

I am astonished at the amount of research which you've put into this book, and written with such a lightness of touch.

Peter Elson. Blue Coat School Development Officer.

Thank you so much for another wonderful production on a par with your book on architect Ellis. The illustrations are superb.

Roger Hull. Liverpool Record Office.

The core of the city centre will continue to change and this will be a valuable resource to help understanding place and character as we work towards planning and policy advice.

David Massey. Merseyside Civic Society.

The book is a fantastic achievement and clearly a labour of love. I think you have done a wonderful service by publishing such visual riches.

Joseph Sharples. Architectural Historian.

What a magnificent piece of history – you have done a great service to Liverpool. So many fascinating facts and images.

Colin Wilkinson. Bluecoat Press.

When walking around the Pier Head area of Liverpool's (now former) UNESCO World Heritage Site, many visitors – and perhaps even a few Liverpolitans – will be unaware that for much of the time they are walking above what once was the shore of the River Mersey. Through a series of historical journeys along part of that original waterfront the book describes some of the people, streets and buildings during the centuries of Liverpool's growth following King John's creation of his 'free borough on the sea' over 800 years ago.

Using archive material, particularly from the libraries of the Athenaeum and Liverpool Record Office, each chapter has been woven together using town plans and maps, architect's drawings, street directories, paintings, photographs, postcards and artefacts together with valuable accounts of the area recorded by historians through the centuries. The 34 chapters are not arranged chronologically and can be read in any order. Each is a story in its own right – each location tracked through time – with frequent cross-referencing to other chapters where narratives overlap together with a comprehensive index.

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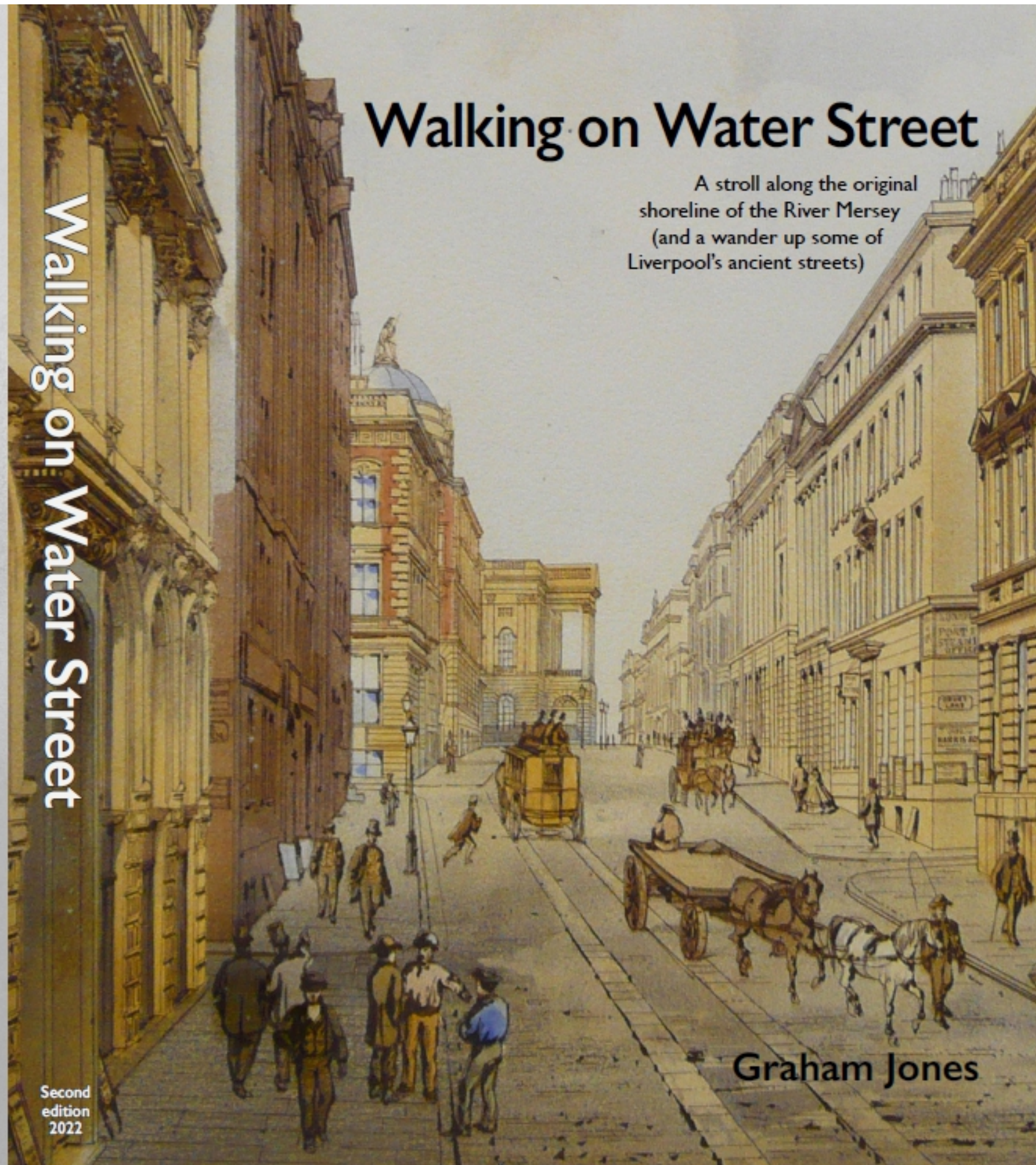
Walking on Water Street

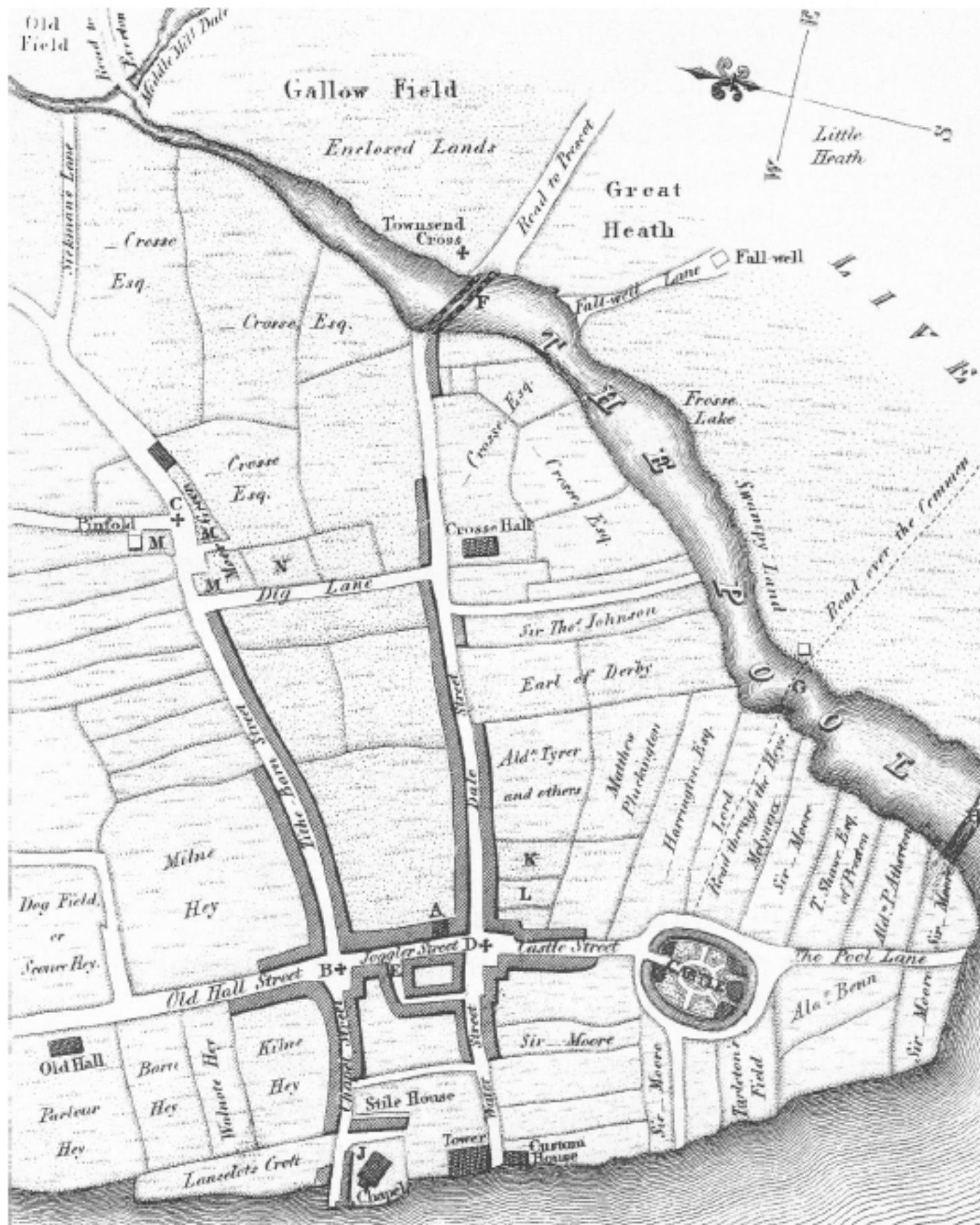
Walking on Water Street

A stroll along the original
shoreline of the River Mersey
(and a wander up some of
Liverpool's ancient streets)

Graham Jones

Second
edition
2022



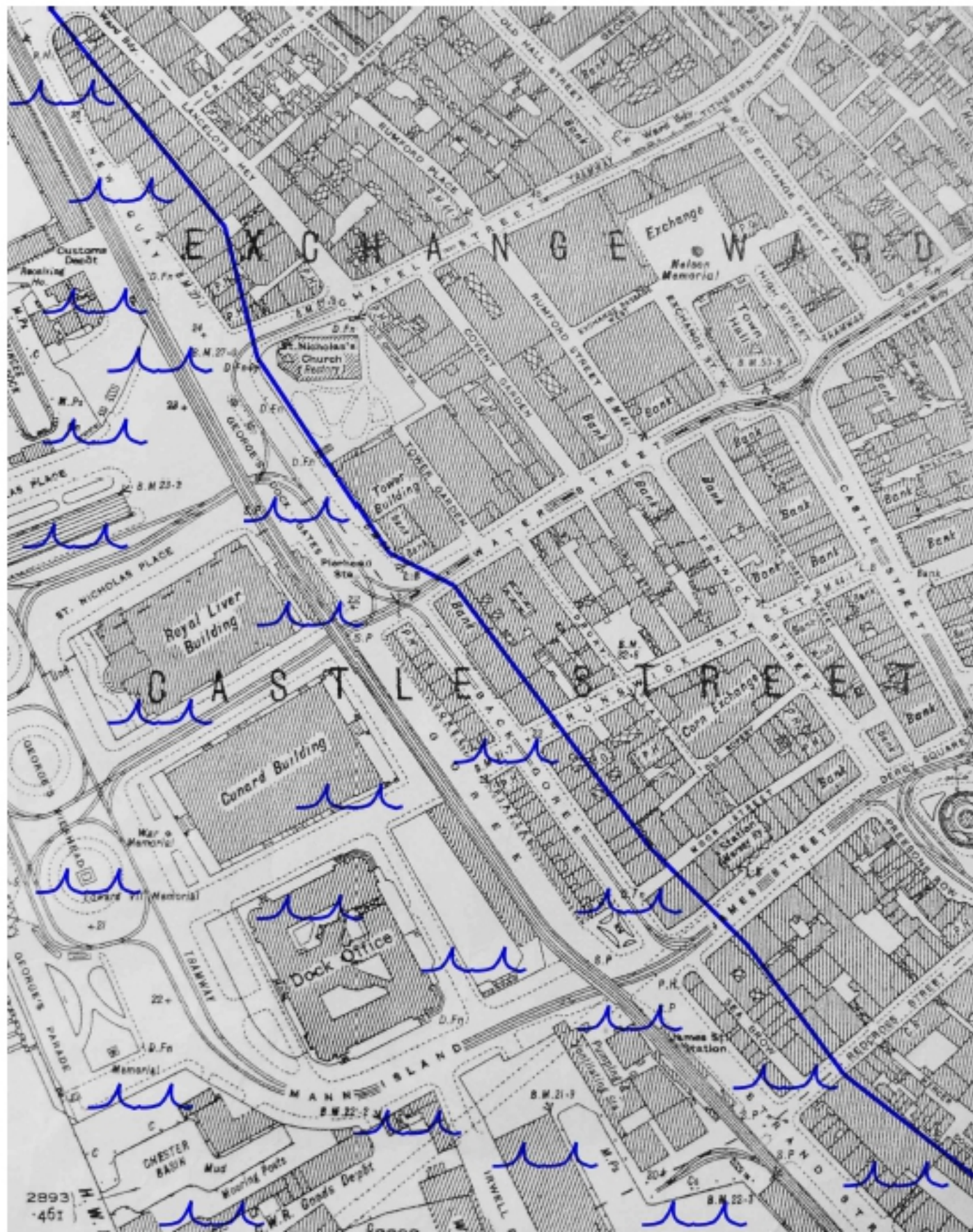


Walking on Water Street

A stroll along the original shoreline of the River Mersey
(and a wander up some of Liverpool's ancient streets)

Graham Jones
Water Street
Liverpool
2021

Facing page. 0.1. A detail from a map by Charles O'Kill in *The Stranger in Liverpool*, 1829, oriented to the east, showing Liverpool as it was thought to have been in the 17th century with the seven streets laid out by King John's engineers in 1207 still the prominent ones of the town.
Author's collection.



Walking on Water Street

A stroll along the original shoreline of the River Mersey
(and a wander up some of Liverpool's ancient streets)

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0.2. Facing page. The original shoreline marked on the 1927 edition of the Ordnance Survey to indicate how walking around today's Pier Head involves 'walking on water' (cf. fig. 0.8). The Pier Head area is part of the former World Heritage Site (LWHS, 2003) (delisted July 2021). Courtesy Liverpool Central Library. © Crown copyright 2022. O.S. licence 034/22.



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0.3. Facing page. Water Street in 1829 by G & C Pyne, from the 1831 edition of *Lancashire Illustrated*. London: H Fisher, Son and Jackson. Author's collection.



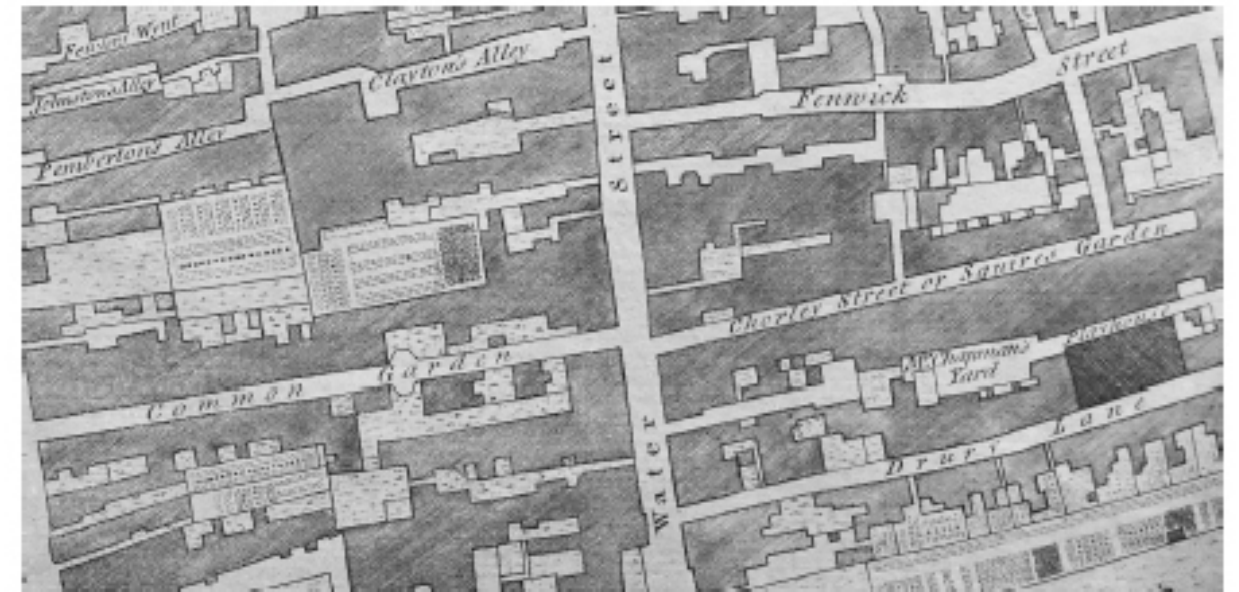
Chapter 3

From Chorley Street to Holt's Arcade

Dancing School Lane, the office of Robert Syers and a half-completed 2nd India Buildings

Vanished streets are perhaps somewhat like long-departed relatives: gone but fondly remembered through family records and a few fading black-and-white photos taken in their advancing years. Chorley Street is like that. Not mentioned in Queen Anne's rate assessment of 1708, Chorley Street first appears as no. 27 in the legend to James Chadwick's *Map of all the Streets Lanes & Alleys* of 1725 as Entwistle Street (see chapter 1, fig. 1.5), running from Water Street towards Moor Street. John Eyes' sketch of 1753 and his map of 1765 both show the street with its eventual name of Chorley,¹ whilst George Perry's plan of 1769 (fig. 3.2) is unique in marking it as *'Chorley Street or Squire's Garden'*.² Indeed, the first three editions of *Gore's Directory* all refer to the street as Squire's Garden prior to its becoming Chorley Street from 1772.³ It survived for two centuries, watching first the town and then the city grow all around it. Increasingly the poor relative of the likes of Water Street and Castle Street, its fate was sealed by the decision to construct a second India Buildings in the 20th century (see chapter 17), beneath which it now lies buried. But Chorley Street does have a history, albeit fragmentary, and deserves to be celebrated for what it was: a street which at different times bore the names of mayors, recorders and bailiffs (Table).

Mayors, recorders and bailiffs from the Appendix to Gore's Directory.		
1602-1619	Leonard Chorley	recorder
1662-1708	John Entwistle	recorder
1678	John Chorley	mayor
1706	William Squire	bailiff
1707	Henry Chorley	bailiff
1709-1722	Bertie Entwistle	recorder
1715	William Squire	mayor



3.2. 'Chorley Street or Squire's Garden' on George Perry's map of 1769, oriented to the east.

Courtesy Athenaeum.

Facing page. 3.1. Holt's Arcade in India Buildings, looking from Brunswick Street to Water Street, decorated for Christmas in December 2014. It is built upon the route of Chorley Street.

Author's photograph.

Chapter 6

From St Mary del Key to the Merchants' Coffee House

...and publicans galore in the Old Church Yard

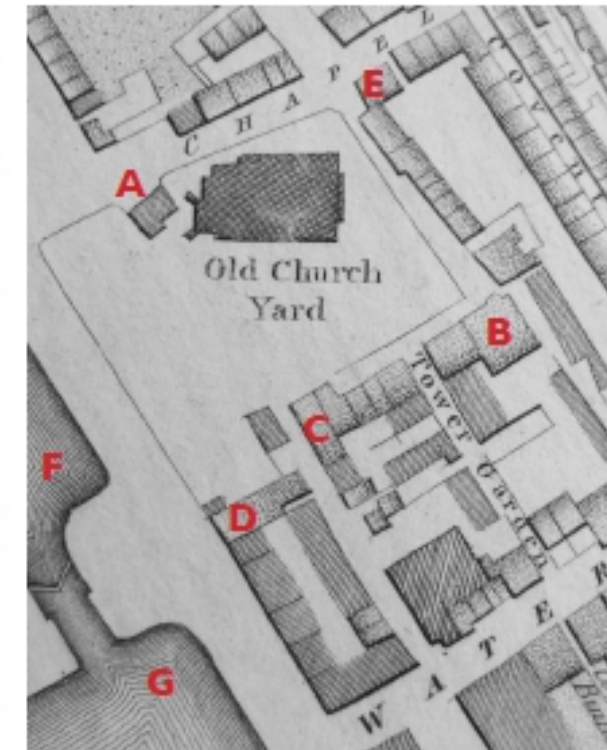
The existence of the "Chapel del Key" of Liverpool is, at the present time, one of the vaguest of myths. Ignored, doubted, or denied by the local historians; with no trace of foundation or original endowment left; without a record of any kind; small wonder is it that its mere name seems to conjure up, either to imagination or memory, nothing save "some baseless fabric of a dream."

John Elton (1902), p. 73.

To the 21st century visitor, the Old Church Yard of St Nicholas is seen as being bounded on two sides by St Nicholas House (fig. 6.2), Mersey Chambers, Reliance House and Tower Building (fig. 6.3).

Over two centuries ago, however, the scene was very different (fig. 6.1), and this story concerns the public houses, taverns, coffee houses, hotels and a bath which once occupied the same sites (fig. 6.4). The starting point, however, is a little chapel which preceded all these buildings and even the church yard itself.

Following upon the quotation which opens this chapter, John Elton proceeded to draw together, in meticulous detail and with an evident fondness for the building and for its chantries and priests, the evidence upon which, a decade later, Henry Peet was inspired to provide additional material. Their contributions are examples of the fine work produced over the last two centuries by the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, and the following account of this little chapel (from which Chapel Street derives its name),¹⁰ which 'stood alone near the high-water mark, on the shore of the Mersey', is largely based upon their papers.



6.4. From Horwood's plan of 1803.
A: St Mary del Key / Ince Boat House (c. 1257-1814).
B: site of Mersey Coffee House / Horne's Mersey Hotel (1824-1845).
C: site of Hope Tavern / Coulter's Hotel (1825-1845).
D: site of Bath Coffee House (1756-1765), rebuilt as the Merchants' Coffee House (1768-1883).
E: Jump's public house (1805-1824), rebuilt as (a) Abram's and (b) Old Style House (to 1895), rebuilt again as Old Style House Hotel (to late 20th century).
F: George's Dock Basin.
G: George's Dock.
Courtesy Athenaeum.

Facing page. 6.1. Top. St Nicholas' Church and Church Yard from the quay of George's Dock Basin in 1797 (Herdman (1856), plate VIII).

Courtesy Athenaeum.

6.5. The plaque, installed on the boundary wall of the church yard a century after John Elton's paper. Junction of Chapel Street and George's Dock Gates.

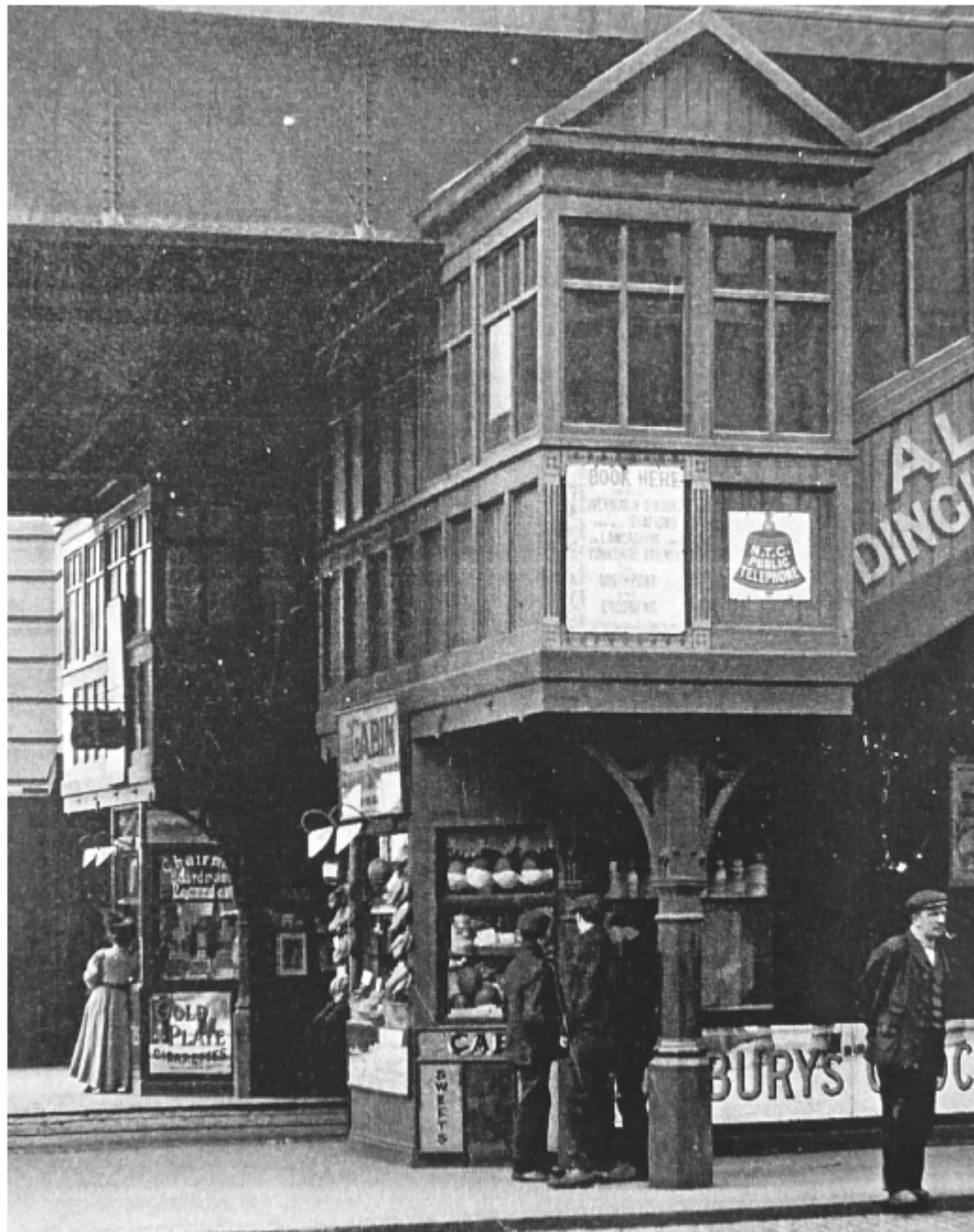
Author's photograph, 2009.



6.2. Looking north, St Nicholas' Church and St Nicholas House, dwarfed by modern apartment blocks.
Author's photograph, 2010.



6.3. Looking east, St Nicholas' Church Yard with, left to right, Mersey Chambers, Reliance House, the gates to the church yard from Tower Gardens, and Tower Building.
Author's photograph, 2010.



Facing page. 21.1. The Cabin (foreground) and Kiosk (background) at Pier Head Station, 1910. Courtesy LRO, ref. Photographs & Small Prints, Overhead Railway.

Chapter 21

From Simpson's Café to the Cabin and the Kiosk

Annie Garvey, Agnes Cowper and Mary Bamber

...and the time will come when Merseysiders must rue the day when they permitted the City Fathers to throttle the lifeblood of this unique undertaking, and in addition to scrap the last vestige of their remarkably efficient electric tramway system.

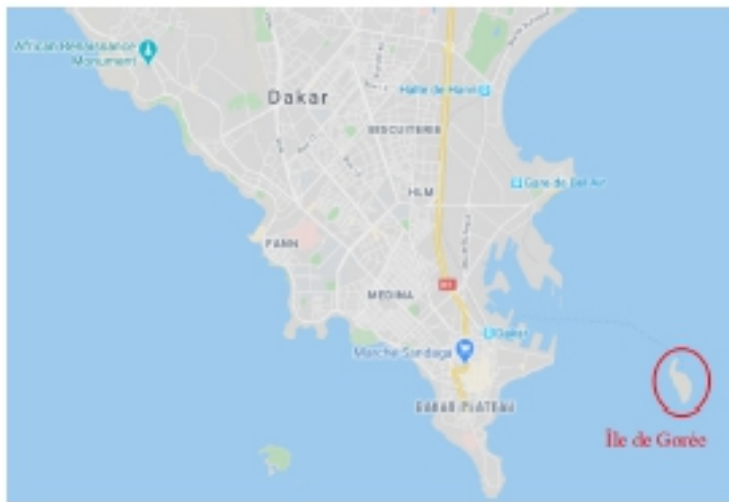
H Maxwell Rostron, 8th August 1958, in Box (1962).

In *Liverpool Roundabout*, Richard Whittington-Egan described a 'lunch-hour perambulation' which included seeing a stone fountain set against the retaining wall of St Nicholas' churchyard (fig. 21.2) and which prompted him to write about 'a charitable and inspiring tale'.

William Simpson was, during the latter years of the 19th century, the proprietor of the famous Landing-Stage Café. A tall eccentric-looking man with an immense drooping mustachio, he was a colourful character who, with his invariable cigar and coruscant diamond scarf-pin, set in the midst of a gleaming expanse of shirt-fronts, compelled the attention of all who saw him... He made several bids to enter politics... and in 1874 fought the general election as a Liberal-Conservative. Much to his disappointment he lost, but five years later he stood for the West Derby ward at the municipal election. This time he won, but shortly afterwards lost his seat on the council because he lived over his café on the landing-stage and was not therefore either a ratepayer or a resident in Liverpool. It was during the time of the terrible Indian famine of 1877-8 that Simpson first conceived the idea of placing an open brass bowl on the landing-stage into which passers-by might cast a copper or two's worth of charity. The results exceeded all expectations. Within thirty-one days £203 1s. 3d. had found its way into Simpson's Bowl. Subsequently pressed into service for the relief of the distressed miners of South Wales, the victims of the Haydock Colliery accident, the Liverpool Distress Fund, the Irish Distress Fund and the Abercarn Colliery Accident Fund, the bowl collected in all the sum of £3,515 1s. 8¹/₂d. in cash, and a further £1,250 worth of food and clothing was heaped about it in boxes, bales and bundles... Although the stone basin of the St. Nicholas fountain is sometimes referred to as Simpson's Bowl, it is not, of course, the original. That was presented by the family to Liverpool Corporation, and it is now preserved in the Town Clerk's Department of the Municipal Offices where its charitable lustre outshines many a more intrinsically valuable piece of civic plate.¹



21.2. Author's photograph, 2010.



Chapter 22

From the New Intended Warehouses to the Goree Piazzas

The Goree, Liverpool, and the Île de Gorée, Sénégal

On the east side a noble range of warehouses, with arcades underneath, formed part of the original design, but they remained for many years in abeyance, and were not erected until 1793, when, in commemoration of the African trade, then so prosperous in Liverpool, they took the name of the "Goree" warehouses.

James Picton (1875), vol. I, p. 557.

James Picton was born in 1805, two years before *An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade* and, perhaps inevitably, remained a child of his time. It may be appropriate therefore, using the advantages of 21st century technology, to preface this chapter with some images of the Île de Gorée, on the coast of Sénégal (fig. 22.1A-F), before an account of the warehouses and Goree Piazzas as they later became known.

The Maison des Esclaves (the House of Slaves Museum) was opened in 1962 to symbolise and memorialise the final 'Door of No Return' for the slaves, although most are believed to have been held and to have departed from the fort (see aerial view), and there has been academic controversy as to the importance of the island in the 'African trade'. However, in 1978, it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and:

its architecture is characterised by the contrast between the grim slave quarters and the elegant houses of the slave traders. Today it continues to serve as a reminder of human exploitation and as a sanctuary for reconciliation.¹⁶⁰

According to Wikipedia, the island was briefly controlled by Great Britain between 1758 and 1763, following which it went back to French control, returning – again briefly – into British hands between 1779 and 1783, and then becoming affiliated to the French until 1960 when it became part of Sénégal at independence.

The slave trade from Sénégal declined from the 1770s and the island became a port for the shipment of products of the 'legitimate trade', although it was not until 1848 that the French halted the shipping of slaves.

The island is just 3km (nearly two miles) off the Senegalese coast, and its tiny size made it easy for merchants to control their captives. The surrounding waters are so deep that any escape attempt would ensure death by drowning. With a 5kg metal ball permanently attached to their feet or necks, a captured African would know what jumping into the deep sea would bring.¹⁶⁰

Such is its significance that, following the opening of the museum, it soon became an important place of pilgrimage for many, including Nelson Mandela (1991), Pope John Paul II (1992) and Barack Obama (2013).



Facing page, 22.1A-F. Clockwise from top left.

Île de Gorée, ca. 2 miles from the coast of Sénégal, 2020, courtesy Google Maps.

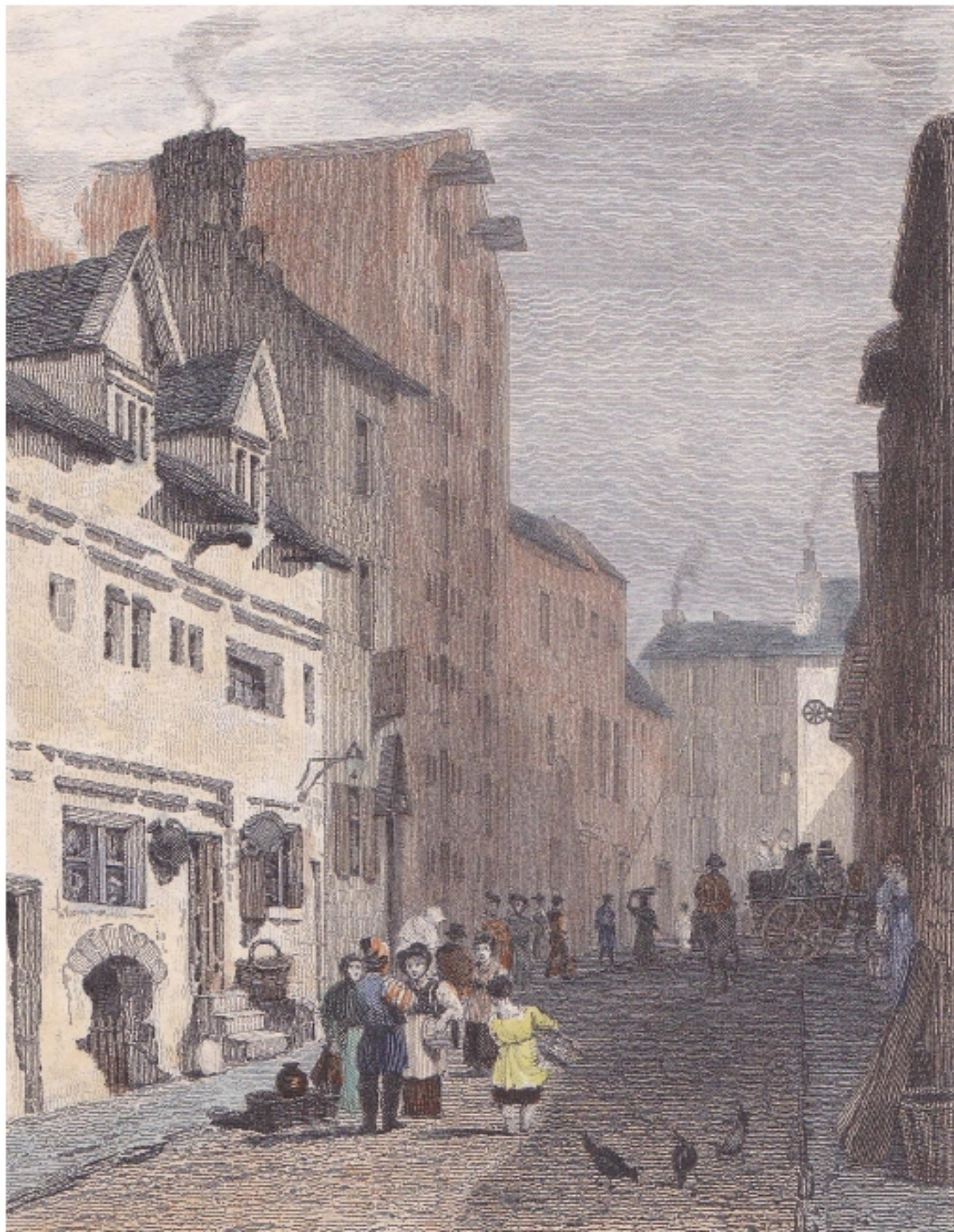
Memorial by Jean and Christian Moïsa, 2002, at the House of Slaves, courtesy allade Ricks, 2016, via Google Maps.

Aerial view looking south, 2020, courtesy Tik Tok Sénégal TV, via Google Maps.

The House of Slaves, 2004, courtesy Robin Elaine, via Wikimedia Commons.

The memorial and surroundings, 2006, courtesy Caro2000 from Quebec, via Wikimedia Commons.

The Door of No Return (rear of House of Slaves image), 2004, courtesy Wandering Angel from Makati City, via Wikimedia Commons.



From 'More Stret' to a gloomy by-way

The Castle Street Field, a problematic Custom House and an indenture to Matthew Jones, mariner

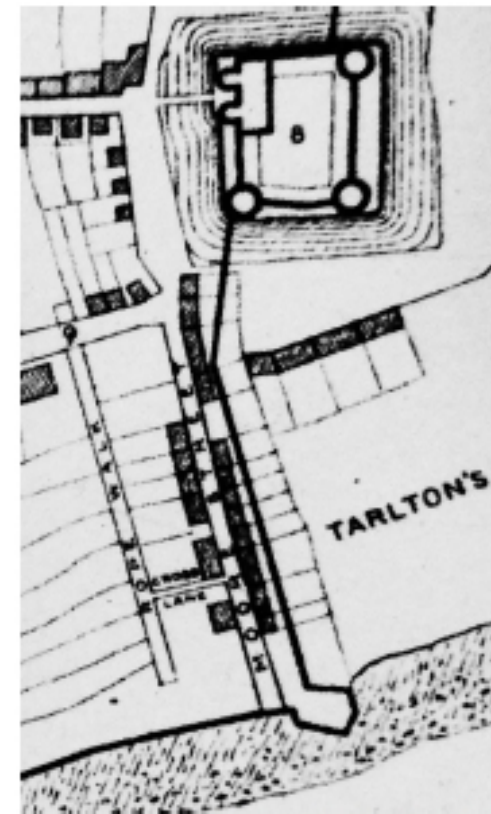
Poor old Moor Street, the murky entry down which the uninterested passer-by looks askance if he looks at all, is the one relic of the once mighty family who reigned in mediaeval state in the Old Hall which has not changed its name. It is now but a gloomy by-way, but mention it, and you not only hear the rustling of the leaves of history, but the crackling of that most human document, the "Moore rental".

Michael O'Mahony, *Ways and Byways of Liverpool*, 1931, p. 20.

Following the civil war, Edward Moore's marriage to Dorothy Fenwick in 1656, the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the confiscation of Moore's property (his father having fought for Parliament and been a regicide) and the recovery of his inheritance through Dorothy's Royalist connections, Moore constructed on his land a privately owned street from Castle Street down to the river around 1665. Within three years, he was in a position to advise his eldest son, William, of the particulars of the tenants in 23 properties that had been built by his leaseholders,¹⁰⁰ having first made it clear as to his absolute ownership of the land.

Have for ever in mind that the ground whereon this street and houses now stand, was a small close of ground, called the Castle Street Field, which said field I and my ancestors have for many hundreds of years enjoyed... Have in mind that the passage through the said field, from the post and chains to the water side, being in some places fifteen feet broad, and in some places eighteen feet, which I now call the More street, is none of the king's highway, but only for the benefit of me and my tenants, and their assigns; and as to all other people, it is only a passage of sufferance.²⁰⁰

The major reasons for resorting to posts and 'two great iron chains, the which I usually upon all occasions keep locked' was to prevent Capt. Fazakerley's continued use of the street as a convenient route for bringing coal to the castle, and to ensure that carters would be made to pay towards their carts breaking up the street. Moore suggested that, 'You may order those that live near the posts to keep the keys and likewise to receive the money'.²⁰¹ It is possible that this was a short term issue once both Saint James' Street (chapter 11) and Tarleton's New Street (chapter 4) were laid out from the castle to the river in the following decade.³



24.2. Properties in Moore Street in 1668, oriented to the east. Detail from fig. 1.1. Courtesy LRO, ref. Hq 942.721066 MOO.

Facing page. 24.1. 'More Stret' in 1829, from Austin, Harwood & Pyne (1831), p. 49. Hand-tinted version.

Author's collection. See also Smith (1872), facing p. 23.



Chapter 25

From Holt's Arcade to HMRC

The May Blitz, 21st century mismanagement, closure and the loss of a jewel in the crown

Blazing fragments blowing in through bomb-blasted windows gave rise to a large number of separate fires in India Buildings. Among the offices which were more or less totally destroyed were those of the Inland Revenue. Later, when most of the fires had been extinguished and the building had cooled down, an inland revenue staff officer went to the special strong-room in which certain important records of your and my incomes were kept. To his delight he found that the fire had not penetrated the fireproof doors. Unable to contain himself in his unholy glee, Mr Bloodsucker ran off to tell his colleagues the glad news, but in his excitement he left every door open behind him. The draught which resulted caused some still-smouldering material to burst anew into flames and the contents of the strong-room were irretrievably lost!

Richard Whittington-Egan, *Liverpool Roundabout*.¹

India Buildings had been completed less than 10 years when it was badly damaged on the night of 3rd May 1941. Housing the telephone exchange HQ, it was an obvious target for disrupting Liverpool's communication network. The last bombs fell on Merseyside on 10th January 1942, but it is clear from the German map, updated to March 1942 (fig. 25.2), that further attacks were still being considered.²

Berichtigt nach Luftbildauswertungen vom August 1940

Sonderausgabe

Ausgabe Nr. 2 Stand: 1941
Nur für den Dienstgebrauch!



Militärgeogr. Angaben nach den bis zum
15. III. 1942 vorhandenen Unterlagen



25.2. German map annotated with targets and legend, based on the British Ordnance Survey. Author's collection.

Translations: Corrected after evaluations of aerial photographs from August 1940.

Special edition. Issue no. 2. Status: 1941. For official use only!

Military geography. Information based on documents available to 15th March 1942.

The detail shows symbols for the India Buildings telephone exchange (73), Riverside Station and Princes Dock.

Facing page. 25.1. Looking east from George's Dock Gates. India Buildings is shrouded for its conversion into HMRC offices, and Water Street is closed to traffic for the weekend to enable heavy lifting onto the roof. The outstretched arms of the crane are pointing left towards the roof of Oriel Chambers and right towards the floors above Holt's Arcade. Having witnessed in 1925 what had happened to Chorley Street (chapter 3), Oriel Chambers would have been watching the crane with renewed nervousness.

Author's photograph, 16th February 2019.



Chapter 31

From Church Alley to Prison Weint

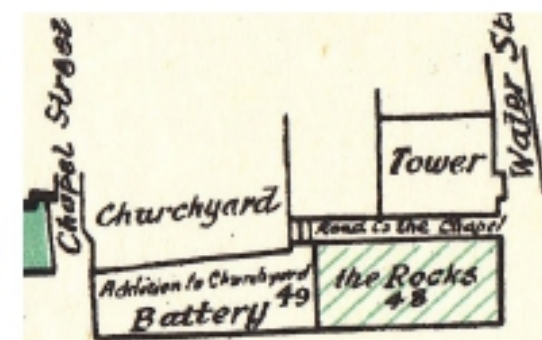
via the Antient way to the Church and Stringer's Alley

The town used to suffer in the early days from the caprices of the tide during bad weather, and various traditional stories are still current of the accidents which were frequent during the angry elements in the harbour, whereby the Stanley Tower and St Nicholas Church were sure to have suffered. The strand of this portion of the river was anciently called 'Townsides', being frequented as the common, and used as the property of the people. Then it grew as a watchword and gathering cry, and 'Townsides forever!' served as a tocsin to rouse many a bold and fiery spirit in the purlieus of Water Street.

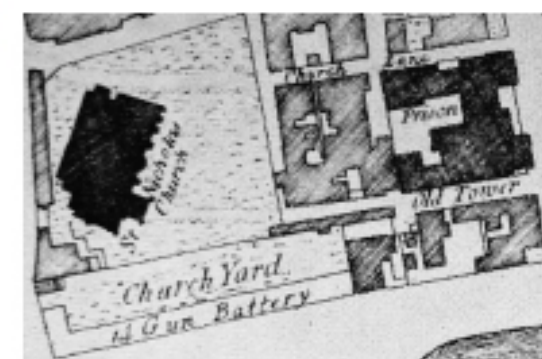
Northern Daily Times, 5th June 1855.

The earliest representation of Liverpool which historians regard as having a date which has withstood critical analysis, is *Liverpool in 1680* (the *Peters Painting*) and shows the presence of a wall separating the Tower of Liverpool from the river (chapter 8, fig. 8.1 and the engraving in fig. 8.2). John McGahey, a 19th century artist, produced a romanticised view of the Mersey washing over the wall (fig. 31.1) and titled it *'Tower 1650'*.¹ Richard Wright's later view is dated 1741 (fig. 31.2), and W G Herdman, in his 1843 *Pictorial Relics*, wrote of his own version of Wright's that it *'shews the stone wall built in 1572 (15 Eliz.); the path between this wall and the Tower, and which is continued between the houses beyond, is the present Stringer's Alley.'*^{2,3}

Although, at the time that Herdman was writing his 1843 *Pictorial Relics*, the passageway between the stone wall and the Tower had become known as Stringer's Alley, it had appeared on earlier plans and by a variety of names, of which Lang's plan of 1750, calling it Church Alley (chapter 6, fig. 6.13), and Eyes' plan of 1753, calling it *'Antient way to the Church'* (fig. 6.14), are the earliest, whilst Charles Okill's plan, created in order to confirm the town's ownership of the land which had been enclosed from the river, marks it as *'Road to the Chapel'* (fig. 31.3). Okill's description may have been with respect to St Mary del Key which still existed near to the Church of St Nicholas (chapter 6, fig. 6.4, marked **A**), whilst on Perry's map of 1769 the route past the Old Tower is not named, and another route to the church is shown as Church Lane (destined to become Tower Garden(s)) (fig. 31.4).



31.3. Detail from chapter 16, fig. 16.10.



31.4. From Perry's map of 1769. Version taken from Smith (1953), fig. 33.

Facing page.

31.1. Top. An imaginary view of a shipwreck near the Tower of Liverpool during a storm in 1650.

Courtesy LRO, ref. McGahey Collection 1.

31.2. Bottom. Etching from a 1741 oil painting by Richard Wright when in the possession of Matthew Gregson.

Courtesy LRO, see reference 2.

From a Commercial Centre to Apartment Land

Loss of UNESCO World Heritage status... and remembering those without a home

It was late October in the year 1861. The wind, blowing keen and fierce from off the landing-stage, whistled and eddied up Water Street and carried on even as far as Lime Street station, and passengers bound for the ferry clutched their hats and bent their bodies forward as they forged along. The first seething rush was over and now the patter of hastening feet came from the last few remaining clerks who, eager to leave the bonds of their daily servitude behind, directed determined steps towards the landing-stage. Their principals, the merchant princes, immaculate in white cravats and top hats had long since set the example, and now the last ledger was being closed, and last counting house locked and bolted as all official commerce closed for another day.

J Francis Hall, *The Dock Road*.



The last ledger was closed and the last counting house in Water Street was locked and bolted many decades ago, and the street is no longer the commercial centre it had been over the centuries that watched Liverpool's growth. *Liverpool Vision* was created in 1999, and one part of its plan – the *Strategic Regeneration Framework* – involved the creation of a new Commercial District centred on St Paul's Square (Parkinson, 2008). The Water Street office buildings that had been constructed for the benefit of shipping lines, insurance companies and banks – the Bank of British West Africa, Blue Funnel, Booth, Commercial Union, Ellermans, Lloyds, Martins, Norwich Union, Reliance Marine – have either been converted into apartments and restaurants or are in the process of undergoing that transformation. The car park in Drury Lane, the site of Brazilian Buildings, has disappeared to provide additional accommodation (figs. 34.2 and 29.32), and even the nearby bucket fountain is under threat. 'Regeneration' is bringing profound change and, as this book was being completed, Liverpool received sad news of the loss of the city's UNESCO World Heritage status.

34.2. Drury Lane looking towards the rear of Drury House, built for Commercial Union (renamed Gravity Residence after converting to apartments). In the distance is Reliance House, built for Reliance Marine, with its new top floor apartments. Author's photograph, December 2019.



Facing page. 34.1. Left to right.

Top: Norwich House (no. 8 Water Street), March 2010; Il Palazzo (no. 7), March 2017; Oriol Chambers (no. 14), April 2012.

Middle: Martins Bank Building (no. 4), March 2010; West Africa House (no. 25), March 2010; Reliance House (no. 20), April 2012.

Bottom: Wellington Buildings (nos. 7-11 The Strand), March 2010; India Buildings (no. 11 Water Street), March 2010.

Author's photographs.

Hope Tavern (Tower Gardens / Old Church Yard), 67(c), 71, 75.
Hopkins (George) (agent for Tower Buildings), 29.
Horne (Edward) / Horne's Mersey Hotel, 28, 67(c), 70(c), 71, 72.
Horton (Admiral Sir Max), 130, 405, 411, 414.
Horton House (Exchange Bldgs.), 130, 414.
Horton (Widow) (Moore Rental, Chapel St), 211, 212.
House of Commons Report (local charges upon shipping), 22, 23.
How a directory is made (*Liverpool Review*, 1889), 38, 43(f.13).
Hughes (Thomas) (Strand St, partner in David Jones & Co.), 49.
Hunter (Jonathan) (home, originally monks' granary), 27, 249(f.1).
Hunter (Robert) (warehouseman, Chorley St), 37.
Huws (Richard) ('*bucher founmain*' designer), 93, 93(c), 388.

Ihlers & Bell (store / office, Moor St / Back Goree), 157, 255.
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