

Waterhouse, Alfred 1830 - 1905



Alfred Waterhouse was born into a strictly Quaker family in Aigburth, Liverpool, Lancashire, England on 19 July 1830 and was articled to the architectural partnership of P. B. Alley and Richard Lane (1795-1880) in Manchester in 1848. Having completed his apprenticeship in 1853 he spent ten-months touring France and Germany. On his return he set up his own architectural office in Manchester. From the outset the practice proved to be successful and before long he had a successful client base within the local business community, consisting mainly of warehouses, schools, chapels, offices and banks.

He came to national prominence when in 1859 he won a competition to design the Manchester Assize Court. Other notable commissions from the early years of his practice included Hinderton Hall (1856-57), a large country house in Cheshire for Christopher Bushell, a Liverpool merchant; Strangeways prison in Manchester (1861-69); and St John the Divine (1863), an Anglican church in Sale, Cheshire.

In 1865 Waterhouse relocated his office to London. His practice continued to thrive and soon after his move to the city he won three major commissions that were to further cement his reputation as one of the leading architects in late Victorian Britain - the Natural History Museum in London (1866 and 1870-80); and the new Town Hall in Manchester (1868); the rebuilding of Eaton Hall (1870-83) in Cheshire. The design of the museum was significant in its extensive use of terracotta for the exterior and interior facing of the building.

Other notable buildings by Waterhouse and his practice included Darlington Town Hall (1861-63); Blackmoor House (1865-73) for Sir Roundel Palmer (1st Earl of Selborne) in Selbourne, Hampshire; the Seamen's Orphans' Institution in Liverpool

(1870–75); Reading (1871–76) in Reading, Berkshire; Hove Town Hall (1880–83) in Hove, Sussex; Lyndhurst Road Chapel (1883), in Hampstead, London; St Elizabeth church (1883–85) in Reddish, Lancashire; the National Liberal Club in London (1884–87); Liverpool Royal Infirmary (1886–92); University College Hospital in London (1894–1903; and the Jenner Institute of Preservative Medicine (1896) in London. He also designed several new buildings for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. From 1877 he was employed by the Prudential Assurance Company to build the series of offices for the company. Built mainly in red brick and terracotta, they are Waterhouse's "most characteristic contribution to commercial architecture" [Cunningham. Grove Art Online]

Waterhouse worked alone until 1891 when he took his son, [Paul Waterhouse](#) (1861–1924) into partnership as A Waterhouse & Son. When, in 1901 Alfred Waterhouse had a severe stroke and was forced to retire, Paul Waterhouse took over the running of the practice.

Alfred Waterhouse was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1861 and was President of the Royal Institute of British Architects (PRIBA) from 1888 to 1891. In 1878 he was awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal. Such was his international reputation that he was elected a member of the academies in Vienna in 1869, Brussels in 1886, Antwerp in 1887, Milan in 1888, and Berlin in 1889. He was also made a corresponding member of the Institut de France in 1883.

He exhibited his designs at the Royal Academy from 1857 to 1901 and was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy (ARA) in 1878 and a Royal Academician (RA) in 1895.

In 1901 Alfred Waterhouse suffered a severe stroke and subsequently retired, leaving his son to run the practice. He died in Yattendon, Berkshire, on 22 August 1905

Worked in
UK
Works

Alfred Waterhouse 1830–1905. Biography of a Practice by Colin Cunningham and Prudence Waterhouse [*see Bibliography*] contains a complete list of Alfred Waterhouse's contracts.

See also:

[British Listed Buildings site](#) - contains over 300 records of buildings designed by Alfred Waterhouse

[Historic England](#) - contains over 300 records of architectural work by Alfred Waterhouse

[Wikipedia - List of public and civic buildings by Alfred Waterhouse](#)

[Wikipedia - List of domestic works by Alfred Waterhouse](#)

[Wikipedia - List of commercial buildings by Alfred Waterhouse](#)

[Wikipedia - List of educational buildings by Alfred Waterhouse](#)

[Wikipedia - List of ecclesiastical works by Alfred Waterhouse](#)

Source of Images

[RIBApix](#)

[Country Life Picture Library](#)

Bibliography

Adams, D. The Architecture of Alfred Waterhouse in Cambridge. B.A. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1962

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

Axon, William E. A. An Architectural and General Description of the Town Hall, Manchester. Manchester and London: Abel Heywood & Son, 1877

Bullen, J. B. 'Alfred Waterhouse's Romanesque "Temple of Nature": The Natural History Museum, London'. Architectural History vol. 49, 2006, pp. 257-285

Cooper, Thomas. 'Alfred Waterhouse, RA, LLD'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 12, 30 September 1905 pp. 605, 609-618

Crooks, Stanley. Alfred Waterhouse in Twyford: The New Church of St. Mary the Virgin 1878. Easton, Winchester, Hampshire: George Mann Publications, 2003. ISBN-10: 0954163443. ISBN-13: 978-0954163440

Cunningham, Colin and Waterhouse, Prudence. Alfred Waterhouse 1830-1905. Biography of a Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. ISBN 10: 0198175116 ISBN 13: 9780198175117 [Contains a complete list of Alfred Waterhouse's contracts]

Cunningham, Colin 'Practicality versus Preservation: Alfred Waterhouse and the Cambridge Colleges'. Architectural History vol. 37, 1994 pp. 130-152

Cunningham, Colin. The Terracotta Designs of Alfred Waterhouse. London : The Natural History Museum in association with Wiley-Academy, 2001.

Cunningham, Colin. 'The Waterhouse Collection of the RIBA and the working of a nineteenth-century office'. Architectural History vol. 49, 2006 pp. 287-316

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

Fawcett, Jane. Seven Victorian architects : William Burn, Philip and Philip Charles Hardwick, Sydney Smirke, J.L. Pearson, G.F. Bodley, Alfred Waterhouse, Edwin Lutyens. London : Thames and Hudson, 1976.

Girouard, Mark. Alfred Waterhouse and the Natural History Museum. London: British Museum (Natural History), 1981. ISBN 0-565-00831-5

Girouard, Mark. The Victorian Country House. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, revised and enlarged edition, 1979.

Jarvis, P. A. Alfred Waterhouse in Darlington. B.Arch. thesis, University of Newcastle, 1983

Jenkins, Frank. 'The making of a municipal palace: Manchester Town Hall'. Country Life vol. 141, 16 February 1967 pp. 336-339

Maltby, Sally; MacDonald, Sally; and Cunningham, Colin. Alfred Waterhouse 1830-1905. London: Heinz Gallery, 1983

'Obituary'. American Architect & Building News vol. 88, 1905 p. 65

'Obituary'. Architect & Building News vol. 88, 1905 pp. 65, 126-127

'Obituary'. Brickbuilder vol. 124, September 1905 p. 189

'Obituary'. British Architect vol. 64, 25 May 1905 p. 8

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 89, 26 August 1905 pp. 231, 237-238

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 89, 2 September 1905 pp. 253-254

'Obituary'. Construction News vol. 20, 28 October 1905 p. 1

'Obituary'. Royal Institute of British Architects Journal vol. 13, 11 November 1905 pp. 11-12

'Obituary'. Westworn Architect vol. 4, September 1905 p. 1

Service, Alastair. The Architects of London and their buildings from 1066 to the present. London: The Architectural Press, 1979

Smith, Stuart Allen. Alfred Waterhouse. Ph.D. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art (University of London), 1970

Smith, Stuart Allen. 'Alfred Waterhouse: civic grandeur' on Seven Victorian Architects, edited by Jane Fawcett. London : Thames and Hudson, 1976 pp. 102-121, 146, 156-157

Wallace, Seiden Anne. Furniture designs by Alfred Waterhouse. A. M. thesis, Brown University, 1879

Links

- Colin Cunningham, 'Waterhouse, Alfred (1830–1905)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2010 [Subscription service] <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36758>

- Colin Cunningham. Alfred Waterhouse. Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online [Subscription service]

<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T090810?q=waterhouse%20a>

- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Waterhouse

- Historic England - over 300 records on architectural work by Alfred Waterhouse

<https://historicengland.org.uk/sitesearch?searchType=site&search=Alfred%20Waterhouse>

- Google / British Listed Buildings site - over 300 records of buildings designed by Alfred Waterhouse

<https://www.google.com/search?q=Alfred%20Waterhouse%20site%3Abritishlistedbuildingsb-e&filter=0&biw=1028&bih=1196>

- Wikipedia - List of public and civic buildings by Alfred Waterhouse

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_public_and_civic_buildings_by_Alfred_Waterhouse

- Wikipedia - List of domestic works by Alfred Waterhouse
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_domestic_works_by_Alfred_Waterhouse
- Wikipedia - List of commercial buildings by Alfred Waterhouse
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_commercial_buildings_by_Alfred_Waterhouse
- Wikipedia - List of educational buildings by Alfred Waterhouse
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_educational_buildings_by_Alfred_Waterhouse
- Wikipedia - List of ecclesiastical works by Alfred Waterhouse
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ecclesiastical_works_by_Alfred_Waterhouse
- Archiseek <https://www.archiseek.com/tag/alfred-waterhouse/>
- Victorian Web - Alfred Waterhouse (1830-1905)
<https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/waterhouse/>
- University of Reading. The Museum of English Rural Life
<https://merl.reading.ac.uk/news-and-views/2013/11/alfred-waterhouse-and-merl/>
- Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660-1980
http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200376
- National Art Library <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/alfred-waterhouse-18301905-ra-priba-216423>
- Architects of Greater Manchester 1800-1940
<https://manchestervictorianarchitects.org.uk/index.php/architects/alfred-waterhouse>
- ART UK <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/alfred-waterhouse-18301905-ra-priba-216423>
- Royal Academy <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/name/alfred-waterhouse-ra>
- Website of Bob Speel <http://www.speel.me.uk/arch/waterhouse.htm>
- Manchester History net
<https://manchesterhistory.net/manchester/architects/waterhouse.html>
- Great Buildings Online. Museum of Natural History
http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/museum_of_natural_history.html
- Jisc Archives Hub. The Waterhouse Collection. University of Reading Special Collections Services <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/5dcf58fa-efc1-33fb-b48d-c9e310afdc4>
- WorldCat
<https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=ti%3AAlfred%20Waterhouse&fq=&dblist=638&start=2>
- Mapping the Practice and Profession of Architecture in Britain & Ireland 1851-1951
https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/mapping/public/view/person.php?id=msib4_1205849947&search
- Wikimedia Commons
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Alfred_Waterhouse
- Country Life Picture Library
<https://www.futurecontenthub.com/search/keyword:Alfred%20Waterhouse>

- RIBA

<https://www.ribapix.com/search?adv=false&cid=0&mid=0&vid=0&q=%22Alfred%20Waterhouse%22>