

LIVERPOOL

Newsletter No 14

Winter 2005-06



Reg Charity

HISTORY SOCIETY

No 1093736

Editorial

Although editorial material in this Newsletter is usually anonymous, an exception is made now because what follows are my thoughts alone, and not necessarily those of other members of the LHS Committee.

During October, I attended a conference on “Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery, organised by the Historic Society of Lancashire & Cheshire and National Museums Liverpool. One friend, when asked whether he would be attending, said he would not because he was a bit fed up with Liverpool continually beating its breast about the Slave Trade. A little while later, while reading the story of a fugitive slave from Maryland who fled to Liverpool in 1850 to escape America’s Fugitive Slave Law and was less than well received, another friend asked me whether Liverpool was really that bad?” These two comments seem to express two extremes of attitude towards what is, inescapably, a fundamental part of Liverpool’s history and past prosperity - its involvement in the Slave Trade itself, and with goods produced by the victims of that trade & their descendants.

At another conference, this time on “Poverty and Experience”, held at Edge Hill College and again organised by the HSLC, two of the speakers very vividly described the poverty experienced by some Liverpool families in years gone by. Although an obvious one, I have not been able to escape the thought of just how deeply these experiences of deprivation must have etched themselves, on the minds, not only of those who went through them, but also on those of their descendants, ‘even unto the third and fourth generation’, not least because of how for both slaves and poor, prosperity and conspicuous consumption were so evident not very far away.

Set against the background of today’s world-wide crises, whether as a result of natural causes, or human agency, it stuck me just how important it is to understand this and ensure that those subsequent generations are not still excluded. In just recent weeks, we have seen images of the suffering caused by Hurricane Katrina, and the earthquake in Kashmir, the riots in Paris and other French cities, and we are warned of another food crisis in Niger. While perhaps the severity of the hurricane may have been exacerbated by the hand of *homo* [not so] *sapiens*, the earthquake was a work of Nature, but the human response to both seems to have been less rapid or efficient than it should have been. There have also been suggestions that this was because of the ethnicity of the victims. If indeed true, this is an inescapable indictment of much of the rest of the world, and the eternal truth of the anti-slavery campaigners motto, “**Am I not a man and a brother?**”, gains renewed significance.

We live in a group of islands, populated by people of many different origins, all of whom, if we trace far enough back, came from overseas. The Celts, Saxons, Vikings and Normans of old were just as much incomers as more recent arrivals from Africa, Asia, the West Indies etc, and for whatever reason, all have chosen to settle within those islands. Liverpool is but one example of the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural result, and, if we can but overcome any innate tendencies to self-interest or prejudice, such as are encouraged almost daily by certain irresponsible newspapers, this “World in One City” will be all the richer for it.

Liverpool’s motto, *Deus nobis haec otia fecit*, was written by Virgil about 40 years BCE, and can be translated as “God has provided this leisure for us”. Another translation renders “leisure” as “peace”, a word much in mind during 2005, even if, sadly, still not present world-wide. Alluding to the City’s motto, that of the University of Liverpool, *Haec otia studia fovent*, meanwhile translates as “These days of peace foster learning”. Merseyside currently enjoys comparative internal peace, and its inhabitants have the opportunity to learn more of its past, both good and bad. To maximise the benefit, we must sometimes face unpleasant facts, neither hiding nor exaggerating them, and also respect those who, for whatever reason, take a different view to our own.

Over the past five years, the LHS has made some small contribution towards increased understanding between the City’s different ethnic and religious groups by inviting representatives to talk to us about their history & place in our common community, and the contribution they have made, & are still making, to it. Sadly, some of these groups and also the younger generation, remain largely un-represented in our membership, and with their voices unheard, we perhaps fail to understand them as well as we should. Could we together try to make 2006 the year when we change this, and make its History Society a truer reflection of Liverpool’s rich diver-

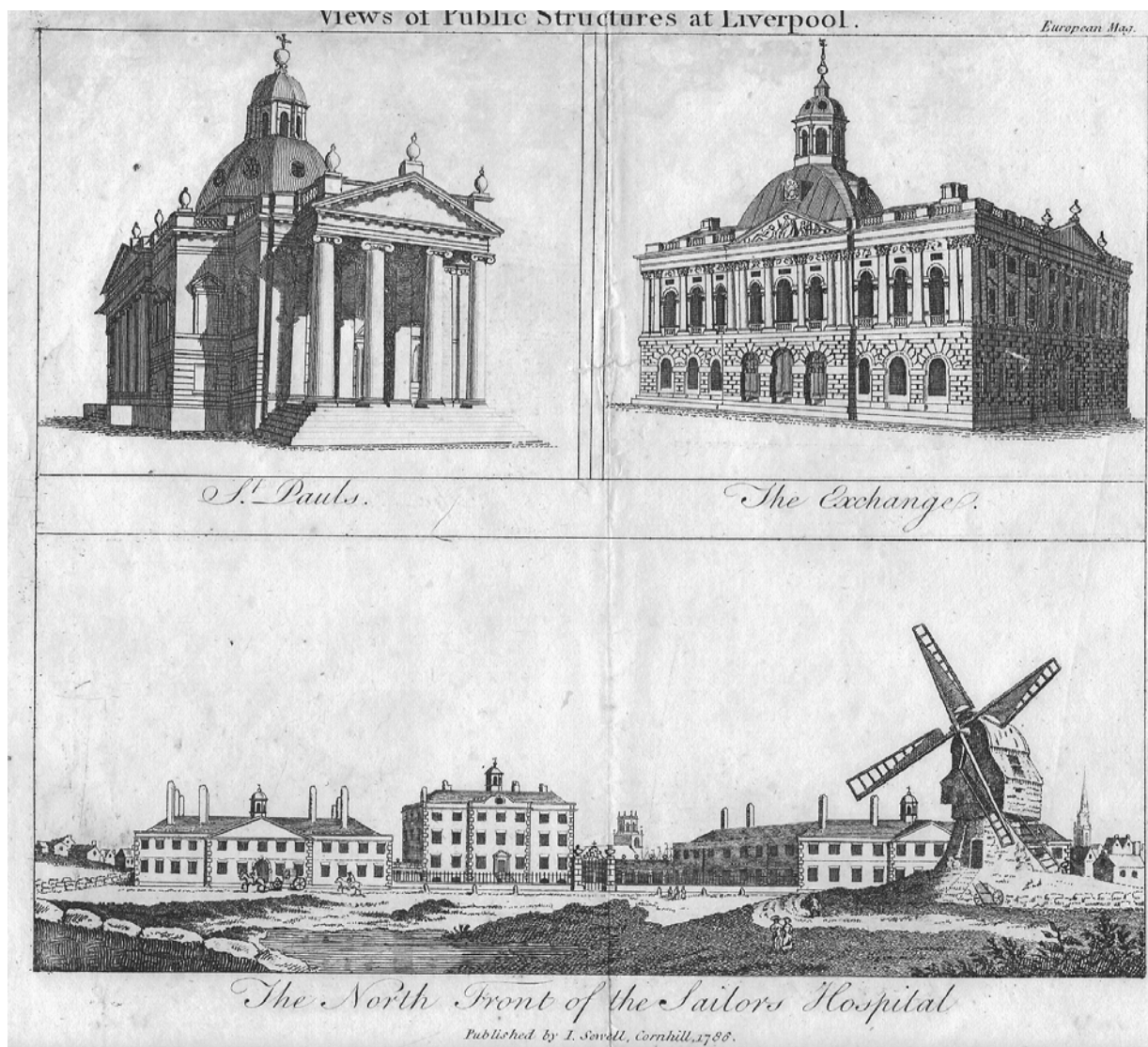
*The Officers & Committee of the Liverpool History Society wish all Members & Friends
the Compliments of the Season & Best Wishes for the coming New Year*

Recent Talks

The Editor regrets that, for a number of reasons, it has not been possible to produce the usual insert, giving resumés of the talks given from September to November 2005. If any member feels able to offer to help with the preparation of future reports, which need only be 250-300 words long, they are asked to have a word with him as soon as possible. Even if only on an occasional basis, any help would be much appreciated

Liverpool as it once was

While many readers will be familiar with the images of Liverpool produced by W G Herdman, and the many steel engravings first published in the 19th century, and republished many times since, perhaps less familiar are those of the 18th century, such as that shown below. It is copied from a 1786 original, issued with *The European Magazine & London Review*, a periodical founded by James Perry, and published between 1782 and 1826.



From the top left-hand corner, the three views are:

- [1] St Paul's Church, designed by Thomas Lightoller and built in 1769. Standing in St Paul's Square, near Tithebarn St, it was sold to allow the extension of Exchange Station, but not finally pulled down until 1931
- [2] John Wood of Bath's third Town Hall and Exchange, built in 1754, and very badly damaged by fire in 1795, when the roof, dome and interior were completely destroyed. Although outwardly somewhat similar, the Town Hall we see today is largely the result of James Wyatt's early 19th century rebuilding and expansion.
- [3] A view, probably from the northern end of Commutation Row, towards the now long vanished Infirmary & Sailors' Hospital. The former, in the centre, was opened in 1749, and the flanking buildings, for 'decayed seamen' and their dependants, in 1752. A 'Lunatic Asylum' was later built behind, but all were demolished between 1826 and 1835. St George's Hall now covers much of the site. Also to be seen are, to the right of the central block, the tower of St Peter's, Church St, (where Next now stands – look for the brass cross let into the pavement) and, at the extreme right, the spire of St George's Church, in what is now Derby Square.

Substituting a fair-ground booth for the windmill, Herdman seems to follow this print very closely in his "Old Infirmary etc with Folly Fair in progress". (See his *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool*, 3rd issue.)

2006 PROGRAMME

January

Winter Break

No meeting

February 19

**The Rathbone Family –
From Welfare to Politics**

Brenda Murray

Given by a Founder Member of our Society, this talk will describe the achievements of twelve generations of the Rathbone family and their contribution to the history and prosperity of Liverpool over 300 years. It covers the timber trade, shipping, religion, politics and banking, but most of all, welfare work. The story culminates with the political success of Eleanor Rathbone in 1945, (pictured right, aged about 40.)



March 19

**“And now we are” five! -
Our 5th Birthday Celebrations**

Chiefly ourselves

It is hard to believe that five years have passed since the inauguration of our society on 18th February 2001. Although our February meeting was nearer to the actual anniversary, your Committee decided that it should be observed just a little later in the hope that the weather will be kinder, and more members and friends able and willing to attend. The exact form of the programme is still undecided, but, as well as a cake and an appropriate libation, it will include an opportunity for members to “show and tell” us some of their Liverpool treasures, and to look at displays of the Society’s activities and research. Some time will also be given over to a free discussion of what members would like to see their Society doing, and how they can help it to do so.

April 23

History of the League of Welldoers

Lesley Black



Taking its name from a verse in S. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians, and sometimes mistakenly called the League of Welders, this local charity was founded as the Liverpool Food Association in 1893, and assumed its present name in 1908. Its founder was Herbert Lee Jackson Jones, who ran it until his death in 1936. Its record of service to the community has nonetheless continued unbroken to the present day. Lesley Black, our speaker, who is the charity’s present general manager, will no doubt tell us tales, some touching, some amusing, of how the League has served Scotland Road and its surrounding area over those 112 years.

May 21

(1.45pm start)

5th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

followed at approx 2.15pm by

Chester – Gateway to Ireland

(More details in next newsletter)

Geoffrey Place

All members living within travelling distance of Liverpool are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting, as it is their chance to say what they do and do not like about how their Society is run

Some Very Good News! Peter and William are back!

After several years of absence, and expert restoration by the NML Conservation Centre, the well loved bronze statue of Peter Pan has returned to Sefton Park. The work of sculptor George Frampton, it is a replica of the famous statue in Kensington Gardens, London. Donated to the city by George Audley, it was originally unveiled on 16 June 1928, and “the little boy who never grew up” returned on 1st December 2005.

Also back from 30th November is the bronze statue of William Huskisson. Formerly situated in front of the Custom House, and then in Princes Avenue (see Journal No 4), it has been similarly fully restored by NML, and now stands in Duke’s Terrace, Duke Street.

After all this hard work and expense, it is to be hoped that the restored statues will be respected, & not vandalised like Spence’s sculptures around the Picton Library in Nov 2005.

Society News

Website

It is much regretted that our website [liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk] remains unavailable. However, our old website [liverpoolhistorysociety@merseyside.org] continues to carry up to date information about the Society's forthcoming programme, and e-mails can still be sent to the address shown below.

Journal

Two members responded to the appeal in Newsletter No 11 for someone to undertake the task of editing the Society's Journal. Their offers were carefully considered, but following the successful testing of the viability of an alternative approach by the production of the 2005 issue by the Publications sub-committee, these were not pursued. We would nevertheless like to thank them both for their kind offers.

It has been decided that, for the time being at least, the sub-committee should continue to undertake the task, and preparation of the next issue is well under-way. Barring the unforeseen, it will be available for issue at the AGM in May, and sent out by post shortly thereafter.



Given the historic significance of 2007, early thought is also being given to the form and content of that year's issue. Suggestions & offers of suitable material to Jo McCann, please.

Forthcoming Conference

The third annual conference of the Centre for Liverpool & Merseyside Studies will be hosted by LJMU University at the Merseyside Maritime Museum on 21 April 2006, with the theme



'Liverpool and Empire, 1700-1970'

For further information or questions, please contact Nick White, School of Social Science, Liverpool John Moores University, Clarence St, L'pool, L3 5UG (n.j.white@livjm.ac.uk) or sheryllynne.haggerty@nottingham.ac.uk

Publisher's Discounted Books Offer

Carnegie Publishing, who in the past have generously donated books to our library, have now offered a 20% discount on all titles in their back catalogue. Items of specific Liverpool interest include the latest new editions of Peter Aughton's *Liverpool, A People's History*, and Peter Kennerley's *Building of Liverpool Cathedral*, the latter's new life of *Frederick William Dwelly, First Dean of Liverpool*, as well as David Parry's *Murder in Edwardian Merseyside*, and Angela Brabin's *Black Widows of Liverpool*.



While post and packing are normally extra, orders worth over £40.00 will be sent free of p&p, so a combined order from a number of members would be worthwhile – some of the cash saved could even be donated to Society funds! For full details of books on offer, please see Carnegie's website (www.carnegiepublishing.com), or the paper catalogue held by the Editor, who will happily co-ordinate any composite orders.

Forthcoming books of local interest from Carnegie are understood to include *By Mersey Shore*, by Peter Kennerley (due June 2006), and no less than four in September 2007, amongst them *Tudor Liverpool* by member Janet Hollinshead, *Liverpool's China Traders*, by C J Baird, *A History of the Port of Liverpool*, by Adrian Jarvis, and *Liverpool and Slavery* by Janet McLarney. Watch out for further details in due course.

A Good Confession



Your Newsletter Editor regrets to have to confess that after the November meeting, he picked up and retained a copy of Fiona Montgomery's *Edge Hill University College: A History, 1885-1997*, in the mistaken belief that it was his own. If the rightful owner contacts him (please form an orderly queue!), he will be glad to return it, failing which it will be placed in the Society's Library.

The Society's Officers & Committee, 2005-6

Officers

Chairman :	John Tiernan (2006)	Administration Secretary:	Jo McCann (P) (2007)
Treasurer:	Neville King (P) (2006)	Membership Secretary:	Michael Brian (P) (2007)

Committee

Charles Collier (2007)	Joyce Culling (2006)	Netta Dixon (2007)	Mary Harrison (2007)
Jon Murden (2008)	Brenda Murray (2007)	Cynthia Stonall (2005)	Marie McQuade (P,C)

NB (P) & (C) denote member of Publications Sub-Committee & Co-opted respectively, and the year is when current term of office ends)

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