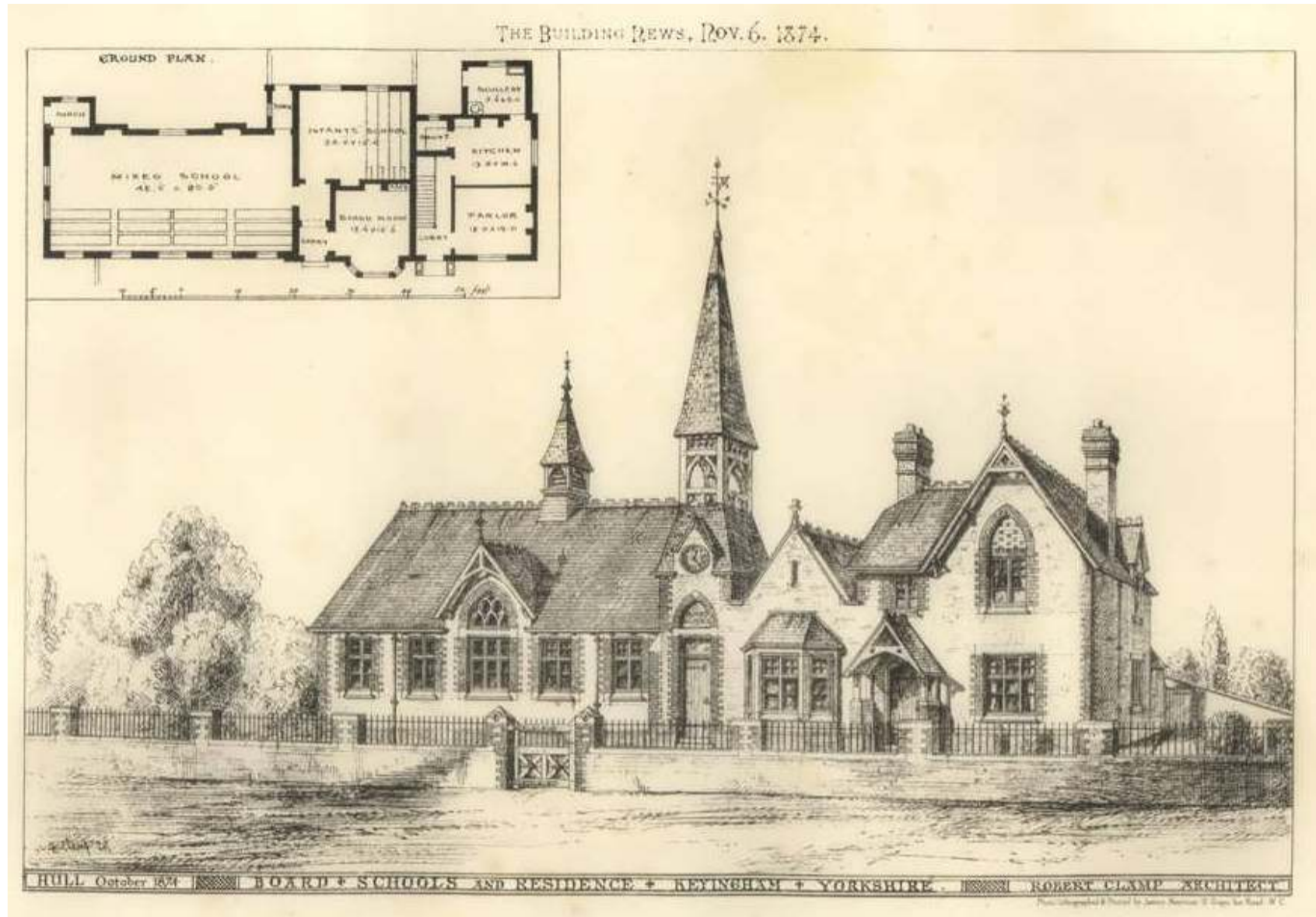


ROBERT CLAMP



Robert Clamp's designs for the Keyingham Board School, from *The Building News*, November 6th, 1874.

Robert Clamp was born on the 21st January 1834 to Charles and Sophia Clamp in the parish of St Ann, Blackfriars, in the City of London, where he was baptised on the 26th February¹. The 1841 census shows that his father was a clerk (aged 40), with Sophia nine years his junior. He had an older brother, Charles (9) and three younger siblings, Sophia (6), John (3) and James (1)².

That is all I know of his life until the 24th January 1859, when he married Maria Elizabeth Hall in Doncaster. He was twenty-five, she about twenty-two, originally from York.

I have so far been unable to find them in the 1861 census, but I know from the 1871³ census that they were then living at Gloucester Terrace in Sculcoates, Hull, with their three children, Robert Hall Clamp (11), Florence Maria Clamp (9) and Charles James Clamp (7). Interestingly Robert junior was listed as being born in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, with Florence in Hull⁴ and Charles in Peckham⁵ - his baptism at St Giles', Camberwell, being recorded on the 17th November 1864.

The 1864 baptism register listed Robert Clamp's profession as 'Surveyor', but by 1871 in Hull he is listed as an architect in the census and indeed in 1870 he was working on plans for the Cam Institute in Dursley, Gloucestershire, several newspapers in that area noting that his office was in Hull⁶.

A couple of years later he was evidently branching out on his own as he advertised his services as 'late and several years principal assistant with Mr Botterill', now operating from offices at 11 Bowlally Lane, Hull⁷. He worked on numerous projects in the area, including a new brewery at Beverley in 1873⁸; a 'Malt Kiln and 4-storey warehouse building at Brough Station⁹'; the erection of 'schools and teachers' residence, board room and offices, for the Keyingham School Board in 1874¹⁰; the construction of an Oil Mill and Refinery facing the River Hull for Messrs Willows and Holt also in 1874¹¹; houses at Sutton, East Yorkshire in 1876¹² and at Cottingham¹³ and Preston In Holderness in 1877¹⁴; new warehouses and offices in the High Street of Hull in April 1877¹⁵; the Board School at St John's Wood, Hull in November 1877¹⁶; and a new Vicarage and outbuildings at Kevingham in July 1878¹⁷.

¹ St Ann's parish baptism register, LMA P69/ANN/A/01/Ms 4508/3

² TNA HO107/1060/3/11/53

³ TNA RG10/4783/32/14

⁴ Baptised on the 30th October 1861

⁵ LMA P73/GLS/011

⁶ Bristol Mercury (page 5), Gloucestershire Chronicle (page 1) and Stroud Journal (page 1), Saturday 20th August 1870 – Working on the Cam Institute, in Dursley, Gloucestershire, 'close to the Cam Station on the Dursley Branch of the Midland Railway' – Tenders to Robert Clamp, Architect, Hull.

⁷ Eastern Morning News, Tuesday 9th July 1872, page 4

⁸ Beverley & East Riding Recorder, Saturday 17th May 1873, page 2 – Advertisement for tenders for the erection of a new Malt Kiln and Warehouse, adjoining the railway station at Beverley for William Glossop.

⁹ Hull Packet, Friday 11th July 1873, page 4

¹⁰ Hull Packet, Friday 20th February 1874, page 4

¹¹ Hull Packet, Friday 13th March 1874, page 4

¹² Hull Packet, Friday 3rd March 1876, page 4

¹³ Hull Packet, Friday 5th January 1877, page 4 – his offices then being at 20 Scale Lane, Hull

¹⁴ Eastern Morning News, Thursday 15th March 1877, page 1

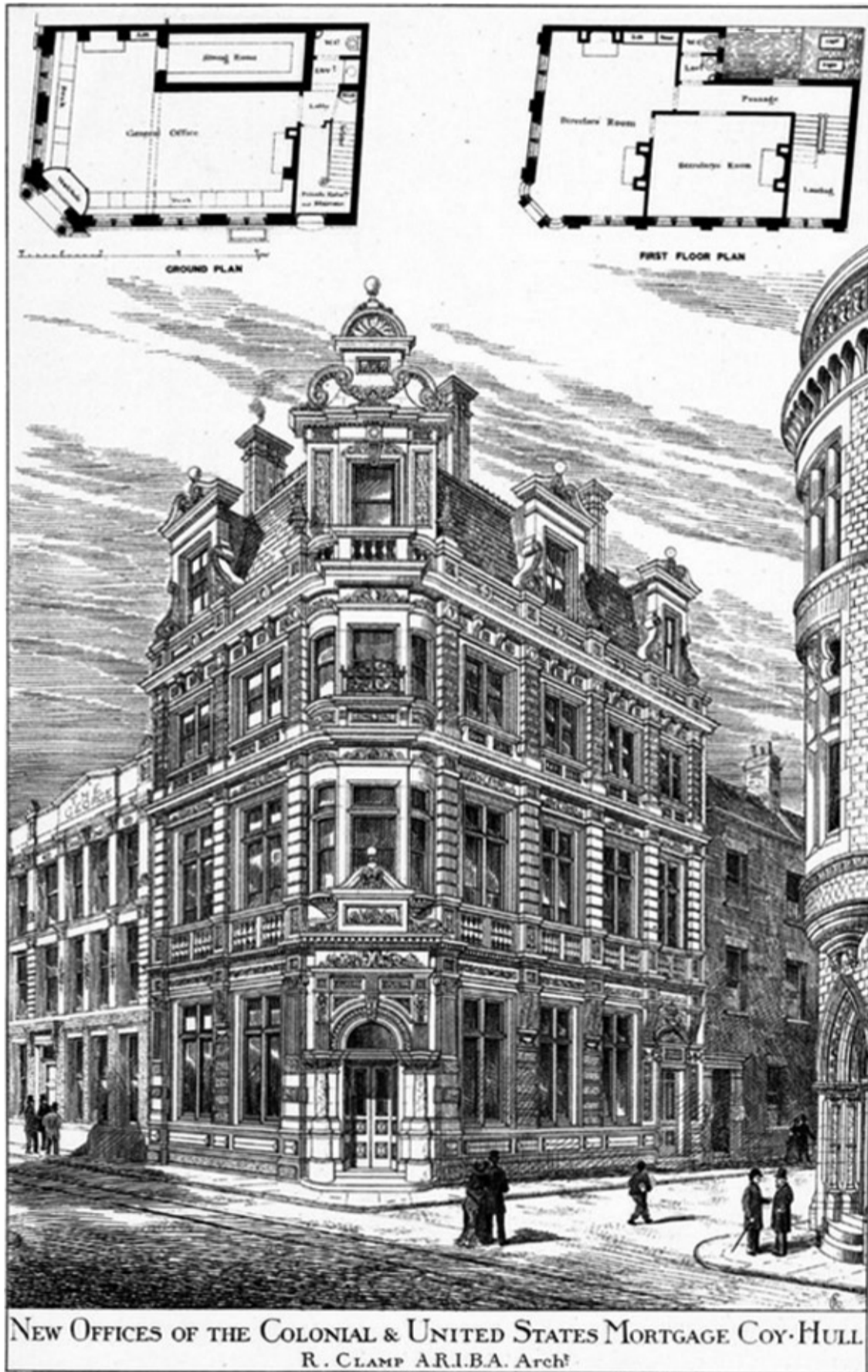
¹⁵ Eastern Morning News, Tuesday 17th April 1877, page 1

¹⁶ Eastern Morning News, Tuesday 6th November 1877, page 1 – for the Cottingham School Board for 300 children in Londesborough Street, St John's End, Hull

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Tragically his wife, Maria Elizabeth, died on the 16th September 1878 aged just 41¹⁸, but Robert continued to work in Hull, moving his offices in December 1880 from Scale Lane in the city to Isabel Chambers, Chapel Lane¹⁹, and moving house to Heaton Villas in Withernsea (on the coast to the east of Hull) where the 1881 census records him living with a housekeeper (Agnes Drummond, 37) and his eight year old daughter, Helen Maude²⁰.

In 1881 he was working on the construction of a new Mineral Water factory for a Mr Driskall in Blackfriargate, Hull²¹, but the following year he was apparently the agent to the Guardian (Fire & Life) Company in Hull, at the wonderfully named '5, Land of Green Ginger'²², from where he was working in June 1884 when he advertised for tenders for the 'erection of a cemetery chapel and mortuary, and also a lodge with entrance gates and palisading, at the new cemetery in the township of Scunthorpe, in the parish of Frodingham, in the county of Lincoln'²³.



By then he had met and married twenty-seven year old Janet Francis Norris on the 13th July 1883 at Hull Registry Office, with whom he had a two children, Julia Frances (born 24th January 1887) and Paul Vernon (born 27th July 1889).

It was during this period that Robert worked on one of his best known buildings, the offices of the Colonial and United States Mortgage Co Ltd in Hull in 1886²⁴ (now a Grade II listed building) - with the Salisbury Club in the city begun in November the following year²⁵.

Soon after, however, 'unhappiness was caused' by his wife 'staying out at night'. That was according to the Hull Daily Mail from the 13th December 1893, which went on to report that Robert Clamp, then 'decided to leave Hull and moved to Woking, but his wife was constantly coming up to London and eventually they separated, petitioner (Robert Clamp) allowing his wife 20s., a week, in addition to paying for her lodgings. This continued down to June 1891, when her husband received information that his wife had been guilty of adultery with the co-respondent' (a man named Robert Simpson).

It appears from the divorce papers that the 'information' in June 1891 was that three months earlier his wife had given birth to the child of Robert Simpson. Clamp immediately stopped the allowance and filed a petition for divorce, which was granted in December 1893²⁶.

He was evidently in Woking by October 1889²⁷, when he was building a pair of cottages on Walton Road for Mr G Woodham, advertising for local builders to send tenders to his office at 'The Studio, Woking Station'²⁸. The following summer, work had obviously increased as he was advertising a vacancy for an 'Articled Pupil' to work with him as an 'Architect, Building and Land Surveyor' who 'prepares designs in a superior manner for any description of buildings. Works superintended'²⁹.

¹⁷ Hull Packet, Friday 5th July 1878, page 1

¹⁸ As announced in the York Herald, Thursday 19th September 1878, page 4

¹⁹ Stamford Mercury, Friday 11th August 1882, page 2

²⁰ TNA RG11/4786/38/14

²¹ Eastern Morning News, Wednesday 9th February 1881, page 1 – Advertisement for tenders 'drawings and specifications may be seen at the Architect's Office, Isabel Chambers, Chapel Lane, and quantities will be supplied on payment of a deposit of 10s., to be returned to each party sending in a bona fide tender'.

²² William White's, 1882, Directory of Hull, page 230.

²³ Stamford Mercury, Friday 13th June 1884, page 2

²⁴ The Building News, 4th June 1886 – now a Grade II listed building.

²⁵ Hull Daily Mail, Tuesday 8th November 1887, page 4 – his offices then being at 1 Parliament Hill, Hull.

²⁶ Petition filed, 28th March 1893, Decree Nisi granted 13th December 1893, and Final Decree on the 25th June 1894

²⁷ Hertfordshire Mercury, Saturday 5th October 1889, page 5, noting that Mr Robert Clamp, architect of Woking, Surrey, was awarded second prize of £5 for his design for a proposed new Post Office in Fore Street, Hertford.

²⁸ West Middlesex Herald, Saturday 26th October 1889, page 1

²⁹ West Middlesex Herald, Saturday 23rd August 1890, page 2

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The following October he was asking for tenders from builders 'for additions to stabling at Lampeter, Mount Hermon, Woking'³⁰, and in February 1891 for the building of a 'Wesleyan Minister's Residence at Woking Station'³¹. His office was advertised as 'The Studio and Rest, Woking Station;', which we discover from the census of 1891³² was also his home - next door to the Police Station in Guildford Road, Woking.

The census records that he was then 57 and was living at the property with a domestic servant/housekeeper called Emily Baker (20, born in Woking) - his daughter Helen Maude not being present at the property, although she did give her residence as 'Woking' in the marriage register for St Peter's, Woking, when she was married on the 1st October that year to Ernest Savage, a 26 year old Chemist, from 'Holy Trinity, Hull'³³.

The following year the Guildford Rural Sanitary Authority appointed Robert Clamp as their Surveyor for the parishes of Pirbright and Woking, in place of Mr James Whitburn who had resigned³⁴, but he was also continuing with his private work, advertising for tenders from Builders and Contractors for the 'building of a small detached residence with lodge near Woking Station'³⁵ - the plans of which he had presumably approved in his capacity of Surveyor!

He was also designing the shop-front of Messrs Saul Brothers, provision merchants of Chertsey Road, which was opened to great fanfare in July 1893³⁶. This was obviously a busy time for Clamp as in November that year another of his designs, the new Liberal Club in Chertsey Road, Woking, was opened³⁷.

His work for the Rural Sanitary Authority must have brought him into contact with most of the local landowners, developers and builders, and so it is perhaps not unexpected to find him joining the Bisley Branch of the United Grand Lodge of England Freemasons, in the late spring of 1892³⁸.

His work for the Rural Sanitary Authority was short-lived, however, with the creation of Woking's own 'Local Board' at the end of 1893.

Throughout this period the electoral registers continue to show he was resident at 'The Studio, near Station, Woking'³⁹, but by 1895 the address had changed to 'The Retreat, near Station, Woking'⁴⁰. At that stage he was eligible to vote in the Woking Station and Maybury

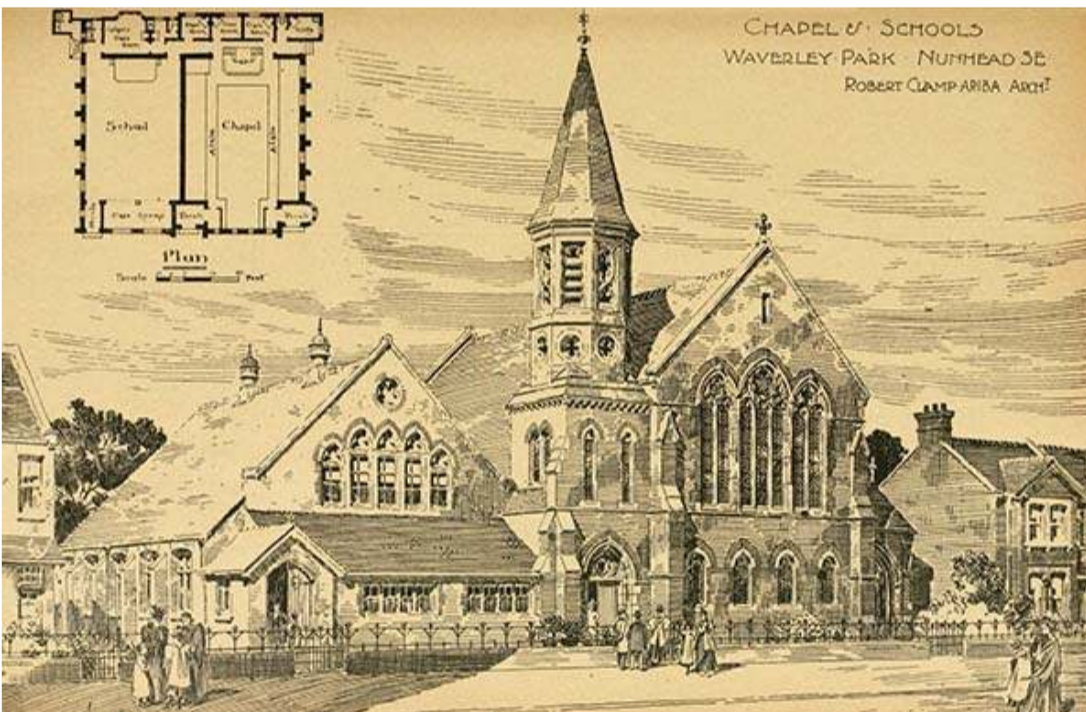


The 'Retreat', Guildford Road, Woking - now a dental surgery - was built in 1887.

Ward, but by 1898 his listing in the electoral registers meant he was eligible to vote in Parliamentary and Parochial Elections in the Woking Village and Mayford Ward by virtue of 'freehold cottages' in Woking Village.⁴¹

By 1901 Clamp had evidently moved out of Woking and was living in Fleet, Hampshire⁴² - the census showing him at a house called 'The Laurels', with a 39 year old housekeeper called Kate Jeffries⁴³, but he was still on the electoral register for the Chertsey Road ward of Woking as the owner of a tenement in Chertsey Road⁴⁴.

Robert Clamp died on the 30th April 1907 and was buried at All Saints Church in Fleet, Hampshire, on the 3rd May⁴⁵, with the probate register noting his address as 'The Close, Fleet', leaving £3,469.17s.3d., to Charles James Clamp (a commercial traveller) and George Cammidge (a retired artist).



In 1898 Robert Clamp won a competition to design a Methodist Chapel and Hall at Waverley Park, Nunhead (from the Building News, February 1898)

³⁰ West Middlesex Herald, Saturday 18th October 1890, page 2

³¹ West Middlesex Herald, Monday 23rd February 1891, page 1

³² TNA RG12/555/5/3

³³ SHC WOKP/3/6

³⁴ Surrey Advertiser, Saturday 23rd January 1892, page 1

³⁵ Surrey Advertiser, Saturday 5th March 1892, page 4

³⁶ West Surrey Times, Saturday 1st July 1893, page 3

³⁷ West Surrey Times, Saturday 25th November 1893, page 8

³⁸ Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London, Membership Registers Lodge No 2317/107

³⁹ 1891 electoral register SHC CC802/2/4 to 1893 electoral register SHC CC802/5/4

⁴⁰ 1895 electoral register SHC CC802/6/4 to 1897 electoral register SHC CC802/8/4

⁴¹ 1898 electoral register SHC CC802/9/4 to 1899 electoral register SHC CC802/10/4

⁴² TNA RG13/1101/77/13

⁴³ Where he continued to build more properties, including a house in Church Road, Fleet (Hants and Berks Gazette and Middlesex and Surrey Journal, Saturday 29th August 1903, page 3)

⁴⁴ SHC CC802/13/4

⁴⁵ All Saints Church, Fleet, Burial Register, SHC FLE/4/1