

**WALKING ON WATER STREET, Part 9
Publicans Galore in the Old Church Yard**

Graham Jones

In 1795 a cynical observer, who has left us an invaluable picture of the Liverpool of his day, calculated that every seventh house in the town was open for the sale of liquor... A population so drink-sodden, reinforced by the rough and desperate privateersmen and slavers, was inevitably turbulent and unruly.

Ramsay Muir, *History of Liverpool*, 1907, p 273



Fig 1. The Old Church Yard in 2010 looking east and showing, left to right, the second Mersey Chambers, Reliance House, the gates to Tower Gardens, and Tower Building. Author's image (GHJ).

To the 21st century visitor the Old Church Yard of St Nicholas is seen as being bounded to the northeast and southeast by St Nicholas House and a number of imposing office buildings (fig 1). Two centuries ago, however, the scene was very different, and a detail from Richard Horwood's plan of 1803 provides an indication of the numerous small buildings bordering the churchyard, stretching clockwise from no 1 (marked 'A'), slightly set back at the northern corner with Chapel Street, to no 17 (marked 'E'), immediately to the west of the church (fig 2).



Fig 2. From Richard Horwood's plan of 1803, oriented to the north (to correspond with the 1848 OS, fig 9). Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.

*A: Jump's public house (1805-1824), rebuilt as (a) Abram's and (b) Old Stile House (to 1895), rebuilt again as Old Stile House Hotel (to late 20th century).
B: building subsequently Mersey Coffee House / Horne's Mersey Hotel (1824-1845).
C: building subsequently Hope Tavern / Coulter's Hotel (1825-1845).
D: site of Bath Coffee House (1756-1765), rebuilt as the Merchants' Coffee House (1768-1883).
E: Ince-Boat house / Hinde's Tavern (pre-1766 to 1814).*

At various times, and around the perimeter of the churchyard, had stood public houses, taverns, coffee houses, hotels and a bath, and a little of their history begins with Henry Peet's plan entitled 'St Nicholas's Church and Churchyard and the Ince Boat-house (Hinde's Tavern) formerly the Chapel of St Mary del Quay from a survey and plan in 1810 by Mr Harrison architect Chester' (fig 3).¹

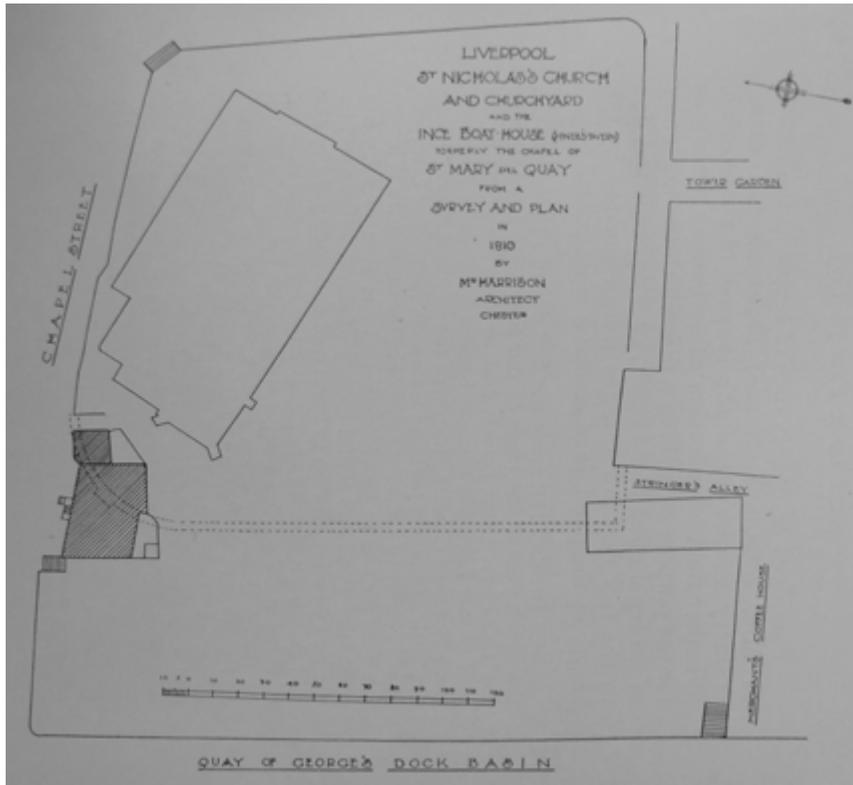


Fig 3. A plan of the churchyard in 1810, oriented to the north east. The dotted lines from Chapel Street to Stringer's Alley mark the wall of the smaller churchyard which exists today following the Liverpool Improvement Act of 1882 (a plaque on the churchyard wall along George's Dock Gates notes the change). Image courtesy of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (HSLC).

The Ince Boat-house was the building in fig 3 with diagonal hatching near to the church, and a view of it by Joseph Butler was copied by W G Herdman for inclusion in the first of his two 1878 volumes of *Relics* (fig 4).² Richard Brooke refers to the building as 'a neat-looking white tavern (Hinde's) then standing in the church yard . . . This tavern was of considerable antiquity, commanded an interesting marine prospect, and was at that period much frequented by respectable persons'.³



Fig 4. 'St Nicholas Church and Shore', showing the churchyard wall fortified for a 14-gun battery to protect the town from the French. To the left is the Ince Boat-house and steps leading to the shore, and to the right, beyond the end of the wall, is a building on land which had been reclaimed from the river (see later). Image courtesy of the Liverpool Record Office (LRO).

The first edition of *Gore's Directory* (1766) noted that 'Richard Gamon, comes to the Ince Boat-house, in the Old Church-yard, almost every day, and takes goods for Chester, and all the adjacent parts'. The last entry at this location was in 1814 when the directory noted that the 'Ince Boat sails every day from the North Pier-head about four hours before high water - Apply to John Acton, bottom of Chapel-street'. When the shore was enclosed for the construction of Princes Dock in 1816, the tavern quietly relocated itself to New Quay.



Fig 5. The churchyard c 1816, looking east (compare fig 1). Image courtesy of the LRO.

Around that time the churchyard bore the appearance shown in another view by Herdman (fig 5) who wrote that,

*If it be enquired why there are so many people in the churchyard, we may state that at the period this sketch was made, the old churchyard was the great promenade of the town, especially at high water. The merchants and their families lived in the neighbourhood, and at tide time and evening it was always thronged with the elite of the town.*⁴

James Picton commented that the Old Church Yard was 'for many years rather a favourite place of residence. Mr. William Pole, mayor in 1778, and Mr. Charles Goore, mayor in 1754, resided there', and noted that the former's residence 'was converted into an inn, long known as "Horne's Mersey Hotel", celebrated for its turtle, and much frequented by passengers from America, in the days before the Atlantic had been bridged by steam'.⁵ William Pole's house can be seen in the centre of Herdman's view (fig 5), to the right of an arch leading to Molyneux Place. The partnership of Horne and Statham, recorded in *Baines' Directory* of 1824 as having opened the Mersey Coffee House that year, seems to have been short lived because, from *Gore's Directory* for 1825 onwards, Edward is shown as the sole proprietor. Then, in the early 1830s, he renamed it the Mersey Hotel and this is where Edward Horne plied his trade for a further 15 years before an important property auction led to the hotel's demise.

OLD CHURCH YARD.	
1	Abram Mary
2	Pilots' Comtee Room Rowland David
3	Crutup and Hassall
4	Shand C. W. and F.
5	Stamp Office Marsden George
6	MERSEY CHAMBERS. 1 Tyrer Wm. & James 2 Biggs John Francis 3 & 5 Hegan, Hall & Co 4 Dowie Kenneth & Co 6 Hampson Thomas 8 Green Joseph & Co. 9 Ker Gilbert
7	Mersey Hotel Horne Edward
8	Crosse Walter
9	Yeoman Ann
10	Pearse Samuel Focke and Boulit Hill Henry
11	Coulter Mary
12	Westbrook James

In 1843 all the properties in the Old Church Yard came up for sale by auction (other than no 1 which by that time had already been redeveloped, and of which more later). Forming part of the Greenham estate, they were offered in three lots, of which 'Lot 2 was the property on the east side of Tower Garden (now Colonial House), and included Horne's famous Mersey Hotel, the area being 922 square yards, let for about £600 a year',⁶ whilst Lot 1 was for the buildings between Tower Garden and Stringer's Alley (figs 2 & 3). The Old Church Yard section of *Gore's Directory* for 1845 (fig 6) was the last to list the properties which ran from no 7 (Edward Horne) to no 11 (Mary Coulter), although the Merchants' Coffee House (no 12) was destined to survive. And so it is time to examine the route by which Coulter's Hotel came into existence.

Fig 6. From *Gore's Directory* for 1845, the last year in which there were no less than four publicans at the Old Church Yard - at nos 1, 7, 11 and 12. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.

In 1814, Mary Coates, previously a victualler on the east side of Salthouse Dock, took over a premises in Tower Garden where, in the *Commercial Directory* for 1818-1820, it is shown as Hope Tavern. Margaret Coates (Mary's daughter?) is listed in 1821 as the victualler and then, in 1825, she is shown in *Gore's Directory* as having moved her tavern to the Old Church Yard. Margaret was succeeded in 1829 by Callow Archibald Gould and then by Ann Gould, his widow. The building continued to be listed as Hope Tavern, first as no 15, then as no 12 and finally, from 1832, as no 11, suggesting that a number of buildings in the Old Church Yard were being replaced or combined over that period. William Coulter is listed between 1829 and 1832 as a victualler in Brunswick Street and then, upon his death, as being replaced by Mary Coulter, his widow. In 1839 she is recorded as having taken over the Hope Tavern and then, in 1843 in *Pigot and Slater's Directory*, she is shown as having renamed it Coulter's Hotel, unaware that the Greenham auction later that same year would seal its fate. It is by that name that the hotel ended its life, and a memory of it, together with the neighbouring buildings between it and Tower Garden, was captured in 1846 in a lithograph by John Isaac (fig 7). The scene was captured none too soon, for *Gore's Almanac* recorded the first stone for the construction of Tower Buildings as being laid in December of that year. How different was the view from the church about a year later when the northern section of Tower Buildings had been completed (fig 8)!

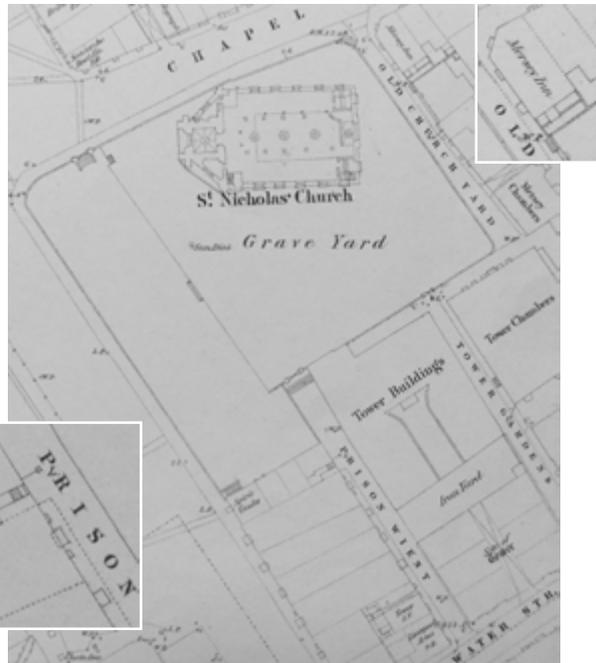


Fig 7. 'St Nicholas's Church Yard, Liverpool in 1846. Previous to the taking down of the Old Buildings. Published by John R Isaac, 62 Castle Street, Liverpool.' Coulter's Hotel is in the centre of the view with, to its right, the gates leading to Stringer's Alley and the masts of ships in George's Dock Basin. The roof of the Merchants' Coffee House is just detectable beyond the gates. On the extreme left, the edge of the recently completed Tower Chambers and the gates leading to Tower Garden can be seen. Drawn on stone in reverse, it was not uncommon for mistakes to be made with lettering, as in the case of the 'S' in 'Coulter's' in this lithograph. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref 942.7214 ISA.



Fig 8. A view of the northern section of Tower Buildings c 1847 (McCorquodale's Directory of 1848 being the first to list offices there). The Merchants' Coffee House is to its right and Tower Chambers to its left. The tower of Tower Buildings immediately became home to the Liverpool end of the Holyhead to Liverpool telegraph (semaphore). The southern, Water Street, section of the building was completed in 1857, the whole to the designs of James Picton. It was pulled down in 1907 and replaced by Tower Building (no 's'), designed by W Aubrey Thomas. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref LIC 186 B.

Fig 9. A detail from sheet 23 of the 1848 OS showing the arrival of Tower Chambers and the northern section of Tower Buildings (completed in 1857 to Water Street). Stringer's Alley (fig 3) is shown as having become Prison Wient and Tower Garden had become Tower Gardens. At the junction with Chapel Street, the 'Mersey Inn' marks the site of Jump's public house whilst, at the southern corner, the Merchants' Coffee House is marked as 'Spirit Vaults'. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.



In 1847, Mary Coulter is shown in *Gore's Directory* as being in the process of taking herself and the hotel's name to Union Street (off Lancelot's Hey) before ending up in Regent Street at another premises. A year later, the Liverpool Pierhead area was surveyed by Captain Hawkins, RE, for the Ordnance Survey, and his map (fig 9) shows the arrival of Tower Chambers (replacing Edward Horne's hotel and a neighbouring building) and the partially constructed Tower Buildings (replacing Mary Coulter's hotel and neighbouring buildings).

In a fascinating paper on *The Early Coffee Houses of Liverpool*, presented to the HSLC in 1912, A H Arkle revealed the (apparently brief) existence of the Bath Coffee House in the Old Church Yard.⁷ The author was uncertain as to exactly where it stood, and suggested that 'possibly the building known as Coulter's Hotel, adjoining the late Merchants' Coffee House, might be the site of this old house.' The plan of 1810 (fig 3) does indeed show a building adjoining the Merchants' Coffee House, immediately to the west of Stringer's Alley although, as we have seen, Coulter's Hotel was a separate building on the east side of the alley. Arkle quoted from an advertisement in the *Liverpool Chronicle* of 18th June 1756 which indicated that

The salt water bath at the Bath Coffee House is now opened for admission of Company... This Bath is an oblong, in length 60 feet, in breadth 24 feet, and 27 feet high. The floor is formed of natural Rock. On the N. side it is closed, on the West it is opened by a large Venetian Window and on the S. by four wide and lofty arches, which support the superstructure... water is conveyed to it in great purity by pipes which run a considerable way into the river and is let out again by every tide... Coffee and tea 6d. each person.

In 1759, a certain Mrs Davis advertised that she had taken the coffee house with the intention of fitting it up as a 'Private House for Boarders and Lodgers', whilst in 1760, when the place was advertised for sale, it was described as 'in the Old Churchyard and fronting the prospect of the River.' However, it is Arkle's comment that the 1761 will of James Bromfield refers to

a messuage near the Old Church in Liverpool called the Bath Coffee House and the Hot Bath and French Prison adjoining thereto. Testator has converted the latter into a dwelling-house and erected a warehouse on part of the said premises and made several alterations in the place lately made use of as a Bath

which provides the clue for determining the site of this intriguing coffee house and its successor. Lang's plan of 1750 (fig 10 oriented to the east), shows the ground that had recently been enclosed by the Corporation. Previously part of the shore - in earlier centuries the Mersey had washed the walls of the Tower of Liverpool at high tide - it is part of this enclosure that provided for the enlargement of the churchyard in 1749. The whole of that shore being of rock (Stringer's Rock is named), it would also have been eminently suitable for the floor of a bath 'formed of natural Rock.'

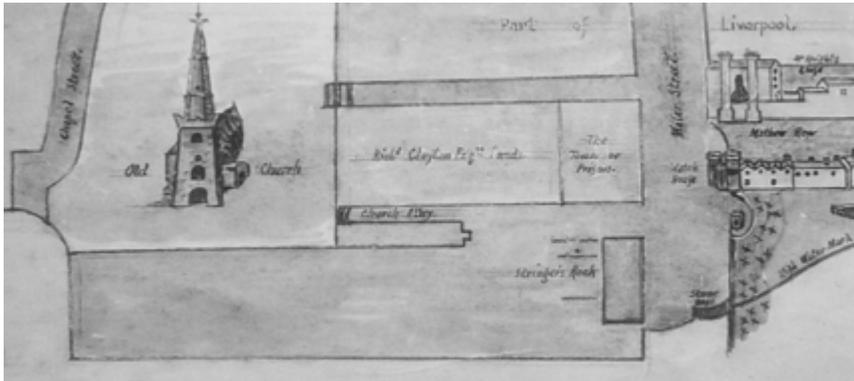


Fig 10. From Lang's plan of 1750. The convention at the time was for plans and maps to be oriented approximately to the east in order that the river (not included on this detail), running left to right. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref Hf 912 1750.

The buildings between Church Alley and the land reclaimed from the river were already well-established; they are marked on Chadwick's map of 1725,⁸ whilst Herdman's view (fig 11) shows their appearance a little later that century.⁹



Fig 11. A detail from a view prior to the enclosure of the land marked as 'Bromfield's ground' on Eyes' plan of 1753 (fig 12). The stone wall protecting the Tower from high tides can be seen leading to an alley between buildings adjacent to the Tower and those on the water's edge. This is 'Church Alley' on Lang's plan and 'Antient way to the Church' on Eyes' plan. The buildings on the water's edge are those marked as being on the long strip of land on the two plans. The site of a residual part of whatever had become of them by 1810 is shown in fig 3 next to the Merchants' Coffee House. Image courtesy of the LRO.

John Eyes' plan of 1753 (fig 12, also oriented to the east, and the existence of which Arkle was presumably unaware) marks the southern section of the enclosed area as 'Bromfield's ground', to the west of the 'Antient way to the Church' (Church Alley on Lang's plan, subsequently Stringer's Alley and later still Prison Wient).

Fig 12. From John Eyes' plan of 1753, oriented to the east showing the land marked as 'Bromfield's ground'. Some of the property that was subsequently built upon this land is recorded in John Bromfield's will of 1761. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref Binns collection, vol 9, Hf 942.7204.

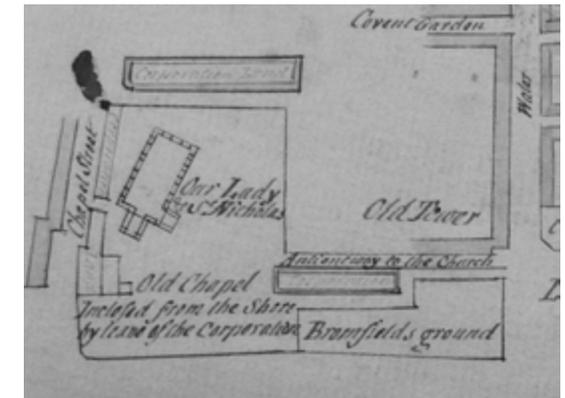


Fig 13. A detail from fig 4 showing the building that is suggested to have been the Bath Coffee House on Bromfield's ground. Image courtesy of the Liverpool Record Office (LRO).



If Joseph Butler's view was accurately copied by Herdman (fig 13), it argues that during the 1750s a building had been constructed on John Bromfield's land in a position which corresponds to 'in the Old Churchyard and fronting the prospect of the River', the description in the 1760 advertisement for the coffee house. Whilst it is two-storey at the raised level of the churchyard, with steps in an arch in the churchyard wall leading from the shore to what would have been

the coffee room entrance, the building below this level would have been the site of the bath. This appears consistent with the 1756 description of the bath as having a single 'large Venetian Window' facing the river (the 24ft dimension), 'four wide and lofty arches, which support the superstructure' facing south (60ft dimension, at the rear on Herdman's view), and also explains why 'On the N. side it is closed'.

Within a matter of a few years, however, even if the bath had been a success, it found itself enclosed and buried as yet another portion of the shore disappeared in preparation for the construction of George's Dock and Basin.¹⁰ Whilst Eyes' map of 1765 indicates that the building survived until that date (fig 14), on Williamson's map of 1766 and Eyes' map of 1768 it has vanished. Then on George Perry's map of 1769 a replacement has appeared on the same site as part of a group

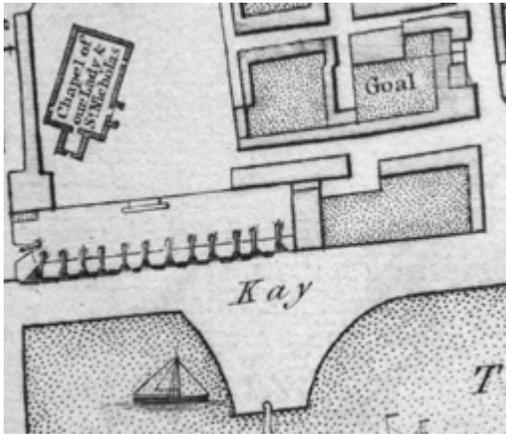


Fig 14. From Eyes' map of 1765, oriented to the east. It marks the position of the Bath Coffee House in the final year of its existence as the building to the south of the churchyard and gun battery (above the 'y' of Kay - an old spelling of Quay). Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.

of buildings that marks continuing development of Bromfield's ground. It is suggested that this shows the arrival of the Merchants' Coffee House, and would explain why not only the bath but also the name of the Bath Coffee House vanished so quickly, and why the dimensions of the Merchants' Coffee House on the 1848 OS (fig 9, 58ft x 23ft, not including the extension to the rear which was on land not originally part of Bromfield's ground) match almost exactly those given in the 1756 *Liverpool Chronicle* advertisement.¹¹



Fig 15. A detail from a 1797 view of George's Dock Gates North, showing the Merchants' Coffee House in the centre of the view, a short flight of steps to the churchyard to its left and a warehouse to its right. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.

And so to the Merchants' Coffee House. Having been unable to locate an earlier reference to it, Arkle noted that

Not until September 1774 do I find the Merchants' Coffee House located in Old Churchyard in the place quite familiar to us, in the following advertisement, viz.: For Sale. Two small dwellinghouses in possession of Esther Taylor and Edward Massey. They lie contiguous to the Merchants Coffee House in the Old Churchyard and front the steps leading down out of the said yard to the gates at the N. end of St. George's Dock [sic].^{12, 13}

The warehouses that subsequently arose next to this coffee house would, in the 19th century, become part of an area known as George's Dock Gates North, and an early glimpse of the Merchants' Coffee House comes from a 1797 view (fig 15).¹⁴

The 'Merchants' Coffee-room' earned its first entry in *Gore's Directory* in 1790, following which William Woods, 'Master of the Runcorn Packet', upon becoming the proprietor in 1805, placed an advertisement suggesting that standards had been somewhat raised (fig 16). Gomer Williams, writing in 1897, provides a hint as to what the situation prior to that date might have been:

It was the boisterous conduct of the sea captains at this tavern that led to the erection of the Athenaeum in Church Street, a haven in which Mr. Roscoe, Dr. Currie, and other men of literary tastes could rest undisturbed by slave captains and privateer commanders.¹⁵

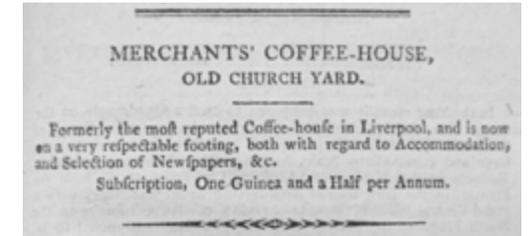


Fig 16. From the 1805 edition of *Gore's Directory*. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.

William Wood's endeavours must have borne fruit for it is recorded that until 1836 the venue was 'the original meeting place - the Merchants' Coffee House - of the *Liverpool Sharebrokers' Association*. This recognised commercial centre, adjoining the old churchyard in Chapel St., served not only as a meeting place for brokers and merchants but also for auction sales'.¹⁶

By the time that Richard Horwood produced his plan of 1803, the coffee room had been extended to Stringer's Alley (fig 2), replacing property that had been on land to the east of Bromfield's ground. By the time of the 1848 OS it had a spirit vaults (fig 9), suggesting perhaps that the bath of the previous century had survived and had been adapted to become an ideal place for such underground storage.

William Woods remained as the proprietor of the coffee house until 1825 and then - in a pattern we have seen already at Hope Tavern and which we will see again at no 1 Old Church Yard - his widow, Margaret Woods, took over. Between 1829 and 1834 James Sixsmith was the proprietor, only to be succeeded by Margaret Sixsmith from 1835 to 1839. Between 1841 and 1862 the coffee house and vaults were managed by James Westbrook, and then, between 1864 and 1867, Mrs Esther Westbrook was left to become the licensee. During and after James' and Esther's proprietorship the building featured in several attractive views (fig 17) which have been preserved in the LRO collection.¹⁷

With its commanding view across the river from the churchyard (fig 18) it had long been the favoured place for merchants watching for news of ships returning to Liverpool.¹⁸ It survived until 1883 when it and all the properties along George's Dock Gates were demolished following the *Liverpool Improvement Act* of 1882.



Fig 17. *The Merchants' Coffee House and Spirit Vaults in 1870 in a detail from a watercolour by Herdman. On the left an omnibus disappears under the footbridge passing over George's Dock Gates, steps to the left of the vaults lead to the churchyard entrance to the coffee house, whilst Tower Buildings can be seen to the rear. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref Herdman Collection 1139B.*

Fig 18. *The Merchants' Coffee House by E Beattie, in a final view from the churchyard in 1882 and showing the extension to the rear. To the right of the building, ships can be seen in George's Dock, and to its left is the side of Tower Buildings and the gatesto the churchyard from Prison Wient. to the rear, a seven-storey warehouse towers above it, part of a series along George's Dock Gates which would all vanish in 1883. Image courtesy of the LRO, ref Herdman Collection 1365 (despite being by Beattie).*



And so to the final destination in our tour of buildings in the Old Church Yard, to the diagonally opposite corner to that of the coffee house, and to a building that had a history stretching back to the 17th century when it was the residence of Edward Tarleton, Mayor of Liverpool in 1682.

W G Herdman wrote of Chapel Street that

One of the earliest and most interesting specimens of the domestic architecture of the town, called "Church Stile House," stood in this street, at the north-east corner (now Abram's) of St. Nicholas' Church-yard; so called, probably, from a turn-stile having been formerly at the entrance to the passage, leading, at a later time, into Tower-garden... This will be found to be a rare specimen of the mortar and tenon houses, so common in Chester... It will be remembered by many as Jump's public house. It was taken down in 1821, having been previously modernised.¹⁹



The most reliable view, by James Brierley, shows it towards the end of its life (fig 19).

Fig 19. *James Brierley's farewell view of the public house which, according to drawings from earlier years, ended its life with a somewhat narrower frontage. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum.*

Mrs Dorothy Jump, a member of a well-established Liverpool family, and who made her first appearance in the 1805 edition of *Gore's Directory*, was perhaps the widow of Captain George Jump, whose final directory listing was in *Woodward's* edition of 1804. Shown for the last time as victualler at no 1 Old Church Yard in 1823 (the pub, other than Jump's, was never given a name during her occupation), Dorothy found herself forced to move to another premises in Chapel Street where she remained for several more years. Nos 1 & 2 Old Church Yard having been pulled down to provide the site for a replacement (*Baines' Directory* for 1824 shows the Old Church Yard listing as commencing at no 3), this larger building is shown on Michael Gage's plan of 1835 and on the 1848 OS (fig 9) where it is identified as the Mersey Inn.

Peter Abram became the first occupant of this new no 1 Old Church Yard in 1825. Having first been listed as a victualler at Bath Street, North Shore, in 1800 and then, for many years, as a liquor dealer at a building in Chapel Street near to the Old Church Yard, Peter would enjoy the move to his new premises only briefly. By 1827 it is Mary, his widow, who has become the victualler, and she would survive Peter by a further twenty years at the public house known simply as Abram's. Following Mary's departure, George Cunningham took over the premises which in *Slater's Northern Directory* of 1848 is shown as the Mersey Inn and in the same directory in 1855 as the Mersey Tavern. In 1859 *Slater's Northern* lists the building as Old Stile with George as proprietor, whilst *Gore's Directory* lists it as Old Style House with Mrs Sarah Cunningham as the victualler. Just as Mary Abram had succeeded Peter by two decades, so Sarah was destined to outlive George by a similar period, being finally listed there in 1879.

Annie Clough arrived in 1880 as victualler and, perhaps with a touch of humour from its compositors, *Gore's Directory* managed to list the building as Old Still House. The name was corrected to Stile or Style in subsequent editions and then, in 1896, it took on a somewhat grander title as Old Style House Hotel.²⁰ The name change reflected its transformation into a building to the designs of the architect Walter Thomas, more famously known for The Vines in Lime Street and the Philharmonic Hotel in Hope Street.²¹



Fig 20. The sign for Ma Boyle's Alehouse and Eatery, 2015. GHJ.

The Old Style House Hotel survived late into the 20th century and some of its features can be seen on a number of the LRO's photographs of Chapel Street taken between 1942 and 1968.²² St Nicholas House now stands on its site. With the hotel's demolition the final link was severed with an aspect of the history of the churchyard which had spanned several centuries.

However, visitors to the Old Church Yard today will find another venue - that of Ma Boyle's Alehouse and Eatery at the Tower Gardens corner of Tower Building - at which to quench their thirst and perhaps contemplate the publicans galore that once provided for the needs of both townfolk and arrivals from distant lands.

References and notes

¹ Henry Peet, The Recently Recovered Plans of Old St Nicholas's Church, Liverpool, *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire [Trans HSLC]*, 1919, vol 71, p 43. The architect's survey had been occasioned by the collapse on the morning of 11th February 1810 of the spire which killed 24 people, principally children of the Moorfields' Charity School (Henry Peet, *Trans HSLC*, 1913, vol 65, p 31). See also Henry Peet, The Site of the Chapel of St Mary del Key, *Trans HSLC*, 1913, vol 65, p 39, where he refers to the building as having had 'a strange and varied career - first a chapel, then the town's warehouse, subsequently a school, and finally a common tavern'. That paper also contains a further plan of the churchyard.

² W G Herdman, *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool*, Brown, Barnes and Bell, 1878, vol 1, plate VII, facing p 10. The date of 1749 that Herdman gave to Butler's original view seems open to question. In his description he wrote that 'It gives a capital idea of the Church and surrounding buildings at the period when the churchyard wall was made into a Fort, at the time when our troubles with the French were at their height'. The Seven Years' War with France did not begin until 1756, and the commentary to another version of Herdman's view in *Bygone Liverpool*, Henry Young & Sons, 1913, p 26, includes the statement that, 'In the year 1759 a French ship, commanded by Thurot of Brest, committed many depredations, and the men of Liverpool, fearing an attack by his or other French ships, determined to be in a position to defend the town, and built a battery, which they armed with fourteen good guns, close to the church'. The view also appears as plate 10 in *Herdman's Liverpool*, The Gallery Press, 1968, with a date of 1760 (thus disregarding Herdman's date) together with the comment that the churchyard was 'fitted up as the battery which can be seen in the foreground of the picture'.

³ Richard Brooke, *Liverpool as it was During the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century*, Mawdsley and Son, 1853, p 42. In 1774 Captain John Hinde is listed at no 17 Old Church Yard; in 1777 the entry is 'Ince Boat House, John Hinde, St. Nicholas's Church Yard'; in 1790 the entry is 'John Hind [sic], victualler, Ince boathouse, Old Church Yard', and then the directories for 1796 and 1800 show William Hinde as 'victualler and Ince Boat-house, 17 Old Church Yard'.

⁴ W G Herdman, op cit, a detail from plate VIII, facing the text on p 11. Herdman's comments about the 'elite of the town' provide an interesting contrast with those of the 1795 'cynical observer' quoted by Ramsay Muir. Herdman's complete picture shows the church with its new steeple. Richard Brooke, op cit, indicates that 'In 1749 the church yard was enlarged on the west side, a space of ground being added, which is distinguishable by being at a lower level than the other parts'. See also *Georgian Liverpool*, a reprint of the 1797 guidebook by William Moss with additional material by David Brazendale, Palatine Books (Carnegie), 2007, pp 94-95, for other views of the Boat-house in the 18th century and further information regarding the church.

⁵ J A Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, G G Walmsley (Liverpool), 2nd edition, 1875, vol II, p 63.

⁶ R Stewart-Brown, The Tower of Liverpool, *Trans HSLC*, 1909, vol 61, p 77. The paper was also reproduced by the author in 1910 as a monograph of the same name, p 45. By the time that Stewart-Brown wrote his article Tower Chambers (see fig 9) had already been demolished and replaced by Colonial House for Alfred Lewis Jones' new headquarters. Colonial House was bombed in WWII and upon the site was eventually constructed Reliance House, the building that survives to this day (fig 1).

⁷ A H Arkle, *The Early Coffee Houses of Liverpool*, *Trans HSLC*, 1912, vol 64, p 1. The paper provides a variety of other interesting details concerning events that occurred at the Bath Coffee House, and includes the fact that 'it was one of the earliest houses of the Liverpool (Lyceum) Library'.

⁸ The tunnel leading from James Street Station to Water Street was painstakingly refurbished in 2015 and the walls now display historical posters and an attractive series of maps etched into brass, including those for 1725, 1765 and 1803. The passageway has become a tourist attraction in its own right.

⁹ W G Herdman, *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool*, William Holden, Liverpool, 1843, plate XXX. The caption to the plate reads 'Liverpool in 1760' and the text (pp 71-72) suggests that the view is (from right to left) 'the Tower and shews the stone wall built in 1572 (15 Eliz.); the path between this wall and the Tower, and which is continued between the houses beyond, is the present Stringer's Alley; the projection of the Church-yard is next seen, being the extension added in 1749'. However, the claimed date of 1760 for this view appears to be in conflict with the claimed date of 1749 for fig 4 and also with Lang's and Eyes' plans. Given that both scenes are by Herdman, this is somewhat puzzling.

¹⁰ The Corporation applied to Parliament in 1762 and George's Dock was opened in 1771.

¹¹ Henry Peet, op cit, 1913, p 36, noted that in 1749, 'A part of the sea strand, about 60 feet in depth, at a lower level, was enclosed by a massive stone wall'. Compare the Bath Coffee House dimension.

¹² The position given in the advertisement for the 'Two small dwellinghouses' suggests that they had been in the rectangular area shown on Henry Peet's plan of 1810 (fig 3) at the end of Stringer's Alley, adjacent to the coffee house. See also Henry Peet, op cit, 1913, plate VI, for a view dated 1773 showing a building at the southern end of the (modified) churchyard wall at a position corresponding to the one in Herdman's scene (fig 4).

¹³ J A Picton, op cit, p 62, writing in the 1870s, commented that 'Before leaving the churchyard, I would call attention to the tavern at the south-west corner, with a doorway opening upon the churchyard, called the Merchants' Coffee-house. It was erected about the middle of the eighteenth century, at the time of the extension of the churchyard, and was for many years the great resort of the commercial community, the large room entering from the churchyard commanding a fine view of the river. The advertisements of the latter half of the eighteenth century show that it was the principal place for auction sales of property and ships'. Arkle, op cit, described auctions at an earlier 18th century coffee house of the same name in Dale Street, and disagreed with Picton's comments, claiming that 'every mention of the locality of the Merchants' Coffee House down to the year 1767 is invariably Dale St... Picton, Gomer Williams, and other writers are clearly wrong in saying as they do that the Merchants' Coffee House in Old Churchyard was erected about the middle of the eighteenth century, and nearly all the sales they allude to in connection with the Merchants' Coffee House took place in Dale Street.' However, the problem of reconciling the two accounts would vanish if the one in Dale Street became redundant when the one adjacent to the Old Church Yard was built. Of the coffee houses with which Arkle dealt in his paper, the 1772 directory lists the Exchange, George's, Neptune and Pontack's. However, the Merchants' in Dale Street is not listed - a coffee house which Arkle showed as having had an important existence since 1733: 'everything at some time or other seems to have passed through this building, from a ship to a bag of pepper' - and it never appeared in subsequent directories.

¹⁴ W G Herdman, *Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool*, 1856, plate VIII. The LRO has a copy of the complete view in colour, ref Herdman collection 1420, and that version is also reproduced by Kay Parrott in *Pictorial Liverpool, The Art of W G & William Herdman*, Bluecoat Press, 2005, p 33.

¹⁵ Gomer Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque with an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade*, Edward Howell, 1897, ending to the footnote on p 133. The LRO's Photographs and Small Prints folder, Hotels and Inns, Merchants' Coffee House, contains a print of the interior of the building entitled 'The Assembly and Public Sale Room' on the reverse of which, written in pencil, it is recorded that 'It was in the Merchants' Coffee Room that the last African slave was sold in England'. No date is given and no slaves can have been brought to Liverpool after the result of the 1772 Somerset case, so it is perhaps uncertain at which Merchants' Coffee House this last slave was sold.

¹⁶ W A Gibson Martin, *A Century of Liverpool's Commerce*, Charles Birchall and Sons, 1950, p 76.

¹⁷ The LRO collection includes several views of George's Dock Gates featuring the Merchants' Coffee House and frequently showing it bearing the sign 'Westbrook's Wine & Spirit Vaults'. See, for example, the Herdman Collection, LRO refs 532 (dated 1856), 1191 (1862), 55 (1865), 36 (1867), 190 (1867) and 155 (1868). Herdman Collection 36 appears as part of an article in the *Journal of the Liverpool History Society*, 2014, vol 13, p 25.

¹⁸ Thomas Kaye, *The Picture of Liverpool; or Stranger's Guide*, 1805, p 122, noted of the coffee house that, 'Commanding a view of the river and signal poles, it is conveniently situated for attending to the movements of the shipping', and the LRO has several views of the multitude of flag poles that once spread across Bidston Hill. Frank Large, *Faster than the Wind; the Liverpool to Holyhead Telegraph*, Avid Publications, 1998, provides a fascinating account of the semaphore signalling system which served Liverpool merchants and shipowners from late 1827 when it began to replace the flag system. The Liverpool semaphore was initially located on Duncan's warehouse in Chapel Street. With the arrival of Tower Buildings in 1848 it was immediately transferred to the roof of the tower. A number of Herdman pictures featuring the Merchants' Coffee House show the semaphore in this latter position.

¹⁹ Herdman, op cit, 1843, p 13, regarding plate IX of that edition, which is one of his versions of an earlier scene. A second version appears as part of plate XLV in vol 2 of his 1878 edition of *Relics* where he claims the original to be dated 1650. A similar view by Roberts (LRO ref Binns Collection, vol 9, Hf 942.7204) shows it with the sign 'D. Jump's. Ale, Porter and Spirits'. All of them depict a wider frontage to the building than that which is shown in James Brierley's view. It is marked on various 16th and 17th century maps as Church Stile House, Church Style House, Stile House and Style House.

²⁰ The first proprietor, from 1896 to 1901, of the Old Style House Hotel was Margaret Jane Denyer. From 1902 to 1904 she was listed as Margaret Jane Lightbown. Having presumably married one of the several men listed with that surname, this may be a rare occurrence of a woman managing to maintain visibility in print during a marriage.

²¹ Quentin Hughes, *Seaport. Architecture and Townscape in Liverpool*, Lund Humphries, 1964, p 93. Reprinted with postscript by The Bluecoat Press, 1993.

²² LRO Photographs & Small Prints, Streets & Districts, Chapel Street.