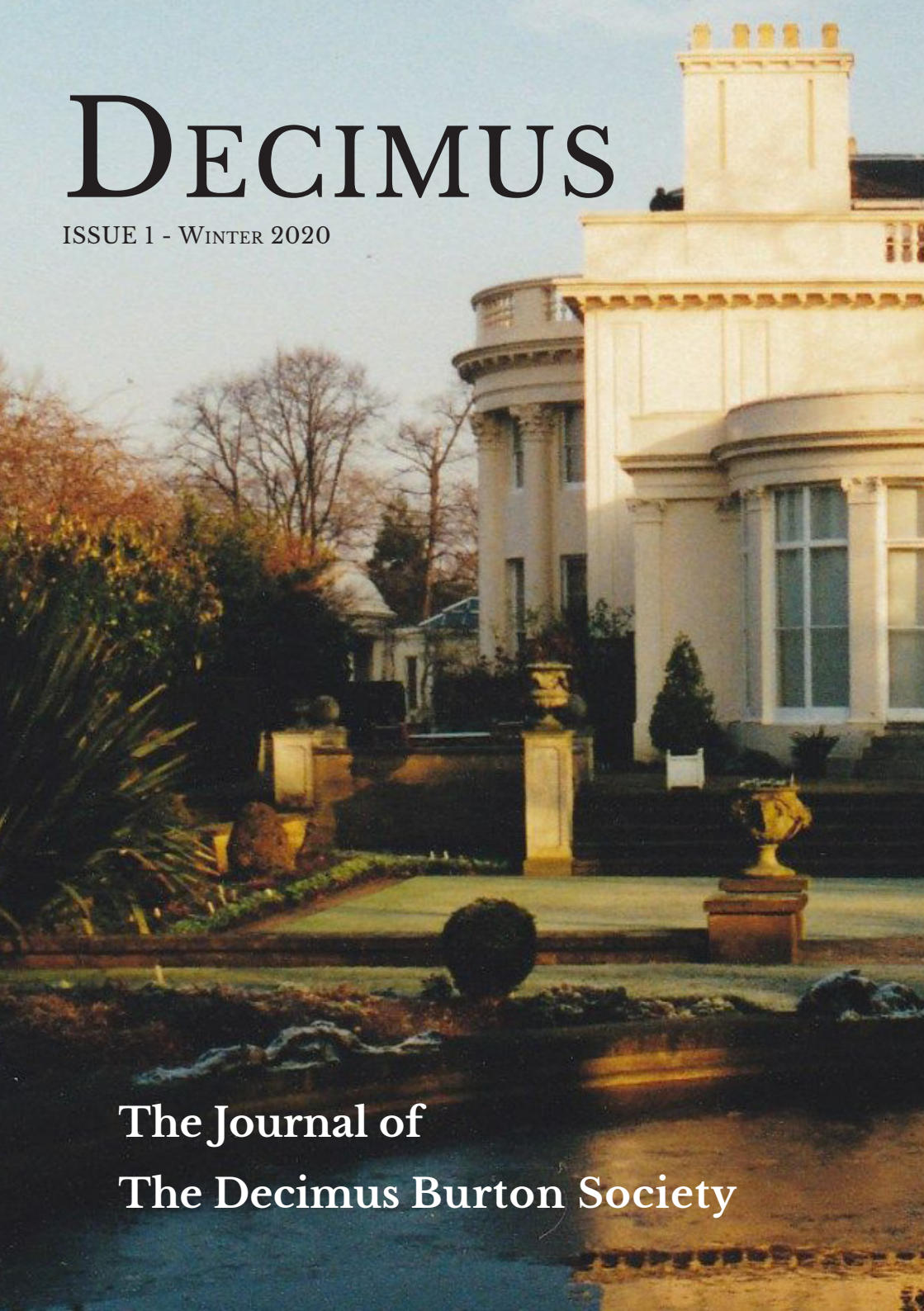
Decimus

ISSUE 1 - Winter 2020



The Journal of
The Decimus Burton Society

Drawing by Indi Ellis, 2018

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Front Cover
The Holme, Regent's Park, designed by Decimus Burton 1818 - © Donald Insall Associates
Back Cover
Keston Lodge © Diana Blackwell

DECIMUS

The Decimus Burton Society was set up to encourage the study and appreciation of the life and work of this eminent architect.

To join The Decimus Burton Society
www.thedecimusburtonsociety.org

The Journal of

The Decimus Burton Society

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to The Decimus Burton Society in this our first issue of the society's journal DECIMUS.

It has been a challenging year for the society since our first AGM in January 2020. However, since then we have achieved a great deal. We have designed and built our website www.thedecimusburtonsociety.org , together with our bi-annual journal DECIMUS, both of which bear witness to the technical and professional skills of my wife Anne. We have also been busy developing a series of events that include visits, talks and lectures, whether virtual or face-to-face, the first of which will be held in February 2021. Lastly, we have been gathering material for our archives and assisting individuals in their research into Decimus Burton.

I have been greatly encouraged by the support of our members, as well as that of other societies, organisations and individuals, such as The Victorian Society, the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society and the Burtons' St Leonards Society, to name a few.

I am looking forward to working with members so that we can make your membership rewarding and enjoyable, and to this end I would like to encourage you to contact me with suggestions for future events.

Paul Avis
Chairman

Trinity Theatre & Arts Centre

Trinity Church, in Tunbridge Wells, was designed by Decimus Burton in 1827 in what was described by architectural historian, Professor Mark Girouard, as the "creative Gothic" style. In Victorian times the church was well attended, but in 1974, the Church Commissioners considered the building "redundant to pastoral needs". It was largely through the efforts of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society that Trinity was saved and converted into a community and arts centre. It is an excellent example of one of Decimus Burton's buildings being adapted to meet changing needs.

For further information, visit www.trinitytheatre.net.

December 2020

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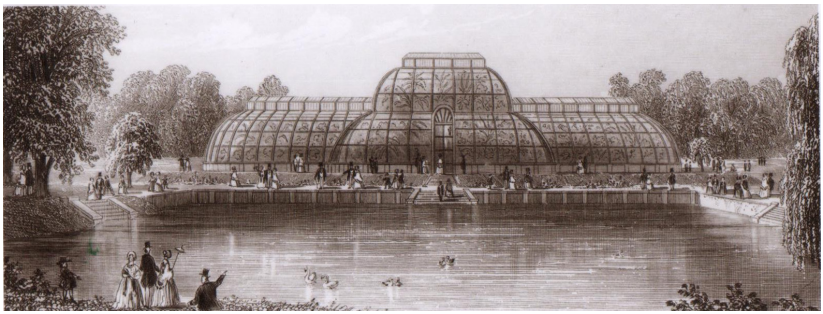
DECIMUS BURTON

Architect & Gentleman 1800–1881

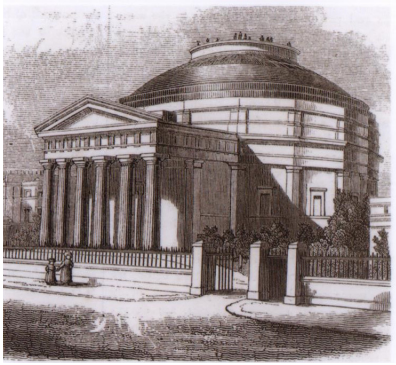
By Dr Philip Whitbourn

Writing in The Observer, under the title "The Great Pioneer" at the centenary of Burton's death, the architect, teacher and writer Stephen Gardiner, OBE, (1927 – 2007) opened with the question "Who was the greatest nineteenth-century British architect?", answering "Decimus Burton is my man". Gardiner saw Burton as providing a bridge spanning the gap between Palladian traditions (such as the Wellington Arch), on the one hand, and modern architecture (such as the Palm House at Kew) on the other.

Certainly, Burton had a thorough understanding of Classical Architecture, and the correct use of the Orders, from an early age. He was only 22 when he designed his first public building, the Regent's Park Colosseum, with a dome larger than that of St Paul's. Then followed those prominent London landmarks the Wellington Arch, the Ionic Screen at Hyde Park Corner,



Palm House, Kew, 1844



Coloseum, 1823 (dem 1875)

Cornwall Terrace, 1822

Wellington Arch, 1824

Athenaeum, 1825

Hyde Park Screen, 1824

Grove House, 1822

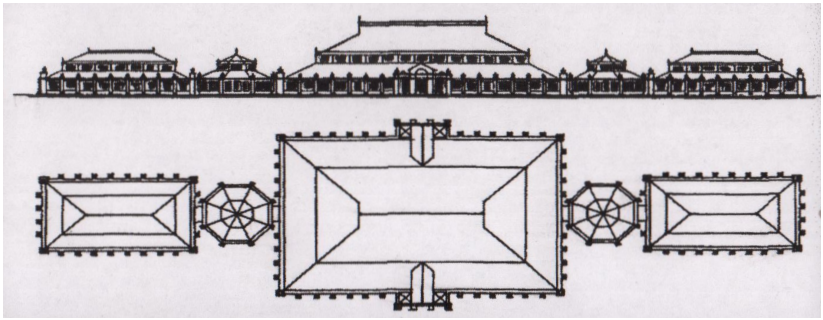
and the Athenaeum Club in Pall Mall, putting him in the top rank of leading architects of the Regency Period, along with Nash, Soane, Smirke, Cockerell and Wilkins.

Burton's route over Gardiner's metaphorical bridge, spanning the gap between his classical monuments and the modernism of his Palm House at Kew, may have started in 1822, with his Loudonesque conservatory at Grove House in Regent's Park. It could then have continued through the Winter Garden at the Colosseum, his involvement with

Palmettes at the Palm house, Kew

Paxton at Chatsworth, and with Turner at Regent's Park and Kew.

The Palm House at Kew has been described as having gained iconic status as the world's most important surviving Victorian glass and iron structure. Today, we have become all too used to seeing glass structures such as the Shard, but none comes close to being as pleasing aesthetically as the Palm House at Kew. Gardiner's main enthusiasm however, was expressed for Burton's now beautifully restored Temperate House, which he described as having a theme that fused old and new, adding that it was "one which we would do well to emulate." To my mind



Temperate House, Kew, 1859

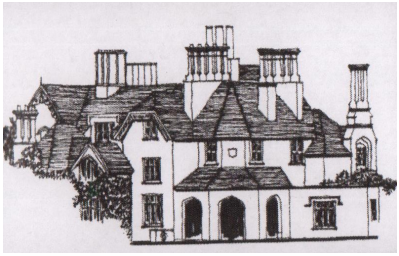
both structures are architectural masterpieces, and together they form the centrepiece of the UNESCO-inscribed World Heritage Site at Kew Gardens.

Alongside this glasshouse route across the metaphorical bridge, Burton was also producing highly interesting domestic architecture in the 1820s and 30s perhaps leading to an Arts and Crafts outcome, as distinct from the modernist one. His early 1820s villas in Regent's Park, such as the very splendid Grove House, were classical in style, as were some of the villas in Calverley Park, Tunbridge Wells. Others in Calverley Park, though, were "Old English" in style, as were his cottages ornés, such as The Grove, Penshurst, and some of his country houses, such as Burrswood at Groombridge, and Bentham Hill near Speldhurst, and it has been suggested that these may have had an influence on Voysey's master George Devey, who also worked in that area. Certainly, Burton was an influence on his last pupil, the Arts and Crafts architect E J May.

To Burton's claim to fame as a Regency architect, as a specialist in glasshouses, and in the field of domestic architecture can be added his skill as a Town Planner in Fleetwood and elsewhere, his expertise in Zoo design in London and Dublin, and in

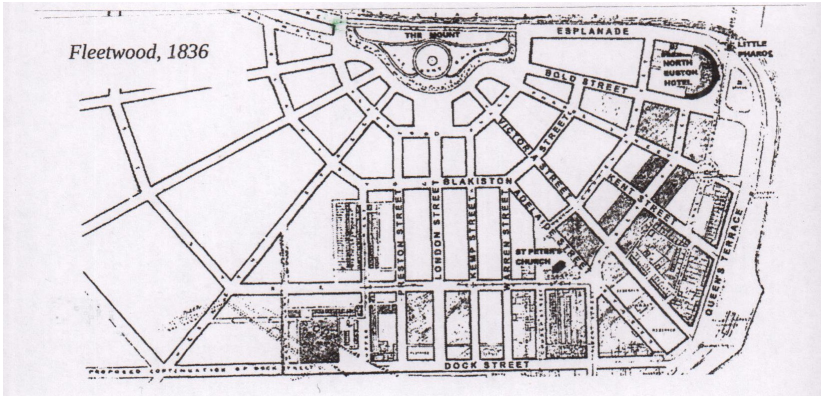
Classical Villa,
Calverley Park, 1828

Old English Villa,
Calverley Park, 1828



Bentham Hill, 1832

The Grove, Penshurst, 1828



Fleetwood, 1836

garden design too, making him no ordinary architect, but one with exceptionally wide abilities and interests.

Moreover, he was a Gentleman, straightforward, high-principled, cultured, amiable and modest. He left no brash writing on his architectural philosophy and his work has long been under-appreciated. It is greatly hoped that the Society will be able to promote a better understanding and recognition of his work, which can still have lessons for us today.

Dr Philip Whitbourn, OBE, FSA, FRIBA, former Chief Architect at English Heritage and Secretary to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (UK), is a recognised authority on the life and work of Decimus Burton.

London Zoo, 1826-41

THE ARCHITECT AND THE ENGINEER

By Dr Kate Teltscher

Glasshouses were at the forefront of Victorian building technology. With their innovative forms and materials, they occupied a position at the intersection of architecture and engineering. Slender iron columns and curved glass shells created a miraculous and wholly unfamiliar sense of space and light. The Palm House at Kew – the greatest surviving nineteenth-century glass and iron building – is the result of a fertile collaboration between an architect and an engineer: Decimus Burton and Richard Turner. But the partnership between Burton and Turner was neither equal nor easy.

The two men came from very different social spheres. Burton was a wealthy, well-connected professional. In 1839, he was

appointed vice-president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, in acknowledgement of his position as a 'ruling power and light in the profession'. Turner, by contrast, was a Dublin iron founder and self-taught engineer. Having established himself as Ireland's leading glasshouse manufacturer, the builder of a sweeping curvilinear glasshouse for Belfast Botanic Garden and a peach house for the Viceregal Lodge in Phoenix Park, Dublin, he travelled to London in 1843 in the hope of building up an English clientele. As an Irishman, Turner had to contend with the dominant English prejudice against Irish workers, who were considered backward-looking and unproductive.

In 1844, the Earl of Lincoln, the government official responsible for Kew, introduced Turner and Burton to each other and to Sir William Hooker, the first Director of the Botanic Gardens. Hooker had been appointed four years previously, when Kew transferred from royal to public ownership. Hooker's aim was to transform a small, neglected garden into a national and imperial botanic centre. Like many a contemporary director of public institution, Hooker wanted a spectacular signature building. In a bold move, Hooker pushed for a grand Palm House that would assert Kew's new status, attract the crowds and demonstrate the government's commitment to botanical science.

Charismatic and articulate, Turner immediately impressed Hooker. He was full of ideas and enthusiasm, completely convinced that wrought iron was the wonder material of the future. After three mornings in Turner's company, Hooker declared to Lord Lincoln that Turner knew 'more about Hothouses & greenhouses & the best principles of heating them than any man I ever met with'. After such a persuasive sales pitch, Turner was invited to draw up a design for a new Palm House at Kew.

When Turner submitted his plans, Burton was invited to give his opinion. Burton was well known to the Office of Woods and Forests, the government department with oversight of Kew. With an extensive network of clients, he enjoyed a reputation for unimpeachable good taste. According to Hooker, Burton was considered 'one of the best & most expensive architects'.

Over the course of his career, Burton had been involved in a range of glasshouse projects, from small-scale conservatories to grand structures, most notably the Great Stove at the Duke of Devonshire's estate of Chatsworth, completed in 1840. Enclosing a near acre of ground under a barrel-vaulted roof,

with waterfalls and landscaped features, temperate and tropical zones, the Great Stove was the largest conservatory in existence. It boasted a central pathway wide enough to accommodate a carriage – so that the Duke's guests could view the plants in upholstered comfort. The mammoth conservatory was designed by Joseph Paxton, the Duke of Devonshire's head gardener. Such was its scale and expense that the Duke wanted an architect to endorse the plans. Burton was only called in at a late stage in the construction process to approve the scheme. But given the Great Stove's fame, Burton was keen to be known as its architect (and even wrote a letter of complaint to the author of a guidebook which omitted to mention him).

The Great Stove functioned both as a model for, and rival to Kew's Palm House. Hooker was determined that the nation's first publicly funded glasshouse should not be outclassed by the aristocratic conservatory. Hooker had previously visited Chatsworth, accompanied by Mr Robinson, the local clerk of works, who had produced an early design, based on Paxton's showpiece. But with Lord Lincoln's backing, it became possible to commission a distinctive building for Kew, and Hooker leapt at the chance.

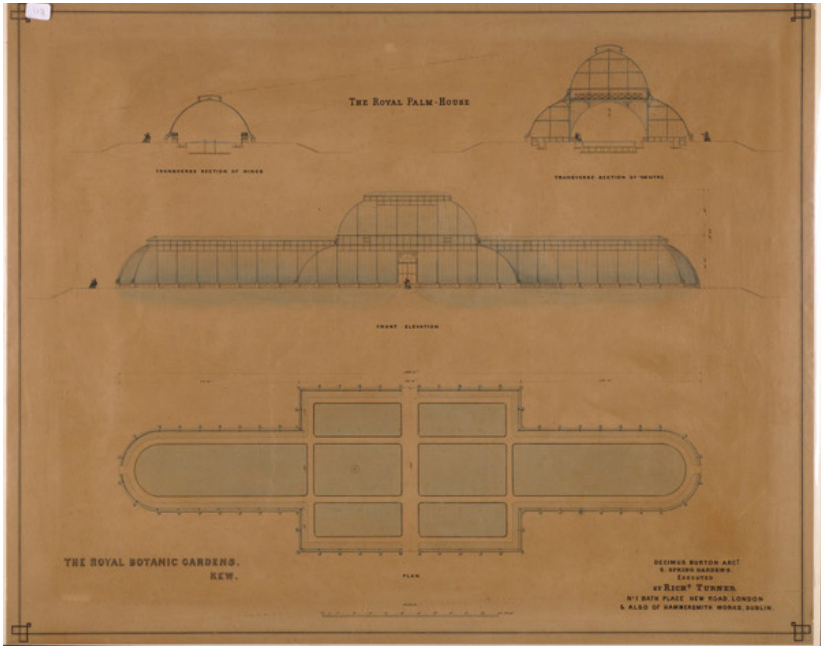
Turner initially produced a Gothic-style design consisting of a central nave with a double row of slender columns and flanking wings. When the plans were shown to Burton, the architect approved the general layout and practicality of Turner's design, but took exception to the double row of columns and neo-Gothic elements. He considered Turner's Gothic flourishes both unnecessarily expensive and fussily ornamental: all 'fret work, crockets, perforated parapets'. Glasshouses, in Burton's opinion, should be simple and functional; not influenced by any particular architectural style. He succeeded in persuading Hooker of the benefits of a pared-down form and started to draw up his own plans. He had in mind a semi-circular roof, similar to that at Chatsworth, and a single row of substantial trussed pillars.

But when Turner discovered that Burton was engaged on his own design, he was more than a little concerned. Granted a sneak preview by the draftsman, Turner found much to criticise in Burton's plans. He disapproved of the semi-circular roof ('the fatal semi-arch') which, to his mind, would cut down the available light in winter. He questioned the lack of roof ventilation and took great exception to Burton's bulky pillars. Such was his alarm that he wrote in confidence to Hooker to warn him of Burton's scheme. 'It seems to be

wildly extravagant', he declared, 'its interior will be much cumbered, no doubt, with a series of these immense massive trussed arched supporters'. Enjoining Hooker to secrecy, Turner confessed that he himself would have to adopt a pose of complete ignorance of the plans.

Hooker appears to have played along. He did not mention Turner's intervention, but instead wrote to Burton to emphasize the importance of the interior space. Hooker's letter caused Burton to pause. At the same time, Turner summoned his foreman ('a Practical as well as a scientific man') from Dublin. Together, they made their way to Spring Gardens, Burton's offices just off Trafalgar Square, with a proposal to rethink the principles of the Palm House design.

For the first week of March 1844, Turner and his foreman remained closeted in Spring Gardens. They made an unlikely team: the established architect, the ebullient Irish iron founder and his level-headed foreman. The greatest challenge was the problem of how to achieve an unobstructed central span to accommodate the



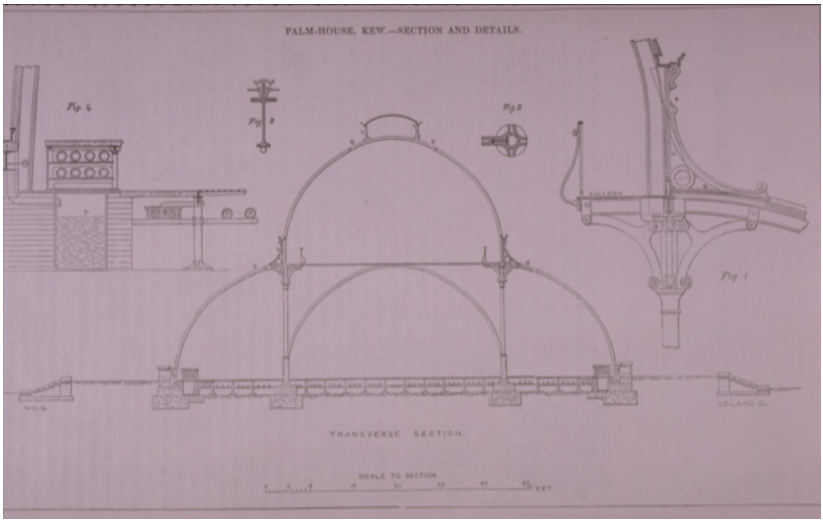
Plan of Palm House
© The Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew

largest palms. When Turner and his foreman finally arrived at a solution, Turner wrote in triumph to tell Hooker. They had devised a way to span an unprecedented width of fifty feet with just a single row of columns on either side. This opened up the interior space to wonderful effect. The aisles would be twenty-five feet long by twenty-five feet high. The curves of the roofs would echo each other. With such strong geometry, the building would be very beautiful. 'I do believe', declared Turner, 'it will be as near what might be termed perfection, as we can expect to almost ever arrive at'.

Despite the central role of Turner and the foreman, Burton presented the revised Palm House scheme as his own. The architectural historian, Edward Diestelkamp, has suggested that Burton omitted to mention Turner and the foreman in his official report to preserve the appearance of impartiality: since Burton was to advise the government Commissioners on the award of the contract, he might have thought it necessary to dissociate himself publicly from Turner. Equally, Burton might simply have regarded the scheme, drawn up in his offices, as his own. In Burton's own estimation, and probably that of the Commissioners, his professional and class status as architect completely eclipsed those of an Irish iron founder and his foreman.

Turner continued to make alterations to the agreed design throughout the construction process. The most significant of these changes was the substitution of 'deck' iron for cast iron. This was sparked by a new patent for 'deck beam' devised by the shipbuilding firm of Kennedy and Vernon: a wrought-iron beam, rolled all in one piece, with projecting ribs or flanges. Turner's attention was particularly caught by the 'bulb-tee', a length of wrought iron rolled into a near 'I' shape. With the instinct of an intuitive engineer, Turner was able to make the imaginative leap between ships and buildings. In this he showed remarkable prescience; the 'bulb-tee' was a predecessor of the I-beam, which was to become one of the most commonly used building elements. Turner was the first person to grasp its structural potential.

Turner's relentless desire to innovate came at considerable personal cost. He was so keen to secure the Palm House contract that he underestimated the expense. Advancing through trial and error, Turner experimented with new manufacturing processes. With all the iron elements made in Dublin and shipped to Kew, the Palm House was one of the earliest prefabricated



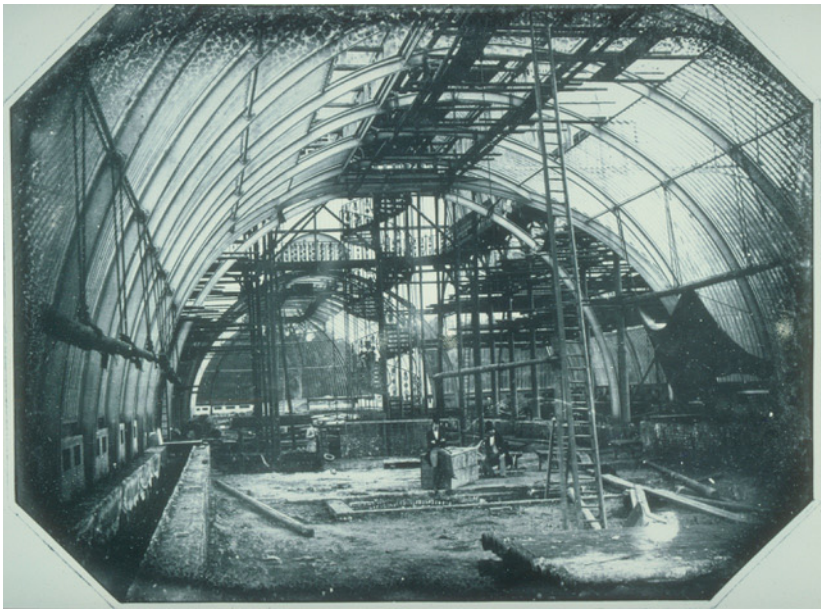
Section and details from '*The Builder*' (15 January 1848)

structures. He created a one-off machine to weld and curve the Palm House ribs. Everything took much longer than anticipated and the project stretched out over four years. Financing many of the improvements out of his own pocket, Turner tried to recoup his losses. Burton supported Turner's claim for reimbursement, but the Treasury remained unpersuaded. Overspending by an alarming £7,000, Turner was brought to the verge of bankruptcy.

At the same time that they were engaged on the Palm House, Turner and Burton worked together on the Winter Garden for the Royal Botanic Society at Regent's Park. On this project too, Turner was late, and introduced alterations to the design, which in one instance earned him a formal reprimand from Burton. Turner undertook, somewhat improbably, to follow all the architect's future instructions to the letter and 'to be guided in all respects – relative to the whole by Mr. Burton'. With his irrepressible inventiveness, Turner must have been a somewhat exasperating working partner. It is notable that in 1859 Burton rejected an approach from Turner to tender for Kew's Temperate House contract. Explaining his decision, Burton claimed that Turner was less competent than other contractors to undertake the project, given the

variety of materials involved. But the architect might also have lost patience with Turner's disregard for directions and deadlines.

When it was finally completed, the Palm House was an immediate and immense success, attracting the crowds and praised in the press. For Hooker, it was 'the glory of the gardens'. Throughout their lives, the design of the Palm House was routinely ascribed to Decimus Burton, with Turner simply regarded as the ironwork contractor. But in March 1880, the year before both men's deaths, the Dublin architect Thomas Drew wrote to the *Building News* about the Palm House. 'I had always understood', wrote Drew, 'that the credit of the design was due to Mr. Richard Turner, of Dublin, a man of singular inventive genius'. Drew's account was based on conversations with Turner, who claimed that he was solely responsible for the design which was carried out under the supervision of Burton. The architect, Drew concluded, had demonstrated his 'candour and good taste' in acknowledging the superiority of



Antoine Claudet, Daguerreotype, 1847

Turner's design and the Irishman's greater expertise in 'the then novelty of iron and glass construction'.

The original correspondence, housed in Kew's archives, largely corroborates Turner's version of events (although he was undoubtedly given to exaggeration). Through a combination of colonial and class assumptions, Turner's contribution to the Palm House went generally unacknowledged for nearly a century and a half. But the Palm House itself, that supremely elegant union of engineering and architecture, tells its own story of a marvellously creative collaboration.

Dr Kate Teltscher is the author of 'Palace of Palms: Tropical Dreams and the Making of Kew' (Picador, £25.00)

THE TEMPERATE HOUSE

At Kew Gardens

By Aimee Felton

Kew had already established a reputation for its gardens by the late seventeenth century. In the 1720s Queen Caroline, the wife of George II established the 400 acre Richmond Lodge Estate between Richmond and Kew. The Prince of Wales and his wife Augusta meanwhile took up residence at The White House, close to Kew Green, where in 1759 Augusta founded a small 9 acre physic garden (later referred to as a botanic garden). It was Augusta who commissioned William Chambers to design several garden follies for the Pleasure Gardens, including the famous Pagoda.

Augusta's garden quickly expanded to 152 acres and included two greenhouses among its main features (1). When the princess died in 1772, her son George III, who inherited The White House, joined its garden to the garden of the Richmond Lodge Estate, and from this point on the combined gardens became known as Kew Gardens.

The gardens were to benefit greatly from the work of the renowned botanist, Joseph Banks. In 1770, Banks had been on board Captain James Cook's Endeavour when the ship landed at Botany Bay. During the voyage, Banks, his colleague Solander and their assistants collected some 30,000 plant specimens and named more than 1400 species. The voyage made Bank's reputation and on his return home, George III consulted him over the development of the Royal

Botanic Gardens at Kew. Banks dispatched botanists throughout the world collecting plants for the gardens, such that it was said in 1783 that the gardens contained "a matchless collection of plants" (2). As the gardens standing increased, so did Banks's who was elected President of the Royal Society, a post which he held for some 41 years.

Queen Victoria's reign brought major changes to Kew with an increasingly formal architectural programme driven as much by technological innovation and scientific research as by the desire to develop the gardens as a botanic representation of the Empire. By the turn of the twentieth century, 102 botanic gardens – some 38% of the world's total – were located on British colonial soil (3).

In 1841, William Hooker secured the post of Director of the Botanic Gardens. Building on the work of Banks, Hooker worked tirelessly to amass the best collection of plants in the world at Kew that would not only be a public spectacle and reflect the flora and fauna that could be found throughout the Empire, but which would also act as a source of specimens that could be sent to other like minded institutions to build up their collections. The most prized of plants were the palms, and as the collection increased, it soon became evident due to the size of the plants that a new glass house would be required to display them – a glass house that also reflected the position of Kew within the botanical world. In 1844, Decimus Burton was appointed the architect of the proposed Palm House, to work alongside Richard Turner, the Irish expert in glass buildings, with W.E.Nesfield as the landscape designer. By 1845, fourteen plant houses were in use on the site, and over 400 acres had been added to the gardens (4). In 1846 two new greenhouses were erected, and in 1848 the Palm House was finally completed. The same year also witnessed the replanting of the Arboretum and Burton's conversion of the old fruit store into the Garden's first museum (5).

Within ten years of Hooker's appointment, Kew had established a robust system of plant material collections between Britain's colonies and European botanical gardens. Glass houses became a striking feature of major botanical gardens in Europe and America, and were attractions in their own right as achievements of engineering, display, and environmental control and conservation.

With the growing success and collections at Kew, in the early

1850s Hooker began to lobby for a second major glasshouse that would become the Temperate House. The proposed Temperate House, it has been suggested, may have got inspiration for its design from the greenhouse at Wanstead, which was completed in 1713. An early model of this conservatory was published in Colen Campbell's Vitruvius Britannicus in 1715. It was illustrated in an engraving by John Kip and Leonard Knyff showing its landscaping context – the Wanstead greenhouse features classical allegorical statues and urns, as well as a central block appended by two smaller wings (6).

The large scale of the project advocated by Hooker was part of a programme of renewal and expansion for the gardens, making its temperate plant collections all the more accessible to the public. When Hooker became director, the gardens had approximately 9000 visitors annually. By the 1860s this had grown to half a million annually (7). In 1858 Hooker suggested that a parallelogram approximately 400 by 100 feet and with a height of 50 feet would provide sufficient space for Kew's temperate collections to flourish. In 1859 Lord John Manners of the Board of Works, the government department in charge of such projects, agreed and said that if he were in office, he would include

Hooker's longed-for glasshouse in the Civil Service Estimates (8). Anticipating the granting of funds, Manners commissioned Decimus Burton to design the new glasshouse. Burton, who had been an important presence and provided architectural oversight at Kew since the 1840s, was given a brief to design a space wherein utility and function outweighed all other factors.

On 18th July 1859 Parliament debated the estimates, of which £25,000 had been requested for the new project. Opposition came from an unlikely source – Joseph Paxton, designer of the Great Stove at Chatsworth, and more recently, of the Crystal Palace in 1851. Paxton claimed that this new venture could be achieved for a mere £10,000 (9). In the event, Parliament voted in favour of the project, though at a reduced amount.

With funding secured, Hooker chose to site the new glasshouse within the Arboretum, a pleasure ground populated by large trees (10). Hooker's own son, Joseph, who was to succeed his father as director, claimed that the Temperate House was too close to the Pagoda, and that its orientation – unhelpful for maximizing sunlight – was dictated by a desire to fell as few trees as possible (11). It's siting, located on a north-south axis is indeed not

ideal for admitting light: many of the adjustments and renovations made in subsequent years have been in the pursuit of admitting additional light to compensate for this orientation.

Hooker himself dictated many of the Temperate House's main features, many for reasons of economy, which were different to the construction of the Palm House: wood was to be used for the rafters with pine window sashes, instead of iron; brick was to be used instead of ornamental stone; there was to be no staircase or gallery; the roof was to be straight in form rather than the Palm House's curvilinear one (they had experienced difficulties with the curved sashes on the Palm House); and there was to be an earthen floor and minimal heating, instead of the Palm House's iron grates and extensive heating system. Hooker wrote, 'We should quite content with the most simple and unadorned structure, provided it is at once of a form agreeable to the eye and suited to the most perfect cultivation of the plants in question (12).' Burton generally followed Hooker's requirements, and subsequently appointed William Cubitt and Company, who had submitted the lowest bid, as general contractors (13).

The glass, tinted with copper oxide, which gave it a pea-green

appearance, was first used for the Palm House and in accordance with Kew's general practice was specified for the Temperate House. The glass was the result of extensive experiments carried out by the chemist Robert Hunt, which concluded that such a tint was best suited to provide maximum light penetration without the risk of scorching the plants.

The straight roof of the Temperate House included hand operated sashes. J.B.E. Simmons, writing in 1981 in his article, The Temperate House, noted that the straight roof slopes and choice of materials were motivated by a need for a well-ventilated structure, as well as for reasons of economy. He explained that 'The resultant straight roof slopes were fitted with heavy iron slides down which wooden sashes could be lowered to uncover the roof (14).' Previously, in 1861, The Builder had been especially enthusiastic about the sliding sashes, which were moved by 'a very ingenious apparatus ..... devised by the engineer of Messrs. Cubitt and Co. by means of which the three upper of the four tiers of lights covering the sides of the roof of the centre house will be passed one over the other and rest on the lowest tier (15).'

Simmons recorded that the ventilators were operated by a screw system at gallery level which allowed for each bay to be uncovered in approximately five minutes. He also suggested the use of green glass in the Temperate House must have been aesthetic because even in the 1840s it was realized that although developed to minimize the sun's scorching rays, without reducing the admission of light, it had no positive effect on plant life (16).

The Octagons, completed first, contained the heating system for the entire Temperate House. Simmons stated that 'the two 54 foot diameter octagons accommodated the house's heating system set in basements beneath' (which is probably why the whole building was raised on a plinth two metres high, and utilized sand and gravel that had been dredged in the course of making a new lake for the Gardens (now known as the Palm House Pond) (17). 'Each contained four boilers and four low chimneys, however, this arrangement caused such overheating and drying within the octagons, and blackening (by smoke deposits) of the glass above as to make the octagons uninhabitable for permanent collections (18).'

From the restoration of the building completed in 2018, we now know that the cornucopia urns on the Centre Block were used as

chimney extracts connected to the now long- lost boilers in the basement. Historic heating pipes were discovered under the concrete floor in the South Octagon and have been preserved. In May 1863 the Temperate House officially opened, though only the central range and two octagons had been completed. Sir William Hooker complained that without its north and south ranges the building constituted an 'eye-sore' adding that the large-scale display of colonial plants he had envisaged would not now be possible.

Work had been stopped at this point by the Treasury due to excessive spending, as the project – budgeted at £10,000 – had already cost £29,000 (19). Although the foundations for the north and south wings were partially laid, the work was indefinitely postponed and part of the ironwork, which had lain in the contractors' yard for many years, was eventually broken up (20).

By 1891 the Temperate House had remained unfinished for nearly thirty years. The then Director raised the possibility of its completion, but it was not until 1894 that Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was able to persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to sanction progress on the Temperate House (21).

The added wings show an important development in glasshouse construction. Their use of rolled steel and wrought iron provided ideal conditions for the collections. In the north range, however, there was a persistent problem with ventilation (22). The difference in construction techniques and materials that were employed at the various phases of the Temperate House's construction proved challenging to the team managing the 2018 restoration, requiring variations in technical approach, and separate and distinct solutions for each individual block.

The green-tinted glass and wooden sash ventilation system used in the central block were not carried forward into the north and south wings in the 1890s (23). This is thought to be a result of the 1879 severe hailstorm which allegedly shattered over 39,000 panes of glass, which led to the Director's recommendation that the practice of green-tinted glass be abandoned.

The South Wing, which is called the Mexican House, opened in July 1897. The contract for it's construction, dated September 1895, provides further information such as the instruction to paint all iron and wood with two coats of 'Gay's enamel paint' (the colour

is not specified). There was also an instruction to carry forward details such as the iron bosses in the octagons and central block into the wing construction for continuity (24). The bankruptcy of the contractor due to the increased expense of the project, resulted in some of the construction detailing, which was different to Burton's original design, being changed.

The North Wing, called the Himalayan House, opened in May 1899. The contract for the North Wing, which like the South Wing cost just over £7,000, was awarded to a different company (Mackenzie and Moncur) to the one that constructed the South Wing. In the North Wing, the side lights, skylight and sashes were to be constructed from teak, the tiles were to be provided by the Roman Tile Company, and Gay's enamel was once again to be used to paint all iron and wood components. All mouldings and decorative features were to be identical to the South Wing (25).

In February 1897 Building News featured plans for the South Wing and stated;

The South wing, which we illustrated, has just been completed, and is now being stocked with plants. The erection of the north wing will be commenced this year.

As regards its external features, the new building follows the general design of Mr. Decimus Burton's central structure; but the construction has been modernized as far as might be; there is a great gain in the lighting as compared with the main structure, and the solid arcade of brickwork has been omitted (26).

Nikolas Pevsner had limited praise for the Temperate House: 'After the Palm House it is an almost incredible anti-climax .... The naked beauty of the Palm House could no longer be tolerated and fussy stone piers and roofs had to be introduced to make the building look like architecture (27).' Nevertheless, the Temperate House was a major attraction in its own right as soon as it was opened.

Brian Johnson, a leading architect, rightly notes that in the nineteenth century rising urban populations led to increased importance being placed on the provision of green space for public leisure.

The glasshouses of the nineteenth century, however, served more than just a practical purpose. These towering architectural sculptures of iron and glass were sights to behold in and of themselves. The interest and delight in the exotic could now be celebrated through the architecture of the enclosure, impressive enough to dignify the magnificence of the plant collection. The glasshouses of the 1800s could also 'be seen as fulfilling a desire for paradise (28).'

Notes

1. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007 p.360.
2. W.Curtis, quoted in Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.362.
3. See Lucille Brockaway, Science and Colonial Expansion: The Role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens (London, 2002).
4. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.367.
5. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.368.
6. Skelton, Andrew, 'The Greenhouse at Wanstead,' Georgian Group Journal, Vol. 18, 2010, p.52.
7. Nigel Hepper, Kew, 1982, p.13.
8. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.188.
9. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.188.
10. UNESCO, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: World Heritage Site Nomination Document, 2003.
11. RBGKA
12. Quoted in Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.188.
13. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.188.
14. Simmons, John Barry Eves, The Temperate House (Kew Living Collections, 1981).
15. The Builder, 1861, p.24.
16. Simmons, The Temperate House, 1981.
17. Ray Desmond, Kew, 2007, p.188.
18. Simmons, The Temperate House, 1981.
19. RBGKA
20. Simmons, The Temperate House, 1981.

21. Ray Desmond, Kew, p.279.
22. Simmons, The Temperate House, 1981.
23. Simmons, The Temperate House, 1981.
24. Work 13/49 (TNA).
25. Work 13/61 (TNA).
26. 'The New Temperate House, Kew Gardens', Building News, 19 Feb 1897.
27. Quoted in UNESCO, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: World Heritage Site Nomination Document, 2003, p.677.
28. See Baker, K, Tempering the Elements: Botanic Gardens and the Search for Paradise (Geneva, 2006).

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SIR JOHN SOANE

Architect and Collector (1753-1837)

By Sue Palmer

At his death on 20 January 1837, the year in which Queen Victoria ascended the throne, Sir John Soane was regarded as the father of the architectural profession in Britain. Knighted by William IV six years earlier in 1831, he was Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy and had, until 1833 when forced to resign because of his deteriorating eyesight, held the prestigious post of Architect and Surveyor to the Bank of England since 1788.

Born in humble circumstances, the youngest child of a Berkshire bricklayer, he left school at the age of 14 and went to work in the family business. A year later, his talent having been recognised, he entered the London household of George Dance the Younger to train as an architect. He also studied part-time at the Royal Academy Schools, winning the Gold Medal with a drawing of 'A Triumphal Bridge' in 1776, and was appointed travelling student to Italy for three years in 1777.

The great importance that Soane accorded to his Grand Tour of 1778-1780 which enabled him to see at first-hand the great buildings of Antiquity and introduced him to a number of wealthy and influential people who became his patrons and clients, is reflected in his portrait, painted in 1804 by William Owen (Fig.1). He is holding a copy of Desgodetz's *Les Edifices Antiques de Rome* (1682), open at the plate showing one of his favourite buildings – the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli. In the background (left) can be seen Galiani's translation of Vitruvius (1758), given to him when he was in Rome by his first patron,

Fig 1 - Portrait of Soane
by William Owen, 1804.
Photo: Geremy Butler

the Bishop of Derry.

On his return from Italy in 1780, Soane set up his architectural practice in London, working hard and travelling all over the country to build it up. By 1784 he was able to take on his first pupil, and from then on he always had between four and six pupils articled to him, learning 'the business of architecture' and doing the growing day-to-day work of the office. Decimus Burton's brother James worked briefly for Soane as an assistant from July 1805 to January 1806, before forsaking architecture for Egyptology.

1784 was also the year that Soane married Eliza Smith, the niece and former ward of a wealthy London builder, George Wyatt, whom he had met through George Dance. That it was very much a love match is clear from diary entries and letters, but it also brought with it financial independence, when shortly afterwards, in 1790, Eliza's uncle died, leaving them most of his considerable fortune. From this date Soane was able to indulge a life-long passion for collecting – books, paintings, sculpture, antique fragments, gems and natural curiosities. His collection spans many countries, from Europe and further afield, but it is important to understand that it was all acquired in England and not by travelling the world. Following his Grand Tour, when he didn't have the means to purchase more than the odd book, Soane hardly ever travelled abroad again, only visiting Paris briefly in 1814 and 1819. (Fig.2)

The legacy also enabled Soane to purchase and rebuild No.12 Lincoln's Inn Fields, into which the couple moved in 1794, with their two young children, John and George. Here for the first time Soane had his architectural office on the premises, at the back of the house on land reclaimed from former stables and outbuildings and accessible via the mews running along behind the square, Whetstone Park.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, the home of lawyers and other professional men, and convenient for the Royal

Fig 2 - The sarcophagus of Seti 1st in the Sepulchral Chamber, drawn by Joseph Michael Gandy on 9 September 1825, the year after Soane acquired it for £2,000. Photo: Geremy Butler

Academy (then in Somerset House) and the City, was to remain Soane's home for the rest of his life. In 1808 he purchased the freehold of No.13 Lincoln's Inn Fields and extended along the back of the site from No.12, building an extension to his office, but, more importantly, a double-height domed space into which he put plaster casts – the very beginnings of his Museum. Not long afterwards he persuaded his tenant in No.13 to move into No.12 and was able to pull down No.13 and rebuild it entirely, moving in in 1813. There then began many years of adding to and arranging his ever-growing collection, making alterations to the architecture as necessary to accommodate it and enhance its display. His habit of setting his pupils the task of drawing the interiors has enabled us to trace this gradual evolution of the spaces and displays. (Fig. 3) The final extension to the Museum came when he purchased No.14 Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1823. Again, he entirely demolished and rebuilt the house, extending the Museum across the back part of the site to create a Picture Room in which to display his collection of pictures, which included works by Canaletto, William Hogarth and his fellow Royal Academician and good friend J M W Turner (Fig.4). The front part of the house was leased out to tenants.

The Museum became semi-public in Soane's lifetime, with friends and acquaintances able to apply to visit it at certain times. The first guidebook was published by John Britton in 1827 – *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting*, and Soane himself followed this with three editions of Description of the Residence of John Soane, Architect, published in 1830, 1832 and 1835, the last and most extensive of which included poetic

Fig 3 - Composite view of interiors at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, drawn by Joseph Michael Gandy in 1822. Photo: Geremy Butler

reflections on the various spaces by his friend, the authoress Barbara Hofland.

Soane's Museum was not in the traditional mould with the objects classified, labelled and in glass cases. His aim was to create an overall picturesque assemblage which would evoke particular sensations in the mind of the visitor. Objects are carefully placed within the framework of the architecture to create particular effects or to point up associations. Describing the Breakfast Room, Soane wrote of 'a succession of those fanciful effects which constitute the poetry of Architecture'. He played with light and space, lining walls and bookcase doors with mirrors and bathing rooms in Mediterranean sunlight by inserting coloured and antique stained glass in skylights and windows.

Perhaps mindful of his own humble beginnings and the help he had had to start on the path to becoming an architect, Soane was also very aware of the

Fig 4 - View of the Picture Room showing Canaletto's *Riva degli Schiavoni* and (to left and right) two of the four paintings of William Hogarth's *The Humours of an Election*. Photo: © Gareth Gardner

importance of an architectural education. This extended not just to his own articled pupils but to the students of architecture at the Royal Academy, where from 1806 he was Professor of Architecture. He took the obligation to give an annual series of lectures very seriously, devoting many hours of his pupils' time to producing over a thousand large-scale drawings to illustrate them – drawings which no doubt influenced the young Decimus Burton when he entered the Royal Academy Schools as a student in 1817. Soane felt that the architectural students at the Royal Academy had very poor facilities and was determined to make his Museum into an 'Academy of Architecture' from which they could benefit, making it known that they could visit it at certain times to draw and be inspired. He never forgot the important formative experience of his Grand Tour and was conscious that there were students who could not afford to make one or, indeed, were prevented from travelling on the Continent during the long years of the Napoleonic Wars. So he set out to make the Dome Area at the heart of the Museum, with its dense assemblage of architectural fragments and plaster casts, into a sort of virtual Grand Tour where students and others could experience things in three dimensions and not just from engravings in books (Fig.5).

At the end of his life Soane was anxious to ensure that his legacy lived on. Eliza had died in November 1815 and he was disappointed in his two sons, who had failed to live up to his ambitions of creating an architectural dynasty. John, who suffered from tuberculosis, predeceased him in 1823 and he had disinherited George, whose bad behaviour he judged to have been the cause of his beloved wife's death. So to ensure that his house and collection was preserved, in 1833 he obtained a private Act of Parliament, to come into effect on

Fig 5 - The Dome Area looking east towards the bust of Soane by Sir Francis Chantrey. Note the 'Mediterranean' sunlight filtering down from the skylights above. Photo: Derry Moore

his death, vesting it in Trustees, to be open to the Nation as a museum, with the important stipulation that it should be left as nearly as possible as it was at the time of his death. The first Curator of the Museum was to be George Bailey, who had started as a pupil in his office in 1806 and risen to be his Chief Clerk. Bailey was to be assisted in the running of the house by the Inspectress, Mrs Sarah (Sally) Conduitt, a friend of Soane's who had stepped in to assume the role of Housekeeper after Mrs Soane's death in 1815. This ensured a greatly beneficial continuity for the first twenty-three years of the Museum, as the two old friends died within weeks of each other in 1860.

Today, 183 years after his death, Soane's Museum is still preserved in the state in which he left it in 1837, and the Trustees continue to uphold Soane's vision, with free access to the public and a lively and imaginative programme of exhibitions, events and education. For more details visit www.soane.org

Sue Palmer is the Archivist and Head of Library Services at Sir John Soane's Museum, London.

Sir John Soane's Museum, London
Photo: © Gareth Gardner

ST LEONARDS NEW TOWN

The contribution of Decimus Burton to the development of St Leonards

By Christopher Maxwell-Stewart

This article summarises appraisals undertaken over the past 50 years. It records how the late Georgian New Town of St Leonards came to be financed and constructed by the speculative builder James Burton, and the contributions made by his sons, notably Decimus Burton, to make it a successful resort of the Victorian era. It notes how Decimus' contributions were both dependent on and exploited the industrial, scientific and fiscal advances which took place in Britain in the early Victorian era.

An objective appraisal of the works of Decimus Burton commences with an assessment of the contributions his father, James Burton, made to his education, early professional life and societal values. The following is a synopsis.

James, a descendant of the border Scottish Halliburtons, was born in London in 1761 (1). A Presbyterian by birth he converted to evangelical Anglicanism. His life was devoted to hard work, fair dealing and family loyalty leavened by a yen to take risks. He trained as a surveyor and made a fortune as a speculative builder of much of late

18th century and early 19th century London (2). His speculations prior to 1815 comprised some 1,800 houses (3) on leases not exceeding 65 years and whilst conforming with the London Building Acts, were not designed to be long-lasting. His principle building material was bricks, of which he made over 30 million (4) during his career.

In 1773 James married Elizabeth Westley who was a few months younger than him. She bore him twelve children – six boys and six girls. Two of these, Emma and Emily died of small pox aged respectively 4 and 9 months (5). Those deaths fuelled a quest in James to improve the design of housing and supporting public health works.

The couple's sons had interesting careers. William Ford (1784-1856) was a gunpowder manufacturer (6). James junior (1788-1862) although causing both his parents much trouble by his indisciplined behaviour, eventually became a minor Egyptologist (7). Septimus (1794-1842) was a successful solicitor who managed the formalities of the Burton family lands prior to 1840 (8). Henry (1799-1849) graduated from Cambridge in Natural Philosophy and became a professor of chemistry at St Thomas' Hospital (9). He espoused improvements in public health and played a significant role in James' corresponding public works of the St Leonards New Town. Decimus (1800-1881), likely educated at Tonbridge School near the family home of Mabledon, worked as an assistant to his father from aged 16 to 21. His training was enhanced by drawing lessons from George Maddox and lessons learnt from attending the Royal Academy School (10), where John Soane lectured in architecture. Decimus was the architect of many of his father's post 1816 buildings constructed on the Crown Estate in Regents Park and Regents Street (11, 12) under the watchful eye of John Nash, one of James' influential associates. In 182, he started his own practice which continued for the next 45 years (13). Alfred (1802-1877) trained as an architect and managed his father's New Town and its later supporting public works until it was merged with the Borough of Hastings in 1875 (14).

In 1804 James and Elizabeth moved their principle home to Mabledon, a castellated sandstone house on an extensive quarry in Southborough between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, continuing in a minor way quarrying its Wealden sandstone (15). His London building projects continued in tandem until 1823. In 1826 the

speculative urge combined with his mission for improved housing and public health facilities returned to him. It is likely that he was spurred by the news of Thomas Kemp's seaside "watering place" on chalk cliffs east of Brighton, commenced in 1824 (16, 17). James convinced himself that the Wealden sandstone cliff lands on the Eversfield Estate 2 miles west of Hastings and 25 miles south of Southborough had the potential to be not only a "watering place" but also a spa with chalybeate waters like those at Tunbridge Wells.

So James in 1828, aged 67, risked his fortune on building a New Town with housing for all classes each with at least one wc connected to a public sewer, a central Hotel, Assembly Room, Bathhouse, Library, church, market, laundering area, police station, licensed public house, roads, street lighting and fresh as well as seawater supplies. It was to have ample open spaces notably the valley of the old Women's Tap which he landscaped to make it a subscription garden (the area coloured yellow on Fig. 2). Decimus (18) and Alfred (19) are recorded as being very concerned that this would result in James suffering the same fate as Thomas Kemp who retired to France to escape his creditors. James did substantially complete his project, but had to abandon his aspirations for an adjacent marina because he had to allocate its intended funding to sea defences.

Another misjudgement was the suitability of the local Wealden sandstones as a building material. His main source of this material was the canyon he cut to create Quarry Hill, and recorded in the naïve watercolour by his niece, Rose Wood (Fig. 3). Some lenses within the local Wealden sandstone are of extremely hard ironstone; he assigned this to his sea walls. The great majority of it locally, however, is friable. Using William Ford's gunpowder to speed up quarrying added to the spoilage; the effective yield was less than 30%. James then acquired from the Eversfield Estate a parcel of land (coloured green on Fig. 1) to create a further quarry. To access this he cut a spur from Quarry Hill and then proceeded to reduce its lower part to a valley in his quest for viable building stone. On completion of quarrying he filled the crater in its centre with spoil and levelled it to create what became the Archery Ground of the Royal St Leonards Archers encircled by Archery Road (20). An 1840's party making its way to an archery event is depicted in Rose Wood's watercolour (Fig. 3).

James' potable water supplies

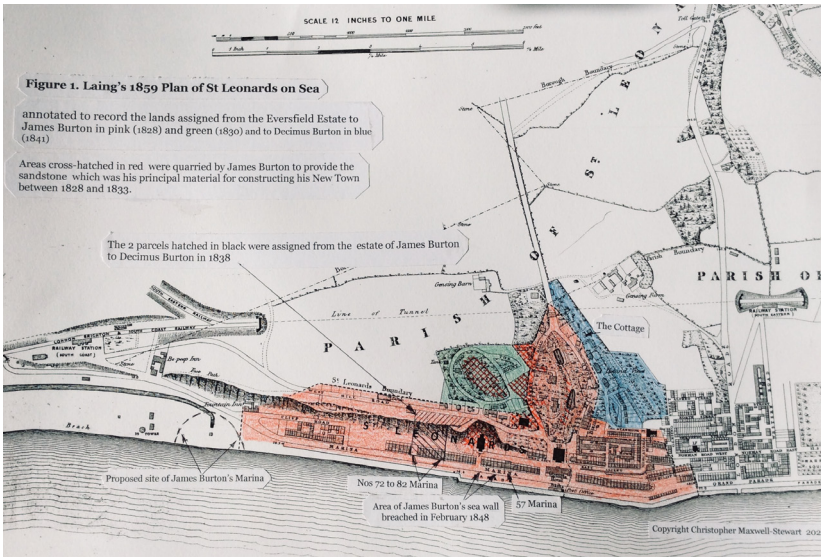


Fig 1. Laing's 1859 Plan of St Leonards on Sea

were obtained from the numerous springs fed by sandstone aquifers of the then undeveloped hinterland of his New Town. A series of hand pumps lifted water from them to local tanks. Others, like the Lavatoria laundering area were supplied by wells. Seawater was supplied by a horse and cart fitted with a wooden basin replenished by hand pump. This delivered seawater to the laundering area and for washing down the streets to flush away horse droppings and other detritus.

In 1832 James obtained the St Leonards Improvement Act. This passed the legal powers of its management to its Commissioners totalling a maximum of 75. It *inter alia* specified their powers to levy rates and limits to borrowing funds to ensure its proper management. Of his six sons, William Ford, Henry, Decimus and Alfred were Commissioners from 1833 to their deaths (21). Septimus independently provided legal advice. The five sons thus became jointly responsible to take the New Town forward. Of major significance is that consequent to this Act, St Leonards had achieved by 1835 the public health requirements of the first national Public Health Act of 1848 which came into force in 1850 and in

practice not fully implemented until the 1870s in other urbanised areas – notably the historic borough of Hastings.

The debate over Decimus Burton's involvement in the planning and design of St Leonards New Town continues to this day (22, 23). One of the legacies of the architect's life is that comparative little documentary evidence exists relating to his life and work, most notably his architectural drawings. With regards to St Leonards New Town, no credible evidence has been found to substantiate Decimus being involved prior to the Improvement Act of 1833, when Decimus became one of its Commissioners. In November 1834, Decimus arranged for the 15 year old Princess Victoria and her mother the Duchess of Kent to visit St Leonards. The royal party were at the time resident in Tunbridge Wells, where they attended the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone of the Victoria National School, for which they were patrons, and which was one of the buildings in Decimus' Calverley New Town development. Decimus took advantage of the timing to arrange the visit to his father's development at St Leonards. Prior

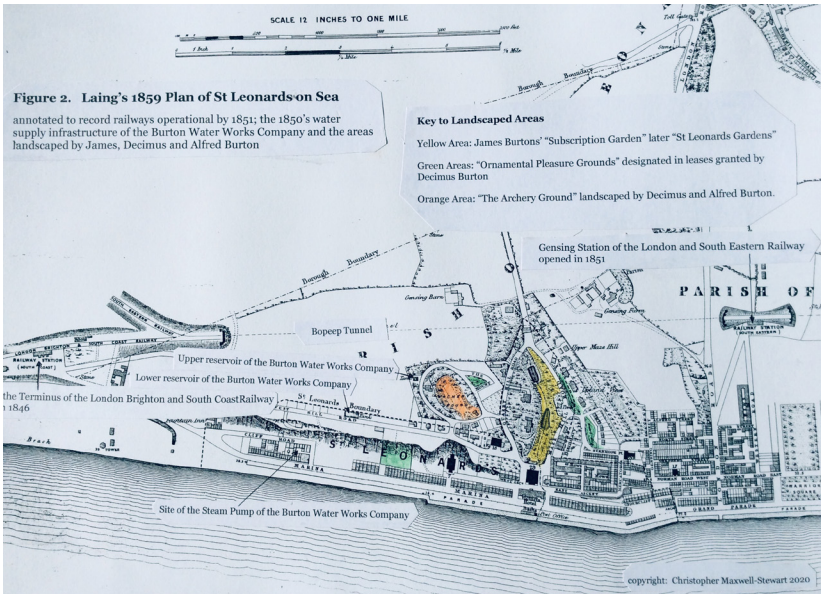


Fig 2. Laing's 1859 Plan of St Leonards on Sea

to the royal visit it is known that Decimus visited to the town to ensure that modifications were made to the villa, 57 Marina, and the adjoining 58 Marina to provide suitable accommodation for the royal party (24). The visit was a great success and did much to establish St Leonards as a desirable resort.

James and Elizabeth Burton died in 1837 and were buried in a pyramidal tomb in St Leonards. James left his estate in equal parts to his six sons (25). They quickly decided that much had to be done to ensure that it had a marketable value and to that end they delegated management powers to the youngest son, Alfred (26).

James had built his New Town with the manual power of close on 1,000 men and horse-drawn equipment. Transport of the materials he used was limited to horse and cart and his sloop sailing vessel. Its ongoing development under Decimus and Alfred was achieved with the use of steam power to transport persons and goods and to pump water (27). Other major industrial improvements became available consequent to the London Brighton and South Coast (LBSC) Railway terminus at Bulverhythe (28) close to where James had planned his marina (Fig. 2).

Decimus was aware of the potential of these innovations because of his association with scientist and engineer members of the Athenaeum Club, which had opened in 1830 and for which he was the architect and a founder member. His networking was much facilitated by having his practice office and home since 1828 at 6 Spring Gardens, only 5 minutes walk from the Club. Members of the Club sponsored his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society in March 1837, including Marc Brunel, civil engineer and father of Isambard Brunel, and Joseph Faraday, the industrial scientist (29). Other Royal Society Fellows who were to become important clients of Decimus were the botanist, William Hooker, who was later to work with Burton on the Palm House at Kew, and George Bellas Greenough, the first President of the Geological Society. The last was also a friend of James Burton and a financial supporter of his New Town by taking on leases on some of the earliest houses James completed, and becoming another of its Commissioners (30).

Having taken on the role of a Commissioner in 1833, Decimus' first financial investment in the St Leonards New Town project was when two parcels of his father's estate hatched on figure 1 were assigned to him in early 1838 (31).

He followed that by acquiring the freehold of land (coloured blue on Fig. 1) from the Eversfield Estate in 1841 (32). By these acquisitions Decimus became the principle stakeholder of the Burton Estate.

Alfred and Decimus recognised that further development of St Leonards could not be dependent on sourcing water from springs and shallow wells which would be vulnerable to pollution as the upper parts of the Burton Estate and the adjacent parts of the Eversfield Estate were developed. A legal determination of the 1832 Act ruled that it permitted the Commissioners to regulate potable water supply but not to provide it. In consequence the brothers decided to form the Burton Water Works Company by 1840 (33). Its infrastructure was a reservoir at the highest Burton Estate and a lower reservoir at the highest point of West Hill Road, the latter constructed with separate tanks to hold fresh and seawater (Fig. 2). The freshwater was supplied from a deep borehole in Ashdown Sandstone between Nos 110-114 Marina and Caves Road from which potable was pumped up 150 feet to the lower reservoir. A separate pump extracted seawater at high tides and pumped it up to that reservoir. Both pumps were driven by a 6 h.p. steam engine(34). Both fresh and seawater were supplied by gravity to selected new houses which had baths with 3 taps; to the Bathhouse on the Marina; to the Bathhouse in the basement of the Assembly Rooms and to Turkish Baths at the lowest point of West Hill Road. The streets and sewers were intermittently flushed by gravity with saltwater. Valves to control these operations were operated by an employee of the Company who lived in the adjacent *cottage orné*, Turncock Keepers House. The Engineer of these works has yet to be identified.

The next civil engineering challenges occurred in February 1848 when the sea broke through the sea wall opposite 57 Marina and 180 feet westwards (Fig. 1). The Commissioners appointed Major Vidler, a military engineer then Surveyor of the Pevensey Levels, to implement subsequent sea defence works (35). Thereafter these were ongoing because the technology of sea defences by a combination of groynes to create bathing beaches and walls to withstand storm waves was in its infancy.

The capital costs of the sea defences and water supply works were substantial and were raised by selling long term leases to selected builders for prime parts of the augmented Burton Estate (36). Decimus, however, had a windfall

in that excavations for the LBSC Railway and later the Bo-Peep Tunnel of the London and South East Railway (figure 2) encountered numerous lenses of ironstone (37). What was a serious impediment to tunnelling was an excellent material for building load-bearing walls, being extremely hard and impermeable. It was abundantly available at minimal cost but required cleaving and trimming to make blocks suitable for coursed construction. This was laborious but the scalpings thus produced provided material for "metalling roads".

Decimus started by having his local residence "The Cottage" (Fig. 1 for location) constructed using this stone as the prime component of its external walls. His drawings of this building have not been found so its original design is not known for certain, but figure 4 is likely to record its original principal elevation. The fact that Decimus used Portland Stone for its dressings predicates that it was built after the LHBC Railway reached St Leonards in 1846.

His next development was The Uplands, immediately South of his own garden. These three

Fig 3. Rose Wood's watercolour depicting an 1840 party making its way to the Archery Ground

Fig 4. “The Cottage”

semi-detached villas were also constructed with coursed ironstone as their prime building material bonded to Guestling bricks. Dressings were in Burton’s favoured hard “Roman Plaster”. The layout of this development including its private road and its “ornamental pleasure garden” were shown on the deeds of August 1849 under which Decimus granted a five hundred years lease to the builder John Harwood. Harwood died in 1854 and The Uplands was completed by another builder Henry Hughes. Variations in the way these villas were constructed raises questions as to which details Decimus was responsible and which were down to the builders.

The builders of the successive

long-leases granted by Decimus were:

The Lawn – John Harwood, but later Henry Hughes. Baston Lodge, built for John Ward Junior – Henry Hughes. Mount Lodge and Nos 1 to 7 Mount to the north of the Archery Ground – William Rodda. The Archery Villas and Aylesbury House on the south flank of the Archery Ground – Henry Hughes. Nos 19 to 35 West Hill Road – William Rodda. 1 to 4 Maze Hill Terrace – Henry Hughes. It remains to be established to what degree Decimus was personally responsible for their design and what was done by their builders or delagated to his nephew, Henry Marley Burton, who succeeded to his practice in 1868 (38). Historic England's listings for these buildings note them as "attributed to Decimus Burton", although none of the original drawings have yet to be found.

An exception to the lack of drawings, however, is the terrace 72 to 82 Marina, for which there survives a certified copy of the lease granted to their builders, Henry Hughes and William Hunter in March 1850 to construct the first of these 11 houses and their "ornamental pleasure garden", together with Decimus' drawing of the seaward elevation of the complete terrace (Fig. 5). The lease includes a requirement that their elaborate iron balustrades at ground and first floor levels be cast to his approved designs. It is a testament to Decimus' commitment to quality in the buildings for which he was responsible that these balustrades have survived in good condition, despite exposure for 160 years to salt-laden rain (39). The design and construction of this terrace was repeated at Nos 89 to 99 Marina. Both terraces, although degraded in places, remain externally substantially as designed. Neither is listed.

Four of the developments listed by Decimus had "ornamental pleasure gardens" (recorded in green on Fig. 2). Those in The Uplands and The Lawn remain and are being progressively restored. The one in The Mount is marred by a tennis court added in the 1930s. The terraced garden behind 72 to 82 Marina is wilded with sycamore trees.

By 1845 the ongoing development of the Estate benefitted from the repeal that year of the Glass Excise. This reduced the cost of sheet glass by at least 50% and thus the heavier "Broad" glass from which larger panes were made (40). Consequently, houses began to be built with larger windows and fewer glazing bars. The removal in

Fig 5. Decimus drawing of 72-82 Marina

1851 of the tax on every window in residential properties exceeding five, spurred the construction of houses with more windows (41). Decimus took advantage of both these factors in the design of houses constructed on the Burton Estate (Fig. 5).

Acknowledgements

This article has been composed of information from many sources over the 52 years since the founding of the Butons' St Leonards Society. The bedrock of the Society was the research and archives assembled by John Mainwaring Baines, Curator of Hastings Museum from the late 1930's to the early 1970's. His encouragement was the spur to the campaign to conserve what remained of James Burton's St Leonards Town which had suffered badly from bombing during WW2 and the then local consensus that it was ripe for comprehensive redevelopment.

A crucial impetus to my efforts was the encouragement of Sir John Summerson, the eminent historian of British architecture who became the first President of the Burtons' St Leonards Society.

Over the succeeding years many others have contributed to the knowledge about James and Elizabeth Burton and their 12 children. Of these the most significant was the late John Fearon descendent of their 12th child, Jesse, who married the solicitor Peter John Fearon who later became the Solicitor of the Burton Estate. In the late 20th century, John Fearon as then heir to the Burton Estate continued the practice of his ancestor and provided invaluable support principally by passing to me personally or to the Society, copy-counterparts of Deeds and Indentures of Decimus Burton's parts of his

father's Estate and his own extensions thereto.
An impetus was given to research into Decimus' contributions to the development of St Leonards by the research of the late Philip Miller recorded in his "Life and Works of Decimus Burton" published by the Building Centre in 1981 to mark the centenary of the architect's death. Philip Miller subsequently continued his research and some of the fruits of that were disclosed to me when I met him in 2009. The valuable documentations he assembled were bequeathed to the RIBA and are now archived at the V&A. The Society's member, Elizabeth Nathaniels, has accessed some of them and kindly shared with me the information relating to 72 to 82 Marina. That research by Elizabeth Nathaniels was a part in her efforts over the past 18 years to assemble updated records of the life and works of Decimus Burton. It began by reassessment of the archives assembled by Baines at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery (HMAG) where she was assisted by local study volunteers Andre Martin, Bill Montgomery and Steve Peak. Elizabeth has added significantly to knowledge of Decimus' life in relation to St Leonards by accessing the archives of George Bellas Greenough at University College London, the Crown Estate, the British Library and the Royal Society. I am much indebted to Elizabeth for her sharing this with me.

An earlier member of the Society who was a keen researcher of the local works of Decimus Burton was Barry Funnell another volunteer assisting HMAG local studies. His assessment of those works were published by the Society in 1982 as "Burton's St Leonards – the Contributions of Decimus Burton". This suffers from not recording the sources of his attributions. Whilst there are grounds for being sceptical about some of those, this publication remains valuable with regard to dates of Decimus' acquisition of lands adjacent to his father's Estate. It also provides evidence that Decimus designed two substantial local villas on land beyond the Burton Estate.

Other valuable information has been sourced from Hastings Public Library, notably the ten volumes of the largely hand-written Diary of Thomas Brandon Brett (1816-1906) the local journalist and publisher. The support of its successive Librarians, notably Brion Purdy, in providing access to Members of the Society to this invaluable document is gratefully acknowledged.

Another continuing valuable source of information is the East Sussex County Records Office formerly housed in the Barbican Lewes, and now in The Keep, Brighton. I am particularly grateful for Christopher Whittick for his assistance to access its records.

Members of the Society continue to assist my research notably Elizabeth Nathaniels, Anne Scott, Brion Purdey, Christine Francis, Steve Peak, Andre Martin, Bill Montgomery, Bruce Latimer and Hugh Bryant.

Notes

1. John Mainwaring Baines. "Burton's St Leonards". Hastings Museum 1956, Baines, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, was Curator of Hastings Museum (HMAG) from the late 1930's to the early 1970's. The documents Baines assembled about James Burton and his family were copious and remain the most important source of research of James Burton's life. The concise 68 pages of his 1956 publication was composed mainly from James Burton's personal notebook (now in HMAG) from the year of his marriage in 1783 to 1811 and the diary of the St

Leonards publisher Thomas Brandon Brett (1816-1906). It is supplemented by Baine's more extensive work "Historic Hastings" which is extensively referenced.

2. Ibid. pps 13/14
3. Ibid. This estimate of the number of bricks made by James Burton was computed by reference to the numbers of 1st to 4th rate houses he had built as recorded by Baines p17.
4. Ibid. Appendix A "Children of James and Elizabeth Burton".
5. Ibid. Appendix A. Emma Elizabeth (b 1786) and Emily (1792) respectively the 2nd and 5th children of James and Elizabeth. Both died within months of their birth of smallpox, the latter following inoculation. J.B's notebook recorded that to protect Emily from the infection they moved the family home out of built-up London thus "Took lodgings at Clapham on account of Emilys (sic) bad health".
6. Ibid. Appendix A. William Ford "Wanted to go to university but was persuaded by father to become a farmer." Later became a gun-powder manufacturer and assisted his father quarrying at his extensive estate, Quarryhill, later Mabledon, in Southborough, Kent. He had two sons, (recorded by James "unfortunately illegitimate"), William Warwick, who became a solicitor succeeding to the practice of his uncle Septimus and, Henry Marley, who became an architect and succeeded to the practice of his uncle, Decimus. These demonstrate the "keep it in the family mantra" of James and Elizabeth Burton and their children.
7. Cooke, Niel, Minerva, vol 7 No 3 May/June 1993. "Burton and KV5". This recounts a bizarre episode of James junior, the 2nd son of James and Elizabeth Burton, who had successively quit indentures to become an architect and solicitor. In desperation he was sent by his father to search for coal in Egypt. He did not find coal but discovered some significant Egyptian remains in the Valley of the Kings some of which were acquired by the British Museum. In 1825 his drawings and text were published as Excerpta Hieroglypthia. His unorthodox life whilst in Egypt included buying three slave girls in the Cairo slave market. He belatedly married one of them, a Cretan Greek. This shocked his parents and probably also his siblings. It speaks eloquently for their magnanimity, however, that the "black sheep of the family", was made a co-equal heir to his father's estate and that, following the death of James junior, his wife received part of the proceeds from the sale of James' senior's estate.
8. Harmond, Carolyn and Peter, Brentwood and Chiswick History Association Newsletter 2020 "Septimus Burton at Grove House". This recounts the 1842 sale of Septimus's possessions in his retirement home, Grove House on the Duke of Devonshire's Estate at Chiswick. The number and quality of those possessions confirms the success of Septimus's practice. The article records the untimely death of Septimus's two wives and his son. This resulted in William Warwick Burton succeeding to Septimus's practice and thus becoming the solicitor of many of the property transactions of Decimus and Alfred Burton.
9. Baines. "Burton's St Leonards". Appendix

1. "Noted for his advanced views on public health" and thus the commanding influence in the formulation of the corresponding provisions of the St Leonards Improvement Act 1832 and, as a Commissioner under this Act, rigorous implementation of those provisions. Ironically, Henry died aged 50 of cholera whilst caring at St Thomas Hospital for victims of the 1840 et seq cholera pandemic.

10. Whitbourn, Philip, "Decimus Burton Esquire, Architect and Gentleman, 1800-1881". Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society Monograph No 1 2003 pps 9 and 11. That Decimus attended Tonbridge School, which is within walking distance of Mabledon, is inferred from lack of other information about his education before he entered his father's office aged 15.

11. Summerson, John. "Georgian London", Pleaides Books 1945 pps 184-187.

12. Arnold, Dana Rebecca, PhD Thesis, Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, 1997 "The Architect of the Metropolis – the work of James and Decimus Burton in London and Dublin, circa 1800-1840.

13. Ibid.

14. RIBA Records. Elected Associate of the RIBA – 8th Jan 1835 – Alfred completed his training with a visit to Italy in 1827. Whilst there are records of his exhibition drawings there is no known example of a building designed by Alfred Burton. It is inferred that his role as an architect was in supervising the construction or modifications of buildings built by his father or designed by Decimus in St

Leonards.

15. Baines “Burtons’ St Leonards”. P18.
16. Antram, Nichola and Morrice, Richard, “Brighton and Hove”, Pevsner Architectural Guide pps 143 et seq.,
17. Hobhouse, Hermione. Thomas Cubitt – Master Builder. Management Books (2000) Ltd., 2nd edition. P365.
18. Greenough Archives at UCL. Postscript by Decimus Burton to a letter from James Burton to George Bellas Greenough 22nd February 1828. “My father is full of his new Speculation which we all regret, on his account....., because it must, notwithstanding his assertion that it shall not, be a cause of anxiety to him...& he forgets that his spirit (which thank God, is excellent) outruns his strength”..
19. Baines, “Burtons’ St Leonards” p19. Letter from Italy by Alfred to his father December 1827 “I am still uncertain as to the fate of the Hastings proposition – I can only hope that what is – is right”.
20. Ibid. Plate 4.
21. Ibid. Appendix B.
22. Summerson, John. “Architecture in Britain 1530-1830”. Penguin Books, 1953. P321 “The Pittville Estate is one of many such layouts associated with spas and seaside deriving their inspiration from Regent’s Park. Decimus Burton’s classical villas at Calverley Park, Tunbridge Wells and the same architect’s Gothic Villas at St Leonards, Sussex, are in the same category....” Sir John, when he became President of the Society revised this to: the St Leonards Gothic Villas and their picturesque setting by James Burton

inspired by Humphrey Repton.

23. Nathaniels, Elizabeth. The Georgian Group Journal, Volume XX2012, "James and Decimus Burton's Regency New Town, 1827-1837".
24. Baines. "Burton's. P38.
25. Will of James Burton – photocopy in the Society's archives of the original proved in London on 26th May 1837.
26. The agreement of the six sons of James to make Alfred their Agent in all transactions of the joint and equal interests bequeathed would have been formalised by Septimus, the one of their number who was most experienced in law. The original has yet to be formed. It's existence is deduced by the preamble which Alfred had inserted in all subsequent assignments, leases etc from his father's estate post the death of Septimus in 1842. An example of that in the preamble to the 75 year lease dated 5th April 1845 of the plot of the hitherto undeveloped corner of Caves and Sussex Roads. This recites the evidence that Alfred is rightly acting on behalf of his 5 brothers (their heirs and assigns) as well as himself.
27. Coleman, George, International Stationary Steam Engine Society No 20. 2004. Hastings and St Leonards Utilities 1832-2002.
28. Michell, Vic and Smith, Keith. Middleton Press 1986. South Coast Railways – Eastbourne to Hastings.
29. Royal Society London. Record of the 22nd March 1837 of the ten Fellows who supported the election of Decimus Burton.
30. Greenough archives at UCL. Half yearly balance sheet 1853 of rents due to George Greenough from his 20 properties on the eastern Marina and adjacent Undercliff.
31. The originals of these two 1838 assignments of prominent parts of James Burton's Estate which were undeveloped on his death, remain to be found but the transactions are cited in several leases subsequently granted by Decimus.
32. Funnell, Barry. The Burtons' St Leonards Society, 1982. The Contributions of Decimus Burton. Funnell recorded p9 that the right to develop this land was granted by the Eversfield Estate by a deed of 24th April 1841.
33. Coleman, George. Hastings and St Leonards Waterworks 1832-1870. FDC Copyright 1971.
34. Coleman, George, International Stationary Steam Engine Society No 20. 2004. Hastings and St Leonards Utilities 1832-2002.
35. Baines. "Burton's St Leonards". p34.
36. The raising of funds to fund the necessary infrastructure works was primarily by granting development rights to builders firstly to construct a single house and then when that had been completed to the approval of Decimus or Alfred, a right granted by an Indenture allowed the builder to let or re-lease that house for a term varying from 75 to 500 years. The initial lease cost the builder little but required him to complete the house within 12 months. The subsequent lease was subject to a stiff pre-payment. The builder usually then continued to construct the adjacent house by the same procedures. To ensure that these formalities resulted in marketable housing, Alfred, as Chair of the Commissioners, had to ensure that their supporting infrastructure of roads, sewers,

water and gas supplies were provided.

37. Hastings News May 1850.

38. The Indenture granted in January 1863 by Decimus Burton to William Rodda to construct what is now No 23 West Hill Road is an example of how there remains doubt as to who designed most of the houses in St Leonards claimed to be the works of Decimus Burton. The document required changes to the design of this house to have the approval of "the said Decimus Burton his and assigns or his of their architect or surveyor for the being". It is signed Dec., Burton in the presence of Henry M Burton, Architect. Was Henry Marley Burton "architect for the time being"? Or was the final design of the building left to William Rodda subject to guidance or approvals by Decimus or Henry Marley? As there are no signed drawings extant to resolve the questions, the design can only be recorded "attributed to Decimus Burton" until further evidence is found.

39. The cast iron balustrades to the 1st floor balconies of Nos 74 and 75 Marina were removed and reset in Summer 2020 whilst repairs to those balconies were undertaken supervised by the architect Ian Exley. They were found to be in excellent condition.

40. Barker, T.C. "The Glassmakers, Pilkington: 1826-1976 "Wiedenfield and Nicholson 1976. Table 6-p79.

41. Ibid. Table 5 p 77 – and p111 – removal of window tax 1st April 1851.

Christopher Maxwell-Stewart, The Burtons' St Leonards Society, South Lodge, St Leonards on Sea, 2020

THIS ENVIABLE LITTLE ENGLISH ELYSIUM

By Dr Chris Jones

In September 1841 the 'Morning Post' printed an advert for 'a very commodious, well-built, and substantial Family Residence … in the most admired and fashionably –tenanted part of the rising new town of Calverley, Tunbridge Wells'. The house was not, as one might expect, in Calverley Park, but at no. 8, Calverley Terrace, and the advertisement provides an opportunity to look at this lesser-known part of the estate.

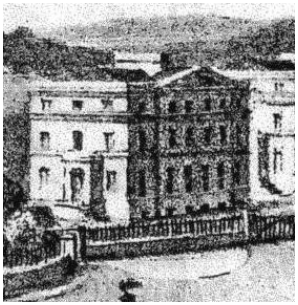
Calverley Terrace and the adjoining Calverley Parade were built slightly before Calverley Park, on a prominent site to the north west (Fig. 1). Those who know Tunbridge Wells will recognise this as the site of the current Town Hall, Library and Assembly Hall. Calverley Parade is to the left, Calverley Terrace to the right, with the single block known as Calverley Mount between them.

To those who only know Calverley Park, and its reputation as the 'proto-garden suburb' (H-R Hitchcock, 1954), these houses, in their formality and regimentation, may come as a surprise. It may also come as a surprise that these houses seem to have been more popular than the now highly-regarded houses in the Park.

Calverley Parade was built first, by local builders. It comprised

Fig. 1. Calverley Parade and Terrace. From an insert to John Clifford's 'Tunbridge Wells guide' of 1827-8. No. 8 is on the extreme right.

ten 'quasi' semi-detached houses – each pair connected to the next by a two-storey linking block. The external appearance was austere, and the internal layout very like that of a terraced house: one room front and back with stairs at the side. Calverley 'Terrace' comprised four pairs of larger semi-detached houses, with three ground-floor rooms around a central hall. The design was not quite as shown above. By the time of the 1829 building agreement the three-storeys with parapets and pediment had become two



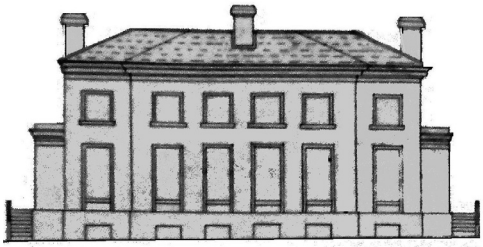


Image courtesy of Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone

Fig. 2. Evolution of the design of Calverley Terrace 1827 - 1829. Left: Clifford's Guide, see Fig. 1 above. Right: Building agreement between John Ward and Messrs. Bramah, April 1829. (KHLC U2737 08/A/02).
In practice there were also dormer windows, canopies and balconies; and the main doors faced the front rather than the side.

storeys with deep eaves (Fig. 2). When actually built they had also acquired attic rooms with dormer windows, and balconies and canopies to the ground floor.

One significant feature of Calverley is that the houses were built speculatively. In this it followed more of a central London business model, rather than that used, say, at Pittville, in Cheltenham. The developer, John Ward, had been a major investor in Regents Park: in York Terrace East and Clarence Terrace, both built by James Burton. After using local builders for Calverley Parade, Ward contracted with Messrs. Bramah, members of the family of the famous locksmith/ engineer, to develop the rest of the estate. Decimus Burton was the architect for all parts. It is important in a speculative development that the houses meet customer expectations. This seems to have been the case with Calverley Terrace – within three years seven out of the eight houses had been sold (the eighth was used for short-term lets).

By contrast half the twenty-four houses in the Park remained unoccupied five years after completion and Messrs. Bramah went bust, owing Ward some £45,000. Perhaps the designs there were too avant-garde, the asymmetry for example. An early 20th century article in the architectural press suggested that Burton had adapted the designs of Calverley to 'the tastes and proclivities of the newly-rich middle class … struggling desperately to follow aristocratic manners'. Such customers, unsure of their standing, may have looked for safer choices. Maybe the idea of a 'rustic' setting had unfortunate connotations when the actual countryside around Tunbridge Wells was a scene of arson and intimidation (in those days of 'Captain Swing').

One attraction of all the houses was the view. The advert talks of the 'singularly delightful' views from the drawing room and chambers of Calverley Terrace: of the park, the noble grove, the furze-clad beautiful common, the unrivalled Mount Ephraim, the far-off Sussex hills. And the position of no. 8 on a 'gentle acclivity' brought 'refreshing benefits of summer breezes' - at that time it was the fresh air rather than the chalybeate spring that was used to sell the health benefits of Tunbridge Wells.

So who did buy the Calverley Terrace houses? Not the rising commercial/professional middle-class of Tunbridge Wells itself: early residents of the Terrace were

exclusively incomers. They were a mixture of this newly-rich middle class and the old establishment. Lady Martha Dampier, widow of a judge of the Kings Bench, lived at no. 3. A little later it was the home of Ann Nichol, daughter of John Charrington of the Mile End brewery. Rev Keene, at no 7, had served in the East India Company as both soldier and administrator, but then trained as a priest and taught at Haileybury. He spent his retirement in Tunbridge Wells writing Persian verse. A later resident was Adelaide Wing, née Basevi , sister of George, the architect, and Nathaniel, the barrister, and a cousin of Benjamin Disraeli.

About two –thirds of the households were headed by women: widows and unmarried daughters. Perhaps they liked the convenience – Holy Trinity church, for example, was only a three minute walk. Perhaps they also sought a sense of community. Their wealth meant that they had no need for paid employment, but their gender excluded them from most forms of public service. They focused, rather, on social, cultural and charitable activities.

Fanny Wood was not impressed by some of these. She wrote about Lady Dampier's Evening Parties 'at which assemble about twenty ladies to three old Gentlemen (there are only five young men in Tunbridge Wells, three of whom are Physicians), to play at whist, yawn, drink a cup of coffee … and return home wearied to death with doing nothing'. But Fanny was only twenty-three, less than half the age of most of the residents. Perhaps Lady Catherine Stepney had better parties at no. 8. She is described as a socialite and 'silver-fork novelist' and was noted for the parties at her London house in Henrietta St, Marylebone. But

Fig. 3. Catherine (née Pollok), Lady Stepney, socialite and 'silver-fork novelist', who lived at no. 8 Calverley Terrace. Engraving by Samuel Freeman, after A.E. Chalon, 1837.
© National Portrait Gallery. NPG D47477 (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).(There is also a bust of her as Cleopatra in the V&A.)

maybe she used Calverley Terrace as an escape from all that.

Sir Henry Martin (3rd baronet) lived at no. 8 in the 1850s. He was from a naval family which had had estates in the Caribbean. Martin's father had campaigned in the 1820s against the abolition of slavery. Lest this be thought representative of all Calverley Terrace residents, we might note that Martin's contemporary at no. 6 was Richard Hancock, a Quaker from Wisbech. His father had supported the young Thomas Clarkson when he published his 1786 essay which argued so effectively that African lives mattered, and led eventually to abolition.

Martin later moved to Calverley Park. Perhaps he was looking for more privacy - there were moves to restrict public access to it at the time. The Terrace houses did have back gardens which, according to the advert, were 'completely shut out from the gaze of the public', but they were generally more open than the houses in the Park. There was a shared space at the front with lawns and shrubs, protected by gates. It was possibly from there that fifty young girls in white muslin strewed flowers to welcome Princess Victoria on her visit to Calverley in August 1834. (The gates were removed, and windows broken, on three nights in May 1842, possibly by Chartist sympathisers after their petition had been rejected by Parliament.)

Over the century, as the town grew, the area changed. What had been described in 1855 as the 'aristocratic part of town' became dominated by solicitors and doctors and their consulting rooms. The leases in the Terrace were a little stricter on non-residential use, but by the turn of the century there was a dental surgery at no. 4. And the garden at no. 8, once the 'enviable little English Elysium' was overshadowed by workshops and the chimney of the municipal baths.

In the 1930s the Terrace was acquired by the council and demolished in October 1937 to make way for the new civic centre. Nos 7 and 8 unexpectedly survived – the new fire station planned for that site never materialised - but they look rather forlorn in a 1962 aerial photograph surrounded by scenes of some dereliction. Today they abut a multi-storey car-park.

Chris Jones is curator of the Salomons Museum in Tunbridge Wells and has long researched the history of the town.

DECIMUS BURTON MUSEUM

By Paul Avis

Recently, several members of The Decimus Burton Society, along with members of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society were given the opportunity to visit numbers 9 & 10 Crescent Road in the centre of the town while they were unoccupied. The pair of semi-detached houses were originally numbers 7 & 8 Calverley Terrace, part of Burton's Calverley New Town development which he had laid out for John Ward in 1828, and which has since proved to be an important landmark in town planning.

The visit, arranged by the council led to the production of a paper by members of the society in consultation with RTWCS to promote the idea of developing the two buildings to be used as a Decimus Burton Museum and potential headquarters for The Decimus Burton Society

(the full paper can be seen on the society's website www.thedecimusburtonsociety.org). The timing of the paper coincides with a cross party group, set up by the council, to look into the future use of the existing council offices and associated buildings (including 9 & 10 Crescent Road).

In 2013, the council and English Heritage commissioned a report to assess the conservation value of the buildings in question. It is worth noting their comments with regard to the buildings we are focusing on (note: they refer to Calverley Terrace, when in fact they mean Crescent Rd):

- *"9 & 10 Calverley Terrace have considerable evidential and historic value, with a high associative and illustrative significance;*

- *the original plan form of 9 & 10 Calverley Terrace are still largely discernable, and they retain several original features;*

- *9 & 10 Calverley Terrace were designed by Decimus Burton, one of the country's greatest architects of the Victorian period, who worked extensively in Tunbridge Wells. Decimus Burton's national works include work at Regent's Park and Zoo, The Wellington Arch, The Athenaeum Club, Calverley New Town, The Palm House and Temperate House at Kew, as well as work at St Leonards, Fleetwood and Phoenix Park, Dublin;*

- *9 & 10 Calverley Terrace are of considerable aesthetic value;*

- *9 & 10 Calverley Terrace date from a key period in the history of Tunbridge Wells when the town expanded and Burton developed the Calverley Estate. This period and the buildings it produced form part of the identity of Tunbridge Wells and lend this building communal significance in the form of commemorative and symbolic value."*

The following drawings are just a few of those from our website which help to illustrate how the buildings could be developed.

The ground and first floors of the two buildings have retained much of their historical character, and could be reinstated as residential rooms of the period, displaying drawings, models and artifacts associated with Decimus Burton's life and times. The basement floors could be renovated to BE used as a museum shop, educational workshops, stores and offices, as well as providing an exhibition of a period kitchen and servants' quarters. The second floors could be renovated to provide office and admin spaces, lecture rooms, meeting rooms and stores. The

space in front of the building, meanwhile could be restored to its original use as gardens.

With the facilities that the new museum would have, it would be able to offer visitors a unique opportunity to visit buildings as they might have appeared in Burton's lifetime, through interiors that are part furnished through acquisition, donation, loans or adopting "facsimiles" where appropriate. It could become the base for a national archive of the life and work of Decimus Burton through physical, digital and audiovisual works, with links to existing collections at other museums and installations. The potential for the museum to develop links with Kew Gardens, the RIBA, the V&A, Hastings Museum and the like would help to enhance the experience that visitors and researchers would have with the potential to attract visitors to other establishments as well as to the museum itself. This opportunity of forging partnerships that are mutually beneficial should not be underestimated.

The museum could offer a series of talks and lectures by qualified experts on subjects connected to the life and times of the architect, as well as a series of guided tours of the museum and other local historical buildings. A range of educational programmes (eg workshops, talks, work books, and research support) for primary, secondary and higher education establishments could be provided, along with opportunities for individuals and organisations to hire out parts of the building for private functions. And a museum shop selling books and gifts could

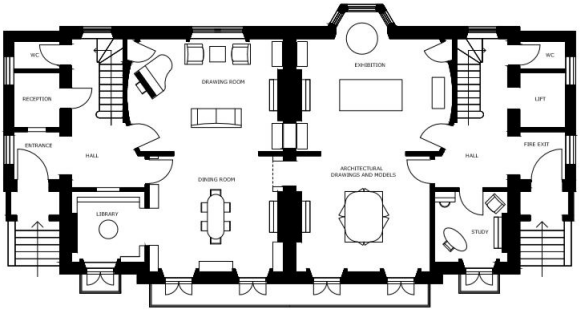
help promote the architect, and the town, as well as his work wider afield.

Tunbridge Wells' location is ideal for a museum dedicated to Decimus Burton, being located midway between London and St Leonards, the home of much of his other work. It was also the seat of his family home at Mabledon, and still retains over 75 examples of his buildings.

There are other well known examples of buildings that have become museums, providing visitors and researchers alike with a valuable educational resource. The Sir John Soane Museum in London, No 1 Royal Crescent, Bath, and The Regency House, Brighton are all different examples of what can be achieved.

Please visit the society's website for the full paper. In the meantime, we would welcome your thoughts and comments.

PRINCIPLE ELEVATION - AS PROPOSED



GROUND FLOOR - AS PROPOSED

Book Review

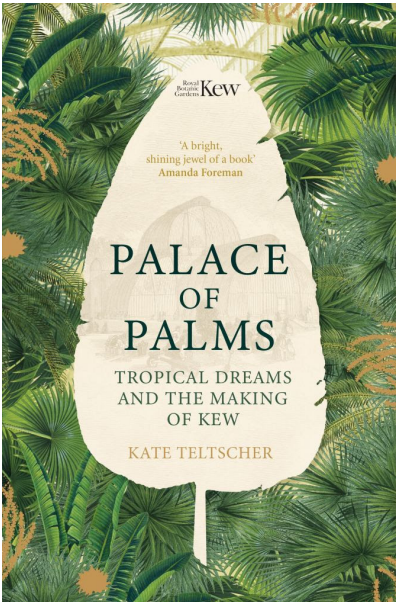
"Palace of Palms – Tropical dreams and the making of Kew"

By Kate Teltsher

One of the most enjoyable books I have read for some time. Kate's 'Palace of Palms' brings to life the gardens, the historical setting and the characters that combined to bring about the creation and development of one of the world's leading botanical institutions, and the role that the Palm House and the plants that it contained had to play .

The author has clearly spent painstaking hours researching her subject which comes across in the level of detail that flows from page to page. It is, however, the way that this information is presented which makes it an enjoyable read. Through her creative writing, you can almost imagine the individual players in their roles as they overcome the challenges of turning William Hooker's dream into a reality.

William and Joseph Hooker, the first directors at Kew, Richard Turner the iron founder and engineer, Decimus Burton the architect, William Nesfield landscape architect, John Smith the first curator at Kew and the chemist Robert Hunt are portrayed warts and all, in a way that makes the reader realise that this was a collaborative enterprise, and one where no individual alone can take credit for the whole.



Decimus Burton, accomplished architect, consummate professional and gentleman, is afforded the credit for overseeing the project and acting as the go-between for all the key parties involved. Arguably, had it not been for Burton standing by Turner, then the engineer's financial standing would have prevented him from being awarded the contract to build the Palm House, with the result that the country, and, one might add, the world may have lost forever the opportunity of enjoying what is truly one of the greatest architectural and engineering masterpieces of the Victorian era, and one that has been a major contributor to Kew Gardens being designated a World Heritage site.

Well illustrated with some beautiful colour and black and white images, I can heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of gardening, architecture and engineering, as well as to those just enjoy a good read.

Reviewed by Paul Avis

"Palace of Palms – Tropical dreams and the making of Kew"

By Kate Teltsher, Published by Picador, London, 2020 - ISBN 978-1-5290-0485-4

Future Events

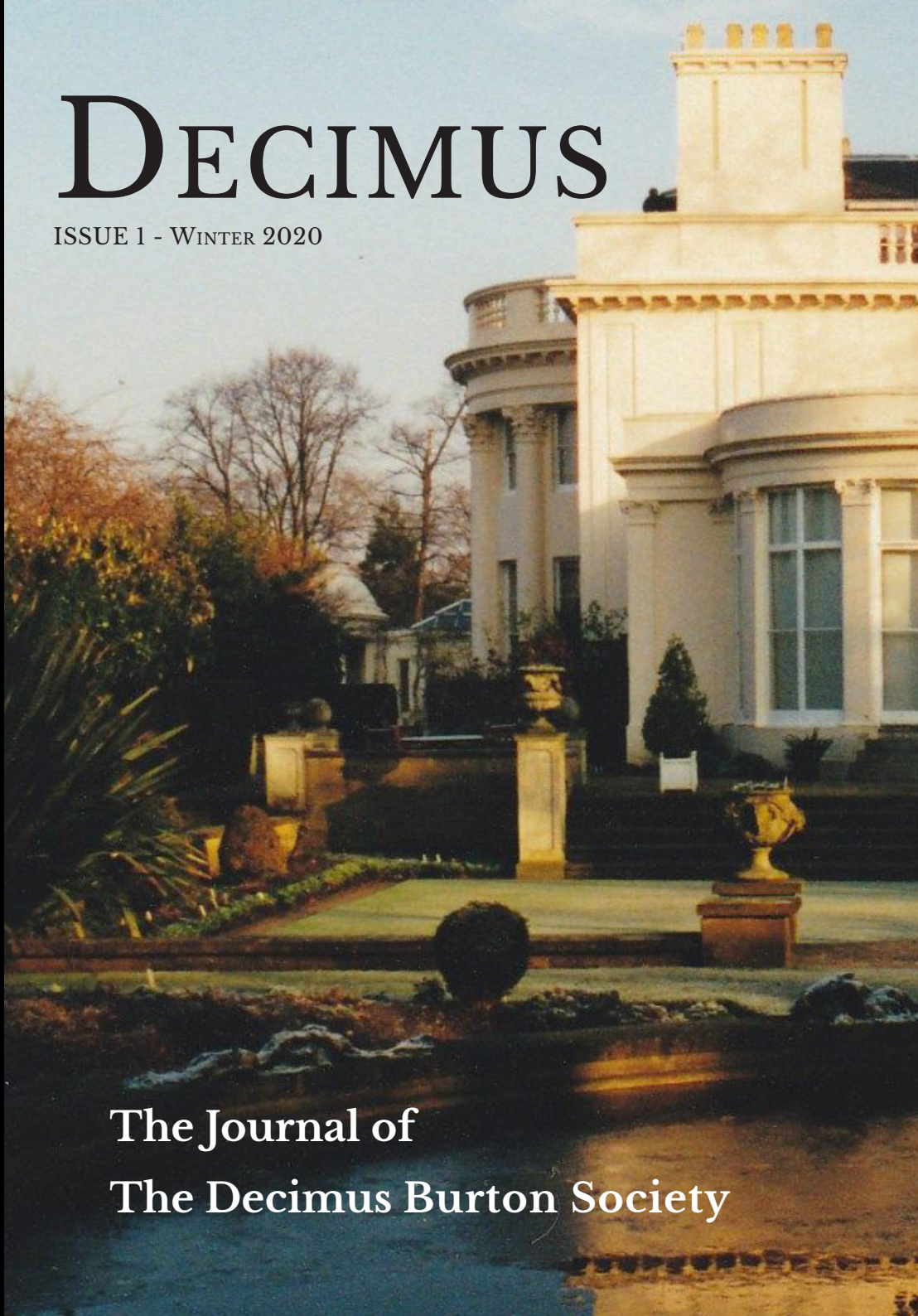
February 18th 2021 - An on-line talk by Dr Philip Whitbourn.

"The Detached Villa: some thoughts on examples of Decimus Burton's villa architecture, 1817-1837", examining a particular aspect of his work.

Further events are being planned, which are understandably dependent on government guidelines and restrictions. We will keep you updated via e-mail or our website. We are, however, committed to organising two events per year as well as publishing two issues of our journal. The next issue of DECIMUS is scheduled for Summer 2021.

Decimus

ISSUE 1 - Winter 2020



The Journal of
The Decimus Burton Society

Drawing by Indi Ellis, 2018

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Front Cover
The Holme, Regent's Park, designed by Decimus Burton 1818 - © Donald Insall Associates
Back Cover
Keston Lodge © Diana Blackwell

DECIMUS

The Decimus Burton Society was set up to encourage the study and appreciation of the life and work of this eminent architect.

To join The Decimus Burton Society
www.thedecimusburtonsociety.org

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Future Events

February 18th 2021 - An on-line talk by Dr Philip Whitbourn.

"The Detached Villa: some thoughts on examples of Decimus Burton's villa architecture, 1817-1837", examining a particular aspect of his work.

Further events are being planned, which are understandably dependent on government guidelines and restrictions. We will keep you updated via e-mail or our website. We are, however, committed to organising two events per year as well as publishing two issues of our journal. The next issue of DECIMUS is scheduled for Summer 2021.