In India’s Image

Rediscovering Anglo-Indian Architecture in the South East of England

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Cover: View of the side of Brighton Pavilion showing the Indian pillared veranda, riot of onion domes and minarets. (Author 2018)
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Introduction

The purpose of this text is to provide a little further historical and contextual understanding for the exhibition ‘In India’s Image: Rediscovering Anglo-Indian Architecture in the South East of England’. A project which seeks to promote a wider understanding of the shared cultural history of Britain and South Asia. It aims to increase awareness to new audiences of the existence of the Anglo-Indian architecture in the South East of England and by way of context architecture further afield. Moreover, it seeks to throw light on some of the often relatively hidden stories behind Indian inspired architecture. To begin to uncover some of the relationships that have been a small part of the complex and sometimes problematic, social, political, cultural and economic connections that have developed between India and Britain since the first Britons, such as Oxford educated Thomas Stephens (1549-1619), set foot in India in the 16th century.

The focus of the exhibition is strictly on the South East of England and on the lesser known sites. This text attempts to look at these sites in a slightly wider context with a little further reference to well-known sites such as the Brighton Pavilion, important Anglo-Indian sites that are outside of the geographical area, such as the Sezincote estate, Gloucestershire, or not open to the public such as Bagshot Park, Berkshire. Ultimately it attempts to provide a starting point for those interested in further exploration of, or research into, Anglo-Indian architecture and the people involved in these architectural projects.

The term Anglo-Indian architecture is however in need of some clarification. The usage of the term Anglo-Indian has changed over the years. Originally it denoted a British ‘third culture’ who were genealogically English but resident in India sometimes over generations – Anthony D King called them a third culture because they were a separate culture that lived neither like those of the London metropole or indigenous in habitants of India but whose lives and social mores were informed by both.1 By the early twentieth century the term denoted those of mixed Indian and British genealogical heritage. It is in the UK essentially now used to denote a hybrid British-Indian culture. So, mulligatawny soup, kedgeree and chutney are examples of Anglo-Indian food, being adaptations of an Indian original – likewise pyjamas and jodhpurs are exemplars of Anglo-Indian clothing.

Architecturally the term might be applied to two very different set of buildings. Firstly, the English inspired buildings that were adapted to local Indian climatic conditions. Examples of such, being the 18th century neoclassical mansions of Calcutta which were adapted on the outside to reflect climatic conditions and inside to reflect different local usage and processional routes, or the similarly adapted Arts and Crafts inspired cottages of 19th century Simla.2 Secondly, the ‘Indo-Saracenic style’ - a fusion of competing Indian (Islamic,

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Hindu) and Western (Neo-classical, Gothic, Flemish) traditions. It is this latter style, characterised by chattris, domes, peacock fan-windows and minarets with which this project is concerned.

The Indo-Saracenic style was a mixture of competing Indian (Islamic, Hindu) and Western (Neo-classical, Gothic, Flemish) styles. The style was primarily found in India becoming something of a house style for colonial architects – a synthesis of the cultures of coloniser and colonised – but it was also transported to Britain. As with any acculturated architecture the synthesis was rarely perfectly equal with factors such as power, patronage, purpose and geographical considerations all having an effect on the extent of the intertwining. Importantly it was not merely a binary choice between European and Indian influences. Within the latter Islamic and Hindu traditions vied for attention. Islamic design tending to dominate secular buildings, as while there were numerous examples of Moghul secular buildings, the Hindu architectural influence came from temple architecture - not always readily applicable to domestic buildings. Moghul architecture also had the attraction in that it symbolised power. While factors relating to power, purpose and geographical considerations usually all effected the extent of intertwining, one site that evidenced the diverse range of influences that can be found within Indo-Saracenic architecture was the Brighton Pavilion estate.

Fig.1 Samuel Bourne, 'Old Court House Street ', Calcutta 1865 (Authors Collection)


Oriental Brighton: power, patronage, pleasure and the Indo-Saracenic aesthetic

Royal Horse Stables and Riding house (1808)

The Royal Horse Stables and Riding house were constructed for the future King George (IV) during a period of increased interest and focus on India. An interest initially sparked by the spectacle of the wealth brought home by ‘nabobs’, wealthy traders, soldiers and administrators, from India whose new-found wealth threatened the established order of British society. This led to establishment attacks on the reputations of both Robert Clive, whose Victory at Plassey in 1757 transformed the East India Company from traders to rulers, and Governor-General Warren Hastings, whose impeachment trial was one of the great political dramas of the period. Attention on the sub-continent was further aided by dramatic reports of the Mysore Wars (1767-1799) and the eventual defeat of iconic Tipoo Sultan by the young Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Seringapatam (1799). An event popularised by the prints of Henry Singleton’s (1766-1839) battle painting ‘The Last Effort and Fall of Tipoo Sultan’ (c. 1800) – a scene composed under an exotic Hindu arch. Most significantly it was also the period when the first relatively accurate representations of Indian architecture began to appear, firstly by William Hodges ‘Select Views in India in the Years 1780–1783’ (1786) but more significantly those provided by Thomas and William Daniels’ influential ‘Oriental Scenery’ print folios (1795-1808).

Fig. 2 Royal Horse Stables and Riding House seen from Church Street now Brighton Dome and Museum (Author 2018)
William Porden’s stables were the second set of Anglo-Indian buildings in England after Sezincote in Gloucestershire (constructed 1805-20). Sezincote was an entire Anglo-Indian estate where the house and all the other estate buildings, such as the dairy, stables, bridge and Hindu temple dedicated to the sun god Surya, were designed in the Indo-Saracenic style. This provided a picturesque Indian view from the house. It also created a little India and provided a nostalgic psychological comfort for the Cockerell family and their Anglo-Indian social circle, many of whom had lived and worked their entire working life in India. Such individuals often had considerable intellectual and psychological investment in the people, culture and landscape of Hindustan and were often ‘homesick’ for India upon their return to England. Indeed, Anglo-Indians evidently suffered from both a homesickness for England when in India and India upon their return at which time they both surrounded

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Fig. 3 View of Sezincote house from the dairy and stables showing the Persian Garden, onion domes, minarets, peacock fan windows, ogee decorated stone-work, chajjas – or roof overhangs, and the shallow roof. (Photograph India Rose Whitehall 2018)

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4 The first building in the England constructed so as to make reference to India was the Indian influenced dome Samael Pepys Cockerell appended to former Governor General of Bengal Warren Hastings’s Daylesford House, Gloucester (1788), an otherwise classical mansion. Cockerell also built the ‘pepper-pot tower’ for St Mary’s Church, Banbury which is topped by a dome similarly Indian inspired. In the same year George Dance had also made additions to the south face of the Guildhall, London that were inspired by Hindu architecture. A few years later a domed octagonal memorial to another nabob Alexander Callander was erected, the ‘Indian Temple’ at Preston Hall Scotland (1792).

5 Circa 1800, Daniells’ also assisted Major John Osborne erect a Hindu Temple in the grounds of Melchet Park, Wiltshire. It was dedicated to his friend Warren Hastings, Governor-General of Bengal, 1773-1775, who while a noted scholar of Indian culture had undergone damaging impeachment trials in London amid a tide of hostility to nabobs and the riches they had accrued in India. For Raymond Head it was ‘clear that the Hindu Temple was more than mere garden monument or memento of India. It clearly articulated a political opinion which many held at the time concerning the affairs of British India and which many of Hastings’s friends felt was the product of his management for which he had failed to achieve adequate recognition or just reward’. (Raymond Head, The Indian Style, London: George Allen & Unwin 1986 p14.) Major Osborne died in 1821 the estate remodelled and the Hindu temple, the first in England, demolished.
themselves with physical objects that reminded them of India and the company of those who understood the subcontinent.⁶

Figs. 4 & 5 The octagonal shaped end of the orangery mirror Cockerell’s octagonal tent room bedroom on the other side of the house. The octagon was seen as the squaring of the circle, the square being the material side of man with the circle representing eternity. Perhaps designed by Repton, it is replete with minarets, chattri, dome, and peacock fan shaped windows. The Surya Temple sits in front of a yoni shaped pool with a Shiva lingum shaped fountain in the centre. (Photographs both India Rose Whitehall 2018)

Figs. 6 & 7 Designed to be reminiscent of a great gateway to the estate like the Buland Darwasa at Fatehpur Sikri but the need to insert windows for accommodation impacts on this somewhat. (Photographs both India Rose Whitehall 2018)

Sir Charles Cockerell though was somewhat unique in constructing a house with Indian influences, most nabobs did not return to England to build Indian influenced estates but Palladian or classical ones. Some like Robert Clive (1725-74) at Claremont, limited their reference to India to a single Indian themed eating room. Other schemes like Basildon Park, Berkshire built for nabob Sir Francis Sykes (1732-1804), made a symbolic allusion to the origin of the wealth that paid for the estate’s construction by the placement of a pineapple topped gateway at the north eastern lodge entrance of the estate. In effect most were inclined to use their estates to assimilate rather than differentiate themselves from the

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existing social elite. Cockerell already owned a palatial London town house that fitted this purpose, had become a member of parliament and had married into the aristocracy. His country residence at Sezincote was clearly not required to function as part of this process.⁷

Fig. 8 Samuel Bourne, The Buland Darwasa, Fatehpur Sikri c.1865 (Authors Collection)

Porden had worked for Samuel Pepys Cockerell the architect who built Sezincote for his brother, with guidance from Thomas Daniells (1749 – 1840) and Humphrey Repton⁸. Daniells subsequently painted the estate from various vantage points, in the manner he had depicted Indian sites in ‘Oriental Scenery’, lending it further authenticity as an ‘Indianised’ landscape - as well as publicity.⁹ Indeed Daniells’ influence can be found in many of the Anglo-Indian architectural schemes of the period.¹⁰ John Nash’s Contemporary representations of the ‘Royal Horse Stables and Riding House seen from Church Street’ (1826) when compared to Daniell’s of the ‘Eastern Gate of Jami Masjid Delhi’ (1795) illustrate the inspiration Porden’s design clearly also derived directly from the Daniell’s ‘Oriental Scenery’. ‘From Church Street the Riding House’ evoked the arched windows and minarets of Moghul Delhi, whereas from the Pavilion gardens the building was dominated by the 65 ft high and 80ft diameter dome which housed the stables. To allow light the dome was dominated by large glass windows. Although this use of glass was to become a feature of the Anglo-Indian dome in Britain at this time and on this scale it was revolutionary. The peacock fan shaped ground floor windows also echoed those at Sezincote. By contrast to

⁷ The subject of why Cockerell chose to build an Indian style house is something discussed in Jan Sibthorpe, ‘Sezincote’, The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857 UCL History, blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah [Accessed June 2018]
⁸ Sir Humphrey Repton was also consulted particularly in respect of the gardens. For more details see Raymond Head, The Indian Style, London: George Allen & Unwin 1986 and Edward Peake et al, Sezincote, n.d.. See also Jan Sibthorpe, Sezincote, The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857 UCL History, blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah [Accessed June 2018]
⁹ Leading artist John Martin (1789-1854) was also commissioned to depict the estate. Both he and Daniells exhibited a number of images of Sezincote at the Royal Academy. Local to Sezincote in Gloucestershire there were two notable buildings that seemed to have been influenced by Sezincote’s Indo-Saracenic aesthetic, the small Spa Cottage in Lower Swell which contained Indian ogee windows and New Market House Cheltenham designed by Edward Jenkins with peacock tail multifoil arches, Indian columns and minarets.
¹⁰ Including Melchet Park and Redcliffe as well as Brighton and Sezincote
the exotic exterior, the interior, as at Sezincote and as would be throughout the rest of the Pavilion Estate, was entirely European in design. The success of the stables prompted the Prince Regent to want to remodel the main house, the Marine Pavilion, but with such a huge dome Porden’s stables had been expensive and it was not until 1815 when the George became Regent that the money to act on this desire became available. 

[Fig.0 The Riding Stables after conversion to the Dome photo-postcard c.1920 (Author’s Collection)]

[Fig.10 Front of the Royal Pavilion photo-postcard c.1920 (Author’s Collection)]

Brighton Pavilion transformed by John Nash (1815-1822)

The Anglo-Indian Brighton Pavilion was remodelled from the existing neo-classical mansion by leading architect John Nash (1752-1835) rather than being something built from the drawing board. Nash’s design was in part informed by Porden’s stables and Humphry Repton’s earlier designs (1808) derived from them, as well as Repton’s enthusiasm for both the aesthetic showcased at Sezincote and Porden’s stables - but also the Prince Regent’s own passions. There was no direct connection with India. The Prince Regent was not to be Emperor of India in the manner later established during Queen Victoria’s reign and he had not been to India so would have had no nostalgic desire for Indian influence. The royal patron however was not a passive client, he owned a copy of Daniell’s ‘Oriental Scenery’ and was clear on his desire for a suitably picturesque, romantic Indian palace. He was passionate about art and architecture and being of a social status above all others not concerned about fitting in with contemporary tastes as so many nabobs had done.\(^\text{12}\)

![Fig.11 View of the rear of the pavilion looking toward the North Porch and India Gate showing the Indian pillared veranda, riot of onion domes and minarets (Author 2018)](image)

The effect of its construction adjacent to the Royal Horse Stables and Riding School, coupled with the other smaller buildings on the estate was to construct something akin to the Sezincote estate where the view from and of the various buildings evoked a picturesque India.\(^\text{13}\) The design functioned to evoke splendour, civilisation and given the reference to


\(^{13}\) The picturesque was the dominant aesthetic of the period through which the social elite viewed wild nature and depicted it. Its first exponent Rev. Gilpin focussed on the physical elements that constituted the picturesque in William Gilpin, Observations on the river
the Moghul Emperors, supreme power - and a reminder that even if indirectly, large parts of India now sat within the British Crown’s domain. The Pavilion was also in tune with the contemporary the aesthetic of Romanticism and within this the Picturesque - the building with its opulent aesthetic, given the association with bathing and leisure, subsequently came to symbolise pleasure.

Sezincote had been built for Sir Charles Cockerell, a nabob, who had made his fortune in India after a long association with the sub-continent – the connection was clear. The only connection the Pavilion was to have with India was during the Great War when the estate buildings were converted to military hospitals for Indian soldiers wounded on the Western Front – in part on the basis that the aesthetic would help them feel at home. Some 12,000 soldiers were treated at Brighton between 1914-16 with careful attention paid to religious and caste concerns. Viewed as wounded heroes, Indian soldiers were a source of fascination for the locals and were the subject of popular photo-postcards.

While the Pavilion was loosely modelled on the domed Moghul palace, one element that referenced a specific building was the North Porch. It was designed by Nash as a garden

Fig.12 The North Porch entrance to the Pavilion (Photo-postcard c.1930 Author’s Collection)


14 Sezincote was influenced by Daniell’s depiction of the Taj Mahal and been described as being a classical building overlaid with Shah Jahan’s iconic tomb for his wife Mumtaz. See Raymond Head, The Indian Style, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1986

15 The experience of these recuperating soldiers was not always a positive one as their letters home reveal, see David Omissi, Indian Voices of the Great War - soldiers letters 1914-18, Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1999
porch from an illustration ‘Ghaut of Cutwa on the Ganges’ in Lt. Col. C.R. Forrest’s ‘A Picturesque tour along the River Ganges and Jumna in India’ (1824), which was seen before publication. Again, it was constructed with the addition of extra windows for light – something repeated in the domes of the Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking and Maharajah’s Well, Oxfordshire.

Fig.13 The North Porch which Nash had based upon Cutwa Ghat temple on the River Ganges. (Author 2018)

The estate was completed by the Adelaide Stables, an Entrance Lodge on Church Street called the North Lodge/Gate (1832), and another entrance later replaced by the India Gate (1921). The onion domed North Lodge was next to the minaret equestrian extension, Queen Adelaide’s Stables (1832) and together with the existing stables they completed an impressive sweep of buildings. The designs were by Brighton Corporation architect Joseph Good for William IV to whom the estate had now passed. However, royal patronage was to be short lived as in 1853 Queen Victoria sold the Pavilion site to Brighton Corporation. After which the Stables became the Dome Concert Hall - remodelled by Philip Lockwood with Moorish designs in 1866, (replaced in the 1930s) and the Riding House became the Corn Exchange.
Figs. 14, 15 & 16 The Moghul inspired North Gate photo-postcard c.1910 (Author’s Collection) and 2018 (Author’s photo) provides a great gateway to the estate from the town and

Figs. 17, 18 & 19 Interior of the Royal Horse Stables and Riding House as seen in 2018 (Author’s photographs). While the interior has had a number of alterations from its original state the effect is to create one of the few buildings which has both exterior and interior Indo-Saracenic elements
The influence of the Pavilion in Brighton

The North Lodge and Queen Adelaide Stables were the last Indo-Saracenic buildings built by the monarchy on the Pavilion Estate and the Indo-Saracenic to the limited extent that it was in vogue rather fell out of fashion for a generation. There were a few exceptions all in the South West and all like Brighton on the coast. Most notably the Chattri at Arnos Grove, Bristol, designed by William Prinsep (1834) as a memorial to the Hindu religious and social reformer Ram Mohan Roy, who had died in Bristol. John Foulston’s ‘Hindoo chapel’ at Devonport, Devon (1840) built as part of a square that showcased all the world’s classical architecture was another exception. Finally, also in Devon, was the artist and architect Col. Robert Smith’s rather idiosyncratic Anglo-Indian mansion, Redcliffe, built overlooking the sea at Paignton (1853-64). Smith had been amongst the first to restore the monuments of Delhi and the knowledge gained from this helped construct Redcliffe.

Fig.20. William Prinsep’s Chattri for Ram Mohan Roy derived from Hindu temple architecture.

16 Sadly, while the rest of the square is extant Foulston’s Hindoo Chapel has not survived. For more information see John Foulston, ‘The public buildings erected in the West of England as designed by John Foulston F.R.I.B.A.’, J Williams, 1838 For
However, the Pavilion Estate did inspire other Indo-Saracenic buildings within Brighton. Firstly, the Western Pavilion built by local architect Amon Henry Wilds as his residence (1826/7). Like the Pavilion the Indian elements emerge out of an essentially neo-classical building. Subsequently, both the West Pier (1866) and Palace Pier (1891) - which during the Edwardian period had an Anglo-Indian Theatre (1910) added - adopted a Mughal aesthetic with windows, arches, chattris and onion domes clearly referencing the Pavilion. The move of the aesthetic down to the seafront further built on the association of the Indo-Saracenic with leisure, recreation and pleasure first established by the Pavilion.

**Sake Dean Mohamed, Brighton and the art of shampooing**

When the Pavilion was complete Brighton enjoyed another import from India. New understanding of hygiene, coupled with few houses with running water, enabled ‘baths’ to become popular from the 1820s as a means of keeping clean. The key premises, Mahomet’s Kings Road vapour baths, was set up by Patna born Sake Deen Mahomet’s (1749-1851). Here bathers were scrubbed and massaged by a ‘shampooer’. It had no Anglo-Indian architectural features, though an oriental pagoda balcony was present. However, it was
Mahomet, Shampooing surgeon to the Prince of Wales at the Pavilion, who introduced shampooing to Britain, publishing ‘Shampooing’ in 1822.

The Indian origins of Brighton’s baths faded into a more Ottoman sensibility when in 1867, a group of wealthy businessmen formed the Brighton Turkish Baths Co Ltd and employed architect Mr Horatio Nelson Goulty to build the Brighton Hammam. The Hamman had a Moorish rather than Anglo-Indian exterior and interior and opened in October 1868 – it did however no doubt further add to Brighton’s oriental architectural fabric.¹⁸

![India Gate 1921](image)

Fig.22 A view toward the north gate arch which can be seen in the distance from the more austere, temple inspired architecture of the India Gate c.1921. (Photo-postcard author’s collection)

**The India Gate 1921**

The final Anglo-Indian architectural postscript on the Pavilion estate was the building of the India Gate in 1921. Replacing the two original gates, the India Gate was a memorial to Indian troops who fought and died during World War One and the Pavilion estate’s three war hospitals that tended to them (Pavilion, Dome and Corn Exchange). It was the idea of Sir

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¹⁸ After a demise in the baths popularity in the late 19th century the building was converted to a cinema circa 1910.
John Otter and linked to that of a Chattri being erected at Patcham Ghat. It was paid for by subscription raised in India by Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, Sirdar Daljit Singh, and designed by Thomas Tyrwhitt (1874-1956) in a simple Gujarati style. It was opened by the Maharajah of Patiala, Bhupinder Singh on the 26th October 1921.

**The Naqqakhana or Jaipur Gate (1886) transferred to Hove 1926**

Brighton’s Indo-Saracenic architectural fabric also spread to its environs. The Jaipur Gate was commissioned for the Colonial & India Exhibition, South Kensington (1886), as entrance to the exhibition’s Rajputana section. The exhibition helped build upon the reputation Indian arts and crafts earned by the Indian Court at the Great Exhibition (1851) and was a key moment for cultural relativism, with the Indian display including ‘fine’ as well as ‘applied’ arts – the first time the term ‘fine arts’ had been applied to non-European art. Evidence of a positive reconsideration of India’s aesthetic and cultural achievement.

![Naqqakhana or Jaipur Gate](image)

Figs.23 & 24 Naqqakhana (Drum platform) or Jaipur gate carved by Rajasthani wood workers from the Shekavati region in situ in Hove. (Author 2018)

Jaipur Gate was designed by Col. Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob (1841-1917) and Surgeon-Major Thomas Holbein Hendley (1847-1917) and so-called as it was paid for by the Maharajah of Jaipur. It was a Burmese teak version of the marble and sandstone drum platforms from which fanfares were delivered to rulers and Gods. The two architects’ lives had been inexorably linked to India. Swinton Jacob was an engineer and architect who had worked across India. His connection to the gate’s patron was that he was chief consulting engineer of Jaipur State, where he developed an irrigation system and designed many public works, such as the Albert Hall Museum, Jaipur, (1887) built in the Indo-Saracenic style. Holbein Hendley had a long career in the Indian Medical Service, was an expert on Indian art, founder of the Quarterly Journal of Indian Art and organised the Jaipur Exhibition (1893).
The gate was carved with floral motifs by craftsman from the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan, a locale famous for its painted havelis and ornate jali window screens. The inscription in English, Sanskrit and Latin, contains the Maharaja of Jaipur’s motto and reads, ‘Where virtue is, there is victory’.

**Durbar Hall 1886 (transferred to Hastings Museum 1919)**

The other extant Anglo-Indian interior from the Indian and Colonial Exhibition (1886) is the spectacular Durbar Hall in the Hastings Museum, some thirty miles east of Brighton. Along with these exhibition interiors, the Nepalese style Indian House at Larmer Tree Gardens, Wiltshire, originally from the British Empire Exhibition (1898), also survives today. Together they constitute a small fragment of the temporary Indian structures built for Exhibitions. Most notable of which along with the Indian Court at the Great Exhibition (1851) and Indian and Colonial Exhibition (1886) were the Court of Honour at the Franco-British Exhibition (1908) at White City and the Indian Pavilion at the Empire Exhibition (1924) at Wembley. Ultimately trade exhibitions, they simultaneously attempted to choreograph a positive representation of Empire and acted as moments when Indian art and handicrafts reached an unprecedented international audience.

**Patcham Burning Ghat (used 1914-15) and Chattri (1921)**

Indian soldiers sent to Brighton for treatment (1914-1916) had been expected to recover. Not all did, and while the military could make use of Woking’s Shah Jahan mosque to oversee correct Muslim burial rites were undertaken, there was no Hindu site nearby. Hindu and Sikh ritual required a funeral pyre on an open ghat, followed by the scattering of ashes in water. There were no ghats in England so a one was hastily constructed immediately north of Brighton on the South Downs at Patcham, overlooking both the resort and sea. Some 53 soldiers were cremated in accordance with religious rites and their ashes scattered in the English Channel. This has been the only time that an open burning ghat style cremation has been permitted in UK.
Fig. 27 Patcham Chattri nestled in the South Downs, looking toward Brighton. Hindus and Sikhs make an annual pilgrimage every June to for a memorial to the fallen soldiers. (Arts Asia.org 2018)

The Chattri (1921) was built as a memorial out of Sicilian marble on the site of the burning ghat. The impetus for the memorial has been attributed to Lieutenant Das Gupta of the Indian Medical Service. ¹⁹ The driving force behind its realisation was Mayor of Brighton, Sir John Otter - who also provided the inscription at the base of the chattri. The India Office and Brighton Council paid for the acquisition of the land and construction. Indian student architect E. C. Henriques, from Bombay, designed the chattri with the assistance of Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob.

It was unveiled by the Prince of Wales, (Edward VIII) on the 1st of February 1921. The Prince of Wales closing remarks at the ceremony both paid tribute to the soldiers and made explicit the links between Patcham, Brighton and Woking. ‘In conclusion – though this is purely a memorial to the Hindu and Sikh soldiers – I am thinking, too, of the Mohammedan soldiers who passed away in your care. These were buried with all military honour at Woking. I hear that before long a gate of Oriental character, the gift of Indians, will adorn the Pavilion. May these two Memorials, so historical and so instinct with compassion and mutual regard, strengthen the ties between India and our country.’ ²⁰


Fig. 28 The Prince of Wales unveiling the Chattri on Patcham Ghat February 1st 1921 (Photo- postcard Author’s Collection).
Woking and the East: the Scholar, the Begum and the fallen from a distant land

The Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking (1889)

Like Brighton and Sezincote, Woking boasted a small cluster of Indo-Saracenic buildings, this time with a distinctly Islamic focus – foremost amongst them the Shah Jahan mosque. The driving forces behind the creation of Britain’s oldest purpose-built mosque were Hungarian born orientalist scholar Dr Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner (1840-1899) and the female Muslim ruler of the state of Bhopal, Begum Shahjahan (1838-1901) who provided the funds and from whom the mosque derives its name. Like the Maharajah of Benares Ishree Pershad (see below), she never set foot out of India so never witnessed the results of her philanthropy. Similarly, like Ishree Pershad she had remained loyal to the East India Company during the Indian Rebellion, and later to the British Crown, and for this received the Star of India. She was a remarkable ruler not least in that she was one of, if not the, first high status Muslim women to be photographed. At the time this was ground-breaking as being photographed was viewed as having broken purdah.21

Fig.29 Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking (ArtsAsia.org 2018)

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21 Purdah being the practice of female seclusion or screening within the home or veiling when outside.
Dr Leitner who had a 20-year association with India had bought the former Royal Dramatic College for £4,500 and converted it into ‘The Oriental Institute’. He wanted to have appropriate religious buildings so approached the Begum for £5,000 to construct a mosque. The construction, designed and supervised by architect William Isaac Chambers, was started in 1888 and completed by October 1889.22

A talented linguist, by the age of 21 Leitner was professor and Dean of the Oriental section at Kings College, following which in 1864 he became Principal of the Government College at Lahore - where he encouraged the study of India languages and culture as well as modern Western science. He published widely on Indian languages, grammar and culture, founding the influential Anglo-Indian newspaper the *Civil and Military Gazette*, (as the *Indian Public Opinion*) and later from Woking started the *Asiatic Review* (1896). Leitner retired from the Indian Civil Service (ICS) in 1886. The Oriental Institute was the fulfilment of a desire to provide a place in Europe to study the history and culture of India and the Islamic world. Leitner’s stature meant that the institute benefitted from being able to award degrees accredited by the University of the Punjab.

Fig. 31 W Chambers plan for Woking Mosque, Building News August 2 1989, shows the classic Islamic ogee arch that was familiar to Europeans through its use in Gothic architecture as well as minarets, onion domes and pyramidal saw toothed merlons. (Shah Jahan Mosque Woking Archive)

Originally built with an aesthetically striking white dome that evoked the skyline of Lucknow or Agra, the Shah Jahan Mosque soon became associated with leading period Muslim scholars (such as Khawaja Kamal-ud-Din, Marmaduke Pickthall) and converts (Lord Headley,). It was even a place of worship for the mysterious W.H. (Abdullah) Quilliam founder of the first (not-purpose built) mosque in Britain, the Liverpool Muslim Institute (1887). Who having disappeared from Liverpool is said to have attended the mosque in the
guise of H.M. Leon. He is buried like many of the leading Muslim figures of the day in Brookwood Cemetery Woking.

Fig. 32 The Oriental Institute Woking, c.1900 now sadly demolished and replaced by a retail park (Shah Jahan Mosque Woking archive SJM/WM/8/1/14)

The Institute flourished initially but declined after Leitner’s early death (1899) and the building no longer survives. A Hindu Temple had also been envisaged but work on this was never completed. Leitner was also buried in Brookwood Cemetery, Woking.

**Sir Salar Jang Memorial Hall (1889)**

The adjacent structure was also built by Chambers at the same time as the Shah Jahan Mosque. It was named after the late Sir Mir Turab Ali Khan, Salar Jung I, GCSI (1829–1883) - who was considered the most outstanding Prime Minister of the State of Hyderabad. A supporter of the East India Company during the Rebellion he was later knighted and visited Britain in 1876. The building originally provided a community meeting space and accommodation for the Imam and from 1921 the *Islamic Review* was published from the site. It is a genuinely hybrid or ‘acculturated’ building. Various elaborately shaped windows of the Indo-Islamic tradition and surrounding decorations, as well as a flattened roof, provide Indian elements, while the overall form and red brick structure also firmly locate it in a local building tradition.
Fig. 33 The Salar Jang Hall (ArtsAsia.org 2018) after the original flat roof had been replaced with a concealed sloped roof required for Britain’s climatic conditions but that enabled the building to appear from the ground as if it was flat roofed. The windows and arches include ogee, horseshoe ogee and Moorish multifoil designs, all classic Indo-Islamic arches.

**Muslim Burial Ground or Peace Garden, Woking (1914-21)**

A second Anglo-Indian site at Woking linked to the Shah Jahan Mosque and indirectly to both the Brighton Pavilion and Patcham Chhatri, is the Woking Peace Garden. The original purpose was to provide a place where Muslim soldiers who had died in Brighton could be buried according to correct religious rites. The German propaganda machine had indicated that Muslims soldiers drawn from Indian regiments were not only being forced to fight the Khalif and their Muslim co-religionists from the Ottoman Empire but were being buried in contravention of their customs. The Germans even built a giant wooden mosque for Muslim prisoners of war at Halbmondlager (or the half-moon camp), Wunsdorf, to try and encourage desertion to their side.

Along with use of Patcham Ghat for Hindus and Sikhs, it was decided that as the Shah Jahan Mosque was relatively close to Brighton, Woking would be the obvious choice for a Muslim Burial ground. Consequently, one was created by the India Office, with War Office funding, a short distance away at Horsell Common, Woking. Originally, a 6ft high wooden fence was erected with a wooden hut acting as a mortuary and shelter for mourners. However, co-religionist Sadr-ud-Din campaigned for a more appropriate memorial to the Muslim war dead. The India Office recommended that leading exponent of the ‘Indo-Saracenic’ style Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob, who had retired to nearby Weybridge, be approached to design it.
Due to failing health he was unable to do so but in his stead India Office Surveyor, T.H.Winney, drew up a design influenced by Swinton Jacob’s “Jaipur Portfolios”. The design with its central domed entrance and flanking minarets not only evokes Moghul and Rajasthani architecture and the Shah Jahan mosque but its surrounding brick wall created a space that evoked the Islamic, or paradise, garden. Islamic gardens, such as those at the Taj Mahal were derived from Persian gardens, which were designed with enclosed walls to represent paradise. Islamic gardens that surrounded a mausoleum were intended to provide a literal invocation of the paradise of life after death. The Muslim Burial ground at Woking was a rather simple but in its own way nestled within a verdant forest provided a rudimentary example of this. The burial ground was built to Winney’s design in 1917 and was originally the resting place of 19 Muslim soldiers. They were later moved to Brookwood cemetery (1969) before the site was restored in the 21st century as Woking Peace Garden and more consciously laid out as a symmetrical Islamic garden with a central water feature, trees and memorial stone.

![Image](image.png)

**Fig. 34** The domed entrance of the Muslim Burial Grounds is now the Woking Peace Gardens (ArtsAsia.org 2018). The site has been restored to include the classic elements of an Islamic Garden of Paradise such as water and fountains. It is one of a growing number of paradise gardens recently developed others include the Persian Garden at Sezincote and at Lister Park Bradford.

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23 The designs are preserved in the India Office Records for details see [https://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2016/03/design-for-the-muslim-burial-ground-woking.html](https://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2016/03/design-for-the-muslim-burial-ground-woking.html) [Accessed June 2018]

24 The Persian word for such an enclosed space being ‘pairi-daæza’. 
Plain tales from the Chilterns Hills: holy water and ivory towers

The Maharajah’s Well, Stoke Row, Oxfordshire (1863-1870)

While Woking reflected clear links to Muslim India, the Maharajah’s Well was a result of direct engagement with Hindu India. The origin of the Well lay in the friendship between East India Company official and local squire Edward Anderton Reade and the Maharaja of Benares, Ishree Pershad Naryan Singh.25

The Maharaja was much intrigued by Reade’s tales of the miserable conditions of the poor back in the Chilterns. Reade, who had himself built a well in Azamgarh in India to solve a dispute between brothers, described the impact of the limited access to clean water on the lives of villagers in his Oxfordshire parish: ‘water retained in dirty ponds, and deserted clay pits. [How] in the dry season the water used for cooking in one cottage was passed onto the like office in others, urchins cruelly thumped for furtive quenching’s of thirst, and washing days indefinitely postponed’.26

As a result, the Maharaja provided the funds to pay for a well for the villagers and work began on the project on Foundation Day 10th March 1863 – the day of the Prince of Wales’

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25 For a more in-depth discussion of the well’s history see Graeme Whitehall, The Maharajah’s Well - an illustrated history, Oxford: Maharajah’s Well Trust, 2016
26 E.A. Reade, letter dated 17th February 1872 to the Editor of the Oxford Times, Oxfordshire History Centre P/173/A/002
Royal Marriage. In the immediate aftermath of the Indian Rebellion (then known as Mutiny) when the Maharajah had supported the East India Company, the Well was not just a gift to the people of Stoke Row, or token of friendship with Reade but also a symbol of loyalty by the Maharajah to Queen Victoria. Many subsequent events associated with the well were timed by the Maharajah to celebrate royal events. It is worth noting that by the time of Reade’s retirement, East India Company officials, while still subject to the same risks to health, were no longer returning to England with the great wealth required to realise any Anglo-Indian construction projects so the Maharajah’s philanthropy was vital. The well was completed a year later (1864) and the following year provided with a grand canopy based on a pavilion at the Maharajah’s palace at Ramnagar under which the Maharajah and Reade had sat and conversed on many evenings.

Fig. 37 H. Jenkin, overpainted photograph, Celebrations of 27th February 1872 for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from typhoid. (Maharajah’s Well Archive)

While the richly coloured exotic canopy is striking, the real feat of engineering was in the construction of a well as deep as the dome of St Paul’s is high, (368 feet to the waterline), and the winding gear designed by Reade and Wallingford based engineer Richard Wilder to haul the water to the surface. More so as it had to be dug by a single man in dank, dark and cramped conditions, who laboured under the knowledge that if any debris fell from the

27 The story behind Col Robert Smith’s construction of Redcliffe in the same period illustrates how changing economic expectations for those employed by the East India company affected their ability to construct nabob palaces. After a long career in the Bengal Engineers, based in Calcutta and Delhi, Smith’s ability to construct this, and another Indo-Saracenic villa Chateau Smith in Nice, France, resulted from his marriage to an heiress - not because he had accrued vast wealth in India as earlier nabobs had. See Raymond Head, *The Indian Style*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1986.
bucket that removed what he had dug it could be fatal. The well transformed life in the village and enabled its growth. Though as a utility its function was largely usurped by the availability of mains water from the 1920s it was still used right up until World War Two. While no longer a source of drinking water, in 1964 the Well water took on another character. As part of a visit from the Duke of Edinburgh to commemorate the well’s centenary, its waters were ceremonially mixed with holy water sent from the Ganges at Benares by the then Maharajah of Benares. Perhaps making it the holiest water outside of India!

The Ishree Bagh

The Maharajah not only provided the capital to construct the Well but to purchase land to build a cherry tree plantation to provide income for the well’s upkeep and Well Keeper’s salary. This was in line with the custom in India where wells were habitually supported by an orchard. The orchard sat in a wider parkland in what had formerly been uneven common land littered with clay pits but that was landscaped under the direction of Reade according to period ideas of the picturesque. It provided a place of leisure for villagers and picnicking or promenading visitors drawn to see the exotic, richly coloured, well deep in the Chiltern Hills.

Figs. 38 & 39 H. Jenkin, overpainted photograph, ‘Shady Ravine or Saya Khoond, central Ishree Baugh, looking toward the Maharajah’s Well’ (c.1870) and H. Jenkin, overpainted photograph, ‘The Pond, Prubhoo Tal, lower Ishree Baugh’ (c.1870). (Maharajah’s Well Archive) Jenkin’s set of overpainted photographs show how like Sezincote the irregular natural landscape replete with water, undulation, trees, winding paths, peeps through to exotic architecture was shaped to conform to the ideas of the picturesque. The set was produced by Reade for the Maharajah to allow him to see the realisation of the project. Their colouring was unusual for England as it was seen as adulteration of the image but in India there was a demand for photographs to be ‘finished’ by colouring.

The garden, or bagh, was named Ishree Bagh in honour of the Maharajah. Indeed, when Reade designed the Ishree Bagh he named many elements in Hindustani to make clear the connection to the Maharajah - such as Muchlee Pokhara (a fish pond in the shape of a fish), Ishree Bagh (a Cherry tree plantation), Saya Khoond (a shady ravine), Purbhoo Teela (a mound) and Purbhoo Tal (a cattle pond). As Reade had spent his entire working life in the
subcontinent and had been away from India for almost a decade, the Indian names undoubtedly had a reassuring nostalgic psychological resonance for him.

The site also incorporated symbols associated with the Maharajah. The original plan, now in the ‘Well Minute Book’ held on loan in the Oxfordshire History Centre, illustrates how shrubbery in front of the Warden’s cottage was shaped into the Maharajah’s armorial bearings of a full moon surrounded by two fishes. This was also referenced in the fish-shaped and fish stocked pond, the Muchlee Pokhara.

Fig. 40 Reade’s original plan in the Well Minute book (inset) showing the Well Canopy, ponds, mound and cherry tree plantation. (Maharajah’s Well archives)

Figs. 41 & 42 Reade’s plan (inset) showing the Well Canopy, the warden’s cottage and the moon and fishes shrubber and an inset of the Well Wardens Certificate of the Maharajah’s moon and fishes armorial bearings, painted in gilt.
The Well Warden’s Cottage

Next to the well is the well warden’s cottage, a uniquely shaped octagonal bungalow. The bungalow was an architectural import from India, its name derived from the humble single-story Bengali dwelling.\(^\text{28}\) It was not until 1870 that the bungalow as conceived in Britain today began to seed.\(^\text{29}\) The modern bungalow is in both external and internal design neither the simple Bengali dwelling nor the more palatial colonial bungalow that became the standard housing for colonial officials. Two bungalows had originally been built on the Sezincote estate in the Bengali style but were later adapted into two story cottages sometime after 1884.\(^\text{30}\) The single story Well Cottage with its simple internal arrangements and deep sloping roof has more in common with the Bengali bungalow than the two-story cottages that dominated the Chilterns.

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\(^{29}\) Kathryn Ferry, *Bungalows*, Oxford: Shire, 2014

intimate relationship with India, and a relationship between themselves that transcended cultural and/or racial divides. Mostly the Europeans involved (such as Leitner, Cockerell, Daniells, Swinton-Jacob, Lockwood Kipling) had generally lived and worked in India and/or had knowledge of Indian art and architecture. The Indians involved if not craftsmen or architects (Henriques, Bhai Ram Singh) were often of noble or other high rank with an expressed loyalty to the British monarchy and the status quo (Begum Shah Jahan, Maharajah Duleep Singh, the Maharajah of Jaipur). The key figures involved in the Maharajah’s Well, Ishree Pershad and Reade both fitted these descriptions. However, not all the sites followed this model – one, a few miles down the road from the well, where these connections were missing was Swansea Road Board School (now E.P. Collier).

![Maharajah’s Well and Well Cottage, Stoke Row (Catherine Hale 2018)](image)

**The Bell Tower: Oriental influences in Swansea Road board School, Reading (1899)**

Like the Indian Institute in Oxford the Anglo-Indian influence here was not the dominant aesthetic of the Swansea Road Board School. In this case it was limited to the Bell tower - a single incongruous pavilion that dominated the skyline - particularly for those arriving by means of the Great Western Railway whose embankment offered the best view of an incongruous chattri. The key figures in the building of Swansea Road Board School were
architects George William Webb FRIBA (1853-1936), Edward Robert Robson FRIBA (1836-1917), local builder William Hawkins and local brick maker E.P. Collier who supplied the bricks free of charge. Webb was involved with many projects around Reading including the main Norfolk Road stand at Elm Park and St Mary’s Butts Jubilee fountain. However, the only record of any ‘Orientalist’ output was when he exhibited the ‘Arabesque Architecture of Cairo’ at the Reading Industrial Exhibition (1865). It is hard to understand looking at Webb’s architecture in Reading how such an exotic chattri came to appear astride an otherwise Anglo-Flemish building.

Webb’s original designs were however apparently rejected, and adaptions were subsequently made by Robson, the chief architect of the London School Board. He specialised in producing red brick school buildings in an Anglo-Flemish revival style that were influenced by his engagement with the Arts & Crafts philosophy. The Swansea Road building was akin to Robson’s London Board Schools, many of which were topped with tower finials.

Unlike with nearly all the Anglo-Indian architecture built in the region Robson had no intimate connection to and knowledge of India and there is no Anglo-Indian narrative that

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31 Of all the many plans and documents relating to Webb’s work across Reading that held by the Berkshire Record Office none have even the slightest trace of Indian influence.

32 Such as Primrose Hill School or Woodhill Primary School
accompanies the structure. However, Robson designed the ‘Peoples Palace for East London’, Stepney. This while again underlyingly influenced by Anglo-Flemish and classical norms, had a rear view that contained both a central dome and onion dome topped minarets. Overall the structure evokes an Indo-Saracenic silhouette reminiscent of both the Hagia Sophia, Istanbul and the Anglo-Indian Royal Horse Stables (Dome), Brighton. It appears that Robson’s eclectic architectural hand - provided by a grammar of ornament that suffuses the medieval, European and Byzantine into something ornate and exotic - is behind the incongruous Anglo-Indian pavilion which dominates the skyline.

Fig.46 E.R. Robson’s The Peoples Palace East London as envisaged in the Illustrated News June 26th 1882 (Author’s Collection)

The Indian Institute Building, Oxford (1883/96)

The building of the Maharajah’s Well at Stoke Row was not the only Anglo-Indian influenced architecture in Oxfordshire. The other key structure being the Indian Institute, Oxford, designed by Basil Champney’s (1883) and built over the ensuing decade (1896).33

Like Woking Institute, it was a place for oriental study that emanated from the vision of a single scholar whose interest lay in the study of Indian languages and culture. In this case, the Indian-born, esteemed professor of Sanskrit, Sir Monier Monier-Williams (1819- 1899). Monier-Williams undertook repeated journeys back to India in order to raise funds for its

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33 In addition, there was also Samuel Pepys Cockerell’s pepper-pot tower at St Mary’s church, Banbury. See Jan Sibthorpe, ‘Sezincote’, The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857 UCL History, blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah [Accessed June 2018]
establisment. He received the support of Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, Viceroy Lord Northbrook and many Indian donors including Sir Bhagvat Sinhjee, Thakur of Gondal.34

The building contained lecture rooms, a library and like Woking a museum.35 Its primary function seems to have been to support ICS (Indian Civil Service) candidates based at the University and provide a resource for the nascent number of Indian students studying at Oxford. It was hoped it would also inform students of politics so that should they become parliamentarians or administrators they acted out of knowledge on Indian affairs rather than ignorance. The entry in Kelly’s Oxford Directory (1900) indicated that ‘the Institute… invites distinguished Indian administrators, and able Orientalists and Indologists of all nationalities, as well as eminent natives of India who may visit this country, to deliver addresses in its lecture rooms or library, where conferences and social gatherings are occasionally held with a view to more united action in arousing an interest in Oriental subjects and in making England and India better acquainted with each other’.36

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35 Monier-Williams had to build his collection from scratch but his efforts led to the assembly of a large number of rare books (now in the Bodleian) and a collection of ethnographic artefacts that were evidently less impressive. However, some are now in the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Collection, such the collection of arms and armour that had been gifted by the Maharajah of Jaipur.
36 Kelly’s Oxford Directory (1900) p55
The Indian Institute continued until the 1960’s but after Indian Independence its relevance came under question and controversially the building was put to other uses by the University. Unlike most of the buildings with an Anglo-Indian connection, this was not a hybrid structure but an Elizabethan Renaissance style structure with decorative embellishments that reflected its purpose. These comprised the stylised image of an elephant perhaps intended to be the Hindu god Ganesha, Yakshas and tigers on the façade, a Sanskrit inscription inside and an elephant and howdah weathercock. The only external element that showcased Indian craftsmanship was its elaborate carved door.

Fig. 47 The Oriental Institute Oxford, (ArtsAsia.org 2018)

Fig. 48 The Oriental Institute Oxford, (ArtsAsia.org 2018) detail of the ‘gargoyle’ of an elephant or elephant headed God Ganesha
Royal Patronage Revived: Bagshot Park and Osbourne House two Indo-Saracenic interior spaces

The Durbar Room, Osborne House, Isle of Wight (1892)

The Pavilion was not the only royal Indo-Saracenic construction project. Though with Queen Victoria’s disposal of the Brighton Pavilion estate the chance of royal patronage for further Indo-Saracenic commissions seemed to have passed. However, after the defeat of the Indian Rebellion (1857-8) there was increasing involvement of the monarchy with India. Rule was transferred from the private East India Company to the British State and the Queen made Empress of India. Increased involvement with India led to a revival in royal interest and patronage – two projects that were expressions of the Anglo-Indian aesthetic resulted from this. The Durbar Hall commissioned by Queen Victoria for her Isle of Wight retreat, Osborne House, and the Billiard Room at Bagshot Park commissioned by her third son, the Duke of Connaught. Though both, like Maharajah Duleep Singh’s alterations to Elveden in Suffolk, were Anglo-Indian interiors rather than exteriors.

Fig.49 The Durbar Room Osbourne House c.1900 showing both the plaster work peacock fireplace and cabinet which displayed the gifts from Indian nobles that in essence acted as pledges of their allegiance to the Queen-Empress. Analysis of those gifts is undoubtably one area for further research. (Photo-postcard Author’s Collection)

Both schemes of work were also intimately linked to the Mayo School of Art being constructed and then installed under the direction of principal John Lookwood Kipling (1837-1911), whom the Duke had met when stationed in India, and the Indian master-craftsman Bhai Ram Singh.
The role of exhibitions in this revival was significant. The British public were first introduced to a wider Indian aesthetic by the Indian Court within the Great Exhibition (1851) which enabled a recognition of the value of the handmade artefact - Indian handicrafts. The whale bone corset and crinolines of the mid-nineteenth century, which prohibited the wearing of overcoats for women, also led to a ubiquity of the Kashmir shawl and ‘Paisley’ design across the land. However, a revival of the Indian aesthetic can only really be said to have flourished in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In part this was because of the rise of art critics who extolled the virtues of Indian art and design and linked it to the Arts and Crafts movement. These were scholars, practitioners and teachers such as George Birdwood, who wrote his influential ‘The Industrial Arts of India’ (1880) and John Lockwood Kipling (the brother-in-law of Edward Burne-Jones) who introduced Arts and Crafts design elements to India. They both not only championed Indian art through their writings, but through exhibition organising and supporting the development of art and design schools in India they helped produce and display India’s finest workmanship to a British public.

Fig. 50 Close up of the cabinet of gifts, displayed as gifts rather than curated artefacts explaining their historical and artistic context in front of the upper storey balcony (Photo-postcard author’s collection)

The first of the two projects was the Indian Billiard room and corridor at Bagshot Park (c.1886) built in Deodar wood for the Duke of Connaught - who had played with Duleep Singh at Osbourne House as a boy. Some have suggested it may be Duleep Singh’s

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38 Deodar is a Himalayan cedar which Europeans became attached to in part because of its ubiquity in the forests in and around the summer capital Simla. For more on the psychological impact of these forests see Graeme Whitehall, The Import[ance] of History and
remodelling of Elveden (c.1880) that first prompted the royal commission but more significantly the Duke had been stationed in India in the period (1883-1888), based at Meerut, so it is likely that the impetus came from this experience.\textsuperscript{39} Whilst in India he may even have seen the screens being designed for the Indian and Colonial Exhibition (1886) in 1885 that are now held in the Hastings Museum.\textsuperscript{40}

Figs.51 & 52 Domed jharokha balcony window and the jail window screens were both devices used in Indo-Islamic architecture to allow women in purdah to look out without being observed and the plasterwork peacock over the peacock fireplace. (India Rose Whitehall 2018)

In the case of the second project, the construction of the Durbar Hall (1890-92) patronage came directly from Queen Victoria. Despite Victoria never visiting India, Osbourne House had already strong associations with those born in India, most notably Maharajah Duleep Singh (1838-1893), Princess Gouramma (1841-1864) and Anglo-Indian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879) were regular visitors with close social ties to the Queen. During the 1880s she had also installed Mohammed Baksh as khitmatgar (valet) and Abdul Karim (1863-1909) as her munshi (teacher of Urdu and Hindustani) as part of her staff at Osbourne. While Bagshot Park was a private space, the Durbar Hall was a public facing banqueting hall, designed to proclaim her status as Empress of India. Unlike Bagshot Park

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
where the room was constructed with pre-fabricated wooden panels, white plaster work dominated the Durbar Hall. Lockwood Kipling described the room as ‘a sort of Hinduised version of the work of the Akbar period’. However, Lockwood Kipling whose name had considerable lustre amongst the social elite in India and would have been central to the granting of such a commission, left the scheme, as he had done at Bagshot Park, very much under the direction of master craftsman Bhai Ram Singh. In both cases Ram Singh oversaw the works for an extended period. Though unlike Bagshot Park where the workmen were Indian, here the plaster work was carried under his direction by W Cubitt & Co. and specialist plasterers George Jackson & Sons who had also collaborated on Duleep Singh’s Elveden.

Fig.53 Detail of the plaster work depicting the Hindu god Ganesha over the doorway (India Rose Whitehall 2018)

**The Palace Cinema, Portsmouth (1920)**

Despite numerous exhibitions showcasing Indo-Saracenic architecture, including the Court of Honour at the Franco British Exhibition (1908) and Queen Victoria’s patronage, memorials to fallen Indian soldiers aside, there was also little uptake of the aesthetic in the early twentieth century. One exception was its’ use for a new place of pleasure, the cinema. One such example sat across the Solent from Osbourne.

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Portsmouth’s Palace (Astoria) Cinema’s Anglo-India style evokes elements of the Royal Stables (central arabesque arch above door) the Bell Tower (central bulbous domes) and Patcham Chattri (side pavilions). Architect Arthur Edward Cogswell (1858-1934) was believed locally to have served with Indian Army during World War One but would have been in his mid-fifties at the onset of the war.\textsuperscript{43} Instead he may have been part of the volunteer reserve the Artists Rifles led by Orientalist painter Lord Leighton, who built a famous Arab Hall (1877-79) in Leighton House, Holland Park, in a relatively similar Anglo-Saracenic style.

Fig.54 Palace Cinema, Portsmouth (now the Astoria) showing domed chattris and two similar to the Bell tower, Swansea Road Reading (Courtesy Granola, Cinema Treasures used under Creative Commons)

The Palace Picture House opened its doors in February 1921. However, it was not the first Anglo-Indian style cinema - this appears to have been the Globe Cinema, Putney, which operated from circa 1910. The cinema was viewed as a place of escape and it appeared that early cinema designers often tried to transport their customers from everyday mundanity to a world of escapism by the use of exotic architecture (Grecian, Chinese, Egyptian, Hindu, Mughal, Moorish). For John MacKenzie ‘Both the Globe Cinema, Putney and the Electric

\textsuperscript{43} Cogswell had a major impact on Portsmouth having designed many pubs and key elements of Portsmouth’s Fratton Park.
Theatre in Paddington (1911 and 1912 respectively) had Mughal external appearances, including oriels and chattris rendered reasonably accurately. The Electric, briefly called the Imperial, indicating its colonial cultural context, was in fact a converted chapel. Like Portsmouth’s Palace cinema both were built before 1922 when the discovery of Tutankhamun and the resultant Tutmania led to the widespread adoption of elements of Egyptian imagery being incorporated into the Art Deco aesthetic that emerged in the second half of the 1920s. It became strongly associated with places of leisure (the Electric was modernised in 1926 with an art deco frontage). It would appear the limited vogue for Anglo-Indian cinemas then was a mere decade from 1910 to 1921 - so Portsmouth’s Palace was the last expression of this fashion. Aesthetically Anglo-Indian design fits well with the Art Nouveau movement which held sway in this period. Tutmania (1922), the International Exposition de Art Decoratifs (1925) and subsequent aesthetic dominance of Art Deco appear to have helped it fall out of favour. Mahatma Gandhi’s Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience campaign of 1920-22, and the subsequent rise of the nationalist movement in India may also have impacted on the image of India as an unproblematic fantasy or place of escapism.

On not so fertile ground: the limited flowering of Anglo-Indian influence

In contrast to the early Indo-Saracenic domestic buildings of the nabob period built by the social elite (Sezincote, Brighton Pavilion), where structures based on Daniell’s prints were largely Indian on the outside and English inside, the revival of the late nineteenth century that took inspiration from exhibitions were internally Indo-Saracenic but externally unremarkable (Elveden, Bagshot Park, Osbourne’s Durbar Hall). Neither had a widespread impact on fashions in either period and significantly, there was no great domestic building constructed that was Indo-Saracenic both externally and internally. The Indian architectural style that had the most impact in the late nineteenth, albeit in a transformed guise, was that of the bungalow.\(^5\)

![Victoria Terminus Bombay c.1905](image)

That the Indo-Saracenic, so popular in the burgeoning Presidency cities of India, failed to take off as a dominant aesthetic at any point during the nineteenth century but rather remained closely connected to a handful of those with Indian connections is at first quite perplexing. This was though perhaps in part because nabobs were viewed with approbation by the existing hereditary elites in Britain and their fashions therefore not viewed worthy of imitation. Furthermore, as discussed because most nabobs desired assimilation into the existing landed elite they bought and built houses and estates that mirrored received wisdom on taste – they did not want to stick out as nabobs. Moreover, it was also perhaps in part due to the strangeness of hybrid art and architecture. Although some like Repton

were early converts to the ‘Indianised’ style, for Gauvin Bailey, such hybrid arts “are admittedly strange, startling – even unsettling – like the result of an experiment gone wrong.” In this respect Richard Burton’s antagonised period response to Velha Goa’s Indo-Portuguese churches’ acculturated decoration is revealing:

The minor decorations of paintings and statues are inferior to those of any Italian church... The frescoes are of the most grotesque description. Pontius Pilate is accommodated with a huge Turkish turban; and other saints and sinners appear in costumes equally curious in an historical and pictorial point of view. Some groups, as for instance the Jesuit Martyrs upon the walls of St. Francis, are absolutely ludicrous.

Though Burton’s acerbic comments were aimed toward another Indo-European synthesis the unsettling nature of the hybridity and the soldier-scholar’s hostility toward it is clear. Commentators have indeed identified this strangeness as directly effecting the appreciation and impact of Indo-Saracenic architecture in England. Some comments were because of the context of the building rather than the building itself, such as one response to the Indian Chapel at Devonport: ‘The assemblage, though strange, is certainly picturesque ; and, if we hesitate to recommend the repetition of such experiments, we are far from regretting, that in this instance they have been made.’ Though for Richard Worth the Indian chapel itself was a ‘strange-looking edifice... designed by Mr. Foulston, in what he called the Hindoo style’. Wightwick later argues that ‘Foulston’s success is precisely because it is freed of a mixed style [which is] like a monstrous union of the parts of one animal with those of another’. Hybridity then for those with period sensibilities could have a monstrous quality.

As a result, many of the structures that were built were under appreciated, altered or demolished. The Pavilion estate was sold off by the crown. When Sezincote was on the market in the 1880s it took four years to sell and the agents downplayed the Indian influence across the estate. While this was during an agricultural depression its clear this rare example of the Indo-Saracenic style was not highly sought after. The two Bengali bungalows on the Sezincote estate at Worcester Lodge were altered, Redcliffe has been


48 Jan Sibthorpe quotes a local period visitor Rev.F.E. Witts who describes Sezincote House as being ‘very peculiar and pleasing’ and whose central feeling of dissonance was not the Indo-Saracenic hybridity of the exterior but the clash between Indian exterior and the disappointingly ordinary interior. Jan Sibthorpe, ‘Sezincote’, *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857* UCL History, blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah, [Accessed June 2018] p22-23

49 George Whightwick, (Nettleton’s) Guide to Plymouth, Stonehouse, Devonport, and to the neighbouring country, Nettleton, 1836 p65. Similarly, the Maharajah’s Well was viewed as incongruous up in the Chiltern Hills, see Graeme Whitehall, *The Maharajah’s Well an illustrated history*, Oxford: Maharajah’s Well Trust 2016


52 For further discussion see Jan Sibthorpe, ‘Sezincote’, *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857* UCL History, blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah [Accessed June 2018]
encircled by urban development so as to lose its original place in the landscape. The Hindu temple at Melchet Park and the Hindu chapel at Devonport have both been demolished as have the exhibition structures such as the Court of Honour at White City. Patcham Chattri was used for shooting practice at one point, and both Woking Peace Garden and the Maharajah’s Well have at different junctures in their history had to rely on the passion and efforts of the local community to fund much needed renovations.

Figs 56 & 57 The Court of Honour, the incongruous Indo-Saracenic ‘Whitecity’, London, a temporary celebration of India and empire originally built for the Anglo-French exhibition (1908). Although there was also an Indian Pavilion at the Empire Exhibition (1924) there was no widespread impact on architectural aesthetic sensibilities in Britain that would lead to a fresh impetus to construct more Anglo-Indian buildings. (Photo-postcards Author’s Collection)

Only recently toward the last third of the 20th century has there been a greater appreciation of this acculturated Anglo-Indian architecture and have most been given the
protection of a listing of grade II or higher. Indo-Saracenic architecture has clearly not always been recognised and cherished in England and is frequently overlooked as an historically important part of the nation’s architectural and cultural heritage.

These monuments have been an integral part of England’s architectural landscape for over 200 years, symbolising the shared history between Britain and the Indian sub-continent, yet they remain largely unknown to a wider public. Hopefully ‘In India’s Image: Rediscovering Anglo-Indian Architecture in the South East of England’ will play its small part in addressing this.
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