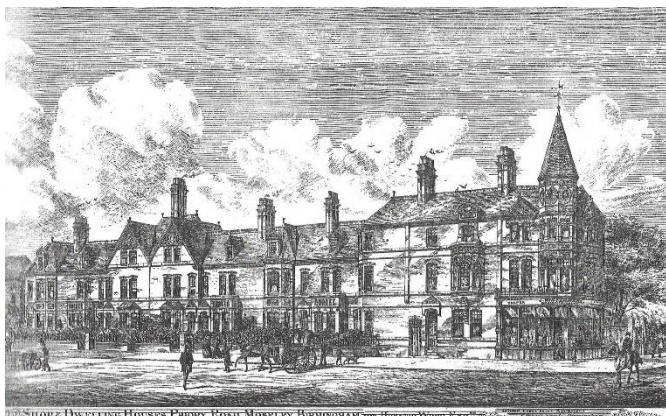


Moseley Road/ Cromer Road junction another of John Bowen's contracts.

John Bowen was Balsall Heath's master builder with works in George St. His major buildings included the Victoria Law Courts where the Foundation stone was laid by Queen Victoria herself in March, 1887.



It is wonderful to discover in "The Architect" of April, 1887 that John Bowen also built the striking shop on the corner of Cromer Road (then called Priory Road) as well as the first six houses adjoining, as in the illustration. He had put in a tender for the contract in 1884 for a total of £2,639.

Horatio Wood was the person offering the contract and he is also of some interest. He was living at "The Priory" on Moseley Road which was a very large house standing in its own grounds opposite the Moseley and Balsall Heath Institute.



He was an eminent Surgeon who came to Balsall Heath about 1870, initially living in a house called Earlsdon on the Moseley Road. He died in 1920 at the age of 80, leaving an estate of nearly £23,000.

A glimpse of the man can be seen in his will where he made provision for his family but in addition left legacies to his coachman and housemaid. Rather charmingly, he also left his son, "*the oil paintings of myself and my wife and the oil paintings of my wife's great grandfather*".

Balsall Heath Local History Society Gazette

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Next meeting.

The committee has decided to suspend meetings. We hope to start meetings again in January 2021.

Membership of the Society costs
£10 a year.

Unfortunately I have not been able to discover who that was. His son, another Horatio, was at that time living in Osborn House, further up the road to Moseley, a house still standing today.

Val Hart

Lost Children

Remember our new book is now on sale through our website and will be available at the Print Works open day (see page 3).

Renewal at St. Alban's

Under this heading in the February issue of the Gazette we told of the grant of £222,000 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in order to protect the Church building by renewing the roof and repairing the walls and windows, and providing step-free access.



With these magnificent photos we are able to see just how well this work is coming along. This is more than a renewal but rather a revitalization! Back in March the work was halted due to the Coronavirus lockdown. Now in August Scaffolding has reached full height and replacement tiles are being quickly put in place.

Church-warden Christopher Smith has told us -

"We think that most of the tiles on the high roof were the original hand-made ones from 140 years ago and many pallet loads of those in good condition have been salvaged by the contractors for reuse in repairing the roofs of other historic buildings. Unfortunately

because of the steep pitch of our roof and the exposed location on rising ground, we needed to replace them with tiles that can be nailed in place to (as we hope) prevent storm damage due to lifting of the tiles."



The Benedictus Window

This is an example of the many things that the Lottery heritage grant is seeking to protect. Chris chose this window for us

"I've chosen a detail from the bottom of the right hand (South) chancel window. It shows the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus and Bishop Mark Napier Trollope, who was Vicar of St Alban's for only a year before he left at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1911 to become "Bishop in Corea" (now Korea), where he had previously served as a mission priest for ten years."

St Albans website is available with links to further photos and details of the church's windows here:- <http://www.saintalban.co.uk/interior/windows>

And a Drop Box with more photos of the Roof Renovation

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9y6b6g4nmic0mxd/AABBhx9uyNMXqq88H9rAydm9a?dl=0>

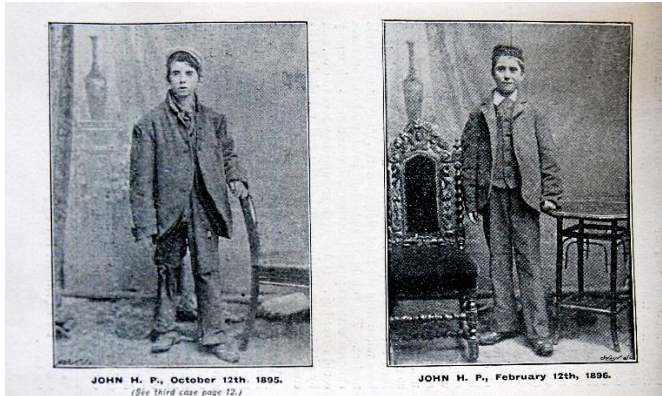
As part of the Heritage Week, St Alban's will be showing a video tour of the church as it is. See <https://birminghamheritageweek.co.uk/10-sept/video-tour-of-st-albans-church/> for details.

J.F.

The Lost Children

Name index of Lost Children photos in the Middlemore Annual Reports

Great progress has been made on this by Patricia Roberts-Pichette in Canada. and we also did some research before the pandemic locked us down. One of the children we identified was JOHN HENRY PAINTER, whose family lived at 10 York Place, Longmore St, Balsall Heath. There were 7 children in the family, the youngest being only 4 months old.



John was 14 years old at the time he was taken into the Homes in 1895, described as “very dejected appearance, very ragged, clothes pinned to keep them together.” His father had been a soldier but was currently unemployed. John had more or less left home to live on the streets and said he slept in a “shutter box” in Bell St. He had been taken to Dr Barnardos 3 nights previously but they apparently let him go when he refused to tell them about his parents. The Middlemore Admission Register notes, sarcastically, “They did not clothe him or cut his long hair which was full of lice”.

John was emigrated to Canada in 1896. All the rest of the family stayed with their parents.

Steve Beauchampe In Memoriam.

Steve was well known to Balsall Heath Local History Society as a campaigner for the Moseley Road Baths and as author of the book “Pool of Memories.” He died suddenly in March, just as lockdown was beginning, at the early age of 61. A great loss to the Heritage sector.

Old Print Works Open Studio

19th-20th September

The OPW will be holding an Open Studio event on the weekend of the 19th and 20th of September and the society will have their own stall. There will be a display and there will be books for sale including the new Lost Children book.

Birmingham Heritage Week. 10th – 20th September

Despite the virus and all of the restrictions, Birmingham Heritage week will happen. There are a lot of events lined up over the 10 days. Many will need some kind of pre-booking so it will be best to start with the website:- <https://birminghamheritageweek.co.uk/>

The closest actual event to Balsall Heath is on the opening day and is a tour of Cannon Hill Park under the title “A gift to the city”. There are also open days at St Agatha’s on Stratford Rd at weekends and the Buddhist Vihara in Ladywood.

It is a good idea to look through the available events early. Some will need bookings others will need particular accounts or programs (apps) on your computer

Events include, various virtual city centre tours at £5, an exhibition of historic cameras in the Jewellery Quarter and a separate online lecture from the curator, a seminar on the excavation of Park St cemetery before HS2, and virtual tours of the Coffin Works and a farm in the Jewellery Quarter.