BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

SPRING MEETING
Saturday 18 April 2015

OXFORD – SOUTH AND WEST

Buildings Notes

These notes cover a part of Oxford which is distinctly "town" rather than "gown"; only two colleges are included: neither St Peter's College nor Nuffield College is well-known, and neither the Annexe to Brasenose nor the extensive new student housing on Paradise Street and St Thomas' Street registers in most persons' knowledge of Oxford. Beginning in Bonn Square we will walk along Queen Street to see the south side and then return examining its northern side: Queen Street is now one of Oxford's principal shopping streets. Next we shall be having a look at New Inn Hall Street, which via Shoe Lane also allows the rear of some of the buildings on the south side of Queen Street to be viewed. Off New Hall Inn Street is St Michael's Street which includes the buildings of the Oxford Union, where many of England's (often mediocre) politicians cut their debating teeth.

The second half of the visit will examine two buildings associated with the Tawney family in Oxford, commercial buildings and student housing between the castle and the railway station, before journeying to the western edge of Oxford to view two brick buildings, one just within Oxford's western boundary and one just beyond it, Seacourt Tower and Botley church, respectively.

BUILDING MATERIALS IN NON-UNIVERSITY OXFORD

Entering Oxford through the late-nineteenth-century development on Woodstock Road or Banbury Road, the two principal means of ingress from the north, the visitor might be forgiven for thinking that Oxford has a tradition of building in brick which goes back almost two centuries. The houses on the area developed by St John's College between 1865 and 1930 include some of the earliest brick buildings in the city and the development of the St John's College estate represents one of the earliest major uses of brick in Oxford.

Beyond university and college buildings, pre-nineteenth-century Oxford was a city of stone for churches and public buildings and of timber-framing, often covered with a protective layer of clay, for the houses. The infill to the timber frame was invariably wattle-and-daub. The architect J.C. Buckler drew the streets of Oxford in the 1820s and his drawings make it clear that streets like Queen Street and St Ebbe's Street were lined with timber-framed houses, many of them jettied or even double-jettied.

OXFORD BEFORE OXFORD CASTLE

Oxford, "the ford for oxen" was an Anglo-Saxon foundation on the high ground above the water meadows at the confluence of the rivers Thames and Cherwell: the town's principal medieval bridges, 'Grandpont' over the River Thames beyond the south end of the Saxon and medieval town and the smaller 'Pettypont' over the River Cherwell to the east of the town reflect its position between two rivers.

The first Oxford seems to have been a planned town with four main roads meeting at a central crossroads, now Carfax, a point which still represents the centre of Oxford. These four roads, known in 1279 at Northgate Street, High Street, Fish Street, and Great Bailey, probably had gates at the junction between the town and the country. These streets are now Cornmarket, High Street, St Aldgates and Queen Street, respectively. A reminder of the North Gate is its adjacent church of St

Michael at the North Gate which retains its Saxon tower. The town's limits and defences were extended in the early middle ages but the potential positions of the first set of gates can be marked by their adjacent churches: the original site of the church later called St Peter in the Bailey marked the probable original west gate at the west end of Queen Street; St Mary's church on High Street may have been the church associated with the first east gate; and St Aldgate's church is highly suggestive of the original site of the south gate.

Before the Norman Conquest, the town had an earthwork defence with an external ditch. This ditch, reused for the medieval stone wall, can still be seen behind the north side of St Michael's Street at the back of the buildings on the south side of George Street. Inside this defence was a series of intra-mural streets: St Ebbe's Street and New Inn Hall Street to the west and St Michael's Street and Ship Street to the north are the preserved examples. Later developments have made the eastern and southern intra-mural streets more difficult to discern although the lost streets of Exeter Lane and School Street could be the intra-mural streets at the original north-east corner of the defences. South of High Street and along the southern edge of the Anglo-Saxon walled town, the intra-mural streets have been lost.

OXFORD CASTLE

Oxford Castle is west of the Saxon town adjacent to it its west side and blocking the old road west. Building began in 1071 for Robert d'Oilly, the Norman knight charged by William I with keeping order in these parts. At its west end is the great motte, *circa* 250 ft (about 75 metres) in diameter and 64 ft (19.5 metres) high: still a formidable introduction to Oxford from the west. At a later date the original timber tower on its top was replaced by a stone-built shell keep, the ultimate place of safety if the castle were to be attacked. Nothing survives on top of the mound of either the timber tower or the keep but within the keep the well chamber has been located.

However, parts of the church within the castle founded by d'Oilly do survive. The twelfth-century crypt and the tower remain from St George's church. St George's Tower, a fearsome beast of coral rag built to a tapering design, was the largest of the towers on the perimeter wall of the castle and the only one to survive. Ralph Agas' map of the city in 1578 shows several of the towers.

Castles have baileys, often an inner and an outer bailey. Part of the inner bailey of Oxford Castle was market by an earthwork (mostly now lost) capped by a wall and towers and a wet ditch, traced archaeologically east of Castle Street in the Barbican Ditch under the modern county hall. To the north was a further earthwork, on the line of Bulwarks Lane, where also the north part of the city wall was extended in a south-western direction to meet the castle earthworks.

Building Oxford Castle involved the destruction of almost half the houses in the Saxon town and the take over of the western half of the Saxon town as the outer bailey of the castle. This is reflected in the street names used in the thirteenth century: Queen Street was 'Great Bailey', St Ebbe's Street was 'Little Bailey', and New Inn Hall Street was 'North Bailey'. The local church then became St Peter-in-the-Bailey.

Castles in southern England went out of fashion after the dynastic disputes of the early twelfth century calmed down but those in county towns found a new use after Henry II promulgated the Assize of Clarendon in 1166 when the sheriff of each county, or pair of counties such as Oxfordshire and Berkshire, was instructed to provide a county gaol and it was suggested that the castle in the county town be used. Justice and punishment of offenders for both Oxfordshire and Berkshire thus became centred on Oxford Castle: the castle at Reading disappeared in the late eleventh century, Windsor Castle was a royal residence, and whilst Wallingford Castle did receive high status prisoners, it was never the county prison. From 1166 right up to the end of the twentieth century Oxford Castle had been a secure place and a place where important trials took place. The later assize courts had a passage direct from the prison. In the twentieth century Oxford Prison became the location of choice for prisoners on remand for serious crimes and Oxford Assize Court the location for their trial.

None of the buildings used for the administration of justice survive from the middle ages; the triumph of parliament in the Civil War, 1642-1649, meant the destruction of many buildings within castles in royalist centres. Oxford had been a stronghold for Charles I and for some years his capital and suffered accordingly. A new prison was rebuilt to the designs of William Blackburn, a noted

prison architect, beginning in 1785 and completed under Daniel Harris, the gaol keeper and an amateur architect, about twenty years later. The convicts were the labour force for building the jail. Until 1863, executions were conducted above the tower at the entrance to the prison. More wings were added in 1848-52 by H.J. Underwood, following in 1839-41, the building of a new County Hall, incorporating new assize courts, designed by the younger John Plowman in a neo-Norman style and meant to look foreboding and forbidding.

By then, the town was spreading westwards and the inner bailey area was unnecessary and an impediment to expansion. Across its northern part, between 1767 and 1790 New Road was cut from the west end of Queen Street to the southern end of Worcester Street. The Oxford Canal then took over the bailey area north of New Road building a wharf and enlarging this to a full scale basin in 1790: Nuffield College stands on the site of the basin (see below 'Nuffield College').

County administration remains within the castle precinct. On the eastern edge is Oxfordshire County Hall of 1969, called Macclesfield House: the Earls of Macclesfield live at Oxfordshire's oldest brick house, Shirburn Castle (begun in the fourteenth century). Behind the Oxford Registry Office is a 1960s building for Oxfordshire County Council, a pre-cast concrete effort designed by Albert E. Smith, then the county architect. Castle sites within a county town, being royal in origin remained part of the county even if the county town, like Oxford was, had been designated a county borough (a unitary authority in place from 1888 to 1974). At the western extremity, west of the great motte, is Oxford Registry Office, of 1911-12 by W.A. Daft. This has a V-shaped footprint with a blunt base facing the crossing of Tidmarsh Lane with New Road and Park End Road. Of orange-brown stone with white stone accents, this has a pedimented entrance with a cupola above: rather a jolly building.

QUEEN STREET

Queen Street is recorded by various earlier names:

pre-1066	Westgate Street
*c.*1260 and 1279	Great Bailey
1578	The Shambles (Butcher Row)
1627	Old Butcher Row
1772 and 1794	Butcher Row
by 1850	Queen Street

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, Queen Street has become one of central Oxford's two principal shopping streets (the other is Cornmarket, with the Clarendon Centre as an indoor space providing a weatherproof walkway with shops between them. Significantly, both Cornmarket and Queen Street are pedestrian streets, although east-bound local buses are permitted to edge their way very slowly along the latter.

'The Shambles' and 'Butcher Row' indicate a former importance of Queen Street; the town's butchers traded here on a wide street, which in 1578 had a shambles or series of market stalls for butchers down its centre. This also accounts for its comparative width in relation to most streets in Oxford.

Bonn Square

Bonn Square was created in 1874 after the demolition on its original site of the church dedicated to St Peter-in-the-Bailey, then a late-eighteenth-century building. (For the new church building see St Peter's College, below). Bonn Square takes its name from one of Oxford's twin towns, the university city of Bonn in the German Rhineland and the birthplace of Ludwig van Beethoven. Another of the twin towns of Oxford is the Dutch university city of Leiden.

The centre piece of the square is an o*belisk* erected to commemorate those who died in British colonial wars in Uganda.

At the north-west corner of Bonn Square is *New Road Baptist Church* built in 1819 to the designs of John Hudson, the surveyor of bridges for Oxfordshire. Ashlar-fronted of three bays, Pevsner remarks that the façade is "not a well-integrated composition" with a big lunette between attached columns flanked by niches on the upper floor.

Between Castle Street and St Ebbe's Street is the *Westgate Shopping Centre*, a restless series of protruding blocks in a dull buff brick laid in Stretcher Bond, looking dirty and not well-maintained: the whole could do with careful repointing. This is a shopping mall, not too large, not too forbidding; these American imports to England began to blight town centres in the 1960s and went out of fashion a decade and a half later only to be revived on a more horrendous scale as out of town malls. Westgate is better than many, probably on account of its relatively small size. On the upper two floors of the western half is Oxford City Library. A team led by Oxford City architect, Douglas Murray, was responsible for the design of this 1969 building.

South Side from West to East

The first building on the south side of Queen Street is a three-storeyed structure faced in red brick laid in Stretcher Bond, before Easter 2015 housing the Oxford branch of *British Home Stores*: there were notices of closure as these notes were being written and it has now been closed. Oxford people are clearly not British Home Stores customers. The stone façade forming the left third of the building's frontage derives from the former offices of Hall's Brewery, which were designed by Oxford-based Wilkins & Jeeves in 1914; the builders were Wooldridge & Simpson, also of Oxford.

The large store of *Marks and Spencers* occupies the site of the now demolished Electra Palace cinema, opened on 27 January 1911, the fourth cinema to open in Oxford. After various changes in ownership, the Electra Palace lasted until 23 August 1958, when the building was taken over by the Oxford Industrial Co-operative Society as their main Oxford store (moving from two sites on George Street); the Co-op inserted a floor across the auditorium but retained the barrel-vaulted roof of the cinema.

The Co-op store was demolished in 1978 and the present Marks & Spencers store built. The street frontage of the ground floor is glass; the structural steel columns, discreetly encased in plasterboard, allow the whole front to be purely a weather skin. On the right and left of the upper part of the frontage are areas of a yellow-buff brick laid in Stretcher Bond. The centre portion is overlaid in white stucco.

Above a ground floor which is almost completely glass, the left-hand portion of the front of *Topshop* is a large oriel in a deep red brick laid in Stretcher Bond; the oriel is raised on three stepped brackets of red brick. Where the floor levels are situated is a single soldier course in the a slightly lighter red brick, suggesting either chosen from a different batch when removed from the kiln or from a different firing. At the head of the gable is a single window. The west side of the upper part of the façade is covered with concrete render.

Adjacent is the premises of *Flight Centre*, three storeys of which the upper two are in a dull red brick laid in Stretcher Bond. The ground floor is glass. Above, on the first floor is two pairs of windows with raised brickwork surrounding and dividing them. The three, centrally-placed, second-floor windows have a similar arrangement of raised brickwork above and between them.

The White Company, a clothing business, took over the most interesting brick frontage on the south side of Queen Street. Until mid-2014, this had brickwork in a deep red, almost maroon, brick, very skilfully laid; the bricks had bevelled edges. Into this were set two formations of yellow brick in the form of a Petrine Latin cross: St Peter was crucified upside down by the Roman authorities. The new tenants to comply with their company name set plaster on the street façade and painted this white. The side gable is in yellow brick in Stretcher Bond; this good quality brick is the colour of the yellow brick now covered by the white-painted plaster.

Eat occupies a single-bay, three-story building, which from the fenestration on the second and third floors was clearly built in the 1930s. In yellow brick laid in Flemish Bond, the upper floors of the front seem not to have been altered since construction.

The remaining buildings have stone façades or are covered in concrete.

North Side from East to West

Carfax is the open space formed at the east end of Queen Street by the demolition in 1896 of St Martin's church, the early-fourteenth-century tower of which still stands: it offers good views over the city. Carfax is the meeting point of four roads; the name could be a corruption of *quadrifurcus*, Latin for 'four forks', and the centre point of the Anglo-Saxon town.

On Carfax, *Tower House* and the *Midland Bank* (now HSBC) occupy the north side of Queen Street; both are by H.T. Hare, the architect of Oxford Town Hall on the east side of St Aldgate's, the road south from central Oxford, leading to 'Grandpont', now more prosaically known as Folly Bridge. Both Tower House and the Midland Bank were built in 1896-97 and are faced in stone. On the north-east corner of Carfax, Lloyd's Bank was rebuilt in 1901 in an ornate, vaguely Jacobean style; it was designed by Samuel Slater, an Oxford architect.

Apart from the glass-fronted ground floor, the building occupied by the *Nationwide Building Society* is a virtually untouched specimen of a smaller Victorian office block. The modern entry is off-centre and clearly is placed where the original one was. Above the entrance doors is a bay window rising through both upper storeys with curved glass in the side portions. Above the bay window is one of three dormers. On the first floor there are three wider sash windows to the east (the right-hand side) and two to the west (the left-hand side). There are three windows to both sides on the second floor, with those on the west side narrower.

The yellow brick of the two upper floors is laid in Flemish Bond. There is much use of stone in this façade, with swags and motifs in the band above the second floor. The flower motif in the west side is different to that in the east side of the stonework band, now painted white. In the gable of the dormers, the brickwork is elaborate, including blocks of stretchers laid vertically and horizontally.

The entry to *The Clarendon Centre* is flanked by a single bay with brickwork to the east, now occupied by *Cornish Kitchen,* and to the west the four-bay premises of *French Connection* also with its upper floors fronted by brickwork. The upper parts of both side portions are in a dull buff brick, with yellow brick soldier courses above and below the curved windows.

36-37 Queen Street was built in 1912 as the showrooms of Morris Garages Ltd. The façade makes much use of timber and large windows, ideal for showing off motor cars in 1912 still a luxury product and very much a new thing: Gottlieb Daimler had perfected the petrol engine less than twenty years earlier, in 1896. Notice the brick gable in dull red brick laid in English Bond to the west of the building. The building was designed by an Oxford architect, Herbert Quinton.

Morris took his car showrooms off to the southern end of St Aldgates in 1932 to a big ashlar-faced building designed by Henry Smith, which with a massive brick-built rear extension has now become the Oxford Crown Court. Geoffrey Tyack called Morris's new premises "pompous" but I suppose that if you are a self-made millionaire you could afford to indulge yourself in a degree of architectural pomposity: Morris had distinct ideas about what was proper for the image of Oxford he wished to create (see 'Nuffield College' below).

32-35 Queen Street is a large building, five bays wide and four storeys and an attic with dormers. It was built in 1888 (datestone) as the 'Wilberforce Temperance Hotel' to designs of F.W. Albury. The red brick is laid in English Bond amongst much stone.

In March 2015, when the first draft of these notes was being written, the left-hand side of the building was unoccupied and the frontage covered with scaffolding. The whole of the brickwork is now visible.

The complex frontage is topped by three large dormer windows

31 Queen Street is dismissed by Nikolaus Pevsner as "the only interesting building [on the street], Victorian, of 4 storeys, with very consistent fenestration, a close row of segment-headed, a close row of round-headed, another close row of segment-headed windows", referring to the first, second and

third floors. Originally the first and third floors had balconies demarcated by the "segment-headed windows".

Built as Hyde's shop in front of the firm's clothing factory, the frontage with the quintuple groups of windows is stone but the side and back walls are a dull pinkish-red brick. The building was designed in 1877 by the Oxford-based architect Frederick Codd; the builders were Symm & Co and the front part alone is reputed to have cost between £8000 and £9000 to erect. The premises are now occupied by *East,* a clothing retailer.

Hyde &Co were established in Queen Street from at least 1839 and are recorded at 32 Queen Street from 1842. The factory to the rear was built in 1869. The factory is four storeys in a dull red brick and can be seen on the square at the eastern end of Shoe Lane. The semi-basement houses the boiler. On the ground floor was the great steam cutting room with the two upper storeys used as sewing rooms, each housing more than a hundred sewing machines. It was quite literally a sweat shop.

The upper part of the side wall to Queen Street is in a yellow brick, probably a product of Gray's, later Webb's, Brickyard, whose clay pit survives behind no.265 Woodstock Road.

At almost the west end of the south side of Queen Street is a semi-detached pair of houses, now occupied by single shops, *Accessorize* and *Jeans West*. The building is three storeys of red brick in a bond which is difficult to discern owning to the use of much stone and render.

NEW INN HALL STREET

As noted above, New Inn Hall Street has its origins as an intra-mural street of the Saxon town. It runs on approximately northwards course from Bonn Square, the original site of St Peter-in-the-Bailey church. The street had a number of earlier names:

by 1379	North Bailey
1570	Seven Deadly Sins Street
mid-C17	New Inn Lane
1797	New Inn Hall Lane
by 1850	New Inn Hall Street

The west side is dominated by the buildings for St Peter's College with the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church at its original northern end. The latter is a stone-built structure in the Gothic style with cross gables and a prominent spire; it designed in 1878 by Charles Bell and replaced an earlier Methodist chapel, designed in 1817 by W. Jenkins and demolished *circa* 1970. The older building had been taken over by St Peter's College some years before its demolition.

Two modern brick buildings can be pointed out at opposite ends of the west side of New Inn Hall Street. At the south end is a three-storeyed shop with the ground floor mostly windows but with interesting use of specials to frame the windows on the two upper floors. The red brick is laid in Stretcher Bond.

The other modern brick building on the west side is the series of shops in yellow brick built in 1988 (datestone on the coffee shop) which take the street to its junction with George Street.

There is more of brick interest on the east side which also includes much older buildings both stone-built and timber-framed. It is described from south to north.

On the south corner with Shoe Lane is an office block for the solicitors *Withy King* including a polygonal lift tower with angled bricks at its corners. The steel-framed structure is clad in yellow brick laid in Stretcher Bond. Obtuse-angled bricks are used at the various cut-off corners and in the outer brickwork of the lift shaft.

Opposite to this is the late-twentieth-century building for *The Coventry Building Society,* on the site of *St Michael's Infants School,* erected in 1876 to designs by E.G. Bruton; this is reported as having been in coloured brick.

The building society occupies specially-designed premises: see the stone plaque displaying the arms of the building society on the first floor on the New Inn Hall Street side. The plan is a single bay facing west, an angled bay, two bays facing south, an angled bay, and a bay facing east. In each bay, except for the last, there is a wide window going up into a triangular gable.

The brick is a dark variegated one laid in Stretcher Bond.

Behind the building society, in the same brick, is a shop built in the same brick, and clearly part of the same building programme.

North of the building society, and worth noting, is a series of timber-framed and stuccoed ranges on the street's east side. The sandwich shop, *Morton's*, at nos. 20, 22, and 24 with gable, is a series of timber-framed buildings, probably seventeenth century in date.

Next, one stone-built building must to be mentioned: *St Mary's Hall* now called *Frewen Hall*, a hostel for members of Brasenose College. Brasenose, in the north-east quarter of the town, was the original, late-medieval, middle-class college founded in 1509 by William Smyth, Bishop of Lincoln from 1495 to 1514, and Sir Richard Sutton, a prosperous Lancashire lawyer and businessman. Both Smyth and Sutton were relatively "poor boys made good" and protégés of that relatively "poor girl made good", Lady Margaret Beaufort, who began life as the daughter of a minor member of the middle-ranking stratum of the gentry in fifteenth-century Bedfordshire and ended up as the mother of the king of England: by dint of conquest (as the victor on Bosworth Field on 22 August 1485) her only child, born before her fourteenth birthday, became Henry VII (*r.*1485-1509).

St Mary's Hall was instigated by the Augustinian Canons in 1435 as a hostel to accommodate their novices studying at the University of Oxford. In the middle ages, halls were how undergraduates were housed; they consisted of several pupils, up to about twenty, living under one roof and being instructed by one or more masters. Several colleges, in fact, grew out of existing halls; these include Brasenose College which took over the buildings of Brasenose Hall.

At Frewin Hall, there survives the fifteenth-century outer gateway and the lower portions of two bays of ribbed vaulting. The two ranges have been refaced more than once: that facing south in the eighteenth century although this building's origins belong to the twelfth century from which a cellar with a reused column and capital survive.

Brasenose College have taken over practically all the brick buildings on the east side of New Inn Hall Street between the entry to Frewen Hall and St Michael's Street, with the exception of that on the corner.

Beyond the stone building is a courtyard of timber-framed and stuccoes buildings with on the street frontage a terrace made up of four distinct structures: two single houses followed by a terrace of four houses.

The first single house is two-bayed but with four arched pieces of fenestration on the ground floor, the northern one of which was originally a doorway. The front is in red brick laid in Flemish Bond, with much yellow brick. The side wall is in a dull red brick in English Bond.

The second single house is three storeys with an attic and rendered. Towards the northern end is a scratched marker indicating the division between St Michael's Parish and St Peter-le-Bailey in 1933.

Each house in the terrace of four houses is three storeys with an attic and originally with a basement. The ground floor has a single wide window; the first and second floors each have two windows. There are dormers to the attic storey. The now somewhat grubby yellow brick is laid in English Bond. The doorways are pushed forward by half a brick.

Brasenose College do not own the corner building, but they have built another series of student rooms on St Michael's Street (see below).

The corner building is a large originally detached building (the St Michael's Street building of Brasenose College now abuts its east side) but was part of the development which included the terrace of four houses immediately to the south. This is three storeys and an attic; there is just a hint on New Inn Hall Street of the original basement. On St Michael's Street are two wide bays; an angled corner bay joins the frontages on both roads; on New Inn Hall Street are also two bays one of which contains

the entry. It is in yellow brick laid in English Bond; the brick is obviously local, probably from Gray's, later Webb's Brickyard at the northern end of Woodstock Road.

Now the St Michael's Campus of Kings Oxford, a privately-run further education college specialising in providing a pre-university diploma for foreign students, it is where St Edward's School, now on a site opposite to the former brickyard on Woodstock Road, was founded in 1883.

New Inn Hall Street was extended northwards to meet George Street in 1872. On the east corner is the former offices of the Oxford Electricity Company, built in 1938. Electricity was nationalised in 1947 and at some point after that, the former Electricity Company offices became the Oxford Labour Exchange, later the Job Centre, a function it retained until about 2009. The ground floor became O'Neill's Irish bar only in the 2010s; the offices above are currently empty and on 2 March 2015 began to be covered with scaffolding. The building is four storeys with an attic added later. They are in the standard neo-Georgian style for minor government and local government buildings of the late 1930s, using a buff brick laid in English Bond; the windows are well detailed and those with rounded heads given an appropriate treatment.

ST PETER'S COLLEGE

Until the 1970s and 1980s, the colleges of the University of Oxford were single gender. Only two Oxford colleges originally for men were initially built of brick but those for women undergraduates were all of brick* but the two men's colleges were designed for men from very different brands of Anglican churchmanship. Keble College, the more famous, was for those of a High Church disposition and building was ongoing between 1868 and 1882.

St Peter's College is much less well-known architecturally and originally catered for Anglican undergraduates favouring a more Low Church disposition. Founded in the year in which he died by Francis J. Chavasse (d.1928), the Bishop of Liverpool, and his son, later the Bishop of Rochester, both members of the Evangelical wing of the Church of England, the college began life as St Peter's Hall, a university hostel; it became St Peter's College in 1961. The college has a complex of buildings derived in part from earlier institutions. These are described from south to north along New Hall Inn Street.

The southernmost building is the former Pupil Teacher Centre and Central for Girls of 1901 designed by London architect Leonard Stokes (1858-1925). The street front is coursed rubble walling with stone quoins. The street façade shows two wings, each a single bay, the southern one originally the Pupil Teacher Centre, flanking a recessed centre of three wide bays, each bay having three mullioned and transomed windows but with the fenestration forming a continuous band across the sunken ground floor; the first floor has three smaller four-light windows. The higher wings, also of two storeys, have doors set in banded rustication: a feature borrowed from the work of Sir Christopher Wren.

The Central School for Girls is on the site of one of three British Schools in Oxford; the British Schools were the Nonconformist answer to the National Schools of the Anglican Church (see below for Stokes' work at the other two National Schools).

Pupil Teachers were young men and women being trained on the job: the system was abolished in 1922. One of the last teachers so trained was the late John G. Dony, MBE, BSc(Econ), PhD, HonALS, the senior history master of Luton Grammar School for Boys. John Dony's early career, interrupted by war service in the merchant navy, had been as an apprentice turner with an engineering firm in Luton.

After the building ceased to be the Central School for Girls, it had a number of different educational uses. In the 1960s and 1970s, the building was used as the engineering department of the College of Further Education which at that date was established in the former Oxford Grammar School for Boys on George Street (this building is now the History Faculty of the University of Oxford). The big rooms of the central school were ideal for housing large-scale equipment. By the 1990s, the former Central School for Girls had become part of St Peter's College.

(In 1900, Stokes had designed the former Central School for Boys, Gloucester Green, which for many years was the Bus Station Waiting Room; it is now a restaurant. This has an ashlar-faced

centre with a cupola above which housed the cloakrooms behind the canted bays and the central hall. The classrooms both to the east in a two-storey block with a stair turret to the north and to the west, a single-storey portion, are brick-built in English Bond. To cut out the noise from the market which was held there is much plain walling. On the other side of Magdalen Bridge, Stokes did East Oxford Primary School, Union Street, in 1901. He was a noted designer of schools, also benefiting from his father's expertise as an Inspector of Schools.)

Adjacent to the northern wing of the former Central School is Hannington Hall, once part of a nineteenth-century attempt to revive the former New Inn Hall. The present building was designed in 1832 by Thomas Greenshields and was altered in 1897-98 to designs of Walter K. Shirley and altered again for St Peter's College. The upper floor, with its north-facing Venetian window, is the college dining room. The street frontage, facing east, is five bays, faced with high-quality ashlar; the outer bays are flanked by giant pilasters.

These buildings are separated from the former St Peter's church by iron railings including a gate which provide vehicular access to the college precinct. St Peter's church is an early work of Basil Champneys (1842-1935). Designed in 1874, this church dedicated to St Peter-in-the-Bailey replaced one built between 1724 and 1740 on the site which became Bonn Square. The college chapel contains a plaster cast of Chavasse's tomb in Liverpool Cathedral.

The next building is the former Rectory of St Peter's church. This is a Georgian building of two-and-a-half storeys and five bays wide of fine quality ashlar. The building is now study bedrooms for undergraduates and includes the pedestrian entrance to the college.

The college site is roughly trapezoidal with each of the north side, backing on to the Methodist Church, the east side, along New Inn Hall Street, and the south side, facing Bonn Square, all straight but the longest side, to the south-west, curving along Bulwarks Lane. The original undergraduate buildings were built along the inside the stone wall flanking the north-east side of Bulwarks Lane. In red brick with stone dressings they were designed in 1930 by Oxford-based architect, R. Fielding Dodd, using a late-seventeenth-century style incorporating windows with mullions and transoms. Dodd's design resulted in two long blocks in the 1930s and others were erected in the same style in the 1950s. Despite being totally inoffensive, Nikolaus Pevsner characterised them as "they look 1900 rather than 1930" but then his waspishness about non-Modern Movement buildings of the 1930s often takes over in the 46 volumes of the first editions of *The Buildings of England.*

In the twenty-first century other buildings for undergraduate and graduate accommodation have been erected. One with stone facings overlooks Bonn Square. Another block, at the eastern edge of the Bulwarks Lane series, is in red brick but a different red brick to what was used before. These are in Stretcher Bond.

Further buildings for St Peter's College have been erected on Tidmarsh Lane and St Thomas' Street. One of these in a yellow brick was opened by Lord White of Hanson Brick in 1995. The other is more recent.

The Master's Lodgings is outside the college precinct and utilises the former Canal House, built by the Oxford Canal's surveyor, Richard Tawney, in 1827-29. It is a stone-faced building on the highly visible west and south sides but red brick in Flemish Bond on the north and east sides; it was originally designed to indicate the prestige of the Oxford Canal (see below).

* The women's colleges with nineteenth-century buildings — Lady Margaret Hall (1878 for members of the Church of England), Somerville College (1879 without restriction), St Hugh's College (1886) and St Hilda's College (1893) — all built in brick and have continued to do so: witness buildings erected in the twenty-first century at all four. The Society of Oxford Home Students (1879, now St Anne's College, Woodstock Road) did not begin building until the 1930s and used squared rubble; its later buildings are in concrete.

ST MICHAEL'S STREET

St Michael's Street was an intra-mural street; the city wall can be glimpsed as the back wall of the showrooms of the antique dealers, Mallams. It has had a number of earlier names:

1405	Wood Street
1548	Bocardo Lane
1751 and 1850	unnamed on city maps
1900	St Michael's Street

Three nineteenth-century buildings on the south side are of especial interest: the hostel for Brasenose College, the Oxford Union, and the Three Goats Heads; on the north side there is Mallams, the antique dealers, and for the former Baptist church, North Gate Hall.

The Brasenose Annexe is a tall building, three bays wide (the outer ones with paired windows and the central one very narrow) of four storeys plus an attic, in buff brick laid in Stretcher Bond.

The Oxford Union Society is where many of England's politicians have cut their debating teeth; the older generation usually had read Greats (= classics and philosophy up to Immanuel Kant) and went off and had a secular job for some years before entering full-time politics, which can be thought of as a rather more honest apprenticeship than doing Modern Greats (Philosophy, Politics and Economics – usually known as PPE) followed by several years being a policy advisor and then picking up a safe seat.

Opinions differ on this building. The anti-Victorians see it as one of the worst excesses of muddle and muck: it is built of a rather unprepossessing dull red brick, which has not been cleaned for more than one generation if not two, and contains more than one building by more than one architect. The society bought the extensive site in 1852 and started building five years later. The original debating chamber, now part of the old library, is by Benjamin Woodward (1815-1861) of Woodward & Deane, the Dublin-based practice who were the architects in 1855-60 of the Oxford Museum of Natural History on South Parks Road. To decorate the interior of this temple to rational debate, Woodward called upon a galaxy of young talent including William Morris, Edward Burne Jones, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and a host of others. At the time, Coventry Patmore remarked that it was "so brilliant as to make the walls look like the margins of an illuminated manuscript". Morris repainted the roof panels in 1875 in a "new and lighter design" so the originals with their strange beasts cannot now be enjoyed. The room is a tall oblong with canted end; the roof structure is exposed.

After Woodward's death, William Wilkinson (1819-1901) of Oxford added a library in 1863 east of the debating chamber, again with a canted bay at the end. To complete the story, in 1878 Alfred Waterhouse (1830-1905) built a new debating hall in which pretentious little boys could hone their skills: it was, of course, larger than the old one. Then, in 1910-11, Mills & Thorpe of Oxford built a new library.

The Three Goats Heads is one of those fun buildings which one stumbles across most unexpectedly. Two bays wide, with a semi-basement, three floors and an attic, its semi-basement and raised ground floor are recessed at the centre and have steps to doorways on either side. Above the semi-basement is an area covered with tiles, breaking up the tall recess. The first and second floors and the attic dormers are in a very light-coloured yellow brick laid in English Bond. The sash windows are recessed behind pointed arches. The arches are made up of two rows of headers set on edge outlined by a row of headers in red brick. On the first floor the windows are divided by pillars of yellow brick; on the second floor there is a stone pillar at the centre of each pair of windows. The side of the building is in a dull red brick.

AFTERNOON SESSION

NUFFIELD COLLEGE

Nuffield College occupies the site of one of the two canal basins at the southern end of the Oxford Canal. Nuffield College was one of the gifts to the University of Oxford from William Morris, the early-twentieth-century bicycle maker turned mass production car manufacturer, and who thus transformed early-twentieth-century Oxford from a relatively sleepy university city into an important manufacturing town and one of the three most prosperous towns in England in the late 1930s: to this writer, the eastern side of Oxford is a pale imitation of another car-making town, Luton, Bedfordshire. The houses built for Morris's workers were smaller and of poorer quality than those built for the well-paid industrial proletariat in Luton *and* they cost up to £100 more to buy: in the late 1930s, depending on which local builder was responsible, the purchase price of three-bedroomed semi-detached houses in Luton was between £450 and £595 whilst those in East Oxford, many of which had smaller rooms, could be up to £700 to buy.

At least the town I grew up in and where I went to school was honest about its economic basis; modern Oxford for many decades tried to deny the source of much of its prosperity. The third one of the three prosperous towns was Coventry, significantly another town where cars are produced.

Nuffield College is also not what Morris originally intended: he wanted a postgraduate college devoted to science and engineering, essentially a 'business school' before anyone had thought that universities on this side of the Atlantic had anything to do with business education. After intervention by A.D. Lindsay, the university's vice-chancellor and Master of Balliol College, what Morris got for his £900,000 and the purchase of the site was a college for postgraduates devoted to the social sciences and economics.

The site was the eastern one of the two basins of the Oxford Canal. On it in 1938, Harrison, Barnes & Hubbard (lead designer Austen Harrison, whose earlier work had been in the design of colonial buildings) had originally designed a bold edifice with elements of classical architecture married to the idea of a medieval aisled hall. Morris did not like it; he told the university that it "was un-English and out of keeping with the best tradition of Oxford architecture; as well as contrary to my expressed wishes that it should be in conformity with that tradition". The new building was "on the lines of Cotswold domestic architecture" and built in Cotswold stone to look like a long-established foundation: the facing ranges of the quadrangle could be a village street in one of the more affluent Gloucestershire villages. Being a new college, Nuffield College wanted to look the part. The dominant feature is the great tower which is actually nine floors of library stack, hence the small windows. Building between 1949 and 1960 took place against a background of austerity and reduction in the original plan: a research institute on the other side of Worcester Street (where the municipal car park now is) was never built. The quadrangles do look like tidied up Cotswold cottages with ashlar walls and stone slate roofs complete with dormer windows for the second floor facing each other across an artificial pond.

THE TAWNEY FAMILY AND OXFORD

Mention the name 'Tawney' to historians of a certain vintage (those aged 60 and above and their now deceased contemporaries and predecessors) and one immediately thinks of R.H. Tawney (1880-1962), a late member of a family prominent in the affairs of Oxford from the eighteenth to early twentieth centuries. Richard Henry Tawney is a man about whom many stories are told. On arrival at Rugby Station in 1894, when a schoolboy of 14 en route to Rugby School, he met another new pupil who would become a life-long friend, William Temple, son of a bishop, later Archbishop of Canterbury, and himself to briefly hold that high office. In the Great War, Tawney was a sergeant in the Manchester Rifles and was wounded in action at Fricourt on the first day of the Battle of the Somme (1 July 1916): he spent several hours in agony in a foxhole. He later recalled that on returning to England he was taken to "a workhouse place" for convalescence. Visited by the Bishop of Oxford, the

nurses looking after Tawney were told “look after that man, there lies the finest mind in England”; the response of one of them to the injured sergeant was “I did not know you were a gentleman, sir”. Later in the 1920s and 1930s, Tawney “often wore his sergeant’s jacket”; the Professor of Economic History in the London School of Economics, also known as “the sage of Houghton Street”, had no interest in clothes or preferment: he turned down a peerage at least twice.

It is also said of Tawney that on being shown the records of the family brewing and banking businesses, he demonstrated little interest in them. The eighteenth century was not his period: he wrote extensively on the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and also two books still relevant today, *Equality* (1931 and revised edition 1938, the latter reprinted in 1952) whose theme is the consequences of inequality, and *The Acquisitive Society* (1920).

Their prominence in the business life of the city in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries allowed several men of the Tawney family to hold the office of Mayor of Oxford more than once. They also owned farms in Bisney, a hamlet beyond the western edge of north Oxford, where in St Mary’s church three of them are commemorated by wall plaques: Richard (*d.*1756) and his sons, Sir Richard (*d.*1791) and Edward (*d.*1800). The younger Richard Tawney was knighted as the senior alderman on Oxford City Council when George III and Queen Caroline visited the city when staying with the Earl of Macclesfield in 1785 and 1786; the mayor that year, John Treacher, heir to another brewery, was knighted on the earlier of the two visits. Treacher’s father had left an estate worth £40,000 at his death in 1780.

The association of the Tawney family and Oxford Corporation continued into the nineteenth century. Alderman Charles Tawney paid for the enlargement of the old town hall built in 1751. This town hall was replaced by the present one in St Aldgates, designed by Henry T. Hare in 1891 and built between 1893 and 1897. The new town hall was designed to celebrate Oxford’s new status as a county borough when that form of unitary authorities was introduced in 1889.

Morrell’s brewery, ‘the Lion Brewery’ on Thomas Street, was on the site of the original Tawney brewery although it was much reconstructed in the late nineteenth century. The Morrell and Tawney families were connected by marriage. The celebrated early-twentieth-century hostess, Lady Ottoline Morrell had married into the family. She hosted soirees and weekends for writers at Headington Hill Hall on the eastern outskirts of Oxford: members saw this house on an earlier meeting in Oxford.

At *No.1 Fisher Row*, overlooking Castle Mill Stream, one of the several rivulets which make up the River Thames on the west side of Oxford, in the early 1790s Edward Tawney, a brewer and sometime Mayor of Oxford, built a fine house in red brick laid in Flemish Bond with many overburnt bricks used in the façade, both headers and stretchers, but with some attempt at patterning. The house is three bays wide and three storeys high.

Next door in 1797, the same Edward Tawney endowed the Tawney Almshouses for four men and four women. *Nos. 2 and 3 Fisher Row* is a three storeyed pair of houses in a variegated brick with stone dressings; a stone, now lacking its inscription, in the gable shared by the two houses records their origin as the Tawney Almshouses. In 1800, Edward Twney bequeathed stock producing an income of £20 per annum for the upkeep and pensions for three poor men and three poor women aged over fifty and unwed (which could mean widowed). Edward Tawney also gae stock worth £21 per year for pensions for four poor tradesmen of Oxford, preferably from St Thomas’ parish. In 1884, the weekly pension of the occupants of the Tawney and Parsons Almshouses was between 8 and 10 shillings. The almshouses were sold by Oxford Corporation in 1968 and are now residences. The houses originally had overburnt headers in the Flemish Bond but due to their now separate ownership, this is less obvious as no.3 has been severely cleaned.

The business acumen of various members of the family was instrumental in creating the Oxford Canal, which winds north from Oxford on a flat route following an even contour though Oxfordshire and Warwickshire to link with the Coventry Canal at Hawksbury. It also shares a section of the Grand Union Canal in Warwickshire between Napton-on-the-Hill and Braunston: Napton-on-the-Hill is a good place to trace its circuitous route.

In Oxford, the canal terminated in two basins: one is now the car park between Worcester Street and Hythe Bridge Street, on the site of the other is Nuffield College. Above the latter is *Canal House*, the canal master’s house, designed by, built for and occupied by Richard Tawney in 1827-29. This Richard Tawney was the surveyor to the Oxford Canal: various members of the Tawney family in

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had branches out of the family business. *Canal House* is extremely grand: well-cut ashlar with narrow joints on all four sides as the external building material and a tetrastyle low Greek Doric portico to the west overlooking the former canal basin and wharf fronting the building but the gabled back wall and the long wall to the north are both in red brick laid in Flemish Bond. From Bulwarks Lane, it appears to have one-and-a-half storeys, but at a lower level is a further floor is at the level of the canal. Canal House is now used as the master's lodgings of St Peter's College.

PARK END STREET AND AREA

New Road leads into Park End Street, a quarter where a surviving remnant of the old industrial Oxford is squeezed between the River Thames and the Great Western Railway. The old industrial Oxford was based on food, clothing, and transport. This also extends east into the city along Hythe Bridge Street and George Street.

Park End Street and Hythe Bridge Street both lead to Frideswide Square. Paradise Street, St Thomas's Street and Tidmarsh Lane are part of this same formerly heavily industrialised area. This also extended into the western end of George Street. The main industries were clothing, transport and food.

Food is represented by the Morrell/Tawney brewery, now largely built over by modern housing, and by Frank Cooper's marmalade factory.

The Morrell/Tawney Brewery has been rebuilt as housing although various buildings from the late-nineteenth-century rebuilding of the brewery under the direction of Oxford architect H.G.W. Drinkwater remain, such as the brewhouse of 1879 and the offices of 1892, plus a magnificent eight-sided chimney in yellow and red brick.

Other breweries in the area, now all replaced, included the Swan Brewery on Paradise Street, founded in 1718; the Weaving Eagle Brewery on Park End Street of *circa* 1865; and Phillips Tower Brewery of 1885.

Frank Cooper's Marmalade Factory has lost its distinctive label across the front and is now in other uses. This is a four storey building, rather larger on the ground floor than on the upper floors. Herbert Quinton, another oxford architect, designed the premises in 1903, following the 1901Factory and Workshops Act which imposed new standards on premises. Frank Cooper's factory at 84 High Street did not meet these new standards. His new factory was 1,630 sq.ft. over four floors. Cooper also had a new house built at about this time, buying no.155 Woodstock Road, which in the 1990s had a dragon overlooking the street from the front gable: it lost this around the year 2000.

Hyde's factory on Queen Street was one clothing factory. On the south side of George Street was Lucas' factory of 1892 (now an Italian restaurant, Zizzi's); it was designed in 1892 by George Drinkwater who also designed public houses and new premises for several breweries. Adjacent to Lucas' were the vast premises of the Oxford Co-operative Society, built in 1980 and extended eastwards in 1929.

Transport, or rather travel, is represented by the Cantay Depository, and by two early garages: Hartwell's and the garage of the 'Oxford Royal Hotel'. There is also the hotel.

The *Cantay Depository* was the Archer, Cowley & Co warehouse, shippers to the British Empire. Its nine-bay frontage in a reddish brown brick laid in Flemish Bond was designed in 1901 by Oxford architect H.J. Tollit. It was a thoroughly up-to-date premises with a steel frame encased in either brick or concrete. The ground floor was devoted to shops with Archer, Cowley & Co's offices at the west end incorporating much glass and with mosaic floors.

Hartwell's Garage also has the name in its entrance on Park End Street but not on the floor at its exit on Hythe Bridge Street. Its extensive workshops are now occupied by *Staples* on Park End Street and by a futon distributor on Hythe Bridge Street.

The *Oxford Royal Hotel* has a frontage to three roads all in Temple Gutting stone but from the back on the Hythe Bridge Street side can be seen dark red brick in English Bond. English Bond also is

to be found on the side wall of its former garage (now occupied by *KwikFit*, a tyre company). This wall has an attractive series of panel marking out portions of the wall, with soldier courses at the base and top of the panels.

SEACOURT TOWER

What does one make of Seacourt Tower, and whence came its inspiration?

Beside the exit from the Western Bypass (the A34), the structure intrigues as you speed past on the elevated road. It began life as a multi-storey garage, to quote Nikolaus Pevsner "intended to look sensational with its grid of small concrete windows, triangular at the top and bottom". The origins can be seen in the western bow where the ramp originally was. Then there is the cruciform tower with its fan-like roofs.

The brick is a light orange laid in Flemish Bond.

At some point Beecher & Stamford's structure of 1965-66 stopped being a garage and became an office block. But what an office block!

Origins: let us try Woodbury County Courthouse, Sioux City, Iowa, USA, officially by William Steele with as associate architect, George Grant Elmslie, but actually by Elmslie. Elmslie completely remodelled the design from that by Steele which had been placed first in the competition for the county court house building: the states in the USA are divided into counties which often have major administrative buildings in the principal town; the administrative side of the building is frequently combined with provision for the administration of justice and civil law. Elmslie had worked for Louis Sullivan in Chicago from 1893 to 1909 and mostly in the final years for very little recompense. (Sullivan virtually abandoned architecture between 1903/04 and at least 1906 and in these years paid little attention to his practice. This Chicago practice based in the lonely eyrie of the top two floors of Auditorium Tower also failed to pick up any work in the reconstruction of San Francisco following the earthquake and fire in 1906 and also suffered badly in the sharp economic downturn of 1907.) Woodbury County Courthouse is a square building with a grand central atrium top-lighted by a hemi-spherical dome. Above the dome and to its rear is an office tower. The tower occupies a third of the footprint of the lower stages. The court rooms along the north and south sides of the upper floor of the publicly accessible portion of the building are top lighted.

Then behind Seacourt Tower is another bijou structure, a retail park with brick walls and a thatched roof. What were the designers thinking of when they thought of that combination in the 1980s!

FURTHER READING

Most of these notes have been written from personal observation over a long period of time. Reference works consulted were:

H.E. Slater and M.D. Lobel, ed., *Victoria County History of England: Oxfordshire,* **3,** 'The University of Oxford', Oxford and London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Historical Research, 1954; re-issued Folkstone: Dawsons for the Institute of Historical Research, 1965.

A. Crossley, ed., *Victoria County History of England: Oxfordshire,* **4,** 'The City of Oxford', Oxford and London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Historical Research, 1979.

Two volumes, which whilst now somewhat dated, give a great deal of information about the city. *VCH Oxon.,* **4,** is especially useful.

I. Mayrick, *Oxfordshire Cinemas*, Stroud: Tempus, 2007.

Pages 89-93, with illustrations of the exterior and the interior, record the Electra Palace on Queen Street.

N. Pevsner and J. Sherwood, *The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire*, London: Penguin Books, 1974.

Pevsner was responsible for Oxford; Sherwood for the rest of the county.

It is now somewhat dated and in many ways, its judgements on twentieth-century architecture are rather too much influenced by Pevsner's advocacy of the Modern Movement, also known as 'The International Style' after an exhibition in New York in 1933.

Pevsner virtually ignores many of the non-university buildings and is often dismissive of those he does include.

G. Tyack, *Oxford: an Architectural Guide,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Tyack adopts a chronological approach in this well-illustrated book and includes the Buckler drawings of St Ebbes's Street (p.116) and Queen Street (p.144). There are photographs of the Tawney house (p.178), of the Canal House and St Peter's College (p.200), and the architect's drawing of the Central School for Girls (p.265).

L. Wooley, 'Industrial Architecture in Oxford, 1870-1914' *Oxoniensia,* **75,** 2010, pp.67-96.

A well-researched paper, it gives details of breweries and clothing factories and workshops.

Some of the architects mentioned may be followed in:

R. Dixon and S. Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture,* London: Thames and Hudson, 1978, 2nd edn., 1985, pp.252-270.

Listing is selective and the choice of buildings noted is equally selective, particularly for architects who are *not* based in London.

A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary,* London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., 1985.

Listing is selective but for the London-based architects included the listing of the oeuvre is often complete. Those whose base was outside the capital fare much less well and fewer of them have entries which give lists of their works. No Oxford-based architects are included.

A short account of the life of R.H. Tawney is given:

L. Goodman, 'Tawney, Richard Henry (1880-1962)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* **53,** pp.844-850.

For Woodbury County Courthouse, Sioux City Iowa, USA see:

D. Gebhard and G. Mansheim, *Buildings of the United States: Buildings of Iowa,* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p.500.

D. Gebhard (ed. P. Gebhard), *Purcell & Elmslie: Prairie Prrogressive Architects,* Salt Lake City, UT: Salt Lake City, 2006, pp.133-140 with numerous illustrations.