



Background to the 3 Architects who shaped Grimsby

Earnest William Farebrother – Herbert Charles Scaping – William Wells

The Education Connection

The 3 architects being focused on, followed each other in their shaping of our town. E W Farebrother had a short but lasting effect from about 1885 till his early death in 1901, H C Scaping a much longer one from 1890 till his death in 1934 and William Wells longer still from 1907 till his death in 1960.

All had some major part in the design and or alteration of around 16 schools around our town and the subsequent development of schooling itself. Some of those schools continue for today's children; at least one other is in a very poor, derelict state though 'Listed'; and others still, had a relatively short life for children and are either now repurposed or have been demolished as no longer suitable for their intended purpose. Was being involved in the building of schools a route to high regard and other more lucrative, private commissions for these architects?

The Education Acts between that of 1870 to the final 'big' Act of 1918, changed the lives of all and brought about the start of school building.

While the Education Act of 1870 paved the way for the first state-run schools run by local Education Boards making education available for all children via funding from the Rates, subsequent Education Acts (1880, 1891, 1893, 1899) made school attendance compulsory at incremental ages, abolished fees and increased pupils' school leaving age. The Act of 1902 (*Balfour Act*) transferred the function of School Boards to Local Education Authorities and established secondary education. The 1918 *Fisher Act* established State-funded education and raised the minimum school leaving age to 14 years.

Clearly, as the period went on, additional school places became much needed. And all this, of course, was before Butler's Education Act of 1944 organised education in a form we'd recognise today and current leaving age of 16 years from 1972!

As Schools' Architect, first for Great Grimsby School Board, then for the Education Committee E W Farebrother was active at the peak; a School Management Committee report in 1896 reads:

"proposed to appoint Mr E W Farebrother architect to the Board, at a salary of 10 Guineas per year, and that he is required to prepare the necessary specifications for all repairs and alterations to the school buildings, furniture and fittings, and the cleaning and painting of the schools"

According to *The Building News* of 1887, he was architect of 3 Board schools in addition to 3 other commercial projects in the one year.

Reporting on H C Scaping's death in 1934, *Grimsby Telegraph* reported "[for] practically 40 years he actively co-operated in an architectural capacity with work of education in Grimsby" and another report commended his school contracts as producing school "as up to date as any in the country".

By the time William Wells came to the fore, many school buildings were largely already in place but being involved in the then new developments at Nunthorpe, Gilby estate and Highfield, his work included designs of schools for Nunthorpe, Armstrong Street and Carr Lane.

The second world war appears to have ended such high-profile local involvement in school building – some of Wells’ designs were never built.

The CHAIRMAN said that Mr Scaping, the managing clerk for the late Mr Farebrother, whose plans of the new schools had been passed by the Education Department, was present that night. He came at his (the Chairman's) suggestion, because he thought they might want to know something in regard to the plans before they accepted tenders for the works. The Board of Guardians last Friday passed a resolution that if the representatives of the late Mr Farebrother could make any arrangement for the completion of the works for which the plans had been passed by that Board, they were willing to fall in with such arrangement. Under these circumstances, he proposed that, out of respect to their architect, and for the benefit of the family that had been left, Mr Scaping be allowed by them to carry out the work, the plans of which were prepared by the late Mr Farebrother, and which had already passed the department.

This was seconded by Alderman Dobson, and carried.

Hull daily Mail May 14 1891: "Grimsby School Board: The Contracts for Building"

Ernest William Farebrother 1853 - 1891

Ernest William Farebrother's birthplace is often misattributed but there's an interesting story about his birthplace 'Corby' in Lincolnshire which throws light on the confusion. In the 1950s, British Railways consulted the villagers of Corby, Lincolnshire

to choose an additional name to distinguish between it and Corby in Northamptonshire. The villagers chose "Glen" in reference to the western branch of the River Glen which flows through the village and in 1956 the civil parish was renamed "Corby Glen".

In 1885 his Reverend father married him to Kate, youngest daughter of the late John Sutcliffe, of Manor House Stallingborough, *her* brother was Tom Sutcliffe, a past local MP., and another brother - Jack – was a Grimsby Mayor and one of *his* sons was Albert Sutcliffe of Grimsby's Zoo of the 1920s. All in all, by marrying Kate, Ernest gained extremely 'good connections'!

He was first articled to James Fowler of Louth from 1877 and became a fellow of RIBA in January 1885 (the year of his marriage) and made Grimsby his home in 1889.

The last work he saw to completion was the chapel buildings off Scartho Road for Grimsby Corporation Cemetery Committee because he died at the extremely young age of 38 years from 'Flu in 1891, leaving a young family of 3 and therefore missed the opening of his Volunteer Artillery Barracks on Victoria Street. He had only just started on designs for Grimsby Workhouse (to eventually take up 10 acres) also off Scartho Road. Up until then, Grimsby had been part of Caister Poor Law Union but by 1890 a much-increased population led to the forming of separate Grimsby Poor Law Union to include parishes around Grimsby. H C Scaping saw Farebrother's designs through to completion and their opening in 1894. Some of buildings remain standing today and we know it as Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, and these with an impressive number of other public and private buildings by Farebrother survive in and around the town.

To give some insight to his character, reporting on his death, Grimsby Newspapers referred to him as:

"(having a) character worthy of imitation and admiration; a man of good address, and of herculean frame"

"such a big, handsome man, towering above everyone else, physically...(but) such a robust constitution was in Mr E W Farebrother's case a chief source of peril (should) have gone to bed when the influenza seized him and have been nursed through it he thought he could defy it, shake it off, force it from him, and it has slain him."

Of his family, daughter Violet E W Farebrother became an actress appearing in 25 films some of them being Hitchcock films; and 2 sons, both graduates from Sandhurst: *Lieutenant (later Lieutenant-Colonel) Francis Hughes E W Farebrother* having a long military career in India and, *Lieutenant Harcourt Sutcliffe E W Farebrother* dying from wounds in WW1 and buried like his father, in Stallingborough church yard. There is also a memorial to Harcourt in the church.

Some of E W Farebrother's work

Artillery barracks, Victoria Street 1891

Clee with Weelsby School, New Clee 1884 (now James Meadows School)

Corby House, (Wellowgate / Abbey Road corner) built for himself

Edward Street School 1884

Nunsfield, Bargate

Scartho Cemetery chapel and Entrance lodge 1888

South Parade School

Wintringham residence, Bargate (now Abbey Vets)

H C Scaping 1865 - 1934

Born 1865 in Hull to Zebedee Scaping, long-time master of Trinity School (and namesake of *Zebedee's Yard* in Hull's Old Town), and Georgiana Harriette from Ireland. He is sometimes erroneously recorded as having been born in Ireland, but Birth and Census Records clearly show him as being born and living in and around Whitefriargate, Holy Trinity, Hull – the address of Trinity School at that time.

Having trained with *Smith and Broderick*, (architects of Scarborough's Grand Hotel amongst many other, UK -wide commissions), he established his own practice in Grimsby in the 1890s. Early commissions were the completion of Farebrother's unfinished projects but he was already surveyor to Lord Heneage, presumably towards the building and expansion of the Heneage Estate, and in Cleethorpes he was one of the architects of *Kingsway* from Highcliff, protecting that part of town from coastal erosion.

...a man of forceful character and breezy personality.....Mr H C Scaping had many likeable qualities, and those who knew him liked him very much...."
Grimsby Telegraph February 28, 1934

Some of H C Scaping's work

Cleethorpes Town Hall 1903 (Council House)

County Police and Court House, Brighowgate

Doughty Road Diamond Jubilee Provident Houses

Education Offices, Eleanor Street (with W Wells)

Farnhurst, Eleanor Street

Former Pestle and Mortar pub, Old Market Place

Former Chambers', Old Market Place

Grimsby Municipal College 1895: (1940s: *Grimsby Higher Grade School / Wintringham Grammar School*; 1960s? *Grimsby Technical School*; 1970s *Grimsby Art School*)

'The Mount', Mill Road, Cleethorpes

33 & 34 Park Drive, Grimsby

Nos. 25 'Rathlea' and 27 'Rathgowry', Weelsby Road

Lincoln Bank, Riby Square, Grimsby

Struan House, Eleanor Street and Stanley Street corner (near Grant Thorold Park)

The Lodge, corner of Bargate and Abbey Road

TSB (ex-Royal Insurance), Victoria Street Grimsby

Nos 74-100 Waltham Road, Scartho. row of Semi-detached 'Flower' cottages (1903)

'Rathfarnham' 36 Welholme Avenue (1902)

William Wells 1879 – 1960

Born in Wetherby, Yorkshire in 1879., William Wells first worked with various architects in Stockport and Sheffield, following both E W Farebrother and H C Scaping into the Royal Institute of British Architects (LRIBA) in 1911.

He came to Grimsby in 1907 as Herbert Scaping's Managing Assistant. WW1 brought work to a halt but after wards, when work resumed, a hoped-for partnership with H C Scaping didn't materialise so he left to set up on his own by 1920 working for a time with E E Bentley of Louth. From a first address at Court Chambers, Grimsby, early Grimsby work included designs for the first houses on the new Nunsthorpe housing scheme / Garden Estate, and further works on the now demolished, Grimsby General Hospital.

WW2 saw the temporary closure of his office until after hostilities ended; first at his home in Great Coates Road then in New Street, Grimsby. Post war, new houses were restricted to 1000 sq. feet unless war damage replacement; sq. area of 1500ft was later allowed but restrictions were not totally removed until about 1953. His individually designed houses can be identified in various parts locally.

In 1950 his son Roger William Wells went into partnership with his father and gradually took over all the commercial work becoming known as the 'stores architect' on such stores as *Boyes* in Freeman Street and on *Petchells* on Cleethorpe Road (now Stevensons).

Some of William Wells' work:

Childrens' Home, Brighowgate

Chambers Stores and café, Old Market Place (1912/13)

Cosalt Factory Robinson Street East Grimsby

Nunsthorpe Housing Scheme 1920-24

2 Cumberland Avenue, Grimsby

21 & 23 Cromwell Road, Grimsby

9, Great Coates Road

Post Office (Ex-Lees furnishers), Riverhead, Grimsby

8 and 10 Dudley Street, Grimsby