

Case Name: Charter Street Ragged School and Girls' Home

Case Number: 1452335

Background

We have been asked to assess the Charter Street Mission for listing. The application was prompted by concerns that the building was about to close and might be vulnerable to developers, in an area of high land values.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	1461979	Charter Street Mission (formerly Charter Street Ragged School and Working Girls' Home)	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
15 January 2018	Partial inspection

Context

The building is not in a conservation area. It is mentioned in the Pevsner city guide for Manchester, as a rare surviving example of a purpose-built institution of this type, with a relatively intact plan.

In 1994 (after the Manchester review survey), the building was excluded from the listing recommendations taken forward. No internal inspection was made and the building was rejected on the grounds that it was not of enough interest historically or architecturally, and of late date for a ragged school, and too altered to be listed. At the time it compared unfavourably with the earlier and (then) less-altered Sharp Street Ragged School nearby, which was listed as a result of the same survey. A building with similar aims (the Derros building, a former Methodist female mission at number 29 Great Ancoats Street, National Heritage List for England 1119732) was also not listed in the 1994 survey, but in 1998 it was added to the List partly for its very important social history links, as a very early example of a women's refuge set up by Methodists and providing both short-term and longer-term housing. This was partly as a result of considerable research on the provision of social housing for women, changing our understanding of the historic interest of similar institutions. Substantial research on this building was also provided in the application, for which we are very grateful, and this also improved our understanding of its historical importance.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

Invitations to comment were sent to the owners, the applicant, the local authority, the Historic Environment Record (HER), Manchester Civic Society and the architectural historian who prepared a heritage assessment

of the building for the city council. A third party also contacted us after the consultation period, was sent a copy of the report and confirmed they had nothing to add to it.

The owners described the report as comprehensive. They had some comments on the listing process, which we responded to directly.

The architectural historian confirmed that the building has been altered but to a limited extent, and argued that this is outweighed by the rarity of the surviving in-situ fabric related to the girls' home and the school, and also by the outstanding social historical value.

The applicant commended the thorough description and full account of the social historical context for the building, but made no other comments.

The HER, prior to consultation, provided a copy of their entry which contained the information that Thomas Johnson was a pupil at Sharp Street Ragged School. They made no comments on the report.

No other comments were received.

The comments above have been taken into account in the detailed advice below and the revised proposed List entry.

DISCUSSION

The statutory criteria for a building being included on the List are that it holds special architectural or historic interest. The general principles the Secretary of State applies when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest are set out in the Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (November 2018). Where buildings illustrate important aspects of the nation's history the building itself in its current form must afford a strong connection with the valued aspect of history.

Further detailed guidance is published in Historic England's Selection Guides for specific building types. The Selection Guide for Education Buildings (December 2017) explains that after 1870, notwithstanding the high standards set by some Education Boards, regard should be given to the local context, and the sort of school that is being considered. The Selection Guide for Health and Welfare Buildings (December 2017) highlights that due to the breadth of provision, specific guidance on all types is not feasible, but general principles for similar buildings can be applied. Architectural interest, planning, and intactness (particularly external) will be crucial considerations.

Local context

This building has previously been considered largely as a very late ragged school, dating from well after the 1870 Education Act. However, it is now clear that both the 1892 extension to the original school and the 1900 replacement of the original building were driven largely by the desire to provide the working girls' home as well as continuing the other activities of the mission. The building also stands in what was throughout the C19 one of the poorest parts of Manchester and one of the worst examples of urban deprivation in the country. For a charitable institution in such an area, it is actually of good architectural quality; the designers (Maxwell and Tuke) are well-known for several much more grandiose buildings, notably Blackpool Tower, Lancashire. They also designed the girls' hostels at Port Sunlight, Wirral (now listed) in between their two phases here. The different styles employed in the two locations reflect the different contexts of an urban slum and a model village, and funding through donations rather than a single philanthropic owner.

Architectural interest

In this context, the detailing is of good quality, as would be expected of such an accomplished architectural practice. The earlier phase includes subtle details such as the slight setting back of the upper floors, as well as repeated embellishments such as terracotta sill-bands, stone sills, terracotta keystones and pedimented entrances. More obvious features of the design include the prominent Flemish and crow-stepped gables, projecting and ribbed chimney breast, and oriel windows, together with the prominence of the south-west corner which faces the city and is emphasised by the massing and the concentration of detailing here. The later phase to Dantzic Street is similar but more polite and employs more-expensive brickwork (header-bond and Flemish-bond), varying window heights, sill-and-lintel-bands, similar gables and chimneys, a decorative dedication plaque and stair-window, and a striking splayed entrance with elaborate terracotta detailing and decorative glazing. The extension on Aspin Lane also makes good use of detailing to integrate it with the earlier range despite the differing floor heights, and to delineate the caretaker's house.

Internally there are some good features for a building of this type. Principally these comprise the entrance foyer and the matron's suite to the working girls' home, but the tiled dados and fireplaces of the club rooms are also of interest. The survival of other more utilitarian features is also notable, including the coal hoist, cooking range, simple schoolroom partitions, gaslight fittings and especially the surviving cubicles on the top floor of the Dantzic Street range, which are extremely rare; similar examples in the Ada Lewis Women's Lodging House have been removed (with listed building consent), presumably because en masse they were a barrier to viable reuse.

Planning

The constraints of the site and needing to remain operational dictated the two-phase approach. The earlier phase contained the principal elements of the girls' home; their dormitory and sitting room, together with vital hall space for schooling, feeding and reaching the needy in the community. The second building provided new work rooms, a laundry, kitchen, additional cubicles and bathrooms, and a large playroom. The matron's suite, caretaker's house and master's office are also of this phase, and it also allowed for a new principal entrance for the girls' home. New men's and lads' club rooms were also added, and kept discrete from the other facilities. The resulting layout does include some complicated access pathways, but overall the arrangement of working girls' home, school and other charitable activities, around the central courtyard containing the nursery, allowed for reasonable (mostly vertical) separation of the different user-groups as well as sensible sharing of infrastructure like kitchens.

Intactness

The degree of survival is relatively good. The plan-form is largely intact from completion of the 1900 second phase. Externally, the most significant change is the removal of the chimney stacks. While the loss of their vertical proportions is unfortunate, a surviving drawing shows that the extant building reflects their design, which was simply a continuation of the chimney-breast treatment with a cornice at the top. Most of the windows are original, and the original roof of the nursery is thought to survive beneath the later felt. While in the dormitory on Aspin Lane the cubicles are no longer present and a small foyer has been inserted, most of the principal spaces survive and remain legible, albeit with some partitioning. Some cubicles and bathroom fittings survive in the Dantzic Street range, and the survival of other historic fixtures is surprisingly good. This degree of survival makes the building strongly evocative of its period and purpose, which is particularly enhanced by the continued use for charitable purposes, by the trust which built it over a century ago.

Historic interest

Although most ragged schools were built well before 1870, this building served a much broader charitable mission. The information available shows that the main impetus behind the extension and replacement buildings of the last decade of the C19 was the provision of safe lodging for working girls. Although institutions with complementary aims had been provided from considerably earlier, they were mostly focussed on alleviating destitution and catered for men or for rescuing 'fallen' women. Municipal provision did occur from the mid-C19 but this appears to have been small-scale and still rare when the Charter Street mission was built. Interestingly, the first large-scale municipal provision of lodging for single working women occurred less than 150m from the Charter Street mission, but not until 1910. How to provide suitable housing for working girls and young women continued to be a difficult question well into the C20.

In London, private or charitable provision commenced in earnest in the last quarter of the C19, but there is only one known surviving purpose-built pre-1900 example (not listed) and few of the converted buildings survive. These metropolitan projects offered a different kind of provision from that seen in the early-C19. This did not seek to place the girls in homes as servants, or to prepare them for emigration, but instead sought to provide the infrastructure necessary to allow the girls to live as useful independent members of society without being dragged down by the squalor of alternative lodgings. The Charter Street mission was acknowledged at the time to be the first of this kind in Manchester, the largest city outside London. It predates the Derros building set up for similar purposes by the Methodists. It also predates the women's lodging houses established by the social reformer Mary Higgs, and is an early purpose-built example nationally, as well as now being a rare example with good survival. The social interest of the provision for women in particular is still under-recognised. This is a good example of an architectural response to a very real need.

Group value

The proximity to and visual relationship with Ashton House, England's first large-scale municipal provision of lodging for single working women, is particularly resonant. Very close together, and in an area which is still dominated by the C19 railway viaduct and retains a setted surface to Aspin Lane, are two buildings which represent some of the earliest philanthropic and public sector solutions to the emergence of women as independent workers in our large cities. Just across St Michael's churchyard but connected with the mission through over 100 years of complementary activity in the same area, and considered a sister organisation by the Charter Street trust is Sharp Street Ragged School (long-time master at Charter Street, Thomas

Johnson, had been a pupil at Sharp Street). Slightly further distant (half a mile away), but very strongly connected as a contemporaneous building with very closely-aligned purposes and sharing some of the internal planning solutions, is the Methodist female mission at the Derros building (29 Great Ancoats Street). This grouping of institutions, all within a 15 minute walk through the former industrial heart of Manchester, reinforces the historic interest of each, and their different architectural treatments reflect their diverse private and public sector origins.

Bearing in mind the context in which it was built, and its purpose, the overall architectural quality of the building is good, and a worthy example of Maxwell and Tuke's output. The survival of planform and features is sufficient to illuminate the high historic interest of the working girls' home in particular, and this is enhanced by the close proximity to Ashton House and Sharp Street Ragged School, and relative proximity to the Derros building. In these circumstances a recommendation to add the building to the List at Grade II is fully justified.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are not.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the available records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled. The Charter Street Mission is therefore recommended for listing at Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Charter Street Mission, which stands on Dantzig Street and Aspin Lane, is recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest:

- * as a rare and relatively early example of social welfare provision of girls' accommodation, unusually combined with a ragged school;
- * for its good design quality as a charitable institution in a deprived area of international notoriety, with varied massing and decorative detailing;
- * for the good survival of planform and features of note relating to the welfare use including timber cubicles, kitchen range, fireplaces, floor and wall finishes.

Historic interest:

- * as a physical reminder of the very real need to safely accommodate working girls and young women in industrial cities during the late-C19 and early-C20, and the extensive efforts made to meet this need;
- * associated with Sir William John Crossley (Bart), a notable industrialist and philanthropist, who paid for the site of the 1892 phase and chaired the building committee;
- * designed by notable architects Maxwell and Tuke, authors of several listed buildings including Blackpool Tower, Lancashire (Grade I) and four girls' hostels at Port Sunlight, Wirral (Grade II);
- * in the continuity of welfare use and charitable ownership since the 1860s.

Group value:

- * with the nearby Ashton House (Grade II), Sharp Street Ragged School (Grade II), and the former Methodist female mission at 29 Great Ancoats Street (Grade II).

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. This is an important building in a national context being a rare and early purpose-built and good surviving example of a home for working women, unusually here combined with a ragged school. It has strong claims to both historic and architectural special interest, as set out in our advice (of particular note is that the survival of cubicles in women's lodgings as here is very rare nationally), and also possesses clear group value claims with other nearby examples of welfare provision in what was a very deprived part of Manchester in the C19. We therefore recommend that this important building should be listed at Grade II.

V Fiorato
9 May 2019

Annex 1**List Entry****List Entry Summary**

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Charter Street Mission (formerly Charter Street Ragged School and Working Girls' Home)

List Entry Number: 1461979

Location

142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
	Manchester	Metropolitan Authority	Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed:

Date of most recent amendment:

Legacy System Information

This section only relates to older records, created before the introduction of the National Heritage List for England in 2011.

Legacy System: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy Number: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description**Summary of Building**

A working girls' home, ragged school and mission hall of 1892 and 1900 by Maxwell and Tuke, comprising a three-and-four-storey trapezoidal courtyard-plan building of red brick with slate roofs.

Reasons for Designation

The Charter Street Mission, a working girls' home, ragged school and mission hall of 1892 and 1900, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest:

- * as a rare and relatively early example of social welfare provision of girls' accommodation, unusually combined with a ragged school;
- * for its good design quality as a charitable institution in a deprived area of international notoriety, with varied massing and decorative detailing;
- * for the good survival of planform and features of note relating to the welfare use including timber cubicles, kitchen range, fireplaces, floor and wall finishes.

Historic interest:

- * as a physical reminder of the very real need to safely accommodate working girls and young women in industrial cities during the late-C19 and early-C20, and the extensive efforts made to meet this need;
- * associated with Sir William John Crossley (Bart), a notable industrialist and philanthropist, who paid for the site of the 1892 phase and chaired the building committee;
- * designed by notable architects Maxwell and Tuke, authors of several listed buildings including Blackpool Tower, Lancashire (Grade I) and four girls' hostels at Port Sunlight, Wirral (Grade II);
- * in the continuity of welfare use and charitable ownership since the 1860s.

Group value:

- * with the nearby Ashton House (Grade II), Sharp Street Ragged School (Grade II), and the former Methodist female mission at 29 Great Ancoats Street (Grade II).

History

At the beginning of the C19 many children from the poorest districts did not have access to education. 'Ragged schools' provided not only education but also clothing and food for the children. They often emerged from Sunday schools or were funded from public subscriptions, and run by local teachers. Many ragged schools were taken over or rendered unnecessary by the schools established after the 1870 Education Act (the Times estimated that 36,000 children were affected by closures). However, many more continued to provide educational and other functions, acting as Christian missions. These functions sometimes included boys' and men's clubs, accommodation, and penny banks. Nationally only five pauper or ragged schools are listed (National Heritage List for England 1036250, 1041455, 1065752, 1246292 and 1254650, the last being Sharp Street Ragged School, a near-neighbour and sister organisation to Charter Street).

Manchester's population more than doubled between 1821 and 1851 and in the central area continued to rise into the 1870s. In the 1840s Angel Meadow was described by visitors and social commentators, including Friedrich Engels, as the very worst of industrial Manchester's slums. Its population of 20,000 to 30,000 included many refugees from the Irish potato famine. They shared the 33-acre area with iron and chemical works as well as cotton mills and the enormous burial ground of St Michael's church, where over 40,000 paupers were interred.

A school was first built on this site in 1866, replacing a timber yard. This was the new home for the Nelson Street Ragged School, renamed (from the Angel Meadow Ragged School, as it was established in 1861) after its first home in the former temperance hall on Nelson Street (which coincidentally had also been used by the Manchester Juvenile Refuge and School of Industry from 1847 to 1851, before becoming a dancing saloon with a reputation for immoral behaviour).

The mission appears to have continued to fulfil a desperate need after 1870. A study of Preston showed that in each of the censuses from 1851 to 1881, approximately 10 per cent of its total population were female migrants between 15 and 30 years old who had not travelled with their parents. There, they were mainly engaged in domestic work eschewed by local girls in favour of factory work, and Manchester must have offered more of both kinds of employment, and been home to large numbers of itinerant females. By the late 1880s an alternative was needed to what the school's annual report called 'the contaminating influence of the common lodging house' on girls in low-paid work such as domestic service.

An extension committee was chaired by William Crossley, who bought the necessary land for £1,650 and presented it to the school. From April 1892, to the south of the 1866 school, a three-storey block fronting Aspin Lane (then called Ashley Lane) provided safe and affordable lodgings for working girls, as well as a large mixed school, cooking and dining for day-school children, a mission hall and men's and boys' clubs. A nursery for infants of working mothers filled the space between the old and new buildings at the level of the semi-basement of the 1866 building, with a glazed roof. This with its access, yard and toilet block occupied

the site of the former Bone Street and its blind-back houses, and four back-to-back houses and associated buildings at Leaf Court.

Despite the 1892 building providing for approximately 1,200 pupils, 500 infants and 40 to 50 resident girls, further extension was needed to properly fulfil the planned mission. Plans were already prepared by 1896, but these were superseded in 1898, with the official opening in July 1900. The 1866 building was completely replaced, with part of its site being used to widen Dantzic Street (then called Charter Street) and the rest for a replacement building to the north-west of the nursery, partly funded by compensation for the road widening. Another extension to the north-east of the 1892 building replaced some cottages. These extensions were primarily for the girls' home and included work rooms, a laundry, kitchen, additional cubicles and bathrooms, and a large playroom. The men's and lads' club rooms, matron's suite, caretaker's house and master's office are also of this phase.

The plan-form of the building is little-altered and although some historic features have been lost, many remain. The glazed roof to the nursery has been covered and a false ceiling inserted. Modern kitchen fittings have been installed in the work rooms and the infants' yard infilled. Glazed dado tiles in the clubrooms have been over-painted. The laundry has been subdivided with partitions. The majority of the cubicles have been removed although some remain; the survival of these in buildings of this type is now very rare. The chimneypiece has been removed in the girls' sitting room, and the playroom added in 1900 has been altered to provide classrooms. Externally, the channelled chimney stacks have been truncated, ventilators removed and some of the windows have been replaced. The building is still (2019) in use by its founders.

HOSTELS AND REFUGES FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Early industrialists, especially in rural areas, sometimes provided accommodation for their workforce (later industrial villages such as Saltaire and Port Sunlight continued this practice). In towns this was less common and as rapid urbanisation increased from the mid-C19, many relied on crowded lodgings or had no proper home.

Many complementary institutions addressed these problems. Some targeted the destitute and homeless, others orphans, and some were gender-specific. Some offered shelter as part of training for work, or while children were prepared for emigration. The National Refuge for Homeless and Destitute Children was established by the (London) Ragged School Union in 1852. Although most hostels and refuges were for men and boys, charitable institutions viewed women and girls as particularly vulnerable to abuse and loss of character. In London these included the home at Urania Cottage, founded in 1847 by Charles Dickens (with funding from Angela Burdett-Coutts, 'the Queen of the poor'). This was a home which aimed to rehabilitate women who had fallen into crime. The only institution with similar aims found on the List nationally is the Village Home for Destitute Girls operated by Dr Barnardo (London Borough of Redbridge; the cottage homes themselves, of 1879, 1887 and 1903, all listed at Grade II under NHLE 1393777). Field Lane Ragged School (also supported by Dickens and Burdett-Coutts) opened a night refuge for women and girls in 1857, and this later also gave training in domestic service.

From the third quarter of the C19 charitable and commercial institutions arose which, by providing suitable housing for poorly-paid women, aimed to prevent the benefits of working from being undone by the negative effects of ordinary lodgings. Burdett-Coutts co-founded, in 1879, a home for female art students. In 1880 Maude Stanley founded the Soho Club for Girls, and in 1883 built premises on Greek Street which included a home for working girls. Other London institutions included the Homes For Working Girls in London (HWGL, founded 1878), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA, founded 1855), the Girls' Friendly Society (GFS, founded 1875), the Girls' Club Union (GCU, founded 1880) and the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants (MABYS, founded around 1875). However, most of the hostels run by these societies were relatively small and few were purpose-built. Only one hostel purpose-built by these societies is listed; the St Mungo's GFS (Grade II NHLE 1392546). This was not built until 1914.

St Mungo's did not cater for the very poor, but for women in jobs such as clerical work – by then a significant proportion of the workforce. From the turn of the C20 this growing sector led to targeted provision, although the Ada Lewis Women's Lodging House of 1912 (Grade II NHLE 1391567) was the first large-scale hostel in London aimed at these more respectable clients. Municipal provision was patchy. Glasgow provided a hostel with 125 beds in 1872, enlarged to 248 beds by 1894. In England, Huddersfield provided lodgings for single women from the mid-C19. However, although the London County Council had been attempting since 1897 to provide large-scale municipal housing for low-paid women, Manchester succeeded first, in 1910 at Ashton House (Grade II NHLE 1197764), less than 150m from the Charter Street home.

Writing about the proposed Charter Street home, the Manchester Guardian of 20 April 1892 recorded that, 'Nothing of this kind has yet been started in the city, but its uses are too obvious to need enlarging on.'

Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges had been founded in 1870 but its female provision was training-based, begun at Heathfield on Broughton Lane, training and placing 10-15 year olds in laundry and housework (opened 1878). Their Rosen Hallas emigration home operated from 1886, and their School Girls' home of 1882 was for under-10s (mostly orphans) and was so-named because it was funded by school girls of Lancashire and Cheshire. None of these was purpose-built, and all have been demolished. Only one surviving institution similar to the Charter Street home is currently known in Manchester. This is the former Methodist female mission at number 29 Great Ancoats Street, also known as the Derros building (Grade II NHLE 1119732). Aimed principally at domestic servants this provided emergency and more permanent accommodation, but was not built until 1899. A similar men's mission on Murray Street (converted in 2015) was not opened until 1903. Noted campaigner Mary Higgs' women's refuge and women's lodging houses in Oldham (location unknown) were not established until 1899 and later.

THE BENEFACTOR

Sir William John Crossley, first baronet (1844–1911), ran an engineering business in Manchester with his brother, Frank. From 1869 they manufactured internal combustion engines for a wide variety of industrial purposes, selling over 25,000 in 1897. Like his brother, William was unsparing in his efforts to be of service to the community. He was chairman of the Manchester Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Throat and the Crossley Sanatorium, which he founded at Delamere in Cheshire. He also became chairman of the Boys' and Girls' Refuges at Strangeways, president of the Young Men's Christian Association, and founder of the Crossley Lads' Club in Openshaw.

THE ARCHITECTS

James Maxwell (1838-1893) and William Charles Tuke (1843-1893) worked together from 1865 and formed a practice in 1867. Their competition-winning design for Cambridge Hall in Southport (1874, Grade II NHLE 1379674) led to the commission for Southport's Winter Gardens and also in Southport they designed the United Methodist Church with Sunday School (1879, Grade II NHLE 1379581). The firm were also architects and agents for the St Annes on Sea Land and Building Company, and designed the layout of the resort in the late 1870s. In the late 1880s James's second son Francis William Maxwell (Frank) (1863-1941) joined the practice. They went on to design the Grade I Tower Buildings at Blackpool (1891 to 1894, NHLE 1205810) and the even taller tower at New Brighton, Wirral (1900, demolished). Other works include four girls' hostels at Port Sunlight for Lord Leverhulme (Grade II NHLE 1184302), buildings of a similar type which were designed in 1896, between the firm's two phases at Charter Street.

Details

Working girls' home, ragged school and mission hall, 1892 and 1900, by Maxwell and Tuke.

MATERIALS: red brick with slate roofs, reinforced concrete floors.

PLAN: trapezoidal, ranged around a central courtyard which is infilled at ground level.

EXTERIOR: standing on a highly-visible corner site, adjacent to a railway viaduct.

The Dantzig Street frontage faces north-west and is of 1900, with three storeys laid in header-bond common bricks, and Flemish-bond fair-faced brick for the (slightly-recessed) upper floor, below the ground-floor sill level, in a two-course first-floor sill-band, a ground-floor four-course lintel-band, and the chimney breast. The angles are also quoined in fair-faced brick. The main frontage is four bays wide, each bay having paired windows, and the right-hand bay wider and also incorporating a corner entrance. The left-hand bay is under a shouldered gable with stone copings. The right hand bay has a larger, Flemish gable with truncated central chimney breast. Between the gables, the eaves project with a cast-iron ogee gutter, and central downpipe which is respected by the moulded terracotta sill-bands of the upper two floors. The roof ridge has crested tiles, a flagpole and a small, brick ventilator tower.

To the left of this frontage is a low, single-storey infill of modern brick, blind and with a monopitch corrugated metal roof. Set back at the left above this and largely in English Garden Wall bond common brickwork is a lavatory tower. This is separate from the main frontage, but with a part-glazed link set back at the top floor. To Dantzig Street this has a hipped roof, top-floor window with segmental arch and stone sill, inserted windows and grilles at lower floors and a blocked doorway at ground floor. Its right return has segmental-arched windows with stone sills to the upper three floors. The left return of the main frontage is in header bond and has short returns of the terracotta bands.

Bay 1 (from the left) of the main frontage has a taking-in door at first floor, and the upper windows are taller than bays 2 and 3. At second floor, bay 3 is blind with a terracotta dedication plaque with a broken

semi-circular pediment, and the inscription, THIS STONE/ WAS LAID BY/ THOMAS JOHNSON/ ON THE EXTENSION/ OF THE/ WORKING GIRLS'/ HOME/ DEC 17TH 1898 (Thomas Johnson, who had been a pupil at Sharp Street Ragged School, was the master and driving force of the institution for many years). Below the sill-band is the reset date plaque of the original building, which bears the date OCTOBER 6TH 1866, and the inscription in the upper and lower margins, THIS STONE RELAID 17TH DECEMBER 1898/ BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EVELYN ASHLEY.P.C. Bay 4 has taller top-floor windows flanking the chimney breast, which is corbelled and rises from the first floor. Within the gable the chimney breast has four projecting vertical ribs. To the left of the chimney breast and breaking the second-floor sill-band is a terracotta oval oculus stair-light with stepped circumference and swan-neck pediment. The first and second floors of bay 4 are otherwise blind.

The ground-floor windows have terracotta sills and interlocking-block terracotta lintels. First-floor sills are terracotta, with segmental brick soldier heads, the upper course projecting. The second floor has segmental gauged-brick heads with terracotta console keystones, and projecting aprons below the sill-band. The upper floor windows have segmental gauged-brick arches. The timber windows are vertical-hung casements, mostly paired and with transoms and upper glazing bars.

The right-hand corner entrance is splayed with a terracotta surround, now painted (blue in 2018). Above the lintel is a relief strapwork panel with barley-twist margins and a cornice above, with swan-neck scrolls flanked by pinnacles. Above this the brick splay has a large semi-circular, three-stage corbel, supporting a pyramidal soffit to the angle of the upper floors. The strapwork panel is inscribed, WORKING GIRLS HOME. The entrance has panelled timber double doors, and an overlight with glazing bars and leaded glass surrounding a central strip of glass bulls' eyes.

Returning to the right, the Little Nelson Street frontage is in two parts. At the left and angling away to the left is bay 1, with the corner entrance at the left. This is similarly-detailed to the abutting Dantzie Street frontage, but with the single window and stair-window at ground floor having segmental brick soldier heads, the single first-floor window having a console keystone like the three second-floor windows, and the two upper-floor windows immediately below the eaves, with no heads. The first-floor window has also been replaced in brown pvc.

To the right and angling away to the right is a six-bay frontage, in English Garden Wall bond. The four left-hand bays (bays 2 to 5 overall) are under projecting eaves with a cast-iron gutter, and have moulded terracotta sill-bands to the first, second and third floors. Each floor is slightly set back from the one below. The roof has crested ridge-tiles and a lead ventilator cap. Bays 2 to 4 each have one narrow window at each of the four floors, with stone sills to the ground floor, and flat gauged-brick heads with terracotta keystones to the ground, first and second floors. Ground-and-first-floor windows are pvc replacements. Bay 5 is wider, with paired entrances under stacked three-light windows, the middle two floors having segmental brick arches with terracotta keystones.

The two symmetrical right-hand bays (6 and 7) are under a large Flemish gable with crow-steps. The bays are separated by a full-height projecting chimney breast, truncated at the top of the gable. These bays are of three tall storeys, each with two windows at ground and first floor, and a timber three-light canted oriel at second floor. The two upper floors have moulded terracotta sill-bands, and are slightly set-back from the ground floor. The chimney breast has a stone panel at first-floor level, inscribed [MISSING] RAGGED SCHOOL/ & WORKING/ GIRLS HOME., and above this are three projecting vertical ribs.

Returning to the right, the Aspin Lane frontage is also in two parts. At the left are six bays of three storeys, separated by sill-bands. The left-hand bay has a crow-stepped gable with terracotta 1891 datestone and copings. The pedimented entrance is at the left with a pair of windows to its right. Above are a first-floor pair, and second-floor timber canted three-light oriel. Bays 2 to 5 are identical, with paired windows to each floor. Bay 6 has another pedimented entrance, with single windows above. Bays 2 to 6 are under projecting eaves, with cast-iron rainwater goods, crested ridge tiles and lead ventilator cap. The upper windows are directly under the eaves. All the ground-floor windows have stone sills, and all windows at ground and first floor have flat gauged-brick heads with terracotta keystones.

To the right is a three-bay extension under a wide, crow-stepped gable, in header-bond brickwork except for fair-faced brick in Flemish bond below ground-floor sill level, and in sill-bands at second and third floors, plus a third-floor transom-band. The eaves-line of the earlier part is continued by a moulded terracotta band. The upper two floors each have three windows, closer-spaced in the gable, with segmental header-brick arches. The ground and first floor each have three-light windows in bay 7 (lighting the club rooms), with segmental header-brick arches. Bay 8 has two toilet windows at ground floor and a two-light stair window above, under a moulded terracotta band which continues on the far side of the adjacent bay's first-floor window. Bay 8 (the

caretaker's house) is framed by pilasters, rising to a terracotta band and cornice above the first floor. The windows at ground and first floor each have four lights with two mullions and a transom with smaller panes above, and a segmental arch to the first floor. All windows have stone sills.

Returning to the right, the north wall comprises: a four-bay, four storey section under a duo-pitched roof with crested ridge; a blind four-storey wall set back on the ridge line of the four-bay section; and the largely-blind north wall of the lavatory tower, set back again but with some modern infill in the angle at ground floor. The four-bay section is in header-bond brick. The two upper floors are slightly wider than the lower two, with brick corbelling, and each has four windows with stone sills. The first floor has a single-light window over the caretaker's house entrance, and the entrance has a window to its right. The lavatory tower has two stair windows.

The interior courtyard walls have (above the hipped roof of the infants' room) timber windows with simple stone sills and segmental heads. The east wall of the Dantzig Street range is clad in white glazed tiles to reflect light, and has two truncated chimney stacks rising from the eaves. The projecting coal-hoist tower also pierces the eaves.

INTERIOR: the plan-form and principal spaces survive well, albeit with some minor subdivision and removal of historic partitions. Original joinery such as panelled doors and skirting also survives well throughout, and there are some remains of the gas lighting system. The 1892 phase on Aspin Lane has original entrance doors, cupboard and glazed partitions at the foot of the stairs. The mission hall has a coffered ceiling and retains its stage with balustrade (missing some balusters). The school hall has moulded joinery around the ceiling beams, and the original librarian's office. Some boys' classrooms retain their timber and glazed partitions and the associated toilet cubicles with plank doors. The girls' living spaces remain, including the timber stairs from the first floor (with a suspended gas light), the sitting room with its three large bay windows, and the dormitory with its exposed roof structure, although the cubicles have been removed and a small foyer inserted at the northern end. The infants' room in the courtyard retains its roof structure although this is externally covered and has a suspended ceiling below it. The office on Little Nelson Street retains its vaulted brick ceiling, and there is an original chimneypiece.

In the northern extension the girls' playroom has some partitioning for the current school use. Within the 1892 building, the timber stair of 1900 from the dormitory up to the playroom survives with some alteration. The classrooms below the playroom survive but have lost their chimneypieces. The club rooms retain dados and chimneypieces in glazed tiles.

The western extension workrooms now have modern kitchen fittings. The former kitchen (partly within the 1892 building) retains a cast-iron range in its 1900 extension. The laundry room has tiled walls, with modern partitioning. The main girls' home entrance has panelled doors, a floor mosaic, and timber partition with leaded and coloured glass. The mosaic floor continues beyond the partition into the stairwell, where the timber matron's stair survives, with simple stick balusters but an elegant curving rail. The matron's accommodation is largely intact, with panelled doors, chimneypieces, fireplaces and decorative plasterwork. The upper floors retain herringbone wooden block flooring, and some of the bathroom and lavatory cubicles (one retaining a cast-iron bath). The coal hoist is also in situ, with its winding gear.

The basement and caretaker's house were not inspected (2018).

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