Glasgow, Liverpool has tended to be a city of objects rather than streets; and for all the Greek influence, there was no local equivalent to Glasgow's Thomsonian. This helps explain the continuation that blew up around the 6th Grance. Americans wrote Stanley Reynolds, who bood some years ago, called Liverpool 'an everyday city'. Country events, was to wish for an 'Iron' which was imagined together to be complete in one street, and so the general confusion of the street on the iron. Country too, was to object to a 6th: because it would block a view of the roof from the south docks which, as nobody could enter there until recently, had never been intended, and which, in the Edwardian boom, was anticipated to be soon occupied by another massive business block. In fact, the last scheme that grasped the logic of the Pier Head was proposed in the 1960s by one of the great architectural firms. His ambition to replace most of the city with giant Reuss-Arts blocks looks mad — the effusion of an architectural Walter Mitty.

Yet not all crisis was lost. This thought that the Pier Head trio are not quite aligned, but in fact tangents on a subset shape that might extrapolation. He thus proposed to extend the Pier Head with four more Liver Building-style edifices, so as to create an arc of seven monumental island-based buildings on the Docks Headquarters. A case, in Rowe's terms, of "local megalomania"; but it was also, characteristically, a Liverpool myth of its unfitted cosmopolitan identity as "some kind of place", as it's "creator" — as Martin Brabo said he could be to Rod Steiger in On the Waterfront. 20

Paragon and paradigm
Whether or not Morrison's plan was a contender, it was the last gasp of a grand modernism that had reared its head in Liverpool since Rouse's time. Of this progeny, St George's Hall remains the opulent paragon that confronts all who step from Lime Street Station. It is entirely apophasis, that the Hall stands for the city as the cover of Joseph Shapley's Poet; Geist. By a typical local style of inspired optimism, the Hall in fact combined two entirely different programmes. There were two contrapuntal, one for concert halls, another for law courts. When it was found that the same 22-year old, Louisal Emlen, had won both, the city decided to unite them in a single grandiose venue. To help Emlen in this vast undertaking, which included a pioneering air-conditioning system, C.R. Cockrell was appointed advisor, and later Emlen's death in 1917, chief architect. The rich interior of the concert halls are largely Cockrell's. The ceiling, hanging from Emlen's own organ pipes, is complete formal composition, and sublime musing. Most remarkable is that its principal address is not the conventional portico at its south end, but the long colonnade which, with the park alongside, lines the park alongside. This colonnade and colonnade is the extended frontage of Berlin's Alte Museum, then the square columns that articulate its arches may summon the name of Schinkel. Did Emlen, who visited Berlin in 1842, draw from Schinkel? Certainly, Alexander Thomson, who only just died, and developed on Schinkel's, was in no doubt as to Emlen's achievement. St George's Hall, he declared, was one of which were "unquestionably for those fine buildings in the kingdom. 21

Emlens completed a couple of other Liverpool buildings, but his early death denied him the range of Thomson's urban work in Glasgow. So while he created a paragon, he produced no paradigm. A paradigm is a star of excellence, but a paradigm sets a pattern for imitation; it is an example to typology. Their difference may parallel Giedion's distinction in Space, Time and Architecture between 'constructive' and 'transient' phenomena in nineteenth-century architecture. 'Transient' were styles and fashion; 'constructive' were those industrial and commercial programmes where efficient deployment of new techniques engendered model spaces for the future. 'Constructive' then, and paradigmatic in Modernist eyes, were two office buildings erected shortly after St George's Hall by an obscure Liverpool builder Peter Ellis: Cook Street, and Oriel Chambers, which worked the logic of commercial space to luminous conclusion by hanging continuously glazed walls across an iron frame. Glasgow also had iron-frame pioneers, including Thomson, but as Francis Duffy noted, 'What is remarkable about Oriel Chambers is that the architect rather than the Georgian domestic room-valence solution of the Inns of Court nor the normal subterranean façade with its implication of one organisation standing alone. Oriel Chambers, in both plan and elevation, is almost programmatically modular - a great aggregation of small indistinguishable units, which is exactly what it is. This is the novelty of Oriel Chambers — not only in his plan a succession of small office units, which are highly adapted to the needs of small businesses, but the façade also carries the same message. Neither palace nor college, Oriel Chambers created a simple precedent for countless office buildings. 22

A precedent and a paradigm — but one that was immediately appropriated. For Building Areas it was a "kind of greenhouse architecture gone mad", and the local Pimpernel called it "bad, lousy, and oafish". 23

Looking back now on those critical editions frames that, ahead of the Americans, Glasgow and Liverpool produced in the 1860s, and noting the absence in Britain of their further developments, we might trace there, around 1870, the discrete invention of that slow falling-away from industrial inspiration and that shifting back of wealth to London that not only led to the decline of the North, but British artistic chance from the Modern Movement to the Victorian era. From 1870 onwards the street was looking for something. What was the cause of early British Modernism, Prevors wrote: 'Nice Southern, No Summer', Oriel was entirely one of the 'sandwich' in mind. But perhaps Oriel displaced locale because it was abstracted from a Gothic model in a city that remained merely Classical... in the 'republics' opposite St George's Hall, that superabundance of model street, as Lewis Swift called it, of the Art Gallery, Museum, and Library. And indeed as eyes now less Modern than Post-Modern, man, what might strike from the Oriel is less a paradigm of rationality than something both more abstract and more worldly; so that when, in the 1960s, James Stirling drew from Oriel to his Leicester Engineering Laboratory, his model was neither its chandelier details nor even its functionalism, but the geometric glass cascade of its art-works. 26

Giedion's Modernism axioms are those of 'constructive' and 'transient' might now be chiselled. In St George's, was not the "ubiquitisation" of programmes, but rather the "global subject" of abstract movement, insensitive of another brand of modernity, as that great 20th-century "by Rodin" that Knodhia found between floors of disassociated programmes contained within the iconic figure of the skylight. With its permanent programme of trial-concert-concert, St George's Hall may be seen as a horizontal skyscraper quite as "defensive" as any New York tower; or, viewed as a linoleum-lined lower, a Fascistic "herrenhaus" as scaled as a floating aerial. 27

Such imaginings, Abbo Robo might have described as 'architectural'. The 'permanences' which constituted, for Ross, the "Architecture of The City", are typologies and monuments, beneath or among which drifts or hovers an "Architectural City": a psychic double more metaphysically 'true' than the actual. In this iconic museum, St George's "archetypal" and Oriel Chambers are joined by objects, places, zones, tunnels, holes that are architecturally neither paragons nor paradigms. As George Melly, locally-born blues singer and surrealist 'agent' observed to me: the Liverpudians are stoned with such analogical traps, few of which correspond to any usual sense of architectural 'quality'. 28

The Liverpool School
Quality, nevertheless, was the ideal of those pacific philanthropists Liverpool Gentlemen, not Manchester Men — who in 1883 founded the Ruskin Professorship of Architecture, and in 1885, the first school of architecture. They aspired to raise the standard not just of design in Liverpool, but of civic culture altogether. Indeed, in its first decade the school ran a remarkably integrated course which, inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement, taught art, design, and trades within a single, manually run institution headed "School of Architecture and Applied Arts". As Hughes described this bold experiment, which saw architects and tradesmen