

West of Marylebone High Street

The western fringe of the Portland–Howard de Walden estate evolved a quite different character from the body of the estate, essentially because it was just that: a narrow if irregular strip, demarcated from the rest by the High Street. Though there was some building in the early eighteenth century, development only took off from the 1760s, when the High Street itself was coming into being, changing from a quiet village street with more private homes than businesses into a thorough-going commercial and institutional centre. Even then, development west of the High Street was sporadic, going on by fits and starts until the turn of the nineteenth century, culminating a few years later in the building of the new parish church. The area's character was above all defined by municipal and institutional presences – workhouse, burial grounds, schools, magistrates' court. Poverty, in varying degree, was fairly widespread, with one long-standing pocket of particular deprivation in and around Grotto Passage. Only in Marylebone Road and Nottingham Place did it prove feasible to build relatively large houses, as on the principal streets east of the High Street, but their early fashionable character was not sustained.

Acknowledging this difference in character, much of the western fringe was sold off by the Howard de Walden Estate after the First World War; a further portion was taken by the Greater London Council for a never-realised school-building scheme in the 1960s. At the time of writing the long-term future of the Moxon Street car park, the large island site cleared of 'slum' houses by the GLC for the school, now owned by Westminster Council, has still to be resolved. The area south of Moxon Street, including the car park,

Aybrook, Cramer, St Vincent and Blandford Streets will be described in a later volume of the Survey.

Paddington Street and Grotto Passage area

Though the east end of Paddington Street was built up in the 1720s, the key factors in the development of the area discussed here were the formation of the New Burial Ground in the early 1730s and the building of the Grotto between the burial ground and the High Street a few years later. Of the two, the burial ground was much the more influential, for its eastern boundary wall and southern access road – Paradise Street – boxed in the small area in the angle of Paddington Street and the High Street, creating ideal conditions for housing developments of the lowest class. By the end of the eighteenth century it had become almost a maze of courts, alleys and narrow streets. Much of the layout survives, although none of the original houses. The western boundary of this enclave, alongside the graveyard, was Burying Ground Passage, renamed Ashland Place in 1886 when the burial ground was opened as a public garden; running crookedly through the middle was Grotto Passage. Only the little alley forming the north end of Grotto Passage has kept the name. The rest became known as Paradise Place, originally the name of a row of cottages behind gardens on the west side, with access from Paradise Street, but transferred in the 1860s to new buildings on the east side. Paradise Place was renamed Garbutt Place in 1937, after the former Vestry clerk W. H. Garbutt.

Paradise Street was partly developed in the 1730s by John Lane. There was some further building, by Joseph Mahoon and others, in the 1750s–60s, and more in the mid-to-late 1780s. The parish charity school was set up on the Paradise Street corner of the High Street in the mid 1750s, and in 1791–2 the St

Marylebone Day School of Instruction and Industry (see page #) was built further along the street. Paradise Street was renamed Moxon Street in 1938, taking its name from Moxon House there.¹

This area was among the worst concentrations of bad housing, overcrowding and poverty in the parish, a 'miserable neighbourhood' which cast its spell over social activists and philanthropists from the 1840s, when the name of Grotto Passage became familiar through the efficiently publicized Ragged School and Refuge there. Within an area of 100 yards square, it was said, were some 120 houses whose inhabitants were sunk 'in the lowest stages of moral and physical degradation', comparable to the legendary rookeries of St Giles. Conditions were described by the Vestry sanitary committee in 1847. Typically, the worst developments were courts shut off from the street by a wall with a common entrance door, lined with one-room deep houses without back yards or back windows, or any sanitation beyond shared privies with cesspits, and perhaps shared wash-houses and dust-holes for ash. Along Grotto Passage was a series of such courts, built over the yards or gardens of houses in Paddington Street and the High Street. Harrison's Place comprised seven two-room houses containing 47 people, who shared a couple of privies draining into another belonging to Grotto Place, a row of cottages to the north. In the ten houses comprising Eccleston's (otherwise Eagleton's) Buildings, 129 people occupied the 24 (out of 26) inhabited rooms, which relied on a single cesspit. Such squalor, in the committee's view, was the fault of the ground landlord; but here as elsewhere the original problem was perhaps loose drafting of eighteenth-century building leases, which enabled lessees to build such slums over yards and gardens without sanction - combined with the almost limitless demand for the very cheapest accommodation.²

Just before Christmas 1858, an inquest jury was shocked on going to Eccleston's Buildings to view the body of a woman who had lived there in a single room with her elderly husband and two grown-up children, refusing to

go into the workhouse despite extreme poverty. She was lying in the corner where she had presumably died; the husband, close to death, was lying in another corner: the jurymen 'were glad to beat a hasty retreat from the vitiated and poisonous atmosphere'. The fetid room was, in the coroner's opinion, fit only for one person to live in: it was 'a dreadful case, he never saw a worse'. Poverty was such that in the winter of 1860-1 families in and around Grotto Passage were reportedly starving.³

The area was notorious for violence, vice and drink. In Grotto Passage, said Lord Radstock in 1861, 'everything has its price in gin, - coals, and even blankets, all go for gin'. But by the time Octavia Hill began her housing work in Paradise Place in 1865, some of the worst problems were already disappearing. Pipe sewers were laid by the Metropolitan Sewers Commission in 1854 along Grotto Passage and the various alleys and courts. Police Place, a group of four four-room houses next to Marylebone Police Court, was demolished about 1855, when the site was incorporated into that of the court. Eccleston's Buildings adjoining had largely been demolished or at least vacated by 1861, when the Census recorded a single family there. The Duke of Portland offered to widen Grotto Passage in 1861, which may have been done when the first new houses were built there a couple of years or so later. In 1868 the medical officer of health, responding to sensational claims in the *Evening Standard*, inspected this and other poor areas in the vicinity house-by-house and concluded that most were reasonably clean and sanitary, with no overcrowding. Grotto Place was declared unfit for habitation by the medical officer in 1873. The Portland Estate began assembling sites for redevelopment on new lines, and from the 1880s this came to fruition with the systematic rebuilding of much of the area with block dwellings by the Estate, through a semi-detached development and management vehicle, the Portland Industrial Dwellings Company Limited, and a handful of private developers.⁴

Ashland Place was built up in the 1750s–60s as Burying Ground Passage. For long a poor street with just a small chandler’s shop in the way of businesses, it took on a more vigorous commercial character from the mid 1880s (Ill. 4.01), shortly before the Portland Industrial Dwellings development, when there was some new building, with a few shops opening and builders, cabinet-makers and a gun-maker setting up there. Cabinet-making, upholstery, and engineering were among the main activities until after the Second World War. In the 1950s the remaining workshops, at 3–4 Ashland Place, were acquired by the glazing contractors J. Preedy & Sons Ltd, formerly of Chiltern Street. Preedy Glass has since relocated to Park Royal, and the former Preedy House is now the Glassworks, occupied as the London home of an ‘innovation consultancy’. The building, much altered at various times, originated as workshops erected as his own venture by the Paddington Street builder George Hussey in 1883–4, a very plain brick-built range with iron floors, occupying the former yards or gardens of 49 and 50 Paddington Street.⁵

Paddington Street originated as Paddington Lane, a track towards Paddington running between Upper and Lower Church Fields. Thomas Smith, in dating Paddington Street’s development to about 1772, was referring to the western part, on the Portman estate, for the name was in use much earlier.⁶ Only the older, eastern section, from the High Street up to and including the parish burial grounds (Paddington Street Gardens), is described in this volume. Development here began in 1724 with a few houses on the south side, followed in 1726 by a row of six immediately opposite. The street was therefore barely started when the parish acquired the New Burial Ground in 1730. The Grotto, built in 1738, stood on a large plot behind houses in the High Street. Present-day Grotto Passage follows the northern part of its western boundary. The frontage between Grotto Passage and the burial

ground was filled with houses (Nos 49–56) about 1752 (Ill. 4.02), and houses on the Grotto ground fronting the street were built in 1785. On the north side, the frontage beyond the 1726 row was filled from the 1740s, partly under a building agreement of 1760 with the developer Jacob Leroux.⁷

Several nondescript Georgian houses survive, but most were rebuilt between the 1860s and early 1900s, typically as shops with flats, similar to new buildings in the High Street. The 1726 row, if not rebuilt when the original leases expired in the early nineteenth century, was replaced by the present Italianate terrace in the mid 1860s together with the matching High Street corner pub of 1866, the Rising Sun, allowing this end of the street to be widened – though No. 7 remained jutting into the roadway until demolished by the Vestry in 1891.⁸ No. 10, on the corner of Nottingham Place, was built as a bakery about the same time. Conventional late Victorian rebuildings include Nos 7 (1891, Queen Anne Revival), and 8–9 (1901, red-and-white Baroque). More originality is shown at Nos 64–65, rebuilt in 1887 for Joseph Chaplin, fishmonger, with effective use of faience in the front elevation (Ill. 4.03). The architect was Thomas Durrans. Two larger institutional buildings, the former Central Institute for Swedish Gymnastics at Nos 16–18 and the former St Marylebone Club and Institute attached to the Good Shepherd mission, are discussed below. About the turn of the century mansion-flats were built at the ends of Nottingham Place (Treborough Mansions, c.1900) and Northumberland Street (Luxborough House, 1899), the latter destroyed in the Second World War (see under Luxborough Street and Nottingham Place below). On the corner opposite Luxborough House, also damaged by bombing, Nos 19 and 20–20A were built in 1960 for property companies (designed respectively by Andrews, Emmerson & Sherlock, and I. & M. Stachiewicz, architects.⁹

The Grotto (demolished)

The Grotto, also known as Castles' Grotto, the Great Grotto or Royal Grotto, was well-known to many mid-Georgian Londoners. It was built in 1738 as his own venture by John Castles, an exponent of shell-work who had recently completed a grotto at Chelsea for Sir Robert Walpole, and later built the one still extant at Wimborne St Giles for the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury.¹⁰

Opened initially at half-a-crown a head, it was in its early years a fashionable resort, one of many royal visitors being Princess Amelia, who subsequently built her own grotto at Gunnersbury Park. Shell-work was the original attraction, and Castles sold shells and cement for the amateur. But perhaps as shell-work became old hat, he also opened a cold bath, fed by a natural spring. In 1756, the year before his death, he built a second grotto on the site, adapting the original as a breakfasting room. Under its later proprietor Richard Lloyd the therapeutic cold bath became more important, and electrical treatment was offered as a cure-all. Castles' shell-work, including a 5ft-square rendering of the royal arms, seems to have become almost irrelevant, but Lloyd maintained the Grotto as a refreshment house, selling tea, coffee and alcoholic drinks.¹¹

The site was a strip almost 300ft deep with relatively short frontages to Paddington Street and Paradise Street. According to Thomas Smith the Grotto itself stood on the site of the lock-up cells and cottages at the back of Marylebone Police Court – that is, on the east side of present-day Garbutt Place. In the Grotto's last years, part of the site was covered with houses, as yet unfinished in 1775. Lloyd's widow still ran the cold bath in 1776. The Royal Grotto Coffee House, High Street, possibly the old establishment or a successor, is mentioned in 1779, and the 'Grotto-house', Paradise Street, was still in existence in 1785, its then function unknown.¹²

Paddington Street Gardens

Paddington Street Gardens comprises the two disused burial grounds which largely superseded the parish churchyard in the High Street during the eighteenth century. Horwood's map of 1813 shows them as 'St Mary le Bone and St George's Burying Grounds'. That the words 'St George's' fall on the larger, southern site probably gave rise to the repeated assertion that this was known as St George's burial ground. There may have been some shared use by the parish of St George's Hanover Square, which until it obtained burial space in Bayswater in 1763 had only the small graveyard off Mount Street, acquired in 1723 when the parish church was being built – if so, perhaps explaining the presence at Paddington Street of the Fitzpatrick mausoleum (below).¹³

Most of what is now Paddington Street Gardens South was granted to St Marylebone by the Earl of Oxford in 1730, in exchange for a small plot west of Wells Street, together with an access road from the High Street, soon known as Paradise Street. It was to be substantially enclosed by a wall, with part set aside for almshouses and a workhouse, to be built within seven years. The ground was consecrated in 1733, by which time the 7ft-high enclosing wall had been built, under the supervision of James Gibbs. But the almshouses were never built, and in 1753 the Vestry petitioned Lady Oxford for a formal release from its obligation to build them, so that the intended site could be incorporated into the burial ground, already proving too small. The workhouse was begun in 1749, at the corner of Paddington Street and Burying Ground Passage (Ashland Place).¹⁴

In 1771 the Vestry accepted Henry Portman's offer of additional burial ground, part of a deal requiring the building of a new parish church on his estate at what became Manchester Square, in default of which the parish was to pay the considerable price of £3,000 for the extra ground. As well as what is now Paddington Street Gardens North, this consisted of a large irregular plot

adjoining at the north-west edge of the 1730 ground, and extending some 500ft down its west side. The two plots had been walled round by February 1772. They were separated by an existing path on the line of Paddington Street, soon to be made into a road, at either end of which gates and rails were set up. The work of laying-out and building, which included the construction of vaults under Paddington Street, was overseen by Sir William Chambers, architect of the proposed parish church, who was also responsible for alterations or repairs at the parish Court House in Marylebone Lane (page ###) about this time. One of the vaults was fitted up in 1804 as 'catacombs' for the dead, presumably meaning that stone shelving was put in for coffins.¹⁵

Notable interments in both grounds are listed in Thomas Smith's *Marylebone*. The north in particular became crowded with monuments, some 'of the most splendid description'; the south ground, with much space given over to common graves, somewhat less so. The most prominent to survive in the north is a stumpy obelisk in memory of Ensign Oswald Burnand, who died in India in 1810. In the south is a Neo-Classical mausoleum of Portland stone, erected in 1760 to contain the body of Susanna Fitzpatrick of Hanover Square, who died aged 30 in 1759 (Ills 4.04, 4.04a). Her husband, Richard Fitzpatrick, was a Whig politician and landowner in Ireland. According to a contemporary description, the mausoleum was 'formed upon the model of Juliet's tomb, as represented at the theatres, and the coffin placed within it, pretty high from the ground, upon an elegant pedestal'. In 1829 the Fitzpatricks' daughter Anne, Baroness de Robeck, who died in Paris aged 80, was also entombed there.¹⁶

There was concern about the offensive state of the main burial ground as early as the 1790s, by which time the workhouse in the corner had long been superseded by a new building north of Paddington Street and converted to use as the workhouse infirmary. The old building was finally cleared away in 1795, two years after an infirmary had been completed adjoining the new workhouse, and the site could be used for burials. Closure of both grounds

was recommended by the Vestry sanitary investigative committee in 1847, when it was noted that the opening of the cemetery at Kensal Green (in 1833) had caused no reduction in burials at Marylebone. They remained in routine use until closed by Order in Council in 1853, although for a few years interments in vaults were permissible by special licence.¹⁷

It was many years before real use was made of what was, in such a densely populated and impoverished district, a valuable resource. In 1859 a proposal to replace the high walls with railings and let the public enjoy the space for recreation was only partly successful. Some of the walls were taken down and railings erected in 1860–1, and in 1863 the ground was opened to the public on Sundays. In 1866 the medical officer of health, John Whitmore, suggested levelling the headstones in the north ground to make a playground of it. Nothing came of this, and in 1872 use of the north ground was granted to the Guardians of the Poor for the use of ‘well-conducted aged and infirm’ paupers.¹⁸

By that time development of the old burial grounds had become bound up with provision of a public mortuary. The decision to build one was made in 1866, following recommendations by inquest juries for whom viewing the body was often thoroughly unpleasant, especially in hot weather. To this scheme, as in other districts, there was opposition from some local people, but in 1868 arrangements for the mortuary’s ‘rapid construction’ were made, and it was completed the following year. Designed with great attention to ventilation and intended to be screened by trees, it was ‘very plain Egyptian’ in style, with battered walls – a somewhat cheap-sounding and old-fashioned structure of stuccoed brick with a part-glazed iron roof, designed by the Chief Surveyor for Marylebone, T. Gaul Browning (Ill. 4.05). It stood near the middle of the south ground, roughly midway between the sites of the two present-day shelters. Tomb-like in form, the mortuary was mistakenly labelled ‘mausoleum’ by the Ordnance Survey. There was room for twenty bodies, and in 1871 Whitmore described it as ‘in almost daily use for those

who have died from contagious or infectious diseases'. This 'ugly charnel house' survived the graveyard's transformation to a park but was demolished in 1889, having been made redundant by a more sophisticated ensemble off the north burial ground.¹⁹

Proposals for post-mortem and inquest rooms were made as early as 1876, but remained in abeyance until pressure in 1882 from the Local Government Board, after the police declared facilities at Marylebone insufficient. It was at first intended to put these buildings in the main burial ground, at the south end where a site in Conway Court was to have been acquired, or at the Paradise Street entrance. To this the rector, the Rev. William Barker, objected, no doubt thinking of the graveyard's future conversion.²⁰

Designed by H. Saxon Snell & Son and opened in 1888, the buildings eventually erected were to the west side of the north ground, on the site of York Court, approached through a Gothic archway in Paddington Street. They comprised a public mortuary-cum-chapel, coroner's court, and an inquest mortuary with post-mortem room and coffin store (Ills 4.06, 4.06a). The inquest mortuary had a glazed screen for the benefit of jurors, a feature apparently derived from the Paris Morgue, and the post-mortem room a specially designed revolving examination table. The buildings were demolished following bomb-damage in the Second World War.²¹

A new proposal to turn the south burial ground into 'a garden for the people' was debated in 1878 at a public meeting presided over by the philanthropic Earl of Lichfield, but the rector, the Rev. C. J. P. Eyre, and churchwardens were quick to pour cold water on it, setting out a litany of insuperable legal and financial obstacles.²² Public opening times had already been extended, and efforts made to cheer the place up, the Kyrle Society providing bulbs in 1881, when a new proposal for dealing with the grounds was made by the rector and churchwardens. But it was not until 1885 – Eyre had by then gone – that the Vestry determined to act, and an executive

committee was set up, chaired by Edmund Boulnois of the Baker Street Bazaar, a magistrate and later both MP and county councillor for East Marylebone. Members included the long-serving Radical vestryman F. H. Hallam, and Colonel Burges – a Marylebone sidesman and vice-chair of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association.

The grounds were cluttered with memorials of all sorts, amounting to 1,905 in the south ground, 884 in the north. All with illegible inscriptions were removed, while the relatively few still legible were mostly relocated to the boundaries. Both grounds were landscaped with new paths and shrubberies to designs drawn up by the Vestry surveyor Henry Tomkins. Parish and Metropolitan Board of Works shared the main costs, amounting to £1,000 – which the MBW thought low – and the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association paid the wages of the unemployed men taken on for the labouring work, also providing some further money and twelve garden seats. A private gift of shrubs and trees was also made through the Association, and another came from the Kyrle Society; other trees and plants were obtained from Cutbush of Highgate. A private donor gave the stone drinking fountain, which is now defunct and serves as the plinth for a sundial in the form of an armillary sphere.²³

In July 1886 the south ground was formally opened for public recreation by Princess Louise, while the north ground, despite the pleadings of the MPGA, remained the exclusive preserve of the workhouse poor. The new garden was still blighted by the presence of a working mortuary in its midst, and for the time being the walks were restricted to the present perimeter path and semi-circular sweep at the north end. The MP for Marylebone West, (Sir) Frederick Seager Hunt, offered to put up a ‘kiosk’, but this had to wait until the mortuary was demolished in 1889. Hunt’s kiosk seems to be the present north shelter, now glazed in. It originally had partitions and seating, taken out in 1897; the south shelter is later. An inexpensive bandstand, supplied in 1889 by W. H. Lascelles & Co., seems to

have been erected on the site of the mortuary. Police, Boys' Brigade and Volunteer bands played at various times, but regular concerts proved difficult to sustain and the bandstand was dismantled in the 1890s and given to the workhouse, perhaps for re-erection in the north ground. Much of the general layout of 1886 survives intact, along with many limes and planes (though some may be older). A public urinal, at the north-west corner, was part of the scheme; in the twentieth century the present cottage-style public conveniences were built at the Ashland Place corner.²⁴

The children's playground at the south end of the garden originated in 1948, when a faculty was obtained for the purpose. Also in the south garden is the marble statue of a road-sweeper, 'Street Orderly Boy', presented to St Marylebone in 1943 by Alderman David Isaacs. The late nineteenth-century piece is the work of Donato Barcaglia of Milan. Near the main entrance, the commemorative stone summarizing the history of the ground was erected by St Marylebone Borough Council about 1960. It is the work of the sculptor Arthur J. J. Ayres.²⁵

Grotto Passage Ragged School and Refuge

'The Grotto,' explains a character in one of R. M. Ballantyne's less exotic adventures, '... is an institution situate in Paddington Street, Marylebone, where homeless child'n, as would otherwise come to the gallows, is took in an' saved – saved not only from sin and misery themselves, but saved from inflictin' the same on society'. One of the numerous ventures associated with the 5th Earl of Shaftesbury, 'The Grotto' was among the earliest and best-known institutions of its kind. It was founded in 1846 by William Maxwell of Richmond upon Thames, in conjunction with Lords Radstock and Kinnaird and the Hon. Miss Waldegrave.²⁶

Conceived as a school for ‘the ignorant and depraved youth of both sexes’, it initially occupied a small room in or near Grotto Passage, but quickly expanded in scale and scope to offer a range of day and evening classes for infants, older children and men of up to 30 years, together with non-denominational Sunday school and prayer meetings. A library and reading-room was opened in connection with the men’s and boys’ evening school. Girls learned needlework as well as reading and writing, while selected boys were given ‘industrial’ training. But it was as a refuge-cum-reformatory for destitute boys that the Grotto became famous, and it was said to be only the second such, following the Ragged School Union’s refuge in Westminster, opened in 1846.²⁷

From October 1848 the school was housed in a former carpentry workshop in Grotto Passage behind 55 and 56 Paddington Street – ‘A more wretched, miserable, unsuitable, and ill-designed building can scarcely be imagined’. The refuge was opened in the same building the following January. There a dozen boys lived, sleeping on hammocks – many inmates were, coincidentally, either refugees from exploitation as boy sailors, or went on to become sailors in the Royal Navy or merchant service; others sought passages to Australia or Canada – working in the streets under the aegis of the Shoe-Black Society to raise the money – or government ‘colonial cadetships’, a scheme instigated by Shaftesbury. Much of their time was given over to industrial training in such activities as firewood-chopping, making or mending clothing and boots, mattress- and hassock-making; and weaving mats, for which looms were set up in the workshop loft (Ill. 4.09).²⁸

In 1859–60 the old workshop, having become unsafe, was rebuilt, while a temporary home was set up in York Mews. The new building, which survives substantially intact, was designed by Thomas Harris, who probably had a personal connection with the Grotto – the master in 1850 was a Mr Harris, and the young architect rescued at least one boy from the street to live there. It was built by John Hale, who worked with Harris on other projects

including the controversial Gothic house at 26 South Audley Street, recently completed. Rugged and warehouse-like, it has the combination of bold decorative detailing and determinedly 'honest' construction characteristic of Harris's work in this period – patent ventilators are prominent beneath the artistically arranged inscription on the front (Ills 4.07, 4.08). Under its present-day paint the façade is picked out in coloured bricks, 'materials in the combination of which the architect is eminent and original in design, and the builder equally so in construction'. In its original form the building was in two parts, a narrow courtyard separating the main schoolrooms fronting Grotto Passage from an ancillary range behind. On the ground floor the main room, with a movable partition, was the girls' and infants' school. The boys' school on the first floor was relatively small. There were workshops, a kitchen and dining-room, master's office and 'large' dormitories. The building was formally opened by Lord Shaftesbury in February 1860.²⁹

In the 1860s, 55 Paddington Street, formerly a grocer's, was incorporated into the premises. The acquisition of the house, where the master occupied a couple of rooms, was principally to get a shop window for wares made by the boys, and to allow direct access from the street so that boys and visitors did not have to run the gauntlet of 'wretched girls' soliciting in the space outside the Grotto. A narrow passageway was opened up for the purpose.³⁰

If the dormitories were indeed built as promised, they had been converted to other uses by the 1870s, when the principal upper room held the ragged school during the day, after which the furniture was stowed away, the room aired, and hammocks slung for the refuge boys. The building could sleep 30 boys, but by the end of the century there were still only a dozen, for which competition from night shelters was blamed, supposedly encouraging boys to become 'loafers'. The ragged school was by then defunct. Now under the management of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, the Grotto had become a short-stay home for the roughest boys aged 16–18 (including boys

from outside London, with the aim of separating them from bad companions). They were quickly assessed or trained and found jobs. In 1900 the building was altered and enlarged as the Grotto Home for Working Lads, intended specifically for Protestant boys who had been trained at industrial schools – thus losing its celebrated character of non-denominational refuge for the destitute. It now housed 40, with a schoolroom and dining-room downstairs and dormitories on two upper floors. Under the management of the Children’s Aid Society, it continued until a new Grotto Home was opened in Southampton Street, Fitzroy Square in 1920, itself replaced in 1930 by a third Grotto Home for 50 boys in Highgate. The Grotto Passage building was later occupied for many years by the British Legion.³¹

Octavia Hill in Paradise Place

In 1865, after long anticipation, Octavia Hill began her work on improving the housing of the poor in Paradise (now Garbutt) Place. Her original aim had been to buy a house near Nottingham Place, where she lived from 1860 and ran a school, with a garden or at least enough space for a drying area and playground, which could be let as tenements. Ruskin, having inherited his father’s wealth in 1864, had promised to pay for it. It was not her intention to buy a slum, and her intensive search took in St John’s Wood; objections were invariably raised when the project was explained. She was still talking about a house at the end of the year, but in February 1865 acquired a row of three, devoid of gardens, numbered 1, 2 and 3 Paradise Place (Ill. 4.10).³²

Hill’s houses stood on the site of the notorious Eccleston’s Buildings, and far from being slums of the worst sort, were almost new, and although superficially old-fashioned, built in a more spacious manner than most of the old houses around Grotto Passage. With two rooms on each of three floors, small forecourts, back yards and back additions with wash-houses and WC’s,

they were the work of Henry Rudkin, a builder in Paddington Street with extensive leasehold interests on the Portland Estate. Rudkin had worked regularly for Charles Dickens at Devonshire Terrace in the 1840s, doing seasonal maintenance. The new houses were leased to him almost exactly a year before Hill acquired them. Hill took an under-lease for 56 years, presumably for all or nearly all the original term, for which £750 was asked. This was provided by Ruskin, and the lease assigned to him by Hill, remaining in his hands until she bought it back in 1881, after they had fallen out over his wish to transfer the housing schemes he had financed to the projected Guild of St George. By her own reckoning they were well built, and although already filthy and verminous, with blocked drains, had no fundamental defects and were easily put in order. Clearly, the occupants were the problem, and at first no further improvements were made, while she waited for evidence that they were capable of appreciating them.³³

Among her first initiatives was the wholesale purchase of tea for the tenants to buy, circumventing grocers with their pricey and adulterated paper 'screws' of tea. This probably led to the opening in 1874 of 'Mr Ruskin's Tea Shop' at 29 Paddington Street, a well-meant but unsuccessful venture, placed under Hill's control in 1876.³⁴

Hill's management ultimately brought in a nominally high return, 8% by the early 1870s, higher than she achieved at her two next slum projects, in Freshwater Place (acquired 1866) and Barrett's Court (1869). In the early 1880s, rather than reduce rents, she successfully introduced an incentive scheme at Paradise Place whereby regular prompt payment earned a quarterly bonus. But her system had unaccounted costs. It depended on weeding out the bad tenants who were so much a part of the housing problem to begin with, and called for close personal relationships with those that remained, educating them, finding them work, and encouraging them to treat their homes with care. Expensive in time, resources and commitment by

Hill and her 'helpers', this went well beyond what any ordinary landlord could provide.³⁵

Ossington Coffee Tavern (demolished)

The Ossington Coffee Tavern and Lodging House stood at the corner of Paradise (Moxon) Street and Ossington Buildings from 1883 until 1961. It was conceived and paid for by the 5th Duke of Portland's sister Charlotte, Viscountess Ossington, who had recently built and endowed the grand Ossington Coffee Tavern at Newark as a memorial to her late husband, the former Commons Speaker. The Marylebone building, opened by Lady Ossington in March 1883, was modest in comparison but even so a highlight in a drab street. Designed by the Portland Estate surveyor Charles Fowler and built by Staines & Son, it was faced in stock and red brick with arcading and other details in red Corsehill stone (Ill. 4.11). The ground floor comprised a coffee room with a smaller dining room and kitchens beyond. A club room and manager's rooms occupied the first floor and the two upper floors were divided into cubicles as a men's lodging house. The house next door (24 Paradise Street) was similarly fitted up for lodgings as part of the same establishment.³⁶

The business was run by the Ossington Coffee Tavern Company Ltd, which like the later Portland Industrial Dwellings Company Limited was independent from the Portland Estate but had a close relationship with it. The company later ran coffee taverns in Gray Street and in Newton Street, High Holborn, and briefly at the former Sawyers' Arms in Marylebone Lane. The property, sold in 1931, was reacquired by the Howard de Walden Estate in 1961 and let to National Car Parks on condition of demolition. The cleared site, blighted by uncertainty about the Greater London Council's island site

opposite, remained a car park until after the council's abolition, when the present flats, Howard House, were built in 1988.³⁷

Improved dwellings, 1881–1930

Most of the Grotto Passage area was redeveloped with blocks of improved dwellings from the late nineteenth century, leaving the old essentially pedestrian street layout. The process began with what is now 8 Garbutt Place, built privately in 1881 in the normal course of lease renewal. But the major campaign was over a 15-month period in 1888–9, when some 100 workmen were engaged by Wall Brothers of Kentish Town in building the first seven blocks of Ossington Buildings, on the sites of Conway and Grafton Courts, together with a communal steam laundry in a separate building. Initially called the Portland Industrial Dwellings, these were swiftly renamed in honour of the aged Lady Ossington, co-owner of the Portland estate, though strictly speaking the new name applied only to the north–south street formerly called Grafton Court. Two further blocks, on the east side of Grotto Passage, replacing Harrison's Place, followed shortly after; they were tendered for by Walls, who lost out to Staines & Son. The nine blocks, of four storeys plus basements, were the joint work of the architects Alfred Robert Pite and Charles Fowler, the estate surveyor (Ills 4.13, 4.14). Although well-built, with fireproof floors and artificial stone staircases, they provided only the most basic accommodation and were at first let by the room, almost all the rooms being fitted with stoves or small ranges. Water and two WC's were provided on each landing.³⁸

The redevelopment was undertaken on 99-year leases by the Portland Industrial Dwellings Company, Limited, whose monogram is over the entrances. Incorporated in 1887, this was a commercial venture independent of the Portland Estate but set up by and partly owned by it. As the Estate's

lawyer Edward Bailey told a Commons Select Committee while the company was still forming, the redevelopment followed several years of site-acquisition, achieved through refusing lease renewals and bargaining with lessees by offering to waive rent and dilapidations. The company was a major attempt to improve social conditions on the estate, tackled piecemeal elsewhere through the established policy of lease renewals in consideration of rebuilding, and by abolishing licensed premises at lease ends. In setting up the company the Estate seems to have been trying chiefly to guard against exploitation of tenants and the creation of a new kind of slum. 'We had plenty of applications to take this property,' Bailey explained, 'but then we thought that the screw would be put on if we accepted them'. The Estate (that is, Lady Ossington and Lucy, Lady Howard de Walden as the principal shareholders) provided £10,000 of the nominal £30,000 capital, and directors were appointed 'who will have the interest of the neighbourhood at heart'. These first directors included two members of the Ellis family (see page #) – Col. (later Maj.-Gen. Sir) Arthur Ellis, grandson of the 1st Baron Seaford and son-in-law of the politician Henry Labouchere; and Evelyn Ellis, the motor-car pioneer. They were accompanied by Bailey's son Reginald, the Tory MP Alexander Ross, John Sidney Snelgrove (of Marshall & Snelgrove) and Edmund Boulnois (see page ##).³⁹

Rooms in Ossington Buildings were much in demand, and prospective tenants were vetted for proof of poverty and respectability, two-thirds of initial applications being rejected. The process was carried out by Octavia Hill, in whose hands management of the blocks was placed, excluding repairs and the laundry. Hill, who held no shares in the company, saw the dwellings as a valuable training ground for her helpers before they tackled more difficult projects, and the work was going on to her 'entire satisfaction', with negligible arrears, when in 1891 the company brought the arrangement to an end, apparently because of difficulties caused by the dual management system. A few years later the company was advertising single rooms in the

blocks overlooking Paddington Street Gardens at 3s a week, with discounts for those taking two or more rooms, perhaps hoping to attract a higher class of tenant.⁴⁰

Although the company carried out some further building, its initial energy was not sustained. Further redevelopment of the Grotto Passage area was contracted to Walter Boswell, a Hammersmith builder who had acquired various leaseholds with an eye to rebuilding. In Garbutt Place, Nos 10 and 11 were built speculatively by him in 1892. He was to have built more block dwellings along the north side of Paradise (Moxon) Street, and agreed to take out a rebuilding lease of the Ashland Place corner in 1898. This all proved beyond him, and his contract was transferred to Portland Industrial Dwellings, who developed the site in 1901–2 with Ashland House, designed by the architect T. H. Watson. As initially proposed, this was not only very plain but of low specification. Fowler's successor Frederick Stevenson successfully pressed for aesthetic and practical improvements, including alterations so as to screen washing-lines on the flat roof from Paddington Street Gardens, while the District Surveyor, with London County Council support, brought a successful action to enforce fireproof construction throughout, something the company was hoping to avoid, on grounds that the block would be let as rooms, not proper flats.⁴¹

In 1904 the earlier dwellings at 8 Garbutt Place were bought by Portland Industrial Dwellings, who removed the staircase and united the building with a new block adjoining (No. 9), designed for them by T. H. and A. M. Watson, as Watson's practice was now styled. But in 1908 the company turned down the offer of the site on the east corner of Paradise Street and Ossington Buildings, which went to a builder in Eastcastle Street, William S. Shepherd, who built Moxon House there in 1909. His architect was W. Henry White, who commented that the new building – with steel and concrete floors and no basement – was a cut above that adjoining (Ill. 4.15). This was Osborne House (now 12–14 Moxon Street), built in 1902 on another site to have been

developed by Boswell, for whom plans were drawn up by Alfred J. Hopkins in 1902. Instead it passed to John Luther Osborne, who built Osborne House in 1904–5, to new plans by W. R. Phillips. Further along this side of the street redevelopment was confined to Nos 2–4, another site given up by Boswell. The building lessee here was Col. W. N. Davis, of Davis & Son, old-established dyers and cleaners, whose premises adjoined at 91 High Street; the gateway at No. 4 gave access to their premises. His architect was E. V. New of New & Son. The Estate surveyor had had hopes that Davis would acquire more sites to make a ‘comprehensive scheme’ up to the corner of Garbutt Place, but the three old houses there remained, at least one of them (No. 10) being taken in hand by the Estate in the 1930s, and they have not been rebuilt.⁴²

A late addition was made to the Ossington Buildings estate by Portland Industrial Dwellings in 1930, with the rebuilding of an old house and shop at 2A Ashland Place, adjoining Block K (now Charles Fowler House). Finance for the new block, called Denison House after Lady Ossington’s husband, was provided by the Howard de Walden Estate taking up company debentures. The architect of the very plain building was Cecil Burns. This seems to have been the last significant work by the Portland Industrial Dwellings Company Limited, which since 1983 has been completely owned by the Howard de Walden Estate.⁴³

Mission of the Good Shepherd

By the mid 1870s a parish mission was being run at 60 Paddington Street, with church services in the schoolroom of the former St Marylebone Institution, hidden away at the rear (see page #). In the 1880s, under the new High Church rector, William Barker, services here were choral, as in the parish church, and Barker himself conducted Saturday-night meetings for

prayer and intercession. Improvements to the church building, including reconstruction of the roof and complete redecoration, were carried out in 1889 under the architect and vestryman Thomas Harris, who had recently overseen improvements to the parish church. Before long Barker was planning a purpose-built institute and club, and obtained the promise of part-funding from the Dowager Lady Howard de Walden. Harris was the inevitable choice to design it. His plans were approved by the estate surveyor in 1897 and the foundation stone was laid by the Duchess of Portland in July 1898. The completed premises, built by H. H. Sherwin of Waddesdon, were opened on 3 January 1900 by the Duke and Duchess of Fife.⁴⁴

The Club and Institute connected with what was now called the Mission Church of the Good Shepherd were extensive and expensive, taking in the site of an adjoining house as well as No. 60, with fire-resisting floors and services including electric lighting, electric bells, and speaking tubes. For the front elevation Harris produced an interesting and eclectic design, executed in red sand-faced brick interlarded with blocks of buff terracotta produced by J. C. Edwards of Ruabon. Though the overall manner is Arts and Crafts, Gothic is there in the ogees over the windows and emphatically in the canopied figure of the Good Shepherd, sculpted by John Daymond III or possibly his son John Dudley Daymond (Ills 4.16, 4.17). It is mounted over a panel of arty lettering.⁴⁵

The new premises included, on the ground floor, a dining-room, library and reading-room, committee room and club-room. On the first floor, the main room was a 150-seater hall, and there were also rooms for such games as billiards and chess. The second floor was divided into bed-sits for club members. One of the activities long associated with the mission was Lady Thompson's Soup Kitchen and Invalid's Dinner Table, founded by the wife of Sir Henry Thompson, the surgeon, cremationist, gastronome and sometime consulting surgeon to Marylebone workhouse. Part of the basement was therefore given over to a soup kitchen, for which a separate entrance was

provided through a grant of ground by the Portland Industrial Dwellings Company.⁴⁶

The mission was in decline or defunct before the Second World War, and the church let as a factory and later to the BBC. A youth club continued at No. 60 until the 1960s. In 1981 the premises, which had been used for a gym and nursery school, were opened by Debbie Moore as Pineapple West, the second of the Pineapple Dance studios which led the 1980s fitness and Lycra craze. They were later occupied by the American University in London, acquired in 2013 by Regent's University, becoming the 'Marylebone Theatre' for drama and fashion students at Regent's.⁴⁷

Central Institute for Swedish Gymnastics

The former gymnastics institute at 16–18 Paddington Street dates from 1910–11, and was the last high-class redevelopment in the street before the First World War brought its improvement under the Howard de Walden Estate to an end (Ill. 4.18). Designed by Forsyth & Maule, it was commissioned by Allan Broman, a Swede who had practised in London since the mid 1880s in the field of 'medical gymnastics' and massage – in modern terms physiotherapy – and had been employed by the London School Board in 1889–93 as 'master' of boys' physical exercise, where he promoted the callisthenics-based training system deriving from the work of the medical gymnastics pioneer Pehr Henrik Ling, and his follower Henrik Kellgren whose assistant Broman had been. Broman's sacking marked the triumph (as regards boys' education) of the English PT system based on military drill espoused by his junior, the board's 'physical instructor' Thomas Chesterton. But Broman remained a prominent figure, and was among the variously naval, military and civilian founders of the Physical Training Club, set up in

1910 to promote physical training 'from a national and Imperial point of view'.⁴⁸

His building opened in October 1911 as the Central Institute for Swedish Gymnastics, offering a men's one-year training course. The Institute and the South-Western Polytechnic in Chelsea (which opened a one-year course in 1908 and also taught women) were the only places in England then providing such training.⁴⁹

In 1915, Broman having turned his attention to training army recruits, the building became a hospital for British soldiers under the auspices of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce, initially for 30–40 men, then as a 24-bed officers' hospital, employing Swedish-style physiotherapy. In 1917 the Swedish War Hospital was taking casualties direct from the Front. After the war, the institute seems to have resumed, but in 1920 Broman sold the premises to the London County Council as its teacher-training College of Physical Education. Five male and five female instructors were initially employed, together with a resident caretaker and session pianist. The college was latterly run by the Inner London Education Authority, but with ILEA's abolition in 1990 closed, and in 1992 the building was acquired for a Greek and Greek-Cypriot cultural centre, the Hellenic Centre, opened in 1994.⁵⁰

Marylebone Road:

Marylebone High Street to Luxborough Street

The builder John White began the development of this strip of the New Road in the late 1770s with 1 Devonshire Terrace and his own house on the north side of the road. Most of the south side was built up in the early 1790s, following a series of agreements for sites here and in the streets south, where

development had begun more than twenty years before. Although these were made directly between the Portland Estate and several individuals, including building craftsmen, the eventual leases were not, but were subject to White's head lease made out to him in 1793.⁵¹ At the west end, the workhouse complex begun in 1775 took up the remaining Portland frontage to the main road west of Northumberland (Luxborough) Street. One large site remained near the High Street, where the new parish church was completed in 1818.

Redevelopment of the old houses began in the 1930s and, held up by war, was mainly seen through in the 1950s–60s. The buildings of most architectural interest, standing or demolished, are the church, the workhouse in its successive phases, and those of the University of Westminster which replaced it. There are historical associations with Charles Dickens at the demolished 1 Devonshire Terrace, but above all this is an area whose interest lies in several institutions, locally or more widely significant.

Devonshire Terrace (demolished)

Devonshire Terrace was a row of three houses on the west side of Marylebone High Street, demolished in the late 1950s for Ferguson House in Marylebone Road (Ill. 4.19). Woodward's Court or Mews, following the line of an alley called Park Passage, was part of the same development, undertaken by John White in 1778. The houses were originally numbered in the High Street but were also known as the Terrace, becoming Devonshire Terrace by request of the householders in 1824. For many years thereafter the neighbourhood address was given as York Gate, Regent's Park, pretentiously dissociating the houses from their High Street location.⁵²

No. 1, to become famous as the home of Dickens, was substantially built by May 1778 when White obtained his lease from the Duke of Portland, and he raised £1,000 on the property that August. The plot originally extended further west than in Dickens's day, covering the sites of two later houses: Church House, later known as Devonshire Lodge, and Church Cottage (respectively 15 and 17 Marylebone Road), both built on an under-lease granted by the then lessee Edward Eyre to the surveyor Thomas Rogers in 1789. White sold No. 1 in 1780, along with the adjacent coach-house and stable in Woodward's Mews, and in 1792 it was bought by the architect John Johnson, who lived there until 1804. It was briefly the childhood home of George Du Maurier; advertised to let in December 1837, the house stayed empty until taken by Du Maurier's father, recently moved to London from Brussels, in late 1838 or early 1839.⁵³

The next tenant was Dickens, whose London home it was from December 1839 to November 1851, in which period he wrote *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Barnaby Rudge*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Chimes*, *Dombey & Son* and *David Copperfield*. When his lease expired he moved to a larger house, in Tavistock Place, the family having grown in the interim: five Dickens children were born at Devonshire Terrace, and one of them, Dora, died there. Dickens's occupation was intermittent, interrupted by lengthy stays elsewhere, from regular holidays at Broadstairs, and six months at Bonchurch in 1849, to extended sojourns in America and on the Continent, including a year in Italy. For the longest of these absences the house was let. His wife's illness after Dora's death, and the crowds in London for the Great Exhibition, drove him to Broadstairs for his longest and last stay there, from May to November 1851.

Characterized by Dickens as having "'undeniable" situation, and excessive splendour', No. 1 was grander than his former home in Doughty Street.⁵⁴ Square in plan, with deep bows at the front looking across a high-walled garden to the main road, it was entered from the High Street. The

front door, opening into a hall with the staircase, had a rusticated Coade stone surround of the pattern used in Bedford Square. The hall was early on described as square; a post-Dickens account makes it 'roughly circular'. There were three ground-floor rooms – a library (Dickens's study), dining room and a breakfast room, later made into a bedroom. On the first floor were the drawing room, best and second bedrooms, and a WC. The second floor comprised a 'large common Sitting room', used as the day nursery, and two bedrooms, one used as the night nursery, the other by the female servants – cook, housemaid, lady's maid and nursery maid. There were in addition a manservant's room in the attic, kitchens and a butler's pantry in the basement, and a cellar. The groom lived over the coach-house and stable. Dickens had various embellishments made, installing marble fireplaces and mahogany doors. An inventory of the contents in 1844 survives, and Dickens's letters contain references to proposed improvements and redecoration, revealing a fondness for green paint: 'I should like all the doors and railings in the garden to be a nice bright cheerful green', he proposed in 1845, and the hall and staircase to the top of the house to be 'a good green: not too decided, of course, to spoil the effect of the prints'.⁵⁵

After the Dickenses left, the house was long occupied by John Indermaur, solicitor, whose practice was taken over from Edmund Sharp, their neighbour at No. 2. A second High Street entrance was made for business visitors in 1851, with a projecting porch. In the 1890s the house was raised in height, partly remodelled internally, and an upper stage added to the porch. In the 1920s–30s the residential portion was separately occupied as No. 1A; the actor James Villiers was born there in 1933. Shortly before the Second World War, Madeline and Katherine Dingley acquired Devonshire Lodge at 15 Marylebone Road for music and dance studios, and a few years later took over 1 Devonshire Terrace as well. Directly opposite the Royal Academy of Music, 'Dynely Rehearsal Studios' were used by actors, musicians and variety artistes, and for training students of music, ballet and

drama. By this time No. 2 was partly in use as architects' offices, while No. 3 had become a nursing home; H. Rider Haggard was among those who spent their final days there.⁵⁶

Dickens's association with No. 1 was never forgotten. It was among the first three houses to be approved for commemorative plaques by the LCC in 1903 and was by then an established place of pilgrimage for American tourists. Although altered, it retained many features from Dickens's day, including a gate on the stairs traditionally said to have been kept locked to prevent the children coming down to distract him from writing. But the LCC failed to support calls to save it when threatened by redevelopment, for which permission was first given in 1936. In 1945 revived plans prompted letters to *The Times* and calls for action to the borough and county councils. The borough council was not bothered. J. H. Farrar of the LCC, who inspected the house in 1947, concluded that it had 'no particular architectural claims', and that the case for preservation as Dickens's home was fatally weakened by alterations and the fact that 48 Doughty Street had already been saved by the Dickens Fellowship. Ten years later, with office redevelopment ready to go ahead, a joint report by the LCC Architect and Valuer damned Devonshire Terrace as belonging to 'the cheaper class of development of the period, with commonplace doorways and internal details'; altered, and presenting 'unsightly' backs to the churchyard. There was little public protest, most of the objections to demolition being on account of the loss of the rehearsal studios rather than of a house hugely significant in English literary history. The matter was raised in the Commons by the Labour MP Kenneth Robinson, to no avail. Henry Brooke, minister for Housing and Local Government, agreed with the LCC that no preservation order should be made.⁵⁷

Items salvaged from the house included the 'Jupiter' keystone from the entrance, now at the Charles Dickens Museum in Doughty Street, and an Adam-period chimneypiece, inlaid with Sienna marble, advertised by T. Crowther & Sons in 1958.⁵⁸

London Bible College and Ferguson House

Flanking the parish church, the two buildings numbered 15–17 and 19 Marylebone Road were projected before the Second World War by John W. Laing & Son Ltd, whose intention was for stone-faced buildings forming an ensemble with the church.⁵⁹ War delayed the scheme until the 1950s, by which time the area had been zoned for housing and met some opposition from the LCC on this score. Ferguson House (15–17) was purely speculative; the other block originated as the home of the London Bible College, since moved to Northwood and renamed the London School of Theology (Ill. 4.20). Both were designed by Clifford Culpin and Partners.

The site of No. 19 was originally occupied by two adjoining houses, one numbered in the New Road, the other 20 Nottingham Place. They were leased by John White in 1793 to the Rev. Millington Buckley, chaplain at the workhouse from 1782, who had taken out a building agreement with the Duke of Portland the year before. Buckley lived at 20 Nottingham Place until his death in 1821. The two houses were occupied for most of their existence from the 1830s as the offices of the West Middlesex Water Works Company and its successor the Metropolitan Water Board.⁶⁰

In 1939 John W. Laing, a member of the Brethren and keen supporter of evangelical causes, was among the proponents of a non-denominational college and correspondence school for training missionaries and others at 'high academic level', on the lines of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.⁶¹ Doubtless spurred on by the presence of Methodist Church House opposite, he wanted this to be at No. 19, and offered the site at cost. Draft plans were prepared, with hopes of a new building by 1941. The London Bible College was incorporated in 1943, beginning in a small way with evening classes in Belgravia, and at the end of the war moved to Highbury New Park pending repairs to No. 19, where it took up residence in 1946. Laing next offered both site and new building at cost, proposing to give his company a modest profit

from his own pocket. Several floors of commercial offices were to make the scheme viable. But in 1952 what had been raised went to buy 46 Nottingham Place as a student hostel. In 1953 Laing and his wife offered a substantial sum, prompting further gifts: the plans were dusted down and modified.

Confident the building would be ready for autumn 1955, the college moved out, turned 46 Nottingham Place into offices and lecture rooms, rented a hall in Chiltern Street as chapel, library and lecture room, and acquired 17 Nottingham Place as another hostel. The LCC demanded height reduction and more parking space at the new building. Revised plans were worked out in consultation with the senior LCC planner Arthur Ling, but were opposed by the Royal Fine Art Commission, who wanted the building reduced by two storeys, finally agreeing to the loss of a single floor and a small reduction in storey heights.⁶²

Owing to the 1955–7 credit squeeze, it proved impossible to borrow, and the money to build came from pre-leasing the office floors. Work was carried out in 1956–8, under close supervision by Laing, a governor of the college from 1953 and president in 1959. There was a ground-floor chapel, fronting Marylebone Road, and on the first floor a lecture hall, library and reading rooms. Designed for 150 students, it was no sooner finished than outgrown, with over 200 full-timers and 300 evening students by 1961.⁶³

In the 1960s a proposed extension was cancelled when the Northwood campus of the London College of Divinity came up for sale, offering combined teaching, administrative and residential accommodation. The move there took place in 1970. By that time, the office floors had been acquired by the property developers Heron Group. With the college's departure, Heron took over the entire building as its headquarters. In the mid 1980s most of 'Heron House' was annexed to the Princess Grace Hospital adjoining, and in 2012 the disused front doorway on Marylebone Road was walled up and the hospital's Nottingham Place entrance provided with a new ramped approach under a glass canopy.⁶⁴

Ferguson House, the larger matching block on the site of Devonshire Terrace and Woodward's Mews, was built about the same time as the college. It was occupied from 1960 as the headquarters of British Plaster Board and named after its late co-founder Hugh Ferguson.⁶⁵ The stone facing of the ground floor incorporates a sculptural panel, rather trite in conception, depicting Charles Dickens and characters from the works written by him during his tenancy of 1 Devonshire Terrace. It was carved by Estcourt J. Clack in 1960.

Methodist Church House

Methodist Church House occupies the site of a house of c.1792, originally numbered 21 Nottingham Place, built for Philip Deare, a government auditor, who died there in 1813.⁶⁶

The present building replaced the Methodist Missionary Society's headquarters of a hundred years in Bishopsgate. The site was acquired in 1938, and the foundation stone laid in June 1939. When war was declared only the lower floors and main staircase were complete, and the top three floors remained no more than a concrete-encased steel frame for the duration.⁶⁷

It was designed by the Methodist architects Paul V. Mauger and Arthur J. May, with L. Sylvester Sullivan, consultant architect, and R. T. James and Partners, civil engineers. Ashby & Horner were the main contractors. Brick-faced, with Stamford bricks on the street elevations and gaults at the rear, the exterior is ornamented with patterning in raised brick and sculptural panels of Portland stone, carved in relief by David Evans (Ills 4.21, 4.22). The panel over the entrance depicts Christ and the first disciples at Galilee; others show overseas converts to Christianity. In plan, the building exploits the slightly acute angle of Marylebone Road and Nottingham Place with a 'hinge' at the corner, devised to provide a round entrance hall and corresponding

committee room above. The main staircase, of reinforced concrete with travertine facing, is in the angle of the two wings of the building, with a curved 'Glasscrete' window running its full height.⁶⁸

Northumberland House (demolished)

Northumberland House was a bow-fronted house of 1792 built speculatively by John Winckworth, bricklayer, of Paddington Street. Originally 36 Northumberland Street, it was occupied for many years until his death in 1859 by the architect Thomas Little. George Devey was his pupil there from 1837.⁶⁹ Its later history is bound up with that of two remarkable institutions for girls and women: the Cripples' Home and Female Refuge, and the Three Arts Club.

As a residential training establishment for disabled girls, the Cripples' Home was the first institution of its kind in Great Britain. It originated in 1851 with the formation by charitable ladies of a girls' industrial school. Of the first pupils one was 'a wretched beggar-girl who used to wander about the neighbourhood of Bryanston Square' – she was disabled, which suggested the idea of a cripples' school. One was set up in Hill Street, Dorset Square, where several houses were subsequently taken over. Straw-plaiting was the staple activity, bonnets and other products being sold at the Soho Bazaar or by contract to workhouses and other institutions. There was also a public laundry, run by the destitute but able-bodied 'refuge girls' who attended to the disabled, and a public creche for working-women's children. By 1863 Hill Street was outgrown, and the home and laundry transferred to 36 Northumberland Street, re-designated 17A Marylebone Road or Northumberland House. A separate 'Cripples' Nursery' was opened in Old Quebec Street.⁷⁰

Applicants for admission had to be 12 or over, free of mental disorder, with full use of eyes, arms and hands, and required a fee-paying sponsor. As described in 1871, the regime was 'somewhat rigid'. No girl was permitted to leave the home other than for supervised daily exercise, although holidays in Sandgate were provided through a 'seaside fund'. Otherwise, a monthly letter and quarterly visit were the only outside contacts. An hour or so of schooling in the three Rs excepted, the day was largely occupied in handicraft – chiefly hat, mat and basket-making, and machine sewing (Ill. 4.23). The refuge girls, sent to the home by magistrate's order, undertook laundry, housework and cooking by rota. After three years, girls generally left to take up apprenticeships.⁷¹

The premises had already been enlarged by building a wing and annexing the adjoining house, 35 Northumberland Street, when a major remodelling was carried out in 1888–9 under the architects Habershon & Fawckner. With fireproof floors and staircases, lift, ventilation system and roof-terrace for exercise, the Home was now a fully up-to-date institutional building instead of the awkward warren it had been. Externally it was in the Italianate style, in brick and buff terracotta, and there was a new central entrance portico in Northumberland Street (Ill. 4.24). The Cripples' Home and Industrial School for Girls, as it was latterly, closed in 1910 or 1911, and Northumberland House became the new home of the Three Arts Club, opened in December 1911.⁷²

This originated in 1907 or 1908 in the Strand as the Frances Club, a day club for women working in music, art and drama. It was founded by Hilda Pocock, a sister of the actress Lena Ashwell, and named after another sister. In 1910 the club moved to Mecklenburgh Square, where it offered residential accommodation and was renamed the Three Arts Club after the New York women's club on which it was modelled. Its re-launch on a larger scale at what was now 19A Marylebone Road was in large part due to Ashwell, who hoped that similar clubs would follow in provincial towns for travelling

artistes. Sir Arthur Pinero, Sir Edward Elgar and John Singer Sargent sat on an advisory board representing the three arts; Nellie Melba and Clara Butt were among others involved. Princess Marie Louise of Schleswig-Holstein, whose mother Princess Christian had been patroness of the Cripples' Home in succession to Lord Shaftesbury, served as president.⁷³

The club aimed to provide safe, affordable accommodation and social facilities to professional and student women in the arts. Cubicles or bedrooms for 100 were available for short stays or long-term residence, plus a dining hall, writing and reception rooms and a concert hall (see Ill. 0.###?). But the famous Three Arts Club balls were mostly held at the Albert Hall. Gwen Frangçon-Davies, Binnie Hale and Dodie Smith were among women who lived there early in their careers. The club was popular with students at RADA and the Royal Academy of Music, but in 1923 it was said that there were 'more musicians than actresses ... and more professional than student members'. A Three Arts Club studio for artists to work in and exhibit was set up at 3 Nottingham Place about 1912, and during the First World War a Three Arts Club shop was opened in Baker Street to promote the work of women artists.⁷⁴

In 1938 the Three Arts Club moved to Granville Place, Portman Street. The present building on the site, 29 Marylebone Road, dates from 1964 and follows the general look of Methodist Church House adjoining. It was developed by the Bernard Sunley Investment Trust and first occupied as Pemberton House by an advertising agency, Alfred Pemberton Ltd.⁷⁵

Luxborough Street

Luxborough Street was originally called Northumberland Street, perhaps in reference to the Portland estates in the Morpeth area. Its present name, assigned in 1939, was suggested by Luxborough House, a block of flats on the Paddington Street corner. Building along Northumberland Street began in the 1760s, with two plots let to Jacob Leroux in 1762, and two to Thomas Sadd in 1766. There was a spate of building about 1775–6 by William Ward and David Gall, by which time the greater part of the west side had been taken for the new Marylebone workhouse. Ward took leases of another pair of houses in 1786, and in 1792 the remaining plots were let to John White, by that time surveyor to the Duke of Portland and acting as architect to the workhouse. They were all or mostly built up by John Winckworth, bricklayer.⁷⁶

The presence of the workhouse stifled any possible aspirations for Northumberland Street – almost literally, for the wind blew so much smoke from the workhouse into Winckworth’s houses that the laundry and kitchen chimneys had to be raised before he could get tenants. It soon joined the ranks of London’s dismal lodging-house streets. In the early 1800s Thomas de Quincey, sinking into opium dependence, lodged at No. 5, a house backing on to the burial ground. Anthony Trollope, then a clerk at the General Post Office, lodged at No. 22 in the mid 1830s, opposite the workhouse entrance. That ‘very uninviting street’ in a ‘somewhat obscure neighbourhood’ is how he presents it in *Phineas Redux*, planting the murderous clergyman Emilius in his old lodgings.⁷⁷

None of the original houses are left, most having been replaced by flats from the early 1890s onwards, in accordance with the Portland Estate’s policy for such an address. The present Luxborough House was built in 1955 to designs by O. Garry, replacing the bombed building of the same name. Built

in 1899, this was the work of Beresford Pite for the builders, Matthews Brothers. Designed 'with the strictest economy' for those of 'moderate' income, it was in fact a fairly standard block of middle-class flats, with a far from utilitarian exterior of brick and stone and two quite spacious three-bedroom apartments per floor (Ill. 4.25). Newcastle House adjoining was built in 1909 to the design of F. M. Elgood.⁷⁸

When the former workhouse closed in the 1960s its redevelopment for the Regent Street Polytechnic perpetuated the split between mainly institutional buildings on the west side of the street, residential on the other. South of the former polytechnic, a new Marylebone Library is under construction at the time of writing (Child Graddon Lewis, architects; interior design and planning by Bisset Adams). On the east side, good-class 1890s flats occupy most of the frontage. Winsford House of c.1899 (by H. J. Hollingsworth, architect, for Matthews Brothers), has the liveliest façade. The others are Nottingham Mansions, fronting Nottingham Street (c.1892-3); Albert Mansions (c.1892-3); the twin blocks of Northumberland Mansions (c.1896-7, now Northumberland Mansions and Cheviot Court); Osborne and Windsor Mansions (c.1891-2). Albert Mansions retains the original singular form of the name, Albert Mansion, over the entrance. Built with caretaker's apartments or cottages at the rear, fronting Bingham Place (Northumberland Mews until 1892), these blocks were typically planned as two- or three-bedroom suites, equipped with electric lighting, service lifts, pneumatic bells and speaking tubes.⁷⁹

The building of these flats made the street a more desirable and well-heeled address than it had been. Among pre-Second World War residents were the novelists Max Pemberton (Windsor Mansions) and Rose Macaulay (Luxborough House); the journalist William Leonard Courtney and his wife Janet Hogarth, one of the editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; and Sir Benjamin Robertson, formerly Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, India (all at Luxborough House).⁸⁰

St Marylebone Workhouse (demolished)

The Vestry was slow to provide a proper workhouse, and the matter dragged on unsatisfactorily through the 1730s and 40s with makeshift rented buildings and unreliable contracted-out management.⁸¹ Lord Oxford's grant of the New Burial Ground in 1730 was on condition of building a workhouse there within seven years, but tardily prepared plans were shelved when the need to rebuild the parish church became pressing. In each case a practical solution was found through the joiner-architect John Lane, a churchwarden, to whose plans both buildings were erected: the church in 1741–2, the workhouse – where shortage of funds delayed progress – during 1749–52. Big enough for 40 inmates, the building fronted Paddington Street at the north-east corner of the burial ground. As demand rose the building was enlarged, and a house rented as an infirmary, but by 1773 it was clear that a new building on a large scale was essential. Alexander Allan, one of the Directors and Guardians of the Poor, produced a sketch for utilizing vacant ground adjoining the rented house, and in 1774 steps were taken for the Vestry to acquire it, together with the house itself.⁸² Statutory powers were secured in 1775, and long leases obtained from the Duke of Portland and Henry Portman. The new building was sufficiently completed for the paupers to be transferred there in May 1776. It was planned for 1,000, numbers having already doubled since 1769 to nearly 300. The old workhouse was thereafter used as the infirmary.

The design of the new building has long been wrongly attributed to John White who, according to Thomas Smith, prepared the designs gratuitously. In May 1775 an open offer was made for anyone to provide plans and elevations, and a fortnight later a scheme by Allan, the only one then received, was accepted subject to revision by a committee whose members included White, his associate Thomas Collins, and the architect Capt. Stephen Riou. 'Altered and made perfect' – mainly by increasing the number and size of the windows – the design was formally approved and an

estimate prepared by Allan for building and covering-in the carcase, and fitting up part as wards and officers' apartments. Allan was appointed surveyor at the beginning of June, duly providing detail drawings and overseeing and certifying the work of individual contractors. Principally a carpenter-builder, he went bankrupt in 1778 developing sites in Norton (Bolsover) and Clipstone Streets.⁸³

The workhouse, entered from Northumberland Street, was symmetrically planned as a narrow quadrangle with corner pavilions (Ills 4.26, 4.28). In the event, only part was built initially, together with a short extension backing on to Northumberland Street at the south-east corner, also designed by Allan. This last was a prison 'for the Idle refractory and disorderly Poor', and comprised a row of brick-vaulted cells with oak doors, the whole faced externally in stone under a slated roof. It was equipped with stocks and an iron collar chained to the wall, and a whipping post stood beside it. The prison was made into workshops in 1813.⁸⁴

By 1786 numbers of inmates had risen so much that it was decided to erect new buildings including a permanent chapel 'to complete the original plan', and a committee comprising White, Collins and John Hobcraft was set up, 'to give directions for making a proper plan and estimate'. Armed with drawings and the round figure of £6,000, White and his colleagues proposed that the work should be carried out by public contract, with a clerk of works under the superintendence of Charles Martin, surveyor to the workhouse and the Paving Commissioners. Who actually made the designs was left unrecorded. White was already beginning to take the lead in building projects at the workhouse, and in 1784 had apparently drawn the plans for new coal vaults. But when the buildings were completed in 1787 he was awarded 25 guineas for 'procuring', not making, the architectural drawings, and for preparing the estimate and particulars of the contracts. The same fee was awarded to Martin, for superintending the work 'under the direction' of the

building committee, which had been expanded to include, among others, the bricklayer Edward Gray.⁸⁵

Outbreaks of fever in the old infirmary in 1791 led to the decision to build one on part of the new workhouse garden: a supposed cause of the fever being the adjoining graveyard with its overcrowding, inadequate covering of bodies in common graves, and consequent 'disagreeable stench'. White was asked to confer with the workhouse physician and apothecary and produce a plan for an infirmary to be built on part of the workhouse garden, together with an airing-ground for patients. On this occasion White was fully credited with preparing the drawings, and the building, a quadrangle at the north-west corner of the site with its own entrance from the New Road, was completed in December 1793 (Ill. 4.27).⁸⁶

By 1797, its numbers swollen in consequence of the war with France, the workhouse was full to capacity and the Directors and Guardians turned to out-relief to prevent overcrowding. The new century saw a series of additions including workshops (1817), extension of the infirmary (1825), a boys' school (1827), and more living accommodation (1840s). Including 300 infirmary places, this brought total capacity to 1,749. As economic distress grew in 1846, night refuges for both sexes were opened at the back of the workhouse, approached by an alley off East (now Chiltern) Street. Legislation having been brought in to prevent long-standing Irish settlers being deported to their famine-stricken homeland, numbers rose to a peak of 2,264, with inevitable makeshifts. Chronic shortage of space was eventually reduced in 1860 by the removal of the workhouse school to new purpose-built premises in Southall.

In 1867 a major administrative change occurred under the Metropolitan Poor Act, the Directors and Guardians drawn from the Vestry being replaced by an elected Board of Guardians, independent of the Vestry and subject to regulation and control by the central Poor Law Board. From the 1860s, in consequence of this system and the appointment of an enlightened

master, George Douglas, Marylebone workhouse began to lose a long-standing reputation for harsh discipline and even savagery.

Following the Metropolitan Houseless Poor Acts of 1864 and 1865, new nightly 'casual' wards were erected in 1867 at the corner of Northumberland Street and Marylebone Road, together with bathrooms, disinfecting rooms and sheds for the requisite tasks of oakum-picking and stone-breaking. Designed by H. Saxon Snell, these were temporary structures (so that the cost was chargeable to the general London rate), made of wood and metal but plastered internally. Scriptural texts on walls and roof trusses were in red letters on a blue background.⁸⁷

Overcrowding and dilapidation led to the building in 1867–8 of new 'chronic' wards, for the old and infirm. The three-storey block, providing six wards of 60ft by 40ft with bay windows to the workhouse yard, replaced old kitchen and laundry buildings partly on the site of the prison, fronting Northumberland Street. They were finished internally in 'varied and pleasing tints ... as cheerful and homely as they are unlike the bare, lime-washed, vault-like brickwork of an ordinary workhouse ward'. The architect was again H. Saxon Snell. The wards were unusually wide, allowing four instead of two rows of beds, and were ventilated by built-in flues instead of side windows with their inevitable draughts – a technical advance perhaps influenced by the confines of the site.⁸⁸

The need for wholesale rebuilding was acknowledged, and the process continued in 1869 with a similar three-ward block to the north. Further progress was held up while new ground leases were negotiated, and when in 1873 agreement was reached Snell was instructed to plan the redevelopment of the greater part of the site. The first phases, carried out in 1875–6, involved new buildings along the rest of the Northumberland Street frontage, including more chronic wards, probationary wards, master's residence, porter's lodge, a Roman Catholic chapel, and a single-storey range at the Marylebone Road corner comprising parochial and registrar's offices. This

last building was quite elaborately treated inside and out, with Portland-stone facing on each elevation. Illustration 4.28 shows the complex layout of the site at this stage in its history.⁸⁹

In 1878 a new three-storey casual ward block was opened at the western edge of the site, replacing the temporary wards demolished for the parochial offices. By 1881 there were some 2,300 inmates, making it the biggest workhouse by number in the metropolis. Meanwhile, in response to pressure from the Poor Law Board to accommodate the sick off-site, St Marylebone Infirmary (later St Charles Hospital) was built near Ladbroke Grove in 1879–81.⁹⁰ A number of ‘lunatic’ and ‘idiot’ cases remained at Marylebone, for observation or while awaiting transfer to Metropolitan Asylums Board hospitals. Thus reduced, the workhouse population steadied at about 1,600.

Rebuilding continued with a new laundry range along the southern boundary in 1887, and in the same year a small block of rooms for married couples was built, softening further the old regime which had enforced separation. A five-storey ward block for able-bodied women was built at the south-west corner of the site in 1888.

By the mid 1890s large portions of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century workhouse remained, and Snell’s son Alfred made plans for their complete replacement by three new ranges: a large, detached block in the middle of the site, facing the main entrance in Northumberland Street; a long, four- and five-storey building fronting Marylebone Road; and a smaller two-storey block north of the casual wards, behind Portman Mansions in what is now Chiltern Street. The site for the central block was cleared in 1896 and the disused Holborn workhouse in Gray’s Inn Road taken over temporarily. This block, built in 1897–8, was faced in brick and Portland stone and incorporated the clock and, in an octagonal belfry, bells from the 1775 building. It housed many functions, and was equipped with such up-to-date technology as electric lighting, hydraulic lifts and steam-coil heating (though open fires

were provided in some rooms). Water tanks were mounted in the four corner towers. The Ladbrooke Grove hospital notwithstanding, there were special sick, isolation, maternity and convalescent wards, mother and baby dormitories and a labour room. There were also the medical officer's consulting room; a committee-cum-interview room; offices for the master, matron and clerks; workshops, for such tasks as tailoring and boot-making; stores; a bakery, and a boiler house. On the first floor was a galleried chapel with an organ and seating for 550. This had an open timber roof and was faced in buff glazed bricks above a dark tiled dado, with decorative bands of red brick and green majolica. But the biggest presence was the 1,000-seat dining hall at the rear of the block, measuring 120ft by 50ft, subject of a much-reproduced photograph first published in G. R. Sims' *Living London*. It was similarly faced to the chapel, with an open timber roof, and took the church-like form of two aisles and a nave, with a clerestory.⁹¹

The Marylebone Road range, built in 1898–1900, was taken up with dormitories and day-rooms for aged and infirm male inmates, and there was also some room for 'imbeciles' and 'lunatics' (Ill. 4.29). The slightly lower wings flanking the tall central block had flat roofs for exercise; the basement, lit and ventilated by wide areas at front and back, was divided into workshops.⁹²

The third new building, for able-bodied males, was finished in 1901. Completed at enormous expense, the late Victorian workhouse, with its approved capacity of 1,921, marked the high point of the reformed Poor Law system of indoor relief. Its heyday was brief, for although it was almost full up to 1910, subsequent changes in welfare provision, including state pensions and national insurance, reduced demand for workhouse places. By the end of the First World War there were only 658 Marylebone inmates, though they were joined by 400 from outside, following the requisition of institutional buildings as military hospitals. In 1930, under legislation to transfer Poor Law functions to local authorities, the workhouse with its 1,131 inmates was taken

over by the London County Council and renamed St Marylebone Institution. During the 1930s the maternity ward, nursery and mental observation wards were closed, and able-bodied inmates were almost all transferred to work placements elsewhere, so that what remained was essentially a home for the old and infirm. Meanwhile the casual wards of 1878 were converted to St Marylebone Central Relief Office (for outdoor relief), opened in 1923 and continuing until 1948 and the formation of the National Assistance Board.

In 1949 St Marylebone Institution was renamed Luxborough Lodge, and in 1964 it was the first of the LCC's large homes to be wound down under a reorganization of council health and welfare services. It was formally closed in January 1965, and the site cleared later that year for redevelopment as part of the long-planned expansion of Regent Street Polytechnic, now the University of Westminster (Chapter 32).

Nottingham Place

Nottingham Place was developed between 1790 and the early 1800s under several building lessees including Thomas Bent, Archibald Campbell, Thomas Chandless and David Williams; John White or his underlessees were responsible for most of the east side. Two houses on the west side, now Nos 31 and 33, were built by George Burraston, whose bankruptcy brought them on to the market, unfinished, in 1794. Several new houses were for sale in 1797, including more unfinished ones at Nos 1, 3 and 4 (now 16, 29, and 22). Behind the houses in Nottingham Place the stabling in Nottingham Mews and Northumberland Mews (Oldbury Place and Bingham Place from 1892) was all or mostly rebuilt at the same time as the houses were modernized and enlarged in the late nineteenth century. The lowlier southern portion of

Nottingham Place, between Nottingham Street and Paddington Street, was developed somewhat earlier and had a separate existence as Great Woodstock Street until 1937, when it was merged with Nottingham Place and the whole renumbered.⁹³

Described at the time of its development as ‘airy, fashionable, and truly desirable’, Nottingham Place was the only high-class street on the Portland estate west of the High Street. Early residents included at least two colonels, a rear-admiral, and Mrs Beilby Thompson, the widowed mother of the politician Beilby Thompson, a society hostess whose house there was reckoned ‘magnificent and charming’ in 1800.⁹⁴ The geologist and philologist Daniel Sharpe, a brewer’s son, was born in 1806 at No. 10 (now 34). (Sir) George Abercrombie Robinson lived at No. 15 (demolished) after his retirement from service with the East India Company, of which he later became chairman. Another old East India Company hand, Lt. Col. Thomas Marshall, died at his house in Nottingham Place in 1824. By the 1830s, when Thomas Smith summed it up as a street of ‘handsome houses occupied by persons of the first respectability’, Nottingham Place could no longer be considered fashionable, and by late Victorian times had settled into being a dullish address, suited to professional occupants. The architect T. G. Jackson, who set up his home and office at No. 4 (now 22) shortly after his marriage in 1880, was one such. It was, he recalled, ‘an eminently unfashionable street, of which indeed I had never heard till I went there to see the house’. He was not sorry to leave for Wimbledon in 1887.⁹⁵

Jackson had no commissions locally, unlike his near neighbour Thomas Henry Watson, at No. 9 (now 32), whose father John Burges Watson was in practice at the house from the early 1850s. The surveyor Henry Northcroft was at No. 13 (now 40) in the 1850s–70s, the house having previously been occupied by the organist and composer John Freckleton Burrowes from about 1834 until his death in 1852. Northcroft was followed in 1877 by the Convent

of the Holy Child Jesus, which subsequently took over No. 12 (now 38) as well, before moving to Cavendish Square in 1888.⁹⁶

In the late 1850s Gustavus von Holst, music teacher, uncle of Gustav Holst, was at No. 22 (demolished), and the pianist Lucy Anderson lived at No. 34 (now 25), where she died in 1878. The music profession, however, was never very strongly represented in Nottingham Place, although in the twentieth century Herbert Walenn's London Cello School (1919–1953), where Jacqueline du Pré, Zara Nelsova and Eleanor Warren studied, was at No. 34.⁹⁷

The physician, medical journalist and proponent of private asylums John Stevenson Bushnan lived at No. 7 (now 28) around 1850, and the physician and physiological chemist George Harley practised in Nottingham Place from 1856. By the late 1850s there were at least three surgeons in the street. One was Robert Romley Cheyne at No. 27 (now 39); he was still there in 1885 when Eliza Armstrong, the girl 'bought' by W. T. Stead as part of his exposé of child trafficking and prostitution, was kept overnight at the house before being whisked to Paris by Stead's associates.⁹⁸ By this time, medical occupation of Nottingham Place was increasing. The trend continued, and in the early twentieth century the houses were overwhelmingly occupied by medical practitioners or as nursing homes and boarding houses. The new Princess Grace Hospital at Nos 42–52, designed by R. Seifert & Partners, was formally opened by Princess Grace of Monaco in 1977. The hospital has since taken over the former Nature Cure Clinic at 15 Oldbury Place (built as part of the same block), Heron House (formerly London Bible College) at 19 Marylebone Road adjoining, and 47 Nottingham Place on the other side of the street.⁹⁹

Distinguished medical past residents include the surgeon and oceanographer George Charles Wallich, who died at No. 11 (now 36) in 1899, and the surgeon Dame Louisa Brandreth Aldrich-Blake, who died in 1925 at No. 17 (demolished). Her house was occupied for twenty years until his death in 1884 by the agricultural writer Hewitt Davis.¹⁰⁰

William H. Carpenter, Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, and his wife the artist Margaret Sarah Carpenter, lived at No. 10 (now 34) from about 1830 until 1852. The stained-glass artist Charles Eamer Kempe occupied No. 28 (now 37) from the 1880s until he died in 1907, after which it remained the premises of C. E. Kempe & Co. Ltd for many years. A blue plaque to Kempe was put up in 1994 by English Heritage. George Croom Robertson, the philosopher and psychologist, died at 16 Nottingham Place (now demolished) in 1892.¹⁰¹

Nottingham Place is particularly associated with Octavia Hill, who moved to No. 14 (since demolished) in late 1860 with her mother and sisters. They were joined initially by Hill's friend Sophia Jex-Blake, the future physician and feminist campaigner. In 1862 the Hills opened a girls' school there, which continued until 1891, following their move to 190 Marylebone Road, where Octavia died in 1912. The school, taking in the daughters of friends or other girls on recommendation, numbered about two dozen pupils, fourteen boarding. Among them in the early 1870s was the future sculptor and modeller Ellen Mary Rope. Lessons were held in the stable building behind the house in Nottingham Mews (Oldbury Place), originally utilized by Octavia from 1865 as a social centre for her tenants in Paradise Place (page ###).¹⁰²

As head leases came up for renewal in the late 1880s and early 1890s the houses were modernized according to a formula devised by the Portland Estate, the top storeys being raised to full height. The remodelling of the façades with window heads, pilasters and other embellishment was done in the Queen Anne Revival manner, in moulded red brick manufactured by the Heather Colliery Company of Ashby de la Zouch, and iron railings to the basement areas and first-floor balconies supplied by the Falkirk Iron Foundry Company. Alternate houses were given bay windows and new attic storeys, with dormer windows tricked out as pedimented Dutch gables (Ill. 4.30).¹⁰³

The development of Great Woodstock Street was begun about 1760 by Jacob Leroux, further houses being built in the mid 1780s, but none of the original houses survive. The east side was rebuilt with Italianate houses in the mid 1860s, the west side in 1900 or shortly thereafter by Matthews Brothers with Brendon House and Treborough House, a pair of mansion-flat blocks probably designed by H. J. Hollingsworth (Ill. 4.31).¹⁰⁴

Great Woodstock Street was a fairly poor address from the late eighteenth century until redevelopment. One noteworthy resident was the statuary William Whitelaw, who died there aged 60 in 1824; his works was in Bath Place, New Road, where the business was carried on by John and James Whitelaw. The building of Treborough and Brendon Houses helped bring Great Woodstock Street into line with Nottingham Place socially. Former residents there include Sir Warren Fisher, permanent secretary to the Treasury and head of the Civil Service, who lived at Treborough House in the 1920s–30s; and the psychoanalyst Montague David Eder, who lived at Brendon House, where he died in 1936.¹⁰⁵

Oldbury Place

Oldbury Place, formerly Nottingham Mews, was built up from about 1790. The original entrance was that from the High Street, the wider turning from Nottingham Street being opened up about 1892 when the mews was almost entirely rebuilt and given its present name. The redevelopers were mainly local businessmen, and included the architect T. H. Watson, builder Edward White, fishmonger Joseph Chaplin and butcher Arthur Craddock.¹⁰⁶ Oldbury Place retained a mainly commercial-industrial character well into the 20th century, with engineers, motor-garages, builders and decorators, and a

fashionable or bohemian residential element from between the wars. In the early 1930s the film actor John Loder and Wanda Baillie-Hamilton, wife of the Tory politician the Hon. Charles Baillie-Hamilton, lived at No. 1, giving rise to the Baillie-Hamiltons' divorce. The architects Sir Lancelot Keay, Basil G. Duckett and Partners were based at No. 22, formerly a garage, from the late 1950s.¹⁰⁷

The Nature Cure Clinic, a charitable treatment centre founded in 1928 on principles of naturopathy, vegetarianism and anti-vivisection, occupied 13 Oldbury Place from 1945, then from 1976 (until its merger with the Institute of Complementary Medicine in 2007) in a new building next door at No. 15, called Nina Hosali House after the clinic's founder. This was built in conjunction with the redevelopment of Nos 42–52 Nottingham Place and Oldbury Place buildings behind for the Princess Grace Hospital.¹⁰⁸

Just pre-dating the general redevelopment of Oldbury Place, Nos 30–31 were built in 1890 as their own speculation by the builders Watson Brothers, replacing old stables. They were first occupied by the Martin Horse Shoe Company, set up to produce a newly patented anti-slip horseshoe made of soft iron with a rubber insert. Oldbury Place was the firm's 'chief factory' and shoeing forge, but the shoes were actually manufactured in Darlington; more forges were opened in Chelsea, Kensington and Kentish Town. Although the Martin shoe found favour with royal and military patrons, in England and Vienna, the company, latterly owned by Sir Owen Randal Slacke, failed and the premises were vacated in 1908. From 1910 they were occupied by the lock and safe makers Bramah & Co., though part of the building continued in use as a shoeing forge for some time. Bramah's later took over 2 Nottingham Street and the adjoining mews building 29 Oldbury Place, built in 1902. They moved to Goodge Street in 2013, and in the same year planning permission was obtained for rebuilding Nos 29–31 behind the façade as three houses, with the excavation of two-level basements.¹⁰⁹

Nottingham Street

Nottingham Street was built up in several stages, in the mid 1760s, mid 1780s, early 1790s and later. At least one house was completed in 1807, and four plots were offered for sale in 1808, with foundations and vaults. A few of the original houses survive (Ill. 4.33): Nos 2 and 3 on the north side, first leased in 1765; the adjoining pair, 4 and 5, leased in 1790; and No. 18 on the south side, leased in 1786. Although not large, the houses seem to have been of quite good class. An advertisement of 1798 draws attention to marble chimneypieces, patent WC, 'excellent wine cellars' and views of the countryside – the whole in 'every way suitable for a Gentleman of Taste, with a small family'.¹¹⁰ Rebuildings include Italianate houses of the mid 1860s (Nos 17 and 23–24), late Victorian and Edwardian flats (Nottingham Mansions, c.1892–3; Tenby Mansions, 1902), and the monumental telephone exchange of the 1920s. The shop at No. 6 was built in 1899–90 when the south entry into Oldbury Place (then Nottingham Mews) was made.¹¹¹

At the back of the houses west of Great Woodstock Street on what is now the exchange site, was Ward's Buildings – William Ward being one of the builders who developed Nottingham Street. This row of nine tiny three-storey cottages, entered from a passage in Great Woodstock Street, was singled out for condemnation in the Vestry report on sanitary conditions in 1847. Of the 27 rooms in all, the 18 then inhabited contained 101 individuals. Each ground-floor room had its own privy, discharging into a back drain to Northumberland Street; for the upper floors there was a single shared privy.¹¹²

Marylebone Telephone Exchange

In 1920 the ground was on the point of being let for a nursing home when possible compulsory purchase of a site for a telephone exchange in Mansfield

Street prompted the Howard de Walden Estate to offer it as an alternative.¹¹³ Telephone exchanges, with their armies of female operatives, were not welcome developments in the highest-class streets.¹¹⁴

The building was designed by Edward Cropper, a Ministry of Works architect responsible for a number of Post Office buildings across the country, and constructed in 1924–6.¹¹⁵ Most of the site was already cleared of houses in 1920, and occupied by a firm of contractors. At the east end, however, were a couple of houses, 6 and 7 Great Woodstock Street, subsequently 5 and 7 Nottingham Place. Intended for future extension of the exchange, these were put into repair for letting.

Initially called Langham Exchange and later Welbeck Exchange, the 1920s building received alterations and additions in the 1970s including the building of an attic floor in 1974, but a plan to extend it over the sites of the houses was abandoned.¹¹⁶ The houses therefore survived, having become ancillary to the exchange as stores. In the late 1980s, plans by British Telecom to replace them with offices and flats ran against opposition from Westminster Council, who considered their loss detrimental to the Harley Street Conservation Area. In 1990 the planning committee was brought round by a slightly increased housing component, to the fury of local residents.

Years having passed without action, the houses sank into severe dereliction, bringing the threat of compulsory purchase by the council in 1995. Direct pressure was brought to bear on the head of BT, Sir Ian Vallance, by the Marylebone Association. Meanwhile, the miniaturization of telecom equipment had left the upper floors of the exchange vacant, and a joint BT-Howard de Walden venture was launched to convert them to apartments and redevelop the houses behind their old facades, the lower floors to continue as a working exchange. This was the first such scheme by BT to get planning permission. After repeated false starts and delays, caused by changes in BT's property administration and technical issues of fire risk, the Howard de Walden Estate took over the whole project in 2004, and the development

plans drawn up by Lam Watson Woods were revised by another practice, PRP Architects. The work was carried out in 2005–6.¹¹⁷

Imposing in scale, Cropper's building is a well-crafted neo-Georgian design, largely executed in two sorts of brick – mottled 'brown reds' from S. & E. Collier of Reading for the lower storeys, silver greys – an unusual choice for London – from Thomas Lawrence & Sons of Bracknell above. The tonal division, plus emphatic rustication and some Baroque details, saves the long elevation to Nottingham Street from monotony (Ill. 4.34).