

**‘The Hotel de Luxe’:
The Architectural and Social Significance
of the ‘Grand Hotel’ in London 1860-1910**

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Abstract

The London grand hotel or hotel *de luxe* was a new building type, designed to provide luxury for a changing society. These venues were located at the intersection of public and private, and composed of a series of potentially contradictory characteristics. They combined an idealised past with the excitement of the future. They promised an experience of consumption rooted in traditional status which was also innovative. 'Modern' in terms of up-to-date technology, they also exhibited the modernity of shifting hierarchies and identities in an urbanised, industrialised society. Their desirability was associated with the excitement of the foreign, but also with their practical role as a convenient base. Monuments to wealth and fashion which constantly adapted, grand hotels both responded to and reshaped identity and social culture.

Luxury is complex and elusive, defined according to place, time and person. Chapter I sets this thesis in the context of other examinations of the concept, its inherent duality as economic fact and medium to communicate social relationships, and its connection to the production of space. It argues for a set of characteristics of luxury around which the thesis is structured. Chapter II: Grandeur examines the hotels' physical reality, size and status. Chapter III: Magic considers the representational encounter, promoted through a narrative of magical transformation. Chapter IV: Exclusivity examines the tensions between this crucial aspect of luxury and the need to attract clients, balanced via tangible and intangible thresholds of plan, design, and staff performance. Chapter V: Cosmopolitanism considers the attractions of foreign cultures, visible in the public-facing staff and in the gastro-cosmopolitanism of restaurants. Chapter VI: Comfort addresses the influence of changing ideas of physical and social comfort on public and guest rooms, and the new, private bathroom. Chapter VIII: Modernity examines the hidden production systems of luxury, and the social modernity on display in palm courts, where men and women could enjoy novel experiences in a new interior. Combined, these characteristics created the grand hotel.

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I am also grateful to my mother, Katharine Broome, expert in genealogy, and my sister, Victoria Hussein, for their insights into the hotel business. Members of my book club, Kim Antonia, Ginny Battcock, Daire Corr, Karen Gleeson, Cathy Hartshorne, Cathy Hollingworth, Anne Prendergast, Vicky Stansfield, and Anna Thorne, encouraged me and forgave my frequent failures to finish 'the book'. My talented and clever daughters, Lucy and Alice, of whom I am immensely proud, have been brilliant, and my husband, Peter Anderson has listened, advised, and kept me going when challenges seemed insurmountable.

When I was considering embarking on this study, I was advised to select a subject with which I had a personal connection, as this would keep me going when times were tough. As a child, I spent many happy days in the Stafford Hotel, St. James' Place in London, where my father was managing director. Ever since, I have been intrigued by the luxury hotel. Consequently, I would like to acknowledge my father, Simon Broome (1931-1977), the inspiration for this study.

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Abbreviations

<i>BA</i>	<i>British Architect</i>
<i>BJ</i>	<i>Builders' Journal</i>
<i>BN</i>	<i>Building News</i>
<i>The Caterer</i>	<i>The Caterer, Hotel Proprietor and Refreshment Contractor</i> <i>The Caterer and Hotel Proprietor's Gazette</i> <i>The Caterer and Hotelkeeper's Gazette</i>
<i>CL</i>	<i>Country Life</i>
<i>DT</i>	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>
<i>HW</i>	<i>The Hotel World</i>
<i>ILN</i>	<i>Illustrated London News</i>
<i>MG</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
<i>LMA</i>	<i>London Metropolitan Archives</i>
<i>RIBA</i>	<i>Royal Institute of British Architects</i>
<i>Saturday Review</i>	<i>Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art</i>
<i>WCA</i>	<i>Westminster City Archives</i>
<i>LCC</i>	<i>London County Council</i>
<i>MBW</i>	<i>Metropolitan Board of Works</i>
<i>CUP</i>	<i>Cambridge University Press</i>
<i>OUP</i>	<i>Oxford University Press</i>
<i>UP</i>	<i>University Press</i>

Chapter I: Introduction

In 1912, the Savoy Hotel Company published *London's Social Calendar*, a 'long and lasting souvenir' for the company's patrons and friends.¹ Bound within were vivacious, highly coloured illustrations of the principal events of the year, from the royal and political to the entertaining and spectacular. Readers could appreciate the magnificence of the House of Lords during the opening of Parliament by His Majesty the King. They could admire the beautiful gowns of the ladies enjoying Cup Day at Ascot, or be thrilled by the galloping horsemen from 'native' Indian Regiments, performing at the annual Naval and Military Tournament at Olympia.



Figure 1. 'New Year's Eve Festivities at the Savoy', *London's Social Calendar* (1912) ²

Interspersed between the illustrations of these established political, social, and cultural occasions were images of events at one or another of the company's London establishments. At the Savoy, exuberant, champagne-sipping pleasure seekers enjoyed the New Year's Eve festivities in the

¹ This booklet does not have a publication date, but the image of Anna Pavlova at the Savoy's Fancy Dress Ball, held during the week of George V's coronation festivities on 22 June 1911, indicates a date of 1912.

² *London's Social Calendar* (London: Savoy Hotel Company Ltd., 1912), 33.

glittering ballroom (Figure 1). In the panelled restaurant at Claridge's, well-dressed guests gathered, served by waiters in crisp, white aprons. Elegant men clad in evening dress, and women dressed in pastel silks and satins dined in the dazzling white and gold Louis XVI interior at the Berkeley. The juxtaposition in the *Calendar* of established political and social occasions with the activities which took place in these grand hotels effectively placed these venues on an equal footing, at the peak of London society.

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, grand hotels or hotels *de luxe* were established as important sites in the social scene of London's elite. The fashionable took lunch or enjoyed an after-theatre supper in the hotels' restaurants and grill rooms. Regimental dinners, coming of age dances, and wedding breakfasts were reported in the local and national press. The comings and goings of notable guests, from American heiresses to European nobility or British actors all were the subject of interest.³ Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, had graced many of these hotels with his presence. As King, he continued to attend events, associating with the nobility and *nouveaux riches* alike and experiencing the alluring combination of traditional and modern luxury that these venues supplied. As a contemporary observed, the realm of the 'fashionable London hotel' was a 'brilliant, flashing world of outward magnificence'.⁴

But the clients of these 'modern *caravanserais*', a term often used for these hotels which recalled the traditional shelters of Middle-Eastern travel, were not confined to the aristocratic or wealthy elite.⁵ Numbers of the better-off middle classes, enriched by the substantial economic and social

³ Countless examples of notable guests appear in the press. See 'Recent arrivals at the Carlton Hotel include Prince Heinrich von Liechtenstein' *ILN*, 9 February 1907, 202; 'Mrs. Langtry has been staying at the Savoy Hotel', *Manchester Courier*, 29 October 1904, 10; 'Among the past and present crowned heads [...] who have made use of Claridge's [...] may be mentioned the King and Queen of the Belgians, [...] the Queen of Portugal [...] and the Comte de Paris', *DT*, 19 December 1907, 4.

⁴ Mrs. John Van Vorst, 'The Homeless Rich. Life in a Fashionable London Hotel', *Pall Mall Magazine*, January 1911, 74-79.

⁵ 'Hotel Profits', *DT*, 8 October 1913, 4. The term *caravanserai* is discussed in Chapter V Cosmopolitanism. See also Elaine Denby, *Grand Hotels: Reality and Illusion* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), 11.

changes of the previous half century, had the money and time to visit London and experience these venues too.⁶ Records of those staying in hotels indicate a wide range of occupations, from food production and transport, governance and administration, to journalism and entertainment. Visitors from the expanding professions included doctors, accountants, solicitors and barristers. Merchants selling goods from chemicals to wood came from London, Aberdeen, or Romford. Manufacturers of steel were from Sheffield, makers of cotton from Lincoln, mining engineers from Edinburgh and book publishers from Nottingham. While some female guests came to work, often in the theatrical profession, many came to participate in social events and experience the theatre, retail and leisure attractions which the city offered. Foreigners from all continents, and citizens born throughout the Empire, from New Brunswick and Aden, to Calcutta and Trinidad, all came to these London hotels.⁷

In 1910, the numbers of first-class hotels in London in which these visitors could stay was in stark contrast to the quantity that had existed sixty years before.⁸ Indeed, in the early 1850s, the poor quality of hotels had been the subject of hundreds of letters to *The Times*.⁹ Yet, by 1901, Arthur Beavan, author of *Imperial London*, could compare the small number of good London hotels in 1855, with the forty or so he listed. 'On every side,' he declared, 'are hotels large enough for palaces, gorgeously appointed and open to receive all-comers with well-filled purses'.¹⁰ Older hotels, such as The Langham (1865) or the London hotels of the Gordon Hotel Company Ltd., competed with those which had been rebuilt more recently, such as Claridge's (re-opened after

⁶ Judith A. Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior: Liberalism and the British Home, 1870-1914* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 2008), 20-22.

⁷ This material comes from the census records of the 13 case studies for 1891, 1901 and 1911.

⁸ According to *The Caterer*, quoting 'the manager of one of the largest hotels in London', the total hotel accommodation in London was probably 50,000 bedrooms in 1908. 'Ten years ago it was not half that, and twenty years ago London was a wilderness - the hotel accommodation being both scanty and comfortless,' 'The Hotel Boom', *The Caterer*, February 1908, 55.

⁹ David Bowie, 'Pure Diffusion? The Great English Hotel Charges Debate in *The Times*, 1853', *Business History*, 58:2 (2016), 159-178, 163.

¹⁰ Arthur H. Beavan, *Imperial London* (London: J.M. Dent & Co.; New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1901), 453.

reconstruction in 1898), and new openings, which included the Cecil (1896) or the Carlton (1899).¹¹ In the following decade, with the construction of hotels such as the Ritz of 1906, the Piccadilly and the Waldorf, both of which opened in 1908, the model in space, style and service for the grand, luxury, metropolitan hotel was firmly established.

The comments of observers such as Arthur Beavan and the pages of *London's Social Calendar* illustrate that the grand hotel in London in this period promised luxury. Yet this assertion raises a number of questions. What does luxury mean in this context? Who used these venues, and what was the significance of luxury to them? What did this luxury look, feel, sound, smell and taste like? How was it fulfilled and by whom? How were the conflicting demands of attracting a wide variety of guests balanced with maintaining exclusivity? Did the notion of luxury in these hotels develop and change over the period, and if so, how ?

Rather than responding to these questions solely through building typography, or a detailed history of a particular hotel, I propose to examine them through the prism of luxury, and the experience of its providers and consumers. In these hybrid and sometimes contradictory buildings, I argue that the recognisable tropes of historic, aristocratic luxury were united with the most up-to-date technologies and fashionable, visible heterosociability. They were promoted through a narrative of magical transformation, complete with references to the twinkling delights of fairyland. The convenience of good location and the grandeur of noble houses were combined with the taste and comfort found in the most opulent of interiors. The excitement of the cosmopolitanism of foreign cultures was tempered by an exclusivity enabled by the building plan, and controlled by hotel staff. All this was facilitated by complex management structures, and internal systems, hidden from clientele, without which these large organisations could not have functioned efficiently. In these buildings, luxury was not static, but subject to continual

¹¹ The Grand (1880); The First Avenue Hotel (1883); The Metropole (1885) and The Victoria (1887).

modification. Although the concept can be defined in a number of ways, I argue that in these hotels the principal characteristics of luxury were grandeur, magic, exclusivity, cosmopolitanism, comfort, and modernity. Combined, they created the grand hotel.

Before addressing each of these themes in the chapters which follow, in this introduction I first examine luxury, assessing how other scholars have addressed the concept, its material expression, and its implications for ideas of social identity and status. I identify luxury's inherent 'duality', as both economic fact and a medium to communicate social relationships.¹² I connect this to the production of space, and the mutual influences between the built environment and the identity of those who consume and experience it.

I then consider current scholarship relating to the history and broader study of the hotel. While there has been a notable increase in recent international interest in the architectural and social history of hotels, there has been no detailed academic study of this enchanting building type in London. Turning to questions of approach, I follow the example of other historians of consumption and scholars of luxury brand marketing, and argue that an effective method of examination is to establish a framework which identifies key features of luxury consumption in these venues. These characteristics, listed above, then act as a structure around which the chapters of this thesis are organised, and through which the details of design, operation and experience are examined.

I then outline the circumstances in mid-nineteenth century London which provided the context and drove demand for grand hotels. I draw on contemporary literature to define the terms 'hotel *de luxe*' and 'grand hotel', and identify the principal sources for this study. Finally I outline the structure of the thesis in greater detail, identifying how each chapter will consider different

¹² Ulrich Lehmann, 'The Luxury Duality: From Economic Fact to Cultural Capital', in John Armitage & Joanne Roberts, eds., *Critical Luxury Studies: Art, Design, Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016), 67-87, 67.

aspects of these buildings, and how this study moves forward the understanding of the role of luxury in the context of the grand hotel.

Luxury: ‘Something Better, Something Different, Something Exclusive’.

Luxury is a complex concept, defined and understood in a variety of ways, which change according to time, place and person. In the past, access to luxury was closely guarded, but in the modern world, as Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello point out, ‘luxury has become commonplace [...] in the general desire to aim for something better, something different, and something exclusive’.¹³ The material reality of luxury, its constant evolutions and its changing interpretations have been the subject of study in a number of academic fields. The definition and examination of luxury has a place in political, religious and economic history, and in the study of design and aesthetics.¹⁴ It is relevant to the scholarship of consumption and gender.¹⁵ It is of significance in marketing and business studies, and, more recently, it has been a theme in critical theory and sociology.¹⁶ More specifically, in relation to the subject of this thesis, it has a place in architectural history.¹⁷

¹³ Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello, *Luxury: A Rich History* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), vii.

¹⁴ Werner Sombart, *Luxury and Capitalism* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1967); John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1977); Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994); Matthew Hilton, ‘The Legacy of Luxury: Moralities of Consumption since the 18th Century’, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 4 (2004), 101-123 and Frank Trentmann and Maxine Berg, *Luxury, the Luxury Trades, and the Roots of Industrial Growth: A Global Perspective* (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

¹⁵ John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1993); Victoria De Grazia and Ellen Furlough, eds., *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 1996); Mary-Louise Roberts, ‘Gender, Consumption, and Commodity Culture’, *American Historical Review*, 103 (1998), 817-844; Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of the West End* (Princeton, N.J.; Chichester: Princeton UP, 2001) and Frank Trentmann, ed., *Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

¹⁶ For luxury brands analysis, see Jean-Noël Kapferer, ‘Why are We Seduced by Luxury Brands?’, *Journal of Brand Management*, 6:1 (1998), 44-49; Bernard Catry, ‘The Great Pretenders: The Magic of Luxury Goods’, *Business Strategy Review*, 14 (2003), 10-17 and Delphine Dion & Eric Arnould, ‘Retail Luxury Strategy: Assembling Charisma through Art and Magic’, *Journal of Retailing*, 87 (2011), 502-520. For the growth of critical luxury studies, see John Armitage & Joanne Roberts, eds., *Critical Luxury Studies: Art, Design, Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016), and ‘The Spirit of Luxury’, *Cultural Politics*, 12:1 (2016), 1-22.

¹⁷ See McNeill & Riello, ‘Chapter 4: Housing Luxury’, in *Luxury* (2016), 116-48, for an overview.

Although the complexity of luxury is now acknowledged, studies of what might be referred to as 'traditional' societies – those in which power and wealth is concentrated in a relatively small group - argue that, in many ways, in these cultures the interpretation of luxury consumption was more straightforward. The benefits of beautiful possessions and the comforts of luxurious surroundings were tightly controlled, permitted only for the social and religious elites.¹⁸ Before industrialisation, the quantity of fine objects was limited, due to difficulties of production, the inherent rarity of raw materials, or the challenges of their origin, all of which added to cost. These restrictions meant that wearing, exhibiting and utilising such objects endowed social status and group membership upon the user. At the same time, luxury, or the lack of it, divided the rest from the elites, excluding those without appropriate prestige, and prohibiting display of luxuries.¹⁹ In these societies, for non-elites, the consumption of luxury - all that was not immediately necessary - was not only inappropriate, but also potentially both illegal and immoral.²⁰ Disrupting the conventions of social order by the adoption of the luxuries of a superior social group was wrong.

However, as numerous scholars have recognised, during the eighteenth century, European attitudes to luxury consumption began to change. Maxine Berg and others working on the histories of Western consumption and global trade have identified that the increased demand for luxury consumer goods, many of which originated in distant lands, motivated and energised British industrialisation and production, resulting in economic development. Consumption patterns altered, and a 'New Luxury' grew, based on retail spending, often conducted by women, and the interaction with the supply of goods in an increasingly urbanised, industrialised

¹⁸ Helen Jacobsen, 'Luxury Consumption, Cultural Politics and the Career of the Earl of Arlington, 1660-1685', *Historical Journal*, 52 (2009), 295-317.

¹⁹ Armitage & Roberts, 'The Spirit of Luxury', *Cultural Politics*, 12:1 (2016), 1-22.

²⁰ Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack, eds., *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c.1200-1800* (Cambridge: CUP, 2019).

economy.²¹ Rather than restricting luxury consumption to a limited elite, the argument made by contemporary economic thinkers such as Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) or Adam Smith (1723-1790) was that individual consumption was important for the greater public good and the growth of the economy.²² The desire for luxuries expanded beyond the rich and powerful to ‘modest and ordinary consumers’, stimulating supply and demand.²³ The consumption of luxury was not only concerned with beauty, rarity and social status, it also had a place in the wider economy, nationally and internationally.

Although the consumption of luxury by a broader spectrum of the populace was still regarded as immoral by some, by the middle of the nineteenth century such activities were increasingly accepted as both economically and culturally beneficial.²⁴ In France, the economist Henri Baudrillart (1821 - 1892) argued that the production and consumption of luxury items were not only essential to the success of the economy, but also for ‘the better part of [France] itself’. In Britain, for Alfred Marshall (1843-1924), author of *Principles of Economics* (1890), consumption was an act of both aesthetic appreciation and a duty to the nation. The ethicist, Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900) also recognised that, although luxurious living might be, as he put it, ‘in some degree censurable’, it was essential to the creation and appreciation of beautiful objects.²⁵ The

²¹ See Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, 'Introduction', in Berg & Clifford, eds., *Consumers and Luxury : Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650-1850*, (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999), 1-16, and Linda Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendor: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005).

²² Hilton, 'The Legacy of Luxury', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 4 (2004), 101-123, citing Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, 6th edn. (London, 1729) and Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (1776).

²³ Jan de Vries, 'Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods, in Brewer & Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods*, 85-9 and 107-15, cited by Maxine Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present*, 182 (2004), 85-142, 92.

²⁴ Hilton, 'The Legacy of Luxury' *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 4 (2004), 101-123.

²⁵ Henri Baudrillart, *Histoire De Luxe, Privé et Public, d'Antiquités Jusqu'à Nos Jours*, 2nd Édition (Paris : 1880), 525 and Henry Sidgwick, 'Luxury', *International Journal of Ethics*, 5 :1 (1894), 1-16, 16. For an historiography of consumption, see M. J. Daunton & M. Hilton, *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001), particularly 'Chapter I: Material Politics: An Introduction', 1-32, which refers to Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics* (1890).

innovations of luxury production and consumption not only stimulated the economy, but also contributed to the image of a nation at the forefront of progress and creativity.

With this shift came an increasing association between luxury, physical well-being and pleasure. It had always been the case that the attractions of luxury lay not just in the visibility of objects as status symbols, but also in 'rich, comfortable, and sumptuous living'.²⁶ Now luxury was not only more widely available, its definition also broadened to encompass a wider range of physical and social experiences. As the century passed, a good life was increasingly defined in material, and, for some, almost hedonistic terms. New sensations, pleasures and leisure pursuits could be embraced, as retailers, theatres and restaurants offered a new kind of luxury experience, in a manner that was increasingly accessible or, in a term used by recent scholars of luxury consumption, 'democratised'.²⁷ Luxury was not only available to a broader social group, but it was also increasingly complex and multifaceted.

Just as the possession and display of luxury goods for the elites in traditional societies was closely connected with their status, part of the allure of luxury consumption for the *nouveaux riches* and aspirational lay in its relationship with identity and image.²⁸ Luxury consumption posits a 'duality', in Ulrich Lehmann's words. It is not only an 'economic fact but a medium to communicate social relationships'.²⁹ For contemporary analysts such as John Rae (1796-1872) and

²⁶ Armitage & Roberts, 'The Spirit of Luxury', *Cultural Politics*, 12:1 (2016), 1-22, 4.

²⁷ Peter Bailey, "'A Mingled Mass of Perfectly Legitimate Pleasures': The Victorian Middle Class and the Problem of Leisure", *Victorian Studies*, 21 (1977), 7-28; Rebecca L. Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard UP, 2000) and Mike Featherstone, 'Luxury, Consumer Culture and Sumptuary Dynamics' *Luxury*, 1:1 (2014), 47-69, 48. For the 'democratisation' of luxury, see Armitage & Roberts, 'The Spirit of Luxury', *Cultural Politics*, 12:1 (2016), 1-22, 4. The term is somewhat contested, and is examined later in this chapter.

²⁸ Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973). 'In the cross-class fashionable society, rank, birth, wealth and fortune might all be necessary for one to achieve leadership, but they were not enough if a woman did not have other qualities that fashion favoured [...] sociability, tact and taste.' Sumiao Li, 'Arabian Nights Entertainment': The Rule of Fashion and the Public Roles of Aristocratic Women in Britain, 1820-1860', *Nineteenth-century Gender Studies*, 6:1, (2010), np.

²⁹ Lehmann, 'The Luxury Duality', in Armitage & Roberts, eds., *Critical Luxury Studies* (2016), 67-87, 67.

Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), the consumption practices of the wealthy were not merely about the standard of the goods or services consumed, or 'the pursuit of demonstrable rarity for its own sake'.³⁰ Rather, as wealth increased and spread over society, consumer behaviour was driven by attempts to attain esteem through visible consumption. The traditionally wealthy were at liberty to satisfy their wants as their needs were already fulfilled. Their wealth enabled them to free themselves from productive work and occupy their time with leisure pursuits and building social and political capital, while their economic dependents 'vicariously' consumed on their behalf.³¹ For the *nouveaux riches*, the professionals, prosperous merchants and manufacturers, and the affluent middle classes, greater wealth enabled a transition from providing for their own needs to the ability to satisfy their desires, adopting the practices of the wealthy.³²

To be successful, however, replicating the consumption of material goods and leisure of the higher social classes not only needed to be carried out conspicuously. Harvey Leibenstein (1922-1994) contends that luxury consumption is also stimulated by a 'bandwagon' effect - the extent to which others are also publicly consuming the commodity.³³ Luxury goods or services gain additional attractiveness because those with whom the consumer wishes to be associated in order to be fashionable are buying them. According to Minas Kastanakis and George Balabanis, 'consumers in this market are not merely following trends, but looking for recognition within a social context.

³⁰ John Rae, *The Sociological Theory of Capital* (1834) is cited in Harvey Leibenstein, 'Bandwagon, Snob and Veblen Effects in the Theory of Consumer's Demand', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 64.2 (1950), 183-207, 184; Theodore Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1899) and Berry, *The Idea of Luxury* (1994), 31.

³¹ For the role of aristocratic women in establishing social and political capital, see Li, 'Arabian Nights Entertainment', *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*, 6:1 (2010), n.p. and K. D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 1998).

³² Colin Campbell, 'Consumption and The Rhetorics of Need and Want', *Journal of Design History*, 11(1998), 235-246.

³³ Harvey Leibenstein, 'Bandwagon, Snob and Veblen Effects', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 64.2 (1950), 183-207. See also S. Shaikh et al., 'Do Luxury Brands Successfully Entice Consumers? The Role of Bandwagon Effect', *International Marketing Review*, 34 (2017), 498-513, and P.F. Nunes, B.A. Johnson and R.T.S. Breene, 'Selling to the Moneyed Masses', *Harvard Business Review*, 82 (2004), 94-104.

They seek status gains through association with, or actual membership of, the right groups'.³⁴ For these consumers, the attributes of a luxury product *per se* were less important than their symbolism as signs of wealth and status and of their relationship with the fashionable crowd.

These arguments have been carried further in recent analyses of luxury brand marketing. This field studies the relationship between consumers and 'luxury' goods.³⁵ It posits that, in the current century, lower manufacturing costs, the expansion of the wealthier classes in developing countries, and rising employment rates among women have contributed to a 'democratisation' of global luxury consumption. In a society in which luxury is increasingly 'democratised', the traditional definition of luxury as something out of the ordinary is no longer justifiable.³⁶ Instead, as Jean-Noël Kapferer contends, it is defined by '*virtual rarity*: the feeling of privilege and of exclusivity', which increases desirability.³⁷ Goods or experiences can be considered luxurious in this 'democratised' world, simply because consumers perceive them to be so. This perception relies upon the desire to be part of a certain group. 'A common notion', the argument goes, 'is that a luxury brand enhances [a consumer's] self-respect, self-esteem and adds status within their

³⁴ Minas N. Kastanakis and George Balabanis, 'Between the Mass and the Class: Antecedents of Bandwagon Luxury Consumption Behaviour', *Journal of Business Research*, 65 (2012), 1399-1407, citing Kapferer, 'The Two Business Cultures of Luxury Brands', in J.E.. Schroder, J.E. Salzar and M. Morling, eds., *Brand Culture* (London: Routledge, 2006).

³⁵ For an introduction to this field, see Klaus-Peter Wiedmann & Nadine Hennigs, eds., *Luxury Marketing: A Challenge for Theory and Practice* (Wiesbaden Gabler Verlag, 2013) and Farhad Aliyev, Taylan Urkmez, & Ralf Wagner, 'A Comprehensive Look at Luxury Brand Marketing Research from 2000 to 2016: A Bibliometric Study and Content Analysis', *Management Review Quarterly*, 69:3 (2019), 233-264.

³⁶ L. Hudders, M. Pandelaere & P. Vyncke, 'Consumer Meaning Making: The Meaning of Luxury Brands in a Democratised Luxury World', *International Journal of Market Research*, 55:3 (2013), 69-70, which discusses the 'democratisation of the luxury market' in the early 21st century. Finkelstein argues that the restaurant 'has been thought of as a source of rebellion in that it assisted in the democratisation of luxury by acting as a conduit in bringing the privileges of the aristocracy to the bourgeoisie'. Joanne Finkelstein, *Dining Out : A Sociology of Modern Manners* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), 43.

³⁷ Kapferer, 'Abundant Rarity', *Business Horizons*, 55 (2012), 453-462; Berry, *The Idea of Luxury* (1994), 5.

reference group'.³⁸ Luxury, therefore, does not lie solely in uniqueness, rarity or the inability of others to obtain it, but also in social perception and identity.

While there are differences between this field and the study of luxury in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most particularly in the social range and geographic scope of the consumers concerned, there are a number of crucial similarities. For those establishing and maintaining luxury brands, a category into which grand hotels would certainly fit, this changing definition poses a challenge. The beneficial social associations of luxury are not preserved by price alone. Instead, the method of distinction between groups, as Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) contends, is 'taste', and judgements of taste are subjective. The capacity to differentiate in matters of taste is derived not only from economic or financial status, but from cultural capital, which, in turn, expresses positions in social hierarchy dependent upon upbringing, education and networks.³⁹ Glitz and bling - what Bourdieu called, 'the crude display of ill-mastered luxury' - might attract some, but to maintain the status of the brand, and by association, the consumers who select it, the purveyors of luxury goods and experiences need to tread a potentially contentious line. The identity, or perhaps more accurately, the identity which an individual displays, is, according to these arguments, inherently connected with the possessions they own, the experiences they encounter, and the spaces they occupy.⁴⁰

³⁸ Aarzoo Daswani & Varsha Jain, 'Understanding Luxury Branding: A Conceptual Framework', *Media Asia*, 38:3 (2011), 131-139, 134 citing F. Vigneron & W.L. Johnson, 'Measuring Perceptions of Brand Luxury', *Brand Management*, 11:6 (1999), 484-506. They divide luxury consumers into five groups: Veblen; Snob; Bandwagon; Hedonic and Perfectionists. Veblenian consumers 'use prestigious brands to impress others and gain status'; Snob consumers 'perceive price as indicator of exclusivity'; Bandwagon consumers are less affected by price, but choose a luxury brand if others do so to separate themselves from non-consumers; Hedonic consumers are less interested in price and more in sensual pleasures and aesthetic beauty. Perfectionists use their own perception of quality along with price to judge luxury.

³⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), and Helene Lipstadt, 'Sociology: Bourdieu's Bequest', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 64 (2005), 433-436.

⁴⁰ Andrew Trigg, 'Veblen, Bourdieu and Conspicuous Consumption', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 35 (2001), 99-116, 105, citing Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984), 31.

Luxury, Consumption, and the Production of Space

This connection between social relationships, identity, and consumption applies as much to the built environment as to material possessions. Influenced by the approach of Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space*, (1974/1991), recent scholars of architecture and interiors acknowledge that, as the consumption of goods reflects and responds to the social status and identity of the consumer, changing as fashions and conventions change, so buildings respond to, reflect and influence the habits, fashions, choices and social identities of their occupants and users.⁴¹ For Lefebvre, space is not simply a structure, or as Joyce and Gillin have recently expressed it, ‘a passive container waiting to be filled with contents’.⁴² Instead, space is produced through three processes: Through conception or planning; through the description of space as experienced; and through daily practice, which can either maintain or subvert the intentions of the planner and designer. The ways in which space is occupied, experienced and used, therefore, not only reconfigure relationships of power and control, as Michel Foucault argues, but more widely alter the way in which occupiers or inhabitants behave and relate to each other.⁴³ Space, in Gregory and Urry’s words, is the ‘medium through which social relations are produced and reproduced’.⁴⁴

In buildings which are either designed to be, or become, outside the continuum of everyday life, these effects can be amplified. These heterotopias might be schools, prisons or hotels, but once

⁴¹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, originally published 1974), 33 & 39. For recent work on the dynamism of space, and its relationship with identity, see Denise Amy Baxter & Meredith Martin, eds., *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors* (Farnham; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing, 2010); S. Taylor & A. Spicer ‘Time for Space: an Interpretative Review of Research on Organizational Spaces’, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 9: 4; 2007 69-94; Zhongyuan Zhang & Andre Spicer, ‘Leader, You First’: The Everyday Production of Hierarchical Space in a Chinese Bureaucracy’, *Human Relations*, 67:6 (2014), 739–62, 740, and Daniel Maudlin, ‘Constructing Identity and Tradition: Englishness, Politics and the Neo-Traditional House’, *Journal of Architectural Education*, 63:1 (2009), 51-63.

⁴² Edward Gillin & Horatio H. Joyce, ‘Introduction’, in *Experiencing Architecture in the Nineteenth Century: Buildings and Society in the Modern Age* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019), 1-11, 4.

⁴³ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd edn. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

⁴⁴ Zhang & Spicer, ‘Leader’, *Human Relations*, 67:6 (2014), 739–62, citing D. Gregory & J. Urry, ‘Introduction’ in *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985) 1–8, 3.

inside, past the point at which exterior and interior meet, Foucault and others have argued, the outside world disappears, and a sense of isolation, protection or otherness can prevail.⁴⁵ George E. Marcus has recently taken this point further, arguing that in 'elite enclosures'- contained spaces which promise luxury - outsiders are excluded. Within, 'as far as the eye can see', the environment is controlled and managed.⁴⁶ Grand hotels, separated from the outside world principally but not only on the basis of luxury, can be perceived as 'autonomous worlds', in which what happens can only happen there, making them a particularly useful location in storytelling.⁴⁷ In luxury venues, this view argues, the luxury is both exclusive and excluding.

Like these scholars, I would maintain that the social and the architectural are intimately connected. Social change and complexity, as William Whyte argues, has architectural consequences.⁴⁸ The relationship between the built environment and those who use it is dynamic, each creating and influencing the other.⁴⁹ Buildings can stimulate the senses, regulate behaviour, or imply status, but the material world, in the words of Molly Berger, also 'shape[s], promote[s] and reproduce[s] economic and social relationships, and the values which underpin

⁴⁵ Michel Foucault, 'Texts,/Contexts: Of Other Spaces' *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986) , 24. For the contested liminality of hotels, see Annette Pritchard & Nigel Morgan 'Hotel Babylon? Exploring Hotels as Liminal Sites of Transition and Transgression'. *Tourist Management*, 27:5 (2006) and Roy C. Wood, 'Hotel Culture and Social Control', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21:1 (1994), 65-80; Tom Avermaete & Anne Massey, eds. *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013) and Douglas Tallack, 'Waiting, Waiting': the Hotel Lobby, in the Modern City', in Neil Leach, ed., *The Hieroglyphics of Space: Reading and Experiencing the Modern Metropolis* (London: Routledge, 2002), 139-51.

⁴⁶ George E. Marcus, 'Luxurious Emplacement: Elite Enclosure, 'As Far as the Eye Can See . . .' *Cultural Politics*, 14: 1 (2018), 63-77.

⁴⁷ Jennifer Volland, 'The Archetypal Space of the Hotel', in Jennifer Volland, Bruce Grenville and Stephanie Rebick, eds., *Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life*, (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2013), 14-39, 16. For the relationship between literature and hotels, see Bettina Matthias, *The Hotel as Setting in Early Twentieth-Century German and Austrian Literature: Checking in to Tell a Story* (Rochester, NY; Woodbridge: Camden House, 2006), and Charlotte Bates, 'Hotel Histories: Modern Tourists, Modern Nomads and the Culture of Hotel Consciousness', *Literature and History*, 12:2 (2003), 62-75.

⁴⁸ William Whyte, *Unlocking the Church: The Lost Secrets of Victorian Sacred Space* (Oxford: OUP, 2017), 21.

⁴⁹ Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, (Oxford; Basil Blackwell, 1983, first published in German, 1969), cited by Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction: Studying Advice: Historiography, Methodology, Commentary, Bibliography', *Journal of Design History*, 16:1 (2003), 1-14, 3.

them’.⁵⁰ Others continue the same theme. ‘Interiors are never neutral’, John Potvin claims.

‘Space creates knowledge and meaning for a given time, place and community’.⁵¹ These interconnections means that understanding the spaces of the past enables understanding of the social relationships of those who occupied them.

Scholars working in the fields of design and architectural history and in the study of consumption and social class have used urban space, new building types, and new interpretations of existing buildings to examine shifting ideas of class, gender and the public/private dichotomy in the nineteenth century in a variety of ways.⁵² In theatres, where the social and physical comfort of a new, more bourgeois audience needed to be maintained, space was organised to keep classes apart, and decoration was adapted to indicate variations in the status of the clientele.⁵³ In public schools and asylums, which professed to provide a ‘home from home’, Quintin Colville, Jane Hamlett and others have contended that plan and design were used to allude to the domestic, but to retain the requirements of their institutional setting.⁵⁴ In pubs and clubs, for Fiona Fisher and Jane Rendell, social hierarchy was reproduced, controlled and managed through spatial

⁵⁰ David Howes, *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2005); Molly W. Berger, ‘The Rich Man’s City: Hotels and Mansions of Gilded Age New York’, *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005), 46-71.

⁵¹ John Potvin, ‘Inside Orientalism’, 1-20, in John Potvin, ed., *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 1-20, 1.

⁵² Jeanne Catherine Lawrence, ‘Geographical Space, Social Space, and the Realm of the Department Store’, *Urban History*, 19 (1992), 64-83; Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992) and Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001).

⁵³ Michael R. Booth, ‘East End and West End: Class and Audience in Victorian London’, *Theatre Research International*, 2 (1977), 98-103; David Schulz, ‘The Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption: Property, Class, and Display at Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s Her Majesty’s Theatre’, *Theatre Journal*, 51:3 (1999), 231-250, and Hugh Maguire, ‘The Victorian Theatre as a Home from Home’, *Journal of Design History*, 13: 2 (2000), 107-21.

⁵⁴ Quintin Colville, ‘The Role of the Interior in Constructing Notions of Class and Status: A Case Study of Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, 1905-1939’ in Susie McKellar & Penny Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity*, (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2004) 114 -132; Jane Hamlett, *At Home in the Institution: Material Life in Asylums, Lodging Houses and Schools in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

organisation and material design.⁵⁵ In department stores, or ‘cathedrals of consumption’, female consumers were attracted, via advertising and publicity, by promises of magical transformations, in interiors that enhanced experience through the use of scale and light.⁵⁶ In restaurants, cosmopolitanism was combined with the display and performance of social status, fashionability and wealth.⁵⁷ Penny Sparke’s extensive work on the ‘modern interior’ argues that, as strict rules of the ‘separate spheres’ approach to spatial planning broke down, in venues which could no longer be defined as either public or private, domestic or commercial, masculine or feminine, representations of ‘home’ were melded with other imperatives to create new, hybrid interiors which were specifically ‘modern’.⁵⁸

Like all these venues, the new London grand hotels were located at the transition between the public and private, between the domestic and commercial, and composed of a series of potentially contradictory ideas. They combined the idealised past, with the excitement of the future. They promised an experience of consumption that was rooted in status, and dressed in tradition, but was adaptable and innovative. Often described as ‘modern’ by contemporaries to indicate up-to-date technology, they also exhibited the modernity found in the changing

⁵⁵ Fiona Fisher, ‘Privacy and Supervision in the Modernised Public House, 1872-1902’, in Penny Sparke et al., eds., *Designing the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2009), 41-52; Jane Rendell, ‘The Clubs of St James’s’, *The Journal of Architecture*, 4 (1999), 167-189.

⁵⁶ In addition to Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), for female consumption, and the place of the department store, see Kathryn Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping: An Architectural History* (New Haven; London: Yale UP for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2003) and Elizabeth Outka, ‘Crossing the Great Divide: Selfridges, Modernity and the Commodified Authentic’, *Modernism/modernity*, 12:2 (2005), 311-328.

⁵⁷ Rebecca L. Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard UP, 2000); Rachel Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2011); Brenda Assael, ‘Gastro-Cosmopolitanism and the Restaurant in Late Victorian and Edwardian London’, *Historical Journal*, 56 (2013), 681-706.

⁵⁸ Penny Sparke, ‘Introduction’ in McKellar & Sparke eds., *Interior Design and Identity* (2004), 1-9, 9. See also Sparke, ‘The Modern Interior Revisited’, *Journal of Interior Design*, 34 (2008), v-xvii; Sparke, ‘The Modern Interior: A Space, a Place or a Matter of Taste?’, *Interiors: Design, Architecture, Culture*, 1 (2010), 7-17 and Penny Sparke & Anne Massey, *Biography, Identity and the Modern Interior* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). Molly W. Berger, ‘The American Hotel’, *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25, (2005), 6-9, also argues that the fluidity and instability of interiors which are both commercial and domestic renders them essentially ‘modern’.

hierarchies and the transience, mobility and anonymity of a deracinated, urbanised industrialised society.⁵⁹ Frequently dubbed *caravanserais*, their attraction was associated with the excitement of the foreign or exotic, as well as their practical role as a convenient base in the centre of the city. Monuments to wealth and fashion which constantly adapted, grand hotels both responded to and reshaped identity and social culture.

The Historiography of the Hotel

Just as an examination of luxury can be situated in a range of academic fields, an analysis of hotels might be appropriate in a variety of disciplines. A study of grand hotels can be approached as urban history, the history of leisure and travel, or of global consumption and transnationalism. Such venues can also sit at the centre of arguments around consumption, social change, gender and design. Despite this range of possibilities, with the exception of Elaine Denby's encyclopaedic *Grand Hotels: Reality and Illusion* (1998), this building type in general, and the London grand hotel specifically, has not, until recently, been the subject of a great deal of academic research.⁶⁰

Of the histories of British hotels which have been published, some place an emphasis on connections with railways, while others focus on interior design and social relationships.⁶¹

However, many tend to be primarily descriptive narratives which lack contextualisation, or are publicity material for the hotel concerned.⁶² Biographies or autobiographies of hoteliers and

⁵⁹ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990) and Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 2010).

⁶⁰ Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998), 8.

⁶¹ Jack Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels and Tourism in Great Britain, 1839-1914', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 19 (April 1984), 201-222; Oliver Carter, *An Illustrated History of British Railway Hotels* (St Michaels, Lancs.: Silver Link, 1990); Marcus Binney, *The Ritz Hotel, London*, 2nd edition (London: Thames & Hudson, 2006). See also Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd, *The London Ritz: A Social and Architectural History* (London: Arum Press Ltd., 1980), and David Watkin et al., *Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels* (London: Vendôme Press, 1984).

⁶² Bowie, 'Innovation...', *Tourism Management*, 64 (2018), 314-323, 135, citing Mary Borer, *The British Hotel Through the Ages* (Guildford: Lutterworth Press, 1972) and Derek Taylor, *Ritz: British Hotels 1837-1987* (London: Milman Press, 2003). Many books about the Savoy follow this trend. See, for example, Compton

chefs often tend to be carefully curated accounts rather than accurate histories.⁶³ While these studies can be useful when examining the image of the grand hotel created through marketing, their value as accurate source material or examinations of the production of space or wider hotel culture is limited.

More recently however, critical studies of hotels have become increasingly prevalent, from scholars both interested in and based in a wide range of geographies. In his recent *Histories, Meanings and Representations of the Modern Hotel* (2018), Kevin J. James argues that the study of hotels falls into three main groups, each of which explores the building not just in terms of architecture and construction, but 'as a cultural object'.⁶⁴ James argues that historiography in each of his three categories - 'the American hotel', the 'colonial hotel' and the 'wartime hotel' - examines the hotel's economic, cultural and political networks, which extend beyond the tourism economy, and include the building's 'spatial regimes and sociabilities'. While arguably the category of the 'wartime hotel', which identifies a thread connecting the hotel with armed conflict, has little impact upon this thesis, much of the scholarship outlined under the other two headings identifies approaches and raises questions pertinent to this study.⁶⁵

Mackenzie, *The Savoy of London* (London: Harrap, 1953) and Stanley Jackson, *The Savoy: The Romance of a Great Hotel* (London: F Muller, 1964) .

⁶³ Examples include Auguste Escoffier, *Auguste Escoffier, Memories of My Life* (New York: Van Norstrand Reinhold, 1997) and Marie-Louise Ritz, *César Ritz, Host to the World* (London: G.G. Harrap, 1938).

⁶⁴ Kevin J. James, *Histories, Meanings and Representations of the Modern Hotel*, (Bristol; Blue Ridge Summit, Pa.: Channel View Publications, 2018), 3. See also Kevin J. James, A. Sandoval-Strausz, Daniel Maudlin, Maurizio Peleggi, Cédric Humair & Molly W. Berger, 'A Discussion of the Hotel in History: Evolving Perspectives', *Journal of Tourism Management*, 9:1 (2017), 92-111.

⁶⁵ While the 'wartime hotel' is fascinating, and warrants further investigation of the case study hotels from 1914 onwards, it is not relevant to the period under investigation. James argues that hotels in conflict zones are often sites of great strategic value. In addition, luxury hotels in particular have been a target for terrorists, due to their connections to elites, capitalism, and hedonism. He cites, amongst others, J.C. Henderson, C. Shufen, L. Huifen and L. Xiang, 'Tourism and Terrorism: A Hotel Industry Perspective', *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Culinary Arts*, 2:1 (2010), 33-46 and D.A. Werick and M. A. Von Glinow, 'Reflections on the Evolving Terrorist Threat to Luxury Hotels: A Case Study on Marriott International', *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 54:5 (2012), 729-746.

Although, prior to 2000, there had been some noteworthy studies on the relationship between commercial hospitality, consumption and changing social practices in the United States, the publication of the special issue of *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* on The American Hotel in 2005 was significant.⁶⁶ Edited by Molly Berger, the articles explored the world of the large American hotel, identifying the importance of design, service, standardisation, and technology, as well as the creation of a narrative of luxury.⁶⁷ The journal drew together articles which examined the subject from a variety of perspectives, under the proposition that the new, purpose built hotel in America was 'both a product and an agent' of industrial capitalism, and the 'expansion and consolidation of enormous wealth', which bound 'the material, economic, social, and cultural worlds in ways that are perhaps unique'.⁶⁸ This approach was echoed by A.K. Sandoval-Strausz in *Hotel: An American Dream* (2007) which detailed the development of the urban hotel, used as a residential and commercial base by the expanding middle-classes across nineteenth-century America. According to this study, one aspect of the American hotel's historic and cultural importance was that its arrival often coincided with a stage in the economic and social development of new towns. A second emphasis was the interconnection between the hotel's plan and design and questions not only of class and gender, but also of race.

Also with a focus on the United States but scrutinising themes which are central to this study, Molly Berger's *Hotel Dreams: Luxury, Technology, and Urban Ambition in America, 1829-1929* (2011) examined the importance of technology, novelty and status in the promise and provision of luxury service. In a similar vein, Rachel Sherman and David Brody have also analysed the

⁶⁶ See in particular Carolyn Brucken, 'In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31:4 (1996), 203-220.

⁶⁷ 'The American Hotel', *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005) which includes Andrew S. Dolkart, 'Millionaires' Elysiums: The Luxury Apartment Hotels of Schultze and Weaver, 10-45; Molly W. Berger, 'The Rich Man's City: Hotels and Mansions of Gilded Age New York', 46-71, and Lisa Pfueller Davidson, 'Early Twentieth-Century Hotel Architects and the Origins of Standardisation', 72-103.

⁶⁸ Molly W. Berger, 'Introduction', in *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005), 6-9.

structures of staff roles and performance in such establishments.⁶⁹ Others have studied the cultural significance of hotels, both, as Barbara Penner argues, as educational sites, where conspicuous consumption and the experience of luxury might be taught to the *nouveaux riches*, and, as Annabel Wharton notes, as visible representations of American values, as seen in the Hilton Hotel chain in the twentieth century.⁷⁰ This body of work identifies the social, economic and cultural complexities of the hotel in the United States, a world in which the duality of luxury is practiced daily. At the same time, much of it argues, explicitly or implicitly, for the pre-eminence of the American hotel and its influence upon international hotel culture.

While the American hotel is certainly of significance in the development of the modern luxury hotel, an overemphasis on its influence fails to adequately capture the role of other hotel cultures. In formulating his second category of hotel historiography, the ‘colonial hotel’, James asserts that, unlike the American hotel, the development of the European hotel - both British and continental - was not closely associated with urban growth, nor ‘integral to the political and commercial dynamism of the nation’. Instead they often functioned as a means of ‘producing hybridised cultural and social forms in colonial and post-colonial contexts’.⁷¹ While this analysis can be applied to the relationship between the design and social practices of hotels in the ‘home’

⁶⁹ A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007) and Molly W. Berger, *Hotel Dreams: Luxury, Technology, and Urban Ambition in America, 1829-1929* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011). For staff structures and roles particularly in luxury hotels, see Rachel Sherman, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006) and David Brody, *Housekeeping by Design: Hotels and Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

⁷⁰ Barbara Penner, ‘“Colleges for the Teaching of Extravagance”: New York Palace Hotels’, *Winterthur Portfolio*, 44 (2010), 159-191; Annabel Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

⁷¹ James, *The Modern Hotel* (2018), 8. See, for example, Maurizio Peleggi, ‘The Social and Material Life of Colonial Hotels: Comfort Zones as Contact Zones in British Colombo and Singapore, ca. 1870-1930’, *Journal of Social History*, 46:1 (2012), 124-153. The interest in colonial influences can also be seen in studies of the connections between both Britain and France with Australia. See Tracey Avery, ‘Furniture Design and Colonialism: Negotiating Relationships between Britain and Australia, 1880-1901’, *Home Cultures*, 4 (2007), 69-92, and Miles Lewis, ‘The French Connection: The Secret History of French Influence in Australian Architecture’, *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, 8 (2006), 91-116.

countries and that exhibited in colonial hotels, I would argue that it underestimates the importance and specificities of European hotel culture.

The principal differences between American and European hotels lay in three areas. Although new and improved British and European hotels claimed many of the luxuries which American establishments offered, they also tended to place an emphasis on fine food, therapeutic comfort, and cosmopolitanism.⁷² The attractions of the 'gastro-cosmopolitanism', a phrase used by Brenda Assael, fostered in restaurants included not only the food and wine consumed, but also the interior design and the nationality of *maîtres d'hôtel*, chefs and waiters.⁷³ Others have also argued that food and the choice of what and where to eat were markers of taste, distinction and identity.⁷⁴ This was an eye-catching combination, particularly for British hotels, and claimed as avowedly 'modern'.

Given the interest in luxury, and the range of recent scholarship connected with hotels, it is surprising that although a small number of individual establishments have been examined, there has to date been no study which considers the significance of this building type in London.

Although the international connections of these establishments cannot be downplayed, a study which focusses on London is of considerable value.⁷⁵ Benefitting from a political stability which

⁷² Laurent Tissot, 'L'Hôtellerie de Luxe A Genève (1830-2000): De Ses Espaces à Ses Usages', *Entreprises et Histoire*, 46 (2007), 17-32; Cédric Humair, 'The Hotel Industry and its Importance in the Technical and Economic Development of a Region: The Lake Geneva Case (1852-1914)', *Journal of Tourism History*, 3:3 (2011), 237-265, and Alexandre Tessier, *Le Grand Hôtel: L'Invention du Luxe Hôtelier 1862-1972* (Rennes : Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012).

⁷³ See Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant* (2000); Haley, *Turning the Tables* (2011); Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption* (2011) and Assael, 'Gastro-Cosmopolitanism', *Historical Journal*, 56 (2013), 681-706.

⁷⁴ For a general history of food consumption and social mores, see Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1985); Peter Scholliers, 'Meals, Food Narratives, and Sentiments of Belonging in Past and Present', in Peter Scholliers, ed., *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe since the Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Berg, 2001) 3-22, and Peter Scholliers, ed., *Eating Out in Europe: Picnics, Gourmet Dining, and Snacks since the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford ; New York: Berg, 2003).

⁷⁵ A review of a recent study of grand hotels in New York, London and Berlin argues that attempting to analyse these buildings over such disparate geographies can produce a result which is too broad brush.

was not seen in Paris or Berlin, the city was a rapidly expanding metropolis, at the centre of the British Empire. As a commercial guide stated, at this time, ‘modern London’ was ‘the largest, wealthiest, most populous, most cosmopolitan, busiest, and most influential of the cities of the world [...] on a pinnacle of superiority – alone, unapproached, and unapproachable’.⁷⁶ As the social and cultural background of those who possessed the financial means to travel changed, and a broader population could enjoy the retail and leisure activities that London offered, the establishments in which the wealthy and the aspirational stayed also transformed. These new, purpose-built hotels were deemed ‘luxurious’, because they combined a place to rest one’s head with a location in which consumption was designed to be visible, where the clientele could attain social recognition through associating with the right people, even if only by sharing the same roof. Like champagne, grand hotels and the social practices taking place within their walls represented an important shift in consumption. This was a move from the original luxury paradigm, which marked the clear social segmentation between the elite and the people, towards a model of mass, or ‘democratised’ luxury in a mass market economy.⁷⁷

This thesis examines the conjunction of this new luxury with a novel space, the grand hotel. I argue that these establishments, like other new building types of the period, were a response to innovative ideas about how architecture should serve the changing demands of a ‘modern industrial people’.⁷⁸ In these spaces, architects, designers, proprietors and managers sought to produce an answer to the question of how to supply a growing audience with expectations of greater comfort and luxury. At the same time, those selecting and enjoying these venues were re-

Tobias Becker, ‘Review of Habbo Knoch, *Grand Hotels: Luxusraume und Gesellschaftswandel in New York, London und Berlin um 1900* (Luxury rooms and changing society in New York, London and Berlin in 1900), (Gottingen: Wallstein, 2016), *German History*, 35.2 (2017), 334-335.

⁷⁶ *Modern London: The World’s Metropolis, an Epitome of Results, Businessmen and Commercial Interests* (London: 1891), 34.

⁷⁷ With thanks to Graham Harding for his notes taken from Christian Barrere, ‘A strange story: When crisis leads to wealth: The institution of champagne as a luxury good’, *Business History Conference*, Business and Economic History online - paper presented at the Business History Conference, Wilmington, (2010).

⁷⁸ Gillin & Joyce, ‘Introduction’, in *Experiencing Architecture in the Nineteenth Century* (2019), 1-12.

creating themselves as members of a club of sophisticated, cosmopolitan consumers, with the standards, status and ways of behaving previously only available to the wealthiest elite. In these venues, space and identity were 'in essence' produced together.⁷⁹

Although this study examines the relationship between space and identity in the London grand hotels, I have not chosen to employ a single established theoretical framework of space. Instead arguments put forward by theoreticians of spatial organisation, supervision and social control, including Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault, or those who have interpreted ideas of the production of space more recently, are utilised to inform examinations of the spaces within the grand hotel as appropriate.⁸⁰ In the same way, although this study seeks to identify the importance of the physical experiences of those using grand hotels, and the methods that hotel proprietors adopted to promote and expand this aspect of luxury, this is not a study of phenomenology. Instead, in the light of a number of recent analyses, my approach is to consider sensory experience as only one aspect of the design and materiality of these buildings.⁸¹

This is also not a study which uses gender as its primary framework.⁸² The changing place of women in society, I argue, does exercise an undeniable influence upon these buildings in

⁷⁹ Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), 5.

⁸⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, originally published 1974) and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd edn. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). For recent interpretations of these approaches, see, for example, Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale UP, 2000); David Brody, *Housekeeping by Design: Hotels and Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), particularly Chapter I, 'Theoretically Checking In', 21-34; Zhongyuan Zhang & Andre Spicer, 'Leader, You First': The Everyday Production of Hierarchical Space in a Chinese Bureaucracy', *Human Relations*, 67:6 (2014), 739-62, 742; Joseph M. Piro, 'Foucault and the Architecture of Surveillance: Creating Regimes of Power in Schools, Shrines, and Society', *Educational Studies*, 44:1 (2008), 30-46.

⁸¹ See for example, David Howes, *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2005) particularly, 'HYPERESTHESIA or the Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism', 281-303. For an investigation of the impact of architecture upon the senses, see Augusta McMahon, 'Space, Sound and Light: Toward a Sensory Experience of Ancient Monumental Architecture', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 117 (2013), 163-179.

⁸² Studies of gender and sexual behaviour go beyond those largely interested in 'separate spheres'. The liminality and heterotopia of hotels have historically connected these buildings to various types of sexual mores and behaviours outside conventional contemporary norms, from the use of hotels for adulterous behaviour which might be cited in the divorce courts, to the behaviour of Oscar Wilde.

numerous ways, from plan to décor, from bathing to dining, and from the staff who provided luxury service to the guests who enjoyed it. Consequently, in common with many examinations of the material culture, design and architecture of this period, questions of gender and 'separate spheres' appear as a *leitmotif* which runs through the thesis.⁸³ However, to focus primarily upon gender, I suggest, would be to limit the wide ranging nature of this study. My central theme, which permits all these considerations to be brought to bear on the relationship between space and identity in these buildings, is therefore luxury.

Luxury, as others have shown, is an elusive concept which is hard to define precisely. It is 'subjective, relative, and multidimensional'.⁸⁴ Although this complexity poses challenges, the combination of elusiveness and subjectivity means that, to some extent, each investigator is at liberty to define the notion as they see fit. For Maxine Berg, eighteenth-century luxury involved ideas of 'comfort and convenience, enjoyment and sociability, taste and aesthetics'.⁸⁵ For one scholar of marketing theory, the concept unites 'lavishness, magnificence, comfort, sumptuousness, opulence and extravagance'.⁸⁶ For researchers of hospitality management, the luxury of a twenty-first century hotel can be defined as 'excess, surplus, superfluity, and opulence

⁸³ Gender studies informs innumerable investigations of space and design in this period, from the influence upon material culture (Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750* (London, Thames & Hudson, 1986); transport (Margaret Walsh, 'Gender in the History of Transportation Services: A Historiographical Perspective', *Business History Review*, 81.3 (2007), 545-562), to interior design (Penny Sparke, *As Long as it's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste* (London: Pandora, 1995); Beverly Gordon, 'Woman's Domestic Body: The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31: 4, (1996), 281-301; Emma Ferry, "Any Lady Can Do This Without Much Trouble ...": Class and Gender in The Dining Room (1878), *Interiors*, 5:2 (2014), 141-159) and public space (Jessica Ellen Sewell *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco 1890-1915* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011). Studies such as Dorte Kuhlmann, *Gender Studies in Architecture: Space, Power and Difference* (London, New York; Routledge, 2013) consider the connections between gender and space.

⁸⁴ Kapferer, 'Why are we seduced by luxury brands?', *Journal of Management*, 6:1 (1998), 44-49, 44 and Daswani & Jain, 'Understanding Luxury Branding', *Media Asia*, 38:3 (2011), 131-139, 133.

⁸⁵ Maxine Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present*, 182 (2004), 85-142, 94-5.

⁸⁶ S. Khan, 'Communicating Luxury to the Masses', *Admap Magazine* (July/August 2006), 474, 46-7, cited in Daswani and Jain, 'Understanding Luxury Branding', *Media Asia*, 38:3 (2011), 131-139, 133.

[...] exclusivity and distinctiveness'.⁸⁷ For Elaine Denby, the superior status of a grand hotel was signified by 'size, opulent interiors, new technology and innovative management, [...] fine cuisine, a careful blend of reality and illusion, and an essential magic of grandeur and luxury'.⁸⁸

These definitions, each appropriate in their own context, indicate that the key aspects of luxury can and should vary, contingent upon the subject and its social and cultural setting. Following this approach, I argue that in the grand hotels of London at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, luxury was made up of six principal characteristics. These are grandeur, magic, exclusivity, cosmopolitanism, comfort, and modernity. The chapters of this thesis use these aspects of luxury as themes, and I will establish a more detailed classification at the end of this introduction. First however, I set out the economic, social and cultural context in which the demand for this new type of hotel grew.

A Rapidly Changing Environment

The development of the grand hotel in London which took place over the half century or so prior to the publication of *London's Social Calendar* (1912) coincided with considerable economic, industrial and technological change. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, new urban culture, social and consumption practices, the place of women, and attitudes to the foreign had all transformed society.⁸⁹ A web of railways brought goods and people to the city.⁹⁰ Although it had not undergone quite the redevelopment seen in Paris over the same period, London and its infrastructure had been improved and reconstructed.⁹¹ While the housing problem had certainly

⁸⁷ Michael Riley and Edith Szivas, 'Luxury and Innovation: Towards an Evaluative Framework', *Research in Hospitality Management*, 5:2 (2015), 147-152, 147.

⁸⁸ Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998), 8.

⁸⁹ For a broad ranging examination of the social, political and economic changes in Britain, see José Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (London: Penguin, 1994).

⁹⁰ Margaret Walsh, 'Gender in the History of Transportation Services: A Historiographical Perspective', *Business History Review*, 81.3 (2007), 545-562.

⁹¹ John Summerson, *The London Building World of the Eighteen-Sixties* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973); Geoffrey Tyack, *Sir James Pennethorne and the Making of Victorian London* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992),

not been solved, many inner city slums had been demolished, and new thoroughfares created. Novel building technologies led to taller buildings.⁹² Gas and, later, electric light illuminated streets, houses, offices and shops. The streets resounded with the 'roar [of] motor buses, vans, carts, cabs, carriages, church bells, hawkers, newsboys, railway whistles, [and] cab calls'. London was 'brighter, greener, airier, taller and more up-to-date.'⁹³

Greater investment, changing management practices, and improved communication combined with legislative change to transform business and commerce. Following the Limited Liability Act (1855) and the Joint Stock Companies Act (1856), companies formed by groups of investors or which raised capital through the sale of shares facilitated large-scale investment and provided income for middle and upper class stockholders.⁹⁴ The gradual reduction of stamp duty and the ability to transport print quickly by rail helped the growth of local and national newspapers, periodicals, trade and specialist journals.⁹⁵ Newspapers and magazines profited from increased advertising, which became more sophisticated in design, production and messaging.⁹⁶

43, and Antoine Paccoud, 'Planning Law, Power, and Practice: Haussmann in Paris (1853–1870)', *Planning Perspectives*, 31.3 (2016), 341–361.

⁹² Richard Dennis, 'Babylonian Flats' in Victorian and Edwardian London', *London Journal*, 33 (2008), 233–247; Jonathan Clarke, *Early Structural Steel in London Buildings* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2014).

⁹³ Jerry White, *London in the Nineteenth Century: 'A Human Awful Wonder of God'* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2007); H. A. Scott, 'The Symphony of the London Streets', *Pall Mall Magazine*, (November 1910), 799.

⁹⁴ Christine Amsler, Robin Bartlett and Craig Bolton, 'Thoughts of Some British Economists on Early Limited Liability and Corporate Legislation', *History of Political Economy*, 13 (1981), 774–793; R.C. Michie, 'The London Stock Exchange and the British Securities Market, 1850–1914', *Economic History Review*, 38 (1985), 61–82; J. Rutterford et al., 'Who Comprised the Nation of Shareholders? Gender and investment in Great Britain, c1870–1935', *Economic History Review*, 64 (2011), 157–187. For an examination of Victorian investing, see Dermot Coleman, *Being Good With Money: Economic Bearings in George Eliot's Ethical and Social Thought* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Exeter, 2011).

⁹⁵ J. Auerbach, 'What They Read: Mid-Nineteenth Century English Women's Magazines and the Emergence of a Consumer Culture', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 30:2 (1997), 121–140; G. Beegan, 'The Up-to-Date Periodical: Subjectivity, Technology and Time in the Late Victorian Press', *Time & Society*, 10(2001), 113–134.

⁹⁶ For the growth of advertising during this period, see Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990) and Roy Church, 'Advertising Consumer Goods in Nineteenth-century Britain: Reinterpretations', *Economic History Review*, 53:4 (2000), 621–645.

The structure of the most influential social groups had changed. From the 1870s, the number of families in 'Society' had grown, increasing from about 500 to over 4,000 by 1900.⁹⁷ While much of the landowning aristocracy had been adversely affected by the agricultural depressions of the second half of the nineteenth century, the great city estate owners had seen their wealth rise. The large business fortunes of the early and mid-nineteenth century, often based in railways, engineering, ship building or property development, had been overtaken by the larger fortunes of the *fin de siècle*. The *nouveaux riches*, who were more likely to be bankers or City business men, could purchase property and possessions previously available only to highest elite.⁹⁸

While birth and family connections still carried considerable weight, rank was increasingly judged by visible signs rather than innate characteristics - a 'relocation of status from heredity to appearance'.⁹⁹ Guided in matters of taste and social conventions by a wealth of advisors, an upper stratum of the middle classes could now educate their sons, decorate their houses and experience comfort in emulation of the aristocracy and the gentry.¹⁰⁰ While sociability, entertaining and the performance of leisure had always played a role in establishing social

⁹⁷ Davidoff uses the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of Society - 'the aggregate of leisured, cultured or fashionable persons regarded as forming a distinct class or body'. Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season* (London, 1973), 103. For the numbers see David Cannadine, 'The Theory and Practice of the English Leisure Classes', *The Historical Journal*, 21 (1998), 445-467, 463.

⁹⁸ Nicholas Cooper, *The Opulent Eye: Late Victorian and Edwardian Taste in Interior Design* (London: Architectural Press, 1976), 6; Christopher Simon Sykes, *Private Palaces: Life in the Great London Houses* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985), 317; Joseph Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches: Style and Status in Victorian and Edwardian Architecture* (London: John Murray, 2000); W. D. Rubenstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain since the Industrial Revolution* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006).

⁹⁹ Patricia Smyth, 'Editorial from special issue dedicated to papers given at the Shared Visions: Art, Theatre and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century conference, University of Warwick, 11 February 2012', *Theatre, Art and Visual Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, 39:1 (2012), xix-xx.

¹⁰⁰ Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior* (2008), 20-22, estimates about 42,000 families in England and Wales had incomes between £1,000 and £5,000 per annum, with 7,500 families over £5,000 per annum in 1865/6, citing Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution* (New York: New Press, 1999), 21. Peter Bailey, '"A Mingled Mass of Perfectly Legitimate Pleasures": The Victorian Middle Class and the Problem of Leisure', *Victorian Studies*, 21 (1977), 7-28.

For the role of advice literature, see the *Journal of Design History*, 16 (2003), which includes Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction: Studying Advice: Historiography, Methodology, Commentary, Bibliography'; Emma Ferry, 'Decorators may be Compared to Doctors': An analysis of Rhoda and Agnes Garret's 'Suggestions for House Decoration in Painting, Woodwork and Furniture' (1876)', and Rachel Rich, 'Designing the Dinner Party: Advice on Dining and Décor in London and Paris, 1860-1914'.

hierarchies, in this environment, the social occasions and ‘finely graded activities’ undertaken both during the London Season, and on other significant dates during the year, were important sites of differentiation. For the wealthy and prosperous middle classes in particular, such events were a means of recognition, of organizing and directing ambition and establishing position.¹⁰¹

London was also increasingly cosmopolitan, both in population and in a broader cultural sense. The city’s growth, from three million in the early 1860s to four and a half million by 1900, was partially due to internal expansion, but London naturally drew people from all over the country.¹⁰² In addition, the combination of the city’s commercial and cultural position at the heart of the growing Empire and better international travel contributed to greater numbers of foreign visitors. In 1880, the author Herbert Fry (1830-1885) was typical of many of those observing the changes. London, he declared, was at ‘the centre of the terrestrial globe, [...]the centre of commerce, of wealth, of intellectual and moral life’, attracting ‘pretty nearly every race on the habitable globe, of nearly every tongue and dialect, of every colour and complexion, of every creed, religion, persuasion and opinion, however eccentric’.¹⁰³

Some considered this influx undesirable, even dangerous. Foreign cultures could imply the decadence of the bohemian Continent, or the unpredictable Orient. However, in general, the shift in consumption practices, which saw the regular use of more imported goods and extended to a more cosmopolitan approach to architecture and design, was indicative of an attitude of ‘curiosity and emulation of other cultures’ that also permeated politics and the arts. Although the display of exotic possessions had always been a symbol of wealth and sophistication for the

¹⁰¹ Michael Curtin, ‘A Question of Manners: Status and Gender in Etiquette and Courtesy’, *Journal of Modern History*, 57 (1985), 396-423, 423; Davidoff, *The Best Circles* (1973).

¹⁰² Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 312. For perceptions of the dangers of the ‘other’, see Laura Tabili, ‘A Homogenous Society? Britain’s Internal ‘Others’ 1800-Present’, in Catherine Hall & Sonya Rose eds., *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, (Cambridge; New York: CUP, 2006), 53-76.

¹⁰³ Herbert Fry, *London in 1880* (London: 1880), 2.

nobility, in the domestic sphere, particularly those of the wealthier liberal middle classes, a decidedly cosmopolitan flavour was seen in the importance placed on decorating with a knowledgeable and tasteful selection of foreign goods.¹⁰⁴

Notwithstanding later Victorian debates about the dangers for those who moved in the public sphere, whether in physical space, in the world of politics and of journalism, or in the novels of authors such as George Gissing, women were increasingly encouraged to participate in the public life of the city.¹⁰⁵ Legislation, changes in political parties, education and occupational structure enabled growing opportunities.¹⁰⁶ The sensory experience of social and cultural cosmopolitanism made venturing into the urban culture of shops, theatres, restaurants and hotels exciting and appealing.¹⁰⁷ Retail consumption gave women the ability to engage more fully with the public sphere, requiring more facilities for their comfort and convenience.¹⁰⁸ By the end of the period, the idea of 'separate spheres', somewhat contested and mutable at the best of times, was less visible in both the commercial and domestic context.¹⁰⁹ By 1910, London had undergone

¹⁰⁴ Joanna de Groot, 'Metropolitan Desires and Colonial Connections: Reflections on Consumption and Empire', 166-190, in Hall & Rose, eds., *At Home with the Empire* (2006); Stacey Sloboda, 'The Grammar of Ornament: Cosmopolitanism and Reform in British Design', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (2008), 223-236, 224 and Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1996). Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior* (2008), 43.

¹⁰⁵ For later Victorian debates, see Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* (1992) and the response from Martin J. Wiener, 'New Women vs. Old Men?: Sexual Danger and 'Social Narratives' in Later Victorian England', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 2:2, (1997), 302-310'. For George Gissing, see Rachel Bowlby, *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing and Zola* (New York: Methuen, 1985) and Arlene Young, 'Character and the Modern City: George Gissing's Urban Negotiations', *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920*, 49 (2006), 49-62.

¹⁰⁶ For the changing social position of women, see Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit* (Penguin, 1994), 23-32.

¹⁰⁷ Judith R. Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale UP, 2012).

¹⁰⁸ For the debates surrounding the female consumer, see Margot Finn, 'Sex and the City: Metropolitan Modernities in English History', *Victorian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Social, Political and Cultural Studies*, 44 (2001), 25-32; Mary-Louise Roberts, 'Gender, Consumption and Commodity Culture', *American Historical Review*, 103 (1998), 817-844 and Leora Auslander, 'The Gendering of Consumer Practices in Nineteenth-Century France', in De Grazia & Furlough, eds., *The Sex of Things* (1996).

¹⁰⁹ For a discussion of 'separate spheres' particularly over the second half of the century, see Leonore Davidoff, 'Gender and the 'Great Divide' - Public and Private in British Gender History', *Journal of Women's History*, 15 (2003), 11-27 and Dorte Kuhlmann, *Gender Studies in Architecture: Space, Power and Difference* (London; New York: Routledge, 2013). See also Robert Thorne, 'Places of Refreshment in the Nineteenth

transformations that were technological, political, demographic, sexual, social, racial, cultural, architectural and spatial.¹¹⁰ Set in this background of an expanding city, changing social elites, the greater visibility of foreign cultures and a more public role for women, attitudes to luxury consumption also underwent a transformation. It was in this environment that the demand for hotel accommodation of the highest quality arose.

‘The Pressing Public Want of the Age’: The ‘Great Hotel Question’¹¹¹

In the 1850s, the provision of respectable hotels in London was limited, and what did exist were of a questionable standard and value. At the same time, the travelling public was both increasing quantitatively and diversifying qualitatively.¹¹² London was ‘the most civilised city in the world’ and men and women, travelling alone, in groups and in families, came from afar to conduct business and experience its metropolitan attractions.¹¹³ Many were widely travelled with higher expectations of service and comfort, and, with increasing incomes, had the money to pay for new luxuries hitherto unavailable to a significant proportion of the population.

The hotel as a building type had developed towards the end of the eighteenth century. Like inns, hotels provided accommodation for travellers, tending to incorporate some form of communal reception and dining rooms, and also often included an assembly room for public gatherings.

Century City’ in Antony D King, ed., *Buildings and Society Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 228-253. Hamlett argues that there was a general reduction in the division between gendered spaces in the home in the early twentieth century, citing Mrs. Panton, who stated that this was the cause of much disharmony between husbands and wives. Jane Hamlett, ‘The Dining Room should be the Man’s Paradise, as the Drawing Room is the Woman’s’: Gender and Middle Class Domestic Space in England, 1850-1910’, *Gender & History*, 21 (2009), 576-591, 588, citing Jane Ellen Panton, *Leaves From a Housekeeper’s Book* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1914), 49.

¹¹⁰ Stephen Inwood, *City of Cities: The Birth of Modern London* (London: Pan, 2006).

¹¹¹ Andrew Wynter ‘The New Hotel System’, *Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers* (1863, re-edited Andrew Steinmetz, London: 1877), 68, and G.A. Sala, *Household Words*, 16 February 1856, 97-103, 23 February 1856, 141-144 and 1 March 1856, 148-154.

¹¹² ‘La population voyageuse s’est grossie quantitativement [...et...] s’est diversifiée qualitativement’. Tissot, ‘L’Hôtellerie De Luxe À Genève (1830-2000)’, *Entreprises et Histoire*, 46, (2007), 17-32, 17.

¹¹³ *The Times*, 3 November 1855, 7. Over six million had attended the Great Exhibition in 1851, and Sir James Pennethorne, architect to the Crown Estate Commissioners, had suggested in 1854 that the city was visited perhaps by a million people, both British and foreign, every year. Tyack, *Sir James Pennethorne* (1992) 84, citing Rep. Sel. Committee on metropolitan communications (1854-5), 164-170

Indeed, there is some debate as to whether the hotel at this time differed much in practice from the inn.¹¹⁴ Daniel Maudlin argues that they were a development by ‘canny innkeepers’ who, initially at least, only changed the name of their establishments to the fashionable French ‘hôtel’ to attract the right customers.¹¹⁵ According to Maudlin, the first building in the English-speaking world to be called a hotel was the Royal Clarence in Exeter, opened in 1770 by a French landlord, although in appearance, spatial organisation and function it did not differ much from existing inns.¹¹⁶ Whether this was the case or not, from the hotel’s earliest incarnation, it was clear that ideas of fashion and social standing were as important as the design and structure of the building itself.

While commercial accommodation had always varied in price and standards, by the 1850s, complaints about hotels in England generally and in London specifically were common.¹¹⁷ During 1853 and 1854, *The Times* received over 400 letters on the subject.¹¹⁸ In 1855, *The English Hotel Nuisance* by the traveller and journalist Albert Smith (1816-1860) crystallised the problem.¹¹⁹

Hotels were ‘bad and dirty[with] extortionate prices and uncivil landlord[s], a fortress system of

¹¹⁴ Borer, *The British Hotel* (1972); Thorne, ‘Places of Refreshment’ in King, ed., *Buildings and Society* (1980), 228-255, and Derek Taylor, *Ritzy: British Hotels 1837-1987* (London: Milman Press, 2003). See also Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998), ‘Chapter I: Origins’. Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1976), particularly ‘Chapter 11: Hotels’ for his thoughts on the evolution of the hotel from the larger inn, which, he argues, took place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

¹¹⁵ The association of French culture with high status is largely connected with the court of Louis XIV and structure and controls of luxury production. Following the Revolution, an influx of French involved in food production and hospitality was influential. See Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley, Calif., London: University of California Press, 1996); McNeil and Riello, *Luxury* (2016), 128.

¹¹⁶ David Bowie, however, has recently written of an earlier use of the word ‘hotel’ in English newspapers, in a 1764 *London Evening Post* advertisement for ‘Madame Martin’s Gentlemen’s hotel’ in St James’ Square, London. Bowie, ‘Innovation’, *Tourism Management*, 64 (2018), 314-323, 317, citing the *London Evening Post*, November and December 1764. See also Daniel Maudlin in James et al., ‘A discussion of The Hotel in History’, *Journal of Tourism Management* 9:1 (2017), 92-111.

¹¹⁷ Franziska Bollerey, ‘Beyond the Lobby: Setting the Stage for Modernity - the Cosmos of the Hotel’, in Avermaete & Massey, eds., *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges*, (2013), 5.

¹¹⁸ David Bowie, ‘Pure Diffusion? The Great English Hotel Charges Debate in *The Times*, 1853’, *Business History*, 58:2 (2016) 159-178, 163. The article outlines the public debate conducted in the press in 1853. Over 85 of the letters were published in September 1853 alone, the peak month. For other comments, see *The Athenaeum*, 9 February 1856, 166 and *The Examiner* 2 February 1856, 70.

¹¹⁹ For Smith’s role in the development of the tourism of the Alps, see Alan McNee, *The Cockney Who Sold the Alps: Albert Smith and the ascent of Mont Blanc* (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2015).

discomfort, [the] terror of tourists in England'.¹²⁰ The book, Smith stated, was a response to *The Times'* leader of 3 November 1855, which he quoted in full. These establishments, he cited, were dark, old fashioned and unhygienic, with 'dingy rooms, [the bedrooms] stuffy [with] four poster[s] and fusty curtains, ... and insect tribes'. Staff, from 'the greasy 'boots' to the pert chambermaid with her flat candlestick and leer', were unkempt, disrespectful and lacking propriety.¹²¹

Although Charles Dickens (1812-1870) did not wholeheartedly agree with Smith's argument, he commissioned three articles from his protégé, George Augustus Sala, on the 'Great Hotel Question' for *Household Words* in 1856.¹²² In these, Sala (1828-1895) contrasted the hotels of New York, Paris and the wider European continent unfavourably with British establishments. For the well-travelled Anthony Trollope (1815-1882), the deficiencies of British hotels were still very much evident in 1862, despite the arrival of hotels constructed by railway companies. Indeed, Trollope asserted, the new 'railway hotel is too frequently gloomy, [...] comfortless and almost suicidal'. All that he required was 'a clean bedroom with a good clean bed.[...] Quick attendance, bills that shall not be absolutely extortionate, smiling faces and an absence of foul smells'.¹²³ Hotels clearly did not reliably meet the requirements of service, comfort, respectability and a predictable tariff, let alone dependably provide facilities that might have been considered luxurious or 'grand'.

The paucity of suitable establishments was not only a concern for the individual traveller. Fine hotels were - and still are - an indication of metropolitan prestige, landmarks within cities, and

¹²⁰ Albert Smith, *The English Hotel Nuisance* (London, 1855), 6.

¹²¹ The 'boots' was a male servant who portered, cleaned boots and did general odd jobs. *The Times*, 3 November 1855, 7.

¹²² See G.A. Sala (uncredited), *Household Words*, 16 February 1856, 97-103, 23 February 1856, 141-144 and 1 March 1856, 148-154.

¹²³ Antony Trollope, *North America* (New York, 1862), 55 and 554.

statements of civic self-confidence.¹²⁴ For *The Times* in 1855, it was a ‘scandal[that] on the continent of Europe these things are far better managed - as they are in the United States of America’.¹²⁵ If London truly was ‘the most civilised city in the world’, the quality of its design and technology, and the grandeur of its thoroughfares should reflect the status of an imperial capital.¹²⁶ By contrast, in Europe, particularly on routes familiar to the ‘grand tourist’, hotel keepers were proud of the comfort and service they provided for wealthier clientele.¹²⁷ The Badischer Hof Hotel in Baden-Baden (1807-9), for example, although not purpose built, combined an establishment of 70 bedrooms in different price brackets, some with bathing facilities, with a *table d’hôte* and public rooms for balls and billiards. In the Lake Geneva region, the quantity of fine hotels grew in conjunction with the expansion of luxury goods suppliers and private banking.¹²⁸ In the larger European cities, despite political instability, existing hotels were augmented by new bespoke venues. In Paris, for example, the *Grand Hôtel du Louvre*, which opened in 1855 in time for the *Exposition Universelle*, and the *Grand Hôtel* (1862), in the Opera Quarter, were constructed in a new urban landscape, offering the comfort, convenience and prestige that the prosperous traveller expected.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ The Burj-al-Arab hotel, Dubai represents the Emirate as a modern state welcoming the world. See also Donald McNeill, ‘The Hotel and the City’, *Progress in Human Geography*, 32 (2008), 383-398.

¹²⁵ *The Times*, 3 November 1855, 7.

¹²⁶ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), i. In *A History of Regent Street: A Mile of Style* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2008), 2, Hermione Hobhouse argues that London had a ‘somewhat provincial image’ and ‘a feeling of inferiority toward other capital cities, certainly as far as public buildings and public monuments went’. See also Erika Rappaport, ‘Art, Commerce or Empire? The Rebuilding of Regent Street, 1880-1927’, *History Workshop Journal*, 53 (2002), 94-117, 96.

¹²⁷ For the development of the grand hotel in Europe, see Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998); Daniel Maudlin, in James et al., ‘The Hotel in History’, *Journal of Tourism History*, 9 (2017), 92-111, 98.

¹²⁸ Bollerey, ‘Beyond the Lobby’, in Avermaete & Massey, eds., *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges*, (2013), 2-48, 6. For Swiss hotels, see Tissot, ‘L’Hôtellerie de Luxe A Genève (1830-2000)’, *Entreprise Et Histoire*, 46 (2007), 17-32, and C. Humair, ‘The hotel Industry and its Importance in the Technical and Economic Development of a Region: The Lake Geneva Case (1852–1914)’, *Journal of Tourism History*, 3 (2011), 237-265.

¹²⁹ Alexandre Tessier, *Le Grand Hôtel* (2012); Habbo Knoch, ‘Life on Stage: Grand Hotels as Urban Interzones around 1900’ in Martina Heßler and Clemens Zimmermann, eds., *Creative Urban Milieus: Historical Perspectives on Culture, Economy, and the City* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

In the United States, the substantial hotel was often constructed as soon as a conurbation reached a certain size. Trollope noted that, in America, 'the first sign of an incipient settlement is an hotel five stories high [...with] two hundred bedrooms. [...] A big hotel is a matter of course'.¹³⁰ Unlike early London hotels, which were generally adapted residential buildings, the purpose-built establishments in America gave architects the opportunity to combine the most fashionable plan of large ground floor reception rooms and self-contained bedrooms on the upper floors, with up-to-date technology which increased efficiency and the standard of service. Although the ground floors of these establishments were often male-dominated spaces used for commerce, hotels such as Baltimore's City Hotel (1826) and the Tremont House in Boston (1829) were also recognised for their elegant interiors and technological sophistication. For the expanding American middle classes, such venues were an opportunity to display recently acquired prosperity, and to experience the luxury and social conventions practiced by the wealthy.¹³¹

The hotel in Britain, and in London in particular, was not indicative of urban development in quite such a clear-cut manner as in America. However, as the second half of the century advanced, new large hotels in London began to supply the well-heeled, demanding, travelling public with the standard of accommodation desired. Initially, railway companies led the way. The first hotel built and controlled by a railway company in Europe was a pair of pavilions at Euston Station by Philip Hardwick senior (1839), but the precedent most frequently referred to was by his son, the Great Western (1854) at Paddington Station.¹³² 'From the moment the doors were opened to its guests', wrote Andrew Wynter, a commentator on 'the new hotel system', 'its success has been

¹³⁰ Trollope, *North America* (1862), 556.

¹³¹ See 'The American Hotel', *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005); Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (2007); Berger, *Hotel Dreams* (2011) and Volland, Grenville and Rebick, *Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life* (2013).

¹³² For railway hotels, see Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels and Tourism ...', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 19 (April 1984), 201-222. For the development of Paddington and the Great Western, see Ben Weinreb et al. eds., *London Encyclopaedia*, 3rd edn., (London: Macmillan, 2008), 616.

triumphant. [...] The pressing public want of the day had been discovered, and unheard of dividends were the result'.¹³³ Wynter continued:

No greater contrast can be conceived than that between the old fashioned London hotel, built and added to by succeeding generations, and the splendid palaces constructed after some Palladian design which we now see towering like huge elephants over the surrounding houses [...] They differ as much from the hotels of our forefathers as a railway carriage differs from a stage waggon.

Unlike earlier hotels, these 'splendid palaces' were luxurious and prestigious, as a number of journals remarked. In 1863 *The London Review* noted that 'whilst Paris can only sustain two of these gigantic *caravanserais*, London will, in a short time, possess at least a dozen'.¹³⁴ In 1877, *The London Journal* echoed the theme, contrasting the recent dearth of hotels of the right quality with the current provision which combined 'the best features of the grand hotels on the Continent, especially those of France and Switzerland'. The author continued:

London hotels not many years ago were a fruitful theme of discussion and not by any means of admiration, among the innumerable visitors to our great metropolis [...] Within the last ten or twelve years, however, some efforts have been made to remedy this want; and Londoners can now point to the Charing Cross, Cannon Street, Langham, Midland and other hotels of which even the capital of the British Empire may be proud.¹³⁵

Hotels had changed and were now more worthy of the city.

Classifying Status: the Grand or First-Class Hotel

The use of the term 'grand hotel', as in *The London Journal* in 1877, was noteworthy. Initially, for visitors searching for better accommodation, assessing the standard of a hotel was not straightforward.¹³⁶ Although guidebooks of the 1850s listed hotels, details of their services or

¹³³ Wynter 'The new hotel system' *Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers* (1863, re-ed. 1877), 68. The phrase, 'the pressing public want of the age' was from 'The New Hotel System', *London Review*, 27 June 1863, 687.

¹³⁴ 'The New Hotel System', *The London Review*, 27 June 1863, 688.

¹³⁵ 'A Metropolitan Grand Hotel', *London Journal*, 1 December 1877, 341.

¹³⁶ Zoe Kinsley, *Women Writing the Home Tour, 1682-1812*, (London: Routledge, 2008), 41, argues that Mariana Starke, *Information and Directions for Travellers on the Continent*, 6th edn. (London: John Murray & Sons, 1828), in a forerunner to the hotel ranking system, used one to three exclamations marks to rank the paintings she recommended. For an assessment of current methods of classifying luxury hotels, see Laurence Bernstein, 'Luxury and the Hotel Brand: Art, Science, or Fiction?', *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 40:1, 1999, 47-53.

precise cost were rarely provided. Instead hotels tended to be classified by the social group of the intended guests. At this time, according to *The Times*, the two pre-eminent hotels, 'of the first class as they are called [which] everybody knows' were Mivart's in Brook Street, and The Clarendon in New Bond Street.¹³⁷ Murray's *Modern London*, a guide for visitors to the Great Exhibition, noted that the 'best hotels' included these two, where 'foreign visitors of distinction will find French and German spoken.'¹³⁸ Another guide declared that both hotels were suitable for 'dignitaries of the highest rank during transitory visits'. The rates of such venues were high, it was asserted, 'but fully warranted by the nature of the entertainment provided'.¹³⁹ The rates and 'entertainment' were not specified.

As metropolitan hotels grew in number, at first guidebooks continued to categorise generally by propriety or the difference in behaviours between social groups, rather than specifically by price or service. In the 1871 edition of Murray's *Modern London*, one hotel was described as 'of the highest respectability, well managed, resort of clergy and gentry', another as 'a very comfortable house for families or bachelors' and a third as 'quiet and genteel'.¹⁴⁰ However, by the 1879 edition, a more structured definition now divided hotels into several distinct classes. These included:

Grand Hotels, generally managed by companies; *Family Hotels* patronized by the English and Foreign nobility and gentry who have no town residence of their own, but generally spend some weeks during the year in London. *Private Hotels* similar to the above but of a quieter and less expensive character; *Hotels* frequented by bachelors and sportsmen; *Commercial hotels*, and hotels owned and patronized by foreigners.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *The Times*, 3 November 1855, 7. Mivart's, later Claridge's opened in 1813 by James Mivart in 1813 as a 'private lodging house' in 51 Brook Street, later expanding to include 53, 55 and 57 Brook Street and 48 Davies Street. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol40/pt2/pp21-32>. The Clarendon (1815) was opened by a French chef, Louis Jacquier and 'the only public hotel where a genuine French dinner could be obtained'. D. Kelly, 'A Migrant Culture on Display: The French Migrant and French Gastronomy', *Modern Language Open*, (2016), www.modernlanguagesopen.org/index.php/mlo/article/view/148.

¹³⁸ *Modern London; or London as it is* (London: John Murray, 1851), xxxii.

¹³⁹ *London as it is today* (London: H G Clarke & Co 1851), 394/5.

¹⁴⁰ *Modern London; or London as it is* (London: John Murray, 1871), 39.

¹⁴¹ *Modern London; or London as it is* (London: John Murray, 1879), 48. Italics are as in the original text.

The guide elaborated the principal features of the *Grand Hotels*. They were usually owned as well as managed by companies. They were large for buildings of the time - '5 or 6 stories high'. They were also 'built in the fashion of those in America and the Hotel du Louvre, at Paris', and had 'fixed tariffs of prices', as well as 'Coffee-rooms for ladies as well as for gentlemen'. These London grand hotels, therefore, were defined as commercial ventures, driven by profit and dividend payment. They were purpose-built, and of a substantial size. They publicised their emulation of the best international examples in both exterior and interior design. Guests could ascertain charges in advance. For commercial and social success, these hotels were designed to provide unambiguously for the comfort of both male and female guests.

According to this 1879 edition of *Murray's*, *Grand Hotels* included not only the main terminus hotels, but also a number of others including the new Grand Hotel in Northumberland Avenue (1880), the Langham (1865), described as an 'American House', and the Palace Hotel at Buckingham Gate (1860/61) which was 'quiet and well-managed, for families and gentlemen, very select'. Increasingly, however, guidebooks distinguished terminus hotels from those establishments in better locations, away from the noise of stations, closer to fashionable social, retail and leisure activities. *Baedeker's Guide to London* advised that although hotels such as the Grosvenor at Victoria (1862), the Charing Cross (1864) and the Midland Grand (1879) offered much the same comfort and service, their locations rendered them 'more suitable for passing travellers who wish to catch an early train than for those making a prolonged stay in London'.¹⁴²

In 1889, *Baedeker* listed 119 hotels in the West End and the City, categorised partially by size, but largely by geography. The ten large terminus hotels were listed separately from, 'other extensive hotels belonging to companies' - a phrase that equated them to *Murray's 'Grand Hotels'*. In the

¹⁴² Karl Baedeker, *London and its Environs* (Leipzig, 1889), 6. For the history of Baedeker guides, see David M. Bruce, 'Baedeker: The Perceived Inventor of the Formal Guide Book, a "Bible" for Travellers in the 19th Century', in R.W. Butler, ed., *Giants of Tourism* (CABI: Wallingford, 2010), 93-110.

1892 *Baedeker*, this latter group included the three Gordon hotels on Northumberland Avenue - the Grand, the Metropole (1885) and the Victoria (1887) - as well as the Westminster Palace Hotel (1858), the Langham and the Savoy (1889). In 1913, *Baedeker's* list included all thirteen principal case studies examined in this thesis.

The Arrival of the Hotel *de Luxe*

In 1879, Murray's *Modern London* had identified the features of the grand hotel - commercial, purpose-built, substantial, cosmopolitan in design, with published tariffs, and catering for both men and women. By labelling these hotels 'grand' or 'first class', guidebooks identified that these establishments rose above the ordinary, in perception as well as in practice. By the last decades of the nineteenth century, a further term was adopted to identify better quality hotels. Used initially in hotel publicity, the phrase 'hotel *de luxe*' was shorthand for a particular type of luxury which set ideas of fashionable French sophistication and a certain cosmopolitanism at its centre. Appearing in the Savoy's publicity brochure, *Souvenir* (1893), the phrase referred to a standard of modern luxury hitherto unknown, which 'was the future of the coming race'.¹⁴³ In a series of advertisements, (Figure 2) the hotel used the strap line 'the hotel *de luxe* of the world'. The Savoy, according to its publicity, set the standard that others, near and far, should emulate.¹⁴⁴

'Hotel *de luxe*' became a standard reference for a certain type of luxury. Other venues used the same phraseology, adapting it to their own features. The Berkeley in Piccadilly, was 'the only small hotel *de luxe* in London'. The Royal Bath Hotel in Bournemouth was the 'hotel *de luxe* of the South', and the Harrogate Grand Hotel was 'the hotel *de luxe* of the Provinces'.¹⁴⁵ In 1900, the

¹⁴³ The Savoy *Souvenir* (1893), 5.

¹⁴⁴ The phrase 'the hotel *de luxe* of the world' was used in advertising campaigns for the Savoy from 1890 (*The Review of Reviews*, June 1890, xviii) to at least 1906 (*ILN*, 16 June 1906, 903).

¹⁴⁵ The Berkeley, 'quiet, unpretentious and comfortable is the only small Hotel de Luxe in London', *The Times*, 7 December 1904, 6 and other dates; The Royal Bath Hotel, Bournemouth, *Saturday Review*, 19 May 1900, 630; The Harrogate Grand Hotel, *MG*, 3 December 1895, 4 and *ILN*, 8 August 1903, 191.

popular musical comedy, 'The Messenger Boy', was set in the fictional 'Hotel *de Luxe*' on the Embankment, and the finest transatlantic liners were 'hotels *de luxe* afloat'.¹⁴⁶



Figure 2 'The Hotel de Luxe of the World', The Savoy, 1890¹⁴⁷

Contemporaries and the press acknowledged the special features of these venues. A guest could not expect to pay the same price for refreshments at a hotel *de luxe*, 'so sumptuously and expensively appointed', as at an ordinary hotel, wrote a correspondent to *The Saturday Review* in 1896. In 1903, *The Pall Mall Magazine* noted the 'unparalleled magnificence and luxury, as well as their perfect adaptability to every requirement of the modern traveller' in the 'hotels *de luxe*' of New York. In 1913, *The Times* discussed the 'luxurious modern developments' in the London hotels *de luxe*. These included the 'craze' for Louis Quinze decoration, telephones in every sitting room, a private bathroom to every suite, and elaborate French menus.¹⁴⁸ In a hotel *de luxe*, technology and modernity came together with fine food and opulent furnishings.

For commentators, advertisers and guests, therefore, a hotel described as first class, grand or *de luxe* offered more than an ordinary hotel. For the guides to London published in the middle of the

¹⁴⁶ Gilbert and Sullivan online archive <http://gsarchive.net/british/messenger/index.html> acc. 21 January 2018.; 'Movements of Mail Steamers', *The Observer*, 23 August 1908, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Advertisement in *The Review of Reviews*, June 1890.

¹⁴⁸ 'Letter to the Editor on the subject of hotel charges', *Saturday Review*, 15 August 1896, 165; Walter T. Stephenson, 'Hotels and Hotel Life in New York', *Pall Mall Magazine*, October 1903, 250; 'Hotel Cecil Improvement', *The Times*, 11 November 1913, 17.

nineteenth century, the conventions of social class and respectability were the principal methods of discriminating between fine hotels and the rest. Promoted as a luxury 'product', but aimed at as wide a market as possible, advertising conveyed messages of comfort and security combined with status and desirable fashionability, which were particularly beneficial in attracting the female consumer. As the nineteenth century passed and moved into the first decade of the twentieth century, expressions of social status retained their significance, but in addition commercial requirements, improvements in technology, changing social and economic structures, and shifts in the place of women produced buildings that articulated a particular kind of luxury.

Sources

Later Victorian and Edwardian grand hotels were complex, and any attempt to understand the reality and the representation of these establishments and their occupants visually, socially and symbolically warrants the examination of wide range of contemporary sources.¹⁴⁹ The buildings, their owners, materials, design and finances should all be understood. Areas of investigation should include both the guests and the staff. The reception, perception and experiences of those who used and observed these establishments are also essential.

Initially, thirteen principal case studies were identified. These are the Langham (1865) on Portland Place; the Grand (1880), the Metropole (1885), the Victoria (1887), all on Northumberland Avenue; the Savoy (1889) and the Cecil (1896), both between the Strand and the Victoria Embankment; the Coburg (1897), now the Connaught, and Claridge's (1898) on the Grosvenor Estate; the Carlton (1899) on Haymarket/Pall Mall; the Berkeley (original construction date unknown but extended and refurbished in 1897), the Ritz (1906) and the Piccadilly (1908) on

¹⁴⁹ 'To understand the nature of Victorian civilisation it is necessary to understand Victorian cities – visually, through their forms and formlessness; socially, through their structures and chronology of processes of change, planned and unplanned; symbolically, in literature and the arts, through their features and images; together for the light they throw on the processes of urbanisation; separately and comparatively in order to understand particularity and the sense of place', Asa Briggs, 'The Human Aggregate' in H.J. Dyos & M. Wolff, eds., *The Victorian City: Images and Realities* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 83-104.

Piccadilly; and the Waldorf (1908) on the Aldwych (Figure 3).¹⁵⁰ Each was labelled 'grand' by contemporaries, but they had a variety of owners, and were designed by different architects. They vary in size and location, and their construction or reconstruction dates are spread throughout the period studied (Table 1). These hotels have been at the centre of archival and digital database searches, and their census records of 1891, 1901 and 1911 have been analysed. This list is by no means exclusive, and numerous others have been included as sources depending upon the material found. However, as others have found, sources for the study of hotels can be problematic.¹⁵¹ Hotel interiors, like other aspects of material culture, are ephemeral.¹⁵² The experiences of guests and staff are difficult to capture without contemporary accounts. Registers of travellers in this period were often either not made or have not been retained.¹⁵³ Of the principal hotels studied in this thesis, I was only able to access the very limited records of the Langham.¹⁵⁴ The Savoy archives, which holds records from the Savoy, Claridge's and the Berkeley, are not accessible to researchers.¹⁵⁵ Inevitably, therefore, there are gaps in knowledge which limit this study. Conversely, the Savoy, whose management seems to have been expert at publicity, is particularly prevalent in contemporary publications, and it is important to avoid placing too much emphasis on this venue.

To ensure a wide range of source material, and consequently of opinions and experiences, a variety of strategies has been undertaken. Contemporary plans, photographs and illustrations

¹⁵⁰ The dates indicated are the dates the hotels opened or re-opened.

¹⁵¹ 'Service industries, of course, present particular problems for economic historians. Data are commonly scarce and of uncertain value'. Rex Pope, 'A Consumer Service in Interwar Britain: The Hotel Trade, 1924-1938', *Business History Review*, 74:4 (2000), 657-682, 657.

¹⁵² Hannah Greig, Jane Hamlett and Leonie Hannan, 'Introduction', in Greig, Hamlett & Hannan eds., *Gender and Material Culture in Britain since 1600* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1-15, 7.

¹⁵³ Lawrence Manley, 'Why Did London Inns Function as Theaters?', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 71:1 (2008), 181. For the challenge of accurately measuring guest or traveller types, see Douglas Hart, 'Sociability and "Separate Spheres" on the North Atlantic: The Interior Architecture of British Atlantic Liners, 1840-1930', *Journal of Social History*, 44 (2010), 189-212, 205.

¹⁵⁴ With thanks to the general manager of the Langham in 2015, Duncan Palmer.

¹⁵⁵ Susan Scott, the archivist at the Savoy Hotel at the time, kindly showed me the hotel in November 2012. However, I was not given access any archives. Others have encountered the same difficulties.

which record the layout and design of hotel interiors have been sourced in the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) and the Westminster City archives (WCA), and elsewhere. These capture the hotels at fixed points in time, enabling assessment of fashions and ideas of comfort. Although hotels did not attract the same interest as churches or government buildings, similar material has also been found in the architectural and building trade press, including *The Builder*, *The Builders' Journal* (BJ) and *Building News* (BN). Records of site visits, and speeches and articles by suppliers and architects in these journals aid the understanding of the intentions of the creators of these hotels.

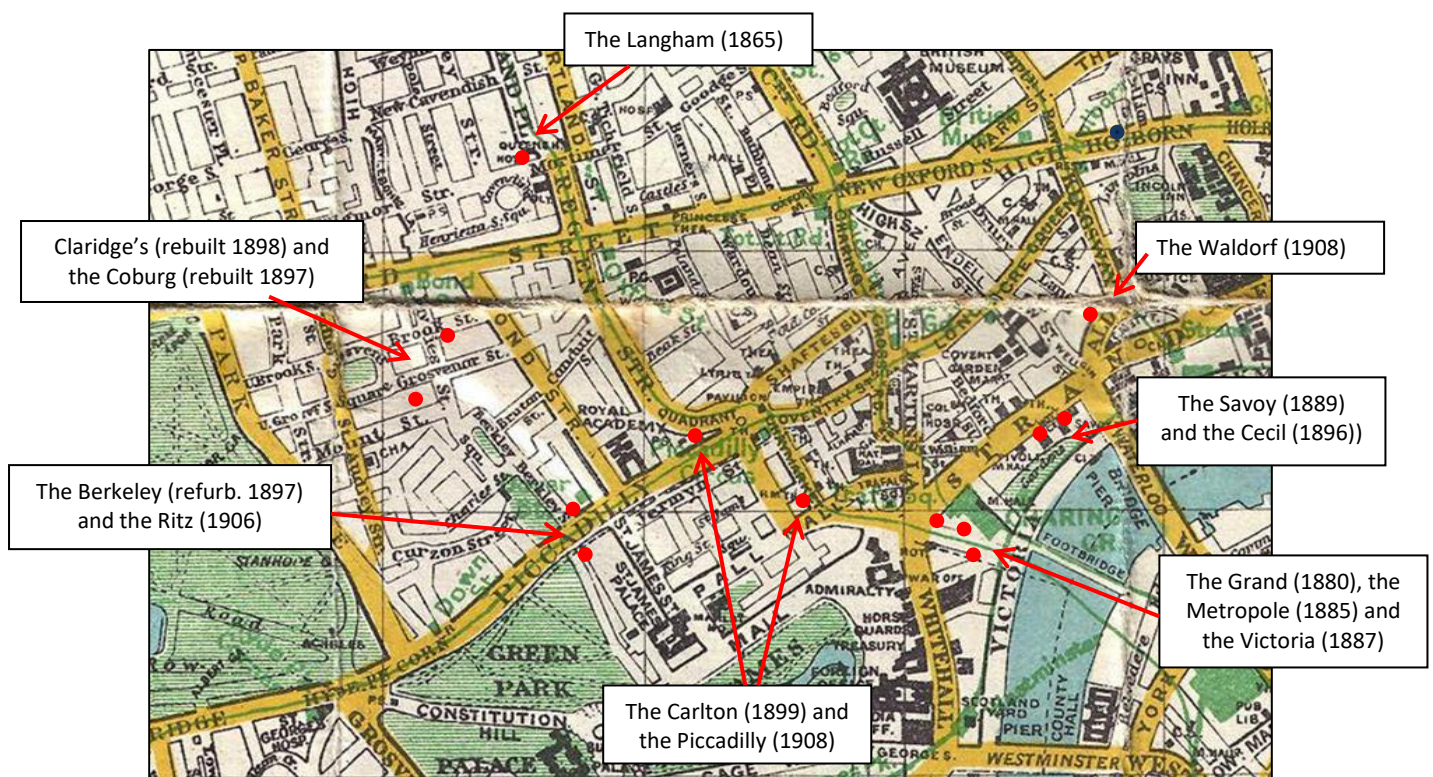


Figure 3 The Case Study Hotels, overlaid onto Bacon's Pocket Map of London and the Suburbs (1900)¹⁵⁶

More widely, articles, images and advertising produced in the huge array of Victorian and Edwardian printed publications have been extremely valuable in understanding both the reality

¹⁵⁶ Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1900_Bacon_Pocket_Map_of_London,_England_-_Geographicus_-_London-bacon-1900.jpg. Dates given are for the opening or re-opening of new or re-constructed hotels. In the case of the Berkeley, the date indicates re-opening after a major extension, internal re-organisation and refurbishment.

and symbolic representations of these venues.¹⁵⁷ Daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and journals catered for different strata in society, connecting social standing, taste and design.¹⁵⁸ Journals such as *The Illustrated London News* or *The Queen* ran regular articles on the leisure pursuits of the wealthy and well-connected, including those which took place in grand hotels.¹⁵⁹ Popular authors such as George Augustus Sala (1828-1895), Lt. Col. Nathaniel Newnham Davis (1854-18917), an early restaurant critic, and Mrs. Lynn Linton (1822-1898), the first female salaried journalist, all found hotels fascinating.¹⁶⁰ A search in digital databases of nineteenth-century British periodicals yields numerous examples of stories set in grand hotels, at home and abroad.¹⁶¹ For authors such as Henry James, Arnold Bennett and Edith Wharton, the hotel provided an ideal location in which to examine changing social and cultural mores. Without doubt, a greater resource of evidence from those who stayed or dined in hotels would have been desirable. Yet, while representations of the grand hotel in the fictional tales in newspapers, magazines and novels cannot be taken as evidence of reality, they do reveal a great deal about perceptions and the place of the hotel in the contemporary imaginary.

¹⁵⁷ Rappaport notes the importance of these publications in the relationship between women and the development of the West End - 'sites of cultural production, generating class, gender, and national identities, while selling goods and fashionable lifestyles'. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), 111.

¹⁵⁸ Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction', *Journal of Design History*, 16:1 (2003), 1-14. Peter Mandler, 'The Problem with Cultural History', *Cultural History* 1: 1 (2004), 96, cited by Greig, Hamlett, Hannan, 'Introduction', in *Gender and Material Culture in Britain since 1600* (2015), 1-15, 5, identifies the need to qualify the 'reach' or 'throw' of a particular cultural construction - in this case, the publication and its readership.

¹⁵⁹ *The Queen* was a sixpenny illustrated 'class' weekly for ladies, which included, according to the prospectus by Samuel Beeton, 'a large number of original articles on the daily life of society', with a mix of 'news' and entertainment for a comfortably well off middle- and upper-class 'ladies'. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), 112, citing Charlotte C. Watkins 'Editing a 'Class Journal': Four Decades of The Queen', in Joel Wiener, *Innovators and Preachers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian England* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1985), 185-200. Despite the difficulties of accurately estimating circulation in this period, Watkins believed the figure was 23,500 in 1890, falling to 16,000 in 1900.

¹⁶⁰ Newnham-Davis wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and his books included *The Gourmet's Guide to Europe* (London: 1908), & *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (London: 1914). Andrea Broomfield, 'Soldier of the Fork: How Nathaniel Newnham-Davis Democratized Dining', *Gastronomica, The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, 4 (2012), 46-54. Andrea L. Broomfield 'Much More than an Antifeminist: Eliza Lynn Linton's Contribution to the Rise of Victorian Popular Journalism' *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 29:2 (2001), 267-283.

¹⁶¹ See for example, Mrs. Wyndham Payne-Gallwey, 'Betty's Ancestor', *The Argosy*, July 1897, 117-127, where the opening scene was set in a private sitting room at a (fictional) Grand Hotel.

Hotel	Architects	Location	Rooms ¹⁶²	Date of opening
The Langham	John Giles & James Murray	Portland Place	300	1865
The Grand	F. & H. Francis, and J.E. Saunders	Northumberland Ave	300	1880
The Metropole	F. & H. Francis, and J.E. Saunders	Northumberland Ave	600	1885
The Victoria	Lewis H. Isaacs & Henry L. Florence	Northumberland Ave	500	1887
The Savoy	None named. Later additions by T.E. Collcutt & S. Hamp	Victoria Embankment/ The Strand	400	1889
The Cecil	John Tavenor Perry & Frederick Henry Reed	Victoria Embankment/ The Strand	700	1896
The Coburg	Lewis H. Isaacs & Henry L. Florence	Carlos Place	C. 200	(rebuilt) 1896/7
Claridge's	C.W. Stephens. Some interiors by Ernest George & Yeates	Davies Street	350	(rebuilt) 1897/8
The Carlton	C.J. Phipps. Interior plan by Isaacs & Florence	Pall Mall/Haymarket	316	1899
The Berkeley	Robert Griggs, and later William Forsyth & Hugh Maule	Piccadilly/ Berkeley Street	C.100	(extended) 1897
The Ritz	Charles Mewès & Arthur Davies, John P. Bishop, and Sven Bylander	Piccadilly	150	1906
The Piccadilly	Richard Norman Shaw, with William Woodward & Walter Emden	Piccadilly/ Regent Street	280	1908
The Waldorf	A.M. & A.G.R. Mackenzie	Aldwych	400	1908

Table 1 The Case Study Hotels

Similar interpretations of image and identity are also found in the publicity material relating to hotels. Grand hotels were developing during the same period as the burgeoning advertising industry and more sophisticated printing processes. Over the period, advertising content improves from simple text to sophisticated designs, complete with illustrations or photography. At the same time, the hotels' own marketing material increased in quantity and quality. At the most straightforward level, hotel advertising was explanatory, communicating information relating to location, services or costs. This material also gave meaning and cultural value to the products it promoted, asserting and implying desirability, status and social membership.¹⁶³

In the absence of hotel registers, information relating to guests has been found in a number of areas. Initially a quantitative analysis of the censuses of the case study hotels in 1891, 1901 and

¹⁶² Early descriptions did not usually state how many bedrooms a hotel offered, but rather a more general 'rooms', probably as they could be flexibly arranged, depending on suite size or guests' requirement.

¹⁶³ Lori Anne Loeb, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women* (New York: OUP, 1994) and Anne M. Cronin, 'Rags and Refuse: The Newspaper, Empire, and Nineteenth Century Commodity Culture', *Cultural Studies*, 20:6 (2006), 574-598, 582.

1911 was undertaken. These registers record the numbers, gender, age, and place of birth or nationality of all those under the roof of the hotel on census night. Although they are only a snapshot of those resident on the nights in question, with a database of approximately 3,500 guests and 2,000 staff over the three dates, the data is of considerable use.¹⁶⁴ Although it is usually not possible to identify who was travelling with whom, which rooms they occupied, the length of stay, or price paid, the census information is valuable for a number of reasons. While the great majority of guests are not well-known, some famous names, such as Claude Monet or Calouste Gulbenkian, can be identified. More useful to understanding the social complexity of these guests, the records also show a roughly equal division between men and women, drawn from all over the British Isles, the Empire, Europe, America, and beyond. Although the occupation of the male guests is not recorded in about a quarter of the records, where it is noted it gives an insight into the social groups from which guests came.¹⁶⁵

The censuses are also valuable in understanding how the staffing of hotels operated. Women tend to predominate in these records, probably as it was more important to have female staff on site due both to their 'domestic' duties and to conventions around safety and respectability. Although male staff are not fully represented, the records do facilitate analysis of management and staff roles, particularly in the case of the Langham (Table 14). Contemporary memoirs of hotel keepers and employees have also been valuable in the study of management practices, and the intentions of hotel owners.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ The censuses record all those resident on 5 April 1891, 31 March 1901 and 2 April 1911. See Appendix for totals of guests and staff in each hotel across the three dates.

¹⁶⁵ The difficulties of using this type of information for assessing class or income level is discussed later.

¹⁶⁶ Accounts of the Savoy, a number by former staff members, include Francois Cellier, *Gilbert, Sullivan, and D'Oyly Carte: Reminiscences of the Savoy and the Savoyards*, 2nd edn. (London: New York, 1927) and Compton Mackenzie, *The Savoy of London* (London: Harrap, 1953). The papers of Sir Henry Burdett, *Burdett.A.10.15 (MSS.Eng.C.6002-3) Gordon Hotels Ltd 1898-1919 - 6002 Folder, Bodleian Library*, a director of the Gordon Hotel Company which owned the Northumberland Avenue hotels have been informative.

The growing supply of hotel and catering publications are useful sources for understanding the expanding commercial hospitality businesses. These grew in number from the 1880s, with advice manuals for hotel management appearing around the turn of the century. Close reading of a number of these journals, including *The Caterer*, which was first published in 1878, has provided information on every aspect of the production of luxury in hotels. Subjects covered range from financial reports to staff, from decoration of interiors to choice of beds, and from suggested plans to lift technology. Advertising supported the publication of these journals, and the wide range of products publicised has supported research into suppliers, popular areas for innovation, and changing fashions in the material culture of hotels.

Finally, the buildings themselves have been useful as source material. Although many nineteenth and early twentieth-century hotels no longer exist, and others are no longer publicly accessible, the experience of entering the doors of a grand hotel leaves a strong impression. Staff still welcome or deter, huge, open spaces still impress, and gleaming interiors still excite. Although twenty-first century guests may be more used to the sensations aroused by large, luxurious buildings, crossing the threshold today of the Russell, the Savoy, Claridge's or the Langham is exhilarating. Doing so when these buildings first opened must truly have astonished.

The Characteristics of Luxury: The Structure of the Thesis

In this introduction, I have argued that luxury is a complex concept, defined according to person, time and place. It possesses an inherent 'duality', existing both as an economic fact and a means to communicate social relationships. Further, following the argument of Henri Lefebvre and others, I maintain that space is not an empty vessel, but is 'produced' by those who design, build and use it, changing its structure, purpose, meaning and significance by their contact and interactions. Equally, the behaviour, social identities and status of those who use the built environment do not exist in isolation from their surroundings. Rather each influences the other,

creating new social spaces, new ways of behaving and new identities in the process. In the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when luxury was increasingly 'democratised', the grand hotel, a new building type, is a fascinating site in which to examine these interactions.

I have then examined the historiography of the hotel, and of the grand hotel in particular. I argue that, although there has been a recent rise in interest in the social and architectural history of the hotel, this thesis builds on and extends this work, contending that these establishments in London have particular importance. Although these venues were similar in many ways to those in America, Europe and beyond - indeed they often expressly stated the benefits of these cross-cultural influences - London grand hotels were special, by virtue of the specific type of luxury they proffered, the social and economic circumstances in which they were developed, and the clientele which produced them. I have then outlined the birth of the grand hotel in London, and set it within the context of a rapidly changing social and economic environment. I have identified the principal features of grand hotels as defined by the earliest guidebooks. These establishments were commercial, purpose-built, of a substantial size, emulating foreign examples, and designed to provide unambiguously for the comfort of both male and female guests.

Although a chronological study of these buildings might have enabled a more direct analysis of development and change in the London grand hotel, this thesis takes a thematic approach, based upon six characteristics of luxury - grandeur, magic, exclusivity, cosmopolitanism, comfort, and modernity. This approach supports the investigation of the hotels' construction, design and facilities, their guests and staff, as well as their image and business model. It also enables the identification of overarching threads, which appear at different stages in different hotels. Finally, it allows for an effective study of the relationship between space and identity in these venues.

In Chapter II: Grandeur, the reader encounters the physical reality of the hotel building, its location, streetscape and exterior, financed in new ways and constructed with the benefit of new building technologies. Grandeur, I argue, was implicit in the objectives of proprietors and architects and essential to the expression of luxury. From aristocratic palaces to the residences of the *nouveaux riches*, excess in floorplan meant an equivalent excess in expenditure. In hotels, size also provided more tariff-earning bedrooms. Style and ornamentation conveyed prestige, through familiar tropes of status, historical narrative, and fashion. By 1910, while some hotel architects continued to look backwards for historicist sources of luxury splendour, others looked forwards, and a number of hotels exhibited glimpses of a grandeur in which taste and identity were connected to modern functionality and a simpler international cosmopolitanism.

Following the introduction to the physical presence of the grand hotel, Chapter III: Magic discusses the representational encounter, using the term 'magic' to cover aspects of luxury created not from material reality but from image, illusion and imagination. According to analysis of the luxury brands of the twenty-first century, marketing material communicates the magic of hopes and dreams, alongside an element of transformative innovation.¹⁶⁷ In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, magic was also a commonly-used metaphor for heterotopic desirability and otherworldliness. In this chapter, I address the magic associated with the mythmaking of advertising and publicity. Through visual and verbal signs, innovative design and alluring messages, hotel marketing appealed to a broad population. I argue that this material generally took a thematic approach, focussing on ideas of comfort, convenience and social position, while balancing potentially contradictory messages of modernity and the aristocratic past. In addition, I argue that themes of magic and fairyland were used to convey the possibilities of self-transformation which luxury consumption enabled. Notions of magic were also seen in the

¹⁶⁷ Daswani and Jain, 'Understanding Luxury Branding', *Media Asia*, 38:3 (2011), 131-139, 138, and Riley and Szivas, 'Luxury and Innovation', *Research in Hospitality Management*, 5:2 (2015), 147-152, 149.

‘dream worlds’ of magical experience, the temporary sets which combined theatrical illusion and ‘secular magic’ to create spaces in which a guest’s most elaborate fantasies could be realised.

Chapter IV: Exclusivity moves from the initial physical and representational impressions of the London grand hotel into the reality of the clientele, and their experience of the interior. Ideas of exclusivity are crucial to the concept of luxury. But in an establishment which successfully filled hundreds of rooms, luxury was attainable for large numbers of guests, drawn inevitably from a varied social group. In this chapter I examine how the tension between access and the appearance of exclusivity was managed. Predominantly using census records, I explore types of guest and their occupations, outlining their varied identities. I argue that exclusivity, or the appearance of it, was maintained through a series of physical and behavioural ‘thresholds’. Many of these were found at the point of entrance, and in the hotel lobby. However, the publication of a standard tariff also acted as a means of both attracting clients and maintaining exclusivity. Through these processes, access to luxury was visibly managed.

The connection between luxury and cosmopolitanism is a persistent theme in studies of consumption. In Chapter V: Cosmopolitanism, I consider the relationship between the foreign and exotic, and luxury in the grand hotel. Before the expansion of global trade, items from distant lands were held to be inherently rare and distinctive. The possession and display of such items represented culture, knowledge and separation from the common man. While this form of cosmopolitanism was desirable, other aspects were less favoured. For some, the potential dangers of the cosmopolitan street, of encountering foreigners, or of ‘bohemian’ behaviour were in direct conflict with the exclusivity and limited access implied by luxury. In this chapter, I argue that, despite these concerns, it was in the interest of hotels to emphasise their multivalent cosmopolitanisms. Grand hotels were not only, by definition, functionally cosmopolitan, designed to accommodate the travelling stranger. Their luxury was also culturally cosmopolitan,

emphasising social distinction through the fashion for French design and sophistication, and the allure of more distant cultures. In addition, the public face of a grand hotel, as embodied in senior management and reception staff, was often European. Although some notable managers were British, I contend that the deliberate selection of foreign staff associated the luxury in hotels with a well-behaved, controlled cosmopolitanism. Finally, I consider the cosmopolitanism of the restaurant, without which the grand hotel's identity, and commercial and social success would not have been the same. Although French was, at first glance, the dominant culture in terms of language, menu and chefs, in reality the restaurant exhibited a broader gastro-cosmopolitanism. This was sufficiently flexible to incorporate other food cultures, both plain and exotic, but was always designed to set the diner apart from the ordinary.

This thesis then turns from the cosmopolitanism of staff and restaurant, and considers ideas of comfort and its relationship with luxury. In Chapter VI: Comfort, I argue that, for guests, physical well-being and social comfort were essential in the public reception rooms of hotels, such as drawing and smoking rooms, and in guest rooms. I contend that, although a prescriptive ideology of 'separate spheres' was not maintained, male guests were generally provided with a masculine comfort in smoking rooms. While women were provided with some predominantly female spaces, particularly in the earlier hotels, by the end of the period, heterosocial drawing rooms tended to be more common, and concerns were less associated with the protection of women than the separation of classes. In the guest rooms on the upper floors, plan, design, furniture and soft furnishings were all designed to provide for the comfort of clients. As the period passed, developments in technology and in fashionable ideas of hygiene, grooming and personal space led to the introduction of a new, modern interior, the shiny, white, private or en-suite bathroom. Finally, in Chapter VII: Modernity, I examine the relationship of this complex concept to the luxury of the grand hotel. As societies become more 'modern', social identities are produced less by

rigid, traditional hierarchies, and more by fluid choices around consumption, behaviour and performance. At the same time, science and rationality lie at the centre of the structures and systems without which urbanised, industrialised societies cannot function effectively. Grand hotels represent a microcosm of these contradictions. In this chapter, I examine two features of modernity in these venues. Although magic was sometimes invoked to explain smooth-running hotel services, luxury was produced largely by a range of hidden systems. I examine two areas of work, the male-dominated kitchens, and the female-dominated laundries and housekeeping, both with similar staff structures, types of technology and spatial arrangements. I draw attention to the place of women in the provision of luxury more widely, identifying that it was common for female members of staff to hold positions of responsibility and build careers. Finally, I argue that the modernity of the grand hotel was both a product of and produced the trend towards greater informality and heterosociability. In the winter garden or palm court, which, for many, is the epitome of the early twentieth-century grand hotel, men and women came together in a new hybrid, social space. In these interiors, hotel guests and visitors indulged in new pleasures, surrounded by the materiality of up-to date-luxury. Unlike the hidden modernity of the production of luxury, this was modernity on display.

While scholars have examined other new building types influenced by social, political and economic change in this period, or debated the rise of the purpose-built hotel in other countries, the grand hotel in London has been under-represented. If architectural history seeks to understand more than the bald statistics of the structure of a building, but rather, 'the work performed by the built environment in the life of a culture', hotels are a site *par excellence* for examining this interaction.¹⁶⁸ Within, identity and space were in essence 'produced together.

¹⁶⁸ Nancy Stieber, 'Architecture between Disciplines', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 62:2 (2003), 176-177.

Chapter II: Grandeur

Everything in this thoroughly up to date caravansary is on a colossal or Brobdingnagian scale.¹⁶⁹

To many it seems that this is the day of the big hotel. Every city of any importance can boast of a 'modern up to date establishment' [...] a structure that is large enough to house an army and grand enough to please a prince. It is in fact a concern that manufactures magnificence in wholesale quantities and sells it in retail fashion.¹⁷⁰

'Journalist, raconteur and gourmet', George Augustus Sala (1828–1895) was a man with a wide experience of hotels.¹⁷¹ Sala's career coincided with the development of the grand hotel and these venues, in London and abroad, often provided material for his writing. His travels in Britain, Europe and America gave him an insight into differing hotel cultures, their influence upon one another, and the systems which enabled such large organisations to function smoothly.¹⁷² He saw the 'up to date' hotel as a venue in which new cultural practices could be experienced, but also which influenced ideas of identity and social change, arguing 'such structures are destined ere long materially to modify our national manners and customs'.¹⁷³ For Sala, successful venues combined modern, cosmopolitan social behaviours and business practices, with a prime location and with grandeur - huge dimensions and an imposing appearance. In his 1863 article 'Mammoth Hotels', he wrote of 'palatial structures', and 'the immensity of the scale' of new buildings.¹⁷⁴ In 1865, his review of E.M. Barry's Charing Cross Hotel commented upon the public demand for a 'sumptuous caravansary [...] fit to vie in its architectural proportions and richness of its appointments with the noblest structures of the kind to be found on the Continent'.¹⁷⁵ In *London Up To Date* (1894) he compared the 'shabby, stuffy costly inns which [...] disgraced the

¹⁶⁹ G.A. Sala, *London Up to Date* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1894), 139. In nineteenth- and early twentieth-century usage 'up to date' is rarely hyphenated. I quote original texts without hyphens.

¹⁷⁰ 'Are the small hotels doomed?' *HW*, January 1898, 8.

¹⁷¹ Peter Blake, *George Augustus Sala and the Nineteenth-Century Periodical Press: The Personal Style of a Public Writer* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015). See also Sala's obituary, Howard Paul, 'Mr George Augustus Sala, Journalist, Raconteur and Gourmet', *The Caterer*, May 1895, 198-200.

¹⁷² Molly W. Berger, *Hotel Dreams* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2011), 116-118. Berger quotes various articles by Sala, including 'American Hotels and American Food', *Temple Bar*, August 1861, 345-357.

¹⁷³ G.A. Sala, 'The Charing Cross Hotel', *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-326, 323; *London Up to Date* (London, 1894); 'Mammoth Hotels', *Temple Bar*, September 1863, 198-208, 208.

¹⁷⁴ 'Mammoth Hotels', *Temple Bar*, September 1863, 198-208, 200.

¹⁷⁵ Sala, 'The Charing Cross Hotel', *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-326, 323.

metropolis' with the arrival of 'palatial caravanserais'. In this book, the name of his fictional venue, the 'Hotel Brobdingnag', was a catch-all for the grand hotels of London.¹⁷⁶ For Sala, grandeur - the blend of size and status - was central to the grand hotel as a luxury venue.

For hotel proprietors, scale and prestigious appearance were also important. As one commentator observed in 1899, 'the overpowering grandeur of big hotels may have a certain attractiveness which pays the owners'.¹⁷⁷ Large hotels provided high numbers of income-generating bedrooms and suites, along with spacious reception and function rooms. Land was expensive, and profits had to be maximised to recoup costs.¹⁷⁸

Like any other retail establishment, these venues were commercial enterprises, which sold hospitality as a luxury experience. Size and an architectural style which clearly and legibly expressed prestige enabled higher prices. 'To many it seems that this is the day of the big hotel', wrote *The Hotel World*, the monthly trade journal, acknowledging the prevalence of these venues. 'Every city of any importance can boast of a 'modern up to date establishment [...], a structure that is large enough to house an army and grand enough to please a prince', the magazine continued. 'It is in fact a concern that manufactures magnificence in wholesale quantities and sells it in retail fashion', the journal concluded, summarising the experience of a grand hotel in terms of production and consumption.¹⁷⁹ While much of the 'magnificence' of the grand hotel was found within the building, as later chapters discuss, what *The Hotel World* recognised in these comments was that, for commercial success, the combination of scale and a grandness associated with financial and social standing was vital.

¹⁷⁶ *London Up to Date* (London, 1894), xii and 139.

¹⁷⁷ T. Raffles Davison, *Hotel Design*, BA, 6 January 1899, 51.

¹⁷⁸ The rateable value of London rose from £19,963,285 in 1871 to £44,866,289 in 1910, according to W.M.J. Williams, 'The Land Of London', *The English Review*, January 1914, 261.

¹⁷⁹ 'Are the small hotels doomed?' *HW*, January 1898, 8.

Size, Style and Status: Contextualising Grandeur

In architecture, size is an important aspect of status. Historically, awe-inspiring scale celebrated technical triumph, measuring prestige through magnitude and knowledge.¹⁸⁰ Imposing façades, in government buildings and private residences, expressed power and status in visual and spatial terms, and the proportions of a building related to the public display of affluence and luxury. In the homes of the wealthy, McNeill and Riello contend, 'size mattered.[...] Excess in floor plan meant an equivalent excess in expenditure'.¹⁸¹ From Blenheim Palace, to E.B. Chancellor's 'private palaces' of the London rich, the height, width and footprint of a building were expressions of wealth and luxury.¹⁸²

In London in the nineteenth century, however, great size was not always viewed favourably and prominent new buildings were not necessarily built to the maximum height permitted. Indeed, the debate around the 'monstrous and overgrown ugliness' of London's first high-rise block of flats, Queen Anne's Mansions (1873 -1890), illustrated that an overemphasis on size could be seen as the undesirable expression of impersonal modernity rather than social superiority.¹⁸³ Consequently, architectural convention and the height restrictions in the 1890s London building regulations, imposed partially as a response to the rejection of the tallest buildings, tended to keep principal elevations below 90, and later, 80 feet.¹⁸⁴ For hotel architects, these restrictions required some thought.

¹⁸⁰ Paul Binski, 'The Heroic Age of Gothic and the Metaphors of Modernism', *Gesta*, 52 (2013), 3-19, 6.

¹⁸¹ McNeill and Riello, *Luxury* (2016), 118.

¹⁸² E.B. Chancellor, *Private Palaces of London Past and Present* (London: Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co, 1908).

¹⁸³ Queen Anne's Mansions, a 10-storey, 116-feet high building, between Victoria Street and St James's Park, was constructed 1873–5. A second stage (1877) climbed 141 feet, and an extension (1888–90) reached 160 feet. Richard Dennis, 'Babylonian Flats' in Victorian and Edwardian London', *London Journal*, 33 (2008), 233-247.

¹⁸⁴ Under the 1855 Building Act, new buildings exceeding 100 feet required consent from the MBW. Prompted by the Queen Anne's Mansions debate, in 1890 the LCC General Powers Act limited building height to 90 feet, and the London Building Act (1894) restricted height to 80 feet, plus two mansard storeys. Clarke argues that in general architects were not widely advocating the use of steel framing until

The choice of architectural style in buildings of size and prestige also posed something of a dilemma.¹⁸⁵ Style and ornament conveyed information about the purpose of a building, the status of the occupants and those who commissioned its construction, and their place in a changing world.¹⁸⁶ The ‘battle of the styles’, both the specific debate about the designs of the Foreign Office, or the more general clash between defenders of Gothic and Classical architecture, was a dialogue about identity with which politicians, architects and much of the wider public were familiar.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, it was desirable to successfully combine style with practicality in any building of note. The ‘great problem of the day’ argued J.P. Seddon (1827-1906) in 1876, was how to ‘ally aesthetic architecture to the practical building which alone the world imperatively demands?’¹⁸⁸ In many cases, architects considered that the solution was the inventiveness of an age-specific, progressive Gothic, which could characterise the industrial age.¹⁸⁹ However, the Gothic carried allusions of Christian morality more appropriate to ecclesiastical or civic buildings than sites of leisure and luxury consumption. For many, the suitable expression of grandeur in these cases was the Classical manner.

Classicism offered a number of benefits. It gave architects a wide and varied historic and cultural vocabulary, ‘in all its chameleon forms’, which could be quoted, re-interpreted, or combined with

after 1900. For a detailed discussion of the London Building Regulations, see Clarke, *Early Structural Steel* (2014), 42-52.

¹⁸⁵ See Joseph Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style* (London: John Murray, 1987).

¹⁸⁶ Antoine Picon, Miriam Swift and Calver Lezama, *Ornament: The Politics of Architecture and Subjectivity* (Chichester, England: Wiley, 2013), 118.

¹⁸⁷ Kelly J. Mays, ‘How the Victorians Un-invented Themselves: Architecture, the Battle of the Styles, and the History of the Term Victorian’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, (2014), 1-23. According to Ian Toplis, *The Foreign Office, An Architectural History* (London: Mansell, 1987), 200-1, the phrase ‘the battle of the styles’ came to be applied specifically to the Foreign Office debate only in the 1880s, having previously denoted the more general conflict over architectural style. See also Bernard Porter, ‘Architecture and Empire: The Case of the ‘Battle of The Styles’, 1855-1861’, *Britain and the World*, 2 (2010), 181-196.

¹⁸⁸ J. P. Seddon, ‘Consistency and Refinement in Architectural Detail’, *BA*, 21 January 1876, 30-33.

¹⁸⁹ Mays, ‘How the Victorians Un-invented Themselves’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, (2014), 7, citing George Gilbert Scott, *Remarks on Secular & Domestic Architecture, Present & Future* (London: Murray, 1857) who argues for a progressive Gothic style, appropriate for new political institutions, the product of contemporary society.

aspects of other styles.¹⁹⁰ Its stylistic motifs and ornamentation, from the Classical orders, rustication, and cornices, to mansard roofs and pavilion ends, were effective in both mirroring social structure and performative status, and in managing the bulk of substantial buildings.¹⁹¹ The Classical style in all its variations also carried few implications of moral virtue. Rather, it tended to connote commercial, upward mobility, and European sophistication.¹⁹² The style could also be re-interpreted and re-formulated according to fashion. The Classical designs of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France, and the taste of the Parisian architectural school, the *École des Beaux-Arts*, were both significant in public and private buildings of prestige.¹⁹³ Where the influence of the French Renaissance were less favoured, an Italian, Palladian or 'palazzo' version could be formulated. If, as was the case after the turn of the century, a more nation-centric interpretation was desired, the motifs of the English Baroque of Wren, Hawksmoor and Vanbrugh could be introduced.¹⁹⁴ As a consequence, a variety of Classical modes remained the Establishment style in England, popular in public buildings, the houses of the newly wealthy, and the metropolitan avenues of London.

Although the Classical style was often favoured by some architects, for others, the grandeur of large buildings of status could best be expressed in the freedom and variety of the eclectic blending of styles, ornamental motifs and new building materials. Indeed, in sites of leisure and

¹⁹⁰ Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches* (2000), 45.

¹⁹¹ Picon et al, *Ornament* (2013), 1 & 105.

¹⁹² Robin Middleton and David Watkin, *Neoclassical and Nineteenth century architecture/2* (London: Faber, 1980); Mark Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1979), 291/2; Peter Borsay, 'Culture, Status and the English Urban Landscape', *History*, 67 (1982), 1-12; Barbara Arciszewska and Elizabeth McKellar, eds., *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches* (2000), 42.

¹⁹³ For the history of the *École*, see Donald Drew Egbert, *The Beaux-Arts Tradition in French Architecture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1980) and Robin Middleton, *The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth-Century French Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1982). For the *École's* influence on architecture and urban planning in London, see Andrew Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (New Haven: Yale UP for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2010), Chapter 9, and Colin Cunningham, 'A Case of Cultural Schizophrenia: Ruling Tastes and Architectural Training in the Edwardian Period', *Architectural History*, 44 (2001), 64-81.

¹⁹⁴ Sam McKinstry, 'Status Building: Some Reflections on the Architectural History of Chartered Accountants' Hall, London 1889-1893', *Accounting, Organisations and Society*, 22 (1997), 779-798.

entertainment, a visible demonstration of architectural cosmopolitanism and exuberance might be especially appropriate.¹⁹⁵ In such cases, any historical or geographical source could be permitted. 'One man may elect to combine Norman, Perpendicular, and Elizabethan together', wrote the author Charles G. Harper (1863-1943) in 1899. 'To another the claims of Saracenic or Indian architecture, with excursions into Classic may appeal more powerfully, and so with combinations ad infinitum.'¹⁹⁶ In the National Liberal Club (1885-7), Alfred Waterhouse integrated Renaissance, Romanesque, Venetian and French stylistic motifs, reflecting architecturally 'the idiosyncratic liberalism of his clients'.¹⁹⁷ At the English Opera House (1890), T.E. Collcutt (1840-1924) employed flamboyant octagonal turrets and domes, combined with arcaded windows and loggias in stripes of red brick and cream and red Doulton terracotta.¹⁹⁸ The strong visual statement of this cosmopolitan eclecticism somewhat paradoxically indicated a particularly English style of architectural progress, which reflected the pluralism and manifold cultural influences of late Victorian society.¹⁹⁹

For the architects of grand hotels, the question of design posed a challenge. As G.A. Sala and *The Hotel World* agreed, grandeur - size and status - was imperative. But in a city where ever larger buildings could be problematic and where architectural style could be contentious, the form which this grandeur took was less easy to resolve. In this chapter, I argue that the size and design of these buildings were, in part, responses to the demands of commerce and the constraints of context. At the same time, the choice of architectural style reflected the need for a striking visual

¹⁹⁵ James A. Schmiechen, 'The Victorians, the Historians and the Idea of Modernism,' *American Historical Review*, 93 (1988) 287-316, 291 citing Frank Walker, 'National Romanticism and the Architecture of the City,' in *Perspectives of the Scottish City*, ed. George Gordon (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1985), 9.

¹⁹⁶ Charles G. Harper, 'The Government and London Architecture', *Fortnightly Review*, 66 (September 1899) 523-32 cited Mays, 'How the Victorians ...', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, (2014), 1-23, 10.

¹⁹⁷ Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style* (1987), 185. D. Avery, *Victorian and Edwardian Architecture* (London: Chaucer, 2003), 28.

¹⁹⁸ Edwin O. Sachs, *Modern Opera Houses and Theatres, Volume I* (London: 1896), 37.

¹⁹⁹ Mays, 'How the Victorians ...' (2014), 10, quoting T. Raffles Davison, 'Devon Jottings', *BA*, 37 (17 June 1892), 443; Joseph Mordaunt Crook, 'Architecture and History', *Architectural History*, 27 (1984) 555-578, 561; A. Sutcliffe, *London: An Architectural History* (New Haven, Conn; London, Yale UP, 2006), 116.

presence which expressed status and luxury. I argue that, although there was a period of eclecticism in the late 1880s and 1890s, the symmetry and motifs of predominantly French interpretations of the Classical style were most widely used in hotels. By 1910, however, innovative building techniques and the use of new materials led to a shift in exterior appearance. While some hotel architects continued to look backwards for historicist sources of luxury grandeur, others looked forwards. The desirability of large buildings was still contested, but there were glimpses of a grandeur in which taste and identity was connected to modern functionality, and a simpler international cosmopolitanism.

First, however, I consider the three principal requirements which had to be met before design and construction could commence. Substantial capital was required to construct grand buildings, equipped with the modern technology and decorated with the opulence expected of a luxury venue. Without a legal and financial structure that enabled this capital investment, new hotels were not possible. Second, suitable plots, of an appropriate size, in convenient locations close to the traditional venues of wealthy sociability and to the modern attractions of retail consumption, leisure and entertainment, were also necessary. Third, an architect with appropriate skill and experience had to be appointed.

Finance: Legislation and ‘Distinguished Management’

To design and construct a new grand hotel, substantial funds were essential. Early Victorian hotel proprietors found it difficult to raise funds for reconstruction or refurbishment, and, even if such investment were possible, the law rendered them personally liable for losses.²⁰⁰ However, in the 1850s a number of legal changes altered that position. Following the Limited Liability Act (1855) and the Joint Stock Companies Act (1856), companies formed by groups of investors or which

²⁰⁰ Bowie, ‘The great English hotel charges debate’, *Business History*, 58:2 (2016), 159-178.

raised capital through the sale of shares, rapidly entered the hotel market 'in great numbers'.²⁰¹

Commentators recognised that 'the era of hotels undertaken by joint stock companies commenced', and investment returns were so attractive that the 'perfect mania for gigantic hotels [seemed] to have taken possession of European capitalists'.²⁰²

Hotels promised a number of benefits for investors. As *The London Review* outlined in 1865, hotel companies offered the shareholder 'a *bona fide* and tangible security in the ground and building,' a factor for those encouraged to invest in geographically distant enterprises. In addition, the success of one of the most prominent early companies, the Great Western (1854) at Paddington, with early profits of more than 30% and paying dividends of 25%, set a standard of very large returns which were initially considered the norm. Unsurprisingly, company prospectuses for new hotels often cited the Great Western as the example which they proposed to follow.²⁰³

A standard business model developed in which a limited company was set up to construct and furnish the hotel, with a second company usually established to purchase the building when completed. Funds were raised via a prospectus which outlined the returns an investor might expect. In June 1889, the prospectus for the Savoy Hotel Company envisaged a dividend of at least twelve and a half per cent for the ordinary shareholders. In 1899, the Carlton Hotel Company Limited was set up to purchase the hotel and its contents, valued at £599, 927, from the company which built it. A sum of £350,000 was to be raised, with the majority of the shares returning five and a half per cent. The 1905 prospectus for the Piccadilly aimed to raise £800,000,

²⁰¹ Christine Amsler, Robin Bartlett and Craig Bolton, 'Thoughts of Some British Economists on Early Limited Liability and Corporate Legislation' *History of Political Economy*, 13 (1981), 774-793 ; 'Some big hotels', *Chambers' Journal*, 3 December 1865, 759.

²⁰² 'Money and Commerce, Joint Stock Speculations: Their Value and Prospects. No VII Hotel Companies', *London Review*, 12 August 1865, 169-170; Sala, 'Charing Cross Hotel', *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-326, 315; Wynter 'The new hotel system' *Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers* (1863. re-ed. 1877), 68.

²⁰³ 'Money and Commerce', *London Review*, 12 August 1865, 169-170, 170; *The Times*, 30 July 1857, 4.

valuing the lease of the as yet unbuilt hotel at £1,046,000, and promised the net profits of the hotel (excluding the shop rentals) would be not less than £60,000 per annum.²⁰⁴



Figure 4 'Doing the Grand' (Hotel). Cartoon in *Fun* magazine, June 1880²⁰⁵

First Wit: 'Tis plain the proprietors must have *credit* to do it Grand here'.

Second Wit: 'Yaas! As 'tis so plain they must have spent their *ready money* and 'Grandly' is how they've done it'.

Despite legislation, the complexities of financing hotels were sometimes viewed with suspicion. In 1880, a cartoon in *Fun*, a satirical magazine, drew attention to the extensive credit required for the new Grand Hotel (Figure 4). Dressed in the fashionable garb of the day, two wits mock the conspicuous display of opulence in the new hotel, paid for by credit. The financial stability of such arrangements were clearly of some concern and the subject of social conversation.

Such scepticism was not misplaced. The considerable initial expenditure often placed strains upon the business during construction or shortly after opening. The Langham, built and furnished at a cost of £300,000 went into liquidation within three years, and sold for half its original cost in 1868.²⁰⁶ The 1882 prospectus for the Northumberland Avenue Hotel promised a 500 bedroom

²⁰⁴ *The Times*, 1 June 1889, 4; 'Carlton Hotel Prospectus', *DT*, 24 July 1899, 5; 'Piccadilly Hotel Prospectus', *DT*, 30 January 1905, 5. The 27 shops were expected to produce £31,500 p.a. This was never realised.

²⁰⁵ *Fun*, 9 June 1880, 236.

²⁰⁶ It sold for £152,000 and subsequently returned to a healthier financial state, with board recommendations for dividends of 20% in 1877 and 1879. 'Money-Market & City Intelligence', *The Times*, 21 August 1868, 4; *MG*, 15 February 1877, 4; 9 August 1877, 4 and 17 August 1879, 4.

hotel for £200,000, with dividends of 19.5%.²⁰⁷ By late 1884, before the building was complete, the company was bankrupt, and the share price dropped from £9 at the float to £2 17s 6d. Taken over by Jabez Balfour's financial empire, the building was completed in 1886, opening as the Victoria in 1887.²⁰⁸

The Piccadilly too suffered severe financial difficulties. The hotel opened in May 1908, but a receiver had been appointed by September. In part this was due to the considerable problems encountered in the design and construction phase.²⁰⁹ However, *The Builder* argued that the 'speedy collapse' was also due to oversupply in the luxury hotel market.²¹⁰ Indeed, in the decade from 1903, it was reported that over £10 million had been spent in London on hotel building, and client numbers had not risen accordingly.²¹¹ 'There has been a tendency in London of late to imitate the large American hotels, but the customers who will pay the prices charged in these places are limited in numbers, and the season for many of them is not long', *The Builder* noted. The 'extravagancies of a group of rich Americans and of their English and French imitators', a market which the grand hotels had traditionally supplied, could no longer be relied upon.²¹² Financial success was by no means guaranteed.

In addition to costs and competition, financial security was also compromised by the inherent nature of the grand hotel business. Part of the promise of luxury was the offer of endless novelty. 'What at one time may confer status, may later be acquired by all and confer no status', Andrew Trigg argues. 'People must always try to acquire new consumption goods in order to distinguish

²⁰⁷ *The Builder*, 14 October 1882, 492.

²⁰⁸ Jabez Balfour's and J.W. Hobbs' projects included Whitehall Court (1884-87); Hyde Park Court, later Hotel (1888/9) and Hotel Cecil (1888-96). Following the downfall of Balfour, the Victoria was sold to the Gordon Hotels Group for £417,433 in 1893.

²⁰⁹ *Survey of London: Vols 31 and 32, St James Westminster, Part 2* (1963), 85-101.

²¹⁰ The manager of one of the largest hotels in London stated that the total accommodation in the city in 1908 was 50,000 bedrooms. 'The Hotel Boom', *The Caterer*, February 1908, 55.

²¹¹ *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 23 September 1913, 7.

²¹² *The Builder*, 3 October 1908, 349.

themselves from others’.²¹³ Success was dependent upon constant adaptation to new fashions and social behaviours. As new establishments were constructed, existing hotels needed to improve to compete. The Savoy opened in 1889, but added significant extensions in 1896, 1904 and 1910. The cost of the 1904 works were reported to be £1million, and although the hotel proudly publicised the increase in turnover (Table 2), it would take many years for monthly turnovers of £6,000 to yield sufficient profit to repay the investment.²¹⁴ Rupert D’Oyly Carte (1876-1948), son of Richard D’Oyly Carte (1844-1901), and director of the Savoy Hotel Group, argued that ‘no expense on improvements can be spared. Whatever is the best must be adopted at once. Last year’s fashion is dowdy this year; so we move forward and introduce something new’.²¹⁵ But, as *The Daily Telegraph* commented, ‘this policy of luxuriousness [...] means increasing establishment charges, which eat into profits and leave a proportionately smaller balance for the proprietors’.²¹⁶ Yet without such upgrades, a grand hotel was unable to maintain its competitive status.

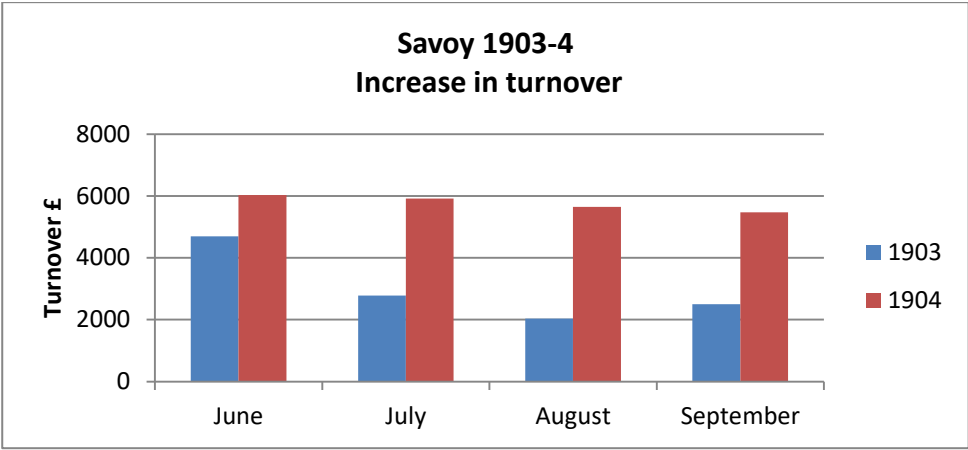


Table 2 Increase in turnover following the Savoy extension 1904²¹⁷

²¹³ A. Trigg, ‘Veblen, Bourdieu, & Conspicuous Consumption’, *Journal of Economic Issues*, 35 (2001), 99-116.
²¹⁴ *The Observer*, 16 October 1904, 4.
²¹⁵ ‘Savoy Hotel’, *Manchester Courier*, 29 October 1904, 10.
²¹⁶ ‘Hotel profits’, *DT*, 8 October 1913, 4.
²¹⁷ Figures published in *The Observer*, 16 October 1904, 4.

The board of directors had overall responsibility for the financial well-being of the hotel, but they also, at least initially, played a part in creating an image of prestigious respectability. In 1866, the *Saturday Review* noted that boards of hotel companies often were 'composed, in great part, of peers of the realm'.²¹⁸ The chairman of the Westminster Palace Hotel (1861) was Viscount Chelsea, and the chairman of the Langham Hotel Company, at the head of a 'highly respectable directory', was the Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot.²¹⁹ Appointments of this nature inferred social cachet and financial solidity. But a title did not necessarily confer good business sense. In 1865, The *London Review* commented on the performance of some aristocratic directors waspishly:

Every hotel board imagined itself about to constitute an El Dorado in which, the weekly or daily labours of the directors over, they might abandon themselves to the luxury and enjoyment of an epicurean state. Hence from tavern keeping and the discharge of duties of mine host having been the lot of persons in the humblest walks of life, the occupation became a prize coveted and sought for by peers and gentlemen of the highest position. How far the business has prospered under such distinguished management is a matter for inquiry.²²⁰

By the 1880s, however, the demands of the hotel business meant that inexperienced aristocratic directors had largely been weeded out. In their place were well-connected directors with business experience. Sir Henry Burdett (1847-1920), a well-respected hospital administrator and author of *Hospitals and Asylums of the World* (1891 and 1893), was deputy chairman and director in charge of the hotels for the Gordon Hotel Company from 1898, involved in the minutiae of the business on a daily basis.²²¹ Frederick Gordon (1835 –1904), chairman of the same company, was also chairman of The Frederick Hotels Company Limited, a shareholder in Messrs. Maples & Co, and held directorships at a number of companies including Pears soap and

²¹⁸ 'Financing', *Saturday Review*, 17 March 1866, 317.

²¹⁹ *The Times*, 30 July 1857, 4; *The Observer*, 6 July 1862, 4.

²²⁰ 'Money and Commerce', *London Review*, 12 August 1865, 169-170.

²²¹ Sir Henry Burdett Papers. *Burdett.A.10.15 (MSS.Eng.C.6002-3) Gordon Hotels Ltd 1898-1919 - 6002 Folder, Bodleian Library*; Jeremy Hines, 'The architect and the pauper asylum in late nineteenth-century England', in Leslie Topp, James Moran, Jonathan Andrews, eds., *Madness, Architecture and the Built Environment: Psychiatric Spaces in Historical Context* (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 263-284, 265.

Apollinaris mineral water.²²² Men with professional training as lawyers and accountants were also often involved as directors. The board of the Carlton included Henry V. Higgins, a solicitor, who was also on the board of Claridge's, and William Harris, a chartered accountant, both of whom were later directors of the Ritz Hotel Company, with Harris as chairman.²²³ In 1889 at the Savoy, the directors included Richard D'Oyly Carte, Michael Gunn (1840-1901) owner of the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, the composer Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), two bankers, R.B. Fenwick and Arthur Weguelin, and the Right Honourable Earl of Lathom. The final member was Hwfa Williams (c.1850-1926), manager of Sandown Park and a close friend of the Prince of Wales.²²⁴ Like many of their clients, these men were drawn from a self-made, newly wealthy class, connected into the networks of the highest social elite.

Legal developments and financial structures facilitated capital raising to fund the construction of these grand buildings. With good management, sufficient profit could be made to satisfy investors. The next issue was the location on which these substantial hotels could be built. Fortunately, as legislative change enabled funding, so urban change provided sites.

Location: 'Central, Pleasing and Suitable Positions'

For success, selecting the right location was vital. In 1907, Ernest Runtz, (1859-1913), the commercial and theatre architect, suggested that the best locations for 'modern, social hotels', were 'central, pleasing and suitable positions [...], within easy reach of the fashionable quarters, and the theatres and concert halls'.²²⁵ Initially, however, although travellers could find existing

²²² The Frederick Hotels Company owned the Great Central and the Hotel Russell in London, the Majestic in Harrogate, the Pavilion in Folkestone, the Burlington in Dover Bay, the Sackville in Bexhill on Sea and the Metropole in Whitby. 'Gordon Hotel Company Limited', *St. James's Gazette*, 15 October 1897, 7.

²²³ *HW*, April 1898, 19 and 24; *The Caterer*, January 1908, 53 and December 1908, 579. Higgins also acted for Ritz in his dispute against the company. Derek Taylor, 'César Ritz and August Escoffier vs the Savoy Hotel Company', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 15 (1996), 29-39.

²²⁴ *Homes of the Passing Show (London: 1900)* 78; Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998), 144; Florence Hwfa Williams, *It Was Such Fun* (London: Hutchison, 1935), 31-2; 'The Savoy Hotel', *HW*, April 1898, 24.

²²⁵ Ernest Runtz, 'Hostelries Ancient and Modern', *The Caterer*, March 1907, 121.

hotels in town, new hotels were generally constructed next to railway stations. Large scale reconstruction often provided suitable sites, and there were advantages for railway companies in providing good quality accommodation for passengers.²²⁶ However, the noise and bustle of stations was not ideal, and fashionable hotels tended to be constructed in more central locations. These were close to retail and leisure attractions, and convenient for those wishing to enjoy the 'Season', the calendar of social occasions in which fashionable 'Society' participated, most of which occurred within a limited geographical area.²²⁷

At the heart of this area was Mayfair and Piccadilly. Much of this was built up, with little opportunity for the large sites that new hotels required. However, changing economics and legislation influenced landowners who were keen to amalgamate leases, and to increase revenues by replacing existing, even fairly recently constructed, buildings. The Office for Woods, Forests and Land Revenues, which administered Crown property, for example, controlled the construction of the Quadrant and Piccadilly Hotel site, which required the demolition of Owen Jones' St James Hall, which had opened in 1858.²²⁸ In 1902, the freehold of the Bath Hotel was sold with the remaining lease of Walsingham House, a massive gabled and turreted apartment block, which had only been built in 1886/7 at cost of £300,000, to the directors of the Carlton Hotel Limited for the construction of the Ritz.²²⁹

²²⁶ Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels and Tourism ...', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 19 (1984), 201-222.

²²⁷ 'Society - the aggregate of leisured, cultured or fashionable persons regarded as forming a distinct class or body'. Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles: Society, Etiquette and the Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), 103, quoting *Oxford English Dictionary*. See also P.J. Atkins, 'The Spatial Configuration of Class Solidarity in London's West End, 1792-1939', *Urban History*, 17 (1990), 36-65, 44, and Robert Thorne, 'Places of Refreshment in the Nineteenth-Century City', 228-255 in Anthony D. King, ed., *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 236.

²²⁸ For the Piccadilly Hotel, see 'The rebuilding of Piccadilly Circus and the Regent Street Quadrant', *Survey of London: Volumes 31 and 32, St James Westminster, Part 2* (London, 1963), 85-100. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vols31-2/pt2/pp85-100>.

²²⁹ 'A New Hotel in Piccadilly', *The Builder*, 15 November 1902, 437. For the site purchase, see Marcus Binney, *The Ritz Hotel, London* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999), 32.

On the Grosvenor Estate, which was undergoing considerable reconstruction under the first Duke of Westminster, two existing hotels, Claridge's and the Coburg, were both transformed from a collection of adapted residential buildings to bespoke establishments. While the new Claridge's occupied the footprint of the earlier hotel on the corner of Brook Street and Davies Street, the Coburg benefitted from the reconfiguration of the street layout to ease traffic flow, widened and realigned in 1891, which created Carlos Place.²³⁰ In addition, the provisions of the Settled Land Acts (1882-1890) enabled landowners to sell inherited property under certain conditions. Under this act, the Salisbury Estate between the Strand and the riverside was sold in 1887 for £200,000. J.W. Hobbs & Co subsequently acquired the freehold of nearly two and a quarter acres, and the Cecil, the vast hotel by Perry and Reed, was agreed in 1893.²³¹

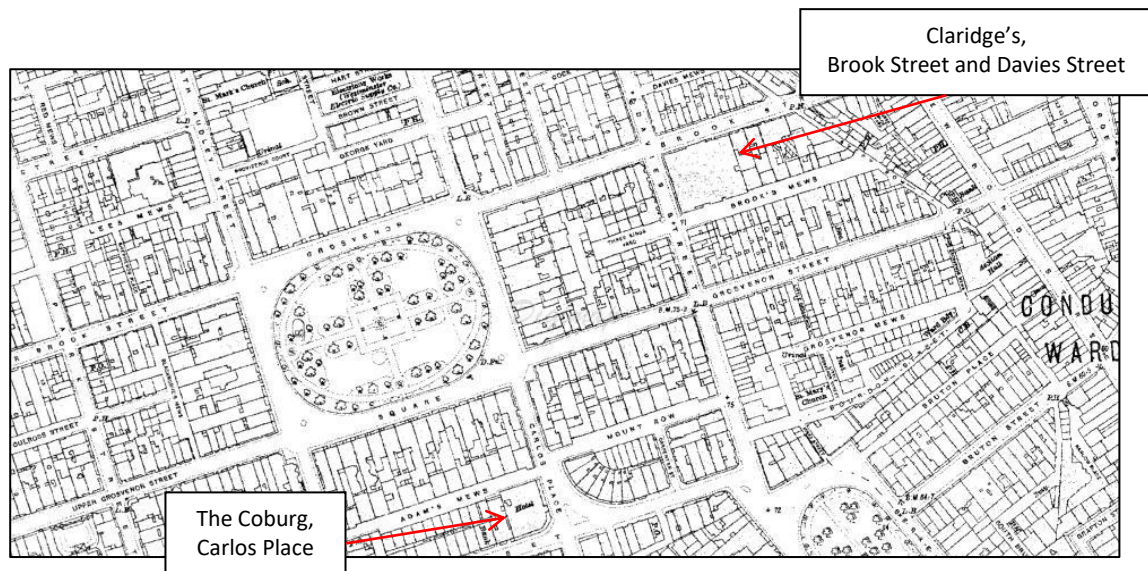


Figure 5 The Grosvenor Estate, c. 1900, with The Coburg and Claridge's²³²

At the same time, large scale improvement works, transport infrastructure and road widening schemes, undertaken initially by the Metropolitan Board of Works (MBW), and later by the

²³⁰ For the rebuilding of the Grosvenor Estate, see *Survey of London: Volume 39, the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair, Part 1 (General History)* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol39/pt1/pp140-161> acc. 15.1.19

²³¹ J.W. Hobbs & Co later went into liquidation, and John Annan appointed by the Official Receiver to complete the buildings. Correspondence 3 February 1894, received by LCC Architects Dept., Theatre and Music Hall Branch LMA GIC/AR/BR/19/0329, and *The Builder*, 6 January 1906, 12.

²³² 'Ordnance Survey Map Revised: c1900', <https://maps.nls.uk> acc. 5.9.19

London County Council (LCC), also produced suitable sites. Northumberland Avenue, on which the Grand, the Victoria and the Metropole were built, was laid out following the compulsory purchase of Northumberland House in June 1874, and connected Trafalgar Square with the Embankment (Figure 6).²³³ On the Strand, which did not retain quite the social cachet of earlier times, but was conveniently close to theatres and concert halls, Richard D'Oyly Carte and Michael Gunn paid the Metropolitan Board of Works £62,000 in January 1884 for three quarters of an acre next to the Savoy Theatre, left vacant following the construction of Waterloo Bridge, and the Savoy opened in July 1889.²³⁴

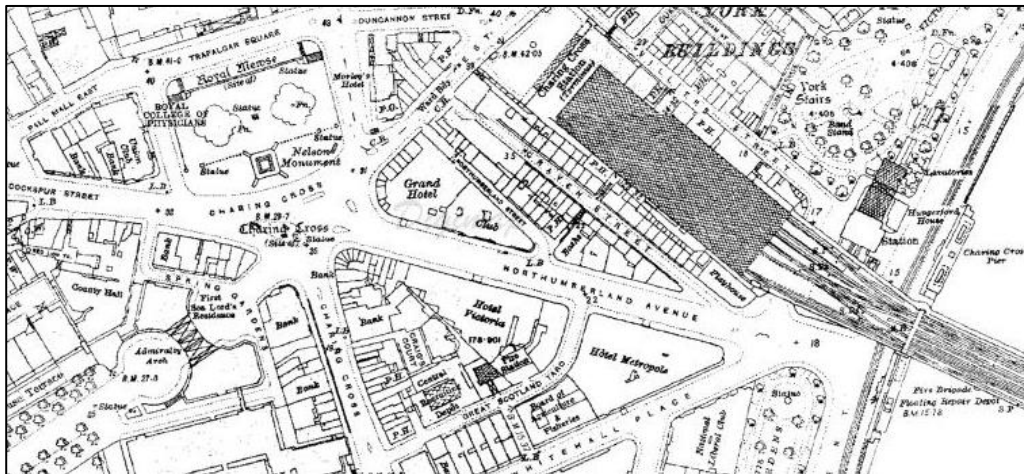


Figure 6 Northumberland Avenue, c1900, with The Grand, The Victoria and The Metropole²³⁵

²³³ *The Survey of London: Volume 18, St Martin-in-The-Fields II: the Strand* (London: 1937), <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol18/pt2/pp10-20>.

²³⁴ Peter Thorold, *The London Rich: The Creation of a Great City*, (London: Viking, 1999); Jill Hesselby and Paula Henderson, 'Location, Location, Location! Cecil House in the Strand', *Architectural History*, 45 (2002), 159-193. D'Oyly Carte had purchased the land for the Savoy Theatre, part of the largely derelict site on which the Savoy Palace had once stood, from the Board in 1880. He appeared before the MBW Commission into corruption in June 1888. His testimony revealed that George Holloway was, with his draughtsmen 'practically the architect'. Only one elevation, according to the reports of RDC's testimony, was submitted to the MBW for approval. RDC confirmed that he paid Mr Robertson, an architect employed by the MBW, to advise on the plans prior to submission. No other architect was mentioned in the design of the hotel in this testimony. See, amongst others, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 June 1888, 8; *Daily News*, 13 June 1888; *The Standard*, 13 June 1888, 5; *The Times*, 13 June 1888, 13. An early plan for the site was for 'a large mansion for the accommodation of artists, actors and literary men' in *Birmingham Daily Post*, 19 October 1888, 5, and an elevation of the 'proposed new buildings' by Robert Edis' (1839-1927) appeared in *Building News* in January 1884.

²³⁵ 'Ordnance Survey Map Revised: 1893 to 1895', <https://maps.nls.uk> acc. 5.9.19

For those wishing to build hotels, therefore, a combination of legislative change and urban development provided the conditions in which the necessary finance and sites could be found. Given that size, profit and attracting the right clientele were priorities for hotel owners, the question then arose of the objectives of the architects, and how they were to interpret the requirement of grandeur into their buildings.

Architects: 'Imaginative Genius' or 'Practical Utility'?

The architects of hotels had to bear a number of factors in mind. In his 1865 assessment of the Charing Cross Hotel, Sala considered the contribution of the architect, Edward Middleton Barry (1830-1880), son and chief assistant of Charles Barry, and an associate of the Royal Academy.²³⁶ It was unusual, Sala argued, for such an architect to 'deign to design an inn'. That he did was 'proof [...] of our democratic age', and the changing status of hotels. The façade of the hotel was brilliant and rich, Sala acknowledged. However its design was driven not by a preference for a pre-ordained style, but by the needs of the management, the ease of the clientele, and the proximity of the station. Barry's design expressed the desires and requirements of the modern age, Sala believed, and the hotel's architectural success was derived from the adherence to that principle. This accomplishment was not due to the architect's reputation, but to his attention to the 'minutest detail', and his willingness to 'subject his imaginative genius to the restraints of more practical utility, in combining solidity with splendour, and elegance with comfort'.²³⁷

An awareness of 'practical utility' was also the advice of other architects experienced in hotel design. Where their opinions are known, a well-considered, efficient interior plan was a priority. Ernest Runtz advised, in addition to his thoughts on location, that 'simplicity and directness of planning is of the first importance', pointing out that 'with restricted space, where land is

²³⁶ Barry also designed the Cannon Street Hotel (1867), *ILN*, 13 April 1867, 377.

²³⁷ Sala, 'The Charing Cross Hotel', *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-326, 320.

expensive, daylight sometimes has to be sacrificed in order to obtain sufficient accommodation to make the enterprise a paying concern'.²³⁸ Writing on 'The Planning of Hotels' in 1912, Stanley Hamp (1877-1968), partner of Thomas Colcutt, also advocated the practical approach. 'The function of an hotel', he wrote, 'is all important and should be settled with its future architect when or before he is definitely appointed'.²³⁹ For *The Caterer*, architectural style was of little importance - what mattered was the advice of an experienced hotel keeper:

The external designs of modern hotels are many and varied, but whether they be Norman, Italian, Elizabethan, Queen Anne or anything else, matters little to the persons responsible for their inner working. In cities and towns they are for the most part colossal, massive and sombre [...]. It is the internal arrangements which most concern the manager, and the architect who consults with an experienced hotel man when formulating his plans has a very valuable aid to the attainment of satisfactory technical results.²⁴⁰

Although E.M. Barry might have been considered too grand to design an 'inn', in practice, many architects were appointed on the basis of a reputation for imposing buildings, and actual experience in hotels and restaurants. Often, the task was divided between the design of the exterior, and the planning of the interior. At the Langham, John Giles, who also designed the Richmond Hill Hotel (1865-6), submitted draft elevations in competition with five others. Upon his selection, the board requested that he work with James Murray, architect of the Palace Hotel, Buckingham Gate (1861), where the interior was much admired.²⁴¹ At the Carlton (Figure 7), C. J. Phipps (1835-97), who was known principally as a theatre architect, designed the palace front which incorporated the hotel and Her Majesty's Theatre. Lewis Henry Isaacs and Henry Florence were employed to design the interior plan, and supervised the building works after Phipps' death.²⁴² They had extensive experience in hotels, having designed the Holborn Viaduct Hotel (1876), the Victoria (1887) and the First Avenue Hotel, Holborn (1900). At the Coburg in 1893,

²³⁸ Runtz, *Hostelries Ancient and Modern*, *The Caterer*, March 1907, 121.

²³⁹ Stanley Hamp, 'The Planning of Hotels', *BN*, 10 May 1912, 653-4, 653.

²⁴⁰ *The Caterer*, August 1906, 346.

²⁴¹ Langham Hotel, *The Survey of London online* (September 2016) <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/tag/john-giles/>, acc. 23.5.18.; Thomas Willert Beale, *The Light of Other Days* (1890), 294.

²⁴² Spain & Dromgoole, 'Theatre Architects in the British Isles', *Architectural History*, 13 (1970) 77-89, 80.

they were selected as architects by Eustace Balfour, architect and surveyor to the Grosvenor Estate, from a list of three.²⁴³ Brothers Frederick John and Horace Francis also had considerable experience in restaurants and hotels, often for Frederick Gordon. They had been architects on his first major catering project in 1870, the restoration of Crosby Hall to provide dining facilities for city workers.²⁴⁴ In the late 1870s, they designed the Grand and the Metropole in conjunction with Ernest Saunders.²⁴⁵



Figure 7 The Carlton Hotel. as illustrated in *Building News*, July 1899²⁴⁶

Like C. J. Phipps, many hotel architects had expertise in theatre design. Hotels had much in common with theatres, not least the construction of spacious public areas, the management of large numbers of people, and the practicalities of fire regulations and sanitary requirements. Both

²⁴³ *The Builder*, 14 October 1882, 492. 'Mount Street and Carlos Place: Mount Street, North Side.' *Survey of London: Volume 40, the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair, Part 2 (The Buildings)*, (London: LCC, 1980) 321-326. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol40/pt2/pp321-326>. acc. 21.3.16

²⁴⁴ Crosby Hall. *The Ancient City Palace and Great Banqueting Hall, its History and Restoration* (1870).

²⁴⁵ 'The Grand Hotel', *ILN*, 19 June 1880, 598. Evidence provided by F.H. Francis to the Royal Commission into the conduct of the MBW, implies that Saunders was not involved with the design of the building, but more likely for his involvement in the purchase of the site. At the Grand, Messrs Francis and Saunders were paid £7,128 17s 6d by Gordon, of which Saunders received half. At the Metropole, he received 150 guineas 'for advising as to the site', according to Gordon to the Royal Commission, *BA*, 13 July 1888, 34/35.

²⁴⁶ Architects' Illustration in *Building News*, 7 July, 1899.

building types were often prestigious landmarks and sites of conspicuous consumption, balancing entertainment with respectability, where the interior design combined references to the domestic with the tropes of status and luxury.²⁴⁷ At the Piccadilly, the Office of Woods, acting for the Crown, appointed the experienced Richard Norman Shaw as architect for the whole Quadrant scheme. The interior architects, who had originally been employed by the lease-holding hotel development company to design the façade, Walter Emden (1847-1913), and William Woodward (1846-1927) had experience in a number of theatres including the Royal Court (1871 and 1888), and the Garrick (1888) as well as the restaurant Romano's (1895).²⁴⁸

Although the majority of these architects were largely trained and gained experience in Britain, the influence of France, and that of the French architectural school, the *École des Beaux-Arts*, runs strongly through hotel architecture. The style favoured by the *École*, where numerous hotel architects trained, was the grandeur of the Classical mode of the Second Empire. *École* training also emphasised the importance of a clearly articulated floor plan and promoted the use of technology, both essential for the successful hotel.²⁴⁹ Henry Florence had been articled to a number of British architects, but he also studied at the *École* under Atelier Blouet, and Pascal.²⁵⁰

A.G.R. Mackenzie (1879-1963), architect of the Waldorf with his father Alexander Marshall Mackenzie (1848-1933) to whom he was articled, studied hotel construction in New York and

²⁴⁷ See David V. Schulz, 'The Architecture of Conspicuous Consumption: Property, Class and Display at Herbert Beerbohm Tree's Her Majesty's Theatre', *Theatre Journal*, 51 (1999), 231-250 and Hugh Maguire, 'The Victorian Theatre as a Home from Home', *Journal of Design History*, 13 (2000), 107-21.

²⁴⁸ Woodward was 'one of a band of architects [...] who concentrated upon central London development on sites of high property value, preferably for flats and hotels'. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (2010), 372; Spain & Dromgoole, 'Theatre Architects', *Architectural History*, 13 (1970) 77-89, 81.

²⁴⁹ For the history the *École*, see Donald Drew Egbert, *The Beaux-Arts Tradition in French Architecture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1980) and Robin Middleton, *The Beaux-Arts and Nineteenth Century French Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1982); and Stephen Calloway, Elizabeth Cromley and Alan Powers, *The Elements of Style: An Encyclopaedia of Domestic Architectural Detail*, 4th edn. (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2012), 385.

²⁵⁰ Isaacs was a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a Fellow the Surveyors' Institution, as well as a Fellow of RIBA. Henry Florence, from Streatham, was articled to E.C. Robbins, J.R. Hakewill and Frederick Pepys Cockerell, son of Charles Cockerell, and studied at the *École des Beaux-Arts*. Alexander Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 259.

other American cities.²⁵¹ But he also understood the design principles of the *École*, having worked with René Sergent (1865-1927) in Paris.²⁵² Sergent himself subsequently worked on the interiors of both the Savoy and in Claridge's in 1910.²⁵³ More influential than these *Beaux-Arts* trained architects, however, was the partnership which was to have a leading role in hotel design.

Although Charles Mewès (1860–1914), and his partner, Arthur Davis (1878-1951) worked together in a range of building types, their partnership is best known for hotel design. Their expertise lay in the organisation of interiors, and the creation of elegant, integrated design schemes, often grounded in the taste of the French seventeenth and eighteenth century, a period about which Mewès was particularly knowledgeable. Mewès had designed the interior of the Paris Ritz (1898), a seventeenth-century *hôtel* on the Place Vendôme, in collaboration with César Ritz, who then brought him and Davis to work on the interiors at the Carlton.²⁵⁴ Their hotel work in London included alterations to the Hyde Park Hotel (initially designed as an apartment block by Perry & Reed in 1888/9 and altered 1901/2), as well as designs for a range of eighteenth-century French interiors for the Hotel Chatham in Regent Street.²⁵⁵ At the Ritz, (Figure 13), they combined interior design with the fashionable architectural details of the Parisian school, and the most modern of building technologies. Beneath the Portland stone and granite exterior was an innovative steel frame, designed by the Swedish-born structural engineer Sven Bylander (1877-1943). In this project, tradition and modernity came together, and the training and experience of the practitioners combined to create a novel interpretation of grandeur.

²⁵¹ 'The Waldorf', *BN*, 13 January 1907, 4.

²⁵² 'Obituary for A.G.R. Mackenzie', *The Builder*, 29 March 1963, 626.

²⁵³ 'Mount Street and Carlos Place: Mount Street, North Side.' *Survey of London: Volume 40, Part 2* (London: LCC, 1980). <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol40/pt2/pp21-32#p33> accessed 15.11.18

²⁵⁴ Mark Boxer, *The Paris Ritz* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991).

²⁵⁵ 'Charles Mewès, 1860-1914: The creator of the modern luxury hotel', *RIBA Journal*, October 1947, 603-4; Hyde Park Court, *Survey of London*. Volume 45 Knightsbridge (London: 2000), 53-63; E864/5/6/7-197, *Mewès and Davis Archive*, Victoria and Albert Museum. See later in this chapter for an examination of the Ritz, and its structural and design innovation.

In 1865, Sala argued that Barry's achievement at the Charing Cross was his response to the social, practical and technological requirements of the modern age rather than the strict adherence to any pre-ordained style. From the 1860s to 1910, 'practical utility' and efficiency in organisation, plan and construction were also the principal objectives of hotel architects and engineers. For those designing hotels, the question was how to manifest this grandeur in material form.

The Importance of Size: 'Large Enough to House an Army'

For the passer-by, the most striking first impression of a grand hotel was usually its size. Hotels were commonly described as gigantic, mammoth, or imposing. In 1877, an observer noted the remarkable size of the Grosvenor (1862), which he likened in immensity to a natural feature:

No object in the metropolis strikes the provincial Englishman with more astonishment than the first sight of this huge building. From the dip of Piccadilly he sees it looming in the distance, far over the head of the royal palace; as he gets nearer it seems to grow into the air; and as he debouches full upon it from some side street, it towers up like a mountain before him – a mountain chiselled from basement to garret with clusters of fruit and flowers, all wrought in enduring stone.²⁵⁶

References to nature and natural materials such as these were well understood as metaphors for enormity and permanence.²⁵⁷ At the same time, scale could be related to new technology and the most up-to-date building techniques. Despite the restrictions of the London Building Acts, in hotels, metal framing and reinforced concrete were widely used by hotel architects and engineers. Iron or steel frames provided the structural core and greater stability which large ground floor public spaces required, as well as enabling a practical layout on the upper floors. At the Langham, structural iron was used in the reception rooms. At the 'colossal' Cecil, the third largest hotel in the world when constructed which cost over £1 million to build, the consulting engineer used 'metal modes of construction', enabling 'the lower floors... to be great rooms and

²⁵⁶ Wynter, *Subtle Brains* (1863, re-ed. 1877), 69.

²⁵⁷ John Kresten Jespersen, 'Originality and Jones' Grammar of Ornament of 1856', *Journal of Design History*, 21:2(2008), 143-153.

the upper parts divided into smaller ones'.²⁵⁸ Although, according to the managing director of the Waring-White Building Company, which constructed both the Ritz and the Waldorf, these techniques added ten per cent to the cost, framing systems speeded up construction considerably.²⁵⁹ Waring-White's 'American system' of prefabricated frames, designed by Sven Bylander, and used at the Savoy Hotel's Strand and Embankment alterations, as well as at the Waldorf and the Ritz, illustrated the advantages of steel construction. Such innovations, and their coverage in both trade and general press also enhanced these hotels' image of modernity.

While 'metal modes of construction' facilitated the construction of buildings with numerous floors and complex internal plans, once building heights began to increase, the lift, Sala's 'most modern and most necessary of novel inventions', was also invaluable.²⁶⁰ To avoid 'the tedious ascent', at the five storey Westminster Palace Hotel (1861), observed a contemporary journal, 'an ingenious contrivance in the shape of a hydraulic lift has been installed'.²⁶¹ In 1863, Sala recommended 'a pair of lifts for each story (sic), so as to admit of invalids and heavy baggages being easily transported from floor to floor'.²⁶² Plans of the Grand, where kitchens were on the upper floors, indicate numerous service lifts, which carried raw materials and prepared dishes up and down the hotel (Figure 56).²⁶³ At the Savoy, the speed of the passenger lifts, which could accommodate fourteen people, was impressive. The average was about 300 feet per minute, according to *The Builder*, although, for the nervous, this could be modified to a 'slow speed for its

²⁵⁸ Clarke, *Early Structural Steel* (2014), particularly Chapters 4 and 10, and for the Langham, 146; 'The Hotel Cecil', *HW*, December 1895, 32. See also 'The Salisbury Estate and the Hotel Cecil', *The Builder*, 6 January 1906, 346 and 'The Largest Hotel in the World', *The Caterer*, August 1891, 305.

²⁵⁹ *Nat. Archives (TNA)*, BT31/10695/81048, cited by Andrew Saint, 'What Became of Waring? Fortunes of an Entrepreneur in Furnishing, Shopkeeping and Construction', *Construction History* 29:1(2014), 75-97, 83.

²⁶⁰ 'Monster Hotels', *London Reader*, 27 October 1866, 689. E.G. Otis exhibited an elevator at the New York Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1853. The first lift in a hotel was at the Fifth Avenue hotel, N.Y.C. (1859). Berger *Hotel Dreams*, 77. Hydraulic lifts were not in use in the City until 1882. Clarke, *Early Structural Steel* (2014), 206 and 46, citing R. Turvey, 'London Lifts and Hydraulic Power', *Transactions of the Newcomen Society*, 65 (1993/4), 147-64, 147.

²⁶¹ 'Passing Events', *Bells Life in London*, 20 January 1861, 3.

²⁶² Sala, 'Mammoth Hotels', *Temple Bar*, September 1863, 198-208, 206.

²⁶³ *Plans of the Grand Hotel*. Job file of Alfred Waterhouse for the Grand Hotel, 1898. Waa/12/4/1-6, RIBA.

entire journey'.²⁶⁴ For the hotel guest, this speed combined the efficiency and excitement of modernity, while implying that their time was precious and should not be wasted.²⁶⁵

The Question of Style: 'Grand Enough to Please a Prince'

The question for proprietors and architects was not whether to construct large hotels, but how to communicate grandeur in form and ornament. Pragmatically, style and materials were chosen to manage size, reflect the interior plan, and take account of the metropolitan environment.

Aesthetically, design and ornamentation needed to express social status and the promise of luxury, combined with indications of cosmopolitan modernity. Connections with ecclesiastical morality and changing fashions meant that the Gothic Revival was not favoured. The Midland Grand at St Pancras (1865-74), by George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), was the only substantial London hotel in this style.²⁶⁶ Instead, the first choice for a hotel style was often broadly Classical.

For hotels, the Classical style was an elegant solution. Its proportions, symmetry and familiar vocabulary managed scale effectively. Architectural detailing broke up the façades of substantial buildings, and the proportions of fenestration and articulation responded to the interior plan of larger ground floor reception rooms, and rows of equal-sized bedrooms off long corridors on the upper levels. More specifically, the most widely used of the style's 'chameleon forms' was often the French 'Second Empire mode'.²⁶⁷ This was a re-interpretation of the Classical based upon L.T.J. Visconti and H.M. Lefuel's new Louvre (1852-57), which borrowed elements from the original sixteenth-century building, producing a contemporary style used throughout the re-

²⁶⁴ *The Builder*, 14 May 1904, 520-521.

²⁶⁵ For the place of time and speed in modernity, see Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1914* (Cambridge Mass.; London: Harvard UP, 2003), 114.

²⁶⁶ Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style* (1987), 119. In the Midland Grand, Gilbert Scott utilised the design concepts he would have used at the Foreign Office, according to Lynda Skipper, 'The Evolution of Wallpaper Interior Design Schemes in a Commercial Setting: The Interiors of the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel (Midland Grand Hotel), London 1870s-1890s', *Journal of Design History*, 30:3 (2016), 315-333.

²⁶⁷ Ian Toplis, *The Foreign Office* (London: Mansell, 1987), 46, citing H-R Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963); Mordaunt Crook, *Rise of the Nouveaux Riches* (2000), 60.

planned and reconstructed Paris. Its attraction lay in a combination of novelty and tradition, and the association with *ancien régime* French sophistication. The style's fundamentals, which included the mansard roof, pavilion ends, rustication, cornice and frieze gave architects parameters within which to work, but also permitted a certain liberty to add individuality, character or embellishment.

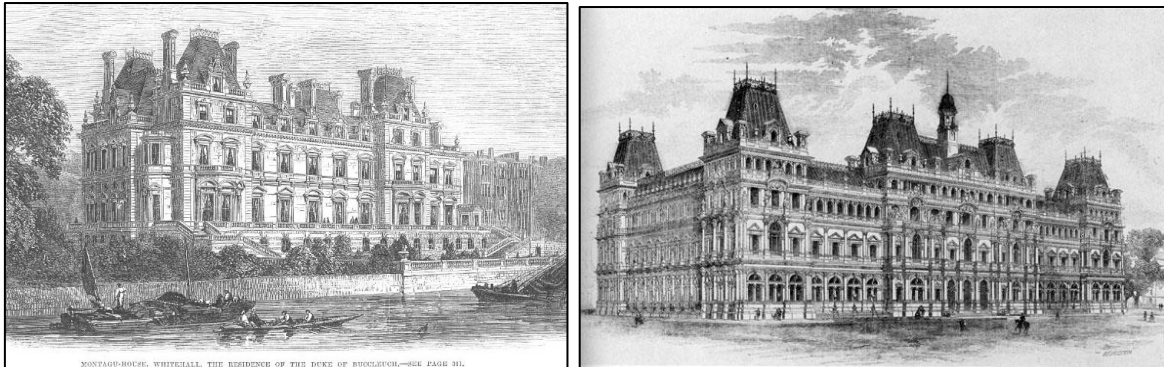


Figure 8 Montagu House (William Burn) 1853-9, and design for the War Office (Henry B. Garling) 1856-7 ²⁶⁸

The combination of ostentation and flexibility meant this interpretation was equally valuable in both the 'private palaces' of the wealthy and in large public buildings. In Whitehall, Montagu House (1853-9) (Figure 8) by William Burn for the Duke of Buccleuch, used similar forms, with a rusticated ground floor and dynamic roofline of tall mansard roofs and chimneys behind parapets.²⁶⁹ Of the fourteen prizes awarded in the 1857 competition for the Foreign and War Offices, seven were given to designs in this style. Of particular note was Henry B. Garling's War Office design (1856-7), which adopted all the basic ingredients of high Second Empire style — mansard roof, pavilion massing, robust classical ornamentation and a picturesque roofline. Although never executed, the widely-publicized plan provided a model for public - and hotel -

²⁶⁸ Montagu House as illustrated in the *ILN*, 24 September 1864, 311. For the image of Garling's building, see Ellen K. Morris, 'Symbols of Empire: Architectural Style and the Government Offices Competition', *Politics & Design Symbolism*, 32:2(1978), 8-13.

²⁶⁹ 'The repetitive French-renaissance-style elevations complete with steep mansard roof, corner towers, high dormers and lofty chimneys could be a prototype for the nineteenth-century grand hotel', David Pearce, *London's Mansions: The Palatial Houses of the Nobility* (London: Batsford, 2001), 185.

building in the Second Empire style, which exhibited, the style's 'great merits [...] in facility, convenience and grandeur'.²⁷⁰

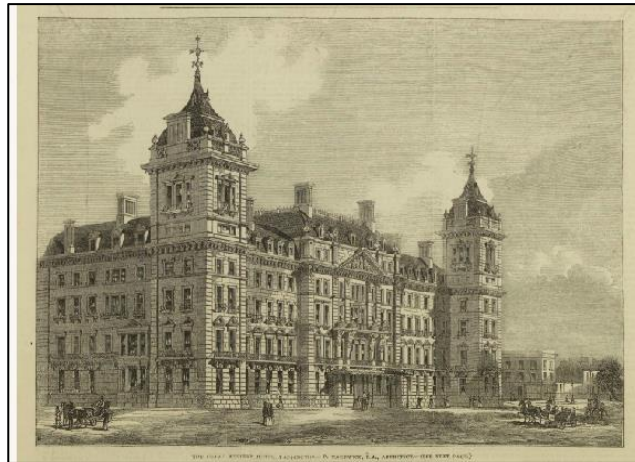


Figure 9 Great Western Hotel by P.C. Hardwick (1854), as drawn in 1852²⁷¹

P.C. Hardwick's Great Western (Figure 9) resembled both Montagu House and Garling's War Office in a number of ways. As contemporary journals acknowledged, the design imitated the style of 'the French of Louis XIV or later', with square corner pavilions, and lofty mansard roofs.²⁷² The 'tall showy building' in stone and stucco was four storeys high, with a basement, and an attic above the modillioned cornice. The pavilions broke the solid symmetry of the façade, as did the central projection of five bays. The design was 'grandiose and monumental', but it was also innovative, using the mansard for the first time in Britain.²⁷³ Named after Louis XIV's architect, François Mansart (1598-1666), the seventeenth-century architect who introduced the structure in the enlargement of the Louvre, the mansard roof was a specifically French Renaissance interpretation of Classical architecture. The feature added height and interest to the roofline. It also pragmatically accommodated additional storeys, making it particularly beneficial in hotels. In

²⁷⁰ 'The New Government Offices', *ILN*, 8 August 1857, 142.

²⁷¹ *ILN*, 18 December 1852, 537.

²⁷² *ILN*, 18 December 1852, 537; 'London and Paris improvements', *Saturday Review*, 8 March 1856, 366.

²⁷³ Sala, *Twice Round the Clock, or the Hours of Day and Night in London* (London: 1859), 58; Toplis, *The Foreign Office* (1987), 46. Simmons, 'Railways, Hotels and Tourism ...', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 19 (1984), 201-222; Bradley & Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, London. 6: Westminster* (New Haven: London; YUP, 2003), 737.

1879, *The Builder* commended the four high mansard roofs in plans for the Grand, which would 'take off the horizontalism which would otherwise be too conspicuous'.²⁷⁴ At the Ritz, the mansarded skyline, which enclosed two floors of attic bedrooms above the main cornice, was, according to *The Builders' Journal*, a conscious echo of Lefuel's extensions to the Louvre.²⁷⁵



Figure 10 The Cecil (1896), dominating its neighbour, the Savoy (1889) in 1903²⁷⁶

At the Great Western, Hardwick also adopted the pavilion corner. Like the mansard, pavilions could contribute to the height and interest of a roofline, but, they also disrupted the uniformity of long façades with equal sized bedroom windows. At the Grosvenor, a vast building largely in the Second Empire style, with some Italianate round-arched details, James Knowles father and son combined mansard roofs, symmetry and impressive size, with a central portion, contained by two end pavilions of five storeys. At the Cecil, (Figure 10), the river elevation was dominated by two substantial pavilions, predominantly in stone, topped with mansard roofs and cupolas, which towered over the neighbouring Savoy.²⁷⁷

At the Waldorf, (Figure 11) A.G.R. and A.M. Mackenzie, managed the features of the Second Empire style particularly successfully. The hotel was situated in the broad curve of the recently

²⁷⁴ BA, 7 February 1879, 50; 'The Grand Hotel', *The Builder*, 29 March 1879, 342.

²⁷⁵ The Ritz Hotel', *BJ*, 11 July 1906, np.

²⁷⁶ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL177735A*

²⁷⁷ James Stevens Curl, *Classical Architecture* (London: Batsford, 1992), 250. For the history of the Grosvenor, see Patricia Metcalf, *James Knowles. Victorian Editor and Architect* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1980), 129-143. 'Hotel Cecil', *HW*, December 1895, 32;7 ; *MG*, 27 August 1894, 5.

laid-out Aldwych, adjacent to Kingsway, a new avenue modelled in part on Haussmann's work in Paris, and the influence of contemporary Parisian design on the building was strong.²⁷⁸ The Classical *Beaux-Arts* detailing even included French-style casement windows.²⁷⁹ The positive response to the hotel noted the effective management of space and style, with a considered approach to ornament, proportion and scale. 'An effect of magnificence is obtained in the outlines which are bold and simple', wrote *The Modern Building Record*, 'the only ornament being a sculptured frieze, capitals and bases. In the centre of the front is a screen in the Ionic style, correcting what might have appeared a monotonous array of regularly-placed windows'.²⁸⁰ In this hotel, the combination of this well-composed, restrained form of French Classicism and Bylander's steel frame construction symbolised a modern but conservative luxury.²⁸¹



Figure 11 The Waldorf Hotel by A.M. and A.G.R. Mackenzie (1908)²⁸²

²⁷⁸ Plans for the Strand/Aldwych, 'the first street of the Edwardian era and an acknowledged failure', were fudged under the supervision of the 1900 LCC Improvements Committee. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (2010), 350. Dirk Schubert & Anthony Sutcliffe, 'The 'Haussmannization' of London? The Planning and Construction of Kingsway-Aldwych, 1880-1935', *Planning Perspectives*, 11 (1996), 115-144, 136.

²⁷⁹ Sutcliffe, *London: An Architectural History* (2006), 191

²⁸⁰ *The Modern Building Record, Volume 1 Public Buildings* (London: Charles Jones Ltd., 1910), 159.

²⁸¹ Michael Snodin, *Design and the Decorative Arts. Victorian Britain, 1837-1901* (London: V&A, 2004), 67.

²⁸² *BJ*, 25 December 1907, 17.

While stone was widely used in hotels, other materials were also employed in the search for practicality, fashion and status. Although it had been a popular building material in London in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Georgian interregnum of cream stucco meant that the late nineteenth-century return to red brick was considered progressive.²⁸³ Like red and yellow terracotta, which could be manufactured by machine with all manner of decorative detail, brick could be mass produced inexpensively. At the same time, red brick recalled the buildings of the English and Dutch Renaissance, and the early eighteenth century. These attributes made these materials popular for hotels designed in the cosmopolitan eclecticism of the 1880s and 1890s.²⁸⁴ On the Grosvenor Estate, new buildings were required to sit politely in the wider streetscape in both form and materials. Rather than Classical cornices, columns and pavilion ends constructed in stone, the Duke of Westminster's preference was for the Queen Anne Revival, and Flemish gables in red brick and terracotta.²⁸⁵ At the Coburg (1896), which was on a prominent raised position overlooking the newly constructed Carlos Place, the building was of red brick with stone dressings, and stone mullion and transomed windows, with Dutch gables.²⁸⁶ C.W. Stephens scheme for Claridge's (Figure 12) was also largely in brick, with terracotta detailing, in a loose interpretation of the English Renaissance.²⁸⁷

In a small number of hotels, eclectic expression was taken a step further. The two Russell Square hotels, both by Charles Fitzroy Doll (1850-1929), the Duke of Bedford's estate architect, were particularly flamboyant. The enormous Imperial Hotel (1900) adventurously combined red brick,

²⁸³ White, *London in the Nineteenth Century: 'A Human Awful Wonder of God'* (2007), 64.

²⁸⁴ Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style* (1987), 188. For the Hyde Park Hotel, see *Survey of London: Volume 45, Knightsbridge*, (2000, 53-63), <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol45/pp53-63>; Andrew Saint, 'Whatever Happened to Jonathan Carr?', *The London Journal*, 12:1 (1986), 65-79.

²⁸⁵ *Survey of London: Vol. 39. The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair Part I: General History*, 53. <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol39/pt1> acc. 15.1.19

²⁸⁶ *Survey of London: Vol. 40: The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair, Part 2 (The Buildings)*. Mount Street and Carlos Place: Mount Street, North Side, 321-326. <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol40/pt2/pp321-326/h3-0005> acc. 21.3.16

²⁸⁷ 'Claridge's Hotel', *DT*, 25 December 1894, 7; *The Architect*, 9 December 1898, 376; *The Caterer*, 15 January 1895, 3.

recessed bow windows, asymmetrical mansard roofs and a bell tower over the main entrance in an idiosyncratic style described by Pevsner as a 'vicious mixture of Art Nouveau Gothic and Art Nouveau Tudor'.²⁸⁸ The striking exterior of the Russell (1898-1900), a self-confident re-interpretation of the mid- sixteenth-century Chateau de Madrid on the Bois de Boulogne, was clad in Doulton's 'thé-au-lait' architectural terracotta, with friezes of garlands and cherubs. Statues of Queens Victoria, Elizabeth, Anne and Mary injected a suitably prestigious reference to English tradition.²⁸⁹ In these hotels, size continued to be an essential element of grandeur, but taste and identity were less about French Classicism and more about exuberance, individuality, and visual impact.



Figure 12 The Brook Street elevation of the 'New Claridge's Hotel' (C.W. Stephens), dated 31 August 1896²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Service, *London 1900* (1979), 146; Sutcliffe, *London: An Architectural History* (2006), 116; Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. London. 6, Westminster* (1951), 217.

²⁸⁹ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 455; Ruth Siddall, 'Decorative Stones in the Hotel Russell, Russell Square', *Urban Geology in London* 7, February 2013.

²⁹⁰ LMA GLC/AR/BR/19/276

The 'Modern' Hotel: Grandeur or Functionality?

A significant assertion often made by both commentators and proprietors during this period was that grand hotels were up-to-date and modern. Much of this related to the technology, the management and service, and the social behaviour of guests, which are examined in later chapters.²⁹¹ In terms of the building structure, one aspect of modernity was the adoption of the mansard roof, the practical solution inspired by French Classical architecture which came to be *de rigueur* in hotels. A second was the lift, which provided luxury to the topmost floors, and the efficient movement of supplies and staff around the building. A third was the use of iron and steel, which pushed against the restrictions of existing legislation, and enabled faster construction, more efficient services, and more flexible interior space. While initially this modernity had little influence upon the exterior of the building, after the turn of the century, these elements, along with the use of new materials, led to a subtle shift in appearance, and a different interpretation of grandeur.

By the middle of the first decade of the new century there were glimpses of this shift. At the Ritz, the steel-framed system of construction, meticulously designed by Bylander, gave Mewès and Davis a degree of freedom in the plan and organisation of the interior which was much admired.²⁹² However, a number of factors meant that the exterior of the building was more problematic. The requirements of the London Building Acts stipulated that the Norwegian grey granite and Portland stone elevations were load-bearing despite the steel frames, with the consequence that the walls were proportionally very thick. Maximising interior space on a tight

²⁹¹ The historiography of modernity is examined in Chapter VII: Modernity.

²⁹² For the coverage of the steel frame construction, *BJ*, 28 December 1904, 21 April and 5 May 1905. London Building Acts of 1894 and 1905. In addition to Clarke *Early Structural Steel* (2014), see J.C. Lawrence, 'Steel Frame Architecture versus the London Building Regulations: Selfridges, the Ritz and American Technology', *Construction History*, 6, 1990, 23-47. 23. Bylander also designed steel frames in Selfridges, The 'Morning Post' building, and Australia House, Kingsway, London. The LCC (General Powers) Act of 1909, 'The Steel Frame Act', officially recognised steel-frame construction.

site precluded the use of projections and recesses which might have relieved some of this solidity. In addition, unlike the interior which dazzled, Mewès and Davis' interpretation of the *Beaux-Arts* architectural style was relatively plain. Although the arcade projecting over the pavement, echoing that at the Rue de Rivoli, gave the hotel's exterior something of an elegant French air, the bulk of the roof dominated the principal elevations, overpowering the façade and adversely affecting the building's proportions.²⁹³ The corner view of the hotel (Figure 13) also tended to emphasise its size, which its simplified architectural detailing did little to relieve.



Figure 13 The Ritz Hotel, by Charles Mewès and Arthur Davis, and John P Bishop (1906)²⁹⁴

In a number of quarters, the hotel's design was not well received, echoing the criticism of the Hausmannian monotony of the new Parisian boulevards.²⁹⁵ In January 1906, before construction finished, *The Caterer* described the Ritz as one of London's 'most magnificent [...], an excellent example of modern work [and] a striking architectural achievement, a prominent addition to the splendour of Piccadilly'. By July, the tone had changed. 'To tell the truth, [...]' the appearance of

²⁹³ Alexander Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 61; Binney, *The Ritz Hotel* (1999), 43. Montgomery-Massingberd, *The London Ritz* (1980), 68.

²⁹⁴ *The Modern Building Record, Volume 1 Public Buildings* (1910), 166

²⁹⁵ With thanks to Dr. O'Mahony for this suggestion.

the straight erect Portland stone frontage [...] is quite severe in its classical plainness'.²⁹⁶ The *Manchester Guardian* labelled the hotel 'an elegant monster', which did not 'quite justify its magnificent position in Piccadilly'.²⁹⁷ *The Builder* too was not a fan. Despite hoping for an 'architectural effect [which was] satisfactory and imposing', the journal wrote, 'one's hopes are dashed to the ground'. The details were 'so disconnected and disappointing' and 'the want of relief [...] is rather depressing'. The proportions were wrong, the main entrance on Piccadilly was not sufficiently imposing and the roofline of chimneystacks prompted a 'feeling of restlessness'. 'The feeling creeps into one's mind', the journal concluded, 'that the chance of designing a notable addition to the street architecture of London has been missed, and one deplores that such an important and prominent site has not been covered with a building of a more satisfactory architectural character'.²⁹⁸ Unlike Richard Norman Shaws's English Baroque and Dutch-gabled Piccadilly Hotel (1908) at the other end of the thoroughfare, this building did not look solely to historicist sources for its inspiration. At the Ritz, at least in its exterior design, function was as important as form.

Function, and practicality were also important at the Savoy. The significant extensions onto the Strand in 1904, and on the Embankment elevation in 1910 were designed to maintain the hotel's commercial position as the 'hotel *de luxe* of the world', and to improve aspects of the guests' social and physical comfort. In 1904, a prestigious entrance from the Strand was required to replace the original, unimpressive carriage entrance on Savoy Hill. Although a lobby and reception room, designed by T.E. Collcutt, had been constructed in the courtyard in 1896, an improved lobby was needed to accommodate guests upon arrival and to provide the newly fashionable social space in which they might linger and observe. More space was also wanted for

²⁹⁶ *The Caterer*, January 1906, 23 and July 1906, 308.

²⁹⁷ *MG*, 28 May 1906.

²⁹⁸ *The Builder*, 30 September 1905, 342.

guest accommodation, including serviced flats, a novel introduction which combined hotel services and privacy.²⁹⁹ In 1910, the brief was to add en-suite bathrooms to all the original hotel bedrooms, including those on the river side.³⁰⁰ In both projects, it was essential that the hotel and restaurant business should not be interrupted, and disturbance kept to a minimum. At the same time, designs should encapsulate the innovative luxury of the hotel.



Figure 14 'The Best Ceramic Material for Exteriors'. Doulton's Carrara at the Savoy (1909)³⁰¹

On both occasions, Colcutt and Hamp identified and implemented consciously modern solutions. In 1904, a road was created from the Strand, with towers on each side, leading to the new main entrance. The ground floor of the building was dressed in slabs of green and white marble, beneath a glass and metal canopy, and the turning circle was 'paved' in rubber to reduce noise. Above, the elevations were decorated in an eclectic style, which combined a Spanish loggia, with Ionic columns, recessed niches and sculptured spandrels, beneath a mansard roof in green tiles (Figure 14). Doulton's 'Carrara', a gleaming, creamy matt-glazed terracotta designed to emulate the appearance of marble, clad the building, and enabled a fine level of decorative detail.³⁰²

²⁹⁹ 'Savoy Court and Savoy Hotel', *CL*, 23 April 1904, xlv; 'How the Savoy was Built', *DT*, 25 May 1904, 5.

³⁰⁰ 'Savoy Hotel', *The Observer*, 30 October 1910, 17.

³⁰¹ *The Architect*, 17 September 1909, 20.

³⁰² 'Savoy Hotel Extension', *The Observer*, 1 May 1904, 7; 'Strand Improvements', *DT*, 4 Feb. 1903, 11; *The Architect*, 10 September 1909, 20; Gibson, 'Thomas Colcutt', *Journal of RIBA*, 18 October 1924, 666-667.

Although the material was relatively inexpensive, its benefits were that it remained clean and bright, repelling the sooty deposits of the metropolis.

In 1910, on the Embankment façade, modern construction and design united in a new interpretation of grandeur (Figure 15). The construction method devised by Colcutt and Hamp and the consulting engineers, Reade, Jackson & Parry, to solve the problem of adding space while minimising disruption, was so unusual that the contractors undertaking the 2007-10 refurbishment had not encountered such a technique before.³⁰³ To accommodate the new en-suite bathrooms and services, the main façade wall was removed, and rebuilt some 8ft 6in nearer to the river. A series of cantilevered girders were constructed beneath an additional mansard storey, which contained new staff quarters. 'The practical effect', wrote the *Building News*, 'is that the whole of the wall construction from end to end of the building and from the top of the seventh story down to the top of the third story is literally hung from the ends of the cantilevers.'³⁰⁴ Beneath green roof tiles, the façade, clad in the same Doulton's Carraraware as the Strand elevation, was unembellished and clean. When compared to its neighbour, the Cecil, which had opened only fourteen years earlier, the Savoy, represented a new era, inspired more by the functional modernity of Chicago, rather than the traditional Classicism of Paris.

Scale, Status and Identity: Grandeur over Refinement

Although their size and expressions of status were designed to impress, the architecture of the London grand hotels was not always received positively. At the Ritz, contemporary critics argued that the design was ill-considered, unsuitable for the prominence of the location. The Northumberland Avenue hotels too, which 'might have formed a cheerful approach to the finest river roadway in the world' were a disappointment, 'a missed opportunity, unambitious and

³⁰³ A. Weller, 'Savoy Hotel Refurbishment Raises Hanging Façade', *Civil Engineering*, April 2011, 14-16.

³⁰⁴ 'Savoy Hotel Extension', *The Builder*, 10 September, 291- 293.

stodgy'. The buildings were too bulky and could not be regarded 'an architectural success'.³⁰⁵ The first iteration of the Savoy was also not widely admired. The original hotel, with its black iron balconies by Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942), and red and cream awnings, was constructed largely without the benefit of an architect, and did not comply with the conventions of any architectural style.³⁰⁶ The building, stated *The Builder*, was 'incommensurate with its position, and perhaps the best one could say for it is that it gains by contrast to with the adjacent Examination Hall'. *The British Architect* was particularly scathing. 'Originality is one thing; license quite another.[...] The originality that reared [...] the Savoy Hotel – that hideous *caravanseraï* upon the Victoria Embankment – is altogether to be deprecated.'³⁰⁷

If the architectural design was not always well-received, the magnitude of grand hotels could also prove controversial. Although size was important for business success, it could indicate impersonal anonymity and a brash commercialism which did not appeal to the guest who desired a luxury which was welcoming, bespoke and particular. As early as 1877, a journal identified a tone of negativity which appeared with regularity. 'In the cold grandeur of the huge modern edifice', wrote *The Saturday Review*, 'the traveller is made painfully aware after a time that he is looked upon merely as prey, that every man's hand is against him, and that from the stately manager to the luggage varlet, all are thinking merely of how much money they can get out of him'.³⁰⁸ In 1899, Arthur Griffiths (1838-1908), a well-travelled former soldier, inspector of prisons and author, argued that this 'tendency to bigness which is so characteristic of the present age' was highly questionable. These 'modern monster *caravanserais*' were so large, he complained,

³⁰⁵ 'The London County Council and the Height of Buildings', *BA*, 10 January 1890, 24. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (2010), 344. *BA*, 14 November 1884, 229 ; 'Hotel Metropole', *BA* 22 May 1885, 249.

³⁰⁶ Peyton Skipwith, 'Mackmurdo, Arthur Heygate (1851–1942)', *Oxford DNB*, (OUP, 2004); Roger Woodley, 'River Views: Transformations on the Thames', *Architectural History*, 44 (2001), 115-122, 120).

³⁰⁷ Savoy Hotel, *The Builder*, 6 January 1906, 13; *BA*, 11 January 1895, 34.

³⁰⁸ 'Foreign Hotels', *Saturday Review*, 29 December 1877, 805-6.

that they 'have almost reached the last limit in size and grandeur'.³⁰⁹ In 1907, Stanley Hamp went a degree further, identifying the inherent contradictions of a form of luxury which was extremely large and excessively grand:

Hotels have tended, in fact, to become too palatial; the status of the age and the standard of hotel living among the rich seems to demand this; but it may very well be questioned whether it is not desirable to render them a little more homelike, not only in arrangement but in architectural expression. As a general rule, the architecture of the modern large hotel is of the worst class, uniting the pretentious and the commonplace.³¹⁰

Hamp's criticism was illuminating. Although he was well-versed in the practicalities of hotel design, he acknowledged that it was perhaps not possible to resolve successfully the demand for size and opulence with the desire for personal service and attention. The grandeur of these hotels was by no means subtle, the opposite of the tasteful quality and individuality which the luxury of earlier centuries had promised. The danger was that these unrefined buildings might not confer the correct interpretation of elite identity which a guest desired.

Conclusion

Grand hotels were financed through new legal and funding methods, and were constructed in convenient locations, close to social, retail and leisure attractions, on sites which often became available during metropolitan improvements. For hotel architects, the challenge was to combine the requirement for buildings which were as large as possible, but also practical, with the need to create the impression of prestige and status - as *The Hotel World* put it, 'to house an army', and 'to please a prince'.³¹¹ The choice of style and ornamentation was often a largely Classical, *Beaux-Arts* influenced, 'Second Empire', mode, which came to be widespread in grand hotel design. However, the recognition of the importance of creating a strong visual statement also produced a variety of eclectic designs, which were not always well received.

³⁰⁹ Griffiths, 'Hotels at home and abroad' *Fortnightly Review*, August 1899, 256-263, 256.

³¹⁰ Stanley Hamp, 'Hotel Architecture', *The Builder*, April 13 1907, 441.

³¹¹ 'Are the small hotels doomed?' *HW*, January 1898, 8.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, while some hotel architects continued to look backwards for sources of luxury grandeur, there were indications of a shift in approach in terms of style. The desirability of large, impersonal buildings was questioned, and for some guests, no doubt, the size of a grand hotel was distasteful. However, there were glimpses of a grandeur in which taste and identity was less connected with the past, and more to a functional modernity, which was increasingly fashionable in America and on parts of the Continent.

What is also evident is that the idea of grandeur had to be managed carefully. In these venues, *The Hotel World* stated, 'wholesale quantities [of] magnificence' were sold in 'retail fashion', yet this was in contradiction with the interpretation of luxury which emphasised individuality and distinction.³¹² Elaine Denby describes grand hotels as possessing, a 'magic of grandeur and luxury' which was not solely focussed upon the appearance of the building.³¹³ To be successful, a grand hotel needed to possess a certain 'magic', and this 'magic' is the subject of the next chapter.

³¹² Ibid. , 8.

³¹³ Denby, *Grand Hotels* (1998), 8.



Figure 15. The new river elevation at the Savoy in 1913³¹⁴

³¹⁴ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL22139*

Chapter III: Magic

Ritz 'ordained that evening dress was *de rigueur* in the dining rooms. [...], the effect was magical'.³¹⁵

'Do not advertise to sell; luxury communicates to build the dream and to recreate it'.³¹⁶

Although grandeur, size and status were important in establishing the luxury of the London grand hotel, for potential guests the initial encounter was often not with the building itself. Rather, the public's first contact was frequently with an imaginary representation of the hotel *de luxe*. The buildings, and the events which took place within were frequently the subject of press comment. Advertisements promoting their services appeared in local and national press. Hotel guides and promotional materials, with content and of a quality which encouraged recipients to retain them, painted a picture of the luxury of the hotel experience. Both deliberately and inadvertently, this material created an image of the grand hotel that was based in reality, but was also an attractive fantasy. Through language and marketing, these *caravanserais*, a term widely used for grand hotels which carried implications of a heterotopic 'otherworld', and their clients could be transformed from the ordinary to the exceptional. Hotel publicity used the lexicon of magic and the image of the palace, as well as themes of tradition and social status, novelty and transformation to create this fantasy. The allure of the imaginary exotic was further enhanced by the creation and promotion of spectacles for special occasions, which used theatrical illusion and 'secular magic' to turn a client's fantasies into reality.

Mythmaking, Magic, and Visual Trickery

Ideas of magic and mythmaking threaded through the social and cultural context of this period in a variety of ways. Although science and rationality were guiding principles in many spheres, the appeal of the non-rational, sensual or emotional figured heavily. In the field of consumption, and in the luxury consumption proffered by the hotel *de luxe* in particular, these notions were

³¹⁵ Marie-Louise Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 153.

³¹⁶ J.N. Kapferer, 'Abundant Rarity: The Key to Luxury Growth', *Business Horizons*, 55 (2012), 453-462, 456.

relevant in four interconnected ways. Magic and mythmaking were seen in the creation of a cohesive, desirable social identity for consumers or guests; they were effective as an explanation of the sensations and desires provoked in sites of consumption; they were found in the visual trickery of 'secular magic', and the magic of marketing and advertising was essential.

Mythology and imagined realms are important in establishing the identity of any social group in a changing world. Myths of tradition and status artificially create groups, identify those who might be members, and make membership desirable. For David Cannadine, this applies to the largest of all social groups. 'Nations', he argues, [...] are in part imagined communities, depending for their credibility and identity both on the legitimacy of government and the apparatus of the state, and on invented traditions, manufactured myths, and shared perceptions of the social order that are never more than crude categories and oversimplified stereotypes'.³¹⁷ Frank Trentmann contends that in the late Victorian period there was a boom in what he refers to as 'mass-manufactured' tradition-making in British culture, which acted as a counter to modernisation and industrialisation.³¹⁸ In situations in which groups of strangers were brought together, the myth of common membership was valuable, and, in locations which claimed to offer luxury, membership was needed to imply a certain status, and to identify boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.

Mythmaking in this period was not confined to tales of invented traditions of historical identity. There was also a general re-awakening of interest in folklore and mythology which meant that magical worlds and creatures were often encountered in Victorian and Edwardian literature, performance, and the visual arts. In these, a 'real and potent magic' of ritual, witches and fairies came to life. Magical stories were imaginative and exciting, outside the conventions of expected social behaviour, and even dangerous. Illustrations could be delicate, feminine and visually

³¹⁷ 'David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How The British Saw Their Empire* (London: Penguin, 2002), 3.

³¹⁸ Frank Trentmann, 'Gentlemen and Players: The Leisure of British Modernity', *Contemporary Record*, 7:3 (1993), 685-692.

appealing.³¹⁹ The land of fairy-tale was undeniably desirable. Setting aside the temptations of scantily-clad nymphs, these other-worlds offered many attractions.

Magic and 'the magical imagination' could also be seen as an explanation of sensations and experiences that went beyond the rational.³²⁰ Numerous scholars, led by Keith Thomas, have argued that the Enlightenment, urbanisation, and the development of a rational scientific approach meant that Western societies were less inclined to be influenced by the magical behaviours that had been significant in earlier periods.³²¹ Indeed, for some nineteenth-century contemporaries, the place of magic in society was largely relegated to anthropological debates, which tended to cast Western nations, explicitly and implicitly, in a favourable light. In primitive cultures, magic stood in opposition to reason, segregated from science, capitalism and religion.³²² In this context, magic was a 'non-modern phenomenon', primitive, irrational and uneducated.³²³ The difficulty with this strict division was that reason and science could not necessarily explain the sensual and emotional response to certain experiences.

Rather than embracing rationality, in many of the sites of consumption which developed in this period, ideas of magic and luxury went hand in hand. The appeal of new retail premises was not

³¹⁹ For the role of fairies in Victorian life and literature, see Jan Susina, 'Dealing with Victorian Fairies', *Children's Literature: Annual of the Modern Language Association*, 28 (2000), 230-37, and Nicola Bown, *Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001). Sir Walter Scott's *Fairies of Border Superstition* *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, (1802) and Thomas Keightley, *The Fairy Mythology* (1826), a study of global fairy mythology, are both cited in Bown, 'The Enchantments of Tradition', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 10:3 (1999), 308-325. For the visual language used by Norman Wilkinson for the fairies in the 1914 Savoy production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, see Christopher McCullough, 'Harley Granville Barker: A Very English Avant-Garde', *Studies in Theatre and Performance* 27:3 (2007), 223-235.

³²⁰ Karl Bell, *The Magical Imagination: Magic and Modernity in Urban England, 1780-1914* (CUP, 2012).

³²¹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971). For the history of magic, see Chapter 1 of Simon During, *Modern Enchantments: The Cultural Power of Secular Magic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2009) and Supriya Rajan, 'Networking Magic: Andrew Lang and the Science of Self-Interest', *Romanticism & Victorianism on the Net*, 64, (October 2013), <https://ravonjournal.org/issue/ravon-64/> acc. 25.6.2018.

³²² Contemporary theorists include Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom* (New York: Henry Holt, 1874); James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A study in Magic and Religion* (1890) & Marcel Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (1902).

³²³ Randall Styers, *Making Magic: Religion, Magic and Science in the Modern World* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

to a consumer's reason but to their senses, emotions and imagination. From Owen Jones' 1858 premises for F & C Osler, manufacturers of glittering light fittings, to William Whiteley's Bayswater emporium, or Selfridge's on Oxford Street, stores were designed as spectacular, tempting environments, set apart from the run-of-the-mill.³²⁴ These shops, Constance Classen maintains, were the 'contemporary, commercial realisation of the pre-modern fantasy of an eternally sunny land of plenty, [...] a synesthetic world in which all the sensory effects shimmered and merged into one captivating whole'.³²⁵ In such venues, Rosalind Williams contends, scene-setting elements from colour to light 'created a fairyland environment, the sense of being, not in a distant place, but in a make-believe place where obedient genies leap to their masters command'.³²⁶ These 'dream worlds' of consumption contrasted with the mediocrity of everyday life. The luxuries that could be purchased within, where the techniques of theatre intertwined with notions of mythical magic, were transformative not only as visible symbols of a desirable social identity, but also in their promise of new sensations and pleasures.³²⁷

³²⁴ For the changing design of shops, see Erika Rappaport, 'The Halls of Temptation': Gender, Politics, and the Construction of the Department Store in Late Victorian London', *Journal of British Studies*, 35: 1 (1996), 58-83; Kathryn A. Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping: An Architectural History* (New Haven; London: Yale UP for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2003); Elizabeth Outka, 'Crossing the Great Divides: Selfridge's Modernity and the Commodified Authentic', *Modernism/modernity*, 12: 2, April 2005, 311-328. For Osler's shop, see *The Survey of London blog*, <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2015/12/11/oslers-shop-oxford-street/>, acc.18.7.18. For the emotional and sensory response to consumption, see Kate Smith, 'Sensing Design and Workmanship: The Haptic Skills of Shoppers in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of Design History*, 25:1 (2012), 1-10. See also David Howes, 'HYPERESTHESIA or the Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism', in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 281-303, 284.

³²⁵ Constance Classen, *Studies in Sensory History: Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch* (Chicago; University of Illinois Press, 2012), 197.

³²⁶ Rosalind Williams, 'Dream Worlds of Consumption', in D.J. Crowley and Paul Heyer, eds., *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*, 6th edn. (Boston, Mass.; London: Allyn & Bacon/Pearson, 2011), 137-150, 142, and Rosalind Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley; Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 140.

³²⁷ Mike Featherstone, 'Luxury, Consumer Culture and Sumptuary Dynamics', *Luxury*, 1:1 (2014), 47-69, 48. Antonella Carù and Bernard Cova, 'Revisiting Consumption Experience: A more Humble but Complete view of the Concept', *Marketing Theory*, 3 (2003), 267-286 and A.F. Firat and N. Dholakia, *Consuming People: From Political Economy to Theaters of Consumption* (London: Sage, 1998), 96.

The purveyors of alluring magic in these sites of consumption utilised various techniques and technologies which audiences were also enjoying in music-halls, theatres and exhibitions. In these venues, Simon During claims, the 'secular magic' of technically-produced conjuring shows and special effects was increasingly prevalent, enjoyed by all levels of society.³²⁸ This type of magic could produce, through techniques such as artificial lighting, magic lanterns and hydraulic trap doors, the 'reality' of the supernatural magic seen in the illusions and fictions designed for popular leisure consumption.³²⁹ 'Secular magic', argues During, moved easily across cultural and linguistic barriers, appealing to a wide audience. From Peter Pan, to the Drury Lane pantomimes of Augustus Harris, or P.T. Barnum's 'Greatest Show on Earth', all were 'powerful cultural representations of otherness', which produced 'magic and miracles through economic and organisational mechanisms'.³³⁰

Finally, as both scholars of consumption studies and late twentieth-century luxury brand marketing analysis argue, notions of magic and transformation were - and are - integral to the concept of a luxury product or experience. In this context, magic is employed in two ways. The first 'magic' is an element of the process which changes the standard object into a luxury. As I identify in Chapter I, by the middle of the nineteenth century, luxury consumption was no longer defined by rarity, restricted to the elite. 'Like magicians' Bernard Catry contends, in an analysis of twenty-first-century consumption, 'the luxury incumbents seek to perform an illusion where actual scarcity is replaced by a perceived rarity'.³³¹ An object, whether scarce or not, can be rendered 'luxurious' through the creation of the perception of rarity or difference, a process

³²⁸ During, *Modern Enchantments* (2009), 1. During cites the phrase 'real and potent magic' from Eliphas Levi, *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual* (London: Bracken Books, 1995), 12.

³²⁹ Ray Johnson, 'Tricks, Traps and Transformations: Illusion in Victorian Spectacular Theatre', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 5:2 (2007), 151-165.

³³⁰ Deborah Sugg Ryan, 'Spectacle, the Public and the Crowd: Exhibitions and Pageants in 1908', 43-72, 45 in Morna O'Neill et al., eds., *The Edwardian Sense: Art, Design and Performance in Britain, 1901-1910* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale Centre for British Art, Yale UP, 2010); Martin Parker, 'Organising the Circus: The Engineering of Miracles', *Organisation Studies*, 32:4 (2011), 555-569;

³³¹ Bernard Catry, 'The Great Pretenders', *Business Strategy Review*, 14: 3 (2003), 10-17, 11.

often described as magical, and performed by a charismatic artist or creator, a 'magical being' who influences ideas of beauty and fashion, creating 'luxury' products.³³²

The second 'magic' is used in the method of communicating the message of luxury. Although the creators of luxury goods and experiences might wish to give the impression that the desirability of their products is created by a supernatural hand, the transformation is in reality accomplished partially through the construction of signs or narratives in advertising and publicity. Then, as now, advertisements selling luxury needed to communicate its significance to the purchaser. This was accomplished by 'glamorous signifiers', to use Raymond Williams' phrase, signs which enhance the attractiveness or raise the status of the product, and, by association, alter the identity of the consumer.³³³ Through this methodology, modern advertising, Williams argues, becomes a 'magic system'[in which], by drawing on the human will to fantasy, utilitarian objects [are transfigured] into signs of social identities'.

Other scholars also argue that advertising works through an exchange of signs or images, and the creation of a connection between product, image and consumer.³³⁴ The value and price of products can be enhanced by identity-creating myths, often rooted in the past or connected with aspects of prestige. The consumption of those products then also endow the consumer with the status of membership of a select group.³³⁵ As Veblen, Leibenstein and Bourdieu all imply, the consumption of certain products indicates a collective taste, which justifies and preserves social

³³² Delphine Dion and Eric Arnould, 'Retail Luxury Strategy: Assembling Charisma through Art and Magic', *Journal of Retailing*, 87 (2011), 502-520, 508.

³³³ Raymond Williams, 'Advertising: The Magic System', originally a chapter in Simon During, ed., *The Long Revolution* (1961), *Cultural Studies Reader*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 1999), 410- 423, 422; Ruth Hoberman, 'Constructing the Turn of the Century Shopper: Narratives about Purchased Objects in the 'Strand Magazine', 1891-1910', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 37,(2004), 1-17, 3.

³³⁴ Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning In Advertising*, 15th edn. (London: Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd., 2004).

³³⁵ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959).

distinctions and group membership.³³⁶ In her work on champagne, Kolleen Guy contends that producers both contrived a creation myth which gave the beverage historic status, while simultaneously marketing the wine as a signifier of membership of an elite community. 'The timeless traditions of champagne reassured [consumers] they were upholding standards of social intercourse [which were then] used as a sign of class membership in the public space'.³³⁷ The product itself became additionally desirable as a means to communicate social identity. In his study of the marketing of the Michelin Tyre Company, Stephen Harp echoes this point, noting that the image of Bibendum - the Michelin Tyre man – incorporated numerous desirable cultural references.³³⁸ The character was white, educated, and well-off, but also carried a glass of champagne. For the purchaser of Michelin tyres, these signs were comforting and aspirational. Through this type of advertising, a consumer's identity was no longer, as Marie-Louise Roberts points out, 'rooted in family, class and social position', but instead a 'matter of display, appearance and merchandising'.³³⁹ Product, consumption and identity were connected.

This association between the consumer, self-representation, identity and advertising can apply to the built environment as much as to any other 'product'. In her discussion on brandscapes, Anna Klingmann contends that 'designing for experience requires connecting architecture to the user's personal dreams and desires'. The attractions of champagne went beyond its inherent quality as a

³³⁶ Lisa Tiersten, *Marianne in the Market: Envisioning Consumer Society in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 234. See also Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1996).

³³⁷ Frank Trentmann, 'Gentlemen and Players: The Leisure of British Modernity', *Contemporary Record*, 7:3 (1993), 685-692. See, for example, the mythology of the American Thanksgiving Dinner as a single foundational event, as discussed in Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, 'A Cultural Field in the Making: Gastronomy in 19th-Century France', *American Journal of Sociology*, 104:3 (1998), 597-641, 632, or the constructed 'foundation myths' of champagne, in Kolleen M Guy, 'Oiling the Wheels of Social Life': Myths and Marketing in Champagne during the Belle Époque', *French Historical Studies*, 22 (1999), 211-239.

³³⁸ Stephen L. Harp, *Marketing Michelin: Advertising and Cultural Identity in Twentieth-Century France* (Baltimore, Md.; London: Johns Hopkins UP, 2001).

³³⁹ Mary-Louise Roberts, 'Gender, Consumption and Commodity Culture', *American Historical Review*, 103 (1998), 817-844, 842, citing Warren Susman, 'Personality and the Making of Twentieth-Century Culture', in Warren Susman, ed., *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Smithsonian Books, 1984).

delicious wine, and the beverage was transformed, in part through mythical tradition-making, into a signifier of status itself. In the same way, the identity, purpose and status of a building exists beyond its role as shelter, and is connected to the changing perceptions of the occupiers. In turn, those who use a building are accorded certain identities, dependent upon others' perception of that building. Like other objects, architecture, Klingmann continues, has potential as a medium to create identity through 'a strategic communication process between users and architects, to produce lasting and meaningful transformations'.³⁴⁰ In this way buildings and their occupants each create and reciprocate identities.³⁴¹

In the grand hotel, architecture was positioned as a luxury product. This building type was available ostensibly to a select social group which included, but was by no means restricted to, the traditional elite of royalty and aristocracy. Guests were defined not by the conventions of social class structures - although, of course, these had by no means been abandoned - but by their consumption of tasteful comfort, fine food, and leisure. As long as they could pay the bill, this clientele was offered the identity of well-connected social prestige. The magic of marketing, in the form of publicity reproduced in newspaper and journal articles, advertising and the hotels' own printed publications, and the images which connected the architecture as product to the consumer or client, was therefore highly significant.

In this chapter, I use 'magic' as a term to cover aspects of the luxury of the grand hotel based not in material reality but in image, illusion and imagination. These establishments were desirable heterotopias, set apart from the conventional, which promised guests membership of an elite group, and sensations and experiences that were out of the ordinary. Magic was as vital to the

³⁴⁰ Anna Klingmann, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press, 2007), 19 & 8.

³⁴¹ This approach echoes the ideas of actor-network theory, a model for interpreting material culture which considers people and objects as equal 'actors' within networks of exchange. Daniel Maudlin, *British Atlantic Architectures: Oxford Bibliographies in Atlantic History* (2013), citing Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

creation of the grand hotel as the bricks and mortar of the buildings themselves. I argue that the magical imagination was visible in the 'magic' of marketing, in the choice of 'glamorous signifiers', in the design of advertising, and in the quality of hotel brochures. Notions of magic were also seen in the 'dream worlds' of exotic, magical experience, the temporary sets which combined theatrical illusion and 'secular magic' to create spaces in which a guest's most elaborate fantasies could be realised. First, however, I identify ideas of magic seen in the language of fairyland and transformation used to describe hotels.

The Lexicon of Magic

In this period, the interest in magic translated into a lexicon of magical terms which were used to describe new illusions and experiences, often related to luxury consumption. 'Prestige' was initially an illusion or conjuring trick, which came to mean brilliance derived from past success.³⁴² 'Glamour' originally meant magic spectacle. It evolved to be associated with beauty and a primarily visual sheen after 1830, before acquiring its modern connotation, which has been defined as a 'magical power capable of making ordinary people, dwellings and places seem like magnificent versions of themselves'.³⁴³ The word 'fairy' became common currency in the adjectives 'fairy-tale', meaning wonderful, and 'fairy-like', meaning delicate, and was associated with the supposed feminine traits of frailty, delicacy, and a lack of rationality.³⁴⁴ Unusual or spectacular experiences, as well as dramatic interiors, were recognised as overwhelming and transformative, and often couched in magical metaphors. Such terms, Simon During contends, were 'routinely called upon to express perceptions of modern society's astonishing, unpredictable or uncontrollable qualities'.³⁴⁵ Queen Victoria suggested that the Crystal Palace,

³⁴² *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (2003), (online), acc. 28.6.18.

³⁴³ Featherstone, 'Luxury...', *Dynamics' Luxury*, 1:1 (2014), 47-69, 63 citing S. Gundle, *Glamour* (Oxford: OUP, 2008).

³⁴⁴ Bown, 'The Enchantments of Tradition', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 10:3 (1999) 308-325, 313.

³⁴⁵ During, *Modern Enchantments* (2009), 40 & 41.

which, according to Thomas Richards, was the first venue in which advertisers used ideas of myth and image making, had 'quite the effect of fairyland'. In 1877, the traveller, Amelia Edwards described a journey up the Nile on a 'magic carpet', and islands on the river as a 'fairy archipelago'. The Countess of Warwick identified the connection between the glamour - 'that attractive or exciting quality that makes people or things seem appealing' - of her coterie with the transformational and material experience of an imagined dreamland:

Of course the Marlborough House Set had glamour; indeed, glamour was its particular asset[...] I can feel something of the same sense of enchantment, [...] that children experience when they watched the transformation scene at the pantomime. For me, the girls in their spangles were beautiful fairies and the scene a glimpse of fairyland.³⁴⁶

For buildings in which the materiality and experience of luxury consumption were combined, this lexicon of magic was certainly appealing. Descriptions of shine and glitter in hotels echoed those of aristocratic houses, and magical metaphors connected interiors with the feminine attractions of fairyland. The 'glassworlds' of crystal chandeliers, glass, mirrors and the glazed roofs of palm courts and winter gardens were indicators both of Victorian modernity and interiors of status.³⁴⁷ Hotels gleamed at night with 'magic lights', and restaurants were 'fairy scenes'.³⁴⁸ To create a sense of occasion, César Ritz insisted upon evening dress in his restaurants. The effect of the pale fabrics and gleaming jewels of the female guests on the *mise-en-scène*, according to Marie-Louise Ritz (1867-1961), his wife and biographer, was 'magical'.³⁴⁹ In 1906, the *Pall Mall Gazette* observed that, in the redecorated pink and white Savoy restaurant, 'a good fairy has given us this room only a few steps away from the strenuous, prosaic Strand'.³⁵⁰ The dining room, the narrative

³⁴⁶ Paula Bartley, *Queen Victoria* (London: Routledge, 2016), 145. Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990). Amelia Edwards, *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*, originally published 1877 (Parkway Pub. Ltd: London, 1993), 197 & 381. Frances, Countess of Warwick, *Afterthoughts* (Cassel: London, 1931), 38.

³⁴⁷ I. Armstrong, 'Introduction', in *Victorian Glassworlds: Glass Culture and the Imagination 1830-1880* (Oxford, OUP, 2008).

³⁴⁸ *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 10. 'Savoy Hotel', *Saturday Review*, 27 May 1899, 666.

³⁴⁹ Marie-Louise Ritz, *César Ritz: Host to the World* (London: G.G. Harrap, 1938), 153.

³⁵⁰ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, quoted in an advertisement for the Savoy, in *ILN*, 6 October 1906, 491.

proposed, was a magical, feminine haven, set apart from the reality of the public sphere of masculine, modern clamour outside.

The language of magic was also used to temper the world of business, construction and technology. Often, the astounding speed of new building methods were described as magical, juxtaposing the rationality of the modern with the mystery of mythology. One reference that appeared from time to time was that of the exotic magic of the *Tales of One Thousand and One Nights*, or *Arabian Nights*, an interpretation of alluring Oriental otherness well known to the public.³⁵¹ In 1904, *The Western Mail* described the Savoy as ‘a vast palace of a thousand splendours, of a thousand surprising and delightful innovations’.³⁵² In 1910, the Savoy’s Embankment extension was constructed so swiftly, the author George Sims (1847-1922) maintained, that the work might have been carried out by ‘the genii and magicians who accomplished the marvels of ‘The Arabian Nights’ [where] deft and diligent human hands have accomplished a task, for which the story tellers of old would have invoked supernatural agency’. Placing the hotel ‘in the heart of modern London’, Sims evoked the ‘fairy tales of science’, a phrase which combined mythology and rationality, to explain the complexity of the work which was beyond the understanding of most readers.³⁵³

Although magical terms were often used in advertising, the majority of the examples given here appeared as comment or editorial. For many publications, the separation between advertising and editorial comment was often indistinct.³⁵⁴ For complex products such as hotels, editorial could

³⁵¹ The first European translator was Antoine Galland (1645–1715). By 1800, there were eighty English editions. Some of the most notable later editions were published by Edward Lane (1839–41), John Payne (1882–4) and Richard Burton (1885–6), who also translated the *Karma Sutra*, *The Perfumed Garden* and other ‘classics’ of the Orientalist canon. Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum, ‘Introduction’ in Makdisi & Nussbaum, eds., *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West* (Oxford: OUP, 2008).

³⁵² *The Western Mail*, quoted in an advertisement for the Savoy in *The Observer*, 16 October 1904, 7.

³⁵³ George Sims, ‘The Savoy Extension’, *The Observer*, 30 October 1910, 17.

³⁵⁴ Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York; Oxford: OUP, 1996), 3.

communicate the promise of luxury more effectively than any advertisement. The novelty and glamour of these new buildings were also fascinating for many readers. In 1865, for example, *The Illustrated London News* detailed the opening of the Langham, from the Prince of Wales's private view to the interior with 'three hundred bedrooms, [...] thirty six baths, fourteen lavatories, and upwards of one hundred water closets'.³⁵⁵ The 1889 opening of the Savoy was covered by the same journal, with eleven paragraphs giving particulars of the plan and decorations.³⁵⁶ Such was the interest in the Savoy, and the skill of those publicising the hotel, that numerous publications covered this event. These included the *Daily Telegraph*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Northern Echo*, published in Darlington, and the *Essex Standard*, published in Colchester.³⁵⁷ Awareness in this new London hotel spread throughout the country.

Yet, although editorial could provide the space for detailed information, it was not under the complete control of hotel management. What could be controlled was advertising, its content and design, and the publications in which it appeared. Through carefully chosen text, image and 'glamorous signifiers', readers could learn of the delights of the hotel. Proprietors also began to produce their own printed material. Brochures contained information which could be useful for existing and potential guests. Within their covers, clients might find descriptions of London's landmarks and attractions. They could ascertain the cost of hotel services in advance. For those unfamiliar with the glamour of the grand hotel, they could find illustrations of the interiors and the social practices within. In the mythology of created identities and the magical process of adding value to create a luxury product, hotel marketing in both advertising and print publications was essential.

³⁵⁵ 'Langham Hotel, Portland-Place', *ILN*, 8 July 1865, 12.

³⁵⁶ 'Savoy Hotel', *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534.

³⁵⁷ *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 31 July 1889, 4; *Northern Echo*, 1 August, 1889 and *Essex Standard*, 14 September 1889, 3.

‘Magic’ and Marketing: Proper Circles, Originality, ‘Glamorous Signifiers’

Although hotels were publicised in a variety of ways - through private views and public openings, through articles in newspapers and journals, or through their own printed material - the most wide reaching method of attracting clients was through advertising. The development of the grand hotel coincided with a huge growth in the number of newspapers and journals. Rosemary Vanarsdel has identified over 125,000 titles published during the Victorian era, directed to every level of society.³⁵⁸ Following the abolition of the Advertisement Tax in 1853, and Advertising Stamp Duty in 1855, advertising was a useful source of income for publishers.³⁵⁹ An 1874 *History of Advertising* calculated the potential, noting that an average issue of *The Times*, containing about 2,500 advertisements, could generate about £1,000 a day.³⁶⁰

For proprietors, advertising served both to attract business and to differentiate their establishment from others. Although it was usual for hotels to be listed in guides to London, the information was generally limited.³⁶¹ But the economy fluctuated and competition from new hotels grew.³⁶² Under such conditions, advertising could create a narrative which distinguished between venues, as well as identifying features that characterised their luxury status. As *The Hotel World* agreed, ‘An hotel may have a clientele truly, but every guest over and above the number required to pay expenses is so much more profit to the proprietor. These extra guests are the result of judicious advertising’.³⁶³ In 1887, *The Hotel Review* advised proprietors on best practice:

³⁵⁸ Rosemary T. Vanarsdel, ‘The Great Unexplored Continent of Nineteenth-Century Studies’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 41 (2008), 1-5, 2, citing *Waterloo Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals 1800-1900*.

³⁵⁹ In 1853, Advertisement Tax was 3s.6d. a sheet, with Stamp Duty 4d. a sheet. Raymond Williams, ‘Advertising: The Magic System’, *Cultural Studies Reader* (1999), 410- 423, 413.

³⁶⁰ Henry Sampson, *A History of Advertising* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1874), 15.

³⁶¹ Karl Baedeker, *London and Its Environs* (Leipzig, 1892), 6; *Perry’s Hotel Guide* (1895).

³⁶² See, for example, comments about the increase in hotel numbers in *HW*, December 1895, 26, and ‘The prospects of hotels in London’, *HW*, February 1898, 12.

³⁶³ ‘The Science and Art of Hotel Advertising’, *HW*, December 1902, ii.

Advertise [...] in papers which look well and read well, in journals which go into the proper circles, whose patronage you desire, rather than in those whose circulation is general and [...] vast; exercise originality in the wording and appearance of your advertisement – the more you excite the curiosity of the public you wish to address the better.³⁶⁴

By choosing the correct publication, read by a suitably affluent but select audience, and by ‘exciting’ the chosen public, through design and message, hotel proprietors could create the right image, transforming their business from one offering conventional hospitality to a luxury product, with all the added value which that transformation entailed.

‘Journals which go into the Proper Circles’: Attracting the Right Business

Although *The Hotel Review* exhorted potential advertisers to select journals of the right quality, and which were read by the right potential market - ‘the proper circles’ - the range of publications in which hotels advertised was usually wide. While it is not possible to identify every publication, a search for hotel advertising in the digital databases of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century publications produces a huge range, varied in geography and readership.³⁶⁵ This wide-ranging audience indicates that the potential clientele was not the exclusive elite which hotel marketing might have implied. What was important for advertisers was to attract business from as many sources as possible. In 1904, Sir Henry Burdett, the director of the Gordon Hotel Company with responsibility for the day to day running of the hotels, recorded a schedule of advertisements for the Hotel Metropole in Brighton (Table 3). Although the hotel was not in London, the selection of publications indicates that proprietors were aware both of the importance of the London market, and of attracting business throughout the country.

³⁶⁴ *The Hotel Review, and Catering & Food Trades’ Gazette*, IV: 32, February 1887, 23.

³⁶⁵ Digital databases searched include *Gale Cengage British Periodicals*; *Nineteenth Century UK Periodicals*; *Illustrated London News Historical Archive (1842-2003)* and *The Times Digital Archive (1785-2012)*.

	No of Insertions	Price per insertion	Total cost
Yorkshire Post	6	£9:12:0	£57:12:0
Leeds Post	6	£5:0:0	£30:0:0
Glasgow Herald	3	£12:10:0	£37:10:0
Manchester Guardian	6	£8:12:6	£51:15:6
Scotsman	3	£9:10:0	£28:10:0
Birmingham Daily Post	3	£10:16:0	£32:8:0
Westminster Gazette	6	£4:5:0	£25:10:0
Pall Mall Gazette	6	£4:5:0	£25:10:0
St James Gazette	3	£4:5:0	£12:15:0
Globe	3	£4:0:0	£12:0:0
			£313:8:6
Less 10%			£31:6:10
Total			£282:1:8

Table 3. 1904 advertising campaign for the Hotel Metropole, Brighton. ³⁶⁶

Advertising for the London grand hotels could be found in publications aimed at all types of reader. In addition to the editorials cited earlier, advertising in 1889 for the opening of the Savoy ranged from *The Times*, the national paper of record, to *The Country Gentleman, Sporting Gazette and Agricultural Journal*, one of a number of publications aimed at the Victorian love of sport, and *The Art Journal*, a monthly periodical covering the fine and industrial arts.³⁶⁷ The *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, a genteel London weekly newspaper which professed to cover all manner of contemporary culture, also frequently carried advertisements for the Savoy the Langham, the Berkeley and Claridge's.³⁶⁸ *The St James' Gazette* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*, were also London papers, designed for evening reading in gentlemen's

³⁶⁶ Sir Henry Burdett Papers—Bodleian Library - Burdett.A.10.15 (MSS.Eng.C.6002-3) Gordon Hotels Ltd 1898-1919)

³⁶⁷ 'The Savoy Hotel and Restaurant', *The Times*, 5 August 1889, 1; *The Country Gentleman, Sporting Gazette & Agricultural Journal*, 2 August 1889; *The Art Journal*, July 1889, 51. See *Waterloo Directory of English Periodicals 1800-1900*, cited by M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon, 2004) 148.

³⁶⁸ In the *Saturday Review* - for the Langham, see 1 July 1865; 30, and 11 December 1897, 673. For the Berkeley, see 18 September 1897, 329, and for the Savoy and Claridge's, see 29 July 1899, 146.

clubs.³⁶⁹ *The Illustrated London News*, first published in 1842 and selling over 300,000 copies by 1863, was the first 'respectable' illustrated weekly in England, and attracted a middle-class, middle-brow audience. The paper circulated throughout Great Britain, but, according to Patrick Collier, 'rhetorically hailed a metropolitan reader', interested in and knowledgeable about the capital, and it often depicted hotel life in London.³⁷⁰ One of the most fascinating images of a hotel, published in 1911, was the double page illustration of a section of the Savoy (Figure 55). This detailed drawing, discussed in Chapter VII: Modernity, conveyed the captivating intricacy of the hotel's facilities and economy more effectively than any words.³⁷¹

Advertising Content and Design: 'Originality in Wording and Appearance'

The *Hotel Review's* advocacy for 'originality' in design was prompted by the need to reflect the individuality of each hotel, but creative advertising also attracted attention in a crowded page. Initially, advertisements for even the smartest of hotels were 'classified' i.e. short form in a single column width.³⁷² In line with the conventions of the time, the text of an 1865 advertisement for the Langham (Figure 16) was in the standard font of the publication. The content was largely factual, noting location and facilities, although themes of size, cosmopolitanism, and modernity can be identified. The scale of the building was 'commodious', 'the largest in London'. Men and women were offered separate reception rooms, with ladies promised elegance, and gentlemen spaciousness. The size of the '*salle à manger*' (the French term added an air of sophistication) was noted, indicating again that this was a substantial

³⁶⁹ Linda K. Hughes, 'Aestheticism on the Cheap: Decorative Art, Art Criticism and Cheap Paper in the 1890s', in Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, eds., *The Lure of Illustration in the Nineteenth Century: Picture and Press* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 229-30.

³⁷⁰ Patrick Collier, 'Imperialist/modernist forms in the *Illustrated London News*', *Modernism/modernity*, 19:3 (2012), 487-514, 488, and Brake and Demoor, eds., 'Introduction' in *The Lure of Illustration* (2009). 5. See for example, 'The Langham', *ILN*, 14 February 1885: 181; 'The Hotel Victoria', *ILN*, 28 May 1887, 604; 'The Carlton', *ILN*, 12 December 1903, 896 and 'Claridge's Restaurant', *ILN*, 15 December 1906, 905.

³⁷¹ The Savoy Hotel: 'A City in a Building: The Complex Internal Economy of a Great Hotel - Where over half a million meals are served each year', *ILN*, 2 September 1911, 376-377.

³⁷² 'Initially editors were unwilling to any breakup of the columns layout system', according to Williams, 'Advertising: The Magic System', *Cultural Studies Reader* (1999), 410- 423, 411.

building. The hotel promised ‘all modern improvements’, which was possibly a discreet reference to sanitary facilities.



Figure 16 Advertisement for the Langham, *Saturday Review*, 1865³⁷³

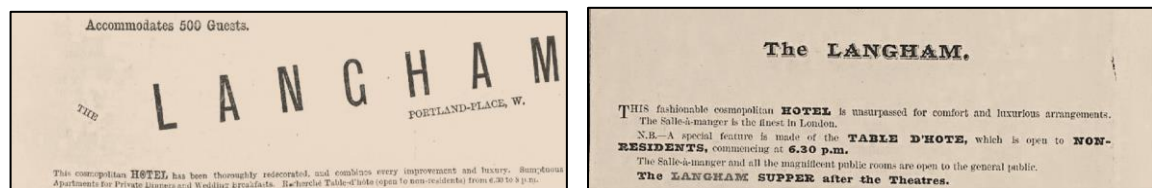


Figure 17. Advertisements for the Langham, *Illustrated London News*, 1885 and 1886³⁷⁴

As printing processes improved, typography, design, and language became more sophisticated. In two advertisements for the same hotel some twenty years later (Figure 17), the font, layout and language all displayed greater imagination.³⁷⁵ In one, the hotel promised ‘every improvement and luxury’ and the apartments were ‘sumptuous’. The second also identified the Langham as fashionable and cosmopolitan. Emphasis was placed on the food. The ‘*salle à manger* [was] the finest in London’, non-residents could dine at the *table d’hôte*, and the fashionable new trend for post-theatre suppers was promoted. In an 1897 advertisement, the text again identified features important to the quality of the hotel - good location and first-rate food. The hotel was in a ‘position unrivalled’ on Regent Street, ‘near the best shops’. The hotel could cater for all manner of special occasions in private. And the manager could forward the tariff without difficulty, so that the bill would produce no unpleasant surprises.³⁷⁶

³⁷³ *Saturday Review*, 1 July 1865, 30.

³⁷⁴ *ILN*, February 1885 and May 1886.

³⁷⁵ L. Hughes, ‘Aestheticism on the Cheap’, in *The Lure of Illustration* (2009), 232.

³⁷⁶ *Saturday Review*, 11 December 1897, 673.

These advertisements for the Langham illustrate that being ‘original’ in design and typography, as *The Hotel Review* advocated, was effective, reinforcing an image of up-to-date fashionability. But they also signal a number of themes which recurred consistently in hotel advertising. The first of these is location. A hotel’s ‘central’ or ‘convenient’ situation, close to social, retail and leisure facilities, was very important for clients. Advertising for the Hotel Victoria, for example, noted it was at ‘the centre of London’s attractions’, and Claridge’s was ‘in the centre of fashionable London’.³⁷⁷ The Midland Grand, on the other hand, attempted to counter its less convenient location by advertising that it was only a ‘shilling fare to nearly all theatres’.³⁷⁸



Figure 18 Advertisement for the Langham, *Saturday Review*, 1897³⁷⁹

A second message was of comfort, a term commonly used across the period by all the case study hotels, and the theme of Chapter VI: Comfort. The Metropole, for example, was ‘arranged and furnished to afford residents every possible convenience and comfort’, the Cecil promised ‘undoubted luxury and comfort’ and the Savoy was ‘the perfection of luxury and comfort’.³⁸⁰ For Victorians, comfort not only referred both to warm, light and clean surroundings, but also to privacy and the aspiration for ideals of social or domestic ease.³⁸¹ In hotels, comfort was as much about promising the security of the right company as a good night’s sleep.

³⁷⁷ ‘The Hotel Victoria’, *Perry’s Hotel Guide* (London: Walter Perry & Co, 1895); Claridge’s, *Saturday Review* 29 July 1899, 146, and weekly over the summer of this year in this publication.

³⁷⁸ *St James Gazette*, 13 July 1889, 15.

³⁷⁹ *Saturday Review*, 11 December 1897, 3.

³⁸⁰ *MG*, May 1885; Hotel Cecil’, *Country Gentleman: Sporting Gazette, Agricultural Journal*, 27 June 1896, 809, and ‘Savoy Hotel and Restaurant’, *The Times*, 5 August 1889, 1.

³⁸¹ John Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort* (2001), ix. Katherine Grier, *Culture & Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930*, (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 2;

A third theme was one of French design and culture. Despite the efforts of British designers and commentators, the view persisted that France was the source of superior taste especially when expressing ostentation and luxury.³⁸² While these associations were often seen in a hotel's decoration and furnishings, in advertising the influence of France was most distinct in references to restaurants and 'cuisine'. This was for two reasons. First, choices about what to eat were markers of class, taste and distinction. The perceived complexity of French cooking, which contrasted with the plainness of British food, required education, expertise, and expense.³⁸³ Second, providing food and beverage was crucial to a grand hotel's income stream. Indeed, according to *The Hotel World*, 'the starting point of all hotel advertising is at home in the cuisine and the service'.³⁸⁴ Consequently, the French terms *table d'hôte* (initially a common table, but which came to indicate a standard daily menu) and *à la carte* (dining from a menu where each dish was made to order), as well as references to French food were common in advertising. When the re-built Coburg reopened, for example, the publicity emphasised its excellent 'cuisine and cellars'. At the Cecil, the 'cuisine [was] controlled by a mastermind of chefdom and manipulated by the best talent of the Parisian school'. At the Savoy, 'the cuisine rival[led] the most famous

Elizabeth Shove, 'Comfort and Convenience: Temporality and Practice', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* ed. Frank Trentmann, (2012), 289-307; Elizabeth Shove, *Comfort, Cleanliness and Convenience: The Social Organization of Normality* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), and Anne Massey, *Chair* (London: Reaktion, 2010), 101. These ideas are discussed in detail in Chapter VI: Comfort.

³⁸² See for example, Anca I. Lasc, Georgina Downey and Mark Taylor, 'French Connections: The Modern Interior and Mass Media' in Lasc, Downey, Taylor, eds., *Designing the French Interior: The Modern Home and Mass Media* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 1-10; Nicholas Cooper, *The Opulent Eye* (1976), 15-17 and M. Snodin, *Design and the Decorative Arts: Victorian Britain, 1837-1901* (London, 2004), 67,

³⁸³ For the story of the restaurant, and the changing role of food in social identity, see Rachel Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2011), 9; Rebecca L. Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: HUP, 2000), 137 and Finkelstein, *Dining Out* (1989), 39. Restaurants are discussed in Chapter V: Cosmopolitanism.

³⁸⁴ 'The Science and Art of Hotel Advertising', *HW*, December 1902, ii.

Continental chefs'.³⁸⁵ The advertising narrative was that French 'cuisine' was superior, magically bestowing social distinction on the restaurant and its suitably sophisticated clients.

Hotel advertising also spoke of a certain contradictory temporality. On the one hand, these establishments claimed to be 'modern' and new. The relationship between modernity and luxury is complex, and in hotel advertising, the term had more than one interpretation. For clients, 'modern' hotels were social worlds which granted independence and a disconnection from the hierarchies of the past, permitting reinvention and recreation of the self. More prosaically, they also had lifts and good sanitary facilities. In other cases, the hotel's newness or renewal was to the fore. In 1885, the Langham had been 'thoroughly redecorated with every improvement and luxury'. In 1897, the Berkeley had undergone 'many improvements [...] during the winter season'. In 1908, the Waldorf was a 'new note in hotels'.³⁸⁶ In a hotel *de luxe*, a guest should never experience the old and worn out.

Conversely, grand hotels could also be defined as luxurious partially because they offered an experience previously only available to the traditional elite. By adopting the 'signifiers' of royalty and the aristocracy, a hotel could 'magically' create an identity which was desirable to their clientele, communicate the standard of service proposed, and add value to their product. Advertising text, images and iconography often referred to a royal or aristocratic past. In some cases, the connection was real, if tenuous. The hotels on the Strand and on Northumberland Avenue were constructed on sites once occupied by the palaces of the nobility.³⁸⁷ In other cases,

³⁸⁵ 'The Coburg', *The Caterer*, 15 December 1896, 598; *St Cecilia, The Official Organ of the Hotel Cecil* (1896), 1; 'The Savoy Hotel and Restaurant', *The Times*, 5 August 1889, 1. French food is discussed in Chapter VI: Cosmopolitanism.

³⁸⁶ *ILN*, February 1885; 'The Savoy Hotel', *St James Gazette*, 4 August 1889, 1; 'Waldorf Hotel', *ILN*, 15 February 1908, 248, and 'The Carlton and the Ritz', *CL*, 7 December 1907, lxxv; *Saturday Review*, 18 September 1897, 329.

³⁸⁷ E. B. Chancellor, *The Private Palaces of London Past and Present* (1908).

the myth of the aristocratic connection was manufactured.³⁸⁸ Although the Carlton was a completely new establishment, the heraldic device used in its advertising was an iconographic inference of tradition and status (Figure 19).³⁸⁹ Similarly, when the advertising for Claridge's spoke of the 'aristocracy of Europe and America', the message combined the traditional elite with the newly wealthy in a flattering manner.

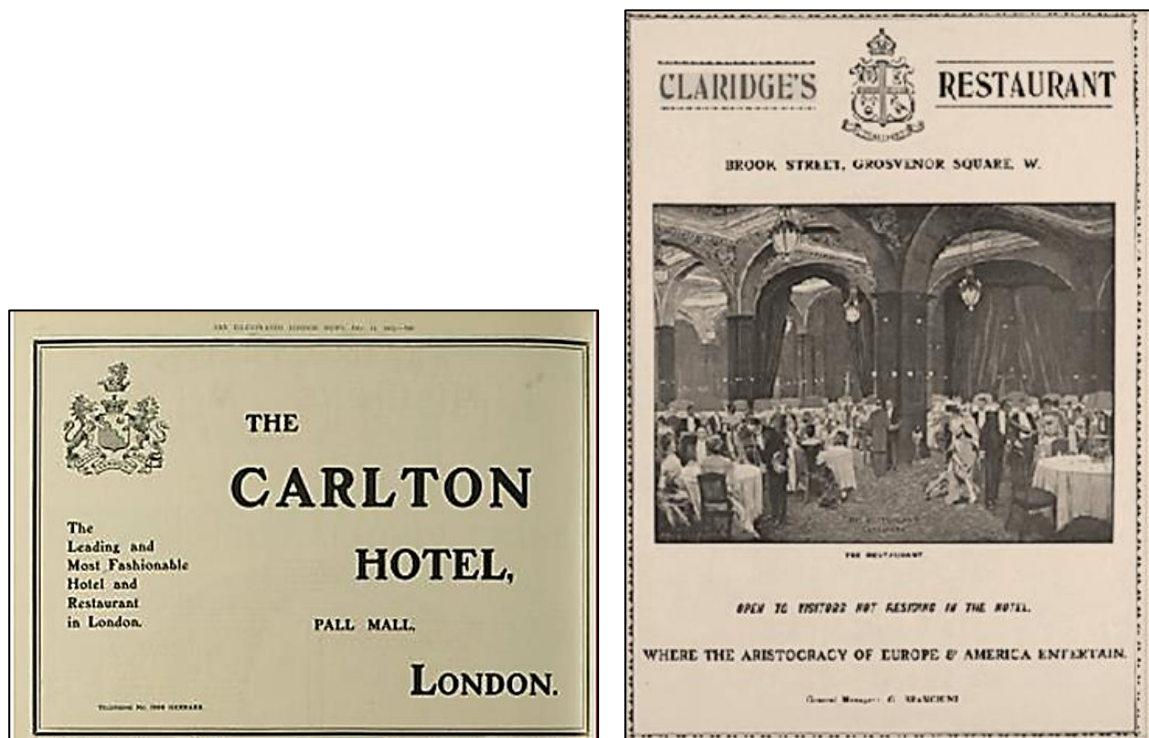


Figure 19 Advertisements for the Carlton, 1903 and Claridge's restaurant, 1906³⁹⁰

Publicity attached to the real presence of royalty and aristocracy also contributed to the mythmaking. The Prince of Wales was not averse to endorsing a new hotel, doing so for both the Langham in 1865 and the Piccadilly in 1908, and he was frequently recorded at social occasions in the best hotels.³⁹¹ The Court and Social pages of newspapers often noted the arrivals and departures of the well-connected, from the cosmopolitan Prince Heinrich von Liechtenstein to the

³⁸⁸ Cannadine, *Ornamentalism* (2002), 3.

³⁸⁹ *Saturday Review*; 29 July 1899, 146. The same advertisement appeared each week over the summer of this year in this publication;

³⁹⁰ *ILN*, 12 December 1903, 896 and 15 December 1906, 905

³⁹¹ 'Piccadilly Hotel', *ILN*, 9 May 1908, 688.

more exotic Prince Mohamed Ali Pasha, brother to the Khedive of Egypt.³⁹² Reports of glittering occasions, such as the 1895 wedding banquet of the Duc d'Orleans at the Savoy, or the 1907 Japanese Ambassador's 'At Home' at the Langham, all contributed to the prestige of the hotel, and by connection, that of the guest.³⁹³



Figure 20 'The Piccadilly Hotel and Restaurant', *Illustrated London News*, April 1908

The image of the palace reinforced the idea of traditional status further. The palace was an ideal architectural 'glamorous signifier', combining the promise of grandeur and fine connections with ideas of enchantment and a mythical past of tradition and honour.³⁹⁴ For most, a palace was an inaccessible heterotopia, only experienced through the written word or through visual imagery. Prestige, comfort and taste were all implicit. American hotels were not averse to this type of signifier, and were often referred to as 'palaces of the people', a 'palace' in which all citizens were granted the same access to luxury accommodation.³⁹⁵ While London hotels were not so democratic, they were 'palaces' which could be experienced by any fortunate guest or

³⁹² *ILN*, 9 February 1902, 202.

³⁹³ *Bow Bells*, 12 July 1895, 60; 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 18 June 1907, 10 and 9 June 1913, 11.

³⁹⁴ Williams, 'Advertising: The Magic System', *Cultural Studies Reader*, (1999), 410- 423, 422.

³⁹⁵ Arthur White, *Palaces of the People: A Social History of Commercial Hospitality* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968). Carolyn Brucken, 'In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31 (1996), 203-220, 218.

diner who had sufficient income. Some, such as the Westminster Palace and the Strand Palace, incorporated the signifier into their name. In others, the connection was metaphorical. The Gordon Hotels were 'gorgeous palaces', the Russell was 'the latest of the sumptuous hotel palaces of modern London', and the Savoy 'the highest and most renowned of all these latter-day public palaces.'³⁹⁶

When the Piccadilly opened in 1908, the metaphor of the palace was the key message in the marketing campaign. The advertising headline was 'A Twentieth Century Palace'. This new hotel was to be traditional yet modern, opulent and up-to-date (Figure 20).³⁹⁷ The establishment would combine science and art, refinement and practicality, in the pursuit of luxury and comfort. The advertising also noted that readers could apply for a booklet which they could keep, a 'beautifully illustrated volume', also entitled '*A Twentieth Century Palace*'.³⁹⁸ The theme of the palace also threaded throughout this brochure. A chapter outlining the history of the hotel's location was entitled 'Piccadilly and its Palaces (Old and New)'. Details of the design, and luxurious facilities of the new venue were set out in further chapters - 'The Exterior and General Design of the Twentieth Century Palace' and 'The Interior of the Twentieth Century Palace'. Sketches revealed the glittering interiors, complete with images of the well-dressed clients. In line with the image of luxurious modernity, a new shiny, white bathroom, complete with basin, bath and separate shower was also illustrated. The final paragraph left the reader in no doubt as to the combination of traditional status and modern facilities which the new hotel promised:

To bring into existence an edifice in every way worthy, not only of the traditions and associations of the spot upon which it stands, but of the requirements of the age for which it caters, has been the constant aim of everyone concerned on the construction of the 'Twentieth Century Palace' to be henceforth known all over the globe as the Piccadilly Hotel.

³⁹⁶ 'Gordon Hotels Limited', *HW*, December 1895, 23; *The Observer*, 16 October 1904, 7; *Souvenir* (1893), 5.

³⁹⁷ 'The Piccadilly Hotel and Restaurant', *ILN*, 11 April 1908, 548, and 2 May 1908, 653.

³⁹⁸ *ILN*, 14 March 1908, 390; for *A Twentieth Century Palace* (London: 1908), see <https://archive.org/details/atwentiethcentu00londgoog>, acc. 25.5.17.

The combination of advertising and this high quality printed brochure to publicise the new hotel was noteworthy. Creative advertising, replete with themes and signifiers emphasising the luxuriousness of the Piccadilly and its facilities, which were placed in an eclectic variety of journals and newspapers, could certainly reach a wide readership. But advertising, by its nature, was transient, and the information limited. Conversely, a beautiful brochure provided the space for detailed description and images of the hotel's location, interiors and services. Information useful for guests in their travels around the city could be included. Such a publication could be both a gift and a souvenir for hotel guests. Consequently, brochures were crucial to the creation of the image of the grand hotel.

The Hotel Brochure: 'A Lasting and Unique Souvenir'

Brochures were beneficial for hotels and their guests for a variety of reasons. A hotel could choose its own style and format, setting it apart in design and content. The magic of luxury brand creation and myths of tradition and status could be explored more deeply. Dramatic visualisations could draw the reader into the experience more completely. On a practical level, a full list of tariffs meant that there would be no uncomfortable financial surprises. Illustrations and photographs enabled the potential guest to assess the standard of the hotel's rooms, but they also forewarned the visitor about the nature of various events, what others might wear, and how they might behave. For those unused to the metropolis, or to the social status which these hotel's professed to offer, this information was valuable.

The look and format of brochures moved with changing fashions in design and typography. The *Langham Hotel Guide to London* was first published in 1867, and subsequently re-issued virtually annually. Although the inside pages tended to be similar, the covers were usually changed with each edition. In 1881, the cover was in blue leather, embellished with a gold shield. The cover for the 1908/9 issue was in pale cream and green, with Art Nouveau detailing along the spine. In

1912, a delicate pink cover marked the new edition (Figure 21). Durability and quality anticipated that brochures were not disposed of quickly, but kept for perusal and reference. Indeed the author of *London's Social Calendar* (1912) expressly stated that long use was the intention, hoping that the *Calendar* would be 'a lasting and unique souvenir'.³⁹⁹ That a 1904 copy of the *Langham Hotel Guide to London* was recorded in the library of Thomas Hardy at his death in 1928, and that many hotel brochures still exist, would infer this was a successful strategy.⁴⁰⁰



Figure 21 *The Langham Hotel Guide to London*. 1881, 1908/9 and 1911/12⁴⁰¹

The information printed within was also intended to encourage retention. Like the Piccadilly's *Twentieth Century Palace*, many brochures set out the advantages of the hotel's location, pointing out any aristocratic connections within the wider context of the history of the city. Most brochures detailed luxurious opulence and superior service, and were illustrated with drawings or photographs of the public and guest rooms. The up-to-date facilities were emphasised, along with the list of tariffs. In the *Hotel Cecil* (1906), for example, the 'Introduction' surveyed the architecture of the Strand, 'a vista of English history', establishing the noble connections of the

³⁹⁹ *London's Social Calendar* (London: Savoy Group, 1912/13), 3.

⁴⁰⁰ A copy of the *Langham Hotel Guide to London* (1904) was in the library of Thomas Hardy at Max Gate, Dorchester, at the time of his death in January 1928. <http://hardy.library.utoronto.ca> acc. 18.7.18.

⁴⁰¹ Copies held in the *Langham Hotel Archive*, with thanks.

hotel. The photography included views of the principal public rooms, the restaurants, a number of guest rooms, the Gentlemen's Hairdressing Saloon, and - the most modern of conveniences - one of the hotel's cars, parked outside the restaurant. Tariffs ranged from the charge for a single bedroom to the cost of washing down a visitor's car.⁴⁰²

Brochures also often reproduced similar information to that in standard city guidebooks. London was complex, confusing and potentially dangerous. The attractions of the metropolis were manifold, but, as Paul Dobraszczyk argues, too many for an inexperienced visitor to negotiate without some form of guidance.⁴⁰³ Information and maps relating to places of interest (which in *The Hotel Cecil* ranged alphabetically from the 'Academy (Royal)' at Burlington House, to the 'Zoological Gardens' in Regent's Park), foreign embassies and banks, and theatres and department stores, all assisted the visitor in navigating the city with ease.

Advertisements of suppliers of various kinds were also often included in brochures, defraying the costs of publication. In 1899, Sir Henry Burdett sought to identify potential advertisers who would be asked to come into the Gordon Hotels' guide, *London and Londoners*, under 'special conditions' at £3.3/- per insertion.⁴⁰⁴ Often the advertisements were placed by suppliers of goods or services to the hotel. Most prominent of these were furnishing companies, but lift suppliers and even sanitary engineers also advertised. In other cases, the products were of a suitably superior status. Most were aimed at the female client, but products for men were also promoted. In the Cecil's brochure of 1906, for example, advertisements appeared for Paquin, 'Dressmakers

⁴⁰² *The Hotel Cecil*, (1906), 2.

⁴⁰³ For guidebooks see Paul Dobraszczyk, 'City Reading: The Design and Use of Nineteenth-Century London Guidebooks', *Journal of Design History*, 25, (2012), 123-144, and Grainne Goodwin & Gordon Johnson, 'Guidebook Publishing in the Nineteenth Century: John Murray's Handbooks for Travellers', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 17:1 (2013), 43-61.

⁴⁰⁴ Diary Note, 14 February 1899, in *Sir Henry Burdett Papers. Burdett.A.10.15 (MSS.Eng.C.6002-3) Gordon Hotels Ltd 1898-1919 - 6002 Folder. Bodleian Library, Oxford.*

to the Courts of Europe' and for Eugene Rimmel Ltd, the soap and perfume supplier. But there were also advertisements for a gun maker, and for Offley's Very Old Port.⁴⁰⁵



Figure 22 Frontispiece of *Souvenir of the Savoy Hotel* (1893) - History and Modernity

Just as advertising design adapted and changed, this form of marketing also innovated and improved, as three of the brochures published by the Savoy Hotel Company illustrate. In 1893, the *Souvenir of the Savoy Hotel*, was a small booklet, with a hard leather cover. The frontispiece connected the location of the new 'palace' hotel, with its historic predecessor, the Savoy Palace (Figure 22). Black and white drawings and photography illustrated the pages, bleeding informally into the strict column layout (Figure 23). The text placed the hotel within the tradition of hospitality of the site, but emphasised the international novelty of the enterprise. Magical, cosmopolitan and domestic references combined to invoke an ideal image. The courtyard, 'at night gleaming with magic lights' provided a quiet resting place. Each suite of rooms was 'compact, comfortable and complete' in the manner a number of Continental and American hotels, 'each set [...] a little home in itself'. Lifts which 'never stop, absolutely safe' rendered 'the transit from earth to the realms above [...] swift, smooth and pleasant'. The charismatic,

⁴⁰⁵ *The Hotel Cecil* (1906), 46 & 56.

European staff who included César Ritz, the general manager, Louis Echenard, the restaurant manager, and the 'great chef' Escoffier - Dion and Arnould's 'magical beings' transforming ideas of fashion - were celebrated.⁴⁰⁶ 'The cuisine is cosmopolitan', the *Souvenir* claimed, 'the foods of almost all nations, and their special methods of preparation being at your command; but the dominant tone, the note of the work is High Class French'.⁴⁰⁷ This hotel, the brochure avowed, was modern, socially select, and fashionable.

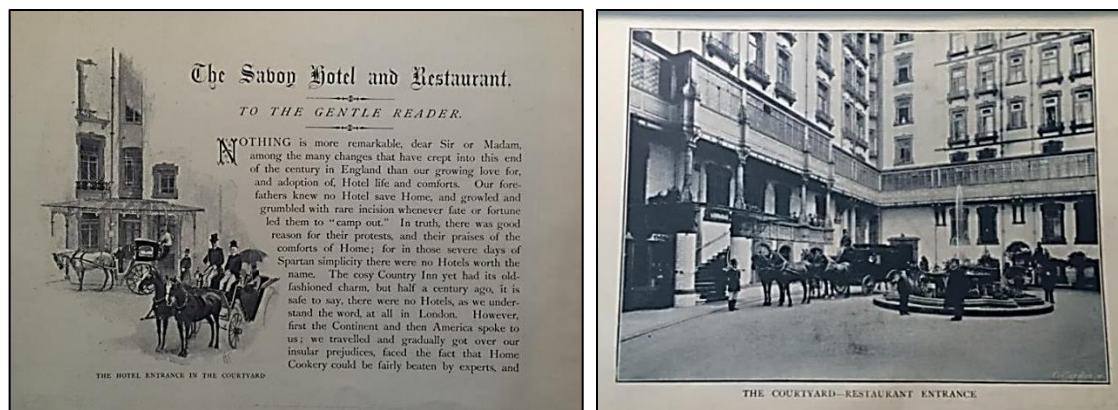


Figure 23 *The Souvenir* (1893) - Illustration and Photography

Seven years later, the Company published *Homes of the Passing Show*, a phrase invoking the spectacle of contemporary life. Approximately twice the size of the *Souvenir*, and with 104 printed pages rather than thirty two, one of the most striking innovations of *Homes* was the full-colour print. Although portions of the same anonymous descriptive text were reproduced from the *Souvenir*, the majority of the written content was in the form of articles by well-known journalists and authors. Many were frequent contributors to popular periodicals, and included the restaurant critic Nathaniel Newham Davis (1854-1917), and the writer Elizabeth Robins Pennell (1855-1936), friend and biographer of James McNeill Whistler.⁴⁰⁸ Rather than focussing

⁴⁰⁶ Dion and Arnould, 'Retail Luxury Strategy: Assembling Charisma through Art and Magic', *Journal of Retailing*, 87 (2011), 502-520, 508.

⁴⁰⁷ *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 24. The same text was in *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 82.

⁴⁰⁸ For Joseph and Elizabeth Robins Pennell, see Douglas Tallack, "One walked of course with one's eyes greatly open' (Henry James): London Sights in Alvin Langdon Coburn, Henry James, and Joseph Pennell', *Textual Practice*, 24:2 (2010), 197-222. See also Elizabeth Robins Pennell, *The Feasts of Autolycus. The Diary*

solely on one hotel, the articles, some of which were in French or German, detailed the history, social distinction and interior attractions of the Savoy, Claridge's and the Berkeley. Also included was the Grand Hotel in Rome, which was under the same management. All were novel, amusing, and entertaining, and the reader was adopted as a member of an educated, fashionable elite.

In an article on the Savoy Restaurant, the author William Beatty Kingston (1837-1900), described his experience of the hotel:

Whenever I sit in that luminous balcony, and gaze through its crystal panels [...], I feel that for the time being I have escaped from the grimy capital of the commercial world; from a city of murky streets, muddy roadways, hideous churches and sordid domestic architecture to a region of beauty, grace and dignity[...], the impression that I have been mysteriously transported by 'art magic' from the commonplace, work-a-day London to some stately and picturesque foreign town is intensified by the vivacious aspect of the restaurant itself, the equipments and appointments of which are essentially French in their every detail. To me the gleaming gallery of the Savoy restaurant, with its white tiled backing and supreme sobriety of general decoration is a terrestrial epicurean paradise, such as even luxurious and tasteful Paris cannot truthfully boast of.⁴⁰⁹

In this piece, Beatty Kingston offered more than membership of a club. Instead, he employed the full range of secular tricks and magical metaphors to describe the transformation that he experienced upon the hotel balcony. Through glittering light, and the shine of crystal, he had 'escaped' the dirt and grime of commercial reality, 'transported' by magic, to a heavenly otherworld of 'beauty, grace and dignity'. The hotel was heaven on earth, superior even, in luxury and taste, to the capital of France. What more could the aspirational guest desire?

The design of *Homes* was also unusual. It indicated a move from the realistic illustrations and photographs of the earlier publication to a more impressionistic approach. Its artistic contributors

of a Greedy Woman (London: John Lane; New York: The Merriam Co., 1896) a collection of articles first published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Joseph and Elizabeth Pennell published *The Life of James McNeill Whistler* in 1908. Alan M. Fern, 'Pennell, Joseph (1857–1926)', *Oxford D.N.B* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) <http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2167/view/article/64823> acc. 11 June 2015.

⁴⁰⁹ Beatty Kingston, 'Then and Now', *Homes* (1900), 19–26, 20. Kingston was the *Daily Telegraph's* war correspondent in 1870, a long time correspondent for the same in Berlin and Vienna, and author of various books of which the best known was *Monarchs I Have Met* (New York, Harper Brothers, 1888). Obituary, *The Times*, 6 October 1900, 13.

included Whistler himself (1834-1903), Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), husband of Elizabeth, and Dudley Hardy (1867-1922). Hardy, the principal illustrator, was well known for his work as a graphic artist, with a particular interest in advertising.⁴¹⁰ The typography, page design and illustration were fluid and unconfined by the strictures of columns and rules. One page bled into another, with the type blending over the illustrations. Hardy's frontispiece (Figure 24) captured a bohemian flavour, the informal style reflecting the relaxed informality of the scene. Male and female diners, drinking wine, sat on the open-air balcony, with a view down the river to Westminster beyond. Other illustrations depicted the guests, the staff and the facilities of the hotel. On one page, the image of a disembodied, stylishly dressed woman rose like a genie, in an ethereal, dreamlike haze, from the misty connection of a telephone. In this hotel, so the design, the visuals and the narrative claimed, magic and modernity were combined.

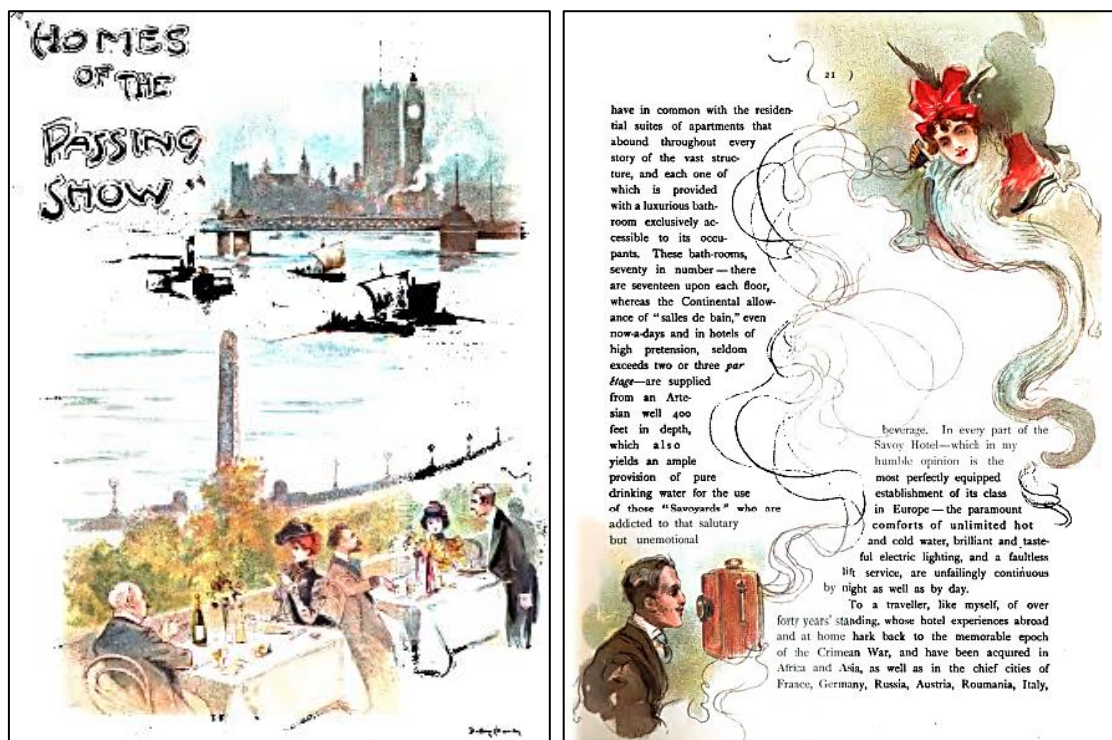


Figure 24 The Savoy's *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), with illustrations by Dudley Hardy⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ 'I think you can educate the masses to a great extent through improving the art of advertising', Raymond Blathwayt, quoting Hardy in 'Caricaturists and Their Work', *Strand Magazine*, July 1894, 627.

⁴¹¹ *Homes of the Passing Show* (London: 1900), 2 and 21.

In *London's Social Calendar* (1912), the third of these Savoy publications, the emphasis was not upon written descriptions of the hotel experience which were very limited, but on vibrant, full-colour illustrations of 'famous functions attended by English Society'.⁴¹² As I have discussed in Chapter I, the subjects of these illustrations included the spectacular social occasions of the Season, from the opening of the Houses of Parliament to the Naval and Military Tournament at Olympia. Juxtaposed with these scenes of established tradition were images of events at the Savoy, Claridge's and the Berkeley. Max Cowper (1860-1911), a draughtsman and artist who exhibited at the Royal Academy, and a regular contributor to the *Illustrated London News*, was the principal illustrator. He depicted these occasions with a fashionable exuberance and freedom of expression.⁴¹³ In one scene (Figure 25), Cowper illustrated the prima ballerina, Anna Pavlova, performing at a Fancy Dress Ball in the week of George V's coronation, observed by costumed guests. In another, he drew the pale pink and white interior of 'The Famous Supper scene at the Savoy', complete with professional dancers performing the new 'Tango' for the bejewelled diners. In a third, he sketched the champagne-fuelled high spirits of New Year's festivities in the Savoy ballroom, a theme which he also used for the *Illustrated London News* in 1907 (Figure 28).⁴¹⁴ Illuminated by gleaming artificial light, with the glitter and shine of crystal and jewels, these were 'dream worlds', and 'fairyland environments', intense, immersive and overwhelming, set apart from the ordinary.⁴¹⁵

Illustrators such as Hardy and Cowper were commercial artists, paid to produce images of grand hotels and the events that took place within their walls. However, their artistic treatment of these subjects, which combined story-telling, mythmaking and exotic magic was as up-to-date as the

⁴¹² *London's Social Calendar* (1912).

⁴¹³ Morna O'Neill and Michael Hatt, 'Introduction' in Morna O'Neill et al., *The Edwardian Sense* (2010), 2.

⁴¹⁴ *ILN*, 5 January 1907, 20-21.

⁴¹⁵ R. Williams, 'Dream Worlds of Consumption', 137-150, 142 in *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*, (2011); Carù and Cova, 'Revisiting Consumption Experience', *Marketing Theory*, 3 (2003), 267-286,

self-image that the hotels wished to project. The illustrations conveyed both modernity and socially distinctive luxury consumption. This was the magical 'dream world' of the grand hotel.



Figure 25 'Madame Pavlova at the Fancy Dress Ball', *London's Social Calendar* (1912) ⁴¹⁶

Through aspects of magic, hotel advertising and printed publications created an image of the hotel *de luxe* which attracted guests and added value. But the magic in these venues was more than an untouchable fantasy. In the public rooms of the hotels themselves, the material expression of this magical world could be seen in the gleam of marble, the glimmer of mirrors, or the sparkle of artificial light. As illustrations revealed, in hotel ballrooms, venues which echoed the interiors in which royalty might entertain their own guests, men and women could experience fairy-tale pleasures. In grand hotels, however, the promise of magical luxury could sometimes exceed even that seen in palaces. On the most special occasions, clients were offered an even more magical experience, one in which the interior was transformed into another, imaginary world, where a client's wish was the hotel's command.

Hotel 'Dream Worlds': 'Cinderellas' and Special Occasions

The balls and parties of the Victorian and Edwardian upper class often possessed an air of magic. Wealthy guests, bedecked in jewels and mingling in beautiful interiors, radiated ideas of

⁴¹⁶ *London's Social Calendar*, (1912), 28/29

enchantment and glimmering fairyland.⁴¹⁷ In the early part of the period, these social ceremonies tended to take place in private ballrooms. However, by the 1880s, entertaining on a large scale in private mansions was becoming increasingly prohibitive. This was partially due to the economy and the associated changes in aristocratic wealth which affected the keeping of large townhouses with sizeable entertaining rooms. At the same time, the rise of the *nouveaux riches* increased the population of those wishing to participate. In addition, the number of semi-public events, such as charity fairs, regimental dinners and professional meetings, which required large function rooms was growing.⁴¹⁸ For hotels, the business of providing space and expertise for clients to entertain their own guests became increasingly fashionable, and by 1914 nineteen of *The Times* sixty five ‘Dances of the Season’ were held at hotels.⁴¹⁹

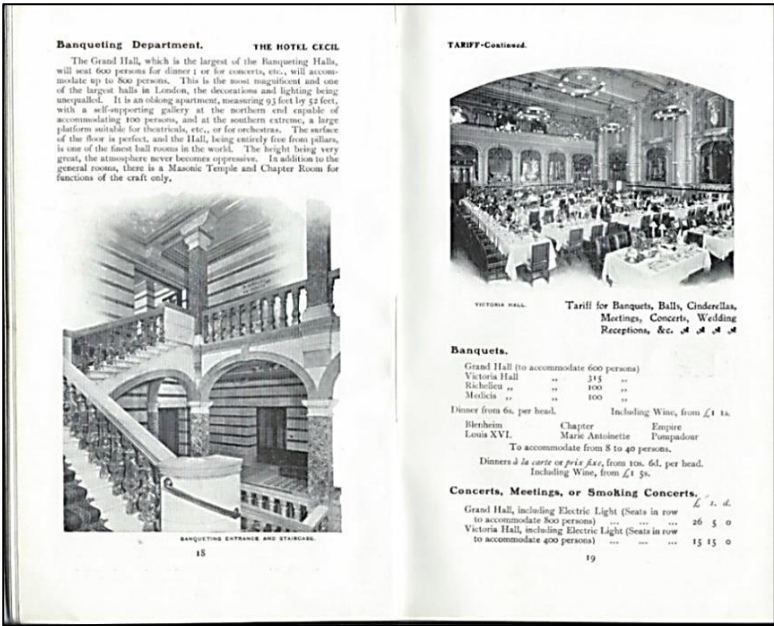


Figure 26 *Hotel Cecil* (1906). ‘Banquets, Balls, Cinderellas’⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ Frances, Countess of Warwick, *Afterthoughts* (1931), 38.

⁴¹⁸ For the role of balls and dancing in the identity of the social elite, see *Theresa Buckland, Society Dancing: Fashionable Bodies in England, 1870-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Kelly Boyd, ‘Elite Dancing and Dining in London and Paris’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 17:3 (2012), 363-366 and Bowie, ‘Innovation and 19th century hotel industry evolution’, *Tourism Management*, 64 (2018), 314-323, 321.

⁴¹⁹ ‘Dances of the Season’, *The Times*, 23 March 1914, 11.

⁴²⁰ *Hotel Cecil* (1906), 18-19.

In many hotels, the size of the function rooms was overwhelming. At the Metropole the *grand salle*, the banqueting hall and the other dining rooms could seat 1,000 simultaneously.⁴²¹ The Cecil's Grand Hall was 92 feet long by 52 feet wide, and could seat 600 for dinner. When combined with the adjacent Victoria Hall the suite could accommodate over 1,000 guests for a dinner dance or, as the 1906 brochure referred to, 'Cinderellas' (Figure 26).⁴²² Even the relatively small Ritz had an entertainment licence for 550 in the lower ground floor.⁴²³

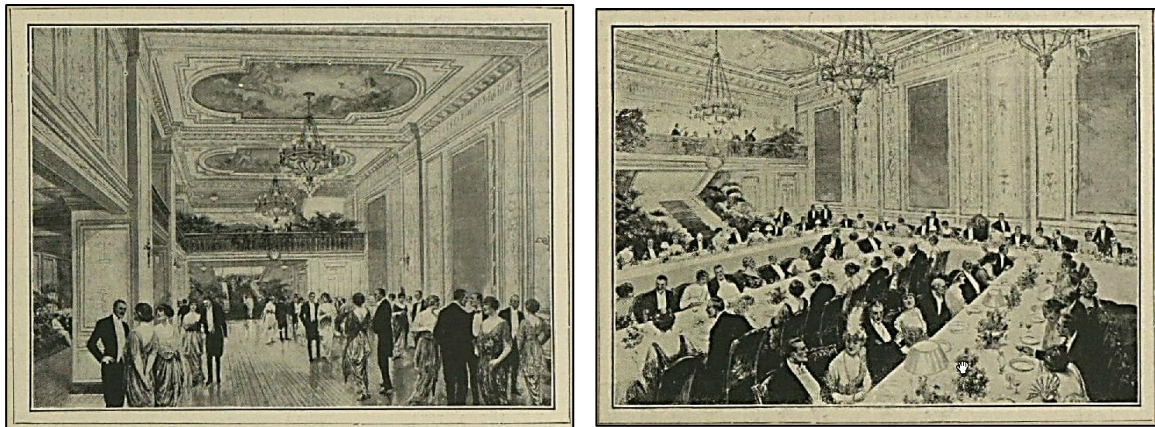


Figure 27. The Banqueting Room and Ball room at the Piccadilly (1913) ⁴²⁴

The decoration in these rooms was sumptuous, often in the fashionable design of the French eighteenth century. At the Victoria, the 1897 redecoration of the banqueting hall used silvered glass with the white surfaces enriched with gold.⁴²⁵ At the Piccadilly, the original basement grill room and adjoining billiard rooms were transformed in 1913 into a banqueting room and ballroom, with cream and gold panels, painted ceilings, and gleaming chandelier (Figure 27).⁴²⁶ At Claridge's, an extension which housed a ballroom was constructed in 1910, enabling the hotel to compete more effectively with others. Here, the *Beaux-Arts* trained architect, René Sergent, designed an interior in the Louis Quinze style, with reliefs by Marcel Boulanger and paintings in

⁴²¹ 'Hotel Metropole', *Musical World*, 16 May 1885, 309.

⁴²² A. Brereton, *London's Social Rendezvous* (London: 1923); *The Caterer*, 14 April, 1906, 144.

⁴²³ Letter from G. L. Gomme, Clerk to the Council (LCC Theatres and Music Halls Committees), 24 May 1906 GLC AR/BR/07/0276

⁴²⁴ *ILN*, 29 Nov. 1913, 911.

⁴²⁵ *The Caterer*, February 1897, 81

⁴²⁶ *A Twentieth Century Palace* (1908), 51, and *ILN*, 29 November 1913, 911.

the manner of Watteau.⁴²⁷ Sergent also decorated the 1910 banqueting suite at the Savoy, which was based upon the design and proportions of the early eighteenth-century Salon Ovale in the Hotel de Soubise in Paris.⁴²⁸ These pale French styles added kudos, cosmopolitanism, and a sophisticated, elite identity.

For clients, holding an event in a hotel was beneficial in several ways. Extremely large spaces were available should the occasion require. As the grand hotels became more established, the prestige of the hotel could add something to the status of the event. Furthermore, the knowledgeable staff could not only navigate the social details of any occasion with professionalism, a consideration for hostesses with less experience of the social scene, they were also able to create ever more imaginative schemes. At the most straightforward level, this might mean dressing the tables, providing the staff, and discussing the menu. But as time passed, the events staged in hotels became more elaborate, with guests participating as both audience and performers, part of the visual spectacle.

This magical treatment was applied to a wide range of occasions. Regimental dinners, weddings, Christmas parties, and celebrations of all kinds were transformed with the 'secular magic' of the theatre and performance. In 1891, for example, the Savoy was the location for a banquet to welcome the Inniskilling (sic) Dragoons on their return from South Africa. A profusion of scarlet and yellow flowers, matching the scarlet and gold regimental colours, covered the table. The standard of the regiment hung above, and menu cards were illustrated with drawings of historic uniforms of the regiment.⁴²⁹ In 1909, the discovery of North Pole by Commander Peary was celebrated by a dinner in which the Savoy Winter Garden was transformed into ice and snow,

⁴²⁷ *Survey of London, Vol.40*. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol40/pt2/pp21-32#p33> acc. 21.3.16; *Claridge's Celebration of a Century (1898-1998)* (London: Sterling Publications, 1998), 18.

⁴²⁸ *BN*, 23 December 1910, 898.

⁴²⁹ *The Caterer*, January 1891, 20.

and the waiters dressed in eskimo furs.⁴³⁰ Even the more straightforward occasions often involved some form of theatricality. The 1908 Carlton Hotel Christmas tree was thirty five feet high and set in a wintry scene, and at the 1910 New Year's Eve ball at the Waldorf, midnight was welcomed with the drama of glittering letters illuminated in the darkened Palm Court.⁴³¹

One of the most celebrated of these magical performative extravaganzas was the 1905 Savoy Gondola Party (Figure 28). The dinner was arranged by the general manager, Henri Pruger, for George Kessler, the American champagne merchant, at a reputed cost of £3,000. The former courtyard of the hotel, which was now the banqueting hall, was flooded with blue-dyed water, filled with fish and swans (which apparently later died of poisoning!) Painted scenery, prepared by the craftsmen of the Savoy Theatre, represented buildings in Venice. A silk-lined boat, strewn with 12,000 carnations, held the table and chairs for two dozen guests. A twelve course banquet was served by waiters dressed as gondoliers. The culmination of the evening was a cake as tall as a man, brought to the boat on the back of a baby elephant, borrowed from London Zoo, all serenaded by the famous tenor, Caruso.⁴³² The choice of Venice, the opera singer's performance and the legendary cost all bestowed prestige upon Kessler, his guests, and the hotel itself, while the extraordinary appearance of the elephant indicated that, at the Savoy, any fantasy, no matter how unusual, could be made reality - at a price.

Conclusion

For hotel proprietors, the luxury of a grand hotel was not just about the grandeur of bricks and mortar. The luxury of these buildings was also about image, an image created by 'magic'. The

⁴³⁰ *The History of the Pilgrims of Great Britain* <https://www.pilgrimsociety.org/history.php> acc.18.7.18; Christopher Matthew, *A Different World: Stories of Grand Hotels* (New York: Paddington Press, 1976).

⁴³¹ *The Observer*, 13 December 1908, 6; 'Christmas at the Hotels', *The Observer* 11 December 1910, 14.

⁴³² These details are taken from the website of Fairmont Hotels, the current owner of the Savoy (2019), and from a summary of George Kessler's life on the RMS Lusitania resource website. Kessler, like a number of other guests at the case study hotels recorded in the 1911 Census, was on the Lusitania when torpedoed on 7 May 1915. <http://www.rmslusitania.info/people/saloon/george-kessler/>; and <https://www.fairmont.com/press-room/articles/thesavoyonehundredfirsts/> both acc. 18.7.18.

lexicon of magic was commonly associated with hotels. Notions of magic existed in the use of myth to establish a collective identity which promised status and prestige. Magic also served as an explanation for the non-rational responses to the sensory experience of luxury. The magic of advertising and high-quality printed publications created and promoted hotel brands. 'Secular magic' and visual trickery, which were widespread in all manner of performances and spectacles in the Victorian and Edwardian world, contributed to the drama and pleasure of the hotel. Finally, the idea of magic as an exotic, otherworld thread throughout the experience of these buildings. Through these contemporary ideas of magic, the grand hotel was defined as a luxury product.



Figure 28 From Gondolas to Auld Lang Syne - Magical Extravanzas at the Savoy, 1905 and 1907⁴³³

If successful, this magic and its magicians performed an illusion in which grand hotels were perceived as rare and exclusive, with limited access. Yet successful magic deliberately created demand. The next chapter examines how, through the hotel plan and design and the performance of staff, the dilemma of exclusivity was managed.

⁴³³ 'A remarkable dinner in a floating gondola at the Savoy Hotel', *The Sphere*, 8 July 1905, and Max Cowper 'Auld Lang Syne' - New Year's Eve at the Savoy', *ILN*, 5 January 1907, 20-21.

Chapter IV: Exclusivity

Drawn from all parts of the world and all social grades - like big fish and little taken in a drag net.⁴³⁴

On every side are hotels large enough for palaces, gorgeously appointed and open to receive all-comers with well-filled purses.⁴³⁵

In *The Grand Babylon Hotel* (1902), Arnold Bennett uses a fictionalised Savoy as the setting for his tale of mystery and murder. The novel tells of an American, Nella Racksole, and her millionaire father, Theodore, who purchases the hotel on a whim, and their subsequent encounters with a variety of puzzling strangers. Throughout the adventure, the hotel is painted as a venue where the identity of the guests is questionable, from the discomfort of the socially and ethnically diverse to the downright dangerous. In the opening scene, the hotel's 'dim' smoking room, is occupied by 'men of all sizes, ages, and nationalities'. The same evening, 'a thousand or so' unnamed guests attend a ball in the Gold Room, given by the 'very rich and very hospitable' Mr. and Mrs. Sampson Levi. This couple, Bennett maintains, are outside the norms of conventional society, not only because they are Jewish but also as Levi's vast wealth is recently acquired under less than transparent circumstances in South Africa. Later, one of the villains, disguised as an old lady, registers at the hotel under the name of a European aristocrat. It is only the knowledge of the hotel clerk which protects the hotel and its visitors from this deception.⁴³⁶ In each instance, the identity of the guests was not comfortably familiar but unpredictable and enigmatic.

For Bennett, the grand hotel was an ideal setting for his story of enormous wealth and mysterious strangers. The luxurious interiors, food and service were enchanting, but they were also an effective counterpoint to the seediness of criminality. The use of the grand hotel as location also provided an opportunity to examine ideas of anonymity and uncertainty - a setting which other

⁴³⁴ 'The Old Inn and the Modern Hotel,' *The Queen*, 4 April 1891, 518.

⁴³⁵ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 453.

⁴³⁶ Arnold Bennett, *The Grand Babylon Hotel*, originally published 1902 (Fairfield, IA: 1st World Library, Literary Society, 2005) 63.

authors have also found compelling. A number of scholars contend that of particular interest to story tellers were the social uncertainties inherent to such venues. Kevin James asserts that, for Henry James, 'soaring urban palace and grand hotels were laboratories to dissect the conditions of modern urban life'.⁴³⁷ For novelists, grand hotels were unpredictable and contradictory, Robbie Moore argues, 'places of transience, [...], of flirtation rather than attachment, restlessness rather than settlement, and laundered rather than fixed identities'. These 'modern' hotels cultivated 'new social forms and groupings, new etiquettes, and new, unexpected freedoms'.⁴³⁸ From Trollope and Wharton to the present day, the hybridity, liminality and ambiguities of hotels have provided settings in which to examine the changing mores of society.⁴³⁹

Although this questioning of identity, social status and conventions might be fascinating for novelists, for real guests in real hotels, such ambiguity was not quite so alluring. This social mingling could be problematic. Hotels might have been designed to project a palatial grandeur that impressed, with a magical narrative which attracted a large audience, but without the promise of a protective exclusivity, their luxury status could not be maintained.

Aspects of Exclusivity: Perceived Rarity and the Control of Space

Luxury and exclusivity are interconnected in two ways. First, as has been established, the impression of rarity was crucial to assertions of luxury. But in markets which demanded numerous consumers, luxury could not be defined by rarity alone. The proprietors of grand hotels

⁴³⁷ Kevin L. James, *Histories, Meanings and Representations of the Modern Hotel* (2018), 13.

⁴³⁸ Robbie Moore, 'Henry James, Hotels and the Invention of Disposable Space', *Modernist Cultures*, 7 (2012), 254-278, 274 and 255. See also Kevin R. McNamara, 'Building Culture: The Two New Yorks of Henry James' *The American Scene*', *Prospects*, 18 (1993), 121-151.

⁴³⁹ See, for example, Henry James, *The American Scene* (1907), Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (1920). Writers as diverse as Elizabeth Bowen, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, Rosamond Lehmann, George Orwell and J. B. Priestley all demonstrate a fascination for the hotel in their writing', Charlotte Bates, 'Hotel Histories: Modern Tourists, Modern Nomads and the Culture of Hotel-Consciousness' *Literature & History*, 12:2 (2003), 62-75, 63. 'Popular narratives of the 20s played off the grand hotel as a site for identity exchange', Mark Katz, 'The Hotel Kracauer', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 11 (1999), 134-152, 139. See also Bettina Matthias, *The Hotel as Setting in Early Twentieth-Century German and Austrian Literature: Checking in to Tell a Story* (Rochester, New York; Woodbridge: Camden House, 2006).

were required to manage two seemingly incompatible goals - maintaining perceived exclusivity while increasing brand awareness and growing revenues or market share.⁴⁴⁰ London hotels had hundreds of thousands of room-nights to sell each year.⁴⁴¹ The largest, the Cecil with 700 bedrooms, had potentially over a quarter of a million to fill per annum.⁴⁴² Every new hotel increased the 'bitter competition'.⁴⁴³ Such rivalry meant that venues needed to attract not just the social elite, but any guest who would both pay the bill and behave appropriately. Luxury consumption in these establishments, therefore, was defined by Kapferer's 'virtual rarity: the feeling of privilege and of exclusivity', and the pricing, design and spatial arrangement which would prompt that impression.⁴⁴⁴ Access needed to appear to be both controlled and privileged. Exclusivity had to be seen to be done.

This interpretation of luxurious exclusivity - one in which availability is perceived to be restricted or rare - intersects with the requirement for hotels to actively exclude some individuals. The hospitality of grand hotels was not unconditional, and establishments needed both to protect clients and to maintain reputation.⁴⁴⁵ To some extent, this aspect of exclusivity was a product of the benefits promised by hotels. The convenience of a good location was countered by a consequent proximity to the perils of 'modern Babylon'.⁴⁴⁶ London's modernity was not clean and disciplined, but as Lynda Nead argues, maze-like and disorientating, its streets, particularly at

⁴⁴⁰ For the contradictions of the exclusivity of luxury in a mass market, see Kastanakis and Balabanis, 'Between the Mass and the Class', *Journal of Business Research*, 65 (2012), 1399-1407, and Nunes, Johnson and Breene, 'Selling to the Moneyed Masses', *Harvard Business Review*, 82 (2004), 94-104.

⁴⁴¹ The number of room-nights is calculated by multiplying bedrooms by the percentage occupancy.

⁴⁴² 700 bedrooms at 100% occupancy would equate to 255,000 room-nights. An 80% occupancy rate (desirable for 21st-century luxury hotels in London) would equate to 204,000. Source: Victoria Hussein, Director for Revenue Management, Belmond Hotels (August 2018).

⁴⁴³ 'The prospects of hotels in London', *HW*, February 1898, 12.

⁴⁴⁴ Kapferer, 'Abundant Rarity', *Business Horizons*, 55 (2012), 453-462.

⁴⁴⁵ D. Bell, 'The Hospitable City: Social Relations in Commercial Spaces', *Progress in Human Geography*, 31 (2007), 7-22, 8.

⁴⁴⁶ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 510.

night-time, unpredictable and perilous.⁴⁴⁷ A commentator noted that, in the 1860s, streets in the heart of London, between Mayfair and St James, were at the 'centre of the surging mass of nocturnal corruption', the 'very sink of iniquity'.⁴⁴⁸ During daylight, according to another, Piccadilly was 'fashionable, aristocratic, autocratic [...], one of the great streets of the world', but at night it was frequented by a more socially diverse and potentially dangerous crowd.⁴⁴⁹ Walter Benjamin's *flâneur* or George Gissing's man-about-town may have appreciated the freedom to engage with such experiences, but this was not the case for respectable society.⁴⁵⁰ The dangers of the street had to be kept outside the doors of the hotel.

Nevertheless, external threats could find their way in. The open access of a hotel might subject decent guests to all manner of reputational, if not actual, dangers. The problem of the 'undesirable guest', in any form, was not trivial. In 1900, *The Hotel World* observed:

Many London and New York hotel proprietors have been greatly exercising their brains lately on the subject of the undesirable guest, that is to say the well-dressed lady or gentleman [...], who uses an up-to-date hotel of the first class to promote some business object of which the least that can be said of it is that it is shady, and its perpetrator an undesirable companion to the average travelling or resident wealthy customer.⁴⁵¹

In giant establishments it was easy for an intruder to enter unobserved. It was not unusual to read reports of the theft of a guest's possessions.⁴⁵² A reference in divorce proceedings did nothing to enhance a hotel's name. Serious scandals ranged from the financial downfall of Jabez

⁴⁴⁷ Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (2000), 12.

⁴⁴⁸ Donald Shaw, *London in the Sixties* (London: Everett & Co. Ltd, 1914), 48/49.

⁴⁴⁹ Robert Machray, *The Night Side of London* (London: John Macqueen, 1902), 3.

⁴⁵⁰ Nigel Dodd and Judy Wajcman, 'Simmel and Benjamin: Early Theorists of the Acceleration Society', in Dodd and Wajcman, eds., *The Sociology of Speed: Digital, Organizational, and Social Temporalities* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), and Arlene Young, 'Character and the Modern City: George Gissing's Urban Negotiations', *English Literature in Translation*, 48 (2006), 49-62.

⁴⁵¹ 'The undesirable guest', *HW*, April 1900, vi.

⁴⁵² 'A Hint to Hotel-keepers', *The Caterer*, December 1887, 341. See the report of a theft by Walter Jarvis in a Cecil bedroom occupied by Charles Hinman of New York in *London Standard*, 31 December 1898.

Balfour, in which the Victoria, Cecil and Hyde Park Court, later Hyde Park Hotel, were involved, to the widely reported 'audacious conduct' of Oscar Wilde, witnessed by Savoy staff.⁴⁵³

Although these more substantial risks were hopefully kept to a minimum, the diversity of guests also posed a challenge. This was a time when the boundaries that separated 'Society' from the rest of citizenry were in flux.⁴⁵⁴ Although a 'club-like' atmosphere in which 'all the birds of the very best feathers[...] flock together' as described in the Savoy's *Souvenir* (1893), was important to a hotel's luxury status, the actual experience was often somewhat less ideal than the publicity suggested.⁴⁵⁵ G. P. Bertini, manager of the Cecil, might have claimed that his guests were 'the elite of English, Continental and American good society', but his clientele were not members of a club, and although the newly wealthy might be able to pay their bills, they did not necessarily have the right social standing. Rather, as *The Queen* noted, guests were 'drawn from all parts of the world and all social grades - like big fish and little taken in a drag net'. Hotel guests could be 'some of the most charming folk', but some were also 'most objectionable'.⁴⁵⁶ *The Hotel World* acknowledged that 'one black sheep admitted to an hotel drives away dissatisfied half a dozen good sheep'.⁴⁵⁷ If, as A.H. Beavan observed, these establishments were truly 'open to all-comers with well-filled purses', such concerns were not surprising.⁴⁵⁸

In this chapter, I consider the methodology of exclusivity in hotels. I argue that these venues deliberately attracted a clientele who were socially, culturally and racially diverse. Using the

⁴⁵³ David McKie, *Jabez Balfour: The Rise and Fall of a Victorian Rogue* (London: Atlantic, 2004). 'Audacious conduct' referred to the accusation that Wilde had spent the night in the Savoy with a rent boy. Two members of the Savoy staff, Antonio Migge, the hotel masseur, and Jane Cotter, a chambermaid, were witnesses in the 1895 criminal trial. See also *DT*, 4 April, 1895, 8; 5 April, 6, and 8 April, 1895, and <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/wilde/Wildecriminaltranscript.html> acc. 19.10.16.

⁴⁵⁴ McNamara, 'Building Culture: The Two New Yorks of Henry James', *Prospects*, 18 (1993), 121-151, 125.

⁴⁵⁵ *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 24-26. See also advertisements for the Coburg in *The Caterer*, December 1896, 598, and *ILN*, 23 January 1897, 130.

⁴⁵⁶ 'The Old Inn and the Modern Hotel,' *The Queen*, 4 April 1891, 518.

⁴⁵⁷ 'The Science and Art of Hotel Advertising', *HW*, December 1902, ii.

⁴⁵⁸ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 453.

census records as source material, I identify the extent of this diversity. To manage the variety of guests, hotels employed devices designed to maintain the impression of rarity, to supervise access and to exclude where necessary. I argue that attracting guests was assisted by the structure and publication of the tariff. While setting price on the basis of supply and demand was essential, varying room rates according to floor, position and size, kept guests of different economic stations apart. At the same time, publishing the lowest price, a common practice, appealed to as wide an audience as possible.

Further, using plans, as well as the study of contemporary technology and commentary, I contend that a series of legible but permeable boundaries, or ‘thresholds’ acted to guard the interior. These thresholds were not only found at the entrance to hotels, but also took the form of the spatial arrangement of the reception, hotel hall or lobby, ‘interzones’ between the street outside and the protected interior within.⁴⁵⁹ At these points, visual cues and the appearance and behaviour of staff acting as gatekeepers formed additional intangible barriers to entry. Through the tariff and through these physical and experiential thresholds, all of which controlled access but sustained the impression of luxury, exclusivity was established and preserved.

The Hotel Guest: ‘All-Comers with Well-Filled Purses’

As the press, commentators and novelists all agreed, guests at grand hotels were certainly disparate. However, accurately analysing them for research is not straightforward. British hotels were not required by law to check identities and register guests until the Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Order of 1915. Indeed, contrary to convention on the Continent, Kevin James argues, ‘the assertion of the legal right to anonymity was central to an idea of the hotel that was deeply embedded in law and custom in the United Kingdom’. Any records that were kept by the

⁴⁵⁹ I take the term ‘interzone’ from Habbo Knoch, ‘Life on Stage: Grand Hotels as Urban Interzones around 1900’, in Heßler and Zimmermann, eds., *Creative Urban Milieus* (2009), 137-158.

case study hotels either no longer exist or are inaccessible, and there is no evidence of visitor books, in which guests might record their own experiences in London hotels.⁴⁶⁰

What have been useful as source material are the census registers for 1891, 1901 and 1911.⁴⁶¹ In these, guests' names and titles, age, gender, marital status, place of birth, and - if foreign - nationality, were documented. The occupation of male guests, approximately 58% of the total, ranged from peer of the realm, and opium merchant, to coal master, and sheep farmer.⁴⁶² While it is not possible to discern details such as the rooms occupied, the records do provide sufficient information to conclude that female guests numbered nearly half the total, that guests were of all ages, derived their income from many sources, and came from all over Great Britain and Ireland, Europe, the Empire, and beyond.⁴⁶³

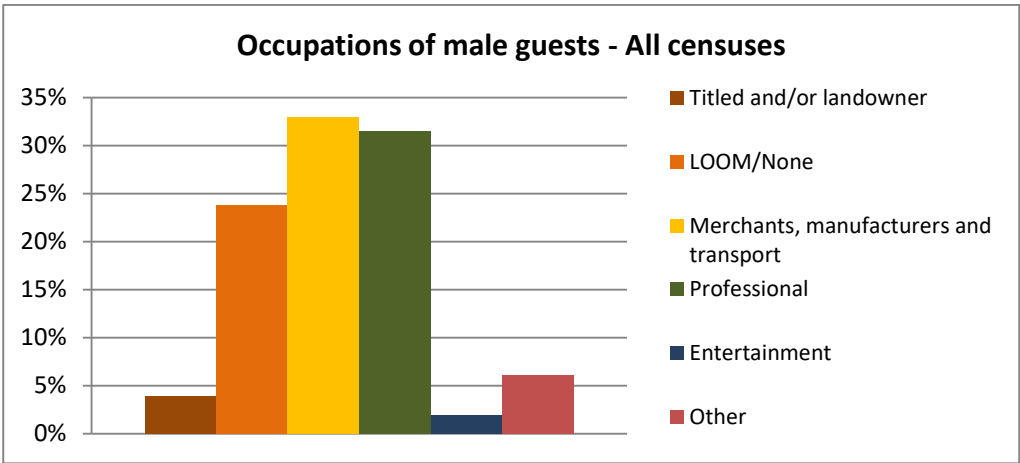


Table 4. Occupations of male guests, using census records for case study hotels 1891/1901/1911

⁴⁶⁰ James argues that this preference for anonymity continued despite concerns about the surveillance of potentially dangerous 'aliens' and the need to document charges for bills. This contrasts with continental systems in which hotels were required by the state to register guests. Kevin J. James, 'Aliens, Subjects and the State: Surveillance in British Hotels during World War I', *Immigrants & Minorities* (2018). Article kindly supplied by author in advance of publication, n.p. See also Kevin J. James, 'A British Social Institution': The Visitor's Book and Hotel Culture in Victorian Britain and Ireland', *Journeys*, 13:1 (2012), 42-69.

⁴⁶¹ The censuses record all those resident on 5 April 1891, 31 March 1901 and 2 April 1911. See Appendix for totals of guests and staff in each hotel across the three dates.

⁴⁶² Alfred Thomas Verney-Cave, 5th Baron Braye, Coburg, 1911; Calouste Gulbenkian, Metropole, 1891; William Craig, Langham 1891; Arthur Gillan, Grand 1911.

⁴⁶³ The only guest rooms identified are those of Claude Monet (510 and 511 in 1901). Soraya Khan, Monet at the Savoy Hotel and the London Fogs 1899-1901 (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Birmingham 2011), 103.

An analysis over the three censuses provides an overview of the variety of guest occupations (Table 4).⁴⁶⁴ It is worth noting that categorisation of occupation can be problematic. One difficulty is that approximately a quarter of the total number of male guests over the period either gave no occupation or declared they were either 'living off their own means' (LOOM), or of 'private means', terms commonly used for investment income.⁴⁶⁵ A second obstacle is that it is not possible to assess the fine detail of social class simply from occupation. As Andrew P. Haley points out in relation to social groupings in America in this period, occupations are not of themselves 'stable predictors' of class or income, as there can such a variation of status and wealth within any category.⁴⁶⁶ Consideration of guests with a title of some sort illustrates the point. Of the total number of male guests- British and foreign - about 4% had titles of some kind, but no other specified occupation.⁴⁶⁷ However, without extensive research it is not possible to know whether these titles were historic or recent, income levels, social status, or indeed the validity of the title. In 1901, for example, Princess Blanche Singh, daughter of 9th Earl of Coventry, the first English noblewoman to marry an Indian prince, and her husband, Prince Victor Duleep Singh, once heir to the throne of the Punjab were at Claridge's.⁴⁶⁸ In the same year, at the Carlton was Sir Aubrey Dean Paul, with his wife, Lady Irene Dean Paul, a Belgian born composer and pianist. In 1911, the Claridge's census records Anton Sigray, an Hungarian count, married to an

⁴⁶⁴ Detailed analysis of guests' wealth is beyond the scope of this study. An additional limitation is that these self-defined occupations were as much social designations, reflecting status and perceived worth, which may have influenced how guests described themselves to annotators. See Dennis Mills and Michael Drake, 'The Census, 1801-1991', in Michael Drake and Ruth Finnegan, eds., *Sources and Methods for Family and Community Historians: A Handbook* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP in association with OU, 1997) and Edward Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited: Census Records for England and Wales 1801-1900* (London: IHR/University of London, 2005), 97.

⁴⁶⁵ For the role of investment income to the Victorian upper and middle classes, see Dermot Coleman, *Being Good With Money: Economic Bearings in George Eliot's Ethical and Social Thought* (Ph.D. Thesis: University of Exeter, 2011) and J. Rutterford and others, 'Who Comprised the Nation of Shareholders? Gender and Investment in Great Britain, c1870-1935', *Economic History Review*, 64 (2011), 157-187.

⁴⁶⁶ Andrew P. Haley, *Turning the Tables: Restaurants and the Rise of the American Middle Class, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 2011), 46.

⁴⁶⁷ This group has been identified by the use of a title or 'peer of the realm'.

⁴⁶⁸ Danielle C. Kinsey, 'Koh-I-Noor: Empire, Diamonds, and the Performance of British Material Culture', *Journal of British Studies*, 48: 2 (2009), 391-419.

American copper heiress, Harriet Daly, whose fortune was estimated at \$2.5 million.⁴⁶⁹ The family of another titled guest, Sir Charles Assheton-Smith, who had been raised to the baronetcy only that year, had made their fortune in Welsh Slate mines. While all these individuals can be categorised as titled, their place in the social hierarchy varied.

Despite these difficulties, there are benefits to categorising male guests by occupation, principally because such categorisation provides an overview of the variety of people which these hotels attracted. Although hotels often publicised the arrivals and departures of their most impressive titled guests, the great majority were common men and women. The greatest percentage of men (33%) were connected to industry or trade, describing themselves as some kind of merchant or manufacturer, or involved in shipping, the railways or other transport. About the same proportion came from the growing professional classes, including the law, medicine and finance, whose emergence gathered pace in the later years of the century.⁴⁷⁰ The proportion of professionals echoes the work of W.D Rubinstein and Joseph Mordaunt Crook, who argue that, in this period, the character and structure of the wealthy changed as landed capital dwindled and trading capital multiplied. Wealth creation then shifted from industrial production to financial services, with the result that the greatest wealth was derived from finance, banking and commerce, rather than manufacturing and industrialisation.⁴⁷¹ These guests were drawn from the social classes, who both desired and now possessed sufficient income to experience this form of luxury.

A more detailed analysis of the 1911 census gives further insight into the global connections and complexity of the contemporary British economy (Table 5). On this night, merchants made up

⁴⁶⁹ See, for example, 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 13 January 1909, 11, and 'Court Circular', *The Times*, 5 November 1909, 11, and *The Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, 27 March 1910.

⁴⁷⁰ For the rise of professionals, see T.R. Gourvish, 'The Rise of the Professions', in Gourvish and Alan O'Day, eds., *Later Victorian Britain 1867-1900* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 13-36, 15.

⁴⁷¹ W. D. Rubinstein *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy In Britain since the Industrial Revolution* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006), and Mordaunt Crook, *The Rise of the Nouveaux Riches* (2000), specifically Chapter I. Rubinstein's main conclusion was that a disproportionate number of fortunes were earned in the City of London, in commerce and finance rather than manufacturing and industry.

approximately a fifth of the male guests. At the Grand, there were merchants in animal feed, steel and fur. Some of those at the Savoy sold wood pulp, diamonds or oil. Manufacturers (11% of the total) of ladies clothing and of draperies were at the Langham. At the Metropole were producers of bread, elastic web and silk ribbon. Professionals involved in finance (12%), the law (6%), and medicine (2%) were documented. Also resident were members of the armed forces, journalists, entertainers and ministers of religion.

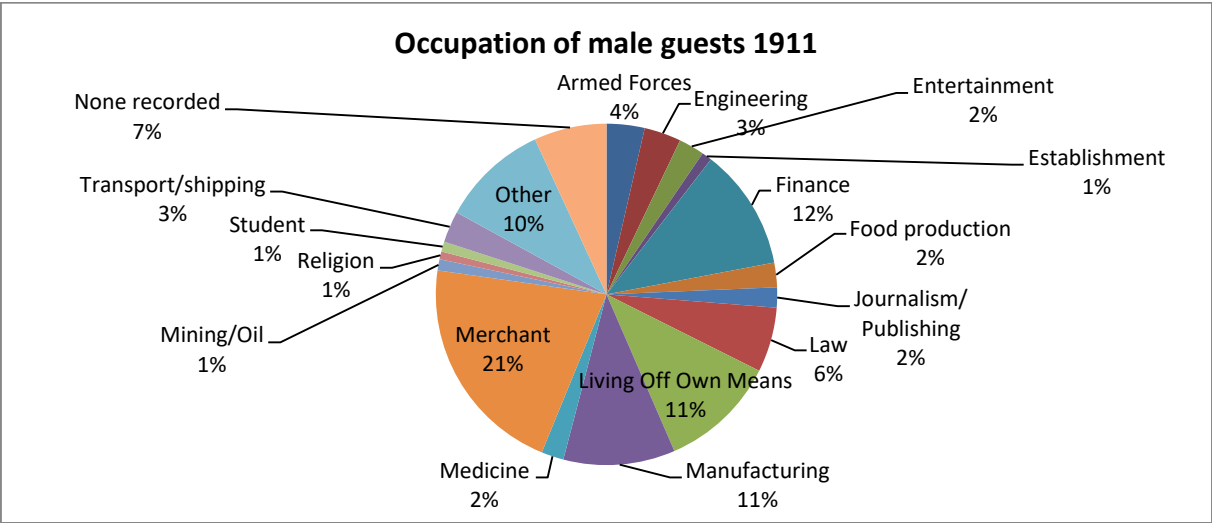


Table 5 Occupation of male guests in 1911.

While this range of occupations indicate a diverse collection of people, the mixture of nationalities across the three census dates adds further complexity.⁴⁷² London’s place as the principal city of a global network was embodied in its architecture and in the material culture and consumption practices of its residents, but it was also evident in the composition of its visitors.⁴⁷³

⁴⁷² I have assumed British-born guests are British, unless otherwise recorded.

⁴⁷³ For the visibility of Empire in London’s buildings, see F. Driver and D. Gilbert, ‘Heart of Empire? Landscape, Space and Performance in Imperial London’, *Environment and Planning: Society & Space*, 16 (1998), 11-28, and G. A. Bremner, ‘Some Imperial Institute’: Architecture, Symbolism, and the ideal of Empire in Late Victorian Britain, 1887-1893’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 62 (2003), 50-73. For the integration of empire in culture and consumption, see Chitralekha Zutshi, ‘“Designed for Eternity”: Kashmiri Shawls, Empire, and Cultures of Production and Consumption in Mid-Victorian Britain’, *Journal of British Studies*, 48:2 (2009), 420-440, who cites Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, ‘Introduction: Being at Home with the Empire’ in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, (2006), 21-22. For the experience of the traveller, see Elleke Boehmer, *Indian Arrivals, 1870-1915: Networks of British Empire* (Oxford: OUP, 2015); Coll Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travellers at the*

The majority of guests would have considered themselves British, having been born in the British Isles or in its dominions and colonies. But even within this group there was considerable variation. About half of the British were born in the north of England, Scotland or Ireland, and a fifth were born in the Empire overseas.

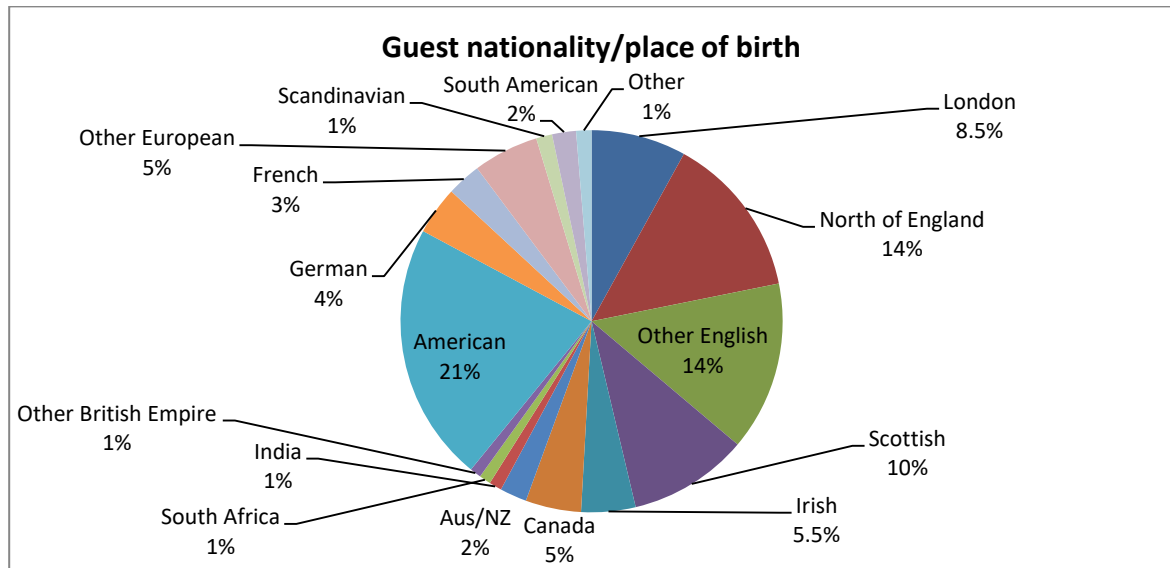


Table 6 Guest nationality, 1891/1901/1911.

Of the foreign guests, Americans made up the largest proportion. In the 1860s and early 1870s, guests from the United States were seldom mentioned in contemporary commentary but by the end of the century this market was booming, and trade magazines spoke of 'reap[ing] the harvest of American guests'.⁴⁷⁴ Many Americans came to London to conduct business, but the city also appealed in other ways. In 1896, *St Cecilia*, the new Hotel Cecil's brochure, commented on the number of American visitors to London, noting:

Some [come] as business men with an axe to grind in the financial capital and clearing house of the world; some railway magnates compete to submit their plans to their English creditors annually; some hotel men travelling to pick the brains of their English confreres; many with mines to place, inventions to apply to practical use; organisers of syndicates,

Heart of Empire (New Haven, Conn.: Yale UP, 2016) and Antoinette Burton, 'Making a Spectacle of Empire: Indian Travellers in Fin-de-Siècle London', *History Workshop Journal*, 42 (1996), 126-146.

⁴⁷⁴ *HW*, September 1897, 30.

theatrical managers, seeking new talent; actors, journalists, and tourists agents; while [others are] millionaires with their daughters, eager for a presentation at St James.⁴⁷⁵

London's commercial attraction was clear. Socially, the well-chronicled fashion for marriages between wealthy Americans and titled British also provides part of the explanation. In 1879, an American periodical commented upon the 'number of rooms engaged by Americans for the winter at the Langham and other London hotels'. 'This new fancy for London', the article continued, 'grows out of the fact that a passion for marrying American girls has developed into a regular craze with the English nobility.'⁴⁷⁶ More widely, by the 1880s, visiting London had become an integral part of a broader pattern of American bourgeois consumption, in which cultural capital and social distinction were acquired through European travel. American tourists 'rushed' to Europe. For the grand hotels, attracting free-spending Americans was valuable.

Some hotels seem to have deliberately attracted Americans more than others. The Savoy, for example, had declared its intention to seek the American market in its prospectus of 1889, and frequent press reports recording the activities of American guests confirm the hotel's success in appealing to this group.⁴⁷⁷ In the 1911 census, there was a noticeable variation across the hotels (Table 7). At the Savoy, the Ritz, and the Carlton, only about a fifth of guests were British or born in the Empire. In these, American guests constituted the highest percentage. Conversely, at the Metropole, the Grand and the Langham, over 60% of the guests were British, and, in the Gordon Hotels establishments in Northumberland Avenue, a high proportion of these were from the North of England. At the Metropole, for example, of the British-born guests 28% (22% of the total) were from Yorkshire, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire or

⁴⁷⁵ 'Ring out the Old, Ring in the New', *St Cecilia*, (London, 1896), 19.

⁴⁷⁶ See Richard W. Davis, "'We Are All Americans Now!'" Anglo-American Marriages in the Later Nineteenth Century', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 135: 2 (1991), 140-199, 144. 'American Girls in England', *Arthur's Illustrated Home Magazine*, January 1879, 60.

⁴⁷⁷ 'American and English Etiquette Contrasted', *Harper's Bazaar*, 19 July 1884, 450. 'The handsome restaurant [...] is nightly crowded with the rank and fashion of the great city, with a sprinkling of the better class of American tourist.' *HW*, August 1901, v.

Cheshire, and 21% from Scotland (17% of the total). While this aspect begs further examination, it might be possible to conclude that competition led to a degree of ‘product’ variation, with different hotels appealing to differing markets.

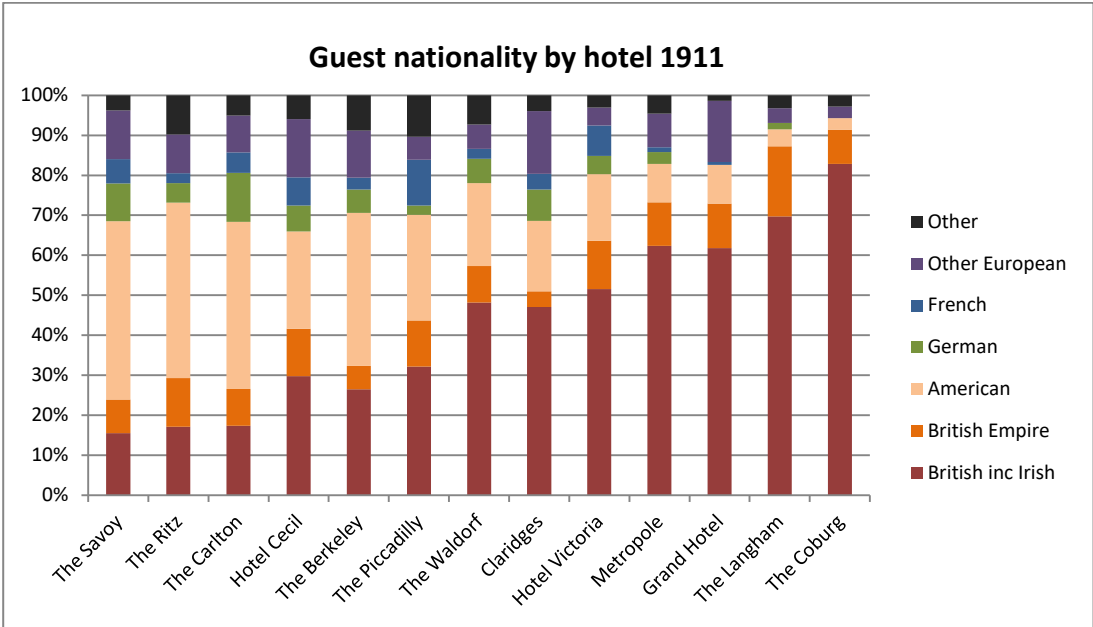


Table 7 Nationality of guests in 1911.

Also worthy of further research are the female guests. Attracting a female audience was essential to the grand hotel’s business model, and the census registers record that women made up nearly half the guest population. Female guests brought men with them, as the trade press acknowledged, and luxury hotels wished to lure men out of their clubs. *The Caterer* noted in 1893 that ‘ever since the days of the garden eviction, men have followed where women have led, and the hotel where women most do congregate is sure to have a generous following of men’.⁴⁷⁸ Hotels, therefore, needed to cater for female guests. However, the relationship between grand hotels and their female occupants was not straightforward. Women were increasingly visible within the public sphere, attracted to and engaging with new forms of retail and leisure

⁴⁷⁸ ‘Feminine Guests at Hotels’, *The Caterer*, April 1893, 155.

consumption, as well as in aspects of political life.⁴⁷⁹ Hotels, including those promising the exclusivity of luxury, could enable such economic and social participation by supplying women with security, privacy and comfort when away from home. The adoption of the design language of upper class mansions - domains in which women were often able to exercise high levels of domestic, social and, indeed, political control - echoed the aspirational role models of the middle classes and the *nouveaux riches*.⁴⁸⁰ Positioning the grand hotel as an aristocratic 'home from home' in advertising and providing the trappings associated with such residences created an environment in which women would feel included and involved.

Yet, female guests could pose difficulties. Some were practical. 'Run[ning] the gauntlet of possible strangers for fifty yards or so in incomplete armour', as *The Caterer* put it, to reach a bathroom might be acceptable to a man, but not usually to a woman.⁴⁸¹ Other challenges were social. Some women, particularly those travelling without a male companion, could test the reputation of a hotel. Independent female guests were often from the worlds of journalism or theatre, both of which lay at the heart of contemporary commodity culture, but were not always considered suitable occupations for a lady.⁴⁸² Although Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) and Lily Langtry (1853-1929) were credited with influencing the standard of the luxury hotels in London, artists such as Loie Fuller (1862-1928), the first American modern dancer to perform in Europe, who was staying at the Victoria in 1891, tested the conventions of appropriate female behaviour.⁴⁸³ Although it was clear that, for success, a luxury hotel needed to attract both men and women, managing and controlling behaviour was essential.

⁴⁷⁹ See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* (1992); Bowlby, *Just Looking* (1985).

⁴⁸⁰ K. D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (1998). For the association of design language with aspirational identity, see Penny Sparke, 'Introduction', in McKellar and Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity*, (2004), 4, and *The Modern Interior* (London: Reaktion, 2008), 33.

⁴⁸¹ *The Caterer*, August 1896, 371.

⁴⁸² Roberts, 'Gender, Consumption and Commodity Culture', *Am. Hist. Review*, 103 (1998), 817-844, 843.

⁴⁸³ M-L Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938) 162; Anna Sutton, 'Infinite Light: The Dance of Loie Fuller', *Australian Ballet website*: <https://australianballet.com.au/behind-ballet/infinite-light-the-dance-of-loie-fuller> acc. 2.1.19.

As the census records and contemporary observations agree, the social and cultural identities of guests in the London grand hotels were diverse. At the same time, these hotels were large, and rooms needed to be filled. With the diversity of the guests in mind, and given that the impression of exclusivity was essential to the notion of luxury, the question is how this impression was established, exhibited and maintained in such large establishments. The solution was found in a series of tangible and intangible thresholds. The first of these was the hotel tariff.

The Hotel Tariff: 'Clear, Definite and Final'

Setting and making public the tariff fulfilled a number of functions. For the hotel, correct pricing was good business practice and ensured profitability. In addition, a certain price level reflected the exclusivity of the establishment and kept out the hoi-polloi. The average annual income in Great Britain in 1874 was £34.90, rising to £42.70 in 1900, so for most of the population, even the least expensive rooms were beyond reach. At the same time, hotels could not afford to put off potential guests unnecessarily. A professional man who earned £700 per annum in the early 1900s, who lived a comfortable life spending £100 on rent and taxes and £10 a year on wine, might well be able to budget for an annual visit to London with his wife and family, enjoying the facilities of the Cecil, at a charge of 6 shillings a night.⁴⁸⁴ In other social circles, for the traditionally wealthy, falling property values in London meant that taking 'a flat at Claridge's for £3 10s a day', was more cost effective than running a house.⁴⁸⁵ Irrespective of their aspirations, publicising hotel prices attracted as many guests as possible. Hotel charges that were, in the parlance of *The Caterer*, 'clear, definite and final' were beneficial for all concerned.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ A. L. Bowley, *Wages in the United Kingdom in the 19th Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1900); Robert C. Allen, 'Real Incomes in the English-Speaking World, 1879-1913', in *Labour Market Evolution* (London: Routledge, 1994), <https://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/media/2154/allen-realincomes.pdf>, and 'National Archives: Census of 1901'. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/census/events/polecon3.html> acc. 6.1.19

⁴⁸⁵ *Survey of London*, 39 <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol39/pt1/67-82>, acc. 15.1.19

⁴⁸⁶ 'Hotels Up To Date', *The Caterer*, March 1906, 104.

Hotel	1865	1880	1898	1900	1905
The Berkeley			7s	7s	8s6d
The Carlton				7s6d	7s6d
The Cecil			6s	6s	5s ⁴⁸⁷
Charing Cross Hotel	2s				
Claridge's				10s	10s6d
The Coburg			6s	6s	6s
The Grand		3s6d ⁴⁸⁸	5s	5s	6s
The Grosvenor	2s ⁴⁸⁹				
The Langham	3s ⁴⁹⁰				
The Metropole		3s6d ⁴⁹¹	5s	5s	6s
The Savoy			7s6d	7s6d	9s6d
The Waldorf (1908) ⁴⁹²					6s6d (4s6d w/o bath)

Table 8 'Prices from ...' Starting tariffs for different hotels 1865-1908⁴⁹³

The tariff also acted as a means of differentiating between hotels. Without a star system to regulate the standard of service or the quality of comfort offered, relative prices could be used to indicate levels of luxury. While this is not a detailed analysis, as a full and complete range of prices cannot be ascertained, a survey of published tariffs over the period indicates the degree of variation between grand hotels (Table 8). Initially, starting tariffs seem to broadly match one another, with a rate of between 2 shillings and 3s6d a night. By the later 1890s, a greater differential seems to have developed, with the Berkeley and the Savoy charging a minimum of 7 shillings or so per night, and the Metropole and the Grand seeking to charge only 5 shillings, which, like the identity of their guests, indicates a variation in standard and market. Although inflation was close to zero during this period, tariffs rose.⁴⁹⁴ By 1905, standard room rates in the case study hotels ranged from 4s6d at the Langham to 9s6d at the Savoy, reflecting perhaps the

⁴⁸⁷ *New York Daily Tribune*, 24 December 1904, 11, and *Hotel Cecil brochure*, July 1906.

⁴⁸⁸ *The Caterer*, 5 June 1880, 104.

⁴⁸⁹ The Metropolitan Hotel Movement No 1, *The Observer*, 16 October 1864, 5.

⁴⁹⁰ *The Langham Hotel Guide* (1872).

⁴⁹¹ *The Caterer*, 5 June 1880, 104.

⁴⁹² *DT*, 7 February 1908, 6.

⁴⁹³ Karl Baedeker, *London and its Environs* (various dates) unless otherwise noted.

⁴⁹⁴ Richard Grossman, 'New Indices of British Equity Prices, 1870–1913', *Journal of Economic History*, 62:1 (2002), 121–146, 137. A comparison of prices across hotels is not possible as no detailed evidence of rates charges across various room types in different hotels, at different times of the year, has been found.

Savoy Groups re-investments, as well as a choice to position their hotels at the top of the market. 'Tariffs in first class London hotels are certainly high,' argued *The Caterer* in 1908, 'but they are not at all out of proportion to those of years ago when the luxury demanded and provided nowadays is taken into consideration'.⁴⁹⁵ For guests, the benefits of a published tariff were more nuanced. For the great majority, who did not have unlimited means, being aware of charges in advance avoided embarrassment, particularly when new to the hotel. Communicating the price of hotel rooms was conducted in a variety of ways. Although the *Baedeker Guides* uniformly recorded both minimum and maximum charges, generally tourist guide books published the lowest tariffs available.⁴⁹⁶ Advertising too usually quoted a minimum charge. According to industry advice, stating the minimum tariff was explicitly intended to avoid any misapprehension about high prices. In 1908, *The Caterer* quoted an expert in hotel advertising:

Not long ago a big new hotel in New York had its patronage seriously affected by the idea of its exorbitant prices, but a well-planned campaign which included the minimum room charge would have corrected any misunderstanding.⁴⁹⁷

A 1904 advertisement for the Cecil in the *New York Daily Tribune* was typical of the form. Aimed at American patrons who were 'specially invited', the advertisement promoted rates for single bedrooms from 5 shillings, and double rooms from 8s6d a day. A grand hotel such as the Cecil might claim to be 'the most magnificent... in Europe', but its prices, according to the publicity, were still reasonable.⁴⁹⁸

Although it might seem that high prices were automatically good for profitability, large hotels could not charge a uniformly high rate. The position and size of rooms varied, and all had to be filled. Guests had different requirements and budgets. Establishing a structured pricing system in

⁴⁹⁵ Baedeker, *London and its Environs* (1905), 7-10 ; 'The Hotel Boom', *The Caterer*, February 1908, 55.

⁴⁹⁶ Baedeker, *London and its Environs* (1892), 8 and 6.

⁴⁹⁷ 'The Art of Hotel Advertising', *The Caterer*, January 1908, 6.

⁴⁹⁸ *New York Daily Tribune*, 24 December 1904, 11.

which tariff varied according to room size and facilities, with a range of optional extras, was an effective method of managing these demands.

The Langham Hotel Tariffs					
		1872	1884	1908/9	1914
Ground	Bedroom (double)	5s – 8s	5s – 8s	9s-11s	9s-11s
	Sitting room and bedroom	21s	21s	15s -23s	15s -21s
First	Bedrooms	5s -12s	5s -12s	11s - 20s6d	11s - 21s
	Sitting rooms and saloons	20s -30s	20s -30s		17s - 30s
	Drawing /bedroom/ dressing room	35s	35s	40 - 54s6d	40 - 54s6d
Second	Bedrooms	4s6d	4s6d	9 - 18s6d	9 - 16s6d
	Bedroom/dressing room	16s	16s	19s6d - 24s	20s6d - -24s6d
	Sitting room	10-12s	10-12s	10s6d - 17s6d	15d - 17s6d
	Drawing /single bedroom	20s	20s		
	Drawing/ double bed/ dressing room	25s plus	25s plus	28s -40s6d	31s6d - 47s
Third	Bedrooms	4s - 8s	4s - 8s	8s - 15s	8s6d - 15s6d
	Bedroom and dressing room	9s	9s	13s - 22s	14s6d - 23s
	Sitting/bed/dressing room	20s	20s	29s - 36s6d	29s - 47s6d
Fourth	Bedrooms	3s6d - 6s	3s6d - 6s	8s - 14s	8s - 14s6d
	Bedroom and dressing room	9s-12s	9s-12s	12s6d - 20s6	13s6d - 26s6d
Upper	Bedrooms	3s	3s	8s - 12s	8s - 12s
Extras	Extra beds (first & second floors)	2s6d	2s6d	2s	2s
	Extra beds (third & fourth floors)	2s	2s	1s6d	1s6d
	Visitor's servants bed per night	2s	2s	2s	2s
	Ditto board per day each	5s	5s	5s6d	5s6d
	Children's cots	2s	2s	1s	1s
Fires	Fire - sitting room	2s	2s	2s	2s
	Fire - bedroom	1s6d	1s6d	1s6d	1s6d
Baths	Hip or sponge (in bedroom)	6d	6d	6d	6d
	Hot	2s	2s	1s6d	1s6d
	Cold	1s	1s	1s	1s
Dogs	Taken into rooms	½ guinea p.d			
Meals	Breakfast plain/ <i>table d'hôte</i>	2s	2s	3s	3s
	Luncheons and suppers from	1s6d	1s6d	2s6d- 4s6d	2s6d- 4s
	Table d'hôte dinner	3s	3s	5s	5s

Table 9 The Langham Hotel Tariffs 1872-1914. *Langham Hotel Guides*

One method of differentiation in pricing bedrooms was according to floor. Charging lower prices as one rose through the building was commonplace. In 1865, G.A. Sala noted that, much to his

approval, at the Charing Cross Hotel, there was 'a graduated scale of prices', based on the floor. In this hotel, a first floor suite might be three guineas, while an attic bedroom could cost two shillings a night.⁴⁹⁹ Other hotels attempted to set prices more equally through the floors. In these cases, there was a conscious effort to ensure that the standard of decoration did not diminish on the higher floors. More importantly, it could not have been attempted without the lift. In 1865, the hydraulic lifts at the Langham carried guests 'who may wish to be spared the fatigue of climbing to the topmost rooms'. At the Holborn Viaduct Hotel, 'all the bedrooms were decorated in the same manner, to the very highest standard, the same. By this arrangement, and the use of the lift, visitors will find all floors practically equalized as much elegance and comfort having been bestowed above as below'.⁵⁰⁰ In 1889, at the Savoy, rather than cheapest rooms being on the top floor, the publicity argued that those most in demand would be at the highest level, 'for the higher one goes the purer the air becomes and the wider the prospect'.⁵⁰¹ The lift transformed attic into penthouse.⁵⁰²

At the Langham, the *Hotel Guide*, which was published virtually annually, contained a table of costs which the reader could peruse at their leisure (Table 9). Rates varied according to room size and floor. The most expensive suites, comprising drawing room, double bedroom and dressing room, were on the first floor, with prices reducing as one rose through the building. The floors of guest accommodation were planned so that rooms could be added to a suite via interconnecting doors at extra cost, if desired. For those without private bathrooms, a hip or sponge bath in the room was charged at 6d, or a guest might choose to take a hot or cold bath in a shared bathroom, at a charge of at up to 2s. Extra beds or cots for children could be added as required, one's

⁴⁹⁹ Sala, *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-326 & 323/4.

⁵⁰⁰ 'A metropolitan Grand Hotel', *London Journal*, 1 December 1877, 341.

⁵⁰¹ 'The Savoy Hotel', *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3.

⁵⁰² The first penthouse was at the Plaza Hotel New York (1923) according to Curtis Gathje, *At the Plaza: An Illustrated History of the World's Most Famous Hotel* (New York: Macmillan & Co, 2001).

servant could be provided with a bed for the night in the servants' dormitory, and dogs were permitted, all for an extra charge. Although the tariff and its publication was a method of simultaneously attracting as many guests as possible while maintaining distinctions through pricing, the nuances required to establish and manage exclusivity extended beyond cost. In architectural terms, exclusivity was also exhibited in spatial plan and design, to which I now turn.

Managing Exclusivity: Control and Access

The duality of the exclusivity of luxury in these venues - the simultaneous need for perceived rarity and for restriction of movement - can be set within debates about access to and control of space. For a number of scholars, the connection between movement and the built environment form the essence of the relationship between society and architecture. 'By giving shape and form to our material world,' Bill Hillier argues, 'architecture structures the system of space in which we live and move.[...] It provides the material preconditions for the patterns of movement, encounter and avoidance which are the material realisation – as well as sometimes the generator - of social relations'.⁵⁰³ As social and economic changes occur, the ease of access and patterns of movement of different members of society in and around buildings also alter. Facilitating the free flow of people into, out of and within buildings, either physically through transitional spaces or metaphorically via transparent or translucent materials, as Penny Sparke argues, demonstrates 'a continuity beyond the conventional binaries of inside and outside, public and private'.⁵⁰⁴ At the same time, if material structures or boundaries are indistinct or absent in environments in which social relations are unpredictable, negotiating such surroundings can be challenging.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ Bill Hillier, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984), ix.

⁵⁰⁴ Penny Sparke, 'Introduction' in Sparke et al., ed., *Flow: Interior, Landscape and Architecture in the Era of Liquid Modernity* (London; New York; Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2018), xvi-xxi, xvii.

⁵⁰⁵ Benjamin Heller, *Leisure and Pleasure in London Society, 1760-1820: An Agent-Centred Approach* (D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 2009), and Jessica Ellen Sewell, *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco 1890–1915* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 169. Heller argues that 18th century leisure seekers in London were able to move more freely if wealthy, while Sewell

To establish certainty in these environments, Hillier's 'patterns of movement, encounter and avoidance' can materialise as methods of controlling who may enter a building, how much access they are granted, and how they behave once within. Indeed, such control is an inherent function in all built structures - 'every building selects from the set of possible strangers a subset of 'visitors' who are persons who may enter the building temporarily'.⁵⁰⁶ In semi-public, shared spaces of leisure such as clubs, Thomas Markus contends, this selection is undertaken at the entrances, which, of necessity, are 'tightly controlled gates in a firm boundary', as well as through increasingly private spaces within. By making the restriction of access visible, the exclusive space within is made more desirable.⁵⁰⁷

The notion of 'separate spheres', which depends upon the distinction between social groups as defined by gender, age or class, was frequently applied to the spatial arrangement of and the degree of privacy given within buildings. Equally importantly, it also relates to the division between inside and outside.⁵⁰⁸ Control at the point where public and private met was vital. For Amanda Vickery, 'the threshold of the house was an ideological boundary of great power, [...] the 'perimeter [...] a frontier in custom and law', and a defensible boundary.⁵⁰⁹ Once within the building, 'separate spheres' could mean that individuals might only be permitted access to certain areas, with unaccompanied children, for example, unable to cross 'the threshold between the nursery and the wider adult home'.⁵¹⁰ At these thresholds, gatekeepers, here the nursemaid,

contends that the 'complex relationship between gender ideology and the built environment' is illustrated by greater freedom of movement for women in newly constructed public spaces in San Francisco.

⁵⁰⁶ Hillier, *The Social Logic of Space* (1984), 146.

⁵⁰⁷ Thomas A. Markus, *Buildings & Power: Freedom and Control in the Origin of Modern Building Types* (London: Routledge, 1993), 157, and Rendell, 'The Clubs of St. James's', *Journal of Architecture*, 4:2 (1999), 167-189, 168.

⁵⁰⁸ See, for example, Mark Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (1979), and Jill Franklin, *The Victorian Country House and Its Plan 1835-1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

⁵⁰⁹ Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 2009), 28.

⁵¹⁰ Jane Hamlett, *Materialising Gender: Identity and Middle-class Domestic Interiors, 1850-1910* (Ph.D. Thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2005), 155. See also Jane Hamlett, 'The British Domestic Interior and Social and Cultural History', *Cultural and Social History*, 6 (2009), 97-107.

permit or prevent access. This legible combination of threshold and gatekeeper reinforced the rigidity or permeability of these boundaries. In buildings such as hotels, which welcomed new arrivals and strangers daily, clear legibility of both was of considerable importance.

For other scholars, spatial control does not only rely upon patterns of movement, or 'separate spheres'. It is also concerned with the power relationship between dominant and subordinate. In buildings in which power is asymmetric such as prisons and asylums, this asymmetry can be 'architecturally inscribed', designed into the bricks and mortar.⁵¹¹ Panoptic design, for the greatest effect, should be accompanied by Foucauldian observation and surveillance. Supervised by guardians or gatekeepers, behaviour can then be monitored and, if necessary, improved.⁵¹²

For sociologists, the control of behaviour is less about the built environment or the surveillance of the subservient by the dominant than the performance and monitoring of appropriate social and cultural actions in wider society. At times of rapid social change, when the membership, conduct and manners of aspiring groups was uncertain, strict rules of taste and behaviour were as important as physical structures.⁵¹³ Rules learned through education or experience, provided a recognisable social structure in which to comfortably operate.⁵¹⁴ In hotels as in other environments in which standards of social behaviour were changing, such guidelines could effectively act as intangible barriers. Whether judged by other members of the social group, or by those employed as gatekeepers, an individual's performance could be decisive in whether access was granted or denied. Hotel gatekeepers, from porters at the door, to reception clerks who checked guests in, needed to be visible, knowledgeable and command authority.

⁵¹¹ Horatio H. Joyce and E. Gillin, 'Introduction', in Joyce & Gillin, eds., *Experiencing Architecture in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 3. See also Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (London: Allen Lane, 1977), and 'Of Other Spaces' *Dialectics* 16 (Spring 1986) 22-7.

⁵¹² McNamara, 'Building Culture', *Prospects*, 18 (1993), 121-151, 132/133

⁵¹³ Mike Featherstone, 'Luxury, Consumer Culture and Sumptuary Dynamics', *Luxury*, 1:1, (2014), 47-69, citing Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (first published 1939) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

⁵¹⁴ 'Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier', Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 6-7.

Physical thresholds, controlled access, and judgements about appropriate taste and behaviour were especially visible in locations where it was fashionable to display distinctions in wealth. In *The Age of Innocence*, Edith Wharton describes the arrival of Newland Archer at a ball where the host and hostess possess newly acquired, and potentially suspect, riches. In this hybrid gathering - a public display of ostentation, set in a private home, where conventional respectability may be compromised - Wharton outlines the steps through which Archer passes, each a tangible or intangible boundary:

Newland Archer, as became a young man of his position, strolled in somewhat late. He left his overcoat with the silk stockinged footmen,[...]had dawdled a while in the library hung with Spanish leather and furnished with Buhl and malachite, [...] and had finally joined the line of guests whom Mrs Beaufort was receiving on the threshold of the crimson drawing room.⁵¹⁵

In this passage Wharton notes the entry point, where footmen both guard the door and express the ostentatious wealth of their employer. She infers the contradictions of the library, a temporary space in which Archer waits before proceeding, a place of learning decorated in the showy taste of the *nouveaux riches*. Finally the hostess is found at the threshold of the most privileged space which emulates the design of the wealthiest homes, as the final gatekeeper before entry. At each step, a judgement is invited, and a threshold is crossed.

In the complex social environment of grand hotels, which themselves were positioned at the threshold between public and private, selecting the right subset of Hillier's 'visitors' was crucial.⁵¹⁶ To retain exclusivity, hotels needed to establish, in Roy C. Wood's phrase, a number of 'implicit and explicit regulatory mechanisms'.⁵¹⁷ Travellers had to pass a series of tangible and intangible boundaries, or thresholds, which combined material structures with supervision or forms of surveillance before they could be transformed into welcome guests.

⁵¹⁵ Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*, first published 1920 (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1994), 14.

⁵¹⁶ Donald McNeil, 'The Hotel and the City', *Progress in Human Geography*, 32 (2008), 383-398, 386.

⁵¹⁷ Roy C. Wood, 'Hotel Culture and Social Control', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21 (1994), 65-80, 67.

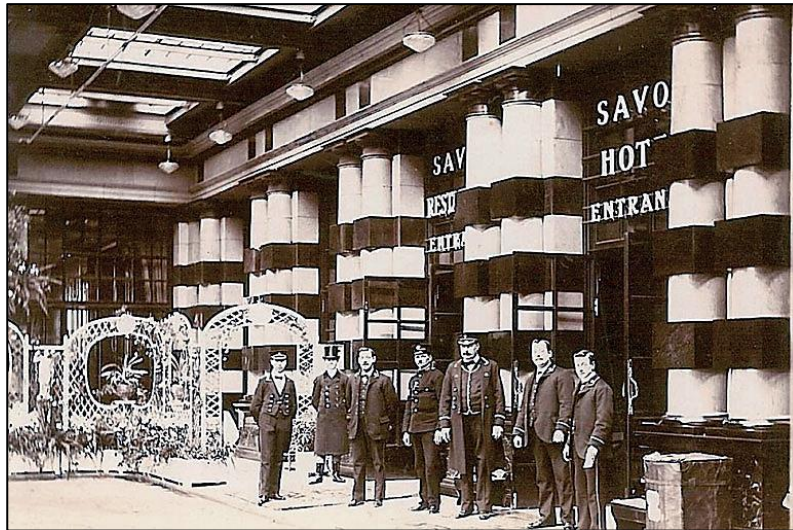


Figure 29 Visible, Controlled and Privileged Access: Doormen and Porters at the Savoy, 1904.⁵¹⁸

Crossing the Threshold: Gates and Gatekeepers

Having established that any charges fell within their budget through scrutinising the tariff, a visitor to a grand hotel was required to cross a number of barriers before they could become a guest. The first of these was the entrance. Here stood the doormen and porters, who performed a dual role (Figure 29). Emulating the staff at an aristocratic house, they ostentatiously expressed the style and status of their employer. They also acted as a form of military guard, protecting the hotel. In command was the head porter, above a number of doormen, day and night porters and pages, the strata of their positions exemplified by variations in uniform (Table 14).⁵¹⁹ 'The porter of a large hotel' *The Hotel World* stated, 'is the first impression of the place; his is the first person the traveller invariably sees and if he presents that correct, attentive well-dressed appearance which all such officers in a good hotel should, why then the guest says to himself this is all right. I shall do well here'.⁵²⁰ On a visit to the Cecil, Lt. Col. Newnham-Davis was particularly captivated by the hotel's porters, 'three gentlemen in gorgeous uniforms, and with as much gold lace round

⁵¹⁸ Photography in Waring and Gillows Archive, GWG/2233/3/2/5.

⁵¹⁹ At the Langham, porters were divided into day and night porters, hall porters and pages. Differences in design often had less to do with functionality than display of socially accepted distinctions. Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), 65.

⁵²⁰ 'The Uniform Oft Proclaims the Hotel', *HW*, February 1897, 7.

their caps as a field marshal wears'.⁵²¹ For the author and others encountering these men, clad in costumes trimmed in gold, affixed with the ident of their hotel, hotel doormen and porters established status, guarded privacy and maintained exclusivity (Figure 29 and Figure 30).

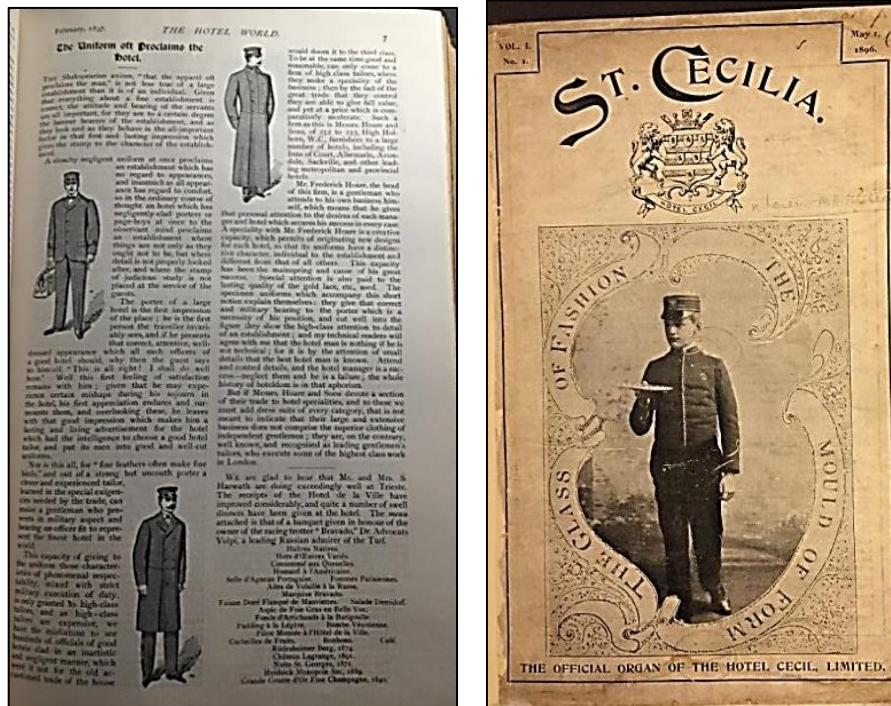


Figure 30 'The Uniform oft Proclaims the Hotel' , Hotel Pages and Porters⁵²²

Having made an initial assessment of the visitor, the doorman would permit entry. After the early 1890s, this was often through revolving doors, which by 1914 were common (Figure 31). This new technology, patented by Theodore Van Kannel in Philadelphia in 1888, was popular in hotels. Practically, opening doors directly onto the street was not ideal, particularly in poor weather. In buildings with lifts, strong drafts could be generated by air rising up the shafts, making standard doors difficult to open. In busy venues, particularly those with restaurants, glazed revolving doors permitted a continual stream of arrivals and departures, with little chance of collision.⁵²³

⁵²¹ Nathaniel Newnham-Davis, *Dinners and Diners: Where and How to Dine in London* (London: 1899), 37.

⁵²² HW, February 1897, 7, and the frontispiece of the Hotel Cecil brochure, *St Cecilia* (1896)

⁵²³ Alan Beardmore, *The Revolving Door since 1881: Architecture in Detail* (Boon: Edam, 2000) and Tom Avermaete, 'The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby: The Norms and Forms of a Public-Private Figure' in

Socially, the revolving door expressed a form of welcome that was particularly appropriate in hotels. Unlike the clear defensible boundary between inside and outside in domestic houses, the hotel's revolving door indicated that its boundaries were protected but permeable. These doors were up-to-date and practical, but also bespoke and sophisticated, always open, and always closed - both hybrid and contradictory.

The Hotel Lobby: 'A fragile balance between openness and exclusivity'

Once past the doorman or porter and through the door, the visitor entered the lobby. This was a flexible, adaptable space, in which after 1900, guests frequently gathered for a new type of informal socialising. But even in the earliest establishments, the hall or lobby fulfilled aesthetic as well as practical functions.⁵²⁶ Like Newland Archer's library, lobbies were 'interzones', a hybrid, spatial boundary between the outside and the privileged interior, a 'semi-public gateway to private places'.⁵²⁷ Fulfilling practical demands while managing a 'fragile balance between openness and exclusivity', was at the core of their design.⁵²⁸

One purpose of these 'semi-public gateways' was to impress. The significance of grandeur applied as much to the interior as to the hotel exterior. Scale celebrated both technological innovation and modern comforts, and as early as 1865, business advice recommended that lobbies should not be 'squat, confined and dingy', but spacious.⁵²⁹ Often the plan of the lobby and the interconnecting public rooms was designed both to amplify scale, and to entice the guest

⁵²⁶ The lounge and its place as a representation of modernity and anonymity is discussed in Chapter VII: Modernity. From social historians to twenty-first century design analysts, the lobby has been of interest. See, for example Alan Phillips, *The Best in Lobby Design: Hotels and Offices* (London: Batsford, 1991); Carol Berens, *Hotel Bars and Lobbies* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997) and Tom Avermaete and Anne Massey, eds., *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges* (2013).

⁵²⁷ Douglas Tallack, 'Waiting, Waiting': The Hotel Lobby in the Modern City', in *The Hieroglyphics of Space: Reading and Experiencing the Modern Metropolis*, ed. Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 2002), 139-151, 142. Also Marc Katz, 'The Hotel Kracauer', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 11 (1999), 134-142.

⁵²⁸ Hugh Hardy, 'Foreword' in *Hotel Bars and Lobbies* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), xiii.

⁵²⁹ 'Hotel Companies. Joint-stock speculations: Their Value and Prospects', *The London Review of Politics, Society, Literature, Art, and Science*, 12 August 1865, 169.

onwards, so that space could be experienced through physical and visual motion. Narrow doorways led to open spaces and darker halls gave onto well-lit reception rooms, creating a tension between what Augusta McMahon refers to as ‘initial restriction and eventual openness’, a technique often adopted in aristocratic or royal residences.⁵³⁰ At the Ritz, where the site was challenging in form and constricted in width, Mewès and Davis’ ground floor plan effectively incorporated the length of the hall into the lobby, cleverly drawing the eye down to the restaurant and the view to the park. At Claridge’s, Mrs C. E. Humphry, a journalist and social commentator, was impressed by ‘the vista of great spaces that dazzles the visitor on entering’.⁵³¹ Such enormous spaces overwhelmed the senses, both amazing and, to some degree, intimidating.



Figure 32 The Main Entrance at the Cecil in 1906⁵³²

In the lobby, travellers were impressed not only by size, but also by the quality of design and materials, a privileged, if somewhat daunting interior. Designs were executed in the traditional

⁵³⁰ Augusta McMahon, ‘Space, Sound and Light: Toward a Sensory Experience of Ancient Monumental Architecture’, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 117 (2013), 163-179, 169.

⁵³¹ Mrs Humphry, ‘A Historical Hotel’, in *Homes of the Passing Show* (London: Savoy Press, 1900), 57-58, 57.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 9.

materials of luxury, and often followed the fashionable interiors in the homes of the affluent. In 1896 *The Caterer* wrote of the newly reconstructed Coburg: 'As soon as the grand hall is entered visitors feel that they are in a luxurious and refined home [...] in every respect like a wealthy man's private mansion'.⁵³³ In some hotels, such as the Hans Place Hotel (1896) or Claridge's, entrance lobbies, although impressive, had a more domestic air, panelled in dark mahogany, hung with oil paintings and furnished with Persian rugs.⁵³⁴ In others, references to palatial interiors were more explicit. At the Cecil, the hall's remarkable size was enhanced by a view which rose up the majestic staircase to the floors above (Figure 32). Executed in carefully chosen marbles, the hall radiated all the prestige of an Italian Renaissance palace, tempered by soft carpets. Palm trees added to the air of exotic luxury. The resemblance to the entrance at Vuillamy's Dorchester House was striking, and an observer could have no doubt about the standard of luxury which the hotel promised.⁵³⁵

Lobbies also fulfilled practical functions. Accommodating the comings and goings of hundreds of guests and all their paraphernalia required a certain amount of space. Parcels and luggage needed to be processed, keys handed to guests, and bills paid. At the Langham, guests passed through a series of thresholds as they made their way into the hotel. Visitors arrived beneath the *porte cochère*, and climbed the steps to the entrance. Once within, they crossed the vestibule, rising again to the entrance hall, which was 50 feet wide. An 1863 plan, published in *The Builder* before the hotel was completed, identified the position of offices in the lobby for porters and post, for the supervising manager, and for 'indicator clerks', recording occupancy, and registering guests (Figure 33). The hotel guide in 1872 noted that in the principal hall, 'in recesses on the right and left [...] are placed the General Office, for the reception of visitors, and the Parcels

⁵³³ 'The Hotel Coburg', *The Caterer*, 15 December 1896, 598.

⁵³⁴ For the Savoy hall (1904), *BJ*, 22 June 1904, 298; *The Builder*, 7 May 1904, 497 and 14 May 1904, 520-21.

⁵³⁵ *Hotel Cecil, London* (1906), 7.

Office for the reception of packages etc.’ According to *The Guide*, in the Parcels Office were ‘intelligent porters’, ready to ‘receive, register and deliver bundles, parcels and luggage and take charge of coats and umbrellas.’ At reception were ‘two clerks, whose duty consists of apportioning apartments, supervising the delivery of letters, card etc. and responding to the thousand and one questions of inquirers of every class’.⁵³⁶ *The Guide* acknowledged explicitly not only that the role of the clerks was to assess, but also the quantity of queries they received and that such queries came from ‘every class’, emphasising the broad spectrum of guests accepted.

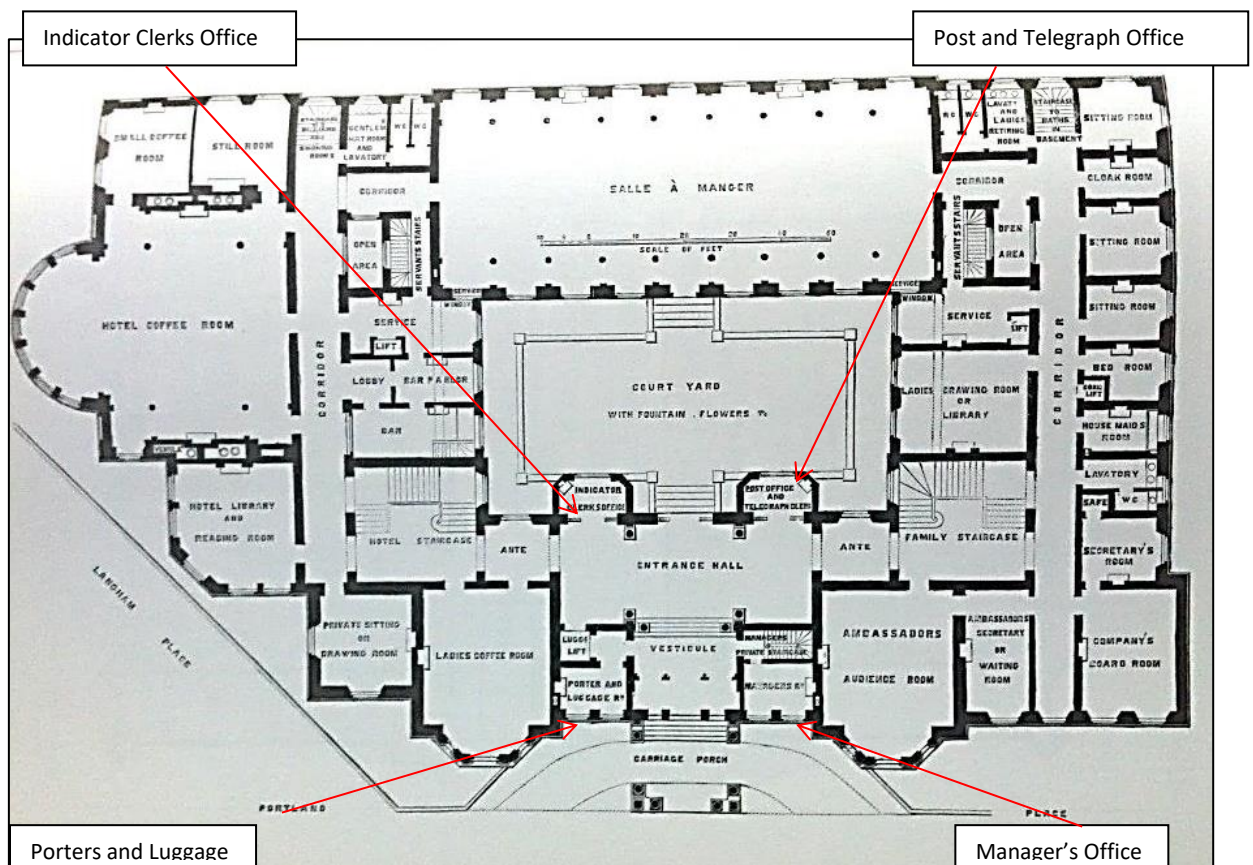


Figure 33 Ground floor of the Langham, as illustrated in *The Builder* in 1863

The lobby was a point at which guests were expected to wait. A pause provided the opportunity to appreciate the size and interior design, but it also gave the guest a chance to both observe and

⁵³⁶ *The Langham Hotel Guide to London* (1872), 9 and (1881), 4.

be observed.⁵³⁷ A Yorkshire woman might assess the taste of the American arriving from the boat train, or a British doctor might consider the manners of a South African diamond merchant. Through this mutual and ubiquitous informal surveillance, guests could witness the visible performance of consumption, and assess the suitability of one another's manners and conduct.⁵³⁸

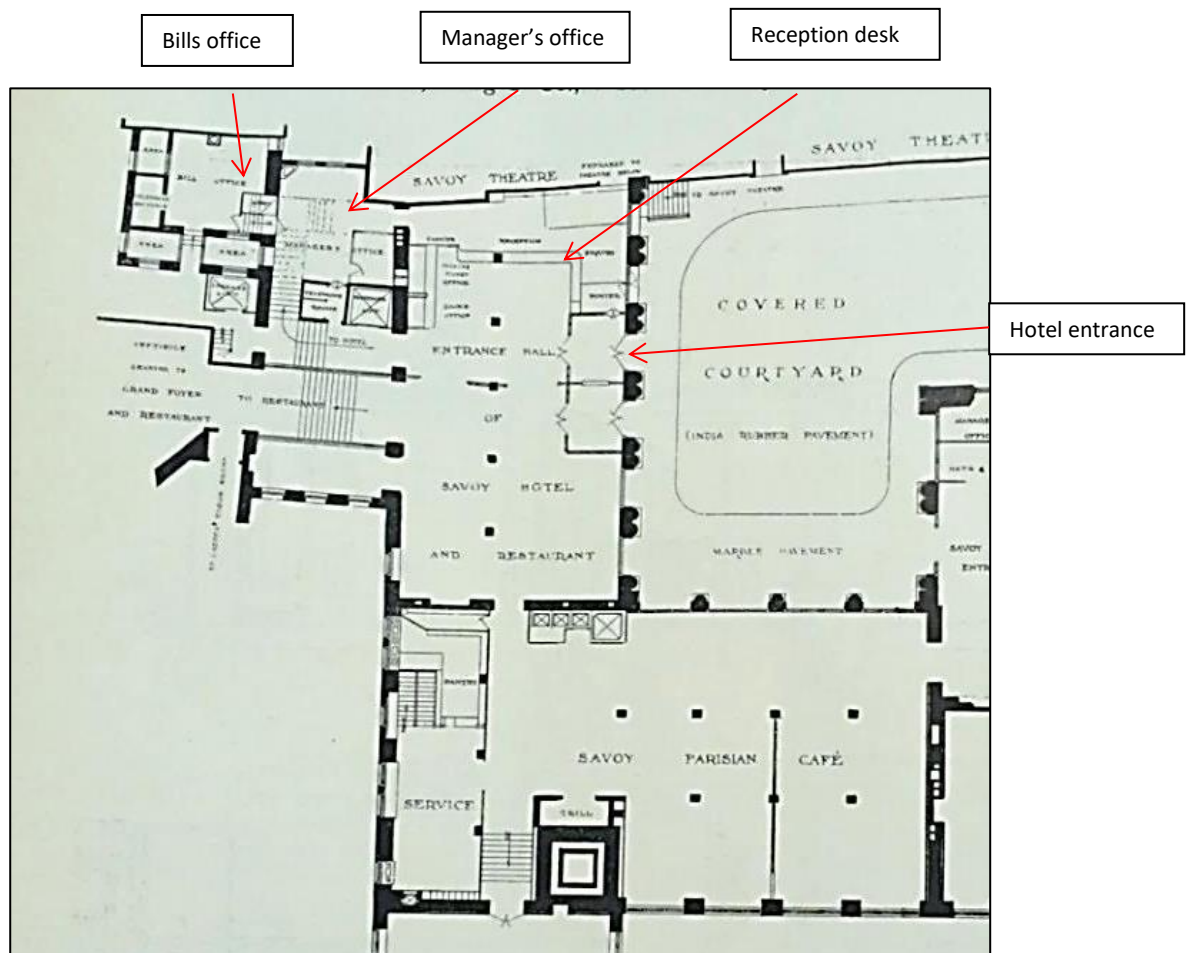


Figure 34 Plan of the New Strand entrance lobby at the Savoy in 1904⁵³⁹

Hotel staff also observed the comings and goings of guests. The manager's office was usually adjacent to or overlooking the lobby, convenient for the Foucauldian panoptic observation of both guest activity and staff performance. A plan of the new Strand lobby at the Savoy in 1904 indicates how the reception desk overlooked the revolving doors, and across the lobby (Figure

⁵³⁷ Peter Bishop, 'Surveying "The Waiting Room"', *Architectural Theory Review*, 2013, 18, No 2, 135-149.

⁵³⁸ Kevin J. James, 'Aliens, Subjects and the State: Surveillance in British Hotels during World War I', *Immigrants & Minorities* (2018). Np.

⁵³⁹ *BJ*, 22 June 1904, 293.

34). In turn the manager's office was positioned between reception and the bills office, ensuring he could supervise standards of behaviour and the movement of cash.

The strictest supervision of the visitor came at the reception desk. Here, the hotel clerk, male or female, might warmly welcome visitors and transform them into guests.⁵⁴⁰ Employees in London hotel 'of the highest grade', *The Hotel World* advised, 'should be uniformly courteous and polite, trained and versatile, chosen not only for their personal appearance, and manners, but also their 'business prestige'.⁵⁴¹ Often staff were European, projecting a sophisticated, cosmopolitan image which luxury hotels were keen to cultivate. Employing European clerks, who spoke other languages in addition to English, *The Hotel World* noted, also ensured that foreign guests were greeted - and assessed - in their own language.

Despite the promise of polite courtesy, the transformation from visitor to guest was not guaranteed. *The Hotel World* noted that while some proprietors might 'assert that, as long as a guest pays his reckoning and breaks none of the rules of the hotel, it is quite impossible to discriminate between the chaff and the wheat', others only admitted visitors 'known to belong to a family *sans peur et sans reproche*', or even discriminated more explicitly by nationality or ethnicity.⁵⁴² A number of hotels did not take guests off the streets, and required pre-booking, or an introduction of some kind.⁵⁴³ It was also not unusual for reception clerks to greet potential guests less than warmly, performing their duties as gatekeepers too keenly. In some hotels, *The Caterer* observed, a traveller could sense that the reception clerk considered him or her less as a

⁵⁴⁰ Avermaete discusses the literature and films on hotels in which the reception desk is a '*site de passage*' at some length. Tom Avermaete, 'The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby', in *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges* (2013), 64. Arnold Bennett considered that a male clerk was more refined and up-to-date, but many grand hotels employed both men and women in these roles. Bennett, *The Grand Hotel Babylon* (1902), 7.

⁵⁴¹ The Reception Office, *HW*, January 1896, 24.

⁵⁴² 'The Undesirable Guest', *HW*, April 1900, vi.

⁵⁴³ 'Some of the first class hotels in the West End only receive travellers when the room has been ordered beforehand, or when the visitors are provided with an introduction', Baedeker, *London and its Environs* (1888), 7.

welcome guest and more 'an intruder, or at least, as a person who is not by any means to be encouraged'. A guest could even be made to feel like a "hardened offender".⁵⁴⁴ This assessment might not be pleasant for the innocent guest, but a balance had to be struck to protect the exclusivity of the hotel, its reputation and its clients.

Conclusion

Establishing the impression of exclusivity was essential to the luxury status of a grand hotel. To do so, a series of financial, spatial, material and social thresholds were set up. Accurate pricing, adjusted according to the product or service received, was beneficial to hotels as it ensured profitability. But the publication of the hotel tariff also informed potential guests from as wide a market as possible, that they could afford luxury, which could be provided for varying budgets, while variations in price meant that guests with different economic means could be separated, at least on the upper floors. The impression of exclusivity was particularly important when a guest arrived at the hotel. This impression was created through a variety of tangible and intangible thresholds or gateways. These ranged from the uniforms of doormen and the assessments made by reception clerks, to the size and design of lobbies.

While these thresholds were seen in other environments in which behaviour was controlled or monitored, in grand hotels the main impetus for such control was the varied and unpredictable identity of a large guest population. Hotels were not only functionally cosmopolitan, in that, by definition, they welcomed the stranger. Other cosmopolitanisms, essential to the luxury experience, were also to be found in the grand hotel, including the staff who engaged most publicly with clients, and the food that was served in restaurants. These cosmopolitanisms are the subject of the next chapter.

⁵⁴⁴ 'English Hotels', *The Caterer*, September 1893, 375; *The Caterer*, January 1897, 2.

Chapter V: Cosmopolitanism

It is almost difficult to realise what Society did without the fashionable restaurant, where visitors, while enjoying the most exquisite dishes, could look round upon the tables at which a cosmopolitan assemblage of guests was almost always to be seen [...] some of the most interesting people in the world, those at whom everybody was wanting to 'have a good look'.⁵⁴⁵

Where there is wealth, there will be luxury. A rich man cannot eat more than [...] the poor, but he will seek to compensate the deficiency of his appetite by the greater delicacy and refinement of preparing it.⁵⁴⁶

In 1900, Mrs. C.E. Humphry, a journalist known for her column in *Truth* magazine and for advice on social etiquette, wrote an article entitled 'Society and Restaurants' for The Savoy Company's *Homes of the Passing Show*.⁵⁴⁷ Setting out the significance of the hotel's dining places to London's social elite, she listed a selection of the rich, famous and titled who availed themselves of the establishment's hospitality. Like Arnold Bennett in *Grand Hotel Babylon*, she noted the diversity of nations represented. In these venues, she wrote, French was heard as often as English, German frequently, Russian occasionally, even 'Hindoostanee' (sic). 'It is almost difficult', she went on, 'to realise what Society did without the fashionable restaurant, where visitors, while enjoying the most exquisite dishes, could look round upon the tables at which a cosmopolitan assemblage of guests was almost always to be seen'.⁵⁴⁸ In these venues, consumption was at its most conspicuous and diners could mingle with those of importance, reputation and fashion. This in turn attracted others wishing to partake in the spectacle, 'to have a good look', to see and be seen. For Mrs. Humphry, being 'cosmopolitan' was exciting and desirable, and cosmopolitanism was central to the attractions of the restaurant, and the hotel.

⁵⁴⁵ Mrs. Humphry, 'Society and Restaurants', in *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 53-56, 53.

⁵⁴⁶ 'Le Menu', *HW*, August 1897, 6.

⁵⁴⁷ One of the earliest female journalists, Charlotte Eliza Humphry's career began with a popular newspaper column for women in the society scandal journal *Truth* under the pseudonym 'Madge'. Other works include *Housekeeping: A Guide to Domestic Management* (London: F V White & Co, 1895) and *Manners for Women* (London: James Bowden, 1897), a guide to etiquette for every occasion, from learning to laugh, to bicycling. *Orlando, Women's Writing in the British Isles, from the beginnings to the present*. http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person_id=humpce acc. 28.1.19.

⁵⁴⁸ Humphry, 'Society and Restaurants' in *Homes* (1900), 53-56, 53.

For some scholars of hotels, cosmopolitanism is a term which denotes acceptance of the cultural and social diversity necessary in commercial hospitality. Hotels, after all, are a demonstration of a willingness to welcome outsiders. As A.K. Sandoval-Strausz argues in his history of the American hotel, in a 'mobile, transient world of strangers', hotels were 'a material manifestation of cultural tolerance, a significant episode in the development of a pluralistic, cosmopolitan society'. 'In theory', he contends, 'hotels were functionally cosmopolitan because they were places where outsiders were welcomed into local communities'.⁵⁴⁹ But, in hotels which sought to differentiate themselves from a standard offering, cosmopolitanism extended beyond hospitable 'tolerance'. Rather, it meant the integration of judiciously chosen aspects of other cultures, employed to symbolise prestige. Luxury had historically been associated with foreign cultures, particularly the status and sophistication of French design, language, and food, but also with the distinction of the more exotic, oriental 'other'.⁵⁵⁰ In hotels which promised luxury, therefore, celebrating a prestigious cosmopolitanism through cultural diversity - albeit carefully chosen - was important. Consequently, in grand hotels, a multivalent cosmopolitanism, or 'cosmopolitanisms', extending beyond the varied nationalities of guests, was employed.⁵⁵¹ Commercial cosmopolitanism was exhibited in the employment of foreign staff, particularly those in the most public-facing, and most publicised, roles. Most explicitly, both social and gastro-cosmopolitanisms were central to one of the most important features of the grand hotel, the restaurant.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁹ A. Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (New Haven: YUP, 2007), 3, and 315.

⁵⁵⁰ McNeill & Riello, *Luxury* (2016), 105-114; Eric Weichel, 'Heraldic Fantasies in Blue and Red and Silver', *Orientalism, Luxury and Social Corruption in the South Sea Directorial Houses*, in Potvin, ed., *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space* (2015), 169-186.

⁵⁵¹ For the concept of plural 'cosmopolitanisms', see T. Agathocleous and J. R. Rudy, 'Victorian Cosmopolitanisms: Introduction', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38 (2010), 389-97, and Pamela Fletcher, 'The Grand Tour on Bond Street: Cosmopolitanism and the Commercial Art Gallery in Victorian London', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 12:2 (2011), 139-153.

⁵⁵² Brenda Assael, 'Gastro-Cosmopolitanism and the Restaurant in Late Victorian and Edwardian London', *Historical Journal*, 56 (2013), 681-706.

Restaurants were important to grand hotels in several ways. Regular hosting of business, charitable and private occasions, and daily provision of cuisine produced income. At the same time, these venues did not only satisfy the biological need for sustenance, they also symbolised social prestige. Dances and dinners, and the publicity that accompanied them, generated interest which attracted the right sort of client. Female clients were desirable as both consumers and as part of the spectacle. By the end of the nineteenth century, dining in fashionable restaurants was an activity, performed by both men and women, which maintained and extended a strategic social network. This 'ceremonious commensality of leisure', in Claude Grignon's phrase, conferred status upon the participants, defined by their fellow diners, by their surroundings, what they ate, who served them, and who prepared the food.⁵⁵³ In smart hotel restaurants, fashionability and prestige was assessed through cosmopolitanism.

In this chapter, I examine cosmopolitanism and its multivalent interpretations as exhibited in the luxury of grand hotels. To create the right impression, Europeans were frequently appointed in the most senior prominent public-facing positions. Foreign managers brought an experience and understanding of varied hotel cultures with them, which was celebrated, and which influenced the practice of hospitality. While the public rooms of hotels, which are discussed in the next chapter, were often decorated in fashionably cosmopolitanism styles, the interior design of the restaurants evolved over the period, changing as fashions changed, but was explicitly designed to encourage a female clientele and to facilitate conspicuous consumption. In these sites of sociability, cosmopolitanism was visible in the décor, the ambience, the cuisine, and those who prepared and served it, and the encouragement of certain behaviours. Initially however, I

⁵⁵³ Commensality - 'the habit of eating at the same table': *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: OUP, 2009). 'A gathering aimed to accomplish in a collective way some material tasks and symbolic obligations linked to the satisfaction of a biological individual need', Claude Grignon, 'Commensality and Social Morphology: An Essay of Typology', in Peter Scholliers, ed., *Food, Drink and Identity Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe Since the Middle Ages* (New York: Berg, 2001), 22-33, 24. See also Finkelstein, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners* (1989), 29-45.

consider the meaning of cosmopolitanism in this period, and its significance to ideas of luxury, specifically those promised in grand hotels.

Cosmopolitanism, the Allure of Difference, and Luxury

For Victorians and Edwardians, cosmopolitanism was pervasive. This was a period of globalisation, of expanding international networks, and of the growth of the influence of cultures from beyond the shores of the British Isles. Its effects were seen in all areas of society, from architecture, interior design, and the creative arts, to business and the consumption of goods.⁵⁵⁴ The impact of works such as Owen Jones' encyclopaedic classification of the history of world ornament was indicative of a growing cosmopolitanism in the arts. Yet, this 'attitude of openness, curiosity, and emulation of other cultures' was not restricted to a broadening design philosophy.⁵⁵⁵ Increased travel, over longer distances, for more people, multiplied connections throughout Europe, the Empire and beyond, expanding interest and knowledge.⁵⁵⁶ International exhibitions displayed versions of foreign cultures, which fed into transnational forms of commercialised consumption.⁵⁵⁷ Cosmopolitanism, in all its guises, was part of contemporary commerce, encapsulated a broader interest in aesthetics and experiences drawn from beyond

⁵⁵⁴ See, for example, Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*: (2002). For symbolism in architecture, see G.A. Bremner, 'Some Imperial Institute': Architecture, Symbolism, and the Ideal of Empire in Late Victorian Britain, 1887-93', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 62 (2003), 50-73, and Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1996). For business networks, see Charles A. Jones, *International Business in the Nineteenth Century: The Rise and Fall of a Cosmopolitan Bourgeoisie* (New York: New York UP, 1987).

⁵⁵⁵ Stacey Sloboda, 'The Grammar of Ornament: Cosmopolitanism and Reform in British Design', *Journal of Design History*, 21: 3 (2008), 223-236, 224. See also John Kresten Jespersen, 'Originality and Jones' The Grammar of Ornament of 1856', *Journal of Design History*, 21: 2 (2008), 143-153.

⁵⁵⁶ For travel networks, see A. Burton, 'Making a Spectacle of Empire: Indian Travellers in *Fin-De-Siècle* London', *History Workshop Journal*, 42 (1996), 126-146; Elleke Boehmer, *Indian Arrivals, 1870-1915: Networks of British Empire* (Oxford: OUP, 2015), and Cecilia Morgan, 'Indigenous London: Native Travellers at the Heart of Empire', *Journal of Tourism History*, 9 (2017), 113-115.

⁵⁵⁷ For the influence of international exhibitions, see Deborah Sugg Ryan, 'Spectacle, the Public and the Crowd: Exhibitions and Pageants in 1908', in Morna O'Neill et al., *The Edwardian Sense* (2010), 43-72, and Thomas Prasch, 'A Strange Incongruity': The Imaginary India of the International Exhibitions', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 34:5 (2012), 477-491.

the nation, and was a crucial element of London's increasingly international status.⁵⁵⁸ For the grand hotels, which epitomised the material expression of commercial hospitality in the largest city in the world, cosmopolitanism could not help but be important.

One consequence of this ubiquity is that the term 'cosmopolitanism' carried (and still carries) a number of diverse, and sometimes contradictory, meanings. In literature, interpretations could range from the derogatory to the liberal, and from the dangerous to the attractive. For many Victorian authors, 'cosmopolitan' was appropriate for the most degenerate characters. At the same time, Tanya Agathocleous contends, it could represent a transnational appeal for concord and justice among men.⁵⁵⁹ For cultured British artists, critics and collectors, cosmopolitanism was exhibited in complex and deep-rooted cultural connections which extended to Germany, Austria, central and Eastern Europe, North America and the Empire. For Pamela Fletcher, London's commercial art galleries, which developed in this period, 'drew on a multi-faceted language of artistic, fashionable and mobile cosmopolitanism as a way of forging a distinct identity [...] In the process, they created a new kind of public for art, as these overlapping discourses of cosmopolitanism shared an aura of exclusivity, and helped orientate viewers to the values of originality, distinction and sophistication upon which modern art relied.'⁵⁶⁰ In such locations, cosmopolitanism, modernity and prestige were interconnected.

This aura of exclusivity, so effective in commercial art galleries, was also beneficial to the sale of imported goods, and home-produced items which emulated 'foreign' design. For the British,

⁵⁵⁸ Judith R. Walkowitz, 'Cosmopolitanism, Feminism and the Moving Body', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38 (2010), 427-449, and 'The "Vision of Salome": Cosmopolitanism and Erotic Dancing in Central London, 1908-1918' *American Historical Review*, 108: 2 (2003), 337-376, 340.

⁵⁵⁹ Agathocleous and Rudy, 'Victorian Cosmopolitanisms' in *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38(2010) 389-97, 395, and T. Agathocleous *Urban Realism and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Nineteenth Century: Visible City, Invisible World* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011).

⁵⁶⁰ Fletcher, 'The Grand Tour on Bond Street', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 12:2 (2011), 139-153, 139 and 140, and Andrew Stephenson, 'Edwardian Cosmopolitanism, ca. 1901-1912', in Morna O'Neill et al., *The Edwardian Sense* (2010), 251-284.

certain aspects of French culture were long-standing indicators of good taste and distinction and intimately connected with luxury. The system of centralised control of design and production which created high-quality items of very restricted supply, set up under Louis XIV, meant that eighteenth-century France traditionally provided a design language which denoted social standing and upward mobility.⁵⁶¹ In addition, for the aristocracy in particular, the possession and display of objects and art, sourced in distant lands, indicated wealth, culture, and expertise. However, by the 1870s and 1880s, such material expressions of cosmopolitan luxury were available to a wider audience. In domestic settings, the representation of world cultures through the display of items ranging from Persian rugs to blue and white china could indicate modern, bourgeois, liberal values. Purchasing goods identified as 'Oriental' in the specialised departments of stores such as Liberty's or Harrods provided new pleasures.⁵⁶² In her study of Selfridges, Mica Nava maintains that cosmopolitan aspirations were essential to the proposition of accessible luxury consumption which the store embodied. They represented a positive engagement with foreignness and abroad, which differed from traditional imperialist interpretations. This was an up-to-date, fashionable cosmopolitanism, rooted partly in the burgeoning consumer culture's appetite for novelty. It was also a response, Nava argues, to Gordon Selfridge's own cosmopolitanism- his position as an American in commerce, outside the conventional boundaries of traditional, British 'Society'. For consumers, Nava's 'allure of difference' made an institution like Selfridge's attractively, and truly cosmopolitan.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶¹ Penny Sparke, 'Introduction' in McKellar & Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity*, (2004), 1-9, 4.

⁵⁶² Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior* (2008) and Krista Lysack, 'Goblin Markets: Victorian Women Shoppers at Liberty's Oriental Bazaar', *Nineteenth Century Contexts*, 27:2, (2005) 139-165, 143. See also Chitrlekha Zutshi, "Designed for Eternity": Kashmiri Shawls, Empire, and Cultures of Production and Consumption in Mid-Victorian Britain' *Journal of British Studies*, 48: 2 (2009), 420-440, 421.

⁵⁶³ 'In this respect [Selfridge] was part of a small but economically and politically significant sector already identified by Eric Hobsbawm as 'the rare dynamic entrepreneurs of Edwardian Britain [who] were more often than not, foreigners and minority groups [...] mainly Americans, Jews, Germans and Quakers'. Mica Nava, 'The Cosmopolitanism of Commerce and the Allure of Difference: Selfridges, the Russian Ballet and

This allure of difference was not only desirable in interiors, or in sites where goods could be bought and sold. It was also fashionable in the growing number of restaurants (Table 10).⁵⁶⁴ Eating outside the home developed as industrialisation and urbanisation grew. At the same time, particularly after the turn of the century, servants cost more and were harder to retain given the greater employment options open to women, and the cost of entertaining at home increased. For those who were newly wealthy, but inexperienced in the complexities of the etiquette of entertaining, the management of a stylish restaurant could provide helpful guidance as well as desirable novelty.

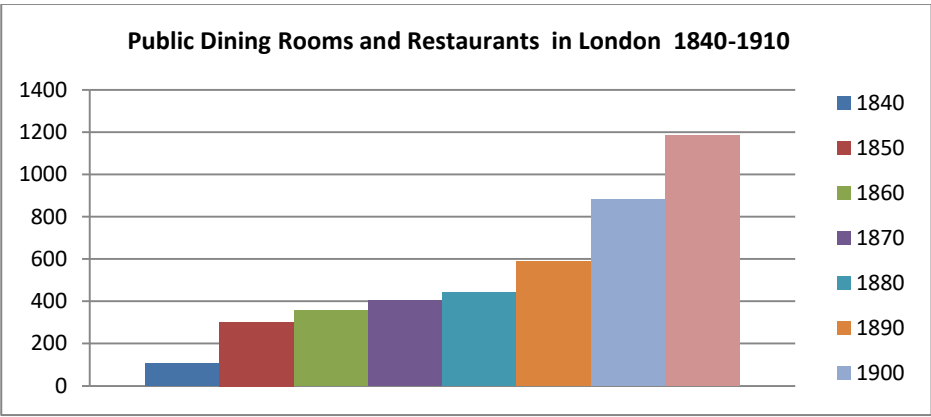


Table 10 Public eating places in London - 1840-1910⁵⁶⁵

The quantity of restaurants was not the only aspect of gastronomic culture to change. The type of food served also altered. In male-dominated eating establishments, or ‘chop houses’ which catered for City workers, plain English food was satisfactory.⁵⁶⁶ But, in the more refined

the Tango, 1911-1914’, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1, (1998), 163-196, citing Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 169.

⁵⁶⁴ For the growth the restaurant, see Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Finkelstein, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners* (1989); Rebecca L. Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: HUP, 2000); and Rachel Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914* (Manchester: MUP, 2011).

⁵⁶⁵ Data from entries in *London Post Office Directories*, collected by Assael, ‘Gastro-Cosmopolitanism’, 684. Assael considers this a conservative estimate, but nonetheless useful to illustrate increase in numbers.

⁵⁶⁶ Robert Thorne, ‘Places of Refreshment in the Nineteenth-Century City’, in Anthony D. King, eds., *Buildings and Society* (1980), 228-255; Andrea Broomfield, ‘Soldier of the Fork. How Nathaniel Newnham-

restaurants, both independent and in hotels, a variety of new culinary cultures was on offer. French culinary taste and practice had long been associated with high-quality dishes, and with the chefs who created them.⁵⁶⁷ However, as Brenda Assael argues, the gastro-cosmopolitanism of late Victorian and Edwardian metropolitan restaurants went beyond French food, food culture behaviours or the look of the interiors. Critically, she contends, this gastro-cosmopolitanism, also encompassed 'the broader context of the dining experience featuring an international cast of caterers and diners'.⁵⁶⁸

Cosmopolitanism in restaurants went beyond design, staff and dishes. Food and identity are closely linked, and the performance of common behaviours associated with eating often imply membership of the same social network.⁵⁶⁹ 'Sentiments of belonging via food do not only include the act of classification and consumption', Peter Scholliers argues, 'but also the preparation, organisation, the taboos, the company, the location, the pleasure, the time, the language, the symbols, the representation, the form, the meaning, and the art of eating and drinking'.⁵⁷⁰ Performing these 'sentiments of belonging' in the public arena of a fashionable restaurant, explicitly designed to enhance the visibility of consumers, and particularly in one in an avowed hotel *de luxe*, amplified the effect of high-status gastro-cosmopolitanism. Luxury, fashion and prestige were imparted by membership of a group which dined in opulent surroundings, on new kinds of carefully prepared food, served at one's convenience. The restaurant, as Linda

Davis democratized dining', *Gastronomica - The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, 12:4 (2012), 46-54, 49 and Crosby Hall: *The Ancient City Palace and Great Banqueting Hall, its History and Restoration* (1870).

⁵⁶⁷ Deborah J. Kelly, 'A Migrant Culture on Display: The French Migrant and French Gastronomy in London', *Modern Languages Open*, 26 (2016), np.

⁵⁶⁸ Brenda Assael, 'Gastro-Cosmopolitanism', *Historical Journal*, 56 (2013), 681-706, 683.

⁵⁶⁹ Finkelstein, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners* (1989), 28. See also Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: OUP, 2007) who argues that people and objects are equal 'actors' within networks of exchange.

⁵⁷⁰ Peter Scholliers, 'Meals, Food Narratives, and Sentiments of Belonging in Past and Present', in Peter Scholliers, ed., *Food, Drink and Identity* (2001), 3-22, 7.

Young argues, had become the place for the public demonstration of the 'vital mix of cultural and financial capital that framed genteel status in the eyes of the beholders'.⁵⁷¹

Fashionability was further augmented by a new kind of social cosmopolitanism. Luxury drew on tradition, but it also desired novelty. In restaurants, as in other sites of luxury consumption, this desire extended to new social mores. Never as 'rootless, free-living and heroically anti-bourgeois' as interpretations of the term 'bohemian', cosmopolitan nonetheless carried implications of changes in behaviour which could challenge old orthodoxies.⁵⁷² Although the newly wealthy and foreign visitors might have wished to adopt the conventions of the traditional elite, they also brought new expectations and new ways of behaving. An important facet of this shift in behaviour was the change in the place of women. The cosmopolitanism of the city had traditionally been connected predominantly to male behaviours. Significantly, however, as Judith Walkowitz contends in her study of London's West End, in this period, models of cosmopolitanism moved from interpretations that focussed principally upon men to those more widely available to women.⁵⁷³ Hotels, and restaurants in particular, formed part of a number of sites of consumption in which women played a complex role as both consumer and commodity.⁵⁷⁴ Women were desirable as clients who brought male patrons with them, but they also were an integral part of the spectacle of dining in a stylish venue. Without attracting female diners, a fashionable restaurant could not be deemed a success.

⁵⁷¹ Linda Young, 'Gentility: A Historical Context for the Material Culture of the Table in the 'Long 19th Century', 1780-1915', in James Symonds, ed., *Table Settings: the Material Culture and Social Context of Dining AD1700-1900* (Oxford: Oakville: 2010), 133-143, 143.

⁵⁷² Lisa Tickner, 'Bohemianism and the Cultural Field', *Art History*, 34:5, (2011), 978-1011, 980.

⁵⁷³ Walkowitz, 'Cosmopolitanism, Feminism and the Moving Body', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38 (2010), 427-449, and 'The "Vision of Salome', *American Historical Review*, 108: 2 (April 2003), 337-376, 340.

⁵⁷⁴ For female 'commercial exchange, commodification and spectatorship', see M.L. Roberts, 'Gender, Consumption and Commodity Culture', *American Historical Review*, 103(1998), 817-844. See also Walkowitz, 'Going Public: Shopping, Street Harassment and Streetwalking in Late Victorian London', *Representations* (1999), 1-30, and Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001).

In the London hotels *de luxe*, therefore, this social cosmopolitanism merged with functional, commercial, and gastro-cosmopolitanisms. Although some aspects were challenging, these multi-valent cosmopolitanisms were broadly considered desirable, and valuable to the proposition of the grand hotel as a luxury venue. How these cosmopolitanisms were expressed, in spatial, material, culinary and human form, is the next subject of consideration.

‘That Cosmopolitan *Caravanserai*’: Identifying the Allure of Difference

Grand hotels and their guests, were, for the most part, happy to be described as cosmopolitan. Mrs. Humphry’s cosmopolitan diners appeared in one of the Savoy’s own publications. Indeed, the existence of such hotels, it was argued, contributed to the confidence of the metropolis. ‘The wonderful development of hotel building and consequent increase in luxurious accommodation’, *The Caterer* wrote in 1906, ‘has unquestionably done more than anything else to make London the cosmopolitan centre it now is’.⁵⁷⁵ For a hotel, being ‘cosmopolitan’ was desirable.

One method by which this valuable cosmopolitanism was communicated was through the word *caravanserai*. Applied first in newspapers to hostelries in the East, and then to sizeable hotels in America and Europe, it was soon in widespread use for large luxury hotels. In 1869, *The Daily Telegraph* labelled the Grand Hotel in Paris ‘that great *caravanserai* of the world’.⁵⁷⁶ In 1886, the Grand Hotel in London was a ‘cosmopolitan *caravanserai*’; the subjects of a German guide to hotel design, recommended by *The Caterer*, were ‘first class *caravanserais*’; and when the Great Central at Marylebone opened in 1899, ‘the long list of London’s *caravanserais* [was] richer by one’.⁵⁷⁷ ‘*Caravanserai*’, and ‘grand hotel’, were effectively interchangeable.

⁵⁷⁵ *The Caterer*, April 1906, 143.

⁵⁷⁶ ‘America in the midst of War’, *DT*, 8 July 1864, 5; *DT*, 7 September 1869, 4.

⁵⁷⁷ *DT*, 28 April 1886, 5, and Eduard Guyer, *Das Hotelwesen der Gegenwart*, (Zurich, 1874, reprinted 1885), discussed in ‘A Book on Hotels’, *The Caterer*, February 1886, 40; *DT*, 7 June 1899, 7.

Like cosmopolitanism, *caravanserai* could carry a variety of interpretations. In 1888, *Murray's Dictionary* defined a *caravanserai* as 'a kind of inn in Eastern countries where caravans put up, being a large quadrangular building with a spacious court in the middle'.⁵⁷⁸ This reference to size and hospitality were both apposite to grand hotels. But the word could also be applied to any building which celebrated the cultural and social diversity of its occupants. In 1899, an article described the Elysée as 'a genuine *caravanserai* after the heart of the Oriental storytellers', since the French presidents who occupied the palace came from all classes of society, with all varieties of taste. In other instances, *caravanserai* was used to communicate the impression of excess. The '*caravanserai*' that was the Paris Exhibition of 1867, was, according to the *Telegraph*, a huge bazaar, overflowing with goods and spectacles. However, as Chapter III argues, size, diversity and excess were not always positive attributes. For *The British Architect*, the 1889 Savoy, was a 'hideous *caravanserai*', with no architectural merit, and was in too prominent a position on the Thames for the quality of its design.⁵⁷⁹ Cosmopolitanism in architecture was not without its critics.

Murray's definition also identified a *caravanserai*'s usual plan. In the Islamic world, such buildings were customarily square, with a central courtyard and rooms around the outside.⁵⁸⁰ This, as a number of commentators pointed out, was a useful model for a purpose-built hotel. With double-piled corridors, arranged in a quadrangle, every guest room could benefit from either a 'sunny outside view or a shady courtyard vista of the panorama of incoming and outgoing guests', argued *The Hotel World*. This style of building might be the 'oldest fashioned method of hotel construction', the journal went on, but it was a practical choice for large establishments, one which had been utilised in numerous royal palaces, and which was 'wisely revived in [...] modern

⁵⁷⁸ *Murray's New English Dictionary*, ed. James Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888).

⁵⁷⁹ 'Bygone Presidents and their abode', *DT*, 28 February 1899, 10. This application also connected the word to ideas of magical Eastern narratives, discussed in Chapter III; 'The Paris Exhibition', *DT*, 25 July 1867, 5; *BA*, 11 January, 1895, 34.

⁵⁸⁰ Eleanor Sims, 'Markets and Caravanserais' in *Architecture of the Islamic World, its History and Social Meaning*, ed. George Mitchell (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995) 97-111.

hotels', including the Savoy and the Cecil, the Grand in Paris and the Palace in San Francisco.⁵⁸¹

Such fashionable venues might be modern, the narrative implied, but they drew their inspiration from a cosmopolitan past.



Figure 35 The Savoy Courtyard in 1893, with Fountain, Liveried Porters, and White Ceramic Tiles⁵⁸²

The courtyard plan was not only practical, it could also be used to evoke, at least in the earlier hotels, something of an exotic air. This was especially so if the sensual pleasures of the scent and colour of flowers and the sound of splashing fountains were employed. At the Langham, the hotel opened with an uncovered central courtyard, complete with fountain and flowers. In the original layout at the Savoy, a courtyard of 6,000 square feet, accessed from Savoy Hill, was the principal entrance for carriages (Figure 35).⁵⁸³ At first floor level, a narrow wooden covered balcony evoked the concealed windows of an Ottoman seraglio. In the centre of this courtyard, 'treated after the Continental manner', according to the *Illustrated London News*, was a fountain, 'in a bower of flowers', splashing 'idly all day, at night gleaming with magic lights, and ever providing a resting place for all who desire *al fresco* quiet'.⁵⁸⁴ This was an image of desirable contemplation.

⁵⁸¹ 'Architecture and Arrangement', *The American Register* (part of *Hotel World*), February 1901, 7.

⁵⁸² *Historic England Photographic Archive BL12022*

⁵⁸³ The Langham, *The Builder*, 25 July 1863, 531-533.; The Savoy, *The Builder*, 6 January, 1906, 12.

⁵⁸⁴ *ILN*, 26 October, 1889, 534; *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 10/11.

The architects of subsequent hotels, however, recognised the impracticality of an outside social space of this kind in rainy, sooty London, and by the end of the century, central courtyards were either glazed over, as was the case in both the Langham and the Savoy, or constructed with glass roofs in place, as at Claridge's. At the Waldorf, too, the hotel was constructed as a quadrangle, with the windows of the interior rooms above the first floor giving onto a central area. The ground floor space, around which the principal reception rooms and restaurants were arranged, was now a sociable 'grand lounge', or winter garden. Through these changes, the most traditional of spaces adapted to become a site of modern, cosmopolitan sociability.

The Public Face of Cosmopolitanism

The cosmopolitanism of a grand hotel was not only encountered in the word *caravanseraï*, the evocation of a traditional Islamic building, or in a splashing fountain. A form of commercial cosmopolitanism was also found in the employment of foreign staff, particularly those in the most prominent managerial roles. Reception staff, as the previous chapter identifies, were often foreign for practical reasons, but the nationality of a hotel's most senior employee also carried significance. As recent research on twenty-first century hospitality identifies, the manager of a luxury hotel is its physical representative, who builds loyal relationships with clients and embodies the status of the establishment.⁵⁸⁵ In selecting and publicising a general manager who was not British, or who had experience in well-known foreign venues, the proprietors of a hotel *de luxe* were not only appointing an individual capable of running a modern, commercial operation, they were also benefitting from business experience which crossed international boundaries, and making a symbolic choice about how they wished their venue to be perceived.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁵ Maud Tixier, 'Specificities, Obstacles and Limits to Building Customer Loyalty in Mountain Resort Luxury Hotels', *Modern Economy*, 2 (2011), 862-867.

⁵⁸⁶ Hotel management is discussed in Chapter VII Modernity. See also 'Comparison of a hotel manager with other modern mercantile magnates', *HW*, July 1897, 13, comparing hotel management to other businesses.

Managers were often European, or had trained or worked in European establishments.⁵⁸⁷ In the case study hotels, nearly half (43%) of the management, reception staff and cashiers recorded in the censuses were born in Europe (Table 11).⁵⁸⁸ More specifically, a survey of available data, drawn from contemporary publications as well as the censuses, indicates that the majority of senior managers were German, French, Italian, or Swiss (Table 13). César Ritz, who was Swiss, had built his reputation in fashionable European resorts such as Lucerne, Baden-Baden and Cannes, where he had provided fashionable therapeutic comfort for and developed relationships with the sort of wealthy clientele which London grand hotels wished to attract.⁵⁸⁹ Ritz (1850-1918), perhaps the most renowned of all hoteliers, came to the Savoy in 1890 at the request of Richard D'Oyly Carte, who had identified the value of Ritz's cosmopolitan contacts and experience. He brought with him a team which included the French chef Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), and the Swiss manager, Louis Echenard. William Autour, assistant to Echenard, had worked for Ritz in hotels in Switzerland and France. Francois Rinjoux, the *maître d'hôtel*, was French, and M. Agostini, the head cashier, was Italian.⁵⁹⁰

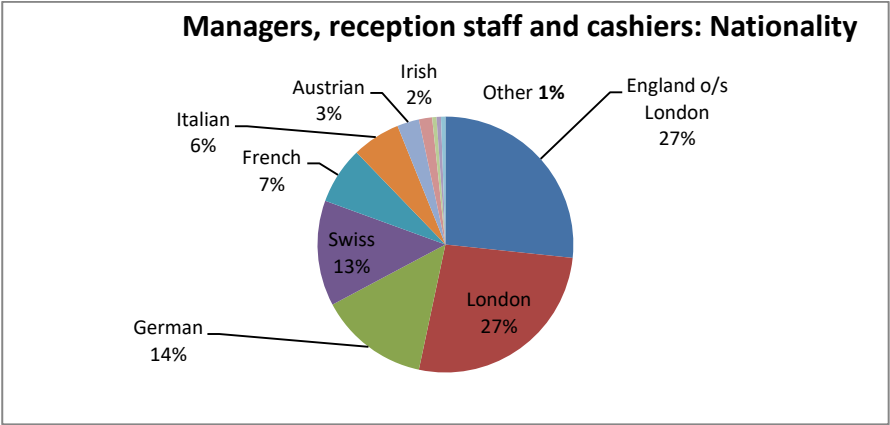


Table 11 Nationality of Front of House Staff. Census records, 1891/1901/1911

⁵⁸⁷ For the quality of European hotel practices and training systems, see G. de M. Soares, 'Hotels', *Tinsley's Magazine*, May 1881, 447-453, 453; *The Times*, 25 September 1899, 7; Hotels and Their Keeping', *The Caterer*, November 1886, 328, and 15 May 1897, 224.

⁵⁸⁸ See Appendix for totals of guests and staff in each hotel 5 April 1891, 31 March 1901 and 2 April 1911.

⁵⁸⁹ 'Some facts in hotelism', *HW*, April 1897, 17. M-L Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 4.

⁵⁹⁰ Kenneth James, *Escoffier: The King of Chefs* (London; New York: Hambledon, 2002), 129.

The same cosmopolitan experience was seen in other hotels. The French Auguste Judah, who during his career was employed as manager of both the Victoria and the Cecil, had been in the hotel trade 'since boyhood'.⁵⁹¹ In the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Berkeley was also run by a Frenchman, Corneille Diette, who 'had a singularly broad and comprehensive experience of hotel administration', gained partly during his time as manager of the Parisian restaurant Meurice's.⁵⁹² These were individuals working in an international profession, unconstrained, at least until the outbreak of war in 1914, by national boundaries.

Part of the explanation for this European dominance was practical. Like reception staff, it was beneficial for managers to speak a number of languages so that they could communicate with foreign guests. A multilingual manager could also manage foreign staff more effectively.⁵⁹³ Moreover, Europeans seem to have been admired for the standard of their training.⁵⁹⁴ 'Hotel managers of foreign nationality have secured the pick of appointments in this country', noted *The Caterer* in 1906. They have 'graduated in every department of the hotel, know their business *au fond*, [and] speak several languages'. But foreigners also benefitted from certain skills which British staff did not seem to enjoy. Such managers possessed, the journal went on 'that cosmopolitan experience of the trade which Englishmen generally lack [...] Their conspicuous courtesy and *savoir faire* [...] fit them for the important positions they hold'.⁵⁹⁵

These connections were important to the image of the establishment, and to be celebrated. Newspapers and journals often recorded where a new hotel manager had been employed, which, if suitably prestigious, could add a sprinkle of stardust. The 'brilliant' G.P. Bertini, manager at the Cecil prior to Judah, was Italian. He was, according to *The Hotel World*, familiar with the cuisines

⁵⁹¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 May 1889; *HW*, March 1898, 9.

⁵⁹² *Modern London: Epitome of Results, Business Men and Commercial Interests* (London, 1891), 33.

⁵⁹³ Carl Ritz, 'The Mechanisms of a Modern Hotel', *The Review of Reviews*, November 1902, 509.

⁵⁹⁴ Two Swiss hotel schools were in Lausanne and Spiez, and a Parisian one in 1910. J. Grande, 'Swiss and French Training Schools. Practical Training for Hotel Keeping', *The Practical Teacher*, Feb. 1911, 525-527.

⁵⁹⁵ *The Caterer*, June 1906, 235.

of all nations, having worked in venues from the home of the late Khedive Ismail, to Delmonico's in New York. In 1914, *The Illustrated London News* noted that the new manager at the Berkeley, Alfred Mambrino, who also was Italian, had experience in Claridge's, the Royal Danieli Hotel, Venice, and Hotel De Crillon, Paris.⁵⁹⁶ For the managers of grand hotels, cosmopolitan connections were significant. Such associations supported efficient management in a number of ways, but more importantly, they contributed to the fashionable image of the establishment. Yet, it was in hotel restaurants that a luxurious cosmopolitanism was most apparent.

The Hotel Restaurant: Social and Gastro-Cosmopolitanism

In London, the development of the restaurant coincided with that of the hotel, and was driven by many of the same economic and social forces. Critics had decried the lack of good quality accommodation for travellers in the middle of the century, and the same dearth was true of reputable places to eat outside the home. In the 1860s, dining in restaurants was rare. Even into the 1870s, there were few restaurants in the capital and those that did exist were largely avoided by the respectable classes.⁵⁹⁷ But the provision of food was necessary for any establishment accommodating travellers, and as hotels grew in numbers and sophistication, so did their dining rooms. At the same time, the commercialisation of mealtimes provided hoteliers with an opportunity for augmenting their income, as well as differentiating their establishments from competitors. Inevitably, for a business model which sought to attract the wealthier middle classes, whose aspirations made them look beyond parochial identifications and towards 'good taste' from wherever it might come, it was desirable to reinforce the allure of difference which came with the social and gastro-cosmopolitanism of public dining.

⁵⁹⁶ 'Bertini the Brilliant' *HW*, March 1897, 7; The Berkeley, *ILN*, 28 February 1914, 358.

⁵⁹⁷ Donald Shaw, *London in the Sixties* (London: Everett & Co., Ltd, 1914), 65; Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption* (2011), 148, citing *The Caterer*, 3 August 1878.

Grand hotels offered diners a number of options. Although the female-only dining room seen in large American hotels was rare, many hotels provided venues which were restricted to residents, separating diners by a public/private distinction rather than gender.⁵⁹⁸ The coffee room at the Berkeley was only accessible from within the hotel, whereas the main entrance for the popular and fashionable restaurant, which could be accessed from the hotel too, was via a well-signposted entrance on Piccadilly (Figure 36). Many hotels also had private dining rooms, for both residents and to non-residents. The Metropole's Whitehall Rooms, for example, were often used for military or professional dinners.⁵⁹⁹ At the Savoy, the private dining rooms were named after Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, and decorated in a selection of fashionable styles (Figure 58).

Many hotels also provided a grill room, in which both hotel guests and the general public could take less formal meals. The grill rooms of the Carlton, the Ritz and the Piccadilly were at basement level, with entrances from the street.⁶⁰⁰ At the Grand, the grill room was re-decorated 1898 in Burmantofts faience to the designs of Alfred Waterhouse and son, and evoked the informality of a public house saloon bar.⁶⁰¹ This informality extended to the clothing of the clients. In restaurants, diners were expected to dress for dinner, whereas in grill rooms this was not required. In 1910, the manager of the Savoy explained that the hotel's Café Parisien, or grill room, was ideal for patrons arriving late in the evening, and 'for motorists and others who may not have time to change, or for various reasons do not want to the bother of dressing'.⁶⁰² Part of the luxury of these hotels was the pragmatic service of the client's wishes, rather the enforcement of a rigid code of behaviour.

⁵⁹⁸ For women in U.S. hotels, see Brucken, 'In the Public Eye', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31 (1996), 203-220.

⁵⁹⁹ *The Observer*, for example, records a dinner for the Worshipful Company of Pewterers, on 29 July 1888, 6, and another for the Association of Foreign Consuls in London on 23 February 1890, 6.

⁶⁰⁰ Plans of the Ritz Hotel, LMA : GLC AR/BR/07/0276; BA, 14 July 1899, 22.

⁶⁰¹ *Plans of the Grand Hotel*. Job file of Alfred Waterhouse for the Grand Hotel, 1898. WaA/12/4/1-6, RIBA.

⁶⁰² 'Custom in Clothes: Evening dress in London and New York', *Observer*, 10 April, 1910, 17.



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The most fashionable place to eat, however, was the restaurant. The relationship between grand hotel and smart restaurant was symbiotic. The best food, prepared by famous chefs in stylish surroundings attracted and retained the most desirable clientele.⁶⁰⁴ The combination, *The British Architect* observed, was 'brilliant and practical'.⁶⁰⁵ By 1900, as *aficionados* of night-time London recounted, the cosmopolitan restaurant was the height of fashion.⁶⁰⁶ In his 1902 book, *The Night Side of London*, urban explorer Robert Machray described the novelty of the phenomenon:

Men don't dine at their clubs nowadays; they go with their wives or the wives of others [...] to partake of the Restaurant Dinner [which] has become almost, if not altogether, the greatest feature of the Night Side of London high life [...] All, or nearly all, the big hotels have restaurants, and some of the smaller. They cater handsomely for *tout le monde* that can pay.⁶⁰⁷

For Machray (1868-1946), these venues were cosmopolitan in a number of ways. That the diners were from a wide range of nationalities was a given. The distinction of social class was not a priority - the ability to pay took precedence. The experiences encountered within stimulated senses and aroused appetites. In the book, Machray recounted that, on his visit to the Cecil, his footsteps were muffled by the thick carpet, and the air perfumed with the scent of flowers. 'The whole atmosphere of the place is one of luxury', he declared. 'Here are serenity, peace, repose'. At the Carlton, he was struck by the 'soft lights, sweet music, pretty women'. Every night a fresh performance was enacted. 'The eternal human comedy-tragedy is being played for all it is worth', he observed. 'You read stories into the smiling faces; you make guesses, vague or clear; you build up little romances, see hints of little ironies; you indulge in pleasant little dreams, or glance away from what may become a tragedy. In a word, you are looking on at another phase of the Show'.⁶⁰⁸ For Machray, the restaurants' attractions did not rest only upon the quality of what was consumed, but also upon luxurious sensuality, and the tantalising theatricality of his fellow diners.

⁶⁰⁴ M-L Ritz, *César Ritz*, (1938), 96.

⁶⁰⁵ *BA*, 14 July, 1899, 19.

⁶⁰⁶ See for example, G.A. Sala, in *London Up to Date* (1894), or Shaw, *London in the Sixties* (1914), 65.

⁶⁰⁷ Robert Machray, *The Night Side of London* (London: John Macqueen, 1902), 70.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 79 and 93.

Also inherent to the attraction of restaurants for Machray was the role of women as consumers. Like a number of other commentators, he observed that well-heeled men who dined outside the home no longer ate predominantly in the male domain of the club. Instead, they dined with female companions in restaurants. Although single women were considered potentially disreputable (unescorted women were firmly removed from the Savoy restaurant, it was reported), generally female diners were deliberately courted, influencing changes in the character and appearance of public dining.⁶⁰⁹ As Margaret Visser argues, women have traditionally played a role in improving manners, influencing men to behave in a more 'civilised' way.⁶¹⁰ Escoffier himself noted that one reason that the hotel became so much part of fashionable life was the presence of women, who, among their other attractions, were 'eminently adapted to the exhibiting of magnificent dresses'.⁶¹¹ At the same time, as contemporaries acknowledged, the fashion for public dining gave women the opportunity to conduct themselves more freely. In 1900, Clement W. Scott, (1841–1904), an author and theatre critic, compared dining practices with those of the 1860s, observing: 'The new *table d'hôte*, the new restaurant, the new hotel coffee rooms and dining rooms, where men and women mix freely together have had a great deal to do with the social emancipation of women, who [...] enjoy their lives very much more than they did thirty or forty years ago'.⁶¹²

This social cosmopolitanism also meant that, in fashionable restaurants, women were as important as men in influencing the type of food and drink consumed. According to Lt. Col. Newnham-Davis, champagne was more popular in London restaurants than in Paris, 'as the

⁶⁰⁹ Stanley Jackson, *The Savoy; the Romance of a Great Hotel* (London: F. Muller, 1964), 24.

⁶¹⁰ Margaret Visser, *The Rituals of Dinner: the Origins, Evolution, Eccentricities and Meaning of Table Manners* (London: Penguin, 1993), 283.

⁶¹¹ Mennell, *All Manners of Food* (1985), citing Escoffier, *A Guide to Modern Cookery* (1903), xi and 158.

⁶¹² Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption* (2011), 149 citing C. W. Scott *How they Dined Us in 1860 and How they Dine us Now* (London: 1900), 12, a souvenir booklet issued by the Trocadero restaurant.

ladies considered dinner incomplete without it'.⁶¹³ Indeed, champagne was so fashionable that, at the Carlton in 1902, 55,000 bottles were consumed out of a total of 108,700, with Bordeaux a poor second at 16,000.⁶¹⁴ 'The isolated male diner at a restaurant is exceptional', observed *The Restaurant*, outlining the changes in public dining over the previous century. 'The ladies are the pacemakers of the restaurateurs of 1911'. According to this journal, women drank liqueurs after dinner, and at a number of the smart hotel restaurants, could even smoke without restriction.⁶¹⁵ This was a permissive social cosmopolitanism which gave better-off women a freedom that was fashionably up-to-date, all taking place in an environment designed to attract and please.

Sensual Appeal and Cosmopolitan Design in Restaurants

Although the provision of food and drink was ostensibly the principal purpose of a fashionable restaurant, the first impression was often their wider sensory appeal. Hoteliers and restaurateurs wished to stimulate guests' palates, but also their ears and eyes. Commentators such as Mrs. Humphrey and Lt. Col. Newnham-Davis spoke of the variety of languages that could be heard. At the same time, as Robert Machray pointed out, a restaurant should also convey a certain serene calm. One way of smoothing over these potentially contradictory impressions was to introduce music to entertain the diners. Music could mask the conversation of neighbouring tables, but it also, as Marie-Louise Ritz noted, could fill awkward silences.⁶¹⁶ By 1896, permanent small 'orchestras' performed nightly at the restaurants in the Langham, the Savoy and the Cecil. At the Berkeley, Frederick Cassino's Orchestra played in the evening between seven and nine-thirty, and

⁶¹³ Nathaniel Newnham-Davis, *Dinners and Diners: Where and How to Dine in London* (London: 1899), iii. He wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and also published *The Gourmet's Guide to Europe* (London: 1908), and *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (London: 1914). Andrea Broomfield, 'Soldier of the Fork: How Nathaniel Newnham-Davis Democratized Dining', *Gastronomica, The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, 4 (2012), 46-54.

⁶¹⁴ Carl Ritz, 'The Mechanism of a Modern Hotel', *The Review of Reviews*, 26 November 1902, 509.

⁶¹⁵ 'The Restaurant of 1811 and 1911', *The Restaurant*, February 1911, 42. 'In the restaurants at the Carlton, the Ritz, the Savoy, the Cecil, the Metropole and Claridge's, there's absolutely no restriction; ladies are permitted to please themselves'. 'Lady Smokers in Restaurants', *The Restaurant*, December 1911, 482.

⁶¹⁶ 'Silence sometimes seemed to hang like a pall over an English dining table. Ritz noticed it'. M-L Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 152.

on Sundays during luncheon. By 1906, *The Caterer* acknowledged, a band of well-qualified performers was 'now looked upon as an essential feature in all high-class establishments'.⁶¹⁷

The playing of music, however, was not without some controversy. A licence was required from Theatres Committee of the London County Council, which was not automatically granted. One aspect to be considered was fire safety, and sufficient exits for the number of guests were required. In 1905, for example, the L.C.C. granted the Ritz a provisional licence for music and dancing, 'subject to an undertaking that the number of persons [...] be limited to 550, and that the licence shall only be used for the purpose of music during meals'. A second consideration was the maintenance of suitable social decorum. The Ritz's licence was restricted to 'private or subscription dances', only.⁶¹⁸ The authorities were as resistant to the wider public enjoying these facilities as the proprietors. At the Savoy, which always aimed to be at the forefront of fashionable innovation, music was played during Sunday night suppers, initially without obtaining the required permissions. When challenged by the Theatres Committee, Charles Munro, secretary of the Savoy Hotel Ltd, defended the practice on the grounds that there was only a small band, playing music to those 'who are spending their Sunday evenings inoffensively dining in the Savoy Hotel restaurant'.⁶¹⁹ The restaurant might be cosmopolitan, but no offense should be caused.

The illumination of the restaurant had also to be considered. Lighting should be bright, but not too harsh. Robert Machray, like others, noted the desirability of 'soft lights', as appealing as 'sweet music' and 'pretty women'.⁶²⁰ Electricity was desirably innovative and hotels were generally early adopters, but implementation needed careful thought. In her 1891 book on the

⁶¹⁷ *The Caterer*, June 1895, 239; *Bow Bells*, 17 July 1896, 92; 'Berkeley Hotel', *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 114; 'High Class hotels, their patrons, and their requirements', *The Caterer*, February 1906, 54.

⁶¹⁸ Correspondence from G L Gomme, Clerk to the Council (LCC Theatres and Music Halls Committee), 24 May 1906, *LMA GLC AR/BR/07/0276*.

⁶¹⁹ Correspondence from Charles Francis Munro, The Savoy Hotel to the Licensing Committee', 27 July 1893, in *LMA Presented papers; LCC/min/1090*.

⁶²⁰ At the Cecil, Newnham-Davis observed the lights on each table were shaded, and at the Coburg, the clusters of electric lights emanated a 'soft, luminous, glow'. *Dinners and Diners* (London: 1899), 179/180.

decorative potential of the new electric lighting, Mrs J.E.H. Gordon noted that unshaded electric lights were 'not conducive to comfort and repose', and that hotel lighting in particular was not always well thought out. 'The lighting of hotels needs development', she wrote. 'Some artistic and good specimens are to be found, but at present these are the exception, and most hotels and refreshment rooms are very crude in their lighting arrangements'.⁶²¹ Consequently, suppliers such as the firm of B. Verity & Sons, which had installed 1,450 lights at the Langham, often created electroliers and lamps specifically to complement a restaurant's decorative scheme.⁶²² Silk shades for wall and table lights, in carefully chosen tones - a delicate apricot pink was most flattering for the ladies, suggested Ritz - produced the soft glow which diners preferred.⁶²³

Mirrors were commonly used to decorate restaurant interiors. Although production techniques had improved, manufacturing large sheets of silvered glass had traditionally been costly and difficult, making them a luxurious, exclusive method of decoration. In addition, reflective surfaces doubled the impression of size. Equally, the combination of mirror and light augmented the charming experience of sparkle, sheen and lustre, enhancing the magical, 'fairy-like' quality of the interior. At the same time, diners could use mirrors to observe one another. Through the reflective surfaces, a guest might glance indirectly across the room at their fellow-guests, witnessing their consumption, appearance, behaviour and companions without difficulty.

In terms of interior style, initially hotel restaurants tended to fall into one of two categories. The first of these was popular in the larger hotel restaurants which included the Langham, the Cecil and those on Northumberland Avenue. This approach was influenced by the grandeur of European seventeenth- and eighteenth-century classical design, and often used the smooth sheen of marble with reflective mirrors to create a vision of luxury. The 'Italian Renaissance'

⁶²¹ Mrs. Gordon, *Decorative Electricity* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington 1891), 150.

⁶²² *Modern London* (London, 1891), 94.

⁶²³ Gordon, *Decorative Electricity* (1891), 44. M-L Ritz, *Cesar Ritz* (1938), 212.

restaurant at the Metropole, 120 feet long by 45 feet wide, and decorated by the firm of Maple & Co, was particularly striking. A photograph taken by the firm of Bedford Lemere in 1886 recorded the interior, furnished with numerous tables, each set for two or four diners (Figure 37). A massive dark green marble dado clad the lower part of the walls. A series of round columns with gilded Corinthian capitals supported the coffered ceiling, decorated in gold. Pendant electroliers with glass shades, designed and supplied by B. Verity & Sons, hung from the ceiling. On each table, dressed in crisp, white linen, were elegant table decorations, and quantities of shining glass and china. Huge, arched bevelled glass mirrors increased the impression of light, size and visibility.⁶²⁴ In size, design and materials, this was a breath-taking spectacle of luxury.



Figure 37 The Restaurant at the Metropole, 1886⁶²⁵

The second approach was less ostentatiously opulent, but also designed to impress. Here the style was more of an idealised aristocratic dining room. Walls were often panelled in dark wood,

⁶²⁴ *The Observer*, 17 May 1885, 2; *The Times*, 1 June, 1885, 6; *BA*, 22 May 1885.

⁶²⁵ *Historic England Photographic Archive: BL06344*. Now the Corinthian Hotel restaurant (2019).

and rooms furnished in muted reds and greens.⁶²⁶ At the Coburg, the panelling was in a deep red wood, with a soft red carpet, and high-backed chairs of dark green leather, embossed with a golden C. At Claridge's restaurant, designed by the well-connected Ernest George (1839–1922) and his partner Alfred Yeates (1867-1944), the walls were in oak, into which patterns in olive wood were set.⁶²⁷ Deep red carpet and curtains muffled noise. The chairs in vermillion morocco leather were embellished with the arms of the hotel in gold (Figure 38).⁶²⁸



Figure 38 The restaurant at Claridge's, as drawn in 1897 and dressed for luncheon in 1912⁶²⁹

While these more muted designs adopted the traditional conventions of decoration for dining rooms in their use of wood panelling and dark colours, fashionability was important. Employing an architect or designer recognised by the network of the wealthy added to the cachet of the venue. In 1888, Helen and Richard D'Oyly Carte investigated the possibility that James McNeil Whistler (1834-1903) prepare designs for the Savoy, including the restaurant, 'in a business spirit'. Whistler was well-known for the rich, exotic Peacock Room, created in 1877 for the shipping magnate, Frederick Leyland, but he had also advised the Cartes on the colour schemes at their

⁶²⁶ For revivalism in dining rooms, see Peter Thornton, *Authentic Décor: The Domestic Interior 1620-1920* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993).

⁶²⁷ Hilary J. Grainger, *The Architecture of Sir Ernest George* (London: Spire Books Ltd, 2011) and Timothy Brittain-Catlin, 'The Architecture of Sir Ernest George', *The Journal of Architecture*, 16:5 (2011), 785-791.

⁶²⁸ Descriptions of both restaurants are found in Newnham-Davis, *Dinners and Dinners* (1899), 179 & 197.

⁶²⁹ *The Architect*, 14 May 1897, 318, and *London's Social Calendar* (1912).

own house in Adelphi Terrace.⁶³⁰ In this case, however, perhaps in the light of the controversy surrounding the Peacock Room, commercial requirements superseded the initial request. Helen Carte subsequently advised Whistler that the hotel directors preferred to appoint a 'large firm to undertake the decoration of the restaurant', which would prepare drawings and estimates of complete schemes. 'They want to see just what they are to have', she wrote, 'and what it will cost'.⁶³¹ In the end, however, commercial efficiency outweighed artistic creativity, and the restaurant was decorated by the well-known furniture makers Collinson and Lock from drawings by T.E. Collcutt (1840 -1924).⁶³² The firm was one of a number which provided a range of services for interior decoration and could supply a complete scheme, a compelling model for commercial premises such as hotels.⁶³³ Collcutt had been a long term collaborator with the firm in the production of high quality items, but he also worked with them in the creation of sites of luxury consumption, which later included both restaurants and liners.⁶³⁴

Contemporary photographs show a dark interior, illuminated by glass canopied wall lights. The chairs were in dark red leather, and a floral carpet covered the floor. A wall of mirrored glass faced the French windows which gave onto the glazed balcony overlooking the river, where coffee and cigarettes could be enjoyed after dinner (Figure 39). Henry Townsend of *The Studio*, a

⁶³⁰ Linda Merrill, *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography* (New Haven; London: Yale UP, 1998), 15. For Helen Carte's description of the colour schemes Whistler mixed for Adelphi Terrace, see Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth Century Decoration: The Art of the Interior* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), 329.

⁶³¹ Elisabeth Robbins, and James Pennell, *The Life and Times of James McNeil Whistler* 6th ed. (Philadelphia; J B Lippincott Co./ London; William Heinemann, 1919), 242; Margaret F. MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort and Nigel Thorp, eds., *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903* (On-line edition, University of Glasgow. <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence>) Richard D'Oyly Carte to Whistler, 20 March 1888, GUL00941 ; GUW MS Whistler D147, and Helen Carte to Whistler, 25 June 1888, GUL00939 ; GUW MS Whistler D145, acc.14.4.2016.

⁶³² For the decoration of the restaurant, see *The Builder*, 13 July 1889, 29, and *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534.

⁶³³ Clive Edwards, 'Complete House Furnishers: the Retailer as Interior Designer in Nineteenth-century London', *Journal of Interior Design*, 38:1 (2013), 1-17, 13, and 'Art Furniture in the Old English Style': The Firm of Collinson and Lock, London 1870-1900', *West 86th*, 19: 2 (2012), 255-81.

⁶³⁴ Anne Wealleans, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat* (London: Routledge, 2006), 30. Collcutt designed 12 interiors for P & O in total, from 1896 to 1903.

magazine which promoted the work of fashionable 'New Art' artists, designers and architects, described the striking quality of the design and workmanship:

From the floor to the glowing frieze with its high relief work in gold', '[the room] is panelled in mahogany, the panels relieved by a lighter coloured inlay, and the pilasters enriched by excellent carving; the deeply coffered ceiling, supported by mahogany pillars, glows with silver and gold decoration and all this serves but to heighten the effect of luxury and comfort, and to form an efficient background for the multi-coloured dresses of the feminine portion of the guests.⁶³⁵

Once again, the luxurious hotel restaurant, decorated in the finest materials, was the setting for the fashionable female diner, who was as much part of the glamorous scene as the silver and gold decoration of the ceiling.



Figure 39. The restaurant at the Savoy, c. 1889⁶³⁶

The provision of increasingly sophisticated food and drink demanded a new approach to table settings. White linen napery, a selection of different glasses for wine, beer, and champagne, as well as a variety of types of silver or silver-plated serving dishes, and cutlery, designed for use

⁶³⁵ H. Townsend, 'A Study in Hotel Decoration', in *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 48-52.

⁶³⁶ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL18414A*

with specific foods, were now required. Many hotels employed specialist ‘platemen’ to manage the prolific quantity of metal items.⁶³⁷ China could be designed specifically for the establishment, decorated in a particular colour scheme, or embellished with the name or logo of the hotel, and supplied by specialist trade suppliers (Figure 40).⁶³⁸ At the Ritz, the china service of over 20,000 pieces was made by the Royal Doulton factory in Burslem. The silverware, which included salt cellars and pepper boxes, as well as trays, candelabra and vases, was supplied under the Waring and Gillows contract by the French firm of Cristofle et cie.⁶³⁹



Figure 40 Advertisements for Bespoke Table Settings for the Up to Date Hotel (1908 and 1911)⁶⁴⁰,

This equipment added to the prestige of the establishment in a number of ways. Supply and maintenance was evidently costly. At the Carlton in 1902, for example, 3,000 tablecloths and 20,000 to 25,000 napkins were in use, and up to £2,000 worth of china was broken per annum.⁶⁴¹ In addition, using such items required a degree of expertise. Navigating numerous courses, each with their own paraphernalia, could cause difficulties for those unfamiliar with such

⁶³⁷ A ‘plateman’ is recorded at both the Cecil and Claridge’s with six at the Langham in the census of 1901.

⁶³⁸ See for example, advertisement for ‘Mappin and Webb, Specialists in Plate & Cutler for Hotels, Hydros, Restaurants, Clubs etc.’, *The Caterer*, 15 June 1906, 247, or for Edwin Inman & Co, Hotel Linen Furnishers, Sheets, Blankets, Quilts, Table Damask, Serviettes, Table Napkins’, *The Caterer*, April 1907, 169. For an account of the rediscovery of certain original silver items, see Christopher Long, ‘Collecting Silver Ritz Magazine’, February, 1986. <http://www.christopherlong.co.uk/pri/silcol.html> acc. 4.3.19.

⁶³⁹ Binney, *The Ritz Hotel, London* (1999), 42.

⁶⁴⁰ ‘Princes’ Plate’, essential for all ‘up-to-date’ hotels. *The Caterer*, December 1908, 594, and ‘Unchippable Surface Dinner Plates’, available with a variety of coloured decoration, *The Restaurant*, January 1911, 2.

⁶⁴¹ Carl Ritz, ‘Mechanism of a Modern Hotel’, *The Review of Reviews*, November 1902, 509.

conventions. White linen was costly to launder, but it also demanded a certain standard of behaviour. A spillage of soup or sauce would be visible to both staff and fellow guests. Equally, waiters had to serve food carefully, and to display dexterity when changing cloths during service. Cosmopolitan liberality might have been permitted, but standards had to be maintained.

There were also changes to the design and layout of the furniture in restaurants. Comfortable, upholstered chairs, and separate tables took the place of boxed compartments and benches, or the single host's table. This spatial arrangement supported the somewhat contradictory desire for both privacy and visibility. Private conversations could be conducted, while others could easily observe a diner's gown or companion.⁶⁴² Space between tables also made it easier for waiters to serve a series of courses consecutively - the fashionable '*à la Russe*' style - rather than the traditional practice of placing numerous dishes on the table simultaneously, known as '*à la Française*'. The performance of serving delicately prepared dishes was as important in the theatricality of the restaurant as were the parts played by the well-dressed diners.

As the fashions of gowns changed into the twentieth century, so too did restaurant interiors. This was part of a general move to interiors which were more delicate in design, and lighter in colour. At the opening of the Carlton in 1899, *The Times* observed that the hotel, furnished by Waring and Gillow to designs by Mewès and Davis, caused 'quite a sensation'. 'Instead of the garish and lavish gilding, the over ornate composition enrichments, the miles of stock pattern carpets and uninteresting machine-made furniture of no style at all, which we had been accustomed to find in even the best and newest hotels', the paper continued, the rooms were 'light and cheerful', the furniture simple and comfortable. This, *The Times* asserted, was a 'surprise' in decoration.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴² Shaw, *London in the Sixties* (1914), 143; Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption* (2011), 137.

⁶⁴³ 'Taste In English Furniture', *The Times*, 2 June 1906, 13.



Figure 41. Dining at the Berkeley, *London's Social Calendar* (1912)⁶⁴⁴

Following the fashion set by the Carlton 'surprise', existing hotels were altered in pursuit of fashionable clientele. Even those which had recently been constructed were re-designed. The Grand Restaurant at the Cecil, which had only opened in 1896, was completely redecorated in 1905. A sombre, if opulent, scheme evoking the Italian Renaissance was replaced with one in which pale tones of gold and pink predominated. The pillars, originally in dark marble, were painted white. The wall panels were in Rose de Barri silk, with a pale blue frieze, and the dark red carpet was changed to one in deep rose. The former gloom, the ever-present Newnham-Davis observed, was replaced with 'butterfly colouring' which exuded 'good temper'.⁶⁴⁵ In the restaurant at the Berkeley, too, the décor was transformed (Figure 41). The scene was illustrated in the Savoy Group's *London's Social Calendar* (1912). The wood panelling of the earlier interior was replaced with white and gold in the Louis XV style. Pale, fluted columns, with gold Corinthian capitals, supported the white ceiling. A deep frieze in moulded plaster embellished the walls. Delicate electric wall lights illuminated the room. Bowls of pink carnations toned with the fashionable hues of the ladies' gowns. Waiters, in white shirts and black jackets, served the guests

⁶⁴⁴ *London's Social Calendar* (1912), 40/41.

⁶⁴⁵ Newman-Davies, *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (1914), 60.

attentively. These were schemes of pink and white feminised luxury, set in a fashionable, protected cosmopolitan venue, in which the guests could see and be seen, an eating-out culture detached from local tradition and part of a shared, transnational bourgeois way of life.⁶⁴⁶

The Ceremony of Gastro-Cosmopolitanism: Staff as Performers

The part performed by the restaurant staff, clad in their crisp uniforms, carried as much significance to the status of the restaurant as the receptionist played in the hotel lobby. Upon arrival, diners were greeted by the *maître d'hôtel* or restaurant manager. These men, often well-known to the *cognoscenti*, fulfilled a number of functions. As a contemporary American guide to the profession advised, a good *maître d'* put diners at their ease, knew all his customers, and was 'acquaint[ed] with their tastes, and with their favourite subjects of conversation'.⁶⁴⁷ His role as gatekeeper, emulated that of both doormen and reception staff, assessing those crossing the threshold of the restaurant.

The restaurant manager also played a part in creating the theatrical scene. M. Joseph, '*Directeur*' of the Savoy Restaurant in 1899, argued that the *maître d'* (who ideally should be French - according to Joseph, as of course, only a Frenchman could properly advise on the complexities of the menu) was a '*metteur-en-scene*' – a stage director.⁶⁴⁸ A restaurant had to create the right impression. Some tables were better than others, and it was beneficial to seat some guests at a more prominent table, others more discretely. Managing this process demanded diplomatic skill. The *maître d'* 'has obscure tables, lower end tables, middle-class tables, upper class tables and exclusive tables', the American guide noted. 'He assort[s] strangers as they come and allots them to their tables according to their appearance or their deserts generally without their being at all

⁶⁴⁶ Rich, *Bourgeois Consumption* (2011), 1.

⁶⁴⁷ Jessup Whitehead, *The Steward's Handbook and Guide to Party Catering*, 4th ed. (Chicago, Jessup Whitehead & Co: 1899), 190, cited in Haley, *Turning the Tables* (2011), 23.

⁶⁴⁸ Newnham-Davis, *Dinners and Diners* (1899), iii.

aware of the sorting process they are subjected to'.⁶⁴⁹ These controls were as effective as any other in the hotel in ensuring that the right clientele were granted access and those without adequate cultural or economic capital were not.

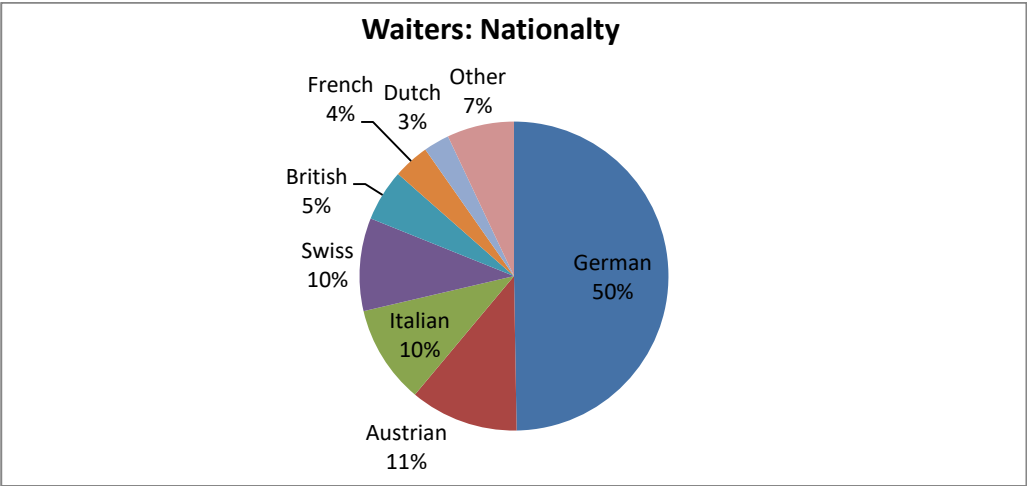


Table 12 Nationality of Waiters. 1891/1901/1911⁶⁵⁰

Waiters also played a part in the drama of the restaurant. Their appearance and expertise were important, but so too was their nationality. Waiters in the smartest hotel restaurants tended to be European. There may have been a number of reasons for this. Manz and Panayi argue that the great increase in the number of hotels and restaurants at the end of the nineteenth century meant it was necessary, regardless of the standard of British employees, to draw on foreign labour. In addition, *The Caterer* expressed a relatively common view that English waiters were less than ideal, being neither ‘proficient [nor] efficient’.⁶⁵¹ The formal training of German waiters, either as apprentices or in hospitality colleges, on the other hand, made them particularly popular. Germans also apparently tended to accept lower wages than British staff, and to rely on

⁶⁴⁹ Whitehead, *The Steward's Handbook* (1899), 186. Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984), 196, quoted in Finkelstein, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners* (1989), 26, who also raises the practice of appropriate allocation of tables in restaurants.

⁶⁵⁰ Census returns for all case study hotels in 1891, 1901 and 1911.

⁶⁵¹ ‘British Waiters’, *The Caterer*, April 1907, 149.

tips rather than a fixed wage.⁶⁵² The census registers indicate that half of the hotel waiting staff recorded were from Germany (Table 12). The efficiency, value, and foreignness of these staff contributed to both the standards and the cosmopolitan image of the restaurant.

‘The Cuisine is Intended to be Cosmopolitan’: Choice and Luxury

Finally the guests were seated at their table, ready to select from the menu. Essential to the luxury offer was the choice and complexity of the dishes available. Diverse guests meant diverse tastes, and a hotel which claimed to deliver luxury needed to cater for such variety. However, providing a cosmopolitan selection of dishes was not only about the taste of the food, it was also about establishing distinction through the impression of rarity, and differentiating the cuisine from standard fare by the time and cost expended upon it. Identifying the connection between wealth, ideas of luxury and sophisticated food, *The Hotel World* acknowledged, ‘where there is wealth, there will be luxury. A rich man cannot eat more than [...] the poor, but he will seek to compensate the deficiency of his appetite by the greater delicacy and refinement of preparing it’.⁶⁵³ For Theodore Veblen’s consumers, superior gratification stemmed not just from costliness, but also from a favourable comparison with others and the display of social distinctions.⁶⁵⁴ A restaurant which proffered sophisticated dishes, created from unusual ingredients (or at least those which sounded unusual) gave participants an opportunity for such display. As Bourdieu acknowledges, it is not only the command of economic capital, but also of cultural capital that serves to differentiate one social group from another. For consumers keen to board Liebenstein’s

⁶⁵² By 1911, about 10% of all waiters and waitresses in London were German. Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi, ‘The Rise and Fall of Germans in the British Hospitality Industry, c1880 to 1920’, *Food & History*, 11:2 (2013), 243-266. In fashionable restaurants, Germans predominated, according to ‘The Restaurant of 1811 and 1911’, *The Restaurant*, February 1911, 42, and ‘New West End Institute for Waiters’, *The Caterer*, April 1907, 158.

⁶⁵³ ‘Le Menu’, *HW*, August 1897, 6.

⁶⁵⁴ Veblen, *The Leisure Class* (1899), 20, as analysed by Giorgios Patsiaouras, *Rethinking Veblen’s Contribution to Consumer Research: A Phenomenological Enquiry into the Perception of ‘Status Consumption’ by Middle-Income British Consumers* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Leicester, 2010), 314.

‘bandwagon’ of luxury, prestige could be gained and reinforced through associating with the right status groups through the consumption and display of the right cultures, products and brands.⁶⁵⁵

At first glance - German waiters notwithstanding - French was the dominant culture of fashionable restaurants. M. Joseph’s *maître d’ hôtel français*’ was singularly placed to assist diners in their enjoyment of the fine food that chefs had created. Both head and junior chefs were usually French. ‘In a large hotel’, as Carl Ritz observed in 1902, ‘85% of the cooks are French, and French is the *lingua franca* of the kitchen’.⁶⁵⁶ The best were acknowledged to be a significant commercial asset.⁶⁵⁷ Joseph Thorau, who succeeded Escoffier at the Savoy, and Antoine Coste, who ran the kitchen at the Cecil for a long period, were both French.⁶⁵⁸ At the opening of the Waldorf, M. Jeanin, a Frenchman, commanded a team of 65 employees in the kitchen.⁶⁵⁹ This cultural dominance was widely accepted, and admired. ‘Chefs are made, not born’, advised *The Caterer*, ‘but to attempt to make one out of any other stuff than a Frenchman would [...] present as many insurmountable difficulties as are presumed to surround the task of making a silk purse out of a – well some other material than silk’.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁵ Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984), 6; Kastanakis & Balabanis, ‘Between the Mass and the Class: Antecedents of Bandwagon Luxury Consumption Behaviour’, *Journal of Business Research*, 65 (2012) 1399-1407, 1402.

⁶⁵⁶ ‘Englishmen[...] are little employed at hotels simply because they won’t learn foreign languages’. Carl Ritz, ‘The Mechanism of a Modern Hotel’, *The Review of Reviews*, 26 November 1902, 509.

⁶⁵⁷ Ralph Nevill, *The World of Fashion, 1837-1922* (London: Methuen & Co., 1923), 230.

⁶⁵⁸ Arthur White, *Palaces of the People: A Social History of Commercial Hospitality* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co, 1968), 129. See also M. Nignon, a French national, ‘late chef of the celebrated Paillard of Paris’, ‘Claridge’s Hotel’, *HW*, November 1898, 18, and Louis Peyre, *Maître chef* at Charing Cross Hotel since 1890 and previously at the Metropole 1885-1890 having come from the Hotel Continental at Biarritz, and then Hotel de Louvre in Paris as noted by *The Restaurant*, October 1911, 392. Other chefs were often Italian or Swiss. The number of chefs recorded in the censuses are relatively low. It seems likely that most did not sleep on the premises. Around 1890, up to five thousand French chefs were working in Britain. Amy B. Trubek, *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 52, cited in Patricia Van den Eeckhout, ‘The History of Labour and Labour Relations in Hotels and Restaurants in Western Europe and the United States in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: An introduction’ *Food & History*, 11:2 (2013), 199–221, 216.

⁶⁵⁹ *The Caterer*, February 1909, 66.

⁶⁶⁰ ‘Gotham’s Chefs’, *The Caterer*, July 1885, 268 quoted in Haley, *Turning the Tables* (2011), 29.

Ostensibly, French food too reigned supreme. *The Queen* asserted that ‘a large dining room and a flourishing menu of six courses all done in French’ were requirements for a modern hotel.⁶⁶¹ In 1900, an article in *Homes of the Passing Show* concluded:

There is only one cuisine – the French.[...] The chef may occasionally as a concession bestow upon inhabitants of other nations one of their own barbarous dishes, elevated by his refining power into something civilised but the French cuisine and the principles of the French cuisine must remain supreme if gastronomic success is to be achieved and maintained. Whatever complaint we may have against France, we must be grateful to her for the art of cookery.⁶⁶²

French was not just the *lingua franca* of the kitchen but also of the menu. Restaurant menus of the period list a series of courses, usually in French. The structure of the courses were based upon a ‘classic’ French *haute-cuisine* menu of the late nineteenth century of six to eight courses but this method of listing dishes in a written menu was a new introduction.⁶⁶³ Heavy and elaborate dishes were inappropriate for what Auguste Escoffier called ‘the light and frivolous atmosphere of the restaurants’ where service was brisk. Instead, dishes were expected to be ‘new and exciting’. ‘Sometimes’, Escoffier noted, ‘the demand comes from a host whose luxurious table has exhausted all the resources of the modern cooks repertory, and who, having partaken of every delicacy, and often had too much of good things, anxiously seeks new sensations for his blasé palate.’⁶⁶⁴ Novelty was all important.

The menu tended to take a fairly standard form. A 1898 Claridge’s menu (Figure 42) illustrates the usual structure. It is handwritten, indicating frequent, perhaps daily changes, depending upon the availability of ingredients. Six or so courses were offered and the menu lists a number of dishes often served in this period. A guest might select a first course of caviar, oysters, or the

⁶⁶¹ ‘The Old Inn and the Modern Hotel’, *The Queen*, 18 April 4 1891, 5.

⁶⁶² ‘Special Features of the Savoy Hotel and Restaurant’, *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 90-91.

⁶⁶³ The courses were usually *potages, hors-d’œuvre, relevé, entrées, entremets de légumes, rôts, entremets de douceurs, glace, fruits et desserts*. Patricia Van den Eeckhout & Peter Scholliers ‘The language of a menu (Le Grand Hôtel, Brussels, 1926), *Food and History*, 1 (2003), 239-247; Dan Jurafsky, *The Language of Food: A Linguist Reads the Menu* (New York; London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2014).

⁶⁶⁴ Auguste Escoffier, *Le Guide Culinaire* (1903), xii-xiii, cited by Mennell, *All Manners of Food* (1985), 159.

popular *Hors d'œuvres variés*. Oysters had traditionally been the food of the common man, but here the French name adds something to their status. The fish course includes sole, salmon, or *turbot au champagne*. It also offers lobster prepared 'in the American style', but written in French. The *entrée* course too indicates that, although the menu was in French, dishes in name at least came from a wider geographical area. The *Rôtis* course usually included a variety of game, and this menu lists snipe, duck, quail and pheasant - all in French - and grouse – in English. Desserts were more limited and often consisted only of ice cream, with perhaps a *soufflé* or *crêpes flambés*. This menu includes a pineapple dish and an ice cream bombe, both of which gave the chefs an opportunity to display their skill and creativity.

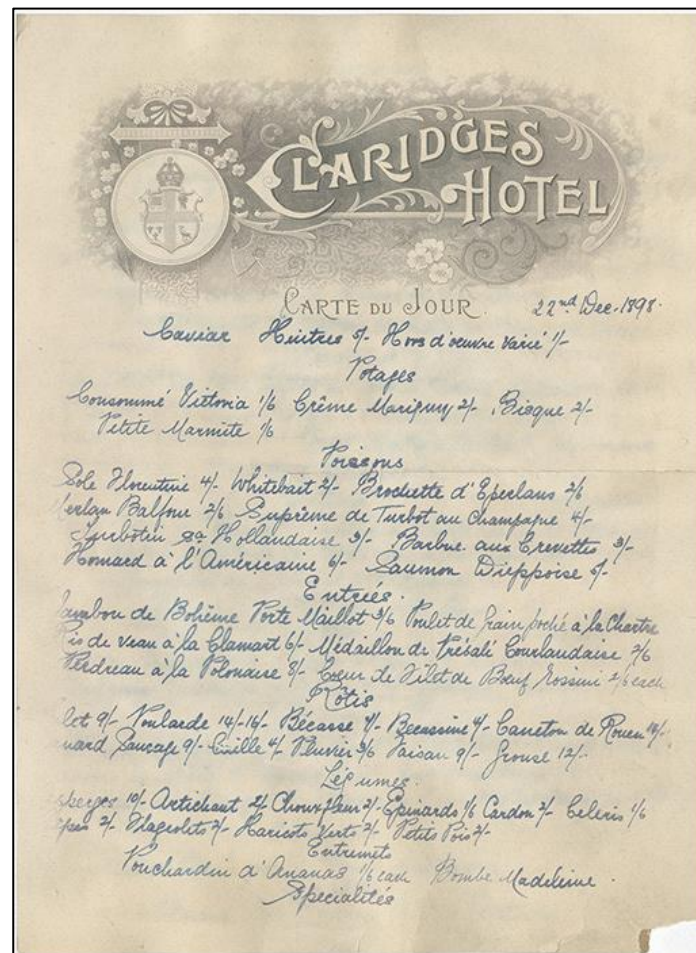


Figure 42 Claridge's Hotel Carte du Jour, on 22 December 1898

Although the main language of the menu was French, the reality was more complex. The objective was to cater for as wide a market as possible. French food predominated but diners were also offered traditional English dishes, as well as culinary influences and ingredients from all over Europe, America and Asia. 'The cuisine is intended to be cosmopolitan', the proprietors of the Savoy claimed in the 1889 *Prospectus*, 'and while the French cuisine will naturally occupy the first position, it is proposed to provide also purely English dishes and those of other nations, and arrangements are in progress to provide later on the special delicacies of the United States'.⁶⁶⁵ Choice and diversity was important, and, at the Savoy, especially for Americans.

Foreign chefs who cooked the specialities of their own country contributed to this offering. At the Ritz, a Viennese pastry chef was in charge of the *pâtisserie*, and a Russian employed to prepare soups, particularly the fashionable beetroot-based *Borscht*. 'Native' chefs were also employed in the preparation of Indian delicacies. Londoners were not unacquainted with Indian food, and specialist restaurants were not unusual, although the dishes did not always meet the standards of 'Anglo Indians', who had enjoyed the 'piquancy and peculiar flavour' of curries in India.⁶⁶⁶ At the Cecil, a 'curry cook of great-renown', an Indian known as Smiler, 'clothed in white samite, with his turban neatly rolled' was supported by a 'band of underlings of his own nationality', who prepared '*curry à l'indienne*', for the delectation of diners.⁶⁶⁷

The common use of French in menus - even in the case of '*curry à l'indienne*' - indicates the strength of the French language in asserting ideas of status and luxury in connection with restaurant food. 'We do not seem to care what we eat', noted a restaurant critic in 1912, 'so long as it has a good outstanding important name – in kitchen French, which is akin to dog-Latin, and

⁶⁶⁵ *Savoy Prospectus* (1889), 3, copy supplied by Susan Scott, Archivist of the Savoy Hotel, 2013.

⁶⁶⁶ In 1906, one establishment in Piccadilly, had a vegetarian 'Hindoo' (sic) chef, who made only vegetarian dishes, and an 'Indian Mohammedan' (sic) who made all sorts of Indian dishes, which were served by white robed and grandly turbaned 'native' waiters. 'A curry restaurant', *The Caterer*, February 1906, 66.

⁶⁶⁷ Newnham-Davis, *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (1914), 61.

sounds imposing'.⁶⁶⁸ The use of French was deliberately distinctive. It aimed to exclude all those who could not understand the language, but also those who could not interpret this particularly exclusive interpretation, where the contents of the dish were identified by reference to geographical location, or to the wealthy or famous for whom the dish was first prepared.

Conclusion

In grand hotels and in hotel restaurants, cosmopolitanism and prestige were interconnected. The interplay between luxury and certain carefully chosen aspects of cultures beyond the borders was seen in a number of ways. Hotels were functionally cosmopolitan as, by definition, the business of hospitality meant that outsiders were welcomed within their walls. They were commercially cosmopolitan as foreigners were often employed in the most prominent positions, and members of staff benefited from experience and training gained overseas. In restaurants, diners in fashionable, opulent surroundings, enjoying new kinds of food, prepared and served by foreign staff, experienced a gastro-cosmopolitanism which conferred glamour and esteem. Dominated ostensibly by the traditionally prestigious gastronomic and design culture of France, this form of cosmopolitanism in reality included many kinds of food, from the humble oyster to the exotic Indian curry, and catered for as broad a range of tastes as possible. At the same time, a social cosmopolitanism permitted the adoption of new social mores in which women were encouraged to experience the freedom of dining in public, and play their part in the spectacle, as both audience and performer.

All of these cosmopolitanisms were desirable to an audience seeking novelty, entertainment and new forms of self-expression and representation. But hotels had to offer more than this form of amusement. They also needed to provide for the comfort that all travellers seek. Physically and socially guests at grand hotels desired comfort, the subject of the next chapter.

⁶⁶⁸ Frank Schloesser, 'Fallacy of the Table d'hôte', *The Observer*, 21 July 1912, 6.

Hotel	Date	Managers	Ntnlty	Source
Berkeley	1891	Corneille Drette, 58 <i>Marie Drette, 40, and four children</i>	France	Census
	1901	George Reeves-Smith 45 <i>Maud Reeves Smith, 30,⁶⁶⁹ and child</i>	British	Census
	1909	Mr Kroell- left for the Ritz		<i>New Zealand Herald,</i> 18 December 1909, 1.
	1911	Raymond Slanz, 49 <i>Fernande Slanz, 41</i>	Austria	Census
	1914	Alfred Mambrino		<i>ILN</i> , 28 February 1914, 358
Carlton	1899	César Ritz	Swiss	<i>MG</i> , 24 July 1899
	1901	César Ritz, 51, Hotel Proprietor Francis Burger, 38, Hotel Mgr.	Swiss Swiss	Census
	1911	Sebastian Neumann 49, Staff Mgr.	German	Census
	1913	Mr Kramer		<i>New York Times</i> , 13 May 1913
Cecil	1896	G.P. Bertini	Italian	<i>HW</i> , December 1895, 31-33
	Feb 1898	Auguste Judah	French	<i>HW</i> , February 1898, 18
	1901	Auguste Judah, 42	French	Census
	1903	Karl Sailer (prev. De Keyser Royal Hotel) George Harvey (prev. Grand Hotel, Brmighm)		Licence app. 4.12.03, <i>LMA</i> <i>archive</i>
	1911	Emilio Carmelo Nobile, 48	Italy	Census
	1913	Mr Crawford		<i>New York Times</i> , 13 May 1913
Claridge's	1891	G. Pragnall, 35 Mary Pragnall, 39, Mgrss, & 2 children	Irish	Census
	1901	Henri Menge, 50	Swiss	Census
	1913	M Gelardi		<i>New York Times</i> , 13 May 1913
Coburg	1896	Mr Kosuth Hudson		<i>Caterer</i> 15 December 1896, 598
	1901	Edward Watts, 32 <i>Mary Watts, 32</i>	British	Census
	1911	William Osborne Anderson, 34	British	Census
Grand	1885	Alfred Holland		BN, 5 June 1885, 878
	1891	William Cox, 30, Asst Mgr	British	Census
	1901	David James McLachlan, 35 <i>Lizzie McLachlan, 39 and child</i>	British	Census
	1911	David James Machlachlan, 45	British	Census
Langham	1865	Charles Schumann	German	Observer, 8 Jan 1865, 5
	1868	James Sanderson	US	Langham hotel archive
	1872	H. Gascoigne		Langham Hotel Archive
	1879	P. Blades		Langham Hotel Archive
	1884	W. C. Gordon		Langham Hotel Archive
	1888	Walter Gosden appointed		<i>Times</i> 11 May 1888, 3
	1891	Walter Gosden, 42	British	Census
	1901	Walter Gosden, 52	British	Census
	1904--14	Harvey Boase Roberts		Langham Hotel Archive
	1911	Harvey Boase Robarts, 58 <i>Mrs Robarts</i>	British	Census

⁶⁶⁹ It looks like Mrs Reeves Smith knocked some 3 years off her age for this census as her age was recorded as 23 in the 1891 census when she was at the Victoria with her husband.

Hotel	Date	Managers	Ntnlty	Source
Metropole	1891	George Pilbeam, 32 (R. G .Hembrow – manager of the hotel))	British	Census
	1899	R .G. Hembrow(to at least 5/8/01) and George Pilbeam		3 January 1899 Henry Coutts diaries
	1901	Frederick Squire, 29, Asst Mgr.	British	Census
	1911	Eugene Richard, 47 <i>Kate Richard, 46 and child</i> Nicholas Flunbeyer, Asst Mgr.	Swiss Swiss	Census
		Walter Ferdinand Happe, 32	British	
Piccadilly	1908	P.W. de Keyser and Herbert Bennett		<i>Times</i> 17 March 1908, 11
	1911	Fritz Heim, 38 Eugen Schlagenlauff , 33, Asst Mgr	German German	Census
Ritz	1906	Henry Elles J Aimino, Acting Mgr		<i>Caterer</i> , July 1906, 309
	1911	Henry Kroell <i>Mrs Kroell</i> Max Horfmann, Asst Mgr Charles Gyzelen, Rest Mgr	German German Dutch	Census
	1913	Henry Kroell		<i>NYT</i> , 13 Mary 1913
	1889	W Hardwicke		<i>ILN</i> , 26 October 1889
	July 1890	César Ritz, Gnrl Mgr Louis Echenard, Acting Mgr	Swiss	<i>The Observer</i> , 6 July 1890,4
	1891	Louis Echenard , Hotel Mgr (sacked 28,2.98)	Swiss	
	1901	William David Collins, 34	British	Census
	1903-09	Henry Pruger	Aust/Hng	<i>Observer</i> , 5 September 1909
	1911	M Gustave Seggelke, Gnrl Mgr on 28.5.11		<i>Observer</i> , 28 May 1911, 16
	1911	Rudolph Humbert, 30 Marcel Blond, 29, Asst Mgr	German France	Census
	1913	Marcel Blond		<i>NYT</i> , 13 Mary 1913
	1887	Henry Logan		<i>Caterer</i> , June 1887 , 210
Victoria	Mar 1891	George Reeves-Smith, Mgr		<i>Caterer</i> , 16 March 1891, 77
	1891	George Reeves Smith, 32, Mgr <i>Maud Reeves Smith 23</i> Auguste Judah, 32, Asst Mgr (went to Frascati's 1889 but returned)	British French	Census <i>Caterer</i> 15 March 1889, 80
	1908	George Schmieder (formerly Great Centrl) <i>Mrs Schmieder</i>		<i>Caterer</i> , February 1909, 66
Waldorf	1911	Louis Edward Cornut, 40 <i>Mrs Cornut, Hotel Mgress</i> Adolph Hock, 32 Evaristo Lucarini , 35, Asst Mgr	Swiss German Italian	Census

Table 13 Managers of Case Study Hotels 1865 -1914

Chapter VI: Comfort

Each new hotel that is opened tries to out-do its competitors in the furnishing of all the ingeniously contrived nineteenth-century enhancers of comfort. In consequence, the ordinary traveller expects to eat, drink, breathe and sleep in the midst of kingly luxury.⁶⁷⁰

On 28 January 1908, the Waldorf Hotel opened on a prime position on the newly constructed Aldwych.⁶⁷¹ The crescent was part of a larger scheme of urban improvement by the London County Council, which also saw the construction of nearby Kingsway.⁶⁷² With the Strand Theatre on the left, and the Aldwych Theatre on the right, the hotel, by Alexander George Robertson Mackenzie, and his father, Alexander Marshall Mackenzie, was in the fashionable *Beaux-Arts* style, with a lightly curving frontage, built and furnished for approximately £400,000, a sum equating to about £40 million today.⁶⁷³

The new establishment boasted all the attributes of a luxury hotel. The public rooms were, according to *Country Life*, 'spacious and beautiful'. The central palm-court was 'unsurpassed'. The 400 or so guest rooms were laid out in what was described as the 'American plan', with one bathroom for every two or so rooms. The management was to be undertaken by George Schmieder, a German, and his wife.⁶⁷⁴ 'Everything', *The Caterer* assessed, 'is fitting and well devised; the artistic eye is pleased and impressed; and the convenience of the guest is studied to the fullest extent, without his pocket being ruined by an expensive tariff'.⁶⁷⁵ This, the promotional advertising claimed, was a 'new note in hotels', which promised 'luxury and comfort at economic prices'.⁶⁷⁶

⁶⁷⁰ 'Are the small hotels doomed?', *HW*, January 1898, 8.

⁶⁷¹ *ILN*, 25 January 1908, 146. *BJ*, 7 November 1906, 81.

⁶⁷² Schubert & Sutcliffe, 'The Haussmannization' of London, *Planning Perspectives*, 11 (1996), 115-144.

⁶⁷³ *The Caterer*, January 1908, 5. This figure relates to 'real cost', comparing cost of a project to the cost index of all output in the economy, www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ukcomapre/relativevalue.php acc. 12.3.19.

⁶⁷⁴ *Country Life*, 1 February 1908, lviii; *The Caterer*, December 1907, 535, and October 1909, 459.

⁶⁷⁵ *BJ*, 25 December 1907, 13; *The Caterer*, June 1907, 243; *CL*, 1 February 1908, lviii, and 66.

⁶⁷⁶ See *DT*, 30 January, 6 & 8 February 1908, 6; *ILN*, 15 Feb. 1908, 248, and *CL*, 15 Feb 1908, lxii.

Although the emphasis upon value for money was not the norm for grand hotels, the Waldorf's claim to combine luxury and comfort was by no means unique. The desire for comfort was an early and persistent theme at this level of commercial hospitality.⁶⁷⁷ According to *The Illustrated London News* in 1865, the Palace Hotel in Buckingham Gate (1861) possessed 'one of the most perfect interiors for convenience and comfort in London'. In 1881, the First Avenue Hotel, *The Caterer* stated, was 'unequalled for comfort and convenience'.⁶⁷⁸ In the same year as the Waldorf's opening, publicity for the new Piccadilly claimed that its brand of 'luxury and comfort' was a product of the thoughtful application of 'science, art, refinement, and practical experience'.⁶⁷⁹

Comfort was not a straightforward concept, however, whether used in relation to hotels or more broadly. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the term had possessed a strongly psychological meaning, and generally referred to solace or support in mental distress.⁶⁸⁰ By the eighteenth century, as society became more civilised, the term was increasingly applied to a state of physical and material well-being, free from pain and trouble, in which bodily needs were satisfied. In this interpretation, the materiality of comfort created a relationship between the body and its immediate physical environment. Satisfying physical needs led to psychological comfort and emotional well-being. A number of scholars argue this increasing emphasis upon material comfort was crucial to the development of consumer society, and its associations with luxury and fashionability.⁶⁸¹ For those engaged with the 'sensual turn' in particular, the value

⁶⁷⁷ And still important today. Brody quotes an employee of the Four Seasons company who refers to creating 'a cocoon of comfort' every evening through the ritual of evening turndown in hotel bedrooms. David Brody, *Housekeeping by Design: Hotels and Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 21.

⁶⁷⁸ *ILN*, 8 July 1865, 12; 'Another London Hotel Company,' *The Caterer*, June 1881, 104.

⁶⁷⁹ *CL*, 11 April 1908, lv.

⁶⁸⁰ *OED online*, acc. 4.4.19.

⁶⁸¹ Elizabeth Shove, 'Comfort and Convenience: Temporality and Practice', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (2012), 290-306, 291, citing John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Early Modern Britain and Early America*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins UP, 2001), 142; Anne Massey, *Chair* (London: Reaktion, 2010), 102.

given to well-being and physical ease, perceived and attained through the senses, was essential to this evolution.⁶⁸² These developments meant that the desire for comfort, attained through acquisition and innovation, and experienced through the senses, was, in John Gloag's phrase, 'the theme song for the Victorian age'.⁶⁸³

Much of this desire for both material and psychological comfort was associated with the domestic, and therefore also pertinent to hotels, where guests were promised a 'home from home'. Victorian ideas of home were not just about shelter but also revolved around the physical experience of domestic life, the possessions which enriched it, and the ways in which this materiality displayed taste and identity.⁶⁸⁴ At the same time, style and appearance, domestic advisors suggested, could not be wholly disassociated from physical experience or practicality. For Mrs. Haweis, for example, real beauty was inseparable from social practice and daily activities. 'The room that mirrors your tastes', she argued, 'must really fit your habits and pursuits'.⁶⁸⁵ 'There is no question', contended G.W. Yapp in his guide to house decoration, 'but that the feeling of comfort is largely influenced by the colour and fitness of the objects around us'.⁶⁸⁶

Towards the end of the century, this emphasis upon physical comfort and 'fitness' or practicality became more visible in decoration and furnishings, including in interiors designed to display wealth. Contemporary experts acknowledged that styles which had historically been associated

⁶⁸² David Howes, *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 4, 285, and Chapter XIV, 'HYPERESTHESIA or the Sensual Logic of Late Capitalism', 281-303. For an introduction to the historiography of the senses, see Martin Jay, 'In the Realm of the Senses: An Introduction', *American Historical Review*, 116 (2011), 307-315.

⁶⁸³ John Gloag, *Victorian Comfort: A Social History of Design from 1830-1900* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1961), xvi. For comfort as both a philosophical and practical concept, see Elizabeth Shove, *Comfort, Cleanliness and Convenience: The Social Organisation of Normality* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2003).

⁶⁸⁴ Constance Classen, *The Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch* (Urbana: Uni. of Illinois Press, 2012), 163. Leora Auslander calls taste, 'a complex interaction of desires for emulation, distinction and solidarity', Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley, Calif; London: University of California Press, 1996), 2. See also Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984), 6 and Penny Sparke and Anne Massey eds.; *Biography, Identity and the Modern Interior* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

⁶⁸⁵ Mrs M. E. Haweis, 'On Furnishing Beautifully', *The Decorator and Furnisher*, December 1882, 76-77, 77.

⁶⁸⁶ G.W. Yapp, *Art Industry: Furniture, Upholstery and House-Decoration* (London: 1880).

with prestige should be adapted to allow for greater relaxation and physical well-being. As 'the taste for luxury and refinement [increased]', a late nineteenth-century historian of furniture argued, 'a degree of ease and comfort was demanded'.⁶⁸⁷ Similarly, in a guide to interiors aimed at both the domestic and trade markets, the author acknowledged that designs might draw on the past for inspiration, but should now reflect 'the recognised standards of comfort of the present day'.⁶⁸⁸ Styles traditionally associated with status were re-interpreted. Guided by advice manuals such as Ogden Codman and Edith Wharton's *Decoration of Houses* (1897), new versions of eighteenth-century French design combined opulence with modern approaches to comfort, which ranged from seating to lighting.⁶⁸⁹ Other approaches which were based more on English interpretations combined the styles of Chippendale and Adam with the practicality of fitted furniture and a lighter palette in fresh, up-to-date schemes.⁶⁹⁰

Other characteristics of this re-interpreted comfort were associated with ideas of convenience. Innovations in lighting, sanitation, heating and ventilation saved labour, but they also improved physical well-being and fulfilled the appetite for novelty and modernisation.⁶⁹¹ Lady Barker suggested that warmth and fresh air, particularly in bedrooms, were pre-requisites for comfort and health, and that, with new technology, a well-ventilated room at the ideal temperature was wholly possible.⁶⁹² New forms of artificial illumination were efficient, but as Mrs. Gordon, author of *Decorative Lighting*, noted, they should also be 'conducive to comfort and repose'.⁶⁹³

⁶⁸⁷ R. D. Benn, *Style in Furniture* (London, 1904), 75 & 83.

⁶⁸⁸ H. P. Shapland, *Style Schemes in Antique Furnishing: Interiors and their Treatment* (London: 1909).

⁶⁸⁹ Joanna Banham, Sally MacDonald, Julia Porter, *Victorian Interior Design*, (London: Cassel, 1991), 207-8.

⁶⁹⁰ M. Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977). See also Robert W. Edis, *Decoration & Furniture of Town Houses*, (London: C Kegan Paul & Co, 1881); C. Gere, *Nineteenth-century Decoration: The Art of the Interior* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989).

⁶⁹¹ Marilyn Palmer, 'Nineteenth-century Technical Innovations in British Country Houses and their Estates', *Engineering History and Heritage*, February 2013, 36-44.

⁶⁹² Lady Barker, *The Bedroom and The Boudoir* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1878), and *Houses and Housekeeping* (London: William Hunt & Co, 1876), 119. Lady Barker is my great-great grandmother.

⁶⁹³ Mrs J. E. H. Gordon, *Decorative Electricity* (1891), 97.

This connection between comfort, modernity and efficiency led to associations between comfort, health and sanitation.⁶⁹⁴ Hygiene improved as scientific discoveries identified the importance of disinfection and cleanliness in controlling disease. Its benefits also included the reduction of the unpleasant sights, sounds and smells of others in shared spaces, whether public or domestic, an often unappreciated aspect of the 'civilising process' with which the Victorians were absorbed.⁶⁹⁵ Bathing became more frequent, and, for the better-off, more private.⁶⁹⁶ For the many, daily bathing, in the privacy of a designated room, decorated in the shiny materials of hygienic modernity, was a dream-like indulgence. In middle- and upper-class homes, on the other hand, hip baths in bedrooms, filled by servants, were replaced by dedicated bathrooms with fixed baths, and hot running water. For those with expectations of luxury, such desirable comforts were increasingly considered necessities.

Victorian comfort was more than a purely psychological or physical response to the world. It was also associated with the control of space, propriety and privacy.⁶⁹⁷ If the temperature of an interior or the depth of the cushioned seating could be controlled, so too could the interactions of the occupants of a building. Differing ideas of respectability and social expectations according to gender, age, and class were reflected in the arrangement of domestic space. These ideas of social comfort, like those of material comfort, were subject to modification and development.

Charles Rice argues that two key works on the plan of the large house, Robert Kerr's *The Gentleman's House* (1864) and J.J. Stevenson's *House Architecture* (1880) illustrated such

⁶⁹⁴ Classen, *The Deepest Sense* (2012), 183.

⁶⁹⁵ John Pratt, 'Norbert Elias, the Civilizing Process and Penal Development in Modern Society', *The Sociological Review*, 5 (2011), 220-240, 221.

⁶⁹⁶ For the development of sanitation, bathing and hygiene, see Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (New York: OUP, 1948), 628-711; Georges Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing Attitudes in France since the Middle Ages* (Cambridge; Paris: CUP; Maison Des Sciences de L'Homme, 1988), 188; Lawrence Wright, *Clean & Decent: The Fascinating History of the Bathroom & the Water Closet* (London: Penguin 2000), 233 and Barbara Penner, *Bathroom* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013).

⁶⁹⁷ Katherine C. Grier, *Culture & Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930* (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 2.

changes. Rice contends that in the earlier book, comfort was found 'in relation to the separation of functions and inhabitants from each other'. By 1880, the fashion was increasingly to promote the mingling of inhabitants.⁶⁹⁸ For grand hotels, these changing interpretations of comfort, propriety, and privacy were significant.

Comfort in all these forms threaded through the luxury of grand hotels. In this chapter, I contend that, as idealised homes-from-home, these establishments followed contemporary advice which emphasised comfort in the domestic setting. At the same time, hotels sought to underline their luxury status by continually adopting the most up-to-date practices. In the private retreat of the guest room, the choice of décor and furnishings was less about the spectacle of social distinction - although fashion was important - than the satisfaction of physical comfort. Providing for physical ease and convenience, and preserving the propriety, health, peace and quiet of guests were all crucial, and hotels adopted a variety of planimetric, technological and material methods on the upper floors accordingly. As attitudes to privacy, hygiene and bathing changed, hotels adapted. The most significant of these adaptations was the change to the bathroom. In the 1860s, numbers of bathrooms were low, and often shared. By the end of the period, a new, modern space, the adjoining or en-suite bathroom, had arrived, catering for individuals with very different expectations of personal space, cleanliness and grooming.

Initially, however, I consider comfort in the public rooms of hotels. Varying ideas of comfort for male and female guests were accommodated partially through a degree of physical separation, but also in décor and furnishings. In smoking rooms, men could relax in interiors designed according to accepted masculine tastes and ways of behaving. Although men were not excluded from hotel drawing rooms, the decoration and furnishings of these interiors followed the

⁶⁹⁸ Charles Rice, *The Emergence of the Interior: Architecture, Modernity, Domesticity* (London: Routledge, 2007), 57.

conventions of the homes of the wealthy in prioritising accepted ideas of female comfort. The drawing rooms of grand hotels, therefore, were designed so that women - accompanied by well-behaved men- could conduct their daily activities in surroundings, which reflected and responded to changing interpretations of fashion and luxury.

The Comfort of Varied Guests: Social and Physical Ease in Public Rooms

In 1895, Mr W. Hamilton Beattie, architect for the North British Railway Company at their new railway hotel in Edinburgh, considered the question of comfort. 'No hotel is well planned which does not thoughtfully provide for the comfort of its varied guests, from the time they arrive until they depart'. 'The public rooms,' he continued, 'should be in such positions as are most convenient for the special class of guests who chiefly use them, [...and] to cause the least interference with the other guests who do not use them'.⁶⁹⁹ For Hamilton Beattie, comfort, at least in part, was about separation.

This approach was not surprising. Although new purpose-built hotels were at the intersection where innovative patterns of consumption and ideas about the 'gendering' of domestic space met, dividing interiors according to the gender as well as the activities of occupants was, at least initially, to be expected. While there is some debate about how this was enacted in reality, in the homes of upper- and middle-class Victorians it was common practice to provide men and women with spaces in which one or the other predominated, and which were decorated and furnished to respond to the variations in ideas of male and female taste and comfort.⁷⁰⁰ For women, this space

⁶⁹⁹ 'Hotel Designing', *The Caterer*, 16 April 1895, 149.

⁷⁰⁰ 'Gendering' - 'the process by which identities are pieced together by active subjects from the materials - object'. Jane Hamlett, 'The Dining Room should be the Man's Paradise, as the Drawing Room is the Woman's', *Gender & History*, 21 (2009), 576-591. 'The drawing or withdrawing room is essentially and pre-eminently the ladies' room; as sacred to their influence and rule as the smoking room is to the regnancy of the men', H.J. Jennings, *Our Homes and How to Beautify Them* (London, 1902), 173. Also Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (1978).

was often an elegant drawing room. For men, this usually meant the privacy and freedom of the smoking room.

The Comfort of Men: The Smoking Room

Satisfying male comfort, distinct in a number of ways from ideals of female ease and well-being, was an important aspect of Victorian and Edwardian spatial planning.⁷⁰¹ In clubs, men could socialise together in private interiors, allowing a degree of uninhibited relaxation.⁷⁰² In large houses, wealthy men could enjoy their leisure in smoking and billiard rooms, usually arranged in suites set apart from the main activities of the house. Within, they were free from restrictions imposed by the female presence and the associated codes of polite society.⁷⁰³ In such spaces, men could enjoy a degree of privacy to smoke, to conduct conversations considered unsuitable for female ears, or simply to 'lounge' in a manner considered inappropriate elsewhere.

Grand hotels recognised the need to accommodate men at leisure in comfort. Indeed, *The Caterer* argued that male comfort was often prioritised over female. 'A moment's reflection', the journal acknowledged in 1896, 'will convince almost everyone that nearly all the modern improvements which bulk so largely in the hotel advertisements make for the increased comfort of men rather than of women'. Female guests were certainly important, but the contented male guest was vital to an establishment's success. Consequently, the journal noted, 'no 'first class' hotel [...] is without a luxurious smoking room'.⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰¹ See John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: London: YUP, 1999); Colville, 'The role of the interior in constructing notions of class and status', in McKellar and Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity* (2004), 114 -132, and John Potvin, 'Vapour and Steam: The Victorian Turkish Bath, Homosocial Health, and Male Bodies on Display', *Journal of Design History*, 18:4 (2013), 319-333.

⁷⁰² Rendell, 'The Clubs of St James's', *The Journal of Architecture*, 4 (1999), 167-189.

⁷⁰³ These suites gave unmarried men in particular a discrete space in which to let off steam. Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan, 1835-1914* (1981).

⁷⁰⁴ 'Women and Hotels, *The Caterer*, August 1896, 371

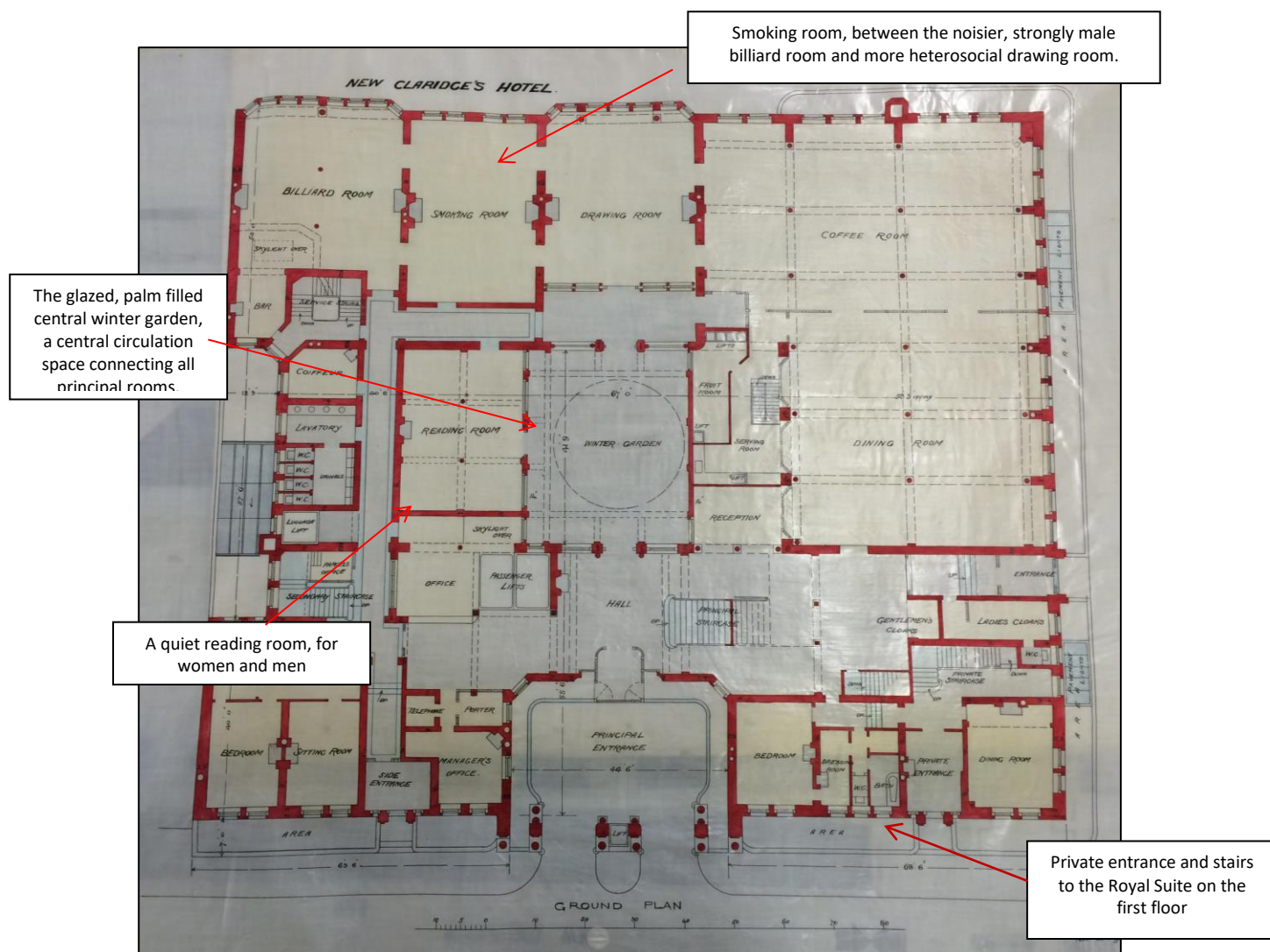


Figure 43 Drawing for Ground Floor of Claridge's, dated August 1896⁷⁰⁵

In terms of location, Hamilton Beattie's advice was that smoking rooms should be 'readily accessible' but in 'retired situations where they do not interfere with the comfort of the lady guests', and, in most of the case study hotels, such rooms were close to the principal public rooms, but set apart.⁷⁰⁶ At the Berkeley prior to alterations in 1907, the large smoking room was accessed from the main hall, but well away from the drawing room (Figure 36). In other hotels, the separation from the principal reception rooms was less distinct. At Claridge's, the billiard room was in the corner of the building furthest from the main entrance, next to the smoking

⁷⁰⁵ LMA GLC/AR/BR/19/276

⁷⁰⁶ BN, 11 August 1899, 157 and 'Hotel Designing', *The Caterer*, April 1895, 149.

room which was interconnected with the drawing room (Figure 43). This hotel also had sufficient space also to provide a quiet reading room, set apart from these more convivial rooms.

Smoking rooms, and billiard rooms where these existed, were also differentiated from the other public rooms by decoration and furnishing. Rather than exhibiting status through the use of mirrors, glossy surfaces and French decorative detailing, these rooms tended to be matt and dark. Sofas and chairs were often low and deep, designs completely unsuitable for corset- and crinoline-clad ladies, and frequently upholstered in hard wearing, dark leather. At the Carlton, the oak panelled, 'Elizabethan' smoking room, was a peaceful haven, where the windows 'let in warm light and shut out street noises'. At the Coburg, the smoking lounge, was furnished with 'tempting divans', which combined 'richness with artistic effect and thorough comfort'.⁷⁰⁷

Decorative style usually took one of two approaches. The first materialised a widely-held view of Victorian and Edwardian masculine identity evoking the relationship between ideas of the past, heroism, and nationalism.⁷⁰⁸ In this time of change, the mythology of Arthurian legend, medievalism and the Tudor monarchs offered an attractive combination of chivalry, heroic adventure and hierarchical social structures. In both architecture and interior design, references to this mythologised masculinity could be seen in style, pattern, and the use of the natural materials of the past.⁷⁰⁹ Wood, stone and leather were combined with the decorative detailing of the Gothic or the English Renaissance. At the Hans Place Hotel (1896), the smoking room, at the rear of the hall, was panelled in fumed oak, with a carved oak chimneypiece, and the furniture

⁷⁰⁷ Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 456; 'The Hotel Coburg', *The Caterer*, December 1896, 598.

⁷⁰⁸ Potvin, 'Vapour and Steam', *Journal of Design History*, 18:4 (2013), 319-333, citing Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London; NYC: Routledge, 119), 1-2.

⁷⁰⁹ Christina Crosby, 'Reading the Gothic Revival: "History" and *Hints on Household Taste*,' in *Rewriting the Victorians: Theory, History and the Politics of Gender*, ed. Linda M. Shires (London: Routledge, 1992), 102, cited by Inga Bryden, 'All Dressed Up: Revivalism and the Fashion for Arthur in Victorian Culture', *Arthuriana*, 21: 2 (2011), 28-41, 30. Bryden also cites Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

was 'remarkable for its comfort'.⁷¹⁰ At Claridge's, the sombre and rich smoking room, by Ernest George and Yeates, was also clad in oak panelling. Above the high wooden dado, walls were green with silver motifs. Leather-buttoned chairs and Chesterfields were arranged in small conversational groups. A stone fireplace, with a huge mantel reaching to the oak-framed ceiling, evoked ideas of a medieval Great Hall (Figure 44).⁷¹¹ The comfort of knowing one's place in history - what more could a gentleman desire?



Figure 44 The Smoking Room, Claridge's (1898)⁷¹²

Influenced no doubt by the fashion for similarly-themed rooms in the homes of the wealthy, the second approach favoured versions of the exotic or oriental, inspired by decorative styles found in India, but also in Islamic decoration in Europe and the Levant.⁷¹³ As I argue in Chapter V, fashionable cosmopolitanism and greater exposure to foreign cultures endowed Anglicised

⁷¹⁰ 'The Hans Place Hotel', *The Architect*, 22 May 1896, 337.

⁷¹¹ H. Townsend, 'Study in Hotel Decoration' *Homes of the Passing Show* (1900), 48, and 'The Furnishing of the New Claridge's' *Furniture and Decoration*, December 1898, 194.

⁷¹² Original photograph in Savoy Hotel Archive. *Historic England Archive Swindon*.

⁷¹³ See Michael Darby, *The Islamic Perspective: An Aspect of British Architecture and Design in the 19th Century* (London: Leighton House Gallery, 1983). For the relationship between privileged male interiors and the oriental, see Anne Anderson, 'The 'New Old School': Furnishing with Antiques in the Modern Interior - Frederic, Lord Leighton's Studio House and its Collections', *Journal of Design History*, 24:4 (2011), 315-338.

interpretations of oriental and Islamic decoration with an allure which had particular resonance within luxury hotels. Interiors connected with these themes reflected an idea of masculinity which combined well-travelled, educated experience with the enticements of the 'fantasy of the sultan's harem'.⁷¹⁴

Often, the furniture and decoration of these interiors did nothing more than deploy fashionable motifs as surface treatments or introduce accessories in an eclectic manner which bore little relation to their original sources. In the Berkeley's smoking room, the simplicity of the Aesthetic style was blended with 'Turkish' kilims on the floor and seating. Stylised patterns ornamented the white walls, and the furniture resembled standard commercial designs for 'oriental' bamboo or wicker furniture, advertised as 'ideal for smoking rooms' in the trade press.⁷¹⁵

In other cases, all aspects of the interior seem to have been designed as a single scheme, or *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁷¹⁶ One of the most impressive of these was the suite of 'Indian' rooms at the Cecil. Here, the smoking and billiard rooms were decorated in a single, unified style, which also incorporated the adjoining informal *table d'hôte* restaurant. These interiors were designed and installed by Messrs James Shoolbred & Co, one of three furnishing companies selected to supply the enormous hotel. The firm, which sold a huge range of fabrics and furnishing materials from all over the world to domestic and commercial clients, had also recently completed the successful redecoration of the grand hall at the Langham.⁷¹⁷ The exotic scheme, *The Hotel World* maintained, was a practical solution to the unusually low ceilings on this floor, which precluded a

⁷¹⁴ John Potvin, 'Inside Orientalism', in *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space* (2015), 1-20, 2.

⁷¹⁵ 'The Berkeley', *The Architect*, 14 May 1897, 21, and *Historic England Photographic Archive* BL14114. See for example, a Merrifield & Co advertisement - Bamboo Furniture Manufacturers. 'Smoking Rooms etc. decorated in Oriental style to design'. *The Cabinet Maker*, October 1902.

⁷¹⁶ *Gesamtkunstwerk* - 'the interior as total expression or work of art'. Potvin, 'Inside Orientalism', in *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space* (2015), 1-20, 7.

⁷¹⁷ Elizabeth Aslin, *Nineteenth-Century English Furniture* (London: Faber, 1962), 87; 'Messrs Shoolbred and Co', *The Queen*, 7 July, 1894, 43 and 13 October 1894, 650, and *The Caterer*, June 1895, 239.

design of classical proportions.⁷¹⁸ Whether this was the case, or whether the principal motivation was providing the somewhat jaded palate of the hotel guest with an exciting experience is not clear. The result was an extravaganza of colour and form, based, so the publicity went, on the Emperor Akbar's palace at Futtipore Sikri in India. Male comfort in this luxury hotel might have originated in the far reaches of the Empire, but the source was of the highest status.



Figure 45 The Smoking room at the Cecil, from *Hotel Cecil, London (1906)*⁷¹⁹

The experience was immersive, with an intensity and sensory immediacy.⁷²⁰ From floor to ceiling, from side table to light fitting, no element was left untouched. The walls, columns, window canopies and chimneypieces of the suite were covered with hand-painted tiles by Doulton's, acclaimed by the *British Architect* as 'one of the most striking examples of constructive faience to be found in London'.⁷²¹ Bright yellow, blue, green and red designs in relief against a background

⁷¹⁸ 'Hotel Cecil', *HW*, December 1895, 31-33.

⁷¹⁹ *Hotel Cecil* (London), 17.

⁷²⁰ Mike Featherstone, 'Luxury, Consumer Culture and Sumptuary Dynamics', *Luxury*, 1:1 (2014), 47-69, 54. Featherstone argues that such immersive experiences are deliberately constructed by 21st century brands to provoke luxury consumption.

⁷²¹ *BA*, 8 May 1896, 328.

of soft blue produced 'a harmonious effect'. The mantelpieces were castellated like an Indian fort. Even the photograph of the smoking room which appeared in the hotel brochure was cropped to resemble the curved domes of the Emperor's palace (Figure 45).

This striking visual impact was accompanied by great physical comfort. The rooms, A.H. Beavan wrote, were equal to any Pall Mall club, and 'a marvel of cosiness'. Curved divans, upright, hard-back chairs and deep, soft armchairs provided comfort in varying forms. 'To get into the easy chairs – large and roomy, and covered in Spanish stamped leather', Beavan observed, 'is simple enough; but they are difficult, by reason of their too much easiness, to get out of without a struggle and a sigh'.⁷²² Even the senses of smell and taste were catered for. The scent of cigars and cigarettes pervaded the room, and, in the adjoining restaurant, guests could enjoy Indian curries prepared by the resident native chef. Exotic delights were blended with supreme relaxation. Unlike the glittering fairyland of the hotel restaurant, designed as backdrop to the performance of female guests, this was an enchanted world for men.

Female Comfort and Respectability: The Drawing Room

While men could retire to the smoking room, accommodating the social and physical comfort of female guests was less straightforward. Although women were essential to the business model of the grand hotel, their welcome was not unequivocal. Single females might arouse suspicion, but even indubitably respectable women could present difficulties. Female guests tended to be less profitable than men, as they rarely ordered expensive food, and did not run up large bills for cigars or drinks.⁷²³ Women, *The Caterer* contended, also often displayed 'troublesome caprices', forgot what they had put in the safe, and did not tip the bell boy, despite keeping him 'promenading up and down stairs all day with roses and cards, parcels and messages'.⁷²⁴ Despite

⁷²² Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 456.

⁷²³ 'Hotels and the Eternal Feminine', *The Caterer*, April 1909, 166.

⁷²⁴ 'Feminine Guests at Hotels', *The Caterer*, April 1893, 155.

these challenges, female guests were generally desirable, not least for their decorative, if somewhat de-humanised, attributes. 'A pretty woman reading in a parlour, or waiting on a hall seat, or scribbling letters in her queer angular hand at the writing table', *The Caterer* argued, 'is ever so much more interesting an attraction than a barrel of *bric à brac*, a potted palm or a *jardinière* full of flowers'. Most importantly, as noted in earlier chapters, women brought higher spending men with them. 'The hotel where women do most congregate', the journal maintained, 'is sure to have a generous following of men'. Nonetheless, despite their contribution to a hotel's ambience and profitability, *The Caterer* reported, female guests did not feel their needs were a priority. 'A lady with a faculty for neat phrasing rather than accurate observation summed it thus', the journal wrote, 'Hotels were built for men. Then it struck the builders that some men might bring their wives, as they bring their dogs. So they stuck on a drawing room'.⁷²⁵ (!)

Whether providing a suitable public reception room for female guests was an afterthought or not, it does seem that the proprietors of the earlier purpose-built hotels were not wholly decided upon the best way to accommodate their female guests, or how to provide for the comfort of couples and families in the public reception rooms more generally. The well-travelled Antony Trollope observed in 1862 that in the new hotels a guest either had the option of an impersonal, cold and draughty 'public room, called the coffee room' or the expense of a private sitting room.⁷²⁶ Writing in 1895, Lucy Hardy, a contributor to numerous late-Victorian journals, noted that the drawing room, 'at an English hotel [was] a comparatively recent institution', and that 'some twenty to twenty five years ago, travellers who objected to pass[ing] the evening in the coffee room were at most hostelrys compelled to engage a private sitting room'.⁷²⁷ In America, as Trollope observed, the response to the requirement for comfort for both men and women was

⁷²⁵ 'Women and Hotels, *The Caterer*, August 1896, 371.

⁷²⁶ Antony Trollope, *North America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1862), 555.

⁷²⁷ Lucy Hardy, 'The Hotel Drawing Room, *The Queen*, 21 September 1895, 525

to provide 'parlors' clearly separated by gender.⁷²⁸ While this form of separation was not so clear-cut in London, at least initially some hotels did provide reception rooms solely for the use of women. Early plans of the Langham, for example, indicate both a 'ladies' coffee room', and a 'ladies' drawing room or library' on the ground floor. At the Grand, the 'home-like' comfort of the ladies' room was on the first floor, away from the main public rooms.⁷²⁹

Towards the end of the century, however, the attitude towards female social and physical comfort was shifting.⁷³⁰ A number of larger hotels continued to devote some space to a ladies' reading or writing room, but in general, it was unusual for any of the principal reception rooms to be defined as solely for female use. As the next chapter establishes, women and men increasingly wished to socialise together. In hotels where luxury was defined in part by fashionable innovation, this aspiration drove the development of a new, less formal, heterosocial space - the lounge or winter garden, which is discussed in the next chapter. In drawing rooms, divisions were less along strict gender lines than modes of behaviour. In his study of north Atlantic travel in this period, Douglas Hart argues that the first-class saloons of liners were retreats from the 'vulgar' classes, not only for wealthy and upper middle-class women, but also their male escorts.⁷³¹ In the drawing rooms of grand hotels, travellers could find a similar approach to social comfort. Indeed, Lucy Hardy specifically commented that the hotel drawing room was intended for 'ladies, and gentlemen accompanied by ladies'. Men were only admitted 'when properly chaperoned by a female companion'.⁷³² Unlike smoking rooms, which were designed to provide men with a

⁷²⁸ Plans of Tremont House, Boston, (1829) arguably the first modern luxury hotel in America, demonstrate a clear division of space along gender lines. Carolyn Brucken, 'In the Public Eye: Women and the American Luxury Hotel', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31 (1996), 203-220, 212.

⁷²⁹ *The Caterer*, June 1881, 118.

⁷³⁰ See Robert Kerr, *The Gentleman's House* (1864), Charles L. Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details* (1868 and 1878), and Robert W. Edis, *Decoration & Furniture of Town Houses*, (C Kegan Paul & Co, London 1881). See also Rice, *The Emergence of the Interior* (2007), 57.

⁷³¹ Douglas Hart, 'Sociability and 'Separate Spheres' on the North Atlantic: The Interior Architecture of British Atlantic Liners, 1840-1930', *Journal of Social History*, (Fall 2010) 189-212, 190.

⁷³² Hardy, 'The Hotel Drawing Room', *The Queen*, 21 September 1895, 525.

degree of privacy from women, female comfort in drawing rooms could accommodate male guests, as long as they behaved appropriately. The comfort of female privacy, if desired, was to be found elsewhere.



Figure 46 The drawing room at the Metropole (1886)⁷³³

Unlike smoking rooms, drawing rooms were not designed to satisfy the need for private, physical ease. Comfort for women in public rooms was not concerned with bodily relaxation.⁷³⁴ Instead, the purpose was to facilitate social comfort in the form of the accepted conventions of appropriate female behaviour. In the drawing room, a female guest - or her well-behaved male companion - might conduct the familiar activities of reading, writing, playing music and socialising, surrounded by furnishings which evoked the well-appointed homes of the wealthy. Lucy Hardy described the drawing room in the 'better class modern hotels' as a 'comfortable and even luxurious apartment, furnished almost like the drawing rooms of a private houses, with books and flowers and numberless small objects of 'bigotry and virtue' scattered about so as to

⁷³³ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL06342*

⁷³⁴ Dorte Kuhlmann, *Gender Studies in Architecture: Space, Power and Difference* (London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 145.

give a quite home-like appearance.’ Reading matter was provided, and generally included daily and evening newspapers, periodicals of various kinds, and guides to the city.⁷³⁵ At the small tables or desks, guests could complete their regular correspondence. Pianos, suitable entertainment for young ladies, were common.⁷³⁶

Unlike the dark intimacy of the male smoking room, drawing rooms were concerned with fashion and visibility. As a consequence, in earlier hotels, these reception rooms were often decorated in the ostentatious grandeur redolent of the European Renaissance, or the fabulous interiors favoured by the wealthiest East Coast Americans.⁷³⁷ At the Metropole, the drawing room was treated with richly patterned gilded panels, decorated with swags and ribbons or filled with mirrors (Figure 46). The grand piano was supplied by Messrs Brinsmead and Sons.⁷³⁸ Bespoke gas light fittings with glass covers, frosted to flatter complexions, illuminated the elegant room. Upright chairs in the fashionable *Louis Seize* style or deeply buttoned ottomans, upholstered in velvet and silk, were arranged informally.

By the turn of the century, the fashion had turned. As was the case in restaurants, in many hotel drawing rooms, ostentation and gilding were overtaken by a paler palette which co-ordinated with fashionable dress fabrics, and a simpler interpretation of the styles of eighteenth-century England or France.⁷³⁹ At the Hans Place Hotel, the drawing room was ‘an elegantly appointed

⁷³⁵ Hardy, ‘The Hotel Drawing Room’, *The Queen*, 21 September 1895, 525.

⁷³⁶ A Hotel Manageress, *Practical Hotel Management* (1890), 13. Hardy also refers to the provision of a piano in her long article. Pianos were also provided in the first-class saloons on liners. Hart, ‘Sociability and ‘Separate Spheres’ on the North Atlantic’, *Journal of Social History*, (Fall 2010) 189-212; ‘American and English Etiquette Contrasted’, *Harper’s Bazaar*, 19 July 1884, 450.

⁷³⁷ Arnold Lewis, Steven McQuillin and James Turner, *Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age* (New York; London; Dover; Constable, 1987) reproduced 203 photographs from *Artistic Houses* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1883/4) which illustrated homes of the wealthiest Americans. The drawing room of the Cornelia M. Stewart house, New York bears a close resemblance to the drawing room at the Metropole, 35.

⁷³⁸ *BA*, 22 May 1885, xx.

⁷³⁹ Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman Jr., *The Decoration of Houses* (London: 1897); Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of the Interior* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), 333;

salon in the best style of Louis XVI'. The walls and ceiling were embellished in moulded plasterwork, copied from a French chateau. The carpet was a replica of an old Aubusson design, and the simple but elegant window hangings were in *rose du Barri* silk.⁷⁴⁰ In the Savoy, the drawing room was less overtly French, but still light and inviting, with pale walls and a delicately patterned carpet. Desks and small tables were arranged for the convenience of the guests. A variety of well-upholstered armchairs and sofas provided seating (Figure 47). In these interiors, fashion and physical ease came together.



Figure 47 Drawing rooms at the Hans Place Hotel (1896) and the Savoy (1898)⁷⁴¹

A comparison of the seating in hotel drawing rooms and smoking rooms reflects changing ideas of comfort for men and women. A chair's form embodies cultural and social factors which lie beyond its apparent function. Physical comfort was not necessarily the 'holy grail' of any chair designer, maker or user. Instead, as Anne Massey argues, 'psychological comfort, luxury and fashionability' could be more important.⁷⁴² Traditionally, chairs had been designed for the display of social status and the expression of genteel taste, constrained by the conventions of posture

Barbara Lasic, "'Dignity and Graciousness": Mewès and Davis and the Creation of *Tous Les Louis* Period Rooms', *Journal of Furniture History*, 48 (2012) 193-210.

⁷⁴⁰ The Hans Place Hotel', *The Architect*, 22 May 1896, 337.

⁷⁴¹ *Historic England Photographic Archive* BL13626 and 14896

⁷⁴² Penny Sparke, *As Long as it's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste* (London: Pandora, 1995), 11 and 27. Massey, *Chair* (2010), 102. See also Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort* (2001), 146, and Grier, *Culture & Comfort*: (1997), 117.

and fashionable dress. However, as the desire for greater physical comfort grew, and a correlation between leisure, relaxation and wealth became more pronounced, the design of chairs in hotels changed. Soft fabrics, colours, and curves in form to accommodate the body became more prevalent. Fat, yielding upholstery prioritised comfort over elegant posture.⁷⁴³

In smoking rooms, the requirements of male comfort were straightforward and chairs were deep, relaxing, and hard wearing. In the earlier drawing rooms, seating was often designed for the material expression of prestige, in appearance and materials. By 1900, furniture suppliers looked to produce seating designed more for physical comfort, promoting 'luxuriantly comfortable soft easy chairs'.⁷⁴⁴ In hotels, some chairs continued to retain the straight-backed formality of the Metropole, but other seating was designed with greater bodily ease in mind. In the drawing room at the Hans Place Hotel, upholstered arm chairs, and banquette seating in the well-lit window recesses gave guests a choice of positions. At the Savoy too, guests could select a firm, upright chair but were also tempted by deep, soft and yielding armchairs, designed to welcome bodies of all shapes and sizes in comfort.

For both female and male guests, in the public reception rooms of hotels, the association between luxury, fashionability and comfort was not just about the materiality of oak and leather, or gilding and silk, but grew to revolve as much around the experience of physical well-being and ease. In the upper floors of hotels, however, ideas of comfort were constrained by additional considerations. Decoration, 'cosiness' and practicality were, of course, essential, but proprietors were also required to accommodate comforts which extended from the peace of mind of a locked door, to the modernity of a shiny, white bath.

⁷⁴³ Gloag, *Victorian Comfort* (1961), 70.

⁷⁴⁴ 'Maple & Co', *The Queen*, 5 December 1891) np.

Individuality, Privacy, and Hygiene: Luxury in Guest Rooms

Prior to selecting design and furnishings, the first consideration for hotel guest rooms was the plan. In some ways, layout on the bedroom floors could present something of a dilemma. Long, wide corridors, suitably decorated with thick carpets and beautiful wallpapers, could convey prestige.⁷⁴⁵ Simple symmetry was also easy to design, straightforward to construct, and maximised the number of income-generating bedrooms. But providing accommodation all of the same size was not necessarily practical. Standardised homogeneity in both size and design might be efficient and cost-effective, but it could imply undesirable mass production and a lack of personal attention.⁷⁴⁶ In addition, room size was influenced by constricted or asymmetric metropolitan sites, and ceiling heights tended to reduce as the floors rose.⁷⁴⁷ In general, therefore, as noted in Chapter IV, the upper floors catered for those with fewer resources, and the most expensive tariff was paid on the lower floors where the combination of high ceilings and the best street position produced the premium rooms.

Guest diversity also meant that standardisation was not commercially wise. Single guests on a limited budget might prefer a small bedroom, with access to a shared bathroom. Large parties and those with greater resources could afford an 'apartment', with private bathroom and a number of interconnecting rooms, which could be added to the suite as required, and which could be used for a variety of functions.⁷⁴⁸ Often contemporary hotel plans did not identify the use of rooms on the upper floors, leaving them to be allocated as dressing rooms, bedrooms or

⁷⁴⁵ Lynda Skipper, 'The Evolution of Wallpaper Interior Design Schemes in a Commercial Setting', *Journal of Design History*, 30:3 (2016), 315-334, 326.

⁷⁴⁶ Brody, *Housekeeping by Design* (2017), 57. Annabel Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago; London: UCP, 2001) discusses the cultural implications of international standardisation more broadly.

⁷⁴⁷ At Claridge's, the bedroom floors reduced in height from 11'6" on the first, to 9'6" in the attic floor (Claridge's Hotel plans. November 1894 *LMA GLC AR/BR/19/276*).

⁷⁴⁸ 'Apartments' was commonly used to refer to suites. *Observer*, 6 November 188; *BA*, 14 July 1899, 22.

sitting rooms according to changing fashions and the client's wishes. Flexible adaptability in suite size and room function was desirable.

Privacy and peace were also important to guest comfort. Initially hotel bedrooms usually opened directly off the corridor, which could be problematic. The transient nature of hotels meant that comings and goings at all times of the day or night were possible. Lift boys, apparently, delighted in slamming lift gates, with 'a sleep destroying bang', and it was not unusual for clients to complain about noise, bustle and discomfort.⁷⁴⁹ As time passed, more consideration was given to maintaining peace and quiet. Double glazing reduced street sounds - the Holborn Viaduct Hotel (1877) was an early example.⁷⁵⁰ Soundproofing was installed in doors, such as those fitted in the Carlton after the fire of 1911.⁷⁵¹ Internal lobbies also minimised troublesome noise.⁷⁵² A number of hotels provided sumptuously furnished 'Royal', or 'State' suites, some of which had private street entrances or dedicated lifts enabling occupants to come and go without observation or interruption. (Figure 43 and Figure 53).⁷⁵³

To protect the security of guests and their possessions, locking systems became more complex. In earlier hotels, keys tended to be of a standard design which could unlock any room, and it was not unusual for keys on hooks to be on view at the reception desk.⁷⁵⁴ In the impersonal, modern hotel, this practice meant it was relatively easy to enter another guest's room while the occupant was absent. An incident of this nature at the Grosvenor prompted a review. Here, Messrs Hobbs, Hart and Co, lock suppliers to a number of hotels including the Metropole, designed a system which enabled doors to be opened only either from the inside or from the outside by individual

⁷⁴⁹ 'American Hotels', *HW*, April 1900, v; T. Raffles Davison, 'Hotel Design', *BA*, 6 January 1899, 2-3.

⁷⁵⁰ 'A metropolitan Grand Hotel', *London Journal*, 1 December 1877, 341. 'Savoy Hotel', *DT*, 25 May 1904, 5.

⁷⁵¹ *BA*, 16 February 1912, 141.

⁷⁵² Ernest Runtz, 'Hostelries Ancient and Modern, Bed and Sitting Rooms etc.', *The Caterer*, May 1907, 206.

⁷⁵³ 'The Savoy Hotel', *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3. See 'Hotel Metropole', *BN*, 5 June 1885, 878; 'The Grand', *The Caterer*, June 1887, 210, and Claridge's as described in *The Architect*, 9 December 1898, 37.

⁷⁵⁴ Wynter 'The new hotel system', *Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers* (1863; re-ed. 1877), 71.

key. In 1904, the new Yale locks at the Savoy were particularly sophisticated. Suite doors could be opened with the press of a button inside the room, ‘thereby avoiding the trouble of [the guest] himself having to answer it’.⁷⁵⁵ These innovations provided protection and peace of mind.



Figure 48. A Bedroom at the Savoy in 1893, and a sample of original wallpaper⁷⁵⁶

Variety was not only desirable in the size and plan of guest rooms but also in their furnishing.

When the Savoy first opened in 1889, the press were captivated. The ‘fine’ exterior was ‘attractive’, the cellars were stocked with ‘carefully selected champagnes, burgundies and clarets’, and in the American ‘elevators’ guests could ‘conveniently ascend’ to the upper floors.⁷⁵⁷

Also admired were the guest rooms, decorated under the guidance of Helen Carte (1852-1913).

Carte was a business-woman of ability, who had managed the D’Oyly Carte opera company tours in the United States, gaining knowledge of American hotels in the process.⁷⁵⁸ While there is

evidence that she supervised the furnishing of the whole hotel, it was the bedrooms and suites

⁷⁵⁵ ‘Hotel Metropole’, *BN*, 5 June 1885, 878, and ‘Savoy Hotel’, *DT*, 25 May 1904, 5.

⁷⁵⁶ *Souvenir* (1893), 23; Siobhan Doran, *Savoy: The Restoration* (London: Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2011), 15.

⁷⁵⁷ *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534.

⁷⁵⁸ Francois Cellier, *Gilbert, Sullivan and D’Oyly Carte: Reminiscences of the Savoy and the Savoyards*, 2nd edn (London: New York, 1927), 416; Brian Jones, *Helen D’Oyly Carte: Gilbert and Sullivan’s Fourth Partner* (London: Basingstoke Books, 2011). See also U.S. press coverage of her tour management, e.g. ‘Women’s Work’, *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 20 May 1881, 5, and ‘Lady Managers’, *Daily Inter Ocean* (Chicago), 14 January 1882, 2. The role of women managers more widely is discussed in Chapter VII Modernity.

for which the press gave her most credit. An article in *The Telegraph* praised 'the refined taste of Mrs D'Oyly Carte'. The suites, the paper exclaimed, were 'upholstered and arranged on a scale which can only be equalled in a grand mansion'.⁷⁵⁹ The bedrooms, furnished by Messrs. Maple & Co, were 'much alike in size and proportions', the paper went on, but 'of course they vary in style, in tone, and in detail'. Each provided a personal experience of comfort and luxury.

The Savoy interiors were fashionably artistic, decorated with a blend of colours, patterns and fabrics, combining the recognisable comforts of aristocratic ease with cosmopolitan, cultural references from Europe or the Orient.⁷⁶⁰ Photographs from *Souvenir* (1893), depict a series of artfully replete interiors, complete with the conveniences required by a well-to-do traveller (Figure 48). Adequate heating and ventilation were implicit. So too were capacious wardrobes, toilet stands, and good lighting. Dressing tables and full length mirrors enabled the elaborate self-grooming fashionable among the elite classes.⁷⁶¹ According to press reports, the rooms were furnished with 'brass twin bedsteads, inlaid cabinets and sets of mahogany, walnut or enamelled ash, carved dados and mantelpieces, wall hangings of Japanese papers or of tapestry designs, friezes of gold, and pottery of choicest description.' Thick carpets lay on the floors. *Chaises longues* afforded female guests the physical relaxation they were denied in the formality of the public drawing room. Each room was unique, but could, if desired, be further adapted to a guest's special requirements.⁷⁶² 'Nothing', *The Telegraph* concluded, 'is wanting to please the educated eye or gratify the artistic one and no incongruity jars upon the observer'. Comfort, the *Illustrated London News* declared, was 'ensured'.⁷⁶³

⁷⁵⁹ 'The Savoy Hotel' *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3, and *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534. The articles are virtually identical.

⁷⁶⁰ For similar interiors, see Charlotte Gere, *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of the Interior* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), 328-333, and Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior* (2008).

⁷⁶¹ Jessica P. Clark, 'Grooming Men: the Material World of the Nineteenth-century Barber Shop', in Greig, Hamlett and Hannan, eds., *Gender and Material Culture in Britain since 1600* (2015), 108.

⁷⁶² See Nellie Melba's sitting room at the Savoy, as illustrated in Cooper, *The Opulent Eye* (1976), 83.

⁷⁶³ 'The Savoy Hotel' *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3, and *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534.

While peace, secure privacy and suitable furniture were vital for the comfort of the guest, so too was hygiene. Scrupulous cleanliness was of the greatest importance in the Victorian home, where it minimised the risk of infection, protected furnishings and also indicated a certain moral and social standing. In hotels, the requirement to maintain high standards was even greater. Reports of poor hygiene or infection could affect a business seriously. Equally, no-one wished to see evidence of previous visitors in their bedrooms.⁷⁶⁴ Rooms should be furnished fashionably, but they should also be well maintained and spotlessly clean.



Figure 49 Choice and Variety in the Bedrooms at the Cecil in 1896⁷⁶⁵

Decorations were selected accordingly. New, hard-wearing, patent wallpapers, such as Walton's Lincrusta were preferable to heavy fabric wall hangings.⁷⁶⁶ Beds were often dressed with half testers, bringing a generous luxury without the accompanying dust of the four poster.⁷⁶⁷ In 1896, photographs of the recently-opened Cecil depicted bedrooms decorated in a range of styles, patterns and fabrics. These images exuded a comfortably replete air. Bed hangings, walls and floors were decorated in a multitude of florals, stripes and motifs (Figure 49). Twin beds, made up with crisp white linen and soft pillows, gave the hotel flexibility, but sleeping in separate beds was

⁷⁶⁴ 'Influenza', it was feared, could cling to heavy materials, transferring the disease from one guest to the next. Arthur Griffiths, 'Hotels at Home and Abroad', *Fortnightly Review*, August 1899, 256-263, 257-8

⁷⁶⁵ *Historic England: BL13570 and BL13570/017*

⁷⁶⁶ For the use of Walton's 'Lincrusta' at the Grand, see *BA*, 7 February 1879, 58-59, and *BN*, 4 June 1880, 648. Gill Saunders, *Wallpaper in Interior Decoration* (London: V & A Publications, 2002), 127-132.

⁷⁶⁷ Following the recommendation of Lady Barker, *The Bedroom and the Boudoir* (1878), 26.

becoming more fashionable, indicative of a preference for hygienic separation in households where incomes were rising.⁷⁶⁸ A good night's sleep in a clean, comfortable bed was essential.

After the turn of the century, variety rather than standardisation continued to be popular in many grand hotels. At the Piccadilly, the fourth and fifth floor rooms were furnished by Liberty & Co, with two regional suppliers, Messrs Chamberlin and Messrs Bunting both of Norwich, responsible for the sixth to the ninth floors. The Liberty rooms on the superior floors were particularly noted for the range of their designs. A client could choose, *The Times* observed, from 'Old English, Adam, Chippendale, Sheraton or Empire or towards the more modern school of English design.'⁷⁶⁹ Each room varied in style, tone and detail, as at the Savoy nearly 20 years before, and the tasteful distinction desirable in the luxury experience was on display.

However, influenced by considerations of hygiene and of stylish modernity, a greater simplicity of design was becoming more fashionable.⁷⁷⁰ Painted, fitted wardrobes and chests of drawers, adopted 'with an eye to the comfort and well-being of the occupant', replaced dust-collecting, free-standing pieces in dark mahogany or oak. Brightly coloured, patterned fabrics and wallpapers were rejected in favour of the pale tones of '*vieux* rose, leaf green and fawn'.⁷⁷¹ The adoption of the lighter palette, and specifically the greater use of white, represented a significant change.⁷⁷² In commercial sitting and bedrooms, dark colours and pattern helpfully disguised signs of wear

⁷⁶⁸ Hilary Hinds, 'Together and Apart: Twin Beds Domestic Hygiene and Modern Marriage, 1890–1945', *Journal of Design History*, September 2010, 275–304, 281; Tom Crook, 'Norms, Forms and Beds: Spatializing Sleep in Victorian Britain', *Body and Society*, 14 (2008), 15–35, 19.

⁷⁶⁹ *The Times*, 5 May 1908, 17: 'The Piccadilly Hotel', *The Caterer*, May 1908, 222–223, and *CL*, 23 November 1907, lxviii. Marie-Thérèse Rieber, *Liberty: British Colour Pattern* (London: Goodman 2013), 33.

Unfortunately no images of these interiors have been found.

⁷⁷⁰ For the changing fashions in bedroom furniture, see Cooper, *The Opulent Eye* (1976), 10, and Edwards', 'Complete House Furnishers', *Journal of Interior Design*, 38 (2013), 12.

⁷⁷¹ 'The Lancet' on Hotels', *The Caterer*, December 1889, 474; 'Messrs Shoolbred and Co', *The Queen*, 13 October 1894, 650; 'A Louis Quinze bedroom', *The Queen*, 15 August 1891, 26

⁷⁷² For the use of white in interiors, see Sally-Anne Huxtable, 'White Walls, White Nights, White Girls: Whiteness and the British Artistic Interior 1850–1900', *Journal of Design History*, 27:3 (2014), 237–255, 247.

and dirt. Clean, pure whiteness, on the other hand, was a visible but rare commodity which required effort, time and money to maintain, a consideration not lost in luxury interiors.



Figure 50 Bedrooms at the Ritz, 1906 ⁷⁷³

These elegant styles were particularly favoured by the most fashionable of the grand hotels. At the Carlton, the palette was largely restricted to the simplicity of white. This ‘restraint’ *The British Architect* contended, was ‘agreeable and pleasing’. The white walls were an ‘excellent innovation’. ⁷⁷⁴ This arrangement was undeniably modern, the journal argued, but inevitably demanding for maintenance and housekeeping. ‘We appreciate the decorative scheme, and hardly think it possible to have too much white in a London hotel (if it be kept white)’. At the Ritz, too, all the 150 guest rooms had white walls. Here, the interiors were decorated in Mewès’ and Davis’ up-to-date interpretations of eighteenth-century French designs, with marble mantelpieces and painted panelling, ‘comfortably as well as daintily furnished either in green or rose red’. Twin brass beds were used in all the principal bedrooms, and dressing tables and armchairs provided a comfort and calm elegance which was much admired (Figure 50). ⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷³ *The Ritz Hotel* Pinterest site <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/240450067580600501/> acc.7.5.19

⁷⁷⁴ *BA*, 14 July 1899, 19.

⁷⁷⁵ ‘The Hotel Ritz’, *The Caterer*, July 1906, 309; Marcus Binney, *The Ritz Hotel, London* (1999).

After 1900, at the Savoy the new guest suites and serviced apartments also generally took this more simplified approach. In the 1904 Strand extension, which promised ‘the greatest possible comfort and luxury’, the suites were in the ‘Adam or Georgian’ style.⁷⁷⁶ The furniture was, according to *The Builder’s Journal*, in a ‘simple and perhaps rather severe order, relying on the refinement of detail and harmony of colour for its attractiveness rather than on obtrusive outlines and carvings’. ‘The result is entirely charming’, the journal declared, ‘indeed a marked change from the average hotel bedroom.’⁷⁷⁷ In the 1910 extension on the Embankment side, the designers took a similarly restrained approach. Guests were accommodated in white-painted, fashionably hygienic twin beds. Rooms were equipped with convenient, dust-free fitted furniture (Figure 51). These clean, pale interiors were desirably unadorned and up-to-date.



Figure 51 A New Bedroom at the Savoy, 1910⁷⁷⁸

The transformation from the well-filled rooms of earlier hotel guest room interiors, replete with dark furniture and layers of pattern, designed to give the impression of comfortable generosity, to the light, pared-back elegance of the Carlton and the Ritz was significant. Whether the

⁷⁷⁶ The Savoy Hotel, *The Times*, 16 June 1904, 4.

⁷⁷⁷ *BJ*, 22 June 1904, 293.

⁷⁷⁸ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL21031/001*

predominant style was English or French, these interiors were furnished almost sparsely, free from the competing patterns and textures of the previous decades. The crisp, white linen of the earlier hotels was now accompanied by white walls, and pale upholstery, curtains and bedspreads. Upon their surfaces, cleanliness, or the lack of it, could be spotted immediately. Frequent renewal or replacement was a requirement. Quality superseded quantity.

Ideas of comfort in hotel guest rooms changed in the half century prior to 1910. These shifts, which saw a greater focus on clean whiteness, and smooth, uncluttered simplicity, correlated with changes in the appeal and frequency of private bathing among the wealthier classes. In the domestic setting, these contributed to an increased number of bathrooms. In hotels, the fashion for personal grooming, hygiene, convenience, and an elegant modernity also contributed to a transformation in the quantity, design and spatial arrangement of the bathroom.

‘That Modern Essential’: Comfort and Modernity in the Hotel Bathroom

When the Savoy’s experienced master builder, George Holloway, was told that the hotel was to have nearly seventy bathrooms, the story goes, he asked Richard D’Oyly Carte whether the guests were to be amphibious.⁷⁷⁹ Holloway was largely responsible for the construction of the 1889 hotel building as no architect was formally appointed.⁷⁸⁰ His expertise lay in managing large projects, and he was involved in a number of substantial metropolitan schemes, which included several hotels. His skills also lay in implementing improvements in building technology. His ‘fireproof’ staircase at the Grand, where he was clerk of works, was much admired by the Architectural

⁷⁷⁹ A number of sources, including Stanley Jackson, *The Savoy: The Romance of a Great Hotel* (London: Frederik Muller Ltd, 1964), 20, quote this statement, but no primary evidence has been found.

⁷⁸⁰ ‘In response to a question at the MBW enquiry as to whether an architect engaged upon the plans, RDC responded that ‘Mr Holloway engaged draughtsmen and was practically the architect’. Report of the Commission into the Metropolitan Board of Works, *Daily News*, 13 June 1888, and *The Standard*, 13 June 1888, 5. See also reports of the opening of the hotel, *DT*, 31 July 1889, 3. Holloway seems to have performed a similar overarching role in D’Oyly Carte’s Opera House, later the Palace Theatre (1891), according to Edwin O. Sachs, *Modern Theatres and Opera Houses*, Vol I. (London, 1896), 36. Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, who was married to D’Oyly Carte’s first cousin, Eliza, designed the balconies. Susan Scott, Archivist at the Savoy.

Association. At the Metropole, his interventions included a system of fresh air ventilation warmed by steam pipes.⁷⁸¹ Despite this knowledge of up-to-date hotel construction, Holloway considered the quantity of bathrooms at the Savoy excessive. However, it was soon clear that D'Oyly Carte's proposal correctly identified a significant change in expectations of comfort and luxury in hotels.

During the nineteenth century, ideas about bathing had changed.⁷⁸² New metropolitan infrastructure facilitated more reliable water supply and waste management. Legislation such as the 1875 Public Health Act and the 1891 Public Health (London) Act established legal and regulatory parameters for sanitary construction. Numerous publications guided builders and residents through the complexities of new plumbing and sanitary ware.⁷⁸³ For the working classes, bathing usually meant a shared experience - of both space and water. For the middle- and upper-classes, the bathroom was a progressively private space, and bathing was to be enjoyed alone.⁷⁸⁴ Personal washing was necessary for hygiene, but it also provided opportunities for physical and psychological comfort and pleasure. For those who could afford it, hot water, warm towels and the accoutrements of bathing were desirable. Consequently, when the Coburg opened in 1897 eight years after the Savoy, the guest rooms were arranged in suites, each with a private bathroom. At Claridge's too each suite incorporated 'that modern essential – a bathroom.'⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸¹ Michael Kilburn, *London's Theatres* (London: New Holland Publishers Ltd, 2008), 86; 'Visit of the Architectural Association', *The Builder*, 1 February 1878, 136; 'The Hotel Metropole', *BN*, 5 June 1885, 878.

⁷⁸² Lawrence Wright, *Clean & Decent: The Fascinating History of the Bathroom & the Water Closet and of Sundry Habits, Fashions and Accessories of the Toilet* (London: Penguin 2000); Penner, *Bathroom* (2013) and Malcolm Shifrin, *Victorian Turkish Baths* (Swindon: Historic England, 2015).

⁷⁸³ Bazalgette's 83 miles of large intercepting sewers, opened in 1865, drained over 1000 square miles of buildings, carrying 420 million gallons a day and costing £4.6m. Wright, *Clean & Decent* (2000) 153-156. R.H. Harper, *Victorian Building Regulations: 1840-1914* (London; New York: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1985). W.H. Corfield, *Dwelling Houses: Their Sanitary Construction and Arrangements* (London: Lewis, 1885), and G.J.G. Jensen, *Modern Drainage Inspection and Sanitary Surveys* (London: Sanitary Publ. Co, 1899)

⁷⁸⁴ Communal male bathing across the classes was common in Turkish baths. Potvin, 'Vapour and Steam', *Journal of Design History*, 18:4 (2005), 319-333.

⁷⁸⁵ *CL*, 6 December 1902 lxxv; Beavan, *Imperial London* (1901), 457.

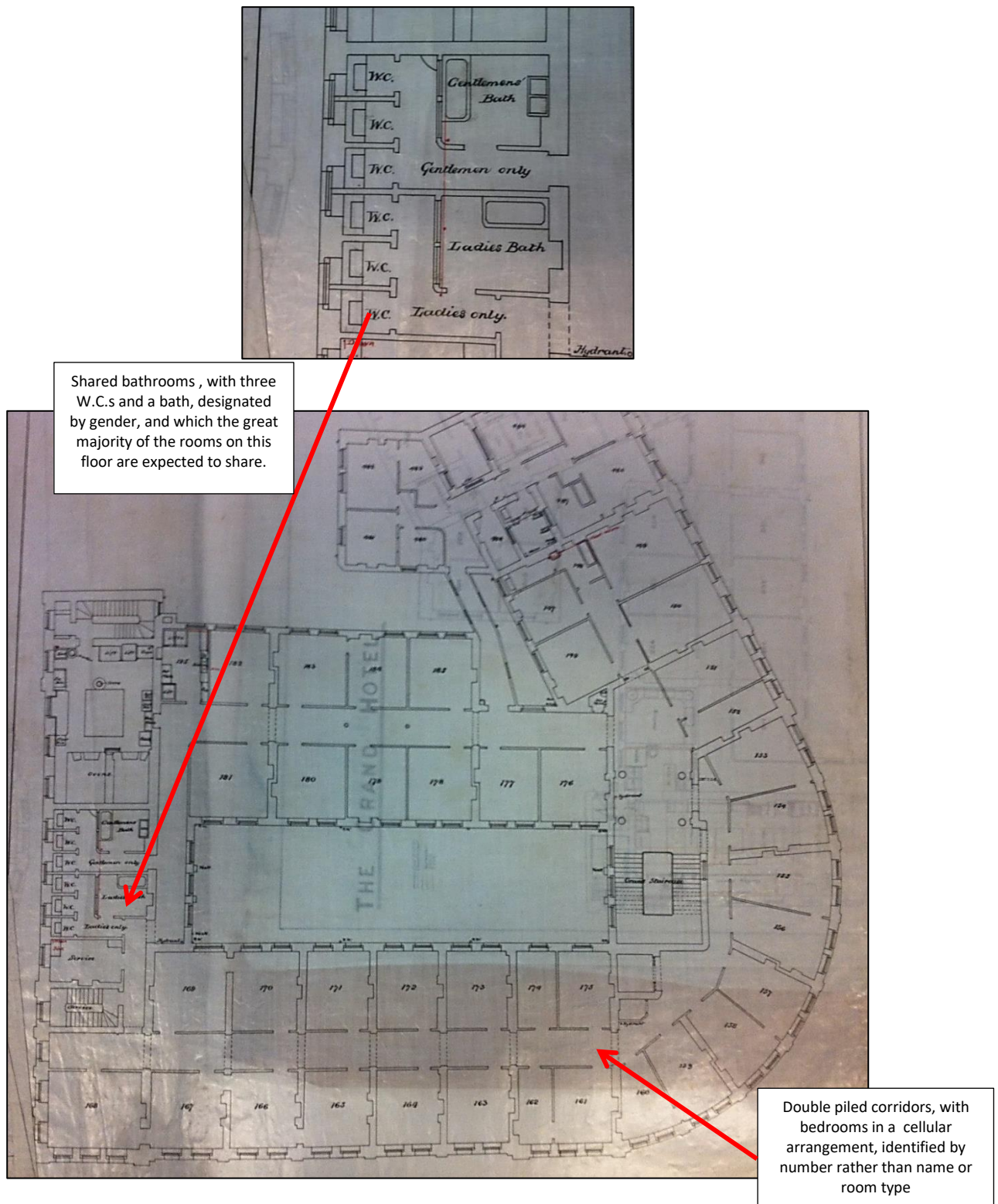


Figure 52 Plans of the Third Floor of the Grand, 1880 ⁷⁸⁶

⁷⁸⁶ *Plans of the Grand Hotel*. Job file of Alfred Waterhouse for the Grand Hotel, 1898. WaA/12/4/1-6, RIBA archive, held at the Victoria and Alfred Museum.

Although grand hotels were constructed with hundreds of bedrooms, the early establishments provided a relatively small number of bathrooms and surprisingly few W.C.s. At the Grosvenor (1862), E.M. Barry planned only two bathrooms per floor, with a slightly larger number of W.C.s.⁷⁸⁷ Even in 1880, a private bath was provided for only two of the suites on each floor at the Grand Hotel. For the occupants of the remaining thirty five or so rooms, one bath and three W.C.s were deemed sufficient for the ladies, with the same for the gentlemen (Figure 52).

One explanation for the lack of bathrooms was the untested, limited infrastructure. Cautious hotel company directors, with 'a general distrust of drains', did not wish to overburden the unpredictable drainage system.⁷⁸⁸ A second, was that, rather than taking 'the long constitutional [...] to get to the bathroom', the expectation in the 1860s and 1870s was that daily washing and other bodily functions would take place in one's own room.⁷⁸⁹ At the Grand, a number of folding metal baths were stored under beds, and portable baths such as these, filled and emptied by hotel maids, were common. This form of bathing, Jill Franklin argues, by the fire in one's dressing or bedroom, reflected the usual practice in the homes of the wealthy, and did not necessarily imply any 'lack of comfort or hygiene [...] - rather the reverse'.⁷⁹⁰

Two developments prompted change in the London hotels. The first was technological. As infrastructure improved, more bathrooms and W.C.s could be installed without overwhelming the drains. Boiler systems became more sophisticated, and hot and cold running water could be supplied direct to upper floors.⁷⁹¹ The second came from overseas. Hotels in America were also improving in both efficiency and facilities. One aspect of the 'American plan', emulated by the London grand hotels, was an increase in the number of bathrooms. In the grandest 'big-city'

⁷⁸⁷ Priscilla Metcalf, *James Knowles, Victorian Editor and Architect* (1980), 141.

⁷⁸⁸ Priscilla Metcalf, *James Knowles, Victorian Editor and Architect* (1980), 141.

⁷⁸⁹ Ernest Runtz, 'Hostelries Ancient and Modern' *The Caterer*, May 1907, 208-209

⁷⁹⁰ Jill Franklin, 'Troops of Servants', *Victorian Studies*, December 1975, 229

⁷⁹¹ *The Caterer*, December 1906, 515. Saving staff time was also a driver for increasing the number of bathrooms in large private houses. J.J. Stevenson, *House Architecture*, (London: Macmillan, 1880), 175.

hotels this did not only include shared facilities, but also 'in-room bathrooms'.⁷⁹² At San Francisco's Palace Hotel (1884), for example, nearly all the suites and bedrooms had their own bathroom. This development was of considerable interest in the British hospitality trade press.⁷⁹³ For hotels wishing to appeal to Americans, and to the wider international market, these examples were significant.

The increase in the number of bathrooms was beneficial for hotels in several ways. Direct water supply and waste systems saved staff time and consequently reduced the expense of more maids. In addition, with private bathrooms incorporated into suites, guests could perform their ablutions without the discomfort of experiencing the hotel corridor in their nightclothes, a particular concern to female guests. In 1896, *The Caterer* pointed out that although by this time, bathrooms were 'usually large, well fitted, comfortable [...] they are badly placed: and whereas a man may consistently face the world in his pyjamas, few women would care to run the gauntlet of possible strangers for fifty yards or so in incomplete armour'.⁷⁹⁴ Hardly an experience of luxury.

The appearance of early hotel bathrooms is difficult to establish. Published references usually only identified quantity and the configuration of suites, and the early brochures do not prominently portray bathrooms, unlike later publications. It seems likely that early facilities followed the principle in large houses of decorating the bathroom in the same manner as the bedroom, with upholstered furniture, carpets and wallpaper.⁷⁹⁵ Planimetrically, these bathrooms responded to the desire for comfort in the form of privacy. Materially, they represented little change from conventional ideas of comfort in bedrooms, which revolved around soft, pliable materials, pattern, colour and texture.

⁷⁹² David Bowie, 'Innovation and 19th century hotel industry evolution', *Tourism Management*, 64 (2018), 314-323, 320, and Sandoval-Strausz, *Hotel: An American History* (2007), 165.

⁷⁹³ *BN*, 25 January 1884, 127; Jefferson Williamson, *The American Hotel* (New York, 1930), 55. See for example, 'European and American plans of hotel keeping compared' *The Caterer*, October 1907, 449.

⁷⁹⁴ 'Women and Hotels, *The Caterer*, August 1896, 371.

⁷⁹⁵ Penner, *Bathroom* (2013), 84.

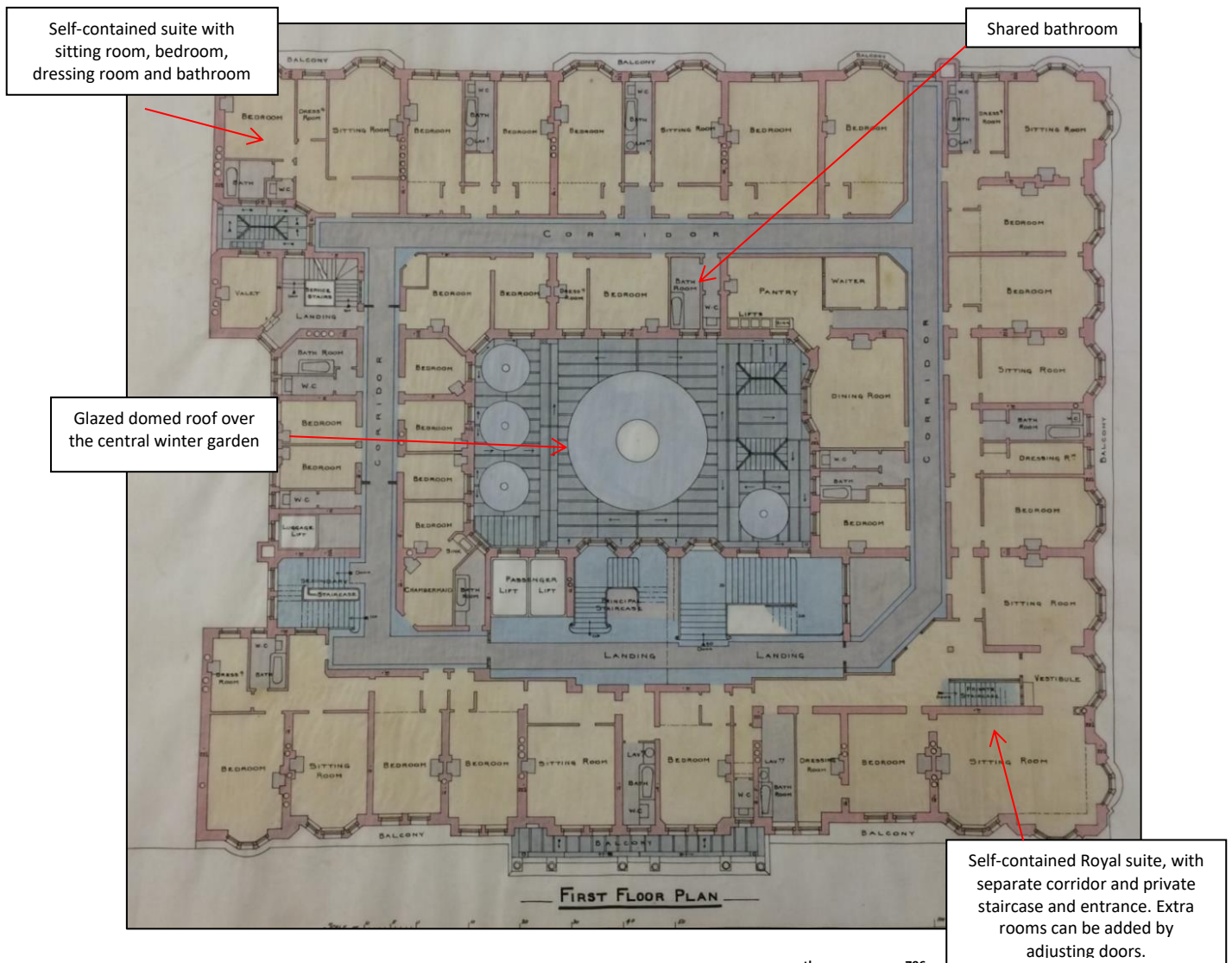


Figure 53 Plan for the First Floor at Claridge's, dated 10th July 1895 ⁷⁹⁶

One or two bathrooms are provided for each suite, not for each bedroom, and shared bathrooms still exist.

As facilities improved, plumbing and sanitation were the subjects of much comment in both the hotel and building trade press. Long articles and detailed drawings of the complex systems required for hotels became common. Every aspect of the engineering seems to have been of interest.⁷⁹⁷ In 1910, *The Modern Building Record* noted that at the Ritz, there were 'two main intake tanks from which lift and force pumps deal with 80,000 gallons every twelve hours give a plentiful supply of water to all parts, and the hot water service is obtained by steam heated

⁷⁹⁶ London Metropolitan Archives GLC AR/BR/19/276

⁷⁹⁷ See, for example, The Langham, *BN*, 6 June 1865, 422; 'Savoy Hotel', *BJ*, 22 June 1904, 292-302; 'Strand Palace Hotel', *The Architect*, 17 September 1909, 22.

calorifier capable of supplying 6,000 gallons of boiling water per hour'.⁷⁹⁸ At Liverpool's Adelphi in 1912, *The Builder* recorded the boilers, air intakes and conditioning plant, heating and ventilation systems, as well as automated vacuum cleaning, laundry and plate washing, and electric clocks.⁷⁹⁹

Beyond technology, the discussion of hotel bathrooms fell into two main categories. The first was the relationship of bathroom to bedroom. This affected both the floor plan and the quantity of bathrooms. Drainage and water supply were not confined to one or two positions on each floor, but were more dispersed. In the newer hotels, although bathrooms were not necessarily 'en-suite' (each bedroom with its own directly accessed bathroom), they were part of the unit sold to the guest. The plan of the first floor at Claridge's (Figure 53), for example, illustrates the convention of providing one bathroom for two or three guest rooms, sold as a single unit or suite. For Siegrid Giedion, the combination of bathroom and bedroom, 'fused inseparably' was expressly modern, indicative of contemporary social habits in the same way that the 'apartments' of Baroque palaces represented social hierarchies and ideas of luxury in the seventeenth century.⁸⁰⁰ The quantity of bathrooms in relation to bedrooms was now an indicator of the standard of the establishment, one which a new or refurbished hotel was happy to promote. By 1906, *The Caterer* acknowledged that in luxury hotels, 'well-appointed bedrooms with bathrooms attached [...] are present day requirements'.⁸⁰¹

The size of bathrooms also became more standardised. César Ritz apparently favoured spacious bathrooms, but this was not usual. *The Caterer* suggested bathrooms should not be too large - 'it only adds costs of floor and wainscot' - and that a surprisingly small room could accommodate

⁷⁹⁸ 'The Ritz Hotel', *Modern Building Record*, Vol. 1 (1910), 167.

⁷⁹⁹ An innovative construction in itself as the existing hotel was demolished and reconstructed one half at a time so that business was not interrupted. 'The Adelphi, Liverpool, Part III', *The Builder*, 21 June 1912, 736.

⁸⁰⁰ Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948), 682, and 687.

⁸⁰¹ 'Hotels up to date', *The Caterer*, February 1906, 54.

all that was required, if well-planned.⁸⁰² At the Waldorf, which had nearly 400 guest rooms, the 176 bathrooms were generally compact. The younger Mackenzie had recently spent time in the States, studying recent hotel construction, which, according to reports, was a factor in the arrangement of the guest accommodation. The plan of the bedroom floors, the press declared, was modelled on the latest American hotels, and offered guests a 'bathroom *en suite* with bedroom', 'a convenience common enough in America but rare in Britain'.⁸⁰³

The quality as well as the quantity of bathrooms was also transformed. Baths and basins or 'lavatories' were essential of course, but innovative equipment which catered for hitherto unappreciated aspects of guest comfort were also now frequently suggested. In the Savoy Strand extension, white vitreous-enamelled, cast iron baths by Doulton & Co were fitted into the corners of the rooms. Above each bath was a shower, 'actuated by Doulton's patent mixing valve', with a hinged glass door to prevent splashing.⁸⁰⁴ 'Every bathroom should have a hot-water towel ailer', the architect Ernest Runtz advised, 'as there is nothing which adds more to the comfort of a bath than a dry warm towel'.⁸⁰⁵

On occasion, novel technology involving bathrooms went beyond interiors or plumbing systems. In 1910, alterations to the Embankment elevation of the Savoy were made principally to enable the addition of en-suite bathrooms in the original hotel. Rather than construct a wall from the ground upwards, the new façade, which incorporated the existing balconies, was hung from girders projecting from the top floor of the building. 'To obtain yet more space for the baths', *The Building News* noted, 'bays are thrown out here and there even in front of the new face'.⁸⁰⁶ To

⁸⁰² M-L Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 141; 'Hotel Bathrooms', *The Caterer*, January 1906, 11

⁸⁰³ *Modern Building Record*, Vol 1 (1910), 160; *BN*, 4 January 1907, 13; *The Builder*, 29 December 1906, 752.

⁸⁰⁴ *The Builder*, 14 May 1904, 520-521; *The Architect*, 6 May 1904, 20.

⁸⁰⁵ Ernest Runtz, 'Hostelries Ancient and Modern, Bed and Sitting Rooms etc.', *The Caterer*, May 1907, 206.

⁸⁰⁶ *BN*, 30 September 1910, 468

speed up the time on site, full size dummy bathrooms were set up in Doulton's Lambeth works.

In this hotel, innovation and comfort came together.

The appearance of the bathroom was also transformed. Inevitably this affected the sensation of physical comfort. White predominated. Soft textures were replaced by hard, glossy surfaces.

Baths were in enamelled cast-iron, easy to clean and durable. In some hotels, wash basins were in the traditional luxury of polished statuary marble.⁸⁰⁷ In others, white vitreous china basins were supported by chrome metal legs.

Although the range of materials and colours was restricted, there were still opportunities to add an element of impressive luxury with design. At the Ritz, the suites of 150 bedrooms and sitting rooms were served by 75 bathrooms by Doulton & Co (Figure 54). The decorative mosaic work, selected by the directors of the hotel 'for its durability and artistic merits', was supplied by Rust's Vitreous Mosaic Co of Church Road, Battersea, a firm which had also provided delicate blue and white hand-cut mosaics for the 1904 Savoy bathrooms.⁸⁰⁸ The *Builder's Journal* expanded on the beauty and finish of the new bathrooms:

White tiles with grass-green frieze and skirtings of the very simplest patterns are used, but the whites are in some cases tinged slightly with pink and in others with green, thus giving a most artistic opal effect to the whole, whilst still retaining the severity of treatment which is so suitable to bathrooms.⁸⁰⁹

This was new design for a new space. By 1910, hotel bathrooms were fashionably pale, hygienic, and sanitary.⁸¹⁰ While the en-suite bathroom was still not a standard provision, in hotels which claimed to offer luxury, private bathrooms were an expectation. The groundwork for the symbolic

⁸⁰⁷ *HW*, May 1904, 13.

⁸⁰⁸ *BN*, 1 June 1906, 767; *BJ*, 11 January 1906, 11, and *Modern Building Record*, Vol 1 Public Buildings (1910), 168; *The Times*, 16 June 1904, 4. Jess Rust was a prominent designer of mosaics in the late 19th and early 20th century. His work includes the floor of the main hall at the Russell Hotel (1898) which is covered in a large zodiac mosaic <http://www.letterfromaberystwyth.co.uk/jesse-rust-mosaics-in-aberystwyth/>. acc. 12.8.15

⁸⁰⁹ *BJ*, 11 July 1906, 9.

⁸¹⁰ Penner, *Bathroom* (2013), 84.

unit of bedroom and bathroom had been laid, and, in this field, the grand hotel led the way in the move to an aspect of modernity which was to become more popular in the following decades.

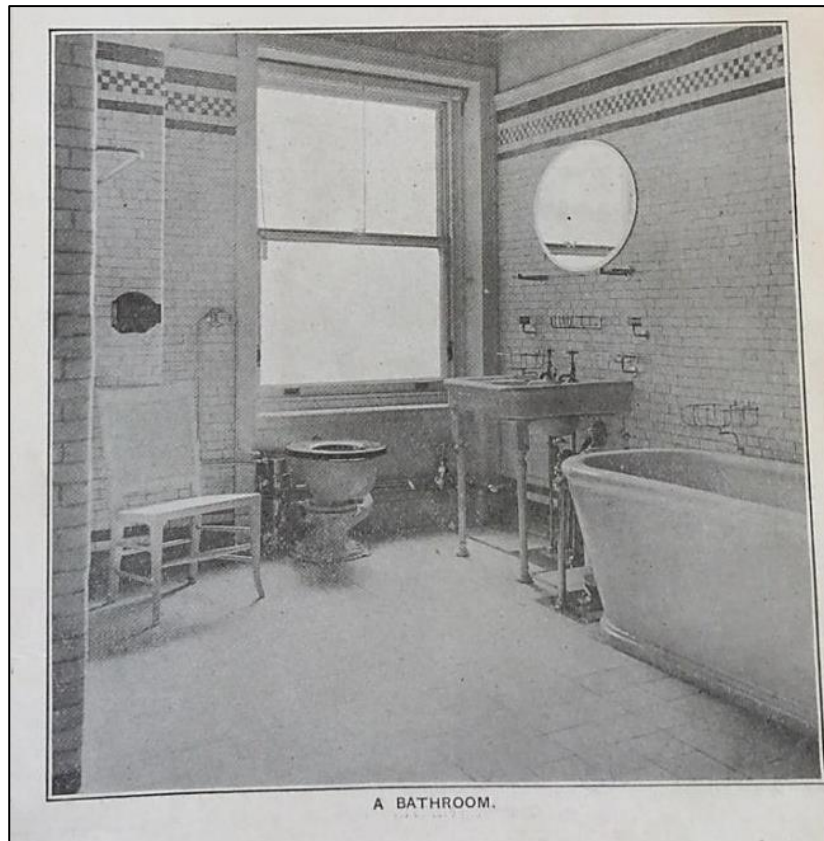


Figure 54 A bathroom in the Ritz, 1906 ⁸¹¹

Conclusion

For grand hotels, the comfort of guests was a priority. Comfort could be found in the appropriate separation of men at leisure, or in elegant drawing rooms, equipped to enable female guests and their well-behaved male companions to pass their time in suitable activities. Comfort was particularly important in the guest rooms, where privacy, security and cleanliness were as essential as the design of the wallpaper, the touch of pillows or the size of beds.

While changes in attitudes to comfort were often subtle, in one area of the hotel the shift was especially noteworthy. The shining, white, private bathroom was a response to new perceptions

⁸¹¹ BJ, 11 July 1906, 9.

of the body, privacy and hygiene. As the period passed, the quantity and design of bathrooms and their relationship to the hotel bedroom altered, and gradually, the bedroom and the bathroom became a single unit. By 1910, these changes were indicative that comfort in grand hotels did not only revolve around physical sensation or psychological well-being, but equally in interpretations of modernity, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter VII: Modernity

For certain forms of luxury the modern hotel is hard to beat [...] All the rough edges of life are smoothed down to satin softness. All the friction is taken away.⁸¹²

Every luxury that money can buy may be found in a great modern hotel.⁸¹³

In September 1895, *The Caterer* published an article entitled 'The Modern Hotel'. In the piece, which had originally had been printed in slightly different form in *The Queen* in 1891, the journalist and social commentator Eliza Lynn Linton compared traditional hostelries with 'up to date *caravanserais*'.⁸¹⁴ Nothing, she wrote, 'has more changed from its former condition than the old inn which has become the modern hotel'. For Mrs. Linton, a hotel's modernity combined many of the aspects of luxury discussed in this thesis. Thick carpets muffled noise; lighting was powered by electricity; drawing rooms, she observed, were furnished with 'luxurious' chairs of all shapes and sizes, and men could find solace in the segregated smoking rooms. She also recognised the importance of new, swift and easy methods of communication. The advent of telephones meant 'everything you want' could be arranged. 'Nothing within the range of human wants that can be ordered [...] comes amiss to the telephone and its manipulator'. In a modern hotel, Mrs. Linton opined, 'all the rough edges of life are smoothed down to satin softness. All the friction is taken away'.

However, Mrs. Linton acknowledged, the 'modern hotel' was not without shortcomings. The personal preferences and singular attention one might enjoy at home were not possible. 'You are a document in a pigeon hole – a number, not a person', she maintained. 'Your individual

⁸¹² 'The Modern Hotel', *The Caterer*, September 1895, 397.

⁸¹³ 'Modern Hotels', *Chamber's Journal*, 24 September 1899, 673-5.

⁸¹⁴ Eliza Lynn Linton (1822-1898), novelist and professional journalist, promoted radical views in early life. Her later periodical articles, conversely, often celebrated 'traditional women in traditional roles', ridiculing the aspirations of the New Woman. *Orlando: Women's writing in the British Isles from the Beginnings to the Present*. http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person_id=lintel Acc. 31.5.2019. See also Andrea L. Broomfield, 'Eliza Lynn Linton, Sarah Grand and the Spectacle of the Victorian Woman Question: Catch Phrases, Buzz Words and Sound Bites', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 47: 3 (2004), 251-272.

humanity goes for nothing, for you have no margin where you can overflow into idiosyncrasy [...]
 Everything is done by system, and the management of a big modern hotel is a science in itself.⁸¹⁵
 For the guest, Mrs. Linton argued, the modern hotel, 'equipped with much luxury', might mean comfort, swift efficiency, and freedom from exertion, but it also could imply impersonal anonymity, regulated by machine-like controls. In grand establishments, the blend of experience, process and service was, in Mrs. Linton's assessment, 'modern', but the consequences of this type of luxury were not wholeheartedly desirable.

Mrs. Linton was not alone in the connections she made between the label 'modern' and the luxury of large, purpose-built establishments. The term had been applied to aspects of grand hotels from at least the 1870s, and, by the end of the century, the moniker was widespread. A glance through *The Caterer* finds numerous references to the development and desirability of the 'modern' hotel and its up-to-date facilities, with all the complexities and contradictions which that entailed.⁸¹⁶ Other publications expressed similar opinions. 'Every luxury that money can buy may be found in a great modern hotel', declared the author of 'Modern Hotels', published in *Chamber's Journal* in 1899. Hotels were 'vast palace[s] of the most sumptuous and splendid character, with resources and appliances, organisation and services, almost as varied if not so extensive as those of a modern city, and presenting almost as many social grades'.⁸¹⁷ An article in *The Times* in the same year, entitled 'Modern English Hotels', testified to the 'the enormous growth of the hotel system of London [...], with their hosts of servants and their luxurious appliances'. These buildings, *The Times* argued, delivered 'absolute cleanliness', 'splendid and

⁸¹⁵ 'The Modern Hotel', *The Caterer*, September 1895, 397. See also 'The Old Inn and the Modern Hotel', *The Queen*, 4 April 1891, 518.

⁸¹⁶ 'All the ingenuity of modern inventions was brought to bear in these vast buildings to abridge manual labour', F.J. Francis, 'Hotels and Restaurants', *The Builder*, 8 February 1879, 155. References in *The Caterer*, included 'The Modern Hotel and its Possibilities', July 1887, 230; 'The 'modern English hotel could hold its own against compeers anywhere in the world', January 1906, 11; and 'Modern Hotels', April 1908, 165-6. Ernest Runtz referred to 'modern hotels' in many articles and speeches. Articles in *The Caterer* include, 'Hostelries Ancient and Modern', April 1907, 163-4; May 1907, 208-9; July 1907, 320-1; August 1907, 366-7.

⁸¹⁷ 'Modern Hotels', *CJ*, 24 September, 1899, 673-5.

comfortable furniture', 'air and light in abundance', and 'admirable cuisine'. 'In splendour of appointment, in perfection of organisation, in skill of management, and in comfort of accommodation, the best of them are hard to beat'. Modern hotels, the paper continued, were luxurious, and the growth in their number and changing social patterns made them available to a wider audience. Fine hotels in the past had certainly existed, but these had been rare, the author argued, 'whereas the best of the new is nowadays to be had, by those who care for it and choose to pay for it, here, there, and everywhere'.⁸¹⁸ For these writers, modernity not only meant the inclusion of a broader social group, but was also equated with size and with complex human and technological systems without which such businesses could not function.

The use of the term, however, requires some further unpacking. 'Modern' and 'modernity' are employed in a variety of social, cultural and historical processes, contexts and conditions, in a wide range of fields of academic study. For many scholars, the starting point of modernity is marked by developments such as the questioning of tradition, the prioritisation of individualism and a transition to secularisation.⁸¹⁹ While modernity can be desirable, it is also inherently disruptive, changing the social patterns of the past.⁸²⁰ In the modern world, individuals do not find their place in society through connections to locality and conventional social and religious hierarchies. Instead modern life is 'self-constructed', and behaviours, relationships and the every-day are shaped by a multitude of choices which result in new social forms and frameworks.⁸²¹ In the modern world, Antony Giddens argues, 'identity is not inherited but rather

⁸¹⁸ Modern English Hotels' *The Times*, 25 September 1899, 7.

⁸¹⁹ The varied interpretations of 'modern' in different areas of academic study is too wide to discuss here. For a summary, see Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air* (London: Verso, 2010), 15-36.

⁸²⁰ Warren Breckman, 'Disciplining Consumption: The Debate about Luxury in Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914', *Journal of Social History*, 24 (1991), 486-505, 486, cited by Robin Schuldenfrei, *Luxury and Modernism: Architecture and the Object in Germany 1900-1933* (Princeton UP, 2018), 275.

⁸²¹ George E Thomas and Susan Nigra Snyder, 'William Price's Traymore Hotel: Modernity in the Mass Resort', *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005), 186-215, 186. See also Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale UP, 2000), who, amongst others, cites Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*,

consists of the narrative each individual constructs to give meaning to life'.⁸²² In this environment, individuals, free from the observance of traditional grades and boundaries, are given personal agency to change and re-invent themselves.⁸²³

Modernity, however, is not only concerned with unstable social structures and ambiguities of identity. Rational, scientific modernity also takes the form of changes in the ways in which time and space are understood and managed. Nineteenth-century improvements such as railway timetables, the wireless and the telephone required a universal time system, which placed a priority on accuracy and speed.⁸²⁴ The efficient use of time and space could also improve working practices and production.⁸²⁵ A 'modern' approach to the organisation of workers and staff, and the functions they undertook was beneficial. Industrial processes, systems and mechanisation increased production but they also improved health, hygiene and standards of living. A 'modern' city was one in which metropolitan improvements, from water supply and street lighting to faster building techniques and traffic circulation, rendered the urban environment quantitatively and qualitatively better.⁸²⁶

Shifting identities, influenced by mass consumption, and the growth of the mass media, as well as changing hierarchies and industrial modernity, have implications for the built environment and

trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977) and 'Of Other Spaces' *Dialectics*, 16 (Spring 1986) 22-7; Michel de Certeau, 'Practices of Space', in Marshall Blonsky ed., *On Signs* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985) 122-45 and *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1984)

⁸²² Thomas and Snyder, 'William Price's Traymore Hotel', *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 25 (2005), 186-215, 186, citing Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 1991).

⁸²³ Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 2010), 15.

⁸²⁴ S. Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge, Mass.; London, Harvard UP, 2003), 34.

⁸²⁵ Frederick Winslow Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* (New York, 1911) and *Shop Management* (New York, 1911) are the best known of these approaches. See also Gregory Clark, 'Authority and Efficiency: The Labor Market and the Managerial Revolution of the Late Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Economic History*, 44:4 (1984), 1069-1083.

⁸²⁶ 'Modern London' was 'the largest, wealthiest, most populous, most cosmopolitan, busiest, and most influential of the cities of the world [...] – alone, unapproached, and unapproachable [...] a very marvel of marvels among the cities of the world'. *Modern London: An Epitome of Results, Business Men and Commercial Interests* (London, 1891), 33.

the material objects with which it was filled. As Mary Douglas contends in her anthropological study of consumption, in the modern world, the value of goods lies not just in their use but also 'in the meaning they communicate about who we are and what we value'.⁸²⁷ In the same manner, new building types which cater for these changing patterns of behaviour and consumption are designed to both reflect and continually respond to occupants and their requirements. In nineteenth- and early twentieth-century London, buildings such as theatres and department stores, pubs and restaurants were designed for varying interpretations of fashion, taste and lifestyle.⁸²⁸ For Penny Sparke, new hybrid spaces, simultaneously both public and private, commercial and domestic, are the essence of the 'modern interior'. The design and materiality of one crossed into the other, providing opportunities for self-expression and social mobility.⁸²⁹ In the hands of those involved with the creation of these interiors - architects and decorators as well as the occupants themselves - 'design had the capacity to turn values, desires and aspirations into visual, material and spatial ideas and realities'.⁸³⁰

Grand hotels were modern in a variety of ways. For journalists and commentators, the 'modern hotel' was certainly 'up to date' in the contemporary sense. In the later nineteenth-century, this phrase was often interchangeable with 'modern', initially meaning 'up to the present day'. By the 1890s, the interpretation had shifted to dwelling in the present and moving with the times.⁸³¹ In most cases, this 'up to date' modernity represented progress and improvement, yet it did not

⁸²⁷ Thomas & Snyder, (2005), 204, citing Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The Role of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 36-92.

⁸²⁸ For connections between space and identity, Hugh Maguire, 'The Victorian Theatre as a Home from Home', *Journal of Design History*, 13: 2 (2000), 107-21; Quintin Colville, 'The Role of the Interior in Constructing Notions of Class and Status: A Case Study of Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, 1905-1939' in McKellar & Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2004) 114 -132.

⁸²⁹ Penny Sparke, 'The Modern Interior Revisited', *Journal of Interior Design*, 34 (2008), v-xii, v. For a historiographical approach to the 'modern interior', see Penny Sparke, 'The Modern Interior: A Space, a Place or a Matter of Taste?', *Interiors*, 1:1 (2010), 7-17.

⁸³⁰ Penny Sparke, *The Modern Interior* (London: Reaktion, 2008), 17.

⁸³¹ Gerry Beegan, 'The Up-to-Date Periodical: Subjectivity, Technology and Time in the Late Victorian Press', *Time & Society*, 10 (2001), 113-134, 117.

necessarily completely reject all that had preceded it.⁸³² In architecture and design, that which was 'modern' could draw on the traditions of the past for inspiration, but build upon them, reinterpreting in new ways for the contemporary world.⁸³³ Grand hotels fitted into this interpretation of modernity. They were expressly new and of their time. The aim of their proprietors was to build upon the traditions of hospitality, design, and service, but reject the poor practices of the past. From furnishings to food, hotels adapted and responded, promising change and novelty as conditions altered. Although a hotel's modernity could be challenging, for the guest, it offered new and exciting experiences and opportunities.

More specifically, I contend that there were two central characteristics of modernity which were at the core of the grand hotel. First, the modernity of organisation and rationality were essential to how the luxury of these hotels was produced.⁸³⁴ These buildings, Kevin James argues, were 'systemized, technologized places - microcosms of a modern metropolis'.⁸³⁵ No hospitality business of size could run profitably without effective, proficient methods of working.⁸³⁶ Luxury hotels, now and then, are, in David Brody's phrase, 'a realm of coddling where labour seemingly vanishes'.⁸³⁷ But without the modernity of structured systems, run by both male and female staff, supported by efficient technology, time management, and communications, the thousands of hot

⁸³² A Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, originally published in 1990 (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015).

⁸³³ An advisor on domestic interiors, for example, might suggest the use of Elizabethan decorative features in a hall, but these must be 'treated in a modern spirit', which prioritised comfort. J. H. Jennings, *Our Homes and How to Beautify them* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1902), 146.

⁸³⁴ For the interconnections between luxury and technology, see Graham P. Gladden, 'Marketing Ocean Travel: Cunard and the White Star Line, 1910-1940', *Journal of Transport History*, 35:1 (2014), 57-77.

⁸³⁵ Kevin J James, 'Sober Debate and Whimsical Inscriptions: Critics, Visitors and the rise of the Grand hotel' in Volland, Grenville and Rebick *Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life* (2013), 40-45.

⁸³⁶ See Peter Scholliers, 'Anonymous Cooks and Waiters: Labour Markets and the Professional Status of Restaurant, Cafe and Hotel Personnel in Brussels, 1840s-1900s', *Food and History*, 2: 1(2004), 145-165, and Patricia Van den Eeckhout, 'The History of Labour and Labour Relations in Hotels and Restaurants in Western Europe and the United States in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: an introduction', *Food and History*, 11:2 (2013), 199-221. For labour in late 20th-century hotels, see Rachel Ellen Sherman, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2007).

⁸³⁷ Brody, *Housekeeping by Design* (2016), 23.

meals and hundreds of clean beds could not have been supplied at the quantity, speed and standard required.

In this chapter, I identify that in hotels, staff space, organisation and systems were complex but rational, benefitting from advice and experience from at home and overseas, and from increasing numbers of female employees in positions of responsibility. At the head was the manager, whose role was to balance creativity and personal attention with machine-like efficiency. This 'hidden modernity' of systems, technology and, to some extent, changes in gender roles, was indispensable. It 'smoothed' Mrs. Linton's 'rough edges of life', and allowed large hotels to operate effectively. I argue that changes in sociability, expectations and patterns of consumption led to the creation of a new type of space which was catered for clients with a new, modern identity. In the palm courts, winter gardens, and lounges of grand hotels, men and women could see and be seen, relating in new ways, and enjoying new experiences. In creating these interiors, proprietors employed the hybridity and exotic planting of the conservatory, the drama of performance, and the 'bohemianism' of greater informality and heterosociability. Palm courts and winter gardens, like lobbies, were a form of Interzone, a 'stage [...] for urban social life', flowing between the exterior and the interior, the public and the private.⁸³⁸

I contend, that by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, these new interiors were the epitome of the grand hotel, where modernity in design and behaviour were on display. The modernity of these spaces designed for new fashionable social identities and behaviours was crucial, but without blending this visible modernity with the hidden modernity of production, the hotel *de luxe* could not have existed. It is to this concealed modernity to which I first turn.

⁸³⁸ Habbo Knoch, 'Life on Stage: Grand Hotels as Urban Interzones around 1900', in Heßler and Zimmermann, eds., *Creative Urban Milieux* (2008), 137-158, 139.

Hidden Modernity: Space, Systems and Staff

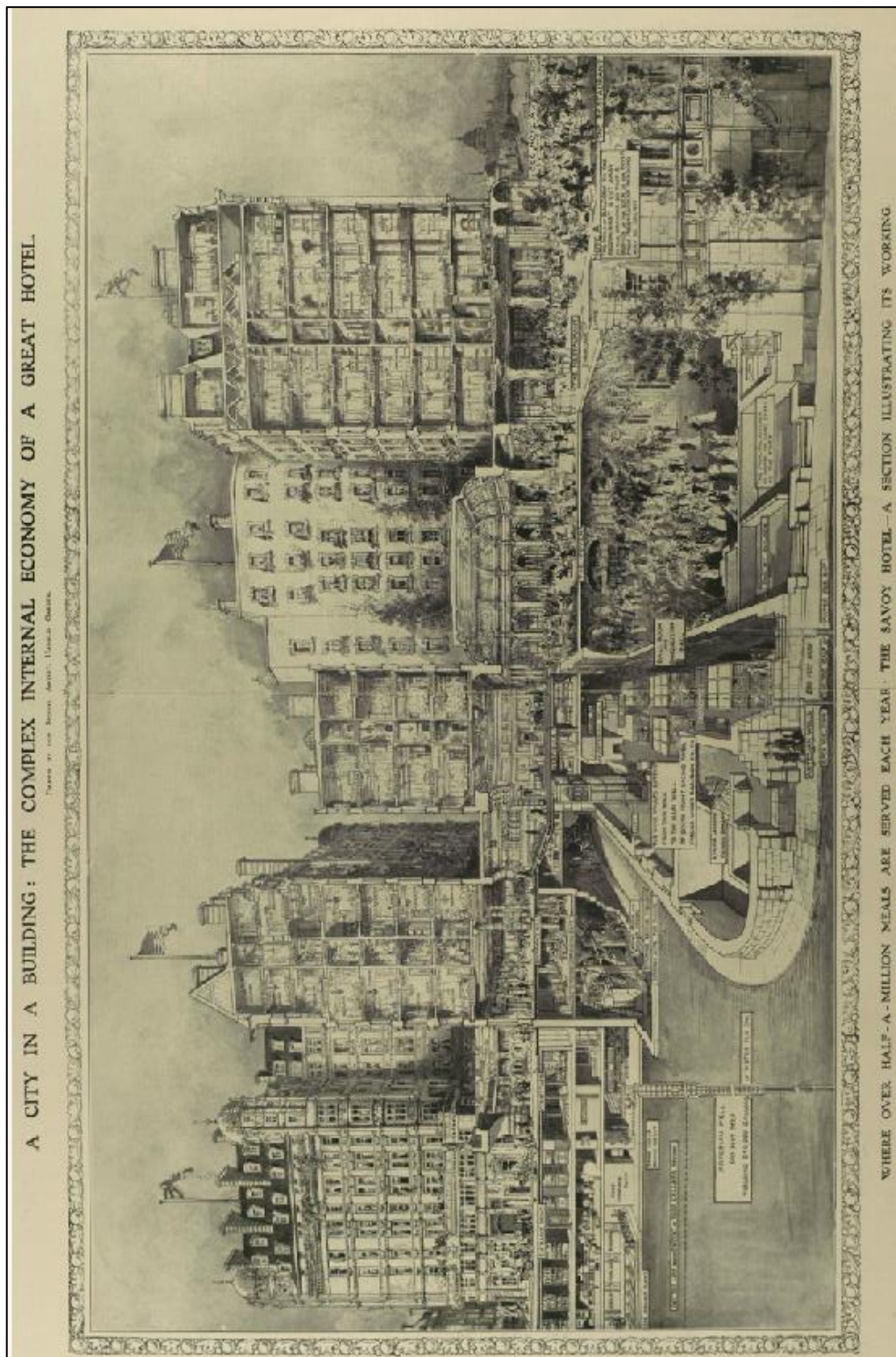


Figure 55 The Savoy Hotel: 'A City in a Building: The Complex Internal Economy of a Great Hotel '

Illustrated London News, 2 September 1911, 376-377.

In Harold Oakley's fascinating sectional illustration of the Savoy (Figure 55) published in the *Illustrated London News* in 1911, the hotel interior was exposed for inspection. In the detailed image, one of a number that Oakley produced for the magazine which visualised the complexities of the modern city, the artist examined an idealised vision of the hidden world behind the façade.⁸³⁹ Readers could view the guests arriving by car or carriage, seated in the entrance hall, or dancing in the ballroom. On the upper floors, beneath the clouds, billowing flags and exposed roof structure, bedrooms and bathrooms led off long spine corridors. In the depths of the earth, kitchens and wine cellars extended, and the well, yielding 240,000 gallons of water per day, and boilers and dynamos, producing 1,000,000 units of power per annum, were revealed.

In the 'vast and complex' hotel, the caption explained, 125,000 beds were made up, and 'well over half a million meals' were served per annum, by 'nearly a thousand skilled workers of all grades.' Yet, 'everything as a rule works so smoothly that, while the results are appreciated, the means by which they are attained and which do not always appear on the surface, escape observation.' This was luxury service - seemingly effortless, almost unnoticed, capable of attending large quantities of guests, each believing their own experience to be distinct.

While the illustration purported to expose the hotel's 'complex internal economy', the visible areas were carefully chosen, limited to those which fed into the Savoy's image of luxury. The space devoted to kitchens and wine cellars indicated the importance of sophisticated food and beverages, the depth of the well confirmed the purity of the water, and the boilers emphasised a secure electrical supply, a requirement for modern life. What the artist did not illustrate were many of the other service spaces required for the smooth running of such a large establishment. Communication systems and offices for management, administration and finance; service and

⁸³⁹ 'Why Londoners Need Not Stand in Fear of Drought: The Great and Intricate Water Supply of the Metropolis', *ILN*, 5 August 1911, 228-229; 'The Unknown Fairyland and the Known: "Jack and the Beanstalk's" Famous Home', *ILN*, 31 December 1910, 1042-1043.

circulation areas for housekeeping, laundry and sanitation were all scarcely visible. Largely hidden from view was the technological modernity without which large establishments could not function, and the employees, organised by hierarchy and department, who enabled the promise of luxury to be fulfilled.

That staff and their activities were kept out of the sight, smell and hearing of the recipients of luxury was common practice in large houses and clubs of this period.⁸⁴⁰ In a grand hotel, there were additional factors to take into account. Although employee numbers probably did not equal the 'nearly a thousand' which the *Illustrated London News* suggested, to fulfil the promise of luxury, a large staff was essential.⁸⁴¹ At the same time, a rational approach to management, exemplified by Frederick Winslow Taylor's principles of mass production, enabled hotels of unprecedented size and organisational complexity. Lisa Pfueller Davidson argues that in similar American venues, the image of a hotel as 'service machine' promoted the idea of smooth, modern automation. David Brody, too, cites how American commercial hospitality introduced systematic methods to analyse guest behaviours and consequent implications for workflow.⁸⁴² In London, the numbers of guests and the standard of service promised, combined with confined urban sites and the demand for profit, necessitated real efficiency in space and time.⁸⁴³

⁸⁴⁰ Mark Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (1979), and Jill Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan 1835-1914* (1981). For clubs, see Markus, *Buildings & Power* (1993) 159-161, and Rendell, 'The Clubs of St James's', *Journal of Architecture*, 4 (1999) 167-189.

⁸⁴¹ It is not possible to quantify exact staff numbers. Censuses record only those resident overnight. Journals tend to list employee types not number. The German architect of the Hotel Kaiserhof in Berlin did suggest that 500 guests required at least 100 staff. Hermann von der Hude, *Handbuch Der Architektur Part IV* (Darmstadt 1885), but these proportions have not been confirmed elsewhere.

⁸⁴² Lisa Pfueller Davidson, 'A Service Machine': Hotel Guests and the Development of an Early 20th-century Building Type', *Building Environments: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* (2005), 113-129, citing a phrase used by W. Sydney Wagner, 'The Hotel Plan', *Architectural Forum*, 39 (1923), 211. Brody, *Housekeeping by Design* (2017), 47, referring also to Winslow Taylor's, *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911). See also Marc S Mentzer, 'Scientific management and the American hotel', *Management & Organizational History*, 5: 3-4, (2010), 428-446.

⁸⁴³ Franklin, 'Troops of Servants', *Victorian Studies*, 19:2, (1975) 211-239. S. Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (2003), 116.

Although there has been no academic investigation into comparable approaches in British hotels, evidence from trade journals and professional associations indicate that there was an analogous application of modernity in the form of scientific rationality.⁸⁴⁴ Businesses drew on advice and experience from a range of national and international sources. Hotels established organisational structures and reporting lines, producing a new class of middle management, with assistant managers, head clerks, housekeepers and head porters all superintending their own departments (Table 14). Manuals such as *Practical Hotel Management* (1890), a compilation of articles by an anonymous 'Hotel Manageress', originally published in *The Caterer*, identified the structure, roles and wages of hotel staff (Table 15), and illustrated the specialised functions which staff undertook.⁸⁴⁵ Although gender segregation was built into the service areas, women were employed not only in the traditional 'domestic' roles of housekeeping and laundry, but also in new functions of administration and finance.⁸⁴⁶ New technology aided the speed, standard and efficiency of service and communication, both within the hotel, and to and from the wider world. At the top of the organisation, managers administered the beneficial traditions of hospitality, while maintaining profitability and a fashionable desirability. To provide luxury, hotel service was undeniably modern - structured, efficient, and renewed continually.

⁸⁴⁴ One of the most well-known journals was *The Caterer, Hotel Proprietor and Refreshment Contractor*, first published 6 April 1878, later known as *The Caterer and Hotel Proprietor's Gazette*, and then *The Caterer and Hotelkeeper's Gazette*. It was followed by others, including the *Hotel Review*, and *Catering and Food Trades Gazette* in the mid-1880s, *Hotel World* in December 1895, and *The Restaurant* in 1909. Professional associations included The Universal Cookery and Food Association (1885) (see Charles Senn, *The Cookery Annual for 1912 and Year Book of the Universal Cookery and Food Association* (London: 1912), 28, and Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food* (1985), 184-188), and The National Hotel Keepers' Association (1886), later the Incorporated Association of Hotels and Restaurants, was set up to protect hotelkeepers from dishonest guests. (*The Caterer*, August 1886, 222-3).

Published management advice ranged from practicalities to law and finance. In January 1883, for example, *The Caterer* published the first of 24 articles entitled 'Hotels and their practical management by a Manageress. A comprehensive guide to managing a hotel'. These covered every aspect of running an hotel. The series commenced with 'Hints on Construction and Arrangement'. Subsequent articles included 'Hints on Fitting up and Furnishing', 'Domestics', and financial administration in 'Book keeping, tariffs etc.'

⁸⁴⁵ A Hotel Manageress, *Practical Hotel Management* (London: Newton and Eskill, 1890). See also *Langham Hotel Guide to London* (1872), 7; Berger, *Hotel Dreams* (2011), 165.

⁸⁴⁶ For gender segregation post 1950, see Paul Bagguley, 'The Patriarchal Restructuring of Gender Segregation: A Case Study of the Hotel and Catering Industry', *Sociology*, 25:4 (1991), 607-625.

A 'Complex Internal Economy': Inside the 'Modern Hotel'

By 1911, when the Oakley illustration was published, the Savoy was one of the most renowned of the London grand hotels. While it was not the largest, it was one of the most widely covered in the press. Providing 'de luxe' service in such a hotel was a multifaceted process, and Oakley's illustration was an enticing method of emphasising its detail and complexity. But to study the built reality of the service areas more thoroughly, additional sources are required, and two have aided the examination of the Savoy's service areas and the intentions of its architects. Although, by 1911, the Savoy had undergone three major alterations, the original 1889 configuration of the service areas had been largely untouched. Plans of the four lower River side floors drawn in 1911 reveal client areas, interwoven with service spaces, and separate zones for food production and storage, engineering and maintenance, housekeeping, circulation and management (Figure 57, Figure 58 and Figure 59). In addition, in May 1912, a few months after the publication of Oakley's illustration, *The Building News* published an article on hotel planning based on an address given to the R.I.B.A. by Stanley Hamp (1877-1968). Hamp knew the hotel intimately, having worked with his partner Thomas Collcutt on various alterations, including the Strand and the Embankment extensions.⁸⁴⁷ In this article, he used examples of various grand hotels in London and abroad and his experience at the Savoy to illustrate the importance of well-planned service areas in what he referred to as the 'modern hotel'.⁸⁴⁸ In all three sources, the most conspicuous of the service areas were those which supported the restaurant - the kitchen, the kitchen offices, and the food preparation and storage rooms.

⁸⁴⁷ Collcutt's initial work was on the interiors, but he went on to add a reception loggia in the courtyard in 1896, and a new balcony to restaurant, 1907, followed by the 1904 and 1910 extensions with Hamp. For plans and notes relating to the 1896 additions and new balcony in 1907 see LMA, GIC/AR/BR/17/026334/3. See also *The Observer*, 1 May 1904, 7; *MG*, 3 May 1904, 6; *The Builder*, 6, January 1906, 12, and *Supplement to The Observer*, 30 October 1910, 17 among other coverage.

⁸⁴⁸ 'The Planning of Hotels', *BN*, 10 May 1912, 653-4, 653. The examples used by Hamp include the Grand Hotel, Paris; the Savoy; the Hotel Cape Town; the Hotel Roda, Andalusia; the Hotels Russell and Imperial in Russell Square and the Hotel Great Central.

‘Well Over Half a Million Meals’ : Modernity and Magic in Food Production

Sophisticated food and cosmopolitan sociability were fundamental to the luxury hotel, as Chapter V explains. Not surprisingly, therefore, hotel kitchens and their associated facilities were of considerable interest to the public and to the trade. The fictional kitchen of Arnold Bennett’s *Grand Hotel Babylon* was ‘one of the wonders of Europe’ ‘newly installed with every device and patent that the ingenuity of two continents could supply’ where ‘twelve chefs pursued their labours[...] helped by ninety assistant chefs and a further army of unconsidered menials’.⁸⁴⁹ In 1865, G.A. Sala wrote of the real kitchens in the Charing Cross Hotel in strikingly similar tones. The ‘roomy culinary department [...] with the great roasting ranges, stoves and ovens’ and ‘the clerk of the kitchen gravely editing bills of fare at his desk’ indicated the size, equipment and bureaucracy required to support the daily production of hundreds of dishes.⁸⁵⁰ In 1889, an article described the huge quantities of food produced in the ‘large and lofty’ kitchens at the Langham, and the scale of the systems required:

Below the hotel are veritable butchers’, fishmongers’, greengrocers’ and grocers’ shops. In the meat stores two or three tons of meat are maturing. Every joint is numbered and every chop that goes to the grill is known. In the fish department are piles of haddocks and bloaters for breakfast, while a glance at the grocers’ stores reveals huge canisters, three feet high, filled to the brim with tea and coffee. Over 210,000 eggs are used in the course of a year, 150,000 of these for puddings, pies, custards etc., in the kitchen and 60,000 for the tables.⁸⁵¹

This was mass production on a scale to rival the most impressive of manufacturing systems.

Perhaps surprisingly, the best location for hotel kitchens was not straightforward. Conventionally, the choice was the ground or basement floors. The ‘most convenient place’, Hamp suggested, was ‘near to or just below the dining room’.⁸⁵² At the Piccadilly, the architects used part of the ground floor for the restaurant kitchen, and *The Times* noted the consequent ‘perfection of

⁸⁴⁹ Arnold Bennett, *The Grand Hotel Babylon*, originally published 1902 (2005), 124.

⁸⁵⁰ G.A. Sala, ‘The Charing Cross Hotel’, *St James Magazine*, October 1865, 313-26, 326.

⁸⁵¹ ‘Big Hotels’, *The Caterer*, April 1889, 141. See also ‘The Metropolitan Hotel Movement, No. IV’, *The Observer*, 8 January 1865, 5 and *The Langham Hotel Guide to London* (1867).

⁸⁵² ‘The Planning of Hotels’, *BN*, 10 May 1912, 654.

service'.⁸⁵³ However, Hamp acknowledged, before the advent of electric fans, it was a 'vexed question' whether it was better to locate the kitchen in the basement, or on the highest floor. In both their Northumberland Avenue hotels, F. and H. Francis situated the kitchens on upper floors. At the Grand, the kitchens were at the rear of the building on the first to the fourth floors, and separated by a solid wall from the bedrooms (Figure 56).⁸⁵⁴ Different aspects of food preparation and storage were arranged on various floors. Vertical interconnections via staircases and small lifts sent ingredients to the kitchens, and prepared food to the *Grand Salle*, the main restaurant, and private dining rooms on the lower floors.⁸⁵⁵

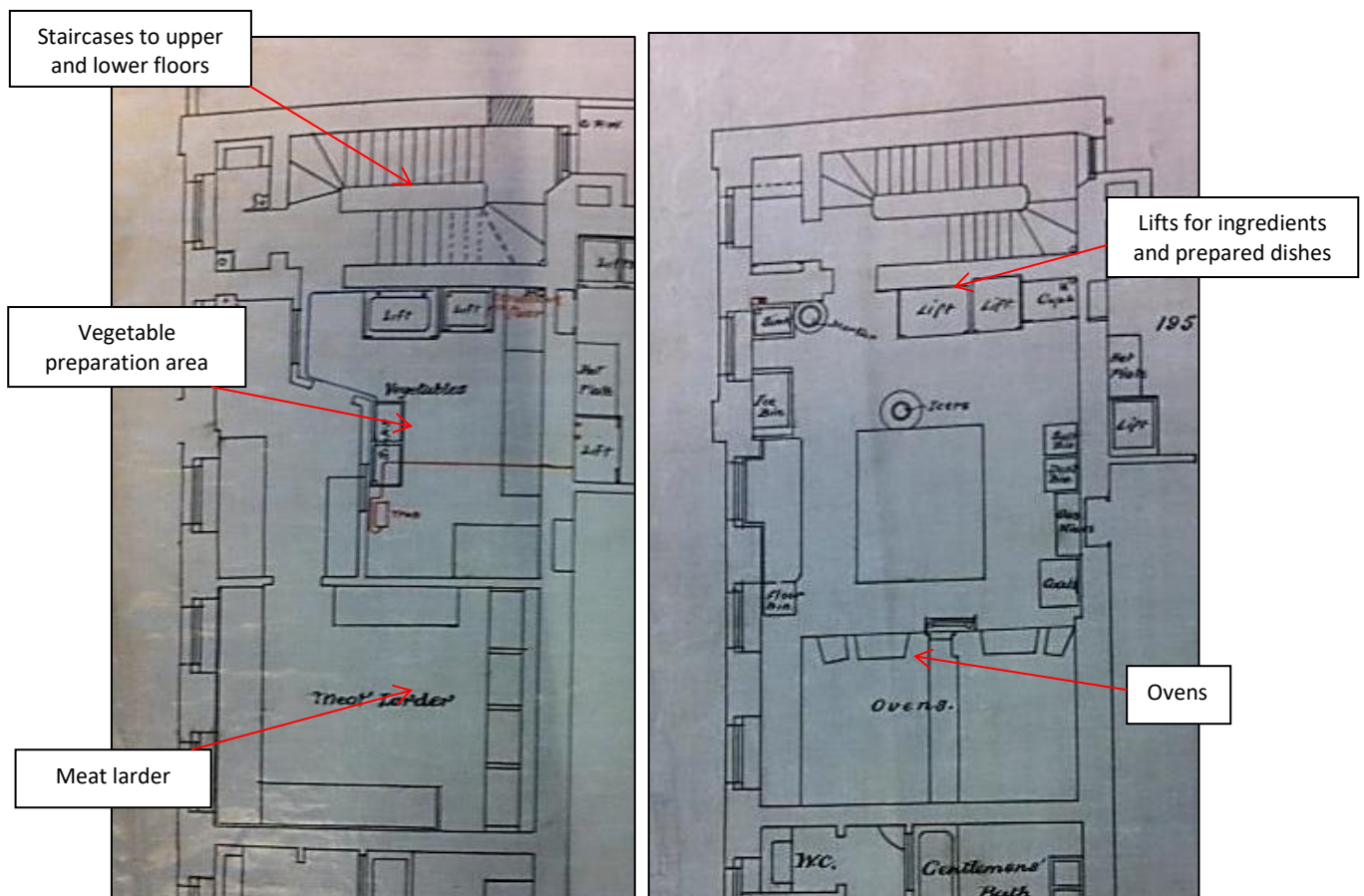


Figure 56 Detail of the Kitchens on the Second (lhs) and Third (rhs) Floors of the Grand (1880)

⁸⁵³ 'The Making of a Great Hotel', *The Times*, 19 October 1908, 12.

⁸⁵⁴ 'The Metropole', *BN*, 15 June 1883, 830; 'The Grand Hotel', *BA*, 7 February 1879, 59.

⁸⁵⁵ Job file of Alfred Waterhouse for the Grand Hotel, 1898. *WAA/12/4/1-6 and (1)PA1936/WATA(64)(14-18)*, *British Architectural Library*, RIBA.

This sectional organisation of the kitchen was also advocated by Hamp, with each zone and group of chefs preparing separate elements of the menu. He suggested five ‘working parts - roast, soup, sauce and entrée, vegetables and fish’, with additional sections for confectionery and ices. At the Savoy, where Escoffier used a structured ‘brigade’ system, the kitchens were arranged over four floors.⁸⁵⁶ The main kitchen was on the same level as the restaurant, and next to the fish, meat and game larders (Figure 57). The *chef’s* office, adjacent to that of the hotel manager, looked onto the main kitchen, enabling supervision of staff and of expensive ingredients.⁸⁵⁷

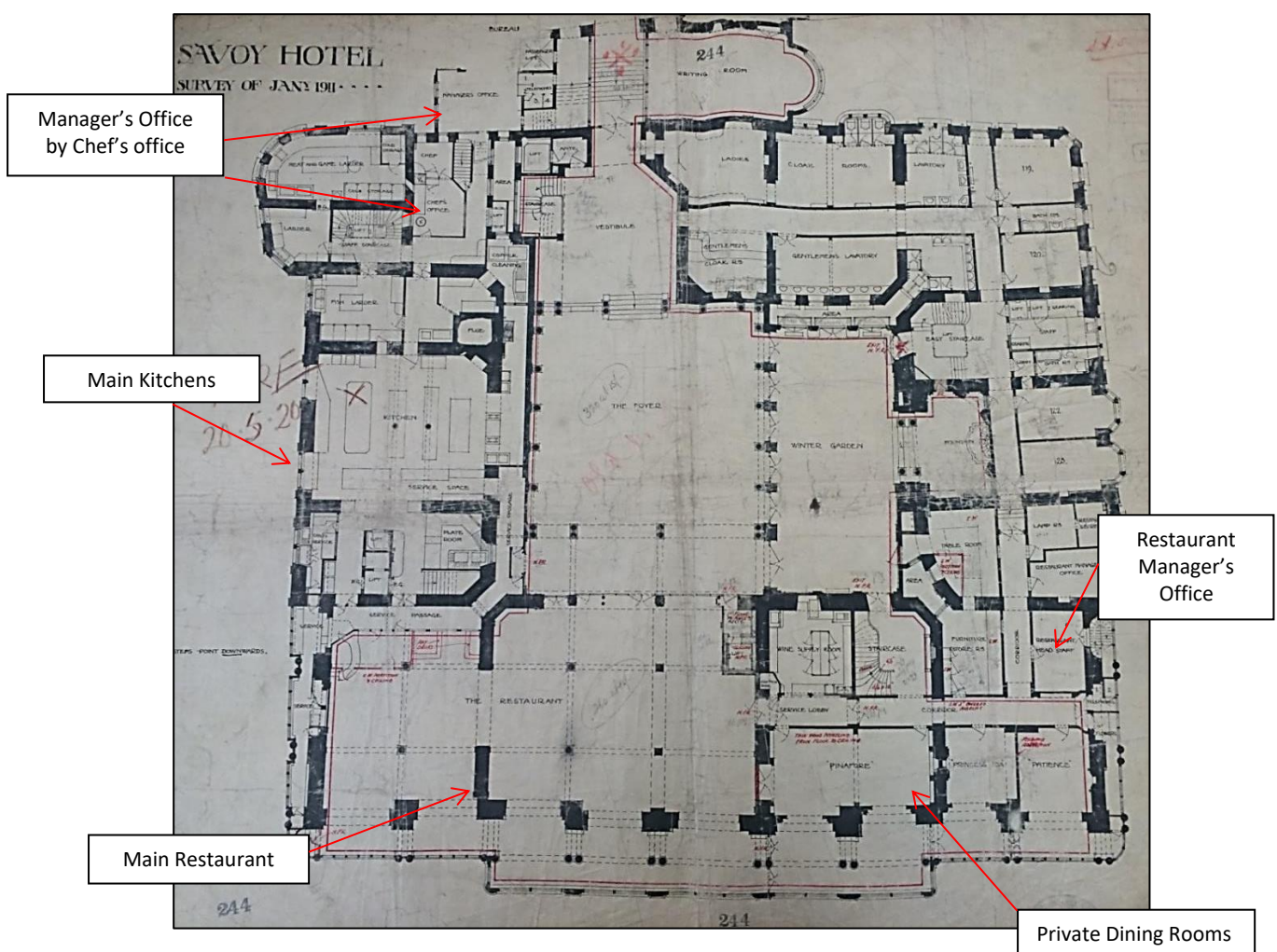


Figure 57 Plans of the Foyer and Restaurant Level at the Savoy, 1911⁸⁵⁸

⁸⁵⁶ Kenneth James, *Escoffier: The King of Chefs* (London; New York: Hambledon, 2002), 131.

⁸⁵⁷ ‘The Planning of Hotels’, *BN*, 10 May 1912, 653.

⁸⁵⁸ Westminster City Archives: WCC: ACC40/15

Immediately below, on the Entresol level, were the pastry kitchen, and the still room, where tea, coffee and buttered bread were prepared (Figure 58).⁸⁵⁹ Also on this floor were dormitories for maids, and administration offices. Below, on the Embankment entrance level, were the bakery, oven, cellars and service areas, with further cellars and storage areas in the basement below (Figure 59). All the service areas on these floors were interconnected by staircases and lifts, allowing the free flow of staff and ingredients out of the sight of guests.



Figure 58 Plan of the Entresol Level , the Savoy, 1911

⁸⁵⁹ The 'still room' in a hotel was akin to a butler's pantry, where breakfasts, teas and items such as the buttered bread to accompany smoked salmon were prepared, according to the biography of Mary Dooley, a hotel still room maid in 1916. Antony Masters, *Inside Marbled Halls: Life above and below stairs in the Hyde Park Hotel* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1979), 47.

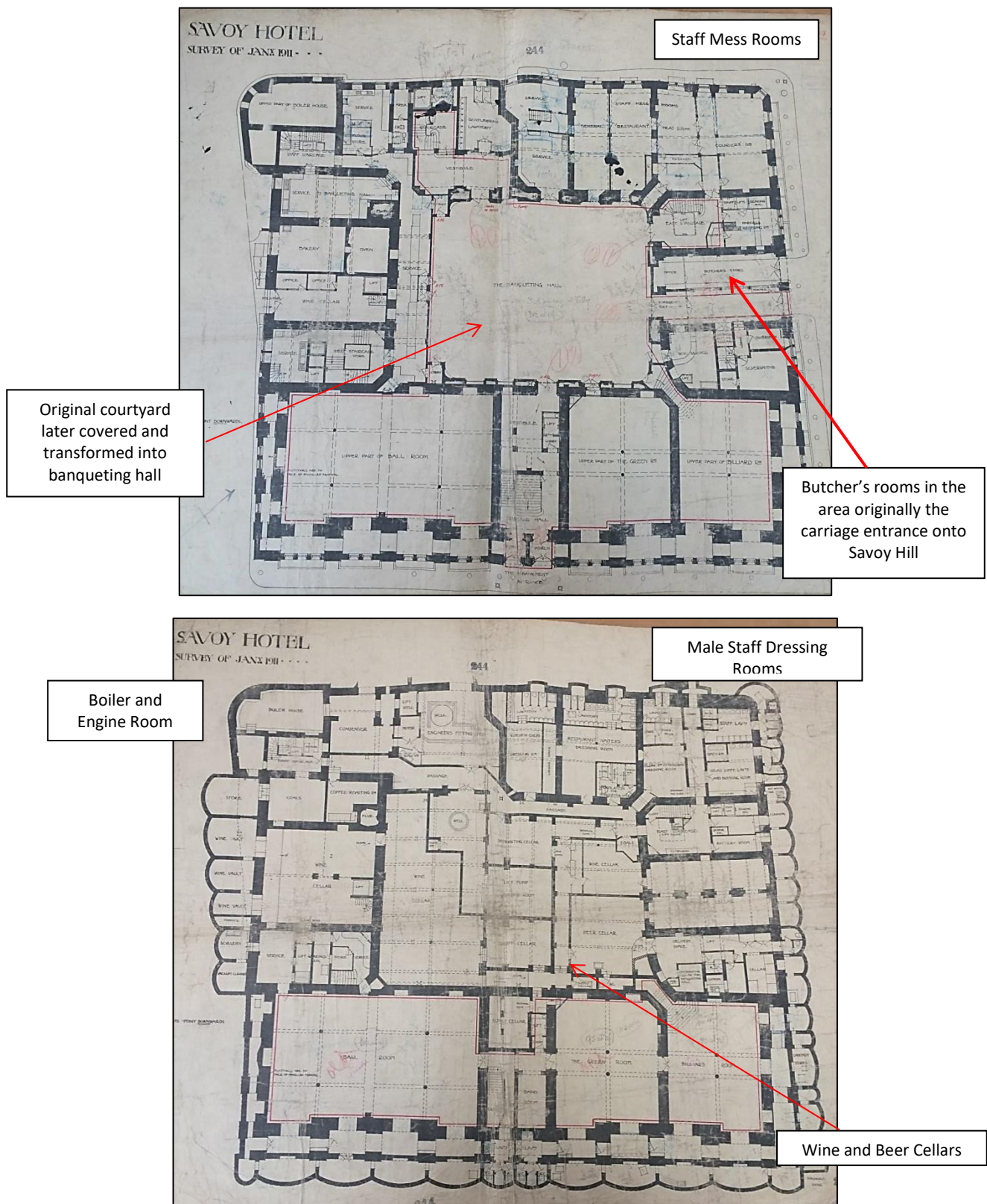


Figure 59 Plans of The Embankment Entrance and Basement Levels, the Savoy, 1911

Installed in the hotel kitchens was a range of innovative equipment, of the kind celebrated in both the general and trade press. For guests, it would seem, the novelty of the kitchen equipment was as significant as comfort and cosmopolitanism. For the American publication *Town and Country*, for example, the ‘modern contrivances of a most ingenious nature’ in the kitchens at the Ritz were as noteworthy as the hotel’s luxurious *Louis Seize* interiors.⁸⁶⁰ For proprietors, this equipment promised efficiency and reliability. The two steam boilers by Messrs Strode & Co. at the newly altered Berkeley were a case in point. ‘By an ingenious automatic arrangement’ *The Building News* noted, ‘these boilers provide a hot water supply for the hotel of over 1,000 gallons an hour [and]] the heating apparatus for steam cooking, for the roasting range [...], gas stoves and hot plates and other apparatus’. *The Architect*, too, remarked upon the Berkeley’s technology, which included a central range and fire grill by Cabain of Paris.⁸⁶¹ These were the most up-to-date technologies, drawing on the knowledge of international experts.

Contemporary photography of kitchens and machinery in publicity material and the trade press reinforced the perception of smooth, shining modernity.⁸⁶² In 1890, a photo of the new Savoy kitchen (Figure 60) was devoid of staff, with gleaming pans arranged methodically on a substantial range, before the hot, sweaty work of food preparation commenced. The text set out a vision of the kitchen as a site not only of modernity and mechanisation, but one where a blend of magical and scientific alchemy was performed by the expert *chef*, who at this time was M. Charpentier, formerly of White’s Club:⁸⁶³

With him we visit his kitchens - or rather his laboratories - all is clean, bright and scientifically ‘up to date’. Here he works his spells, using gas, coal, and steam as various heat producers. Here is he the Lord of the Furnaces, who can grill a split smelt as deftly as he could roast a whole ox.

⁸⁶⁰ ‘The New Ritz Hotel of London’, *Town and Country*, 20 October 1906, 51-59, 59.

⁸⁶¹ ‘Berkeley Hotel, Piccadilly’, *BN*, 28 May 1897, 772, and *The Architect* 28 May 1897, 21.

⁸⁶² See *Historic England Photographic Archive* of the kitchen (BL14930); refrigeration equipment (BL20041/003) and dynamo room (BL20041/005).

⁸⁶³ *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 20-22; *ILN*, 26 October 1889, 534.

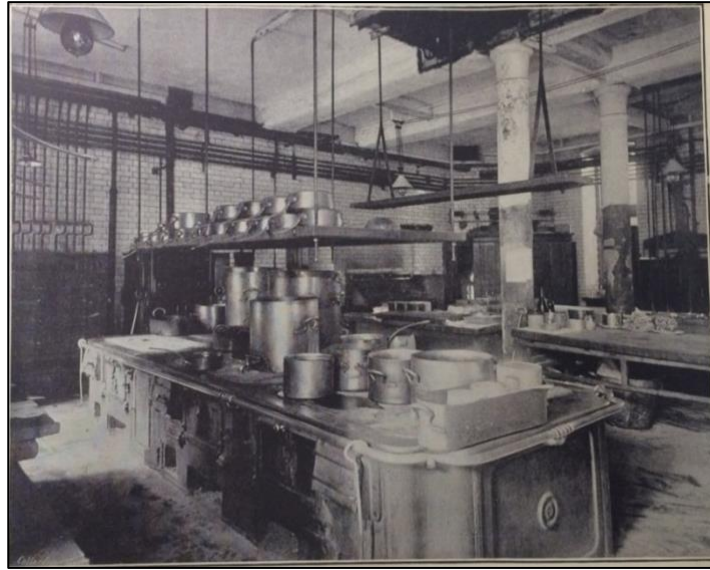


Figure 60 The Efficient but Unsullied kitchen at the Savoy, as seen in *Souvenir* (1893)

This intriguing combination of modernity and magic was a theme that pleased the hotel image makers. As Chapter III has shown, a transformative fairyland fed through many aspects of the image of the hotel *de luxe*. The idea of effortless magic was enticing but systemisation and structure were essential. The Savoy kitchens were run with ‘the perfect system of divided labour. Each cook is a specialist and has a function peculiar to himself’ reiterated the *Souvenir*.

Managing a kitchen in a big hotel, as a later guide to catering management also argued, necessitated ‘the most perfect system of working’, which hotels were keen to publicise.⁸⁶⁴ In contrast however, neither Hamp, Oakley’s drawing, nor wider hotel publicity drew attention to another essential component of modern luxury service. The ‘domestic’ areas of housekeeping and laundry, staffed largely by women, also reflected a modern approach to service without which grand hotels could not have functioned.

Making Up 125,000 Beds: The ‘Domestic’ Side of Luxury

Although the maintenance of costly decorations, the cleanliness of rooms, and the laundering of vast piles of linen was as necessary as food production, ‘domestic’ work in hotels did not

⁸⁶⁴ *Catering Management* (London: Waverly Book Co., 1919), 5.

generate quite the same interest. Early accounts of the housekeeping and laundry departments are limited. Where contemporary accounts or records do exist, they indicate work hierarchies and specialisations similar to those in the kitchens and restaurants. At the head of the housekeeping department was a woman, the senior housekeeper, and like the rest of her staff, usually English.⁸⁶⁵ Although detail and nomenclature varied according to establishment, typically beneath the housekeeper were a number of chambermaids who, in the early period, often provided personal service to any female visitors without their own maid. They could keep charge of the linen, and generally supervised not more than thirty rooms, managing the housemaids who also cleaned the common parts and reception rooms.⁸⁶⁶

Not all hotels had laundries on site, but for those that did, a modern combination of structured specialisation and up-to-date technology was employed, similar to that in the kitchens. At the Langham, which employed between thirty and forty laundry staff daily in 1872, the staff included laundry ironers, a laundry marker, a laundry packer, a linen room assistant, and a work needle room assistant.⁸⁶⁷ Modern equipment in the laundry was as fascinating to the trade press as that in kitchens, and journals frequently commented upon progress.⁸⁶⁸ At the Cecil, the 700 bedrooms and a number of restaurants and dining rooms placed particularly heavy demand upon the laundry. The department, according to an 1899 article entitled 'Modern Hotels', consisted of a 'wet and steaming range of subterranean apartments in which the finest of modern machines are

⁸⁶⁵ The case study hotels database records nearly 1000 staff in this category, and includes housekeepers, chambermaids, housemaids, staff maids, linen keepers and linen maids. 41% of the total were born in London, 45% in England outside London, 8% in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and only 6% in Europe.

⁸⁶⁶ Both *Practical Hotel Management* (1890), 2, and *Catering Management* (1919), 77 do give some indication of the structure and status of different roles in the 'domestic' side. The census records these different kinds of maids. Leonora Philipps, *A Dictionary of Employments Open to Women* (Women's Institute, London, 1898) only identifies 'barmaids' in the hospitality business, and no other separate kind of maid. Hotel and refreshment room barmaids were superior to pub barmaids, earning 10s-15s per week, 15. In domestic service, (no hotel work was listed, with the exception of barmaids), a housekeeper might earn £30-£60 per annum, a parlour maid £18-£30, and a housemaid £14 to £26 per annum.

⁸⁶⁷ The *Langham Hotel Guide* (1872), 6. See appendix for the list of employees on site in 1911.

⁸⁶⁸ For steam laundries see *Hotel Review and Catering World*, November 1886, 135; 'Hotel Laundries', *The Caterer*, August 1891, 306, and Hotel Laundries II: Power Machinery', *The Caterer*, November 1891, 426.

doing the washing for the whole establishment [...], at a rate of perhaps three or four thousand articles a day'. 'Although all the main processes are performed by machinery', the article continued, 'there may be five and twenty or thirty people employed in this laundry'.⁸⁶⁹ A 1907 photograph illustrates an impressively clean, tiled, barrel-vaulted interior, with white-aproned women sorting the spotless linen. Behind, others attend to the laundry machinery (Figure 61). In 'modern hotels', manual labour and mechanisation worked together in the production of luxury.



Figure 61 Staff and Machinery in The Laundry of the Cecil in 1907⁸⁷⁰

Administering the Business of Luxury: The Growing Role of Women

While it might have been expected that much of the work concerned with the 'domestic' side of hotels was carried out by women, greater numbers of female staff were also working in administrative and managerial positions. Traditionally, wives of innkeepers had often played a significant part in running their establishments as their husbands. Arguably there was also an acceptance of women in senior positions in hotels as there was not a great social and cultural distance between managing a household, and running these commercialised, 'homes from home'. As Clare Wright argues in relation to small hotels in Australia at this time, these 'public and private spaces collapsed into each other, so that the values and attributes associated with

⁸⁶⁹ 'Modern Hotels', *Chambers Journal*, 24 September 1898, 673-5, 674.

⁸⁷⁰ *Historic England Photographic Archive BL20041/002*

these territories (including their gendering) were ambiguously interconnected'.⁸⁷¹ In Britain there has been little academic research in this field, although evidence of women in positions of responsibility was widespread. Records of new appointments in the trade press often referred to women managers in the same context as men. In *The Directory of the Hotel World* of 1900, a substantial proportion of 'Hotel Men' listed were in fact women.⁸⁷² 'Hotel management has become a profession, to be studied in every branch from beginning to end' wrote one observer in 1900, 'and the best practitioners are those, of both sexes, who would win success in any walk of life'.⁸⁷³ Although the role of women in business at this time tended to remain largely undervalued, in hotels, female managers seem to have been accepted and acknowledged.⁸⁷⁴

Women were often recorded in the finance and administration departments of the case study hotels. The censuses identify numerous female cashiers and reception clerks, who could rise to senior positions.⁸⁷⁵ In 1901 at the Savoy, the 'restaurant chief cashier' was Emily Bennett, aged 42, and at the Cecil in 1911, two women were employed as checking clerks, and four as desk cashiers, part of a team of fifteen. A number of women were also identified as 'hotel manageress', an occupation recorded in a contemporary study of female employment.⁸⁷⁶ Some of these women were single, in other cases they were the wife of a manager (Table 13). In 1908, Mrs. George Schmieder was warmly received by *The Caterer* as a working partner with her husband at the Waldorf. Although Marie-Louise Ritz self-deprecatingly did not wish to 'exaggerate' her responsibilities, - 'any woman of moderately good taste could have done the

⁸⁷¹ See also Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives - Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies*, 32 (2001), 57-75.

⁸⁷² 'Hotel Men. A directory of the leading proprietors, managers etc. connected with the Hotels, Restaurants, Clubs and Catering Establishments of the British Isles', *HW*, April 1900, np.

⁸⁷³ Griffiths, 'Hotels at home and abroad' *Fortnightly Review*, August 1899 256-263, 258.

⁸⁷⁴ 'Even when women were commercially successful [...], they were not publicly recognized by coverage in the press and celebratory dinners, as a man of comparable worth would have been'. Leonore Davidoff, 'Gender and the "Great Divide": Public and Private in British Gender History', *Journal of Women's History*, 15:1 (2003), 11-27, 17.

⁸⁷⁵ Female cashiers at the Grand (1891), and the Ritz (1911).

⁸⁷⁶ Leonora Philipps, *A Dictionary of Employments Open to Women* (London: Women's Institute, 1898), 70.

same and more probably', she wrote of her contribution to the hotel business in her biography of her husband - she was closely involved with the design and implementation of the furnishings at the Carlton, and with the Ritz hotels throughout Europe. She was also arguably the effective guardian of the Ritz brand after her husband's breakdown in 1902, and subsequent death.⁸⁷⁷

One of the most influential women was Helen Carte (1852-1913). Prior to her marriage to Richard D'Oyly Carte in April 1888, she had been business manager of the Opera Company, and had often travelled to America, visiting New York in at least 13 times by Christmas 1882. Reputedly paid a salary of £1,000 a year plus 10% commission on the theatre business in 1886, her ability to manage personalities such as Oscar Wilde, W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan was as valued as her organisational and financial skills. 'Seldom, if indeed ever,' wrote Francois Cellier (1849-1914), musical director of the Opera Company, 'was someone found to possess such a thorough knowledge of the principles of sound finance, with absolute mastery of details either with respect to the intricate figures of financial statement or the most subtle and involved clauses of a legal document'. Although her principal role lay with the Theatre and Opera Company and she was never referred to as hotel manageress, she had, as previous chapters note, considerable influence on the design and furnishing of the hotel, and its ongoing success. It is likely that she exposed the wrongdoings of Ritz and Escoffier that led to dismissal in 1898, and she was involved with the hotel management until her death in 1913.⁸⁷⁸

Space and Control: Managing Respectability and Monitoring Efficiency

Although, by convention, production areas were hidden from guests, their location and plan were influenced by two additional considerations. The first was practicality. Service areas, whether

⁸⁷⁷ George Schmieder (sometimes Schneider) opened the Hotel Great Central, Marylebone, in 1899. *DT* 7 June 1899, 7. For the Waldorf, see *The Caterer*, December 1907, 535, and October 1909, 459. M-L Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 159.

⁸⁷⁸ Brian Jones, *Helen D'Oyly Carte: Gilbert and Sullivan's 4th Partner* (2011); Cellier, *Gilbert, Sullivan and D'Oyly Carte: Reminiscences of the Savoy and Savoyards* (1914), 7 and Derek Taylor, 'César Ritz and Auguste Escoffier vs The Savoy Hotel Company', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 15 (1996), 2-39.

kitchens or housekeeping, needed to be proximate and accessible, ensuring efficient, prompt service. The second concerned supervision and control. In late nineteenth-century cities, where the numbers of young women in employment was growing, the respectability of female staff, particularly those who came into direct contact with upper- and middle-class consumers, could be a matter for concern.⁸⁷⁹ At the same time, ensuring that the vast numbers of staff, both male and female, worked hard and did not infringe upon the trust granted to them was essential.

One conventional method of managing staff respectability was through the separation of function by gender.⁸⁸⁰ The 'domestic' departments were almost always staffed by women, while chefs, waiters, porters and maintenance staff were male.⁸⁸¹ Staff dressing rooms and W.C.s were separated according to gender, and, if space allowed, sometimes by department. In the larger hotels, recreational space was often also divided by gender, and by hierarchy.⁸⁸² At Claridge's, for example, the basement included a maids' sitting room and a male smoking room, as well as three dining rooms for senior staff, away from the common dining hall (Figure 62).

A hotel might declare that it was modern, but its status and profitability also relied upon the prevention of pilfering and theft. Reports of burglaries, such as the 1900 conviction of a member of staff at the Metropole for stealing jewellery, were not desirable, but theft from the hotel itself was also a concern.⁸⁸³ Sir Henry Burdett (1847-1920), a director of the Gordon Hotels, noted that he had instituted a 'system of checks' with the reception clerks at the Metropole who handled cash.⁸⁸⁴ Several hotel plans indicate a monitored staff entrance. At Claridge's, a 'Controller's

⁸⁷⁹ See Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), and Michael Goron, 'The D'Oyly Carte Boarding School': Female Respectability in the Theatrical Workplace, 1877-1903', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 26 (2010), 217-231.

⁸⁸⁰ Franklin, 'Troops of Servants', *Victorian Studies*, 19 : 2 (1975), 211-239.

⁸⁸¹ Women were also employed as cloakroom attendants and florists. Census records for Claridge's and the Grand (1901), and the Grand and Waldorf (1911).

⁸⁸² The Planning of Hotels', *BN*, 10 May 1912 653-4, 653.

⁸⁸³ *The Times*, 15 October 1900, 15.

⁸⁸⁴ *Sir Henry Burdett Papers. Bodleian Library, Oxford. Burdett.A.10.15. (MSS.Eng.C.6002-3) Gordon Hotels Ltd 1898-1919 6002 Folder February to April 1901, 3 January 1899. See Chapter II for more information.*

Modern Communication: Organising Time and Space

The Savoy's Timekeeper's Office and the monitoring of staff time was not the only way in which grand hotels were interrelated with the temporality of modernity. Hotels of this kind were part of the interlocking chains of modern networks of travel and communication, which were governed by a universal time system. Further, the cost of the basic product of hotels - the guest room - was measured by both time and space. Price might vary according to the standard of the room, but charges were levied on the basis of length of stay and size of space or number of rooms occupied. In addition, the promise of temporal convenience was also crucial to luxury. Guests wishing to spend time free of impositions, in the manner of the privileged, desired the swiftest response to any request, at the time and location of their own choice.⁸⁸⁶ Managing time and space effectively, through both traditional and up-to-date communications - internally and externally - and through efficient administration was essential to the provision of luxury.

Hotel communication systems came in both traditional and modern forms. The most visible of these were the pages. Dressed, like porters, in the recognisable visual language of luxury service, hotel pages were usually London-born, teenage boys.⁸⁸⁷ They carried messages within the building and into the city, and ran errands, easing the chore of consumption by collecting shopping or placing orders for guests. Less visible but equally indispensable were technological methods of communication. Early systems emulated those in country houses, upgrading as innovations developed.⁸⁸⁸ At the Langham, an internal bell system was monitored by an 'indicator clerk' based in the lobby, 'whose sole business [was] to see that all bells are duly answered – a very important and necessary post in so large an hotel', *The Building News*

⁸⁸⁶ See the 'commodification, compression, colonization and control of time' in Barbara Adam, *Time* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004). See also Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space* (2003), 34, and Shove, 'Comfort and Convenience: Temporality and Practice', in *Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (2012).

⁸⁸⁷ Place of birth of total pages and lift boys - London 70%; England outside London 21%; Other 9%.

⁸⁸⁸ Franklin, 'Troops of Servants', *Victorian Studies*, 19:2, (1975), 211-239, 231.

suggested.⁸⁸⁹ In 1899, the Great Central was fitted with 'Telesense, 'an ingenious instrument new to England' but which does not seem to have been widely adopted elsewhere.⁸⁹⁰

Innovative, internal communication systems amplified the luxury of speed and discretion, sometimes with a little magic thrown in. 'Should the guest desire strict privacy', explained the Savoy *Souvenir*, 'he or she can communicate by a speaking tube with the Restaurant side, and breakfasts, luncheons, dinners - anything from a cup of tea to a 'cocktail' from the American Bar - will come to them in the twinkling of an Embankment lamp'.⁸⁹¹ Simultaneously, systems also increased the efficiency of business processes for hotels. In 1878, *The Caterer* argued 'the convenience afforded to residents in an hotel by the use of the electric bell system cannot be overestimated, and when it has been once introduced, it speedily becomes regarded as indispensable to the property and comfortable working of the establishment'.⁸⁹² Modern communication was as necessary for proprietor as for client.

'Modern hotels' also required swift connections to the world beyond the walls. These gave busy guests more control over their own time, and connected them to local, national and international networks.⁸⁹³ Advance planning was not so necessary, G.A. Sala pointed out, if 'chance diners' could request a table for dinner during the afternoon. Such guests, he continued, 'are always wiring and telephoning to and from the Hotel Brobdingnag', his tongue-in-cheek term for a typical grand hotel.⁸⁹⁴ Booking tables or rooms by telegraph, or, later, by telephone, made life easier for the consumer, but these technologies added to a hotel's desirability. 'Engaging rooms' by 'wireless telegraphy' as an advertisement in 1906 for the Savoy in the *Illustrated London News*

⁸⁸⁹ 'The Langham Hotel', *BN*, 6 June 1865, 422.

⁸⁹⁰ 'Hotel Great Central' *DT*, 7 June 1899, 7.

⁸⁹¹ *Savoy Souvenir* (1893), 10.

⁸⁹² 'Electric Appliances for Hotels etc.', *The Caterer*, December 1878, 136.

⁸⁹³ By the end of the 1880s, the telephone in England had become 'an accepted, though still rare, method of communication in business' Gloag, *Victorian Comfort* (1961), 194.

⁸⁹⁴ Sala, *London Up to Date* (1894), 140-141, and Modern Hotels', *Chambers Journal*, 24 September 1898, 673-675, 675.

boasted, not only placed the hotel at the centre of a network of modern communication, but added to the hotel's allure through exciting innovation (Figure 63). The image of the message being beamed from a liner, across a glassy ocean as the sun set, was a vision of modern luxury - the supply of all desires, at any distance, without delay.



Figure 63 'Engaging Rooms at the World's Most Famous Hotel by Wireless Telegraphy', 1906⁸⁹⁵

By 1900, fast communications both within the building and with the rest of the world were important selling points for hotels *de luxe*. This extended from the ability to make telephone calls from one's room, to the receipt of international news and information, an attraction for cosmopolitan merchants, manufacturers, and tourists. In 1896, the Cecil boasted that 'telephonic communication with the outside world is arranged in every bedroom'. The Paris Ritz had installed telephones in all main bedrooms in 1898 as did the London Ritz in 1906. 'The author of 'Modern Hotels' spoke of the 'piping hot news from all ends of the earth', which news agencies 'pour[ed] in to hotels, ' just as they do in to the newspaper offices and the leading clubs all over the world'.

⁸⁹⁵ *ILN*, 28 April 1906, 609.

A 1906 article on 'Hotels Up to Date' argued that modern communications - 'telephone, telegraph office, telegraph tape news' - were as essential to the 'frequenters of the up to date hotel' as luxurious reception rooms. These were 'everything that the mind of man can conceive not merely in the way of comfort but of absolute luxury'.⁸⁹⁶

'Progressive, Imaginative, Daring, Generous': The Skill of Management

At the head of this modern organisation was the hotel manager. The part which the manager played as the public face of the grand hotel as a site of cosmopolitan luxury has been discussed, but, as many contemporaries acknowledged, their role as operator of these 'service machines' was significant and demanding. The 'assured success of the Savoy, wrote *The Caterer* in 1895, was not just due to its 'unsurpassed cuisine' but was also 'thanks to excellent management'.⁸⁹⁷ 'A hotel manager controls a heterogeneous miscellanea of departments, each a trade in itself, and so plans and arranges the momentous changes of policy of the undertaking which these amalgamated departments comprise that it is a going financial concern', observed an article in *The Hotel World*, comparing the hotel manager with other 'modern mercantile magnates'. The manager, the piece continued, 'is the brain piece of the whole machinery, the power house of cables of the hotel, the latent motor of the whole operation'.⁸⁹⁸ The 'modern hotel' was a business of machine-like, interrelated intricacy.

What also made the role of the manager 'modern' was the range of expertise required to run such a large business successfully.⁸⁹⁹ As another contemporary observed, 'the hotel manager must possess a number of the most diverse and often very rare qualities. He must be both masterful and conciliatory; he must exert wise firm authority over his staff, at the same time

⁸⁹⁶ *St Cecilia* (1896), 15; Binney, *The Ritz Hotel, London* (2006). 'Hotels up to date . Effective means of advertising and High Class hotels, their patrons, and their requirements'. *The Caterer*, February 1906, 54.

⁸⁹⁷ *The Caterer*, April 1895, 143.

⁸⁹⁸ 'Comparison of a hotel manager with other modern mercantile magnates', *HW*, July 1897, 13.

⁸⁹⁹ 'Directors and Managers', *Hotel Review*, April 1887, 63.

keep his clients in good humour.’ The manager, the author argued, must understand ‘the whole of the minutiae, the most secret ways, the power to control and direct the whole of the complex machinery by which the hotel is served and kept going’. In summary, ‘the good hotel manager must be omnipresent, omniscient and he may be omnipotent for good or evil for he holds the comfort and wellbeing of the hotel guests in his hands’.⁹⁰⁰

In the production spaces of hotels, modernity and luxury intertwined. A manager had to ensure that the practical requirements of business efficiency were met. Without modern machinery, networks of communication, space and time management, women in administrative and managerial roles, and senior management of a high quality, a luxury hotel could not function effectively. But good management concerned more than this hidden modernity. For success, it was incumbent upon the manager of a hotel *de luxe* to provide a social modernity which gave men and women the opportunity to reject the formalities and restrictions of the past, and to mingle together in new, less rigid, ways. ‘If the management is progressive, imaginative, daring, generous’, observed César Ritz, ‘it can attract fashionable, wealthy, and discriminating people to its doors’.⁹⁰¹ A ‘modern’ manager established his hotel as novel and enticing, a venue where new identities could be forged. It is this visible, performed social modernity which I now address.

Modernity On Display: Hotel Lounges, Palm Courts and Winter Gardens

When the Waldorf Hotel opened in 1908, the *Illustrated London News* acclaimed it as the ‘latest addition to the leading London hotels’, and in ‘size, arrangements and special characteristics, [...] one of the finest in London’.⁹⁰² The hotel’s most celebrated feature was the large social space in the centre of the ground floor, a photograph of which was used to illustrate the article (Figure 64). The magazine referred to this interior as the Grand Lounge, but it was also known as the

⁹⁰⁰ Griffiths, ‘Hotels at home and abroad’ *Fortnightly Review*, August 1899, 256-263, 258.

⁹⁰¹ Ritz, *César Ritz* (1938), 98.

⁹⁰² *ILN*, 1 February 1908, 178,

Palm Lounge and as the Palm Court. In appearance and use, it resembled other similar social spaces, which bore a variety of names, which had been introduced in many of the fashionable grand hotels since the end of the century. At the Langham, a comparable interior was labelled 'the vestibule', and at Claridge's the space was known as the 'winter garden'. In other hotels, the space was simply called the lounge and, depending upon their size and plan, hotel lobbies also often displayed many of the same features.⁹⁰³



Figure 64 'The Grand Lounge' at the Waldorf, published in the *Illustrated London News*, 1908⁹⁰⁴

Although the name of these new interiors varied, several common characteristics set them apart from other reception rooms. Traditionally, as previous chapters identify, hotel reception rooms and restaurants manifested certain architectural, stylistic and design features which reflected accepted ideas about status, gender and comfort. However, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, writers who observed luxury hotels increasingly spoke of a shift in behaviours, which were

⁹⁰³ The 'Palm Lounge' at the Waldorf, *The Caterer* January 1907, 54; The Langham's 'vestibule', *The Langham Hotel Guide* and Claridge's 'winter garden', *The Caterer*, January 1895, 3. The space was also sometimes referred to just as 'the lounge', *Catering Management* (1919), 126.

⁹⁰⁴ *ILN*, 1 February 1908, 178

accompanied by changes in spatial arrangement and interior decoration. In 1895, Lucy Hardy observed:

Better-class, modern hotels [offered] that pleasant arrangement usual at most large Continental hostelries, viz the spacious entrance hall, furnished with seats and palm trees and shrubs - a kind of 'winter garden' - where the visitors can partake of light refreshment at little tables and observe all who enter or quit the hotel. There is a pleasant Bohemianism about this hall or indoor garden which is lacking in the drawing room proper.⁹⁰⁵

For Mrs. Hardy and her contemporaries, these interiors were explicitly 'modern'. In 1899, *The British Architect* suggested that the 'lounge' was a 'necessary feature in all modern hotels'.⁹⁰⁶ In 1908, *The Caterer* maintained that the 'palm court or winter garden' was 'indispensable' to a 'modern' hotel.⁹⁰⁷ Others described how, after dinner in 'modern hotels', it was common for groups of men and women to 'lounge' 'in cushioned chairs around little tables', chatting, smoking, 'sipping tea and coffee and listening to the delicious strains of the hotel band'.⁹⁰⁸ In these interiors, the rigidity of formal hierarchies were set aside.

These new hotel lounges and palm courts possessed three components which differentiated them from existing public rooms. They offered a spacious, inside/outside hybridity, which often drew on the architectural features and exotic planting of orangeries and conservatories.

Observation and performance were their *raison d'être*, facilitated by plan and design. Relaxed informality for both men and women, or, in Mrs. Hardy's term, 'Bohemianism', which included smoking by both genders, was preferable to strict rules of traditional etiquette. It was this combination of hybridity, performance, and heterosocial informality, all indicative of changing ideas around traditional social structures and identities, which rendered these interiors explicitly modern, and their up-to-date fashionability which made them integral to the 'modern' early twentieth-century grand hotel.

⁹⁰⁵ Lucy Hardy, 'The Hotel Drawing Room', *The Queen*, 21 September 1895, 525.

⁹⁰⁶ *BA*, 14 July 1899, 22.

⁹⁰⁷ 'A modern winter garden' *The Caterer*, May 1908, 236-7.

⁹⁰⁸ 'Modern Hotels', *HW*, (November, 1898), 3.

A Hybrid Space: Glass, Light, Palms

Although as the nineteenth-century drew to a close the palm court or winter garden was new to the grand hotel, at first impression the inspiration for their design came from an established space, the conservatory. Just as iron- or steel-framed, glazed structures marked the intersection between the interior of a house and the garden beyond, the interior/exterior hybridity of winter gardens was, at least initially, the product of their position in the hotel's plan. In the earliest buildings, the space which became the winter garden had often originally been intended as an open but protected courtyard, in the Mediterranean manner, complete with plants and fountain. While this arrangement could succeed in warmer climates, in London it quickly proved impractical. Consequently, at hotels such as the Langham and the Savoy, these central courtyards were glazed over, bringing the outside space within the building.⁹⁰⁹

New hotels built on the quadrangular plan, such as Claridge's and the Carlton, retained this hybrid space, and were constructed with glass roofs over the central circulation area, their top lighting recalling the staircase halls of Palladian villas or the contemporary art galleries in the homes of the *nouveaux riches*.⁹¹⁰ At the Carlton, 'the glass roofed quadrangle[...], a well ventilated courtyard [formed] a luxurious lounge, [...] furnished with palms' (Figure 66). At the Russell (1901), a central 'glass covered palm house or winter garden' connected the entrance hall, smoking and billiard rooms, and dining room.⁹¹¹ The fashion for this new space was such that, when a different plan was employed, as at the Piccadilly, or the Ritz, where the winter garden was set to one side of the grand gallery, (Figure 67) the practice of incorporating a palm court or lounge modelled on the glazed courtyard became standard.

⁹⁰⁹ The Langham's courtyard was covered in 1871 at a cost of £13,000, *Langham Hotel Guide* (1872), 5. At the Savoy, after alterations in 1896, the courtyard was eventually completely glazed over on the restaurant level in 1904, which created two/three levels, with the double height banqueting room on the lowest floor, and the foyer above.

⁹¹⁰ See Cooper, *The Opulent Eye* (1976), for The Library, 52 Grosvenor Street, London, 195, and The Music Room, Thornton Manor, Birkenhead, 201.

⁹¹¹ Beavan, *Imperial London (1901)*, 456; *BJ*, 6 June 1900, 328.



Figure 65 The Central Winter Garden or Hall at Claridge's, as first built (1898)⁹¹²

Lounge interiors combined a number of features, building upon tradition but with an eye to modern, fashionable novelty. In some hotels, such as at the Carlton and the Waldorf, the decorative style was based predominantly upon interpretations of French eighteenth-century styles, denoting social standing and upward mobility.⁹¹³ The artifice of delicate frames of mirrored French windows lent light but led nowhere. Fretwork created the illusion of an eighteenth-century orangery. At the Ritz, the trellis on the coved cornice was composed of geometric motifs, and a fountain called *La Source* was set in its own gilded niche.⁹¹⁴ In other hotels, including Claridge's, the interior style drew more on restrained Adamesque styles, with fluted columns and Corinthian capitals (Figure 65). However, as fashions changed, so did the décor. At the Hotel Victoria, the substantial 1914 alterations provided a central ground floor 'lounge', clad with two tones of marble, in a fashionable Art Deco interpretation of the Egyptian style (Figure 70).⁹¹⁵ For this 'modern' interior, exhibiting up-to-date design was vital.

⁹¹² Waring and Gillows Archive, WCA GWG/2233/3/2/5

⁹¹³ Penny Sparke, 'Introduction', in McKellar & Sparke, eds., *Interior Design and Identity*, (2004), 1-9. 4.

⁹¹⁴ Although no extant designs for the interior of the Ritz have been found, see similar designs by Mewès and Davis, in the *Mewès and Davis Archive. V and A, 1864-1975*, which includes 'designs for the furniture, fittings and walls of a winter garden in the Louis XIV style, complete with trellised walls, and jardinières'.

⁹¹⁵ *ILN*, 13 June 1914, 1018. For Egyptian influence and the use of 'Egyptianised' design motifs in the twentieth century, see James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival: Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (Abingdon: NYC: Routledge, 2005), 347-396.

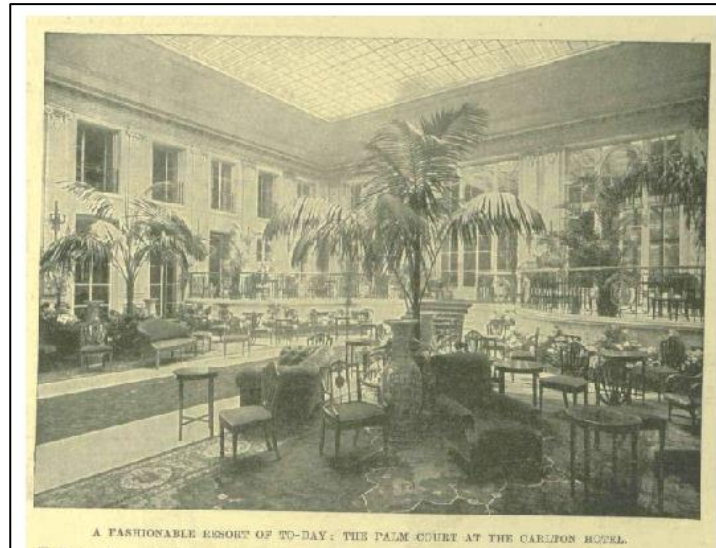


Figure 66 'A Fashionable Resort of To-Day', The Carlton Palm Court, *Illustrated London News*, 1899⁹¹⁶

Although design detail varied according to fashion, two aspects of these interiors were consistent, both of which contributed to the impression of interior/exterior hybridity. The first of these was the use of light. Where natural light was limited, artificial lighting was employed to emulate nature. Stained or frosted glass ceilings were backlit, and coves and cornices were illuminated by concealed fixtures. At the same time, the smooth materiality of glass, mirror and marble created the 'magical' shine desired in luxury interiors. The second was the vogue for indoor plants, which were provided by a wealth of commercial suppliers.⁹¹⁷ Winter gardens, like conservatories and glasshouses, projected a utopian vision of a Garden of Eden. Although these were clearly social spaces rather than ones devoted to cultivation, exotic, tender plants such as palms, some the size of trees, fulfilled two functions (Figure 69). Their lush green leaves indicated a desirable cosmopolitan 'otherness', rooted in their distant origins. At the same time, their costly exoticism rendered them recognisable markers of social status.⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁶ *ILN*, 5 August 1899, 190.

⁹¹⁷ 'Advertisement for palms 'Specially hardy-grown for Table and other Decorations in Hotels and Restaurants' *The Caterer*, January 1891, xli. See also *HW*, November, 1898, 3.

⁹¹⁸ Penny Sparke, 'Nature Inside: Plants and Flowers in Modern Interiors', Paper presented at the Dorich House Museum 8.1-8.8, 8.3. <https://www.dorichhousemuseum.org.uk/wp->

The connection between conservatories and hotel winter gardens and palm courts went beyond bright, glassy materiality and exotic planting. As a number of scholars have argued, the Victorian conservatory was a complicated and contradictory site wherein ideas about sex, race and empire intersected. Neither truly inside or outside, the spatial ambiguity of conservatories was often used in art and literature as a 'morally liminal space, the ideal site for secret rendezvous and risky flirtations.'⁹¹⁹ Like conservatories, hotel lounges, palm courts and winter gardens were 'threshold spaces', in which 'physical and ideological boundaries between public and private were tested'.⁹²⁰ Their heterotopian hybridity set them beyond rigid conventions. Ways of behaving which would previously have been considered unacceptable - from public 'lounging', to men and women chatting, drinking and smoking together - were encouraged. Although this physical ease and enjoyment was possible elsewhere in the hotel, either in the privacy of one's own room or, for men, in the seclusion of the smoking room, what amplified the modernity of these social practices in palm courts and winter gardens was that they were carried out by both genders, and clearly on display.

Observation, Performance and Identity: The Hotel Lounge as Stage Set

Performance has always been an aspect of luxury leisure and consumption, and by association, luxury interiors. At the same time, spectacle and performance were major elements of many late Victorian and Edwardian leisure activities, from shopping and exhibitions, to pageants and

<content/uploads/sites/15/2018/05/Penny-Sparke-Final-2.pdf>, acc. 13.6.19, and Pat Kirkham, Rethinking Flow and the Relationship between Indoors and Out: California c1945-c1965', in Penny Sparke et al., eds. *Flow: Interior, Landscape and Architecture in the Era of Liquid Modernity* (London; New York; Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2018), 189-198, 197. For a literary reference, see Newland Archer at the Beauforts' ballroom which led onto 'the depths of a conservatory where camellias and tree ferns arched their costly foliage over seats of black and gold bamboo', Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (1920), (1994), 14.

⁹¹⁹ Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Glassworlds: Glass Culture and the Imagination 1830-1880* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 208, lists a number of Victorian novels in which the conservatory acts as the setting for a 'crisis of female sexuality'. See also Samantha Burton, 'Champagne in the Shrubbery: Sex, Science, and Space in James Tissot's London Conservatory', *Victorian Studies*, 57:3 (Spring 2015), 476-489.

⁹²⁰ Nancy Rose Marshall, 'Image or Identity: Kathleen Newton and the London Pictures of James Tissot', in *Seductive Surfaces: The Art of Tissot*, ed. Katharine Lochnan (New Haven: Yale UP, 1999), 23-52, 39, cited Burton, 'Champagne in the Shrubbery', *Victorian Studies*, (2015), 479.

theatre.⁹²¹ These conventions were also found in the hotels and restaurants of the period. For Francиска Bollerey, the architecture of professional hospitality explicitly encouraged and enabled a 'performance of modernity'. In the 'modern' interior, personal display was not only about the demonstration of existing status. In the novels of authors such as Henry James, Robbie Moore argues, hotel lounges and palm courts were acknowledged as distinctly modern forms of architectural space, transient and malleable, with 'laundered rather than fixed identities'.⁹²² The structure of society was changing, the numbers of the better-off were increasing, and many more were able to participate in the consumption of luxury.⁹²³ In these interiors, guests participated in the creation of new identities as both observers and observed.

In palm courts and winter gardens, interior design facilitated performance in a number of ways. Lighting, of course, aided visibility, but the planimetric arrangement also encouraged observation. In central, circulatory winter gardens, such as those at Claridge's and the Russell, a flow of guests passed through, moving from entrance hall to drawing room, and from reading room to restaurant, creating a continual display.⁹²⁴ Where lobby lounges replaced entrance halls, the theatricality of arrival and departure provided anticipation and interest. At the Great Central at Marylebone, the courtyard into which new arrivals were driven was, according to *The Telegraph* 'commanded by a three-sided lounge, from the easy seclusion of which visitors can watch the coming and going of the travellers'.⁹²⁵ What could be more entertaining than to observe, and judge, the 'passing show' of other fashionably attired residents?

⁹²¹ For the contemporary fashion for spectacle, see Deborah Sugg Ryan, 'Spectacle the public and the Crowd: Exhibitions and pageants in 1908', in Morna O'Neill et al., *The Edwardian Sense* (2010), 43-72.

⁹²² Bollerey, 'Beyond the Lobby', in Avermaete & Massey, eds., *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges*, (2013), 2-48; Moore, 'Henry James, Hotels...', *Modernist Cultures*, 7 (2012), 254-278, 254.

⁹²³ Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, (1899), 41-59. See also Andrew Trigg, 'Veblen, Bourdieu and Conspicuous Consumption', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 35 (2001), 99-116. Penny Sparke; Anne Massey, 'Introduction, *Biography, Identity and the Modern Interior* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 1-9.

⁹²⁴ *BJ*, 6 June 1900, 328.

⁹²⁵ 'Hotel Great Central', *DT* 7 June 1899, 7.



Figure 67 The Winter Garden at the Ritz (1906)⁹²⁶

In a number of cases, the architecture of performance was enhanced by the theatrical technique of changing floor levels. At the Carlton, the central portion of the room was lower, with raised terraces and delicate metal balustrading around the walls, a deliberate dramatic device requested by César Ritz.⁹²⁷ At the Ritz, the winter garden was centred on the Piccadilly entrance, with a low flight of steps which ran the width of the opening onto the hallway creating a form of proscenium arch, and a slight separation from the longitudinal grand corridor (Figure 67). At the Waldorf, where the Palm Court was virtually a direct copy of that at the Carlton, *Country Life* noted the performative role of the interior, inviting the reader to ‘imagine how brilliant an appearance it will represent after dinner when beautifully dressed men and women grace the scene and the band (an excellent one) plays from the balcony’.⁹²⁸ The role of the other guests in the creation of identity of the observer as a person of glamour and status was as essential as the luxurious materiality of the interiors.

⁹²⁶ *Builder's Journal*, 11 July 1906, 6.

⁹²⁷ ‘A Fashionable resort of today: The Palm Court at the Carlton Hotel’, *ILN*, 5 August 1899, 190, and Lt. Col. Newnham-Davis, *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (1914), 23.

⁹²⁸ *CL*, 1 February 1908, lviii.

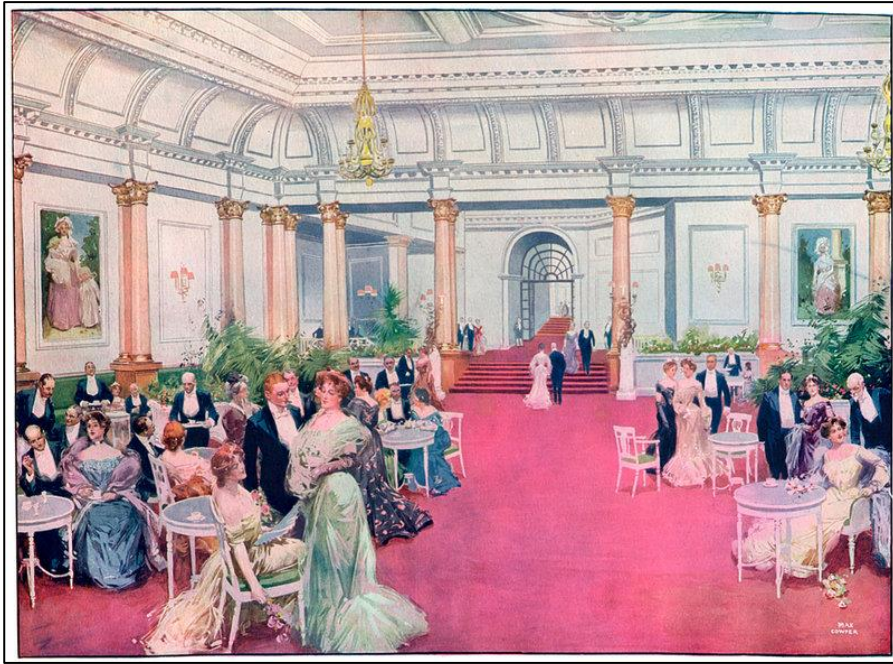


Figure 68 The Foyer at the Savoy, c.1910 ⁹²⁹

The device of combining changes in height with movement to enhance the performance of luxury status was particularly successful at the Savoy. The 1904 works included a new lounge between the original restaurant and the new entrance hall to the Strand (Figure 68). Taking advantage of the drop in floor levels of some 30 feet between the Strand and Embankment Gardens, the aptly named 'Foyer' was entered via a wide staircase leading down from the lobby. The narrow arched opening clustered the arrivals, before opening out into the room. Guests stopped at the informally arranged tables and chairs, for light refreshments and conversation. Others passed through to the restaurant, creating an elegantly garbed *dramatis personae* of luxurious display. Here modernity and performance combined.

'Bohemianism' and Heterosociability

While part of the attraction of these interiors was the drama of conspicuous consumption, the changing ways in which guests wished to socialise were also influential in this modern space.

⁹²⁹ Max Cowper, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:H%C3%B4tel_Savoy_%C3%A0_Londres.jpg acc. 24.7.19.

Although providing some degree of separation was still often necessary, towards the end of the century, the segregation of men and women at leisure, both at home and in hybrid, semi-public spaces like hotels was becoming less fashionable.⁹³⁰ Charles Rice argues that, in the domestic sphere, the influence of architects who advocated a plan which favoured privacy and seclusion had waned in favour of those who preferred 'openness and publicity', and promoted the 'commingling of inhabitants'.⁹³¹ For scholars of the architecture of commercial hospitality of this period such as Habbo Knoch, the behaviour in modern hotels could go beyond 'commingling'. The restaurants and palms courts of grand hotels provided 'transient spaces for informal intercourse, which could be used for acts of emancipation, and the loosening of gender relations and moral codes.' Erika Rappaport takes this point further, arguing that managers of West End hotels, theatres and department stores encouraged, 'a new form of open, licit sexuality', 'a distinct form of modernity [...] constructed through the promotion of a capitalist inspired heterosexual culture'.⁹³² Open immorality might not have been acceptable, but there can be no doubt that these new behaviours challenged the strict codes of the previous century.

That hotels, and their spaces designed for leisure, did not merely accommodate but actively encourage changing social behaviours and modern identities did not pass contemporaries without comment. In 1887 *The Pall Mall Gazette* identified the growing custom for men and women to travel and socialise together, noting that, in hotels, 'everything that segregates the sexes is contrary to the tendency of nature and the spirit of the time'.⁹³³ In 1900, the *Builder's Journal* wrote that the Russell's 'central winter garden, a kind of lounge or foyer' was a

⁹³⁰ Srilata Ravi, 'Modernity, Imperialism and the Pleasures of Travel: The Continental Hotel in Saigon', *Asian Studies Review*, 32:4 (2008), 475-490, citing Chris Rojek *Decentring Leisure - Rethinking Leisure Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

⁹³¹ C. Rice, *The Emergence of the Interior* (2007), 57 & 62.

⁹³² Knoch, 'Life on Stage: Grand Hotels as Urban Interzones around 1900', in *Creative Urban Milieux* (2008), 137-158, 150., and Rappaport, *Shopping For Pleasure* (2001), 162, citing P. Bailey, 'Parasexuality and Glamour: The Victorian Barmaid as a Cultural Prototype', *Gender and History* 2:2 (1990), 148-72.

⁹³³ 'The Decadence of the Political Club', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 16 June 1887, 1.

recognition of the 'importance of the social side of hotel life'.⁹³⁴ Identity, the 'modern hotel', and social change were mutually interconnected.



Figure 69 'Make it the New Palm Court of the Cecil' - Advertisement in *Country Life*, 1912⁹³⁵⁹³⁶

Of the various tempting experiences which a guest might enjoy in the lounge or palm court, arguably the most 'bohemian' was smoking. Conventionally, as the previous chapter discusses, smoking was a pastime for men, with male smoking rooms set apart from the principal public rooms. Gradually however, the new palm courts and lounges developed into interiors to which men and women were encouraged to repair after dinner, to drink and listen to music, and references to smoking grew. At the Langham, *The Caterer* wrote of 'a very handsome and tasteful vestibule, [...] forming a smoking lounge'. The *Hotel Guide* noted that the newly covered vestibule was 'fitted and furnished artistically, forming an agreeable lounge in which visitors after dinner can take their coffee and smoke whilst they listen to exceptionally good music, rendered

⁹³⁴ *BJ*, 6 June 1900, 328.

⁹³⁵ *CL*, 25 May 1912, xvii.

⁹³⁶ Two Palm Courts, decorated in the 'Louis XIV manner in a colour scheme of blue and gold', were added to the hotel in 1911/12, at a cost of some £50,000. *The Builder*, 31 May 1912, 632.

nightly by the Langham Quartette'. By the publication of a guide to catering management in 1919, this lounge was acknowledged as the place where 'visitors may gather with a certain amount of freedom, where tea and light refreshments are taken and where smoking is permitted'.⁹³⁷

Female smoking, in hotels and elsewhere, had a particular significance in the construction of new identities. Seen as a symbol of women's emancipation in the 1890s by both adherents and detractors, it was a visible challenge to conventional gender roles. The debate surrounding it reflected a disquiet about social and economic change, and associated questions of morality.⁹³⁸

Mrs. Linton, in her role as social commentator, used smoking as a metaphor for women who behaved outside conventional norms. A woman who smoked 'after dinner with the men, in railway carriages, in public rooms - when she is allowed', Mrs. Linton wrote, thought she was 'vindicating her independence and honouring her emancipated womanhood'.⁹³⁹ In hotels, female smoking was a public demonstration of a distinct break from accepted behaviours of the past.

Although there were risks associated with such transformation, the market which luxury hotels wished to attract, it would seem, was less likely to consider these behaviours as negative than positive. An article in *The Restaurant* from 1911 about 'lady smokers' noted that in fashionable West End establishments, which included the Carlton, the Ritz, the Savoy, the Cecil, the Metropole and Claridge's, ladies were permitted to 'please themselves' as far as smoking was concerned. But, rather than putting off clients, the journal acknowledged, this sort of liberal behaviour was considered desirable by the social group which these hotels wished to attract - 'in conceding to ladies liberty to smoke it is only conforming to the social custom prevalent among

⁹³⁷ 'Modern Hotels', *HW*, November, 1898, 3; *The Caterer*, July 1891, 244; *The Langham Hotel Guide* (1872), 5, and *Catering Management* (1919), 126.

⁹³⁸ See Rosemary Elliot, 'Destructive but Sweet': Cigarette Smoking among Women 1890-1990 (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2001), 89-146.

⁹³⁹ Mrs. Lynn Linton, 'Wild Women as Social Insurgents', *The Nineteenth Century*, October 1891, 566-605, 597, cited Elliot, 'Destructive but sweet' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Glasgow 2001), 112.

the class for which they exclusively cater.”⁹⁴⁰ A certain liberty of self-expression, at least for the aspirational elite, was evidently part of the desirability of these new spaces.

For hotels, this combination of hybridity, performance and ‘bohemianism’ in palm courts, lounges and winter gardens was explicitly modern. It offered clients the possibility of new identities, able to express themselves in ways which had previously been unavailable. More specifically, this type of modernity was aimed at those who chose to experience luxury consumption in ways which were new and exciting.



Figure 70 ‘One of the Most Luxurious in London: The New Lounge of the Hotel Victoria’ in 1914 ⁹⁴¹

Conclusion

In large, grand hotels, luxury was interconnected with novelty and modernity. These establishments were ‘modern’ in the contemporary sense of being ‘up to date’ and moving with

⁹⁴⁰ Lady Smokers in Restaurants’, *The Restaurant*, December 1911, 482.

⁹⁴¹ *ILN*, 13 June 1914, 1018.

the times. Visitors were promised the grandeur and traditional comforts of aristocratic hospitality, but, through efficiency, adaptability and innovation, they could also enjoy physical ease and speed of service hitherto unknown. Rather than using shared facilities, guests bathed in shining, white, private bathrooms, attached to their bedrooms. They relaxed in new types of social spaces, where men and women conversed, smoked and relaxed together in ways which would have been considered unacceptable half a century before.

This change was lamented by some. Complaints about the loss of established hierarchies and personal service in hotels were by no means unknown. In large commercial establishments driven by the need for profit, guests could feel anonymous, unappreciated and disconnected. Mingling with the type of client who, for reasons of race, religion or social class, might formerly have been excluded, or encountering the liberal behaviour of some female guests, could be unwelcome. However, disruptive, challenging modernity gave many guests the opportunity to enjoy luxury in ways which formerly would not have been possible. In the process it created new spaces and new identities. For most guests of the London grand hotels, this was something to be celebrated.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

The most basic human needs are food, water, warmth and rest, but when we go on holiday, we expect an experience above the ordinary.⁹⁴²

Then as a matter of course, other palatial caravanserais arose in London, each one in turn to be described as 'The last word in Hotels de Luxe'.⁹⁴³

The concept of luxury is elusive.⁹⁴⁴ Its definition and understanding change according to time, place and person. It can be enticing, better, different, and exclusive.⁹⁴⁵ It appeals to the senses, is expressed in physical comfort, and resonates in ideas of beauty and taste. It can be found in true or perceived rarity, whether unintentionally or deliberately constructed. Luxury possesses an inherent duality, existing both as an economic fact and a medium to communicate social relationships.⁹⁴⁶ From Veblen and Leibenstein, to Bourdieu and Berg, scholars and analysts have argued that luxury expresses something about those who desire, possess and display it, and the culture in which it takes place.⁹⁴⁷

Changes in luxury consumption are interconnected with changes in ideas about identity and status, and the priorities of wider society. Architecture too both responds to and influences social change. Space is a social production, which, as William Whyte argues, 'owes as much to those who consume it as it does to those who create it'.⁹⁴⁸ In buildings in which luxury consumption takes place, plan, design and materials certainly designate the physical reality of luxury, but they also reflect social relationships, position and taste. As the grand, purpose-built hotel developed

⁹⁴² 'What Makes a Great Hotel?', *Travel Supplement, Sunday Times*, 13 October 2019.

⁹⁴³ C.B. 'The Secret of Success', *ILN*, 1 September 1906, 311.

⁹⁴⁴ Kapferer, 'Why Are We Seduced by Luxury Brands?', *Journal of Brand Management*, 6:1 (1998), 14-49.

⁹⁴⁵ Riello & McNeill, *Luxury* (2016), vii.

⁹⁴⁶ Ulrich Lehmann, 'The Luxury Duality: From Economic fact to Cultural Capital', in John Armitage & Joanne Roberts, eds., *Critical Luxury Studies: Art, Design, Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016), 67-87, 67.

⁹⁴⁷ Theodore Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1899); Harvey Leibenstein, 'Bandwagon, Snob and Veblen Effects', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 64.2 (1950), 183-207; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 6-7, and Maxine Berg, 'In pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present*, 182 (2004), 85-142, 94-5.

⁹⁴⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, originally published 1974) 33 & 39. William Whyte, 'How Do Buildings Mean? Some Issues of Interpretation in the History of Architecture', *History and Theory*, 45:2 (2006), 153-177, 167.

in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, architects, designers, proprietors and managers sought, practically and profitably, to meet the challenges of supplying a growing audience with rising standards of comfort and luxury. At the same time, clients were fashioning themselves as sophisticated, cosmopolitan consumers, with social and material expectations previously only attainable by the traditional social and religious elite. The grand hotel was created and re-created through 'a strategic communication process', in which space and identity were, 'in essence', produced together.⁹⁴⁹

Inspired by childhood visits to the Stafford Hotel, St. James', London, where my father was managing director, I was interested in the idea that hotels which, in the conventional narrative, aim to attract only the wealthiest of guests, are in fact much more complex. The evidence of my own experience was that such hotels were multifaceted, filled with visitors from all over the world, who were not what one might conventionally call the 'rich and famous'. Many of the clients whom I encountered were seeking a warm welcome, physical comfort and security, and a convenient base from which they could explore the city - one which could offer them the treats they did not necessarily experience in every-day life, and in which they could enjoy food, wine and the company of others. Equally, I understood the skill and effort required from the multinational staff for this daily performance of hospitality. In this team, each member knew his or her role, and was expected to fulfil it to the best of their abilities. As staff in luxury hotels today are reminded, every day may be the same for porters, receptionists and chefs, but for the visitor, each encounter should be special and exciting.⁹⁵⁰

My own experience and early research identified that hotels are certainly complex, with a potential place in a number of academic fields. The development of the grand hotel in London can

⁹⁴⁹ Klingmann, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (2007), 19 & 8, and Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure* (2001), 5

⁹⁵⁰ Victoria Hussein, Director of Revenue Management, Belmond Hotels, Interview: August 2018.

be studied through the history of technology, of business organisation, or of urban development. It has a place in advertising and marketing analysis. It is relevant to design and material culture. The changing roles of female consumers and staff figure in the study of gender in this period. However, rather than focussing on any of these single approaches, in this thesis I have adopted a strategy which deploys an interdisciplinary methodology, integrating archival history, material, qualitative and quantitative analysis. As Joanne Pready notes in her study of this building in fiction, the hotel is 'a sum of all of its parts, and all parts must be considered together, in an attempt to understand the hotel matrix'.⁹⁵¹ An effective method of considering the social and architectural significance of the grand hotel or hotel 'de luxe', I argue, is to do so through an understanding of luxury. To this end, I have identified six themes of luxury - grandeur, magic, exclusivity, cosmopolitanism, comfort and modernity - which have acted as a structure for chapters, and within which I have considered my research questions.

Grand hotels were luxurious in a number of ways. At the most basic level, they promised privacy, security, and a convenient location. They offered warmth, cleanliness, and the most up-to-date facilities. Interiors were decorated and furnished in styles which evoked status through references to traditional aristocratic taste, cosmopolitan eclecticism, or modern fashionability. Although staff were expected to reject unwelcome visitors, for the favoured guest, service was swift, knowledgeable and polite, with an appropriate familiarity.

This luxury appealed to the senses, an area of historical research which has greatly expanded in recent decades. In restaurants, grills and private dining rooms, wines, champagnes and fine food were prepared and served by cosmopolitan chefs and waiters, while music was played by resident orchestras. Physical comfort was highlighted throughout the hotels, but so too was the visual

⁹⁵¹ Joanne Pready, *The Power of Place: Re-negotiating Identity in Hotel Fiction* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Nottingham, 2009), 256.

impact of the interiors. New electric lighting was carefully adjusted. Mirrors, marble and polished mahogany glittered and gleamed. The spectacle of the comings and goings of other guests entertained, and encouraged the impression that clients were members of an exclusive club.

The luxury of these hotels was produced by a staff of men and women, organised into structured departments, within which roles could be highly specialised. In the most public-facing roles, these staff were often European, chosen for their training, experience, and the impression of alluring cosmopolitanism which they proffered. The most up-to-date technologies, promoted to enhance the narrative of novelty, aided employees in the smooth operation of the business. Lifts were as valuable to guests making their way to the upper floors as to staff transporting luggage, raw ingredients, or completed dishes around the building, and large hotels could not have been successful without them. Other innovations, from kitchen and laundry equipment to international communication methods, were efficient and attractively modern.

Although an impression of restricted membership was encouraged, as the censuses show, these venues were used by a socially and economically diverse clientele, from all over the world, whose income was derived from a wide variety of sources. This audience of men and women was attracted by advertising and publicity material, which combined the myths of traditional aristocratic luxury with the enticements of magical innovation. Within the walls, the narrative went, the contented guest was provided with all they could desire. In these exclusive venues, visibly protected by a series of thresholds, gates and gatekeepers, a client, irrespective of their origin, could claim an identity of well-connected, tasteful, sophistication.

Although this study has focussed on a relatively short period of time from about 1865 to 1910, it is apparent that the luxury of grand hotels was not static. This was a time of rapid social, economic and technological change, to which businesses had to adapt if they were to retain their

position. Adaptation and innovation was seen in many aspects of the hotel business, advertising design and messaging was increasingly sophisticated, and there was a shift from the well-filled, 'Artistic' design of earlier guest rooms, to simpler, pale interiors after the turn of the century.

However, it was in two new types of interior in which the relationship between luxury, space and social behaviour and identity in these hotels was most clearly illustrated. As early as 1863, George Augustus Sala identified that an 'up to date' hotel was a venue not only where guests could enjoy clean beds, good food and a convenient location, but also which could influence social change, arguing that 'such structures are destined ere long materially to modify our national manners and customs'.⁹⁵² In bathrooms, hotels responded to changing ideas of privacy, hygiene, comfort, and design. In early hotels, the usual practice was to provide a small number of bathrooms, shared between several guest rooms, accessed via a public corridor, or a temporary bath, in one's own room, filled and emptied by staff. By 1910, the hotel bathroom was a clean, white, shining, personal space, often en-suite to the bedroom, in which a guest could enjoy unlimited hot water and warm towels. Luxury in these interiors emphasised personal space and the well-groomed individual in a streamlined, scientific, modern world.⁹⁵³

In the palm court or hotel lounge, on the other hand, luxury was public rather than private, and social rather than personal. In these bright, fashionable, hybrid interiors, furnished with lush palms and comfortable seating, men and women could indulge in the pleasures of drinking, smoking and talking together. While grand hotels continued to manage their exclusivity, these interiors were the most explicit example of a luxury which was both accessible and privileged, in which the newly wealthy, or simply those who could pay the bill, could imagine themselves to be members of the elite.

⁹⁵² G.A. Sala, 'Mammoth Hotels', *Temple Bar*, September 1863, 198-208, 208.

⁹⁵³ Barbara Penner, *Bathroom* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 84 & 91, citing Hermann Muthesius, *The English House*, originally published 1904/5 (London, 2007), 235.

Further Research

Many questions raised by this research are worthy of further examination. These range from a more detailed investigation of the hotels' interior design and materiality, or the economics of the hotel's business model, including the connections between hotels and suppliers.⁹⁵⁴ Due to limited space, this thesis has not investigated the differences between case study hotels to any degree. Advertising emphasised their luxurious qualities, but the hotels of Northumberland Avenue, with their predominance of British guests and staff, may have provided a different form of luxury to that of the apparently more international Savoy or Carlton. Although other scholars have considered the cultural connections between hotels in different jurisdictions, the influence of the London grand hotel, and of those who were involved in its development, and the place of the grand hotel as a site for transnationalism more widely would all be fascinating subjects to study further. The place of women, both as guests and staff, is also worthy of more research. Hotels offered a degree of freedom and independence for working women and for those who wished to enjoy the social and leisure activities of the city. For female staff, hotels seem to have been a place where respectable careers could be established.

Conclusion

In 1911, the American social commentator, Mrs. John Van Vorst wrote about life in a London grand hotel, which differed considerably from that described in *The Times* in 1853. This was 'a brilliant, flashing world of outward magnificence, of perfected mechanisms, of electrical contrivances, of marble colonnades, of hothouse plants, of iron grilles, of gilt and tapestry'.⁹⁵⁵ Despite these attractions, as this thesis has elucidated, a grand hotel might be less than ideal.

⁹⁵⁴ I am aware of current research into the firm of Warings, by Patricia Lara-Betancourt.

⁹⁵⁵ Mrs John Van Vorst 'The Homeless Rich. Life in a Fashionable London Hotel', *Pall Mall Magazine*, January 1911, 74-79. Bessie Van Vorst (1873-1928) and her sister-in-law Marie wrote *The Woman Who Toils being the Experiences of Two Gentlewomen as Factory Girls* (London; New York: Doubleday, 1903), recounting their experiences in a series of factory jobs in the U.S., in a landmark social investigation. Van Vorst was particularly concerned that a woman fulfil her familial duties, whether working or upper class.

Hotel life could lack intimacy, privacy and personal attention. Morally, this form of luxury consumption was questionable. Mrs. Van Vorst doubted the virtue of spending over £25 on one night in a luxury hotel when a woman living nearby with her eight children lived off £3 per week. However, she acknowledged, a hotel *de luxe* was beguiling. 'Excitement is the thing craved for, constant excitement, freedom from obligations, an atmosphere of festivity, created by ruthless expenditure and which can nowhere be so well obtained as in a fashionable London hotel'.

What this study has revealed is that the luxury of the grand hotel had multivalent meanings. It was mutable and adaptable. It used myths of the past, and promises of the future to create spaces in which the individual might re-create themselves. Monuments to wealth and fashion which constantly adapted, the grand hotel both responded to and reshaped identity and social culture. It existed in the physical form of the hotel building, but it was also experienced in narratives in advertising and publicity, and in contemporary literature. But more than this, architecture shapes users, and users shape architecture. In a society which is rapidly changing, to maintain its position, a building must rapidly change too. The grand hotel was created in response to the demand for change. In return, its occupiers, users and consumers were shaped by the grand hotel. What is also apparent is that the changing relationship between space, luxury and the individual in a grand hotel is a process without end. Indeed, this constant adaptation, as a commentator wrote in 1911, is the secret of the grand hotel's success.

"The last word in Hotels de Luxe." Absurd! as if 'twere likely that the last word would ever be spoken with so many mighty rival orators in the public forum, each eager to outwit the other with something more eloquent than is signified by the phrase "de Luxe," each determined, if possible, to excel that which has hitherto been thought perfection.⁹⁵⁶

⁹⁵⁶ C.B. 'The Secret of Success', *ILN*, 1 September 1906, 311

Appendices

I. Census Totals

Total numbers of hotel guests and staff registered on the census returns at each of the case study hotels, on 5 April 1891, 31 March 1901 and 2 April 1911.

	<i>Opening Year</i>	1891		1901		1911	
		Guests	Hotel Staff	Guests	Hotel Staff	Guests	Hotel Staff
The Langham	1865	152	164	165	147	188	169
The Grand	1880	175	52	158	71	144	63
The Metropole	1885	316	88	241	69	239	66
The Victoria	1887	114	66	121	48	66	45
The Savoy	1889	83	71	65	72	213	86
The Cecil	1896			249	155	185	114
The Coburg	1897			47	39	35	38
The Berkeley	1897 (refurb)			23	34	34	28
Claridge's	1898			41	51	51	41
The Carlton	1899			75	63	98	50
The Ritz	1906					41	31
The Piccadilly	1908					87	55
The Waldorf	1908					165	73
Totals		840	441	1185	749	1546	859
Total Guests Recorded		3571					
Total Staff Record		2049					

II. Staff Occupations by Department at The Langham in 1911

Occupation	Department	m/f	Total
Hotel manager	Administration	M	1
Reception clerk	Administration	M	2
Clerk/Assistant clerk	Administration	F	4
Enquiry clerk	Administration	M	4
Cashier/Assistant cashier	Administration	M	3
Telephone operator	Administration	M	1
Cook	Food/beverage	M	12
Waiter	Food/beverage	M	47
Staff waiter	Food/beverage	M	2
Still room maid	Food/beverage	F	7
Stores clerk	Food/beverage	M	2
Assistant cellarman	Food/beverage	M	3
Glass and china keeper	Food/beverage	M	2
China washer	Food/beverage	M	1
Plate cleaner	Food/beverage	M	6
Plate man	Food/beverage	M	2
Housekeeper/Assistant housekeeper	Housekeeping	F	3
Chambermaid	Housekeeping	F	32
Housemaid /under housemaids	Housekeeping	F	7
Laundry ironer	Housekeeping	F	2
Laundry Marker	Housekeeping	F	1
Laundry Packer	Housekeeping	F	1
Linen room assistant	Housekeeping	F	1
Work needle room assistant	Housekeeping	F	2
Basement door keeper	Maintenance/service	M	4
Basement porter	Maintenance/service	M	1
Fireman	Maintenance/service	M	1
Houseman	Maintenance/service	M	1
Lamp globe cleaner	Maintenance/service	M	1
Porter	Porter/luggage/lift	M	5
Hall porter	Porter/luggage/lift	M	2
Night hall porter	Porter/luggage/lift	M	1
Page	Porter/luggage/lift	M	6
Liftman	Porter/luggage/lift	M	2
Liftboy	Porter/luggage/lift	M	2
Luggage liftman	Porter/luggage/lift	M	1

Table 14 Staff occupations, Langham Hotel 1911, as recorded in the census

III. Staff wages (*Practical Hotel Management*)1890⁹⁵⁷

Staff	m/f	Wages	Total pay per annum
Chef	m	Weekly -W	£ 132.60
Baker	m	W	£ 98.80
Engineer	m	W	£ 98.80
Head Cellarman	m	W	£ 78.00
Vault man	m	W	£ 65.00
Head waiter (2)	m	W	£ 54.60
Plate man	m	W	£ 54.60
Assistant Cellarman	m	W	£ 54.60
Assistant Vault man	m	W	£ 52.00
Clerk	m	Per Annum - PA	£ 50.00
Sitting Room Waiter	m	W	£ 46.80
Odd Maid (not in receipt/tips so wages higher)	f	W	£ 46.80
Housekeeper	f	pa	£ 40.00
Pan man	m	W	£ 39.00
Night Porter	m	W	£ 39.00
Vaults Maid (clean smoking and billiard rooms)	f	W	£ 36.40
Assistant Coffee Room Waiter	m	W	£ 36.40
Assistant Table D'hôtel Waiter	m	W	£ 36.40
Steward's Room Waiter	m	W	£ 36.40
Pantryman	m	W	£ 36.40
Plate man (2)	m	W	£ 36.40
Billiard Marker (Senior) (manages billiard tables)	m	W	£ 36.40
Book keeper	f	pa	£ 35.00
Linen Keeper	f	pa	£ 35.00
Hall porter (2)	m	W	£ 27.30
Day Porter	m	W	£ 27.30
Office assistant	f	pa	£ 25.00
Barmaids	f	pa	£ 25.00
Still Room Maid (senior)	f	pa	£ 24.00
Store Keeper	f	pa	£ 20.00
Stair and Corridor Maid	f	pa	£ 20.00
Vegetable Maid	f	pa	£ 20.00
Pastry Maid	f	pa	£ 20.00

⁹⁵⁷ Average Annual Income 1900: £42.70 A. L. Bowley, *Wages in the United Kingdom in the 19th Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1900); Robert C. Allen, 'Real Incomes in the English-Speaking World, 1879-1913', in *Labour Market Evolution* (London: Routledge, 1994), <https://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/media/2154/allen-real incomes.pdf>, and 'National Archives: Census of 1901'.
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Staff	m/f	Wages	Total pay per annum
Billiard Marker (junior)	m	W	£ 18.20
Staff Room Maid	f	pa	£ 18.00
Still Room Maid (junior)	f	pa	£ 18.00
Chambermaid	f	pa	£ 16.00
Assistant Linen Keeper	f	pa	£ 15.00
Scullery Maid	f	pa	£ 15.00
House Maid	f	pa	£ 14.00
Basement maid	f	pa	£ 10.00
Page	m	W	£ 6.50

Table 15 Staff wages (*Practical Hotel Management*)1890

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Meetings and Interviews

Jonathan Clarke

Dr. Graham Harding

Victoria Hussein, Director for Revenue Management, Belmond Hotels (August 2018)

Susan Scott, Archivist at the Savoy (23rd November 2012)

Management of the Langham Hotel (18th March 2015)