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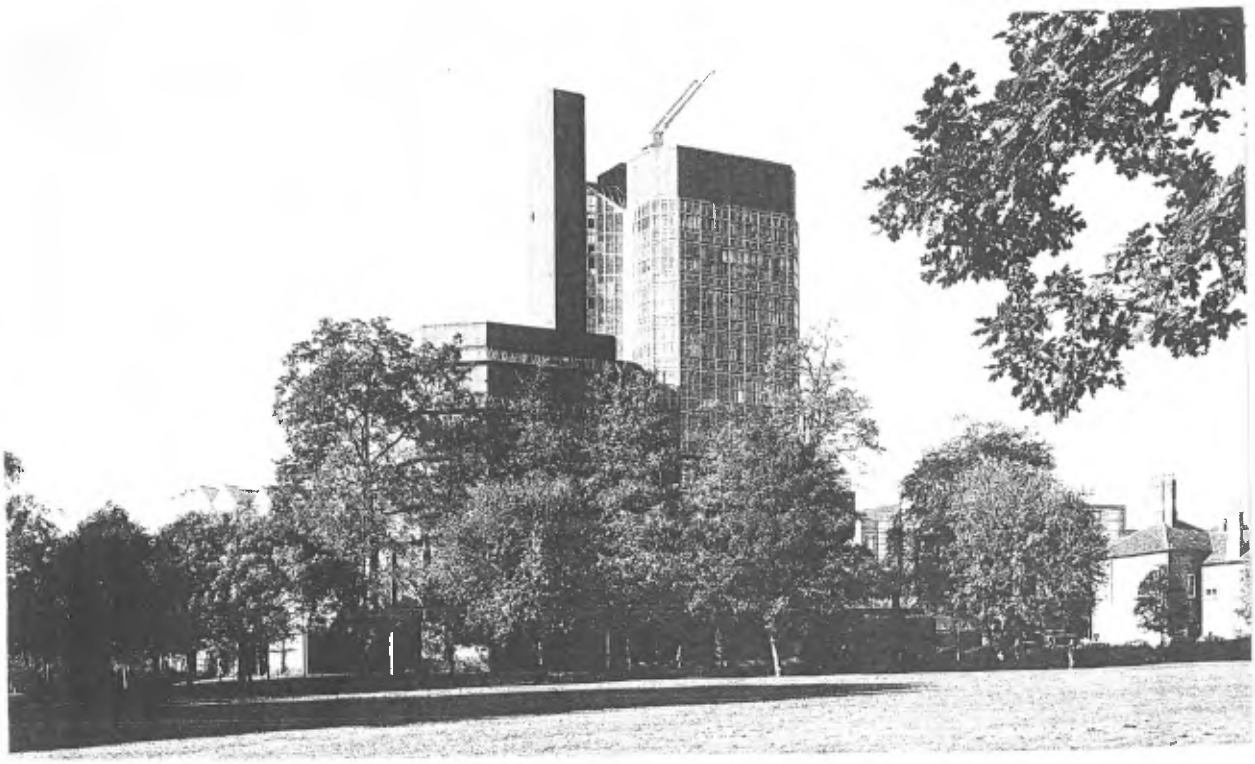

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Cover Illustration:

The Engineering Building, University of Leicester (Stirling & Gowan, 1959-63): the view from the university park. One of the Red Trilogy, the Engineering Building is the earliest of the three buildings considered in the review article, pages 9-20.

Editorial:
British Brick Society Matters

When about eighteen months ago, initial considerations were given to the make-up of this issue of *British Brick Society Information,* the intention was to use *BBS Information,* **121,** August 2012, for articles on 'Brick in Churches'. Unfortunately, a problem has arisen over illustrations accompanying the longest of the issue's projected articles, 'Holy Trinity Church, East Hyde, Luton: An Early Essay in Brick by Benjamin Ferrey'. As this may take some time to resolve, it therefore seemed prudent to instigate a delay in publishing the planned contents until these have been resolved.

In place of the anticipated number with a focus on 'Brick in Churches', this issue of *BBS Information* contains those items which had already been gathered for use in the first issue of *British Brick Society Information* due to be sent to members in the early part of 2013, adding an account of the society's Spring Meeting in Oxford, originally written with inculsion in a 'Brick in Churches' issue in mind.

It is anticipated that the missing illustrations will become available in late 2012 or early 2013 and that the intended contents on the 'Brick in Churches' will form the second of the issues of *British Brick Society Information* to appear in 2013. Both the author of the article with the missing illustrations and the editor of *BBS Information* apologise for these delays to other authors who expected their papers to appear in August 2012.

Apart from the successful visit to North Oxford on Saturday 21 April 2012, reported on pages 21-27, in the past three months the British Brick Society has held its Annual General Meeting on Saturday 9 June 2012 in Faversham and more recently a Summer Meeting in South Westminster on Saturday 18 August 2012. It is intended to include extended accounts of the buildings seen in both these meetings in future issues of *British Brick Society Information.*

The society's thanks are due to its long-standing member Arthur Perceval for his excellent organisation of the meeting in Faversham. Due to a medical condition, Dr Perceval was unable to conduct the tour of brick buildings in Faversham which he had arranged. However, he provided both an extensive resume of the buildings to be viewed together with a map of their locations and for Ray Harrison, a local architect, to very ably conduct members round Faversham and its brick buildings. The society extends its most grateful thanks to Mr Harrison for showing us so many interesting buildings and to Dr Perceval for the arrangements made for the meeting and the afternoon tour.

There will be one further issue of *British Brick Society Information* in 2012, whose principal contents is an extended article on brickmaking and conditions in the brickfields of Victorian London and elsewhere as portrayed in the novels of Charles Dickens. It is anticipated that this will be issued to members towards the close of the year.

The editor continues to invite contributions for use in future issues of *British Brick Society Information.*

DAVID H. KENNETT
Editor, *British Brick Society Information,*
Shipston-on-Stour, 20 August 2012.

Potteries and Brickmaking: Gloucestershire Examples

Philip and Dorothy Brown

Some nineteenth-century brickyards produced pottery as well as bricks.[1] Conversely, some nineteenth-century potteries produced bricks. A study of Oxfordshire potters, for example, noted that the 'potters generally operated also as brickmakers ...'.[2] Potteries at Greet, Leckhampton and Taynton, in Gloucestershire, carried out potting and brickmaking under the same management and are discussed here. By contrast, potteries at Cranham and Whitecliff appear not to have made bricks.

GREET

In Greet, at the edge of the Cotswolds near Winchcombe, a pottery and a brickyard were operated by the Beckett family from at least the 1840s to the early twentieth century. Clayworking may have been in operation earlier: the late Martin Hammond suggested that the brickwork of a kiln surviving at the pottery could be of eighteenth-century date; and a worker at the pottery thought that the depth of the claypit might indicate digging from before the nineteenth century.[3] William Beckett was described as a 45-year-old brickmaker in the 1841 census of Greet, which also recorded one potter. When William died, his son Richard A. Beckett continued the business and then, after his death in 1913, his widowed mother kept it going briefly. In 1914, the brickyard was taken over by the Winchcombe Brick & Tile Company Ltd which appears to have weathered the impending war and was still listed in Kelly's *Directory* in 1939. The pottery, on the other hand, ceased functioning and lay idle until sold in 1926 to Michael Cardew who revived the slipware tradition within the new studio pottery movement.[4] It seems that the Greet Pottery and Brickyard ceased as a joint concern when there was no longer a member of the Beckett family anxious to keep it going.

Production at Greet was on a modest scale, only fourteen individuals involved in bricks and/or pottery being identified in censuses from 1841 to 1901. Half were described in the same or subsequent censuses as concerned with both pottery and brick production. In 1901 there were the Becketts, widowed mother and son, a 'carter at the pottery', one brickmaker, and one 'flower pot maker'. The latter was Elijah Comfort who later returned to the pottery to help Michael Cardew establish it as the Winchcombe Pottery.[5] All clayworkers identified in the Greet censuses were male, apart from the Beckett widow: but census returns often under-record clay workers, especially women.[6] There was, however, a report that a brickmaker named Simon Barton was responsible for digging the clay for making both bricks and earthenware, and that the clay was trodden by the bare feet of his 'several daughters'. Barton was aged 63 at the 1901 census, so these activities probably dated from the late nineteenth century. By 1910, Richardson and Webb describe a more sophisticated processing of the clay using horse power.[7]

An undated trade card for the Greet Pottery advertised garden, seakale, rhubarb, and chimney pots, as well as earthenware pottery and glazed ware: it also noted that Beckett always had an extensive stock of bricks and drain tiles on sale.[8] We have no equivalent advertisement of the bricks and tiles, and therefore must rely on census returns and directories as a guide to what was being produced. Both these sources have serious limitations and may provide apparently contradictory implications.

Census returns suggest a waning commitment to brickmaking during the nineteenth century and increasing emphasis on potting. The Becketts are shown as brick and tile makers in 1841 and 1851; but thereafter are listed as farmers and potters. The designation "potter" may

have been chosen as most distinctive and less commonplace than "brickmaker", a term applied more to both brickyard proprietors and employees. Also, Richardson and Webb in 1910 made no mention of brickmaking while giving a detailed account of potting at Greet where bread pans, washing pans, pitchers *etc.* were made and partially glazed before firing in an up-draught kiln, while flower pots were fired in a down-draught kiln.[9]

Quite contrary conclusions might be drawn from directories.[10] From 1856(PO) to 1879(K), the Becketts are described as makers of bricks and tiles and of earthenware; but from 1885(K) to 1906(K) only brick and tile making is listed, not pottery. Also, although Richard Beckett was listed as a potter in the 1871 census, for legal purposes in deeds dated 1873, he is described as '... of Greet Potteries ... Brick and Tile Manufacturer'.[11] The suggestion that brickmaking was in decline is also put in doubt by the report of Martin Hammond on the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire Railway, opened in 1906. It had a 693-yard long tunnel at Greet and he was told that the common bricks forming part of the lining were supplied by a brickyard at Greet equipped with one Hoffman and two beehive down-draught kilns.[12] Small country brickyards may well have varied production according to fluctuating local demand, and there was certainly a brisk demand for bricks when this line was built. The Battledown Brickyard in Cheltenham supplemented the capacity of its kilns with clamp-firing to meet that demand.[13]

LECKHAMPTON

In the late 1830s, Frederick Thackwell set himself up in Leckhampton, on the southern fringes of Cheltenham. In 1867 he advertised that, for the past 31 years, he had traded in Cheltenham as a 'Brick, Tile and Pipe Manufacturer, and Potter'.[14] An account of what was generally called the Cheltenham Potteries outlines how, in 1867, Thackwell took his son-in-law, John Thompson, into partnership; but when Thackwell died in 1876 the pottery passed to another son-in-law, Thomas Henry Hooper, who was also a cooper. Finally, around 1895, the business was run by Arthur E. Godwin until being bought by Cotswold Potteries Ltd. which ceased trading in 1912.[15]

Thackwell was described as a brickmaker in the 1851 census and in directories from 1842(PO) to 1852(S); but in the 1861 census and in directories from 1859(S) and 1862(S) he is described also as a potter. His advertisement in 1852 lists red ware and horticultural pottery as well as bricks, draining pipes and tiles, all available 'at his Pottery';[16] and the 1861 census shows him as a brickmaker and a potter. After taking over the business, Hooper is still listed in directories as a brick and tile maker from 1874(A) to 1894(A), but his 1878 advertisement is only for red ware and horticultural pottery;[17] and in the 1891 census he appears as a cooper and pottery manufacturer — but not as a brickmaker. In 1889(K) and 1894(K) he is described only as a flower and garden pot manufacturer.

Brickmaking, though apparently decreasing in importance, was still carried on in 1879, three years after Thackwell's death. Agents of the Walsingham Estate in Norfolk when assessing the suitability of the area for opening a brickyard,[18] reported that the yard started by Thackwell had produced 420,000 bricks in the previous year. They were all clamp-fired but reputedly of 'average quality' and sold easily. Sand had to carted 3 miles to the brickyard and the finished bricks had to pass through a toll-gate to reach Cheltenham. These factors may have contributed to a decrease in brickmaking, but competition was probably more important. This was from the nearby Battledown Brickyard which became the dominant maker and eventually the only considerable brickyard around Cheltenham.[19]

By the time that Arthur Godwin was running the business, the directories make no mention of brickmaking. In 1897(K) he was manufacturing simple and decorated garden wares as well as pottery for amateurs to decorate and 'Red Ware for table decoration'. By the start of the twentieth century, 1902-06(A) and 1906(K), as well as appearing as a potter, he is shown as

an encaustic tile and enamelled tile maker. Born in Hereford, he was probably related to the Godwins of Lugwardine, leading makers of inlaid tiles. In 1902, he insured his premises, now called 'The Tile Works'. They had no equipment specifically for brickmaking but contained a 'Dust House', a 'Dipping Room', and a 'Colour Room', all of which would fit with the production of dust-pressed tiles, inlaid and colours.[20]

When the pottery was taken over by Cotswolds Potteries there was again no mention of brickmaking. Richardson and Webb described their wares in 1910 as 'decidedly good'; and an account of a visit in 1912 by the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club described the production of a red ware using Lower Liassic clay, glazed with red lead. A green 'Chelt Ware' was also made from Cornish clay with a glaze containing copper oxide. 'Magnificent garden vases' and 'table knick-knacks' were also produced; but the staple product was the flower pot.[21]

TAYNTON

At Taynton, 9 miles westwards from Gloucester, a combined pottery and brickyard used clay from what was then termed Keuper Marl. Brickmakers were recorded there in the 1841 and subsequent censuses, one being shown as a farmer and brickmaker. Edwin Phillips, who was to preside over the combined pottery and brickyard, appeared in 1868(S) as a brick and tile maker and in 1870(K) both as a farmer at Coldcroft and as a maker of bricks, drain pipes, floor quarries, and pottery ware. The 1871 census shows Phillips as a farmer and brickmaker, but living in a cottage nearby was William Young, a potter born in Newport, Mon. In 1881, Phillips appears only as a farmer working a modest 33 acres at Coldcroft; but also shown in the census was William Watts, a 36-year-old potter, clearly identified previously at Whitecliff (discussed below). By 1891 the census shows the 73-year-old Edwin Phillips as a farmer and potter; but in the next dwelling, recorded as the Taynton Pottery, was James Watts also from Whitecliff. Finally, in 1897(K), Edwin Phillips is described as a brick and tile and earthenware maker at Taynton Steam Pottery Works, the general description of Taynton noting that bricks, drain pipes, and brown pottery ware 'are made here by Mr Edwin Phillips'.

In 1901 Coldcroft was occupied by Charles Phillips and his 20-year-old son, Horace William, both described only as farmers. Also in the census were recorded three brickworkers and a red ware pottery thrower born is Staffordshire. By 1914(K) Horace Phillips appears as a manufacturer of brick, tile, pipe, earthenware, flower pots, and pottery at the Steam Pottery Works, the general description of the village noting that pottery was made there, but bricks were no longer mentioned.

In 1908, Edwin Phillips had died and his property was put up for auction.[22] Coldcroft Farm had nine head of cattle and 30 of poultry, with two horses, twelve sheep, and thirteen pigs. There were nearly 7 acres of 'pasture orchard' and about twenty cider casks, more than half being full of cider. This part of Gloucestershire was noted for both cider and perry. The brick and pottery works had an 8-horsepower engine by Marshall, brick and pipe making machinery, two potter's benches with wheels, and a lead mill for preparing glazes. Stock in hand included plain tiles, pan tiles, various drain pipes, 'sundry jars, pans and covers', seakale and rhubarb pots, chimney and flower pots — but only one stack of coping bricks.

Richardson and Webb described the Taynton Pottery and Brickworks in 1910. Two layers of clay were dug, the top 6 feet of yellow colour derived from the weathered Keuper Marl was used for pottery to produce 'a very excellent article, burning a good red colour'. Below this layer was 'normal Red Marl' used for making pipes and wire-cut bricks which were fired in a small rectangular up-draught kiln of 'primitive type', producing a good brick but of 'not very good colour'. Pipes and pottery were burnt in 'the usual pottery kiln', firing being started with coal but completed with wood. The recent sinking of a well had shown that the layer of Red Marl was

a good 30 or 40 feet thick.[23] It seems that the Taynton works might still have been a going concern but, after the 1914-18 war, directories such as 1923(K) do not mention clayworking at Taynton.

WHITECLIFF AND CRANHAM

At these two potteries it seems that bricks were not produced during most of the nineteenth century. Whitecliff in the Forest of Dean was, at least from the 1840s, in the hands of the Watts family. John Watts is recorded as a potter in the 1841 census, the entry expanded in 1851 to show him as a locally-born manufacturer of earthenware, aged 60, employing twelve men and four boys; and thirteen 'pottery labourers' are shown as living in the immediate vicinity. By 1861, his son, also John Watts, had taken over as master potter employing sixteen men and boys. John's son, James Watts, was the last member of the family recorded there as a potter in the 1881 census; but he appeared later at Taynton. In directories, Whitecliff Pottery was listed from 1842(P) until 1879(K). Its wares were mentioned frequently, an advertisement in 1859(S) describing Red and Black Ware, Chimney, Garden, Rhubarb and Seakale Pots, Socket Pipes, Draining Pipes, Glazed Ridge and Angle Tiles, Garden Pots of Every Description, Tobacco Pipes, Marbles, Yellow Ware *etc.* — a comprehensive list down to pipes for smokers and cheap clay marbles for children to play with — but no bricks. Nor are bricks mentioned in any other list we have found. The cessation of potting here was presumably due to competition from industrially-made wares from Staffordshire, but John Watts had taken precautions. In 1879(K) he is shown as a potter and also as a wholesale and retail dealer in Staffordshire Wares; and in the 1881 census he is described only as a dealer in earthenware.

The Cranham Potteries were in the Cotswolds, near Painswick. Here from at least the eighteenth century until early in the twentieth, pottery was of major importance to the village. A published history makes no mention of any associated brickmaking;[24] and the census returns for 1841 to 1901 show at least 32 individuals associated with pottery, but no brickmakers.

POTTING AND BRICKMAKING

For much of the second half of the nineteenth century at Greet, Leckhampton and Taynton, combining brickmaking with potting was a workable proposition. A cursory inspection of county trade directories of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shows many businesses combining pottery making with brickmaking; and the first *Census of Production, 1907*, provides a statistically-based index of this diversification.[25] Firms in the 'China and Earthenware Trades' while producing 'Red Ware Pottery, Stoneware and Brown and Yellow Ware' to the value of £629,000 also produced 'Brick and Fireclay Goods' valued at £61,000. Probably, like Whitecliff and Cranham, some potteries produced no bricks at all.

At Greet, Leckhampton and Taynton production was on a relatively small scale and, by the early twentieth century, many country potteries and small brickyards were struggling to survive. The cessation of production at the various sites is summarised on Table 1.

The only brickmaking that continued after the outbreak of the 1914-18 war seems to have been that at Greet where there must have been favourable local resources and transport facilities to interest the Winchcombe Brick & Tile Co Ltd. At Taynton there was probably still a sufficient supply of clay but not other facilities to attract a commercial company. The cessation of pottery production followed a similar time scale, except at Greet where potting was revived as 'studio pottery', but only after an interval of more than a decade. Many of the staple products of the country potter had been replaced by cheap industrial products from non-local factories;[26] and the Cheltenham Pottery had diversified to produce 'knick-knacks' and decorated tiles. But it seems

TABLE 1
THE CESSATION OF PRODUCTION AT GLOUCESTERSHIRE POTTERIES AND BRICKYARDS

LOCATION (Proprietors)	BRICKMAKING	POTTING
GREET (the Becketts)	Ceased by Becketts in 1914 Carried on by Winchcombe Brick & Tile Co Ltd probably until 1939.	Ceased by Becketts about 1913. (Restarted as Winchcombe 'Studio' Pottery in 1926 and still active.)
LECKHAMPTON (Thackwell and others)	Ceased in late 19th century, probably because of local competition.	Passed to various owners and ceased in 1912.
TAYNTON (the Phillipses)	Ceased probably at outbreak of 1914-18 war.	Ceased probably at outbreak of 1914-18 war.
WHITECLIFF (the Watts)	(no evidence of any brickmaking)	Ceased 1880s.
CRANHAM (various)	(no evidence of any brickmaking)	Ceased early 20th century.

that frequently the longest sustained production was of flower pots.

The Becketts at Greet and the Phillipses at Taynton were frequently, and sometimes only, described as farmers, and it may be that they were simply proprietors of brickyards and potteries rather than knowledgeable and practical clayworkers. Thackwell at Leckhampton and the Watts family at Whitecliff were not listed under any second occupation other than clayworking and were probably true master craftsmen.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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7. Wheeler, 1998, p.21. L. Richardson and R.J. Webb, 'Brickearths, Pottery and Brickmaking in Gloucestershire', *Proc. Cheltenham Natural Science Soc.*, NS **1(4),** 1910, pp.223-282 and *ibid.*, NS **1(5),** p.273.

8. Gloucester Archives (GRO) at D6754/4. A similar trade card is reproduced in Wheeler, 1998.

9. Richardson and Webb, 1910, pp.273-274.

10. Directories are cited in the text by date and

the following letters in brackets: Gloucestershire County Directories - Kelly (K), Post Office, (PO), Slater's (S); Cheltenham Directories - Annuaire (A), Hunt's (H).

11. GRO, D7622 3/14.

12. M. Hammond, 'Brick on the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway', *BBS Information,* **96,** 2005, p.28. The 1884 edition of the 25-inch OS map of Greet does not suggest these kilns in the Beckett's brickyard, but they are shown on the 1923 edition during occupation by the Winchcombe Brick & Tile Co. So Martin Hammond's informant may have been describing the brickworks at a later date than when these bricks were made.

13. Richardson and Webb, 1910, pp.268-269.

14. Advert in *Cheltenham Examiner,* 30 January 1867, p.1, col.2.

15. E. Miller, *Potteries, Tiles and Brickmaking in Leckhampton,* Leckhampton: Leckhampton Local History Soc Research Bull., no **2,** 2001.

16 Advert of 1852 reproduced in Miller, 2001.

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18. Norfolk Record Office (NRO), 'Report of Henry Woods', at WLS/LX/60/3 430x1, and NRO WLS/LXVII/52 479x4. We are grateful to William Monaghan and the NRO for supplying copies of these documents.

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Review Article:
The March of Red Brick: Building English Universities in the 1960s

Alan Berman (editor), *Jim Stirling and the Red Trilogy: three radical buildings,*
160 pages, numerous unnumbered photographs and architectural drawings,
London: Francis Lincoln Limited, 2010.
ISBN 978-0-7112-3144-3, hardback; price £30-00, US$ 45-00.

Jim Stirling and the Red Trilogy sounds like the title of a 1960s spy novel not a measured assessment of three — for England at the time of their construction — quite revolutionary buildings and an examination of their reception and importance. The three red buildings — the Engineering Department of the University of Leicester (1959-63), the History Faculty of the University of Cambridge (1964-67), and the Florey Building at The Queen's College, Oxford (1965-79)[1] — were all designed in the early part of the career of James Stirling (1924-1992).[2]

The Leicester building was far more the work of James Gowan (b.1923), then Stirling's partner, than of Stirling himself; the two men parted company[3] fairly soon after the initial drawings were made for the Cambridge building. The red brick top of the Leicester building is what you see high above the hill as the train approaches Midland Road Station from either London or Birmingham. The tall red brick top hides a water tank designed to give sufficient head for hydraulics experiments. In contrast the Cambridge building sits amongst the leafy avenues of large houses on the western edge of the city whilst the Oxford one is largely hidden by somewhat non-descript buildings beside a busy roundabout, although one excludes the recent Waynflete Building of Magdalen College from this criticism.

The British Brick Society included the History Faculty Library in its visit to Cambridge in 1990 and the Florey Building towards the end of its Autumn Meeting in Oxford in 2004. It has yet to view the Leicester building; the society should go to Leicester, a city with many good brick buildings, and include the Engineering Department in its tour.

Another educational project by Stirling & Gowan of the same period, conceived in 1963 and completed in 1968, did not use brick, but like the unrealised project for additional study-bedrooms at Selwyn College, Cambridge, should be considered with the Red Trilogy. At the Andrew Melville Hall, student housing for the University of St Andrews,[4] Stirling apparently "saw a problem with the availability of bricks and brickwork labourers locally and decided on the use of pre-cast concrete units which make a big impact on the appearance of the building" (p.21 with illustration). The assertion about the availability of bricks seems very odd: despite the fact that the road bridge over the Firth of Tay at Dundee had yet to be constructed in the 1960s, the products of the brickworks at Errol, which the British Brick Society visited in 2005, were relatively accessible to the site at St Andrews.

What the three buildings considered in the book have in common is the generous use of red brick, often Accrington; red tile, usually of Dutch manufacture; and acres of glass. They pick up ideas put forward in two unrealised schemes for student housing in Cambridge: Stirling and Gowan's entry for the Churchill College competition and even more striking in its projected use of brick, that for additional student bedrooms at Selwyn College (p.9 with illustration),[5] on a site very near to the later History Faculty Library, for which brick was the intended walling material. With these two projects, the completed buildings share a number of design features. One such, twin red towers with chamfered corners for lifts and stairs — brick at Leicester, tile-cladding replaced by brick at Cambridge, and tile-clad at Oxford — owes much to Jim Stirling's exposure to ideas then prevalent in the U.S.A., specifically the work of Louis Kahn (1901-1974) in Philadelphia, particularly the Arthur Newton Richards Research Laboratories, designed in 1957

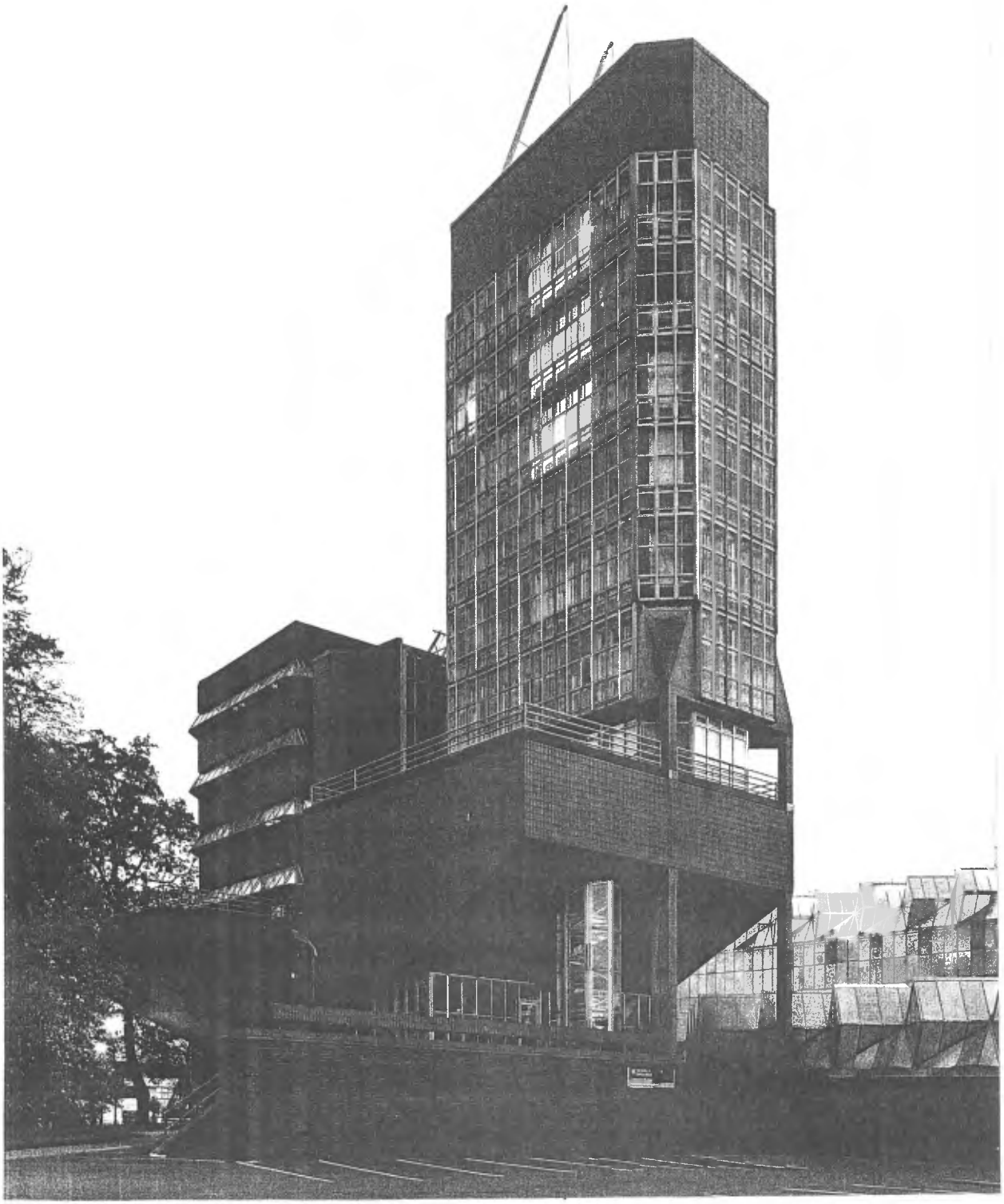

Fig.1 The Engineering Building, University of Leicester (Stirling & Gowan, 1959-63), general view showing the research tower with much red brick with the glass-roofed laboratories beyond.

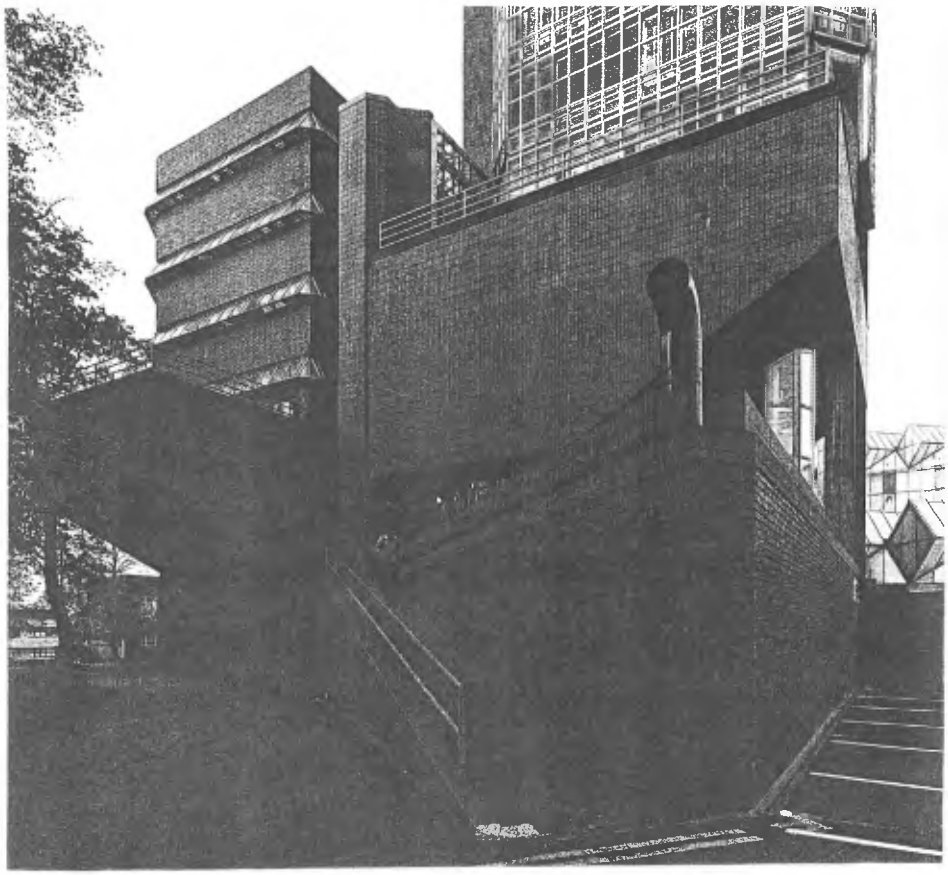

Fig.2 The Engineering Building, University of Leicester (Stirling & Gowan, 1959-63): entry, showing the cantilevered lecture theatres and the classroom block.

and built over the next eight years.[6] Another American influence was Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) and the buildings for the Johnson Wax Company in Racine, Wisconsin,[7] which combine high-quality brickwork and large areas of glass but in a way totally different to James Stirling's approach.

After a brief introduction by the editor (pp.6-11), the book is arranged in three parts. Part one, 'The Background' has essays by architectural historian Alan Powers on 'British Modern Architecture before Stirling and Gowan' (pp.14-17) and by architect Robert Maxwell on 'Stirling before Leicester' (pp.18-25) although the latter omits reference to Stirling & Gowan's assembly hall/dining hall with kitchens of Brunswick Park School, Camberwell Green, London Borough of Southwark, designed in 1961-62 and built using white brick and much glass.[8]

Part Two, 'The Red Trilogy' is the story of the creation of the three buildings: factual and to the point. The Engineering Department, University of Leicester, designed in 1959-60 by James Stirling and James Gowan, was completed in 1963; it is examined by the editor of the volume with architect John McKean (pp.28-41).[9] William Fawcett, architect and teacher of architecture at Cambridge, attempts an understanding of the new building provided for the university's History Faculty (pp.42-53). Finally, the editor, founding partner of Oxford-based architectural practice Berman Guedes Stratton, offers 'Understanding the Florey Building, Oxford' (pp.54-67) together with 'Building the Future: challenges and failures of post-war technology' (pp.68-73); the last includes substantial quotations from Michael Wilford, Stirling's first assistant, subsequently his partner in James Stirling & Partner and principal in Stirling & Wilford Architects, inheriting the practice after Stirling died in 1992, aged sixty-eight.

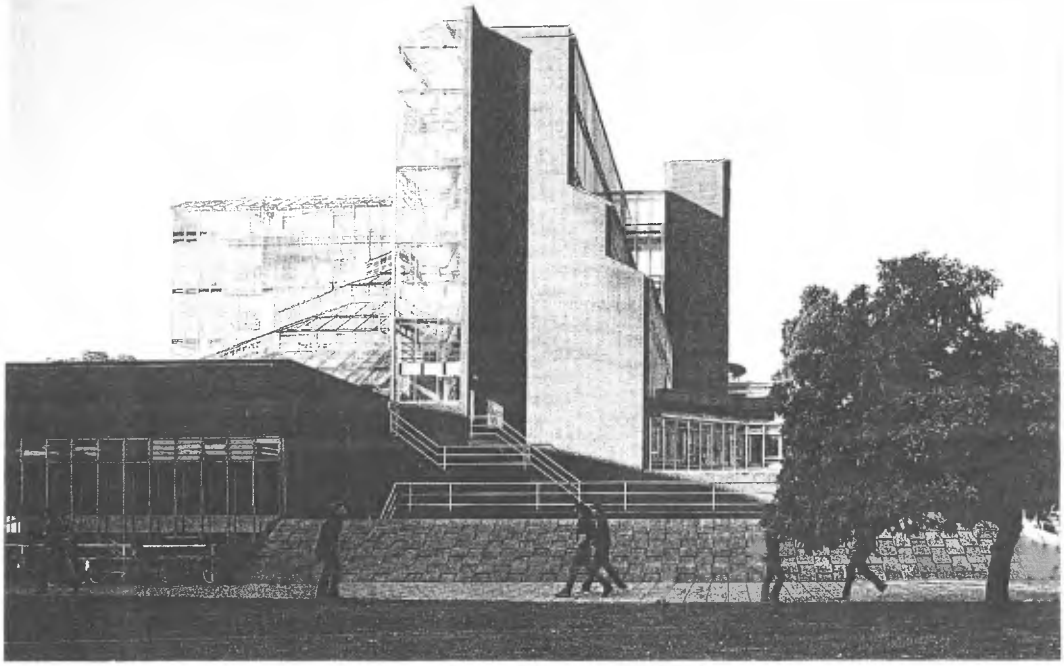

Fig. 3 The History Building, University of Cambridge (James Stirling, 1964-57): view showing brickwork of end wall of teaching and faculty offices block with the stepped roof of the library to the left.

What the three chapters on the individual buildings emphasise is the twin necessities of good client relationships and a building champion on the committee which has commissioned the work. At Leicester in the newly-appointed Professor of Engineering, Edward Parkes, provided immense support and a hands-off approach. At Leicester the chief actors were similar in age in 1959: Parkes, Gowan and the structural engineer, Frank Newby, were all aged 33 and Stirling was two years older (p.30). At Cambridge, Geoffrey Elton, three years older than Stirling, gave considerable impetus to a building which would prove difficult to construct: William Fawcett is particularly good on this and on the breakdown of relationships between Stirling and the university's estate manager, David Mills. Michael Wilford took over day-to-day client liaison. Elton was aided by Moses Finley, a professor a decade older than the architect. In Oxford, there were problems almost from the off: opposition to Stirling as the architect and funding problems were merely two. Then just as construction work began, unfortunately, the building's principal champion, Lord Florey, the Provost of The Queen's College from 1962 to 1968, died; at the same time, the college bursar, A.A. Williams, was, to say the least, obstructive and not interested in making a success of the project, to the point of deliberately being absent from crucial meetings. Alan Berman details the lack of trust and the penny-pinching approach to both construction and, crucially, maintenance, leading to building deterioration. There was also the question of Stirling's commitment. During the construction of all three buildings — the presentation drawings for the Leicester building were Gowan's — but particularly in the years he was concerned with the Florey Building (1965-70), the architect was frequently not available: he was far away, teaching at Yale, two decades before e-mail, video-conferencing, international direct dialling, and frequent jet flights from Logan and JFK to London Heathrow.

As the three case studies show, universities and their employees — and this reviewer writes as an academic not an architect — are notoriously bad when commissioning buildings. Few academics and administrators understand the construction process nor, as the bursar of

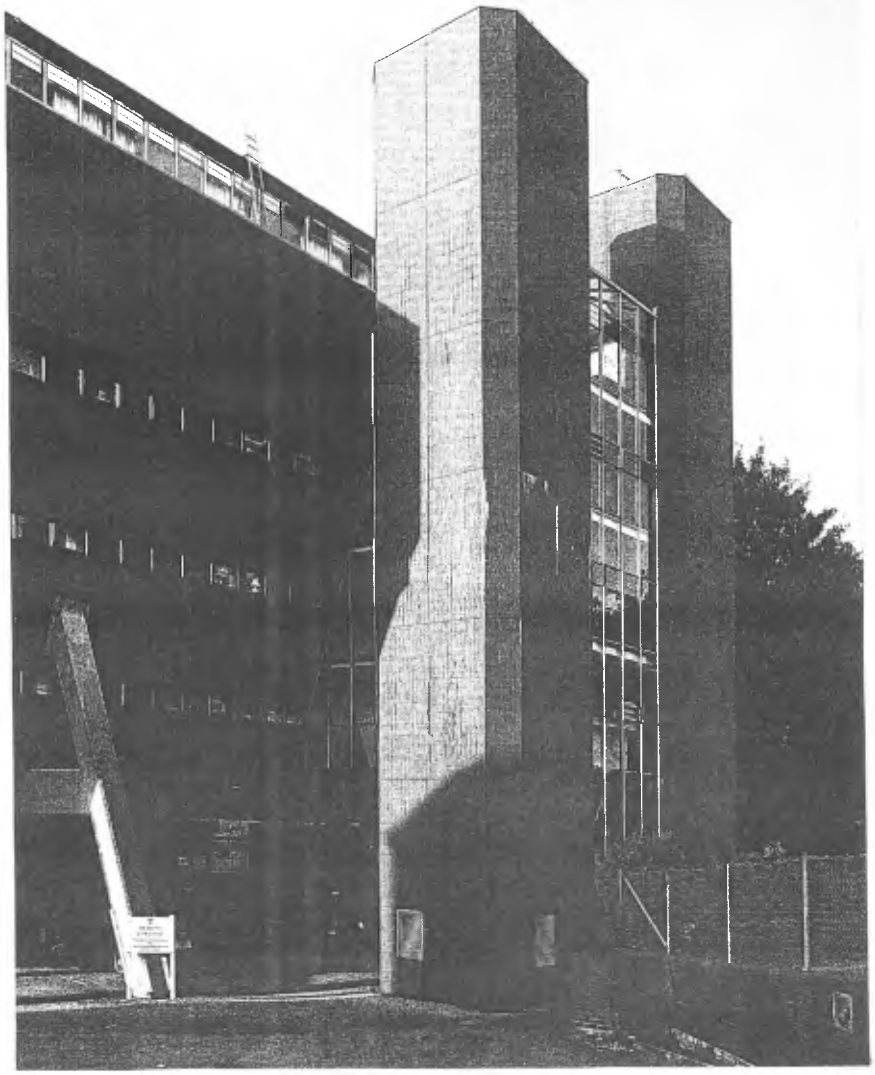

Fig. 4. The Florey Building, the Queen's College, Oxford (James Stirling 1965-79): the vertical circulation shafts and the stepped design of the outer face. The shafts are red brick, the cladding of the main building is red tile of Dutch manufacture.

Queen's noted, do they bother to learn (quoted p.65): Parkes was the great exception. They want a great building from a 'star architect', preferably one they might claim to have discovered, but they are often unwilling and/or unable to pay for his work to be built to a sufficiently high standard. Equally, problems of maintenance loom large, something which is especially true of each of these buildings.

In Part Three 'Why do architects love these buildings?', the editor has assembled the thoughts on the three buildings from twenty-four different architects (pp.76-140) before offering his own reactions in 'A Difficult Reconciliation' (pp.141-154). Wisely, he avoids contributions from critics and theorists. Nikolaus Pevsner had called the History Faculty at Cambridge 'rude' and 'actively ugly'[10] and Geoffrey Tyack dubbed the Florey Building as having

> [t]he characteristically 1960s obsession with novelty [and] reflecting the obsession with glass which had been a characteristic of the Modern Movement since its earliest days. But the rear walls are almost windowless and clad throughout in bright red tiles: ... at variance with Oxford's building traditions ... The Florey Building represents the culmination of Oxford's flirtation with experimental modernism.[11]

Two pages of notes on the contributors, which strangely do not include repeating those on Alan Berman given on the back flap of the dust jacket, a page of further reading and a good index complete the book.

Three immediate reactions occurred before your reviewer wrote much of the discussion of this meaty book. The first is the lack of plans, both of the buildings themselves and of the sites. The latter would have helped in understanding how the design became inappropriate when the History Faculty Library was turned through ninety degrees anti-clockwise to take account of the university's inability to purchase a small parcel of land included in the original brief. A site plan would have shown how the access to the Florey Building was and is cut off by the city council's inability to buy a narrow stretch of river-edge land to provide the intended riverside walk from Magdalen Bridge: access to the Florey Building remains through the car park. Second, the absence of the reactions of the late Sir Colin St John Wilson, Stirling's oldest friend, might have been overcome by reprinting his 'James Stirling: in Memoriam' from *Architectural Review,* December 1992.[12] Third, and perhaps most controversial of these less positive comments, it would have been useful to have had some considered comments from users of the three buildings, and this does not only mean the intemperate outburst of Dr David Starkey on Radio 4's *Start the Week* programme on Monday 25 October 2010. Starkey's complaint seems to stem from an unwillingness to accept that librarians have a job to do, that for them a view of the book stacks is good security, and that entry past the desk is the norm in most libraries; however dissent about the temperature extremes is valid. Leaving the Seeley Historical Library[13] is known to have been a wrench. But, as Berman notes, the engineers at Leicester have not complained: their building remains fit for purpose and highly adaptable as the equipment required by an engineering laboratory changes. The students at Oxford like the accommodation and the splendid views it offers: it tops the ballot at Queen's for rooms. As one whose undergraduate room for two years overlooked a May Tree, this reviewer can appreciate the importance for developing minds of space, colour and the natural world when looking up from the book, the typewriter, the drawing board, or now the computer screen.

Only in 'A Difficult Reconciliation' (pp.141-154) does Alan Berman fully explore the sources for the striking ideas brought together in these three buildings, some which have been mentioned earlier, but others are skated over or omitted completely.

For the Cambridge library, we may begin with "an unidentified photograph in Stirling possession of a stepped glass industrial building "; the photograph shows the now demolished York House, no.55 Major Street, Manchester, a cotton-goods warehouse[14] of 1911 designed by Harry S. Fairhurst with seven floors of glass alternately vertical and diagonal designed to catch the limited light of smog-filled Cottonopolis. The side walls, windowless and once red brick but so blackened through more than sixty years exposure to coal dust that the colour became invisible, form a giant line of brickwork "run up in one sweeping diagonal", to quote Nikolaus Pevsner's description.[15] Already in the late 1960s, the building had an uncertain future and by the time this reviewer walked the streets of Manchester's city centre looking at its Edwardian buildings York House had become a car park.[16] Had it been preserved, York House would have made superb teaching and library space for one of Manchester's universities. It is very clear that it was an influence on Jim Stirling's future thinking.

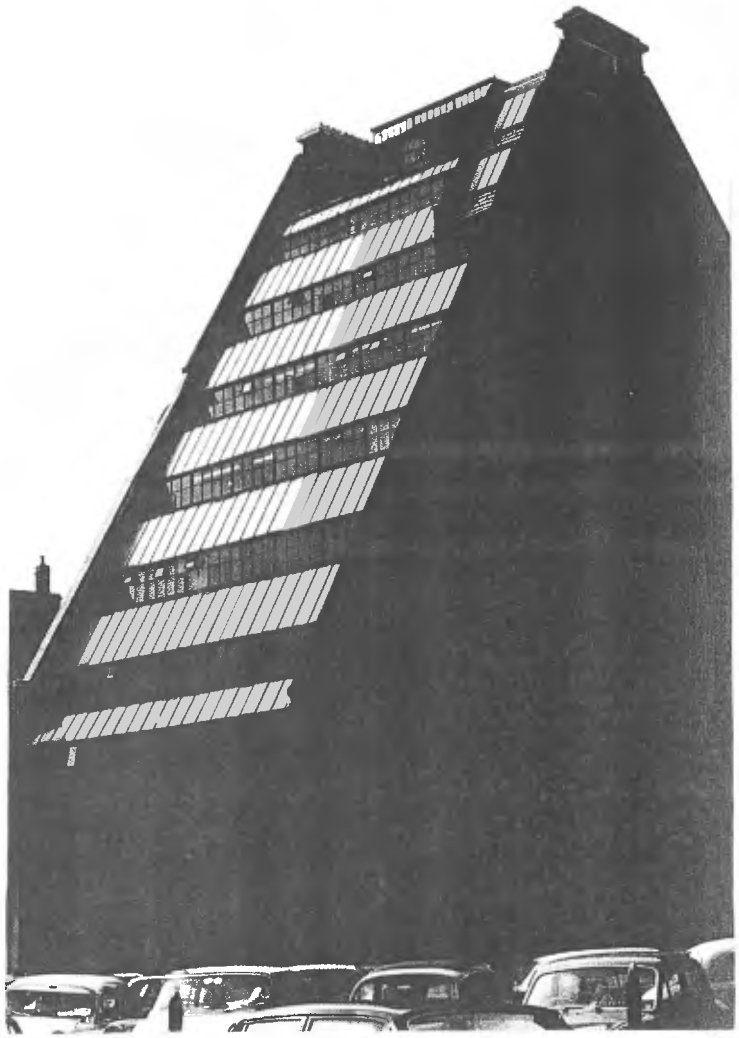

Fig. 5 James Stirling's inspiration: York House, number 55 Major Street, Manchester, was designed in 1911 by Harry S. Fairhurst with the fenestration of its seven uppermost floors stepped to provide maximum light for the examination of textiles. When unoccupied in the late 1960s, the building with its sheer side walls of red brick, by then covered with half a century of soot and grime, was destroyed for a car park. Tragically, it was the last unoccupied warehouse in central Manchester to be demolished. With more imagination, it would have made a superb studio for the teaching of architecture or textile design.

Equally, the authors might have explored the influence of the work of Alvar Aalto (1898-1976) at the Institute of Technology, Espoo, Finland, built 1949-72[17] on the thinking of James Stirling in creating the History Faculty Library. At Espoo, the striking pair of lecture theatres within a quadrant defined by crisp exterior brick walls forming a right-angled triangle and with a sloping roof look suspiciously like a potential precursor for the History Faculty Library at Cambridge. Finland, we must always remember, was much promoted in the *Architectural Review* from the late 1940s onwards.[18]

A substantial influence on Jim Stirling is not fully explored in the volume: the two office buildings in Liverpool by Peter Ellis are Oriel Chambers of 1864-66 which is well-known[19] and

the less publicised No. 16 Cook Street of 1866-68 where the side wall and the surround to the spiral stair are simply glass mounted on a frame; on the side wall the glass alternates between vertical and diagonal panels.[20] Ellis aimed to get maximum light into each of his buildings: the south-west side of Oriel Chambers is almost completely glass, just as its public face on Covent Garden is punctured by windows which protrude to give front, side and top light to rooms on the building's north-east side.[21] Jim Stirling would have known both Liverpool buildings: he grew up in the city before the Second World War, with the docks as his playground, and in the late 1940s he trained at the School of Architecture in the University of Liverpool. In this context, it is worth reminding ourselves of what today would be called the mission statement of the University of Liverpool:

In 1887 the men of Liverpool
raised this University College
for the advancement of learning
and the ennoblement of life

written as it is on the wall of the first building erected for the then new institution.[22]

One aspect of the Leicester building deserves fuller exploration. In the late 1950s, before the Engineering Building was conceived, one of a series of new science buildings went up in Oxford: the Dyson Perrins Laboratories for organic chemistry, of 1957-59 by Basil Ward.[23] This had a cantilevered-out lecture theatre with bare concrete walls, nowhere near as elegant as the red tile cladding of the two lecture theatres at Leicester. Another cantilevered theatre is that beside the tower of the Maxwell Building of the University of Salford; it echoes the fashion for big lecture theatres to protrude above the ground.[24] The idea of protruding lecture theatres stems initially from the Russian Constructivist tradition and specifically the Rusakov Club for Transport Workers on the Stromynka, Moscow, by Konstantin Melnikov, with its protruding upper floors of the assembly hall.[25]

It was noted early in this review article that the St Andrews student housing of 1963-68 and the unrealised project for additional accommodation at Selwyn College, Cambridge, should be considered with the Red Trilogy, particularly with regard to the Florey Building, itself student bedrooms and a breakfast room: dinner would be taken in the college hall, a quarter of a mile away.

It will not be difficult for many members of the British Brick Society to recall the typical student housing of the 1960s: Cardiff, Leeds and Newcastle provide examples from Wales and England; Kalamazoo, Michigan, from the USA.[26] The block is an extended rectangle, two to five storeys high, depending on the topography of the site, with study bedrooms either side of long corridors, where the only illumination to circulation space is provided, if one is lucky, by a large window at the end of the corridor and by windows, more rarely glazed walling, beside the stairs. The sides are straight, with windows, usually occupying much, if not the whole, of the upper part of the outside wall of each study bedroom, placed flush with the walling, whether the outer skin is brick or breeze block covered with concrete. The exterior can seem as soulless as that of an airport hotel.

James Stirling was not the first to introduce the idea of a saw-tooth façade, with windows angled to catch more direct sunlight. Two practices could claim the distinction of being the pioneer: one in Oxford, the other in Cambridge. In Oxford, the Architects' Co-Partnership in 1958-60 designed an infill block for the east side of North Quad at St John's College, Oxford.[27] In deference to the existing buildings, they used stone; the east side has windows facing south-east and on the west side the windows face south-west At St Andrews, Stirling took the concept one stage further and splayed the four wings of each block like an outstretched hand. From the

high point of the crest where students enter, the exterior falls down and the saw-tooth of the exterior produced bedroom windows which look out to sea. The incipient mastery of the waves seems to this reviewer even more inspirational than a May Tree.

At Cambridge, a year before the work at Oxford, David Roberts (1911-1982) had used yellow brick for the Castle Hill Hostel of Clare College, and given it a saw-tooth façade.[28] Five years later, in 1963, at the north-west corner of the expansive lawns of Jesus College, he did the same with an L-shaped block; the bedrooms on the north side at least have windows facing north-east, so that they do get some direct sunlight.[29] David Roberts was a Cambridge-based architect who graciously said of being the loser in the competition for the History faculty,

> I ... think that it is high time that Cambridge had [a] building by Stirling and Gowan, so I am not wholly unhappy about the result (quoted p.45).

Despite being more than a decade older than Stirling, Roberts was much influenced by Stirling's designs for Selwyn and the Florey Building when designing student accommodation at St Hugh's College, Oxford. Here a bold, red brick building on the south side of St Margaret's Road, at the northern end of leafy north Oxford, curves away from the road, very much in the manner of Alvar Aalto's Baker Dormitory at Harvard, designed in 1947 and built over the following two years.[30] From the road, the St Hugh's building is now hidden by more recent and rather mundane buildings for student accommodation.

The wider sociological background could have been more fully explored by Berman and his contributors. The limited amount of Modernist architecture in England in the 1930s had been the work of outsiders.[31] If one thinks of the classic examples in England, a surprising number were designed by men who did *not* fit the establishment mould of the day. Serge Chermayeff (1900-1996) was a colourful character: of Russian extraction but a British citizen, the Russian Revolution left him at school in England, cut off from his homeland; in the 1920s, he had been a professional dancer in Buenos Aires. High and Over at Amersham, of 1933, was designed by Amyas Connell (1901-1980) and Basil Ward (1902-1976), both New Zealanders, who had worked their passage on a cargo boat as the means to come to England, the same Basil Ward would go on to design the Dyson Perrins Laboratories in Oxford. Wells Coates (1895-1958) who designed the Lawn Road Flats in Hampstead had been born in Japan where his parents were Methodist medical missionaries from Canada; his higher education in mechanical and structural engineering had been in Vancouver, British Columbia, before he came to London to take a PhD on 'The Gases of the Diesel Engine'.[32] For three years in the mid 1930s there was an influx of refugees from German Fascism: Erich Mendelsohn and Walter Gropius[33] were merely the most prominent of those who were sojourners in London.

The work of these architects was commissioned by men who equally were tangential to the inner circles of the upper levels of English society. Bernard Ashmole (1894-1988) for whom High and Over was built had been the Director of the British School at Rome for three years after 1925; earlier he had fought at the Somme, being awarded the Military Cross. Jack Pritchard at Lawn Road Flats was a furniture designer with socialist leanings. Earl de la Warr (1900-1976), a socialist peer with a title dating from the fifteenth century, was mayor of Bexhill-on-Sea from 1932 to 1935, for which he provided the famous pavilion which bears his name; as a conscientious objector, he had been an able seaman on a trawler in the Great War. A playwright and his actress wife, Benn Levy (1900-1973) and Constance Cummings (1910-2005), commissioned No.66 Church Street, Chelsea from Gropius and Fry.[34]

There are strong comparisons with Stirling's clients. At seventeen, Geoffrey Elton (1921-1994) and his mother had fled to England on 14 February 1939, refugees from the march of Nazi Germany into Prague, to join his father, the classicist, Victor Ehrenberg. Moses Finley (1912-

1986) hailed from New York and fell foul of the McCarthy witchhunt. Howard Florey (1898-1968) a medical graduate of Adelaide University had worked his passage from Australia as a ship's surgeon to take up a Rhodes Scholarship. With an English education, Edward Parkes appears more conventional but came originally from New Zealand. Equally, their academic specialities produced underlying attitudes which played no small part in their support for Jim Stirling's buildings: Elton was initially iconoclastic in his views on Tudor England even if the interpretation later became one orthodoxy; Finlay displayed what was then a rare sociological appreciation of the ancient world; Florey was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry, for the development of penicillin; Parkes was a mechanical engineer. 'Big Jim', as Mark Girouard[32] dubs him, was a brash Glaswegian of working-class origins, the son of a ship's engineer,[33] who grew up in Liverpool — as already noted, Stirling freely acknowledged that the docks were his playground — and whose life was both interrupted and shaped by four years of fighting in World War II, some of it both ferocious and hand-to-hand; he felt far more at home in their company than with the conventional inhabitants of the high table of an Oxford college.[34] As with his client group, Jim Stirling was an outsider: it did not enlarge his reputation with those who might commission buildings from him that a construction overrun meant postponing a royal opening but such was the price worth paying for getting the building right, even if his protracted absences from day-to-day involvement on the site did lead to poor workmanship in places. The Florey Building reveals an essential dichotomy between a courtier and an architect. Alan Berman makes clear how Robert Blake — political historian, Conservative peer, and Florey's successor as Provost of The Queen's College — was mortified at having to delay a 'date with royalty' (p.64). It seemed to have been a matter of relative indifference to the architect.

What Alan Berman and his collaborators have done is show how these three buildings got built and why they are important not just to architects but also, and more importantly, to the maintenance of a humane existence. The dedication sums up the approach both of the various authors and of James Stirling: "To adventurous young architects and clients with the courage to let them build" (p.1). Despite their faults, for which the architect is neither completely blameless nor the sole perpetrator, these three buildings add both to "advancement of learning" and to "the ennoblement of life"; the book confirms this vision and their importance.

DAVID H. KENNETT

NOTES AND REFERENCES

ABBREVIATION

ODNB H.G. Mathew and B. Harrison (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004, 44 vols.

1. Earlier publication of these buildings can be followed J. Stirling, *Buildings and Projects 1950-1974*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1975. A. Vidler, *James Frazer Stirling: Notes from the Archive*, New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2010, esp. pp.126-140, is the catalogue of an exhibition held in London in 2011; it is a valuable compendium of drawings and other illustrations from the vast Stirling-Wilford Archive, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal. M. Crinson, *Stirling and Gowan; Architecture from Austerity to Affluence*, New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2012, had been announced but was not available when this review article was revised in December 2011.

2. M. Girouard, *Big Jim The Life and Work of James Stirling*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1998, and C. Rowe *et al.*, *James Stirling: Buildings and Projects*, New York: Rizzoli, 1984, both provide general appraisals of Stirling's career.

3. Significantly in 1992, James Gowan did not contribute to the tributes paid on 2 November 1992 at the Royal Academy of Arts, London; see 'James Frazer Stirling 1926 (*sic*)-1992: in Memoriam', *Architectural Review*, **191,** no.1150, December 1992, pp.4-17. Gowan felt "unwilling to accept [the] invitation to contribute" to *Jim Stirling and the Red Trilogy* (p.9).

4. Vidler, 2010, pls.127-129, the last one a

photomontage including an unbuilt portion of the St Andrew's student housing. Description: J. Gifford, *The Buildings of Scotland: Fife*, London: Penguin Books, 1988, p.373.

5. Vidler, 2010, p.118-127; pls.109-113 (Churchill College), 115-118 (Selwyn College). For the buildings actually constructed at these sites see N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Cambridgeshire*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2nd edn, 1970, pp.183-186 with pl.74a (Churchill College by Richard Sheppard, Robson & Partners) and p.198 (Selwyn College by Sirrat Johnson-Marshall of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners).

6. T. Leslie, *Louis Kahn Building Art, Building Science*, New York: George Braxiller, 2005, pp.91-128; J. Rossa, *Louis I. Kahn 1901-1974 Enlightened Space*, Köln, London, Los Angeles: Taschen, 2006, pp.36-39.

7. J. Lipman, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Johnson Wax Buildings*, New York: Rizzoli, 1986; M. Hertzberg, *Frank Lloyd Wright's S C Johnson Research Tower*, Petaluma CA and Warwick: Pomegranate, 2010; M. Hertzberg, *Wright in Racine, The Architect's Vision for One American City*, San Francisco and Warwick: Pomegranate, 2004, pp.51-65 and 67-75. The literature on Wright is voluminous. A short account is B.B. Pfeiffer, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, Köln, London, Los Angeles: Taschen, 1991, where the Racine buildings are considered pp.140-9. A standard biography is R.C. Twombly, *Frank Lloyd Wright His Life and Architecture*, New York and Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1979; for the Racine buildings, see *ibid.*, pp.279-284 with figs.10.3-10.5.

8. N. Pevsner and B. Cherry, *The Buildings of England: London 2: South*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983, p.623; Vidler, 2010, pp.122-3 with fig.114. See also A. Saint, 'A Different Dimension', *The Guardian Review*, 2 April 2011, pp.16-17, where the building is the principal illustration.

9. The Leicester building has attracted much comment, notably in J. McKean *et al.*, *Pioneering British 'High Tech' by Stirling and Gowan ....* , London: Phiadon Press, 1999, and by K. Frampton, 'Leicester University Engineering Laboratory' in *Labour, Work and Architecture: Collected Essays on Architecture and Design*, London: Phiadon Press, 2000. See also, N. Pevsner, revised E. Williamson, *The Buildings of England: Leicestershire and Rutland*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2nd edn., 1984, pp.226-7 with pl.75.

10. Pevsner, 1970, p.217 with pl.80b.

11. G. Tyack, *Oxford An Architectural Guide*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.322-3. J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974, p.190 suggest "some will adore it, some detest it".

12. C.St.J. Wilson, 'James Stirling; in Memoriam', *Architectural Review*, **191, no.1150,** December 1992, pp.18-20. See also Wilson's tribute at the Royal Academy, *ibid.*, p.13.

13. Pevsner, 1970, 203 with pl.69. RCHME, ... *The City of Cambridge*, London: HMSO, 1959, re-issued 1988, pp.17-18 with pl.78; plans pp.13 and 15.

14. A warehouse was a place to inspect samples *not* a textile factory. Several warehouses survive in other uses on both Whitworth Street and Princess Street, Manchester. D.H. Kennett is preparing 'Brick and Terracotta in the Mercantile City: Edwardian Manchester' for a future issue of *BBS Information*.

15. N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire I The Industrial South*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969, p. 293; now demolished. References to York House are omitted C. Hartwell, *Pevsner Architectural Guides: Manchester*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001, and C. Hartwell, M. Hyde, and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire: Manchester and the South East*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004. No photograph was included in I. Beesley and P. de Figeiredo, *Victorian Manchester and Salford*, Halifax: Ryburn Publishing, 1988, which despite its title includes as many buildings of 1901 to 1914 as those of 1837 to 1900. Demolition seems to have taken place before the photographs for the last-named book were taken.

16. The last three words should be understood with all the force that the late Dame Edith Evans gave to that celebrated phrase "a handbag".

17. L. Lahti, *Alvar Aalto 1898-1976: Paradise for the Man in the Street*, Köln, London, Los Angeles: Taschen, 2004, pp.58-61; unfortunately the text and illustrations do not make clear how natural light was admitted to the large lecture theatres. The building chronology is competition, 1949; planning, 1953-55; construction, 1962-66.

18. After 1946 *The Architectural Review* was edited by J.M. (later Sir James) Richards (1907-1992) who had been its assistant editor from 1935 to 1942. There is a story that Richards had been many times to Finland but never to Manchester. Details: G. Stamp, 'Richards, James Maude', *ODNB*, **46,** pp.782-4.

19. J. Sharples, *Pevsner Architectural Guides: Liverpool*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004, p.171-2; R. Pollard and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire: Liverpool and the*

South West, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006, p.342. Pevsner, 1969, p.177-8.

20. Sharples, 2004, p.142 with photograph of street front on p.143. Pollard and Pevsner, 2006, p.317. Pevsner, 1969, p.171, with pl.65, showing the courtyard.

21. Pollard and Pevsner, 2006, pl.90 shows the oriel windows on the Covent Garden side. Pevsner, 1969, pl.64 shows the Water Street frontage which also has oriel windows.

22. Alfred Waterhouse's building of 1889-92 is now the Victoria Building; Sharples, 2004, p.223, illustration on p.224; Pollard and Pevsner, 2006, p.363 and pl.84. Neither records the dedicatory inscription.

23. Tyack, 1998, p.304 with illustration on p.305; Sherwood and Pevsner, 1974, p. 270.

24. Hartwell, Hyde and Pevsner, 2004, p.623.

25. K. Berton, *Moscow: An Architectural History,* New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1977, pp.211-2, with fig. 69. N.B. de Mezquita,'Rusakov Workers' Club' in *Building the Revolution Soviet Art and Architecture 1915-1935,* (exhibition catalogue), London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2011, pp.212-219. As the photographs *ibid.* p.219 make clear, the Rusakov is a brick building.

26. The writer's personal experience at Cardiff as an undergraduate in the mid 1960s and the others as a conference participant. For the buildings see: J. Newman, *The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan,* London: Penguin Press, 1993, p.307 (University Hall, Cardiff); P. Leach and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire West Riding: Leeds, Bradford and the North,* New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2009, p.484 (Bodington Hall, Leeds); N. Pevsner *et al., The Buildings of England: Northumberland,* London: Penguin Books, 2nd edn., 1992, p. 506 (Henderson Hall, Newcastle, but the 1930s portion only). K.B. Eckert, *Buildings of Michigan,* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, does not mention the dormitories nor, indeed, any of the buildings at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.

27. Pevsner, 1974, p.201 with pl.118; Tyack, 1998, p.305-6 with pl. on p.306.

28. Pevsner, 1970, p.61.

29. Pevsner, 1970, pp.90-91.

30. Lahti, 2004, pp.50-53.

31. This paragraph was written using S. Bayley, 'Patrons of the Modern Movement', in G. Stamp (ed.), *Britain in the Thirties,* [being *Architectural Design Profile* **24,**] no date but *c.*1960, pp.90-95, which illustrates most of the buildings discussed.

32. Details of the life stories of the architects are taken from *ODNB.* A. Powers, 'Chermayeff, Serge', *ODNB,* **11,** pp.307-9; F. McCarthy, 'Coates, Wells Wintemute', *ODNB,* **12,** pp.255-7; C. Benton, 'Connell, Amyas Douglas', *ODNB,* **12,** pp.964-5. Basil Ward is not in *ODNB,* see *Who Was Who, 1971-1980,* p.832.

33. A. Cobbers, *Erich Mendelsohn 1887-1953: The Analytical Visionary,* Köln, London, Los Angeles: Taschen, 2007; G. Lupfer and P. Sigel, *Walter Gropius, 1883-1969: The Promoter of a New Form,* Köln, London, Los Angeles: Taschen, 2004.

34. See J. Boardman, 'Ashmole, Bernard', *ODNB,* **2,** pp. 660-1; E. Shorter, 'Levy, Benn', *ODNB,* **33,** pp.557-8; Lord Selkirk, 'Sackville, Herbrand ...', *ODNB,* **48,** pp.535-6 for Earl De La Warr; Constance Cummings was still living when *ODNB* was compiled, see *Who Was Who 2001-2005,* p.126.

35. P. Collinson, 'Elton, Geoffery Rudolph', *ODNB,* **18,** pp.349-354; F.W. Walbank, 'Finley, Moses I.', *ODNB,* **19,** pp.620-1; R.G. MacFarlane, 'Florey, Howard Walter', *ODNB,* **20,** pp.161-5. Sir Edward Parkes (b.1926) is still living, see *Who's Who 2011,* p.1773.

36. Mark Girouard, *Big Jim The Life and Work of James Stirling,* London: Chatto and Windus, 1998.

37. Sociologically, a ship's engineer would be regarded as a member of the middle ranks of the middle class; however, most men in this occupation, having begun their careers as engineering seamen, identified with fellow seamen as working class and never saw any need to change their identity or class affiliation.

38. T. Eagleton, *The Gatekeeper A Memoir,* London: Allen Lane at the Penguin Press, 2001, ch. 6, 'Dons', pp.124-152, describes Cambridge in the period when Stirling was building there and at Oxford; he comments "I find myself treating a certain species of upper-middle class type with the alert nervousness of a zoo-keeper in charge of some apparently docile but secretly vicious beast" of species of right-wing academic. (*ibid* p.136)

Brick for a Day: North Oxford

A group of a dozen members assembled outside the Ashmolean Museum on Saturday 21 April 2012 for a walking tour of north Oxford, to places not exactly on the city's tourist trail. The morning concentrated on Walton Street and Jericho and included nineteenth-century housing, Ruskin College, the buildings erected at various dates for Oxford University Press, and the new Walton Street Health Centre, the first building to be completed on the site of the old Radcliffe Infirmary. Here, the Radcliffe Observatory (1772, Henry Keene; 1792-94, James Wyatt), St Luke's chapel (1864, A.W. Blomfield), and the original hospital building (1759-70, Seiff Leadbetter) — all essentially buildings constructed in stone — have not been demolished whereas the 1930s brick-built wards on the edge of Walton Street were pulled down. The demolitions allow for the development of new university buildings and additional student accommodation for Somerville College, which now admits males unlike in the eras of its two most famous Chemistry graduates: Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin (1910-1994) and Margaret Thatcher (*née* Roberts) (b.1926). Founded in 1879, Somerville College was the second women's college in Oxford: it was and is non-denominational and secular.

Ruskin College was founded in 1906 to give working men (and later women) the chance to experience university life and tuition: its earliest students included a railway official, Robert Ladway (1884-1982) who half a decade after his year in Oxford would organise the trains taking munitions and horses from London to the battlefields of France and Belgium. When Robert Ladway was a student in 1909, the college met in a former house on St Giles. In 1907, land had been obtained on the west side of Walton Street on the corner of Worcester Place, and the college building was opened in 1912, designed in the offices of the London firm of Joseph & Smithern, by then headed by Charles James Smithern (d.1937) and Charles Sampson Joseph (1872-1948). The three storey building has a raised ground floor faced in good quality ashlar and much stone was used as surrounds to the fenestration; stone is also used for the whole of the central two bays of the Walton Street frontage. Red brick was used throughout on areas visible from the street, including the side wall away from Worcester Place. Brick was laid in English Bond with extremely neat closers to accommodate the fenestration. The Walton Street frontage has slightly protruding side wings with two bay recessed wings between each and the central stone portion. On Worcester Place, the central four bays of the ten bay façade are recessed.

In the morning session, two religious buildings were seen: the exterior of the United Synagogue and the outside and inside of St Barnabas church. The synagogue is a recent building of straw-coloured brick laid in Stretcher Bond with at every fourth course the mortar recessed, from a distance giving a rusticated appearance. The older, left-hand worship hall has an asymmetric gable in brown brick but the left-hand one uses the straw-coloured brick. The two worship spaces are used by three distinct congregations: Orthodox Jewry, Reformed Jewry and Liberal Jewry. Between the worship areas is a large room capable of being incorporated in either of the worship areas or used purely as social space. An emergency exit to this and the right-hand worship space is faced in blue-black brick.

Going north from Oxford station, St Barnabas is the church one sees on the right from the railway. It also adjacent to the Oxford Canal. The church (fig.1) owes its existence to Thomas Combe (1796-1872), Printer to the University, and his wife Martha (1806-1893), both of whom were art patrons particularly of the Pre-Raphaelite movement: their collections grace the Ashmolean Museum. This Anglican church was built in 1868-69 to designs of A.W. (later Sir Arthur) Blomfield (1829-1899). Unlike his earlier St Luke's chapel (1864) for the infirmary, a Gothic building in stone with lancet windows, Blomfield designed St Barnabas to mirror early Christian basilicas in Italy, notably the cathedral at Torcello in the Venetian lagoon and San

Fig. 1 St Barnabas Church, paid for by Thomas Combe, Printer to the University, and designed by A.W. Blomfield. It was built using local rubble stone embedded in a mortar of blue lias and coarse sand. Designed in 1868, and built over the following year, with the tower being added in 1872. The brick courses are used to stabilise the construction and provide bases for the fenestration.

Clemente in Rome, but followed his patrons' instructions to 'design a church to hold a thousand persons for as small a sum as possible' of 'strength, solidity and thoroughly sound construction ... [with] not a penny to be thrown away on external appearance and decoration'. Intended to be built of concrete, the patron saved money with walls of local rubble stone, using mortar of blue lias clay and very coarse sand; plastered internally the walls have brick courses visible in

the external rendering. As with the flint walls surrounding late Roman forts in England, the brick courses also serve to stabilise the rubblework as well as being decorative and providing bases for the aisle windows. Externally, the windows have exposed brick arches. Internally, the church has 'a solemn internal effect aimed at by proportion alone, and by the addition, by degrees, of coloured decoration applied to the surface of the walls'. The 'by degrees' can be seen on the north side of the clerestory which has mosaic decoration with the words, in English, of the *Te Deum* above and below the figures of the saints, whereas the south and west sides remain plain. The mosaic work was executed by Powells between 1905 and 1911. There is gold-leaf decoration of 1893, by Blomfield, at the east end, both beside and within the apse. The original build omitted the tower, added in 1872; it employs the same wall construction but uses brick only sparingly in the lowest stage. The fourth and fifth stages have much brick at the corners and surrounding the belfry openings. Its top was renewed in copper in 1965.

In this mixed area, the houses on Walton Street are comparatively large whilst those further down the hill tend to be much smaller. On the corner of Walton Street and Little Clarendon Street, two sets of residential buildings with shops beneath have had portions to the rear removed as part of a programme to convert them into student rooms with retail units beneath. In March 2012, the writer had watched this terrace of four fronting Walton Street, being demolished at the rear; a month late, members were able to view construction details of these three-storey buildings not normally visible, such as the double skin of bricks to outside and party walls but without a cavity and the less solid construction of non-load bearing walls. One room retained a chandelier from its previous occupants! By mid August, a concrete frame had been erected where there had been nothing but a large hole in the ground at the rear of the standing buildings. The contractors for this conversion and extension are Knowles & Son.

Two roads head north from central Oxford, dividing at St Giles' churchyard: Woodstock Road to the west, Banbury Road to the east. Here, the group looked at five buildings, each very different in their functions, two in both their original and present-day purposes. On the west side of Woodstock Road is the Roman Catholic church dedicated to St Aloysius, designed by J.A. Hansom & Son and built between 1873 and 1875, towards the end of the life of Joseph Aloysius Hansom (1803-1882). This large church (fig.2) is set back from the road, with a courtyard in front of it on the north side of which is the presbytery built in 1877-78; the latter was designed by Oxford architect William Wilkinson (1819-1901). Both church and house were constructed of white brick, probably supplied by Gray's (later Webb's) brickyard further north on the west side of Woodstock Road: the 1896 house, no. 251 Woodstock Road, built for the brickmaker Edward Webb uses in the same white brick. The water-filled claypit is behind this house. However, the brick of the church has been cleaned whereas that of the presbytery retains the grime of a hundred years of motor transport. The brickwork of the church was laid in Flemish Bond but that of the presbytery is English Bond. The liturgical west front (actually facing east) of the church has a big rose window in the centre, outlined with a double row of headers; to maintain the circle the mortar joints thicken slightly as the outer edge of the bricks is reached. An octagonal turret at the corner is there to facilitate maintenance.

On the opposite side of Woodstock Road are two buildings both inspired by a vaguely Arts and Crafts style. St Giles' Parish Room to the south was designed by Wilkinson's nephew and subsequent partner, Harry Wilkinson Moore (1850-1915), who inserted a row of traceried windows on the long street frontage. It was built 1887-91 using thin red bricks in Raking English Garden Wall Bond. Three and a half bays to the south are divided by angled buttresses, with tumbling set at 30 degrees. The bay north of the entrance is a cut-off tower, whose height does not exceed that of the three gables facing Woodstock Road. Immediately to the north is its contemporary, a building with a rather colourful history. Built as the Big Game Museum, it was the original home of the Oxford Playhouse in 1923; in the early 1970s it was the Blind Shop. By

Fig. 2 St Aloysius Roman Catholic Church, Woodstock Road, Oxford, is set back from the street. It was built in the local white brick to the designs of J.A. Hansom & Sons between 1873 and 1875.

2012, the building had been taken over by Oxford University and used as the Language Centre.

Visible from both Woodstock Road and Banbury Road, the former Oxford High School for Girls, designed in 1879 by Thomas G. Jackson (1835-1924), is "Queen Anne at the front but Mary Anne at the back", a remark initially made of the buildings of H.T. Hare (1861-1921). The back has brick corners and big windows but much render covers much of the walls; the front, on Banbury Road, is more extravagant: decorative pilasters of terracotta, almost forming attached columns, adorn the first and second floors. Scenes from classical mythology are part of the decoration on the pilasters, perhaps illustrative of the focus of the education provided.

If Walton Street and Jericho represent a solid working class area of Oxford — St Barnabas was built as the spiritual centre for the workers at the Oxford University Press, many

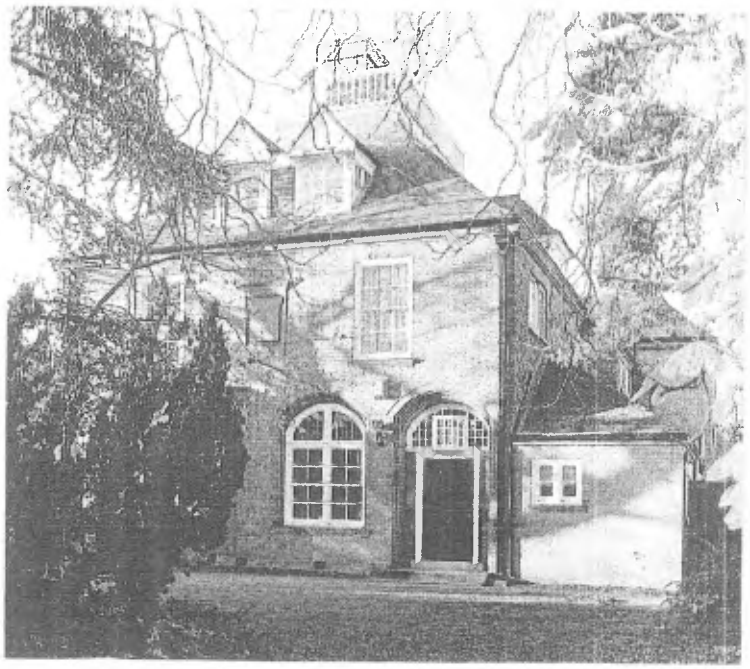

Fig. 3 Number 29 Banbury Road was designed in 1882 by John James Stevenson for his brother-in-law, Thomas Osmond, the Bursar of St John's College; number 29 Banbury Road, built for Thomas Hill Green, was almost identical.

of whom occupied houses on Walton Well Road — the contemporary houses on Norham Gardens, off Banbury Road, examined in the afternoon, were at the opposite pole of the class structure in the nineteenth century. But today things are different. In the late twentieth century, three of the larger houses on Walton Street were owned by distinguished professors: archaeologist Christopher Hawkes (1905-1992) of Oxford and historian Lawrence Stone (1919-1999) of Princeton. However, caveats must be entered. Hawkes found that two houses were necessary to house two academics' extensive book collections, and for Stone, who in the USA lived in a style causing him to be affectionately known as Lorenzo Il Magnifico, this was his English *pied-à-terre*, convenient for the Bodleian and the Public Record Office. But to illustrate the contrast between the beginning and the end of the twentieth century: Hawkes' Wykehamist contemporary, J.N.L. Myres (1902-1989) grew up at no.1 Norham Gardens, the 1863 house to which his father, J.L. Myres (1969-1954), the university's inaugural Wykeham Professor of Ancient History, had added a dining room in 1903. The original occupiers of the 26 individually-designed houses on Norham Gardens, built between 1862 and 1879, included eleven senior members of the university: five professors, the Bursar of Keble College, and five college fellows.

Norham Gardens is part of the former St John's College estate, extending from the Oxford Canal to the west across Woodstock Road and Banbury Road to the River Cherwell in the east. At the southern end of Banbury Road are two almost identical houses designed in 1882 by John James Stevenson (1831-1908). The first, number 29 (fig.3), was commissioned by Stevenson's brother-in-law, Thomas Osmond, the bursar of St John's College. The second, number 27, was designed for Thomas Hill Green (d.1881), Whyte's Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford. Both houses are in a bright orange-red brick. Green had a terracotta plaque placed on his house containing the initials 'THC' an 'CBC', symbolising their companionate marriage. Osmond's house has a cartouche but no plaque.

At the east end of Norham Gardens is Lady Margaret Hall, established in 1878, the first of five late Victorian Oxford societies for the education of women: they could attend classes and

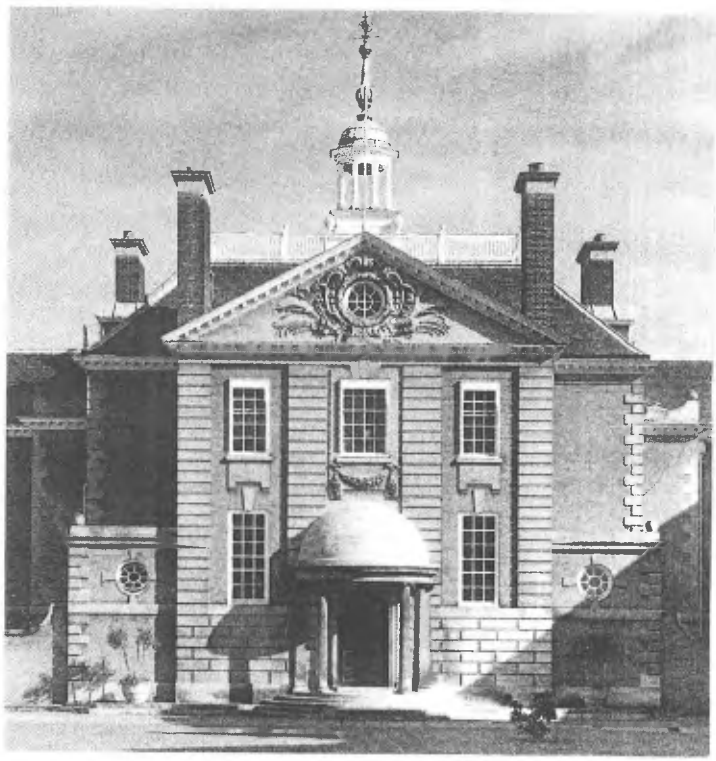

Fig. 4 The Talbot Building, Lady Margaret Hall, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield in 1909, the second of his buildings for the college. As it faces the entrance it is more elaborately treated than his other accommodation blocks.

sit the examinations but, before the passing of the Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act in 1920, they could not take a degree. In a college named after Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of King Henry VII, members of Lady Margaret Hall had to be in communion with the Church of England. Almost all of its buildings are in red brick, beginning with Old Hall attached to 21 Norham Gardens, the house in white brick first used by the principal and her nine students. Old Hall of 1881-83 was designed by Basil Champneys (1842-1935). Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942), nephew of Arthur, designed a series of ranges named after persons prominent in the development of Lady Margaret Hall, a tradition which has continued: first Wordsworth, then Talbot, Toynbee, and Eleanor Lodge, in 1896, 1909-10, 1915, and 1926, respectively, all in red brick in the style reflecting a simplified echo of Wren's portion of Hampton Court Palace. As the centrepiece facing Wolfson Quad, Talbot has a pediment above rusticated brick pilasters. To the north the quad is closed to the north by the library block and the entrance range to the west, both by Raymond Erith (1904-1973), begun in 1957 and completed in 1961. The library range has seven lunette windows above the book stacks of the second-floor balcony; the first floor is also book stacks and on the ground floor is a study room with banks of computers. Red brick has been used for further buildings erected since the 1960s to cope with increased numbers of undergraduates and more recently of additional postgraduate students. Built in the early 1970s are two towers of irregular plan with rounded corners, Sutherland and Kathleen Lea. The most recent addition is Pipe-Partridge, an L-shaped block with a cloister walk facing south; it opened at the beginning of academic year 2011-12.

In the early 1930s, the college employed Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960) to design Deneke (fig.4). Scott used a narrow brown brick: contrasting with the rest of the college's brickwork but perhaps not completely out of place. Lady Margaret Hall has sufficiently wide spaces for the contrast to be quieter than it might otherwise have been. As well as student bed-

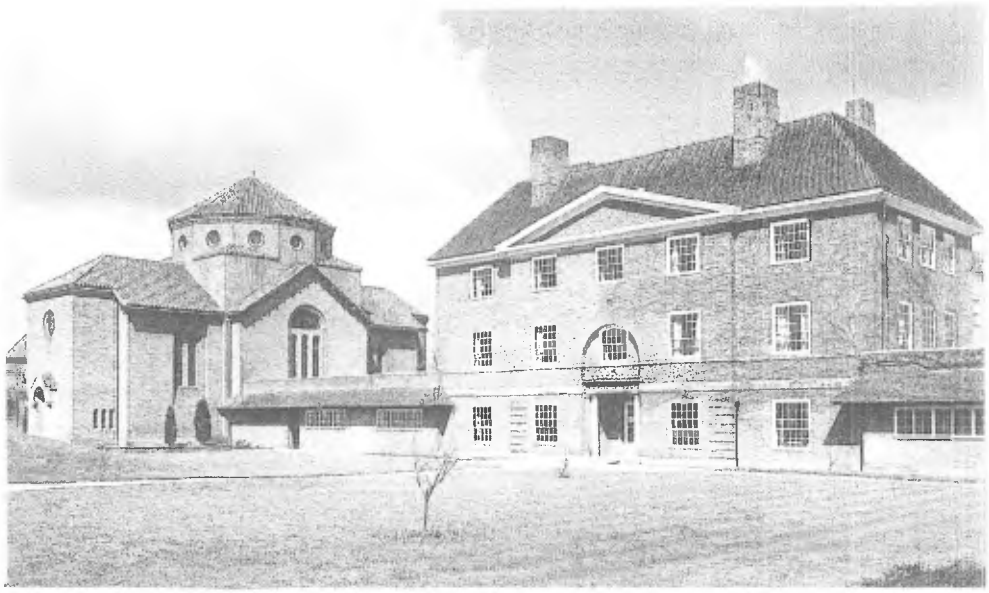

Fig. 5 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's Deneke Building for Lady Margaret Hall, with the college chapel on the left. Designed in 1932, it uses narrow bricks of a pale brown colour.

sitting rooms, Deneke includes both a vast panelled dining hall, complete with the high table, and, at the end of the ground floor corridor, the college chapel is Byzantine in inspiration, with nave and chancel of almost equal length and a dome between them. On the outside a shallow dome sits on twelve-sided top to a square central tower.

Like all Oxford colleges, Lady Margaret Hall faces the problem of providing sufficient accommodation for its students. Partly, the problem has been solved at Lady Margaret Hall by a new building every decade but also having a policy of buying the houses on the east side of Fyfield Road, most of which were built in the 1880s, and converting these into student rooms; the houses back on to the college grounds. The solution of converting houses is used by other colleges but usually at a distance from the college itself: Keble College have taken over several houses on Banbury Road and St Edmund Hall some on Norham Gardens. Others of the large houses on this street have become the home of university departments.

Two articles for future issues of *British Brick Society Information* are in preparation which derive from buildings viewed on this and an earlier visit to another part of non-tourist Oxford — George Street, Cowley Road and Headington. One will examine buildings in Oxford built between 1919 and 1939 for people's leisure activities. The other aims to catalogue and discuss terracotta and its varied uses in North Oxford, specifically as found on buildings on Banbury Road and Woodstock Road. It is probable that these articles will appear in issues of *BBS Information* that will be sent to members in 2014 or early 2015.

DAVID H. KENNETT

BRICK IN PRINT

Between April and August 2012, members of the British Brick Society received notice of a number of publications of interest to members of the society. 'Brick in Print' has become a regular feature of *British Brick Society Information*, with surveys usually two or three times a year. Members involved in publication or who come across books and articles of interest are invited to submit notice of them to the editor of *BBS Information*. Web sites may also be included. Unsigned contributions in this section are by the undersigned.

TERENCE PAUL SMITH

1. James Bettley, 'Portrait of a family home: Boxted Hall, Suffolk',
Country Life, 25 April 2012, pages 84-88,

Holy Trinity church, Boxted, has a north chapel of brick added by Sir William Poley (1602-1664) in which a marble scroll records the family back to a fourteenth-century Thomas Poley, the first of the family to settle in this village in the valley of the River Glem, one of the many streams to flow south to the Suffolk Stour. The family remain in possession. In 1561, William Poley (d.1587) a man whose monument is in the chapel took charge of the family property with his father reserving rights to the parlour at the end of the hall, the chamber over it, stabling for two geldings, and the ability to fish in the moat, the river and other waters. John's retirement settlement demonstrates that the hall, the parlour at one end and a chamber over it already existed in this house rated at 22 hearths in 1674. The house has four ranges around a shallow courtyard and by 1561 was on two floors, the upper one of which was reached by a newel stair in a small brick tower in the courtyard. Figure 2 of the article shows the surviving wainscotted Tudor hall.

John Poley (1676-1757) died childless and the estate went to his cousin George Weller (later Weller-Poley) (1710-1778) who by 1767 had 'much improved' the house by his 'elegant taste', to quote Weller's kinsman, William Croftes (p.84). Weller added bay windows to the front, which he covered with stucco, and installed with sash windows. Beside the river between 1756 and 1763, he created a walled garden open to the river; its surrounding wall of red brick has pavilions in the east wall. He also built a road bridge over the river in 1760. The next major work on the house was not well regarded when completed. It is what we see today (as shown on p.84-85). In 1900, J.G. Weller-Poley II returned from his honeymoon and his wife Ethel did not like what she saw. The stucco was removed and the house encased in red brick inset with strips of wood to imitate close-studded timber-framing; three gables in the same style were added to the front.

The photographs by Will Pryce in the article's figures 1 and 3 bring out the redness of the brick.

D.H. KENNETT

2. Mansour Boriak and Salah El-Masekh, 'A Roman Bath at Karnak',
Ancient Egypt, **12,** 6, issue 72, June/July 2012, pages 34-44.
J. P[eter] P[hillips], 'And There's More ...',
Ancient Egypt, **12,** 6, issue 72, June/July 2012, pages 45-49.

At the time of writing, Egypt is in the news because of the troubles following an ill-co-ordinated revolution, the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak, and subsequent elections for both a parliament and a president. It is therefore refreshing to read something far more positive in this

report of excavations, beginning in 2009, at Karnak, Luxor by Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities.

The excavations revealed Roman baths (*thermae*) covering, at the time of this report an area of some 3,000 sq.m. Unfortunately, the section of the article headed 'Dating' (p.43) is limited to four lines and merely tells us that the complex overlies a late Ptolemaic building of mud bricks. Since Roman buildings in Egypt are by definition post-Ptolemaic, this is not very helpful. (Has, perhaps, some text been lost during preparation for publication?) Artefacts recovered include amphorae of the third century AD, which presumably indicates the date. But elsewhere it is noted that the '*thermae* were remodelled ... over what appears to be a long period of use, which only adds to the challenge of understanding the history of the complex' (pp.36-37). Without further details, it certainly adds to a reader's perplexity.

There are other perplexities too: a 'voussoir', we are told, is 'constructed of *tegulae* measuring 30 × 24 × 5.5 cm [≈ 12 × 9½ × 2 inches]' (pp.40-41), which makes no sense; *arches* are constructed of voussoirs (*cuneati*), not voussoirs of *tegulae*; and *tegulae* is properly used of one of two types of roofing tiles, the other type being *imbrices*. (*Tegulae* applied to bricks was a medieval usage.) This is recognised (p.42): 'voussoir bricks, called *cuneati* in Latin. Their wedge shape is 48 cm [≈ 19 inches] ... on the long side and 33 cm [≈ 13 inches] ... on the short side.' They taper from 13 cm [≈ 5 inches] at the top to 6 cm [≈ 2½ inches] at the bottom.

'Most superstructure walls stand less than a metre high, but some of the fired brick walls of the substructure are three meters (*sic*) tall' (p.36). The bricks vary in size: 30 × 16 × 8.5 cm [≈ 12× 6 × 2¼ inches]; 30 × 21 × 6 cm (12 × 8¼ × 2¼ inches]; and 28.5 × 14.5 × 14 (*sic*) cm [≈ 11 × 5¾ × 5½ inches], — but this last dimension seems implausible for Roman bricks: is their thickness actually 4 cm [≈ 1½ inches], which seems more likely? Bricks are also used for floors, benches, and wells. In hypocaust-heated rooms the square supports (*pilae*) are 'of multiple courses of two bricks, each 30 × 15 × 8 cm [≈ 12 × 6 × 3 inches]' (p.42). Also found, though not *in situ*, were some circular bricks 17 cm [≈ 6¾ inches] and 20 cm [≈ 6¾ inches] in diameter and 10 cm [≈ 4 inches] thick. 'Usually their presence suggests that an older hypocaust system may have existed somewhere on the site' (p.42).

The editorial addition (pp.45-49) to this article adds further details, including the presence of some puzzling ceramic drainpipes, but nothing more on bricks.

Excavation is ongoing, and we may look forward to further interesting discoveries.

3. John Goodall, 'Artisan Arcadia: The Manor House, Aslackby, Lincolnshire', *Country Life*, 28 March 2012, pages 60-65.

In Spring 1998, the British Brick Society visited the Manor House, Aslackby, the home of a member Alan Baxter. Alan Baxter has spent a great deal of his time and money restoring the house, which is of exceptional brick interest with intricate external decoration to the cross wing of 1650; dendrochronology placed the timbers of the stone hall range at 1484, when ownership changed following the execution of William Lord Hastings. So it is sad to report that the photographs by Paul Barker of the front of the cross wing and its gable (on pp.62-3) sink deep into the gutter so as to mar one's appreciation both of the photograph and through it of the brickwork details.

Both gables have concave curves rising to a low triangular pediment. A photograph on page 60 shows the front gable with windows lighting rooms on both floors and in the attic; both gables are decorated with brickwork raised by half a brick above the vertical plane of the wall. At first floor level, the back gable (on pp.64-5) has three pilasters of a single stretcher face, with alternate courses of two headers, ending in brackets supporting an intermittent horizontal series of three brick courses. Outside and between the pilasters are shields. In the gable is decorative

Fig. 1 The Manor House, Aslackby, Lincolnshire: the east wing built in the mid seventeenth century.

brickwork echoing a crownpost roof truss. The front gable (shown on p.60) has two string courses of three courses which are lowered beside and between the three-light windows; pilasters and shields are also used. The string course on the asymmetrically planned main front has the partly lowered string course and ten shields at the level of the first floor windows.

The building style is an example of what Sir John Summerson (1904-1992) called Artisan Mannerism. There are further examples in Lincolnshire. John Goodall mentions a house in Coningsby demolished in the 1960s; another (the so-called 'Elizabethan House') is extant in the same village. These are, indeed, a characteristic feature of Lincolnshire domestic architecture, though examples are not, of course, confined to the county. For a summary account see N. Pevsner and J. Harris, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire,* 2nd edn, revised N. Antram, New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2002, pp.77-80. Doubtless others also remain to be discovered and examined both in this county and adjacent ones.

D.H. KENNETT

4. John Goodall, 'A Home and a Refuge: Mapledurham House, Oxfordshire', *Country Life,* 23 May 2012, pages 196-201.

On the afternoon of its Annual General Meeting in 1984, held in the medieval brick school at Ewelme, Oxfordshire, members of the British Brick Society repaired to Mapledurham House, a brick house with stone quoins. The manor was bought by the Blounts in the 1490s and is now inhabited by their descendants the Eystons. Dendrochronology has dated the felling of the structural timbers of the house to between 1608 and 1611, twenty years after what had been previously accepted for the construction of the building. This ties in with dated plasterwork in several rooms bearing the inscription '1612'. The tree-rings also correspond to a transfer of building patronage from Sir Michael Blount (d.1610), Lieutenant of the Tower of London 1590-95, to his son, Sir Richard Blount (d.1628). Sir Richard's motives in building in a secluded village away from the maelstrom of London after 1605 and the Gunpowder Plot could have been

Fig. 2 The Manor House, Aslackby, Lincolnshire: the south gable of the east wing built in the mid seventeenth century.

influenced by the family's adherence to the old faith: they remain staunchly Roman Catholic. His faith may account for how the great stair, with two landings between each of the three floors, does not always match intermediate floor levels; additional steps beyond doors conceal spaces for a priest to hide, as also is the case in one of the brick chimney stacks.

The house gained sash windows in the early eighteenth century. In about 1789, when society had more tolerant attitudes than a century and a half earlier, a Catholic chapel, still in use, was added to the rear of the house: the chapel is brick. After 1828, Thomas Martin restored the main façade to his imagined Elizabethan ideal and since 1960, Jack Eyston has been repairing both the house and those of its dependent village.

D.H. KENNETT

5. Rob Gregory, 'Colony Room: House, Delhi, India, Vir Mueller Architects', *Architectural Review,* **1383,** May 2012, pages 52-57.

This six-storey house is in Delhi's Defence Colony, laid out in the late 1940s and originally intended for officers of the newly independent India's armed forces. The clients — a wealthy married couple — engaged Vir Mueller Architects (Pankaj Vir Gupta and Christine Mueller) to provide a large family house capable, in due course, of division into separate homes for the

owners' two children. It is of load-bearing brickwork in English Bond with teak fittings and marble flooring. A total of 287,000 red wire-cut bricks, supplied by Jindal Bricks, were used.

A series of open-work screens and bay windows provides shade from Delhi's intense climate, whilst the brickwork is also designed to withstand the city's seismic activity. At first glance, the rather busy brickwork can seem a little arty-crafty; but apart from its practical advantages, it also echoes fragments of the local medieval Islamic brick architecture. Internally, some walls are plastered, though others are of exposed brick. The latter include those of the principal grand staircase, which is also intended for display of the family's art collection.

For some imponderable reason, the architects set themselves 'the challenge that not one brick would be cut' (p.56), though it appears from the photographs that closers were produced by wire-cutting during manufacture.

6. Niall Hobhosue, 'Brick Layers: Astley Castle, Warwickshire, England, Witherford Watson Mann',
Architectural Review, **1384,** June 2012, pages 52-61.

How do you deal with a ruin — other than leaving it *as* a ruin — which has work of all periods from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries and when some of the former appearance is unknown? That was the problem facing the Landmark Trust when, with limited funds, a rehabilitation of Astley Castle, Warks., for holiday use was contemplated in 2006. The winner of the invited competition was the architectural practice Witherford Watson Mann. Their solution was daring, possibly contentious, and, in Niall Hobhouse's opinion, entirely successful: it is, so I believe, difficult to disagree with that assessment.

The castle ruins are of roughly dressed stone with some later brickwork. Rather than attempting a reconstruction of how it *may* have looked in one of its periods — and which period would one choose anyway? — the architects 'proposed threading an armature of new masonry work throughout the main sections ..., with the double job of ... stabilising and protecting the early stonework and ... providing a rigid frame to which the new living accommodation, of timber could attach itself [*sic*: 'could be attached' surely?]' (p.56). This timberwork, including much glazing and an openwork staircase, is of considerable finesse. Some of the openings look into the north-eastern section of the ruin, which has been left as a pair of open courtyards.

Throughout, that 'new masonry' is of narrow red bricks supplied by Danish manufacturer Peterson Tegl and laid in Raking Flemish Garden Wall Bond, giving an overall muted and irregular zigzag pattern. This beautifully laid brickwork, with its planar appearance, effectively marries the strongly orthogonal new timber and glass construction with the rougher finish of the earlier work.

All in all, this is an impressive solution to a difficult problem.

7. Will Hunter, 'Kinky Twist ...: Four Oaks, Wiltshire, England, ZMMA'
Architectural Review, **1384,** June 2012, pages 62-71.

At first glance, especially from the south-west, this Wiltshire house, for the developer Crispin Kelly, looks like a traditional vernacular red brick house — say, of the seventeenth century — with modern fenestration punched through. In fact, it is a wholly new building initially designed by Stephen Taylor Architects in 2006, but taken over by the ZMMA practice and completed in the autumn of 2011. That it is new becomes clear as, with the aid of numerous illustrations, one moves around the building, which has a sort of stretched-Z-plan (hence the 'Kinky' of the title), rather as if two misaligned orthogonal elements had to be joined by an angled unit. It has a basement and ground, first, and attic storeys.

The principal doorway is set in a deep recess ('embrasure') in one of the oblique central faces. Fenestration is generous and variegated — some openings having deep reveals, others set flush. And flush with the red-tiled pitched roofs are the windows lighting the attic storey. Internally, the Z-plan, the differently sized interconnecting rooms, and the curved staircase present a complex series of varying spaces.

The house is an intriguing addition to the Wiltshire rural scene — though one would not, perhaps, want to see the exercise repeated too often, as with those architectural jokes for BEST stores by James Wines and SITE in the USA — and look what happened to *them*! (See *BBS Information,* **105,** October 2007, pp.31-32, and P. Restany and B. Zevi, *SITE Architecture as Art,* London: Academy Editions, 1980.) Architectural quirkiness requires genius, as with Sir John Soane (1753-1837). Perhaps, one day, ZMMA will be placed in that category; or perhaps they will be considered the equivalent of those Victorians whom H.S. Goodhart-Rendel (1887-1959) dubbed 'rogue architects'. Time — but beyond *my* time — will tell.

Unfortunately, the elevation drawings at p.65 have faint grey outlines, making them almost impossible to see, especially as there is show-through from p.66. One hopes that *AR* will not continue this unhelpful practice. Sadly too, Will Hunter's text is in that affected manner that some critics seem unable to resist — what Americans call *bloviating,* which expressive word you will not find in most *British* dictionaries: but see *Chambers,* 11th edn, 2008. Why, for example, use German *unheimlich* (p.66) rather than an English equivalent ('weird', 'uncanny') unless it be to sound clever — or perhaps one should say *geschickt*?

Fig. 3 Raakspoort Town Hall and Cinema, Haarlem, Netherlands.

8. Peter Blundell Jones, 'Cinema Scope: Raaksport Town Hall and Cinema, Haarlem, The Netherlands, Bolles & Wilson',
Architectural Review, **1384,** June 2012, pages 72-81.

A somewhat vicissitudinous history behind this large building on the western edge of the ancient centre of Haarlem in the Netherlands (fig.3) led to a collaboration between two practices: Bolles & Wilson were the principal architects, but Döll Architecten were responsible for the town hall

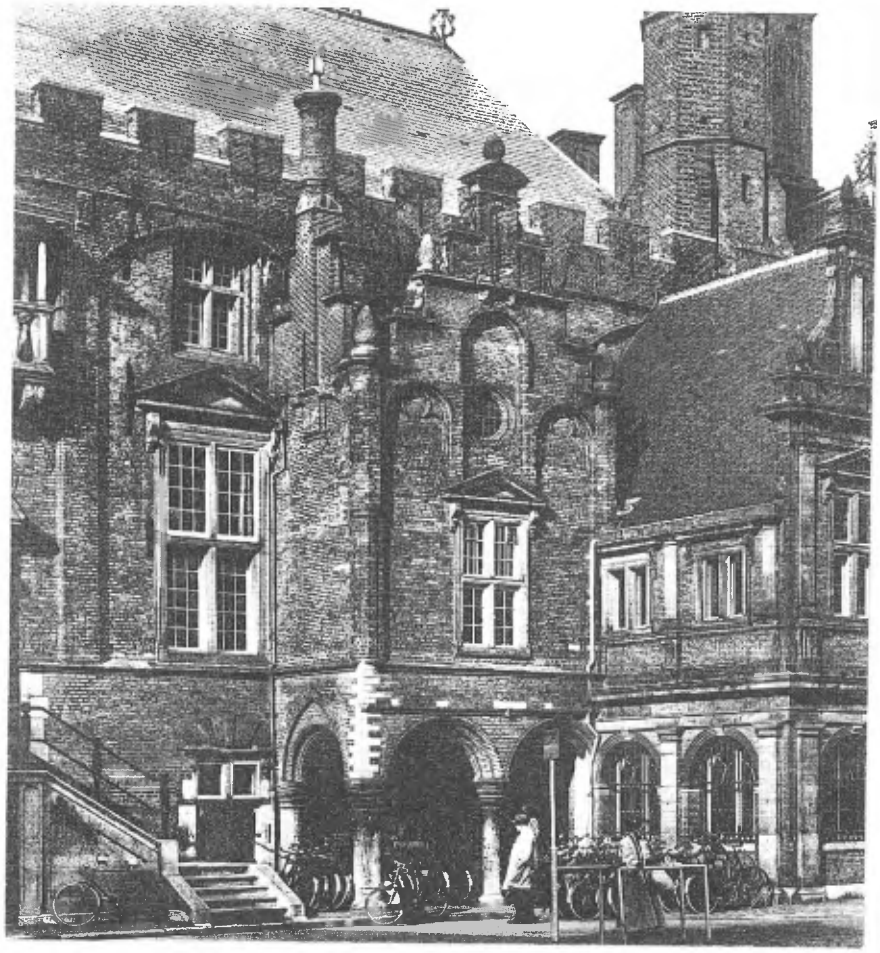

Fig. 4 Town Hall (*Raadhuis*), central Haarlem, Netherlands: the kernel of this brick building dates from the middle of the fourteenth century; the two annexes were added in the fifteenth century; that to the right was modernised in 1633, when too the other Classical windows were added.

interiors. There is a further duality, for the building — unusually (uniquely?) — combines a town hall with a multiplex cinema. That the result is in no way schizophrenic is a tribute to the two firms and perhaps also to the commissioning municipality.

Haarlem possesses an impressive central Town Hall (*Raadhuis*) with work from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries (fig.4), with some nineteenth-century reconstruction. This is 'still in us for political and ceremonial functions, but as local services proliferated in the 20th century, satellite offices for local authority departments grew up around the town. The new building at Raakspoort was devised to bring them all together ...' (p.74).

It is located at a junction of the historical core and the start of what we may call 'Greater Haarlem' — itself the usual combination of (to borrow the title of an 1966 spaghetti western) the good, the bad, and the ugly. At ground level an oblique passageway runs through the building, thus interconnecting *and* separating the old and the newer districts — yet a further duality. The passageway influences the plans of the upper floors — though not that of the subterranean lower ground floor, which houses eight film theatres of varying sizes.

The building has a prominent slim clock-tower, demanded by the municipal council, which also, it seems, insisted on the use of brick in homage to the Dutch architect Willem Marinus Dudok (1884-1974), whose best known work is the Hilversum Town Hall (1924-30)

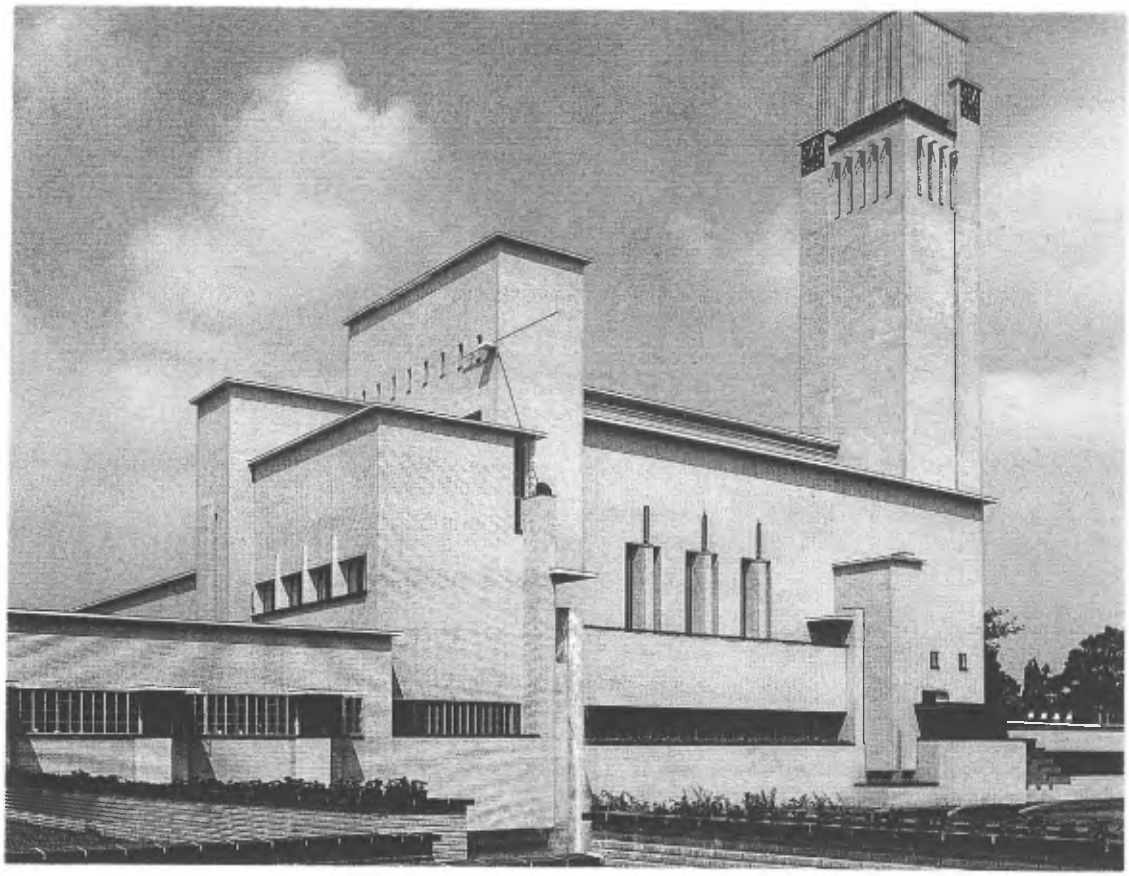

Fig. 5. Town Hall, Hilversum, Netherlands (1924-30) by Willem Marinus Dudok.

— a building to which the much over-used epithet *iconic* really does apply (fig.5). Actual construction at Haarlem is of reinforced concrete framing with 120 mm (4 inches) thermal insulation in the cavity between load-bearing structure and brick facing. The system permits a fascinating variability in the windows, of laminated timber coated with black plastic: some project from the wallface whilst others recede with deep reveals; others run round corners in an echo of a common 1930s device.

This in-and-out texture of the building is reflected in most of the facing itself, which is of red bricks in an irregular Flemish Garden Wall Bond and with textual interest added by projecting every fourth course. Contrasting with this are sections of brickwork without the salient courses — though not, as stated on p.77, in Stretcher Bond: they are, in fact, in the same bond as the others. They are laid with a paler mortar, so that their overall appearance is lighter in colour. This helps to emphasise the vertical non-alignment of the windows, particularly in the not-quite-straight eastern façade.

Set into or against the brickwork are stone fragments and ironwork from earlier buildings on the site — one further expression of the building's duality and of its marriage of past and present.

This is a large complex, a little quirky in places yet undeniably in a well-established Dutch brickwork tradition. Peter Blundell Jones's assessment is warm — and justifiably so: this is a welcome addition to the Haarlem townscape, albeit lacking the coherence and intimacy of its Hilversum precursor of eight decades earlier.

* * *

9. Keith Wrightson, *Ralph Tailor's Summer: A Scrivener, his City and the Plague,*
xiv + 208 pages, 16 illustrations, 3 maps,
New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press, 2011
ISBN 978-0-300-17447-2, price £20-00 hardback.

Plague hit Newcastle-upon-Tyne in early May 1636 and burned itself out in the last week of December that year. Ralph Tailor was a scrivener, whose work included the writing of the nuncupative wills, that is wills given orally and because of illness or infirmity not signed by the testator although witnessed and signed by others. Wrighton gives a vivid account of the people who died in the summer and autumn of 1636 but he provides much more. Of the sixteen illustrations, seven are nineteenth-century photographs of Newcastle buildings, timber-framed with multiple jetties. By the 1870s to 1890s, the infill of the jettied portions is brick laid between the relatively close-set timber verticals. Some of these buildings survive today, particularly the former merchant's house at the foot of Long Stairs (p.19).

D.H. KENNETT

AND FINALLY

In item 7 above, I referred to the American word 'bloviating', meaning 'talking pompously'. Immediately after posting a proof of that item to David Kennett, I came across an except from a profile of the architect Peter Wilson, published in *Brick Bulletin* and quoted in 'Pseuds Corner' in *Private Eye,* **1317,** 29 June - 12 July 2012, p.29. The following brief extracts give a flavour of its bloviating, 'Pseuds Corner' style.

Asked about the use of brick in his projects, Wilson claimed that 'at the age of twelve' he realised that 'a baked-earth tectonic multiple' — what most of us call a *brick* — 'possessed not only physical but also rhetorical, emblematic and even anatomical dimensions ...': in other words — well, *what* exactly?

Quite apart from the fact that bricks are *fired* or *burned* rather than 'baked', one assumes that Wilson did not use these precise words at *twelve.* And one might hope that no-one would use them at *any* age. Otherwise, *we* may end up as the British Baked-Earth Tectonic-Multiple Society!

BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY
MEETINGS in 2012 and 2013

Saturday 6 October 2012
Brickworks Visit
Measham Works, Measham, Leicestershire
Hanson Brick's new factory, opened in September 2009, is the largest and most modern brickmaking facility in Europe, with the capactity to produce 100 million mud bricks per annum. Numbers are limited to *ten.*

Saturday 22 June 2013
Annual General Meeting
Beverley, East Yorkshire
with walk to see the brick buildings of historic Beverley in the afternoon

Details of the October meeting was included in the May/June mailing.
Details of the 2013 Annual General Meeting will be sent in April/May 2013

There is projected visit to the Tilbury Forts in August 2013, which may be a midweek visit. Also planned for 2013 is a Saturday visit to north and south of Oxford Street, London including the church of All Saints Margaret Street (1850-59; William Butterfield) in polychrome brickwork, Charles Dickens' childhood home and the Cleveland Street workhouse in the morning and brick churches for London's French communities, the Manette Street Workshouse and other buildings in the vicinity of Soho Square in the afternoon. Dates to be finalised in Autumn 2012 and announced in the November/December mailing.

In addition to the Annual General Meeting, other visits may be held..

The British Brick Society is always looking for new ideas for future meetings.
Suggestions of brickworks to visit are particularly welcome.
Offers to organise a meeting are equally welcome.
Suggestions please to Michael Chapman, Michael Oliver or David Kennett.

Changes of Address

If you move house, please inform the society through its Membership Secretary, Dr Anthony A. Preston at 11 Harcourt Way, Selsey, West Sussex PO20 0PF.

The society has recently been embarrassed by material being returned to various officers from the house of someone who has moved but not told the society of his/her new addess.