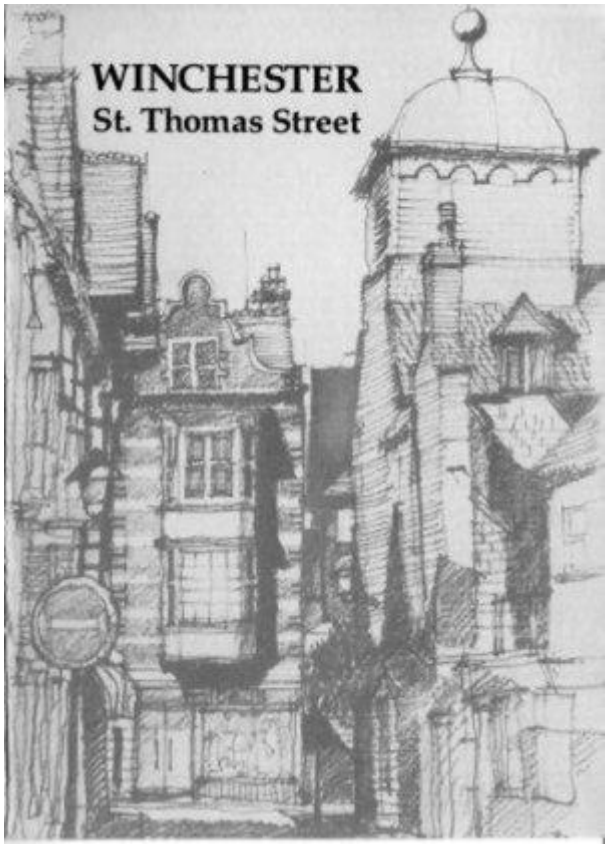
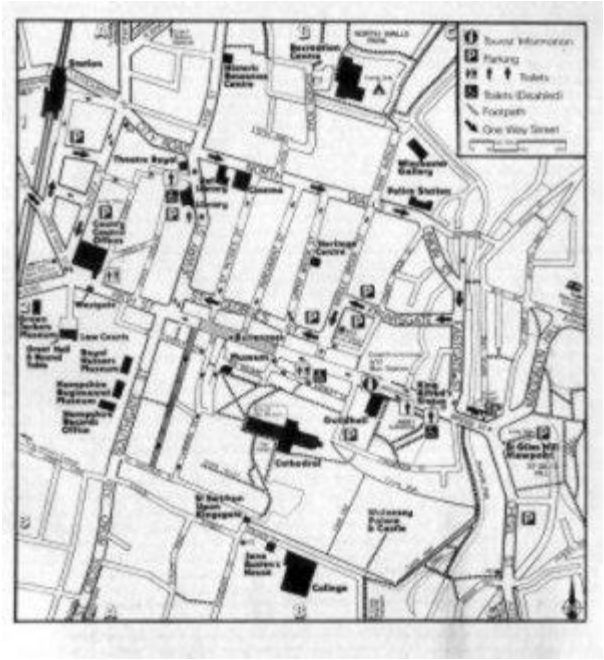
Winchester St. Thomas Street - Overview



This is a description of the architecture of buildings in St Thomas Street in Winchester produced by the Trust in 1986.



Publications

This is the fifth in our ‘Street’ series printed in 1988 by Sarsen Press, Winchester. Previous publications from Winchester bookshops and the Heritage Centre include:

1976 The High Street by Keith Walker RIBA and Mrs B. Carpenter Turner BA JP.M

1984 Jewry Street by F. Chippindale RIBA

1985 The Square and Great Minster Street by F. Chippindale RIBA

1986 From Cathedral to Castle by F. Chippindale RIBA and Keith Leaman RIBA

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Introduction

St. Thomas Street runs north and south from High Street to St. Swithun's Street, that being the city boundary in Roman times. It has always been favoured as a residential area with small cottages and large houses having suitably extensive gardens. The 19th century Ordnance Survey maps indicate the sites of Roman pavements, and present day excavations at the S.W. corner show masonry walls of a Roman town house with a tessellated pavement.

Speed's map of 1611 shows the north end of the street with tenements and cottages and gardens on the west side as far as St. Thomas's Passage. This area of the town was considered a healthier district than the low lying Brooks. Under the Paving and Street Lighting Act of the 1770s the road from the High Street to St. Clement Street was paved and partly paid for by adjoining owners. There was private piped water by the Winchester Water Supply Co. in the 1850s but no main drainage until after 1878.

At this part of the street was a brewery and nearby the King's Head Inn, mid 17th century and demolished in 1936. The public right of way across the site remained and the name retained when development took place in the early 1980s. These changes were part of a developer-architect competition organised by Winchester City Council for the improvement of property in Little Minster Street. The winning scheme by Plincke Leaman and Browning, architects, included two corner shops in addition to town houses and offices.



panoramic view

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Nos 1 to 9

Nos. 1, 2 and 3 were small cottages between Lloyd's Bank at the junction with High Street and St. Clement Street. These properties have been used over the last 100 years by a wide variety of shopkeepers.

For 25 years No.1 was Amey's Eating House, not licensed, and popular for family catering. No.2 Lingard House, was the birth place and home of Dr. John Lingard (1771-1851) an eminent catholic priest and historian, author of a history of the Anglo-Saxon Church and a history of England in 1688.

In 1836, a commodious room in the County Court offices had been allocated as an infant school of St. Thomas's and St Bartholomew of Hyde. Alterations were undertaken in 1882 by J.Colson, a local architect.

The property between St. Thomas Street and Little Minster Street had many users including the Mechanics Institute, a Temperance and Billiard Hall with, during the second world war, a club for black American soldiers. The white American soldiers used nearby Minster House.

Bendicks chocolate makers moved from here to Winnall in 1966 leaving premises for temporary use by the Winchester Archaeological Research Group. Part of this St Thomas Street frontage has been used by solicitors for many years. The firm of Faithfull Gardner Stanier and Thomas subsequently vacated No.7 to join Harris and Bowker in Southgate Street, now Faithfull and Bowker.

No.8 was probably built in 1805 by Henry Godwin, a solicitor living at No.23 opposite. He was town clerk in Winchester from 1816 to 1834. His son, Benjamin, took over from his father in 1849 as Registrar. This firm, Godwin, Bremridge and Clifton included Bernard Bremridge cousin to Charles Godwin, who was clerk to St Cross Hospital Trustees and coroner for Winchester City for over 30 years. Charles Godwin who died in 1939 was an early car owner in Winchester with a registration number A1, and he may be responsible for the Hampshire Automobile Club having their headquarters at his office address.

Below is a drawing of the facade at the start of the street.

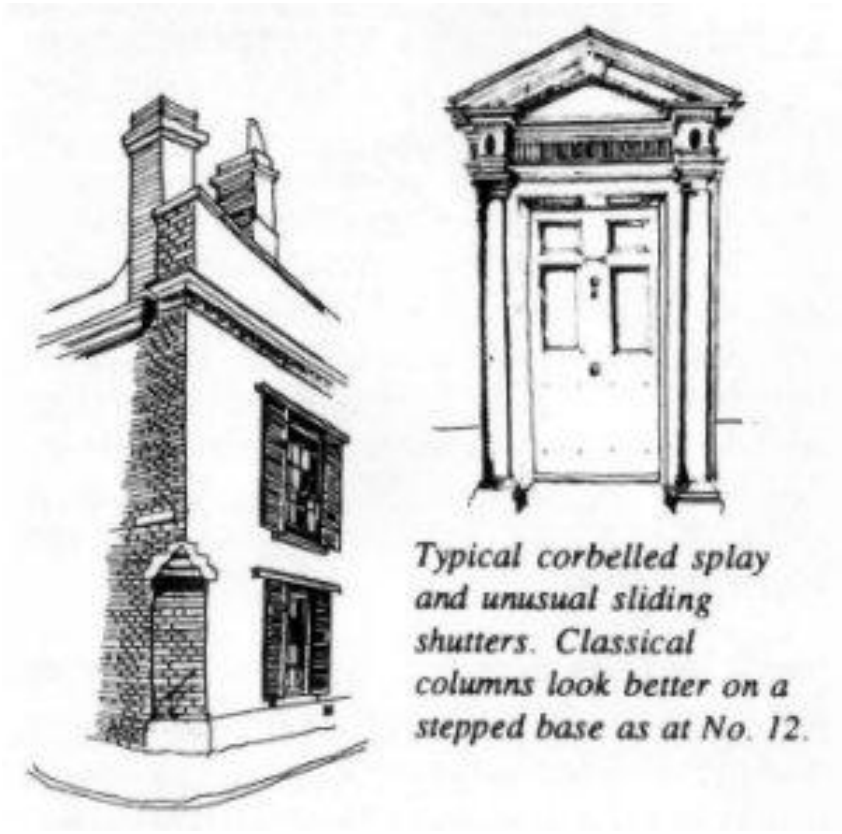


panoramic view

The plot alongside, now Penarth Place, with a frontage of 61 feet and depth of 65 feet, was developed in 1882-83 in a most unusual manner. Four plain, undistinguished houses on the building line have narrow arched entries leading up steep steps directly to the first floor entrance. Internal access to the ground floor and rear garden is under these steps, with a further flight to the upper floors. The Taylor family were involved with Nos.1-4 Penarth Place, raising a mortgage for the plot of

£4,535. This plot and the area to Minster Lane used to be the garden of No. 3 Great Minster Street.

Adjoining No.4 Penarth Place, and next to Minster Lane is Matcham's motor engineers. This corner site is on Godson's map of 1750, and the 1969 Ordnance map shows a hall behind the St Thomas Street plot The property was auctioned in 1918 as a builder's store on two floors, a large coach house and stable with manure yard. The builder's store was rented at £16 per annum, the landlord paying rates and taxes. In 1944 Alfred Bowker, solicitor, of Southgate Street, used the property as a coach house, having purchased it from Thomas Martin in 1919 for £305. It changed hands again in 1953 when G.P. Matcham bought it freehold for £1600. There is a sarsen stone at the corner of this building, which had coins embedded when the two brothers, R.J. and C.P., took over from their father after his death in 1982.



Typical corbelled splay and unusual sliding shutters. Classical columns look better on a stepped base as at No. 12.

The Plymouth Brethren used the hall at the rear until 1974. In the late 1950s part of these premises had been occupied by Mr. Whittier, cobbler, using gas light and working on unmade floors.

Mr. Stone, a craftsman in leather goods worked there until 1965 when his son, a printer, took over having installed electricity and proper flooring. By 1967 the rent had risen from the original six shillings weekly to £8, the rates being £42. This second-rate structure was removed when the end wall of Matcham's was rebuilt and the site cleared in 1983 to provide rear access and garage for the adjacent owner in Little Minster street.

No.9 Mulberry House, is on the pavement line but with a spacious garden reaching to the brick boundary wall in Symonds Street. The mulberry tree, supposedly planted

by Charles II, with other similar trees at Nos. 12, 13 and Kitnocks, was uprooted in the October '87 storm. Like several other houses in the street Mulberry House is a DoE Grade II listed building of the 18th century, with dormers and a north wing added later.

From the late 19th century professional people occupied this house. C.M. Deane of the London and Smith's bank in High Street was here until 1891. In 1895 Dr. RA. Powell lived here, followed by Hi. Hardy MA, a college don, until about 1920.

Admiral Sir E.E. Bradford GBE, KCB, CVO, was here from 1929 until his death, aged 77 in 1935. He had served in the Egyptian war of 1882 and Lord Jellicoe in his book 'The Grand Fleet' paid tribute to his seamanship.

By 1940 Lady Bradford and Miss Bradford had left, to be followed by the Hon. Mrs. Hunter. For the years between 1950 and the late 1960s it was used by Mrs. Daldy at No.9A as the Ladies' County Club, offering luncheons, teas and bridge parties. The present owner, Mrs. Ella Cochrane bought the house from the Baring Brothers in 1954, changed the upper floors into flats and provided garages from Symonds Street.

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Nos. 10 - 13

No.10 was the home of Cdr. 'Rocky' Knight founder of the Australian Navy Physical Training Establishment.

Nos.10 and 11 were part of Mulberry House as servants' quarters and are now separated from No.12 Wickham House by a set back stable yard, with behind, a walled garden.



Wickham House is not on Godson's map of 1750 so is dated later that century. Like other large houses in the street it is built almost to the street frontage with attractive steps leading to a fine arched door with fanlight and Roman Ionic engaged columns.

The blank window spaces could be the result of the window tax of 1696 which was repealed in 1851.

W.J. Wickham FRCS, whose memorial is in the Cathedral, died in 1864. He was a native of Winchester and hospital consultant for forty years. His father W.N. Wickham was also a surgeon at the hospital from 1823 and was closely linked with Winchester College for many years. Wickham House has, since 1953, been used by business firms.



Knocker from access door in garden wall of No. 13 Footscrapers and doorknockers show a wide variety of designs

No.13 is of approximately the same period and appearance as No.12 but the materials and detailing are less attractive. In the 1880s a Mr. Butler, surgeon, lived here, followed in the first quarter of this century by T.D. Richards MRCS. Mrs. Constance Young, who had been here since 1960 died in July 1980 at the age of 110. A member of the Barrow Simonds family, she married into the Young family, brewers in London.

On Mrs. Young's 100th birthday, the brewery horses and dray were a feature of the family gathering that honoured the occasion. The layout of the house is typical of the time, planned with more regard to formality than for orientation and convenience. The two storey servants' quarters do not upset the symmetry of the three storey block alongside.

The stable block fronts St. Swithun Street and was the home for Stella, an old grey horse which was exercised regularly in the surrounding streets.

The garden wall, listed grade II as is the house, is of brick and stone with blocked openings, which was altered in the early 1980s to gain a wider access to the garden behind. Since then No.13 has not been in full residential use.

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Nos. 14- 20



panoramic view

Adjoining to No. 13 are cottages, Nos. 14, 15, 16 and 17, which provide an interesting comparison in scale with No.13, having a minimum room height on three floors, with hipped dormers for attic use. There is a built-in wall tablet dated 1695 but there were alterations and additions in the 19th century.

The Roman town collapsed in the 5th century and before the Norman Conquest a new street plan was laid out, St. Thomas Street being called Calpestret in the Middle Ages, Calpe being a Saxon word for silver.

Towards the close of the 16th century the south west corner of the street was a garden area reaching to Southgate (Gold) Street belonging to St. John's Charity. In the late 13th and 14th centuries much of this site was held by the Russell family, wool exporters, whose residence was on adjacent property extending to Southgate Street and called `Lion's Hall'. In the 18th century it was part of the garden of Chemocke House stretching from St. Swithun Street to St. Thomas's Passage. This corner site was rented from St. John's Charity by Mr. H.Q. Ludford in 1927. It was used for garage purposes, and in 1946 new workshops were built.

To do so it had been necessary to use some of the gardens of property in Southgate Street, particularly No.49, Winton Court Hotel built in 1860 and closed in 1986. This was later sold back to St. John's Charity, successful negotiations having been concluded with the Green Man public house to gain rear access to the Southgate Street properties.

In 1976 a car showroom was built fronting St. Thomas Street but in 1978 the business was sold by Henly's Motor Company who closed it in 1984.



The site is currently being developed for use as private sheltered housing by Anglia Secure Homes P.L.C.

This new development for buyers aged 55 or over, is built to street boundary limits and to maximum height, with enclosed courtyard and garage facilities. It includes 29 apartments, on lease, at minimum costs from £85,000 to £111,500. This design might have been more attractive if the block had been U-shaped with a landscaped court opening on to St. Thomas Street.

The site adjoining, known as Villiers Court was bought by Mr. H. Bendall in 1972 for housing development. Because of anticipated foundation problems it was re-sold and eventually five town houses were built in 1976 by Wiggins Homes, designed by Evans, Roberts and Partners. This was a successful solution to the familiar problem of high costs of land and building within Winchester calling for maximum development usually with minimum sized rooms.

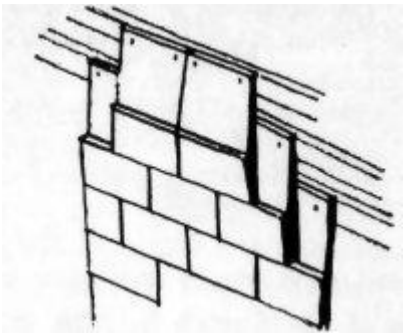
Chemocke House is now Carlisle House and Lee House, being a remand home and probation centre. Mark Carlisle MP was Under Secretary in the Home Office in 1973 and His Honour Judge A.M.Lee, was Chairman of the Hampshire Area Probation and After Care Committee from 1969-1977. Dr. Matthew Coombs, physician, lived there 1722-1751 and the Reverend Prebendary Sir Villiers Chemocke, a governor of Hampshire County Hospital, bought it in 1758. After his death in 1779 Lady Chemocke left it to Reverend E. Harvey of Aspley Hall, Bedford, who sold it in 1790, after which time it had many owners.

Miss Heathcote bought it in 1803, during the time she was in touch with Jane Austen and found for her lodgings at 8 College Street. She sold the house to Charles Benny, a local builder, who in 1844 pulled down the south wing which had been built on land leased from St. John's Charity.

In 1856 W.J. Wickham bought the house and on his death in 1864 his son, the Reverend H.J. Wickham, Chaplain to St. John's Hospital, sold it to Winchester College prior to 1888 when already a dining hall and fives court had been built.

It was Dr. G. Moberly, Headmaster of Winchester College from 1836-66, who suggested Chernocke House as a boarding house for 'Commoners' partly because St.Thomas Street had a reputation for 'healthiness'. The Reverend W.P. Smith, a college staff member from 1873-1901 added two new galleries, prefects' library and changing rooms.

Before this, from 1894, it had been known as Furley's, after its housemaster 1894-1910, who wrote the 'Annals of Chemocke House from 1859-1909' and later was Mayor and Freeman of Winchester. The house was taken as a military hospital from 1914-1919, converted into an hotel by the Ludford family in the 1920s and from 1939-1942 was a hostel for Bank of England typists working at Laverstoke. From 1945-1969 it was used by night nurses from the hospital, followed by three years occupancy by the Department of the Environment. Squatters were in for another three years prior to the Government spending £600,000 on refurbishment preparatory to its present use.



The appearance of the frontage was not improved when an insensitively designed opening was made to provide car space on the site of the old fives court. The end elevation facing south has mathematical tiles to simulate brickwork at the time of an 18th century tax of 2/6d. per 1000 bricks. Lee House was used, in 1987, by BBC TV as a backdrop for an Agatha Christie novel.

The semi-detached houses to the north of Chernocke House, known as The Laurels and Femlea, were owned by St. John's Charity. These two houses are post 1873 and the tenancy starting 1880, expiring 1979, showed a rent of £6. The tenants' list includes the Reverend Canon Boden, librarian and cathedral precentor, and the Reverend Edwd. Bannister. Since 1979 the property, No.18A, has been owned by Winchester Tutorial College, No.18 being rented to the College.

The detached house marked on Godson's map at the junction of St. Thomas's Passage and St. Thomas Street has been owned by St. John's Charity since 1860. In the last century it was the home of Dr. Chard, cathedral organist. Later Col. A.H. Drummond author of the Eton boating song, who died in 1932, lived there.

Now known as Westway House, it has been used by the Hampshire County Council since 1972. It seems to have had over the years a wide range of occupants, including apartment dwellers, and a variety of office users. Since 1986 the ground floor has been used by Cine Wessex.

St. Thomas's narrow passage leading to Southgate Street is a paved pedestrian route but because of car parking problems partly related to offices in Southgate Street there is unfortunately conflict with cars.

There is a pre-1939 telephone kiosk here, designed by Sir Gilbert Scott and given listed building status by the DoE in 1987.

Several references are made to St. John's Winchester Charity established in 1289 by John Devenish, Alderman of the City. In 1558 Ralph Lamb was an important benefactor.

Fronting this passage is a late Georgian house, known as Kitnocks, with 5 bedrooms and attractive garden. It is currently on sale priced at £200,000.



Between St. Thomas's passage and the old site of St. Thomas church is Mason's Yard, a U shaped two storey building of some distinction. No. 20 was changed in 1972 to four houses being possibly a late 18th century stable block for No.9, Mulberry House.

In 1812 the City agreed a 40-year lease at 21 shillings for premises and garden and another similar amount for coach house and garden. In those days the Mayor would accept chickens in part payment.

In 1815 an indenture between Deane and Davidson, wine merchants, refers to cellar vaults and later to wine bins, oak shillings and bottle racks. Charles M. Deane who, in 1815, had received from Davidson £600, died in 1891 and left his son A.E. Deane the freehold. The ownership of the stable block had changed in 1895 when Dr. H.A. Powell of Mulberry House took over.

Godrich and Petman, wine merchants, were tenants in 1905 although R.H. Petman had been there previously. When Mason Bros. bought the property they concreted over the brick vaulted cellars, used as air raid shelters in World War II.

The pleasant open space alongside this old stable block was the site of the former church of St. Thomas, and in the 15th century, of St. Petroc. There is a long history of church building on this site and eventually after the repair bills for St. Thomas's became excessive, it was agreed, in 1826 to build a new church on the same site. But 19 years later a decision was taken to buy land adjoining Serle's House in Southgate Street, at a cost of £340, and to build there, in 1847, a new church double the size of the existing one, at a cost of £8,000.

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Nos. 21 - 25

Access to Nos. 21 and 22 is across the landscaped area of the old graveyard, and some of the tombstones are still visible following the demolition of St. Thomas's in 1845. John Gauntlett, Alderman of the City, was buried here in 1762 and his wife

Mary in 1770. Five of their seventeen children were also buried in the grounds of St. Thomas's Church. These two houses of the late 17th and 18th centuries are in grey brick with red dressings, having tile roofs above the usual two storey arrangement of sash windows.

The off street car parking problem for the house owners is again evident, as part of the stone boundary wall and iron railings were removed in 1983 to allow space for two cars within the garden.



No.23 was the property of St. John's Charity from the mid 16th century to 1971 when the Charity Commissioners allowed the sale to the present occupiers.

Prior to that date the tenants had been paying £40 a year rent for forty years, the adjoining house No. 23a now part garage being let to a corn merchant. An earlier occupant had been Henry Godwin, solicitor, with offices opposite, followed by Mrs. S. Hayward who had a forty years lease, from 1855, rented at £1.4s.2d.

This house has remarkable brick vaulted cellars in the area of Roman remains marked on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map. The spacious landscaped garden still retains the clearly defined contours of over a century ago.

The records of No.24 reach far back into the history of Winchester. There are references to this property before 1550 in which year Richard Burton, Mayor of Winchester 1559-1586, lived at this address. This building probably incorporated the present main block of No. 24, the Norman undercroft with rebuilt chamber above, and the building along the street frontage to the south which was demolished about 1812. The value of the property including stables and outhouses, part of the east side of the street, was £435 in 1574. The house passed to William, son of Richard Burton and later, in 1604, it was owned by William Kirkbye, but by 1716 Matthew Inter, one time Mayor, had provided his son Thomas with this property.

In 1829 Mr. C. Woolridge had a lease from Stephen Hearne, who prior to 1861 had built a drawing room and linked the undercroft wing to the main house. He also had the freehold of the garden from St. John's Charity in 1897.

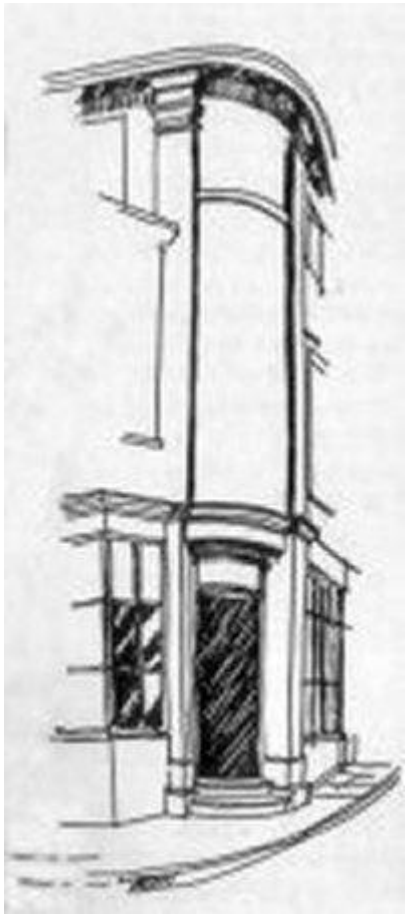
The undercroft as shown on the 1871 Ordnance Survey and detailed in the 1915 auction catalogue, is described as a groined vault with two bays, divided by a stone arch and measuring 27 feet by 17 feet. The room over the undercroft is reputably where Cromwell received the Keys of Winchester Castle in 1645. The nearby Southgate Hotel was one of the sites of Cromwell's guns when besieging the castle.

The acting solicitors at that date were C. Woolridge and Son of St. Peter's Street, the occupants from the 1880s onwards being the Misses Woolridge. A tithe of 17 shillings was due to the Rector of St. Thomas's Church and a fee of 1s 3d. payable to Winchester Corporation.

For many years No.24 was the residence of the Mayor of Winchester. Post medieval pottery was found, and is officially recorded in the City Museum, when in 1979 an outdoor pool was refurbished. It was at this time the south corner fronting the street was altered to provide a concrete arch and iron gates to the set back garages. The façade was repainted in a more acceptable colour, this being the only large house in St. Thomas Street with painted brickwork.

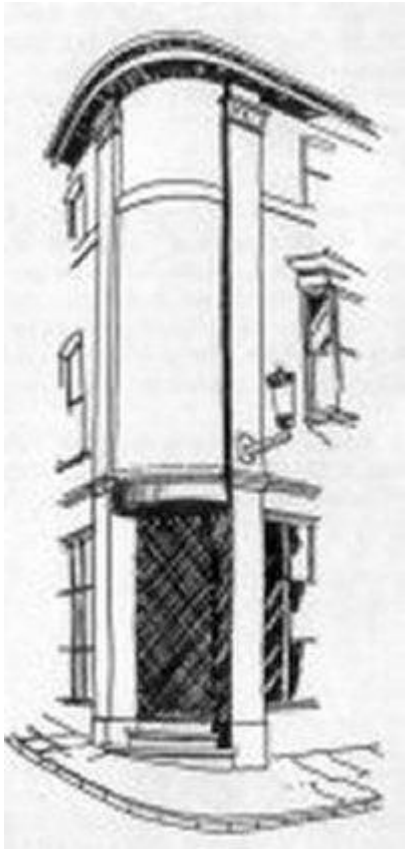
No.25 dating back to 1650, was the rectory for St. Thomas's and also for St. Maurice's Church, which used to be in the High Street before being demolished in 1957. The house is rather unusual in this street with slates instead of tiles and having full height three storey canted bays on either side of a panelled door with fanlight and bracketed hood. There is a plaque on this building recording its history. Dr. Richards was here in the late 19th century and the Reverends Dicker and Colchester from St. Maurice's were in the rectory at the start of the 20th century. For about fifty years, from the 1920s Savage and Weller estate agents, occupied these premises, Mr. Weller having links with St. Thomas's Church.

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Nos. 26 - High St



Although St Thomas Street was known earlier as Shoemaker Street, it seems to have been favoured more by professional people. No. 26 had three doctors in the 1880s followed later by accountants and now by solicitors.

No.27 has Classical revival details with pilasters full height, cement rendered, and on an unusually tight curve into St. Clement Street. Now a pet shop, it was known as the Green Dog Beauty Parlour in the 1940s. Previously the Singer Sewing Machine Co. were here and after the First World War the Salvation Army used the premises as a soldiers' rest.



Across St. Clement Street the single block of buildings continues to the High Street and has been owned by St. John's Charity since 1857. Nos. 28 and 29 continue the Greek theme but with first floor oriel windows.

On the 1871 Ordnance map shown below is the Guildhall Tavern, maybe a competitor of the Dolphin Hotel on the High Street corner. No.28 was let, from 1920-27, to the United Yeast Co. at £45 followed in 1932 by the Conservative Party office use and in 1957 by the Ministry of Education.



Map of St Thomas Street

J. Kaines, butcher, occupied no.30 in the 1880's followed by Chaplin & Co., carters agents, who also sold tickets for the N.W. London and S.W. Railways. Joe Stones, hairdresser, moved there in 1961 from Jewry Street where he had been for over thirty years. The previous occupier of these premises was also a hairdresser, Madame Astaire.

St. John's Charity owns the block including the original Dolphin Inn at the junction of St. Thomas Street and High Street. On the return elevation in St. Thomas Street are two carved panels indicating the link with the owners.

It may be of interest to realise that public opinion, as expressed in the Hampshire Chronicle in 1882, condemned the Dolphin Inn as 'presenting ugly features and occupying valuable space'. A new design in 'domestic Gothic', by Thomas Stopher, a local architect, was approved in 1882 and St. Thomas Street at that time was widened five feet.

The drawing (click for larger image) below shows the refurbished elevation in the early 1980s after removal of cement rendering and paint. The building was structurally unsound which meant that steel framing had to be inserted in addition to 46 deep bored concrete piles. The local architects for this work were Plincke Leaman and Browning.



panoramic view

Winchester St. Thomas Street - Acknowledgments

Designed and written by Frank Chippindale RIBA and Keith Leaman RIBA
We gratefully acknowledge the interest and willing help given by past and present residents in St Thomas Street. Although individuals do not wish to be mentioned, our thanks are due to Mr. H. Mason, R.J. and C.P. Matcham and to Phil Yates. We do appreciate the time spent and advice given by Mrs Barbara Carpenter Turner, Chris Webb, Philippa Stevens and Austen Whitaker for scrutinizing the script.

The elevational drawings are by courtesy of Keith Walker and Plincke Leaman and Browning.
The front cover drawing is by BJ. Brough and all other sketches by Keith Leaman

Contributions

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Blinkers Hairworks, 3 St. Thomas Street

Burns & Graham, Antique Furniture & Interiors, 4 St Thomas Street

Cine Wessex, Film & Television Facilities, 19 St. Thomas Street

Cobbold Roach Ltd, Stockbrokers, 7 St Thomas Street

Cunningham-Knowler, Building Surveying, Architectural Design, Planning, Fine Art, 4 St Clements Yard

Fern, Ladies Fashion Wear, 20 St Thomas Street

Godwin Bremridge & Clifton, Solicitors, 8 St Thomas Street

Grass Valley Group, 7 St Thomas Street

S.S. Kulkarni & Partners Consulting Structural Engineers, 3 St Clements Yard

Lloyds Bank Plc, 7 St Thomas Street

Magpie, Clothes for the Individual, 5 St. Thomas Street

Martin & Company, Chartered Accountants, 25 St. Thomas Street

G.P. Matcham & Sons, Engine Reconditioning & Parts Service, St. Thomas Street

Microprocessor Consultancy Services Ltd. 33 St. Thomas Street

Orange Chemicals Ltd, 34 St Thomas Street

A.P.F. Rothman, 13 St Thomas Street

Scotch Corner, Ladies Fashion & Knitwear. 1 Kings Head Yard

Simons Studio, Schools, Wedding & Portrait Photographers, 1 St Thomas Street

Winchester Tutorial College, Independent Further Education, 18 St. Thomas Street (0962 68793) and Members of St Thomas Street Residents Association

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