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: CURATOR'S PIECE :

DR. SYLVIA PINCHES

Well, we are open again. The first day was Wednesday 23 March, giving us a few days to get back into the swing of things before a very busy Easter weekend (some 325 visitors over the Saturday to Monday). Visitors can now see not only the wash-copper I mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, but also the replica glass panels in the front door. They look a treat and the white triangles really set the door off on the outside. The yellow on the inside adds to the dramatic impact of the hall lounge. The exhibition in the glass case in number 80 has also been refreshed, with many new items on display. There are many ship models and some more unusual items such as a small stationary engine from c. 1903 still in its original wooden box.

You will be pleased to know that now members of the Friends will be able to come in free, on production of a current membership card. In recognition of all the support given by the Friends as individuals and as a body, at their last meeting the Trustees of 78 Derngate decided to allow free entrance. However, if you wished to make a donation, however small, in lieu of entrance money and completed a Gift Aid form with it, we should be very grateful, of course! In any case I hope you will spend some money in the shop when you come. I am sure you will, for we have added a number of new lines, including some rather elegant glasses engraved with Mackintosh designs. We are also steadily increasing the range of books stocked, not only on Mackintosh and related architects and designers, but on model engineering also.

Work on number 82 is now scheduled to start on 25 April. During the initial weeks of the project there will be some disruption to the normal running of things. Entrance will be through the Victoria Promenade side door, and visitors will have to be conducted round to the front entrance of number 80. As soon as possible a temporary entrance will be made into the 'garage', i.e. through the elegant coaching arch on the Derngate front, and the two other rooms on that side refurbished. Once that is completed, our operations will move into the three Derngate-front rooms, leaving the builders free to work on the back of the building and the basement. Things will no doubt change week by week and I trust that our visitors will bear with us during a difficult period. It is going to get worse before it can get better! The scheduled period for this first phase of work is twenty-six weeks (not twenty as I said last time), which takes us well into the autumn. The Trustees are working hard to raise the money needed for the rest of the project, so we hope that the builders will be able to carry straight on through the winter, re-instating the upper floors and creating exhibition space, meeting rooms and my office!

: DANCE & AUCTION :

Saturday 14 May. 7.30pm.

Great Doddington Memorial Hall
Northamptonshire.
Tickets £10 including light supper
(Bring your own drinks).

The event is to raise funds for the
78 Derngate Trust.

Tickets can be bought on
01933 224347 or 359163.

or email

fundraising478@btinternet.com

If you would like to donate items or promises (however large or small) for the auction please contact the same phone number/ email.

Come and make the fundraising a success!

78 DERNGATE NEWS

Chris Sherlock

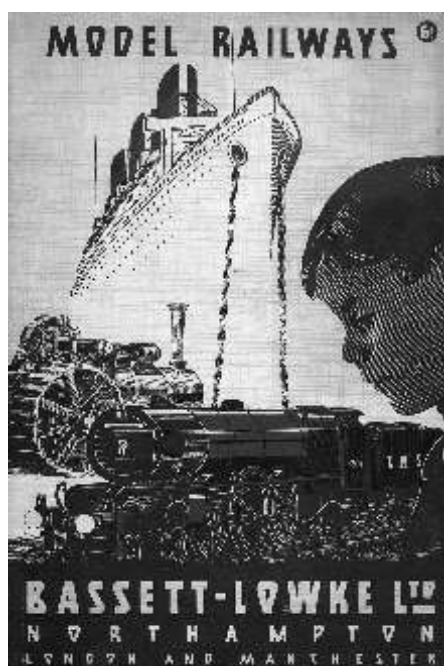
WJ Bassett-Lowke and Harry Franklin advertised their products in a mail order catalogue, thought to be amongst the first in the world. For the first edition dated 1899 to keep costs to a minimum, spaces were left between the text for illustrations. These were photographic prints that they had taken themselves, and then pasted in by hand. Although hard work the customers were impressed and brought an immediate and very profitable response.

The first catalogue illustrated with blocks came out in 1902 and thereafter were published annually, except for the war years, until 1939. After that they were resumed at intervals and the last one was published in 1963. I can just imagine the excitement of a new edition dropping through the letter-box.



April 1932.
Sherlock/Sanderson collection.

Both catalogues have yellow backgrounds



November 1937.
Sherlock/Sanderson collection.

It is possible that WJ's contact with George Carette may have influenced them to produce a catalogue in French as early as 1904 and a larger Model Railway Catalogue was produced in 1906. As far as I know no other catalogues were produced in other languages (unless you know different). In the Model Railways and Locomotives magazine dated July 1910 catalogues were advertised in sections:

Section M.A.C containing particulars of Model Electric, Steam and Clockwork Locomotives, Rails, Coaches, Wagons, Signals and every accessory for Model Railway work, Boilers, Stationary Engines, Fittings, Pressure Gauges, Injectors, Sheet Rod and tube in copper and brass. Tools for model making etc. Over 300 pages post free 7d.

Section M.S. Scale Model Yachts, Warships, Cruisers, Torpedo Boats, Vessels of every possible description, Ships' fittings etc. etc. Post free 3d.

Section M.A. Scale Model Flying Machine, Balloons, Model, Balloons, Model Aeroplane Motors and all sundries for experimental work fully illustrated - Post free 2d.

Section M.E. Electrical Models, Appliances and Materials. Post free 2d.

After 1918, the range of products became more consistent and were concentrated in three lists. 'A' for Model Railways 'S' for ships and 'B' for steam stationary engines, fitting castings and equipment for model makers.

A charge was made for all the standard catalogues, as there would have been a huge response to offers of a free list. The covers were designed by various artists and draughtsmen. Often WJ would suggest the theme and they were generally bold and eye catching. Early catalogue covers were drawn by Henry Greenly, Kenneth Cullen, George Winteringham and CJ Allen, in later years E.W. Twining was involved, his last being the 'O' gauge catalogue of 1950.

In addition there was a regular supply of leaflets for distribution by post and for exhibitions. One such list was the 'Abridged Christmas list no 43X', containing particulars of all kinds and types of Engines, Wagons, Rails, Warships, Racing Yachts etc. etc. over 60 pages post free for 6d, as advertised in the Models, Railways, & Locomotives January 1918.

Collecting Bassett-Lowke catalogues has become an obsession for Rod Sanderson and myself, and since January we have acquired a large variety. The contents are remarkable with such a wide variety of goods on offer. Some of the catalogues are easy to date with the month and the year, or the season and the year, but also we have found some with no publication date reference to them. So the only way of dating them, and arranging our collection in chronological order, is to look through each undated catalogue and find a piece on a model that has some predated reference to when the items were initially available. This oblique back-reference within the catalogue allows you to form the published catalogue order.

78 Derrnate has a selection of the Bassett-Lowke catalogues in the archive. It would be interesting to see a display of catalogues once 82 is restored and more exhibition space is available. In the meantime we will keep collecting. See you at the model railway fairs.

NB to stall holders, females love trains too, OK.

ART NOUVEAU

**Author: Klaus-Jurgen Sembach.
Pub. Taschen.**

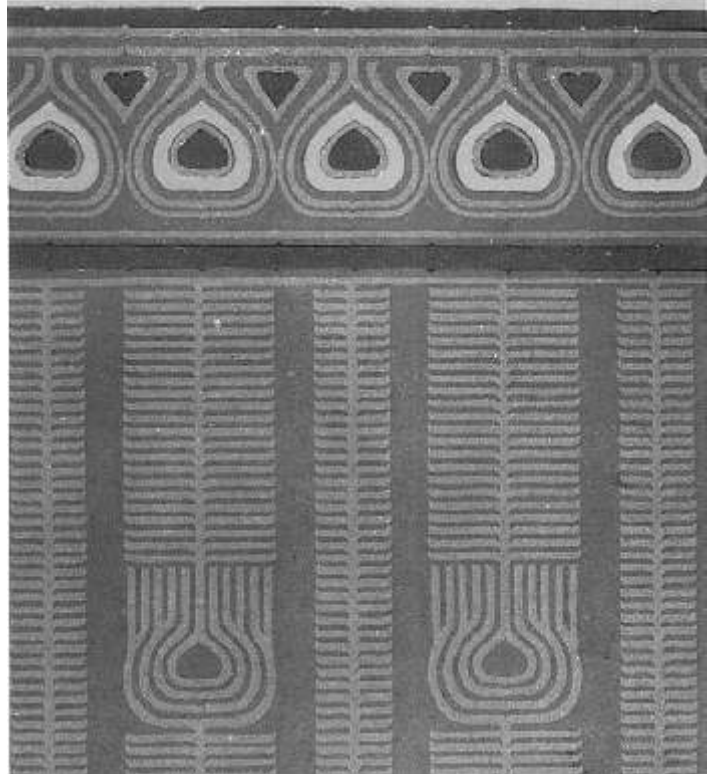
The title suggests that the subject is impossible to cover but this comprehensive study by Sembach achieves almost all. This is because the format of the book, once a preliminary history of the development of the movement is considered, breaks down into chapter headings that are city references and all of which are in turn cross referenced. So if your passion is for any one of these particular cities; Brussels, Nancy, Barcelona, Munich, Darmstadt, Glasgow, Helsinki, Chicago or Vienna and their associated artists and architects then you are in for a wonderful read.

Not the best known in the UK is the work of Richard Riemerschmid, a contemporary of Peter Behrens and Hoffmann. The photographs of his work on the Munich Kammerspiele (1901) particularly show the flow of his work and echo his interest as an overall designer rather than that of a trained architect. Indeed he was part founder of the Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk (United Workshops for Artist Craftsmanship 1898) based on the William Morris ideals.

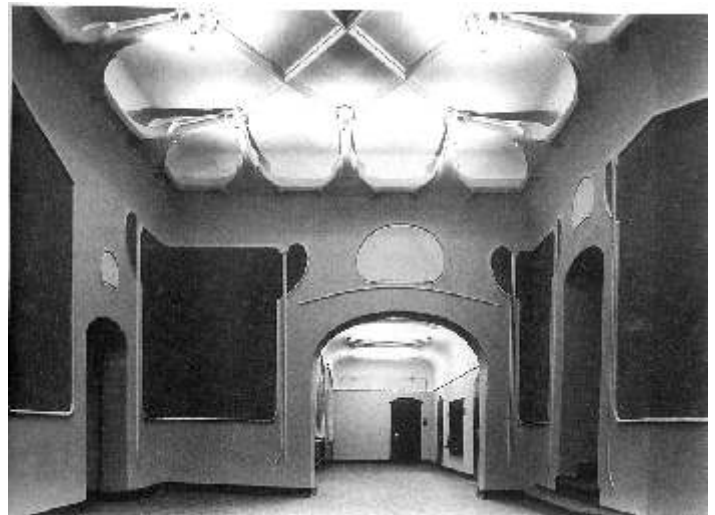
Both Riemerschmid and Behrens exhibited at the 1900 Paris World Exhibition that we know Bassett-Lowke visited. Other than architectural work, Behrens showed a particularly vivid design for wallpaper in orange, brown with violet centred hearts. Riemerschmid was soon overshadowed by Behrens' successful partnership with industry as he became artist-advisor to the electrical company AEG in Berlin in 1909, when real links were made between art and industry in terms of concept, material and design.

What is helpful in the book is that there are potted biographies where most appropriate for the designer concerned. Of Behrens it reminds us of his early work with the Vienna Secession and Darmstadt and that he was professor of Architecture at the Vienna Academy from 1922 (though alas no mention of New Ways when listing major works!) and that he took over the department of architecture in Berlin Akademie der Künste in 1936. But, as is suggested in the text, Behrens own work was superseded by new generation architects Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius, both of whom had worked for Behrens for a time.

I have deliberately concentrated here on the Munich and Darmstadt contributions to the book in that they illustrate why perhaps W.J. Bassett-Lowke turned to Behrens after CRM had gone off to France, especially as we know WJ had already used Secession stencils in his factory office in Kingswell Street, Northampton, before the make-over of 78 was conceived.



Peter Behrens: wallpaper design. 1900



Richard Riemerschmid: foyer Munich Kammerspiele. 1901.

Needless to say, the author writes with critical gusto about CRM and Glasgow; Loyd Wright and Chicago and the Wiener Werkstätte, as well as the other cities.

The book is a very well laid out in its approach to the development of Art Nouveau from its forming to its demise. It covers all aspects of decorative arts as well as considering how architecture may inform and condition our lives. Sumptuously illustrated. If you buy nothing else on Art Nouveau this is an excellent starting reference.

Rob Kendall.

: PORT VENDRES - TAKE 2 :

Take 1. On a trip to France last August, I took the train to Perpignan to look at the area with a view to buying a property in the region. Dizzy with looking in estate agents windows and computer images, I decided to take the train to Port Vendres to relax and see the place where CRM lived for the remaining years of his life. Leaving the station I wandered down to the town and went right of the quay looking across to the Hotel de Commerce where our man lived with Margaret.

Going around the quay, this time finding the tourist office, I saw notice of the exhibition about CRM. Going in I introduced myself as a guide from 78 Derngate. Beaming, one of the staff went off, returning with a leaflet.

Continuing on, passing the now closed Hotel de Commerce, pressing my nose against the glass in the entrance door in the hopes of getting a glimpse of the past, to no avail. Then, on round to the Dome to the exhibition, some of which was new to me. During the video of his life I found myself smiling, I was sitting in the south of France yet hadn't 'done' the Glasgow bit, except in books.

Returning to UK, my head was buzzing as to what I would do with the Hotel de Commerce. I'd seen at the exhibition they had wanted a permanent site for CRM in Port Vendres. I had his original two rooms restored in the period of his time there and was promoting the hotel as such in my head!!!

Back to reality take 2. I left UK on 9 February for Spain. It not saying anything. I took the train to Perginan. Deciding to stay, I hired a car and went to Port Vendres. Smiling again at this little place, I booked myself into the Hotel St Elme that is situated on the quay along from the Hotel de Commerce. Checked in, I stood on the balcony looking out, CRM mode, fully understanding what he saw. It has a little of everything, the sea, marina, port, hills with breathtaking views of the area, mountains, hilltop castles, forts and lookout towers, varied architecture and people from all walks of life. A new film playing beneath you each time you looked out.

I found Robin Crichton, of the Mackintosh en Roussillon Association. Knocking on his door unannounced I was welcomed into his home. We exchanged news of each other's venues. They have now acquired a place. A wine cave next to my hotel that they are going to share with the owners, as, after not being successful with the local council, they've decided to do it independently. As well as planning two holiday breaks in CRM's footsteps.

Returning to the UK, I have added another piece of CRM's life to my knowledge. Is this a wrap or will there be Take 3?

Cynth Howe

: MACKINTOSH BOUND :

On a recent visit to Glasgow one the Friends, Marlene May, discovered that J. D. Wetherspoon have a bar in Sauchiehall Street that they have decorated in 'Rennie Mackintosh' style including the bar pumps and carpeting. Marlene assures us that the food and drinks are reasonably priced and that it was nice to see a new company making such an effort to cater for those on the CRM trail.



CRM. The Little Bay, Port Vendres. 1927. Hunterian Art Gallery. Glasgow

: CALENDAR : OF EVENTS 2004/2005

**Aston Hall & Gas Hall
Birmingham
Pre-Raphaelite**
Saturday 7 May £15.00
Bookings 01604 458842
(See panel this page)

**Dance / Supper & Auction
Fundraising for 78**
Saturday 14 May. 7.30pm.
Great Doddington. Northants
Tickets £10 inc. supper
Book on 019933 224347 or
01933 359163.
(See panel on front)

Kelmarsh Hall, Northants
Thursday 19 May. 2.15pm
Meet at Hall. £5 guided tour
Pre-book 01604 711317

**Wightwick Manor & Severn
Valley Railway**
Sat 11 June £24.50
Details 01604 469281

**Lake District:
Blackwell, Brantwood &
Ravenglass & Eskdale
Railway**
Fri 23 - Sun 25 Sept. £195
Booking 01604 493794

Friends AGM
Thurs 24 November.

ASTON HALL & GAS HALL

Saturday 7 May

Meet 10am Christchurch Road,
Northampton.
(Note NEW meeting point above).
£ 15.
Booking 01604 458842.

A guided visit to Aston Hall, a prime example of Jacobean architecture. Then a guided tour of the Gas Hall Pre-Raphaelite collection, Birmingham. A packed lunch should be brought. Some free time then leave Birmingham 6pm.

NEWSLETTER COPY

Should you wish to contribute to the newsletter articles and/or photographs re 78 please contact:

Rob Kendall
on **01604 711317**.

You may also like to check the Trust web site

www.78derngate.org.uk