



SANDOWN HALL (LODGE) LIVERPOOL



In 1821 the following advertisement of a Sale by Auction appeared in the Liverpool Mercury:

*'On Wednesday 1st August at the George Inn, Dale Street. The Mansion, Stables, Outbuilding, Grounds comprising the Eastern part of the beautiful and valuable estate in Wavertree called SANDOWN. 19 Statute acres formerly in occupation of Mr Willis Earle - Copyhold of Inheritance. In part separate from the Western part of estate by sunken fence. An abundance of healthy young timber growing.'*

It seems likely that Sandown Hall had been built for this Mr Earle, a coal merchant with a yard in Stanhope Street, Liverpool, in about 1810. Another coal merchant, John Menzies with an office in Old Hall Street, also lived on the Sandown estate: an 1815 Property Tax Return for the Township of Wavertree lists the two men together as 'Earle Willis & Mr Menzies' (assessment £360). Willis Earle's elder brother, Richard Willis of Halshead Park, was the owner of coal mines in the Prescott area.

By 1824 the occupier of Sandown Hall was George Decimus Littledale, the tenth son of Henry Littledale of Whitehaven.

Born in 1783, he had married Harriet France of Bostock, Cheshire, in 1822, but died after only four years of marriage.

It seems as though Hugh Hornby - the man who was to occupy the house for over 45 years - bought the house soon after.

Hugh Hornby had been born in Kirkham, Lancashire, in 1792. His brother Joseph had moved to Everton in about 1821, but Hugh travelled extensively in the countries surrounding the Black Sea. He met and married Louise Cortazzi, the daughter of the Venetian consul in Smyrna, and the couple set up home in Everton. Hugh went into partnership with his

brother, the firm having its office in Exchange Buildings, Liverpool, and specialising in trade with Russia.

The 1851 Census recorded Hugh Hornby at Sandown Hall along with his wife, two sons, two daughters, a governess and nine servants. He was a prominent member of the Liverpool Town Council, having been Mayor in 1838-39 and later Chairman of the Finance Committee. In 1866 it was written: 'Whether we hear of him in committees, see him in the Council chamber, or elbow him smoking his fifteenth cigar on the knifeboard of the Wavertree omnibus, we find in him a well informed man, an excellent linguist speaking several languages, an intelligent merchant, an able financier, a clear-headed debater, and one well fitted to lead in that Council chamber which is adorned and benefited by his presence'.

Hugh Hornby died in 1875, aged 82. Sandown Hall was bequeathed to his widow, though his eldest son Hugh Frederick lived close by at Sandown Lodge in Olive Lane. It was HFHornby who became the most celebrated member of the family, as a result of his bequest to the City of Liverpool of the Hornby Art Library in 1899.

Louise Hornby, Hugh's widow, died in 1881 but Sandown Hall remained the home of the couple's three surviving daughters: the two 'Misses Hornby' (Helen and Mary) and their widowed sister Matilda Madden.

The three old ladies were a familiar sight in Wavertree until their deaths in the 1920s; after which the Sandown Hall estate passed into the hands of Messrs Crawford's Biscuits for use as the company's sports and social club.

It was the sale of part of Crawford's Playing Fields for housebuilding which prompted the formation of the Wavertree Society in 1977. Unfortunately planning permission had been granted before local residents became aware of the sale. Although the campaign to save the fields was unsuccessful, it led to a closer watch being kept on the weekly lists of local planning applications, which has continued to the present day.



The neglected Hall

Unfortunately the first permission also set a precedent, and planning permission was later granted for housing development on the remainder of the fields (except for the western portion, owned by the City Council, which is now officially designated as Public Open Space) in spite of the Society's protests.

In 1990 the Hall and grounds were sold - following the closure of Crawford's Binns Road factory - to local businessman George Downey. He later sold the sports field to Wainhomes, who are currently building a housing estate called Sandown Chase. The hall itself - a Listed Building since 1952, with a particularly fine interior - stood empty but subject to a proposed for conversion to a private nursing home.

The demise of Sandown Hall

Despite best efforts of a heritage protection society the hall was demolished.

I came across something ages ago that said that the blocks, bricks etc had been stored and sold. The fellow who bought them to rebuild stored them in a very damp place and when he went to rebuild on different land found that they were unusable. IHe did rebuild but with new materials:

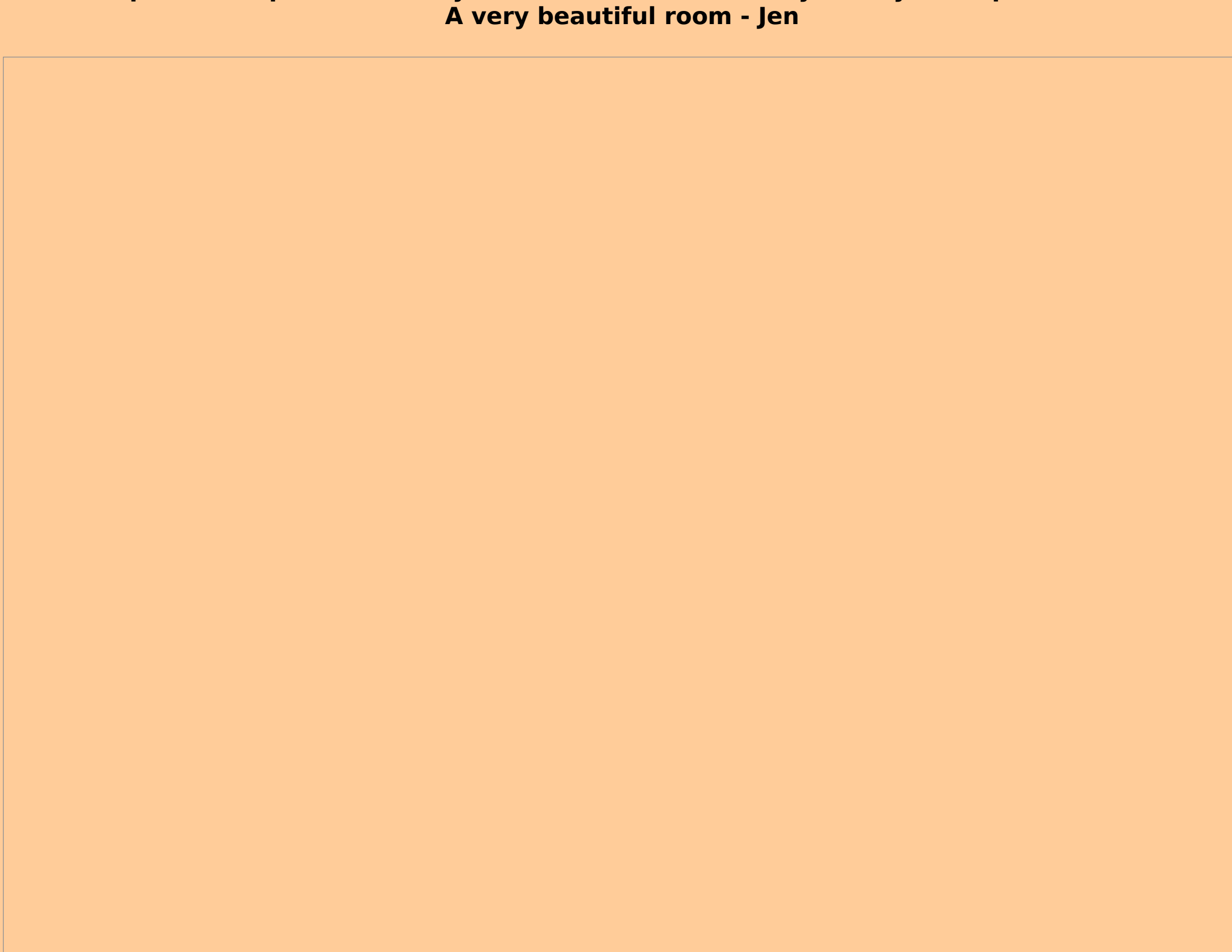


New recreation of Sandown Hall

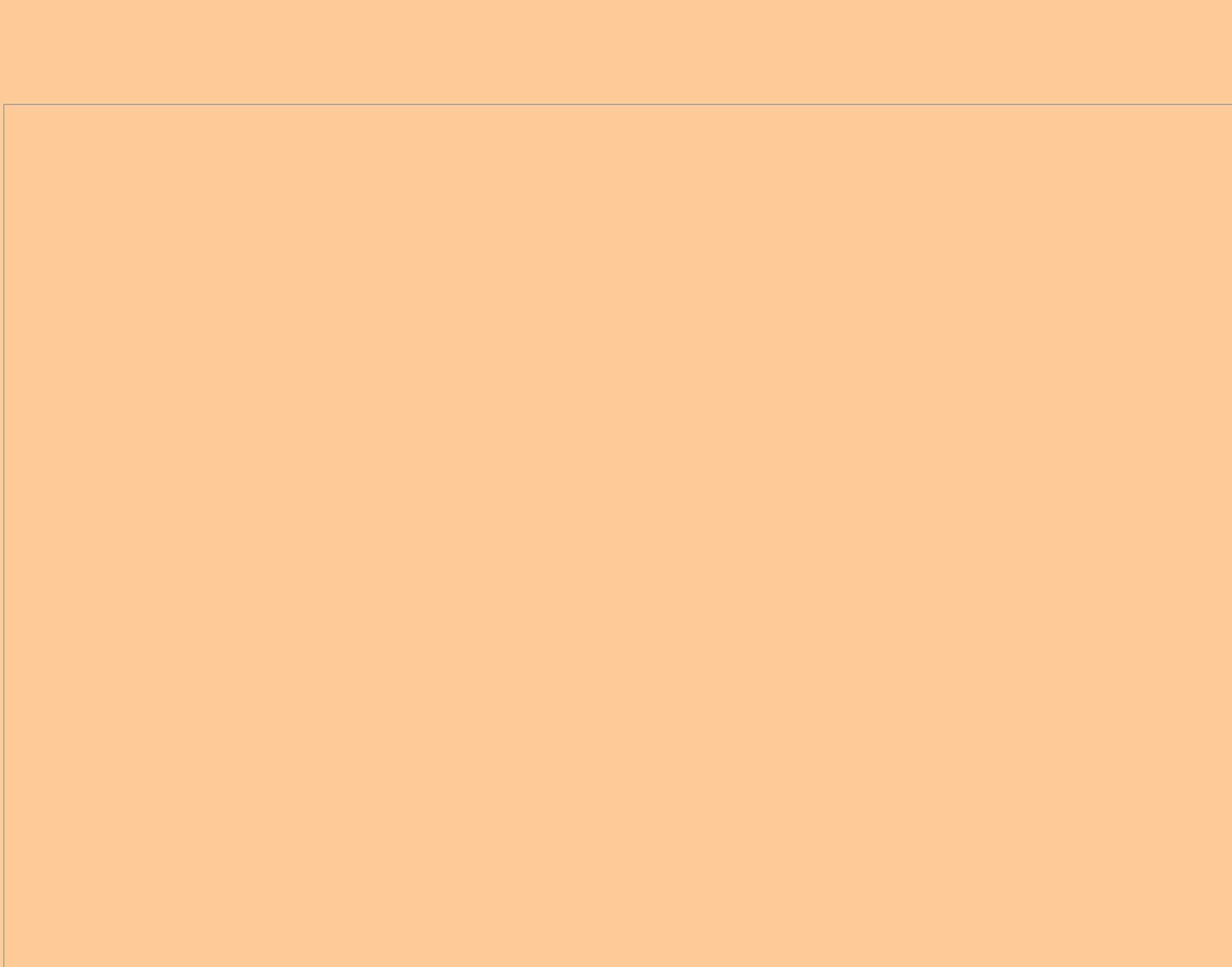


I did some more research on sandown hall and found that it has been recreated but not using the original sandstone. I can't work out where it is as I'd love to visit.

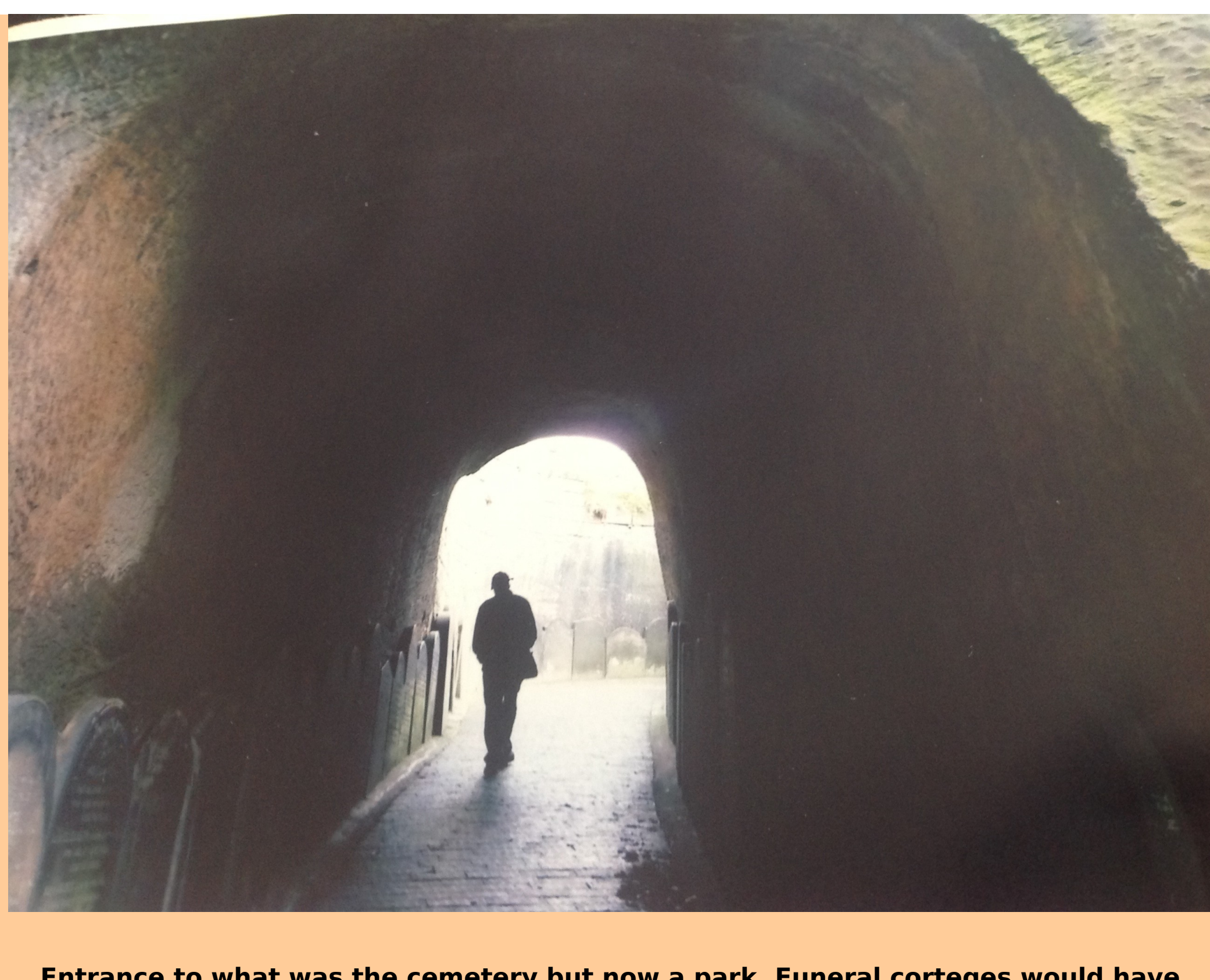
I've had several trips to Liverpool over the years, last time the Horn by library was open after its refurbishment. A very beautiful room - Jen



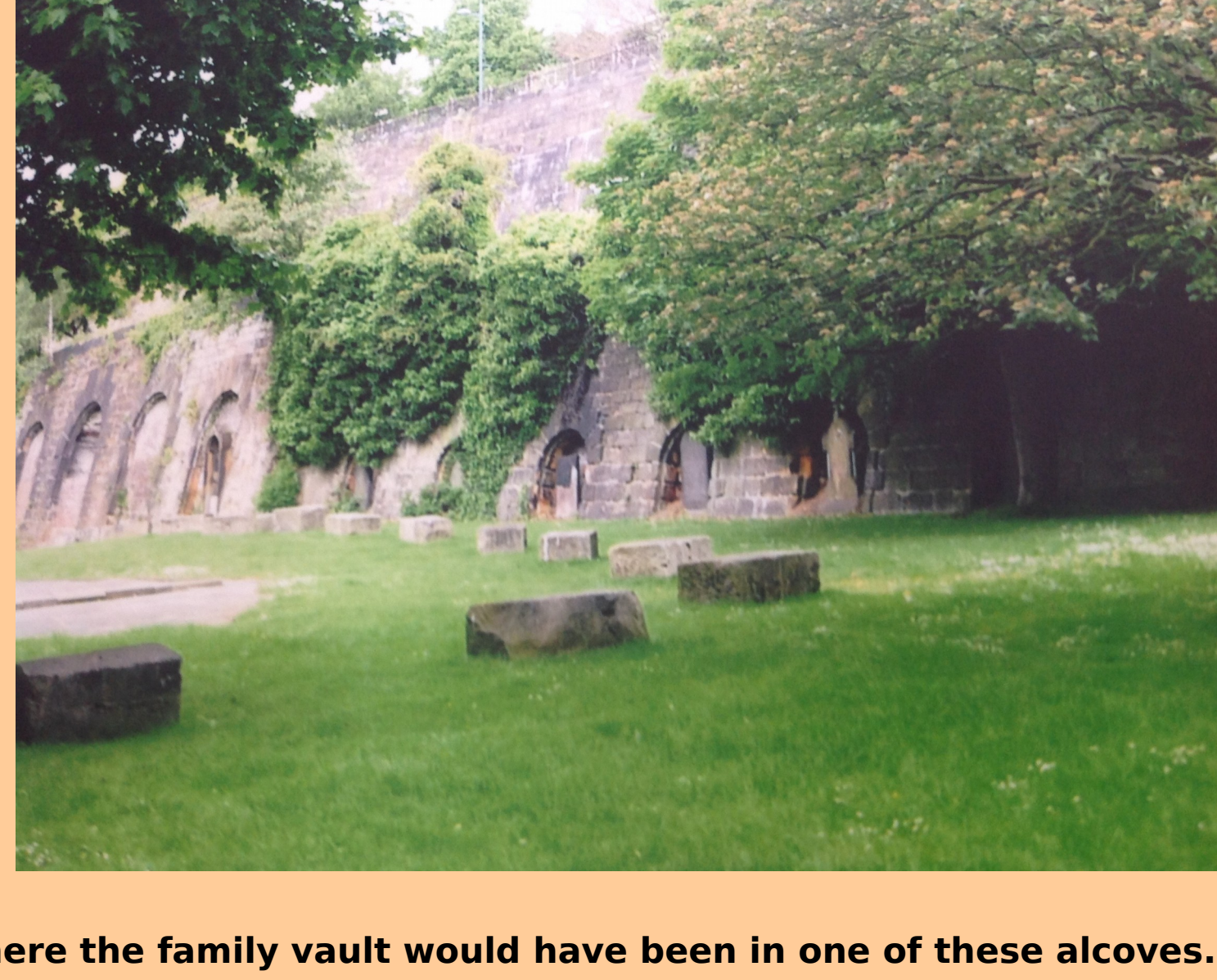
The grubby outside of Liverpool town Hall where Hugh was mayor



The beautiful council chambers, Hugh was the second mayor to have presided here. I'm sure that somewhere I had a photo of the mayoral board with his name second on the list.



Entrance to what was the cemetery but now a park. Funeral corteges would have gone through here on way to cemetery just below.



Where the family vault would have been in one of these alcoves.

One disappointment in Liverpool was that the old cemetery that Richard Cortazzi was buried in 1902, has been turned into a park. There was a family crypt but that has disappeared. The old gravestones are all there but not in situ and I couldn't see any to do with us. It's a very gloomy and atmospheric park in a hollow behind the cathedral. I've emailed the council to see if they've got any record of where the headstones might be but never had an answer.

-Thanks Jen

