

## Owen, William 1846 - 1910



William Owen was born in Latchford, Warrington, Cheshire, England on 27 August 1846 and was a pupil of John Lowe (1828-1920) in Manchester from 1862 to 1867. He then worked as an assistant to James Redford (1836?-1911) from 1867 to 1869 when he commenced independent practice in Warrington.

The scope of the practice was wide-ranging and included churches, private houses and industrial and commercial premises, mainly in the Warrington area.

In the 1880s Owen developed a friendship with the industrialist William Lever after undertaking work at his factory in Warrington. He accompanied Lever in a search to find a site for a proposed new factory for the manufacture of his company's Sunlight branded soaps. The site chosen was on 56 acres (23 ha) of land on the Wirral in Cheshire between the River Mersey and the railway line at Bebington. Here was created what came to be known as Port Sunlight where he built his works and a model village to house its employees. Owen subsequently designed the first twenty-eight houses at Port Sunlight in 1889-90. He also designed some the later houses in the village.

Other architectural work by Owen included Holy Trinity Church in Warrington (1871); Winwick Sunday and Infants' School in Warrington (1871); the Baptist Church in Altrincham, Cheshire (1878-79); St Barnabas' Church at Bank Quay in Warrington (1879); Garnett House at Penketh, near Warrington (1880); Birchdale in Stockton Heath near Warrington (1880); School of Art, in Warrington (1883); an extension to Church of All Saints in Thelwall, Warrington (1890); 5-11 The Folds, in Thornton Hough, Lancashire (1892); Parr's Bank in Southport, Lancashire (1892); Parr Hall concert hall in Warrington, Cheshire (1895); and the Albion

public house in Warrington (1896)

Owen worked alone until 1896 when he formed a partnership with his son, [Segar Owen](#) (1874-1929) as [W. & S. Owen](#) [also known as William & Segar Owen]. The practice had offices in Warrington and Manchester. They were architects for the Greenall Whitley Brewery Company for whom they designed several public houses including The Royal Oak in Warrington (c.1900); The Wheatsheaf (c.1900); and the Mulberry Tree in Stockton Heath, Cheshire (1907).

W. & S. Owen also designed St Clement's Chapel in Warrington (1897); the Workhouse Infirmary in Warrington (1899); and the Technical Institute in Warrington (1900-02) Fire Station (1902); the Gymnasium (1902; Dutton Workhouse in Preston Brook, Cheshire (1904); the Boys' Parochial School in Warrington (1909); a house in High Cliffe, Appleton, Warrington (1911); All Saints Church in Newton-le-Willows, Lancashire (1913-14); Lady Lever Art Gallery (1914-22); the Y Felinheli War Memorial in Gwynedd, Wales (1926); News Theatre in Chester, Cheshire (1935-36); cinemas in Widnes and Runcorn, Cheshire (1937); The Regal Cinema in Northwich, Cheshire (1938); and Warrington Borough Hospital (1940).

William Owen was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1872, and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1889. He died in Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire on 5 April 1910

Following the death of William Owen in 1910, Segar Owen retained the name of the firm. The practice continued after his death until at least 1940.

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. The Arts and Crafts movement in the North East of England: a handbook. Wetherby, England: Oblong Creative Ltd., 2013

Armstrong, Barrie and Armstrong, Wendy. The Arts and Crafts movement in the North West of England: a handbook. Wetherby, England: Oblong Creative Ltd., 2006

Davison, T. Raffles. Port Sunlight: A Record of its Artistic & Pictorial Aspect. London: Batsford, 1916.

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

'Obituary'. Building News vol. 97, 13 August 1909 p. 255

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 97, 14 August 1909 p. 192

'Obituary'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 16, 1908-09 p. 704

'Obituary'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 16, 1909-10 p. 492

## Links

- Architects of Greater Manchester 1800-1940

<https://manchestervictorianarchitects.org.uk/architects/william-owen-of%20warrington>

- The Victorian Web - William and Segar Owen

<https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/owen/index.html>

- The Victorian Web - Port Sunlight: Housing

<https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/portsunlight/2.html>

- Historic England - contains 37 records of architectural work by William Owen

<https://historicengland.org.uk/sitesearch?searchType=site&search=%22William%20Owen%22>

- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Owen\\_%28architect%29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Owen_%28architect%29)

- archiseek - William Owen <https://www.archiseek.com/tag/william-owen/>

- archiseek - 1904. nine workmen's cottages, Port Sunlight, Cheshire. William & Segar Owen <https://www.archiseek.com/2009/1904-nine-workmens-cottages-port-sunlight-cheshire/>

- The National Archives

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F175710>

- British Listed Buildings - Technical School, Warrington

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101329722-technical-school-bewsey-and-whitecross-ward>

- British Listed Buildings - Parr Hall, Warrington

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101310063-parr-hall-bewsey-and-whitecross-ward>