

ARTS & CRAFTS TOURS

LIVERPOOL: ENGLAND'S SECOND CITY AND NORTH WALES

June 10 – 19, 2017

Four men from Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool were arguing about which of their cities was Britain's second city. The Glaswegian said that naturally Glasgow was the second city. The Brummie said he was wrong, that it was Birmingham. No said the Mancunian it is of course Manchester. And the Liverpudlian said you are all wrong, it's London.

This coming June we will be spending nine days seeing whether that Liverpudlian was right. For five days we will be visiting and examining some of the best of England's 19th century architecture and fine arts in what many agree is England's Second city and then we will go on for four days to some of the wonders of northern Wales.

Our guide for our several days in Liverpool is Joseph Sharples, an architectural historian who was curator at the Walker Art Gallery and is the author of Liverpool city volume in the Pevsner Architectural Guide series. At the University of Liverpool he researched the architectural patronage of the city's nineteenth-century merchants.



Top of the Liver Building

In addition to being one of the most important industrial cities of the 19th century, Liverpool perhaps more than any other city has had ties with America and these can be seen in some of the buildings in its business section. The industrialists were among the first and most important of the patrons of the Pre-Raphaelites and their collections form the foundations of at least two of the museums we will visit – the Walker Art Gallery and the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight.



Liverpool Anglican Cathedral

Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral was designed by the young Giles Gilbert Scott who won the competition in 1901 with G.F.Bodley as joint architect. The cathedral is the longest cathedral in the world and the fifth-largest. It sits majestically sideways on St. James' Mount above the city. One of the highlights of the Anglican Cathedral is the Elizabeth Hoare Gallery (below) with its collection of Victorian and Edwardian ecclesiastical embroidery. There is also more contemporary work in the Cathedral by Elisabeth Frink and Craigie Aitchison and a quite spectacular Lady Chapel.

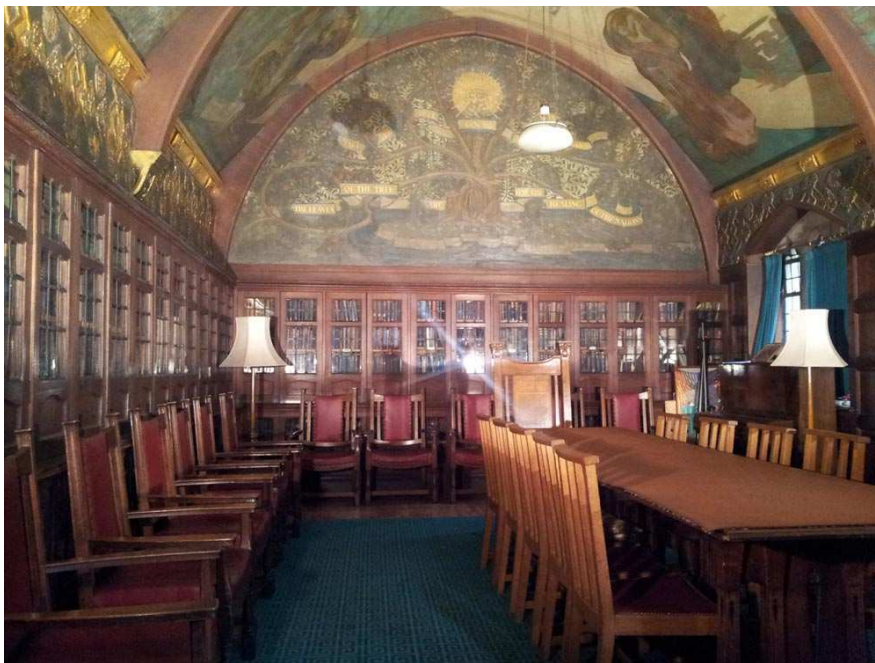


Further along Hope Street, and past our hotel and the Philharmonic Pub (shown below) where will stop for a drink, is the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral of Liverpool whose early design was by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Here we can see his original model and the crypt he designed.



We'll be visiting St. George's Hall, the Walker Art Gallery and several buildings in the business section including the monument to the telegraph operators on the Titanic, before our dinner at the new Titanic restaurant in one of the largest warehouses on the River Mersey.

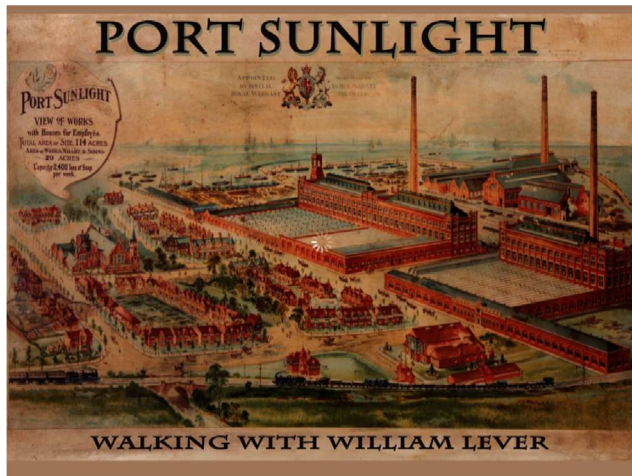
In addition to art patronage, many of the industrialists were also patrons of their local church and with Joseph we will visit several whose interiors in particular show the work of such major artists as Edward Burne-Jones, Gerald Moira, Morris and Company and the Della Robbia Pottery Company.



Gerald Moira painted ceiling in the library at the Ullet Road Church

On another day we will go to visit Port Sunlight with Michael Shippobottom who is a Director at Donald Insall Associates and was primarily responsible for the preservation and restoration work they did at Port Sunlight.

This town was built by Lord Leverhulme of Lever Brothers for the workers at the soap factory and employed such architects as Lutyens, Ernest Newton, Sir Ernest George and James Lomax-Simpson. In addition to the many homes there were churches, libraries, community centers and the Lady Lever Art Gallery.



In complete contrast is Lord Leverhulme's own home, Thornton Manor (on the right above) which we will visit at the end of the day.

We will spend a day in Manchester visiting various sites guided by Julian Holder, a lecturer in the history and theory of architecture at the University of Salford and the author of *Ancoats* and *Manchester's Northern Quarter*. We begin at one of Alfred Waterhouse's masterpieces, the Manchester Town Hall which is home to a mural series of the history of Manchester by Ford Maddox Brown.

Just a short distance away is the City Art Gallery with its collection of pre-Raphaelite works and then we go on to the Victorian Baths (interior below) a brilliant example of the concern mid-19th century citizens had for providing opportunities for personal cleanliness. We end our day at the Edgar Wood Centre housed in Church of Christ Scientist which he designed. That evening is dinner on your own and you'll be free to select from a number of excellent Liverpool restaurants.



We then move into North Wales where our guide is Richard Haslam the author of a biography of Clough Williams-Ellis, an architectural historian and Brother of the Art Workers Guild. He is the author of several books on Welsh architecture including *The Buildings of Wales: Gynedd: Anglesey, Caernarvonshire and Merioneth*.

With Richard we will explore the variety of this area of the country putting some of the 19th century work in an earlier context and seeing examples of the battles between the Welsh and English that are almost a thing of the past – but see if you can pronounce and read many of the road signs.

We begin at Llandudno a Victorian resort town on the Irish Sea and travel down through the Snowdonia National Park to our very relaxing and beautifully situated country house hotel, Penmaenuchaf Hall (the garden below). On the way we will stop at Gwydir Castle and Bodysgallen Hall.



We will spend a day at Portmeirion which became well known in the 1960's as *The Prisoner*, a surreal spy drama, was filmed there. It is primarily the vision and creativity of the architect Clough Williams-Ellis that has made the village such a popular attraction for visitors as well as filmmakers. In addition to laying out the plans for the village and designing many of the buildings, he also brought to the village a number of buildings from other countries that were in danger of being destroyed and lost and incorporated them into his plans. And some of you will of course know of the lovely Portmerion Pottery which was founded by Clough's daughter Susan Williams-Ellis.





We will also visit his own home and gardens, Plas Brondanw (above). And quite near our hotel is a remarkable, small chapel by Henry Wilson, St Mark's Brithdir, with exceptional metalwork and crafted wooden pews.

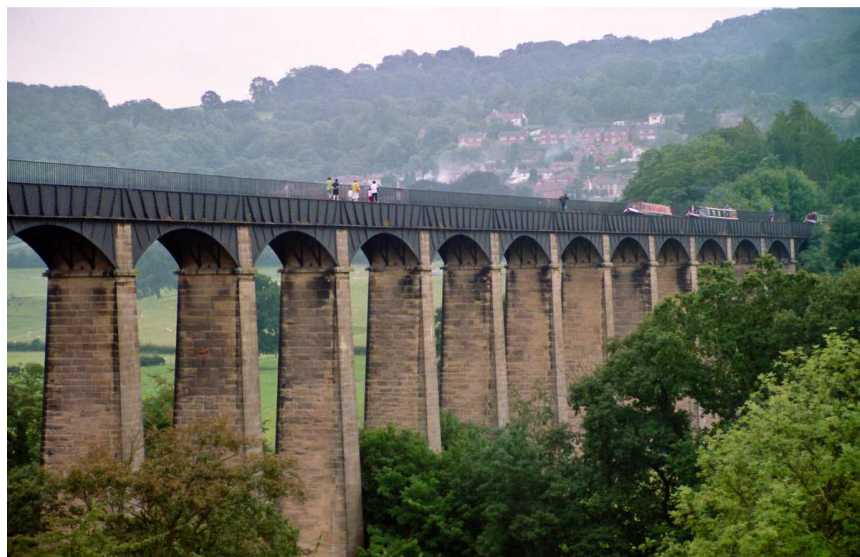


Hand hammered copper altar, St. Mark's



One of the many animals carved on the pews at St Mark's

We end our stay in North Wales at a small village hotel in Wrexham but first we visit the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct designed by Thomas Telford. Here you'll have an opportunity to walk along the aqueduct and enjoy the exceptional scenery that is unique to this part of Wales.



One of our final stops is to Plas Newydd the home of two remarkable women who collected a variety of architectural interiors which were threatened such as the window treatment below. They incorporated all these various elements into their home – certainly something any arts and crafts enthusiast and preservationist can enjoy, appreciate and respect.



We hope you'll decide to come with us on this unique adventure. Please contact us at artsandcraftstours@gmail.com for further information and details. The Registration Form and Tour Conditions are on our site: www.artsandcraftstours.com