nephew, Robert Buck, died unmarried only three weeks after she did. The estate was then settled on Robert's brother, John, who became the sole owner of Agecroft. John Buck became the first in a series of owners of the Hall to assume, by royal permission, the name of Dautesey in 1867. Soon after inheriting Agecroft, he undertook extensive repairs and alterations to the house, most of this work taking place between 1865 and 1867.

The architectural evolution of Agecroft during the nineteenth century is difficult to trace because it is not known exactly when specific alterations were made. One of the more significant changes was the

reorientation of the main entrance from the east range around to the south range. By this time, the south and west ranges comprised the formal rooms and family living quarters; the north and east ranges were utilitarian servant spaces. There had always been a door on the south range, but now it became the main entrance, providing direct access to the great hall, library, and drawing room. Other changes included the addition of a butler's pantry in a corner of the courtyard, a dairy on the north range, and a housekeeper's room at the end of the east range. Interior changes included the conversion of the great hall into a billiards room. The kitchen and buttery were remodelled into sitting and smoking rooms, respectively. Lavatories were also added.

The oldest known photograph of Agecroft, believed to have been taken between 1865 and 1875, shows the east range basically as it looked in the 1920s just before its removal. The remaining stucco had been eliminated and the two chimneys completely remodelled. The large pond visible in the foreground of the photo, though a very picturesque feature, was formed by the sinking of the ground due to coal mines below. Barrister John Buck Dautesey died at Agecroft in 1868, unmarried at the age of fifty-six. In his will, he left Agecroft to his sister, Catherine (1808-1878), the one remaining sibling. Catherine was living there at the time of the 1871 census with four servants. She married, but died childless in 1878 at the age of seventy.

Agecroft then passed to Catherine's second cousin, Captain Robert Hull-Brown, (1839-1904) who also took the surname Dautesey. In 1882, he married Miss Alice Mary Schomberg. It was during their ownership that Agecroft reached the fullest flowering of its nineteenth-century rebirth. Photos taken in 1886 of the house and grounds provide a wonderful glimpse of Agecroft as a late Victorian country house.

The architectural press began to take note. As early as 1884, Agecroft was featured in Henry Taylor's Old

Halls in Lancashire and Cheshire, published in Manchester. After the turn of the century, Agecroft was discovered by Country Life Magazine and was featured in October 1902 and again in April 1903. The coverage in Country Life made Agecroft an object of national attention. The write-ups in both issues noted that few timber houses like Agecroft were so well preserved, and praised the current owner for maintaining its ancient character. In 1904, Agecroft was included in Charles Latham's In English Homes, a large folio volume published by Country Life with monographs and fine photographs of English houses. Agecroft was featured in Country Life one last time in May 1929.

Christopher V. Novelli.....Feb 2014

A native of Richmond, Virginia, Chris Novelli has worked as an architectural historian with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and has been a weekend tour guide at Agecroft Hall since 1997. He graduated from the University of Virginia in 1996 with a master's degree in architectural history. Chris Novelli has lectured on architectural topics at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and has given architectural walking tours of the city. Chris visited the U.K. and Manchester for the first time in 2010.

Part two of this article will appear in the next Manchester Group Newsletter.

The full length article complete with footnotes is available by emailing beryl.patten@virgin.net

MANCHESTER GROUP - EVENT REVIEWS

Downton Abbey in Salford: the Archaeology of Worsley New Hall 21 November 2013 YHA

Many the times I have driven amongst the thousands of vehicles that daily thunder along the M60 as it bisects the attractive village of Worsley without realising what fascinating archaeological remains lay in the wooded slopes to the west of the crowded motorway: Worsley New Hall. Dr. Mike Nevell's excellent

and informative talk brought us up to date with the most recent discoveries in the context of the site's redevelopment as a flagship hotel and golf course for Peel Holdings.

Worsley New Hall was built between 1840 and 1845 as a brand new country estate for the first Earl of Ellesmere, Francis Egerton, whose family had made their fortune during the Industrial Revolution from the coal mines and canals on the Bridgewater lands centred on Worsley. The Hall was on a new site and replaced Worsley Old Hall which was deemed too modest. It was a rare opportunity to showcase the talents of an architect, in this case the renowned Edward Blore. (He would later complete Nash's designs for Buckingham Palace.) Worsley New Hall was built between 1840 and 1845, with ten years to establish the gardens and lake which were designed by William Nesfield. The Hall was used as a home for seventy years with time out as a military hospital during World War 1 and was then under military occupation during World War 2 until falling into disrepair before being demolished above ground by contractors in the late 1940s. An Anti-Aircraft Operations Bunker was constructed in the grounds in the 1950s.

Today various aspects of the estate survive: the Head Gardener's Cottage with its pretty octagonal tower, a stable block, a walled garden with a heated wall and a boiler house and chimney. No expense for this extravagant estate had been spared and there still remains the ultimate status symbol for the 1840s of the Ice House, with a frontage also designed by Blore. The boating lake supplied the ice when it froze in winter, and the lake itself had an ornamental island crowned with a folly.

The archaeological challenge was to excavate the foundations of Worsley New Hall and uncover the hidden elements of the formal gardens: the paths and parterres. As said, the Hall had only been demolished above ground, so the foundations were intact but backfilled. A Community Dig in May 2012 was organised. Once JCBs had scooped out the

said backfill "Salford's Pompeii", as Dr Nevell described it, could be excavated and revealed, and 3D laser scanning would extrapolate and then recreate images of the house

It was a vast and complex mansion, over 100m long with 3-5 storeys and basements. On the hillside site, in Gothic style, it boasted turrets, tall chimneys and a flag-tower which elevated it prominently above the surrounding countryside. There were many unexpected discoveries: a second lower storey of cellars, the ashlar cladding of the main front wall, vents and vertical flues for the central heating, fire grates and even taps and evidence of piped water running from a lake three miles away using downhill pressure – no hydraulics required! Also unearthed was the 1908 Otis lift. The Hall was one of the first places in Salford to have electric power, firstly from the installation of its own water-driven turbines as it was not connected to mains power until the 1920s. The final phase of excavation revealed an undercroft and a huge arched support wall that braced the hall to prevent it slipping down the hillside, especially after the front terracing had been constructed.

So, what then is the significance of Worsley New Hall? Other hall sites in the region have been excavated since 2006, for example Timperley Old Hall and Royton Hall, but none match either the sheer scale of Worsley or contain the same 1840s-style cutting edge technology. In addition, Nesfield, the gardener/designer, was a leading proponent of his craft and his detailed plans still exist. The Hall also warranted a royal visit in 1851 by Victoria and Albert as it was considered a new building of some note.

Many thanks to Dr Nevell for such a fascinating talk. There is more detailed reporting on his findings at 'usir.salford.ac.uk' and extensive photographs on 'Images for Worsley New Hall'. In conclusion Dr Nevell then considered the way forward: there is work to be done both uncovering the paths and middle and lower terraces and continuing the exploration of the estate's woodlands. Thus a fantastic site that

had been lost has been rediscovered and documented, and many of these features will be preserved and incorporated into the grounds of the new hotel complex which will arise and perpetuate the use of this estate.

Anne Hodgson

Dec 2013

**Christmas Excursion to Liverpool:
An Xmas lunch and talk at the
Florence Institute, Toxteth. 14
December 2013**

A prompt start from Store Street meant arriving at Toxteth Town Hall Community Resource Centre, originally the Township of Toxteth Park Public Offices, exactly on time. These two titles give a hint of the historical and current uses of the building. Josh Terry gave a brief but very informative talk on the many uses of the building from its opening in 1865, including Registry Office for Births (Ringo Starr in 1940) & Deaths, Medical Dispensary, Morgue, Services for the Destitute, Department of Health & Social Security & Unemployment, before it

local people.

Next door is another remnant of Toxteth's past, the High Park Street covered reservoir built in 1845 to provide safe drinking water to a growing population crowded into insanitary living conditions plagued by cholera. Up to 2 million gallons of water from the reservoirs at Anglezarke and Rivington could be stored in this vast brick-lined, cast iron-pillared cistern. Liverpool subsequently developed its main supply from Wales but the reservoir only became redundant in 1996, to be bought by the Dingle 2000 Development Trust. This project has had less success than the Town Hall next door becoming mired in financial difficulties. The Trust are still optimistic that a use will be found. The next stop, just a few paces along the road, was the unscheduled bonus. John Southworth welcomed us to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church & Presbytery, a well proportioned and little altered church designed



The Florence Institute for Boys, Toxteth in its prime.

fell into disuse in 1994. Henry Price, who was Manchester's first City Architect from 1902 to 1934, was based here early in his career. Today the building has wi-fi, a computer suite, a range of advice services and very successful starter units for small businesses. It is a genuine community resource belonging to the

by J. O'Byrne, a pupil of J.A & C.F Hansom and completed in 1878. The splendid Stations of the Cross painted by May Greville Cooksey in 1928 are part of the Grade II listing. Cooksey was not an exceptional artist but the series of paintings is lively and packed with small detail in the manner of the Pre-Raphaelites.

A short walk brought us to the location of the main event, the Florence Institute, a success story - a building brought back into use after meticulous conservation and reconstruction which, judging by the numbers of small dancers and parents swarming round us as we arrived, has found a central place in its community. Florence was the daughter of Sir Bernard Hall (1812-1890), a West Indies merchant, Alderman and former Mayor of Liverpool (1879/80.) When she died tragically at the age of 22 her father built a boys club as a memorial to her, "in the hope that it might prove an acceptable place of recreation and instruction for the poor and working boys of this district of the city".

The building closed in 1988 but remained intact and secure until an arson attack in 1999 halted early regeneration efforts. Dingle Community Regeneration Trust in partnership with Merseyside Building Preservation Trust, Liverpool City Council and architects Purcell began to explore the feasibility of restoring the building for community use in 2000. The Florence Institute Trust was formed in 2005 to develop and manage the project and the official opening by the Prince of Wales was in April 2012. A testament to the dedication and hard work of many local people.

Our visit began with a tour of the building, followed by an excellent lunch provided by the in-house caterers in the Great Hall and an informative talk by Rob Chambers of Purcell Architects. Rob explained the role and philosophy of Purcell as main architects and their involvement in not only the construction and conservation, but also multiple funding and planning applications. Photos of the derelict building emphasised the huge achievement in converting the facility for modern use, particularly remarkable as much of the existing structure was preserved or restored. New inserts are clearly modern and give the building more flexibility.

We departed through another swirl of small dancers for the coach journey back to Manchester. Another

meticulously organised and very enjoyable Victorian Society outing over.

Paula Moorhouse

Jan 2014

The Victorian Postal System and Anthony Trollope, Julian Stray 19 February 2014 FMH

Julian Stray's talk deserved its audience of 64, ten of whom were members of the Trollope Society. We were treated to a mixture of facts, figures and anecdotes illustrating the revolution in postal services in the Victorian era and Anthony Trollope's role in them.

Started by the Romans for carrying messages of state, British postal services became public in 1635, but were expensive and confined to a limited number of routes, all from London. Rowland Hill introduced postal reform in 1840, with postage paid by the sender instead of the recipient, at the famous one-penny rate. Mail was posted in receiving houses, shops commissioned to collect it. The few post offices were housed in rented buildings. The first purpose-built post office was Sir Robert Smirke's General Post Office of 1829 (demolished in 1912), but the widespread building of post offices did not start until the introduction of crown offices in 1865. The once-familiar generic style of architecture only appeared in the late nineteenth century. Along with the burgeoning of post offices there was a massive growth in the number of employees, almost all male, who filled a wide variety of posts. The work was hard; country postmen worked a seven-day week until the 1890s. It was nevertheless popular and posts often passed from father to son; we heard an example of a 142-year succession within a family in London.

The coming of the railways had a large influence on carriage of mail, which had been contracted to firms using enormous numbers of horses on carts and mail coaches. (The horses were treated like employees in being given sick leave.) The Post Office was an early customer of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway but disputes soon arose because it was more profitable for the railways to carry mail privately. The Postmaster General was given

wide powers in an 1838 Act of Parliament, but the remuneration of the companies remained a matter of negotiation. There were similar disputes when Parcel Post started in 1883, over which the Post Office was not granted a monopoly. The Post Office started to use motor vehicles in 1897; again services were contracted out.

Anthony Trollope (born in 1815) started work with the Post Office in 1834 as a copyist. He evidently disliked the work, but seemed to find it more congenial when he was appointed as a surveyor's clerk in Ireland in 1841. Surveyors – a post dating from the seventeenth century – were responsible for all the postal arrangements in their district. Trollope took the opportunity to travel (on horseback) as much as possible, as his expenses were paid. His workload increased with the 1840 reforms, which surveyors were responsible for implementing. In 1851 Trollope was sent as surveyor to the Channel Islands, where he took steps to increase the service's efficiency. He proposed the introduction of pillar boxes, already in use in Belgium and France. This took place in 1852, first in St Helier and then in Guernsey, before being extended to the mainland the following year. The early boxes had a variety of shapes and makers and a few still survive.

Trollope later became involved in the development of international mail, especially important in Britain. He negotiated a treaty with Egypt in 1858, and in the same year he led a delegation to Malta. He later led missions to the West Indies, India, China and Japan (writing novels during the sea passages) before settling in East Anglia. His relations with senior management were not always good; he had feuds with Rowland Hill, and pleas for a pay rise to John Tilley, the Post Office Secretary and also his brother-in-law, fell on deaf ears. Trollope left the Post Office (without a pension) in 1867, but the following year went to Washington to complete a treaty on its behalf. He died in 1882 of a stroke.

Roger Barton

March 2014

Lancashire to L.A : the Legacy of John Parkinson, Bolton Architect, Jamie Ryan-Ainslie 25 March 2014 YHA

This was a joint event with Manchester Modernists held during the Manchester Histories Festival. Our speaker, Jamie Ryan-Ainslie, is the great-great-great nephew of John Parkinson, whose work spans the Victorian to modern eras. Parkinson's life was full of fresh starts; he had ambition, confidence in his abilities and a strong work ethic. From humble beginnings in Lancashire he became the architect of many of the buildings that shape our image of Los Angeles.

He was born in Scorton, Lancashire in 1861 and moved to Bolton at the age of nine. He left school at fourteen but his artistic talent led to pupillage with John Bradshaw, of the Bolton practice that would become Bradshaw Gass and Hope. He studied construction at Bolton Mechanics Institute but never architecture, working as a joiner.

In March 1883 he decided to emigrate to North America, living in Halifax NS, Winnipeg and Minneapolis where he worked as a foreman in sawmills. On his return to England the next year, with the experience he had gained, he expected to find work easily. However this was not to be and after seeing a photograph of San Francisco in Bolton Art Gallery in 1885 he decided to return to America. He had no contacts and again found work in a sawmill and, despite his lack of architectural training, designed his own house in Napa, California. Then, hearing of opportunities, he moved to Seattle where he designed his first commercial buildings, taking full advantage of the need for new buildings after the fire of June 1889. In an era when competitions were popular, he won several and in 1892 was offered the job of school board architect. He went on to design over thirty schools.

He left Seattle for the then small town of Los Angeles in 1894 where he remained for the rest of his life. Here his 1897 Laughlin Building was the

first Class A steel-framed building and is still in use. He then designed the then tallest building in Los Angeles, the Angelo Hotel, followed by the city's first skyscraper, the Braly Block (1902). Parkinson was not a stylistic innovator or committed to a particular style. His buildings range from Art Deco, Romanesque, Spanish colonial, streamline moderne, prairie style and neo-classical to arts and crafts. He was very knowledgeable about structural issues and hired the best draughtsmen. The landmark buildings by Parkinson include the Coliseum (1921), the Wilshire (1928), City Hall (1928), the Wholesale market (1918) and Union Station (1935) along with many other offices, houses and hotels.

Apart from his interest in architecture, he was obsessed with elevator design and filed nearly a hundred patents. He completed his autobiography shortly before he died in 1935 and his son, also trained as an architect, took over the practice. Jamie's presentation included, appropriately, videos showing the use of Parkinson's buildings in films and movies and the successful restoration and conversion of the Art Deco Bullock Wilshire department store into a law college. About fifty of Parkinson's buildings remain and he is now receiving the interest he deserves: Jamie's MA thesis, a book *Iconic Vision: John Parkinson, Architect of Los Angeles* by Stephen Gee and the recent naming of a Parkinson Square in his adopted home of Los Angeles.

<https://digital.lib.washington.edu/architect/architects/108/>

David French May 2014

Victorian Gentlemen's Clubs in Manchester and Liverpool, Alexandra Mitchell 30 April 2014. YHA

As part of her Social and Economic History PhD thesis, Alexandra had looked at these clubs in Manchester & Liverpool, each town having up to a dozen examples. Whilst attracting members from the surrounding areas, these clubs were typically based in the town centre

and offered facilities for reading, dining, billiards and smoking. They clearly offered business and social networking opportunities for the local worthies. Their constitutions, rules, architecture and interior design owed much to the great pre-existing London clubs.

Manchester's Union Club was opened in 1825, originally in a house in Norfolk Street, and then moving in 1856 to a Richard Lane designed purpose built property in Mosley Street, possibly part financed by Brooks the Manchester banker. The club's membership rose to 400 and it had 11 bedrooms for the convenience of its out-of-town members. The style of the building, untypically for Richard Lane, was Italian palazzo and we may speculate whether it influenced the still extant Edward Walters palazzo on Mosley Street a few years later.

The 1869 Manchester's Brasenose Club, described as an Arts and Social Club, never had purpose built premises and probably for that reason had a more basic decor than other clubs. From time to time it held Art Exhibitions and its members included eminent architects such as Waterhouse, Worthington, Darbyshire and Salomon. Its members had a sense of humour and many menus were written with satirical overtones, probably influenced by the fashionable Savoy Operas of the period. For the dinner held in 1894 to celebrate the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal, the fish course was called Follow Your Leader - Leader Williams was a member.

Regarding the two Liverpool clubs mentioned, only the rule book survives of the 1835 Palatine Club on Bold Street. However, it did acquire in 1854 an Italian palazzo style building by Parnell (who had co-designed London's Army and navy Club) causing Picton to compare Liverpool's Bold Street with London's Pall Mall in terms of grandeur. We are fortunate to have better records of the 1883 French Renaissance style Liverpool Conservative Club in Dale Street designed by F. & G. Holme. The building (now used by

the City Council) was photographed in the 1880s by Bedford Lemere showing leather upholstered furniture under elaborate electric chandeliers, plaster ceilings & cornices with walls decorated in Lincrusta paper.

In this late Victorian period, the port of Liverpool handled twice the goods tonnage of London and Manchester was moving to the zenith of its Cottonopolis phase, finished cotton goods being England's largest export. Within that context, these clubs in both cities fulfilled a very important social and business function.

David Astbury

May 2014

2014 AGM CONSERVATION REPORT

Ken Moth, Chairman of the Northern Buildings Committee (NBC), gave the Greater Manchester Casework Report for 2013

The Northern Buildings Committee deals with listed building application consultations covering the North of England and including Manchester. The Manchester Historic Buildings Panel advises the City Council on listed building and conservation area issues in the city, and Mark Watson represents the Society on this panel.

I will describe some Manchester cases dealt with by the NBC over the last year and then Mark will comment on a few more cases dealt with by the Historic Buildings Panel.

Upper Brook Street, former Welsh Baptist Chapel Grade II*, 1837-9, Charles Barry & AWN Pugin

After years of neglect, the roof of the former Welsh Baptist Chapel on Upper Brook Street was removed in 2006, since when its condition rapidly deteriorated. It was included on the Society's 2010 Top Ten Endangered Buildings List. We were consulted on a scheme to convert the building to student residential use, and to erect a single-storey building to house additional units, the whole amounting to 93 rooms. The reuse and external restoration of this important and much dilapidated building was welcomed in principle.



Former Welsh Baptist Chapel, Upper Brook Street, Manchester, 1837-9: architects, Charles Barry and AWN Pugin

Despite this, we felt that there was much scope for improving the proposal. The architectural expression and form of elements of new design, such as the extensions, were poor and would be detrimental to the appearance and setting of the listed building.

The approach of making the new interventions deliberately legible as such was crude. Given the almost total loss of the interiors, the aim should be to provide as faithful a restoration of the exterior of the chapel as possible. The single-storey block to the south was also poor. Not only would it harm the setting of the listed building, but it would occupy about half the graveyard which is historically significant and enhances the setting of the building. All of these points were covered in our response.

Sherborne Street West, Overbridge and Springfield Mills Grade II, 1845

In 2004 the Society was notified of an application for the residential conversion of this 1845 former mill complex. The conversion never materialised, and in April 2011 firefighters were called out to extinguish a blaze in the mill which left it badly damaged. The present owner applied to demolish the building in order to facilitate a new mixed-used development. We strongly objected to the mill's demolition on the basis of the meagre documentation submitted. Mark Watson supplied the information that

the building has been demolished and the site is cleared.

Stamford House, Stamford New Road, Altrincham, Grade II, 1904-5, Charles Heathcote

Back in 2010 the Society was consulted on – and objected to – refurbishment plans for Stamford House, an impressive commercial block by one of Manchester's most important late nineteenth and early twentieth-century architects. It has stood empty for some twenty or more years and is suffering from extensive dry and wet rot. The latest proposal sought the total refurbishment of the building with new shop fronts to the ground floor and apartments on the upper floors. The Committee welcomed the refurbishment of this hugely impressive building. The application was a great improvement on the previous proposals. Our response encouraged the retention of as much of the internal partitioning as possible and the installation of authentic shop fronts.

Stockport, Heaviley, St George Grade I, Paley, Austin & Paley, 1892-97

Whilst this case covered a minor issue it included an important point of principle. At its August meeting, the NBC considered proposals to make permanent the creation of a meeting space in the north aisle of this church, and a children's area in the south aisle, involving the disposal of some pews. Though we were not

opposed to the scheme in principle, we objected to the manner in which the areas had been furnished, in a domestic style with bright carpets, brightly coloured upholstery and IKEA-style furniture; we also expressed our disappointment about the poor quality of the application materials. The DAC considered our comments. It accepted the need for detailed Statements of Need and Significance, which the PCC has since provided. Noting our concerns about the furnishings, it averred that the parish intended to replace these after their temporary arrangements had been authorised by faculty, and as funds became available. However, the DAC repudiated our right to object to the furnishings in the first place: the DAC considered the unfixed and entirely ephemeral nature of soft furnishings and children's furniture to be of extremely low significance to the interior of the building. It further felt that such considerations were outside the scope of statutory consultation, particularly when on such a small scale as the two areas concerned.

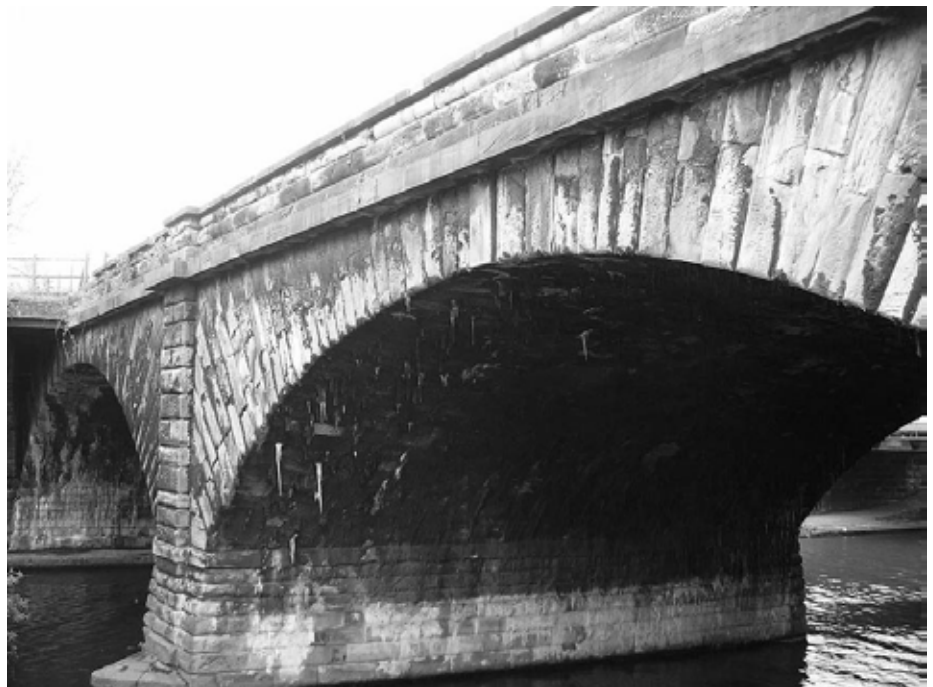
We rejected the DAC's reasoning here. We do not believe that the removal of the pews, in which we have a legitimate interest, can be considered separately from the result of removing the pews on which we must be consulted. It may be true that, unconnected from any other proposal, the introduction of soft furnishings into a church is none of our business, but here the introduction of soft furnishings is a direct consequence of something that is our business. Furthermore, the selection of soft furnishings which are not in character with existing furnishings goes against the Church of England's own guidelines.

The Ordsall Chord Project

This major regional infrastructure project affects a number of listed and unlisted structures, most notably George Stephenson's Grade I listed Irwell railway bridge, the setting of the Grade I listed 1830 Liverpool Road Station buildings, the severance of the line connecting the station to the rail network and the adjacent 1848 Grade II listed Manchester, South Junction and

Altrincham Railway viaduct with its series of cast iron bridges. During the year we were given two lengthy presentations by Network Rail together with a site inspection. Whilst accepting the need for these major infrastructure improvements our response began by stating how harmful the proposals were. Implementation of the scheme would cause substantial harm and it was therefore essential that sufficient mitigation was provided. There were a number of details on which we commented. We regretted the loss of the rail connection to the station, although this is rarely used. Widening of the 1848 viaduct was acceptable in principle but the quality of detailing was vital. In addition, the 1848 cast iron bridge over Water Street was proposed to be largely demolished, with only a small portion remaining in situ stranded between re-laid railway lines. This is one of several iron bridges along the viaduct.

advocated a thorough and accurate restoration of Stephenson's bridge, in which the quality of the masonry repair was paramount. Public access to and visibility of the Stephenson bridge was also recommended. The caisson pier at mid-span of the girder bridge is a sturdy and impressive structure and should remain in place. It was clear from discussions that a number of options were still being investigated for the adjoining zig-zag viaduct in terms of how much of its fabric could be retained. We were firmly of the view that as little as possible should be lost. The CGIs submitted in the public consultation documents suggested the electrification gantries crowning the viaducts were crude. For such a project as this, a carefully-designed, bespoke solution to the gantries – as with other aspects of the scheme – was required. Finally, we commented that all other heritage assets to remain should be carefully conserved and repaired.



Stephenson's Irwell Railway Bridge, Manchester (Grade I) 1830,

We requested that this bridge be disassembled in its entirety and reused elsewhere. The proposed line of the new bridge crossing the Irwell would entail the demolition of at least half of the adjacent un-used girder bridge. However, the removal of the entire girder bridge would reveal the elevation of Stephenson's bridge – a far more significant structure, and we recommended this. We

A great many of our comments were accepted by Network Rail and incorporated into the design. English Heritage has lodged an objection to the proposal, preferring another option which moves the chord about 100 metres to the south west. We did not prefer this option, which would cost many millions of pounds more. Significantly, the proposed option now involves taking

important heritage assets such as Stephenson's Bridge and the adjoining land which are currently owned by a developer into public ownership and carrying out full restoration, landscaping and public access as we requested. In English Heritage's preferred option these would remain in private ownership and remain unrestored. We felt that the consultation process had been helpful and productive and on balance are pleased with the benefits which the scheme will deliver.

Later in the year we were consulted on options to increase platform capacity at Piccadilly Station. We expressed a preference for one of three options which were tabled and objected to the other two.

Ken Moth 25 January 2014

Mark Watson gave an additional report highlighting the current state of some of the local buildings which have featured on the Victorian Society's Top Ten Endangered Buildings lists in past years.

- The Masonic Church, St Edmunds Falinge, Rochdale by Medland Taylor is now being looked after by the Churches Conservation Trust.
- Agecroft Cemetery Chapel, Sharpe and Foster. Salford Council have repaired the fence and removed most of the ivy and trees but, despite a decade of negotiations with the Heritage Trust for the North West, seem to be taking the line that the building should be a managed ruin.
- Crumpsall Library, Henry Price. The Buildings at Risk officer tells us that he has been in consultation with the owner and is hopeful for the future but in the meantime it is deteriorating rapidly.
- St Ignatius, Salford, Alfred Darbyshire, Amber Sanchez has persuaded English Heritage to list this as Grade II.
- Conservative Club Accrington. There has been no action or reaction to exposure so far.
- St John, Crawshawbooth, Austin and Paley. Theft of lead has resulted in catastrophic and extensive water damage.
- Oldham Town Hall development is

proceeding satisfactorily.

• Not on the Top Ten list but topical is London Road Fire Station, Woodhouse, Willoughby and Langham, Planning permission has been renewed for a further three years for a scheme approved by the Northern Committee.

Mark Watson also reported on the Ancoats Dispensary and the work of the Save Ancoats Dispensary Group and the campaign to secure a new use for the building.

MANCHESTER GROUP 2014-2015 Events

SATURDAY 21 JUNE 2014

An excursion by train to Lancaster; a walking tour of Palatine Lancaster

with Stephen Gardner and Mark Watson

WEDNESDAY 16 JULY 2014

An excursion by train to Leeds: Marks & Spencer, Penny Bazaars and the Manchester connection.

Led by James Etherington and Mark Watson.

Cost: £12 including donations and excluding travel costs and lunch.

Booking form can be found on page 19 of this newsletter.

SATURDAY 30 AUGUST 2014

An Examination of Victorian and Edwardian Manchester
with Mark Watson.

Meet at St. Ann's Church at 10.15 am. Cost £10 including donations but not refreshments. Pay on the day. Finish 5 pm.

We shall meander through the city centre discussing the buildings and streets along with their histories, allowing time for lunch and, no doubt, visiting a teashop or two. Be prepared for Manchester's weather and wear suitable footwear.

Please 'phone or text Mark Watson

on 07831 267 642 or email sawp1849@me.com by August 28th 2014 to book on this event.

The excursion by train to Hull has been postponed due to engineering works which have affected journey times. We hope to run this event in 2015

TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 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. 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 Karlake & 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 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 Redesigned: 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

TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2014

An illustrated talk
The Comic Image in the Market Place 1820-1850
with Brian Maidment Professor
Liverpool John Moores University

Most art historians write off the period in the history of illustration between the ending of the British caricature tradition and the rise of black and white book and magazine illustration as a cultural wasteland filled only with what David Kunzle has called meaningless 'graphic bric-a-brac'. On closer examination the comic art of the late Regency and early Victorian period proves to be extraordinarily vivid, experimental and driven by a rapidly expanding market for graphic images that drew in new consumers from a broad range of social backgrounds. This highly illustrated talk charts some of the key continuities, developments and innovations that characterised graphic comedy in this period and seeks to celebrate the restless inventiveness that characterised the market place for illustrated books, magazines, play-texts and song books at this time.

Brian Maidment is Professor of the History of Print at Liverpool John Moores University. He also holds Visiting posts at the Lewis Walpole Library of Yale University and at the Centre for Textual and Print History at the University of Ghent. He has written widely about nineteenth century print culture, especially writing by labouring-class authors, mass-circulation periodicals, and illustration. His most recent books are *Dusty Bob - A Cultural History of Dustmen* (Manchester University press 2007) and *Comedy, Caricature and the Social Order* (Manchester University Press 2013)

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

TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2014

An illustrated talk
The Arts and Crafts Movement in Yorkshire
with Barrie and Wendy Armstrong.
Independent researchers

Barrie and Wendy Armstrong will talk about The Arts and Crafts Movement in Yorkshire, the final volume in

their acclaimed trilogy of gazetteers dealing with the Arts and Crafts Movement in the North of England.

They will give a general overview of what they have found relating to the development of the Movement in Yorkshire, leavened with more detailed discussion of some of their own favourite places, artefacts, artists, craftsmen and patrons



St Cuthbert, York; detail of the St Cuthbert window by Edward Woore, 1935 : courtesy Barrie Armstrong

Amongst many other examples they will discuss the influence of Sir Hugh Cholmely Fairfax on the Arts and Crafts village of Brandsby and the work of the Home Arts and Industries Classes held by Beatrice Carpenter at Bolton on Swale. Their talk will also highlight some loose ends needing further research, such as the little known North Riding Arts and Crafts Exhibition Association and the mysterious Harrogate stained-glass artist Violet Mary Barnewall.

The talk, like all three of their books will be lavishly illustrated.

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 13 DECEMBER 2014

Date for your diary

Christmas excursion to Birkenhead. The annual Xmas lunch, walk and a talk

Further details will follow in due course

SATURDAY 31 JANUARY 2015

Annual General Meeting followed by an illustrated talk

Building their own platform: Victorian bandstands and the harmony of mass production

with Kathy Clarke, Victorian Society caseworker for the south of England and North and East London.

Bandstands were the pride of almost every urban park in the late nineteenth century, and a focus of social life and musical endeavour for the very communities whose lives were bound up with the production of such mass-produced pieces, which were often bought off-the-peg. This talk will illustrate their varied, often florid designs, and show how far from being quaint park ornaments these structures once were and, happily, how they are being revived.

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 18

POTATO WHARF YHA

Our usual venue for talks in 2014-2015 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 (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 Metrolink 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.

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.

Please note - the major road works on Water Street are due to continue well into next year.

By car - the YHA car park is still accessible from the south via Liverpool Road and from the north via Quay Street and Lower Byrom Street.

By public transport - the number 33 bus route has been changed and currently no longer in serves the YHA.

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 early 2015 as will the next Events Card (February to September 2015)

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 31 January 2015

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. Questionnaire July 2014
9. Election of Officers and Committee.
10. AOB

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

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 - Leeds M & S Archives

WEDNESDAY 16 JULY 2014

An excursion by train to Leeds:

Marks & Spencer, Penny Bazaars and the Manchester connection.

Led by James Etherington and Mark Watson.

Buy your tickets in good time to catch the 09.41 to Leeds from Manchester Piccadilly Rail Station. If joining in Leeds, meet at the station ticket barrier at 10.40. Cost, including refreshments at the Archive, excluding train and bus travel, £12. Bring a packed lunch. Wear strong shoes. We expect to be back in Manchester by 6pm.

CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKINGS: WEDNESDAY 14 JULY 2014

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.....

Enclose your completed form, a stamped self-addressed envelope (if no email given) and a cheque for **£12** per person made payable to: *The Victorian Society* to: **Mark Watson, 18 Thomas Telford Basin, Manchester M1 2NH. Tel 07831 267642 Email sawpit1849@me.com**

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 Group of the Victorian Society: Questionnaire July 2014

We would be grateful if you could take the time to let us have your views which will help with future planning.

- 1 How long have you been a member of the Manchester Group?
- 2 Do you attend any Victorian Society Manchester Group or National events?
(If you don't attend events please give reason)
- 3 Where from and how do you travel to Manchester Group events at the YHA?
- 4 Outline your main interest in the Victorian & Edwardian Period:
(eg Architecture/Engineering/Decorative Arts/Textiles/Social History)
- 5 Do you consider that our Group event charges, in addition to the Victorian Society subscription, offer value for money?
- 6 Are you willing to write material for our Group Newsletter?
- 7 Do you miss the serving of refreshments at most of our meetings?
- 8 How often do you visit the Victorian Society's website?
- 9 What could you do to promote our events to other interested people you know?
- 10 Do you have any suggestions regarding the Manchester Group's Golden Jubilee to be celebrated in 2016?

Please complete and return to:
David Astbury
Manchester Group Deputy Chair
8 Masefield Avenue
Prestwich
Manchester
M25 9QW

or bring to a meeting - thank you