

## **The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**

### **Notes on a Heritage Weekend Walk, Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September, in Bradford City Centre. Led by Chris Hammond a Trustee of the Bradford Building Preservation Trust.**

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#### **Introduction**

We begin our walk, appropriately, at the City Hall, built at a time (1873) when Bradford regarded itself, indeed was, a European or International City, looking beyond the confines of the West Riding to its trading connections across the world. In this respect Bradford shares the same cultural heritage as, say, Liverpool or Glasgow – quite distinct from Leeds and Sheffield which were, despite their size and pretensions, essentially Yorkshire manufacturing and commercial centres. So here we stand before a re-creation of the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence – and the great warehouses which we shall see were not conceived simply as warehouses but as re-creations of the renaissance palaces and warehouses of the Florentine wool merchants of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries – and from whom the mantle of the Wool Trade descended to Bradford in the later part of the nineteenth century.

A large number of social and economic factors contributed to this transformation, but the opportunity was seized, in my view, with the establishment of the Bradford Chamber of Commerce in 1851 under the energetic leadership of Jacob (later Sir Jacob) Behrens, a member of the immigrant community from Germany and who was instrumental, through the Chamber, in establishing and consolidating Bradford's overseas trade. It is regrettable that no statue has ever been raised to him.

Bradford was also fortunate in having architectural practices – remarkably few in number – which had the ability and confidence to carry that vision forward and to express it in buildings of great dignity and solidity. Most of these architects worked solely in Bradford and hence such names as Fairbank, Pepper, Milnes and France, Andrews and Delauney, have never received the nation-wide recognition that they deserve. Only the firm of Lockwood and Mawson, which designed, inter alia, the City Hall, St. George's Hall, the Wool Exchange and the whole of Saltaire, is widely known. What other World Heritage Site is the work of a single architectural practice? (Answer: Victoria Railway Terminus, Bombay, by F.W. Stevens)

However, our walk is concerned with the buildings and architecture of Bradford as now exists - and here we must stand in silence at the huge amount of destruction and re-building which took place from the 1960's under the equally energetic leadership of S.G. Wardley, City Engineer and Chief Planner. Until 1960 Bradford was an almost wholly intact Victorian City, the great public buildings and warehouses crowded into the City Centre, smoke-blackened, many underused and with a wholly inadequate provision for public spaces and squares. Now, with hindsight, we realise what great architectural assets these buildings were – and had they been retained the Bradford mercantile centre, more so than Saltaire, may well have qualified as a World Heritage Site. But in 1960 the place seemed to be merely worn-out, and so, at least at the beginning, Wardley's plan to connect Bradford with the emerging motorway network, to erect fine new buildings and to separate traffic from pedestrians, received little or no opposition. As a result the mercantile centre of Bradford was substantially gutted. But worse, the 'fine new buildings' (largely the work of Bernard Engle and Partners) fitted uneasily in the West Yorkshire scene: they soon looked drab and run-down and the general deterioration in social behaviour, unforeseen in the early 1960's, made the pedestrian underpasses seem unpleasant and menacing places.

So, our walk is going to take us through a wide range of building types and architectural styles – from about 1850 to the present and indeed the future – since Bradford is now poised on yet a further re-building programme. It is this variety and potential which makes Bradford such an exciting city to study.

## **Centenary Square**

Centenary Square, which commemorates the raising of Bradford to City status in 1897, is a success story – an open space with the right balance of Yorkshire stone paving and raised turfed areas, flanked by the City Hall (1873 by Lockwood and Mawson) which faces across the square the new Asda St. James Development (Aldermanbury House, 2004, by Panter Hudspith Architects) which replaces the buildings of the Provincial Building Society. The earlier block (1971), by John Brunton and Partners, was a simply-detailed and successful design-the best building by this firm of architects in the city. Its architectural impact was, however, severely compromised by the later (1975) block by the Bradford Architects' Department, the retention of which would have severely impeded the layout of Centenary Square. To the East of Aldermanbury House stood The Mechanics Institute (by Andrews and Pepper, 1871), a grievous loss of the 1960's.

Lockwood and Mawson's 'Florentine Gothic' Town Hall (re-named City Hall in 1965), the foundation stone for which was laid in 1870 was the winning design in an "open" competition held in 1869 – and doubtless won following their successful design for the Wool Exchange, opened two years earlier. It is complemented very well by the substantial extensions of 1905-1909 by F.E.P Edwards, Bradford's first City Architect, in association with Norman Shaw (who designed the extensions to Manchester Town Hall and, nearer home, St Margaret's Church, Ilkley). Statues of the English monarchs (except Edward VI) are placed along the frieze of the 1873 building (fortunately with their names underneath so that we can recognise them). The jolliest, in my view, is that of King John, busily tearing up the Magna Carta, and the most sober that of Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector. It is said that the Irishmen employed on the site refused to have any part in raising his statue.

To the west side of the City Hall, the Law Courts (1971, by W.C.Brown, City Architect), faced in local Bolton Wood stone, have worn well. So also have the Police Headquarters, by O. Perry, City Architect, completed in 1975. The reflecting-glass curtain walling, the stepped paving with water-cascade and fountain represent the first attempts to create a Civic Square. Similarly, Thornton House, immediately to the east; the first building to be completed (in 1959) as part of the re-development scheme. Designed by Bernard Engle, then in partnership with Clyde Young, its bowed curtain-wall façade which has recently been re-faced provides an admirable counterpoise to (and on sunny days reflects), the Florentine Gothic of City Hall.

## **Hall Ings**

In contrast to Centenary Square, Hall Ings, to the rear of City Hall, is a nightmare-the road and underpass towards Jacob's Well make pedestrian movement difficult and dangerous and the multi-story car park, so close to City Hall, is an absolute disgrace. Under Will Alsop's now rejected scheme this low-lying area would have been transformed into a series of "lakes"-very attractive and beguiling in the architects' impressionistic drawings "under Italianate skies"-but rather less so in the cold reality of dismal Yorkshire winter nights.

Adjacent to the car park, at the junction with Bridge Street, is the Norfolk Gardens Hotel, completed in 1972 and faced, not with Bradford Stone, but with stone-coloured cement blocks, of which it can at least be said that the quality of the material matches the quality of the architecture.

What a contrast to St George's Hall on the other side of Bridge Street (by Lockwood and Mawson) and its immediate neighbour on Hall Ings-the Bradford Telegraph and Argus Newspaper offices (originally Milligan and Forbes' warehouse, by Andrews and Delauney). These two buildings were begun and completed in the same years (1851-1853) and set the architectural standard for both the civic and the commercial buildings of Victorian Bradford. The adjacent modern printing-hall, where the huge machines may be glimpsed through the darkly-tinted glass façade, complements in my view the 1853 building in terms of assurance and boldness of architectural expression. We should, however, record that on this site stood the Courthouse, by James Richardby, 1834 which Nikolaus Pevsner described as 'the finest Grecian building in Bradford'.

Hall Ings terminates in the east at Eastbrook Well, now (2005) scene of a major reconstruction and re-planning programme which we shall discuss towards the end of our walk. Now we return to Centenary Square and enter Tyrell Street.

### **Tyrell Street, Ivegate and Kirkgate**

The Prudential Assurance Company had scant regard for local building materials; their blood-red brick building of 1895 must have been even more striking when it was built than it is today. The architect, Alfred Waterhouse, was commissioned to give the Prudential an immediately recognisable image, as can also be seen in Park Row in Leeds and, most stupendous of all, the Refuge Building (now Palace Hotel) in Manchester. Waterhouse was an prolific architect, a sort of Norman Foster and Richard Rogers rolled into one; his Manchester Town Hall and Natural History Museum are among the greatest buildings of Victorian England. He was also the architect for the emerging colleges in Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds and (less happily) rebuilt colleges in Oxford and Cambridge.

And so we enter Ivegate – Bradford’s historic street, now pedestrianised with a wrought iron arch at the junction with Market Street. Erected in 1988 to the designs of Peter Parkinson and made by Richard Quinnell, the sculptured panels represent aspects of Bradford’s history, buildings, industry, commerce and people. Regrettably, this somewhat self-conscious ‘landscaping’ has not been able to arrest the general decline of Ivegate as is evidenced by the presence of amusement arcades, karaoke-type fun pubs and shuttered-up shops. On Thorpe Buildings is a plaque to John Sharp who was born on this site and who became Archbishop of York. The two branches of the Sharp family have played a prominent role in Bradford history; Abraham Sharp (b.1653), the mathematician and astronomer, was an associate of John Flamsteed, the first Astronomer Royal and Christopher Wren. His observatory in the tower of Horton Hall should at very least have guaranteed its survival – the demolition of both Horton Hall and Horton Old Hall in 1966 by the Leeds Regional Hospital Board in the face of appeals and petitions from the Bradford Civic Trust, the Historical and Antiquarian Society and the keepers of Bradford Museums was nothing less than a tragedy.

A short detour from Ivegate leads to the cul-de-sac of Hustlergate, an intimate little square which, in any town or village on the continent would have been thriving with bars and pavement cafes. Here it is just a backwater.

At the top of Ivegate (notice en route the nicely – rebuilt ‘Tudor’ style pub of the 1920’s and the remarkable ‘Egyptian’ columns at first floor level on ‘Tan Island’), we see another plaque - to John Nelson ‘The Preaching Stonemason from Birstall’ who was confined in a dungeon here for a time in 1744; the site of which now appears to be (not inappropriately) a body-piercing studio.

The junction between Ivegate, Kirkgate and Westgate gives us the opportunity to view two of the worst, and one of the best, buildings in Bradford. The worst first. The Kirkgate (formerly Arndale) Centre of 1972 designed by the prolific architectural practice of John Brunton and Partners, is wholly without merit, the windowless, massive concrete facing slabs and mean and badly arranged entrances obliterate the streetscape of Westgate and Kirkgate. The proposed, and subsequent demolition, of Lockwood and Mawson’s Kirkgate Market of 1877 (by Town & City Properties Ltd) provided an outcry, not just from the Victorian Society but from such famous sons of Bradford as J.B. Priestley and David Hockney – Priestley reveals how his love of English Literature was stimulated by his purchases of second-hand ‘Everyman’ volumes for a shilling (5p) from Mr. Powers’ market bookstall. But to no avail, and the light and spacious colonnaded and iron framed interior spaces of the 1877 market are but a fading memory. What is even more poignant is that the architects themselves (but perhaps not the developers of the planning committee) regretted, in retrospect, that the market was not retained as part of the development.

Perhaps even worse is High Point, also by John Brunton and Partners, the massive near-windowless concrete tower for the Yorkshire Building Society which looms over the top of Westgate and dominates the Bradford skyline. High Point is strongly suggestive of the fearsome ‘Ministry of Love’ in George Orwell’s ‘1984’. One might imagine the same black-uniformed guards with jointed truncheons roaming around its perimeter.

It is with relief that we turn to see Sunwin House (the Co-operative Emporium) in Godwin Street (1935), designed by W.A. Johnson, the Co-op architect, in the 'International Modern' style. (The Co-op in Huddersfield is also Johnson's work). The light, glazed stair-towers are strongly reminiscent of the de la Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea, designed by the innovative practice of Mendelsohn and Chermayeff in the same year. Sunwin House brings to Bradford a whiff of the sea-side.

### **Westgate, John Street and Northgate to Manor Row**

At the top of Westgate, the "Boy and Barrel" public house at the junction with James Gate has one of Bradford's most distinctive pub facades, a riot of etched and stained glass. The pub achieved fame or notoriety as a location for the film "Room at the Top" – in a memorable scene in which the film's hero (or anti-hero) Laurence Harvey, is seen entering on a key assignment. But we will continue along the side-alley which rejoices in the grandiose title James Gate, pausing to note the run-down late Victorian buildings at the junction with Grattan Road which cry out for refurbishment.

In John Street the market on the far side, has been re-named the "Oastler Shopping Centre". It faces, across John Street, the Old Rawson Street market which after years of dereliction is now being rebuilt to house an "anchor" chain store and, more hopefully, small local businesses which might again provide the colour and diversity which Rawson Market once possessed. The Rawson Hotel, with its tremendous colonnaded corner turret and dome (Bradford's answer to Liverpool's "Vines Hotel" in Lime Street) is all that remains of the imposing façade of the "Northgate" extension of the Rawson Market which extended nearly the whole length of John Street and which terminated, near the top of James Gate, with a similar domed cupola. Built in 1904 by T C Hope and D Jardine (who also designed the Technical College in Great Horton Road) it fell victim to bombing in 1940. Perhaps, in the re-development scheme, the hotel will acquire once again some of its former glory, although it is doubtful whether the famous restaurant (with white table linen and shining silver cutlery, rivalling that of Brown, Muffs) will ever return.

As we turn into Northgate we see the statue of Richard Oastler "The Factory King". Oastler was the prime mover of the "10 Hours Act" which limited the working hours of children to 10 hours a day. His statue, by J. Birnie Philip, unveiled in 1869, shows him in company with a mill-girl and mill-boy – an evocative and touching group whose message is probably lost on most passers-by today.

Turning into North Parade we see what must be one of the most extravagant – one could almost say "wilfully exuberant" high Victorian facades in Bradford: this is the (former) Church Institute, designed by Andrews and Pepper and built in 1871-3. The sculptured roof-line is pure fantasy. Opposite, not to be missed, is Gazelle House which appears to be an iron-framed building with very unusual art-deco glass windows at first and second floor levels.

At the junction of North Parade and Manor Row is the imposing façade of the (former) Yorkshire Penny Bank, built in 1893 to the designs of the architect James Ledingham. The massive iron gates at the corner entrance and the clock-turret above gaze forlornly across the traffic lights of the inner ring road to the desert of parking lots and car show-rooms in Manningham Lane where Busby's Department Store stood before burning down in 1979. The construction of the road, (which rejoices in the name Hammstrasse, after Bradford's twin town in Germany) not only involved the demolition of a pleasant parade of shops and pubs (The Theatre Tavern and the Royal Standard) but also effectively severed the link between Manningham and the City Centre – creating both a social and an economic barrier. The Connaught Rooms survive, but are no longer the fashionable venue that they once were.

The top of Manor Row affords a fine vantage point from which the topography of the city may be appreciated. The valley below running north to Shipley constitutes a natural artery to the city. The hills on the far side rise up to Undercliffe, Peel Park and, further north, Bolton Woods. But as an entrance to the city the valley (Valley Road and Canal Road) is a disaster: nothing but car parks, dumps of various sorts and retail sheds. A major element of Alsop's visionary scheme was the restoration and re-opening of Bradford Canal from Shipley to the city centre (the last stretches of which were closed in 1922 and lock gates only recently demolished) and to create waterside walkways and cycleways, leisure facilities, gardens and housing. In short to create a humane environment which is now wholly lacking and, regrettably, is likely to remain so for many years to come. The vision

however remains and the long-term planning objective is to create a series of “canalside urban villages” linked to an extension of the Broadway scheme described below.

### **Manor Row, Cheapside and Upper Piccadilly**

Manor Row is remarkably complete – the only major loss is the Carlton School building, built for Bradford Grammar School, by Andrews and Pepper 1872-4 and in use until 1948 when the Grammar School moved to its present site in Manningham Lane. It was described, accurately in my view, as an “ancient, wandering and dismal looking pile”. It burned down following the closure of Carlton School in 1986.

Descending Manor Row we see, on the east side the very pretty façade of the (former) Northern Counties Investment Trust Limited, clearly built as an extension to an earlier house. The inscription is partly obscured by the fascia of the Nawaab Restaurant – white table linen and all! Then below, the (former) office of the Bradford Canal Company, as shown by the blue Bradford City Heritage plaque; then the classical severity of Kenburgh House, formerly a chapel and, facing Upper Piccadilly, the superbly chaste Italianate building of the Register Office, built as the Poor Law Guardian’s Office by Andrews and Pepper in 1877. It is remarkable that only a few years previously the same architects should have been responsible for the extravaganza of Church House in North Parade.

Further down Manor Row, between Broad Street and School Street, there is welcome evidence of economic resurgence. The massive warehouse block (Broadgate House) of 1883 (note the boldly carved datestone in the cornice) by the architect Rhodes Calvert, and the adjoining Manor Buildings of 1892 (by B.D.Fairbank and J.H.Wall), which tower above Forster Square Station in the valley below, are being converted to offices, apartments and lofts for the rapidly growing housing market. For many years these warehouses were derelict hulks, apparently without a future. The lesson to be learned is that such buildings provide the economic basis – the seed-corn for urban regeneration – the most stupendous example of which is of course the redevelopment of Manningham Mills by Urban Splash. In a few decades the social fabric of these areas of Bradford could be entirely transformed. As Leeds has found since the 1980’s, what was once a practically no-go, run down riverside area of the city has now become a highly sought after residential area.

Such a vision was absent in the redevelopment of Forster Square Station in the 1980’s, the site of the old Midland Station being sold off, the buildings (except for the token retention of the screen wall) demolished and the new station built well behind Forster Square, out of sight, accessible to the City only by an up then down ramp from Forster Square itself or by a staircase and lift from School Street. The passenger (customer) facilities are negligible. What mean and inadequate buildings Bradford’s railway termini are! And Bradford might have been able to boast of restored stations to vie with Manchester Piccadilly or Liverpool Lime Street! The comparison is heartbreakingly invidious.

Now back to Manor Row. Looking up, on the west side, there is clearly a dislocation in the building line. The three early Victorian (or Regency) villas below the Yorkshire Penny Bank are set well back from the street front (and presumably once fronted with gardens); then the extension to the (former) County Court built right up to the street line with unornamented side brick elevations both to the villas and to the first County Court Building of 1859 below – a distinguished Italianate building by the County Surveyor, Charles Reeves (possibly in collaboration with Lockwood and Mawson). Does this suggest a former intention to demolish these earlier buildings and to re-build completely along the street line?

Then, at the corner to Upper Piccadilly, stands York House, built (as the Bradford Heritage plaque proclaims) by Lockwood and Mawson in 1866 as one of the several Gentlemen’s Clubs (originally the Liberal Club) in Bradford. The rooms were clearly planned on the Grand Scale (as shown by the huge dining room bay window). The building is strongly reminiscent of the Randolph Hotel in Oxford (which Osbert Lancaster regarded as the finest gothic building in England, second only to Lincoln Cathedral!) Its neighbour, which stands at the corner between Upper Piccadilly and North Parade, is in strong contrast, a finely detailed “subdued domestic gothic” building. It was built (as the inscription on the corner pediment proclaims), as the Institute for the Blind and was designed by George Knowles and William Wilcox in 1868.

## **Piccadilly, Kirkgate, Piece Hall Yard, Bank Street, Hustlergate and the Wool Exchange**

Piccadilly may be thought as something of a back water to Darley Street, the main shopping street. And so it is, particularly where the ugly rear façade of Marks & Spencer's backs on to it, yet it is a street full of interest with wool warehouses which pre-date the better known ones in Little Germany. At the upper end of Piccadilly however are later buildings – the long block of Equity Chambers reaching down to Duke Street which faces another office block of 1904. Crossing Duke Street and looking up we see, on the east side, high up in the cornice, what must be one of the most monumental street signs anywhere: "PICCADILLY 1833". This, I think, must be one of the earliest warehouses in Bradford, designed by James Richardby and built 1830-1834.

On the opposite side of the street is another fine warehouse (Dean House) with an elliptical stone archway and pediment above. Then we hurry past the dismal canyon-like part of the street created by Marks & Spencers to the Old Exchange Building at the junction with Kirkgate. The Exchange symbolises Bradford's first attempt to provide a building which should meet (like the Assembly Rooms at Leeds) the social and commercial requirements of the town and its architectural style was a matter of no small importance. In 1825 the "Bradford Courier" advised the Building Committee that it should "hold fast to the models which have been handed down to us from the days of Greek excellence. Gothic is of course out of the question for an erection of this nature ..." The Committee clearly agreed and the building, designed by Francis Goodwin in 1828, was severely Grecian in style - as is still evident despite later alterations.

At first the building was simply known as "The Public Rooms" but soon acquired the title "The Exchange" and the street on which it stood was called "Exchange Street". The present name "Piccadilly" is an early example of the adoption of fashionable London street-names. The Exchange (which at one time housed the offices of Lockwood and Mawson), soon became inadequate for the commercial needs of the town which led to the erection of the Wool Exchange in 1864-7. It was then used (as the Heritage Plaque proclaims) as Bradford Post Office and is now a solicitor's office). As we shall see, it is paradoxical that the architectural style of the new Wool Exchange is the exact opposite of what the "Bradford Courier" would have approved.

On the building opposite, high up on the façade, is a sculpture of what appears to be a pelican (difficult to see) with the mysterious inscription "Scribite Scientes/Litera Scripta Manet" (which may be translated: "write about what is known/the written word survives") The initials CW (?) and the date 1871. Is this some record of the long defunct Bradford Philosophical and Literary Society or an Antiquarian Society?

At the foot of Piccadilly, Kirkgate winds down to Cheapside: we pass en route a rare survival of a coaching inn – The Shoulder of Mutton pub – the stable yard of which is now converted into a small enclosed garden or patio. At the corner with Cheapside stands the Bradford Old Bank Building (now Commerce House, a former home of the Chamber of Commerce), an imposing and dignified "classical baroque" design of 1885 by Milnes and France. Its neighbour on Cheapside, now called City House, is presently undergoing welcome renovation for the Bradford West City Community Housing Trust.

Cheapside, the continuation of Manor Row to Forster Square, is dominated by the imposing Midland Hotel (1885, by D Trubshaw, Architect to the Midland Railway) and re-built station entrance screen. The rest of Forster Square, where Forster House and Midland House once stood, is a building site, the first stage of the proposed Broadway Centre. These buildings suffered a slow and ignominious decline. A Portland Stone plaque in the entrance archway to Midland House once proclaimed:

Bernard Engle & Partners  
Architects and Town Planners  
S.G. Wardley  
City Engineer and Town Planner  
1963 – 1964

Over the years the plaque became daubed with graffiti and was eventually covered with fly posters. No doubt it now rests in some land-fill rubble site but whatever we think of the architecture this plaque at least should have been saved.

We now re-trace our steps along Kirkgate to Piece Hall Yard which records Bradford's first and only Piece Hall, built in 1773 to regulate the buying and selling of the woollen "Piece Goods" brought in by the merchants and manufacturers of the outlying districts. It was built on a much smaller scale than the famous Piece Hall in Halifax and soon outgrew its original purpose - partly on account of its insufficient accommodation and partly because merchants began to prefer to carry out their transactions in private in their own warehouses - culminating of course in the palatial warehouses of Little Germany. The Piece Hall ceased to operate as such in 1853 and was subsequently demolished. However, in Piece Hall Yard is a wonderful institution and remarkable survivor - the Bradford Club, built to designs of Lockwood and Mawson in 1877 and with a massive lantern over the doorway. Not even prosperous Leeds can now boast of such a club of its own.

At the corner of Kirkgate and Darley Street stands the superb Italianate building of the (former) Bradford Banking Company, designed by Andrews and Delauney in 1858 (now the Bradford and Bingley Building Society) and symbolic of Bradford's growing prosperity and self-assurance. The inscription over the doorway "Labor Omnia Vincit" (Work Conquers All) is Bradford's Civic Motto. The interior, beautifully restored, is absolutely stunning.

On the opposite corner is the former Talbot Hotel, once Bradford's premier hotel and now a shop. The deeply incised lettering at the entrances and in the cornice proclaims its former use. Then, down Bank Street, at the corner with Hustlergate, is another stupendous bank - the former Bradford Commercial Bank, designed by Andrews and Pepper in 1867-8 (now the National Westminster Bank). In the intervening ten years, the Italianate style has given way to gothic (how versatile Victorian architects were) and this is evident not only in the exterior but in the delicately painted (and restored) ceiling. The Bradford Commercial Bank provides a most appropriate foil to what is one of Bradford's major Victorian buildings - the Wool Exchange.

"My good Yorkshire friends, you asked me down here among your hills that I might talk to you about this Exchange you are going to build: but, earnestly and seriously asking you to pardon me, I am going to do nothing of the kind ... I have to tell you at the outset that I do not care for this Exchange of yours."

"Now pardon me for telling you frankly, you cannot have good architecture merely by asking people's advice on occasion. All good architecture is the expression of national life and character ..."

(Extracts from a lecture delivered by John Ruskin at the Mechanics Institute, Bradford, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1864 reprinted in "The Crown of Wild Olive")

As far as I know, the individual reactions to Ruskin's "Good Yorkshire Friends" have not been recorded. What did the leading men of Bradford think of this veiled attack upon their taste and architectural aspirations? Perplexity, yes, but dismay, no: Bradford was not deterred by the censure of this brilliant, wayward and ultimately insane architectural critic. Henry Francis Lockwood and William Mawson who won the competition to design the Wool Exchange (and who may well have been present on this occasion) were no doubt wholly familiar with Ruskin's "The Stones of Venice" and their building is in a wholly Venetian Gothic style.

The Wool Exchange stands on a narrow triangular site, the main entrance surmounted by a clock tower facing north east. We will pass round anti-clockwise. First the Bank Street façade, three storeys of narrow paired gothic pointed windows, the divisions between the storeys marked by decorative string - courses of different coloured stone and with open Venetian stone cresting above the parapet. Slender gothic pinnacles shoot up from the corners of the building. The carved heads set in roundels are of famous explorers - it would have been helpful if the architects had provided labels by which to recognise them; they are from left to right: Christopher Columbus, Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh, Commodore George Anson and Captain James Cook. On Market Street they continue: Lord Palmerston (who laid the foundation stone in 1864), W.E.Gladstone, Samuel Cunliffe Lister (Lord Masham), Sir Richard Arkwright, James Watt, Robert Stephenson, Sir Titus Salt and finally Richard Cobden "The Apostle of Free Trade" whose marble statue also stands inside the Wool Exchange, now gazing down on Waterstones' books. Shops occupy the ground floor, but it has to be said that the

gothic style does not lend itself to the display of goods and the narrow gothic windows are grudging to the ingress of light – a commodity in general in short supply in Bradford. Each side of the entrance are the statues of Bishop Blaize, Patron Saint of Woolcombers holding a wool comb, the instrument of his martyrdom and King Edward III who did much to encourage the wool trade. On the rear (Hustlergate) façade the dreary back wall-a later infill-has been replaced by one of glass which includes a mezzanine floor for a café, lightens the building enormously and reveals its constructional details. A brilliant design of 1982 by the architect Andrew Dempster.

Facing the Wool Exchange, at the foot of Hustlergate, stands Parkinson's Buildings (1877, now the Britannia Building Society), another fine gothic design by Knowles and Wilcox. Finally, at the corner of Market Street and Cheapside, we see yet another bank – the former Bradford District Bank (now Nat-West), designed by Milnes and France in 1873. The stone used, and the finely detailed carving, is of the highest quality and the corner site is emphasised by a dome raised upon a circular drum. What an incredible wealth of bank buildings Bradford possesses within such a small compass in the City!

### **Market Street, Charles Street, Hall Ings to Eastbrook Well**

Market Street, formerly called New Street, takes its name from the old Market House, long demolished of course, which stood at the bottom of Bank Street. It was erected in 1801 by a Mr Rawson, Lord of the Manor, who is said to have visited Italy to seek a suitable design. Old engravings show it to have been a curiously rustic building – perhaps a very amateurish version of Palladio's great market hall in Vicenza?

A more recent and important casualty was the demolition in 1962 of the Swan Arcade by the Arndale Property Trust. It stood opposite the Wool Exchange where Arndale House now stands. Designed by Milnes and France in the Italianate style and built 1877-81, it boasted six grand entrances, the main ones on Market Street and Charles Street, and, within, four linked arcades with wrought iron glazed roofs and accommodation for offices and stock rooms. It was a spectacular building, equal to the Victoria Quarter in Leeds and, along with Brown, Muffs Store, the mecca of Bradford Shopping. J.B.Priestley worked in the Swan Arcade as an office boy in the years before the First World War and the building, even then, had a profound impression on him. I think that the demolition of the Swan Arcade stands in relation to Bradford in the same way that the demolition of Pennsylvania Station stands in relation to New York: the realisation that development plans, mooted with such self assurance and with such financial clout, can lead, without the real apprehension of ordinary citizens, to the irreversible destruction of familiar landmark buildings. Certainly, when in 1968, the successors to the same developers proposed the demolition of the Wool Exchange, Bradford City Council purchased the building and thus saved it for posterity – which makes its failure to do so in the case of Kirkgate Market all the more sad and ironic. Of its replacement, Arndale House of 1965, designed by the American firm of John Graham and Partners, little needs to be said. There is, of course, no such place as Arndale, the name links that of Sam Chippindale and his Associate Arnold Hagenbach, the principal financiers of the Trust. It is easy today to denigrate the dull uniformity of the Arndale Centres which have been built throughout the country, but it should also be recognised that Sam Chippindale, who started his career from a small office in Charles Street, also had the vision, however misplaced or inadequate in practice, of creating bright, clean sheltered shopping arcades following the years of austerity after the Second World War.

Arndale House will, regrettably, not be demolished in the new Broadway re-development scheme, and it is to this scheme, and the demolition of the buildings of 1960s re-development scheme, that we now turn our attention. All the buildings designed by Bernard Engle and Partners are, as far as I can ascertain, to be demolished. Not one token block, to show future generations an epoch in Bradford's building development and architecture, will remain. As noted already, Forster House and Midland House have gone and Central House of 1959-1961, the "piece de resistance" of the whole scheme, is to follow. Is this wise planning policy? Are we not repeating the errors of the 1960s in this comprehensive sweeping away? Are the proposed new buildings (by Benoy Architects and the developer Westfield Broadway) clearly superior to those of Bernard Engle and Partners and will they provide for a more civilised urban environment? To answer these important questions we should take a careful look at the buildings themselves, starting here in Charles Street.

First, it should be noted that the parade of shops which face us are not wholly cheaply or meanly built; the shop fronts are of generous proportions and the large picture windows at the first floor are framed in Portland Stone with decorative bands of green serpentinite. Similarly the tower blocks rising above are delicately detailed with thin ribs of aluminium, the rising storeys being accentuated with panelled bands of green serpentinite again.

We now cross Broadway and into Hall Ings, crossing over the roadworks to take our stance above Eastbrook Well, at the bottom of Leeds Road. Looking back, notice the delicately curved façade of the block on Hall Ings running to Bank Street. But in my view, most significant of all is Central House, facing directly across Eastbrook Well towards Leeds Road, proclaiming or announcing to visitors and travellers the presence of the New Bradford. Its detailing repays close study. The tower, consisting of three vertical bands of windows surrounded by columns of Portland Stone, is raised up on “pilotis” – slender vertical columns – which are encased in glass panels, the middle section of which is stepped forward and angled downwards to provide the maximum light, but the minimum glare, to the showrooms within. What a stunning first floor restaurant this would make!

Such are the positive architectural attributes of these buildings: but are they of sufficient “architectural and historical interest” to merit Listed Building designation and retention as part of the Broadway scheme? My judgement is, that with the exception of Central House, they fail such a test. Moreover, a very positive feature of the Broadway scheme is the attempt to re-create, at least partially, the street pattern which existed prior to 1960, to eliminate through traffic and the pedestrian underpasses and to unite once again Little Germany with the City Centre. Again, these 1960s buildings are a barrier to the fulfilment of that vision. Except Central House: as the 1960s buildings around it are demolished its historical interest as the sole survivor or iconic representative of a major epoch in Bradford’s building history will increase. I see no reason, given a sensitive conservation-orientated approach, why Central House-or at least the centre-piece-should not be retained and re-furbished. In my view its demolition would be a gross error to rival that of the demolition of Swan Arcade and for which future generations will rightly condemn us. But all in present is in a state of flux. Let us hope that all the buildings which are to come will be worthy additions to the architectural heritage of Bradford,

“Floreat Bradford”  
or  
“Let Bradford Flourish”