

THE LUTYENS TRUST

To protect and promote the spirit and substance of the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens O.M.

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2021

A REVIEW OF NEW BOOK *ARTS & CRAFTS CHURCHES*

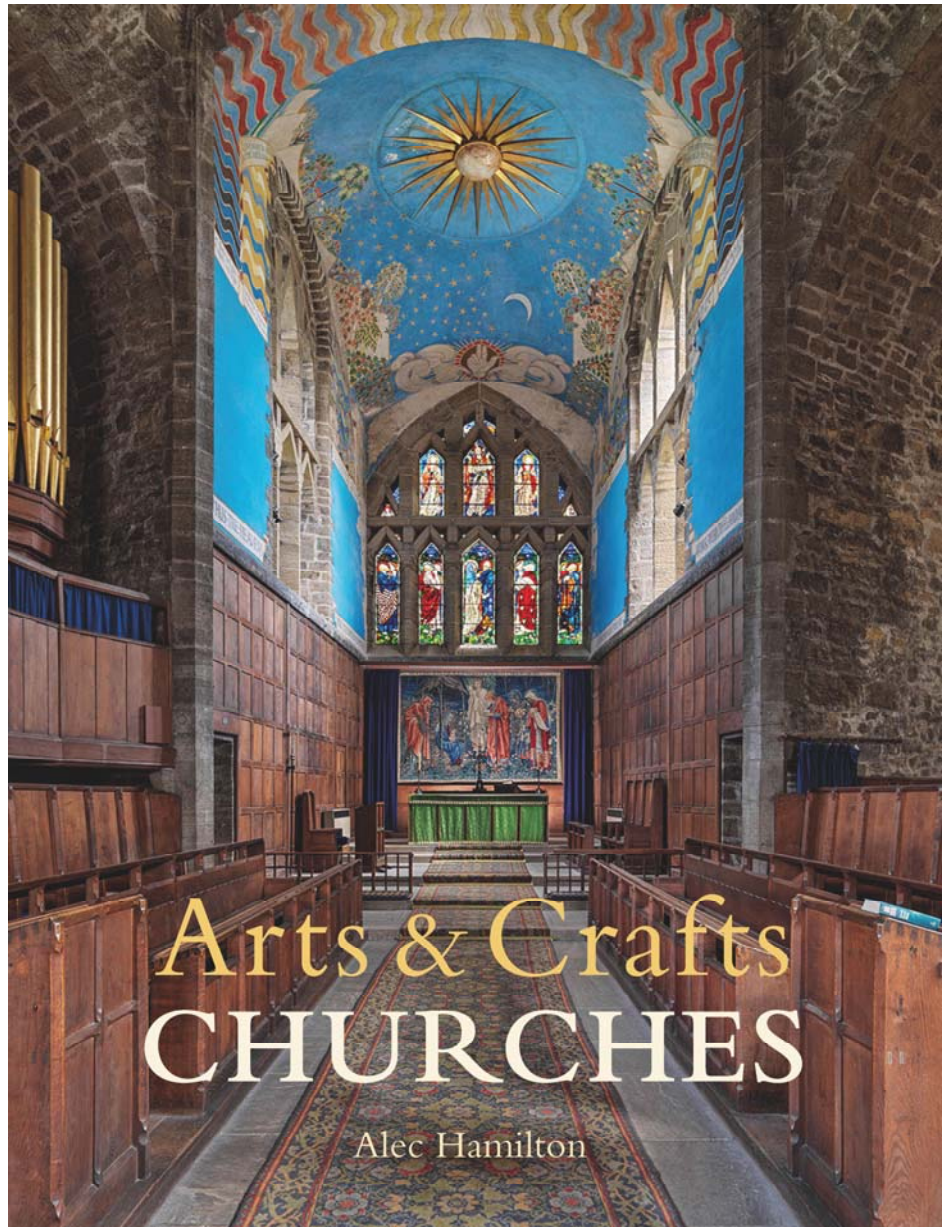
BY ALEC HAMILTON

By Ashley Courtney

It's hard to believe this is the first book devoted to Arts and Crafts churches in the UK, but then perhaps a definition of these isn't easy, making them hard to categorise? Alec Hamilton's book, published by Lund Humphries – whose cover features a glorious image of St Andrew's Church in Sunderland, of 1905 to 1907, designed by Albert Randall Wells and Edward Schroeder Prior – is split into two parts. The first, comprising an introduction and three chapters, attempts a definition, placing this genre in its architectural, social and religious contexts, circa 1900. The second, larger section divides the UK into 14 regions, and shows the best examples in each one; it also includes useful vignettes on artists and architects of importance.

For the author, there is no hard-and-fast definition of an Arts and Crafts church, but he makes several attempts, including one that states: "It has to be built in or after 1884, the founding date of the Art Workers' Guild". He

does get into a bit of a pickle, however, but bear with it as there is much to learn. For example, I did not know about the splintering of established religion, the Church of England, into a multitude of Nonconformist explorations. Added to that were the social missions whose goal was to improve the lot of the impoverished; here social space and church overlapped and adherents of the missions, such as CR Ashbee, taught Arts and Crafts skills. This, in turn, heralded the advent of individual expression, with each architect and artist making up his or her own mind about religion and art, fuelled further by an explosion in literacy and the revelations of Charles Darwin.





*Lutyens's St Jude's Church at Hampstead Garden Suburb.
Photo: © Ashley Courtney*

So where does our man, Edwin Lutyens, fit into all of this? Surely he features large. Well, not as much as you might think. In fact, Hamilton is rather dismissive of his contribution, lumping him with Charles Nicholson and Giles Gilbert Scott for whom, he believes, Arts and Crafts is “simply a box of tricks which some architects dip into from time to time”. I think we can disagree with that. Lutyens understood the crafts, but did he allow much room for artistic collaboration with others? He only designed a few churches and this book ignores most of these. This is unfortunate but, as the author explains, the section called *The Gazetteer* is more interested in less well-known churches. Thus well-known examples by Lutyens, such as St Jude's and the Free Church, end up being mere footnotes. This is a pity, especially in the case of St Jude's, given its interior's dynamic painted scheme.



*St Mary the Virgin, Pixham, Dorking of 1903,
designed by Lutyens. Photo: © Alec Hamilton*

Another Lutyens church, his Methodist Church at Overstrand in Norfolk, features. However, as far as I can make out, no artist was involved, although Hamilton mentions a local bricklayer. He sees “echoes” in this church of the Watts Mortuary Chapel at Compton in Surrey, designed by Mary Seton Watts, but this comparison escapes me. For my money, as a pseudo-Classical building, the Overstrand church may have wit but it's not his best building by a long chalk.

The book sees St Mary the Virgin at Pixham in a more favourable light; Lutyens is even quoted: “The conception of the building is that it should be made of local and simple materials, and by their use alone it should give evidence of the care, love and reverence of its object”. All very William Morris, but again, delightful though it is – not least with its domestic vernacular forms – I don't see evidence of any artist's involvement.

The best example of a Lutyens-designed Arts and Craft church, I believe, comes under one vignette, entitled Oxford Chapels, which features Campion Hall Chapel. Not only does its simple space exhibit great design, craftsmanship and individual wit (especially in the detailing of its woodwork) but it showcases one of Frank Brangwyn's "Stations of the Cross" paintings and for me, better still, murals by Charles Mahoney in the adjacent chapel. This is totally charming and very much in the spirit of what the Arts and Crafts is all about. Lutyens may not have had much to do with those murals, but then, perhaps, it is not right or proper to try to design a *Gesamtkunstwerk* – a total work of art – by a single designer or artist.

Perhaps he was searching for something far greater and more abstract to explain "the other" and went off in pursuit of this on his own. Consequently, the chapel at Castle Drogo is only a footnote and we can only guess at the mind-blowing experience the Roman Catholic cathedral in Liverpool might have been. St Martin's in Knebworth, Hertfordshire points, I think, towards this abstraction as do the mighty memorials in France, which express a single, unifying purpose.



*Campion Hall Chapel in Oxford, designed by Lutyens;
these murals are by Charles Mahoney.
Photo: © Ashley Courtney*

Then there is Lutyens's contribution to Tyringham Hall in Buckinghamshire, commissioned by its owner, the banker Frederick König, who was interested in Theosophy. Lutyens designed the sumptuous temple of music-cum chapel in its grounds. This tour de force incorporates a carved white marble altar frontal by William McMillan RA and a painting by Frank Dicksee – every Arts and Crafts church must have a painting, surely. And who made the astonishing brass grille in the floor under which the organ once played? There must have been great collaboration here, not least with the client, since it's loaded with symbolism. But, alas, there is no mention of this beautiful building at Tyringham (probably because it was privately owned).

Perhaps, in the end, Lutyens had too firm a grip on his work to allow others to run amuck creatively. Hamilton suggests that "those who designed these churches and those who paid for them were not driven by logic, reason or clarity of vision...". Well, I'm afraid our man had those qualities in abundance. Nevertheless, this book is to be applauded. A daunting, complex task has been shaped into a very enjoyable read and is sumptuously illustrated. Let the exploring begin!

***Arts & Crafts Churches* by Alec Hamilton (Lund Humphries, £45) is available at a discount to Trust members (20 per cent off, plus free UK postage). Visit www.lundhumphries.com and use code ACCHURCHES at the checkout to apply it. Offer valid until end 31 March, 2021.**

LUDOVIC DE WALDEN: A TRIBUTE

By Martin Lutyens

It is with much sadness that the Trustees have to report the death of Ludovic de Walden on 2 November, 2020. Ludo had been a much-valued colleague and had acted as Legal Counsel to The Lutyens Trust for almost 20 years. He became a Trustee in 2013 and was due to take over as Chairman in January, 2021. He was an immensely successful lawyer, specialising in art provenance, with clients that included many of the world's leading art institutions.

He was also a keen admirer of Edwin Lutyens's architecture and brought to the Trust an invaluable combination of knowledge of the arts, common sense and legal expertise. These, coupled with his friendship and sense of humour, made him an ideal Trustee colleague. He also generously hosted our meetings at his firm's office, which was much appreciated. He will be sorely missed and our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.



Photo courtesy of Jan de Walden

CHARTING LUTYENS'S CONTRIBUTION TO BRIDGES IN SURREY

By Russell Morris

Monday, 3 July, 1933 was a busy day for the then Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII, who opened three new bridges across the Thames – Chiswick Bridge, designed by Herbert Baker; Twickenham Bridge by Maxwell Ayrton, and Hampton Court Bridge by Lutyens. All are now listed, although Ayrton's Grade II*-listed bridge trumps the others thanks to its triple-hinge arch – an innovation which was probably entirely the work of engineer Alfred Dryland. This allowed greater flexibility and structural movement, not just where each arch abutted but at the bridge's centre, too.

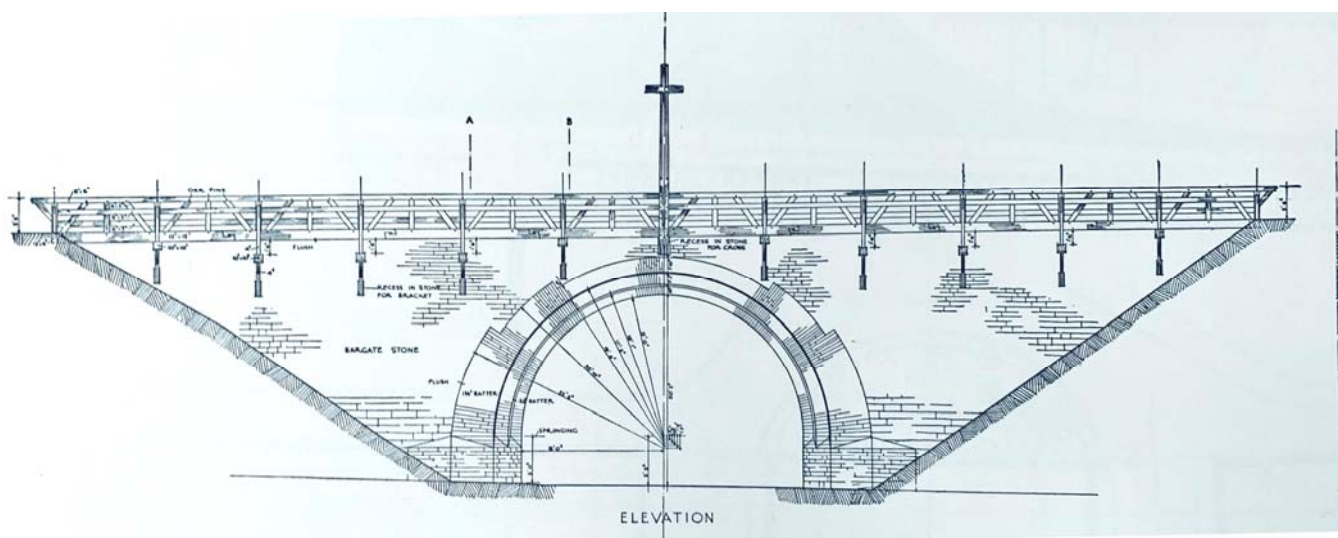
Hampton Court Bridge, together with subsidiary bridges across the Mole and Ember rivers, were designed in association with Surrey County Council's engineer WP Robinson. Lutyens's Renaissance architectural style made him a clear choice to work alongside Christopher Wren's contributions to Hampton Court.

*Right:
Hampton Court Bridge
designed by Edwin Lutyens
(the corner pavilions were
never built), depicted in
watercolour by Cyril Farey,
Lutyens's go-to perspectivist.
Courtesy of Country Life*

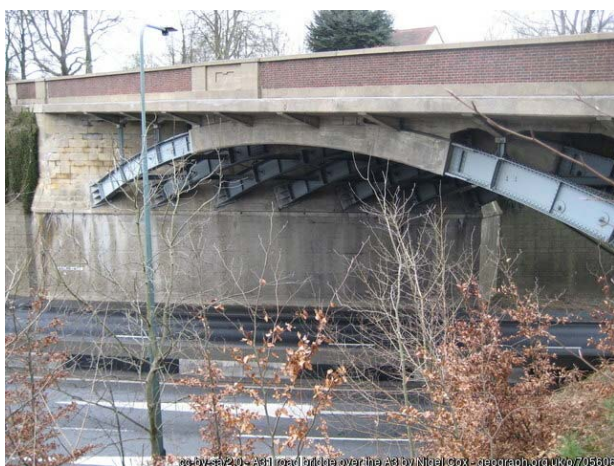


The design of this bridge is well-known, as is the unfortunate omission of Lutyens's proposed corner pavilions (no one could think of an appropriate use for them). One subtlety in its design, that often goes unnoticed, is the manner in which its reinforced-concrete arches gracefully continue the line of their Portland stone springers.

This was not Lutyens's only work for Surrey County Council. At the time, the new A3 Guildford bypass required a bridge across the so-called Pilgrims' Way at Compton (just seven miles from the architect's childhood home). Here Lutyens civilised what might have appeared a forbidding tunnel by shaping it as a series of diminishing, concentric arches receding from portals of an invitingly generous scale. Highway excavations provided it with its Bargate stone facings. The design of the rustic oak balustrade, braced by cantilevered struts, was borrowed from nearby medieval bridges originally constructed by the Cistercian monks of Waverley Abbey in Surrey. Lutyens would have known these historic bridges from his boyhood explorations of the area, and he deployed the balustrade design elsewhere, notably at Plumpton Place in East Sussex. Sadly, at Compton, the oak has been replaced by steel crash barriers. But at the centre of each one is a tall, oak cross celebrating the spurious link with pilgrims. The crosses were a familiar A3 landmark until this stretch was demoted to a mere exit slip road.



*Lutyens's drawing of the A3 Guildford bypass bridge crossing Pilgrims' Way at Compton, Surrey.
Courtesy of Country Life*



*The steel-ribbed bridge carrying the A31 Hog's Back across the A3, north of Compton, Surrey.
Photo: © Nigel Cox*

Does the bypass show any other Lutyens influences? A little to the north are two more bridges: one carries the A31 along the hilly ridge of the Hog's Back, the other takes a private driveway across what is now the Hog's Back exit slip road. An ambiguous caption to a photograph from Getty Images, showing the second bridge under construction, attributes it to Lutyens, but this is unreliable. Both structures are contemporaneous with the Compton and Hampton Court bridges.

The A31 bridge, the more interesting one of the two in engineering terms, is supported by seven arched ribs. The central section of each rib is made of reinforced concrete that continues the geometry of arcs of steel sections forming the outer parts of the ribs. This arch made of two materials is akin to the combination of concrete and stone found at Hampton Court. The bridge's superstructure is made of brick.

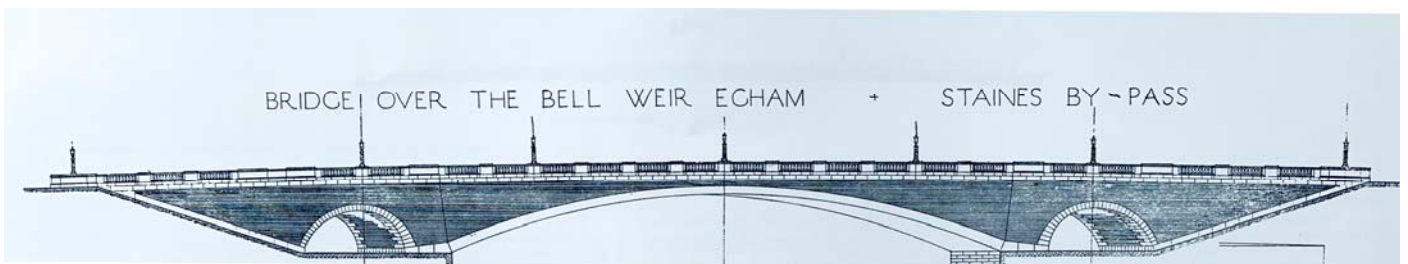
By contrast, the bridge crossing the Hog's Back exit slip road is a simple, reinforced-concrete arch supporting brick spandrels and parapets. It is surprisingly substantial and elegant for a structure carrying only a private driveway to a single house.

The brickwork of both bridges is reminiscent of that of Hampton Court Bridge. The brickwork of the private bridge is similarly built in English bond; on the other bridge it is in Flemish bond.



*The bridge carrying a private drive across the Hog's Back exit slip road, perhaps suggesting a Lutyens influence.
Courtesy of David Rose*

Lutyens, still enjoying Robinson's patronage, was recalled in 1939 to design a Thames crossing near his pavilions and lodges, built circa 1930, on the Magna Carta "freedom" water meadow at Runnymede. Owing to impending war, the construction of the Bell Weir bridge, as it was known, was postponed. Work on it was eventually resumed, two decades after Lutyens's death, under the supervision of his colleague George Stewart, finally opening in 1961.



*Detail of the Bell Weir bridge at Runnymede, designed by Lutyens in 1939 and finally completed in 1961.
Courtesy of Country Life*

A curious subtlety of this bridge's small landward arches is their asymmetric voussoirs that diminish in depth away from the river. The bridge now carries the northbound, clockwise carriageway of the M25, but most drivers will be unaware of crossing the Thames, let alone a bridge designed by Lutyens. The parallel, anti-clockwise structure – called the New Runnymede Bridge – was designed by Joanna Kennedy of consulting engineers Ove Arup, and built in 1978. It was intended as a foil to its Lutyens neighbour but its sleek, functional engineering makes for a visually startling juxtaposition.

So was Lutyens involved in the Hog's Back bridges? We know he designed the bridges at Pilgrims' Way and Hampton Court, and the parapets and brickwork at Hog's Back are similar to those of the subsidiary bridges at Hampton Court. Maybe the finer details at Hog's Back do not convincingly suggest the direct involvement of Lutyens's office, but WP Robinson was surely strongly influenced by his collaboration with Lutyens.

LUTYENS HOUSES ON THE MARKET

Richard Page's regular property column

In the late 19th century, Munstead Heath, an area of hilly woodland by the village of Busbridge, adjoining Godalming in Surrey, became famous for several country houses designed by Lutyens, thanks to Gertrude Jekyll's encouragement and support. The two met for the first time in 1889 through Jekyll's Surrey neighbour, Harry Mangles – one of Lutyens's early clients – when Lutyens was just 20. Perhaps the best-known house is Munstead Wood, built for Jekyll from 1896 to 1897 in a free Tudor style designed to blend seamlessly with a garden that Jekyll had begun to create already, and the surrounding landscape. Their long, fruitful collaboration began thereafter. Other Lutyens houses in the area include Munstead Place (originally Munstead Corner) of 1891; The Hut of 1894, again for Jekyll; Little Munstead of circa 1895, and one of Lutyens's masterpieces, the larger house, Orchards, of 1897 to 1899, built for William and Julia Chance. All these houses had ancillary cottages for household staff and gardeners.

Munstead Orchard, Busbridge, Surrey



One of these cottages, the Grade II*-listed Munstead Orchard – the original gardener's cottage to Munstead Wood – built from 1894 to 1895, is quietly available through Hamptons. The picturesque, half-timbered, tile-hung Munstead Orchard stands in beautiful walled gardens occupying half an acre. The 1,500-sq ft cottage includes a sitting room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and two bathrooms. It also features a cellar, tool shed and garage.

However, its pièce de résistance is the Grade II-listed Thunder House in the garden (pictured, right). This is a triangular belvedere designed by Lutyens from which Jekyll liked to observe thunderstorms. This little gem is made of Bargate stone with battered elevations and a pyramidal tiled roof. Guide price: £1.25m.



The Hollies, North Munstead Lane, Surrey



Hamptons also reports the recent sale of one of a pair of Lutyens cottages called The Hollies on North Munstead Lane, next to Little Munstead. This Grade II-listed, three-bedroom cottage, which dates from 1895, is built of Bargate stone, with tile hanging under a tiled roof. It had a guide price of £650,000.

42 Kingsway, Holborn, London



William Robinson, editor of *The Garden* magazine, which Jekyll had also written for – which was amalgamated with *Country Life* in 1900 – enlisted Lutyens to design 42 Kingsway, Holborn (1908 to 1909). This Grade II-listed building, with its Classical stone elevations, has since been converted to a restaurant on the ground floor with apartments above. One second-floor apartment is for sale. It features two bedrooms, 1,500-sq ft of living

space, has original high ceilings, views over Kingsway and use of a communal roof terrace. Available through Chestertons for £2.5m.

The Salutation, Sandwich, Kent



The Salutation. © Richard Breese/ Lutyens Trust Photo Archive

One iconic Lutyens building has just come up for sale – The Salutation, one of Lutyens's finest buildings in his Wrenaissance style. Completed in 1912 for the Farrer brothers, for whom Lutyens also designed a London townhouse at 7 St James's Square, the house was described by ASG Butler in the Lutyens Memorial Volumes as "Sir Edwin's supreme rendering of the full Georgian idiom, touched with something more than had been achieved by his 18th-century

predecessors... This very perfect work establishes itself as a high peak in Sir Edwin's achievement and it deserves every possible record".

Run more recently as a country-house hotel and restaurant, the house is Grade I-listed and has over 11,000 sq ft of accommodation, including eight bedrooms and six reception rooms. It also incorporates a group of cottages, providing a further nine bedrooms, all set in 3.5 acres of formal gardens. Available through Rafferty & Pickard. Guide price: £5m.

Chestertons: 020 3040 8300; www.chestertons.com

Hamptons: 01483 417222; www.hamptons.co.uk

Rafferty & Pickard: 01622 392202; www.raffertyandpickard.co.uk

Richard Page is Group Marketing Director of estate agent Dexters. During his 35-year property career, he has advised on the sale of many Edwin Lutyens houses. Do please contact him with any Lutyens-related property news at landseer75@hotmail.com.

Disclaimer: prices and availability correct at time of going to press.

Owing to current restrictions, we are not including the usual list of houses and gardens open for visits.
The lists will be reintroduced as soon as restrictions are lifted.

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The Lutyens Trust website: www.lutyenstrust.org.uk