

BEACONSFIELD

a streamlined resource for the development and presentation of contemporary art

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8 Albert Embankment

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

IMPACT ON EXISTING CULTURAL ASSETS

OCTOBER 2020

Proof of evidence for A. David Crawforth BA (hons) Fine Art, RAS PG Dip Painting.

Appendix B

Summarised history of the Lambeth Ragged Schools





Site of new Lambeth Ragged School, Doughty Street (now Newport Street). Watercolour by J.D. Wingfield..

Henry Beaufoy's late wife had started a Ragged School around 1841 in railway arches adjacent to the site, one of which is still leased and used by Beaconsfield today. The school gets a long description in Mayhew. The original building site stretched from Black Prince Road to Whitgift Street and included the railway arches behind. Access to the Ragged School was from Doughty Street (now Newport Street).

Source: www.landmark.lambeth.gov.uk

Beaconsfield
The former Lambeth Ragged School
22 Newport Street, SE11

Beaconsfield is based in the southern (girls) wing of the former Lambeth Ragged School. Built 1849-1851 by Henry Beaufoy, in memory of his late wife, Eliza Beaufoy, the building was originally three times the size and cost £10,000, with a further £4,000 laid down for maintenance.¹ The following text, written in 1851, gives a description of the building and how it was used:

"It is of oblong construction, in the Doric style of architecture, with a noble façade and portico. Its centre is elevated, and on either side are extensive wings – the one on the right being appropriated to the use of the boys; and that on the left to the girls. The centre part of the building consists of two lofty storeys; the principal entrance is approached by a flight of steps, and the whole of the exterior is surrounded with substantial iron railings. The rooms in the wings are spacious, well ventilated, and are at night brilliantly illuminated with gas, and warmed throughout by hot water pipes. The other rooms, of which there are four up-stairs [sic] as well as on the basement storey, are of smaller dimensions, and some of them are fitted up with galleries for the reception and training of infants and the more juvenile portion of the scholars; while the others are designed for the accommodation and instruction of the senior scholars, a girls' sewing class, and a committee room. The entire building, including the out-offices and lavatories, with a large play-ground for each school, and covered play-ground underneath, of the same extent as each school-room, occupies an area of more than 6,000 feet; and will altogether accommodate nearly one thousand children."²

The school was one of nearly 200 Ragged Schools (so called because of the 'ragged' appearance of the poor vagrant children that attended them) that sprang up around the country at the time,³ although most were housed in much more makeshift surroundings.⁴ The schools gave basic lessons and taught the bible, all free of charge, which helped poor children find work or emigrate.⁵

It is not clear who was the architect of the building. The remains of Beaufoy's correspondence from the period include a letter to Sir William Tite, a respected architect of the day,⁶ regarding the suitability of the site. However, there are many more letters between Beaufoy and William Rogers, who built the nearby Lambeth All Saints Church (now demolished),⁷ is the only architect represented in the correspondence as working with Beaufoy on the development of the building. However, while we can be certain that Rogers acted as surveyor,⁸ there is nothing in the correspondence which explicitly confirms his role as architect.

The original plot was owned by South-Western Railway and had previously housed dust yards. Built in a recognised slum and industrial area,⁹ the building on Doughty Street (now Newport Street) must have been impressive within its surroundings.

The building and land remained the property of the trustees until 1872 when the day school was transferred to the School Board for London, which used the building until 1880.¹⁰ After a number of Education Acts were passed in the latter part of the century (notably the 'Forster's Act' in 1870 and the Elementary Education Act of 1891), the position of Ragged Schools began to change as free education became more formally available.¹¹ In 1903 the decision was made to sell the site

¹ vauxhallsociety.org.uk

² The description "comprises the substance of a statement which was read by Frederic Doulton Esq. the honorary secretary". All from an article from Lambeth Ragged schools publications entitled 'Lambeth Ragged School', 1851. Lambeth Archives, IV/71/111.

³ The idea for free schools for poor children began with John Pounds in 1818 and was taken up by, among others, Lord Shaftesbury, who formed the Ragged School Union in 1844. Source: vauxhallsociety.org.uk

⁴ In fact the Lambeth Ragged School began life in the (Lambeth?) Palace-yard, and then moved to a railway arch, before moving into its grand new premises on Newport Street. Source: 'Lambeth Ragged School', 1851. Lambeth Archives, IV/71/111.

⁵ vauxhallsociety.org.uk. A newspaper report on the first annual meeting of the friends and subscribers to the Ragged School also discusses the issue of emigration to the colonies. Source: Lambeth Archives, IV/71/15, 8 December 1848.

⁶ Sir William Tite (1798 – 1873) was an architect "best known for building the Royal Exchange. Became president of the Architectural Society, 1838. President of Royal Institute of British Architects 1861 – 63, and 1867-70. Member Metropolitan Body of Works. Fellow of Royal Society etc. Buried in Norwood Cemetery" (notes, Lambeth Archive, IV/71/1-132)

⁷ Built 1844-1846, on Leake Street (York Street): www.southwark.anglican.org

⁸ Lambeth Archive, IV/71/13

⁹ See text from the Museum of Garden History website, which describes the extent of the pollution and stench in area, created by bone crushing factories, the Seyshell Asphalt company and from the local pottery factories: www.compulink.co.uk/~museum/local%20history%20B. It is worth noting the proximity of Doulton's pottery factory to the Lambeth Ragged School – part of the building still remains and is now home to Southbank House on Black Prince Road. www.a2a.org.uk

¹¹ By 1891, with the second Elementary Education Act, free schooling had in fact become compulsory for all children under 11. For more information on the sequence of the education acts see:

back to the Railway¹² and in 1904 most of the school was knocked down when the railway was widened.¹³ Network Rail still own the freehold for the site.

When Beaconsfield took over the lease from the London Firebrigade in 1994, the remaining building was derelict. Beaconsfield worked with LKM Architects to restore the building and transform it into a contemporary art space. The building was stripped back to its original open-plan design and new toilet and kitchen facilities were added. Beaconsfield acquired the use of the double railway arch at the back of the former school building in 1998, adding another gallery space, whose urban aesthetic contrasts with the pristine nature of the upper and lower galleries. The arch was sandblasted in early 2005 and state of the art infrared heating was added in summer 2005. Works are currently in progress to link the lower gallery and arch space so that access between the two will be under cover.



http://www.know-britain.com/general/education_in_england_2.html

see also: <http://www.thepotteries.org/dates/education.htm> and: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_England

¹² www.buildingconservation.com

¹³ vauxhallsociety.org.uk

"RAGGED SCHOOLS."

Mr. Charles Dickens, in an eloquent Letter addressed to the Editors of the *Daily News*, describes the places which bear the above name, as an effort "to introduce among the most miserable and neglected outcasts in London, some knowledge of the commonest principles of morality and religion; to commence their recognition as immortal human creatures, before the Gaol Chaplain becomes their only schoolmaster; to suggest to Society that its duty to this wretched throng, foredoomed to crime and punishment, rightfully begins at some distance from the Police-office; and that the careless maintenance from year to year, in this capital city of the world, of a vast hopeless nursery of ignorance, misery, and vice: a breeding-place for the hulks and gaols: is horrible to contemplate."

"This attempt is being made in certain of the most obscure and squalid parts of the Metropolis; where rooms are opened at night, for the gratuitous instruction of all comers, children or adults, under the title of 'RAGGED SCHOOLS.' The name implies the purpose. They who are too ragged, wretched, filthy, and forlorn, to enter any other place: who could gain admission into no charity-school, and who would be driven from any church-door: are invited to come in here, and find some people not depraved, willing to teach them something, and show them some sympathy, and stretch out a hand, which is not the iron hand of Law, for their correction."

To these words of burning truth, we may add that this great work of reclaiming the Destitute Poor has now been in progress some three years and a half. The first systematic start was, however, made by a Society called "The Ragged School Union," formed in April, 1844, at a meeting of the teachers of various Schools, held at the St. Giles's Ragged School, Streatham-street, in Bloomsbury. During the first year, two hundred of these Schools were opened, the rent and other expences being paid, generally, by the teachers themselves; and, sometimes, by one or more benevolent individuals in the locality of the School. This was done by various denominations of Christians, without any concert or co-operation between the Schools; and the object of the Society is to create a Union between them, in order more fully and effectually to encourage such Institutions; and, by small pecuniary assistance, extend their usefulness, and increase their number.

At the head of this "generous band," is Lord Ashley, as Chairman of the General and Visiting Committee; and, according to the only Report yet printed, the twenty Ragged Schools then established showed an average attendance of nearly 2,000 children and 200 teachers: to one School, 5,783 had been admitted since its commencement; and there had been, during the winter, an average attendance of 250 children, of youths of both sexes, whose ages ranged from eight to sixteen years. In some cases, these Schools are only open on the Sabbath; but, mostly, on one or two week-day evenings as well. At the date of the above Report, the operations of the Society had been much cramped for want of funds; yet, with so small a sum as £61 9s. 6d., they had contributed towards the formation of several Schools.

We have selected one of the Society's Schools for illustration, that in Jurston-street, Oakley-street, Lambeth; a locality where the work of reclamation and prevention is much needed. The School is opened on Sunday evenings, at six o'clock; and the year's average attendance has



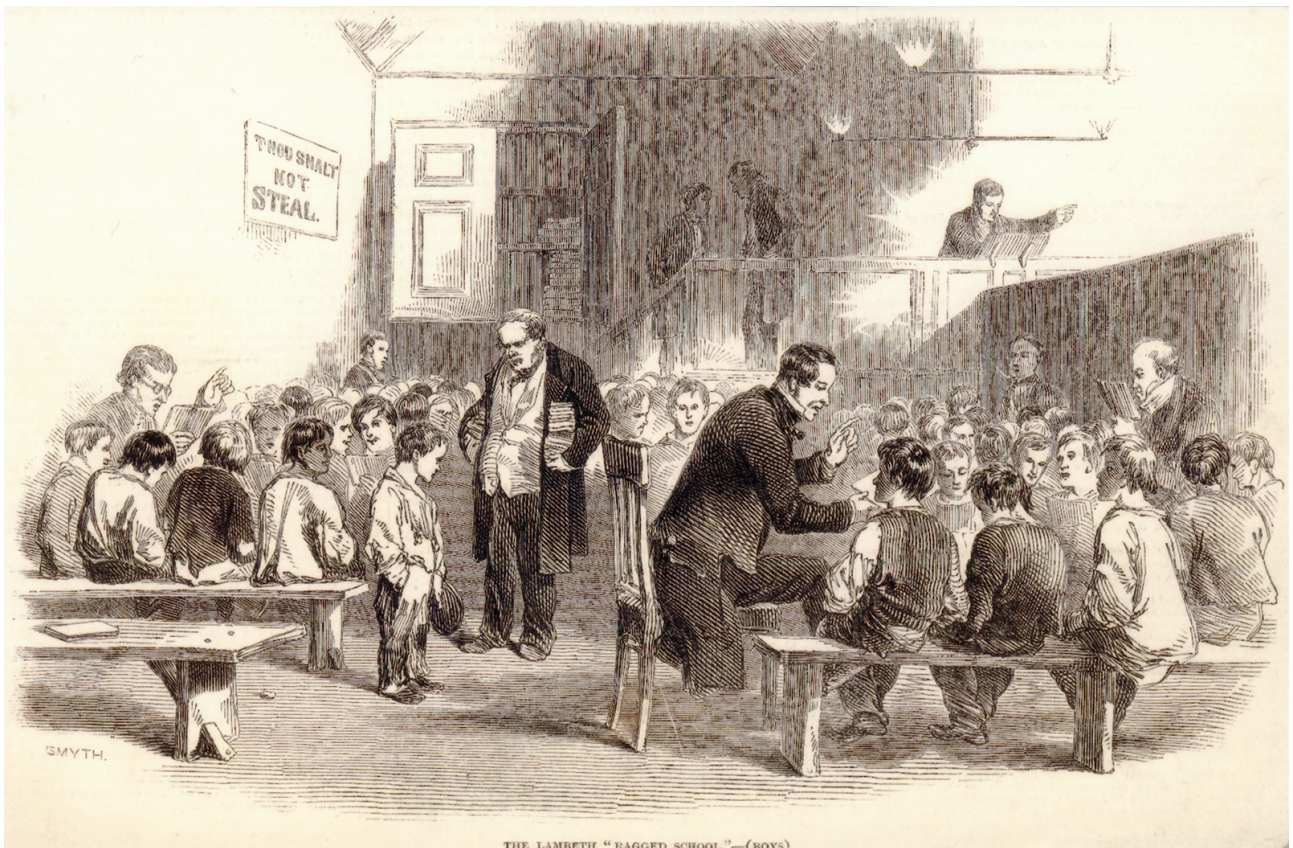
THE LAMBETH "RAGGED SCHOOL."—(GIRLS).

been 250 children and 25 teachers. Several distinguished individuals have already visited the Schools in operation; amongst others Lord Ashley, Lord Robert Grosvenor, Lord Sandon, Hon. W. F. Cowper, Charles Dickens, Esq., Lady Troubridge, and Lady Alicia Lambert.

Meanwhile, the system is rapidly extending; for, where so much good can be effected at such trifling cost, the result must be successful. We gather from a lecture recently delivered at the Literary and Scientific Institution in Aldersgate-street, by the Rev. Mr. Ainslie, that the sum of £300 was raised, in one day, at Epping to establish there a school of this description. At Windsor, a school on "the Ragged" principle, has been established by a poor chimney-sweep, "who," said Mr. Ainslie, "had himself been a bad and abandoned man, but who was reclaimed, and who now sat there, with his dirty face, teaching and doing more good than thousands of others of ten times his capacity." On Mr. Ainslie's visit to this School, there were upwards of 100 young persons present, from the age of eight to ten, boys and girls, all behaving with the greatest decorum, and tolerably well clothed—"for, educate the mind, and it immediately revolts at the body being clothed in rags."

The Lambeth Ragged Schools (Girls), interior scene (before the School was moved to the new building on Doughty Street). Engraving and article from the Illustrated London News, 11 April 1846.

Source: landmark.lambeth.gov.uk



THE LAMBETH "RAGGED SCHOOL."—(BOYS)

The Lambeth Ragged Schools (Boys), interior scene (before the School was moved to the new building on Doughty Street). Engraving by Smyth from the Illustrated London News, 1846.

Source: landmark.lambeth.gov.uk

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LAMBETH RAGGED SCHOOLS,

Doughty St., Lambeth Walk.

**THE
OPENING PUBLIC MEETING,**
WILL BE HELD
ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5TH, 1851.

The Building will be Open for inspection at 12 o'clock,
AND THE CHAIR TAKEN BY
THE RT. HON. LORD ASHLEY, M.P.
At 2 o'clock precisely.

Several Clergymen and Ministers of the District, with the Members for the Borough, and other Gentlemen, are expected to attend.

Admission by Ticket only, which may be obtained of the Honorary Secretary, Mr. FREDERIC DOULTON, High Street, Lambeth; at Pigott's Library, Kennington Common; of Nisbet & Co., Berners Street, Oxford Street; B. L. GREEN, 62, Paternoster Row; and at the Offices of the Ragged School Union, 15, Exeter Hall, Strand.

W. SYMONS, PRINTER, VAUXHALL.

Printed bill announcing the opening of the Lambeth Ragged School.
Source: Lambeth Archives, IV/71/67.



The Lambeth Ragged School.

Date and artist unknown. Source: www.vauxhallsociety.org.uk/LambethRag.html