

Introduction

Like many of London's place names, Marylebone means different things to different people. To some it connotes the Marylebone Road and its penumbra, scarred by grinding traffic, to others the area adjacent to the two Marylebone Stations, main-line and underground, while those with a sense of civic history may call to mind a once proud parish stretching from Oxford Street through St John's Wood to the edge of Kilburn. By far the most famous association is with Lords, and the Marylebone Cricket Club founded in 1787. But the enduring image of Marylebone as a district is of the grid of alternating streets and mews, leavened by the occasional square, that picks up the West End's uncertain structure beyond Oxford Street and shakes it into order and urbanity.

The core of that district lies at the heart of these volumes. One of London's historic great estates, it started out in the 1710s under the Harleys, passed to the Portlands and is now largely in the freehold ownership of the Howard de Walden dynasty. Breaking outwards from Cavendish Square, Harley, Wimpole and Welbeck Streets run to the north; Queen Anne, New Cavendish, Weymouth and Devonshire Streets cross between them: Portland Place, laid out by the Adam brothers and debouching into Nash's Park Crescent, gives the grid its spacious eastern edge. Rigid in layout yet human in scale, the disciplined planning and architecture of these streets are the outcome of a historic Georgian underlay refreshed by piecemeal adjustments over the centuries.

Westwards of this eligible area come Marylebone High Street and Marylebone Lane, the ancient axis of the parish, connecting Oxford Street with the former nucleus of Marylebone village. Beyond these the Roman-style Regency parish church and the main campus of the University of

Westminster, on the old workhouse site, face up to Marylebone Road and mark the north-western limit of the present volumes. East of the Howard de Walden grid is another territory again. Great Portland Street prefaces a triangle of land historically integral to Marylebone yet nowadays deemed to belong to Fitzrovia. Its hypotenuse begins with Cleveland Street, whence the old parish line and present borough boundary between Westminster and Camden continues to the junction of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road. Broadening southwards and latticed by its own less assertive grid, this triangle comprises offices, workshops – many once thronged with garment workers – and a backwater of narrow streets and artisan flats. Flashes of Victorian incident and colour enliven this streetscape, supremely the celebrated All Saints, Margaret Street (Ill. 0.39). Towards the triangle's southern base, the impact of Oxford Street's trade overwhelms. That greatest of London shopping streets is reserved for a future volume, but its force and scale can be felt up to the line of Wigmore and Mortimer Streets. The few streets that have escaped, like Rathbone Place and Hanway Place, are more redolent of Soho than of Marylebone.

The aura of south-east Marylebone is various. Time-honoured medical connections have bequeathed cosmopolitanism and gravity to the central grid. Here patients for private clinics or guests at serviced apartments and hotels alight at the kerbside, chauffeurs linger on the qui vive for parking attendants and pedestrians scurry rather than saunter, pressed forward by the rhythm of the streets. A mundane mews behind may be disrupted by a vision of nurses on tea breaks clad in overall green, or a lorry backing in with oxygen canisters. Marylebone High Street and its boutiques draw their constituency of well-heeled shoppers and loafers. Yet Paddington Street Gardens and Marylebone Churchyard close by convey an air of ease, with old people reflective on benches or gaggles of schoolchildren on the grass. Lunchtime sprawlers in Cavendish Square are different – a *mélange* of shop assistants, office workers and tourists taking their breaks. On the fringes of

Fitzrovia the livelier portions of Great Titchfield Street and its surroundings exude conviviality, mixing pubs, small shops and cafés, even now not all gentrified, patronized by the copious media businesses that have spread outwards from the BBC and taken over the premises of the dwindling garment trade. Such is the portion of Marylebone whose history and architecture these volumes investigate.

South-East Marylebone before 1711

Marylebone east of the Tyburn River belonged to the Manor of Tyburn, which was in existence by the time of Domesday Book. Estimated at about 600 acres, the manor then belonged to Barking Abbey and ran as far north as St John's Wood. The hamlet of Tyburn, originally so called, lay by the manor's southern edge, where the stream crossed Oxford Street some way east of that ancient thoroughfare's junction with Watling Street–Edgware Road. A small church dedicated to St John the Evangelist was built here, supposedly in the reign of King John or the early thirteenth century. It occupied a site on the stream's east bank, identifiable today with the narrow block at 350–352 Oxford Street between the two arms at the bottom of Marylebone Lane.

Later in the thirteenth century Robert de Vere, 5th Earl of Oxford, who had inherited the manor through his wife, Alice de Sanford, built a manor house half a mile to the north of Tyburn village, on the site where the Conran shop now stands near the top of Marylebone High Street. That helped settle the axis of Marylebone Lane and Marylebone High Street, the former always more sinuous than the latter. Following a decree of 1400, a new church dedicated to St Mary, still small, was built across the street from the manor house in a better-protected location than its predecessor down by the main road. Manor house and church promoted a northward shift in the Tyburn community's centre of gravity, and from the 1460s at the latest it began to be

known instead as Marybourne, Marybone or Marylebone, the 'Marybone' form finding most favour until well into the eighteenth century.

Possession of the manor eventually reached Thomas Hobson, an Exchequer officer under Henry VII, who may have added to or rebuilt the house and resided there. It was confiscated at the Dissolution by Henry VIII on the grounds that the ultimate title still lay with the Abbess of Barking. Marylebone Park, later Regent's Park, was now carved out of it for the King's pleasure, while the remainder of Tyburn manor along with the title of keeper of the park was granted to the courtier Sir Anthony Denny. A survey of 1538 mentions the manor house's appurtenances around this time, referring to orchards, gardens, meadows, dovehouses and a windmill – features repeated in deeds for the next century and a half.¹

Control of the reduced Tyburn manor passed next to the Forsett family. London lawyers of standing, they were to retain it for more than a hundred years. Richard Forsett, described in 1555 as 'farmer of the King and Queen of their manor of Marylebone', seems to have been a subtenant of Sir Henry Sidney, who held a lease expiring in 1598. He was succeeded in 1561 by his son Henry Forsett, then by Henry's brother Edward (c.1554–1630), a politician and author of minor note. In 1611 Edward Forsett bought the freehold from the Crown for £829 3s 4d. He lived in the manor house during his declining years and was buried in the vault he had built beneath the chancel of the parish church (the inscription of which survives in the present building). His son Robert, married to Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Spiller of Laleham, continued to occupy the manor house, but after his death in 1671 and that of his son Edward in 1672 it came under the control of Edward's widow Anne (born Anne Nelson, widow of Henry Field of Ashford, Middlesex) during the minority of their son Robert. She remodelled and extended the house to its ultimate form (Ill. 0.3), falling out in the process with Robert, who chose to live at Laleham. There, 'having God be praised a very sound mind though a crazy body', he died and was buried in 1688. It was during this 1670s–80s

period that the house was first used as a school. With Robert's death, the property came into the hands of his aunt Arabella, sister of Edward Forsett, and her husband Thomas Austen, a wealthy merchant of Hoxton and South Mimms.²

Thomas Austen (d. 1701) was an accumulator of property and there is no evidence that he and his wife lived at Marylebone. Their son John Austen (c.1675–1742) had political ambitions and sat for some time as a Whig MP. He was most interested in ready money and collecting art, so he sold most of the estates his father had acquired. Marylebone – or the Manor of Tyburn, as it was still formally called – was the first such sale, maybe realized to meet expenses connected with John Austen's unsuccessful bid to become an MP for Middlesex in 1710.³

In 1708, perhaps with a view to its sale, Austen commissioned a survey of his Marylebone inheritance from Henry Pratt, best known for his maps of Ireland. Pratt's map offers a clear picture of the manor, shortly to become the Cavendish–Harley estate, at that date (Ill. 0.4). It amounted to 203 acres, excluding the 63 acres of Barrow Hills north of Marylebone Park. The inhabited nucleus was the top of the High Street, where buildings lined what was still an irregular lane north and south of the church on the west side, but on the east side mostly south of the manor house. Three bowling greens are marked, of which the two largest belonged to Marylebone Gardens, by then open to visitors for over fifty years and in the ownership of the Long family, Covent Garden-based brewers and vintners. So successful were these gardens that the village had become a place of suburban summer resort.

Beyond that nucleus the manor was broken into enclosed fields. The Tyburn settlement beside Oxford Street had vanished, but to its west on the future site of the mouth of Stratford Place stood the Lord Mayor's little 'banqueting house', built in 1565 for officials inspecting the water supply to the City of London drawn from the Tyburn. Only two further small buildings are shown by Pratt on the Oxford Street frontage. John Steel(e), tenant of the

largest farm, held about 119 acres stretching from the north-eastern tip of the property (in modern terms the top of Cleveland Street) to the south-west corner next to Marylebone Lane, with a farmhouse where Great Portland and Riding House Streets now meet. Bisecting this farm, a track starting from Oxford Street by the site of Rathbone Place ran north-west and emerged where Marylebone Lane and Marylebone High Street meet. Two hostelrys beside this track, the Adam and Eve near Oxford Street and the Half Way House nearer Marylebone village, suggest it may have been in regular use by merry-makers going to and from Marylebone Gardens; it was certainly the quickest route from St Giles and built-up London to the village (see Ill. 0.4b). A vestige survives as Marylebone Passage, between Wells and Margaret Streets. In the fields a little to the north of the Adam and Eve stood a third establishment, the Boarded House, renowned from the 1680s until the 1720s for the baiting of bears and yet more exotic animals such as leopards, panthers and African tigers. It was also here that the celebrated James Figg promoted sword contests and trials of strength, in which he himself sometimes fought, and other entertainments, including boxing matches between women. After 1725 Figg's performances generally took place at the 'amphitheatre' he had built behind his pub, the City of Oxford, on the Oxford Road. The Boarded House was demolished in 1735. (The suggestion that another well-known prizefighter, John Broughton, later established an amphitheatre there is erroneous; a description by J. T. Smith ties it firmly to the Adam and Eve site).⁴

By 1708 the usage of this land was by no means purely agricultural. Clay and gravel pits abounded in token of London's encroachment, and a tenant of one of the eastern fields, George Wells, had been called a brickmaker as far back as 1658. Wells Lane or Street, named after him, was another old track, but did not connect with Oxford Street till the 1690s. The Longs, who were responsible for that extension, probably owned the Adam and Eve, and planned a brewery close by under a lease of 1695 from Thomas Austen, but it

is not shown by Pratt. In 1703 they advertised plain tiles and pantiles from their kiln in this vicinity.⁵

Beyond the area thus mapped smaller freeholds intervened in the south-east corner of Marylebone between the edge of the manorial ground and the parish boundary, the most important being Harp Close, belonging to the Girle family. The one substantial development here along Oxford Street was the brewery built sometime in the third quarter of the seventeenth century by Joseph Girle senior, and two public houses associated with it, the Castle, a coaching inn, and the George. The Castle may well have commemorated the 'small Fort, at the East-end of Tyburn Road', shown approximately here on George Vertue's map of the earth defences put up to protect London against the King in 1642-3.⁶ Further north, also on Girle's land, lay Marchant's Waterworks, earliest of several reservoirs or ponds reliant on the springs rising through the gravel at points all along the southern fields of Marylebone parish. The Berners family, which since 1654 had owned the 25 acres next west, known as Newlands, with an access lane from the north, leased a small area for similar purposes to the New River Company in 1685. The largest such project was the Duke of Chandos's Marylebone Basin of the 1720s. None proved successful in the long run and the sites were duly built over.

Joseph Girle died in 1677, just as he was becoming deeply involved in the development of Soho.⁷ His Marylebone properties were divided between his one son and many daughters. By 1690 the larger part of Harp Close had been sold to Thomas Rathbone, a local carpenter and surveyor who doubtless always had it in mind to develop the ground but bided his time until about 1718, the date given on a stone still to be seen at the bottom of Rathbone Place (at 52 Oxford Street). A portion west of the Castle Inn descended to a Girle granddaughter, whose husband Major John Hanway started building up Hanway Place from about 1721. By then the far more ambitious development of the old manorial lands, described in the following section, had begun. It

had made great headway by 1738, when William Berners followed suit with his Oxford Street frontage.

When Girle died, he also owned two of three freehold fields lying beyond the manorial grounds, immediately west of Marylebone Lane. These took their names from the City of London's conduit, which carried the waters of the Tyburn (or Ay Brook as this stretch of the river was also known) across Oxford Street towards the City. The land east of the Tyburn, with the Lord Mayor's Banqueting House, comprised the northern end of the City Corporation's Conduit Mead estate, which extended south of Oxford Street all down Bond Street. The Banqueting House became redundant and was pulled down in 1736, but its grounds were not developed till the 1770s, as Stratford Place. West of that property lay the twenty-odd acres of Conduit Field or Close, whose ownership descended from Girle's daughter Mary to Sir Thomas Edwardes and began to be developed from the 1760s; most of that area, now between Wigmore and Oxford Streets and generally known as the Hope-Edwardes estate, lies outside the scope of the present volumes. The third freehold, some four acres in extent, was Little Conduit Close, which descended from Girle's daughter Hannah Thayer and thence to Jacob Hinde. It was systematically developed from the 1770s, chiefly with Thayer and Hinde Streets.

Accounts of these smaller landholdings are given in the succeeding chapters, and here it is sufficient to show their location on a map (Ill. 0.5). The history of the manorial lands and their development is an altogether more substantial tale, and is next addressed.

The Howard de Walden estate and its antecedents

The Cavendish–Harley estate, 1711–55

In a passage attributed to Joseph Addison, *The Tatler* related in May 1709 that ‘one of my acquaintance who lives at Marylebone, has put a good sentence of his own invention upon his dwelling-place, to find out where he lives: he is so near London, that his conceit is this, “The country in town; or, the town in the country”’.⁸ Two years later John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, bought from John Austen the Manor of Tyburn and all the Marylebone lands depicted in Pratt’s survey, together with Barrow Hills north of Marylebone Park. The purchase was reputed to be a bargain for Newcastle, a shrewd acquirer of land; the price of £17,000, it was said, should have been £25,000. A valuation made in December 1710 by a Mr Sherwin (perhaps Robie Sherwin, a client of the duke’s) estimated it at £20,779, or 24 years’ purchase of the annual rental.⁹ Austen must have been eager to sell.

The duke died within months of the acquisition at his main country seat, Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire, and the property passed to his only child, Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles (Ill. 0.6). In 1713, in a match that had been planned by the duke, she married Edward Harley, the only son of Robert Harley, Queen Anne’s chief minister, latterly Newcastle’s political ally and since 1711 the 1st Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer.¹⁰

Planning for development of this well-situated property may have begun as early as 1715, as was later claimed, but there is no evidence for activity before 1717, and indeed there was litigation over Newcastle’s bequests, not settled till after his widow’s death in 1716. The young Lord Harley, who became the 2nd Earl in 1724, was an aesthete, collector and patron, eccentric and unworldly. Better at spending than investing, he seems never to have been much involved with his London estate. It was his uncle, also Edward, another Tory politician, a former Exchequer official and an experienced fixer, who was the pivotal figure in terms of engagement with the

land and its potential. In July 1717 Francis Seale was appointed steward and receiver of the Harleys' rents. By the end of the year 'Auditor Harley', as Edward was known, obliged to stand away from public affairs to refute a charge of embezzlement, had identified a half-dozen eminent and well-heeled Tories as potential investors willing to build on the estate and asked Seale to produce a plan. John Prince, a Covent Garden builder-surveyor, had become involved by April 1718 and together Seale and Prince began negotiating building leases of marked-out ground. What was to become Cavendish Square was enclosed and sewers were laid. It soon became public knowledge that plans were afoot for a 'very spacious and noble Square, and many streets that are to form avenues to it'.¹¹

Early in 1719 Prince published a plan that he claimed as his own design, showing 'Buildings already begun to be built'. This stretched the truth about what remained empty fields. The sophisticated plan (Ill. 0.7) prefigured a densely residential enclave, many streets of houses arrayed about a single square placed on axis with Hanover Square, a chapel to its west, a market to its east and a palace (for the Duke of Chandos) on its north side, with gardens behind. The existing road along the southern and parish boundary was denominated Oxford Street. Most of the other street names likewise derived from Harley family names, titles and residences. An important feature of this plan, and a novelty for London, was its extensively orthogonal layout as a regimented grid. Despite many deviations in particulars the philosophy and outlines of the plan held. Over many decades its form was broadly adhered to; the original scale of its rectilinear blocks and the width of its roads continue to define the area.

The estates were finally and formally settled on Lady Harley and her heirs in February 1719. A private Act of Parliament then led to a trust deed of June 1719 that facilitated the granting of leases by her for up to 99 years. The only other concerted development in the parish at the time, on the Rathbone estate to the east, involved leases of 61 years, as had been fairly general in

London hitherto. The Harleys' innovation of longer leaseholds may have been thought likely to attract better-quality building; a similar trust deed was negotiated for the comparable Grosvenor Estate in 1721. The 99-year leases were introduced from June 1719, backdated to March, and always granted in the names of both Lord and Lady Harley, or Earl and Countess of Oxford, as they became in 1724. They were generally, though not invariably, staggered to fall in together.¹²

Activity around building leases intensified in 1720 keeping Auditor Harley busy managing a flurry of affairs. That June, Seale gave notice to Abbott Newell, an existing lessee and supplier of bricks, to hand over land for building. Aristocratic enthusiasm was such at this juncture that Prince drew a new plan projecting a second square ('Queen Anne Square') in direct line with Cavendish Square, northwards of Queen Anne Street. The church and market house were to be immediately begun, to anchor intentions. Shown Prince's plan, Lady Pye judged it 'a noble plan of building that will be much for Lord Harley's advantage'.¹³

Then in late 1720 South Sea Company share prices dived. The bursting of that bubble ushered in an unfavourable investment climate and forced abandonment of the new plan. Furthermore, Francis Seale died in October. His successor, appointed in February 1721, was William Thomas, who had been Robert Harley's secretary (Ill. 0.8). Thomas chronicled his time as the estate's steward in 1738, and continued in the role to c.1745. His record might be thought self-justificatory, but other evidence confirms that he represented the Harleys conscientiously. Slowly but surely, Thomas allocated plots on building leases and assiduously pursued dilatory or miscreant builders. From about 1725 he was based in a house at the west end of Henrietta Street.¹⁴

Leases were generally preceded by building agreements, usually allowing two years at peppercorn rents for completion, the leases to be issued after covering in and backdated. Party walls were enforced, and there were specifications as to timber scantlings, the use of red and grey stock bricks with

rubbed-brick window jambs, wall thicknesses, heights, window sizes, stone-coped parapets, crown glass, 3ft 6in-wide areas and 5ft-paved front footways. There were covenants with respect to palisades or fencing, paving, coach-houses (not to be on street fronts), and against noisome trades. Aspirations toward homogeneity of design evident in the specifications were never seriously pursued.¹⁵

In so far as there was an architectural controlling hand it was that of James Gibbs. He was already linked to the Harleys in the 1710s and may have been involved behind the scenes with the devising of estate plans in 1719–20. As for John Prince, he was still on the scene in the early 1720s, but Thomas had to write to him in 1725 about his failure after many years to complete fronts on Holles and Princes Streets. Allegedly, Prince was only semi-literate and he was derided as arrogant – he described himself, unusually, as a ‘master builder’ and, people said, as ‘the Prince’ of builders. He appears to have forsaken or been forsaken by the Harleys and returned to Covent Garden around 1725. More dependable in the early years were Benjamin Timbrell and Thomas Phillips, leading carpenters, contractors and partners, who were involved with works on the estate by 1720 and responsible for building the Oxford Chapel, later St Peter’s, Vere Street, in 1721–4.¹⁶

This initial energy was not sustained. Oxford Market, built in 1721, ran into legal difficulties, and the wider economics of building cycles contributed to a steep decline in activity by the early 1730s. The Oxford Street frontage was completed by then, but the streets connecting with Cavendish Square took longer, while the square itself remained gappy. Its incompleteness, indeed, became the butt of acerbic satire by the Grub Street journalist James Ralph in 1734.¹⁷

A further sign of difficulties was the frustrating and ultimately barren outcome of the Duke of Chandos’s plans for the north side of the square and its environs. Having notoriously amassed a fortune as paymaster-general during the wars of the Spanish Succession, James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon

and then 1st Duke of Chandos, began his sumptuous house at Cannons, Edgware, around 1713. In 1717 he proposed also to take land on the square's north side for a mansion. Negotiations with the Harleys were protracted, in part because he hoped to secure extensive and uninterrupted grounds, to the point that it was suggested he might approach the Crown for lands further northwards. After the South Sea Bubble the duke's fortunes took a turn for the worse and his plans changed. In 1722 he was contemplating building a north-south street, so giving up on the idea of a great garden. Next he envisaged taking just the east half of the land north of the square. Finally, in 1724 Chandos bought the freehold of around seven and a half acres, comprising the entire north side of Cavendish Square back to Queen Anne Street. Beyond that to the north he proposed to develop land on leasehold to a depth of 1,395ft. Various streets were projected, including the future east-west New Cavendish, Weymouth and Devonshire Streets, plus north-south ones less exactly related to the eventual street pattern.¹⁸

Once again this scheme did not stick. At the end of 1724 rival water companies were hatching elaborate plans for basins around London. One was the Strand-based York Buildings Company, of which Chandos had become a governor. He now bought more stock in the expanding company, and proposed the use of his Marylebone lands for a reservoir. Plans were settled for a long lease to the company for a basin 1,395ft by 200ft, half on Chandos's land, half on Lord Oxford's, on the same north-south axis as Cavendish Square, extending from Queen Anne Street up to the future line of Devonshire Street and leaving strips east and west for housing. Excavation began in July 1725 with 300 men at work, paid by Chandos. The 'Marylebone Basin' was complete the following April (Ills 0.9, 0.10). J. T. Desaguliers, who doubled as chaplain and hydraulic engineer for the duke at Cannons and at York Buildings, advised on the installation. An extra plot (later the site of Chandos House) was taken for maintenance and a small 'water house'. Pipes

were to supply St James's Square, where Chandos was instrumental in forming another reservoir in 1726–7.¹⁹

But the New River Company was already supplying Cavendish Square and undercutting its competitors. The basin was not a success and the York Buildings Company never paid its rent. Development along the margins having failed to materialize, in 1730 Chandos tried without success to sell the reservoir. A New River main to the north-east corner of Cavendish Square was projected in 1742, and in 1749 Chandos's son sold all the land north of Queen Anne Street back to the Harley estate for £250. The basin was eventually filled in and the site developed from around 1768 as Mansfield Street.²⁰

In 1726 the Cavendish–Harley rents from Marylebone were £1,816 7s 2d, more than half from the streets laid out since 1718. But William Thomas, the steward, had to overcome a multitude of difficulties. The vacillating Chandos had to be politely told off about the placement of stables and sewers, as well as about the stench of a 'laystall or dunghill' on his ground between the square and the reservoir. Other builders were rebuked for delays with less circumlocution, but the usual expectation of completion within two years had to be extended to seven years for minor development on Chapel Court in 1725. Thomas's exasperation surfaced in 1726 – 'I leave the World to Judge whether such buildings as have been lately erected upon Charles Johnson's and Jenkin Edward's Ground can be called Improvements of his Lordship's Estate'. Another antagonist was William Long, who inherited leases of land near Oxford Market used for extracting gravel and brick clay and dumping night-soil. Long's opposition delayed the development of what is now Eastcastle Street till the late 1730s.²¹

In 1734 the Earl and Countess of Oxford's only child, Margaret Cavendish Harley, married William Bentinck, 2nd Duke of Portland, at the Oxford Chapel (Ill. 0.11a–b). The event marked a rare appearance of the dynasts on their Marylebone property, for none of the nominal proprietors

yet lived there. By then the spendthrift 2nd Earl's finances were straitened. Facing debts of almost £375,000 in 1737, he put his affairs into the hands of trustees, and Thomas prepared his 'memorial' to help them decide whether or not to sell the estate. Having decided against, they oversaw an extraordinary burst of activity in 1738–9. Ground rents had risen to £1,508 10s 11*d* when Oxford was declared bankrupt in 1740. He died in 1741, to be succeeded in his title by his cousin Edward Harley junior, who had latterly been living in Henrietta Street. But the 3rd Earl of Oxford did not inherit the Marylebone estate, which under the Act of 1719 was held in trust for his widow and then after her death in 1755 for her daughter the Duchess of Portland. The Marylebone lands thus passed by stages to the Bentinck family.²²

The Portland estate, 1755–1901

An all but complete hiatus in development occurred in the early 1740s, and things only picked up slowly thereafter. Following William Thomas's retirement, there appears to have been no controlling mind or close estate management. The widowed Countess of Oxford spent nearly all her time at Welbeck, which she improved, but was little concerned with London affairs. When she died in 1755 the title to the Marylebone estate passed to her daughter, wife of the 2nd Duke of Portland, as Cavendish–Harley heiress. Practical control remained in the hands of the late Earl of Oxford's trustees, principally the lawyer and antiquary James West (1703–72), whom the countess had come to distrust – 'the richer he grew and the grander, the more she disliked him'. The amiable duke (Ill. 0.11) spent most of his time at Welbeck, which was in fact his wife's in name; the livelier duchess, who is well portrayed in the letters of her friend, Mrs Delany, preferred Bulstrode Park, Buckinghamshire, the Bentinck family property. When in London they occupied a Thames-side house in Whitehall but the duke was seldom there.

He also owned in his own right a substantial and more immediately lucrative London estate in Soho Fields, in the throes of development between 1728 and 1768.²³ Both seem to have been detached from policy for suburban Marylebone.

Nevertheless, Marylebone ground rents grew to £2,616 by 1753. That year saw two changes. In August the absentee countess appointed a new steward and receiver of rents for Marylebone in the person of Thomas Isatt (d. 1771). Described when appointed as a gentleman with a base at Milnthorpe on the Welbeck estate in Nottinghamshire, Isatt doubtless had some legal and financial background. He established himself in London on Wigmore Street and acted as treasurer to Marylebone Vestry from the late 1760s. But he was also peripatetic, acting for the Portlands in the north-west and having some role in the excise at Liverpool. He regularly witnessed building leases during the boom of the 1760s. Latterly, he worked with a brother, Henry Isatt (d. 1780).²⁴

In October 1753 the countess also allowed her husband's first cousin Thomas Foley, 2nd Baron Foley, to build a large independent house with its own grounds north-east of Cavendish Square, known as Foley House. The consequences proved as fraught as those the Harleys had suffered from the Duke of Chandos. In 1758, after the house was finished and the countess had died, the Duke and Duchess of Portland for reasons that are obscure went on to sign a document promising the masterful Lord Foley control of a large part of the estate's central open lands in front of his house. Conflicts over this transaction led to suspicion on the duchess's part towards Isatt and her trustee James West, and contributed to an estrangement between her and her son, the 3rd Duke of Portland.²⁵ On inheriting in 1762, the 3rd Duke instigated lawsuits to recover the position, resolved by compromise in 1767. On the ground the siting of Foley House across the previously intended path of Queen Anne Street and the undertaking to leave its northward prospect unimpeded caused a tissue of town-planning problems that dogged

development for half a century, until it was destroyed and Langham Place laid out.

Otherwise things on the Portland Estate, as it had now become, were looking up. East and west of Foley House building proceeded by leaps and bounds over the three decades from 1758, tripling the development's size and taking it northwards most of the way from Mortimer and Wigmore Streets to the New Road (Ill. 0.12). That major thoroughfare had been laid out by Act of Parliament in 1756–7, transforming the accessibility of Marylebone and Paddington from the City. Along its Marylebone stretch it followed the approximate boundary between the Crown property in Marylebone Park and the land bought by the Duke of Newcastle in 1711. A few fragments of Portland land lay beyond (including the site of the present Madame Tussauds), while the future ground of Park Crescent and the top of Harley Street belonged to Dupper Field, Crown land south of the New Road. Over the territory in between now stretched street after inexorable street of terrace housing. The best of it lay west of Portland Place; here existing north–south streets hitherto hardly more than stubs were prolonged and interspersed with strings of shared mews. The eastern districts, around Great Portland Street and beyond, generally attracted more humdrum development. So did the estate's irregular western confines, where the old village of Marylebone and the fading attractions of Marylebone Gardens, still taking up some few acres until the 1770s, caused the grid adumbrated a half-century before to break step.

There was a certain minimalist efficiency about this phase of development. John Gwynn, writing in the 1760s well before it had reached its full extent, thought the area's new buildings no better than 'a plain brick wall of prodigious length'.²⁶ On the other hand there was little back-land development of the kind that caused problems elsewhere for future generations. Middleton Buildings, a court put up around 1759 between Langham and Riding House Streets (and extant, though its houses have been

replaced), is a rare instance to the contrary. Between Marylebone High Street and the parish burial ground there was also a messy area that degenerated into slums. Many minor streets, especially in the eastern sector, jumbled up commercial, industrial and domestic uses with stabling. But when Edward Bailey represented the Portland Estate before the Select Committee on Town Holdings a century later, he was able to claim that it was a well-run estate in part because it was 'very well laid out originally'.²⁷

The developments that most redeemed the heart of the estate from crushing uniformity were those promoted by the Adams in Mansfield Street and Portland Place, subsequent to the 1767 agreement between the 3rd Duke of Portland and Lord Foley's heir. This solved some of the problems caused by the intrusion of Foley House, and released the forces for a scintillating run of Adam frontages, divided across Portland Place by the exceptional 125ft-wide open space that it had been promised would be left free of building to preserve the verdant view northwards from Foley House.

The architectural qualities of this bold venture are separately discussed below. How far it impinged upon the Portlands' personal calculations is hard to say. The 3rd Duke of Portland (Ill. 0.13) was the most distinguished of his dynasty, holding the title for 47 years, serving twice as head of government and acting as long-term leader of the so-called Portland Whigs. Yet he was extravagant, at least in early life. Succeeding his father in 1762 at the age of 24, the duke first lived independently while in London at 16 Grosvenor Street, not on the family property. In 1766 he eased his finances and his relations with his mother, still titular owner of the Marylebone estate, by marrying his cousin Lady Dorothy Cavendish, daughter of the 4th Duke of Devonshire. They then moved to Charles Street, Mayfair. They must have hankered for a purpose-built London home, for around 1770 the Adams designed them a grand mansion where 61 and 63 New Cavendish Street now stand, intended to look down Mansfield Street (Ill. 0.14). But the duke was already embroiled in politics and the scheme turned out to be unaffordable. Instead, for almost

the remainder of his long life he lived in sufficient grandeur at Burlington House as tenant of his brother-in-law the 5th Duke of Devonshire, who owned both this and another of the great Piccadilly palaces, Devonshire House. The death of his mother in 1785 did not solve the 3rd Duke's problems; according to Professor Turberville, author of the definitive *Welbeck Abbey and its Owners*, 'the entanglements in which he had been involved before his mother's death were too extensive and disastrous, and too cumulative in their effects, to admit of any rapid alleviation'. When he died in 1809, he was encumbered by half a million pounds of debt.²⁸

Towards his Marylebone estate, which before his mother's death nominally belonged to her trustees, the 3rd Duke's commitment seems to have been intermittent, if not fickle. He was clearly piqued by the Foley affair. During the local struggle of the 1760s, which led to the replacement of Marylebone's Open Vestry by a Select Vestry, he at first opposed the change because it was initiated by the rebarbative Lord Foley. Then after Foley died, the duke changed his mind.²⁹ He seems always to have dealt with the parish considerately but at arm's length. Thomas Isatt, who remained his agent till he died in 1771, must have been the main conduit for this relation, as treasurer to the Vestry. After that things are less clear. The second of the proprietary chapels built on the estate, the Portland Chapel of 1760-6 in Great Portland Street, was instigated under the duke's father, possibly by Isatt; with the third, initially the Titchfield, later the Welbeck Chapel, opened in 1775, he appears to have had little to do. He made some lukewarm show of helping the Vestry through their endless tribulations in procuring a new parish church, but it never eventuated during his dukedom. At one stage in the long ping-pong game of finding a site, he offered one at the top of Harley Street and it was accepted, yet nothing came of it.³⁰ On the other hand the duke was personally engaged with some of the negotiations involving the Adam brothers, and he made sure that when James West finally died in 1772, he was

replaced as his mother's trustee by a lawyer who was also a friend, Sir Beaumont Hotham.

Even before Isatt's death, a certain oversight of all the Portlands' estates – including Welbeck, Bulstrode, Marylebone and Soho and much else – had passed to the remarkable John Heaton (1738–1818). Based in Old Burlington Street since 1777, Heaton was a lawyer of substance with extensive interests and a suburban property of his own at Bedfords, Havering. His primary business seems to have been as agent to the 5th Duke of Devonshire, managing and developing his Derbyshire properties, notably Buxton; he also looked after the Devonshires' Burlington House estate in London, and probably Chiswick too. Heaton seems to have swung into full action on the Portlands' estates only after the dowager duchess died. In 1787 he performed some kind of rescue act on their finances: 'he has just finished extricating the Duke of Portland from distress', wrote the Duchess of Devonshire to her mother, 'and even by useful speculations gives him the prospect of affluence'. The remedy included the sale of the Portland Soho estate, undertaken from 1795 onwards.³¹ Given the pace of development on the Portland Marylebone estate, Heaton must surely have judged it as critical to the Cavendish–Bentinck dynasty's future prosperity. Duly, from around 1786 there are clues to Heaton's active involvement here too.

One token of a shift towards closer management of the Marylebone property under the 3rd Duke was the emergence of an estate surveyor. In the early stages of the Cavendish–Harley estate, as we have seen, James Gibbs acted fleetingly in some such capacity, probably informal. The next possible candidate is the architect-builder Stiff Leadbetter, who had worked for the 2nd Duke at Bulstrode, built speculatively on the Portland Soho estate (where he had his London base), designed Foley House and erected the Portland Chapel before his death in 1766. But there is no hint of Leadbetter regularly managing developments in Marylebone or laying out new areas for building. The first architectural figure known to have done the latter was Richard

Norris, who was paid in 1776 by the 3rd Duke for work at Burlington House and in the following two years is named as the duke's surveyor in deeds about staking out a development at the junction of Great Portland and Devonshire Streets and laying out streets in the area of Norton (now Bolsover) Street and eastwards.³² Either Richard Norris senior (d. 1779), a Holborn-based builder and surveyor, or his son of the same name (d. 1792) may be meant.

John White the elder (1748–1813), a man with intimate Marylebone connections, is the first figure with a fair claim to be called the estate surveyor. His appointment in 1787 tallies well with that of William Porden, the neighbouring Grosvenor estate's first surveyor from about 1784.³³ White had earned his spurs developing Harley Street north of New Cavendish Street in the 1770s. Here he succeeded in the efficient creation of high-class houses without the Adams' flair or the elegance of Chambers. He was also active around the top of the High Street, and involved in the development of the new workhouse from 1775 onwards. A Salopian by birth and son-in-law to T. F. Pritchard of Coalbrookdale Bridge fame, White presumed to architectural status in Marylebone as early as 1770, in connection with the first designs for a new parish church, but was at first usually called a carpenter, timber merchant or simply builder. For the finishes of his early Harley Street houses he may have been helped by the Scottish-born architect George Steuart, who also had Shropshire connections.

The circumstances of White's appointment as surveyor are known. In February 1786, 'at the request of Mr Heaton', he signed an agreement to build first-class houses on some ground in Wimpole Street and Devonshire Place. The following January, Heaton was writing from Buxton to a third party, possibly White's lawyer, discussing terms for White's appointment as 'an agent of my own choice' and urging him to come to Buxton to talk things over. So Heaton had seen enough of his work by then to approve of him. Soon after that White was employed by the 5th Duke of Devonshire to add wings

to Chiswick House. On the Marylebone estate he revised arrangements for some portions of the land still unbuilt on and created the first proper estate map in 1797–9. Around 1790 he consolidated his position by building himself a sizeable house with a yard on a fragment of Portland land just north of the New Road. There he was joined in business by his son John White junior, and after about 1800 much of the architectural work may have emanated from the son. There must have been some relation between the Whites and the 3rd Duke, for John White junior could claim ‘His Grace’s good wishes’ when he applied for the post of Marylebone district surveyor in 1808. But though they produced designs for developing Marylebone Park (1809) and for the parish church (1810–13), for neither of these prestigious jobs were the Whites retained as architects. More fruitful were their schemes for extending Buxton on the Devonshires’ behalf from 1803 onwards.³⁴

The 4th Duke of Portland inherited in 1809 aged 41 and died in 1854 aged 85, so his was another lengthy dukedom (Ill. 0.15). Though a minor politician, he excelled as a man of business who stabilized his dynasty’s fortunes by putting the finances of his estates to rights. After selling Bulstrode, he took no drastic initiatives, but he spent much effort in developing his Nottinghamshire farms. Marylebone, now mostly built up, was in need of retrenchment, not grand visions. He donated the bare site for the new parish church, completed at last in 1817, and he fought for full compensation for the compulsory purchase of his properties under the Crown’s Regent Street scheme. The duke ‘made it a principle not to spend any of the Marylebone revenues’, says Turberville; ‘he did not consider he had any right to their present enjoyment’.³⁵ He is the prudent hero of the estate’s history.

The sense of a new broom soon made itself felt. An early change came in 1811, when Samuel Ware (1781–1860) supplanted the ageing John White as estate surveyor. His appointment probably arose out of alternative plans submitted by Ware and the Whites for redeveloping the environs of

Burlington House, John Heaton preferring Ware's more remunerative version.³⁶ This may have caused bad blood between Ware and White junior, who retained the consolation prize of district surveyor for Marylebone and made life difficult when his rival came to reconstruct the Oxford Market.

Unlike White senior, Ware was fully a professional architect-surveyor, not an ex-building craftsman. He was a competent designer, best known for the Burlington Arcade and the staircase at Burlington House, but his greatest strengths were as a precise and scrupulous surveyor. He was employed by the 4th Duke for £200 per annum as a retainer, plus fees for all special and incidental business, a small percentage for vetting all rebuildings carried out on the estate, and then a sliding scale of fees paid by potential tenants for surveying properties and negotiating terms. These tasks were not light; Ware claimed he received on average two or three communications per day about the estate, and in the case of one tiresome tenant in Henrietta Street he answered 49 letters (for which he charged the Duke five guineas extra). He also undertook land deals on his own behalf, including the purchase and efficient development of a small estate in Brompton.³⁷ In 1834 he was able to retire aged 53 to Portland Place and a large house at Church End, Hendon, handing over the estate business to his nephew C. N. Cumberlege (later Cumberlege-Ware).

Ware was busiest with Portland estate tasks in the early years of his surveyorship. He tangled manfully with the wily and much more senior John Nash over valuations of Portland property required for the Regent Street development, earning disparagement for his pains. In 1816 he rebuilt the Oxford Market, never lucrative and a continued headache thereafter, as its shops and tenements – never the right size – were directly managed by the Estate. He endeavoured to change estate arrangements over fire insurance, and he made a complete valuation of the 4th Duke's 'ecclesiastical property'; this he estimated at £50,733 13s 8d, or £40,587 if sold in one lot, which the duke proceeded to do (page ###). Ware also adapted Harcourt House,

Cavendish Square, adding stables behind, allowing the duke to become in 1825 the first proprietor of the Cavendish–Bentinck dynasty to live on the Marylebone estate. Since his father's death he had had no very permanent London abode, moving with his family from Burlington House first to Bath House, Piccadilly, and then to St James's Square.³⁸

When Ware was appointed, John Heaton was still trustee and steward to the 4th Duke. In 1817, just before he died, the job jumped a generation to his grandson, born Charles Ellis, later Charles Heaton, and finally from 1838 Charles Heaton-Ellis (1789–1865). Paid an annual salary of £500, Heaton-Ellis operated first from an address in what is now Cavendish Place but then belonged to Mortimer Street, latterly from 49 Harley Street, and had a country seat inherited from his Ellis forbears at Wyddial Hall, Hertfordshire. By the time of his last name change much of the day-to-day legal work of the estate had passed to E. S. Bailey of Bailey, Shaw, Smith & Bailey, of 5 Berners Street. This dynasty of solicitors eventually became the main working trustees. Edward Savage Bailey (1794–1870), the son of a Holles Street lawyer, was the first of them, practising originally from Newman Street, then Berners Street; he was succeeded in direct line by his son Edward Bailey (1822–88) and grandson Edward Horsman Bailey (1849–1933).³⁹

The upshot of these changes and of steadily accumulating improved ground rents, as old leases expired and new ones were issued, with or without provisos for rebuilding, was a dramatic leap in the Marylebone estate rental. The sums recorded by Robert Skynner, the receiver, leapt from £11,725 in 1817–18 to £20,017 in 1818–19, then £33,506 in 1821–2 and £39,188 in 1824–5. A growing proportion of this income came from commercial property, the Oxford Street figure for improved rents alone rising from £10,243 in 1828–9 to £19,056 in 1836–7. The later figures include a small return for Portland Town, an outlier to the estate then in course of development next to Primrose Hill, but it never yielded much. The rental continued to climb, reaching £52,893 in 1836–7, £56,960 in 1845–6 and £60,116 in 1849–50. These are gross figures;

allowing for costs, in 1844 the 4th Duke estimated that Marylebone was bringing in about £50,000 a year, or just under half of his total income. So rural rents no longer mattered most.⁴⁰ Mostly at Welbeck in his declining years, the 4th Duke left a London estate transformed less in looks than in wealth when he died in 1854.

None of the duke's four sons married. The oldest died young, so the title passed to the next, John. The 5th Duke (1800–79) was then past his prime. Though honourable and diligent in business affairs like his father, he famously accumulated a reputation as a recluse, digging tunnels and creating underground rooms at Welbeck Abbey and raising high trellises round the back of Harcourt House in Cavendish Square to protect his privacy, to his neighbours' dudgeon. As a pillar of the established church, he was increasingly beset by appeals from local clergy seeking support for their schools and other causes.⁴¹

The management of the Portland Marylebone estate carried on along the lines laid down in the 1810s. Formally, it was held still by two trustees, a family connection plus the reigning Bailey. The Baileys took the day-to-day policy decisions, writing letters to the 5th Duke asking clear questions at issue and leaving space for the latter to pen his answers. After James Lockyer had declined the post on grounds of ill health, Cumberlege was succeeded as estate surveyor in 1864–5 by Henry Baker, long acquainted with the work as Ware's former assistant and an architect-surveyor of similar type. Working from his own office in Gower Street, Baker was on £700 a year in 1872.⁴² That year, informing the duke about a case where litigation threatened because he had judged that the tenant in possession should not be offered a renewal, Baker added this postscript:

Very large numbers of Your Grace's old leases fall in in 1873. I am now in active survey and disposition of them – but I find many houses in a state of utter ruin, & others so objectionably occupied, that I feel compelled to

object to such lessees under any circumstances. They reside in the country or suburbs, let out every room to a separate family, and collect their rents weekly, so that they make considerable profits, whilst the superior landlord suffers materially in many ways.

Yet, Baker concludes, there are no current vacancies 'and I venture to say that the Estate never stood in a higher position, character and rentals, than it does at the present moment'.⁴³

The overall policy at that juncture remained cautious. Despite London's exponential growth, the advent of railways, the intensification of consumption in and around Oxford Street, and the gathering exodus of families to further-flung suburbs, the Portland enclave held its own, unblemished by major improvements or clearances. Edward Bailey listed nine street-widening schemes undertaken by the Estate between 1848 and 1874, but these were all tidying-up jobs carried out when the long leases of the 1760s neared their end.⁴⁴ There was as yet little change in the balance between rich and poor districts, or between domestic, professional and commercial tenancies, and only piecemeal rebuilding. Freehold sales were very rare. Lease renewals on payment of a fine were predicated on the premises being put into full repair, usually with the addition of an extra storey and other exacting and costly works like changes to the windows or replacement of front railings. In Portland Place and Cavendish Square some houses were aggrandized with porticoes and balconies, but that seems not to have been stipulated as a general estate policy.

The 5th Duke of Portland having died at Harcourt House in December 1879, the dukedom passed to a cousin, a great-grandson of the 3rd Duke. But following the 4th Duke's will, in case he should have no direct male heirs the Marylebone property descended to the 5th Duke's two sisters, Charlotte, Viscountess Ossington and Lucy, Baroness Howard de Walden. Thus the Portland Marylebone estate lost its link with the dukedom, though the old

title was retained till 1901. Lady Ossington (1805–89), the widow of John Denison, a former Speaker of the House of Commons, was much involved in religious and temperance causes, especially in Nottinghamshire; her most munificent foundation was the Ossington Coffee Tavern, Newark, opened in 1881. She had a house in Upper Brook Street but was seldom in town. When she died, it was said that ‘there were few charities connected with her London property to which Lady Ossington was not a generous subscriber’.⁴⁵ Lady Howard de Walden (1807–99), the widow of the 6th Baron Howard de Walden, a career diplomat, spent more time in London than her sister, occupying 35 Portland Place from 1887 but living otherwise mostly at Malvern. She too was philanthropic, donating to medical and nursing foundations; for instance, she paid the entire cost in 1893–4 of the National Dental Hospital at the corner of Great Portland and Devonshire Streets.

Shortly after the old ladies inherited, changes in policy and management took place. Hitherto there had been no central estate office; the steward and surveyor had operated from their own premises (under Cumberlege ‘so inconveniently located in the Adelphi’);⁴⁶ ground rents were either sent in to the receiver or, well into the nineteenth century, paid at the Court House in Marylebone Lane. Then in 1882 a Portland Estate office, conspicuous with crest, arose on the site of the painter Turner’s studio in Queen Anne Street (Ill. 0.16). There followed a campaign to tackle the worst slum area on the estate, around Grotto Passage behind Marylebone High Street. First came the Ossington Coffee Tavern in Paradise (now Moxon) Street, paid for by Lady Ossington as a humble sequel to the Newark original and opened by her in 1883. Then the Estate set up the Portland Industrial Dwellings Company to replace the worst slums with flats, named Ossington Buildings.

Authorship of the estate office and coffee tavern and oversight of the industrial dwellings came from Charles Fowler junior, appointed estate surveyor after Henry Baker died in 1878. Baker had been ill for some time, but

his assistant Augustus Hughes (who claimed to have done much of the recent work) did not get the job – perhaps another token of a change in gear. Both Baker and Fowler had been district surveyors – excellent experience for oversight of a London estate while vision or radical rebuilding was not on the agenda. But during the 1880s the tempo altered. ‘The new building schemes were planned by him’, it was stated when Fowler died, as could scarcely have been said of his two predecessors.⁴⁷

It is hard to know whether these new initiatives emanated from the heads of the managers or the hearts of the proprietors – perhaps something of both. The agitation about the urban housing question and the complacency of the great landlords was at its height in the 1880s; older tenets about rank and obligation were giving way to calls for social amelioration, exemplified on the estate by changes at the Regent Street Polytechnic, reformed on philanthropic lines under Quintin Hogg. In addition, it was in the selfsame Grotto Passage pocket of slums that Octavia Hill, herself an estate resident in Nottingham Place, had begun her well-publicized efforts towards housing-management reform. The trustees of the Portland Dwellings Company were cognizant of her activities and drew her into the selection of tenants for Ossington Buildings. So there were incentives for action. Nevertheless, the Grotto Passage area campaign was exceptional. The rest of the intensive rebuilding that transformed the estate between 1880 and 1914, including the reconstruction with small tenement blocks of lowly areas east of Great Portland Street, was entirely carried through by private builders, without delegation to any outside philanthropic or municipal body.

In 1887 the Portland Estate’s agent, Edward Bailey of Baileys, Shaw & Gillett (as the firm then was) gave evidence to the Commons Select Committee on Town Holdings, then scrutinizing the whole urban leasehold system. Bailey gave a polished performance, without the edge of truculence imparted by his counterpart for the Grosvenor Estate, H. T. Boodle. He left the impression that the estate was run in a benevolent manner, at trivial profit

to its proprietors. Besides the Marylebone property, estimated at about 3,800 houses, he accounted also for the smaller Portland Town estate between Primrose Hill and St John's Wood High Street, which had been developed from the 1820s onwards and yielded a ground rent of 'only' £1,900 per annum; the Marylebone equivalent was not elicited but was probably well over £100,000. Defending the leasehold system, Bailey compared the orderly state of the Portland Marylebone estate with its Soho equivalent, which had been sold off piecemeal and deteriorated in consequence.⁴⁸

Bailey was at pains to stress that the Estate dealt fairly with existing tenants when leases were renewed; by a recent change in policy, 'middlemen' were cut out as far as possible, and renewals, now always for shorter terms than the original 99 years, were agreed at low ground rents in exchange for properties being reconditioned or rebuilt. He was pressed on just one issue: whether the Estate charged for 'goodwill' or business value in setting the one-off payment or fine when a renewal took place. While denying that was done, Bailey admitted that shorter leases with higher rents were fixed for commercial locations like Oxford Street, arguing that the charge reflected 'what any man would give in a different trade in that shop', not the goodwill of any individual business. The issue would come back to haunt the Estate, but for the time being it emerged unscathed. It even escaped the flail of Frank Banfield's *The Great Landlords of London* (1888), which lashed the iniquities of the Bedford, Grosvenor and Portman estates. Banfield's sole mention of the Portland estate was a backhanded compliment, that 'as far as complaints of hardness and arbitrariness against ground landlords go, they are few on the Portland, many on the Portman and most on the Grosvenor'. Still, the Estate remained implicated in his conclusion, that 'the power possessed by the agents of the ground landlords is an anachronism, as to-day it exists divorced from responsibility to public opinion'.⁴⁹

That power continued to be exercised through rebuilding leases, which obliged tenants or other applicants to reconstruct premises at their own

expense. Bailey and his peers maintained that this policy represented more public-spirited landlordism than taking a quick profit by rack-renting old properties. But the shopkeepers of Marylebone High Street, forced to rebuild to a costlier scale and design than they desired or often claimed they could afford, seldom saw things that way. The end result of the rebuildings was a more handsome, updated and valuable estate. But it was created at the cost of the leaseholders, who took the risks, and sometimes it contributed to their failure.

The Howard de Walden estate, 1901 to the present

Viscountess Ossington was childless. Her sister the Dowager Lady Howard de Walden died ten years after her in July 1899 but was outlived by her oldest son, the 7th Baron Howard de Walden, by only three months. The Marylebone estate thus devolved on her grandson, the nineteen-year-old Thomas Evelyn Scott-Ellis, at that juncture en route to South Africa with the 10th Hussars to serve in the Boer War. Educated at Eton and Sandhurst, the 8th Baron Howard de Walden (1880–1946) was a vivacious and impressionable young man whose childhood had been disrupted by his parents' divorce. Spoilt and free-spending like his contemporary and fellow London landowner, Bendor, 2nd Duke of Westminster, he was nevertheless a more courageous and endearing character who developed a scatter of enthusiasms ranging from antiquarianism to fencing, yachting and writing opera libretti (Ill. 0.17).⁵⁰ It became the destiny of 'Tommy' Howard de Walden, as he affectionately came to be known in the wide circles of his acquaintance, to reconcile the Portland estate with changing London tastes and practices. The teething stage was painful.

In 1901 the heir came of age and was invalided home from South Africa to assume his inheritance. Still a bachelor, he moved with his mother

into Sefton House, Belgrave Square, rechristening it Seaford House and installing an onyx staircase. For a decade he enjoyed almost total independence, developing his manifold enthusiasms and spending freely. For the moment he took little active interest in Marylebone. The Howard de Walden Estate, as it had now become, was prospering, and its managers were entrenched. Charles Fowler had retired in 1898 and been replaced by Frederick John Stevenson. Little is known of Stevenson except that he came from an established London-Scottish family and was the first of the estate surveyors to be primarily a surveyor by profession. He too was comparatively young, and applicants to build found him more exacting than his predecessor. Latterly, he acted for the Estate as a partner in the City surveying firm of Vigers & Co.

Some of the former paternalism carried over, for from about 1903 the Estate undertook the major task of rehousing tenants from the outmoded Portland Town development at St John's Wood in superior blocks of artisans' dwellings on a fresh site, Scott Ellis Gardens off Grove End Road. But there was already trouble with one of the Estate's most influential and wide-awake tenants, the draper John Lewis, and worse was to come. A long-serving Marylebone vestryman and borough councillor in the Radical interest, also briefly a Progressive member on the London County Council, Lewis wished to expand his Oxford Street premises by annexing properties further north, including the houses on the west side of Holles Street. In 1889, with Fowler's approval, he was able to rebuild the two northernmost houses (Nos 16 and 17) as future showrooms to form part of his intended new store. In the meantime he agreed to fit them up with partitions and fireplaces so they could be let as private houses. Both in fact remained empty, and by the time the new store came to be built in the late 1890s Fowler had gone and Stevenson and the Estate trustees had other ideas, including high-class mansion flats on the south side of Cavendish Square, partly flanking a blind alley behind Holles Street. Lewis's plans involved building over this alley,

redeveloping old dwellings he had acquired in Cavendish Buildings on its west side to join up with the Holles Street side of the new store. The Estate was prepared only to allow him a bridge, so preserving the alley. When in 1900 Lewis went ahead regardless, opening up Nos 16 and 17 to make showrooms, putting in shopfronts and starting to build over the alley, he soon faced an injunction to reinstate. In law the Estate held all the aces but was also able to present the issue simplistically as a clash between commercial and residential interests, its sole aim being to preserve the residential character of Cavendish Square. Lewis made his essentially moral case publicly through pamphlets and posters on his hoardings, presenting the Estate as exploitative and denouncing the leasehold system. Agreement with Stevenson, modifying the Estate's requirements, was followed by inaction on Lewis's part, and in 1903 he was committed to Brixton Prison for contempt of court in ignoring the injunction, generating maximum publicity. Relenting after three weeks, he was released on undertaking to do the stipulated work. This he partly did, but refused to put back the fireplaces, finally done at his expense by direction of the High Court.⁵¹

These matters might have rested, had not Lewis, who loved nothing better than a good fight, continued his campaign some years on with placards along his Holles Street shopfronts 'to the effect that property had its duties as well as its rights' (Ill. 0.18).⁵² The implication was that by building up a prosperous business he had enriched the Howard de Walden Estate, and merited special consideration – a variant on the 'goodwill' argument of 1887. Lewis had a point: around this time his fellow Oxford Street store-owner S. J. Waring was paying the Estate a whopping £37,500 per year in ground rent; a little later, in 1914, the Estate levied a fine of £84,400 for renewing leases for the two blocks of another big store, Peter Robinsons. With the Liberals in power and Lloyd George's land and tax reforms in the wind, Lewis stepped up his campaign, mounting increasingly offensive placards. The most notorious pair read '16-17 Holles Street – Lord Howard de Walden's

monument of iniquity’ and ‘In the Holles Street drama the young baron is discovered behind the curtain pulling the wires for the imprisonment of his old tenant’. The said baron, momentarily distracted from his glamorous lifestyle, was advised he had no alternative but to sue. The case came forward in March 1911 with tip-top barristers on either side, affording high public entertainment. Forced to admit he had never visited the property in question, Lord Howard de Walden was awarded damages of a farthing. So Lewis won the moral victory.⁵³

The case – and the embarrassment – made a deep impression on Lord Howard de Walden, as probably also on his advisers. Just then there was much political and social instability; a government committed to land reform held the reins at Westminster. The estate too was in the throes of commercial and demographic change: ‘a great deal of it is, or has been, in a transition state from residential to business purposes’, commented *The Times*. Six months after the John Lewis case the Estate announced that Lord Howard de Walden was considering a scheme ‘to give the tenants a permanent holding in lieu of the usual London lease’. There followed a statement from both Lord Howard de Walden personally and Baileys, Shaw, & Gillett to the effect that 999-year leases would be offered to all existing lessees in order to secure for them ‘a more permanent tenure than that afforded by their present holdings’. Payment for this dramatic extension, it was added, could largely be arranged on mortgage. Tongue in cheek, Lewis hailed this ‘splendid lead’ as ‘a great step in the right direction, and it may be that Lord Howard de Walden, who probably has a long future before him, will as a peer of Parliament see the wisdom of ultimately transferring all responsibilities of the landowner, for buildings erected by others, to the municipal authorities’.⁵⁴

This was indeed a momentous event in the history of London property, even more so than the 99-year lease system introduced by the Cavendish-Harleys two hundred years before. Lessees who could afford to do so rapidly availed themselves of the 999-year arrangement. The disposal of freeholds

followed. John Lewis, for instance, was able to buy his site in 1921 and to contemplate developing the south side of hitherto inviolate Cavendish Square. Divestment began before the First World War, when most of the 60-acre Portland Town estate in St John's Wood was put on the market. Lord Howard de Walden can be credited with some short-term foresight over this initiative. Already commercial pressures combined with a stringent tax regime seemed to spell the demise of great estates, urban and rural, and that foreboding only increased after the war. On the other hand he must have been mindful that sales would raise cash to spend on his quixotic and costly ventures, ranging from fisheries at Chirk Castle, his Welsh seat, to investments in Kenya.⁵⁵

The main conduits between Lord Howard de Walden and the estate managers during this transitional period were a cousin on his mother's side, Edward Powles, and his secretary, Archibald Turner Bellingham. The Welsh-born Bellingham, his master's factotum in all business affairs, was not to the liking of Lady Margherita Howard de Walden, who inherited him along with her new handful of a husband in 1912. Powles, a solicitor by training, and Bellingham, who had surveying qualifications, both sat on an advisory committee set up in 1911 after the John Lewis fiasco, and served on the General Real Estates Investment & Trust Ltd, a new body created in January 1919. This wholly owned limited company, which had separate offices, was set up to buy blocks of property from the Howard de Walden Estate at Stevenson's valuation and to sell them off, so as 'to realise as much of the Marylebone Estate as is possible without detriment to the remainder of the Estate'. Following an accelerated policy, the sale of the whole of the settled estate to the company was agreed in September 1922. The deal was estimated as worth £4,364,360, of which Lord Howard de Walden reputedly received £2m personally.⁵⁶

The years 1920–4 therefore saw the Howard de Walden Estate selectively pursuing the 999-year lease policy, while the General Real Estate

Company arranged the outright sale of outlying freeholds by a series of private negotiations. So this was a busy time for the new estate surveyor who succeeded Stevenson in 1920, Edward Augustine Blount (1873–1936). The climax came in 1925, when after a bidding competition with Lord Waring of Waring & Gillow it was announced that Colonel Blount (always so called on account of his good war record) had arranged the sale to Sir John Ellerman and his Audley Trust Ltd of 40 acres east of Portland Place for about £3m. That put into Ellerman's hands virtually the whole of Great Portland Street, plus land on either side stretching west to Hallam Street and east to Great Titchfield Streets. Blount was retained as surveyor to the Audley Trust. Most of the properties were subject to long leases, so the sale portended no grand scheme of rebuilding. On the other hand that particular slice of property was booming in the twenties, with the motor trade at its height in Great Portland Street and the wholesale garment industry spreading like wildfire northwards from Oxford Street.

It is difficult not to view the decision to sell as a loss of nerve, prompted by Lord Howard de Walden's personal interests plus an instinct to narrow the Estate's holdings to the type of professional and residential property management it best understood. When the sales blitz was over, it had surrendered nearly all of its Oxford Street frontage, plus its hinterland west of Cavendish Square northwards up to Wigmore Street; everything east of Portland Place from Hallam Street right up to the old eastern border behind Cleveland Street all the way from Oxford Street to Euston Road; and much of the fringe of property west of Marylebone High Street, for instance Nottingham Place and Luxborough Street.

The Marylebone estate, reduced to about half that bought by the Duke of Newcastle in 1711, was more or less the area still managed by the Howard de Walden Estate today (Ill. 0.0). Its heartland was the great grid of streets between Cavendish Square and Marylebone Road south to north, and from Marylebone High Street to Portland Place west to east. Over this shrunken

but still-eligible empire Colonel Blount presided during his reign as estate surveyor up to 1936 with unremitting interventions, chronicled in the estate's archive. Some new 999-year leaseholders were shocked to discover they had by no means bought the right to do as they liked with their properties. The Estate was also now fighting a losing battle against multi-occupation. Fewer of the big houses contained single families; even doctors now bunched together in sets of consulting rooms. Flats and medical establishments proliferated, conforming usually to a cautious architectural taste that the Estate has never since quite shaken off (Ill. 0.35). An example is the demure new estate office rebuilt in 1937 at 23 Queen Anne Street, to take in the employees looking after Lord Howard de Walden's extraneous interests, hitherto housed in Victoria Street. The agency at this time was in the hands of the freeholder's young son-in-law, James Lindsay. The surveyorship changed hands frequently thereafter. Blount was succeeded briefly by his and Stevenson's previous deputy, V. Royle Gould. The longest tenure after that was by Basil Hughes (in post, 1942–60).

As for the divested properties, any personal touch to their management soon disappeared. Sir John Ellerman, an accountant and shipping-line tycoon with a yen for buying and selling tracts of urban property, was a recluse who saw his Audley Trust's 40 acres round Great Portland Street purely as an investment. Rodents were the main passion of the son who succeeded him in 1933, also Sir John Ellerman. By 1938 the Audley Trust was represented locally by Basil Samuel (1912–87) and his brother Howard (1914–61). Hampstead-born sons of a jeweller, they had established themselves as dealers in West End commercial property. They were cousins of (Lord) Harold Samuel, who undertook much post-war rebuilding through the Land Securities Investment Trust; and it was to Land Securities that the Howard de Walden Estate in 1957 sold their last remaining chunk of Oxford Street, the block between John Princes and Holles Streets. The brothers were first based at Roxburghe House, Regent Street, then after the war at 97 Mortimer Street,

amassing interests across London. In Marylebone they took over about half of the Audley Trust's properties piecemeal, creating various holding and development companies. These were brought together to form Great Portland Estates Ltd in 1957–9. After Howard Samuel's death Basil Samuel continued to run the company, selling off some of the properties in 1983. Great Portland Estates continues today with a much diversified portfolio.⁵⁷

The remaining Audley Trust freeholds, largely towards the two ends of Great Portland Street, eventually passed to what has come to be called the Langham Estate. In the 1970s this was sold to the British Land Company and then on to the National Water Council. After further changes of ownership, the approximately fourteen-acre landholding was acquired in 1994 by Mount Eden Land Ltd for Samuel Tak Lee, a Hong Kong property magnate who was the recorded owner at the time of writing.⁵⁸

The character of this eastern former district of the estate differs today from that of the central Howard de Walden grid. But that distinction was on the way to establishing itself before the sales of the 1920s, and its subsequent history might have been similar had it remained within the estate. When in the 1960s and 70s the Samuels were keen to promote large-scale office redevelopment of parts of their territory, they ran into tenacious community opposition. It was in fact beyond the Audley Trust's holding, in blocks between Bolsover Street and Cleveland Street sold off piecemeal in the early 1920s, that comprehensive development took greatest hold, as at Holcroft Court, the one large scheme of local-authority housing in eastern Marylebone (1968–71), and the present Holiday Inn, Carburton Street (1971–2).

The post-war Howard de Walden Estate itself was not without development ambitions. In 1960 a new-broom surveyor, S. H. Moore, installed at 23 Queen Anne Street in a room with a green carpet, a blue ceiling and 'chairs in shrillest orange and yellow', was interviewed by Giles Wordsworth for *Time and Tide* magazine. 'Mr Moore likes the modern idiom', the reader was told. Moore hoped to discontinue the 999-year policy and hinted about

rebuilding much of the older property: 'there is no need for a consulting room to be fourteen feet high'.⁵⁹ Little of this bore fruit. Planning and listed-building controls had already begun to limit the Estate's scope for action. Nor did much impetus for change derive from the amiable 9th Baron Howard de Walden (1912–99), who was content to let the estate management run on so long as it provided sufficient income for his pursuits, racing above all. As before, the trustees were mainly friends and contacts of the family. The tone of the Queen Anne Street office was conservative and private but friendly, as it remains. By a structural change of 1963 the Estate ceased to be an old-fashioned settled estate that had to pay heavy taxes each time the 'tenant for life' died, and became in effect a property investment company. That year also, in a further gesture of consolidation, the Estate sold to St Marylebone Borough Council the flatted Scott Ellis Estate at St John's Wood, which it had built in 1906 and directly managed.⁶⁰

Policy for the thirty years after 1945 was largely devoted to the long-term management of the estate's historic core, to the detriment of quick gain. Refurbishments, for which there was much scope, became commoner than total rebuildings. The claims of leasehold enfranchisement legislation, allowing some lessees to buy their freeholds, had also now to be grappled with; generally, the Estate was successful in withstanding damaging sales. A more outward-looking approach emerged cautiously in the 1970s, when a small planning and development team was created under John Godliman. Most of the resulting in-house projects related to existing estate properties, but some investment took place in new buildings further afield. The reconstruction of 64–66 Wigmore Street in 1982–3 as modern offices behind old façades was the Estate's largest directly managed development at this time. Further schemes fell victim to the recession of 1988–92. Empty properties and rent arrears now accumulated. In Marylebone High Street, still almost totally under Howard de Walden ownership, many shops fell vacant

or were under cheap and temporary tenancies, and planning for its regeneration began.

Under a shake-up of 1993–4 Andrew Ashenden became chief executive to the Estate, with a view to boosting its activities and performance. The first focus was shopping, notably in Marylebone High Street. Newly courting publicity, Ashenden took to the pages of the *Estates Gazette* to rebuff the old canard ‘that the area north of Oxford Street has less appeal than locations on its south side’: ‘Marylebone can match Mayfair’, he asserted.⁶¹ The new policy, coinciding with a consumer boom, proved a great success. Conrans was drawn to the top of the High Street, Waitrose to its centre, and small smart shops and cafés multiplied in their wake. By another initiative, the Estate fostered closer partnerships with its many medical lessees and tenants, so that their ever-more specialized needs, ranging from dental laboratories to MRI scanners, could be understood and planned for. To diversify activities and promote further projects beyond the Marylebone core, a separate property-trading and development arm called Welbeck Land was set up, later split off from the Estate altogether.

After the 9th Baron Howard de Walden died in 1999, the chief beneficiaries of Howard de Walden Estate Holdings became his four daughters: Hazel Czernin, 10th Baroness Howard de Walden (b. 1935); Susan Buchan (b. 1937); Jessica White (b. 1941); and Camilla Acloque (b. 1947). The active policies initiated under Ashenden have continued since then. Nowadays there is a fairly continuous flow of redevelopments behind fronts undertaken in Marylebone by the Estate itself. Most cover just one house at a time, but sometimes where interiors are deemed more open to change they take in two or three together. The business of creating high-class and therefore high-rent office or residential accommodation within listed premises, knitting in lifts and other modern services within a sensitive fabric, entails a regular relationship – a kind of informal partnership in expertise – between the Estate and the Westminster planners. The successes of these

distinctive yet everyday activities of the Howard de Walden staff show how, given a balance of investment and care, London's historic buildings can adapt, survive – and turn a good profit.

Government, religion and education

Government

Francis Sheppard's *Local Government in St. Marylebone 1688–1835* (1958) provides an exemplary account of how the area covered by these volumes was administered during its first development and growth. In brief, until 1768 Marylebone was governed by an Open Vestry, which met a few times each year to set church, highway and poor rates. There were no paid officials until 1710. A more formalized administration began in 1730, in token of the increased business caused by the Cavendish–Harley developments. A Court of Petty Sessions was now established so that the justices could from time to time authorize the Vestry to carry on its business. After first meeting in an Oxford Street pub, it transferred to a new building in Marylebone Lane built by the Earl of Oxford, which also served as a manorial courthouse or estate receiver's office, watch house and lock-up, and effectively became the vestry hall. Soon the watch house acquired a separate building adjacent; in 1803–4 this was rebuilt, the courthouse following on in 1824–5.

At first the Vestry's business was largely taken up with the consequences of the new Cavendish–Harley streets and houses, so the two administrations must have overlapped. William Thomas, the Harleys' steward, acted as treasurer to the Vestry from 1733, helped organize the creation of the new burial ground in Paddington Street to supplement the old churchyard near the top of Marylebone High Street, and may have inaugurated the Vestry's excellent record-keeping tradition. The early pace

was not, however, maintained; not till 1752 did a long-promised workhouse open in a corner of the burial ground.

From 1721 the paving and cleaning of Oxford Street were administered by the St Marylebone Turnpike Trust, on which Thomas also served. In 1756 that body was given the Marylebone stretch of the New Road (today Marylebone Road) to construct and maintain. But the cleaning, lighting and policing of the streets in between were neglected – ‘the Vestry did nothing for the people living in the populous south-eastern fringe of the parish, who nevertheless contributed a very large proportion of the money’.⁶² A new Act obtained in 1756 resulted in no real improvement. So pressure mounted from 1764 for a Select Vestry on the lines of those already functioning in the Westminster parishes of St James’s and St George’s, Hanover Square. It was led by Lord Foley of Foley House, then the most outspoken aristocratic voice in the parish, the influential Portlands being absentees. The move at first failed, but a second attempt was not resisted by the 3rd Duke of Portland and passed into law just as the build-up of south-east Marylebone reached its peak.

Three quarters of the 122-strong Select Vestry that came into existence in 1768 consisted of aristocrats and gentlemen, the other quarter of tradesmen. By then Marylebone was maturing into a significant suburb; besides the tripling in size of the Portland developments, the Berners and Portman estates were advancing quickly. The Select Vestry secured better parish administration by means of a new parish Act of 1770 giving it fuller powers for policing, lighting and maintenance. Over the next half-century Marylebone gained a record as a proud and exemplary local authority. It opened an entirely new workhouse in 1776, providing potentially for 1,000 paupers as opposed to the 300 jammed together in the earlier one. It took over the management of Oxford Street completely, and it successfully withstood pressure from the Crown over control of the lighting and paving of its short portion of the new Regent Street. Beyond the Vestry’s remit, a new ‘public

office' with a magistrate and constables attached was opened in Marylebone High Street near the end of this halcyon period, in 1821. Its positioning, between the new church at the top of the street (1813–17) and the rebuilt courthouse at the bottom (1824–5), confirmed Marylebone High Street and Marylebone Lane as the parish's administrative axis despite its continued expansion, as districts north of Marylebone Road up to St John's Wood sprang up.

Marylebone's Select Vestry lost its shine in the 1820s, partly for reasons of overspending and maladministration – some of those relating to the church are detailed below – but mainly because of increasing national calls for a fully representative democracy. After sundry efforts to change the system, a parish poll held in May 1832, as the Reform Bill was passing through its final parliamentary stages, invoked Hobhouse's Act of the previous year. That ushered in an elected Vestry by universal ratepayer suffrage, as opposed to the co-opting of fresh members practised under the Select Vestry. By the new arrangements one-third of the 120 vestrymen – for whom there was now a £40 property qualification – were elected each year. The clean-out of the old interests followed: Marylebone had a Radical Vestry by 1835.

The strength of Radicalism in the elected Vestry's early years lay with a politicized 'shopocracy', ranging from fairly raw artisans like William Kensett of Mortimer Street, cabinet maker, to superior Oxford Street shopkeepers like Jacob Bell (chemist) and John Nicholay (furrier), both influential in the 1840s and 50s.⁶³ Though political fervour quietened down, tradesmen dominated the elected Vestry down to the end of its life. As F. H. Hallam, one of its members, remarked in 1885:

I have gone carefully through the list, and I cannot find more than twenty-two who are not tradesmen. Now, if we look anywhere for economy, we will look to the trading classes, who must necessarily feel fluctuation of

business, and is it likely, by any change, to have a more economical Board to manage our affairs?⁶⁴

The elected Vestry and the St Marylebone Borough Council that succeeded it in 1900 wielded fewer powers than the Select Vestry. In 1834 the Vestry lost the administration of the Poor Law, hitherto one of its main purposes, in a portent of centralization confirmed when the Metropolitan Board of Works (1855) and then the London County Council (1889) gradually drew further local powers into their hands. Many residents, notably doctors and other Marylebone professionals concerned with public health, approved these changes as better for London as a whole. Others, Radicals in particular, opposed them, preferring parish autonomy and low rates.

The municipal presence in south-east Marylebone has traditionally been restrained. A mortuary and coroner's court were built beside the north burial ground near the workhouse complex in 1888. There were never any board or council schools in the area, and there is only one significant council estate, Holcroft Court, built as a culmination of fumbling efforts by St Marylebone Borough Council to grapple with the blighted post-war area east of Bolsover Street. Nor was there a public library in the area under the borough council – the last London council to adopt the Public Libraries Acts, in 1923.⁶⁵

From 1965 the remit of the City of Westminster was extended into Marylebone, acquiring stronger planning powers, which it has wielded less hesitantly than the previous council. A recent token of enhanced public commitment to the area is the new public library planned for Luxborough Street. Drainage, lighting, cleaning and traffic management naturally remain public services, and there are countless regulations to constrain and irk building owners and tenants, not least those affecting historic buildings. The designations of the Harley Street and Stratford Place conservation areas in 1968, followed by those of east Marylebone in 1982 (after years of unrest

about planning policy east of Great Portland Street) and Hanway Street in 1989, have had a benign impact on the local environment. But the influence still exercised by the Howard de Walden Estate shows that authority is no less divided today than it was back in the 1730s when the Vestry and the Cavendish–Harley staff shared premises.

Church and Vestry

One aspect of the Select Vestry that made it vulnerable was its growing identification with the church party and its strategy on church-building. It took most of this Vestry's lifespan, from 1770 to 1817, to procure the new parish church whose need had been foreseen once the population started climbing. Already in 1766 John Gwynn was complaining that Marylebone possessed only 'despicable little chapels' instead of a church 'built in a magnificent manner and well placed' to make up for the 'want of noble objects in that quarter'. A succession of botched initiatives ensued, causing delay, disappointment and waste. In 1814 it was finally fixed that the chapel of ease in construction on Marylebone Road would be upgraded to parish-church status. But the subsequent tripling of its cost for external show, without gain in numbers or convenience of seats, elicited anger. The new church was financed by borrowing at high wartime rates of interest.⁶⁶

Nor was the provision of the four extra district churches, required in the 1820s by Marylebone's meteoric growth, better handled. Again there was toing and froing over sites, jockeying between different interests and, particularly over All Souls, resentment that the Vestry had been outwitted by John Nash and the representatives of the Crown. Nor did the tradespeople of eastern Oxford Street and its hinterland, remote from the parish church, get the district church they had hoped for, because sites in their area cost too much. Instead, the last of the four churches (Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road,

1826–7) was pushed to the parish's margin.⁶⁷ The mistake had to be rectified by the creation twenty years later of St Andrew's, Wells Street.

Additionally, by a manoeuvre of 1817 the freeholds of the main Marylebone proprietary chapels, hitherto private places of worship, were vested in the Crown with a view to turning them into full district churches, as the Oxford, Welbeck, Portland and Portman Chapels all eventually became (as St Peter's, Vere Street; St James's, Westmoreland Street; St Paul's, Great Portland Street; and St Paul's, Portman Square). This took place at the personal behest of the 4th Duke of Portland. The duke inherited interests of kinds in all the chapels on his land, but even those that he fully owned (the Oxford, Welbeck and Portland Chapels) earned him little. From the Oxford Chapel, for example, after deducting expenses plus 20 per cent of the pew rents for the minister's salary he received only £237 in 1816–17. He may also have become persuaded that it was wrong to own church property. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners did not yet exist, so through the mediation of the duke's friend, George Canning, Lord Liverpool's government agreed to take the chapels over. The move cost the ratepayers nothing, as the expense of putting the shabby chapels into repair fell to the Crown, while the profits from their pew rents now accrued to the Vestry. But the likelihood of future liability was foreseen, encouraging suspicions that the central authorities were conniving with the Select Vestry to strengthen the established interest in Marylebone.⁶⁸

For the rest of the nineteenth century the Marylebone Vestry continued in theory to bear financial responsibility for the parish and district churches alike, including the former proprietary chapels (with the exception of the Margaret Chapel, whose destiny followed a different path, ending up as the glamorous All Saints, Margaret Street). That was not burdensome, as the pew rents generally covered the cost of maintaining the buildings and paying the ministers. But it had become no longer politically acceptable to subsidize church-building from the rates. So when it came to recasting the parish

church in 1883, the Rev. William Barker did his best to conciliate the vestrymen, still in theory his paymasters, while ensuring that the bulk of the expenditure was voluntarily raised. All the same, Marylebone Radicals (John Lewis among them) continued to press for an end to the connection. That finally took place in 1898, when in an era of eroding pew rents an Act of Parliament passed the Vestry's interests in the six churches concerned to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.⁶⁹ In this way, less than two years before its recasting into a modern London borough, the Marylebone Vestry's business at last became wholly secularized.

Other denominations

Dissent, however reticent or fitful in its manifestations, was always present and active in south-east Marylebone. Already when the parish was still quite rural, French Huguenots had a small chapel on the fringes of Marylebone Gardens. Later on, Nonconformists clustered in commercial areas. Thus the district's two most conspicuous Victorian chapels, the Hinde Street Methodist Church and the Welsh Chapel in Eastcastle Street, both lie within reach of Oxford Street. They were preceded by the original Margaret Street Chapel of c.1752 and the Scotch Chapel in Wells Street of the 1760s. Both went through bouts of intellectual aspiration, possible by virtue of their accessibility and appeal to upper tradespeople, professionals and the leisured classes. The outstanding instance of a Marylebone chapel devoted to stimulating thought and conscience among the well-off was the Unitarian chapel in Little Portland Street, presided over during its heyday by the high-minded James Martineau (minister, 1859–74). Within the established church H. R. Haweis steered St James's, Westmoreland Street (the former Welbeck Chapel), along similar lines with an aesthetic twist. At the other end of the spectrum the ex-coalheaver William Huntington's Providence Chapel, Little Titchfield Street,

catered for charismatic adherents until it burnt down in 1810. Smaller congregations came and went, often foregathering in minor halls for hire, a common back-land feature between Marylebone streets.

Catholicism and Judaism were latecomers to the area's places of worship. First off the mark after the emancipations of the 1820s was the West London Synagogue, a liberal congregation that occupied a good building designed by David Mocatta behind Margaret Street for twenty years (1849–70) before decamping westwards to larger premises in Upper Berkeley Street. An Orthodox congregation followed suit, creating a branch synagogue in the shell of a warehouse in Great Portland Street in 1854–5 but also soon expanding to the grand Central Synagogue further up the same street (opened 1870). One of Marylebone's war losses, this was opulently rebuilt in 1956–8, testifying to the strength of Jews in the modern flats around Portland Place and the local dress trades. The Catholic presence was more marginal. The one Catholic church in the area covered, St Charles Borromeo, Ogle Street, grew out of a mission started in 1861 to serve parts of Marylebone and St Pancras that the hierarchy had identified as lacking places of worship. Tucked away in eastern Marylebone's lowliest street, it always served a migrant congregation, first mainly Irish but latterly Italians and others. Wealthy Marylebone Catholics preferred to worship at St James's, Spanish Place (just beyond the western boundary of these volumes), a descendant of the Spanish Embassy chapel once attached to nearby Hertford House. In that context one other former place of worship deserves mention, the remarkable domed chapel built behind 32 Welbeck Street in 1864–5 to serve the Russian Embassy.

Schools and colleges

Marylebone has always featured private schools conducted in former domestic premises. The earliest recorded, in the old manor house, dated back

to the seventeenth century and achieved some Georgian fame as what would now be called a 'prep' school for boys under Dr John Fountaine's tutelage. There was an equivalent for girls at Oxford House further down the High Street between about 1745 and 1830. Most such schools, like Octavia Hill's in Nottingham Place from 1862 onwards, lasted a few decades at best. But a few, notably Queen's College, Harley Street, started in 1848-9 for training governesses, developed into permanent establishments with their own buildings. In recent years private fee-paying schools have made a return to the area, the giant houses of Portland Place, for instance, proving favoured and lending 'four in the afternoon' animation to its staid pavements.

The earliest of Marylebone's purpose-built schools started off as for the poor, so tended to occupy plain structures located in the district's lowlier eastern or western fringes. The first was the St Marylebone Charity School of the mid 1750s in the High Street, long gone. The current Saint Marylebone School developed out of two such church-based foundations of 1792 and 1808, amalgamated in 1828 onto a site beside the parish church and periodically recast thereafter. The most remarkable survival of these establishments for the poor is the ragged school in Grotto Passage, an ambitious performance of 1859-60 aimed at uplifting the slum district west of the High Street.

The provision of extra schools on the 'national' system kept pace with the expanded church provision in the 1820s. All Souls created one just behind the church, then added a second in a stable yard behind Great Portland Street. Holy Trinity followed suit by squeezing a school into a yard off Cleveland Street in 1852. The voluntary churches of the next generation built schools of their own; St Andrew's and All Saints, not content with their undue proximity, curiously erected parish schools of some scale side by side at the end of Margaret Street in 1869-70. Other denominations responded according to their means. The Catholics opened schools in Bentinck Mews in 1862 and Ogle Street in the 1870s; the Westminster Jews' Free School moved north from Soho to Hanway Place in 1883. The best Victorian elementary education on

this side of the district was furnished by the Portland British Schools, started in 1859 by the high-minded Unitarians of the Little Portland Street Chapel.

None of these schools could withstand the collapse in local child population after 1900. The School Board for London found no demand to meet in this part of Marylebone, and the successor to its education powers, the London County Council, busied itself with closing down substandard premises. Ultimately, only All Souls Schools survived, transferring in 1909 to Beresford Pite's fine three-decker building in Foley Street. The LCC tried to mop up the remaining children into their new Upper Marylebone Street School in 1914, the first municipally provided school at this end of the borough. But even that did not survive the Second World War. Its replacement was the Science and Engineering campus of the Regent Street Polytechnic, now University of Westminster – a sign that state-sponsored educational facilities in this part of Marylebone would henceforward focus on the higher sector.

The final chapter of these volumes tells the tale of the Polytechnic's creation on Regent Street in 1838 as a venue mixing entertainment with popular scientific lecturing, its transformation under Quintin Hogg into an establishment balancing technical training with social purposes, and its half-reluctant, sometimes painful post-war absorption into the higher-education system. Here the normal topographical structure of the Survey is set aside so as to do justice to an institution with a unique history, whose four main sites all fall within eastern Marylebone.

Population and social character

Since the area covered by these volumes is a fraction of changing administrative units, estimates of its population at various times are necessarily broad. Sixty-six households are registered in the hearth-tax

returns for Marylebone as a whole in 1664, and eighty-four in the first ratebook of 1684.⁷⁰ That suggests a total parish population of a very few hundred. The Pratt map of 1708, showing only the future Howard de Walden area, sketches in about 35 inhabited structures, and there cannot have been many fewer by then in the environs of St Giles's Pound at the east end of the Tyburn Road. Assuming a fair rate of growth, over a hundred houses and less than 500 residents might be deduced for the whole parish by 1711, more than half living in the district under discussion.

The Cavendish–Harley developments changed all that. For the next fifty years they dominated Marylebone, before construction first on Portman land and later Eyre land in St John's Wood balanced the influences of ownership. In 1767 during the second big building boom one newspaper claimed there were 'full three thousand houses unfinished and unlett' in Marylebone.⁷¹ No doubt that was an absurdly excessive guess. But growth was unquestionably 'prodigious'. Parish baptisms and burials went up by multiples of four or five between the 1710s and the 1730s, and by similar rates between the 1730s and the 1770s. By one calculation probably based on the same source, Marylebone's population increased twelvefold between 1739 and 1795. That points to a parish population of around 5,000 in 1740, since the first census of 1801 gives a figure of 63,982. A preponderant majority still lived south of Marylebone Road, perhaps two-thirds in the area of these volumes, which by then was all but built up. A figure of 40,000 or upwards seems a safe assumption – larger than all but a few Georgian towns, and almost all packed into properties less than eighty years old.⁷²

Marylebone population figures continued to climb, reaching a peak of 161,680 in 1861. In our area the first half of the nineteenth century saw only slight densification by London standards. In the mid-Victorian years there are reliable estimates for the Portland Place and Cavendish Square wards, in combination roughly the same area as that covered here: they total 45,821 in 1861, 44,959 in 1871 and 42,047 in 1881. So the population was falling

marginally. By 1901 the decline was marked, with a figure of 35,391 given for a slightly different area. The drop then became precipitate, especially east of Great Portland Street. All Souls parish, created to serve a booming Marylebone district of about 25,000, had been twice subdivided in the 1840s and 50s, but the church added for one of these fractions, St Andrew's, Wells Street, ministering to a then estimated population of around 5,000, could not sustain itself beyond the 1930s and closed.⁷³ Several schools shut, and the new Upper Marylebone Street one built by the London County Council in 1914 attracted as many children from St Pancras as from Marylebone, was never full and did not last long. Today the total population of the area is around 10,000, split between two wards of the City of Westminster: Marylebone High Street and West End.

Problem areas

The fall in population of the eastern district followed from the changing nature of trades and the growth of the Oxford Street economy, replacing houses and tenements with workshops and, later, offices. But it had never settled into an auspiciously inhabited sector of Marylebone. One symptom was the prevalence of prostitution. Addresses in that area featured plentifully in the various editions of the salacious Georgian vade mecum, *Harris's List of Covent Garden Ladies*. Even its better streets had lost status and value well before numbers dropped. Norton Street, for instance, started out in the 1770s with some good houses but declined from about the 1820s. It fell so low as to be fingered in 1857–8 during the worst of the prostitution panics, resulting in its change of name, to Bolsover Street. These panics went back at least to 1787, when the *Public Advertiser* sympathized with 'Dean Harley, Mr Mercer and the other leading people in Marybone' in deploring the 'outrageous nuisance' of common prostitutes on the street, and estimated with mercenary precision

that not only the Duke of Portland would gain to be rid of them, but 'every individual householder would be benefited, in the proportion of ten or twelve per cent'. The crusade was rejoined in the Edwardian period, when Great Portland Street traders got up a petition about the 'rapid increase of foreign prostitutes', and St Marylebone Borough Council ran a persistent campaign for rooting out 'disorderly houses'. Many such establishments were tracked down to the backwaters east of Great Portland Street. The trade persisted despite much rebuilding of this area with small blocks of self-contained flats, flouting the wisdom that prostitution flourished only in older property.⁷⁴

Another clue to social instability was an influx of young single immigrant men into these streets at the end of the nineteenth century, primarily Germans and Austrians, but also Italians, French, Poles, Russians, Hungarians and others. In Clipstone Street, for instance, almost without foreign-born residents in 1851, such lodgers were packed into every other house in 1901. Mostly they worked in hotels and restaurants or as tailors. There was a Jewish element in this migration, but it was not predominant. Many probably stayed for only a short period. Rathbone Street, stigmatized by the police in 1906 as 'the criminal alien and worst quarter' of the district north of Oxford Street, boasted another strong continental contingent.⁷⁵

Overcrowding and the decrepitude of housing was a Victorian concern all over London. Marylebone's problems, though not grievous, were sufficient to elicit a broadside in 1870 from its Medical Officer of Health, who contrasted the recent heroic efforts in draining and cleansing London with the failure to tackle the dwellings of the poor, in consequence of which the sanitary improvements were 'neutralized', he said.⁷⁶ Just two pockets of housing on the Portland estate became gravely degraded. One was centred upon Ogle Street and Saville (now Hanson) Street, east of Great Titchfield Street. The other lay west of the High Street, where overcrowding and atrocious sanitation in back courts and yards around Grotto Passage elicited a classic outcry in the 1840s and 50s. In both places the first remedy was a ragged

school and a refuge. The underlying conditions took longer to tackle. Grotto Passage received special attention, first through the pioneering ministrations of Octavia Hill in Paradise Place, then in the 1880s by the Portland Estate's own self-promoted industrial dwellings company, acquiring model flats and a coffee tavern as a result. The Ogle Street slums, perhaps less acutely problematic, were also less in the public view. Here the Estate's solution was to replace worn-out housing with small blocks of artisans' flats privately developed and managed. The same thing happened on the northern fringes of the neighbouring Berners estate, where sets of 'residences' were erected along Cleveland and Nassau Streets during the 1880s and 90s. Such flats helped reduce the multi-occupation chronic throughout Victorian inner London – with anything from ten to thirty people in a house and an absentee leaseholder taking his profits via a rent-collector – and returned housing to the ideal if not always the reality of family units.

The rich

Georgian Marylebone was perceived as an outlier of London, and its earliest attractions were suburban – repose, clean air and open space. Cavendish Square in its earliest formulations can be plausibly construed as an intended cluster of noblemen's villas with putative gardens to match. Things did not work out like that: terraced houses became the norm, and space was soon at a premium. Yet 'the quality' did come to live in Marylebone. They populated first Cavendish Square and Henrietta Place; next the grid of streets laid out around Harley, Wimpole and Welbeck Streets along with Berners Street, Stratford Place and pre-eminently Portland Place; then, finally, Langham Place and Park Crescent. These were the main aristocratic concentrations, but until the mid nineteenth century there were also a few high-born names in most good streets west of Great Portland Street. The merely rich – gentry,

merchants, bankers and their inexhaustible dependants – were more widely diffused.

This success was the more striking because Marylebone was some distance from the centres of London life and influence – Court, Parliament and City. Without the making of the New Road linking Marylebone with the City, the building boom of the 1760s onwards would at least have been delayed. As for the connection between Marylebone and Westminster, that was a recurrent concern. Its alleged ease of access was one of the selling points John Prince attached to his plan of 1719. Later, urging Lord Shelburne to abandon Berkeley Square in favour of Marylebone, the Adams' client and ally General Clerk pleaded that it was 'not 6 minutes difference. You have all within yourself tranquility, quietness, your mind to yourself to your friends & to mankind'.⁷⁷ Access was still much in John Nash's mind when he laid out Regent Street as a means of rapid transit to and from Regent's Park, even remoter. Faced in 1816 with a threat to excise Oxford Circus from his scheme, Nash retorted that it was an essential prong of his plan to make the whole area north of Oxford Street more accessible: 'even at the present day', he wrote, 'it is an expression of derogation to say such a one lives in one of the streets beyond Oxford Road, and houses in those streets on that account have been depreciated'.⁷⁸ A full century later, Lady Howard de Walden, exiled to Portland Place because her Belgravia mansion had been requisitioned during the First World War, complained that she was 'far from the middle of London' meaning, as she admitted, from the shops of Bond Street. In response her husband went out, paced the distances from Belgrave Square and Portland Place to Bond Street and pronounced them comparable.⁷⁹ The making of Belgravia after 1825 had indeed sucked back from Marylebone and Mayfair many of those for whom proximity to Court and government really mattered. But in respect of shopping, Lady Howard de Walden's preoccupation, Marylebone was as well placed in the twentieth century as it ever had been.

Cavendish Square was the social acme of the district from the start of the Cavendish–Harley developments, remaining so until Herbert and Lady Margot Asquith’s departure in 1920. Addresses were chosen and rental values calculated with distance from Cavendish Square in mind. It boasted one royal resident, Princess Amelia (there 1760–86), plus a smattering of dukes and earls down to the death in 1879 of the 5th Duke of Portland. Close by, the short-lived Foley House was tenanted briefly by another royal prince, William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester (1806–9). Next in status came the Adam creations in and around Portland Place, along with easily overlooked Stratford Place (Ill. 0.25). That was an enclave apart, plentifully supplied with generations of titled folk but always mixed in character. It was well on the way to becoming mainly commercial and institutional when the 17th Earl of Derby bought and greatly enlarged Stratford House for political entertaining in 1908.

Among the long north–south streets Wimpole and Harley Streets were the most fashionable, on a par until the mid nineteenth century, with plenty of peers, baronets and knights. Welbeck Street trailed a little behind, as did Queen Anne Street, best of the cross streets. Berners Street, smart in its early years after 1765, soon lost its shine. The parallel Newman Street, never so appealing, had become the leading Marylebone artists’ street by the 1820s. Around that time prelates also seem to have appreciated Marylebone. In 1814 two bishops each were domiciled in Berners Street and Wimpole Street, and one each in Cavendish Square, Upper Harley Street and Wigmore Street.

Another measure of status is foreign representation. Denmark seems to have been the first nation to have a Marylebone ambassador, in Harley Street from 1769. The Russians followed suit in the same street from 1780, then later added another for their chaplain with a chapel in Welbeck Street. Prince Ludwig von Starhemberg of Austria took a Portland Place house in 1794, pioneering an enduring diplomatic presence there, over the years embracing representatives from Belgium, China, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. The

Neapolitan ambassador lived in Wimpole Street during the Napoleonic period; the Austrians shifted after Waterloo to Stratford Place but quickly moved under the long-serving Prince Esterhazy to Chandos House; the Brazilians were first represented from the 1820s in Park Crescent; James Barbour, the American ambassador, was in Devonshire Place around the same time. Marylebone was also a favoured location for the French exiles of 1793–1815, a theme explored by Gordon Mackenzie. One specially intimate set was in Thayer Street, centred until her premature death on the Comtesse de Polastron, mistress of the future Charles X, who lived for a while in Baker Street.⁸⁰

Military and naval officers resided in plenty hereabouts, at every level of rank and achievement downwards from Wellington in Harley Street during his Peninsular War phase as Sir Arthur Wellesley (he cannot have been there much) to Earl St Vincent in Mortimer Street (now Cavendish Place) and, later, Earl Roberts in Portland Place. The officer classes distributed themselves evenly and persistently across Marylebone. In early Berners Street they were mixed with a scatter of colonial governors, some on furlough, others bereft of a role following the American War of Independence.

The staple in the big houses was the merchant class, and those whose income came from employment or investment in the big colonial enterprises. Families with direct and indirect interests in India, the East India Company or the colonies of the West Indies abounded. In 1840, out of 103 houses in Harley Street for which some information can be gleaned (about two-thirds of the total number of houses there), 37 had definite East India Company connections and 13 slave-owning links with the West Indies. A famous instance of the latter, and typical of lifestyles that separated business and domestic concerns, was the Barrett household in Wimpole Street, where Edward Moulton-Barrett's obsessive attempts to control his children may have reflected anxieties to conceal the truth about the family's failing plantations in Jamaica.

Also in 1840 there were twenty MPs living in Harley Street, seventeen lawyers and eight bankers – categories that overlap, as do those of the investors in the East and West Indies. Few eminent politicians favoured Marylebone, doubtless because of the distance to Whitehall. Edmund Burke felt himself ‘extremely remote’ when he moved to Queen Anne Street in 1762.⁸¹ But Henry Addington lived briefly in Stratford Place (c.1791–5), Gladstone likewise in Harley Street (1876–82), Asquith for longer in Cavendish Square (1894–1920, excepting his years in Downing Street).

How many people lived in these large London houses and in what proportion of servants to gentry? In Grosvenor Square at the date of the 1871 census the average household size totalled thirteen or fourteen, of whom ten or eleven were servants.⁸² Data for Cavendish Square from the same census suggest slightly lower numbers. The largest and most intensively serviced households there were certainly aristocratic: the Earl of Fife at No. 4 with eighteen servants for his wife and himself, the Earl of Gainsborough and family at No. 9 with seventeen for a family of four, and Viscountess Barrington at No. 20 with twelve for a family of six. The typical total was much lower, many professional families in the square having just four or five live-in servants. In Portland Place the total numbers in a house seldom exceeded fifteen, commonly in proportion of about two servants to each family member, with an occasional inverse proportion. Much depended on who happened to be there when the census was taken; nor should the existence of extra servants be discounted, living in a mews behind or further afield.

There was still a market for large houses, old and new, in 1900. But they were in decline, as the lure of the suburbs or of mansion flats took hold. The Schlegel sisters in Forster’s *Howards End* (1910) lose the security of their inconvenient old Marylebone home because their millionaire landlord must have ‘Babylonian flats’ on the site. The bijou house on side streets or at the back was now making its debut, as motor garages supplanted stinking stables

and the mews became detoxified. After the First World War the flight into flats became precipitate and the big, dark, up-and-down houses began to be demolished or divided up, into consulting rooms as much as flats. Very few of them remained in single-family occupancy after 1945.

At one such, a semi-retired general practitioner's house on six storeys in Queen Anne Street, a total of four residents were rattling around still in the early 1960s. Several rooms had never been reopened since the war and had their furniture swathed in dustsheets; others were 'box rooms' jammed with possessions. An elderly maid dressed in brown with a pinafore, ready to answer the doorbell, lived and slept next to the area in the dank, voluminous basement. The doctor took his solitary meals in the dining room in the back extension, served by hoist from the kitchen below. Two floors over, his invalid wife was confined to a sitting room and bedroom. Above that again lived the housekeeper, originally hired in the late 1920s as the companion to the doctor's only child, a daughter who had long since escaped into marriage. At the very top of the house were empty servants' bedrooms and the doctor's cluttered laboratory-workshop. On a typical day four separate teas were served on four storeys. Then the house was wanted for redevelopment and the short lease was not renewed. In about 1963 the whole ménage minus the maid (who returned to her native Devon) had to remove to a flat in De Walden Court, New Cavendish Street. A way of life had come to an end.⁸³

Trades and professions

In between the glamorous rich and needy poor lay Marylebone's middling sort. Always preponderant, they are most simply discussed according to their work. Medicine has set the most enduring stamp on south-east Marylebone. But other occupations too, ranging from manufactures and crafts through the distributive and retailing trades have had their times and places of

concentration within the district. Different specialisms stand out at different dates: from the mid eighteenth century, artists and other skilled craftsmen; in the early twentieth century, the motor traders of Great Portland Street and the garment industry.

Medicine

The density of medical practitioners and hospitals in south-east Marylebone may well be the greatest in the world. Today the medical district is concentrated in the grid of streets between Marylebone High Street and Portland Place. Harley Street at its centre, long established as a byword for front-rank medicine, still conjures up an old-world image of a male consultant in a three-piece suit seated behind an oak desk giving wealthy patients his undivided attention. In fact consulting rooms, clinics and hospitals abound all over the surrounding area, offering not just traditional elite private medicine but the full range of modern cosmetic surgery and high-tech facilities.

Medicine first arrived in Marylebone at the same time as the housing boom of the 1750s onwards. Most of the early evidence relates to institutions for treating the poor. Hospitals, like housing, gravitated to healthy suburban locations close to open fields and fresh air. Hence the location of the Middlesex Hospital, transferred to purpose-built premises in Charles (now Mortimer) Street in 1757. The parish workhouse in Paddington Street opened in 1752 at first used a rented house for sick paupers, but numbers increased so greatly that much more extensive accommodation for both the sick and able-bodied had to be provided in the 1770s. In that decade, too, a short-lived General Medical Asylum for the poor was established in Welbeck Street, soon succeeded by the Marylebone Dispensary (1785–c.1936).

Previously Finsbury and the City had been the preferred locations for medical practitioners to live. The start of a shift to Bloomsbury and

Marylebone can be traced to the 1750s–60s, as proximity to London’s teaching hospitals became important for top medical men who held prestigious posts in them. The Middlesex included teaching from its inception, and the establishment of University College London in Bloomsbury with its medical school and hospital (opened in 1832) bolstered the popularity of that neighbourhood for senior figures in medicine. Closeness to aristocratic patients was the other major consideration. By the 1840s there were sufficient eminent physicians and surgeons in Cavendish Square and Queen Anne Street to act as a magnet for others. But those at the top of their profession were as likely to reside south of Oxford Street as north. The medical directory for 1854 shows an even distribution between Marylebone, Mayfair and Bloomsbury.⁸⁴

The mid nineteenth century saw advances in medical science and rising status for surgeons and physicians. For some the route to fame and fortune came through specialization and the parallel founding of specialist hospitals or dispensaries. In Marylebone these included the Margaret Street Hospital for Consumption (1847); the Heart Hospital, in Westmoreland Street since 1914 but founded in Margaret Street in 1857; the National Dental Hospital, established in Great Portland Street in 1861; St Peter’s Hospital for Stone, in Berners Street 1863–82; the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, which moved to Great Portland Street in the 1870s; the West End Hospital for Nervous Diseases, started in Welbeck Street in 1878; and the Western Skin Hospital, established in Great Portland Street in the 1870s. Of these only the Heart Hospital is still in the area, although the Orthopaedic Hospital retains an outpatients’ clinic. In their stead have come a plethora of hospitals, clinics and nursing homes for private paying patients.

Alongside these there developed a complex infrastructure of chemists, manufacturers, vendors of medical equipment, homes for nursing staff, medical colleges and societies. Though the first four of the categories have declined in number, the medical institutions, lobbies and centres of exchange

in this most clubbable of professions show no signs of deserting Marylebone. Among them are the Medical Society of London (Chandos Street), the Royal Society of Medicine (Wimpole Street), the General Medical Council (Hallam Street), the British Dental Association and General Dental Council (Wimpole Street), and the Royal College of Nursing (Cavendish Square), to which the King's Fund, now also in Cavendish Square, has recently been added.

Once fashionable society ebbed away from Marylebone, a similar shift of smart medical practice might have been expected, but that never happened. By then many patients of all classes were travelling to see doctors rather than the reverse. But the main reason seems to have been that once a distinct medical community had been established it was found to be enormously beneficial to those within it. This professional interaction is recalled in the many memoirs of consultants, who placed great value on the ability to call on the advice or second opinion of a neighbour. But in the twentieth century there was also an active policy on the part of the Howard de Walden Estate to preserve the Marylebone grid as a medical enclave. Generally, leases were granted for properties in the Harley Street area for domestic use only. But once a lease was granted, an application for a licence to practise medicine was normally permitted under certain conditions, which extended to the size and form of the plate bearing the consultant's name fixed at the entrance. This allowed the Estate to control not only the quality of medical tenants, but also their quantity.

The image of the Harley Street doctor relies much on the traditional kind of premises he inhabited. The standard London town house needed little alteration to turn it into a doctor's house. Ground-floor front rooms became waiting rooms instead of dining rooms, with a consulting room either immediately behind or in the closet wing. Originally, the doctor's dependants occupied the remainder of the house above, but after families moved to the suburbs, houses might be converted or rebuilt as suites of consulting rooms for multiple medical occupation. In the later twentieth century many

consultants gave up their private rooms for the better-equipped universities and hospitals. In their place came 'alternative practitioners and aesthetic therapists', for whom the individual consulting rooms in elegant domestic settings provided a soothing backdrop. In the latest conversions encouraged by the Howard de Walden Estate there has been a policy of reconstruction to create purpose-built consulting suites over reinforced basements, allowing the latest diagnostic equipment to be installed behind retained façades, which preserve the historic character of the district.

Artists, craftsmen and musicians

The making of any high-class Georgian development always drew an influx of skilled artisans into an area. Masons, carpenters, joiners and plasterers therefore feature among the first Marylebone lessees and residents, occupying back premises and yards permanent or temporary. In the early Georgian years there was a continuum between business, building craftsmanship and art, so that masons like the two John Devalls, Richard Maile and James Lovell acted as developers, masons or 'statuaries' according to occasion. Likewise the plasterer William Wilton, a prolific developer on the Cavendish-Harley estate, opened a papier-mâché factory in Edward Street, no doubt partly providing finishes for local houses. The Adams' most famous plasterer, Joseph Rose junior, had a 'Manufactory and Exhibition of Architectural Ornament', perhaps serving similar purposes, in Edward's Mews.⁸⁵ Joiners naturally made furniture and frames, as requisite in the new houses as details for cornices or stairs.

Overlaying this early stratum of building craftsmen from about the 1760s came clusters of specialists, emanating in part from an artisan community already established in Soho, and responding to the proximity of wealthy clients in Mayfair and Marylebone itself. The incomers' favourite

locations were those closest to Soho: Berners and Newman Streets, Rathbone Place and Street, Great Titchfield Street and the various cross streets in this easternmost corner of Marylebone. There was less artisan penetration into the prime territory around Cavendish Square.

Sculptors are the best-recorded representatives of the influx of crafts with a more sharply cultural profile. The earliest of note was Michael Rysbrack, friend and neighbour of James Gibbs in Vere Street from 1725, part of Edward Harley's personal circle of virtuosi, and always a sculptor proper, not a mason. Next after a gap comes William Wilton's status-conscious son Joseph, a founder member of the Royal Academy; soon after returning from Rome, Joseph Wilton moved into a new Great Portland Street house in the early 1760s and set up a business that offered carving and dealt in marbles but did no general mason's work. J. F. Moore, first of many artists in Berners Street in 1765, was a monumental sculptor who likewise did nothing below chimneypieces. Joseph Nollekens, ensconced in Mortimer Street for half a century from 1771, made mainly busts and monuments and tried to live like an independent artist – unconvincingly, if J. T. Smith's guying memoir may be trusted. Such figures were soon joined by a bevy of painters, engravers and craftsmen, a few aiming at independence, the rest reliant on a network of collaborators, clients and publishers.

The sculptors mentioned above – and the Scheemakers, the Bacons, Thomas Banks and John Flaxman – all needed sizeable yards for their stocks and operations. Even Flaxman, who preferred to draw and model on a small scale at home, chose a house in 1795 with a yard attached where he erected 'shops and studios'. The Bacons had an octagonal modelling room that probably doubled as a gallery. Their Newman Street neighbour, the glass enameller Joseph Backler, had a 'Gallery of Stained Glass', open to distinguished visitors including royalty.⁸⁶

The earliest painter known to have lived in the area is John Wootton, a landscapist and sporting artist in the Harley circle who inhabited 31

Cavendish Square for many years from about 1730. The simplest strategy for a Georgian artist with money enough and space was to convert a mews building into a studio, as Allan Ramsay did behind his Harley Street house in 1768. William Shaw, a second-rank equine painter who died in 1773, built 'a large painting room' in Mortimer Street, 'with conveniences to receive the animals'. Benjamin West developed a two-part studio behind his Newman Street house, consisting probably of a working studio at the back converted out of a previous music room, and a larger apartment with a chic frontage towards the garden, used as a gallery and for entertaining. Romney likewise built a two-room 'gallery' on his garden in Cavendish Square. Turner took over a schoolroom behind his house in Harley Street as a picture gallery, later reconstructing it as part of a combined house, studio and gallery fronting Queen Anne Street. Less marketable, James Barry could not afford a house with a mews for his immense canvases, so had to make do with premises in Eastcastle Street with a workshop behind where he eked out his latter days in misanthropy. Other painters availed themselves of top-lit back extensions, becoming common also for smart Marylebone shops by 1820 and increasingly denominated 'gallery'. The many miniaturists and engravers just used rooms with the best light they could find, high up or at the back of a house.

From the 1820s the haphazard lighting and restricted size of Georgian studios began to be felt unsatisfactory. After West's death his sons erected a large gallery in his garden to show his work, to Nash's designs and with modern lighting arrangements. Attendances soon dwindled, in Nash's view because Newman Street was 'too far out of the way' – perhaps foreshadowing inner Marylebone's fall from artistic fashion. Excellent artists still lived or worked there, and exhibition galleries came and went, notably in Upper Regent Street, where for a spell in the 1850s the Portland Gallery faced both the Polytechnic Institution and the 'Polyorama'. But a steady emigration of major makers of the fine arts now took place to newer suburbs. Newman Street and Rathbone Place continued to abound in artistic trades and

professions with concomitant private art schools up to at least 1900. But most were minor figures or specialized crafts firms that chimed in with the by then semi-industrialized ethos of that district.

The leading painters who did remain, including some of the Pre-Raphaelites, took large converted spaces in stable or timber yards, hiring studios when they needed them or clubbing together to share them, as with the so-called Clipstone Street circle (c.1840–54). A next step was the creation of purpose-built studio flats. Marylebone boasted perhaps London's earliest example in Langham Chambers of 1854, long gone, before the genre spread to Chelsea, Kensington and Hampstead. As for the sculptors, they too had become thin on the ground after 1860. Exceptions were Joseph Durham in Devonshire Street and Thomas Woolner in Welbeck Street. Both availed themselves of mews premises in the smarter sector of Marylebone, suggesting that their work was not outlawed by the Portland Estate as noxious trade.

Artists were the tip of an iceberg of skilled artisan workers in Georgian and Victorian Marylebone, operating from premises packed together in mews and yards behind street frontages. When fire destroyed a swathe of back-land workshops behind Great Titchfield Street in 1825, losses were imputed to a carver and gilder, a cabinet maker, a chair maker, a piano manufacturer and a card maker.⁸⁷ Firms involved with household finishing and furnishing were particularly copious: upholsterers, furniture makers and dealers, framers, carvers, wallpaper manufacturers and suppliers, decorators, carpet warehousemen, stove manufacturers and so on. Most clustered close to Oxford Street. Perhaps the highest-status Victorian cluster was in Berners Street, where one firm, Sandersons, emerged to twentieth-century pre-eminence in furnishings and wallpaper. Further west Edward Foxhall, Soane's carver and decorator, had a shop in Old Cavendish Street, and the greatest of the decorative painting firms, the Craces, were based in Wigmore Street from 1827. Mortimer Street attracted a cluster of late Victorian stove

makers, though by then their premises were as likely to be showrooms as places of primary manufacture.

Berners Street was also host to major musical instrument makers, who first appeared there around 1790, probably migrating from Soho alongside music publishers and engravers. Making instruments and publishing music often went together, as with Boosey & Co. (first in Holles Street, later in Regent Street) or Rudall, Carte & Co. (Berners Street). In a later form of diversification, the grander piano makers and dealers of Wigmore Street opened recital rooms.

Alongside the makers came the musicians themselves: composers, singers and instrumentalists, as plentiful as the artists. Musical performances in the area go back to the heyday of Marylebone Gardens, which boasted a bandstand or orchestra from the 1730s with an organ added soon afterwards. Short operas could be performed there as well as incidental music. After it closed in the 1770s, Marylebone remained weak in bespoke venues for performance until the Princess's Theatre in Oxford Street opened in 1836, purveying a mixed diet of opera, drama and music hall. From the 1850s the major churches – Marylebone parish church, All Saints and St Andrew's – nurtured strong choral traditions as an element in their armoury of competitive attractions. All depended on good organs, that in the parish church having been built by John Gray of the New Road and first regularly played upon by the composer Charles Wesley junior. Popular tastes were catered for by the Marylebone Music Hall, operating from the back of a High Street pub between 1856 and 1900, and on a grander scale by the Oxford Music Hall near the Tottenham Court Road corner of Oxford Street (1861–1926).

In 1867 St George's Hall in Langham Place opened as a concert room, only to be outshone when the sumptuous Queen's Hall rose beside it in 1893. The next year Brinsmeads the piano makers opened their modest recital hall in Wigmore Street; not to be outdone, their neighbours and rivals Carl

Bechstein & Sons of Berlin, first established in Britain in Rathbone Place (1884), inaugurated their larger Bechstein (later Wigmore) Hall (1901). The St James's (later Philharmonic) Hall, Great Portland Street, opened in 1908 turned out a flop. But for the next forty years, until bombing destroyed the Queen's Hall, Marylebone could claim to be central to London's musical life. Backing came from the Trinity College of Music, occupying settled premises in Mandeville Place from 1880, and the august Royal Academy of Music, which moved to Marylebone Road in 1911. The accumulation of these local institutions and venues had their impact when the mantle passed to Broadcasting House. The live performance of classical music already ranked high in the BBC before its Portland Place days, so that a concert hall became an essential element of its new Marylebone headquarters in 1928–9.

The garment trade

Two trades assumed great importance in early twentieth-century Marylebone. One, the motor trade, was so exclusively connected with Great Portland Street that its discussion is reserved for Chapter 22. The garment trade had earlier origins and much wider diffusion. As an industry of intricately connected activities and sequences, operating in small units with hand-held equipment, the finishing of clothes and shoes needed no special premises, so none such are conspicuous in London till well after the sewing machine started to make an impact towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Before 1900 the main concentration of the West End garment trade was in Soho.⁸⁸ But it was strong also north of Oxford Street. Indeed, a correlation can be plotted between proximity to Oxford Street and numbers of tailors, dressmakers and kindred trades. Directories for 1842 show about one in two entries in Vere Street, next to Oxford Street, as belonging to these businesses; one in three in Great Castle Street, the first parallel street north; one in four in

Margaret Street, next north; one in five in Mortimer Street, next north again. In Wigmore Street, parallel with Mortimer Street, the ratio was slightly under one in four. So the garment workers always clustered close to the fashionable shops. Most probably laboured at home, attending at shops or clients' homes as required. As for the shops themselves, display windows for fashions and fabrics were still limited beyond Oxford Street itself until the 1830s. They then began creeping along Upper Regent Street, resisted Canute-like by the Crown authorities, who had not expected the top of their new street to be so soon commercialized.

After 1850 come signs of diversification and industrialization, at least in accessories. Addresses near Oxford Street filled up with wholesalers for the emerging department stores, and Berners Street firms, for instance, lodged patent applications for hat and curtain fasteners, hat brims, bedsteads, lace and costume jewellery alongside others for furnishings and the metal trades. But still there were no purpose-built premises. New 'warehouses' erected in the 1870s-90s tended to house small engineering firms or furniture makers, not yet sewing machines.

The boom in the West End garment trade coincided with the halcyon years of the Oxford Street department store. Barely evident by 1900, it started to transform the building fabric from about 1910. Construction of new footage for the trade then raced ahead for thirty years, permeating right up to the Euston Road and broken only by the world wars. Wholesale clothing still dominated such streets as Margaret Street for three further decades after the Second World War. When shops attached to the Holcroft Court housing scheme were being planned in the late 1960s for the top of Cleveland Street, the workshops behind were expected to fill up with garment workers. Since the millennium the sector has dwindled dramatically, but it is still represented in pockets.

Proximity to Oxford Street was always at a premium. Among the earliest firms to build were Bastin, Merryfield & Cracknell, makers and

importers of items in ladies' clothing, previously occupying much smaller premises in Aldersgate, on the edge of the City of London drapery sector. Their new large and ornate building of 1906 in Great Portland Street lay directly behind Peter Robinsons, one of the major stores. Its display windows facing the street hint at a measure of advertising if not of retailing (Ill. 0.23). They soon took on extra premises across the street, suggesting that none of the five storeys was sublet. Rather smaller was Golderbrock House, Great Titchfield Street, rebuilt in 1912–13 by an existing lessee, then snapped up by a blouse manufacturer and fitted out with a first-floor showroom.

Such showrooms were the exception. Most of the inter-war garment buildings consisted of open floor space packed with as many workers, usually women, and sewing machines as could be supervised. That entailed Americanized framed construction, large windows and thin internal partitioning. Minimal classicism or a flicker of Art Deco was the usual approach to external style, not always devoid of ham-fisted spirit. Specialists in the genre included the surveyor-architects Waite & Waite, and H. Courtenay Constantine. Such buildings tended to be let by the floor or less, since garment firms were many but small in size. St Margaret's House, Wells Street, for instance, was commissioned from Albert Richardson by Sandersons for its own use when that firm was in expansive mood. Following the post-1929 slump, the building was let out instead to nine separate firms, all but one from the resilient garment trade.

Hostels and hotels

The large number of shop assistants employed in drapery and other stores elicited a growing demand for hostel accommodation, notably for young women. From the 1870s the conditions of employees and their welfare exercised reformers, who urged the bigger shopkeepers to show a lead. John

Lewis, not yet reputed a model employer, built frugal hostels in Weymouth Street (1885–6) and then another, better equipped, in Bolsover Street (1914–16). Peter Robinsons also ran hostels, now all gone. Bourne & Hollingsworth had a small establishment in Mortimer Street before decanting its staff into spacious halls of residence east of Tottenham Court Road.

From the 1880s hospitals, charities and other organizations procured similar hostels, where nurses and women in the drapery trades and shops were the commonest residents. Mortimer Street acquired a cluster of these establishments, culminating in Ames House, built for the YWCA to Beresford Pite's designs in 1903–4 and one of several hostels including restaurants open also to non-residents. Nurses might be housed either in purpose-built premises like the shiny-white Howard de Walden Nurses Home and Club, Langham Street (1899–1900), or in adapted houses and flats. Later examples were bigger, like John Astor House, Foley Street, for Middlesex Hospital (1929–31). Among post-war hostels the most interesting in conception, if not architecture, is International Students House (1964–5), occupying an end of the reconstructed Park Crescent.

A guide to Marylebone of the 1920s lists ten public hotels dotted around the area covered by these volumes, with further private hotels in Langham Street and Nottingham Place.⁸⁹ The oldest continuous hotel in the area has been the Berners Hotel, on its present site since 1826 and for years just in linked houses, like most such establishments. After the one-off Langham Hotel, opened in 1865, purpose-built hotels arrived in bursts. The rebuildings of the Berners Hotel and the Portland Hotel in Great Portland Street, and the making of the Welbeck Palace in Welbeck Street (now a Holiday Inn) all responded to the Edwardian hankering for luxury. In the post-war period Maxwell Joseph took over and spruced up two old-style hotels in linked premises, the Mandeville in Mandeville Place and the Clifton-Ford Hotel in Welbeck Street, completely rebuilding the latter (now the Marylebone Hotel). The lumpen Regent Centre Hotel (now another Holiday

Inn) also then appeared in Carburton Street. Berners Street acquired a second somewhat louche hotel when Sandersons the wallpaper emporium reopened as the Sandersons Hotel in 2000, patronized (like the relaunched Berners Hotel down the street) as much by passing custom as by paying guests. Today many further small hotels cater for tourists, general or medical.

Shops

Many hostel residents would have worked in shops with large departments employing dozens of assistants. But the smaller Marylebone shops should not be forgotten. Most just served the immediate wants of the local community. Changes of occupation and shopping habits make it hard today to grasp how many small shops and trades there once were. Almost no street was without them. In 1841 nearly every one of the 80–90 addresses in Wells Street, for instance, was partly in trade use, including three grocers, two dairies, two hairdressers, two tobacconists, a greengrocer, a butcher, a baker and a tallow chandler. Fashionable addresses were more mixed than might now be suspected. Taking 1841 again, Devonshire Street, the northernmost street crossing the grid, enjoyed a baker, fishmonger, fruiterer, tea dealer, chemist and coal merchant. Even exclusive Harley Street had a bookseller, a wine merchant and a pub.

The overwhelming majority of 117 listed addresses in Marylebone High Street likewise served local needs. But there were exceptions like the paper-stainers William Woollams & Co., who in 1841 had addresses in Marylebone Lane and Wigmore Street and a network of connections with the furnishing and decorating trades beyond. While much of their employment was local, they responded also to a wider world. So too did the ‘Old Curiosity Shop’ in Thayer Street, which from the 1850s advertised nationally as dealers in women’s clothing and a welter of second-hand goods, often destined for

export. Many small specialist shopkeepers enjoyed an extended remit, partly because they were close to Oxford Street which always attracted a wide-based clientele, but also because they helped supply customers with second homes beyond London.

Oxford Street excluded, Marylebone High Street is the area's prime shopping street, regarded today as a fulcrum of local energy and prosperity. Its shops generally lack the architectural *chic* of Wigmore Street, reflecting its more workaday character historically. Wigmore Street in contrast was closer in character to smart Mayfair shopping streets, and in 1823 Samuel Ware projected a development for it on the lines of Burlington Arcade. In the Edwardian period the rebuilding of Debenham & Freebody drew department-store scale into the heart of Marylebone, but it had no imitators. Other Wigmore Street shops, such as John Bell & Croyden the chemists, have proved the most enduring.

Planning and architecture

The Howard de Walden grid

The determining feature of the streets that make up the centre of the Howard de Walden estate is the compact grid, whose abiding impact has been mentioned at the start of this introduction.

Grid plans are as old as cities themselves, because they offer the most efficient way of dividing property. But they can only impose a pattern of planned regularity once they attain a certain extent. In London the earliest notable street grids were those around Covent Garden of the 1630s, followed by Bloomsbury and St James's Square. All were connected with squares and covered only a few acres. A more convincing precursor for Marylebone is

Soho Square, developed after 1677 with independent linear streets to its west and south.

Two great West End developments, the Cavendish–Harley estate in Marylebone and the Grosvenor estate in Mayfair, started off almost simultaneously during the reign of George I. Both again took the notion of a great square surrounded by a grid of streets as their point of departure.⁹⁰ But they improved upon the previous model in two ways. They covered much larger areas, about 100 acres in Mayfair, double that in Marylebone. That scale immediately made their grids more forceful and their squares less dominant, particularly so on the Cavendish–Harley development, where the original square – as it turned out the only one – was laid out close to the estate’s southern boundary. Both plans also broke with the methods improvised in the seventeenth century for tucking in the stabling and other services that high-class houses required. Now for the first time the oblong blocks of the two grids were bisected by common mews servicing two parallel streets.

The origins of this enlarged grid with servicing behind are obscure. The plan published by John Prince for the Harleys in 1719 (see Ill. 0.07) certainly shows a full-scale grid stretching as far north as the eventual line of Devonshire Street, with oblong north–south blocks of similar size to those that took shape over the next eighty years. But none is in its final position. Nor does the Prince plan clarify what was intended inside the blocks, only the fatter ones being shown as bisected by mews-like back streets. Likewise the earliest plan of the Grosvenor estate, the Mackay map of 1723, shows the street layout much as carried out, but with the interiors of the blocks indeterminately blank. If priority has to be awarded in carrying out the street–mews–street arrangement on the ground, it must go to the Grosvenor estate, since the whole layout of Grosvenor Square, the four principal streets and mews in between, proceeded immediately. On the portions of the Cavendish–Harley estate developed in the 1720s–30s, that same regularity is not yet apparent. Cavendish Square enjoyed stabling immediately behind its houses

only on the east side. Nor were linear mews at first laid out as a matter of course between the main streets. The one exception was Mill Hill Mews between Wigmore and Henrietta Streets (marked on Rocque's map in error as 'Wellbeck Mews'). On the estate's eastern half, where the major streets ran east-west rather than north-south, minor in-between streets like Little Portland Street had ambiguous status.

The new planning model asserted itself fully on Cavendish-Harley (or Portland) land only after 1755, starting with Harley Mews South (now Wigmore Place) in the southernmost block between Harley and Wimpole Streets. Thereafter the street-mews-street pattern thrust northwards. The original axis for its advance was between Harley and Wimpole Streets. But beyond Queen Anne Street it spread west and east, notably to the double-depth blocks between Harley Street and Portland Place. There the collapse of the plan to fill a grid square with a mansion for the Duke of Portland caused the ingenious Adams to devise two H-shaped mews serving the ultra-grand terraces built up round these lengthy peripheries. Other variants to the basic model depended on block sizes. With the systematic 'roll out' of this planning grid up to the Marylebone Road by 1800, Cavendish Square came to look like a prestigious appendage at the tail of a semi-autonomous territory. By then the pattern had become standard for other smart West End developments.

The regularity of these blocks is only approximate. On neither axis do block lengths or widths ever exactly repeat themselves. The position of all the major north-south streets seems to have been set after the South Sea Bubble burst, when a revised Cavendish-Harley masterplan, probably the second after the one published by Prince, came into force. The distance between the cross streets, many of them not begun till much later in the century, was also fixed by 1724. Measuring from centre to centre, these were, approximately: Cavendish Square to Queen Anne Street, 495ft; Queen Anne Street to New Cavendish Street and New Cavendish Street to Weymouth Street, both 465ft; Weymouth Street to Devonshire Street, 410ft. Variations in block sizes may

have been influenced by now-forgotten obstacles or features on the ground like small ponds or existing structures.

These block dimensions may have been based on an estimate as to the optimum size of 'takes', and hence the number of houses that could be built and sold at any one time. The smarter Cavendish–Harley/Portland blocks typically allowed for between twelve and sixteen good-sized terraced houses on each of the long sides. That seems roughly replicated elsewhere, but they could be longer. Some frontages in Grosvenor Street stretched to well over twenty houses or some 500ft, while on the Berners estate, also covered in these volumes, Berners and Newman Streets of the 1760s and 70s ran to over 600ft, making Berners Mews in between the longest mews of its day.

Given the quantity of land available, it also made sense to vary the block sizes and types to cater for different levels of housing. In the eastern sector, for instance, there were no purpose-planned mews, so streets got squeezed closer together and had to make do with the ad hoc yards within blocks typical of earlier London developments. Not that the layout of those areas was neglected; even here few back-land courts of cottages were allowed, of the kind that turned into slums. Instead, internal block space was taken over by trade and manufactures, soon intensifying to dangerous densities. The perils of such infill were exposed by the fire of 1825 that destroyed swathes of workshops and their valuable contents in the centre of the block bounded by Great Titchfield, Margaret, Wells and Mortimer Streets.

Streetscape and house plans

The corollary to the disciplined layout of the grid was monotony (Ill. 0.24). Bereft of more than a handful of special buildings, the blocks at the heart of the Cavendish–Harley/Portland estate set their own austere milieu. Vistas of flat brick fronts unfolded before the beholder, alleviated only by occasional

shops and corner pubs. Before 1850 very few bay windows protruded from the fronts along the main streets. Even the ground storeys were seldom at first stuccoed. Doorcases attracted some embellishment, and with them came fanlights to brighten the boxy entrance passages. The cutting-down of first-floor windows to create iron-railed balconies was generally a modification found only after 1800. In one respect the early houses were less stern than they became; almost all were a storey lower. So the towering of frontage over street on the north-south axes would have been less oppressive than it is today.

The mute fronts of Harley Street and its neighbours, increasingly uniform as they marched northwards, must at first have seemed modern, novel and orderly. But by 1800 they were commonplace and, by the time of the Victorian romantics, the object of an outspoken reaction. Benjamin Disraeli in his novel *Tancred* (1847) put down their shortcomings to the constraints of the Georgian building acts:

Mary-le-bone alone ought to have produced a revolution in our domestic architecture. It did nothing. It was built by Act of Parliament. Parliament prescribed even a façade. It is Parliament to whom we are indebted for your Gloucester Places, and Baker Streets, and Harley Streets, and Wimpole Streets, and all those flat, dull, spiritless streets, resembling each other like a large family of plain children, with Portland Place and Portman Square for their respectable parents.

Dickens, twelve years resident in Devonshire Terrace, Marylebone Road, looked deeper, discerning in this moribund landscape a failure in moral feeling. In *Dombey and Son* (1848) Mr Dombey's Marylebone house, 'on the shady side of a tall, dark, dreadfully genteel street', becomes the claustrophobic backdrop against which a drama of compulsive egotism is

played out. And in *Little Dorrit* (1857) Dickens likens such architecture to the hypocrisy of manners:

Like unexceptionable Society, the opposing rows of houses in Harley Street were very grim with one another. Indeed, the mansions and their inhabitants were so much alike in this respect, that the people were often to be drawn up on opposite sides of dinner-tables, in the shade of their own loftiness, staring at the other side of the way with the dullness of the houses ... The expressionless uniform twenty houses, all to be knocked at and rung at in the same form, all approachable by the same dull steps, all fended off by the same pattern of railing, all with the same impracticable fire-escapes, the same inconvenient fixtures in their heads, and everything to be taken at a high valuation – who has not dined with these?

More poignantly, Tennyson bemoaned the ‘dark house’ in ‘long unlovely’ Wimpole Street where Arthur Hallam would come no more. More practically, the decorative journalist Mrs Haweis called for more colour:

We have all suffered from the difficulty of finding our way about such long, black, featureless ravines as Harley, Wimpole, Welbeck Streets ... all the houses looking alike, all painted a delicate creamy white, and all equally black. Mayfair and Marylebone rivalled each other in uniformity: a new door-knob or a blue door represented, but a very few years ago, the utmost stretch of metropolitan imagination.⁹¹

Such were the perceptions of Victorians occupying houses anything from fifty to a hundred and twenty years old, often sorely in need of a face-lift.

Behind the ranked façades, every dwelling like every family differed. That was especially so for the better streets, where houses before 1800 were typically built in ones or twos. The greater the plot widths, the likelier were

there to be variations in plan form; and the bigger the house, the commoner would be the original elaboration and later redecorations of the basic carcass. Once frontages exceeded 25ft, the plan form in Georgian houses up to at least the 1770s could vary, with main staircases sometimes in the front compartment, sometimes in the centre, sometimes conventionally at the back of a narrow hall – grander examples sometimes of stone with iron balustrading, simpler ones at first of timber with balusters to match. The archive of the Berners estate includes a book that records plans of most of the houses on Berners and Newman Streets, new in the 1760s and 70s. The fronts there concealed a variety of plan forms, suave in the hands of a master like William Chambers, but also present in houses put up by carpenters and masons without explicit architectural input.

Minor streets and smaller houses seldom departed from the rear-stair terrace plan, standard in the West End by about 1730. Where the streets were jammed closer together without an intervening mews, the house plots were also shallower. So small houses would have only paved back yards, soon taken up with sheds for services, trades or cesspits. Larger ones often started with a fair garden, but before long, underground kitchens started creeping back towards the mews; or business rooms, billiard rooms and the like gobbled up open space, stretching out well beyond the standard half-width back extension, which could be a good light room where plot width and aspect were favourable.

The breakdown of Georgian austerity along street frontages came about through a blend of natural erosion, changing tastes and the evolution in building types, sizes and uses. The partial stuccoing of fronts and adding of extra storeys made no marked difference. But when several individual houses were pulled down and their plots thrown together as flats – of high, middle or artisan class – as occurred all over eastern Marylebone from about 1880, a streetscape with another rhythm started to emerge. The effect was farthest reaching on commercial streets like Great Portland Street and Wigmore Street.

Eventually, in such conditions a single design could take up a whole block, as with the overweening Portland Court, Great Portland Street (1905–9) and many later examples. At that point the character of the street became monumental, and the original plot sizes lost value as modules of the bigger whole.

That was less the pattern in the smarter streets, where up until 1914 there was still demand enough for single houses and control enough by the Portland–Howard de Walden Estate for many plots to be individually rebuilt. Because of their enclosed terrace position, the architects who replaced them were bound to respect the previous general configuration. In terms of appearance, the mid-Victorian instinct was to depart strongly from the originals, by thrusting out bays and sticking up gables. But in the hands of middle-of-the-road architects like Frank Elgood, Banister Fletcher and W. Henry White a subtler Marylebone style emerged from about 1890 for rebuilding houses in a way that fitted in and yet stimulated the streetscape, using richer materials and creating more individualized plans. The occasional wilder card, like C. H. Worley’s terracotta frenzy at Wimpole House on the corner of Wimpole and New Cavendish Streets (1892–3), did no harm, because a balance of estate oversight and building regulations forced all compositions to stick to scale and respect the adage of variation within uniformity. After 1900 greater deference towards the old Georgian houses became manifest, though their replacements still used redder brick and much more stone. As time went on, many more of these were flats. After 1918 the individual house became all but extinct apart from conversions and rebuildings in redundant mews space, and some clever individual compositions along the cross streets. All added to ‘the chattering variation of the architecture, from house to house’, to quote from an Elizabeth Bowen novel part set in wartime Marylebone, *The Heat of the Day*.⁹²

Monotony is a complaint not much voiced any more against the Howard de Walden grid and its environs. Instead, there is appreciation and

admiration that here, without loss of variety, London has retained something of the discipline imposed by pre-modern building regulations. A certain aura of urbanity remains. It would be stronger but for the ubiquity of vehicles, too frequent, fast and forceful along what in the main are one-way streets or too garishly cluttering up their gutters. While so much through traffic still pervades the area, its former dullness – or old sequestered peace – can only be a historical memory.

Architecture, architects, builders and developers

Individual buildings of interest in eastern Marylebone are legion. Here attention can only be drawn to a few of them, and to those figures or groups who had a strong impact on the fabric at critical junctures.

James Gibbs is the first architect of note to feature in the history of the Cavendish–Harley estate. There is firmer evidence for his authorship of the Oxford Chapel (now St Peter's, Vere Street) than for the Oxford Market, but it makes sense that the only two prospective public buildings on the 1719 estate layout should have been reserved for the Harleys' favourite architect. Both were parsimonious projects, yet the Oxford Chapel was to be a point of departure for later Georgian proprietary chapels, just as Gibbs's grander St Martin in the Fields became a reference for countless parish churches. Apart from these special jobs, Gibbs helped out with sundry aspects of the crucial Cavendish Square development around 1722–4, though he cannot be shown to have designed any one whole house there. Round the corner in Henrietta Street (now Place), close to the chapel, the case was different, for there from 1725 onwards Gibbs took part in development both on his own account and with such colleagues as Charles Bridgeman the landscapist and William Thomas, the Harleys' steward. Gibbs himself lived in Henrietta Street from 1732 to his death in 1754. It is very regrettable that all the Henrietta Place

houses have gone; just one lavish room was rescued in 1956 and is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Altogether, intact early Georgian interiors from this first phase of development are few indeed, confined to four houses in Cavendish Square, which rejoice particularly in noble staircase halls: impressive enough at Nos 3, 4 and 5, spectacularly painted at No. 20.

A few familiar architectural names float by in the early Cavendish–Harley years. Henry Flitcroft was involved in a small way with some houses in Great Castle Street in 1725–6. Edward Shepherd and John Wood (‘Wood of Bath’) appear as craftsmen employed by Lord Bingley in Cavendish Square in 1722 before transferring to the captious patronage of the Duke of Chandos. Shepherd soon moved on to securer Grosvenor estate work. The precocious Wood, barely in his twenties and originally described as a joiner, took several Cavendish–Harley building leases, notably in Oxford Street. Before reverting to his native Bath around 1727, he also built the bespoke riding house for a troop of Grenadier Guards on ground just south of the present All Souls, Langham Place. Its memory survives in the name of Riding House Street.

As elsewhere in Georgian London, the crucial figures who did most to realize the early developments were the developer-builders who agreed for large speculative takes, organized the ground into plots and subdivided them among colleagues or applicants. Because of the many possible arrangements for conducting speculative development, the nature of these men’s dealings and skills is often elusive. But they operated in a world as yet without clear demarcation between professional and artisan activity. By virtue of their local property interests, many became active vestrymen bearing major parochial duties, while some held official posts beyond Marylebone.

Most started out as skilled craftsmen, but not all. Perhaps the biggest single entrepreneur in eastern Marylebone was Thomas Huddle (d. 1768), probably the son of Edward Huddle, gardener, who took a lease of part of the Berners property in 1716; there was also a family connection with the Goodges of the neighbouring Goodge Street area in St Pancras. Thomas

himself is first described in 1732 as a gardener, then as a brickmaker, a natural onward step, since brickmaking was still a largely local activity. From developing the Oxford Street frontage of the Berners estate in 1738–40, Huddle jumped into a bigger league with several large block takes of the 1750s on Cavendish–Harley land, anticipating the coming boom. Huddle probably did not himself build in the strict sense, delegating instead to others with trades skills.

Among notable craftsmen-developers were two families of masons, the Mercers and the Devalls. George Mercer senior, described as ‘a close associate’ of James Gibbs, was already active on Cavendish–Harley developments in the 1720s. Like Huddle, he stepped up a gear in the 1750s, by which time his son George Mercer junior was probably helping him. Sometime mason to the Ordnance, treasurer to Marylebone Vestry and on occasion latterly terming himself architect, Mercer senior bought and developed the freehold block between Cavendish Square and Queen Anne Street that the Duke of Chandos had failed to utilize, built two large stone-fronted houses at the ends of what is now Cavendish Place, and was involved in the tangled saga of Foley House. Houses in which he was involved are often spacious but austere, with cantilevered stone stairs finished off with plain iron rails (e.g. 29 and 30 Welbeck Street). The profile of the two John Devalls, contemporary with the Mercers, is different. Big stone contractors, masons on major public buildings and suppliers of bespoke chimneypieces, they may have had a sizeable complement of permanent employees, some based in their yard in Little Portland Street. But takes in Margaret Street in the 1730s and in Queen Anne Street, Mansfield Street, Portland Place and Great Portland Street from the 1760s reveal the Devalls also as large Marylebone entrepreneurs.

Further craftsmen-developers of stature include William Franks (d. 1790), a surveyor-builder on a large scale who handled big takes, subcontracting most of them, and also had large interests in the Goodge Street

and Percy Street areas of St Pancras; John Lane, joiner (d. 1753), holder of various official positions and architect to the second Marylebone parish church (1741–2) and the first workhouse (1749–52); and the first of a remarkable series of plasterers, William Wilton of Charing Cross, Marylebone and Wanstead (d. 1768). Wilton was a participant in the Henrietta Street take of the 1720s associated with Gibbs. He rebounded from a bankruptcy in 1728 to enjoy wide success as a supplier of ornamental plasterwork and to develop further in and around Margaret, Great Portland and Mortimer Streets, in which last street he continued to hold property. Wilton's papier-mâché factory, started behind the former Edward Street and what is now Cavendish Place around 1745, has already been mentioned. Nollekens's biographer J. T. Smith says this factory employed 'hundreds of people' making ornaments for chimneypieces and mirrors. It may not have lasted long, and Smith's memories are prone to exaggeration, but William Chambers, latterly a friend of Wilton's and an intimate of his son, the statuary Joseph Wilton, certainly experimented in papier mâché. Wilton senior's manager at the factory was his nephew Thomas Collins, another entrepreneurial plasterer, intimate of Chambers and long-lived Marylebone resident.

Cavendish Square was only finished after the tempo of development picked up in the late 1750s. That is the date of Nos 17–18 on the west side; No. 17 has interior features in a Gothick taste attributable to Henry Keene, equalled only by the remarkable rococo-Chinese plasterwork at 13 Harley Street of similar date. The two great Corinthian-pedimented compositions that grace the square's north side ought to have been the architectural set piece from the first phase of the Cavendish–Harley development. They are in fact an afterthought, dating from as late as 1768–70. Schemes for this frontage had come and gone. The most fascinating was a multi-authored, temple-style headquarters for the Society of Dilettanti, begun in 1753–4 but then cancelled. Some of the ideas were evidently picked up by the eventual owner of the site, George Tufnell, and echoed in the stone fronts for ordinary houses finally put

up here by the executant builders – perhaps Edward Gray, bricklayer, and John Bastard, mason, both active elsewhere in the district.

The first fresh name to feature after the Portlands succeeded to formal ownership of the Cavendish–Harley properties in 1755 is that of the architect-builder Stiff Leadbetter, who built the proudly independent Foley House and the Portland Chapel, Great Portland Street, second of the local proprietary chapels. Leadbetter died in 1766 and was soon overshadowed by the premier architects of their day, the Adam brothers and William Chambers. Both took part in the Marylebone building boom of the 1760s and 70s, and both had collaborators and camp followers who spread their styles and ways of working. Damaged and fragmentary though Portland Place and Mansfield Street appear today, enough remains to make these streets, together with Chandos House, much the largest surviving concentration of the Adams' London developments. Given the toll of time and the lavishing of money on property hereabouts, it is remarkable that so many houses remain in some tolerable or better level of interior preservation.

The fate of the Chambers oeuvre in Marylebone has been worse. It is not even certain how many houses Chambers designed in Berners Street, but it may have been as many as twenty-two, each slightly different, including a house for himself. All have gone, mostly between the 1930s and the 1960s. A few vestiges of Chambers ceilings survive in Harley Street houses, probably designs made for Thomas Collins, his friend and fellow venturer also in Berners Street. Though never a speculator on the Adams' scale of effrontery, Chambers was not averse to dabbling in property, and both he and his brother John are found as marginal presences in his rivals' murky financial dealings. Elsewhere, three surviving houses of about 1776–7 in Langham Street can plausibly be attributed to Chambers, as they were built for his sculptor-friend Joseph Wilton, but here too only fragmentary details survive to hint at their likely provenance. So Chambers is best represented today in Marylebone through the legacy of his craftsmen and pupils, notably the

respectful Thomas Hardwick, who lived first in Rathbone Place, later in one of the Chambers houses in Berners Street. To Hardwick fell the rebuilding of the parish watch house and, late in his career, the long-promised Marylebone parish church that Chambers had once seemed destined to design.

The speed, the guile, the consummate skill and the resilience with which the Adam brothers acted upon the Marylebone building world between 1767 and the 1790s is fully set out in Chapters 11 and 17. Here just a few summary points may be made. One is that the Adams' very first ideas for building in Marylebone actually pre-date the inception of their Adelphi development, usually thought of as the earlier scheme. Another is that their ventures in Portland Place and Mansfield Street were not, like the Adelphi, specifically undertaken by the Adam building company, but began as a speculation by the architectural practice of Robert and James Adam. The buildings themselves have sometimes been especially ascribed to James, but there is copious evidence for the pre-eminence of Robert, most celebrated of the brothers; William, the youngest, was also involved in the later stages, and especially after Robert's death in 1792. Nor has the diversity of the Adams' plans and ambitions for their vast Portland 'take' in Marylebone always been appreciated. Freestanding *hôtels* for the nobility, notably the 3rd Duke of Portland himself, featured among their designs not just at the start of their involvement, but well into the 1770s, ready to be slotted into their ever-changing masterplan. If no such mansions materialized, two grand enough houses did in the shape of the extant Chandos House and its former neighbour, General Robert Clerk's house at the corner of Mansfield and Duchess Streets, later transformed by Thomas Hope. As for the rest, Robert and James Adam devised a concatenation of grand terraced houses, whether in Mansfield Street or disguised behind temple fronts of brick and stucco all along the processional showcase that was the original Portland Place – broad, faintly forbidding, somehow un-English, not an open thoroughfare for its first fifty years but a sealed-off oasis or set piece. Some slight touches of decorative

grace barely offset these houses' external austerity, but internally they were an endless lexicon of invention and refinement in the celebrated and eagerly mimicked Adam style.

With the Adams came their collaborators, sometimes paid builders, craftsmen or assistants, sometimes active partners in the speculative process. The level of their independence varied. Two of the highest-calibre craftsmen, the plasterers Joseph Rose senior and junior, could execute designs by the Adams or create them themselves, and had their own speculative interests in Mansfield Street, Portland Place and nearby Queen Anne Street East (now Langham Street), where they lived. The building side involved some intriguing fellow figures from the Scottish diaspora. Foremost were Hepburn and James Hastie, brothers from a well-educated family who had migrated after the '45 rising and eventually established themselves in London. In and around Portland Place the Hasties sometimes built for the Adams, more often for themselves. From their Great Portland Street base they went on from the 1770s to develop much around Bolsover and Clipstone Streets, but there all their work has gone. Pillars of the Scotch Chapel in Wells Street, the Hasties were well respected in the local building world. One of their links was with the Richardson family: George Richardson, an early draughtsman of John Adam's in Edinburgh, came down to work for his London brothers, lived in Great Titchfield Street and issued a range of architectural books from there, but died poor. His son, William Richardson, more builder than architect, inherited the Hasties' Great Portland Street premises and in the 1820s under Nash developed the western arm of Park Crescent plus 124–152 Harley Street.

Among secondary figures in the development world of the 1760s and 70s, John Johnson ranks as the most dependable. Like John White (discussed above on page ##), Johnson was a provincially born carpenter who rose through efficiency to become a sizeable builder and respected architect. His earliest Marylebone connections seem to have been via the architect-builder Jacob Leroux. After an association with a plasterer, William Lloyd, who went

bankrupt, Johnson set up a home and business in Berners Street, building numerous houses there and earning trust enough to be chosen as William Berners' architect and builder for his country house, Woolverstone Park. In the 1770s Johnson helped develop takes on the Portland estate around the middle of Harley Street and built the fine 61 and 63 New Cavendish Street, pastiching the Adam manner. After passing on the building business in the 1780s to his son of the same name and some partners who developed much of Cleveland Street, Johnson moved to Devonshire Terrace and became a banker. But the bank failed in 1803, so his career ended haplessly.

Also touched by the Adam idiom was Richard Edwin, an architect who lived at various Marylebone addresses but died young in 1778. Edwin's most substantial work was Stratford Place (1772–6), the only French-style *hôtel* to survive in Marylebone, consisting of a mansion, forecourt and flanking houses – a strange apparition in the purlieus of Oxford Street. The mansion, now the Oriental Club, boasts some of the best interiors in the area. Just before he died, Edwin also designed a striking front near the top of Great Portland Street, similar to another notable demolished house, that of Robert Adam's rival James Wyatt. For most of his career Wyatt operated from Marylebone, living first in Newman Street, then building himself a large house and office in Queen Anne Street East (part of the present Broadcasting House site), where he lived till his death in 1813. Under its subsequent name of Foley Place the same street attracted other architects, including James's son Benjamin Dean Wyatt (1810–33) and Charles Barry in his most fertile period (1827–41).

For most of the nineteenth century building activity in eastern Marylebone was too sporadic for particular architects to stand out. The major intervention was Nash's Upper Regent Street and Park Crescent, under way between about 1813 and 1826. All Souls Church is the only authentic survival of Nash's great West End planning scheme in the area covered by these volumes, as Park Crescent has been entirely reconstructed. If Nash was the

dominant creative figure, he was abetted by others such as his partner James Morgan, the architect-builder James Burton, and two less enduring builder-developers, Charles Mayor and Samuel Baxter. In the next generation the able David Mocatta was active in the area; it is unlucky that all his work, notably a row of houses in Langham Place and a synagogue in Margaret Street, has gone.

High Victorianism in architecture is not naturally associated with Marylebone, yet it was here that William Butterfield flung down its boldest challenge in the shape of All Saints, Margaret Street (1849–59). This world-famous group of church and ancillary buildings continues to shock, in part because it still looks as militantly different from everything around it as it did when it was new. Not that it was quite alone. Close by, Butterfield's friend G. E. Street built a small chapel for the nuns of All Saints Convent. Street lived in Marylebone, as did G. F. Bodley, J. L. Pearson, Alfred Waterhouse and William White, but none of these architects made much impact on the district. One who did was a second-rank figure eager in his outspoken early days to be aboard the High Victorian bandwagon: Thomas 'Victorian' Harris. A long-serving Marylebone vestryman, Harris designed the punchy Ragged School when it was rebuilt in Grotto Passage (1859–60): it is probably his earliest-surviving work. Later he enlarged Marylebone parish church in the 1880s with surprising skill and tact, extended the neighbouring school and finished his career by rebuilding the parish mission in Paddington Street. The most conspicuous High Victorian monument in the area is a different beast – the Langham Hotel (John Giles and James Murray, architects, 1863–5). All awkward brick bulk and fiddly stone detail, the long-term home of the novelist Ouida is the kind of building that gave Victorian architecture its bad name. Having survived decades of ridicule and neglect by the skin of its teeth, it has earned a hefty makeover to buck up its questionable charm. It would now be unthinkable to replace it.

By 1880 many of the lightly built Georgian houses of eastern Marylebone were worn out and unserviceable. On the Portland estate a policy of rebuilding was now increasingly adopted – generally piecemeal as leases fell in, rather than by wholesale clearance. To control this strategy, the estate managers preferred to work with trusted developers and architects. The regularity with which certain names recur suggests they may have kept a register of favoured or acceptable architects, but no trace of one has been found.

Among architects of this period the name of Frank Minshull Elgood is the most recurrent. He was the son and grandson of Marylebone auctioneers and estate agents, his grandfather John Elgood having taken over a business at the corner of Wimpole and Henrietta Streets in 1820.⁹³ Elgood himself made his architectural debut in the late 1880s with a house in Harley Street and a run of Queen Anne shops in Wigmore Street. A cascade of work followed. At first Elgood largely rebuilt houses for high-class professionals and others on the smart streets, but commercial jobs became more important after 1900. His fronts are always up to date in style, sometimes handsome or festive, seldom original. After the First World War he was in partnership with Edward Hastie, his assistant from 1907. Elgood eventually acquired a knighthood, but that was for his work for the Church Army Housing Society, not his architecture. Outside Marylebone he designed a church in Northwood, and chaired the innovative Ruislip-Northwood planning scheme in its early years.

Elgood's main rival was W. Henry White, an architect easily confused with two others of similar name. White's entrée into the Portland-Howard de Walden world probably came from an early association with James Boyton of the estate agents Elliott, Son & Boyton, from whose Vere Street address he began his independent practice in 1892, before moving for the rest of a long career to Cavendish Place. Once again there is a long list of White buildings in red brick and stone across the range of respectable late Victorian and Edwardian styles, less refined than Elgood's best work but with a

compensating vigour. White's two sons joined him in partnership from 1928, but the practice seems to have become less active in the area; by then he was living largely in Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, where he built a house for himself.

Sir James Boyton led the local field of estate agents in this era of prolific rebuildings. Boyton joined the Vere Street business of Henry Elliott & Son in 1878, soon became a partner and by 1890 was its driving force. Again there is a hint of the firm's domestic portfolio expanding into a more commercial one. Boyton worked with other designers besides White; he also controlled a subsidiary, the West End Property Investment Company, latterly serviced by a second architect, Lionel Barrett, who rebuilt the Vere Street premises in 1911–12. He was briefly an LCC member, Conservative MP for Marylebone East from 1910 to 1918 and served on the important Tudor Walters Committee on housing, securing a knighthood in 1918. He worked at times for Debenhams, and was responsible for negotiating the 999-year lease from the Howard de Walden Estate that gave D. H. Evans the confidence of tenure to rebuild their Oxford Street store in the 1920s. Boyton had a house at Marlow not far from W. Henry White; presumably they were friends.

Other architects whose names repeatedly turn up in the smarter streets around this period include C. H. Worley, prolific around Harley, Welbeck, Wigmore and Wimpole Streets in the heartier idioms of the 1880s and 90s; and, in the next generation, Claude Ferrier, son of a famous Cavendish Square neurologist and author of some coolly accomplished Beaux Arts fronts. Mortimer Street was the base of some busy commercial architects, surveyors and estate agents, such as Augustus E. Hughes and his son A. Edward Hughes, Mayor of Marylebone in 1922–3. Assiduous if undistinguished, Hughes senior acted for a time as architect to both Peter Robinson and John Lewis and designed some of the early blocks of flats in the district. Also in Mortimer Street was Alfred J. Hopkins, who rose from estate agent to surveyor and architect, trading in anything from pubs upwards.

Locally active builders recurrent in the intensive reconstructions of 1880 to 1914 include Matthews Brothers of Hallam Street, sometimes linked with Beresford Pite, sometimes with other architects; Watson Brothers, also of Hallam Street; A. A. Webber of Mortimer Street; and J. Stevens of South Molton Street. As always, some of their jobs involved contract work, others were speculative developments, among them the many private blocks of artisans' flats being built in the lesser streets. Many London builders naturally also operated in the district, but a surprise inclusion is T. H. Kingerlee & Son of Oxford, who after picking up some work for John Lewis in Weymouth Mews in 1896 went on to build for many local architects and developers, such as J. A. Michell of Great Castle Street.

For architectural quality the palm in this period must go to Beresford Pite, whose Marylebone designs have been the subject of an essay by Elaine Harwood.⁹⁴ Of his dozen odd jobs, ranging in date from 1889 (well before he left John Belcher's office for independent practice) to 1909, almost half were charitable commissions, emanating from Pite's commitment to the mission work of All Souls, Langham Place. Along with these went two private houses, alterations to a third in Harley Street for Pite's own use, and a sumptuous mosaic front to Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, together with a nearby warehouse to supply it. These jobs show Pite taking equal pains to confer inventive design and craft upon all his clients, well-off or needy. Much of this has been lost, Pagani's included. But the two houses, 37 Harley Street and 82 Mortimer Street, survive along with All Souls School, Foley Street, to testify to the verve, learning and versatility of Pite's architecture. Not all his work was high art. He enjoyed a regular relationship with Matthews Brothers, the builders; some of their developments, in Hanson Street for instance, seem to have been touched by his hand but not wholly designed by him. Two other nearby buildings rival Pite's in delight if not sophistication. One is the former Boultings premises at the corner of Riding House and Candover Streets (1903-4), a riot of jovial invention worthy of its rare architect, H. Fuller Clark.

The other is Radiant House, Mortimer Street (1914–15), a vision in blue and cream faience seemingly designed for the family stove-making firm by an even obscurer figure, F. L. Pither, but erected only after his death.

On the Howard de Walden grid or at its edge, many other rebuildings beside those of Elgood, White and Worley cheer up the streets. Examples that might be cited include the former dairy building with flats over at 14–16 New Cavendish Street (Saul & Harvey, architects, 1901), or the rumbustious block opposite, 1–5 New Cavendish Street and 6 Marylebone High Street (Arthur Sykes, architect, 1904). Street corners of this era are often lifted by the happy turning of corners with tourelles. Perhaps the sprightliest run of commercial buildings is the terracotta-clad row in Wigmore Street that includes the Wigmore Hall, linking fronts by Walter Cave, T. E. Collcutt and John Norton with a demurely flat-chested composition by Ernest George & Peto. Next west, in a stone-clad block incorporating the former Welbeck Palace Hotel by Boehmer & Gibbs (1907–8), the heavy-dress dignity of a dowager sails in upon the scene. Opposite, James Gibson of Wallace & Gibson set a new scale for Wigmore Street by rebuilding Debenham & Freebody in Edwardian Baroque mode, gleaming in Doultons' Carrara ware. As the one department store to consolidate north of Oxford Street, this is the only major shop covered in the present volumes. In contrast, the Royal Society of Medicine just round the corner in Wimpole Street and Henrietta Place, by Belcher & Joass, 1910–12, all neoclassical pomp and professional probity, swims hard against the encroaching commercial tide. Joass, Beresford Pite's successor in John Belcher's practice, was responsible for several other pre-First World War Marylebone buildings in a mannered classicism not quite comfortable in its skin: for instance, 28 Margaret Street, 76–80 Mortimer Street and 31 Weymouth Street.

Mews rebuildings or conversions can be traced back to the 1880s, when the architect Barrow Emanuel of Davis & Emanuel secured sites for a few clever small houses in Weymouth and Harley Streets. Emanuel's initiatives

foreshadowed much high-class building activity around Portland Place, notably in Devonshire, Hallam and Weymouth Streets. If full-scale town houses were in decline after 1900, a few were still being built, singly or sometimes now in symmetrical ranges. Around 1909–13 the builder William Willett the younger, famous for his suburban ‘Willett homes’, had a few late flings hereabouts at this distinctly urban type of grouped town house, abetted by his in-house architect Amos Faulkner and others.

The inter-war years were the heyday of the small (but not always so small) independent Marylebone house on the Howard de Walden estate, either in the mews or along the cross streets, New Cavendish, Weymouth and Devonshire Streets. Burnet, Tait & Lorne, G. Grey Wornum and Sir Giles Scott all made individual stabs at the genre under the patronage of Bovis Ltd. But flats were to dominate the housing of twentieth-century Marylebone. Their prime promoters in this sub-district were the Peczenik family. Leon Peczenik, a Polish Jew by origin, had been naturalized by 1870, made a commercial fortune and at his death in 1911 owned an apartment in Paris and a house in Portland Place. From 1907 he – or his son Charles E. Peczenik, acting under his name – had begun investing in smart French-style flats, at 11A–B Portland Place and 1 Weymouth Street, using reputable architects familiar to the Howard de Walden managers, Frank Verity and Sydney Tatchell. The younger Peczenik carried on that line up to the Second World War, building many such high-class blocks of flats and some offices. They were usually sketched out by outside architects; then a *bureau d'études* of Peczenik's own at 169 Great Portland Street carried through the details. He himself had had some training as an architect and engineer in Paris, but was primarily a businessman who operated through a series of development companies. Though he was also involved in the rebuilding of Grosvenor Square from the late 1920s, the upper Portland Place district was his heartland. If the clustering of Jewish families thereabouts may partly reflect Peczenik's

influence, it also owes something to the Gluckstein and Joseph families, enlightened owners of Bovis Ltd, and may go back to Barrow Emanuel.

The area's inter-war architecture was dominated by large institutional and commercial buildings. First came the Crown's reconstruction of Regent Street, no different north of Oxford Circus than south. The 1920s blocks here all ended up plainer than the one portion carried out before the war, Frank Verity's colonnaded Regent Street Polytechnic. Subsequent projects confirmed the allure of Portland-stone fronts, handled in shifting ways by F. J. Wills in his Little Titchfield Street extension for the Polytechnic, by G. Val Myer and F. J. Watson-Hart in Broadcasting House, Langham Place, and by the abler Edwin Cooper in his phased conversion of 20 and 21 Cavendish Square and extension along Henrietta Place as the College of Nursing. This line of façade development, progressing from weighty and modelled to light and sleek, culminated locally in G. Grey Wornum's 66 Portland Place, the RIBA headquarters, a showcase for the cool 'northern classicism' of the early 1930s, primed with modish decorative detail to make up for the stripping-down of mass. A few medical and garment-trade buildings also aspired to stone fronts. But the majority were of brick with some token stylistic allusion or other – at first Georgian or Beaux Arts, then from the 1930s Art Deco, Dutch or (like the RIBA) Scandinavian. None rivals the assurance of St Margaret's House, Wells Street (1930-1). The one piece built out of a larger scheme devised by Albert Richardson for Sandersons, its front is gravely monumental with a dab of Swedishness. Then at the back Richardson sticks his tongue in his cheek, serving up a provocatively Loos-like glazed 'brick' behind – the only possible word. Before war came, the nearest the area got to orthodox Modernism (as it is now interpreted) was at 71-73 Great Portland Street, a motor showroom built after some compromises to Joseph Emberton's designs in 1937.

Eastern Marylebone's post-war architecture was disappointing but not, as it could have been, a disaster. The worst total losses to bombing were the Queen's Hall, the Great Portland Street synagogue and some of the remaining

Chambers houses in Berners Street. Reconstruction took place slowly: the most comprehensive was the recreation of the whole of Park Crescent in facsimile, after attempts to save at least Nash's fronts proved unavailing. Once commercial rebuilding restarted at the end of the 1950s, the caution of the Howard de Walden Estate, conservative as to style and height, paid off. If the bolder architects had their ideas toned down, as did Katz and Vaughan for their Clifton-Ford Hotel, Welbeck Street, prominent sore thumbs were avoided. That low-key policy contrasts with what happened on the Crown's Queen's Hall site, where despite much effort to get a good development, the resulting mid-sized tower proved unworthy. Worse was the fate of Berners and Newman Streets, where office blocks of low quality got consent willy-nilly. Had it not been for Ivan Sanderson, whose insistence on a landmark for his family's furnishings firm caused Slater & Uren to raise their game in the Sandersons building, Berners Street would have lost all architectural quality. As it is, the best of its other blocks, Richard Seifert's Copyright House, has recently been allowed to go.

After building controls were eased, sundry cheap offices mushroomed up, especially east of Great Portland Street, where freeholds had been sold off. A well-received pair of 1950s blocks by the architects Gollins, Melvin, Ward & Partners faced one another across New Cavendish Street, but have vanished today, victims of their own economy. Some such blocks have now gone, others have been refurbished and reclad; the best that can be said of the survivors is that they are seldom wholly out of scale. For the time being the architectural initiative lay still with public sector commissions. Eastern Marylebone retains three major monuments dating from the latter years of this era, in the concrete idiom of the late 1960s and early 70s. One was the Holcroft Court housing scheme for Westminster City Council, nominally by Armstrong & MacManus but largely designed by a young assistant in their office, Michael Gold. Blank on the outside, it is slotted neatly into the street grid with all the architectural and spatial effort turned inwards upon a grand

internal garden court, apart from an outlying block of shops facing Cleveland Street. Close by is one of the two large projects, planned simultaneously, that symbolized the transformation of the Regent Street Polytechnic under the London County Council and its successor the Greater London Council. The Science and Engineering Building in New Cavendish Street was delegated to private architects, Lyons, Israel & Ellis, who gave it brutalist zip. The larger Marylebone Road campus of the Polytechnic, replacing the old workhouse, was a more onerous commission, retained by the LCC's own architects. Like many projects of the time, it proved too complex, incorporating several faculties and a housing element, and altering so often between first concept and completion that no one was satisfied with the delayed result. Despite these drawbacks and many subsequent chops and changes, it remains the flagship building of the University of Westminster and a memorable feature along the hard-edged Marylebone Road. The most notable recent building in the area has been another troubled project, the enlargement of Broadcasting House, finally completed after more than ten years in 2013 (Ill. 0.36). MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard, the original architects, were not retained for the second half of the commission, but the final result with its glistening outline and populated open court is likely to be regarded as London's most conspicuous monument to the genius of the late Sir Richard MacCormac.