

## **Usher, John 1822 - 1904**

John Usher was born in Blunham, Bedfordshire, England on 2 July 1822. He was the son of the Surveyor to the River Ivel Navigation. In the early 1840s he moved to Bedford where between c.1847 and 1850 he commenced practice as an architect and surveyor. His office was located in Mill Street, Bedford in 1866. He later had offices at 44 High Street, Bedford and at 9 St. Paul's Square, Bedford.

He was in partnership with his nephew, Alfred Ernest Anthony (c.1853-1920) as Usher & Anthony from January 1880.

Virtually all the commissions undertaken by the practice were in the Bedford area. This included a mansion and lodges at Clapham Park, Bedford for Mr. James Howard (1873); Mill Street Baptist Chapel and restoration of the Howard Chapel in Bedford; Baptist Chapel in Rothsay Road, Bedford; the Bedford Liberal Club; the Woodlands in Clapham, Bedford; and Great Barford House in Bedford.

Usher & Anthony were the first surveyors to the Trustees of the St. John's Hospital in Bedford and were responsible for laying out Waldeck Avenue and De Parys Avenue in Bedford; and Bedford Cemetery

By the mid-1880s Usher had significantly reduced his involvement in the practice, and from then on, Anthony effectively ran the office.

Usher died at his residence, Hiawatha, 6 Goldington Road, Bedford on 5 November 1904. Anthony died in Bedford, Bedfordshire on 18 March 1920.

It would seem that the name Usher & Anthony was maintained after the death of the two founding partners as a photograph, floor plan and brief description of a house at Biddenham, Bedford, executed to a design by Michael Dawn, by Usher & Anthony is featured in 'Decorative Art' 1931 (p.10).

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Directory of British Architects 1834-1914. Compiled by Antonia Brodie, et al. Volume 2: L-Z. London; New York: British Architectural Library, Royal Institute of British Architects/Continuum, 2001

Links

- Article on John Usher by Linda S Ayres. Forest Hill Road Cemetery  
<https://www.fosterhillroadcemetery.co.uk/john-usher-architect-surveyor-1822-1904/>
- The National Archives - Miscellaneous Records of Usher & Anthony of Bedford, architects <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/f86e08bb-306a-4112-80a5-6b313d5dea48>
- Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service - 77 and 81 High Street Blunham  
<https://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/CommunityHistories/Blunham/77And81HighStreetBlunham>