

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE HISTORY OF BATH RESEARCH GROUP



No: 8	2019-20
MEETING REPORTS	2
MAJOR DAVIS' CONTRIBUTION TO BATH AS WE SEE IT	3
TWERTON GAOL: THE CITY OF BATH'S NEW MODEL PRISON, 1842 TO 1878.....	6
MR TOMPION AND HIS CLOCK.....	22
MONUMENTAL MASONS IN BATH IN THE 18 TH AND 19 TH CENTURIES.....	24
POSTSCRIPT FOR COVID : THE MICROBE by T.F.P.	33

EDITORIAL

As we all take stock of the 'Covid 19' pandemic of 2020, to the right you will see an advertisement taken from a *'Bath Chronicle'* of 100 years ago which refers to a former 'global pandemic' - that of the 'Spanish Flu' epidemic of 1916-1919.

It has been estimated that 17 to 50 million people died worldwide, and a quarter of the British population were affected. The death toll in Britain was reportedly 228,000, while it is said that more people died of it in 1918 than in the four years of the Black Death Bubonic Plague from 1347 to 1351.

(Current figures for Covid-19 are 0.9 million worldwide and 42,000 in Britain.)

It was nicknamed 'Spanish flu' as the first reported cases were in Spain. However, as this was during World War I, newspapers were censored (Germany, the United States, Britain and France all had media blackouts on news that might lower morale) so although there were influenza cases elsewhere, it was the Spanish cases that hit the headlines. The outbreak hit the UK in a series of waves, with its peak at the end of the war believed to be due to returning troops travelled home.

A further snippet from a *'Bath Chronicle'* this one from the start of the pandemic in 1916, is a light-hearted, if rather dated, poem signed 'T.F.P.', and is to be found as a postscript to these *PROCEEDINGS*, it begins:

"There's a certain demon-microbe with a longish Latin name,
Which I never could remember, though it's got through all the same,
Who's devastating efforts - may never trouble you -
Result in what the world at large is pleased to call "the flu."

Bulletin No. 2.

FIRST AID

National Health Campaign

"Never since the Black Death has such a plague swept over the world as the recent epidemics of influenza. Influenza infection is by contact and not airborne, and this being so, it is certainly preventable."

→ → What are you doing to make sure that your home is kept free from epidemic disease? With all respect the promoters of the FIRST AID National Health Campaign suggest one sure way to safeguard home health.

The regular use of

FIRST AID

Disinfectant Soap

Bath Chronicle 19 April 1919

MEETING REPORTS

UNFORTUNATELY, DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, A NUMBER OF MEETINGS WERE CANCELLED AND SEVERAL ABSTRACTS DELAYED.

ABSTRACTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS THAT DID TAKE PLACE WILL BE PUT UP ON THE WEBSITE WHEN AVAILABLE

RECENT ABBEY EXCAVATIONS

Monday 9th September 2019 St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker Cai Mason

MEDIEVAL ARCH AND EXCAVATIONS AT BATHAMPTON

Monday 11th November 2019 St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker John Withy

MAJOR DAVIS' CONTRIBUTION TO BATH AS WE SEE IT

Monday 7th October 2019

St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker

Doc Watson

Summary by

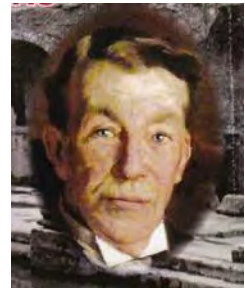
Doc Watson

Charles 'Major' Davies was the son of Edward and Dorothy Davis, Edward being the son of Charles and Lydia Davis a wealthy Bath family.

Dorothy was already a widow, her first husband and baby dying when out in India from where she returned to England on a widow's pension in 1823. She met Edward in London whilst he was training to be an architect under the tutelage of Sir John Soane of Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Returning to Bath with his new wife, Edward, having joined the masons, acquired his first big commission to design the new park for Bath - the Royal Victoria Park which was opened in 1830.

Charles 'Major' Davis was born in August 1828 and was trained as an architect to follow in his father's footsteps. But he was not to be trained in London under an eminent architect of the day but by his own father. When his father died in 1852, Davis established his own architect's firm in Westgate Buildings. In 1858 his grandmother died and left him an inheritance which allowed him to marry - one Selena Howarth, who had been born in India to a high ranking family in the East India Company, and buy a house in Pulteney Street (No. 55)



In May 1861 he designed the drinking fountain in Walcot Street. He was commissioned by and the fountain was donated to the town by Mrs Landon of the Royal Crescent.

In the massive Roman-like wall which shores the foundation of Bladud Buildings, there has recently been inserted a Drinking Fountain, of remarkable beauty worthy, indeed, of Rome itself. Even in that proverbially classic city, so rich in decorative fountains, the one now open to the public in Walcot Street would be conspicuously attractive, on account of its grandeur, combined with simplicity, elegance, and utility. The variety of material employed gives colour and richness to the design. The columns are of red and of grey granite, highly polished, the capitals of which are marble, displaying aquatic plants, broadly and correctly delineated, and yet treated artistically. All the details are in the finest taste, and have been most carefully considered, so as to produce harmonious effect. The bold sweep of the arch which encloses the whole is enriched with suitable mouldings, and panelled with emblems in unison with the adjacent parts. The variety of stone in this neighbourhood has enabled the architect (Mr. Charles Edward Davis) to combine Venetian red, yellow, blue, and cream-colour in the same composition. The general appearance is most satisfactory, and the granite basin for the public, the ample cistern for cattle and for dogs, are excellently arranged. From Bath Chronicle

In 1862 now a married man Davis needed some form of regular employment and applied for the post of Bath's City Surveyor of Corporate Works. He beat John Elkington Gill, the assistant to the former holder of the position, George Philip Manners, who had expected the job and Charles Phipps, a young and up and coming Bath architect.

Within a month of his securing the post, the Old Theatre Royal, which had opened in 1805, was burnt down on the Good Friday. How was it started? No one knows but it ended up a burnt-out shell. And within days Davis could be seen making his way amongst the ruins with a measuring stick and note pad. >

It was decided to hold a competition which was to be anonymous, the various entries choosing nom de plumes. Davis chose as his "Much Ado About Nothing", perhaps not a good idea as he lost out to Charles Phipps, who had, in turn, lost out to Davis in the stakes to be City Surveyor. Later Phipps would leave Bath and design Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket London, as well as renovating many theatres around the country.



Two years later in 1864, the old White Hart Inn in Stall Street had become such an eyesore that it was decided to pull down the abandoned building and replace it with a new Hotel, swimming pool and treatment rooms. Initially, the Council was prepared to fund the whole thing but when estimates were done, it was decided by the Council to pull out and local businessmen took over the finances.

A competition was held, organised by the City Surveyor, Davis. However, he did not only organise the competition but also won. His winning entry was disqualified as being too expensive and he was replaced by Wilson and Wilcox for the Grand Pump Room Hotel.

In 1866 a new Police station was built in Orange Grove to replace the old one in the High Street. Davis got the commission to design it.

In 1869 Davis was made a Captain in the Worcestershire Militia, having given up his position with the local Bath Volunteers which was run by ex-servicemen. They had made the ruling that only ex-serving officers could obtain a rank above Lieutenant, and Davis objected and left.

In 1871 just off the Abbey Churchyard was a walkway known as Abbey Passage or Abbey Place. It was a quick route from the churchyard to York Street. It backed onto the gardens of the houses in Abbey Street. The owners of these houses complained to the Council that hot muddy water was seeping into their basements and it must be a result of the King's Bath (owned by the Council) having sprung a leak. The City Surveyor was given the job of investigating.

In March 1871 shoppers trying to get from the Abbey Churchyard via the Abbey Passage through to York Street found their way blocked. This passage, or Abbey Place as it was also known, was a narrow alleyway entered via an arch between No's 4 and 5, Abbey Churchyard. The passage then ran behind the houses fronting onto Abbey Street to the left with gates into the gardens of No 6 and No 7 whilst on the right was the eastern side of the King's Bath. In the 17th and 18th Centuries you could have stood alongside a stone balustrade to watch the bathers in the Bath, but by the 19th century the modesty of the bathers was protected by a wall, although you could still see them if you wished to from the windows of the Pump Room. Continuing along on the right-hand side of this passage you came upon a door opening into a gas-lit passageway leading down into the Queen's Bath. This was a sloping path for the convenience of wheelchairs. Beyond this doorway the Abbey Passage led out into York Street.

On this occasion, however, the thoroughfare was blocked by workmen prising up the paving stones. Charles Edward Davis, in his role as City Surveyor of Corporate Works, had employed a group of workmen under a local builder, Richard Mann, to dig a trench down into the Abbey Passage.

Publically speaking about the incident nearly 20 years later, Davis recalled it in a rather dramatic way, 'I was obliged to abandon my work, and having little hope that I should ever be allowed to recommence it,' adding with a sense of mystery 'I removed a portion of the lead.' That portion of the lead lining on the Great Bath is still missing to this day.

He added, talking about the hole in the ground that the workmen had dug, 'Fortunately I did not again fill in the soil, but arched it in, building walls of masonry to keep it in position.' Had there been a hope in his mind even then that there might be a future opportunity to do that extended excavation? But at that precise time there was little enthusiasm for any more work to be done by the Council and no more money.

EXPOSED by Doc Watson.

Work was going well and the men had begun to discover Roman steps going down and a lead lining disappearing under the rubble. They were on the edge of a major discovery only to have it thwarted by the owner of the Kingston Baths, a private Turkish Baths in York Street on corners of Abbey Street and Church Street. Owned by Henry Wiseacre, he in turn complained to the council that the work as being done in the Abbey Passage especially by the pumps installed to take away excess water had dried up his own private spring. Work was stopped immediately and it was only seven years later when the council bought the Spring in question that work was able to continue.

This was when the actual excavation of the Roman Baths was begun.



However, it suffered various complications and delays when the owners of the house at No. 5, Abbey Street refused to move until adequate other accommodation was found for them. No. 5 was owned by the Board of Guardians who oversaw the workhouse up on Combe Down and also managed the various Poor Law Offices around the town where the poor could apply for assistance to pay for a doctor or a funeral. It took five years of negotiation before new premises were bought for the Guardians on North Parade at a cost of £3,500 - so that then No. 5 could be finally removed.

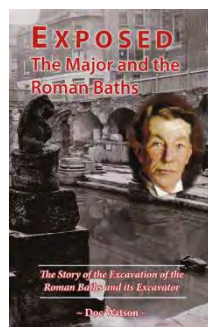
< No 5 Sits in the Bath.

The first visitors to the Roman excavation were allowed into a part of the Baths in August 1883 via a set of rickety steps coming down from the back of one of the shops in the Abbey churchyards.

To stop any vandalising of the remains ex-Sgt William Turner, a royal marine was appointed as the first guide in 1883 with a salary of 15 shillings a week. He was warned that he should not give guided tours, but because he was there when the major did so with important visitors, the ex-sergeant learnt a lot and used to oblige others for a few pence. He remained in office until the Baths were officially opened in 1897.



For further information on Charles 'Major' Davis please see:



EXPOSED

The Major and the Roman Baths

Doc Watson

ELSP 2017

ISBN 978-1-912020-63-8

£ 8.99

TWERTON GAOL: THE CITY OF BATH'S NEW MODEL PRISON, 1842 TO 1878.

A talk which looks at the reasons for a new gaol, its design, the type of prison it was and the reasons for its closure only 36 years after it was built

Monday 13th January 2020 St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker Richard Williams

Abstract Richard Williams

Introduction

When I first came across the building in East Twerton, which bears the title 'Governor's House' (grey plaque on left-hand end of building, just below the first floor), sitting amongst the terraces of that suburb, most of them built in the 1880s, this rather handsome building seems rather incongruous. When I learnt that it had been the site of Bath City Gaol, initially, I was puzzled, where were the prisoner's kept?



However, coming across the image to the left, a photograph from 1885¹, found in the book *Bath Exposed!*, and all was explained. The original cell block can be seen behind the building that still remains and what is left was the administrative block and male debtors prison (see drawings below).

The image shows the prison after its closure when Stuart Place had been built through the end of the cell block, the eastern end having been demolished and the block losing much of what had been the female end of the prison. After

many years of alterations to the prison block, from a manufactory of 'French' confectionery to an engineering works, it was finally demolished in the 1990s. The administrative block/debtors prison remains, now flats.

This research is largely based upon the five boxes containing several hundred documents kept at the Bath Record Office², from simple bills (the prison required large quantities of potatoes delivered) to major policy documents, although some key documents, e.g. plans of the gaol are missing.

¹ Trish Curr has the photograph in the Bath Record Office, but we have been unable to trace it there.

² Many thanks to the staff of the Bath Record Office for lugging in these boxes in for me and helping with searches for other related documents.

Twerton Gaol's Predecessor: Bathwick Gaol in Grove Street 1772-1842

Before looking at the new gaol it is helpful to know more about its predecessor, the old Bathwick Gaol.



Rear (above) and front (right) views of the gaol

Planned by Thomas Attwood, although others have been attributed with its original design, the building still stands in Grove Street. This prison has been fully described by Chris Noble in two articles, *Grove Street Gaol*ⁱⁱ and *The New Gaol in Bathwick (1772-1842)*ⁱⁱⁱ, both articles can be found on the History of Bath Research Group website (go to <http://historyofbath.org>).

In order to understand the reasons behind the building of a new model gaol along the lines of that built in East Twerton it is important to understand some of the reforms that were taking place in this period of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries.

Prison Reform in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries

One person stands out in the latter half of the 18th Century and that is John Howard. Remembered today through the Howard League for Penal Reform, Howard became High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1773. He had overall responsibility for Bedford County Gaol and was shocked at what he found there. Looking for better solutions to the gaol system he set out to look at the state of prisons, visiting large numbers of prisons, not just in Britain but across Europe.



In 1774 he reported back to the House of Lords Select Committee, his work being generally well received by the committee. In 1774 published *The State of Prisons* in which he suggests that prisoners would benefit from time alone in their cells in order to reflect on their life and crimes. Howard's concerns led to two 1774 parliamentary acts - one abolished gaolers' fees, the other enforced improvements in the system leading to better prisoner health. Of particular reference to this study, he visited Bathwick Gaol 5 times, and, according to Chris Noble^{iv}, wrote more on this gaol than any other person. In his 1789 visit Howard writes quite positively of the gaol, compared to Somerset's other prisons, however, he also found a great deal wrong and shows particular concern over the regular flooding in Grove Street - see Chris Nobles article iii for much more detail.

The Penitentiary Act of 1779 authorised the construction of prisons in accordance with Howard's theories and in 1791 Gloucester prison became the first prison of its kind: 'incorporating individual cells, separation of different classes of prisoner, medical care, exercise facilities and religious instruction'³.

³ A much quoted statement but I have not found its original source.

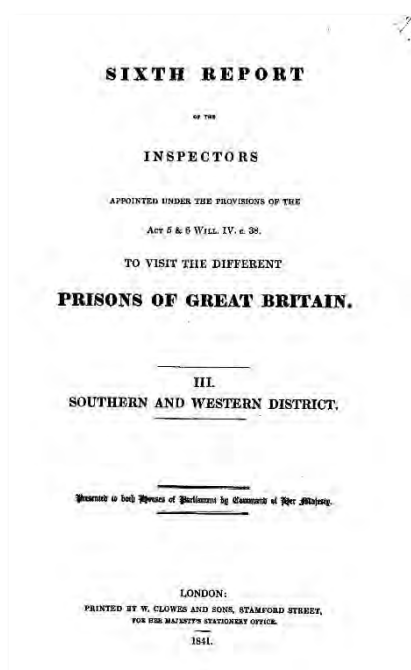
New Ideals in Prison Design

The 'Penitentiary - 'Separate and Silent' System

- In 1835 the House of Lords Committee on the State of the Gaols called for:
 - Uniformity of Discipline
 - Entire separation, except during hours of labour and religious worship and instruction, to prevent 'contamination' and this securing a proper system of prison discipline
 - That Inspectors of Prisons be appointed to visit the Prisons from Time to Time, and to report to the Secretary of State.

In 1842 Pentonville Prison, the new 'National Penitentiary' (replacing Millbank) was completed⁴, this was when Twerton Gaol was opened. By 1848 fifty-four prisons were built in the UK on the 'Separate & Silent' system, Bath's new gaol was one of these.

1841 Prison Inspectors Report on Bathwick Gaol



One of Howard's key recommendations was the setting up of a national prison inspectorate. The 1841 prison inspector's report, just a year before Bathwick Gaol closed, highlighted the many defects of the old prison in Bath. Below is a summary of just some of these findings, I have selected those more relevant to the building of the new gaol.

Overcrowding

Highest numbers ever recorded on 27th September 1840 with 83 prisoners and 15 debtors⁵

Approximately 3 people sleeping per room, some rooms had 4

Bath Prisoners Housed in Other Gaols

- Costing more to maintain Bath prisoners at Shepton Gaol & Ilchester than annual cost of gaol
- County Magistrates had refused to house Bath prisoners so additional accommodation had been 'hastily' built for 37 prisoners from Ilchester

Staffing

- 3 turnkeys, 1 night watchman and the prison keeper, no female staff apart from governor's wife (matron) and his daughters
- Very 'onerous' for the staff and prison not secure - 'escape easy'
- Health of the current keeper and his predecessor affected by their duties

Condition of Prisoners

- Both untried and convicted female prisoners shared rooms, only got 1 hour of exercise
- Some women shared beds due to shortage of bed linen
- No men sharing beds apart from 3 with 'the itch' (scabies) who were found under one cover

⁴ This was the same year as Twerton Gaol and many references were made in inspectors reports to Pentonville and the systems practiced there when they visited Bath's new prison.

⁵ Shift in population from the rural to urban areas and Vagrancy Act of 1824 had helped to turn, what was essentially a debtor's prison, into a prison for felons.

- The one female debtor lived with the men but has a separate room

Support for Prisoners

- The chaplain did not appear to converse with prisoners
- There was no schoolmaster or schoolroom and no instruction in reading except for the women
- Large numbers of prisoners under 17

Inspector's Final Comment

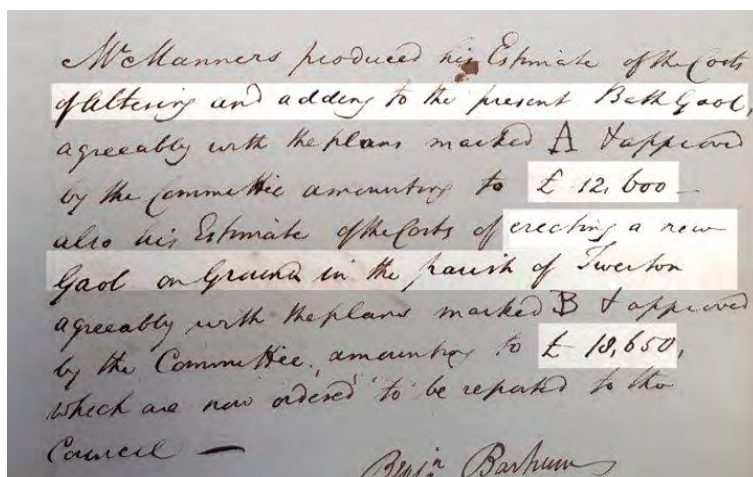
'...so closely packed a prison, very insecure in point of construction, and standing in the open street, the present protection would be found quite inadequate in case of any degree of combination or tumult occurring here.'

Plans for Gaol Improvements

Extending the Old Prison or Building a New Gaol?

- Discussion concerning the need for prison improvements began in the mid 1830s and possible sites for a new gaol explored (a number of records exist in the Bath Record Office showing plots of land which landowners were willing to part with which the Manners, the City Surveyor, visited, exploring ideas of where to put the new prison)
- Initially there was a plan for the extension of the existing Grove Street Premises
 - July 1839 - G. P. Manners, Bath City Surveyor, asked to produce plan 'altering and adding to the present Bath Gaol'
- By September 1839 he was being asked to produce costs for both an extension and a new gaol

Estimates for Altering/Extending Grove Street vs Erecting a New Gaol - September 1839



Extract taken from minutes of Bath City Council Prison Committee 17th September 1839

The cost of the new gaol was to be almost fifty percent higher than altering and adding to the old gaol. Both designs were intended as 'separate system' gaols and meeting the standards recommended by the Home Office of the period and housing the same number of prisoners (115). However, the situation of the new gaol, in the largely uninhabited southern part of Twerton (I think that the reference to Twerton refers to the parish and not the actual eventual site) would have had an almost unreserved approval from the city's councillors. When Bathwick Gaol was built, the area was largely uninhabited, Pulteney Bridge, leading to Grove Street from the city was

still being completed. By the 1830s the Bathwick estate had been fully developed with many substantial properties being built in the area. Keeping the gaol in Bathwick no longer had any attraction for Bath's citizens.

Choosing a Site for the New Gaol

November 1839 discussion about best site for new gaol

3 Main Sites Discussed:

1. At Odd Down near the Red Lion

This site was right next to the newly opened Bath Union Workhouse, opened in 1838. However, the land, offered by a Mr. Fortt (probably one of the renowned Fortt family, Bath caterers) was considered too large a plot and too far from the city

2. Near the junction of the Wells Road and Oldfield Road

This plot of land was considered too irregular and sloping for building a prison.

3. At East Twerton near the Lower Bristol Road

The East Twerton site was both near town (the newly erected Victoria Suspension Bridge giving easy access across the river), flat and not liable to flooding.

- By December 1839 the decision had been made and land was being purchased from James Lea and Thomas Hales for the new gaol
- 1840 further land purchased to widen the road from the Lower Bristol Road



Cotterell's 1852 Map of Bath

Plans for the New Gaol

The Gaol Committee Report - 23rd December 1839

- A committee was set up to amend the initial gaol plans. In their report they state that, "With regard to Prison Discipline your committee being well aware of the attention which the Government has been giving the subject, applied to the home office for whatever information could be afforded them and in answer were furnished with several copies of the 3rd and 4th Reports upon the state of Prisons and Prison Discipline..."
- They then go on to state that:

upon the subject your committee concluded that an efficient system of Prison Discipline might be comprehended in three particulars, Separation, Labour and Instruction

Extract taken from minutes of Bath City Council Prison Committee 23rd December 1839

- They identify the need for prisoners to work but, due to the 'separate system', this either must be done in the individual prisoner's cells or in specially erected sheds, sheds were considered to be "the most friendly to health, economy and management"
- 'Instruction' was considered essential the light of the many prisoners who "can neither read nor write" and that even for those that can, "no criminal can have a proper estimate of things", that "in deterring him from crime", he must be given "a just sense and knowledge of himself, his interests and his duties"
- To this end both a chapel and a school room were considered essential but must be done so without "breaking through the principle of separation".

Plans Agreed

The Council Agreed the Plan on 27th December 1839

Henry Stothert, engineer⁶, David Aust, mason, and Thomas Lewis, builder, awarded the main contract in July 1840. The new prison was opened in the summer of 1842.

The Design of the New Gaol

Unfortunately, although the records in the Bath Record Office are extensive, they lack the original plans/designs for the new gaol, apart from a drawing of the roof of the administrative block which at least give some overall dimensions.

Turning to the maps of the area for clues, the first comes from Cotterell's 1852 map of Bath.

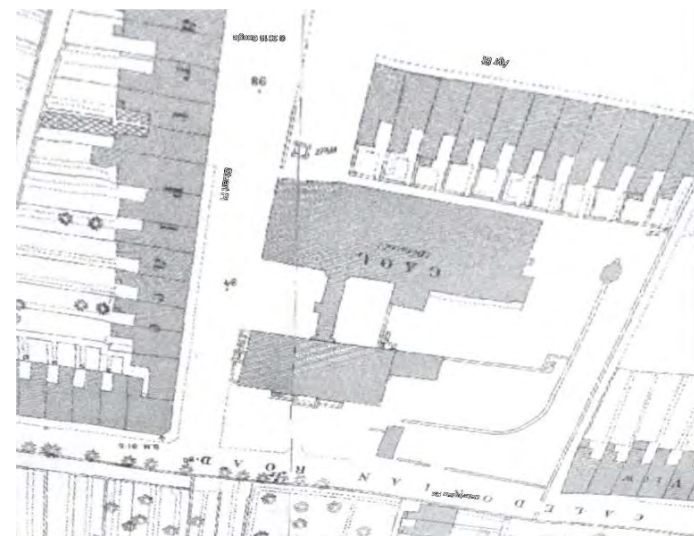


Cotterell's Map of Bath, 1852

The buildings shown have a very irregular shape and are very difficult to interpret, although my own drawings that follow will hopefully provide some keys to understanding what Cotterell has drawn.

What is quite clear is the boundary wall, 17 feet high, it's southern⁷ edge bordering the newly built cutting through which the Great Western Railway ran from Bath to Bristol. To the north lay the existing buildings of Summerlays Place and East Twerton Terrace with a lane to the Lower Bristol Road.

Also, inset into the boundary wall are two circular blobs which I believe were probably gate houses of some sort.



1885 Ordnance Survey Map of Bath

The next map which gives further clues is the Ordnance Survey map of 1885. This more clearly shows the administrative block (lower building) and the cell block (upper building) with a linking corridor between. This was drawn a few years after the gaol had been closed and has Stuart Place driven through the eastern end (female prisoner's wing) of the gaol block and Ayr Street running along the back where the exercise yards were. It also quite clearly shows the curving south-western corner of the wall with one blob (gate house?) remaining and the inner wall between the main prison and the debtors exercise yard. Several other buildings, possibly of a date post the prison, appear sticking out from the two main buildings.

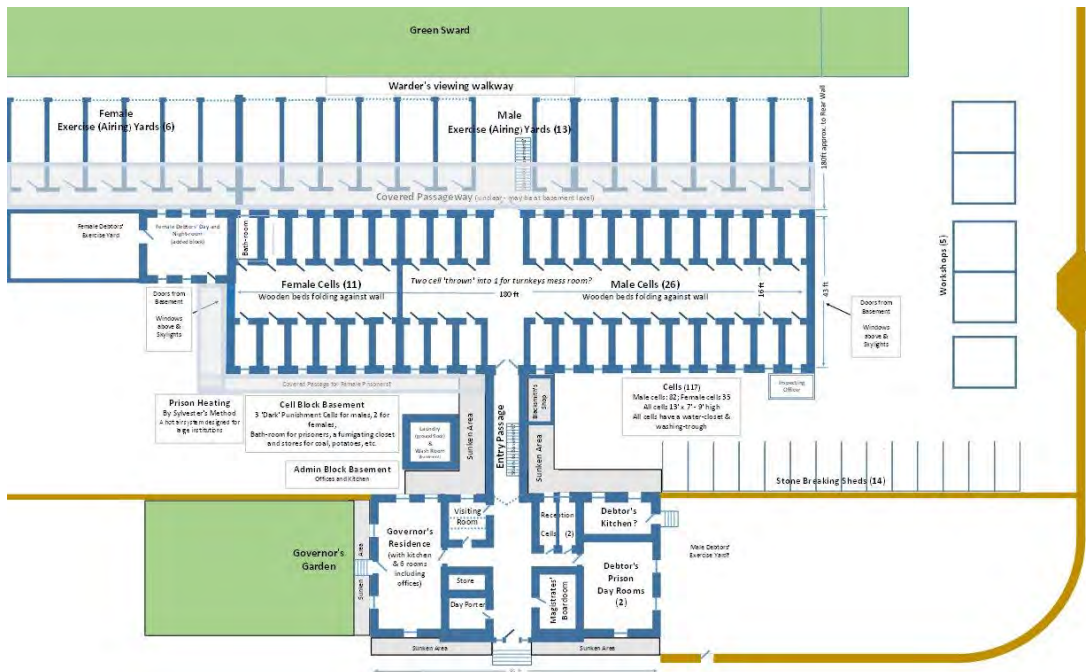
⁶ It is important to note that Stothert, already a famous engineering name in the city, was the lead contractor, the new prison required a huge amount of ironwork and the latest engineering solutions - heating, ventilation, etc. Stothert had already built a treadmill for Shepton Mallett Prison in 1823, one was considered for the gaol in Twerton, however, the number of prisoners required to turn a mill quern stone (as was done in Shepton) mitigated against the smaller Twerton Gaol - see Later Additions - The Tread Wheel - 1866-67, below.

⁷ The maps and drawings on this and subsequent pages have south upper and north lower, this has been done to fit with the description in the inspectors report which approaches the gaol from the Lower Bristol Road which is north.

Drawings Based on the 1845 Prison Inspectors Report

The prison inspectors report of 1845, that runs to several pages gives a great deal of information about the layout and uses of the various parts of the prison. However, although the inspector provides some precise measurements relating to the cell block, he can be rather vague about the position of many aspects of the layout so the drawing that I have created was, in some cases, pure guesswork.

The following is the overall drawing showing the main site, with just part of the outer wall shown:

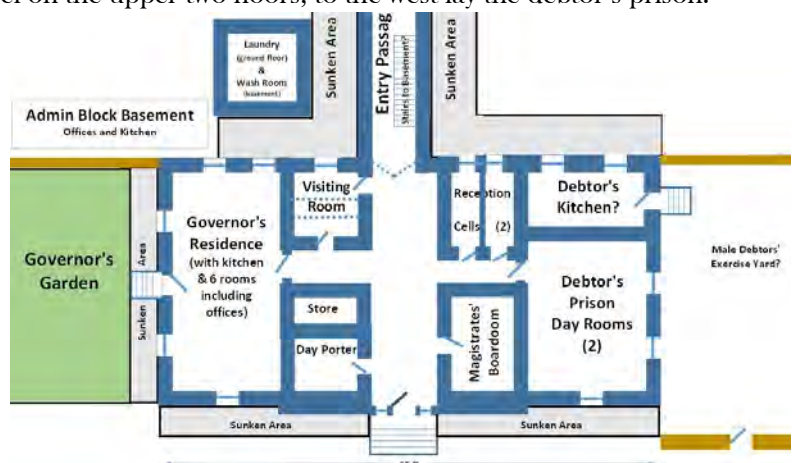


The administrative block/debtors prison (lower building) with the Governor's garden to its left, the corridor linking this to the cell block and the cell block itself surrounded by exercise yards, etc.

The Administrative Block - Ground Floor

The administrative block had 3 parts, the eastern end (left on the drawing) was the governor's residence, the centre contained various rooms and had the chapel on the upper two floors, to the west lay the debtor's prison.

The magistrate's boardroom was formerly a reception room for the debtor's prison, however while debtors formed the majority of prisoners in the early years of the Grove Street Gaol, by the 1840s debtors numbers were falling. The inspector spends little time describing the debtors prison as his main concern was the felons. The way into the debtors prison was behind the magistrates room and had an exercise yard and a kitchen⁸.



⁸ The inspector is vague stating that it is beyond the debtors day rooms and he may be describing the main kitchens in the basement of the building or there may have been a separate out-building in the debtors' yard.

Beyond the debtor's corridor lay two reception cells for the main prison. The inspector expressed concerns about the lack of heating and ventilation in these cells, although he does state that the window could be opened. He expressed real concern about the sharing of cells with up to 3 prisoners per reception cell⁹.

Across from the reception cells lay a visitors room, divided into 3 by two rows of bars. The prisoner was at one end, the visitor at the other end, and a warder sat between¹⁰.

The east wing was the governor's residence, comprising a kitchen, probably in the basement, and 6 rooms including offices. More of the governor's residence as we move up through the building.

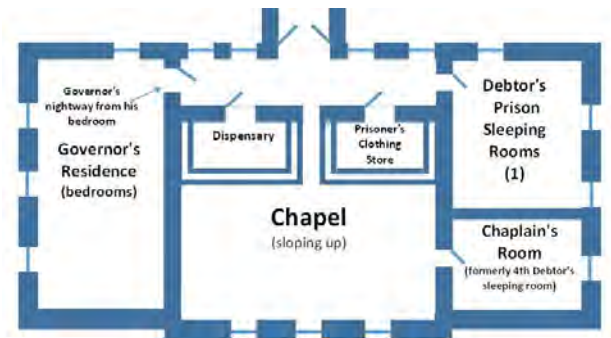
The corridor linking through to the prison had a gate with bars this end and a solid gate the other end. Somewhere in that corridor lay stairs to the basement area¹¹.

The Administrative Block - 1st Floor

The first floor had the governor's bedrooms and a nightway that allowed the governor and his wife (prison matron) access via the corridor to the cell block.

Under the slope of the chapel¹² lay a dispensary and the store for the prisoner's clothing. Whether this was for their street cloths, put into store while in prison, or to keep prison clothing¹³ is not stated.

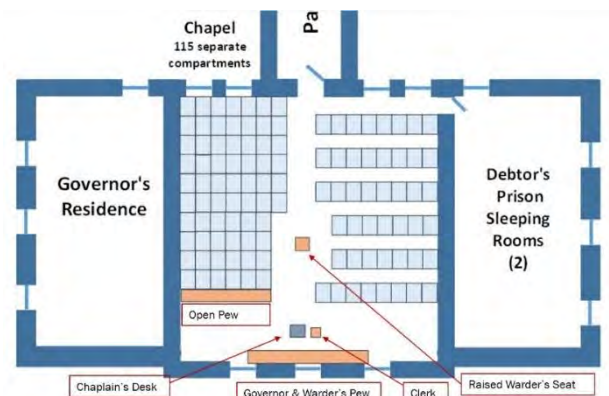
The debtor's prison continued on this floor with one sleeping room (debtors were not on the separate system so would have shared the room). The chaplain's room was formerly a fourth debtors' room but, as has already been stated, declining number of debtors meant that it had been given to the prison chaplain.



The Administrative Block - 2nd Floor

For the prison chapel, the inspector report 115 separate compartments. One side had side entry to the row of compartments, the other side had back entry 'to bring in or withdraw any particular prisoner without disturbing others in the row in which he sits.'

There was 'a narrow passage down the centre, in the middle of which sits an officer in a raised seat', presumably to watch the prisoners at the back. At the front, the chaplain had a reading desk, with a clerk next to him and the governor and his staff would sit facing the prisoners at the front. An open pew was also available, possibly for debtors or visitors.



Finally, two further debtor's sleeping rooms were to be found on this floor.

⁹ By this period even prisoners who were not yet convicted were considered to be under the separate system and therefore should not share cells - there were often 6 prisoners in these cells.

¹⁰ The inspector says little about the position of doors, so most of the drawn are based upon logical places for a door and not on any information given by the inspector.

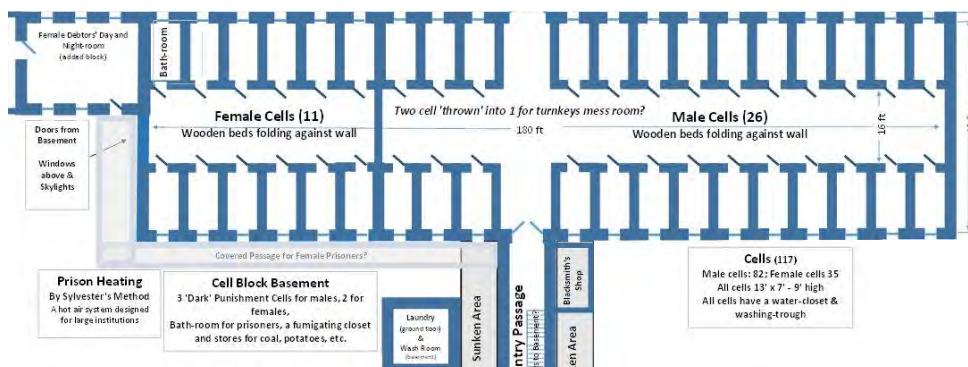
¹¹ I have not drawn the basement areas as the inspector gives almost no clues about their layout but does list some of the rooms to be found there.

¹² I have the chapel sloping down to the front of the building with the large windows to the front of the building at the front of the chapel. I am fairly sure that it was oriented this way as it appears the most logical fit.

¹³ It is likely that they would wear a uniform, all the images of prisoners that I've seen at this time have them wearing one, and there does appear to be some expenditure on prison clothing in the documents in the record office.

The Prison Cell Block - Ground Floor

The prison had 115 cells designed to hold individual prisoners, divided into male prisoners (82 cells) in the west wing and females (35 cells) in the east with a dividing wall between. On the ground floor these were wooden bed frames which folder up against the wall so that prisoners could work in their cells in the day



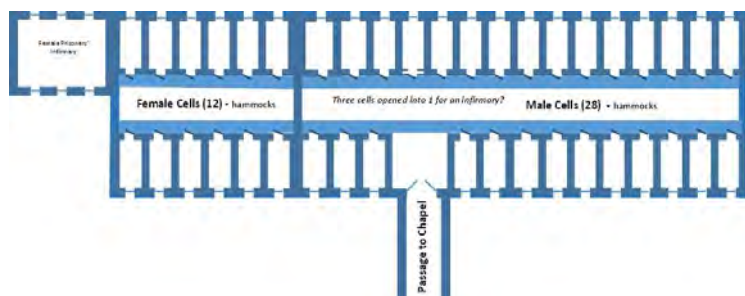
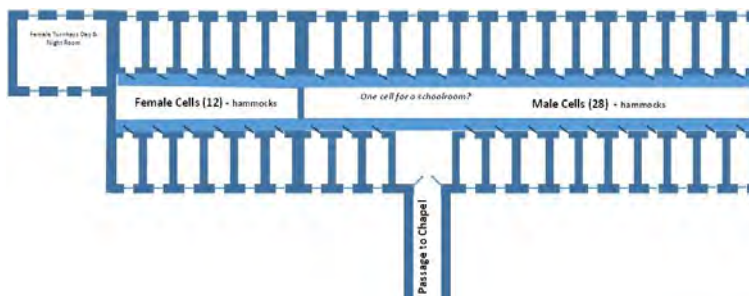
(wooden beds brought from the old gaol). Each cell also had a 'water-closet & washing trough'. One of the female prisoner's cells on the ground floor was a 'bath-room'. Additionally, a female debtor's block had been added¹⁴ at the 'eastern extremity'.

Due to concerns about female prisoners being moved past male cells, a corridor had been built which linked to the sunken area by a passageway¹⁵. The passage of female prisoners continued on the upper floors when gaining access to the chapel and the inspector suggested that another route should be devised. Also of concern for the inspector, the governor and male warders had pass key to doors through the wall which separated male and female cells, which was against the regulation agreed for this prison¹⁶.

Heating was done by the Sylvester method, a hot air system employed in many large institutions. In the basement were various store rooms and 3 'Dark' punishment cells for the men and 2 for the women.

The Prison Cell Block - 1st & 2nd Floors

The first floor had 12 female and 28 male cells fitted with hammocks and a female debtor's sleeping room. One cell (position not specified) was given over to a schoolroom. The female turnkeys had a day and night room on this floor above the debtor's rooms.



The second floor was almost identical apart from 'three cells, opening one into the other, are used as an infirmary.', and the top floor of the debtors block an infirmary for female prisoners¹⁷.

¹⁴ See the final image of this document for a modern image of, what I believe is, the actual block.

¹⁵ I have put in a corridor (shaded grey) which may be where this passageway was place, however, due to the vagueness of parts of the description this may be incorrectly placed.

¹⁶ The home office issued guidance on regulations, local authorities usually then adopted these regulations for their prisons but did not always adhere to them. Central government at this time had no regulatory powers themselves but could only work through advisory channels if they found that regulations were not being adhered to.

¹⁷ The temperature in the female infirmary could fall as low as 30°, something the inspector said should be remedied.

Work Regimes

All prisoners, apart from debtors, were required to work unless sickness made it impossible.

The table opposite is from the 1848 inspectors report on prison employment.

Those with specific skills might be employed in the kitchens or as carpenters, masons, etc. Some might be given tasks such as working the pump, cleaning, washing or mending, but the majority were employed either breaking stone or picking oakum¹⁸.

Some prisoners might be unfit for work but the inspector shows his concerns in the document opposite, a male prisoner who suffers from fits is being looked after by two fellow prisoners, this, of course, broke the strict rules on prisoner separation.

The convicted prisoners were thus employed:—

MALES.	
Breaking stones	12
Working pump	1
Carpenter's work	1
Mason's work	1
Picking oakum	11
Assisting in the kitchen	1
Cleaning	3
	<hr/> 30
FEMALES.	
Picking oakum	10
Washing	3
Mending stockings	1
	<hr/> 14
Unemployed	1
	<hr/> 15
Total	

The six untried prisoners were without occupation. Two, a male and a female, were in the respective infirmaries. The former, being subject to fits, had two other prisoners placed with him, and these were convicted felons.

1848 Inspector of Prisons Report 4 Feb - 9 Aug 1845 - Vol XXIV - Bath City Gaol, p. 39

Work Producing Nothing!

Those convicted of more serious crime which involved a sentence of hard labour would often be given the task of turning a crank which, usually, turned a paddle in sand but did no other useful work. The following return from the 1848 report shows how many prisoners, in this case 2, have been given how many hours per day of cranked labour. Central government was concerned that hard labour sentences were not being carried out by local gaols, so offered payment for cranked labour¹⁹.

No. 25.—Scale of Crank Labour.

{Months Employed.	Number of Working Hours per Day.	Number of Prisoners the Cranks will Employ at one time.	The ordinary Velocity of the Cranks per Minute.	The Daily Amount of Labour performed by each Prisoner.	How recorded with Precision.	Application of its Power.
January	5	Two	From 30 to 40.	1½ hours.	By Index.	Nothing.
February	5½					
March	5½					
April	6					
May	6½					
June to }	7					
August }	6½					
September	6½					

1845 Inspector of Prisons Report 4 Feb - 9 Aug 1845 - Vol XXIV - Bath City Gaol, p. 54

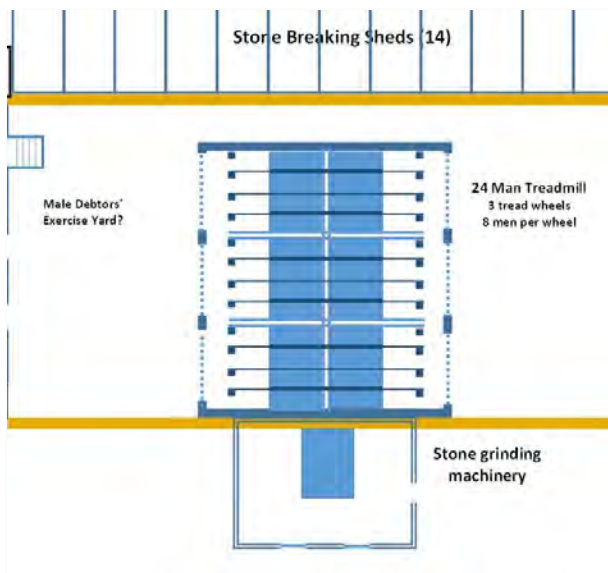
¹⁸ Picking oakum was widespread in both prisons and workhouses, as was breaking stone. Broken stones went to repair roads, while oakum (often old ships ropes) was untwisted and then teased apart by hand until the individual fibres were left, these were then used for packing between the planks on ships decks or sealing joints in plumbing. Pickers hands suffered greatly from the task and it was not uncommon for pickers to hide the unpicked rope. The heating distribution flues in the new goal often clogged up with oakum put there by the prisoners and the inspector suggested that the staff weigh the oakum in order to spot any that went missing. Both stone breaking and oakum picking were done to earn the institution some money. The 1841 inspectors report shows that Bathwick prison bought £16 of oakum from Bristol docks and, once picked, sold it back at £22, with carriage 'hither and back' less than £1. The £5 profit equates to approximately £500 in today's money.

¹⁹ Cranked labour was usually measured by an indicator on the machine, to make the work harder (or easier) a screw would be adjusted by prison staff - this is thought to be the origin of the slang 'screw' for prison warders. In many prisons they were in prisoner's cells, although I have not found where these machines were based in Twerton Gaol.

Later Additions - The Tread Wheel - 1866-67

In 1866 the City Council and magistrates decided that a tread wheel (or treadmill) was required at the gaol²⁰. Following standard procedures, tenders were put out and the contract awarded to Stothert and Pitt²¹ on 29th October 1866.

The drawing below, redrawn by the author, shows a 'Design for Tread Wheel Arrangements for 36 Men' found in the gaol records in Bath Record Office. This is probably not the one built by Stothert & Pitt because the drawing is signed by G Haden & Son, Trowbridge, April 16th 1866, so are likely to be an unsuccessful tender²². However, the position of the wheel and its general configuration would seem to be appropriate given the detailed specification given to the contractor.



Note that the new treadmill was placed in the male debtor's yard. Debtors prisons were on the decline at the time and the system was effectively abolished in 1879.

< Drawing by author based on documents on Bath City Gaol, Twerton in Bath Record Office

The image to the right is from London's Coldbath Fields vagrants' prison²³ which shows a treadmill that was likely of a similar type to that found in Bath. One half of the prisoners are on the wheel while the other wait their turn on a small seat, which might explain the small squares by each prisoner's station on the wheel. Also note the continuous partition between each station, preventing the prisoners from seeing/communicating with each other.



²⁰ The introduction of one of these devices at the gaol may have stemmed from changes attitude towards prisoners in the 1860s. The older systems were thought to be too light on prisoners, more punitive regimes based on the stricter application of hard labour were being introduced.

²¹ A report made by the justices from 23rd April 1867, reports on the stone crushing machinery malfunctioning and stating that Mr. Pitt, the Contractor, 'promptly attended and met in consultation'.

²² The detailed specification requires "Three tread wheels complete for 8 men on each" and not the 12 men per wheel in the diagram. Whether the final wheel had a greater number of men per wheel or not isn't clear, however, the number of prisoners in Bath City Gaol at any one time who were under a hard labour sentence would seem to mitigate against 36 men being so employed and it seems more likely that a 24 man treadmill would be more appropriate.

²³ This treadmill is one story up and the original image has vagrants being led by warders, walking in circles, below (probably what the prisoners on their seats are looking at). The Twerton treadmill was probably at ground level.

Prison Staffing

1843 - The Need for a Schoolmaster

The new prison's staffing was far larger than the original Bathwick gaol. On the 19th November 1843 the chaplain of the new prison, W. C. Osborn wrote a letter addressed to the mayor, aldermen and councillors concerning the need for a schoolmaster. In this five page document he raises his concerns about the lack of a schoolmaster, contrary to the regulations and giving the numbers of illiterate prisoners. This extract from the end of the letter concludes that there was an urgent need for a schoolmaster to be appointed.

From the Statistics which I have given & the remarks I have made on the duties of the schoolmaster, I feel assured you will readily see the importance of giving the appointment alluded to your earliest consideration.

I remain
Gentlemen
your humble servant
W. C. Osborn

Bath
Nov 19th 1843

Bath City Gaol, Twerton, documents in Bath Record Office

The appointment does appear to have been made and by 1848 the prison inspector provides a table of staff appointed. Interestingly, the schoolmaster and schoolmistress both have the name Pike, they are in fact husband and wife. The 1841 and 1851 census show that Thomas is as an accountant, his wife, Frances, has no occupation recorded. In 1841 they are in Pulteney Street, in 1851 at 22 Brougham Hayes, not far from the prison. Whether they were still employed at the prison part-time or had moved on is uncertain. They are possibly relatives of the governor John Pike but there is nothing to confirm or deny this.

No. 26.—Officers' Salaries, Fees, Emoluments, &c.

Names.	Office.	Age.	When Appointed.	Salaries per Annum.			Nature of Fees, Emoluments, and Allowances.	
				£.	s.	d.		
Rev. W. C. Osborn, M.A.	Chaplain . . .	33	February 1843	200	0	0		
W. R. Bayntun, Esq.	Surgeon . . .	46	April 1836	125	0	0		
John Pike . . .	Keeper . . .	40	April 1839	150	0	0	} House, coal, candles, and washing.	
Georgina Pike . . .	Matron . . .	39	April 1839	50	0	0		
William McGeorge	Warder . . .	48	November 1841	78	0	0		
Jacob Gale . . .	Ditto . . .	39	April 1840	54	12	0		
James Brown . . .	Cook . . .	56	September 1840	54	12	0		
William Summers . . .	Warder . . .	35	January 1841	54	12	0		
William Pritchard . . .	Watchman . . .	54	February 1841	54	12	0		
Alexander Keogh . . .	Warder . . .	26	July 1843	54	12	0		
Joseph Lunsdown . . .	Ditto . . .	44	September 1840	54	12	0		
Aaron Baker . . .	Engineer . . .	28	March 1844	70	4	0		
Thomas Pike . . .	Schoolmaster . . .	54	March 1844	60	0	0		
Frances Pike . . .	Schoolmistress . . .	46	March 1844	20	0	0		
George Francis . . .	Labourer . . .	28	May 1846	15	12	0	} Lodging and ration. Apartments, coal, candles and washing.	
Ann Shepherd . . .	Warder . . .	45	April 1846	39	0	0		
Total Number of Officers . . . 16				Total . . .			1135 8 0	

1845 Inspector of Prisons Report 4 Feb - 9 Aug 1845 - Vol XXIV - Bath City Gaol, p. 54

This table is also interesting as it shows the reverend Osborn earning considerably more than the keeper (governor). However, the Pike family have a house, coal, candles and washing provided which would presumably amount to a considerable amount. His wife, Georgina, is only paid £50 despite having overall responsibility for the female prisoners. The female warder, Ann Shepherd has an apartment, coal, candles and washing provided which means that the £39 she earns may not be that much less than the male warders and other staff who are on £54 12s.

The Reverend Osborn vs John Pike

In 1856 William Osborn writes a letter of complain about the governor, John Pike. His reasons are many and complex and fully explored in an article by Trish Curr¹, however, put simply, he accused Pike of breaking the regulations, particularly concerning the use of prisoners to do work for the governor and his family. These seem misdemeanours rather than anything more substantial, however, the chaplain appears to have been a believer in the regulations being upheld to the letter.

Unfortunately for the chaplain, his complaint seems not to have met with a great deal of local support for the governor. Nationally, the issue was dealt with by the Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, who ruled that Pike be dismissed, however, he had no power over the staffing of this locally run prison and the council and magistrates backed their governor. In fact, counter accusations were made against Osborn. Pike did admit some guilt is mis-using prison labour and promised not to do it again. Both he and Osborn remained in their posts, with Pike dying while still in his job in 1869, and Osborn retiring and moving to Weymouth having served the new governor John W. Preston for his remaining years in the post.

One outcome of this dispute was the visit of a number of magistrates to the prison in 1858 from as far afield as Guernsey and Vienna. All show the gaol in a positive light, and a remarkable statement is made by the mayor of Exeter. He says, 'insufficiency of the Gaol of the City of Exeter, both as a punishment for vice and as a means of reclaiming those confined therein & I see the arrangement & discipline of this prison the probable means of effecting both.' Which does seem to suggest that the management of the gaol was, indeed, of a very high standard.

The reverend Osborn showed real concern for the rules but also for the welfare of the prisoners, particularly the young. His own household appears to be supporting a number of those he considered needing support. In 1861 the census shows him living in Greenway lane his wife and son, 6 boys 16 years old and under, 5 servants and a cook, a very large number of servants for such a household. Osborn campaigned widely for the better treatment of juveniles in prisons writing two pamphlets: *The Preservation of Youth from Crime*; and *The Imprisonment of Children Convicted for Minor Offences*. He was also a key figure behind the setting up of the Somerset Industrial School, the site of which is now Hayesfield School, not far from Twerton Gaol.

The Governors and their Families

1851 Census Return

John Pike	Head	43	Governor of Bath Gaol	John, Middles
Georgina F ^c	Wife	38	Matron of F ^c	John, Bathwick
Hannah F ^c	Daughter	20	Domestic Duties	Henry, Southwark
Georgina F ^c	Daughter	16	F ^c	F ^c
Emily F ^c	Daughter	14	F ^c	Samuel, Somerset
Lucy F ^c	Daughter	12	at Home	F ^c Bath
John F ^c	Son	8	F ^c	F ^c Bath
Elizabeth Hardy	Servant	20	House Servant	John, Middles

This shows John Pike, 'Governor of Bath Goal', his wife Georgina, 'Matron of ditto'²⁴, 5 daughters and a son, plus one house servant. John Pike was appointed as governor of the Grove Street Gaol in 1839 at the age of 33. The older daughters were helping their mother out with the female prisoners in Bathwick Gaol as the 1841 inspectors report points out.

The 1861 Census shows that only his daughters Georgina and Lucy were still living at home. They had no servants recorded which seems a bit unusual. Possibly he was using prisoners as family servants, however, this would have contravened the regulations - as William Osborn had pointed out. Pike's wife, Georgina, died only 4 years later at the age of 56, John Pike dying in 1869, at the age of 61.

1871 Census Return

John W Preston	Head	43	Military/Late 22 nd Foot	Woolwich, Sheffield
Charlotte F ^c	Wife	32	Matron, Bath Prison	Middlesex, London
John W F ^c	Son	17		St Paul's, Plymouth
Georgina F ^c	Daughter	10		India, Plymouth
Edith W F ^c	Daughter	5		India, Plymouth
Robert W F ^c	Son	3		India, Plymouth
Sarah Stone	Serv	16	Domestic Servant	India, Plymouth
Annie Pegg	Serv	16	F ^c	India, Plymouth

The 1871 Census Return shows the new governor. Following the death of John Pike the new appointee was John William Preston:

Preston's census return has him 43, 'Military/Late 22nd Foot, born in Sheffield. As with his predecessor, his wife, Charlotte, is prison matron, she is 32 and from London. With 2 sons, 2 daughters and 2 servants the governor's residence would have been fairly full.

How good a governor was John Preston? The governorship of John Pike was thoroughly tested by the chaplain, no such dispute is recorded with the new governor. What does stand out was Preston's career after Bath City Gaol had been closed in 1878. In 1878 he becomes governor of Birmingham, Winson Green Prison, with a prisoner population of 500. In 1883 he moves on to Manchester, Strangeways Prison, very much larger, with 1000 prisoners.

We can only speculate about the different characters of the two governors. I would deduce from his dispute with Osborn, that John Pike was perhaps a slightly old-fashioned governor, allowing prisoners to work for him and turning a bit of a blind eye to strict regulations about prisoners working for prison governor's families. In contrast, John Preston goes on to a seemingly meteoric rise through the prison system after the closure of the Bath City Gaol. Perhaps he was more of a disciplinarian, particularly given the toughening of attitudes towards prisoners and the increase in hard labour sentences in the 1860s. They may have been quite different men.

²⁴ In the 1845 inspectors report the inspector comments, 'There is no special residence for a matron, and the present matron, being the governor's wife, resides with him, so that from there being but one residence for both officers, it would seem to have been contemplated that any future, governor's wife should officiate as matron.'

Prisons and Their Sentences

The prisoners in the gaol at the time of the inspectors visit, excluding debtors, were:

- 1/3 were 'Prisoners before Trial'²⁵
- 1/3 Convicted at the Assizes or Quarter Sessions²⁶
- 1/3 Summary Convictions (magistrates)
- 10 out of 37 male prisoners were under 17 (no females)
 - 3 were under 12

Sentences in 1847:

- Female prisoners:
 - Majority held for less than 14 days
 - Maximum sentence was 6 months
- Male prisoners:
 - Majority held between 1 and 2 months
 - Maximum sentence was usually between 6 months and 1 year
 - 1 held for 1 to 2 years, 1 held for 2 to 3 years

3 adult male sent for transportation 7 years, 3 male and 1 female for 10 years, 1 under 17 for 10 years

Prison Closure

Given the apparent success of the prison, it seems strange that Twerton Gaol was shut after only 36 years, when its predecessor, Bathwick Gaol, described by the Home Secretary as '...among the most defective jails...'²⁷, survived for 70 years. The reason was very simple and through no particular fault of the gaol in Twerton:

The 1877 Prison Act

- There was a long-standing proposal to centralise the running of prisons
- Concerned with the varying quality of Britain's prisons, many operated by local authorities, the government resolved to rationalise the prison system
- The Act resolved to transfer prison control to the Secretary of State from the control of the Justices of the Quarter Sessions
- County prisons were to be established and prisoners in local gaols moved to these prisons
- 38 out of 113 gaols were closed immediately, 19 more in following 10 years

There were attempts to keep local gaols open. Nottingham Town Council let a campaign against the bill before Parliament, known as Mr. Cross's Prison Bill, which details the benefits of local prisons. However, this was to no avail, the bill went through.

On the 16th November 1877, Bath City Council writes to the Secretary of State asking for the gaol to be retained. In February 1878 a temporary stay of execution is given but on the 9th August 1878 the Gaol closes for good.

²⁵ Prisoners would be held in the gaol until the assizes or quarter sessions were held, this would often be time used by the local law enforcement agencies to gather evidence.

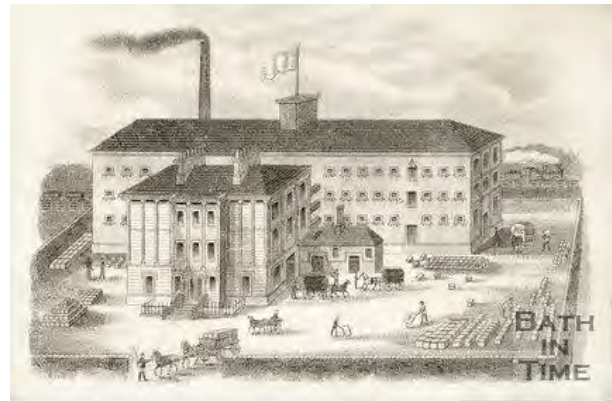
²⁶ The Quarter Sessions (held of quarter days) tried those cases that could not be tried summararily by local magistrates. More serious cases would be referred on to the Assizes.

²⁷ see, Chris Noble, *The New Gaol in Bathwick, 1772-1842* (iii), p. 83)

The Gaol Buildings After Closure

Over the years there were several uses for the gaol. From an advertising poster from the 1880s we find this drawing:

John Goddard has started his business in New Bond Street, Bath, making 'French' sweets. This rather fanciful²⁸ depiction of his new factory in the 'Old Gaol' does at least give an overall feel of the gaol with additions made to turn it into a confectioner's manufactory.



Goddard John & Co., Ltd., manufacturing confectioners, Old Gaol, E. Twerton



The back of 8 Stuart Place, taken by the author in January 2020

This very useful set of buildings took on many other guises over the years, however, in the 1990s it was decided that the prison block was no longer of any use and it was demolished, leaving the administrative block alone. However, Stuart Place had been knocked through the end of the cell block and the enterprising builder had left the eastern extremity of the block built into some of the houses in that street. Around the back of number 8 Stuart Place can still be seen the remnants of the cell block, and what I believe to be, the additional block build for female debtors, etc.

Conclusion

Arguably, Twerton Gaol can be seen as a 'model' prison of its day. Based on the latest ideas for a 'separate system' prison and costing Bath City Council a considerable amount of money, it met most of the requirements of a local gaol of this period. Visiting inspectors and magistrates were impressed by its standards and, despite the Reverend William Osborn's criticisms of John Pike, the first governor appears to have met his role to the satisfaction of the city's magistrates and councillors. John Preston's meteoric rise through the prison service after leaving the goal suggests that he was very much in tune with the requirements of a prison governor. Closure came through no fault in the prison but was the inevitable result of the 1877 Prison Act.

Short Bibliography

ⁱ *The Bath Gaol Investigation*, Trish Curr, in *Bath Exposed!, Essays on the Social History of Bath, 1775-1945*, Ed. Graham Davies, 2007, Sulis Press.

ⁱⁱ *Grove Street Gaol*, HBRG Newsletter No 38 - January 1999

ⁱⁱⁱ *The New Gaol in Bathwick (1772-1842)*, Chris Noble, *Bath History Vol. 9*, pp. 64-86

²⁸ The railway train is running level with the prison yard, when, in reality, it sits 15 feet down in a cutting at this point. The image completely ignores the suburban dwelling of Stuart Place down the left-hand side of the site and Ayr Street and Highland Terrace which run behind the prison, between it and the railway line. I also feel that the prison's administrative block is far better proportioned than this depiction.

MR TOMPION AND HIS CLOCK

Monday 10th February 2020 St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker Stephen Clews

Abstract Information below taken from Bath Roman Bath's Blogger Susan – March 2016.



The 'Tompion Clock' located in the restaurant, The Pump Room, at the Roman baths.

Thomas Tompion (1639–1713) was an English master clockmaker and watchmaker known today as the father of English clockmaking and his work includes some of the most important clocks and watches in the world.

The 1670s-1700s were an interesting time in the history of telling the time: pendulums had only recently been invented and clock makers were working out how to improve clocks and watches' accuracy particularly with springs, making it possible to take these fragile instruments onto ships.

Thomas Tompion was (and still is) a well-regarded clock maker. He worked for Charles II, William III and Queen Anne. As a friend of the first Astronomer Royal, Flamsted, two of his clocks were built into the Observatory, Greenwich. And after a successful life, having made over 700 clocks and 6,000 watches when he died his work was recognised with a burial in Westminster Abbey.

The Bath clock is, to get technical, a long case equation clock. This means its much bigger than a grandfather clock (it stands over three metres high) and it has a kidney shaped dial which reflects the solar time which is not regular like the ticking of a clock because of the elliptical orbit of the earth around the sun. This was important to the men of science as that was what they were used to from sundials. Even so, to check an equation clock its necessary to regularly use a sundial to get "the sun's time". So all of these clocks were supplied with a sun dial! Ours is outside the nearest window in the Pump Room.



The clock with its hood removed



Tompion's sundial outside the Pump Room

Unlike most of Tompion's clocks, which were given mahogany wood cases, ours has an oak one. Another difference is that it has to be wound every 3 weeks which sounds good until you consider the one Tompion made for William III now in Buckingham Palace needs to be wound only once a year.

Some people have suggested these differences are because Tompion made the clock cheaply and gave it the City of Bath not so much as a gift but a very large advertisement in the social centre of Bath. However, he did live here and was made an honorary freedman of the city before he gave the clock.

MONUMENTAL MASONS IN BATH IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

Monday 9TH March 2020

St Mary's Bathwick Church Hall

Speaker

Kim Jordan

Abstract

Kim Jordan

Studies of marble memorials in churches usually focus on the artistic achievement of the work or the identity of the deceased. This study describes the characteristics of the monumental masonry trade in Bath and examines the lives and work of the craftsmen involved. They called themselves “statuaries” or “marble masons” to distinguish their specialism from the “stonemasons” working on constructional stone for buildings. The two were closely associated by necessity; marble masons supplied interior marble work such as chimney pieces and carved architectural stone for the building trade, a bigger market than funerary commissions.

Bath is fortunate in having several churches with many memorials. Signed work was rare before the early 18th century but over 350 were signed, more than half the total erected, between 1700 and 1900. The market was competitive so it might be expected that makers would have signed every work yet authorities on monumental masonry have not commented on this apparent anomaly. The working assumption adopted for this study is that the commissioner could accept or decline a request from the maker to add a signature.

It is certain that many more than 350 signed works were erected in Bath and its locality. Contemporary illustrations of the interior of St James, now demolished, show many memorials, other city churches have a few, outlying villages have examples and recent archaeological investigations in the Abbey have recovered many pieces of broken memorials, some with a signature.

The general term “memorial” includes two differing forms; a monument is taken to include some three-dimensional carving of marble to form a figure or an ornamental design whereas tablets are a flat marble slab cut to a variety of shapes. A dark background slab was often used to provide contrast and definition for the lighter marble in the foreground. Examples are illustrated below. Both forms have signatures and inscriptions cut by hand, a highly skilled craft also employed by marble masons when producing stone tombs and gravestones for cemeteries, a bigger market than church marble work.

Typical Monuments and Tablets



Monument by C. Reeves 1843



Monument by F. Lancashire 1791 above
Tablet by W. Lancashire 1807 below



Tablets by T King Snr 1802 above
T. King Jnr 1827 below

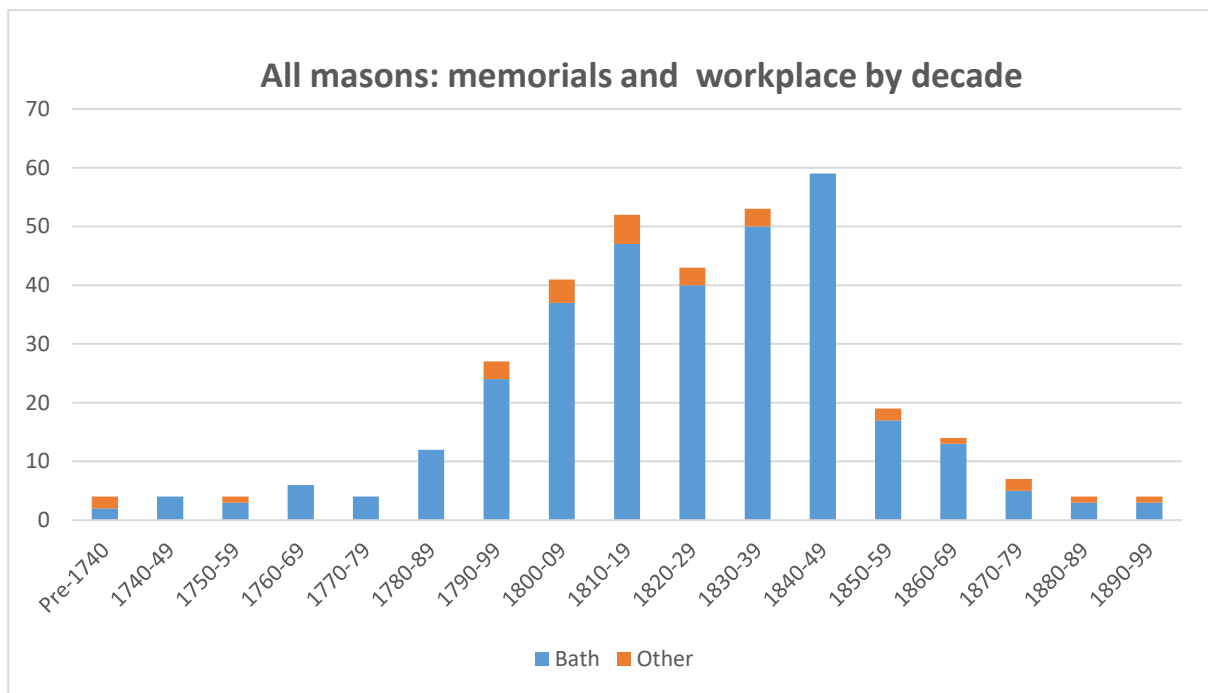


Tablet by C. Reeves 1845

Published studies of monumental masonry and articles in the Journal of the Church Monuments Society pay little attention to tablets or provincial work in general; the Journal index over its 34 years records only nine of the sixty-four masons identified in this study. In recording both types of memorial this study assembles a representative data sample to form a base for analysis of the trade and its craftsmen over a period of two hundred years.

Activity of the trade between 1700 and 1900

In his authoritative work “Church Monuments in Romantic England” (1977) Nicholas Penny notes that the erection of memorials accelerated in the latter decades of the eighteenth century, peaked in the first half of the nineteenth century and then declined rapidly before 1900. The same trajectory is apparent from the Bath data showing by decade a total of 358 signed memorials.



The preponderance of local manufacture is clear. 329 of the 358 memorials, 92% of the total, were made in Bath.

Local preponderance was a feature of the trade; towns and cities would have their own mason or masons. The masons’ reputation was local and their customers lived locally. Some Bath craftsmen proved successful in overcoming those constraints and finding a wider market.

Fashion

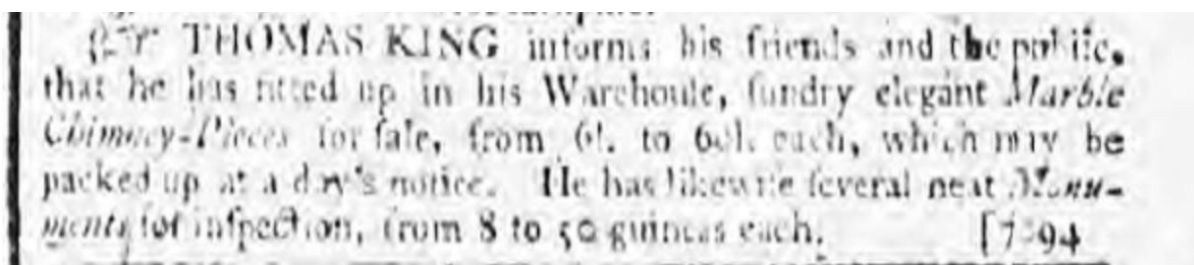
Devotional statuary and wall decorations were removed from English churches after the Reformation. The landowning aristocracy and gentry then erected tombs and monuments in the vacant space in their local village or town church. In the eighteenth century a new fashion was created as the growing class of plantation owners, traders, merchants, bankers, lawyers, colonial administrators and military families adopted the practice. By commissioning a memorial on vacant space in older churches and in the new churches built at the time their family’s social position and prestige could be displayed. Penny described the resulting effect as “a peculiarly British art form” not seen elsewhere in Europe. Bath’s churches provided the ideal canvas for the art form to flourish through the patronage of wealthy residents and visitors to the city.

The fashion was bound to end when church walls became filled but decline had begun earlier when lack of burial space in central churches and churchyards led to the opening of new burial grounds beyond the city centre; the Abbey cemetery in 1844 and Lansdown in 1848 were early examples. The Burial Act of 1852 then required the process to be adopted in response to medical advances linking disease to city centre groundwater contamination. St James cemetery was established on the Lower Bristol Road in the 1860's and others soon followed.

Marble masons had been producing stonework memorials, tombs and gravestones in cemeteries throughout the decades of the church marble fashion. As marble commissions declined, new cemeteries opened and population increased new initiatives emerged. Turvey and Sons of Corn Street had established a stone works in St. James cemetery by 1880 and another in the 1890's in Locksbrook cemetery but produced only one signed marble monument, in St Nicholas, Bathampton, between 1880 and 1900.

The marble fashion was expensive. Thomas King, the leading marble mason in Bath in the second half of the eighteenth century, advertised his prices in the Bath Chronicle in 1786. At today's prices the monuments would be valued between £1000 and £6000 and chimney pieces between £700 and £7000. Advertisements including reference to chimney pieces and other materials for the building trade show the importance of that market to marble masons' businesses.

Tablets would have been cheaper than monuments but still relatively expensive for most families.

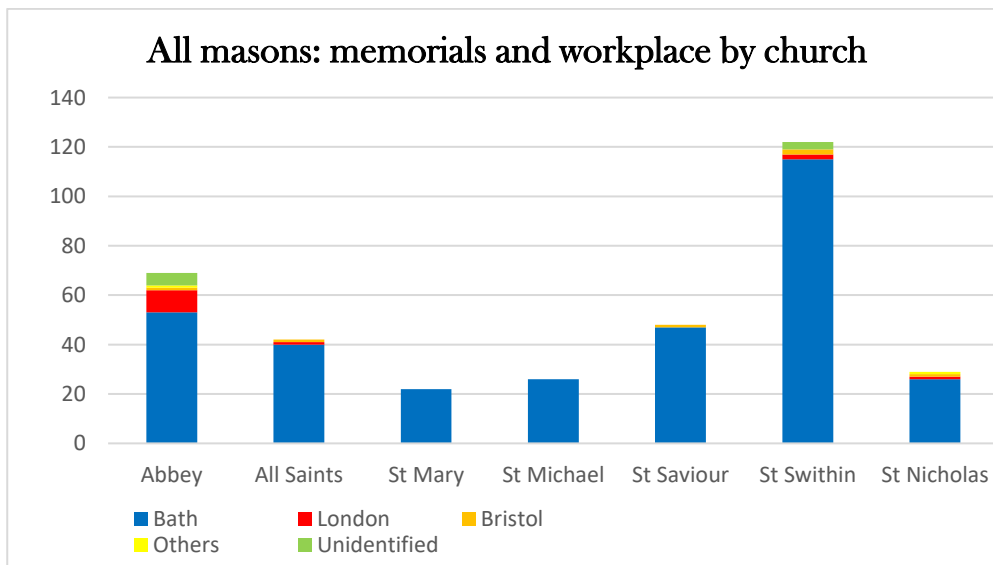


Bath Chronicle 16th February 1786

The diagram below shows the distribution of 358 signed memorials across seven churches in Bath. Those seven all have twenty or more signed works.

The Abbey and St Swithin, the most fashionable churches at the time, have the most works by London makers. Placing a commission there would emphasise a family's superior position and distinguish the implied artistry and skill of a London maker from that of a local craftsman. 12 London makers produced 12 signed works in Bath, 7 in Bristol produced 7 and makers in Frome and Box each provided a single work. 8 other makers' locations have not been identified thus far.

64 craftsmen produced the 358 works; 35 Bath masons produced 329 and the 29 others 29. The names of 14 other marble masons working in Bath appear in contemporary records but is not possible to attribute any given work to a particular craftsman, some of whom would have been employed in the larger firms.



The craftsmen in Bath

329 signed memorials were erected by 25 firms in Bath involving 34 masons. Each firm's contribution is illustrated in the chart below.

The most striking feature is that two firms, the Kings and the Reeves, produced 210 or 64%. Only 6 firms produced more than 10 works and the other 19 produced only 49 or 15%. The latter group comprise some who were primarily professional sculptors producing a memorial only occasionally, some who were more involved in the building trade as builder, supplier or architect and some whose career was short or low in signed works.

The Kings and the Reeves were outstandingly successful in memorial marble work with the Biggs and Lancashires providing competition in the heyday of the trade. William White played an important role as the trade declined and Rogers and Son and Joseph King were significant in the latter decades.

FIRM	Pre-1740	1740-49	1750-59	1760-69	1770-79	1780-89	1790-99	1800-09	1810-19	1820-29	1830-39	1840-49	1850-59	1860-69	1870-79	1880-89	1890-99	TOTAL
Biggs family																		11
Birth																		1
Boobyer & son																		5
Davis																		1
J. Ford Jnr																		1
Gahagan																		1
Harris																		8
J. Harvey Jnr																		1
Hoare																		2
Holbrook																		1
Hopkins																		1
Hulbert																		2
T. King & sons																		88
J. King																		7
Lancashire family																		13
Osborn																		2
Reeves family																		122
Ricketts																		3
Robins																		1
Rogers & son																		12
Sheppard																		1
Turvey & sons																		1
Viner & son																		9
Walker																		1
White																		34

Bath firms by decade and total output

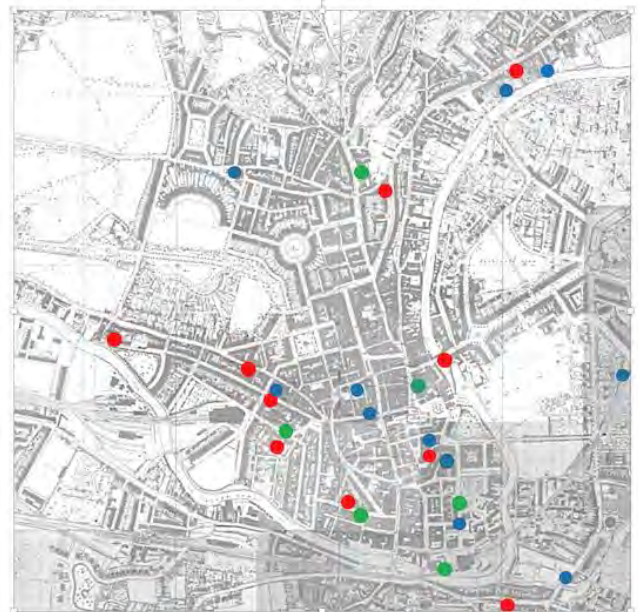
Workshops

25 business occupied at least 27 premises between 1700 and 1900. The approximate locations are mapped below in the sequence of their establishment. All were within one mile of the Guildhall, the highest concentration being in the artisan area in the lower part of the city and the London Road in Walcot.

Premises could be used in succession by different firms. 6 & 7 King Street were used by William Reeves from 1792 to 1826 when he moved to 27 Charles Street, formerly one of Lancashire's premises. William Biggs then replaced Reeves in James Street where the Biggs firm remained until the death of William's son Joseph in 1844

A contemporary illustration of a yard and workshop is shown below, that of Samuel Rogers Jnr in about 1862.

Marble masons' premises mapped on 1885 OS map



1740-1800 in Red 1800-1850 in Blue 1850-1900 in Green

Although dating from the period of decline in marble work when the firm was concentrating on the cemetery and building trade market, the yard probably differs little from masons' yards of the preceding century and more.



Rogers & Son's yard, Widcombe c1862

Training in the craft

London was the artistic centre for sculpture in Britain. Leading craftsmen working in London early in the period had trained with masters in Italy, the Low Countries or under their instruction in London itself. During the eighteenth century academic training developed in London, the Royal Academy becoming pre-eminent from its foundation in 1768. Graduates became leading British sculptors by the turn of the nineteenth century. Those with such training in sculpture secured prestigious public and private commissions for sculpture of all kinds and enjoyed similar patronage for funerary monuments.

Artisan training was offered by the Masons Company of London whose seven year apprenticeship also carried the cachet of a London training. Some provincial towns and cities had a Guild system with rights recognised and controlled by the local Council. Bath had such a system, which included masons, but it had been in decline since the turn of the century, gradually being seen by the Corporation as a restriction on the city's economic development. When in 1765 the Corporation lost a test case of their rights to protect and control Guild privilege the system was abolished and the enrolment of trade apprentices ceased. Only one marble mason apprenticeship was served between 1724 and 1765, that by John Ford junior under his father between 1751 and 1758. Thereafter apprentice training under a local experienced mason, usually a family member, became common practice.

Competition

Marble masons needed to create public awareness of their business and their skill. Advertisements in the newspapers and the newly-emerging city Directories provided an opportunity to demonstrate a training pedigree. The three advertisements below are similar in style but make differing claims of pedigree; Francis Lancashire's credentials secured by experience with Prince Hoare, himself trained by masters in London and Italy; William Reeves as foreman to Thomas King, master mason of the Mason's Company of London and foremost marble mason in Bath at the time and John Ricketts' experience of "many years in London with the first Masters" is worded to imply skills of the highest order.

MAUGE and LANCASHIRE, Successors to
Mr. PRINCE HOARE, STATUARY, and for many
 Years past his principal Workmen; beg Leave to acquaint
 the Nobility, Gentry, and Public in general, that they carry
 on the Business in all its Branches, at the late Mr. Hoare's
 Yard, near the North Parade, BATH; where Monuments, Chimney-
 Pieces, and all Sorts of Work in Marble, Wood, or
 Common Stone, are executed in the neatest Manner, and on
 the most reasonable Terms.

Bath Chronicle 8th September 1770

BATH.
WM. REEVES, Marble-Mason, Carver, &c.
 many years Foreman to Mr. KING, begs leave
 to acquaint his friends and the publick, that he has
 opened a YARD in
JAMES-STREET, KING'S-MEAD,
 Where he executes MONUMENTS, CHIMNEY-PIECES,
 &c. &c. on the lowest terms, and hopes that by a con-
 stant exertion and diligence in the above branches, he
 shall have the honour to give general satisfaction to his
 employers. [8994

Bath Chronicle 18th October 1792

HARRINGTON-PLACE,
QUEEN-SQUARE, BATH.
JOHN RICKETTS, STATUARY, embraces this
 opportunity of returning thanks to his Friends for favours con-
 ferred on him during his business in Gloucester; he most respectfully
 begs leave to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry, and the Public, that at
 his SHOP, in PETER-STREET, near St. James's-Parade, he
 executes all kinds of MARBLE-WORK-ORNAMENTS in
 other Stone, and in Wood; and as he will pay every attention ne-
 cessary, hopes he shall be able to give every satisfaction required in
 his profession.
 N. B. Having been many years in London with the first Masters,
 has enabled him (and from his own works) to have various Designs
 for Monuments, and Subjects properly adapted for Entabatures to
 Chimney-Pieces, &c. many of which are after the antique.

Bath Chronicle 7th May 1788

Display of wares was another competitive area. In the advertisements below Francis Lancashire announces the opening of a large Ware-Room where goods can be inspected and draws attention to the monuments and ornaments in marble, stone and wood for sale and houses to be let or sold; Reeves and Son are hoping to attract discerning customers by offering copies of popular busts in marble for connoisseurs and plaster busts of classical figures for household decoration

ALBION-PLACE, Upper Bristol Road, near the
ROYAL CRESCENT, BATH.
F. LANCASHIRE and SON,
 STATUARIES, CARVERS in general,
 MARBLE MASONS, and *Competition Manufacturers,*
RESPECTFULLY return thanks to the Nobility,
 Gentry, Builders, and others, for their past favours
 for many years conferred on them. Beg leave to inform
 them, that they may be supplied with neat and elegant
 MARBLE CHIMNEY PIECES, and Chimney Pieces
 decorated with their elegant Composition, which for
 sharpness and durability cannot be excelled.
 They have opened a large Ware-Room fitted up with
 Chimney Pieces of all the different coloured Marble,
 which enables them to accommodate those who please to
 give their commands with the above by a days notice.
 They execute MONUMENTS, URNS, VASES, COATS
 of ARMS and SUPPORTERS, and all ornamental work, in
 Bath stone and wood, also Painwick stone stair-cases and
 chimney pieces, with fine blue slabs of the same—on in-
 spection the work will be found to be well executed, and
 their terms equal to any in the kingdom.
 Those who chuse to ornament their own chimney pie-
 ces, may be supplied with all kind of composition orna-
 ments on the most reasonable terms.
 N. B. Eleven small HOUSES to be let or sold, well
 situated in the Parish of Walcot. The rent from Twelve
 Pounds to Twenty Guineas a year.—Likewise, One
 House in a capital situation, fit for a Gentleman's Family.
 A large quantity of Laths, Lime, Pitching Stones,
 &c. Enquire as above. 19724

Bath Chronicle 28th February 1793

Fine Arts.
ON SALE by REEVES and SON, STATUARIES,
JAMES-STREET, opposite the New Free Church,
MARBLES.
 1. A Bust of LUCIUS, one of the Nephews of AUGUSTUS.
 2. A Bust of BRITANNICUS, Son of the Emperor CLAUDIUS.
 3. Bust of a YOUNG LADY, in the Character of FLORA.
 4. Statue of MINERVA,—an Antique Fragment.
 5. Bust of the celebrated Mr. ALLEN, of Prior-Park.
 6. Bas-Relief of Mr. PELHAM, Chancellor of the Exchequer.
 7. Bust of CICERO.
A large Porphyry Oval Table.
PLASTER CASTS.
 8. Four wrought Brackets, with Female Figure.
 9. Two Ditto, small, with Mask.
 10. Bust of J. PIERCE, esq; formerly Surgeon to the Bath Hospital.
 11. Bust of the late EARL of NORTHAMPTON.
 12. Bust of RICHARD NASH, esq; called *Beau Nash*.
 Statues of VENUS of Medicis, APOLLO, DANCING FAUN,
 GANYMEDE, IXION, &c.
 Heads of Farnese HERCULES, JUPITER, &c. &c.

Bath Chronicle 21st November 1822

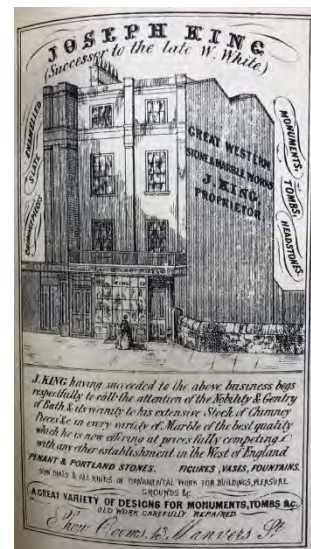
By 1800 city directories were including statuary and marble masons in the trade listings. Thomas King Jr placed the first full page advertisement by a marble mason in Gye's Bath Directory in 1819. An elaborate tableau design to commemorate Nelson's victories, the skill required to achieve its construction allows him to describe himself as sculptor thus positioning himself above those competitors who settled for statuary or marble mason.

Later in the century, as the marble memorial fashion was in steep decline, Joseph King, not related to the earlier King family firm, used the 1881 Bath Post Office directory to advertise the wide range of his products at his new premises at 13 Manvers Street. King had been an employee of William White at White's premises at 17/18 Manvers Street, taking on the running of the business after White's death in 1858.

The boldness of these advertisements was not emulated by other masons who relied on simple, small designs conveying the essentials of their trade and their address.



Thomas King Jr's advertisement



Joseph King's advertisement

Signed work identified the maker; addition of the traditional *Fecit*, *F'* or *F* invited association with art of classical antiquity. Reeves and Son took the opportunity to demonstrate their classical credentials in 1816 by using the plural *Fecerunt*. Those who were professional sculptors chose *Sculpt* or *Sc* to confirm their assuredness of their higher artistic status.



Reeves and Son Monkland Monument 1816.



Detail of lower right corner

Diversification and financial pressures

The newspaper advertisements show how businesses did not solely depend on funerary commissions. Chimney pieces and carved stone items for general house building or household and garden ornaments were essential parts of the stock in trade but some of those items were also being produced by stone carvers working within the building trade. John Ricketts tried a new direction in 1792 by investing in barge operations between Bath and Bristol, initially with a single barge then adding a second and third before the venture was lost in his bankruptcy the following year. Thomas King Snr joined forces in a wholesale venture in 1791 with his brother-in-law and fellow marble mason, Thomas Paty, of Bristol importing Italian marble and Baltic timber into Bristol.

Working closely with the building trade provided opportunities for speculation in building schemes jointly with property developers or builders or by taking building leases on developers' land. The ventures often proved financially unsuccessful and bankruptcies ensued:-

1771 Francis Robbins*	1811 William Lancashire*
1791 Henry Mais	1847 Robert Davis*
1793 John Ricketts*	1849 Charles Reeves*
1795 Thomas Lovett	

*subsequently re-established in business

The Kings and the Reeves

These family firms were predominant in the trade in Bath for over 100 years; the Kings from the 1760's to the 1830's being overtaken then succeeded by the Reeves into the 1870's. Both were successful in obtaining commissions throughout England, Wales and Ireland, in the West Indies for the Kings and in the West Indies, India and the former Ceylon by Reeves.

Other studies have identified at least 150 King works other than the 88 recorded in this study thus indicating an output of perhaps 240 but the total could be much greater since those other studies omitted tablets.

At least 100 works by the Reeves in addition to the 122 recorded here indicates an output of at least 220. That could also be an underestimate if tablets were not recorded.

Thomas King senior served his apprenticeship with the Mason's Company of London then established his business in Lansdown, Bath in the early 1760's. Later he set up a marble yard and workshops at Snow Hill at the junction with London Road. It was sufficiently significant to be recorded on Harcourt Masters' 1794 map of the city shown below.

He secured important commissions soon after arriving in Bath; the marble work on Ralph Allen's tomb of 1764 in Claverton churchyard is considered to be his work although it is not signed.



Four more Allen family memorials signed by King between 1765 and 1785 are in St. Nicholas, Bathampton.

In the Abbey his work includes that of James Quin and his design of a broken column for the Walsh monument is believed to be the first use of such symbolism to represent the ending of a line of succession.

By his death in 1804 he had amassed a considerable property portfolio including houses in St. James Square, Dover Street, Bennet Street, Mount Pleasant, Paragon, and Beaufort Place, Walcot where he died leaving a substantial estate to his sons who continued the business. In his will he provided £20 for a monument to himself duly executed by his sons in Woolley church on the outskirts of Bath.

Thomas Jnr seems to have been the senior partner as the T. King signature continued to mark the firm's work. They secured a commission of international importance in 1814

with the memorial to Admiral Phillip in St. Nicholas, Bathampton, and continued the family property interest with investments in developments in Norfolk Crescent, Great Stanhope Street and Nile Street. Their business disappeared from the public record during the 1830's. The name King reappeared on memorials between the 1860's and 90's. They are the work of Joseph King.

William Reeves opened a yard at 6 James Street in 1792 and a residence at number 7 on setting up in business after being Thomas King's foreman for many years. His son, Charles, must have shown sufficient skill in the work for the firm to be renamed Reeves and Son in about 1800. In 1826 the business was relocated to larger premises at 27 Charles Street.

On William's death in 1831 Charles continued the business, later joined as partner in 1842 by his son, William. Charles' involvement in unsuccessful property dealings led to his bankruptcy in 1849. He re-established in business, but financial problems arose again in 1854 when a sale of four houses in Charles Street and some stock-in-trade was necessary but pressures must have continued leading to his suicide in 1861.

A public appeal was launched to save his wife and family from destitution and to allow his son to continue the business. He managed to do so, naming the 27 Charles Street workshop the "City Marble Works", then in 1870 moving back to James Street, number 24, opposite his grandfather's premises of nearly 80 years before. In naming the premises "Midland Marble Works" he aligned his business image with the new Midland Railway terminus just along James Street at Green Park. When he died in 1883 his estate included houses in King Street, Lansdown and Odd Down.

The significance of the Kings and the Reeves lies not only in their dominance of the trade in the city but the wide extent of their commissions elsewhere in Britain, including London, and abroad, an achievement equal to London craftsmen at the time. The Lancashire family business of Francis and his son William between the 1770's and William's death in 1825 did not reach such high levels of output but their work is recorded throughout Britain and in Barbados, giving them also an important place in the history of British monumental masonry.

Those three firms are the only provincial makers noted in published works on monumental masonry as bearing comparison with leading London firms. Their lives and work, together with that of their colleagues and competitors in Bath, have left a legacy to be noted as much as those whose lives they recorded in marble for posterity.

Author's note

This presentation summarises material from a larger work in progress developing a detailed history of the monumental masonry trade in Bath and short biographies of over 50 masons involved.

I am grateful to Henry Brown for sharing his data on the monuments in St. Swithins and his photograph of Reeves and Son's Monkland monument. Anna Riggs and Oliver Taylor of Bath Abbey have assisted me with information from Abbey records and Roger Williams has been kind enough to advise me on many aspects of the monumental masonry business from his experience and knowledge of three generations of his family business established in Bath in the early 20th century.

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HBRG Web Site: www.historyofbath.org.uk

POSTSCRIPT FOR COVID : THE MICROBE BY T.F.P.

There's a certain demon-microbe with a longish Latin name,
Which I never could remember, though it's got through (sic) all the same,
Who's devastating efforts - may never trouble you -
Result in what the world at large is pleased to call "the flu."

To do this demon justice, one needs words - you know the sort,
You'll hear them any morning in the Guildhall City Court,
Or if, as often happens when the human heart is wrung,
You'll get 'em in perfection when our Avon Street gives tongue.

But I'll forbear, and merely drop a hint or two to show
The only way to circumvent this most obnoxious foe,
Which knows no more compunction than a German or a Turk.
For this is how it sets about its bit of dirty work;

He jumps upon your carcase till you ache in every limb,
And if he makes you sing out - well, it's hardly like a hymn.
His little game's to catch you unexpected at the start,
In hopes to break your spirit and put terror in your heart.

In this he closely simulates the doings of the Hun
Who, when it comes to "frightfulness" can always "take the bun."
Of course, you fight the microbe, and I think, if you are wise,
You'll get a doctor and a nurse to join you as allies.

And then it is, when Greek meets Greek, the battle ebbs and flows,
The demon grips you by the throat, then hangs on to your nose.
He pounds upon your throbbing head, your temperature gets higher,
Sometimes you feel "poor Tom's a-cold", and then he's all a-fire.

A hacking cough exhausts you, while your eyes are all a-stream,
And if you dose a minute, oh! My goodness, how you dream!
A burning thirst assails you which would drain the Avon dry,
But when it comes to eating - well you feel you'd sooner die.

The beggar thought he'd starve me out, and thus my fate control,
But feared he'd drown when I began to "swing the flowing bowl!"
I knew non-alcoholic drinks those demons can't abide,
And so with milk-and-soda I just deluged my inside.

I swallowed lots of physic, too, as nasty as could be,
And how I kept it down I'll straight confess, 'tween you and me
A certain friend -no matter who- on whom I set much store,
Sent, with his kind regards, a box of chocolates galore.

Then I could take the physic with a smile and not a frown,
For well I knew the toothsome little sweets would help it down.
All this so cowed the microbe he began to lose his grip,
The nurse and doctor chuckled, for they saw he'd have to skip.

The doctor confidently said " Thermometers don't lie,
And this, my weather-glass declares the clouds are rolling by."
And then he took some soundings, with his stethoscope in hand,
" It's all plain sailing now," says he, "and we're in sight of land.

The demon-microbe's gone the pace and had his bit of fun,
But now, I think we've got the little devil on the run,"
The end was he was driven out, no better than he came,
And if he visits you, I hope, you'll serve him just the same.

MORAL

Now all ye friends and neighbours, if the foul fiend visits you,
Fight him for all you're worth, for it's the only thing to do.
Just like his prototype the Hun, he'll make a dash at start,
But if he doesn't score at once, he'll get "left in the cart."
So keep up your pecker and be as cheery as you can,
And then, whene'er the tussle comes, the odds are on the Man.

Christmas, 1916

T.F.P.

- Taken from 'The Bath Chronicle' 30th December 1916 -