Building Engineering Services
HERITAGE REVISITED
Part 11
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VICTORIAN & EDWARDIAN STREET FURNITURE
SS GREAT BRITAIN EXHIBITION
BRISTOL

A rare example of a James Allan Snr & Son Elmbank Foundry Glasgow rectangular single doorway 4 stall Urinal located on the dockside of the SS Great Britain exhibition site in Bristol. It carries the James Allan Snr & Son nameplate.
INTRODUCTION

The Heritage Group decided to carry out research into whether any examples of street furniture favoured by the Victorian & Edwardian and built during those periods as cast iron street urinals and drinking fountains were still extant in the 21st century.

Lucinda Lambton the author in her book refers to certain items of street furniture as 'Temples of Convenience'.

The ongoing and progressive increase in the demand requirements for health and safety and environmental health must have speeded up the demise of this type of external toilet or drinking fountain public facility. Nevertheless, it was found that cast iron urinals still exist around the country with several still in use, as can be seen from the following examples.

The great majority of these toilet facilities were provided for males use but two examples have been found that were provided for female use, Chilton Open Air Museum & Sydney Gardens Bath Spa.

Birmingham and Bristol are two cities which have retained many of these old structures that have been Listed Grade II. They can also be found in preserved heritage railways, public parks and museums both open-air and closed.

Acknowledgement is given to John Bolton of Scottish Ironwork Foundation who has provided many of the examples of the cast iron urinals

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Heritage Revisited Part 11 March 2021 illustrates a selection of these public conveniences and drinking fountains which can still be found, some have been renovated and remain in use; some have become museum exhibits; but the great majority have been abandoned and just left to deteriorate and become derelict.
EAST SOMERSET PRESERVED HERITAGE RAILWAY

A fine example of a single doorway Urinal at the Cranmore Station of the East Somerset Preserved Heritage Railway in Somerset. The name of the manufacturer displayed on one front panel is Walter Macfarlane of Glasgow made at their Saracen foundry.
This delightful setting for a 4-stall rectangular cast iron urinal can be found at le Bordage, St Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands. The high level mounting of the cold-water header cistern gives it an unusual appearance. The manufacturer is James Allan Senr & Son of Glasgow.
This fine restored example of a Walter Macfarlane Cast iron urinal made at the Saracen Glasgow Foundry was manufactured during the Edwardian period.
It was transferred from Llandrindod Wells, Powys where it is understood to have been sited on the platform of the railway station.
This excellent restored double doorway urinal is on display at the National Tram Museum in Crich Derbyshire. It can be found adjacent to the Red Lion public house as one of the exhibits and part of the street scene.
This 3 stall urinal is sited in the grounds of an Ormskirk Church located against an external wall. It is in excellent condition complete with security gate to deter vandalism.

The manufacturer is McDowall Steven & Co. Milton Ironworks Glasgow.
This example is described as a round pattern with curved entrance screen of decorative panels pierced to the top, with a raking roof to a filigree dome with bowl finial. It was made by George Smith & Co at their Sun Foundry in Glasgow. It is a Grade II listed structure given a complete upgrade, refurbishment with the original paint colour restored.
This 5 stall rectangular urinal manufactured by Walter Macfarlane is located adjacent to the railway station in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham.
This wonderfully restored single person male cast iron urinal is displayed at the National Rail Museum in York. It was originally sited on the platform at Curthwaite rail station in Cumberland on the Maryport Carlisle Railway. It was made by George Smith & Co at their Sun Foundry in Glasgow.
SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE
NEW SOUTH WALES  AUSTRALIA

The photos of the urinal under Sydney Harbour Bridge Australia
were provided by Group Member Paul Yunnie
The name marked on the urinal is B G Plummer & Co Sydney. Comparison however, of the floral design on the right hand side Sydney panels shows an almost perfect copy with the left hand side panels found on the Urinal at the S.S. Great Britain exhibition site in Bristol, England.

It must follow that B G Plummer had an agreement with James Allan Snr & Son of Glasgow to manufacture their Urinals in Australia.

This excellent example of a double doorway 2 stall urinal to a design of James Allan Snr & Son Elmbank Foundry Glasgow, is in a remarkably preserved condition and can be found on the roadway under the Sydney harbour bridge in Australia.

The irony of its location is that although here is a toilet facility provided for male relief the notice on the adjacent lampost says

**NO STOPPING.**
This double doorway rectangular Urinal is another fine example made by George Smith & Co at their Sun Foundry in Glasgow. It can be found on the platform of Bewdley Station which is part of the Severn Valley Preservation Heritage Railway that runs from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth.

The urinal was purchased from British Rail and erected in 1977. It was opened in September of that year.
Another fine example of a 4 stall double doorway Urinal is to be found at the Colyford Station of the Seaton Tramway in Devon.

The name of the manufacturer is not displayed but the pattern on the panels are similar to that of Lockerbie & Wilkinson of Birmingham.
HARBORNE BIRMINGHAM
This 6 stall Urinal possibly installed as a separate item of pavement street furniture appears to have been absorbed into the layout of the Public House building when it was extended at a later date. No makers name is noted on any of the cast iron panels, but the pattern on the panels bare a resemblance to the Lockerbie & Wilkinson design.
This Public Convenience celebrated its centenary in 2006. Previously sited in Caversham in Berkshire it was considered by Reading Borough Council to have reached the end of its useful life and was closed. The year was 1980. Alternative uses were then considered, but none found to be suitable.

The building and its contents were originally purchased by Reading Borough Council in 1906 and provided for the use of passengers using the tramway at the Caversham terminus. The cast iron decorated panel structure is partitioned suitable for separate male and female use. It was manufactured at the Saracen Ironfoundry of Walter MacFarlane & Co. in Glasgow.

In 1985 the building was donated by Reading Borough Council to the Chiltern Open Air Museum. Its team of dedicated volunteers then dismantled, removed and rebuilt it in its present location between the years 1987 and 1991. It was finally opened in 1992 to provide public toilet facilities for the Museum.
STAR YARD CHANCERY LANE LONDON

This double doorway Urinal is located in Star Yard off Chancery Lane in London. Both doorways have now been blocked off. It has a Georgian wired panelled glass roof.

The makers name is displayed on the left external panel. It can only be seen very close up and one needs to know just where to look. The name "McDowall Steven & Co" - "Milton Ironworks" is inscribed around the top circle with the place name "Glasgow" inscribed around the bottom of the circle. Below is an easily readable example.
This example is described as a round pattern with curved entrance screen of decorative panels pierced to the top, with a raking roof to a filigree dome with a bowl finial. It was made by George Smith & Co at their Sun Foundry in Glasgow. It is a Grade II listed structure given a complete upgrade, refurbishment with the original paint colour restored.
SYDNEY GARDENS  BATH SPA

This strangely shaped rectangular urinal could be found in Sydney Gardens, Bath Spa.

It is a Grade II listed structure which has unfortunately been allowed to deteriorate and although most of the surrounding trees and bushes have been trimmed back, the branches of trees are detrimentally affecting the roof of the building. The continuing tree growth will eventually break the panes of the roof glazing. The building is now inaccessible as the doorway has been closed off and locked. The name of the manufacturer is not displayed but the pattern on the panels are similar to that of Lockerbie & Wilkinson of Birmingham.
Another example of a double doorway 4 stall urinal can be found in York House Gardens, Richmond on Thames, London. It was manufactured by Walter Macfarlane at their Saracen Ironworks in Glasgow. This Urinal is still in use.
DEVONPORT DOCKYARD
FERRY ROAD ENTRANCE

This double entrance door rectangular Urinal stood at the entrance to the dockyard in Ferry Road, Devonport. This photograph was shown in the 'Pillar to Post' 1982 book by Henry Aarons. It shows the excellent condition it was kept in for its age.

The manufacturer is James Allan Senr & Son of Elmbank Works Glasgow. It had 6 stalls and a pitched Georgian wired glazed roof, it has now been dismantled and removed to storage in a local Museum.
This unusual single person round urinal is located in Thorn Park, Plymouth. It was manufactured at the Saracen Ironfoundry of Walter MacFarlane in Glasgow.
DRINKING WATER FOUNTAINS

The drinking water fountain has a history which dates back into pre-history with the ancient Greeks. In more recent times it has been a method of allowing ordinary people to be able to drink water provided by the local water authority.

The Victorians & Edwardians were well known for their ornamental and highly decorative drinking water fountains. Whether they are to be found located inside a Building or on the Street, these fountains are items of engineering and architectural history. The following pages show drinking water fountains of unusual design and / or exceptional quality found by the Heritage Group.

This excellent example of a highly ornate and decorative drinking water fountain (now unused) in Victorian highly glazed colourful tiles is located in the Old Library Building in Cardiff and dates from the 1890's when the building was refurbished.
This drinking fountain was erected in 1904
It is a Grade II listed structure and located in Clifton Bristol
This drinking fountain was erected in memory of The Reverend Urijah Rees Thomas in recognition of his dedication to the service of the public.
STURMINSTER NEWTON DORSET

This cast-iron drinking fountain and horse trough was erected to the memory of J Comyns Leach MD JP and his son E Comyns Leach both doctors located in Sturminster Newton, Dorset who both died during the Edwardian period. Note the small statue of Neptune with his trident which adorns the top of the drinking fountain.
Erected to the memory of
J. Comyns Leach
MD JP
who practised in this
town for over 40 years
and who died at sea
March 11th 1907
aged 65 years
and of his son
E. Comyns Leach
B A Surgeon
who died at Sierra
Leone June 17th 1903
aged 30 years
TROWBRIDGE MUSEUM
WILTSHIRE

This Victorian cast iron drinking fountain can be seen in the Trowbridge Museum, Wiltshire
Salters Drinking Fountain

This cast iron fountain was rescued from the outside of Home Mills when The Shires shopping centre was being built in 1988-9.

Dated 1868, it was probably not in use until 1877 because of the poor quality water which came from a well in Waterworks Road. After that, pure water was piped to the town from Biss Bottom Springs at Upton Scudamore.

_Trowbridge Advertiser, 30th June 1877_

**Drinking Fountain at Home Mills**

Mr Gouldsmith has had an ornamental iron drinking fountain, supplied with water from the Water Company's mains, placed in the yard of the Home Mills, Fore Street, for the use of the workpeople, who can slake their thirst this hot weather by a draft of pure spring water, which flows out of a lion's mouth copiously by turning a tap.
This Victorian fountain is a Grade II listed structure and can be seen close to the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol. The Drinking fountain section has been removed.
The fountain has a different religious verse on each face.
This cast iron drinking fountain made at Coalbrookdale was erected to celebrate the coronation of Edward VII in 1902, and can be seen in Cow Square, Somerton, Somerset. It provided water for people, horses and pets.
CLEVEDON SOMERSET
A very colourful Victorian tiled drinking fountain for people and their pets to be found in Clevedon Somerset.
This fountain which dates from Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee year of 1897 can be found in the Queen’s Gardens of the Palmyra Square Conservation Area in Warrington, Cheshire. Only the canopy remains and is a Grade II listed structure.

Robert Garrett, a wealthy local businessman, presented to this Public Park the royal centre piece of a cast iron drinking water fountain.
The excellent quality of the ironwork can be seen in the profile image of Queen Victoria on the canopy. The fountain was manufactured by William Macfarlane at their Saracen Foundry in Glasgow.

The four faces of the canopy show on two sides a profile of Queen Victoria and on the other two sides an image of a stork, with the inscription KEEP THE PAVEMENT DRY

The photos of the Queens Park, Warrington, Drinking Fountain were provided by Group Member Geoff Brundrett
HORFIELD COMMON BRISTOL

This cast-iron pedestal drinking fountain with light lantern was erected in 1900 is to be found on a corner of Horfield Common in Bristol.
ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION
TO THE MEMORY OF
W.D. WATTS,
LATE MEMBER OF THE CLOSTER
COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THIS DISTRICT.
1900
This eleventh book in the Building Engineering Services Heritage Revisited Series makes a distinctive change from its predecessors Part 2 and Part 10. This time it shows extant examples of Street Furniture that were provided during the Victorian & Edwardian periods for the health benefit of the general public. It is again a collaborative effort by the members of the CIBSE Heritage Group. Thanks are given to members who have contributed to the store of books, documents, photographs and illustrations in the Heritage Group Collection. Special thanks go to our friends at Historic England and National Trust for their considerable assistance.

For more information about the street furniture in this booklet visit the Heritage Group Website at <www.hevac-heritage.org>