The design of Liverpool pubs in the nineteenth century

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Introduction

This article explores the historical development of pubs in Liverpool, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Unlike *Licensed to Sell* by Geoff Brandwood, Andrew Davison, and Michael Slaughter, which focuses mainly on the interior of pubs, this discussion looks mostly at the exteriors, specifically at the street level facade.[1] In part this is because the evidence we have, in the form of photographs, is much richer than that for nineteenth-century interiors, but it is also because studies of how residents perceive cities place much emphasis on such eye level features.[2] In this way, pubs are a significant part of their townscape. This article argues that Liverpool pubs in the nineteenth century took a distinctive form, one which in many ways seems to foreshadow the branded pubs of the late twentieth century. In turn, this distinctive built form owes much to the adoption in Liverpool of the 'managerial system', in particular by the firm of Peter Walker & Son. Paul Jennings's recent valuable account of the development of *The Local* gives us the historical back-

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ground at a national level for England, and points out just how much work still needs to be done to explore regional and local differences.[3] The study of pub design in the nineteenth century has tended to focus on spectacular examples rather than seeking to assess typical local patterns. The effort to do the latter is fraught with problems of the survival of evidence, but this article seeks to build a framework for such analysis. The case of Liverpool is interesting and important in its own right, but further development of the approach taken here may encourage others to carry out their own local studies and add to our store of knowledge.

The article starts by introducing aspects of licensed retailing in nineteenth-century Liverpool and the nature of the evidence which this has left behind. There are then some brief remarks on how others have viewed buildings as carrying the marks of the organizational ideas which lay behind them, before a framework for analysis is outlined. This framework is then applied to the development of the Liverpool pub in the mid-nineteenth century. Drawing on company records, the licensing registers and other archive material, but centrally on the visual record in the form of photographs, this

analysis draws our attention to a particular cluster of pubs run by Andrew Barclay Walker. The hub of a company which became the dominant force in Liverpool licensed retailing, this cluster exhibits certain features - simple design based on models drawn from emerging shop design - which can be related to developments in managerial practice. In this way, the built form not only reflected managerial practice but also consolidated it, acting as a visual indicator of success and so forming a 'to-hand' model for adoption by others in the city.

Public houses in context

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the main way of running a pub (and the one preferred in most debate on the subject) was the independent business person owning or renting his or her own premises and free to buy their supplies of alcohol for resale from any manufacturer or wholesaler - the 'free house'.[4] (Although we should note the importance of 'loan ties' in London and the Home Counties by 1800). However, for a variety of reasons (including indebtedness on the part of landlords and growing access to capital on the part of brewers) there was a trend towards the direct ownership of public houses by brewers.[5] In the vast majority of cases such houses were run by nominally independent tenants, 'tied' to take the products of the brewery. However, in some localities, and Liverpool was the first and most distinctive of these, the employment of salaried managers, liable to instant dismissal, became by the third quarter of the century the dominant form. This innovation can be directly traced back to the partnership that went under the style of Peter Walker & Son. It was formed by the Scottish brewer Peter Walker, who moved with his family to Liverpool in the 1840s, and his son Andrew, who ran the company between 1848 and 1893.[6]

The use of managers seems to have begun in the 1850s and entailed the development of a managerial hierarchy supported by a detailed accounting system. House inspectors checked that the houses were properly run and reported to a superintendent. It is this system as a whole, rather than just the employment of managers as opposed to tenants, that was the real innovation. It was rapidly taken up across Liverpool, if resisted in other areas of the country by both licensing magistrates and brewers. By the end of the nineteenth century, a majority of the pubs in Liverpool were run by salaried managers, an accelerating trend and also one matched by the concentration of ownership in the hands of companies as indicated in Table 1. By 1891 four major companies owned over a quarter of the city's pubs. It was in the ranks of these companies that most managers were to be found: in Peter Walker & Son, for example, 215, or 89%, of the company's Liverpool pubs, were under management in 1891.

For an institution which was so central to working class life and which was a key

A) Types of tenure 1898

Owner	667	32.10%
Tenant of private owner	136	6.54%
Tenant of brewer	218	10.49%
Paid manager of brewer	1057	50.87%
	2078	

B) Owners 1891

Agents	66	3.17%
Companies	1155	55.45%
Individuals	859	41.24%
Unknown	3	0.14%
	2083	

C) Major pub-owning companies 1891

Peter Walker & Son	241
Robert Cain	137
Rowland Bent	110
Threlfalls Brewery Company	93
	581

Table 1: Tenure and ownership of Liverpool public houses in 1890s. From Mutch, A. (2006) 'Public houses as multiple retailing: Peter Walker & Son 1846-1914', Business History*, 48(1).*

business sector, there has been relatively little attention to the pub in its social and business context during the period. Social histories tend to neglect consideration of the impact of business strategies on the nature of the pub and the standard business histories tend to focus largely on brewing as opposed to retailing.[7] One notable exception is the work on the pubs of Bradford by Jennings, but this stands out as an analytical island in the sea of local histories which tend to focus on lists of owners and landlords.[8] The pub remains an emotional touchstone in discussions of English (in particular) life and hence there are many examples of books of photographs of pubs.[9] Many of these eschew much contextual detail, even down to the provenance of illustrations, but they can, as we will see, be valuable sources in their own right. However, in considering the pub as built form the pioneering work of Mark Girouard deserves particular attention. Girouard writes from the perspective of an architectural historian and so his focus

in *Victorian Pubs* is on the development of particular styles of pub.[10] His main geographical focus is on the rich resources supplied by London and his examples tend to be those recorded in the architectural press. Consequently, the discussion is based on distinctive illustrations rather than a representative sample.[11]

While his main focus is on London, Girouard does consider examples from elsewhere, notably Birmingham and Liverpool. He notes that 'Liverpool pubs are very much a world of their own, rather than a provincial version of London pubs, and deserve a separate book'.[12] He recognizes that some of the examples which he, and others, draw on, notably the Philharmonic, are not really typical of the Liverpool pub.[13] This magnificent building, with its elaborate ironwork and world famous toilets (tours of which are offered to this day!) is the product of the particular struggle for respectability and pre-eminence of the two major pub owners in the city, Peter Walker & Son and Robert Cain & Sons. Their real wealth, however, was generated from hundreds of more typical dockside, city centre and slum pubs which led *The Times* to observe in 1875

These gin-palaces, with their flaring barrel lamps and other external decorations, are in some respects peculiar to the port. The poorer the locality, the better chance there is, it seems, of the house succeeding, and the wretched customers cannot complain that they are not honoured with splendid establishments.[14]

It is these pubs which are the subject of this article and which constitute a remarkable collection of four books of photographs, Freddy O'Connor's lavishly illustrated *Pub on Every Corner* series.[15] When one adds to this Terry Cooke's *Pubs of Scottie Road* one has a distinctive resource which is not paralleled in any comparable town.[16] Of course, it could be argued that this is a product of the chance survival of photographic records. That there is some connection to our major theme of the development of the managed house can be seen in the work on Birmingham where the firm of Mitchells and Butlers, also a key owner of managed houses, had a similar practice of recording its pubs.[17] One of our problems is that the years of slum clearance and war damage have meant that the surviving built record is unreliable as a means against which to test this photographic record for representativeness. However, comparative work (of which very much more is needed) does seem to suggest that while we might find isolated examples of comparable built forms elsewhere, there was something distinctive about the Liverpool experience.[18] While the record for Birmingham has some parallels, it is important to point out that the managed house form and its built equivalent emerges later there than in Liverpool. A scan through the pages of the Liverpool pub books does suggest a particular built form that, briefly, seems to have more parallels with the shop than the house. However, this is an impression: the task for the rest of the article is to

conduct a more structured analysis, drawing on the surviving historical records and relating the built form to the way in which pubs were run. In order to do this we need to consider in a little more detail the connections between buildings and institutions.

That historians have considered such connections can be observed in the following from the social historian R.J. Morris's account of the Victorian self-help writer Samuel Smiles. In commenting on the way in which much of Smiles's approach is enshrined in the buildings of Leeds, notably the Woodhouse Temperance Hall and Mechanics Institution, he contrasts the modest proportions of this building to the lavish decoration of the later Leeds Mechanics Institution, observing that

These buildings are a visual record of the social structure of each institution. The Woodhouse Hall was placed between the Wesleyan chapel, the Anglican St Mark's, and the Bricklayers' Arms, an elegant utilitarian building which hardly broke the lines of by-law back-to-back housing which surrounded it. The Cookridge Street building is an aggressive assertion of the cultural authority of the urban elite.[19]

Of course, it could be argued that this is simply a particular reading of the two buildings. Some people might not notice the buildings at all and others might read them differently depending on their own particular perspectives. Those who write on church architecture, however, give us a stronger sense of the link between the form of buildings and more abstract ideas.

Studies of the way in which space was organized in the English medieval parish church have shown how it was based on particular assumptions about the form of worship.[20] The chancel, screened off by the rood screen, was the exclusive territory of the priest, so reflecting hierarchical assumptions. Such considerations were repeated regularly and consistently. Most church goers might not see the connection to theological debates but such connections were certainly present. The plans, both horizontal and vertical, of French cathedrals were intimately linked to the tenets of scholastic philosophy.[21] That the taken for granted nature of such practices shaped the use of churches can be seen in the violence of the reaction to the built environment during the long years of the Reformation. It was not just that statues and stained glass were smashed, but that wholesale changes were made to the physical layout of space.[22] Churches in Scotland were partitioned to form the sort of space which suited the new liturgical practices, especially the emphasis on the pulpit and the Word.[23] The controversy over the placing of the altar and the rails, if any, which separated it, were a major part of the Laudian controversies in England. It took many years for a new built form to emerge in English and Welsh Nonconformity and Scottish Presbyterianism, but congregations struggled to raise the finance to provide

new built settings. Of course, this discussion has largely been about interiors, whereas our focus is on the outside of pubs. While such features did not excite controversy on the same level as religious debates, there were still arguments about the openness and ostentation of pubs and their claimed impact on drinkers.[24] The example of churches is raised here to suggest how the built form could reflect ideas about how organizations should be run. However, in order to see how the built form of the pub might reflect not only architectural fashion but also how they were owned and managed, we need a language for analysis and this is the task of the next section.

A vocabulary for analysing pub design

Figure 1 outlines a vocabulary based on a central difference between the design of a facade as a shop or as a house. This approach is based on that adopted by Brunskill's   analysis of vernacular buildings, although the pub does not feature there.[25]

The distinctions have been developed on the basis of inspection of the physical and visual record and are primarily oriented towards the task of analyzing urban pubs. That is, a full classification scheme would require extension in two directions. To take into account the full range of vari-
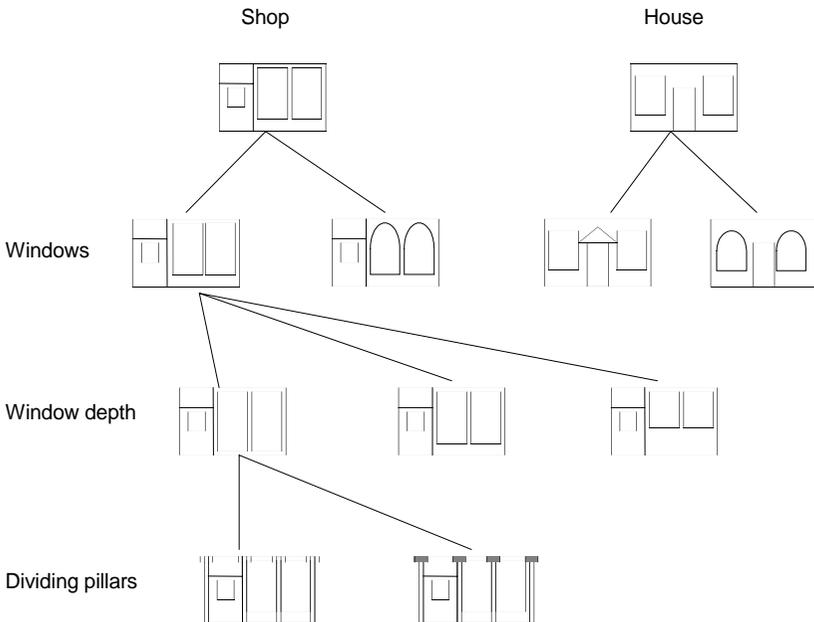

Figure 1. A vocabulary for pub design

ation, especially in rural and small town pubs, we would wish to extend the house category to a much greater extent than is essayed here. A full comparison of all urban pubs would also necessitate the extension of the scheme to include elements such as the nature of signage, the treatment of areas above the window level, etc. There are another two considerations which are not covered in the diagram, both related to our concentration on facades at the ground floor level. One is the important nature of the plan of pubs. We can classify these as broadly corner, terrace or detached (Fig. 2). As we will see in more detail below, the overwhelming majority of Liverpool pubs were of the corner type. There is a clear relationship between the other two forms and the continued adoption of a 'house' style

of design. The second consideration is the relation of the facade to internal arrangements. The nature of the evidence required to analyze these relationships in more detail is beyond the scope of this article, but inspection of the archival evidence for Liverpool suggests a very clear reflection of internal arrangements in the facade of pubs (Fig. 3). That is, doors correspond to particular parts of the pub, which tended to feature a very large bar area with several entrances, an 'outdoor' department with its own entrance and a fairly vestigial 'lounge', again with its own entrance.[26]

As the focus in this article is on Liverpool pubs, classification of the house style is necessarily limited. Figure 4 shows a 'classic' example drawn from
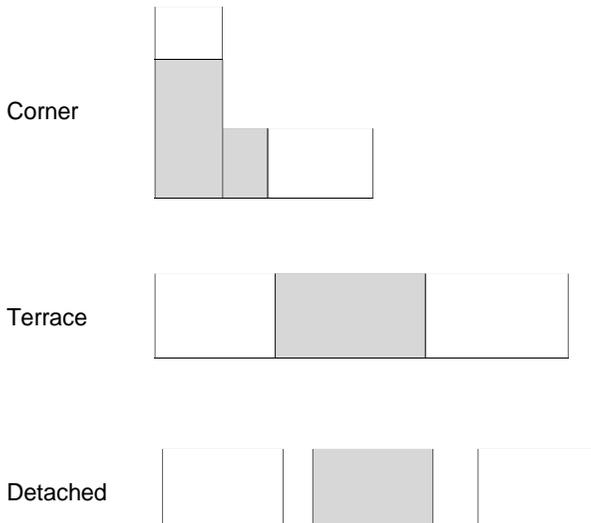

Figure 2. Pub plans
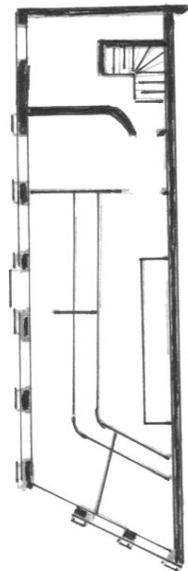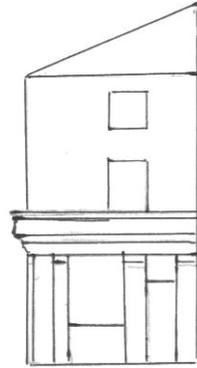
Figure 3. Trafalgar Vaults, Liverpool, 1902. Redrawn from LRO 720 KIR 2395. Reproduced by permission of Liverpool Record Office and Edmund Kirby Limited.

a small market town and representative of many similar examples. We note here how the pub is developed from and retains many of the features of the house from which it originated (and hence the name). In this example the main windows remain of the same dimensions as domestic dwellings, with any elaboration reserved for the doorway. The bay window on the right of the picture represents a typical example of the type of elaboration of windows which is not pursued further in Figure 1.

The Liverpool pub, however, relies much more on the features which reflect developments in retail design. Figure 5 shows two Victorian shop fronts in Grantham, Lincolnshire which are useful for comparative purposes. We can note here the growing height of the facade and the depth of windows enabled by the development of plate glass, features which are also emulated in the 'classic' Liverpool pub.[27]

The first level of our classification refers to the form of the windows. In the classic shop these are straight headed, although it is possible for variations in the character of the head of the window to be found. This elaboration of window shape is perhaps more found in the 'house' type, with the adoption in some

Figure 4. Kings Arms, Westgate, Grantham (author).

Figure 5. Shop fronts in Grantham showing increase in height and area devoted to windows (author).

examples of the contemporary fascination with the Gothic. However, if we simply focus on the straight headed variety, then we could suggest that another distinguishing feature is the depth of windows. In retailing practice the focus was on the vertical extension of windows in both directions - so that they extended to internal ceiling level in one direction and nearly to the ground in the other. Facilitated by the development of plate glass and other structural features (such as cast-iron framing) we can see a number of such large windows in the Liverpool record. However, there are also examples of what we might term medium and shallow depth windows. One could extend this classification to look at the nature of the glass itself. In examples in Birmingham of deep and medium depth windows, for example, the effect of transparency is countered by the employment of small panes of glass.[28] In Glasgow much use was made of frosted glass to obscure windows on the one hand and wooden infillings at the bottom of the window opening on the other to restrict the view into the pub.[29] The magistrates there were much impressed by the ease with which the

interior of Liverpool pubs could be viewed. They had

travelled along some of the streets on the top of a car, from which they could easily see into the interior of the public-houses, the windows of which are not obscured with figured glass or blinds as is so common in Glasgow.[30]

For the purpose of our analysis the simple categories of deep, medium and shallow will be employed, medium being taken as windows ending at the same height as the window glass in doors, which tended to be fixed at waist height.

Figure 6. Camden Street Vaults, Liverpool. From O'Connor 1995, 50. Reproduced by permission of the Bluecoat Press.

The final level of elaboration for our purposes is the nature of the pillars which often divide the facade between windows and doors. In some cases the simple form of the windows and doors forms the divisions, with relatively little elaboration. In other cases far more complex forms of pillars, with intricate capitals and more depth articulate the facade. Such effects can be provided by elaborate paint schemes either on plaster or wood. Of course, we could extend this analysis to further classify these effects - to cate-gorize the headings of pillars between variations on the Corinthian and simpler effects, or to detail the treatment of signboards. Figure 6, which we will feature in our analysis below, is a useful visual illustration of these points. It is an example of what we would define as a shop design on a corner site, with a simple form of vertical division, medium depth straight headed windows and a simple signboard. In fact it represents part of a 'classic' cluster of pubs which our classification enables us to identify. However, before presenting the results of the analysis in more detail, we need to consider the nature of the evidence we draw upon.

Liverpool pubs: building on the shop

The analysis presented below is based on volume 1 of O'Connor's four part series, which covers the city centre. It is restricted in this way because the task of analysis involves not only the classifica-tion of the visual evidence but also the

attaching of contextual information drawn from the licensing registers and company records. The process was that a record was constructed for each of the selected photographs (as below) using Microsoft Access with coding against the scheme outlined. Further contextual material was then attached from the supporting databases drawn from the licensing registers, the census and company records. This is a time-consuming process which necessarily restricts the scope of analysis. There are some further caveats about using the visual record which need to be taken into account. The great bulk of the photographs that O'Connor uses are of pubs clearly marked with the insignia of Peter Walker & Son. However, on closer investigation many of these houses are often ones which the company had acquired at a later date. In other words, the initial design may not have originated from Peter Walker & Son, or the premises may have been converted once acquired.

The matter is further confused by two practices. One is that the company undertook the management of premises on behalf of their owners, when to all intents and purposes the pub was designed and run as with the others in their portfolio, hence explaining why pubs which appear in the licensing registers as owned by others have a visual record showing them as Walker pubs.[31] The other is that Walkers supplied their beer to many other pubs (and Andrew Walker also operated as a major wine and spirit merchant). Pubs which they supplied

could display an illuminated lamp and other signage. This caused some dissension when contracts ended but landlords refused to take down the signage. One landlord who the company pursued wrote

Why all this bother about me in particular when there are scores of houses in Liverpool having your name on the ends & front of the buildings, also in the Windows, Doors & Lamps who do not draw one drop of your Ale - There are several that I could point out in this Road and the neighbourhood. - The very next house to my other house has your name far more prominent than ever I had it & the house belongs to a firm of Brewers who would not have a barrel of your Ale in one of their houses on any account.[32]

So the simple visual record can be misleading. O'Connor generally supplies information about the date of the photograph, but this does not necessarily represent the original built form. In some cases he supplies two pictures of the same pub which demonstrates the 'great rebuilding' which occurred in Liverpool, as in many other towns across the country, at the end of the nineteenth century. It is this radical reconstruction, as well as subsequent changes, which makes the surviving built environment an uncertain guide. The rebuilding process involved the conversion of the rather simple facades of the early designs, often based on the tacking of plaster or timber forms on to the basic building, into facades of more substantial materials (often expensive stone or brickwork). This conversion often saw more idiosyn-

cratic designs for each pub, rather than the more 'branded' theme that we will see below, with a noticeable heightening of window sills and distinctive decorative features. It was this movement that culminated in the glories of the Philharmonic and the Vines, which can be seen as show pubs representing the apogee of the Liverpool pub. Because of this, we use the earliest photograph of those which O'Connor presents, which gives us some 70 examples for analysis.

The analysis of these examples then involves the drawing in of other contextual information. A key source here is the licensing registers.[33] In a city in which licensing matters were at the centre of local politics, the recording of data in registers was a key weapon and a full run survives which enables the researcher to trace the running and ownership of pubs over time. Ownership data is present from 1875, with the main use of the registers for this analysis being from 1881, selected to align with the census of that year. The use of this information from the registers enables in some cases the status of the pubs as tenanted or managed to be ascertained. This is then supplemented by information drawn from the records of Peter Walker & Son who, as we will see, were the dominant force. The survival of this material is very fragmentary and consists of two lists of properties, indicating in particular whether the property were owned or leased and, in the case of the latter, the length of leases.[34] It often proved difficult, because of conflicting address information (particularly significant in the case of corner properties, which might be known by two street names) to identify pubs clearly. One should note here the practice in Liverpool of often not giving distinctive names to pubs and of referring to them simply by address.[35] There are also a number of house management accounts available which enable us to confirm, for example, that the pub in Figure 6 at London Road and Camden Street was a managed house for Andrew Barclay Walker from at least 1859. In this way a number of sources can help us track change over time and give us confidence in the broad outlines of our analysis. We should note that the factors discussed mean that the amount of detailed information on specific pubs diminishes as we seek further detail in our analysis. However, looking at a broad sample rather than just illustrative examples

	House	Shop	Total
Corner	5	48	53
Terrace	1	15	16
Detached	0	1	1
	6	64	70

Table 2. Analysis of sample by plan and type.

shows up some distinctive patterns of pub design.[36]

Table 2 shows two clear features. It indicates the overwhelming dominance of what we have termed the 'shop' form in Liverpool, something which is confirmed by visual inspection of the remaining volumes of pictures and which could usefully be contrasted to the pattern in many other areas. For this reason the rest of this analysis concentrates in more detail on aspects of the shop form, attempting to derive patterns within this form. The dominance of the corner pub is also confirmed. This was a matter of considerable debate within Liverpool, resulting in an unsuccessful legal challenge to the practice of extending pubs into nearby premises. In 1875, for example, a pub at Blundell Street owned by Andrew Barclay Walker came up for transfer. An objection was made on the grounds that the pub had been extended since being licensed into neighbouring streets. The magistrates granted the transfer on the grounds that 'the licence [was] for the premises originally licensed and we state distinctly from the bench that if the parties choose to sell in other premises they must take the responsibility for it'.[37] However, when such a challenge was mounted by a temperance association it was unsuccessful, leaving the temperance advocate William Caine to remark ruefully 'we were powerless to interfere with the existing law ... at any rate, it would be a sheer waste of money to attempt to dispute the matter any further'.[38] Hence the pub which has two frontages, often with a deeper frontage on the side street, with a range of doors giving access to specific departments.

If we examine these shop forms in further detail we find that 49 of the 64 (36 in corner pubs, 13 in terraced versions) contained straight-headed windows of the type illustrated in Figure 6. Table 3 analyses these straight-headed shop type properties in more detail on the two further dimensions of our classification: the depth of the windows and the elaboration or otherwise of the divisions (e.g. pillars) which articulated the horizontal dimension of the facade. What this analysis suggests is a very pronounced 'shop' form with windows which either reached to about waist height from the ceiling or came lower down. Some of these 'shops' had complex facades in which the divisions between windows and doors were marked by elaborate pillars, but far more common was a much simpler type. The core of the 'typical' Liverpool pub was therefore a facade modelled on elements of contemporary retail practice, featuring relatively straightforward facades with a strong vertical element in which the effect was gained by the articulation of simple and repeated design elements which could be easily scaled up to reflect internal layouts. It remains to relate such a pattern to managed houses in general and to one firm in particular.

If we examine our licensing register data, we find that of the 32 'simple shops' 7 were recorded in the 1881 licensing register as under the ownership of Andrew

	Elaborate	Simple	
Deep	5	15	22
Medium	9	14	23
Small / hybrid	1	3	4
	15	32	49

Table 3. Analysis of shop types by windows and decorative effects.

Barclay Walker, with a further 1 owned by the company he controlled, Peter Walker & Son. Only one other owner, William Clarkson, owned more than one example. He would later sell his pubs to Peter Walker & Son in 1890, declaring that

He is desirous of leaving the business entirely and he would feel more easy if that business which he has been so long associated with and has built up with such care were in the hands of first class people such as your Company rather than left to be manipulated by other parties.[39]

This suggests at least a close connection which was mirrored in the adoption of a similar built form. If, having identified Andrew Barclay Walker as a key figure, we examine his holdings in more detail, then we find that of the 11 pubs owned by him from our sample in 1881 all were shops in format. Nine were on corner sites, reflecting a key property strategy that we observed above. Seven of the 11 were simple shops, four with deep windows, three with medium. A pattern emerges which is confirmed by turning to the property records. Seven of the 11

pubs recorded against Walker can be traced in these records, all of which had the straight headed windows bar one. All of these houses are recorded as being held on lease, with terms varying from five to 21 years. Something of this process can be seen in the history of a pub which is not recorded by O'Connor, the Shamrock Vaults at the corner of Latimer Street and Ambrose Place.[40] This was the property of William Williams, builder, and William Roberts, saddler. They leased the pub to Andrew Barclay Walker in November 1866 for a 21-year period. In 1880 a further lease of the mortgaged property for 17 years was negotiated between Williams, now a warehouse owner, and Walker. From the 1881 register we know that the pub was managed by the 29 year old George Kay (confirmed by his entry in the census for that year). Nine years later Williams' widow sold the property to Peter Walker & Son. So there was a process of building up a business on the basis of leased property which was then converted to freehold. The earlier property was modelled on a pattern which produced the most effective exterior for property which

was not owned, with the great rebuilding occurring once such properties were turned into freehold.

It is here that we can trace the connections with the 'business model' adopted by Walker. Two of the pubs for which we can trace entries in the property records are on Brownlow Hill and Camden Street - the latter being the property in Figure 6. We have managed house accounts for five pubs in 1861, including both of these pubs (accounts which have expanded to ten by 1866). Six of these pubs can be traced in O'Connor's visual record (Table 4). All of these are corner pubs, with only one, on London Road, having arched windows. It has an elaborate decorative scheme, as does the pub on Fox Street, with elaborate pillars between its medium depth windows. All the rest conform to the pattern that we have termed the

Location	Earliest recorded date	Plan	Facade	Holding	O'Connor volume & page
26 Brownlow Hill and 21 Hartford Street	1848	Corner	Straight deep simple	Lease	1:60
73 Byrom Street and 81 Great Crosshall Street	1855	Corner	Straight medium simple	Lease	4: 6
2-4 Fox St and 163 Richmond Row	1855	Corner	Straight medium elaborate	-	4: 40
31 Soho St and Gomer Street	1856	Corner	Straight deep simple	-	4: 43
21 London Road and Camden Street	1859	Corner	Straight medium simple	Annual tenure	1: 50
125 London Road and 2 Audley Street	1855	Corner	Arched	-	1: 51

Table 4. Andrew Barclay Walker early managed houses.

'simple shop'. We know that the pub on Brownlow Hill was where Walker first got his experience of the retail trade, operating it in partnership with his father from the late 1840s. In the next decade Walker began to manage pubs for his uncles, both colliery managers near St Helens. From these beginnings he went on to build a substantial business based on managed houses. Not only was this innovation successful for his business, but it went on to provide a model for other operators in the city. They adopted not only his style of operation but much of the built form which he utilised, giving rise to the distinctive pattern to which *The Times* alluded.

We can place this innovation in a wider context which helps to explain the linked development of both the practice of house management and the built form adopted. We first need to recognize two factors about Liverpool. One is that as a major port city, expanding rapidly during this period, it was, as Milne has it, a 'world city'.[41] That is, in many ways it turned its face out to the world rather than adopting practices from its hinterland. The second was that it was a city in flux, with vast numbers of temporary residents during the nineteenth century from two sources. Liverpool was a major emigrant city, a stopping off point for the masses of people leaving firstly Ireland and then parts of Europe for North America. Many of the hopeful Irish emigrants in fact never left the city but sought casual work in the docks and shipyards. The second source of temporary custom for the pubs

of the city came from the large numbers of sailors who arrived on each favourable tide.[42] As a tidal port, Liverpool was subject to considerable surges of people, often recently paid, who wanted in part to spend their money in entertainment. This meant that many of the pubs had a distinctive trade in spirits. Compared to a city such as Manchester, Liverpool had many more pubs with full licences.[43]

In the 1830s changes in legislation led to the introduction of the beer house.[44] Payment to Excise authorities bought a license to sell beer, as opposed to those public houses which also sold wines and spirits, and were subject to much tighter regulation by magistrates. Liverpool in particular saw an explosion of beer houses, much to the disquiet of the magistrates. Their practice was to assess the fitness of the applicant, the structure of the building and the needs of the neighbourhood when granting licenses. However, under increasing pressure to grant more licences, because of the thriving and lucrative nature of the spirit trade, a faction of magistrates agitated for a policy of 'free licensing', in which market demand would regulate the numbers of pubs.[45] This policy operated from 1861 to 1866 and resulted in an increase of nearly 400 fully licensed premises, converted from beerhouses. At the same time more beerhouses continued to be opened, a process not halted until all premises for the consumption of alcohol were brought under the control of magistrates by legislation
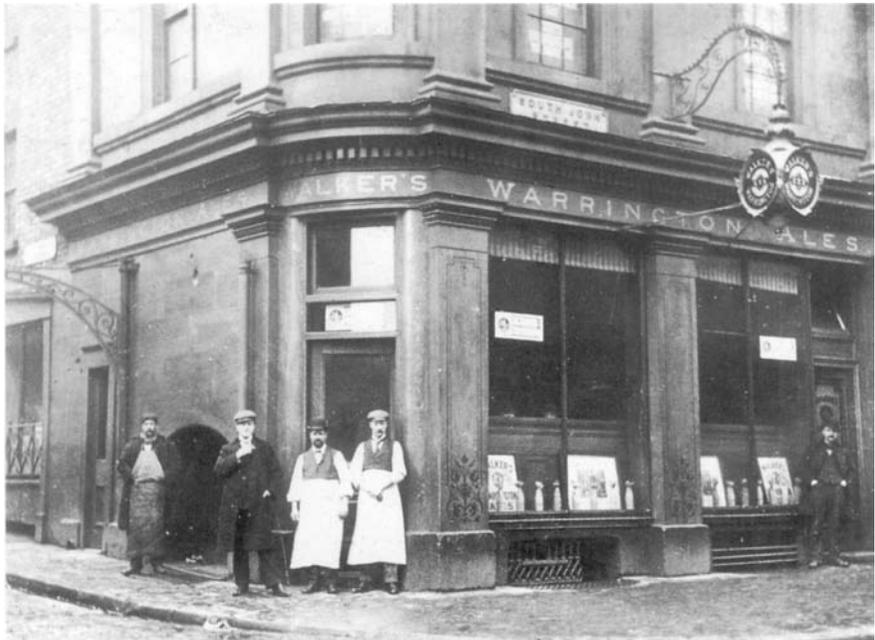
Figure 7. Custom House Hotel, Liverpool. From O'Connor, 1995, 78. Reproduced by permission of the Bluecoat Press.

in 1869. This combination of market conditions and regulatory change produced a very competitive market in which a retailing orientation was suggested. That is, most pubs when owned by brewers were run more as outlets for the distribution of beer than with the attention to customer demand which might characterise retailing.[46] A document put out by Peter Walker & Son to celebrate 50 years in business presented an explicit and forthright explanation of their 'managerial system' in the context of retailing.

It is a product of the natural evolution of our commercial system, and has its precise equivalent in other trades in that process which has reduced small traders to the position of managers of large establishments, and has subjugated the instinct and the opportunity for petty personal greed to the interests of the publics at large, as secured by stores and other large undertakings governed by system and principle.[47]

The managerial system enabled the adoption of competitive strategies across the range of Walker's pubs in the same

fashion. For example, Walker was alleged to have been a widespread user in the early years of the frowned upon practice of the 'long pull'.[48] This was where extra measure would be given for the same price, a practice which would give Walker advantage over smaller operators. He could also use staff from his pubs to meet peaks of demand by, for example, moving them from city centre to dock pubs.[49]

This business strategy, then, favoured the acquisition and management of a large number of outlets on a similar basis. In doing so there was value in producing a common visual image relatively cheaply and Walker seems to have done this by borrowing techniques from retailing. We might note here that beerhouses were also known as 'beershops' and that O'Connor has several examples of very simple shopfronts employed in such establishments. However, Walker added something more to these, drawing in particular on developments in plate glass to feature very tall facades with extensive windows which created an impressive appearance. In this he and his designers may have been drawing on the strikingly modern use of cast iron and glass in the design of offices such as Oriel Chambers

Figure 8. Old Angel Nottingham - corner view. A house design with other design elements (Gothic windows on the left) grafted on (author).

Figure 9. Old Angel Nottingham - side view (author).

and 16 Cook Street.[50] The consistent visual design of outlets thus mirrored the consistency given by the application of direct management, with its focus on tight discipline enforced by a hierarchy of house inspectors. The success of direct management became clearly visible in the spreading empire of outlets which Walker opened across the city. The focus in these outlets was quite clearly on the Walkers 'brand' in the manner of some early 21st century chains of managed houses.[51]

We need to place such developments in the context of limited channels for the discussion and dissemination of new ideas

about organizational practice. This is a comment that could be applied to much of British industry during this period and one which was explicitly made in the context of brewing in 1894, when a very rare treatise on management practice was noted as being couched in 'an open and generous manner almost foreign to British traders'.[52] The built form of a company's outlets was therefore a very visible and striking reflection of its management practices, particularly at a time when regional and local economies were of more significance. In this fashion, other brewers came to adopt not only house management but also the built form of the pub as shop. In one of the few older pho-

tographs that O'Connor presents which shows clearly the offering of brewers other than Walkers, a pub owned by the brewers Blezards on Vauxhall Road demonstrates all the features - the shop on the corner design, with windows stretching down from ceiling to waist height, separated by simple pillars bearing painted decoration - that we have observed appear to have their origins in the middle of the century.[53] The precise nature of the process of dissemination and adoption may be difficult to uncover, but it seems plausible to suggest on the basis of the evidence presented that the particular form of the Liverpool pub and the innovation of direct management are tightly intertwined.

Conclusion

This analysis has only looked at a small fraction of the 2000 pubs in Liverpool in the nineteenth century. If we scan the remaining volumes of O'Connor and Cooke, however, the impression is that the picture presented for the city centre holds true for other areas. What appears distinctive about Liverpool is that design features which can be found in city centre pubs (and which might be found, albeit in smaller numbers, in other major towns) are also reproduced in the inner suburbs. Even smaller pubs seem to share something of the magnificence of the city centre, something which we can link to the management of the estate. That is, much of the appearance of Liverpool's pubs might be attributed to the nature of

its economy. Other factors include the nature of local regulation of the drinks trade and architectural fashions. Nothing has been said in this article of the complex of designers, shop fitters and builders which must have laid behind the production of these pubs, and this is an area for further investigation. However, enough has been said to indicate the inter-relationship between the built form of the pub and the management strategy of the major pub owning company in the nineteenth century.

It would be valuable to set these findings in a comparative setting of practice in other towns and cities. To do this the classificatory scheme would require refinement and extension. Of particular value would be its application to the managed pubs of Birmingham, which seem to show a number of similarities. However, it is hoped that enough evidence has been presented to show the advantage of a more systematic and structured approach to the external design of the pub and its connection to business practice. Of course, we lack the evidence to know how these pubs were perceived by either their customers or the general public. If we want to make an informed assessment of what these perceptions might have been, a focus on what was typical as well as what was spectacular might help.

Given the intensely local flavour of the pub and the market for beer in the nineteenth century a more systematic approach to the surviving evidence might

point us to significant differences. For example, to end the article in entirely speculative fashion, one might suggest that an examination of London might reveal that it is hard to distinguish any pattern! That is, in a city where the multiple publican (that is, the publican who owned several outlets) was of considerable importance and the tie was generally in the form of loans, rather than outright ownership of property, we might expect the pub to reflect the interests of a varied set of owners. One's impression of the surviving evidence is of exuberant display as being the only common element. However, a comparative examination of small details like the nature of the heads of pillars might provoke some intriguing questions. In Liverpool, pillars separating windows tend to have rather plain flat heads. If they have elaboration at all, it is in taking the consoles (the large and increasingly decorative brackets that typified the ends of the signboards of many contemporary shops as in Figure 5) up onto the signboard and using these to further mark out each bay. By contrast, one's impression is that in London it is more common to have elaborate capitals, often drawing from examples from Classical architecture, so giving a much richer decorative scheme.

Such speculations would need much more detailed evidence to convince. If, though, we compare a Liverpool and a Nottingham pub we can see something of the way in which the built form reflects the dominant forms of management which lie behind them. Figure 7 shows

the Custom House Hotel, Liverpool. This has all the features of the shop form that we have discussed as being typical of Liverpool, albeit ones developed on an imposing scale. Such a pub represents the triumph of a managed estate, where the emphasis is on the common ownership by the company, represented by the name painted over the windows and the distinctive lamp. By contrast, the pictures of the Old Angel in Nottingham (Figs. 8 & 9) show a pub which is a hybrid of a house design with elements of Victorian display grafted on. The 'Gothic' windows of the later facade, however, respect the existing ceiling line and are not carried round into an overall design for the whole facade. This represents a tenanted ethos in a town whose magistrates were fiercely resistant to any notion of pub management. These are quite clearly speculations, but the hope is that others might take up the endeavour to establish regional clusters of styles. Once this is achieved then a properly comparative account would be feasible.

Acknowledgments

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