

Joseph Ivimey: an architect in Victorian Cornwall

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The former Miners' Bank (later Barclays) in St Columb Major has previously been attributed to Silvanus Trevail or said to have been influenced by him. The architect is identified as Joseph Ivimey, who arrived in Cornwall from London in 1862, and the paper explores the little that is known of his other work – a handful of villas in St Austell and a chapel in St Columb – and his family links with Cornwall.

The primary aim of this paper is to identify and bring to notice the architect of a notable Victorian building in Cornwall, the Miners' (later Barclays) Bank in Fore Street, St Columb Major (Figs 4, 6). The design has been attributed to the well-known Cornish architect Silvanus Trevail, or, alternatively, according to the current List description for the Grade II building, was by an unknown architect 'clearly influenced' by Trevail's work (Conservation Studio 2010, 31; National Heritage List for England (NHLE) 1327406; cf Perry and Harradence 2008, 201). However, the St Columb building, built c 1873, was constructed at a time when the young Trevail had only just begun to practice and was working almost entirely on new board schools (Perry and Harradence 2008, 20–1; Barnes 2023, 209–16). It pre-dates by some years both Trevail's first ventures into large commercial buildings and any work by him in a comparable architectural style (Perry and Harradence 2008, *passim*).

The architect for the St Columb bank was Joseph Ivimey (c 1836–1902). He had an architectural practice in St Austell during the 1860s and is known to have produced designs for a small number of other buildings in Cornwall (below). He was the son of a London solicitor, also Joseph Ivimey, who dealt extensively in insolvencies and was also the Superintendent Registrar for St Pancras. The 1861

census recorded Joseph senior living at 1 Amptill Square, immediately north of Euston station, with his wife and twin sons, Joseph and Henry, then aged 25; Joseph junior's profession was noted as 'architect'. The following year Joseph appeared in the London *Post Office Directory* (1862, 1028) as 'architect and surveyor', with a business address at or adjacent to his father's chambers in Staple Inn. No information has been found on his education and architectural training, or any buildings designed prior to this. He is not listed in the *Directory of British architects 1834–1900*, and is not known to have been registered with the Royal Institute of British Architects (Felstead *et al* 1993). He married Elizabeth Chinnery, daughter of a London wine merchant, in Brighton in May 1862 and two months later was in St Austell, seeking tenders for the construction of a house for a client (*Brighton Gazette*, 8 May 1862, p5; *Western Daily Mercury [WDM]*, 26 July 1862, p8). Later in the summer he played cricket for a St Austell team (*Cornwall Gazette [CG]*, 15 August 1862, p5).

The younger Ivimey's arrival in Cornwall was probably a consequence of his father's business interests. Joseph senior and another London solicitor, Thomas Gill, had in 1852 acquired the manor of Treverbyn Trevanion, previously part of the landholdings of the Trevanion family of Caerhays, then being disposed of following the

insolvency of the heir to the estate (*West Briton* [*WB*], 2 April 1852, pp4–5; 8 October 1852, p4; *CG*, 18 August 1854, p1). In 1856–7, Ivimey and Gill paid £18,000 to the Duchy of Cornwall for the adjoining manor of Treverbyn Courtenay (Kresen Kernow (KK) MT/1, 2). In addition to the farm tenements of the manors, these acquisitions gave the two Londoners control over almost all of the associated 1700–1800 acres (690–730 ha) of rough ground (*WB*, 2 April 1852, p4). This included various historic tin workings but also, more significantly, a growing number of china clay operations. Both solicitors continued their London practices and only occasionally appeared in Cornwall, but from about 1856 they became significant figures in the clay industry, primarily as landowners leasing setts for clay production but also taking some direct involvement in clay ventures (for example, KK MT/317, 339, 358, 360; 462; 477; *CG*, 14 March 1856, p8; *WB*, 26 May 1865, p5).

Suburban villas

Young Joseph had a direct financial interest in part of his father's Treverbyn holdings (KK MT/10) and his arrival in St Austell in 1862 may have been linked to this: one of the properties was Cannamanning clay works and 'Joseph Ivimey, jun., Architect and Surveyor', living at Trevarrack, St Austell, was cited as a contact when this was offered for lease early the following year (*WB*, 9 January 1863, p1; KK MT/10, 331). Probably more important to him, however, were contacts arising from Joseph senior's business dealings. Among these were the influential Coode family, prominent in local legal and banking activities and substantial landowners, with whom Ivimey had worked during disposal of the Trevanion lands (*West Briton*, 26 September 1851, p4; 8 October 1852, p4; 13 August 1858, p5).

At the time that Joseph arrived in St Austell the china clay industry was undergoing a period of rapid expansion, with the consequent economic vitality of the clay district boosted by the completion in 1859 of the Cornwall Railway (Barton 1966, 109). One result was a boom in the construction of large houses around the town for individuals prospering directly as clay producers or from the resulting upturn in activity for other trades and professions (Newell 2002, 32; Beacham

and Pevsner 2017, 496f; Kirkham, in preparation). Joseph's first known architectural commission was for one of these houses, a villa for John T Pearce, a local doctor: a press notice in late July 1862 sought tenders from builders for its construction, with drawings and specifications to be viewed at 'the office of J. Ivimey, Esq., Architect, St. Austell' (*WDM*, 26 July 1862, p8).

Construction of the Cornwall Railway line through St Austell had cut through a block of fields north east of the churchtown, isolating an area between the town's new station and a lane leading out towards Tregonissey. Three weeks after Ivimey's notice seeking tenders for Pearce's villa, four individuals signed an agreement with the railway company to pay £80 towards construction of a new road along the north side of the station, linking Tregonissey Lane to another route out of the churchtown, High Cross Street (KK SHM/35). One of the signatories was the surgeon Pearce, Ivimey's client; the others were Edward Coode, who owned the land north of the railway, Henry William Higman, a china clay merchant, and Robert Dunn, described as 'yeoman' but primarily a St Austell innkeeper with extensive clay interests (KK SHM/35; for example, MT/343; T/860; *WB*, 14 February 1862, p1). Pearce, Higman and Dunn were described as holding leases on parts of the land 'for building purposes' (KK SHM/35).

An order defining St Austell's urban bounds for the purposes of the 1858 Local Government Act was signed off in September 1864; the accompanying map showed the three newly-built villas on the north side of the station (KK DCAUSF/3) (Fig 1). Pearce's residence, *Trevarthian*, was at the western end, with the villas for Higman and Dunn, respectively *Methleigh* and *Oak Villa*, immediately to the east. The houses all lay within a roughly triangular area bounded on the south by the new road, soon to be named Palace Road, to the west and north by Tregonissey Lane and on the east by a field boundary shown on the 1840 tithe map. Open fields remained to the west, north and east, with the exception of another new house, *Fairfield* (later *Fairmead*) at the eastern end of the road north of the station (Brokenshire 1997, 41). This last, also on Coode land, was described in 1864 as a 'new house' for Edwin Thomas, son of the proprietor of the Charlestown iron foundry (*CG*, 7 October 1864, p6; 1851 census). The Ordnance Survey 1:500 town plan of St Austell, surveyed in 1880, shows the houses with formal



Fig 1 Detail from an 1864 map of the bounds of St Austell (blue line), showing the four newly-built villas on the yet-to-be named Palace Road. (Kresen Kernow DCAUSF/3.)

entrances and approaches from Palace Road, each with landscaped grounds with extensive planting and wooded perimeter belts (Fig 2).

Pearce's house occupied a 1.4 acre (0.55 ha) site and was substantial: the 1911 census listed it with 18 rooms and when offered for sale in 1926 it had 11 bedrooms, four reception rooms, a library, servants' hall and five greenhouses (*Cornish Guardian* [CGdn], 19 March 1926, p16). Part of the grounds were lost to an office

block and car park in the 1960s but the house was recommended for listing Grade II in 1995 as a 'fine and complete example of a mid C19 Italianate stucco villa' (CGdn, 9 March 1967, p8; Cornwall Historic Environment Record (HER) MCO 34744). It had a two-storey symmetrical front with pediments on the end bays and 'moulded and carved plaster ceiling friezes and bands plus low relief detail to the ceilings, panelled and carved window shutters and open-

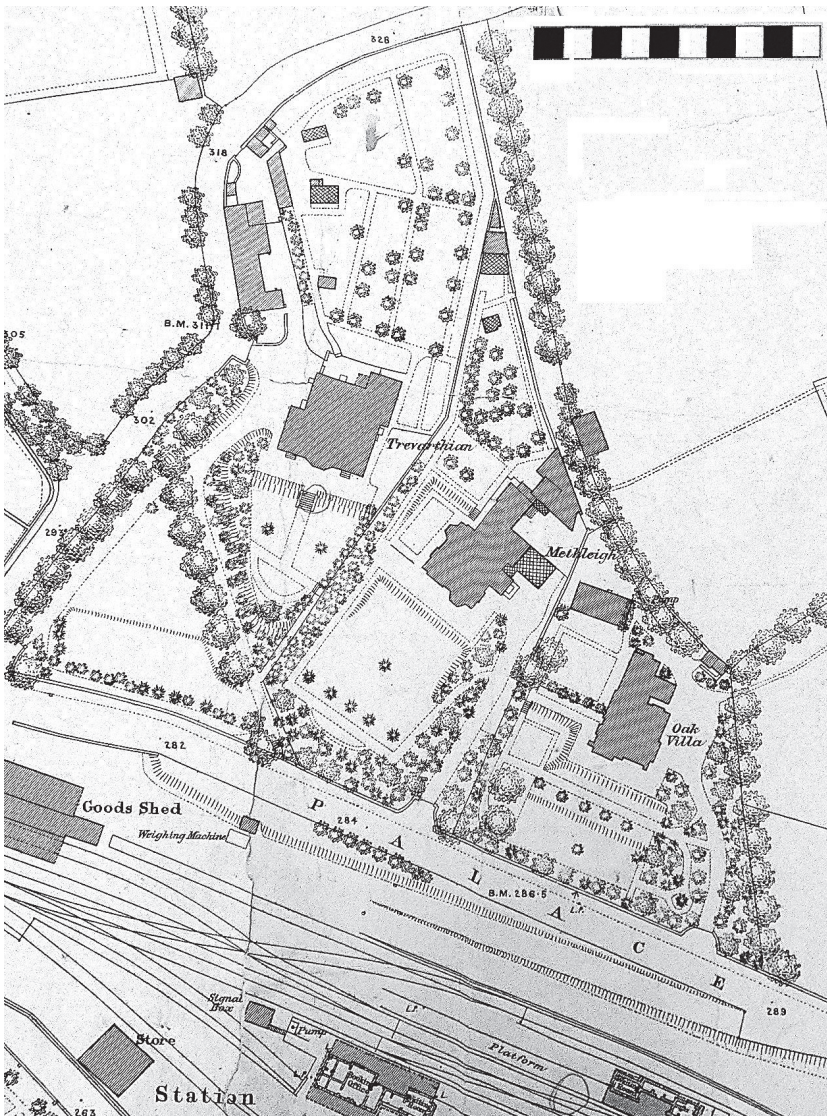


Fig 2 The Palace Road villas and grounds shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:500 town plan of St Austell (OS sheet L.8.18), surveyed in 1880. (Scale added = 50m.) (Kresen Kernow OSP /11/1.)

well staircase with turned balusters'. It was demolished before the listing was confirmed in 1999 (Samantha Barnes-Knight, pers comm).

Ivimey's 1862 notice seeking tenders indicates that he designed this building, but his involvement with the Palace Road villas probably extended further: in 1866 a report of his design for a new Truro fish market noted him as of St Austell and as 'the architect of the new houses near the railway station in that town' (*WB*, 23 March 1866, p5). This hints at a wider scheme for the Palace Road plots. The choice of *Methleigh* as the name

of one of the new houses may indicate further Coode involvement, beyond that of landowner, in that the manor of Methleigh (Breage) was part of the family's historic landholdings (KK H/212/9). Conceivably, the Palace Road houses were a speculative venture by Coode, paralleling a type of suburban development seen elsewhere in the country at this period (Smith and Whitfield 2025, 58–70). However, the fact that Pearce, Higman and Dunn held 'building leases' and also contributed to the cost of the new road suggests a less entrepreneurial arrangement. More probably, the

involvement of these individuals simply reflects the tight networks connecting those owning land and those in professions, industry and trade in St Austell at this period: Pearce the surgeon was an adventurer in two mineral setts in the Polgooth – Sticker area let by Coode in 1862 and Higman and Dunn had both taken clay setts from Ivimey and Gill in preceding years (KK CF/1/3760, 3761; MT/343, 358, 477). All four men were among those elected to the first St Austell Local Government Board (CG, 23 December 1864, p5;

13 January 1865, p5). Ivimey junior applied for the salaried position of Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances to the new Board but was unsuccessful, the post going to an established local builder (CG, 27 January 1865, p6).

Only one of the Palace Road houses of this period survives, Robert Dunn's *Oak Villa* (later named *Oakleigh*) at 6 Palace Road (HER MCO 77981) (Fig. 3). Ivimey and his wife were living there when their son was born in 1867 (CG, 9 May 1867, p8). This is a substantial and impressive



Fig 3 6 Palace Road, St Austell in 2015. Formerly known as *Oak Villa* and *Oakleigh*, the house was almost certainly designed by Joseph Ivimey. He was recorded living there in 1867. (Photograph: Eric Berry.)

structure – the 1911 census reported 12 rooms – and it continues to occupy a relatively large plot marked out by boundary planting of mature trees, a substantial stone boundary wall and ornate carved granite gateposts. The house itself is of semi-coursed quarry-faced stone, relieved by horizontal bands of contrasting dressed stone, and has distinctive crow-stepped gables projecting above the roof slopes, two-light mullioned windows with mouldings on the central uprights and ornamental medallions in the upper faces of the steeply-sloping gables.

Public buildings and a chapel

During the mid-1860s Ivimey occasionally played in local cricket matches (for example, *WDM*, 22 August 1864, p3; *WB*, 29 September 1865, p4; *Cornish Telegraph*, 23 May 1866, p3), but nothing further is known of his professional activities until 1866, when he produced plans for several public buildings in Cornwall. Launceston Town Council selected his designs for adding a second storey to George Wightwick's 1840 corn market in Broad Street, but there was considerable bickering within the Council over the cost and the project did not proceed; Ivimey had to request £5 for his work and this was eventually paid, albeit grudgingly (*Launceston Weekly News*, 31 March 1866, p8; 12 May 1866, p8; 29 September 1866, p8). Later the same year he was awarded a premium for plans for new public rooms in Truro, as was the established regional architect, J P St Aubyn, but the designs finally chosen were by London architects Habershon and Pite (*CG*, 27 December 1866, p9). Truro Town Council also accepted Ivimey's plans for a new Truro fish market, to be built over the River Kenwyn at the rear of the Market House (now Hall for Cornwall) (*WB*, 23 March 1866, p5; *CG*, 5 April 1866, p8). The scheme was still theoretically alive late in 1869 but proceeded no further (*WB*, 23 September 1869, p6). (The idea of a fish market arched over the river was revived ten years later and a similar sequence ensued: plans by Trevail were approved but, after long delays, the scheme was eventually abandoned (*CG*, 26 July 1878, p1; 6 September 1878, p8; *WB*, 3 October 1878, p4; 22 December 1881, p6).)

Ivimey's son Francis Fairfax was born in early May 1867 at *Oak Villa*, Palace Road, presumably being rented from Dunn (*Western*

Morning News [*WMN*], 8 May 1867, p1). Later that month it was announced that Joseph was the architect for a new Wesleyan chapel to be built in St Columb Major: '[T]he style will be Gothic, and the schoolroom will be beneath the chapel'; total costs for the project were estimated at about £1300 (*CG*, 30 May 1867, p3; *WB*, 31 May 1867, p6). Less than a month later Joseph was soliciting tenders for construction of the building, and the successful contractors were announced in July (*WMN*, 20 June 1867, p1; *WB*, 26 July 1867, p5). The successful tender of £1125 for the work, from William Pearce and William Charles of St Columb, commented that £10 had been estimated for the 'rails and gates in front of Chapel size and quality not having been mentioned by Architect' (KK MRCP/59/8). It also noted that 'Portland stone will cost £80 more than the above price. The stone cutting will cost £120 in Bath Portland £200' (*ibid*). The corner stones for the chapel were laid in mid-September and the building completed the following summer (*WB*, 27 September 1867, p7; *CG*, 25 June 1868, p8). The chapel accounts record payments to 'Ivimey Architect' of £15 in September 1867, £10 in early 1868 and £12–10-0 (£12.50) in July, but it is unclear whether this represented his total remuneration for the work (KK MRCP/57). A first payment to the contractors of £200 was made in November 1867, 'as p^r Mr Ivimeys Certificate', suggesting that he supervised the project as it progressed (*ibid*).

A photograph of the chapel in its later years (Rabey 1979, 36) shows the Fore Street (west) elevation of coursed rough-faced stonework with two horizontal bands of contrasting dressed stone flanking the bottom and centre of a large central window with pointed arch and tracery. The frontage was set back from the street and approached by a wide flight of steps, with further steps rising through a pair of steep-roofed porches to the entrance doors. The projecting porches were carried on slender cylinder columns with large ornate cushion capitals supporting pointed-arch openings; these and the narrow single-light windows flanking the porches were ornamented with voussoirs in contrasting colours. Nikolaus Pevsner in 1951 suggested that 'one may have a glance' at the various Nonconformist chapels in Fore Street, but Ivimey's building seems not to have attracted other notice beyond brief references in directories (Pevsner 1951, 146; for example, Kelly 1889, 964–5). It was drastically

remodelled in the late 1960s and demolished in 1991 (*CGdn*, 29 December 1966, p8; *WB*, 11 April 1991, p1).

After this work Ivimey appears to have left Cornwall and returned to London; the circumstances are unknown. Early in 1869, with an address in Euston Square, he received the second premium of £25 for plans for a new Everton Hospital for Infectious Diseases, in Liverpool; again, however, he was unsuccessful, the commission going to a local architect (*Liverpool Mercury*, 14 January 1869, p6; *The Builder*, 23 January 1869, p72; *Liverpool Mail*, 8 April 1871, p11). The 1871 census found Ivimey in Euston Square with his wife, son and two female servants, one from Roche, the other Luxulyan; he gave his occupation as ‘Architect Reg. Marriages’ [*sic*], the latter position presumably supplementing his architectural work and probably passed to him by his father, who still held the role of Superintendent Registrar (*Marylebone Mercury*, 12 October 1878, p2).

The few projects noted above represent all that is known of Ivimey’s architectural career to this point, although there must have been other work. Early in 1873 he published a rather laboured piece in *The Builder* (18 January 1873, pp50–51) on ‘The improvement of small houses’, concluding: ‘I know I have tried to reconcile the conflicting claims in these microcosms of houses, and have found designing large houses child’s play in comparison.’ The implication is that he had had a hand in houses other than the Palace Road villas; whether these were in Cornwall or elsewhere is unknown.

The St Columb bank

A few months later, again from his London address, Ivimey invited tenders for two further building projects in St Columb Major (*West Briton*, 15 May 1873, p1). The first was for the construction of new bank premises for Willyams & Co; Ivimey’s plans could be inspected at the existing bank in the town and tenders were to be sent to ‘Mr Dunstan’. This was Joseph P Dunstan, manager of the St Columb branch of the ‘Miners’ Bank’, as the Willyams’ business was known (*CG*, 17 October 1874, p4). The second invitation to tender was for taking down and rebuilding a shop and stores in St Columb; plans for this could be viewed at the

estate office at Carnanton, seat of the Willyams family, but proposals were again to be sent to Dunstan (*WB*, 15 May 1873, p1). There is no direct evidence of how Ivimey became involved in these projects but a link through Dunstan is plausible: he had been the treasurer of the St Columb Wesleyan chapel when it was built to Ivimey’s designs five years earlier (*KK MRCP/59*; *WB*, 27 September 1867, p7).

Ivimey’s bank occupies a prominent corner site between Fore Street and Broad Street, dominating the streetscape through its use of red brick, unusual in the local context, and a striking polygonal tower with slated spire which forms the angle between the two street frontages (Figs 4, 6). The building addresses a widening in the otherwise very narrow Fore Street immediately to the south, which enables the bank to be considerably more prominent in its local setting than it otherwise would have been. The Broad Street elevation to the former banking hall is topped by an elaborate moulded parapet, pierced with two ‘W’s (for Willyams & Willyams, the title of the banking partnership at this date) flanking a Dutch-style gable filled with stone strapwork (Fig 5). Below this, the elevation features large four-light mullioned and transomed windows framed by granite pilasters bearing carved lozenges; other openings have chamfered granite quoins; exposed areas of brickwork carry diaper patterns in yellow and blue-black brick. The Fore Street elevation is distinctly different. It incorporates a two-storey bay, canted at street level but corbelled out in brick to support a first-floor rectangular bay with a tripartite window. Building angles on this elevation are in dark brick, also used in horizontal bands. Early photographs show the building with at least two, probably more, tall ‘Elizabethan’ brick chimneys, no longer extant, and with two entrance doors with shouldered arches in the corner tower, one to each elevation, each headed by a cornice carrying further strapwork (Fig 6). The panels above the two entrance openings and the single-light transomed window between them carried carved shields in relief, and further shields appear in an arcade below the spire on the tower, adding to the building’s overall air of playful theatricality. Other changes since the original construction include replacement of the former door to Broad Street by a two-light mullion and transom window, with two similar single-light windows inserted flanking the large window on the ground floor of the Broad Street



Fig 4 The former Miners' Bank, Fore Street, St Columb Major, viewed from the south in 2025. (Photograph: Graeme Kirkham.)



Fig 5 The Dutch-style gable, moulded and pierced parapet and ornamental strapwork on the Broad Street elevation of the bank. (Photograph: Graeme Kirkham.)

frontage; alterations to the Fore Street elevation have resulted in changes to the original false half timbering on the projecting gable. Nonetheless, the building remains impressive. Its architecture has been described as ‘[S]plendidly showy in a Free Jacobethan style’ (Beacham and Pevsner 2017, 522).

No further information has been found on Ivimey’s other 1873 St Columb commission for the rebuilding of a shop and store. A candidate, if his design in any way paralleled the fanciful

extravagance of the bank, lies about 100m south at numbers 26–28 Fore Street, almost opposite the site of his Wesleyan chapel. This has three bays, each a shop, in red and yellow brick with rectangular attached granite columns with plain heads on the ground floor. Above is a riot of moulded yellow terracotta ornament in friezes, panels, brackets and capitals (Fig 7). Regrettably, other than the exuberance of the ornament, there is no positive evidence to link the building to Ivimey.



Fig 6 An early twentieth-century postcard view of the bank. (Photograph of the original held by Kresen Kernow AD2766/V/3.)



Fig 7 Ornamental detailing in yellow terracotta on the front elevation of 26–28 Fore Street, St Columb Major. Could this be another design by Ivimey? (Photograph: Graeme Kirkham.)

After the bank

In London, Ivimey participated in the Victorian professional middle class enthusiasm for spiritualism (Oppenheim 1985, 28–39). He took part in experiments on ‘spirit photography’ in the early 1870s and was a member of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists through the middle years of the decade (*Christian Spiritualist*, 3, 1 (January 1873), p13; *Spiritualist*, 26 June 1874, p306; 31 July 1874, p iii; 14 December 1877, p ii). In 1881, asked by a medium at a spiritualist event whether he had previously

attended séances, he answered ‘Many’ (*Spiritualist*, 13 May 1881, p224).

From about 1874 he was living in Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square; a document recording him at this address in 1879 described him as ‘architect’, but no further references to commissions have been found and it is unclear whether he continued to practice (London Archives ACC/1290/058). The 1881 census recorded him and his wife living in Queen Anne’s Grove, Acton, both noted as ‘annuitants’. Joseph senior had died in 1878, Thomas Gill two years earlier, leaving Ivimey junior and Gill’s son Rockingham as Lords



Fig 8 The unusual 8m-high Grade II listed war memorial on the Headland, Newquay, the design for which was 'sketched' by Fairfax Ivimey and carried out by a local monumental mason, Charles Henry Evans. It was unveiled on 24 May 1921 by Edward, Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall (Newquay Express, 27 May 1921, p7). (Photograph: Graeme Kirkham.)

of the manor of Treverbyn (*CG*, 25 November 1876, p4; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 9 October 1878, p4). Financially, Joseph probably no longer needed to work.

The new Treverbyn Lords maintained a philanthropic connection with their property, donating a site for a new board school (designed by Trevail) in 1877, funds for a new organ in the parish church in 1879 and a site and funds for a Sunday school and public room four years later; Thomas Gill was commemorated with a stained glass window in the nave of Treverbyn church (*CG*, 18 January 1878, p7; 15 June 1883, p4; *WB*, 17 April 1879, p5; Cornish stained glass [website]). Twenty years later, Ivimey and Gill were lauded for contributions to local improvements, donating more than half the cost of a new road through Hallaze, for example (*St Austell Star* [*SAS*], 28 February 1901, p4; 5 December 1901, p5; *WMN*, 14 June 1902, p8). Joseph's former association with cricket in the St Austell area was also remembered: it was reported in 1901 that his son Fairfax would be visiting the following year 'with a view to seeing if anything can be done to revive cricket and bring it up to the old standard' (*SAS*, 10 October 1901, p4).

Joseph was then living in Richmond, Surrey – the death of his second wife there was reported in July 1901 (*Daily Chronicle*, 6 July 1901, p1) – but in November 1902 he acquired *The Fort*, a large villa overlooking Newquay harbour (KK TF/2228). He took part in a golf competition in Newquay the following month but died there shortly before Christmas; the notice of his death described him as 'of Richmond and Treverbyn' (*CGdn*, 12 December 1902, p8; *Evening Standard*, 24 December 1902, p1). His funeral, held at the London Necropolis Company cemetery at Woking, Surrey, was attended by members of the Lovering and other clay families as tenants of Treverbyn (*SAS*, 1 January 1903, p4).

After Ivimey's death his son Fairfax lived at *The Fort*. He was an artist who, by his own account, had spent time in Paris during the 'Bohemian' period and whose work was evidently still regarded there (*Newquay Express*, 16 July 1931, p14; *CGdn*, 22 November 1934, p5). He settled into the polite ways of Newquay, becoming, with his wife Julia, a leading figure in various local organisations (for example, *WB*, 17 September 1903, p6; 8 October 1903, p7; *CG*, 14 July 1904, p7). After World War I, Julia promoted the placing

of a memorial in Newquay church to five members of the crew of *SS War Grange*, torpedoed and then beached at Newquay in 1918, and Fairfax designed Newquay's monumental war memorial on the Headland, constructed in 1921 over a former Napoleonic lookout and now listed Grade II (*CGdn*, 24 September 1920, p4; 27 May 1921, p7; NHLE 1442574; HER MCO 23064) (Fig. 8).

Conclusion

Only two buildings Joseph Ivimey is known or suspected to have designed now survive: the former Miners' Bank in St Columb Major and 6 Palace Road (previously *Oak Villa*) in St Austell. The bank is listed (NHLE 1327406) and the latter identified as a Locally Significant Building (*St Austell Conservation Area Appraisal* 2017, app 3). Another of the Palace Road houses was listed (above) but it and the other houses there potentially designed by Ivimey have been demolished and their sites redeveloped. The site of his St Columb chapel is now a car park.

It is possible that Ivimey's income from his interest in the Treverbyn lands made it unnecessary for him to pursue work energetically, that he was, effectively, a dilettante in his profession. Alternatively, perhaps few of his works are known because, unlike Trevail, for example, he was not inclined to seek publicity and has left no archive of his plans (Perry and Harradence 2008, *passim*). Equally, he came into Cornwall at a period when the architectural field was crowded with established names such as J Piers St Aubyn, Henry Rice of Liskeard and John Matthews of Penzance, with a growing presence from ambitious, younger and locally well-connected rising stars such as Trevail and James Hicks of Redruth (*cf* Perry and Harradence 2008, 29–30; Perry and Schwarz 2001). For many smaller bread-and-butter projects, there was also competition from individuals, often builders, who were not formally qualified as architects (*ibid*, 30–1). For whatever reason, we know of only a few buildings designed by Ivimey: a search of London and provincial newspapers for the 1860–70s, and of 'trade' publications such as *The Builder*, *Building News* and *The Architect* for the same period, has turned up no further references to his work.

Ivimey's London links would have made him aware of wider architectural trends, and features

such as the crow-stepped gables on *Oak Villa* and the ‘Jacobethan’ elements of the Miners’ Bank can be compared with aspects of, for example, Charles Buxton’s buildings of the late 1850s at Foxwarren Park, in Surrey (NHLE 1030053, 1189110; Harris 2020). In the Cornish context, his St Columb bank can be seen as an early manifestation of the distinctive eclecticism in architectural styles, choice of materials and treatments, which had such an impact on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century townscapes, not least in the work of Trevail and Hicks (Perry and Harradence 2008; Perry and Schwarz 2001). A few other near-contemporary buildings offer comparisons. Among them, Hicks’ Venetian Gothic design for Trounson’s shop in Fore Street, Redruth, built in 1870, provides a slightly earlier local instance of the imaginative use of brick in combination with other materials (HER MCO 61804; NHLE 1142560); Liskeard’s Masonic Hall, on the Parade, designed by John Paul and ‘nearly complete’ early in 1873, incorporates a range of different materials and decorative elements on its ornate polychrome ‘French Classic’ façade, which must have been striking when first constructed (*The Builder*, 29 March 1873, p250; Beacham and Pevsner 2017, 313; NHLE 1355192); Marazion’s chateau-style granite Town Hall and clock tower of 1870–1, architect unknown, was a bold attempt to use a strong vertical architectural form to dominate a key urban space (HER MCO54301; NHLE 1327585). In none of these cases, however, and arguably not again until Trevail’s ‘Red Bank’ was built in St Austell churchtown in 1898, 25 years later, did a Cornish town see a structure as exuberantly adventurous in design, use of materials and sheer impact on its immediate urban setting as Joseph Ivimey’s St Columb bank. For this he deserves to be remembered.

Acknowledgements

The author is not an architectural historian and is dabbling here in matters well outside his usual comfort zone. However, having serendipitously come across the reference to Ivimey as the architect for the St Columb bank, it seemed worth sharing the fact and attempting to establish details of his life and other work to set it in context. The results of the latter search have been meagre: others may be able to expand or correct the information offered and this would be welcome.

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Detailed references have not been given for census entries; these (including page images) are now accessible online through various family history websites, indexed by name, street and keyword.

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