

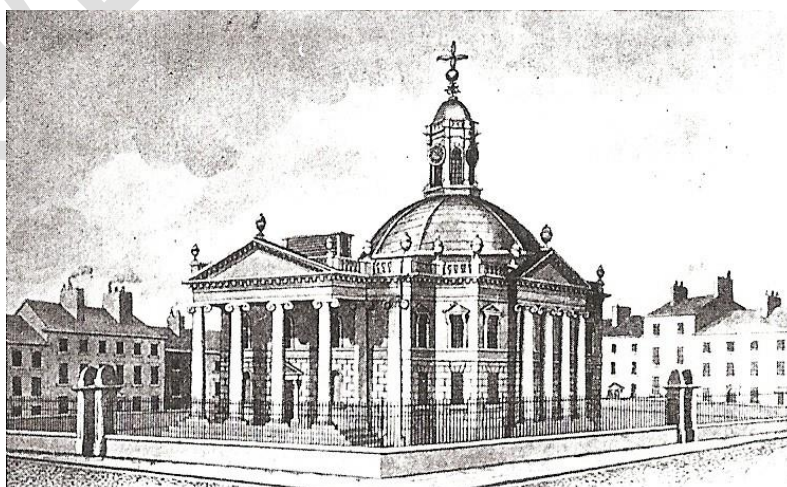
A History of St. Paul's Church and Square, with Contemporary Cuttings



Herculaneum earthenware plate c1833

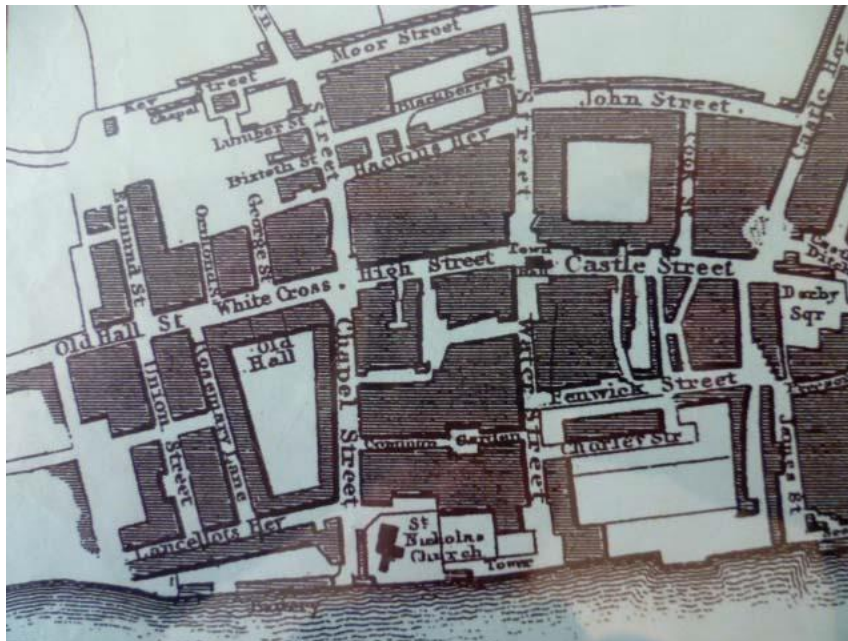
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St. Paul's Square and the Church

St. Paul's Square was laid out c1760 at an exciting time when Liverpool was growing as a key UK and World port. It now had some 222 streets and, between 1750 - 70 the population would expand by some 16,000 to over 34,000. Development was soon to envelop land to the north of the original seven streets and this included 'Dog Field' and what would later become St. Paul's Ward.



1725:

A new square, initially referred to as Saint Paul's Church-yard, was laid out and surround by spacious three-storey Georgian 'mansions' occupied by wealthy merchants, captains, and gentlemen. On the west side it was open to Ladies Walk, Maiden's Green and views of The Mersey, still at this time a fashionable bathing spot.

The **1785** map shows the new square, church, and the encroachment of the canal system and coal yards:



In 1766 the initial residents of **St. Paul's Church-yard**, keen to escape the growing squalor around the dock, and as listed in Gore's Directory were: *(houses not yet numbered)*

Captain James Brown

Captain Richard Dawson, engineer in ordinary to his Majesty

Thomas Isatt, officer of excise

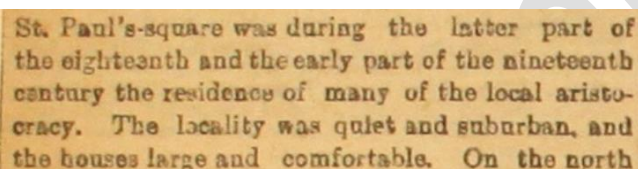
Nicholas Crook, gent

Thomas Crook, gent

At this time still pleasantly situated on the very edge of town, no canals, no railways, no warehouses, and when the church was completed in 1769 was described as:

'..... built in an open square, from the west entrance to which it may be viewed with advantage; and standing on elevated ground, it is a noble addition to the view of the town, from whatever point it is taken'

Enfield 1774ⁱ



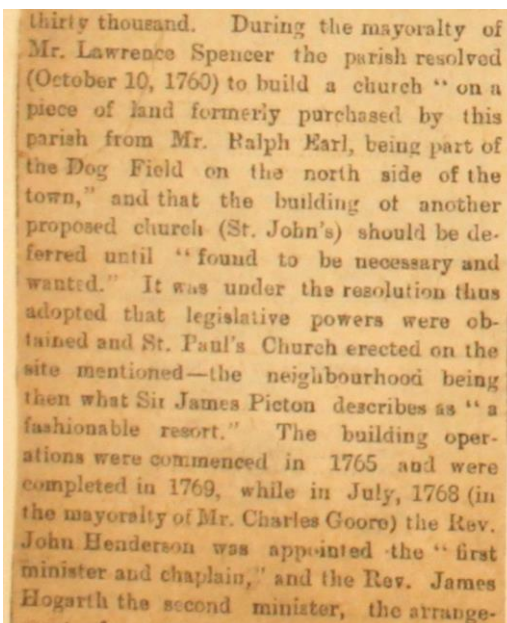
St. Paul's-square was during the latter part of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century the residence of many of the local aristocracy. The locality was quiet and suburban, and the houses large and comfortable. On the north

I doubt though that those responsible, the Earl family had sold the land (Dog Field) to the Corporation, had envisaged the imminent changes the area was about to see, and perhaps no wonder the church was to be described later as seeming ***'always to have been under a cloud'***.

The church had been deemed necessary to serve the quickly growing population and was set in motion by the passing of the **St. John's and St. Paul's Churches Act of 1762; revised 1767.**

"The first stone of this Church dedicated to St Paul was laid on April 4th 1763, in the third year of our Lord, George the Third by W. Gregson then Mayor"

St. Paul's foundation stone was laid by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, William Gregson Esq, on the 4th April 1763. Both St. John's and St. Paul's said to be designed by architect **Timothy Lightoler** (Lightholder) of which more later. The masons were T & R Edwards. *Liverpool Courier* 5th July 1889



thirty thousand. During the mayoralty of Mr. Lawrence Spencer the parish resolved (October 10, 1760) to build a church "on a piece of land formerly purchased by this parish from Mr. Ralph Earl, being part of the Dog Field on the north side of the town," and that the building of another proposed church (St. John's) should be deferred until "found to be necessary and wanted." It was under the resolution thus adopted that legislative powers were obtained and St. Paul's Church erected on the site mentioned—the neighbourhood being then what Sir James Picton describes as "a fashionable resort." The building operations were commenced in 1765 and were completed in 1769, while in July, 1768 (in the mayoralty of Mr. Charles Goore) the Rev. John Henderson was appointed the "first minister and chaplain," and the Rev. James Hogarth the second minister, the arrange-

One of the builders/tradesmen involved in the build was John Foster, father of 'King of Liverpool' John Foster Snr:

'His father showed business acumen, giving 5% discount on work at St Paul's Church, and prospered especially in Corporation work.'ⁱⁱ

The yellow sandstone church was completed and consecrated in 1769 and had cost £13,139 with the Corporation granting aid of £4000:

'Wednesday last the new elegant Church of St. Paul's, in this town, was consecrated by the Right Revd the Lord Bishop of this Diocese. An excellent Sermon was preached upon the occasion by the Revd. Mr Henderson to a very numerous congregation'

Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser and Mercantile Chronicle: (Vol XIV Number 686)

Friday July 14, 1769

A photograph of a historical document snippet with a light beige background and dark text. The text reads: "In the year 1763 the church of St. Paul, in St. Paul's-square, Old-hall-street, was built at a cost of £13,139, the money being raised, in the usual way, viz., by a parish tax on the inhabitants of Liverpool of all religions, aided by a grant of £4,000 from the Corporation. The mode in which..."

The church being one of the new 'corporation churches' would have certain costs covered by the Corporation rates, including the salaries of the two incumbents and maintenance. This obligation remained in place until 1897 when the two roles were united and the Rev D. G. Fee Smith became the sole minister. The Corporation would hold the 'perpetual advowson'. This was sold in 1845 to George Ramsden Esq. who bought the advowson/patronage for £630. In 1891 Mr. Howard Douglas Horsfall then purchased it.

In July 1768 the Rev. John Henderson was appointed 'first minister and chaplain', and the Rev James Hogarth the second minister. It had two ministers, one being for high church service on Sunday mornings, and one for the evening service, which was low church, for what was then deemed a different class of worshippers.....namely poorer! Each service could accommodate 1800 worshippers, although this is unlikely to have ever been achieved.

The first baptism at the new Church is recorded as having taken place on 6th July 1769, that of 'Edward, son of James Brown, Mariner', and the first burial was that of Peter Forrest who died on 14th July 1769 aged just 8 years. The graveyard would be the final resting place of many sadly young souls.

Gilbert Rigby, merchant of Old Hall St is also an early burial here having died 9th October 1769. [Sources](#) credit the naming of nearby Rigby St to him (laid out 1770). The gravestone inscription told a heart-warming tale relating to Gilbert's wife Mary, who died on 13th March 1814. Just five days later her servant Catherine Holding also died. Catherine was interred in the same family vault as Mary and the inscription read:

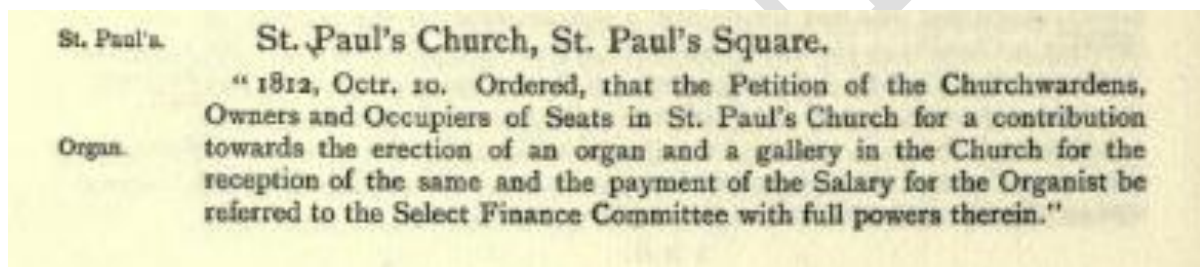
'... also of Catherine Holding the approved and faithful servant of the above family..... interred together with her mistress, whose affection for her was such that she was unable to survive her loss. They were lovely in life and in death were not divided'

In 1774, Enfield described the new church:

'It has a bold Ionic portico on the west side, the pediment of which, with its large projection, produces an agreeable recess of shadow upon the body of the building, and finely relieves the four columns which support the front. The south and north fronts have each a pediment supported in like manner, but not with so great a projection. To each of these fronts there are handsome flights of steps, which lead to the several entrances into the church, the main body of which is one Ionic order, standing upon a low rustic basement. The stone work is finished at the top with plain vases, and a range of balustrades. In the centre, upon an octangulat base, rises a dome, on which is placed a lanthorn terminated with a large ball and cross. The church is built in an open square, from the west entrance to which it may be viewed with advantage; and standing on elevated ground, it is a noble addition to the view of the town, from whatever point it is taken.

On the inside, the dome is supported by eight Ionic columns, which, being lofty, large, unfluted, and of a dark grey colour different from the rest of the church which is white, have a rude gigantic appearance. The galleries, which are neatly constructed and pewed, retreat behind these columns, and are privately supported by brackets inserted in the shafts of the pillars. The ground floor is divided into open seats for the use of the poor. The altar is in an oval niche, plain and neat. The pulpit is of a movable kind, and has a stair case in the centre, unseen by the congregation, by which the preacher gradually ascends to public view.' (Enfield 1774, Chapter V)

Some time after 1812 the organ and gallery is planned:



In 1825 'a multi-faced clock was installed in the cupola' and the Liverpool Mercury of Friday 3rd June reported:

'The clock in St. Paul's Church is finished, and is a great accommodation to the neighbourhood'

This can be seen in later photographs:



The clock would face repairs costing £25 in 1871, just voted through by 7 - 5 after debate.

As uncovered in the Oxford Archaeological North digs/watching briefs of 2005/09 the church also had a substantial crypt:

'A subterranean crypt was found in the area of the church's main, south-west, entrance, and comprised a series of at least 23 two-storey red-brick vaulted bays flanking a central corridor. Although these bays had once been sealed by substantial doors, all those investigated had been emptied of their original contents and backfilled with demolition debris and broken gravestones'

^{iv} https://library.thehumanjourney.net/228/1/StPaulsFullReport030210_2.pdf

One such vault was owned by the family of John (died 29th March 1820) and Molly Myers of Crosby House. Another was owned by 'Rachel Walker of the Island of Antigua'

The church measured 86ft 4in x 86ft 4in, had walls 3ft 2in thick, and was surrounded such:

The whole is enclosed by a dwarf wall, and cast iron ballustrades, three handsome gates lead to each entrance of the church, through a small paved area, or court, the whole of this enclosure is light, elegant, and deserving a better situation.

Wallace, J, 1795 *A General and Descriptive History of the Ancient and Present State of the Town of Liverpool*, Liverpool, 141-144

St. Paul's also reflects the early ethnic changes, and Liverpool's connections with slavery. Church accounts from 7th Aug 1800 showing baptism¹ records of men of African origin:

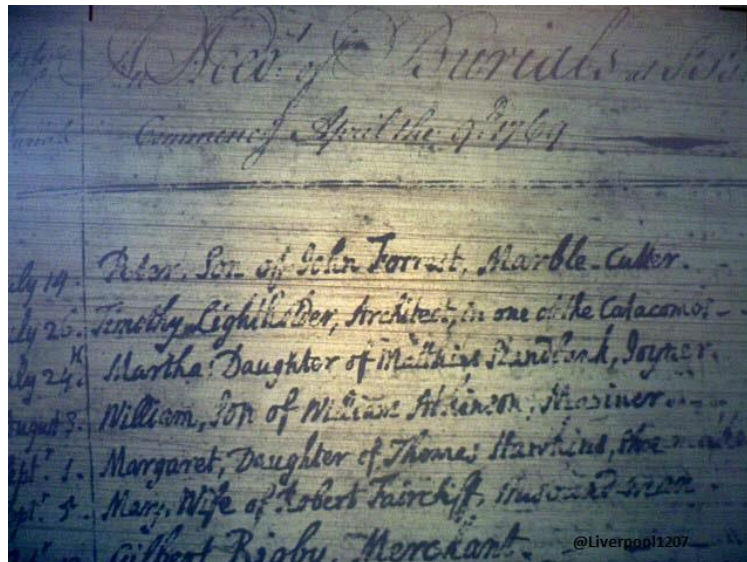
Cooper And of Mary his wife
July 26 Ann Dau^r of Robert Davis Labourer
And of Sarah his wife Leech St.....
John Boys an African Black man
About Nineteen Years Old
Robert Williams an African Black
man ^{about} Nineteen Years Old
Aug 4 Lawrence Croft son of David Davis
Poter Mitchell And of Ann his wife...
Aug 10 Elizabeth Dau^r of John Owens, Iron
Rowler of the Iron Rowling mill ^{his wife} of Margaret

LRO 283PAU 1/1

¹ Liverpool 800 Culture, Character & History: pages 320/25

Who was the Architect?

The design of the church, which was not without its critics in terms of practicality, is generally accredited to Timothy Lightoler (also known as Lightholder) but John Hope also lays claim. Interestingly both men were buried at St. Paul's: Here from the burial records we see an entry for **'July 26 1769 – Timothy Lightholder, Architect, in one of the catacombs'**



Lightholer seems to have been an interesting character and is also accredited by some for designing the contemporary St. John's Church in St. Johns Gardens. However;

'Lightholer, it turns out was not an architect, but rather an architectural expeditor, who seems to have enjoyed pretending he was an architect. He apparently secured many of his designs from none other than Peter Harrison...'

The Buildings of Peter Harrison: Cataloguing the work of the first global architect, 1716-1775, John Fitzhugh Millar

Another possibility for the architect is **John Hope**.

Hope has various connections with St. Paul's. In 1773 he is listed in Gores Directory as living in St. Paul's Square, and was interred there on 21st March 1808 aged 73. His wife Elizabeth and two young sons, also called John, were also buried at St. Paul's. Daughter Sarah was baptized here on 6th Nov 1775

A paper by The Liverpool Architectural and Archaeological Society from 1869/70 makes a strong representation for Hope to have actually designed, or at least been involved in designing, St. Paul's. (LRO ref 720.6 ARC pp.4-5)

Twenty-Second Session.

1869-70.

FIRST MEETING.

6TH OCTOBER, 1869.

F. HORNER, Esq. PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

The SECRETARY announced that two sets of drawings had been received in competition for Mr. Picton's prize for sketches.

Mr. PARSLow read the following notes relative to John Hope, an architect formerly practising in Liverpool :—

"In the last week's copy of the "Builder" the names of the architects are given who competed for the Dublin Exchange, one hundred years ago. Comments are made upon a few of these names, and it is added, some knowledge of others may be possessed by readers of the "Builder." I possess information with reference to the Liverpool firm whose name appears fifth on the list; my authority is my brother-in-law, who is the great grandson of Mr. John Hope, the senior member of this firm.

"John and Samuel Hope were sons of John Hope, architect and builder, of Millington, Cheshire. John was born in the year 1734, and Samuel 1737. The father was architect to the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, at his seats, Dunham Massey and Envil; he was also the architect of Knutsford, Cheshire, and of several residences in that county. His sons succeeded to his business, and came to Liverpool about the year 1763. Samuel died shortly after engaging in the competition referred to. John's books, still in existence, which were most elaborately kept, show that he was engaged frequently by the Corporation of Liverpool. He prepared plans for the rebuilding of St. Nicholas' Church, for which he was paid, but there is no record of his continuing the work. He was also engaged

as architect in the erection of St. Paul's Church, though there is no record of his preparing plans for it; some interesting particulars, however, appear. For attending parliament and conferring upon the Church Bill he charges the Corporation one guinea per day for forty-five days. He also charges an annual salary of £52 10s for his services for several years in building the church. The name of Timothy Lightholler, who prepared the accepted design for this church, is often mentioned by John Hope, in his books. He was further engaged in making additions to St. Domingo House, the residence, for a short period, of one of the royal dukes. Among other clients appears the name of Her Grace the Dowager Duchess of Athol; also the Legh family, of High Legh Hall, Cheshire, the Blundells of Ince, and the Earles, Stanleys and Booths of Liverpool. Wavertree Church was also built by him. A most complete diary still exists of his private and business matters, which he kept every day for twenty-eight years. An entry is made in his day book relative to sending off his drawings for the Dublin Exchange, but his diary does not commence until the year following. A note worth mentioning also appears of an agreement to pay Mr. Byrom, his draughtsman, £40 per annum for three years. This Mr. Byrom subsequently married his daughter, and succeeded to his business at the beginning of this century. The last entry in his diary was made fourteen days before his death, which took place in his seventy third year, 1808.

"In his diary are notes showing that he was an interested observer of political events, which subjects are also introduced into his business letters from the Earl of Stamford and Warrington; and a poem, expressing gratitude to God for Mr. Hope's recovery from a serious illness, written by one of three orphans whom he took under his care, represents him as remarkably benevolent and kind to the poor."

Hope was also the architect for Holy Trinity Church, Wavertree:

'...the Wavertree Chapel at Ease to Childwall Church was built, designed by John Hope. On 5th August 1794 the Bishop, the Very Reverend William Cleaver, consecrated the building, dedicating it to The Holy Trinity'

<http://www.holytrinitywavertree.org.uk/about-us/our-history>

Some Notable Parishioners

Sir James Allanson Picton (1805 – 1889): Architect. Baptised here in 1805 and was involved in efforts to save the church in 1889.

'No.109 – Born 2nd December: James Allanson, son of William Pickton, Joiner, Highfield St and of Esther his wife. Baptised 29th Dec 1805'

John Hope (1734 – 1808): Architect (see above) Lived close to the church, was involved in its design, may have been a warden at one point, and along with members of his family was buried here.

Rev Leigh Richmond

Author of 'The Dairyman's Daughter'

of general. In a commodious house at the corner of St. Paul's-square and Virginia-street was born, in the year 1770, the Rev. Leigh Richmond, rector of Turvey, Bedfordshire, the distinguished author of "The Dairyman's Daughter," perhaps the most popular tract ever written, which has reached the hearts of hundreds of thousands of readers, and tended to promote a quiet simple piety, not often met with in this age of fast life. Mr. Richmond's father was a physician, Dr. Henry Richmond, his grandfather, one of the rectors of Liverpool, his relative, Silvester Richmond, the witty author of so many electioneering squibs, has been mentioned freely in the preceding chapters.

Mr. William Everard: founder member of Liverpool Library

He is actually said in various sources to have lived in St. Paul's Square in *1757 or earlier, thus predating what is generally recognized as the 1760 date it was said to have been laid out. Here from a J. A. Picton talk of 1874

ciation for literary purposes. In the year 1750 a few gentlemen were in the habit of meeting for the discussion of literary subjects at the house of Mr. William Everard, in St. Paul's-square. These meetings were kept up with some spirit for a number of years, and their acquisition of books ultimately led to the establishment of the Liverpool Library, into which the society appears to have merged, for after this time (1758) we have no further record of its existence. It was in 1779 that the

The **Liverpool History Society** tells us:

*Liverpool had a distinguished history in the provision of libraries, commencing in 1715 with the Seamen's Library at the Parish Church of St Peter. In 1757, William Everard, a mathematician, schoolmaster and architect, created the Liverpool Library in his parlour in **St Paul's Square** and was its first librarian; in 1803, this library was re-established in Bold Street and became the Lyceum* <http://www.liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Newsletter35.pdf>

*In questioning the 1757 date I have come across one reference to leases being from 1764 for some properties, so 1757 could be feasible?

2. All that Piece of LAND, with the MESSAGE or DWEL-
LING-HOUSE thereon, situate on the west side of St. Paul's-
square and corner of Virginia-street, in Liverpool, containing in
front to St. Paul's-square 46 feet 7 inches, or thereabouts, and in
front to Virginia-street 15 feet 6 inches, or thereabouts, now in the
occupation of Mr. John Mather, as tenant thereof. This Lot is
held for the residue of a term of 999 years, granted by a lease from
Ralph Earle and others, dated the 9th of May, 1764, subject
to the Yearly Rent of 15s., and to the covenants in the said lease
contained.

Acoustic Problems

From the outset a problem St. Paul's faced was that of poor acoustics, with first attempts at a remedy involving 'oiled paper':

preacher gradually ascends to public view. The open dome renders the voice extremely indistinct, and in some parts almost unintelligible. Several attempts have been made to remedy this inconvenience; particularly by spreading oiled paper over the bottom of the concave, like parchment upon the head of a drum, but the ears of the audience are not so much benefited, as their sight is offended by this contrivance.

Enfield 1773

The fault finally appears to have been rectified by structural alterations carried out in 1818 by architect Peter Harrison of Chester, with the Liverpool Mercury reporting:-

The picture below from 1931 shows a shallow saucer dome under the original dome. A report from Feb 1861 by the Liverpool Architectural and Archaeological Society backs this up:

The Commissioners, in common with many other Inhabitants of this Town, have long had reason to lament, that, in the original construction of the interior of Saint Paul's Church, more attention appears to have been shown to the beauty of the architecture, and accommodation of the congregation who might attend it, than to that very essential convenience—their hearing of the minister. This they know to have been an evil, existing from the consecration of the church, with very little exception. To remedy this defect, which, as has been stated, arises from the construction of the church, and from its uncommon altitude, an attempt was made, several years since, but unfortunately failed of producing the desired effect. The consequence of this has been almost the total absence from church, not only of the Proprietors of the seats in the Galleries, and the lower order of inhabitants in the free seats in the Body, but a very considerable diminution in the rents attached to, and payable for, the former; by which the Parish has sustained, for a series of years, a very considerable charge, in making up to the Ministers, and others, the deficiency of their stipends. With these facts before their eyes, the commissioners have thought it their duty to consult one of the first Architects in the Diocese, as to the probability of effectually curing the defect pointed out in this Address; and it has afforded them great satisfaction to know, that, by an alteration which, while it will conduce to the comfort of those attending a place of worship so unnecessarily spacious, will, beyond all question, materially improve the hearing in it; and that the utmost expense, on this occasion, cannot exceed the sum of £600.—And when it is considered by the Vestry, that, in adopting the alteration recommended by Mr. Harrison, of Chester, (the Architect alluded to) the morals of the lower class of inhabitants in the neighbourhood of the church will be improved by their attendance on divine worship,—and that the interest of the Parish will be advanced by the resources to arise from the letting or selling of the Pews in the Galleries,—the Commissioners cannot entertain a doubt, that the good sense of the Vestry will cheerfully listen to their recommendation that the alteration suggested be carried into effect, when the Funds, applicable thereto, will not materially feel its adoption.

The Commissioners, not wishing to take up the time of the Vestry in any further observations in support of their recommendation, beg leave to refer to the opinion of Mr. Harrison on the proposed alteration, and to a comparative statement of the extent of Saint Paul's, with other churches, by which it will be seen, that, when its space shall be contracted, the number of cubic feet will very considerably exceed that of the others; thus proving to demonstration, as the Commissioners respectfully submit to the Vestry, that their opinion of the view of the Architect in the construction of it is well founded, viz. that "beauty and extent" were more his objects than the comfort and advantage of the Congregation, or the feelings of the Minister:—

53,000 Cubic Feet more than Saint Peter's.
82,000 Ditto more than Saint Nicholas'.
2,000 Ditto more than Saint Michael's.



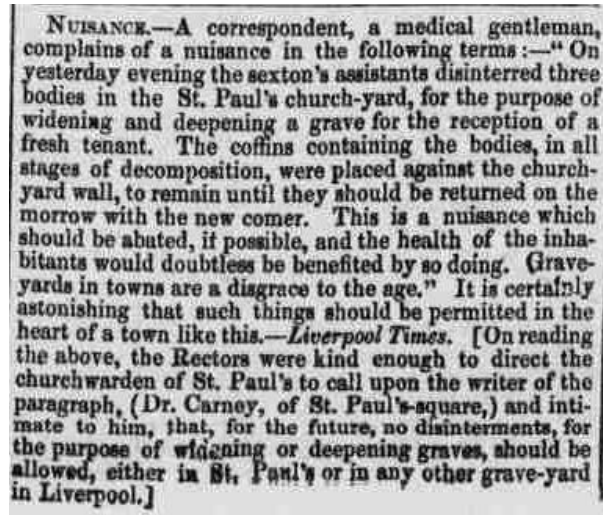
The drawings of St. Paul's Church, in Liverpool, prepared by Mr. Reid, an assistant, and Mr. Doyle, a pupil in the President's office, were again exhibited, and received high encomiums from the members present.

Mr. J. F. Doyle, one of the authors of the drawings, entered into some interesting explanations. He stated that on first entering the Church of St. Paul's, early last spring, they were no less astonished than surprised to find, instead of the fine lofty interior which they had expected from the appearance of the exterior, an extremely low segmental arch, springing immediately from the top of the cornice of the columns, and a flat ceiling from thence to the side walls, which gave to the interior a very low and stunted appearance. Being somewhat astonished at the difference between the exterior and the interior, they determined to ascend into the roof of the church, when, after a careful examination, it was found that the low segmental ceiling was no part of the original structure, but had been a subsequent addition, made some 45 years back, in order to improve the accoustic qualities of the church, so mutilating the structure as to cause it to be one of the worst instead of the finest interiors in Liverpool. After a thorough examination, they found the dome and roof of the church of such peculiar and sound construction, that they determined to make correct drawings, which the president had requested them to lay before the meeting that evening. Having called the attention of the members to the drawings on the screen, and pointing out the peculiarity of the arrangement of the gallery and the construction of the dome, Mr. Doyle pointed out the difference between the original drawings by the architect and the structure as erected, giving it as his opinion that the drawings by the architect were only the original sketches, which had been vastly improved upon by the architect during the course of preparing the working drawings and the erection of the building. The timber used throughout the roof was English oak, and not a joint or single timber had started, but was as sound and as strong as when first erected. One peculiarity in the construction was the absence of iron bolts or ties, and the timbers being fastened by plates of oak secured with dowels, or pins of oak. He concluded by expressing his sorrow that the building should have been so mutilated by such unartistic hands, and that it would be very interesting to any professional gentleman to make a careful examination of the church

The Graveyard

Burials had commenced from the outset but one of the issues St. Paul's faced was being in a relatively small square measuring only 50 yards by 64 yards. Considering the roadways on all four sides and the building itself being 28 yards square, the space for burials was limited (approx 2600 sq yds). By the mid 19th Century the graveyard, like others in the town was full.

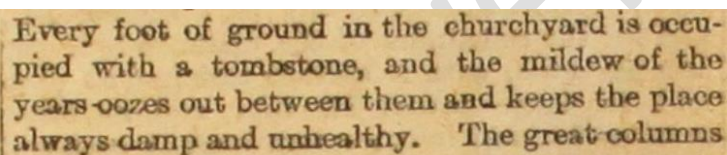
A letter published in the Liverpool Mercury of 31st March 1843 graphically illustrates practices at the graveyard and associated health risks:



NUISANCE.—A correspondent, a medical gentleman, complains of a nuisance in the following terms :—“ On yesterday evening the sexton's assistants disinterred three bodies in the St. Paul's church-yard, for the purpose of widening and deepening a grave for the reception of a fresh tenant. The coffins containing the bodies, in all stages of decomposition, were placed against the church-yard wall, to remain until they should be returned on the morrow with the new comer. This is a nuisance which should be abated, if possible, and the health of the inhabitants would doubtless be benefited by so doing. Grave-yards in towns are a disgrace to the age.” It is certainly astonishing that such things should be permitted in the heart of a town like this.—*Liverpool Times*. [On reading the above, the Rectors were kind enough to direct the churchwarden of St. Paul's to call upon the writer of the paragraph, (Dr. Carney, of St. Paul's-square,) and intimate to him, that, for the future, no disinterments, for the purpose of widening or deepening graves, should be allowed, either in St. Paul's or in any other grave-yard in Liverpool.]

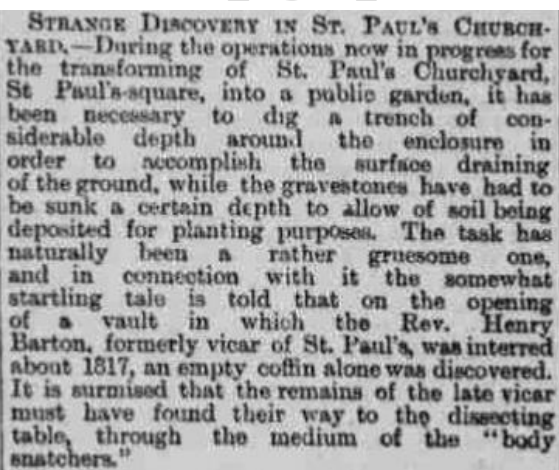
St. Paul's churchyard was, along with others, ordered to be 'closed for interments by Order in Council dated the seventh day of April One Thousand eight hundred and fifty four'. Burials continued though until October 22nd 1856 with that of Caroline Stafford, St Anne St. Records tell us that the total number of burials was some 12,333. (283 PAU 4/4).

The **graveyard precinct** was acquired under the 1887 Open Spaces Act but was clearly not immediately cared for: *Liverpool Mercury Feb 1889*



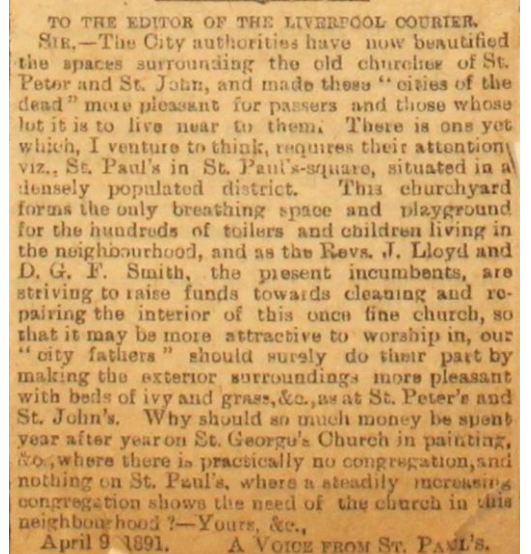
Every foot of ground in the churchyard is occupied with a tombstone, and the mildew of the years oozes out between them and keeps the place always damp and unhealthy. The great columns

...and as this letter of 1891 shows:



STRANGE DISCOVERY IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.—During the operations now in progress for the transforming of St. Paul's Churchyard, St Paul's-square, into a public garden, it has been necessary to dig a trench of considerable depth around the enclosure in order to accomplish the surface draining of the ground, while the gravestones have had to be sunk a certain depth to allow of soil being deposited for planting purposes. The task has naturally been a rather gruesome one, and in connection with it the somewhat startling tale is told that on the opening of a vault in which the Rev. Henry Barton, formerly vicar of St. Paul's, was interred about 1817, an empty coffin alone was discovered. It is surmised that the remains of the late vicar must have found their way to the dissecting table, through the medium of the "body snatchers."

PLEA FOR ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.



TO THE EDITOR OF THE LIVERPOOL COURIER.
SIR.—The City authorities have now beautified the spaces surrounding the old churches of St. Peter and St. John, and made these "cities of the dead" more pleasant for passers and those whose lot it is to live near to them. There is one yet which, I venture to think, requires their attention viz., St. Paul's in St. Paul's-square, situated in a densely populated district. This churchyard forms the only breathing space and playground for the hundreds of toilers and children living in the neighbourhood, and as the Revs. J. Lloyd and D. G. F. Smith, the present incumbents, are striving to raise funds towards cleaning and repairing the interior of this once fine church, so that it may be more attractive to worship in, our "city fathers" should surely do their part by making the exterior surroundings more pleasant with beds of ivy and grass, &c., as at St. Peter's and St. John's. Why should so much money be spent year after year on St. George's Church in painting, &c., where there is practically no congregation, and nothing on St. Paul's, where a steadily increasing congregation shows the need of the church in this neighbourhood?—Yours, &c.,
April 9 1891. A VOICE FROM ST. PAUL'S.

The graveyard was turned into St. Paul's Gardens in 1894, as this **spooky** cutting from The Mercury of 18th June shows

Church Bells and Altar Silver

The Corporation Minutes of 5th March 1777 refer to the original bells at St. Paul's, and John Foster's work in raising them into the cupola:

Ordered that the Treasurer do pay to John Foster his bill for finishing joiner's work in raising the great bell of St. Paul's Church out of the roof into the cupola, making a sounding board and some inward doors and other work there, amounting to £82. 18. 4.
And also one other bill to Christopher Holding for a small or ting-tang bell amounting to £18. 14s. (Picton, *Liverpool Municipal Records, 1700-1835*, p. 278).

Church Bells of Lancashire - Cheetham F H (pgs. 63-64)

The original bell was replaced in 1861 and eventually the two bells were transferred to the new St. Paul's Stoneycroft in 1915:

1. WILLIAM CHADWICK ESQ^r JAMES BUR-
ROUGHS ESQ^r CHURCHWARDENS
On waist:
MURPHY FOUNDER DUBLIN
1861 (42in. diam.)
PRIEST'S BELL.
JAMES CLEMENS ESQ MAYOR 1776
(22in. diam.)
St. Paul's Church was begun in 1763 and completed in 1769. It was closed in 1900 and is to be demolished. In the early part of 1915 the two bells were taken to the new church of St. Paul, Stoneycroft, where I was able to copy the inscriptions on March 5th. The bells were then on the floor of the bell chamber, the building being still in course of erection. Both have old-fashioned cannons. The priest's bell is possibly by Rudhall.

The 'Priest's Bell' referred to above weighed 2cwt and was given to the church by the then Mayor James Clements in 1776. The larger 1861 bell weighed 12cwt.

In 1769, the year St. Paul's was consecrated, the Mayor and Corporation also gave the church:

'a beautiful set of altar silver bearing the London hallmark'

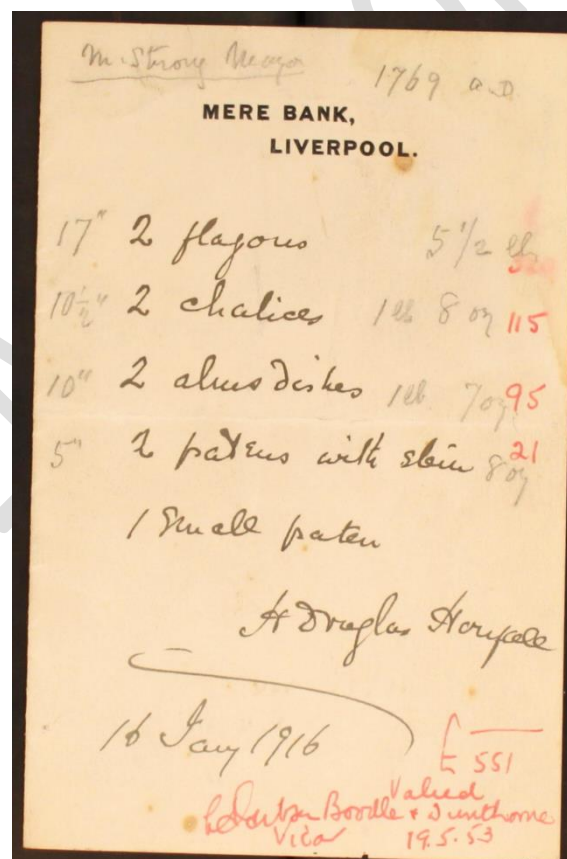
A Brief History of St. Paul's by Rev R.J. Brunswick

Pictures of this silver appear on the current St. Paul's website which also tells us it was sold to Liverpool Museums in 1997 for **£17,500:-**



<http://www.saintpaulstoneycroft.co.uk/history.html>

In LRO ref '283 STO 14/3' there are pictures of various silver with some matching the above picture, and very interestingly details of a valuation acquired by Douglas H Horshall in 1916 values the collection at **£515!**



The LRO file contains some amazing pictures including this of what is I presume one of two stunning 1769 flagons, inscribed with name of Mathew Strong Esq. as Mayor:



National Museums Liverpool has confirmed that the silver is currently held by the Decorative Arts Department at Walker Art Gallery. Let hope it goes on display soon!



Pictures ©Liverpool Records Office (LRO)

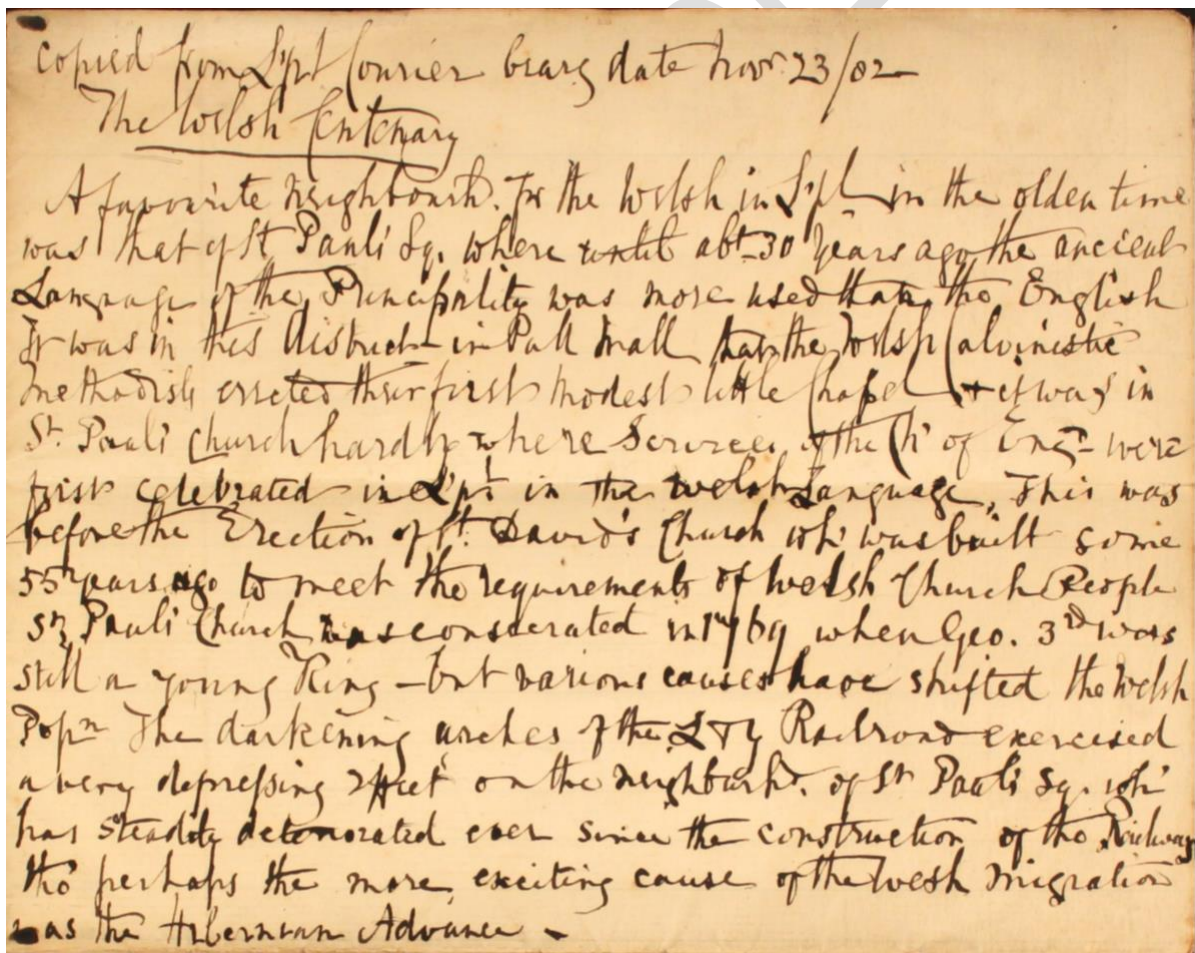
Change Would Come Rapidly

The pleasant outlook of the Square in 1769 would change rapidly. The increasingly busy port also brought increasing population, new industries, and the town would soon expand north engulfing St. Paul's on its way.

The year 1774 sees the basin of the new Liverpool Leeds Canal open just yards away at what is now Back Leeds St, and this brings with it coal yards, timber yards, and all that goes with it. 1787 sees the first Welsh Chapel on nearby Pall Mall indicating the mass influx of Welsh workers that would follow, and indeed in 1793:-

'Permission obtained from the Bishop of the Diocese to have Divine service performed in the Welsh tongue at St. Paul's Church, Nov 19'

The following was found on some church documents at LRO of c1883 and had been added as some handwritten notes. It refers to the 'Welsh Centenary' and paints a clear description of the Welsh impact on the Square, followed by another shift in population. It is difficult to read but I have done my best to transcribe:



Copied from [unclear] former bears date Nov 23/02
The Welsh Centenary
A favorite neighbourhood for the Welsh in [unclear] in the olden time was that of St Paul's Sq. where within abt 30 years ago the ancient Language of the Principality was more used than the English. It was in this district in Pall Mall that the [unclear] (alvinistic) Methodist erected their first modest little chapel & if way in St. Paul's church hardly where services of the [unclear] of [unclear] were first celebrated in [unclear] in the Welsh language. This was before the erection of St. David's Church which was built some 55 years ago to meet the requirements of Welsh Church People. St. Paul's Church was considered in 1793 when Geo. 3^d was still a young King - but various causes have shifted the Welsh Pope. The darkening arches of the [unclear] Railway exercised a very depressing effect on the neighbourhood of St Paul's Sq. which has steadily deteriorated ever since the construction of the [unclear] the perhaps the more exciting cause of the Welsh migration was the Abernethy Advance -

Copied from L'pl Courier bearing date Nov 23/02

The Welsh Centenary

A favourite neighbourhood for the Welsh in L'pl in the olden time was that of St Pauls Sq. where until abt 30 years ago the ancient language of the Principality was more used than the English. It was in this district in Pall Mall that the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists erected their first modest little chapel + it was in St. Paul's church where services of the Ch' of Eng were first celebrated in L'pl in the Welsh language. This was before the erection of St. David's Church which was built some 55 years ago to meet the requirements of Welsh Church people. St. Paul's Church was consecrated in 1769 when Geo. 3 was still a young King – but various causes have shifted the Welsh pop'n. The darkening arches of the LYR Railway exercised a very depressing ????? on the neighbours' of St. Paul's Sq. It has steadily deteriorated ever since the construction of the Railway tho perhaps the more exciting cause of the Welsh migration was the Hibernian Advance.

The Liverpool Mercury of 20th Sept 1866 tells us of the town in 1760 and the rapid change that soon engulfed both the town and the area around St. Paul's:

There was no business of any importance at that time north of the Exchange, which was the residence of the more prosperous part of the population. St. Paul's-square was built about that time, and was the most fashionable square in Liverpool. Just beyond it was the Ladies' Walk, the favourite public promenade, from which there was an uninterrupted view of the mouth of the river and the shipping leaving or entering the port. But the next few years made a great change in this neighbourhood. Canals were coming into existence, and in the year 1774 the canal from the town of Leeds, in Yorkshire, to the Ladies' Walk, in Liverpool, was opened from Liverpool to Wigan, and gradually to Chorley, Blackburn, Accrington, Burnley, and Colne, in Lancashire, and to Bingley, Keighley, Bradford, and Leeds, in Yorkshire. The North Ladies' Walk thus became the terminus of a line of inland navigation 130 miles in length, and the ladies migrated from St. Paul's-square to Duke-street, St. Anne-street, and Everton, then one of the prettiest villages in England. A new town soon grew up along the banks of the canal, and unfortunately it was allowed to grow up without any sufficient care being taken either as to the width or the directness of the streets. The forming of this grand line of inland navigation gave a great impulse to population and industry in the northern districts of Liverpool, and this has continued to be felt to the present time with constantly increasing force.

As early as 1790 we see cellars being used as dwellings, and although at this stage this could well be for servants it was a sign of what would follow:

1790	St Paul's Square	Front Houses	37 inhabited, 5 empty, 179 persons
		Back or Cottage	1 inhabited, 0 empty, 2 persons
		Cellars	5 inhabited, 24 persons

In 1800 additional canal basins for timber appear off Old Hall St, and then 1845 would see the massive impact of the railways on the immediate area. The houses on the northwest side of St Paul's are demolished by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, for what was initially Tithebarn Station, with further expansion in 1888 as Exchange Station opens. Later pictures show the impact this must have had:



Here we see a notice from L.Y.R. regarding the sale of demolition materials, including that from 'Rigby St, Plumbe St, Prussia St, and St. Paul's Square'. It clearly illustrates the extent of change that was to follow:

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.
THE LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE
RAILWAY COMPANY are ready to receive TENDERS for the OLD MATERIALS of the Buildings about to be pulled down, for the Extension of their Railway into Tithebarn-street.
 The Materials will be Sold in Lots as specified below, and the Buildings must be pulled down with all despatch, as soon as the Company can hand the keys to the parties purchasing.
 Lot 1 Block, between Back Leeds-street, Plumbe-street, and Leeds-street.
 2 " " Leeds-street, Plumbe-street, and Rigby-street.
 3 " " Rigby-street, Plumbe-street, Prussia-street and St. Paul's-square.
 4 " " Prussia-street, Key-street, and Edmund-street.
 5 " " Edmund-street, Key-street, Tithebarn-street, and Lumber-street.
 6 " " Ormond-street, Lumber-street, Tithebarn-street, and Bixteth-street.
 Plans of the Premises may be seen, and any other information obtained by application at the Company's Offices, 33, Dale-street, where Sealed Tenders are to be sent on or before the 30th instant.
 Liverpool, 25th April, 1849.

The mid 1800's also sees refineries, sugar manufactories, and malt mills appear. The tall building immediately to the top right of the Church in the above picture started as Frederick Dressers Mill and later became Tomkins, White & Courage, scene of the major fire in 1894.

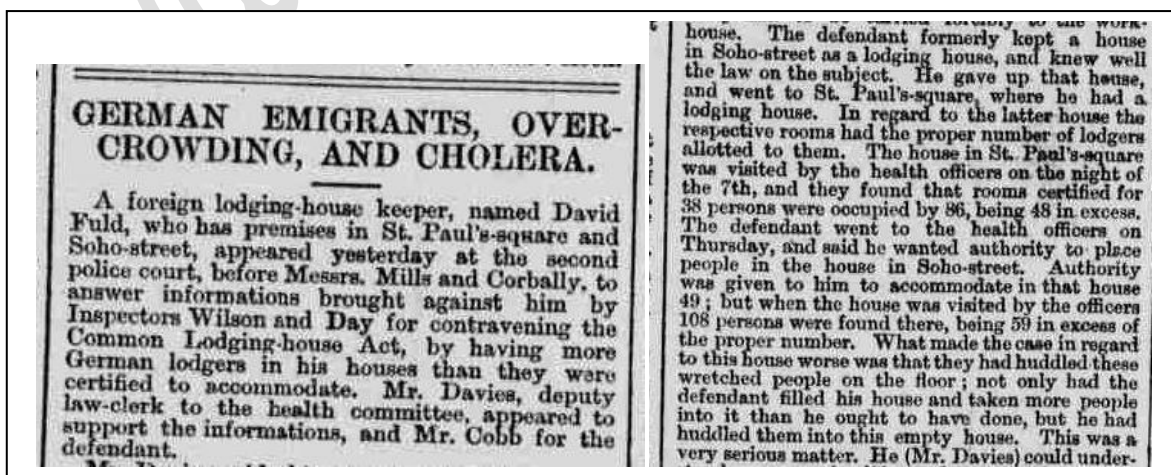
The issue of maintenance is one that seems to have plagued the church throughout its history, and as the cost was borne by the ratepayer one of constant discussion. Here in 1865 we see the Chairman of the Commissioners being forthright:

suggested that they should come to a resolution requesting the Easter Vestry to adopt some vigorous means to protect the property. He was afraid they had a poor case. St. Paul's Church was a large place, with comparatively no congregation. There were two ministers, who, however zealous they might have been, had certainly not been successful in their work. They had gone on for years receiving a very comfortable subsistence out of the church, and doing nothing for the public service. Therefore, there was no sympathy whatever on the part of the public. He believed there was a population in the neighbourhood sufficient to fill two or three churches if there were the right sort of men as shepherds. Mr. Falloon, in a church in the immediate neighbourhood (St. John's), had one of the largest congregations in Liverpool, and he believed that a truly zealous minister would fill St. Paul's Church.—Mr. Owen remarked that, in a large number of streets, warehouses had been substituted for houses the inhabitants of which attended St. Paul's Church.—Dr. Taylor moved that it be a recommendation to the churchwardens to lay a statement as to the repairs necessary and the funds in hand before the parishioners at the next Easter Vestry.—Mr. Barton seconded the motion.—Mr. Hagger having promised, on behalf of the churchwardens, that such a statement should be laid before the vestry, Mr. Roberts withdrew his motion, and the proposition of Dr. Taylor was agreed to.—The meeting then separated.

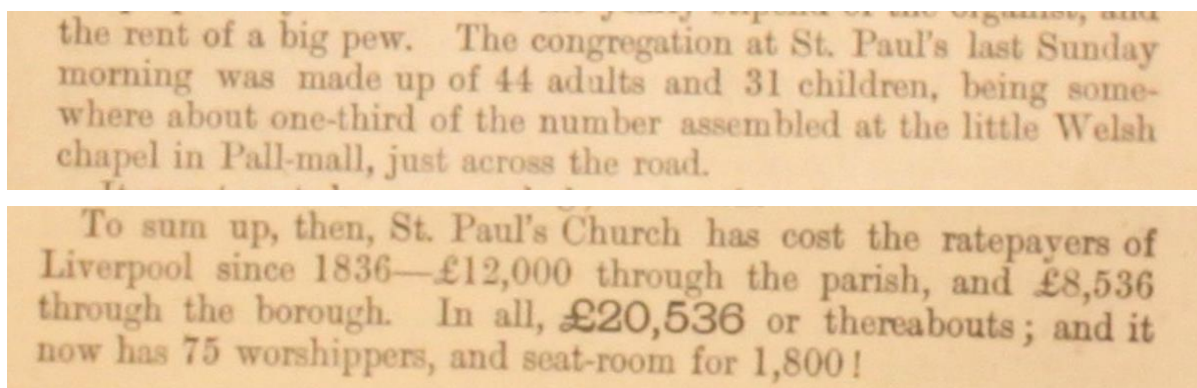
The issue did not go away, and again in August 1866 the commissioners are wrestling with the neglected state of the church and repair costs. The question of heating, or lack of it, was raised with *'being built on a clay foundation'* blamed for damp. It was agreed to ask Mr Wylie (the surveyor) to consult with Mr Robson (the borough surveyor) on the best mode of heating the church and *'carry out the same at an expense not exceeding £200'*

The Liverpool Mercury of 25th March 1871 covers further debate that illustrates the problems the church commissioners faced in balancing falling congregations and income with that of maintenance. With unsafe stonework, the clock needing repairs costing £25 and the acknowledgment that they could no longer afford to pay the organist. Debate ensued about becoming a 'free church', which others said it in all intents and purposes already was, and the inevitable discussion about congregation numbers.

A snippet from a story in the Liverpool Mercury of 10th May 1866 again illustrates the changing nature of St. Paul's Square, and is currently very topical in view of global migration:



Inevitably the issues and changing demographics of the parish would have severe implications for the numbers worshipping, and the receipt of pew rents at St. Paul's and in 1877 we read:



Saint Paul's: An investigation into possible disendowment (283.09 STA)

1871 would see the opening of the famous **St. Paul's Ear and Eye Hospital** at No. 6 St. Paul's Square, at the corner with Virginia St. It would remain here until 1912 when it moved to Old Hall St. On the morning of 25th February 1896 this would be another building in close proximity to the Church that would suffer a major fire (Liverpool Mercury 26th Feb 1896).

Here an advert from The Liverpool Mail of 28th September 1872

ST. PAUL'S EYE AND EAR HOSPITAL,
No. 6, ST. PAUL'S SQUARE, LIVERPOOL.

PATRON.
The Right Honourable the EARL of DERBY.

PRESIDENT.
THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL.

COMMITTEE.

Peter Bancroft, Esq.	Fred. H. Powell, Esq.
Anthony Bower, Esq.	William Roberts, Esq.
Edmund Jardine, Esq.	John Fergusson, Esq.
Edwin Mumford, Esq.	Rev. James L. Cotter.
William Nimmo, Esq.	

HONORARY MEDICAL OFFICERS.
George E. Walker, Esq., F.R.C.S.
John E. Howard Pughc, Esq., M.R.C.S.

HONORARY TREASURER,
ALFRED EDMONDSON, Esq.

HONORARY SECRETARY.
P. B. M'QUIE, Esq.

BANKERS.
NORTH-WESTERN BANK, LIMITED, LIVERPOOL.

Medical Officers' Report week ending the 21st instant.
New Cases.—Diseases of the eye..... 15
 " Diseases of the ear..... 4
Total attendances during the week..... 78

*Subscriptions are earnestly solicited for the above Hospital.
The demands are daily increasing and even now exceed its resources.*

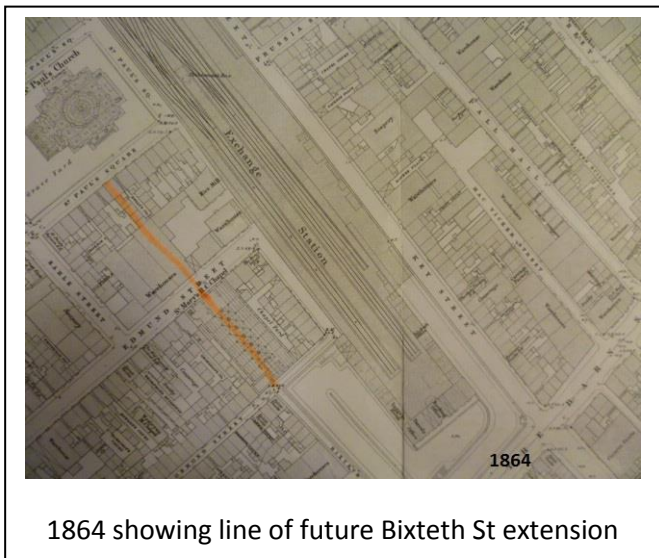
P. B. M'QUIE, Hon. Sec.,
Albert-buildings, Preeson's-row.

This building at some point became known as [Maxwell House](#), The Liverpool Borax Company. It was demolished in the 1970s becoming a surface car park.

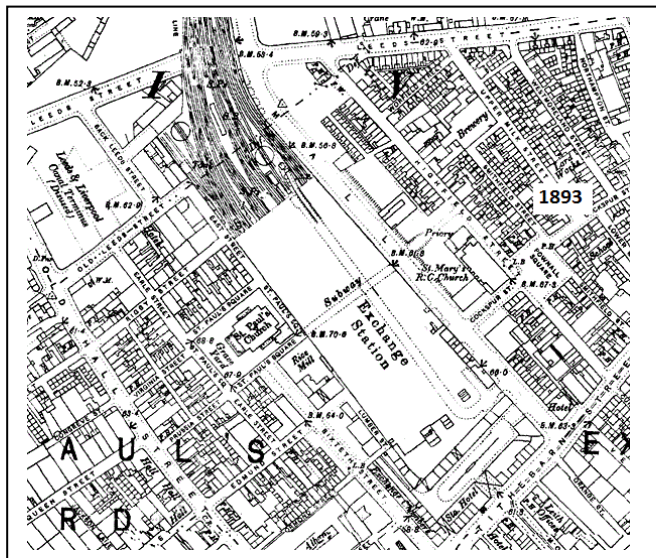
Another notable near neighbour of St. Paul's opened in 1879 – **Cross's Menagerie**, and remarkably this also suffered a [major fire in 1898](#) which resulted in the sad death of many exotic animals. If you would like to read more about this fascinating place you can do so by reading The Liverpool Review of April 28th, 1888 or, The Porcupine of 9th June 1877, both available at Liverpool Central Library Archives.

Further change was afoot in 1884/85 when Bixteth St was extended through to St Paul's Church yard in conjunction with further works by LYR (Liverpool Mercury 4th Aug 1884). This would have necessitated demolition of some of the original houses on St. Pauls Square. At this time [St. Mary's RC Church](#) on

Edmund St was taken down brick by brick and moved to Highfield St. The following two maps show the change between 1864 and 1893, including the extension of Exchange Station, and also of the White, Tomkins & Courage Rice Mill (then still Frederick Dresser – see fire 1894).



1864 showing line of future Bixteth St extension



Suggested improvements at this time included a ‘wood pavement’ –

A very desirable improvement is likely to be soon effected in St. Paul's-square, the Health Committee, acting upon a report of the city engineer, having decided to recommend the laying of wood pavement there, between Prussia-street and Virginia-street, and opposite the Eye and Ear Infirmary, an institution which is pursuing a work of the greatest benefit amongst afflicted ones of the community.

This could possibly have been a noise reduction intervention, or to assist those attending the hospital?

1886 would see further major changes with the Leeds St canal basin, and Clarkes Basin Old Hall St filled in. Pall Mall was extended through to Love Lane – all accommodating the said railway expansion.

Also in 1886 the Liverpool Review talks of the ‘fine old spacious mansions’ now being ‘devoted to such base uses as boarding-houses’. So in its later years the once picturesque St. Paul’s Square is now surrounded by commerce, warehouses, mills, and run down Georgian board-houses.

In 1889 the changing congregation and demographics are once again highlighted:

Captain Martin stated that since the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company made their alterations in that locality about 3,000 inhabitants had gone away.
 Mr. E. Paull.—How many are left?
 Captain Martin.—I cannot say; still there are not many.

The excess of Church accommodation is due largely to the change in the religious complexion of the neighbourhood, there being now a considerable proportion of Irish Roman Catholics where half a century back the residents were mostly Protestants, though even then there

The 27th July 1894 nearly bought disaster to the aging church when a 'great fire' occurred in the neighbouring Rice Mill managed by Fred Dresser. The Mercury of the 28th carries a dramatic tale of a **'seething mass of molten grain and glowing timbers'**, collapsing buildings, and fire offices 'risking lives'. Sadly for St. Paul's it also witnessed the Mission Room **'almost battered to atoms'** by falling debris.

The Mission Room

At some juncture the corrugated Mission Room was erected 'adjoining the church' (see 1893 map with hall coloured in), rather eerily, on top of the flatted gravestones of some of those interred below. This was post 1852 when the last burial took place, and the record of inscriptions (352 CEM 1/15/1) records truncated details for some, and for other gravestones simply says 'under Mission Hall'. You can see its proximity to the Rice Mill and hence damage from the 1894 fire:



This is confirmed by a piece from 1893:

with rough timber ; and a corrugated iron building, erected on the space of some forty or fifty graves, completes in this corner a scene of abominable desolation and rank neglect.

The 'room' was used for what must have been a chilly and spooky Sunday School. This description from The Mercury in Feb 1889 paints a sad vision:

It would be interesting to narrate the character of the "service" which was held in the school-room, and of the vain attempts of an uninformed but well-meaning man to hold the attention of the children through the dreary hour, but some things may not be told. Let it suffice that, after an ill-read service, there was a crude attempt at speech and at extempore prayer; but sitting there, looking at the starveling band of restless children, and thinking of the great soul after whom both church and school were named, it seemed miserably pitiful and sad.

It was also used for election meetings, and what I hope were more cheery entertainment evenings:-

ST. PAUL'S, ST. PAUL'S SQUARE.

Second Entertainment

IN THE
MISSION ROOM,
ADJOINING THE CHURCH.

On Tuesday, December 10th, at 8 p.m.

CHAIRMAN - - P. H. RATHBONE, Esq., C.C.

Programme.

PIANO SOLO.....Mr. W. GRIFFITHS
SONG....."Olde and Newe".....Miss ROSIE JACKSON
RECITATION (Humorous)....."Dan".....Mr. W. CRAWFORD
SONG....."Sing Sweet Bird".....Miss EDITH LAWRENCE
SONG (Humorous)....."I did it".....Mr. A. J. JACKSON
VIOLIN SOLO.....Mr. A. GRIFFITHS
SONG....."The Gates of the West".....Miss GRIFFITHS
SELECTION ON THE FAIRY BELLS.....Mr. E. J. PARKINSON
RECITATION (Humorous)....."Shan O'Neil".....Mr. W. CRAWFORD
SONG (Humorous)....."We are a merry Family".....Mr. A. J. JACKSON
SONG....."When the heart is young".....Miss EDITH LAWRENCE
RECITATION (Humorous)....."The Ticket of Leave".....Mr. A. J. JACKSON
SELECTION ON THE FAIRY BELLS.....Mr. E. J. PARKINSON

MR. GHEO DANIELS,
THE POPULAR HUMORIST AND ENTERTAINER,
Will give the following selections:-

BURLESQUE BALLAD....."Good-bye Annie".....Original
LEARNED LECTURE ON NATURAL HISTORY (Illustrated).....Original
HUMOROUS SONG....."The Four Dancers".....Hallé
HUMOROUS SKETCH....."Old Mother Hubbard".....Anon

ADMISSION - - 3d. and 1d.

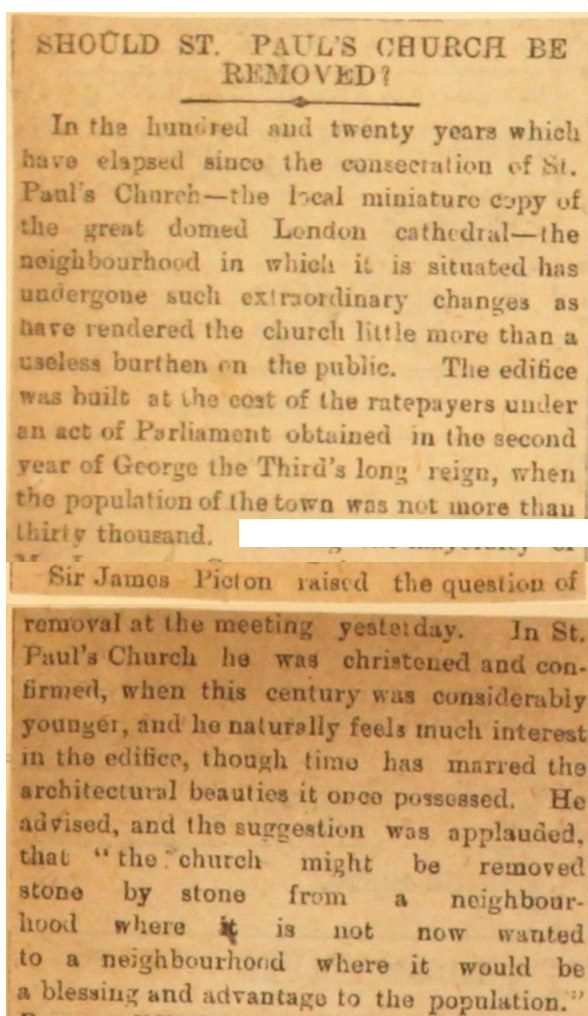
The Mission Hall seems to have had a busy but short life, being dramatically destroyed in the 1894 rice mill fire described earlier. If it was rebuilt is not known.

Why not Move Stone by Stone?

In an article in The Liverpool Courier of 5th July 1889 there is a suggestion that St. Paul's could be relocated stone by stone has had happened with the Church for the Blind (Hardman St). The suggestion was made by non-other than Sir James Allanson Picton whom himself had been baptised at St. Paul's in 1805:

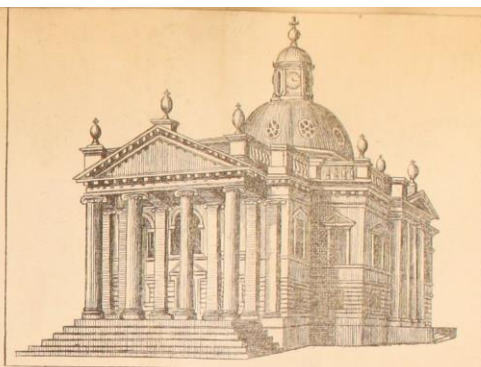
'the church might be removed stone by stone from a neighbourhood where it is now not wanted to a neighbourhood where it would be a blessing and a advantage to the population'

Although the pros and cons were discussed and explored further it clearly never came to fruition. This had of course been successfully achieved with the nearby St. Mary's.



Restoration Fund: March 1891

At this time [Mr. Howard Douglas Horsfal](#) purchased the advowson/patronage of the Church and appears to try and inject new life into the dying institution. The poor state of the Church had become a hot topic with much debate, letters to the press and the launch of a Restoration Fund:



St. Paul's Church, Liverpool.

DEAR SIR,

May we ask your kind perusal of our Appeal on behalf of one of the oldest Churches in Liverpool? A few moments inspection of the Building will shew how much requires to be done, in addition to the little we have thus far been able to accomplish, to render it fit for Divine Service.

Although our Congregation has increased materially during the past year, it is hardly reasonable to expect poor people—and our work lies among the very poor—to be regular in their attendance at Church when the external decencies of religion are wanting. Our chancel carpet is so worn that it cannot even be taken up and shaken: there is hardly a window in the church in which the greater number of panes are not cracked or broken: and in many of the old-fashioned high-backed pews it is difficult to sit down, and impossible to kneel. A fragment of the old "three-decker" does duty for a pulpit, but there is neither reading desk nor lectern, nor any accommodation for the choir.

Plans have been prepared and approved by the Chancellor of the Diocese for altering the interior of the Church so as to render it more suitable for Divine Worship, but to carry them out will involve an expenditure of about £1,000. Towards this we have received a most generous offer, to meet with a similar amount whatever sums we may collect, and towards the remaining £308 6s. 6d. we earnestly ask your kind help. The smallest sums will be gratefully received, and may be paid to the St. Paul's Restoration Fund, Bank of Liverpool (Heywood's Branch), or to

Yours faithfully,

J. LLOYD, 15, Earle Street, St. Paul's Square.

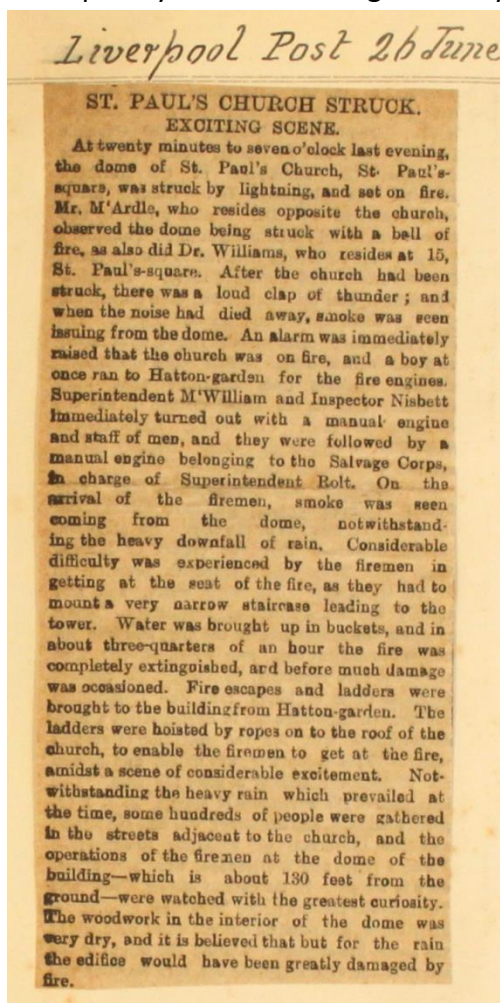
D. G. F. SMITH, 28, Earle Street, St. Paul's Square.

MARCH, 1891.

I see that another of the Corporation churches—St. Paul's—is in a wretched state of dilapidation, but in this case the two incumbents, instead of fighting the Corporation on the question as to who is responsible for the repair of the fabric, have manfully resolved to raise a voluntary fund to furbish up the interior. That there is need for this will be seen when I state that the chancel carpet is so worn that it cannot even be taken up and shaken. There is hardly a window in the church in which the greater number of the panes are not cracked and broken, and in many of the old-fashioned high-backed pews it is difficult to sit down, and impossible to kneel. A fragment of the old "three-decker" does duty for a pulpit, but there is neither reading-desk nor lectern, nor any accommodation for the choir. The truly pitiable condition to which this once fine church has been reduced (it is situated in a densely-populated neighbourhood) must excite the sympathy of good Churchmen, and I trust that the effort now being made by the Revs. J. Lloyd and D. G. F. Smith to resuscitate its faded splendours will be successful.

Courier 10 Ap^l 1891

This drive could not have been helped by the dome being struck by lightning on 25th June 1891:



There were 'Re-opening' services in late Oct 1891 which may reflect closure to recover from the lightning strike or the completion of the said alterations. This was followed by at least 3 or 4 'Entertainment Evenings' in the Mission Room.

Passing of the Old St. Paul's

Despite the efforts of Mr. Horsfall and others it appears, albeit with some short-term success, that the fortunes of St. Paul's did not improve sufficiently to see in the 20th Century with a healthy outlook. The area had become increasingly isolated from parishioners.....

stranded and desolate, and the roar of passing trains and the hum of the business world all about

With the Exchange Station Railway platforms and sheds pushed close to its east wall, the White, Tomkins & Courage Mill shadowing from the south, the buildings and outlook must have been dark and gloomy. The area demographics had changed unrecognisably since the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the numbers to justify and support the church were simply no longer in place. The end was nigh:

Every foot of ground in the churchyard is occupied with a tombstone, and the mildew of the years oozes out between them and keeps the place always damp and unhealthy. The great columns at the church portico have crumbled away in places and been repaired with cement; but the names of true lovers, carved in the sandstone years and years ago, still remain to tell us of youthful affections and juvenile yearnings for immortality.

It is a beautiful building, with the graceful circle of the dome resting on eight massive stone columns, and has a solidity of appearance which speaks well for those pious forefathers of this busy city. There were seats for 1300 people, but the sole occupant of all that wilderness of church was one solitary old woman.

Liverpool Mercury 5th Feb 1889

A description of the Church in January 1893 in a piece called '**St. Paul's Amongst the Warehouses**' is a damning indictment to the 'improvements' made:

The moral of the plain unvarnished story is this. The money which has been expended in the fantastic gewgaw of a travesty of a choir which disfigures the church would have amply paid for a thorough cleaning, repairing and decorating of the noble edifice, the condition of which is now a standing disgrace to those concerned. And, as the church is apparently on the road to ruin, it would be a magnificent act for one or other of our merchant princes either to restore it or remove it to some spot where it would prove a living, powerful church and an ornament to the city.

Although Mr. Horsfall's efforts to inject new life into the dying church had come to no avail he was not to be defeated - in very little time he was working towards the foundation of a new St. Paul's.

In July 1901 the church itself was permanently closed later to be procured by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company for further expansion of the railway. Here yet again we see stagnation with the said expansion never taking place and the church sadly left to deteriorate into a dangerous ruin.

The Liverpool and Wigan Churches Act 1904 permitted the sale of old churches and vicarages including St. Paul's, and also All Souls Eaton St., [St Marks - closed 1908](#), [St Thomas' - closed 1905](#), St Titus, and Christ Church Hunter St.

St. Georges Church had already closed and had been demolished in 1897, and St. John's in 1898.

During this period the adjoining business quarter was seeing big investment with the [Cotton Exchange](#) opening in 1905, and Orleans Building on Edmund St in 1907.

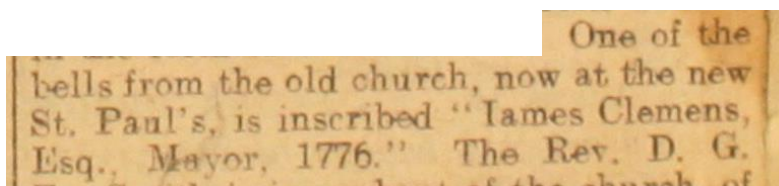
The sale of St. Paul's went through on 12th Feb 1908, purchased by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway for £15,000 - '**not including Communion Table Font, Communion Plate, Organ, Pews, Seats, Hassocks, Safe, Bells**'.

The sale, and the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Act 1910, made provision for expansion of the railway, the removal of burials, and the building of a new church. Of the £15,000 sale fee £1,000 was stipulated to go to St Nicholas's Church.



St. Paul's around the time of closing

Evidently some remnants of the old church did make it to the new including 'portions of the organ casing', and:



The Liverpool Courier 8th January, 1916

The website of the new St. Paul's in Stoneycroft tells us:

'All that remains of this former church is its altar silver (this was sold to Liverpool Museum for £17,500 in 1997), organ case, two bells and a small metal plaque recording the laying of the foundation stone' - see picture of silver on page 12

This picture of the 'metal plaque' and the following pictures were found at LRO (283 STO 14/3) along with additional silver pictures, and although no details were given I am assuming these are of the 'organ casing' mentioned above:



It would be fascinating to explore and search for any other possible relics!

Whilst the delays in securing a 'free' site(s) for building the new church led to a very public dispute between Mr. Horsfall and the Bishop of Liverpool Francis Chavasse, a grand new Church eventually opened at Stoneycroft in 1916:

LIVERPOOL COURIER, SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1916.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, STONEYCROFT.



The handsome new church of St. Paul, Stoneycroft, will be consecrated this afternoon by the Lord Bishop of Liverpool (Dr. Chavasse). The church has been erected on a site at the corner of Derby-lane and Derwent-road, and the cost of building has been chiefly met by money received from the sale of the old St. Paul's Church, St. Paul's-square, the fabric and site of which was purchased by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in 1898. The first stone of the old St. Paul's church was laid on April 4th, 1763, and was thus inscribed: "The first stone of this church, dedicated to St. Paul, was laid on 4th April, 1763, in the third year of our Lord, George the Third, by W. Ferguson, then Mayor." It was consecrated in 1769. When the church was built there were no dwelling-houses or buildings on its north side, and the view towards the river was uninterrupted in that direction. Originally the nomination of incumbents and other paid officers rested with the Corporation, who paid the stipends of the incumbents, for the church was served by a double incumbency. In 1897 these were united, and the Rev. D. G. Fee Smith, formerly second or junior minister, became the sole incumbent. St. Paul's-square is now surrounded by streets of warehouses and business premises.

The new St. Paul's Church presents some unique features of architecture, and it is said there is nothing like it in England. It has been designed by Mr. Gilbert Scott, the gifted architect of the Liverpool Cathedral. The building is a free rendering of the Gothic style, and has not followed any mediæval model. It is built of grey brick, specially made at Ruabon for this work, and is roofed with red tiles. A peculiar feature of the interior of the church is the alternate high and low arches of the nave arcade. The walls are plastered, with brick drawings, and there is a panelling of wood all round. The aisles are laid in grey and white tiles, and the seating consists of rush-bottomed chairs arranged on a flooring of wooden blocks. An interesting point is in connection with the organ casing from the old St. Paul's church, and a classical carving has been worked in the form of a Gothic case. One of the bells from the old church, now at the new St. Paul's, is inscribed "James Clemens, Esq. Mayor, 1776." The Rev. D. G. Fee Smith is incumbent of the church, of which Mr. H. Douglas Horsfall is the patron.

To-morrow the preacher morning and evening will be Archdeacon Wakeford.

@Liverpool1207

Although the site of the old church had been intended for an extension to Exchange Station this never happened, and the church was left increasingly derelict, still standing in 1930. In the summer of that year the dangerous state of the church became obvious when a thirteen year old boy was tragically killed in a fall from the roof beams of the church whilst reportedly searching for a pigeon's nest.

A sad description of its latter days appears in *The Ways and Byeways of Liverpool* – M. O'Mahoney (1931):

That interior now lies open to the sky or is veiled in dust, ancient and modern; the traceried windows are blindfolded with boards; the high doors, through which a select congregation rustled decorously in to worship, are barred, as are the mouldering railings; grass grows in the clefts of the shattered steps; rainpools lie between the long sunken tombstones, and, fitting emblem of fame departed, the falling leaves of a thin line of poplars are drifting with the wind.

On 2nd March 1931 the Liverpool Echo describes the church as being '*desolate in a wilderness of warehouses*' and runs this story:

**THE PASSING OF
ST. PAUL'S
DEMOLITION OF FAMOUS OLD
LIVERPOOL CHURCH**

Those who have a mind for pondering over the brevity of human wishes would do well to pay a visit to St. Paul's Churchyard, Liverpool.

There the old church that has stood one hundred and sixty odd years is being demolished and some thousands of bodies are to be removed.

Which among the gaily clad worshippers at this Regency church (it was built the year after King George III was crowned) could have foretold that a day would come when it would lie desolate in a wilderness of warehouses, with tall Georgian houses surrounding St. Paul's Square, each inhabited by two and three families?

In the days of its prime, St. Paul's was in the fashionable centre of Liverpool, and the coaches of wealthy merchants clad in silk and lace and flowing wig would draw up at its iron gates.

Today the skeleton of the church and its churchyard belongs to the L.M.S Railway Company, and gangs of workmen are busily engaged in demolishing its walls and carting away the stone.

THE SOLE MEMENTO

Two huge stone pillars, five feet thick, supporting a massive Greek pediment at the west porch, alone remain to tell of its former glories.

In a few months the thousands that lie there are also to be removed.

A complete list of all the graves has been in the possession of L.M.S estates department for some time, and now full arrangements have been made by the Home Office for the disinterment of the bodies and their reburial elsewhere.

Close against the north side there is what must be the earliest tomb of all. It is that of a boy of eight, Peter Forrest, son of John Forrest, who was buried in 1769 – the same year that the church was built.

On another tomb is the brief instruction – ‘this grave never to be opened; the burial place of Hugh Hughes’ No other particulars are added.

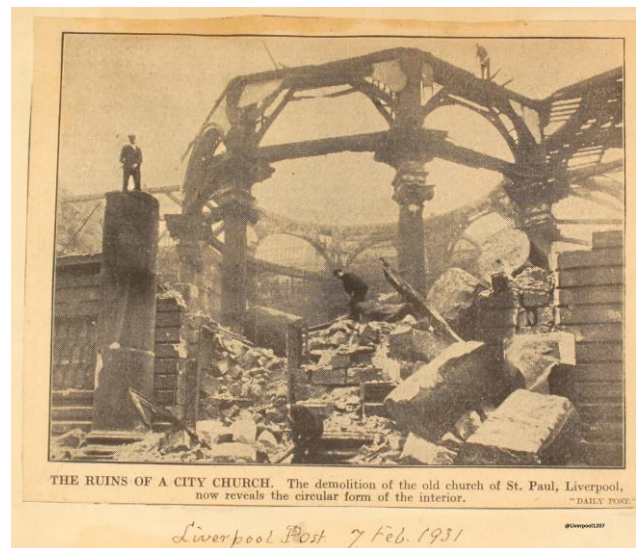
A somewhat similar inscription is on the grave of one Thomas Walker, who died in 1786, which reads: ‘This grave not to be opened without the permission of Thomas Walker Esq. of Manchester-street, Manchester-square London.

Many of the gravestones bear curious and, in some instances unconsciously funny verses. Quaint when seen by the modern eyes is that inscribed on the resting place of Mr Thomas Kniveson, comedian, 1775 which runs –

‘On time a great stage he played a noble part
Each act, each scene, displayed a Christian heart
Strict in religious, as dramatic laws
His aim was human and Divine applause’



The Demolition



Demolition was completed at a time when the surrounding area was being regenerated through widespread slum clearance. Very quickly, and more or less on the same footprint, St. Paul's would be replaced by non-other than the worlds first purpose-built boxing stadium! On 22nd July 1931 the foundation stone laid for [Liverpool Stadium](#) was laid, with the opening on 20th Oct 1932.

Of its contemporaries only St. James in the City survives:

St. Peters 1704, demolished 1922

St. George's 1734, demolished 1897

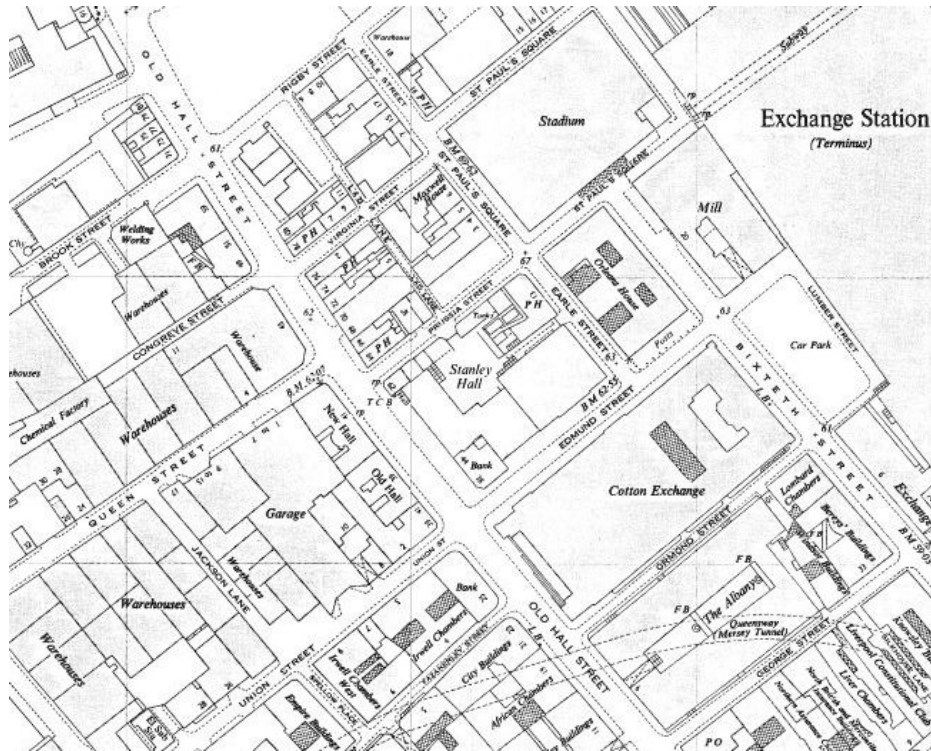
St. Thomas's 1750, demolished 1911

St. Paul's 1769, demolished 1931

St. Anne's Richmond 1772, demolished 1871

[St. James](#), 1774, still standing

Post-war map:



The boxing and music venue would remain open until 1985, being demolished in 1987 to be replaced by a surface municipal car park. You may have visited the [St. Paul's pub](#) or even [The Neptune](#) for a pre-event drink.

By 1965 the Square would of course be in the shadow of the giant Littlewoods John Moores Building (now The Plaza)

In the period 2005 – 2009, during the building of five new glass and steel temples to modern architecture, St. Paul's Church would briefly reappear not only to hint at its early and glorious beginnings, but also reminding us that it may still be the final resting place of the cities forefathers.

A trial-trench by the team from Oxford Archaeology North in 2005 revealed foundations of the church, and disarticulated bones. This was subsequently followed up by three phases of watching brief. The fascinating findings of this work, which revealed glimpses into a world long gone, can be read here https://library.thehumanjourney.net/228/1/StPaulsFullReport030210_2.pdf It really is a good read and contains great pictures.

And finally.....What of the 'chubby' Liver Birds?

Within, where once the preacher stood, are stored two quaint ornamental iron-work uprights, surmounted by gilded representations of the "Liver." These have apparently been removed from their original position in the church where, in former days, when the Mayor and Corporation attended St. Paul's in state, they were the cynosure of all eyes, as the resting places of the potent civic mace and sword. Now they, like the rest, are lumber too. Unseen and unheeded, they are thrown aside as bits of useless old iron. Surely, if only for old association's sake, they might have been allowed some sequestered nook within the church. But as they are not wanted, why should they not be presented to the Public Museum? Even apart from any other interest, these "Livers" are as funny-looking specimens of the mythological genus as we have ever seen, and indicate that our forefathers were as much at sea as we are as to the precise character of the wondrous bird. These derided and cast-out specimens have the appearance of chubby ducks: the carved lectern in St. Nicholas' Church represents our heraldic "Dickie" as a noble eagle with the head of a goose: the more recent developments of the species are well known. We suggest to the authorities at St. Paul's the desirability, then, of presenting their two mute, inglorious specimens of the glorified bird to the Free Public Museum.

St. Paul's in Paintings

The dome of St. Paul's was a famous landmark on the Liverpool skyline for many years and was often depicted in paintings:

John Thomas Serres – Georges Dock Basin 1797



Michael Angelo Rooker dated 1768 – 69, from [Liverpool Museums](#)



The buildings, from left to right, include the churches of St Thomas, St George and St Nicholas. The Old Town Hall is the lower dome and **St. Paul's** church the larger one

Time-lines

1760 - St. Paul's Square laid out
1765-69 - Church built
1770 - Old Hall St Canal Basin – Old Leeds St/Earle St
1787 - First Welsh Chapel on Pall Mall – influx of Welsh
1793 - 'Permission obtained from the Bishop of the Diocese to have Divine service performed in the Welsh tongue at St. Paul's Church
c1790 - Clarks Basin: Ladies Walk purchased, basin extended to Bath St. New coal wharfs at Dutton St
1800 - Additional canal basin at Old Hall east side for timber trade
1810 - Plans for installation of the organ and gallery
1820 - Old Hall St widened, slums/courts demolished, and the 'old hall' finally demolished
1821 - Repairs to ball and cross
1825 - Clock installed
1850 - Train lines encroach: as Great Howard St station lines extended to Tithebarn St http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/liverpool_exchange/index.shtml
1862 - Henry Tate also started his own refinery at 1 Earle Street (east of Old Hall Street), and 2 years later added a molasses refinery at 1-3 Edmund Street
c1871 - St Paul's Eye Hospital No. 6 (moves to Old Hall St 1912)
c1871 - Frederick Dresser opens malt mill at Bixteth St, taken over by White, Tomkins & Courage
1880 - Approach lines widened as new Exchange Station built
1884/85 - Bixteth St extended around this period thru to St Paul's Church yard when St Mary's moves.
1886 - Clarks Basin closed
1894 - Mission Room destroyed by falling masonry from fire
1894 - St Pauls Church graveyard closed (12,333 burials) turned into St Pauls Gardens
1902 - Old Hall St lowered: bridge demolished
1906 - Cotton Exchange opens, Old Hall St
1907 - Orleans House - Edmund St - office block - site of John Newton's home - wrote 'Amazing Grace' here c1759 – 63
1931 - St Paul's Church finally demolished after child killed by falling debris
1932 - 22nd July, foundation stone laid for Liverpool Stadium
1938 - Stanley Hall opens, Edmund St
1965 - Littlewoods John Moore Building
1987 - Liverpool Stadium demolished. (Closed 1985). Municipal Car park laid out
2005-09 - Archaeological investigations during building of new St. Paul's Square
2011 - No.4 St. Paul's Square completed

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<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=TnWuBAAAQBAJ&hl=en>

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Memorials of Liverpool J.A. Picton: <https://archive.org/details/memorialsoliver01pictuoft>

Liverpool1207 Blog - <https://liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com/tag/liverpool1207/>

@LpoolGhostSigns - <https://plus.google.com/113347121694942167606/posts/39b2WMxYeKd>

Liverpool Records Office, Central Library:

283 STO/12/4 – St Paul’s Stoneycroft 1904 – 16: Documents and correspondence relating to the sale of Old St Paul’s Church, St Paul’s Square

283 STO/14/3 – St. Paul’s Church, Stoneycroft - News cuttings, Scrapbooks, Memorabilia 1874 – 1991
Includes: ‘A brief history by Rev R. J. Brunswick’

942.721 WAL – St. Paul’s Church. Wallace J pgs. 141 – 144

942.721 ENF – Notes on Liverpool Churches: Enfield 1773 (Chapter 5)

942.721 OMA - The Ways and Byeways of Liverpool – M. O'Mahoney (1931)

942.721 STA - Saint Paul’s: an investigation into possible disendowment; in The State Church in Liverpool 1877 pgs. 18 - 20

352 CEM 1/15/1 – Gravestone inscriptions: microfiche

050 LIV - Liverpool Review - pages 10-11, 17 April 1886 - Saint Mausoleum: a Sunday morning in St Paul's

726.5 (72) CHE - Church Bells of Lancashire - Cheetham, F H (pgs. 63-64)

Cuttings via references above at the always excellent **Liverpool Records Office**, Central Library, and the **British Newspaper Archive** at <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

Links in text:

Liverpool Stadium - http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk/issues/misc/articles/liverpool_stadium.php

Sir James Allanson Picton pg10 - <http://www.sarsfieldmemorialsiverpool.co.uk/sir-james-allanson-picton/>

Maxwell House pg20 – <http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/File:lm195810HE-Feed.jpg>

Cross’ Menagerie fire pg20 – <https://www.flickr.com/photos/44435674@N00/7831085900/>

St. Mary’s RC Church pg20 – <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hibernia/churches/hig.htm>

Mr Howard Douglas Horsfal pg25 – <http://www.stfaithsgreatcrosby.org.uk/horsfallobit.html>

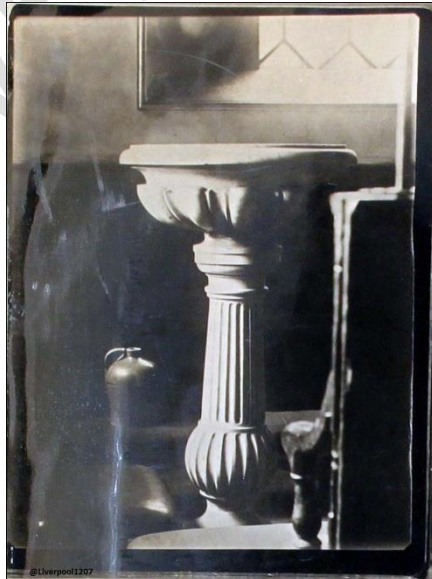
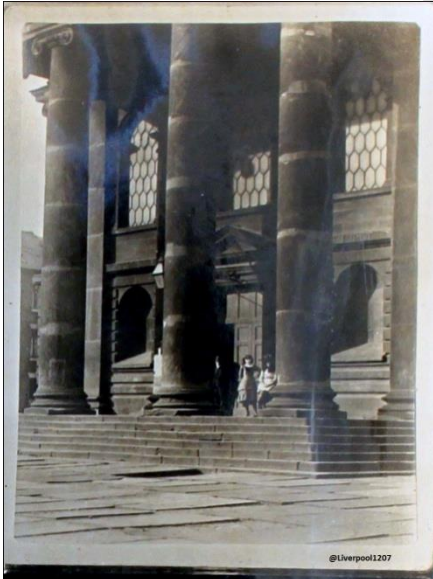
St. Mark’s Church, St. Thomas’ Church pg27 - <https://liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com/long-lost-buildings/st-marks-church-upper-duke-st/>

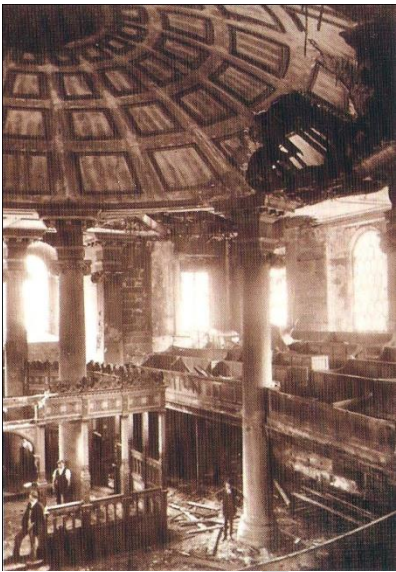
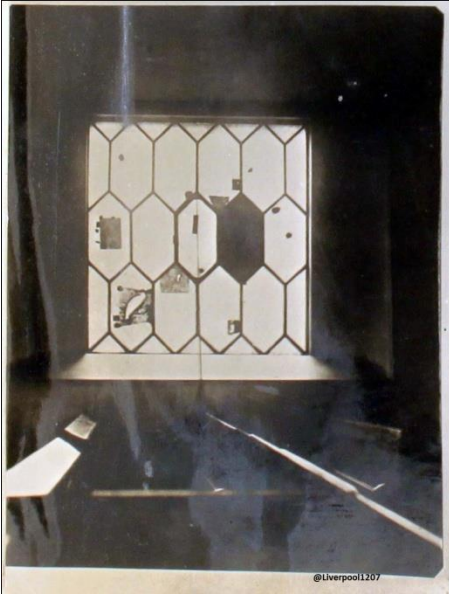
Cotton Exchange pg27 - <https://liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com/buildings/built-on-cotton-the-liverpool-cotton-exchange/>

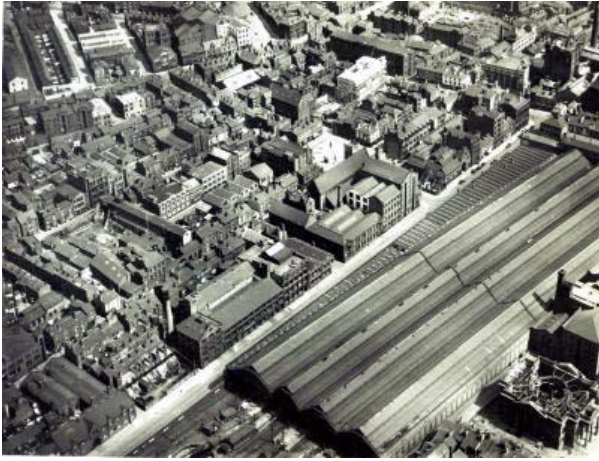
St. James pg33 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-13608618>

St. Pauls and Neptune pubs – pg34 <http://daveoxton.com/the-saint-pauls-pub/>
http://www.closedpubs.co.uk/lancashire/liverpool_l3_neptune.html

Galleries







c1931 – Church bottom right, minus dome



Lad Lane at Prussia St.



Lad Lane 1960s



St. Paul's Square – Prussia St.



Liverpool Stadium – on church site



Bixteth St towards St. Paul's Square -1968

If you can share any memories of, or further information about St. Paul's Square

why not contact me via Twitter on

[@Liverpool1207](https://twitter.com/Liverpool1207)

To view this document on line visit:

<https://liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com/2015/10/07/a-history-of-st-pauls-church-and-square/>

ⁱ Enfield, W, 1774 *An Essay Towards the History of Liverpool*. Drawn up from papers left by the late Mr. George Perry, and from other materials since collected, by William Enfield. With views of the principal public structures, a chart of the harbour, and a map of the environs. The second edition, with additions. Printed for Joseph Johnson, No. 72 St. Paul's Church Yard. 1774

ⁱⁱ **John Foster and Sons, Kings of Georgian Liverpool: Hugh Hollinghurst**

ⁱⁱⁱ **City of Liverpool:** Municipal archives and records, from A. D. 1700 to the passing of the municipal reform act, 1835 by Picton, J. Allanson <https://archive.org/details/cityofliverpoolm00pictrich>

^{iv} **St Paul's Square, Liverpool: Archaeological Watching Brief: Oxford Archaeology North Issue No: 2009-10/1029**
https://library.thehumanjourney.net/228/1/StPaulsFullReport030210_2.pdf

