

MOWBRAY GREEN AND THE OLD BATH PRESERVERS

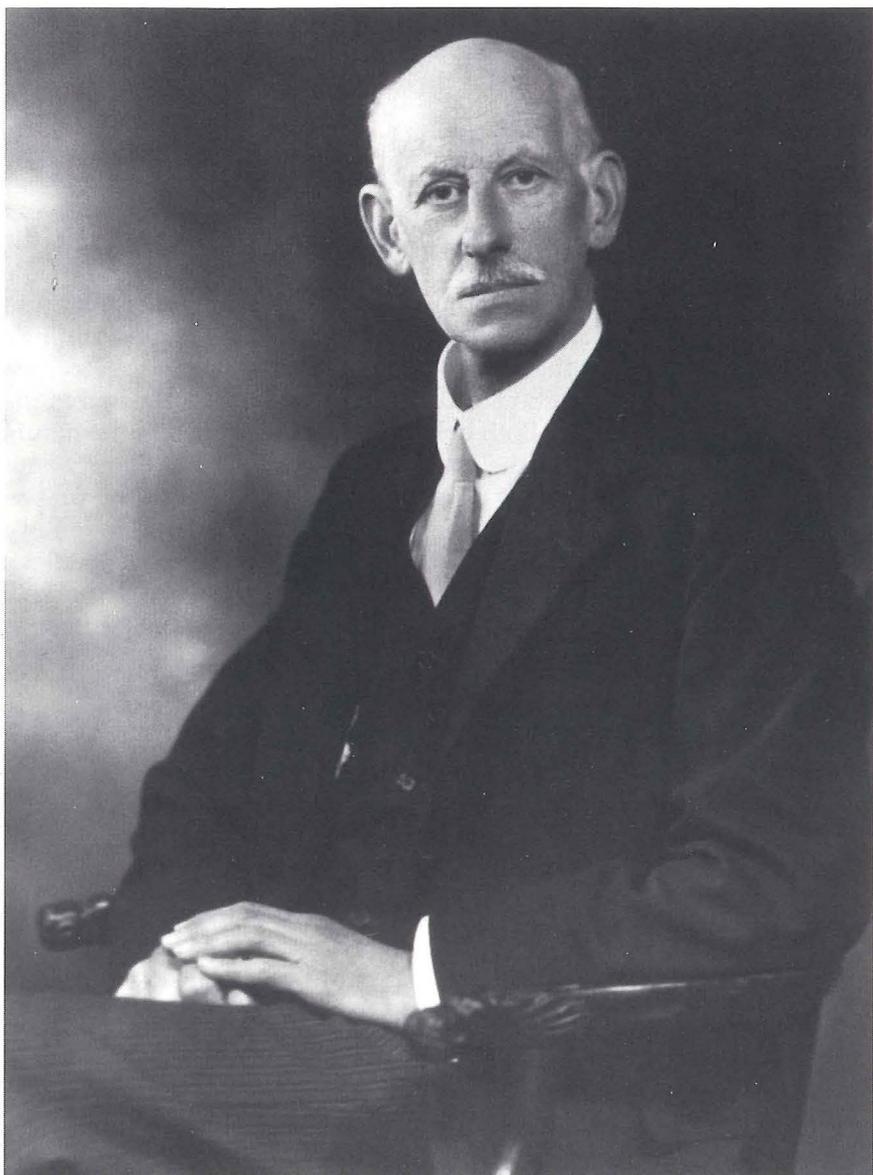
David McLaughlin

Two local events excited the citizens of Bath in 1909. One was the Pageant of the city's history. The second was the campaign led by the Rector¹ of Bath Abbey to protest against the threatened demolition of the north side of Bath Street. The promotion of Bath's history through the Pageant was seen at the time as no less important than the Rector's attempt to halt the destruction of Bath Street by a vast extension of the Grand Pump Room Hotel. Both episodes sought to reaffirm the nature of Bath through its past; the Pageant through Bath's literary and historical associations and the Rector's campaign through the preservation of Bath's historic buildings. 'In 1909 it was proposed to remove the columns on the north side of Bath Street, but owing to the exertions of Archdeacon Boyd... the project was abandoned. As a wag remarked, it was a case of Samson taking hold of the pillars, not for the purpose of pulling them down but of holding them up!'²

This concerted effort to save Bath's old buildings marked the beginning of a new era. The protest movement had begun. Concerned citizens had found a voice. Out of it grew a new and formidable challenge to those who had sought change – the Old Bath Preservation Society.

Among those early campaigners was a remarkable architect, Mowbray Aston Green. Mowbray Green, born in Surrey in 1865, had spent his youth in Warwick. He continued his training at the Architectural Association and University College, London, and in 1884 was articled to the Bath architect A.S. Goodridge, the son of H.E. Goodridge, architect of Beckford's Tower on Lansdown. In 1891 Mowbray Green returned to Bath to establish his own architectural career. Gradually he built up an extensive and varied practice. 'Churches, country houses, schools and town residences all came within his scope. Other buildings in his charge were Prior Park, the Royal School, Lansdown, and Bath Abbey.'³

His manuscript commonplace book, with its white cloth binding emblazoned with gold-blocked lettering ARCHITECTURE, starts in 1891 at the beginning of his practice in Bath. The very first entry states 'Never give a Certificate when you wish to keep a check on a Contractor', a wise and necessarily business-like approach for a young architect



1 Mowbray Aston Green (1864–1945) – ‘An adopted son of Bath, no man did more in his day and generation to preserve its great traditions or to advocate its zealous care ...’ (Courtesy Bath Central Library)

embarking on his professional career. On the same page an entry for 16 April 1891 gives an early indication of Mowbray Green's interest in both architectural history and the history of Bath. The Cold Bath House which stood on Claverton Street in Widcombe is the subject of the entry which records its history, development, use and condition with references from both John Wood's *Essay* and the *Bath Chronicle* for 1890. This scholarly approach to local buildings was to lead Mowbray Green to write the first book to study the eighteenth-century architecture of Bath in detail. A further entry in his commonplace book six years later reveals Mowbray Green's interest in architectural criticism and writing.

Architecture like prose, deals with a common knockabout and every day material.... As with prose, some one or two writers let the unexpected light of the new discovery into your soul, so in architecture, after patient study, some great and gracious building, perhaps long known, seen but not perceived, beams suddenly and intimately upon you.... Dare you condemn an ancient building which you find praised in a guide book? Dare you praise a new one until you have heard someone else praise it? The chaotic or pre-critical stage in architectural appreciation ... is... that in which [only] the ancient is good. How few outgrow it.⁴

Mowbray Green did. His interest and delight in the architecture of the eighteenth century were ahead of his time. It was only in the 1920s that other books on the subject began to appear. But Mowbray Green was not simply to write in a superficial manner about eighteenth-century architecture; he made a comprehensive study of it. He photographed many historic buildings in Bath and was a member of the Bath Photographic Society. He also collected the early calotypes of the Rev. Francis Lockey and other pioneer photographers. It is interesting to speculate whether it might have been Mowbray Green who suggested that a 'pictorial record' of Bath's old buildings should be made when the Photographic Society held its fourth annual meeting in February 1893 and '...a photographic survey of the district attracted attention':

There was not a year passed but some old building was taken down, some church restored, some ancient monument yielded to decay or vandalism, or some railway cutting made which displayed the geological strata. It was proposed to obtain photographs of all these and other objects of interest which would form a most valuable record for historians, antiquarians, and archaeologists.⁵

Mowbray Green's own collection of several hundred lantern slides is held by the Victoria Art Gallery in Bath. As well as duplicating the measured drawings and photographic plates of his 1905 book, the slides also record the old churches, houses and landscapes of Somerset, Dorset, Cornwall, Sussex and the Isle of Wight. His collection of early calotypes by Lockety and others is held by the Bath Central Library.

In 1901 the prospectus for his book, *The XVIIIth Century Architecture of Bath*, was issued by the Bath bookseller and publisher, George Gregory. The prospectus invited subscriptions for the work which was to be published in a series of four parts. The first part came out in 1902 but by June 1903 the demands of his architectural practice led Mowbray Green to write to A.M. Broadley, a contributor to the book, of delays. By November, George Gregory was writing to reassure Broadley, 'I hope to have Green's book out soon, he has almost finished the copy.' But a year later it was still not ready. Mowbray Green had written to his publisher in August 1904, 'I shall be glad to give up about 14 hours a day which I am doing now.'⁶

Finally, in January 1905, the great volume was finally complete. Its publication marked a major turning point in the way that Bath's architectural past was portrayed in writing. For the first time, Bath's eighteenth-century buildings had been comprehensively looked at, measured, drawn, photographed and discussed as examples of *architecture* in their own right. The book firmly established Mowbray Green as *the* authority on the eighteenth-century architecture of the city. The reviews were full of praise.

Mr. Mowbray Green... puts before our eyes, both with pen and pencil, the material setting and surroundings amidst which all these great people... lived, moved and had their being. He does this so thoroughly and so artistically that there is nothing left for a successor to accomplish. An able architect and artist himself, he does full justice to the supreme efforts of his illustrious predecessors of the eighteenth century... as only an architect could.⁷

The striking quality of Bath as a city has just now been ably set forth in the 'Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath'... The professor should be grateful to Mr. Mowbray Green for so carefully producing a book on Bath which shows what the possibilities of cities may be if the control of their streets and squares gets into good hands, and it emphasises the terrible lack of artistic responsibility which the autocrats of the Strand improvements are just now exhibiting.⁸

... we have hitherto possessed no measured plans and detailed descriptions of their construction beyond those left by their chief architect, John Wood. His irritating 'Essay' deserves the sharp criticism of Professor Earle. 'It is unfortunate for the renown of Mr. Wood that he has been his own chronicler, an office which an enemy could not have performed for him so badly as he has performed it for himself....' Still, the student found in Wood's pages delineations and details that no other expert had prepared for him. Now all this is changed. Mr. Mowbray Green has studied 'The Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath', has measured and sketched and photographed the most interesting features of all that survives of it, has studied pictures and descriptions of what has passed away, and has subjected the available information and the floating mass of tradition respecting it to the comparative criticism by which the trained mind can accomplish so much. Upon his great theme, the eighteenth century architecture of Bath, it is complete and unanswerable, and as the years roll on it will become in some respects priceless, for as one by one old houses are swept away or modernised, either internally or externally, the actual witnesses disappear and there only remains the record of what they revealed to the observing eye.⁹

However, the literary and historical associations of Bath's eighteenth-century buildings were not yet completely set aside; included as an appendix were three articles by A.M. Broadley¹⁰ on Hester Lynch Piozzi, the Bath Theatre Royal, and Thomas Beach. But the primary concern of the book remained the architecture of Georgian Bath.

As the now-acknowledged expert, it was natural for Mowbray Green to commit his energy and knowledge to the Rector's campaign to prevent the demolition of Bath Street. At a national level the protest movement was no new phenomenon. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) had been formed in 1877 by William Morris, in protest against the restoration of Tewkesbury Abbey. (In fact, Morris's great dictum, 'We are only trustees for those that come after us', continues to guide the SPAB to put the case against the *restoration* of old buildings, proposing instead their skilful *repair*.) The first Ancient Monuments Act in 1887 gave limited protection only to prehistoric monuments. The National Trust, founded in 1897, emerged out of campaigns for access to open spaces and commons. It was as late as 1926 that the Council for the Preservation of Rural England was formed, an organisation in which Mowbray Green was to take an active role.

And it was not until 1937 that the Georgian Group came into being in response to the demolition of the Adam brothers' Adelphi Terrace in London. Put in this context, the Rector's crusade in 1909 was a remarkably *early* battle to save historic buildings.

Considering Thomas Baldwin's projects following the City of Bath Improvement Act of 1789, Mowbray Green had written in his book: 'Of these works Bath Street is the best. An Ionic colonnade runs down both sides of the street and terminates in a segment at each end, the one facing the King's Bath and the other the Cross Bath.'¹¹ The Old Bath Preservation Society was formed as a result of the Rector's campaign, and Mowbray Green was there as its first joint treasurer. The fledgling Society made a great impact – a crowded protest meeting at the Assembly Rooms on 27 March 1909 was reported both locally and nationally. The well-known art historian, critic and writer, D.S. MacColl, Keeper of the National Gallery of British Art (now the Tate Gallery), was one of the key speakers. He denounced the Bath Street scheme declaring that

London, which had destroyed church after church of Wren's and hundreds of other things is against the demolition. In London, we are dimly becoming sick of this architectural chaos. Well, when we feel that sickness most, when we want to point to a model of something better, what do we point to? We say 'Look at Bath!' And while we are turning round to look at Bath, what is Bath going to do? Bath is going to destroy it. This madness, this artistic madness, not to call it by too fierce a name, has seized one city after another.¹²

The Rev. H.H. Winwood then put forward the resolution: 'That this meeting of citizens and friends of Bath strongly condemns the proposed destruction of Bath Street, a unique and characteristic example of 18th century architecture and... earnestly hope that means may be devised to avert the threatened mischief....'¹³ Seconding the motion, J.F. Meehan concluded:

One of the newest and very latest arguments of the Vandals is that it is old fabric and will fall down some day if we do not pull it down now. Surely there are some architects in existence who know of some way of preserving old buildings. There are some ancient fabrics in preservation – Glastonbury Abbey, for example. If this can be preserved, surely Bath St. can be.¹⁴



2 Bath Street in 1905, photographed by Mowbray Green. (Courtesy Bath Central Library)

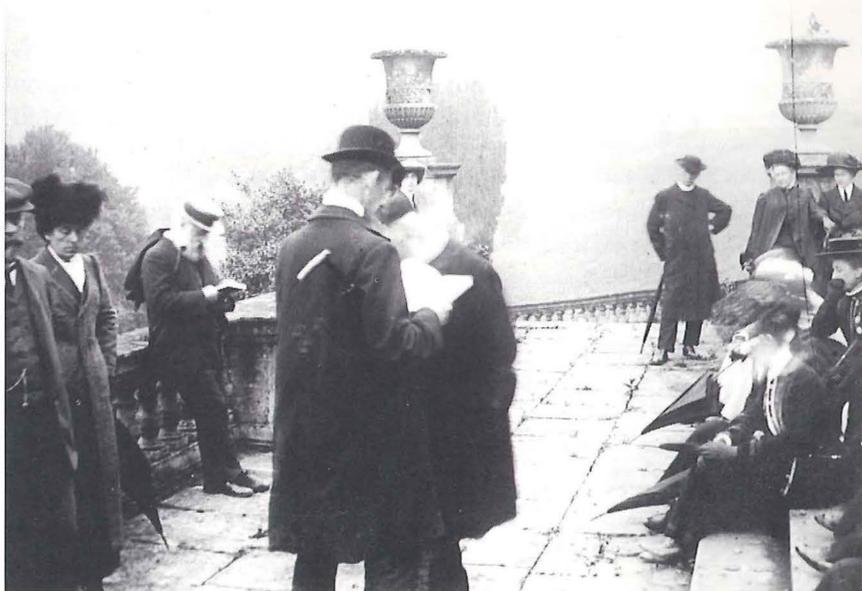
This is surely a thinly-veiled reference to the architect who had reported on the condition of the Bath Street buildings, Frederick Bligh Bond,¹⁵ Director of Excavations at Glastonbury Abbey for the Somerset

Archaeological Society since 1908. Richard Mann¹⁶ was much more direct in his criticism. In a letter dated 14 May 1909 he wrote:

The report of Mr Bligh Bond as to the condition of the houses, forms an appendix (to the Town Clerk's statement), condemning the street and describing the columns etc., as 'distinctly perilous'. ...The Town Clerk could have been provided with far better material than this, to prepare a case for the preservation of the street. The fact that a slighter built house on the opposite side of the street has for half a century borne the trying strains of a dancing academy, nullifies Mr. Bond's opinions.¹⁷

Despite Bligh Bond and the would-be developers, the Old Bath Preservation Society's campaign succeeded. Bath Street was saved from demolition – a hardly unknown threat to other eighteenth-century buildings in the city. Mowbray Green himself had recorded Nassau House in the Orange Grove¹⁸ before its 'removal' about 1902 to make way for the Empire Hotel,¹⁹ Major C.E. Davis's magnum opus. Even during the Bath Street campaign this earlier destruction was remembered with bitterness and regret. 'They hardly know... how much the removal of that old house in the Orange Grove... to make way for another hotel, has been deplored by all people of taste, visitors and citizens.'²⁰ Meanwhile the Society's intended role was clearly set out in its Annual Report for 1911–1912; 'We must go forward making our voice heard in energetic protest when wrong is threatened, and in the quieter times by lectures, letters and other means showing the standard that ought to be aimed at.' Nevertheless, the last Annual Meeting for many years to come was held in July 1912, 'two years before the beginning of that war in which people were so busy preventing, punishing, or committing atrocities abroad that there were few hands left to do so at home, though the military occupants of some of the fine old houses in Bath, showed that it is not only by enemy aliens that buildings can be damaged.'²¹

At first it might appear that in the decade after the First World War the Old Bath Preservers remained inactive. Individually, however, they were very active indeed, and none more so than Mowbray Green. From 1923 he was advising the Bristol and Bath Regional Planning Scheme. In 1927 he was instrumental in the celebration of the work of John Wood. 'The Georgian architecture of Bath has almost become a National Monument...,' the commemorative pamphlet proclaimed, 'and the bicentenary of the beginning of John Wood's work is a fitting occasion for both Bath and the architectural world to pay a tribute to his genius.'²²



3 Caradoc and the S.V. Field Club at Prior Park, June 1910, from a lantern slide by Mowbray Green. (Courtesy Victoria Art Gallery, Bath City Council)

The event was celebrated with the placing of a wreath on what was then mistakenly believed to be John Wood's former house at 24 Queen Square by the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Walter Tapper.²³ And of course Mowbray Green led the walk round John Wood's buildings as part of the occasion.

The following summer, 1928, the RIBA held the British Architects Conference in Bath. Mowbray Green was, as always, generously involved, ready to share his love and knowledge of eighteenth-century Bath and to voice his concern over the care of the city and its surroundings. He was editor of the Conference *Handbook to Bath and district* as well as giving a 'lantern Talk entitled "A Walk Round Bath"'. One of the Conference's major topics was 'The Preservation of Rural England'. This subject was of great concern to Mowbray Green himself as shown in his undated essay, 'Keeping Somerset Beautiful'.

What... do we regard as the standard of beauty, what is the countryside, and what do we mean by preservation? ...in the words of

the Design and Industries Association... *nothing need be ugly*. Ignorance, carelessness, and untidiness are the worst enemies of the countryside. It is essential that people should know of the powers and duties of their own democratically elected bodies... essential that a well-informed and firm body of public opinion should be developed, to influence and... to bring public pressure to bear upon local authorities in... making relevant bye-laws. Once such bye-laws are in existence, the task *still* rests with private individuals and local organisations to bring to the notice of the authorities cases of contravention.²⁴

Mowbray Green lost no time in putting these ideas into practice. The Old Bath Preservation Society was revived in 1929 'with a view to co-operation with the City Authorities in preserving the dignity and beauty of the City.' Many original members had left Bath; 'others went their way to the land where the many mansions certainly are not designed by Cubists or Jerry builders.' Among former members who attended the special 'Revival Meeting' of the Society held in June 1929 was Mowbray Green. On this occasion he drew attention 'to certain atrocities lately perpetrated in the principal streets.' The attempts of certain building owners to replace façades or insert new shopfronts were disastrous and Mowbray Green called on the Council to use its powers under the 1925 City of Bath Act 'to enforce... the by-laws... relating to the elevations of buildings and the reconstruction of frontages'²⁵ by referring such cases to their special Advisory Committee.

In fact it was Mowbray Green who had this legislation introduced at Bath, the very first of its kind in the country. The report of the Bristol and Bath Regional Planning Scheme, published in 1930, acknowledged Mowbray Green's advice to their Committee. Their report highlighted the need for architectural control, most significantly referring to 'The Bath Clause':

To the City of Bath belongs the credit of setting up under their 1925 Act a new form of Advisory Committee to which the local authority could refer any building which was considered to be unworthy of its position [i.e. its site]: the decision of the Advisory Committee is binding on the builder and the City Council. Based upon this private Act, the Minister of Health has drafted a Model Clause for inclusion in Town Planning Schemes. All local authorities possessing town planning powers can therefore apply the means devised by the Bath Act if they wish.... The Advisory Committee... consists of An Architect..., A Surveyor..., A Justice of the Peace.²⁶

Not only had the publication of Mowbray Green's *Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath* been a pioneering work of architectural history, his work in town planning was totally innovatory.

Another test case soon arose. The Assembly Rooms had long been neglected and by the 1930s its future was a matter for debate. All manner of ideas were considered, but the problem was eventually resolved in 1931 when an anonymous donor enabled the Rooms to be bought by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The benefactor was Ernest Cook, grandson of Thomas Cook of the travel company. The announcement of the purchase²⁷ was greeted with great excitement in Bath with newspaper posters proclaiming 'ASSEMBLY ROOMS SENSATION'. 'Soon after, the ownership of the building was transferred to the National Trust on the advice of the Society's solicitors....'²⁸

Four years later, however, the future of the Rooms had still not been resolved. By the mid-thirties it was even being proposed as a location for the public library. Ernest Cook wrote to A.R. Powys²⁹ in March 1935 '...about the City's plans for the building... their use as a library would be the greatest possible mistake.... I approved of the idea but since then I have changed my view of the matter. Personally I should regard it as a disaster if these grand rooms are not to be available for concerts or entertainments.'³⁰

In March 1936 Powys and Macgregor of the SPAB and Mowbray Green reported on the Rooms to the Council's Spa Committee and in September 1936 the latter was asked to supervise the repairs and alterations. The restoration was deemed a great success. Everyone had praise for the sensitivity and beauty of Mowbray Green's work. The Mayor, in his speech at the opening of the Rooms in October 1938, went so far as to suggest that 'we have in Mowbray Green a worthy successor to John Wood'. Why though had there been such a delay between the announcement of the purchase of the Rooms in 1931 and their restoration beginning in 1936? The 'anonymous donor' had stipulated that the Rooms were to be refurbished at the Council's expense and after negotiating a 75-year lease from the National Trust at a peppercorn rent the Council did indeed refurbish them. But while all this was taking place it was busily promoting a further private Bill.

This Bill not only sought to protect 'scheduled buildings' – much to the delight of the Old Bath Preservers and the newly formed Bath Preservation Trust – it also asked for powers by which the City could make several major 'improvements'. Among them was a proposal for the *total demolition* of Edgar Buildings at the top of Milsom Street, as

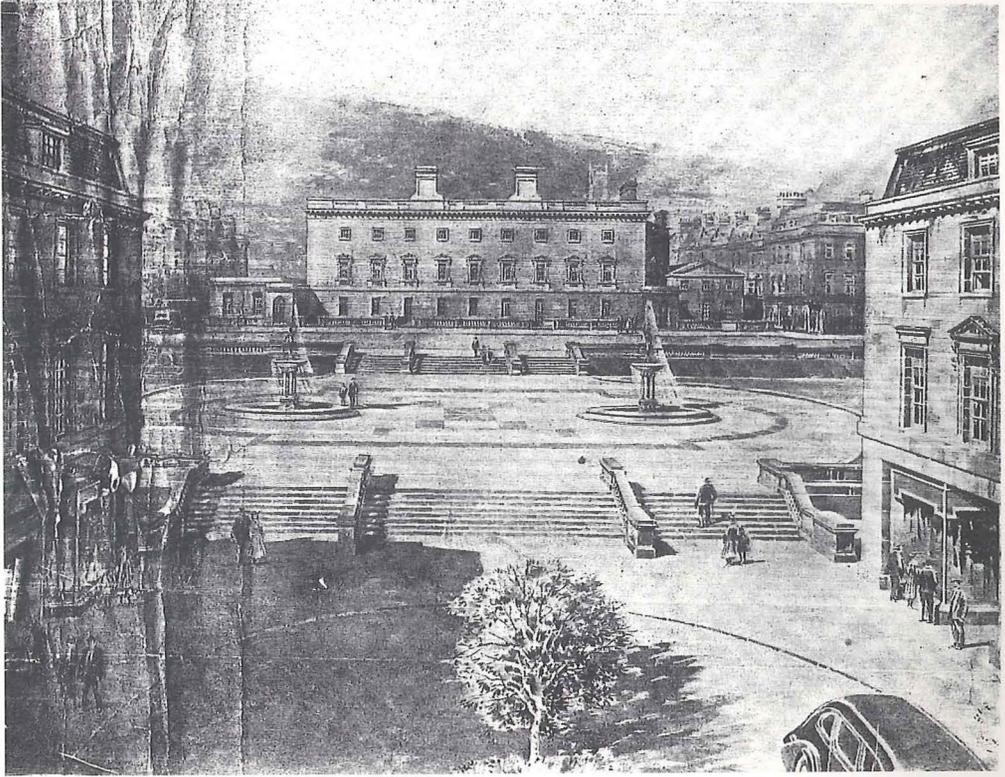
well as most of the south side of Alfred Street, in order to extend Milsom Street northwards to the Assembly Rooms and create a vast piazza with fountains. No wonder Ernest Cook was so upset with the Council. Having anonymously provided the money to secure the future of the Rooms, he must have been furious at a proposal that would so radically alter their architectural context. The newly formed Trust suddenly found itself 'temporarily at variance with the City Council'. Among the twelve trustees of course was Mowbray Green. He must have felt awkwardly placed. He would soon be involved in reporting on the Rooms while at the same time the city itself was proposing to destroy their very setting. It is surely a mark of the respect that the Council must have had for Mowbray Green's work and integrity that he later received the architectural commission for refurbishing the Rooms.

Meanwhile, handbills headed 'Preserve Bath Movement' appealed for residents and lovers of Bath all over the world to unite in opposing the 'improvements' by joining the Trust and sending donations in support of the Trust's work. Once again the campaign succeeded. A modified Bill was finally proposed, the 'improvements' were dropped, and the 'scheduled buildings' were ready to be selected.

'The Georgian architecture of Bath has almost become a National Monument...'. So wrote Mowbray Green in 1927. By 1937 that hope was about to become a reality. The Town Clerk wrote to the Old Bath Preservation Society in August of that year inviting their 'assistance... in the preparation of the list of buildings... which are... to be included in the schedule of protected buildings.'³¹ It was Mowbray Green who had been instrumental in the preparation of the schedule on behalf of the Trust. After the temporary 'variance' of just two years earlier, the Old Bath Preservers and the Trust were working happily in partnership with the City again to ensure its preservation. As well as protecting 'scheduled buildings' the 1937 City of Bath Act also enabled the Council for the first time to offer financial assistance to private owners for the restoration of such buildings. A new chapter in the care of the city's historic buildings had opened, a chapter that had been largely written by Mowbray Green. All the same, despite these great strides forward, the Secretary of the Old Bath Preservers rightly recognised the continuing importance of the Society's educational role.

I often wish that instead of teaching only 'Empire History'... teachers would... begin with 'Local History' and show the boys and girls of Bath... they are citizens... of a city they should be proud of and help

NOT DREAM PICTURES, BUT BATH AS IT WILL LOOK



4 The contemplated new stretch of Milsom Street towards the Assembly Rooms, from *Bath and Wilts Chronicle and Herald* 22 October 1935. (Courtesy Bath Preservation Trust)

to preserve. I wish too that the young men and women could have 'listened in' to the Broadcast Talk [on 17 April 1939] about Bath in the Series 'Built to Last', when John Betjeman... discussed our own city and its preservation with Alderman Wills and Mr. Mowbray Green. It would have taught them something!³²

And what did Mowbray Green choose to talk about on this occasion? Not the glories of the newly refurbished Assembly Rooms. Not his role in preparing the list of scheduled buildings to be protected. He went back instead to thirty years earlier – to the original 1909 campaign of the Old Bath Preservation Society to save Bath Street, using the example of the campaign to demonstrate the world-wide importance of safeguarding Bath and the role of the Old Bath Preservation Society and the Trust in ensuring that the preservation of the city would continue.

The impending threat of another world war brought a renewed determination and urgency to the Preservation Trust's activities. The 1941 *Annual Report* gave news of an important new initiative.

An important work now to be taken in hand is the making by a specially qualified committee of a complete 'Pictorial Record' of the interesting Eighteenth Century Houses and Buildings already scheduled for 'Preservation'. Such a 'Record' should prove of inestimable use in the problematical and certainly, difficult future.

It is essential, in view of this 'Future', membership should increase rather than decrease, and Members and non-members are asked to bear in mind that the small subscription of 5s.0d. entitles them to rank as recorded Defenders of our unique and famous Queen City of the West.³³

The foresight of the recorded defenders was very wise. Two tragic nights of bombing in April 1942 caused much loss of life in Bath as well as the damage and destruction of many historic buildings. James Lees-Milne's diary for Tuesday 28 April 1942 records:

Miss P. told me in the office that the Bath Assembly Rooms had been gutted by fire in the Bath raid on Sunday night. It has upset me dreadfully that so beautiful a building hallowed by Jane Austen and Dickens should disappear like this in a single night. ...the Circus has a crater in the middle of the grass, and all its windows are blown out.

Two houses in Royal Crescent are burned out, the abbey windows are gone, and the fires and destruction have been devastating. There were no defences, no A.A. guns were heard, and the Germans dived low and machine-gunned the wardens and A.R.P. workers in the streets. This is a reprisal raid for ours over Lübeck. Both raids are sheer barbaric bloody-mindedness, anti-culture and anti-all that life stands for. I positively want not to survive the war when things like this can happen.³⁴

In a 1949 Ministry of Works booklet recording the 'Chief Cultural Losses through Enemy Action' throughout Britain the bombing of the Bath Assembly Rooms ranks among the sixty chief cultural losses of the whole country. Their destruction must have been a bitter blow to Mowbray Green. Yet despite his age, for he was now well into his seventies, he was to take a new and extremely active and demanding role in the care of Bath's historic buildings during war time as the 'panel architect' for the Ministry of Works.

In practice it was usual for the panel architect, appointed by the Ministry of Works, to be called upon by the local authority direct, since in the nature of things urgent consultation was often needed. The architect as a practical man... could advise whether a wall could and should be shored or otherwise kept in position or should be taken down, any decorative features being carefully preserved. ...the all-important first consultation, to decide whether a building should be removed at once or whether demolition should be deferred for further consideration, fell to the lot of the panel architect.³⁵

Mowbray Green's correspondence with the Ministry of Works³⁶ amply demonstrates his zealous and energetic continuing care of historic Bath as he made a building-by-building, wall-by-wall, stone-by-stone analysis of the war damage in his determination to retain as much of the original fabric of eighteenth-century Bath as possible.

In Bath the actual destruction of historic buildings was not as severe as early reports suggested, although the burning of the Assembly Rooms is a grievous blow. Yet, because so much of Bath is of architectural interest, many historic buildings were damaged, several dozen of them too badly to merit repair as houses by the local authority. Some of these have been temporarily repaired by their owners; others, such

as Nos. 2 and 17 Royal Crescent, Hope House, Lansdown, and Nos. 6 to 9 Cavendish Place, have been attended to by the Ministry.³⁷

Mowbray Green had a never-ending energy which he gave freely in the care of the city he loved so much. Only a few days before his death, on 9 December 1945 at the grand age of 80, he had written to apologise that he would be unable to chair the next meeting of the Bath Branch of the Somerset Archaeological Society due to illness. Until then his 'tall, spare figure... striding about the city was a familiar and welcome sight.... The funeral cortege passed the Lecture Hall as the members assembled for the Meeting and after an eloquent tribute had been paid to his memory... all stood awhile in silence.'³⁸

Recognised in his own day 'as the acknowledged authority on the eighteenth century architecture of Bath', it was thought then that his monograph on the subject '...will always remain the foundation and inspiration of any future work in this direction.'³⁹ This has certainly proved to be the case as both Walter Ison and Nikolaus Pevsner acknowledged in their own writings. The *Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath* would endure 'as a pioneer study of the early and middle periods of its architectural development'⁴⁰ was Ison's verdict, while Pevsner, in his encyclopaedic *Buildings of England* series, wrote that it is 'thanks chiefly to Mowbray Green and the recent work of Mr. Walter Ison [that Georgian Bath is] so excellently documented....'⁴¹

Through his book and his many other activities Mowbray Green brought a new awareness and understanding of the *context and importance* of Bath's eighteenth-century architecture within a changing city. We owe him a great debt.

An adopted son of Bath, no man did more in his day and generation to preserve its great traditions or to advocate its zealous care by its citizens in a rapidly changing and utilitarian age.⁴²

Notes

- 1 Sydney Adolphus Boyd, 1857–1947, Rector of Bath 1902–38, Archdeacon of Bath 1924–38.
- 2 R. Grundy Heape, *The Soul of Bath: An Architectural Study* (London, 1939). 'To the Members of The Bath Preservation Trust, The Georgian Group, and to those men and women who have the best interests of Bath at heart, I dedicate this book.'

- 3 Obituary of Mowbray Aston Green, *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, Jan 1946, p. 100.
- 4 Paul Waterhouse, 'Architecture and Prose', *Architectural Association Notes*, May 1897, from Mowbray Green's 'Architecture' commonplace book (in a private collection).
- 5 *Bath Journal* 25 Feb 1893, p. 3.
- 6 Autograph letters bound in grangerized two-volume copy of Mowbray Green, *The Eighteenth Century Architecture of Bath* (Bath, 1905), Broadley Collection, Bath Central Library.
- 7 *The King* 11 Feb 1905, p. 650.
- 8 *The British Architect* 24 Feb 1905.
- 9 *Bath Weekly Herald* 10 Feb 1905.
- 10 Alexander Meyrick Broadley, 1847–1916, lawyer, author, journalist and collector; joint author of *Bath Pageant* (1909).
- 11 Mowbray A. Green, *The XVIIIth Century Architecture of Bath* (Bath, 1905), p. 199.
- 12 Meeting of Protest Against the Demolition of Bath St., Assembly Rooms, Saturday 27 March 1909, typescript, p. 9 (Bath Central Library, MS 1527, 914.238b).
- 13 *Ibid.* p. 10.
- 14 *Ibid.* p. 11.
- 15 For Frederick Bligh Bond, 1864–1945, see William W. Kenawell, *The Quest at Glastonbury: A Biographical Study of Frederick Bligh Bond* (New York, 1965), and A. Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (Ware, 1988), p. 120.
- 16 'Richard Mann' is allegedly the pseudonym of Alderman Thomas Sturge Cotterell.
- 17 Newspaper cutting filed with *Old Bath Preservation Society's Pamphlets. Bath Street, Bath* (1909) (Bath Central Library, pamphlet 218, 942.38b).
- 18 Mowbray A. Green, op. cit., p. 10, pl. II. Major C.E. Davis's drawing of the front elevation is reproduced on p. 10.
- 19 Ironically the Empire Hotel itself was 'listed' as being of special architectural or historic interest on 17 July 1989.
- 20 *Old Bath Preservation Society's Pamphlets. Bath Street, Bath* (1909), p. 19.
- 21 Old Bath Preservation Society, Annual Report 1930, typescript, Bath Preservation Trust archives.
- 22 *John Wood Celebration at Bath, Tuesday 1 November 1927* (pamphlet, Bath Central Library). The 23-member Advisory Committee included the editors of *Country Life* (Edward Hudson) and *Architectural Review* (William G. Newton), the Curator of the Soane Museum (A.T. Bolton) and naturally Mowbray Green.
- 23 For Walter Tapper, 1861–1935, see A. Stuart Gray, op.cit., p. 345.
- 24 Mowbray A. Green, 'Keeping Somerset Beautiful' (n.d.), typescript, Bath Central Library.
- 25 Old Bath Preservation Society, Minutes of Special Meeting June 1929, Red Book, Bath Preservation Trust archives.
- 26 Patrick Abercrombie and Bertrand Brueton, *Bristol and Bath Regional Planning Scheme* (London, 1930), pp. 156–157.

- 27 The Somerset Record Office holds the 'Deeds, Bath Assembly Rooms, with agreement to sell to A.R. Powys, of London, Architect & another 1931' (reference DD/na 12 c/2290).
- 28 'Bath Assembly Rooms', *SPAB News*, vol. 1, no. 2, April 1980, p. 27.
- 29 A.R. Powys, an architect highly skilled in the sensitive repair of historic buildings, was Secretary of the SPAB from 1911 until his death in 1936.
- 30 John Gaze, *Figures in a Landscape: A History of the National Trust* (London, 1988), p. 94.
- 31 J. Basil Ogden's letter to Old Bath Preservation Trust, 4 August 1937, Bath Preservation Trust archives.
- 32 Old Bath Preservation Society, Annual Report, 22 June 1939, typescript, Bath Preservation Trust archives.
- 33 Bath Preservation Trust, *Annual Report*, 1941.
- 34 James Lees-Milne, *Ancestral Voices* (London, 1975), p. 52.
- 35 Ministry of Works, *War and Archaeology in Britain: the Excavation of Ancient Sites and the Preservation of Historic Buildings* (HMSO, 1949), p. 34.
- 36 Copies of the correspondence and related photographs are held at the Bath Record Office.
- 37 Ministry of Works, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
- 38 Bath and District Branch of the Somerset Archaeological Society, *Report, 1945*, obituary of Mowbray Green, p. 328.
- 39 *Ibid*, p. 328.
- 40 Walter Ison, *The Georgian Buildings of Bath* (Bath, 1948 repr. 1969), p. 27.
- 41 Nikolaus Pevsner, *North Somerset and Bristol* (Harmondsworth, 1958 repr. 1973), p. 89.
- 42 *Bath Chronicle* 15 Dec 1945, obituary of Mowbray Aston Green, 1865-1945.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Bath Central Library, Bath Preservation Trust, Bath Record Office, the Victoria Art Gallery, BBC Written Archives Centre, David Beresford-Smith, Peter Borsay, Trevor Fawcett, Christopher Pound, Jean Pratt, and Jane Root.

Views which I have expressed in this essay are my own and may not necessarily reflect those of my employer.