Jewry Street

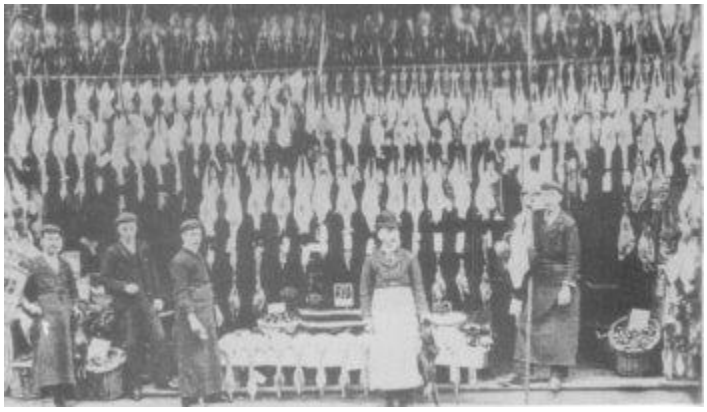


Aerial photo of Winchester and Jewry Street

This booklet is a description of the architecture of part of Jewry Street in Winchester produced by the Trust in 1984. You can read the individual sections on the Web, see below.

The illustrations and notes are arranged to be read in sequence, starting along the west side of Jewry Street from the junction with High Street and returning to finish opposite Barclays Bank.

Jewry Street - Introduction



The photograph of No. 45 Jewry Street in 1905, was taken five years after the first Medical Officer of Health was appointed in Winchester. Since then the Food and Drugs Acts of 1955 and the Regulations of 1966-70 control both hygiene and dress.

The price of beef steak in the 1890s, at under one shilling a pound, with bread at two pence a loaf, should be linked with earnings.
At that time the rent of a house (in Sussex Street) was 6s. 4d. weekly when the average wage was £1. 10s.

In 1983 the rent of a small council house was £12 and the average weekly wage £100.

Foreword

This Roman town, known as Venta Belgarum had a typical rectangular street pattern within the walls, the High Street being the main east west thoroughfare.

Godson's map of 1750 shows it as Jail Street; earlier it was known as Jury Street and at all times it was a direct route to Southampton and the continent.

Historical

All the old buildings in Jewry Street, except the Congregational Church, the Elizabethan Restaurant and the De Lunn buildings, were influenced by the introduction of renaissance architecture from Italy.

Inigo Jones, the architect for the church in Covent Garden, the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall and the Queen's House, Greenwich, visited Italy in the 17th century. He saw there the revival of Roman classical architecture already well established since the 15th century. Its introduction into England broke the continuity of traditional detail in house building. Tudor-Elizabethan features were gradually replaced, projecting mouldings were used at roof and wall junctions, and to emphasise door and window openings.

The use of Roman type columns, on the Corn Exchange and Nos. 30-31, and 35-37, are clearly derivative. Vertical strip divisions, known as pilasters, with classic mouldings top and bottom, can be seen at Nos. 22-25.

The Georgian period (1702-1830) produced its own version of classic architecture as seen at No. 29.

Following these changes came two revival periods. The pointed arch Gothic, seen in churches since the 12th century, was re-introduced in the 19th century. Two buildings show these changes. The 1853 Congregational Church by W F Paulton is in Early English Gothic (1189-1307) the other 19th century revival was Greek architecture, a modest example being the Old Market House in Market Street (1857).

Jews in Winchester

The history of the Jews in Winchester, their persecution and perseverance, is probably typical of the integration also seen in other towns. They were here for centuries in and around Jewry Street, with a school and numerous private and public

synagogues, (also to be seen in St Peter Street and St George's Street). They came from Normandy and were well established by the 12th century. Their skills in finance led them to be hated by the barons who borrowed money. Records indicate some Jews were executed in the 12th and 13th centuries for "having martyred christian children to provide blood for paschal rites".

All Jews were to be expelled at the end of the 13th century but, as in Germany and Holland, evidence remains, in the following centuries which points to their continuing financial skill in both banking and the retail business.

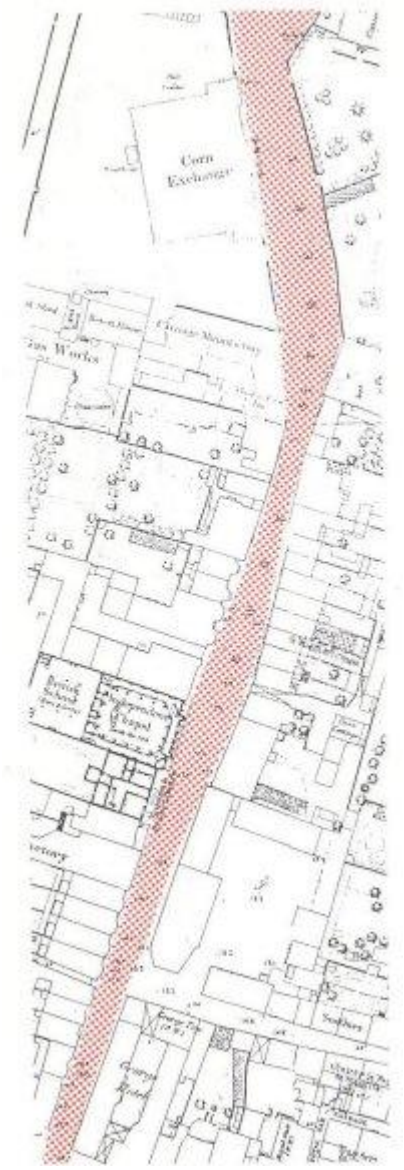
Listed Buildings

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 the Secretary of State for the Environment has a duty to compile lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Buildings are classified in grades according to their relative importance:
Grade I Buildings of Outstanding Interest.
Grade II Buildings of Special Interest.
of which particularly important ones are graded II*.

Consent is required for the demolition of a listed building and for its alteration or extension, and this is distinct from normal planning permission.

All applications must be advertised in a local newspaper, a notice displayed near the site, and amenity groups such as the Victorian Society and the Winchester Preservation Trust, along with at least six similar bodies are given due notice. The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 awards grants for the repair of individual buildings.

Jewry Street - Controls



The appearance of buildings is affected by the planning controls and building regulations in use at the time. There have been such restrictions over several centuries so that houses in the 16th century, for example, could be taxed if a gable fronted the street.

A tax of £5 in goods would be levied to enlarge private houses and owners considered baths, casement windows and panelling as removable fittings. The vertical sliding sash window was introduced from Holland. In the 17th century there was excise duty on glass, the tax on the number of windows, if more than six, being based on the house rental of £5 per annum minimum.

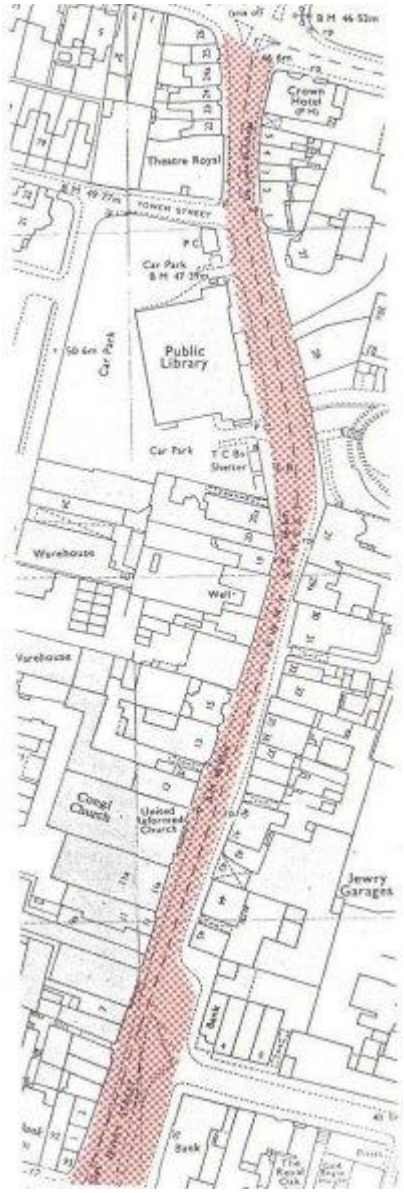
Poverty in the town could be assessed by the amount raised from a hearth or stove tax of two shillings each. The 18th century introduced a tax on bricks of 2s.6d. per 1,000 which seemed to result in the popular tile and slate hanging to evade the tax. Tiles were even made to look like bricks, though bricks in the mid 18th century only cost 20 shillings per 1,000 (Essex facing bricks for Sheridan House, in 1983, cost £150 for that number).

The traditional English bond brickwork gave way in the mid 17th century to the more economic Flemish bond. Herring Bone pattern brickwork is adapted to the timber framing of the Elizabethan Restaurant (rebuilt 1920s).

The 1696 window tax was repealed in 1851 during Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901). The price of glass dropped from one shilling to tuppence halfpenny a square foot, resulting in larger window panes and fewer glazing bars. The Crystal Palace exhibition halls used the largest pane at that time, of 49" x 10".



The George Hotel, Jewry Street 1871



Official controls in the 1980s start with fees on a sliding scale when drawings are submitted for planning and building control approval. There can be conflict between the wishes of the individual owner wanting freedom of expression and the requirements of the local authority.

The contentious issue of colour control engenders a lively debate, particularly when frontages, as seen at Nos. 6, 28 and 38, are painted out of keeping with the street scene. The City Council produced a booklet in 1976 on "Signs and Shopfronts" to give guidelines on shop fascias and signs. Attractive shop signs in this street are conspicuous by their absence.

An analysis of types of shops in previous centuries produces a clear image of a different and slower way of life. The Jewry Street tobacconist who, in the 19th century also had a billiard saloon, would be popular with pipe smokers and those who enjoyed a game of billiards by the hour (the 1983 version is the snooker hall). High city rates, apart from cigarettes ousting pipe tobacco, meant that by 1909 there

was only one such shop in the town. A specialist tobacco shop (from the Pentice) has now been re-assembled in the City Museum.

So coach builders, saddlers, coopers, ironmongers, chemists, florists, and fish shops in Jewry Street have been replaced by Building Societies and multiple stores and the professional people have moved to the High Street.

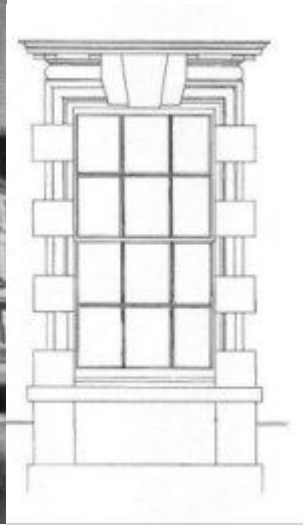
The encouragement of hire purchase, together with the fragmentation of family life, has produced a greater demand for house furnishing. With the loosening of financial and home ties have grown the second hand and antique businesses. In line with this is a lively interest in fashionable clothes by young people linked with a wish to eat out, there being eight such premises in the street.



The George Hotel, Jewry Street site cleared for Barclays Bank

Jewry Street - West Side 1 - 11 as far as the Gaol





The houses and shops, Nos. 1-11, as far as the Gaol, were built after earlier ones were removed and Jewry Street widened by eight feet, costing the corporation £800. This part of the street was typical, having dormer windows and chimney stacks in a sloping, hipped roof, finishing with a projecting bracket cornice. The drawing above shows a well proportioned classical window, double its width in height, with projecting stone architrave and triple keystone to carry the weight over. The panes are of similar ratio to the window itself.

The drawing below shows the effect of the Building Acts in 1707-9, requiring wood windows to be recessed, with brick or stone cornices, and parapets instead of overhanging wood eaves.





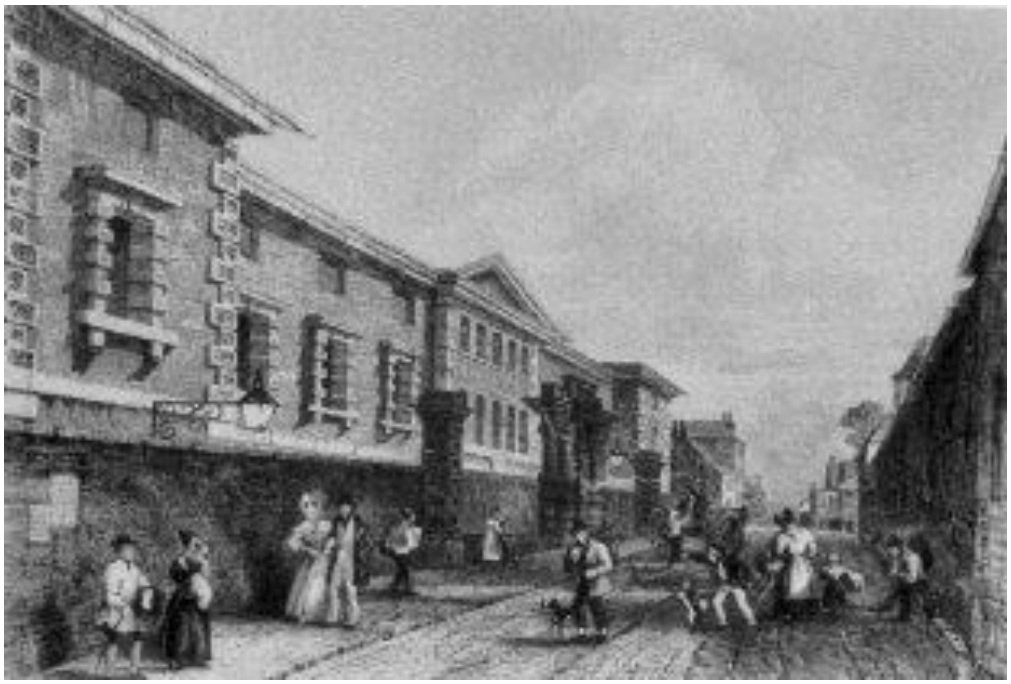
The architects for the Bristol and West Building Society made a conscious effort to resolve the return side to the High Street.

The roof line has been dropped and the earlier classic surrounds to openings deleted, producing an indecisive character. Compare the finish at the top of the metal sash windows with those of the Georgian Restaurant. Winchester provides many bold Victorian answers in contrast to the pseudo Georgian bank at No. 50.

The older buildings, from 1903, (as seen below) make more use of purpose-shaped bricks in walls which carry the weight of floors and roofs. The 1980 buildings are of concrete framing, clad with bricks.

The new building features an oriel type window, the more traditional one being seen below. This photograph also shows an Art Nouveau design for metal gates, in contrast to the ones on Sheridan House.





The Gaol (Grade II listed building) is marked on old maps of 1611 and was rebuilt about 1800 to a design by George Moneypenny. It had similar architectural features to Newgate Prison in London designed by George Dance in 1770.

Winchester's Gaol was for serious criminals, whereas the Castle held political prisoners, the West Gate was for debtors and the Bridewell, near the Old Guildhall, was for vagrants. Gaolers did not have a regular salary so money was extracted by torture from prisoners. In 1816 poachers were transported to Australia and rioting farm labourers hanged. Even for stealing clothing the punishment was to be "publicly whipt" and imprisoned.

The prisons were filthy and badly ventilated so the Public Health Act of 1848 demanded improvements. The Gaol was closed in 1850 and the Governor's House bought by the corporation for use as a city museum and library.

The photograph shows on the far left the three-storey Golden Lion Hotel alongside the old cottages later to be the Elizabethan Restaurant.

The drawing below shows part of the original Gaol with its decorative classical pediment and, underneath, vermiculated quoins intended to give a feeling of strength. The round arch windows have the usual stone voussoirs on impost blocks. Also shown is a proposal to replace the church with shops and offices and to build a new church in Staple Gardens.







Part of the Gaol site was bought for £820 by the Congregational Church. It is not surprising to see this Grade II listed building in Gothic style, knowing that the competition for the Houses of Parliament (1840-60) was won by Barry and Pugin, with a reproduction Gothic design.

The church frontage, of yellow brick and Bath stone, is now in need of repair. The interior is surprising, with a central lantern and double hammer beam roof. The photograph of the girls' entrance to British Hall, with its mock strap door hinges, was similar to the boys' entrance, and passageways led to the British and Foreign School at the rear. The church cost £2,500 to build, and the Sunday School £1,250 in 1853.

Jewry Street - West Side to City Road



The present District Library (Grade II* listed building) is a conversion of the original Corn Exchange, designed in 1838 by a local architect Owen Carter at a cost of £4,000.

The site was a cattle market but now there is a car park with a "bottle bank' for the collection of glass for recycling. The Library frontage has features similar to those on St Paul's Church, Covent Garden by Inigo Jones. The original building had a large granary store underneath and a residence for the Clerk to the Market.

By the early 1900s it was no longer being used exclusively as a Corn Exchange and two shops were inserted at the north end. Subsequently it was used as a sports centre, skating rink and the Regent Cinema (see photograph above). The building was then bought for £8,000 by the corporation. In 1936 it was converted into a public library and in 1964 the City Council restored the front facade and remodelled the interior at a cost of £33,000 (by Casson, Condor Partners). Another major improvement by the Hampshire County Architect, in 1977, costing £80,000, was to insert new floors and galleries and amenities such as wheel chair access.

Since the Public Libraries Act of 1850 when the library had about 500 books, there has been a separate building in North Walls for reference material and magazines.

The photograph also shows the Old Market Hotel with its attractive iron balcony, built in 1850 by a speculative builder called Vaughan. The hotel closed in 1912 and reopened as a theatre-music hall from 1914 until 1922, when it was converted to a cinema.

After the cinema closed a charitable trust bought the building in 1974 in order to stop its development into more offices. The first phase of restoration of the Victorian interior was completed in 1981.

The Theatre Royal and Nos. 22-26 are listed buildings of Group value Grade II.

Jewry Street - East Side to St Peter's Church

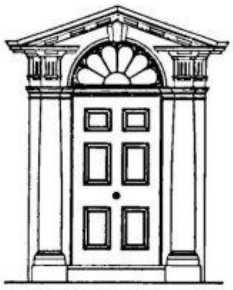




The De Lunn buildings of 1890, by architect T Stopher, has the now empty Crown Hotel on the site of the earlier Crown and Cushion. This romantically conceived building exemplifies the confidence of its time and today is a reminder of another era, when at least one shop still had the shop keeper living above his premises.

Beyond this group of shops and dwellings can be seen, at No. 29, the Georgian Restaurant (Grade II* listed building), an early 18th century house once lived in by prominent Winchester citizens.

Note the brick arch windows, the unusually narrow bricks and the wood sashes flush with the outside wall face. The Corinthian type capitals to the door case have unfortunately been "gilded".



The drawing shows a typical 18th century six panel door with Roman Doric order attached and a broken pediment to allow for a round arch and fanlights.

The photograph below shows Canister House (Grade II listed building) and SCATS showroom, both maybe to be replaced with a new office block. It is hoped the old secondary access to North Walls will be re-instated.



Jewry Street - East Side to High Street

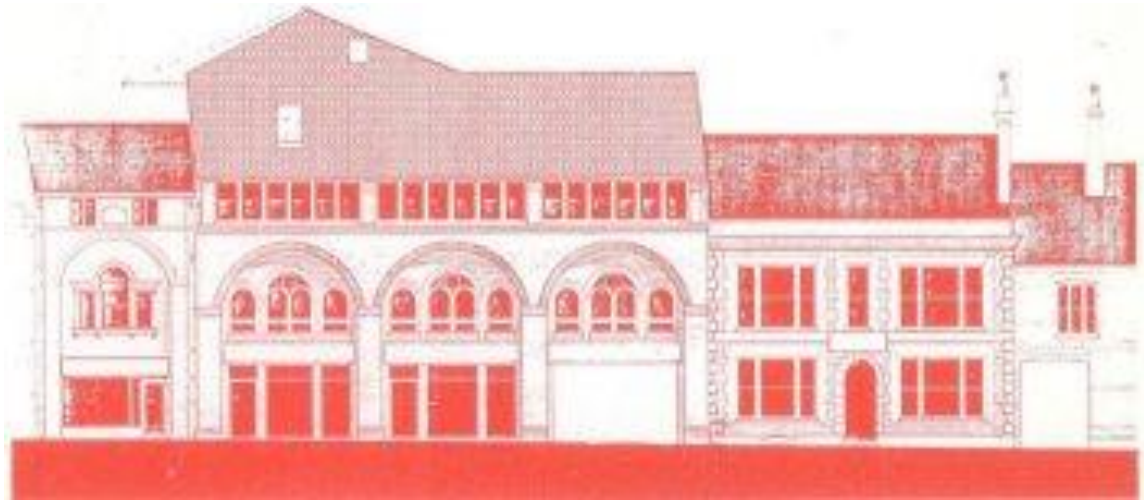


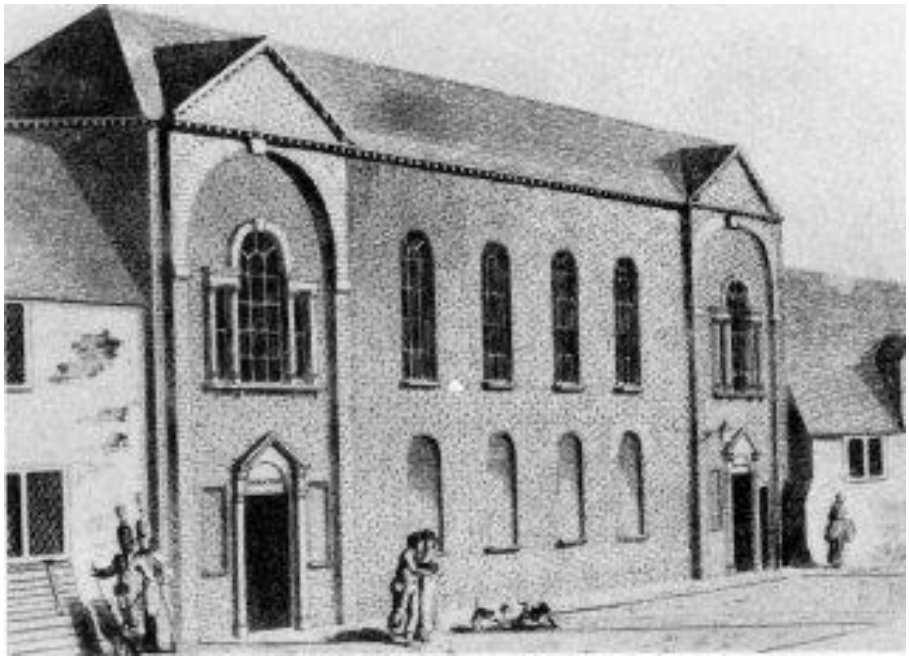
This side of Jewry Street has a number of listed building of Group value Grade II including No. 29a and Nos. 34-37, 38 and 39.

Century House (Nos. 30/31) designed by T D Atkinson in 1925, is a copy book example of Classical detail. In the same year the Gothic Roman Catholic Cathedral Church was built in what had been the gardens of No. 29.

This part of the street merits a face lift and the removal of intrusive shop signs.

The drawing below includes the rebuilt part of the old theatre (page 11) and the replacement building (1982) of shops and offices, costing £850,000, by architects Evans Roberts and Partners.





The drawing to the right is of the only purpose built theatre in Winchester, constructed at a cost of £1,000 from private subscribers.

The owners, Harris and Collins, opened with Sheridan's play The Rivals in 1785. These two had built up a theatre circuit between Salisbury, Southampton and Chichester.

The players visited Winchester in July during Saint Swithuntide, coinciding with horse racing at Worthy Down, dancing in St John's Assembly Rooms and cock fighting in the city taverns.

The audience sat on back-less benches in the pit and the gallery, with boxes higher up. Prices were three shillings for box seats, two shillings in the pit and one shilling in the gallery.

The theatre could not pay its way so in 1861 it was auctioned and later gutted. The building for H W Framptons (photo below) was designed by the son of H W F in the fashionable Classic, including Greek style ornament. This business failed in 1912. The firm had been in the Corn Exchange since the 1860s.





The George Inn had been on the site of the present Barclays Bank since the 1400s, with the main entrance in High Street.

At one time it was called the New Inn, later the Moon Hotel and in the 15th century was acquired by the city at a figure of twenty pence ground rent. It was largely rebuilt in 1769, being then in private ownership. Before 1939 the hotel was bought by the Ministry of Transport and leased to the Agriculture Ministry during the war as HQ for Hampshire's Agricultural Executive Committee. It was also used by some of the Bank of England staff evacuated from London.

The hotel ran a horse drawn-carriage service to meet all trains when the railway station (architect Sir William Tite) was completed in 1838.



Barclays Bank by W Curtis Green, architect, opened in 1959. Sir Nikolaus Pevsner comments "it makes this building rather impertinent in comparison with the old guildhall (now Lloyds bank) in the High Street. It must be one of the last historicist buildings in England".