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# BAZAARS AND BAZAAR BUILDINGS IN REGENCY AND VICTORIAN LONDON

KATHRYN A MORRISON

## INTRODUCTION

Few retail or social historians have researched the large-scale commercial enterprises of the first half of the nineteenth century with the same enthusiasm and depth of analysis that is applied to the department store, a retail format which blossomed in the second half of the century. This is largely because copious documentation and extensive literary references enable historians to use the department store – and especially the metropolitan department store – to explore a broad range of social, economic and gender-specific issues. These include kleptomania, labour conditions, and the development of shopping as a leisure activity for upper- and middle-class women.

Historical sources relating to early nineteenth-century shopping may be relatively sparse and inaccessible, yet the study of retail innovation in that period, both in the appearance of shops and stores and in their economic practices, has great potential. It may persuade us to modify our views on the ground-breaking character of later nineteenth-century retailing, and may even shed new light on the genesis of the department store.

This article sets out to convey something of the scale and ambition of early to mid-19th-century retailing by examining London's long-vanished and long-forgotten bazaars.<sup>1</sup> These were permanent establishments, and should not be confused with temporary charity bazaars, or 'fancy fairs'. Pevsner dismissed bazaars as 'merely a fashion in nomenclature', but they were much more than this.<sup>2</sup> To indulge the tastes, pastimes and aspirations of

upper- and middle-class shoppers, they developed the concept of browsing, revelled in display, and discovered increasingly inventive and theatrical ways of combining shopping with entertainment. In devising the ideal setting for this novel shopping experience they pioneered a form of retail building which provided abundant space and light. This type of building, admirably suited to a sales system dependent on the exhibition of goods, would find its ultimate expression in department stores such as the famous Galeries Lafayette in Paris and Whiteley's in London.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF BAZAAR RETAILING

Shortly after the conclusion of the French wars, London acquired its first arcade (Royal Opera Arcade) and its first bazaar (Soho Bazaar), providing covered venues for the fashionable shopping promenade when extreme weather or excessive traffic rendered Bond Street inhospitable. In both the arcade and the bazaar a large number of retailers was assembled beneath one roof, controlled by a single proprietor. This concept was not completely new. Medieval selds seem to have been organised in a similar manner, as were the long shopping galleries, or pawns, of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century exchanges.<sup>3</sup>

Architecturally, arcades and bazaars were very different from older retail building types, and from one another.<sup>4</sup> Arcades aspired to be streets, rather than rooms, and evolved from the idea of the covered

pavement, represented by the Rows in Chester or the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells. While walkways in exchange galleries had been lined by open stalls, those in arcades were flanked by small, glass-fronted shops, with accommodation for the shopkeepers above. Bazaars more closely resembled exchanges and, for that matter, modern department stores. Their capacious open-plan interiors were equipped with solid counters (or ‘standings’), rather than flimsy stalls or shops, and provided fluid circulation routes (or ‘promenades’) for customers (invariably ‘visitors’). While both the arcade and the bazaar offered opportunities to shop, promenade or lounge, bazaars also staged a tantalising array of entertainments and exhibitions for the amusement and edification of their patrons.

The origins of the arcade lie in France, where the building type was created at the Palais Royal in 1781–84, but the bazaar took root in London, where the Soho Bazaar of February 1816 was the first of its kind.<sup>5</sup> The term ‘bazaar’, borrowed from the Arab word for market, had been used periodically to describe European markets since at least the fourteenth century. Interest in eastern culture was stimulated by Napoleon’s campaign in Egypt during the 1790s, to the extent that one of the very first Parisian arcades was called the Passage du Caire. In 1807 the poet Robert Southey described the last of London’s seventeenth-century exchange shopping galleries, Exeter Change, as ‘precisely a bazar’,<sup>6</sup> probably suggesting nothing more than a passing resemblance to an oriental market. With the opening of the Soho Bazaar, however, the term acquired a much more precise definition, and a standardised English spelling.

Aside from their names, the Soho Bazaar and its followers had little in common with the noisy and colourful eastern bazaar. The closest English equivalent to this was the public provisions market which, in the course of the nineteenth century, was taken over by municipal authorities and, to some extent, sanitised and improved. Markets, however,

remained at the opposite end of the retail spectrum to bazaars.

Bazaars were exclusive private enterprises, with counters rented out to traders on a franchise basis, much like present-day department stores. It required a large capital sum to set up a bazaar and, over the years, many entrepreneurs suffered heavy losses, even bankruptcy, when their ventures failed or their premises burnt down. Despite such risks, the rewards from a successful bazaar could be great. Financial gain was doubtless the primary motivation behind the setting up of bazaars, but proprietors were eager to publicise their philanthropic intent in order to win support. They portrayed their businesses as benevolent establishments, offering an outlet for goods produced in their homes by respectable people who could not afford to rent and furnish a shop, including impoverished tradespeople and artisans. In particular, the first bazaars were concerned to assist disadvantaged women, such as war widows.<sup>7</sup> Nowadays most shop assistants are female, but in the early nineteenth century apprenticeships in London drapers’, haberdashers’ and even milliners’ shops were offered almost exclusively to men, so bazaars presented a rare opportunity for respectable and relatively independent retail employment to women without substantial capital.<sup>8</sup> But not every bazaar counter was run as a fledgling business by an enterprising female. Advertisements in London newspapers reveal that many standings were managed as branches of larger businesses and staffed by assistants. And the largest bazaar enterprises – sometimes occupying separate rooms or suites – were invariably run by men.

For small-scale retailers it was less of a risk to take a counter in a bazaar than to rent a shop. For a couple of shillings a day, a trader with a satisfactory character reference and a stock of goods could rent a stretch of counter and make a decent living.<sup>9</sup> Although the rent was calculated on a daily basis, most standings were held for months or years. But bazaar retailing was not without its dangers: in 1836 the entire stock of

40 traders (mostly women) in the Western Exchange Bazaar on Old Bond Street was destroyed by fire, leaving them destitute and dependent on charity.<sup>10</sup>

The first bazaars portrayed themselves as patriotic as well as benevolent, thus garnering even greater public support. At the Soho Bazaar articles of foreign manufacture (*e.g.* French gloves) could not be sold without special permission: those disobeying this rule would be ‘prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law, as an enemy to the whole community’.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, the Western Exchange was set up primarily for ‘British Manufacturers, Artists and Dealers’.<sup>12</sup> But, as the memory of the French wars abated, bazaars began to stock foreign goods. In 1826 the Baker Street Bazaar announced that foreign articles would be admitted for sale, and in 1829 the Royal Bazaar on Oxford Street was said to sell ‘*bijouterie* and nic-nacs, the *Nouveautés de Paris* and Spitalfields – Canton in China, and Leather-lane in Holborn’, perhaps with the implication that the provenance of some goods was questionable.<sup>13</sup> In the 1830s the Chinese Hong sold ‘all sorts of Chinese curiosities’ at the Pantechinon Bazaar in Belgravia,<sup>14</sup> and in the 1850s and 1860s the Portland or German Bazaar on Langham Place specialised in German toys.

Although many bazaars had furniture showrooms, most merchandise fell into the category of fancy or artistic goods, and if conventional shops occupied the street frontage of a bazaar, fittingly, they were usually let to milliners or jewellers. In 1859 the writer George Augustus Sala described the counters of the Pantheon ‘laden with pretty gimcracks, toys, and *papier maché* trifles for the table, dolls and children’s dresses, wax flowers and Berlin and crochet work, prints, and polkas, and women’s ware of all sorts’.<sup>15</sup> While much of this merchandise would have been the product of ‘cottage industry’, some was undoubtedly mass produced, with manufacturers and wholesalers targeting bazaar retailers in their advertising. As well as selling fancy goods, bazaars had picture galleries where artists could display their work free of charge but paid commission on sales.

J. M. W. Turner does not seem to have displayed finished paintings in bazaars, but he recalled: ‘... there was a stall in the Soho Bazaar where they sold drawing materials, and they used to *buy* my skies. They gave me 1s. 6d. for the small ones, and 3s. 6d. for the larger ones! ... There’s many a young lady has got My sky to her drawing’.<sup>16</sup> Turner’s skies apart, bazaar paintings were of notoriously inferior quality.<sup>17</sup>

All bazaars were strictly governed. Rules and regulations, based on those of the Soho Bazaar, were drawn up by the proprietor and implemented by a manager and supervisors. It was invariably stipulated that goods had to be marked with fixed prices and sold for ready money rather than credit, something that had become increasingly common in cities and fashionable resorts in the second half of the eighteenth century. Haggling was banned, ensuring that exchanges between vendors and customers were polite, civilised and short; there was ‘no clamour – no useless noise, or confusion’.<sup>18</sup> The traders had to dress plainly and neatly, and were not permitted to receive goods in the bazaar.<sup>19</sup> To enforce this, persons carrying parcels, bundles or loads were banned from most establishments, and wholesale transactions had to be conducted outside bazaar hours, usually meaning before 10 o’clock in the morning, or after 6 o’clock at night. On one special occasion in May 1817 the Soho Bazaar remained open until 10 o’clock at night to accommodate a private visit from the elderly Queen Charlotte and her entourage.<sup>20</sup>

The pains taken to maintain the respectability of bazaars, through a plethora of rules and the regular supervision of traders, reflects the fact that exchanges had acquired an unsavoury reputation. In the late seventeenth century, the Middle Exchange was nicknamed ‘Whores’ Nest’, and by the eighteenth century the social standing of the clientele of surviving exchanges had declined, as had the cachet of the areas in which they were situated, the City and the Strand. Even Bond Street had acquired a

dubious reputation, and by the early nineteenth century it was very much a man's street, where respectable ladies preferred to be chaperoned. While undesirable characters could not be prevented from frequenting Bond Street, Oxford Street or Regent Street, it was relatively easy to exclude them from bazaars by positioning intimidating doorkeepers at entrances. Porters clearly had diverse duties: in 1843 the Western Exchange advertised for 'a strong active man, age 30, who can drive, look after horses and knows town well'.<sup>21</sup> At the Soho Bazaar porters were empowered to bar 'persons meanly or dirtily dressed, or otherwise calculated to lessen the respectability of the place'.<sup>22</sup>

Despite scaremongering by their critics, the controlled environments of the best bazaars succeeded in imbuing them with an air of gentility. Mayhew reported that a room over a 'friendly bonnet shop' in the Burlington Arcade was used for prostitution: nothing like this could happen in bazaars, which had no living quarters for shopkeepers.<sup>23</sup> Yet it was always possible for vendors to make assignations when the supervisor's back was turned. This, of course, was discouraged, and in 1859 Sala described the intimidating demeanour of 'the young ladies who serve behind the counters at the Pantheon' as follows:

To their lady customers they behave with great affability. The gentlemen, I am pleased, though mortified to say, they treat with condescension mingled with a reserved dignity that awes the boldest spirit . . . Yet I have known a man with large whiskers . . . to whom a young lady assistant in the Pantheon, on a very wet day, once lent a silk umbrella. But he was always a bold man, and had a winning way with the sex.<sup>24</sup>

The most desirable bazaar customers were no doubt fashionable aristocrats, even royalty, but most hailed from the well-to-do middle classes. Contemporary literature suggests that bazaars were particularly popular with mothers and young children, and with 'the fops of Bond Street and the dashing bucks of St James's' who were attracted to the sales assistants.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, it is plain that respectable women felt able to visit bazaars without a chaperone. Customers do not seem to have been deterred by the fact that supervisors asserted the right to search visitors suspected of stealing, even insisting that clothing was removed.<sup>26</sup> Shoplifting appears to have been a particular problem at the Soho Bazaar, with several cases coming to court.

As in modern malls and department stores, shoppers were encouraged to linger through the provision of 'dressing rooms' (probably lavatories) and refreshment rooms. These amenities were provided principally for the benefit of female visitors. Customers could also enjoy attractions such as conservatories, aquariums, aviaries and menageries, where the living exhibits could be purchased. In addition to this, for the price of 1s. (usually reduced to 6d. for children), visitors could gain access to special exhibitions, including panoramas, dioramas, cosmoramas, physioramas, old master or epic paintings and models.<sup>27</sup> In many ways, this fashion picked up where Exeter Change had left off, as the upper floor of that establishment had hosted many intriguing exhibitions in the late eighteenth century, eventually being taken over as a menagerie.<sup>28</sup>

Panoramas were particularly associated with the Baker Street Bazaar and the various short-lived bazaars that occupied Savile House on Leicester Square. The main draw at the Royal Bazaar on Oxford Street was the British Diorama, which opened in March 1828. On 27 May 1829, however, the special effects used in Clarkson Stanfield's dioramic depiction of 'The City of York, with the Minster on Fire' set the bazaar alight. The Lowther Bazaar on the Strand relied heavily for its revenue on the 'Magic Cave', a subterranean exhibition with cosmoramic views that was frequently visited by Louis Philippe between 1848 and 1850.<sup>29</sup> Another popular bazaar exhibition was Madame Tussaud's waxworks (Fig. 1) which moved, in 1835, from the Bazaar on Gray's Inn Road to the Baker Street Bazaar. Tussaud's expensively fitted Golden

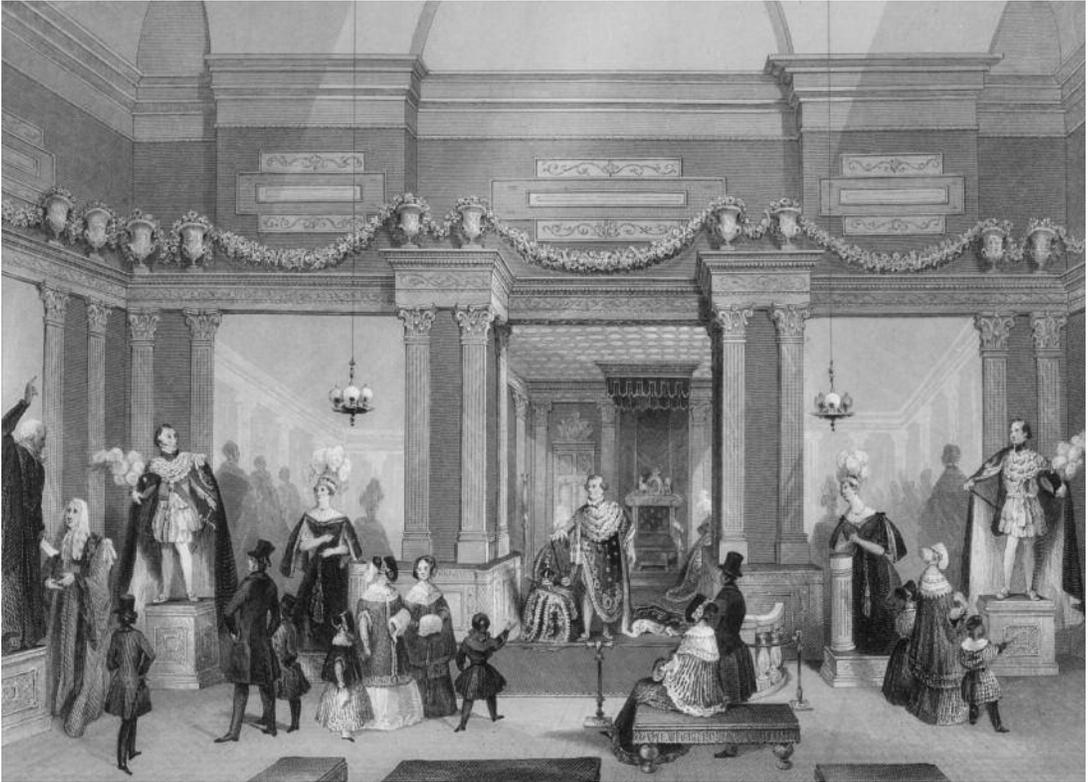


Fig. 1. Baker Street Bazaar. Interior of Madame Tussaud and Son's in 1841, showing the exhibition of George IV's coronation and state robes in the 'golden chamber' (from J. Mead [pub.], *London Interiors*, 1841). *British Library, shelfmark 10350.f.9.*

Corinthian Saloon appears to have been transferred from one establishment to the other, together with the waxworks.<sup>30</sup> One of the strangest bazaar exhibits, shown in August 1828 at the Royal Bazaar, was a three-year-old French girl, in whose irises could be read the words 'Napoleon Empereur' and 'Empereur Napoleon', a phenomenon explained by her mother 'earnestly looking at a franc-piece of Napoleon's' during pregnancy.<sup>31</sup> Over and above such attractions, bazaars hired bands and staged balls, concerts and shows. Every December between 1839 and 1861 the Baker Street Bazaar hosted the Smithfield Club Cattle Show, and an extra attraction in winter 1842

was the Glaciarium, an artificial ice rink surrounded by Alpine scenery.<sup>32</sup>

In sum, bazaars must have been amongst the largest and most stimulating retail businesses in Regency and early Victorian London, allowing visitors to buy a wide range of goods, to see and be seen, to indulge in social discourse, to be entertained, and even educated. The architecture of many of the buildings which housed these establishments was innovative and exciting, contributing to the thrill and theatricality of the bazaar experience and proving eminently suitable for a style of retailing that was centred on display.



Fig. 2. Soho Bazaar, 4–6 Soho Square, photographed in 2005. *Ron Baxter*.

#### BAZAARS AND THEIR BUILDINGS

The Soho Bazaar was the first of its ilk, and although the building did not offer an architectural template for future bazaars, it certainly set the standard for their interior design and established their position in the social hierarchy of the London retail world.

The four-storey brick building at 4–6 Soho Square still stands (Fig. 2) but has been converted into offices. It was erected in 1801–04 as a warehouse by John Trotter, the head of a firm of army contractors who, as storekeeper-general, took control

of all government stores during the French wars. The structure extended west to Dean Street, and from there continued north, almost reaching Oxford Street. This vast building became redundant with the conclusion of war, and so Trotter came up with the enterprising notion of adapting it to create a bazaar. At first Trotter proposed that the government should run the enterprise, but when his overtures were spurned he financed it by himself, opening his new bazaar on 1 February 1816. Despite this momentous undertaking, Trotter is seldom counted amongst the great retail innovators of the nineteenth century.

The interiors of Trotter's austere warehouse were transformed by red hangings, large mirrors and solid furnishings. The aura of high-class domesticity, however, was undermined by inscriptions on the beams of every room, promulgating the regulations of the establishment.<sup>33</sup> The main rooms were equipped with numbered mahogany counters which were rented out to 200 vendors. The construction of these counters intrigued contemporary writers, possibly because the idea of counter flaps was then a novelty.<sup>34</sup> Although traders were not allowed to introduce fixtures, they were provided with lockers and drawers under the counters. In addition to the sales rooms, a parterre and a long room called 'The Grotto' were filled with plants for sale, a gallery was set aside for the exhibition of works of art, and ladies were provided with a 'Dressing-Room' (presumably fitted with a water closet), one of the earliest documented examples of this kind of facility in a retail establishment. A kitchen, probably in the basement, served as a mess room for stallholders and apartments were provided for watchmen, or caretakers.

In the year following the opening of the Soho Bazaar, approximately 20 new bazaars were established in London. In a postscript to his pamphlet, *The Bazaar*, which was published in May 1816, the Rev. Joseph Nightingale listed no less than 16 bazaars, ten of which had recently opened,

and six which were about to open.<sup>35</sup> Further investigation reveals that most of these were obscure and short-lived businesses which occupied modest buildings and never appeared in directories or guidebooks. Nightingale conceded that most 'are, in fact, shops of tradesmen, who have, by a different arrangement of counters, converted them into little stands, which they let out both to men and women indiscriminately'.<sup>36</sup> Clearly London shopkeepers were attempting to capitalise on the fashion for bazaars, adopting their *modus operandi* in superficial ways, and on a small scale.

Despite having a transient existence and dubious status, some of the bazaars established in 1816 are of considerable interest. Little is known about the St James's Bazaar on St James's Street, but in March 1816 twenty of its vendors were arrested for trading without hawking licenses. The magistrate hearing the case was sympathetic to the idea of bazaars and, although the sale of licenses to bazaar traders throughout London had already generated a revenue of £2,000, he ruled that the vendors should be exempt from hawker's duty.<sup>37</sup> This must have given great impetus to bazaars. One of several establishments which opened in subsequent months was the Metropolitan Bazaar at 82 Fleet Street, close to St Bride's. Occupying a relatively new four-storey building, heated by the Marquis de Chabannes's Patent Warming System, it provided counters for men on the ground floor and for women on the upper floors.<sup>38</sup> The bazaar traded from July 1816 until February 1817, but burnt down – to the deep suspicion of the Eagle Assurance Company – in May 1817.<sup>39</sup> Other bazaars which existed fleetingly in 1816 and 1817 included the London Bazaar at 167 Fleet Street, the Royal Cobourg Excambium and Leipzig Emporium at 90 Strand, the Piccadilly Bazaar at 35 Piccadilly and the Grand City Bazaar at 42 Cheapside. Of their architectural arrangements, however, nothing is known.

Another obscure bazaar listed by Nightingale was the Venetian Bazaar in Savile House on

Leicester Square. This house had been built in 1806–09 for Mary Linwood and her co-owners.<sup>40</sup> Linwood was a needlework artist who displayed her work – needlework copies of well-known paintings – on the first floor, while other parts of the building were sub-let. Nothing more is heard about the Venetian Bazaar, but in 1830 the building housed the Royal Westminster Bazaar then, in the 1840s, the Savile House Bazaar. These bazaars were not the primary draw at Savile House, but they benefited from proximity to other attractions, such as William Green's shooting gallery. The building continued to accommodate a wide range of ephemeral entertainments after the death of Mary Linwood in 1845, but it was gutted by fire in 1865.<sup>41</sup> The site was subsequently devoted exclusively to entertainment rather than retailing; it was redeveloped in 1880–81 as the Royal London Panorama, remodelled as the Empire Theatre in 1882–4, and rebuilt as a cinema in 1928.

The London Bazaar on Bond Street, yet another establishment listed by Nightingale, may have been a predecessor of the Western Exchange, known from 1819 as the Western Exchange Bazaar, at 10 Old Bond Street. The caption of a coloured aquatint showing the interior of this establishment (Fig. 3) reveals that it opened on 1 January 1817. Soon afterwards it was carpeted in preparation for a visit from the royal family,<sup>42</sup> and in 1819 it acquired a secondary entrance inside the new Burlington Arcade. According to *Punch*, this entrance was 'most ingeniously concealed, to puzzle novices and afford a little harmless perplexity, in a pastry-cook's shop'.<sup>43</sup>

The three-bay, three-storey façade of the Western Exchange was unpretentious and conventional.<sup>44</sup> At ground-floor level, a castellated archway stood to the left of a modest shopfront. The interior, however, was revolutionary in terms of shop design, anticipating the stereotypical spatial arrangements of department stores by more than half a century. It comprised a spacious room, lined by an arcaded gallery and lit by a rooflight. The architectural details, including



Fig. 3. Western Exchange Bazaar, 10 Old Bond Street, 1817. *Museum of London.*

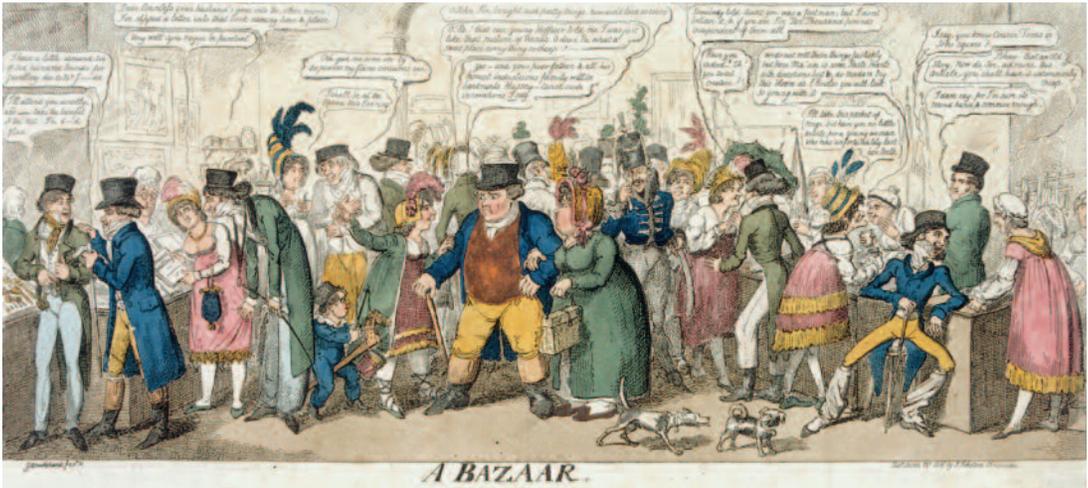


Fig. 4. *A Bazaar*. Coloured etching by George Cruickshank, 1816. Guildhall Library.

columns, capitals and arches, were Gothic in style. From their appearance, some of the simpler columns may have been of cast iron, a material that was already revolutionising spaces within industrial and public buildings. The counters in the centre of the room were devoted to small feminine knick-knacks, while those around the periphery, some staffed by men, specialised in silverware, porcelain and, paintings. The Western Exchange is also known to have sold furniture, and to have had a *bureau de spectacle* for the sale of theatre tickets.<sup>45</sup> It was enlarged by the addition of a ‘new bazaar gallery’ in 1823, and a ‘grand saloon’ in 1824.<sup>46</sup> Although it closed temporarily after a fire in 1836,<sup>47</sup> the Western Exchange continued in business until August 1846, when the building was damaged by a freak summer hailstorm.<sup>48</sup> It may never have reopened following this setback, and by 1848 the premises had been taken over by a woollen draper.<sup>49</sup> In 1921 a correspondent to *Country Life* recalled visiting the woollen draper’s as a boy, and confirmed that traces of the original gallery could still be seen inside the premises of Armstrong Siddeley.<sup>50</sup> The site was later redeveloped.

While the Soho Bazaar and the Western Exchange enjoyed success, most of the smaller bazaars set up in 1816 and 1817 failed, and a mere handful of new establishments opened between 1817 and 1825. One of these was the Regent Bazaar of 1824, which occupied a Gothic chapel on New (now Marylebone) Road, on a site taken over by Madame Tussaud’s in 1884. Typically, the Regent Bazaar lasted no more than a year. As it turned out, not everyone welcomed this new approach to retailing, and early bazaars generated strong opposition which must have influenced potential customers. Anticipating modern protests concerning multiples and malls, most of their detractors were activated by concerns that bazaars would compete unfairly with small shops in their vicinity. Indeed, in May 1816, 1,600 housekeepers and tradesmen presented a petition to Parliament, complaining about bazaars.<sup>51</sup> Opponents provoked and exploited fears that bazaars would encourage sexual immorality. This is evident in several contemporary caricatures (Fig. 4),<sup>52</sup> and in literary efforts such as Humphrey Hedgehog’s poem of 1816, *The London bazaar, or where to get cheap things*, which implied that saleswomen in bazaars were involved in



Fig. 5. Royal Bazaar, 73 Oxford Street, 1828–29.  
*Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection 792.*

prostitution.<sup>53</sup> The effects of such attacks were countered by several publications, some of which may have been instigated by John Trotter. Nightingale's pamphlet, mentioned above, included a highly favourable account of the Soho Bazaar. Two years later *A Visit to the Bazaar*, an illustrated children's book, took its young readers on a tour through a bazaar, explaining the nature of its diverse trades in an educational manner.<sup>54</sup> This seems to have been calculated to bolster the respectability of such establishments.

Bazaars did not become really popular until the late 1820s and early 1830s, when the opening of several Parisian establishments enhanced their standing. One of the first Parisian bazaars, the Grand Bazar on the rue Saint-Honoré, opened in 1825; it occupied three rooms, but lasted no longer than five years.<sup>55</sup> Much

more significant as a potential model for British architects was the Bazar de l'Industrie which was built on Boulevard Poissonnière, between 1827 and 1829, to a design by Paul Lelong. In plan, the building resembled a church, its nave and semi-circular apse surrounded by metal galleries housing an upper shopping level, and its central hall lit by a lantern positioned on the ridge of a coved ceiling. Equally impressive was the Galerie de Fer, or Bazar de Boufflers, on the Boulevard des Italiens, which was designed by Antoine Tavernier and opened around 1830. In the same year, the Bazar Montesquieu, or Bazar de Fer, by Victor Lenoir, opened. Now that Paris was rich in bazaars, giving the final seal of approval to their status, a great many new bazaars were established in London and provincial English towns.



Fig. 6. Queen's Bazaar, 73 Oxford Street.  
Aquatint by Benjamin Read, 1833. *Guildhall Library*.

Contemporary with the Bazar de l'Industrie was the Royal Bazaar at 73 Oxford Street. Until 1827 this large site was occupied by Mr Leader's coachworks, sometimes described as a carriage depository. The buildings, including a 'spacious showshop, elegant gallery (and) showrooms', had been 'recently erected at a very considerable expense' and were considered 'well adapted . . . for a bazaar of the first consequence'.<sup>56</sup> Despite this, the property was rebuilt by the new owner, Thomas Hamlet, a rich jeweller and cutler who had begun his career in Exeter Change. The Royal Bazaar opened on 8 March 1828, but was extensively damaged by fire on 27 May 1829, and had to be reconstructed.<sup>57</sup> A view showing the Great Room of the short-lived 1828 building (Fig. 5) reveals that a gallery surrounded a

two-storey well, lit from above by part-glazed cupolas and a lunette set into a deeply coved ceiling.<sup>58</sup> Additional light was provided by a tripartite window hung with chinoiserie blinds. The walls behind the counters were painted to create the illusion of a conservatory, with trees and sky depicted behind a grid-pattern of fake glazing bars. Just before the fire a suite of rooms on Castle Street, behind the Great Room, was fitted up for the sale of household furniture, prompting one reviewer to wonder why one could hire a chair and a newspaper in Parisian bazaars, but not in their English counterparts.<sup>59</sup> These new furniture showrooms escaped the fire, and were made available to vendors until the rest of the bazaar could be reconstructed.

The Royal Bazaar had been insured for £10,000,

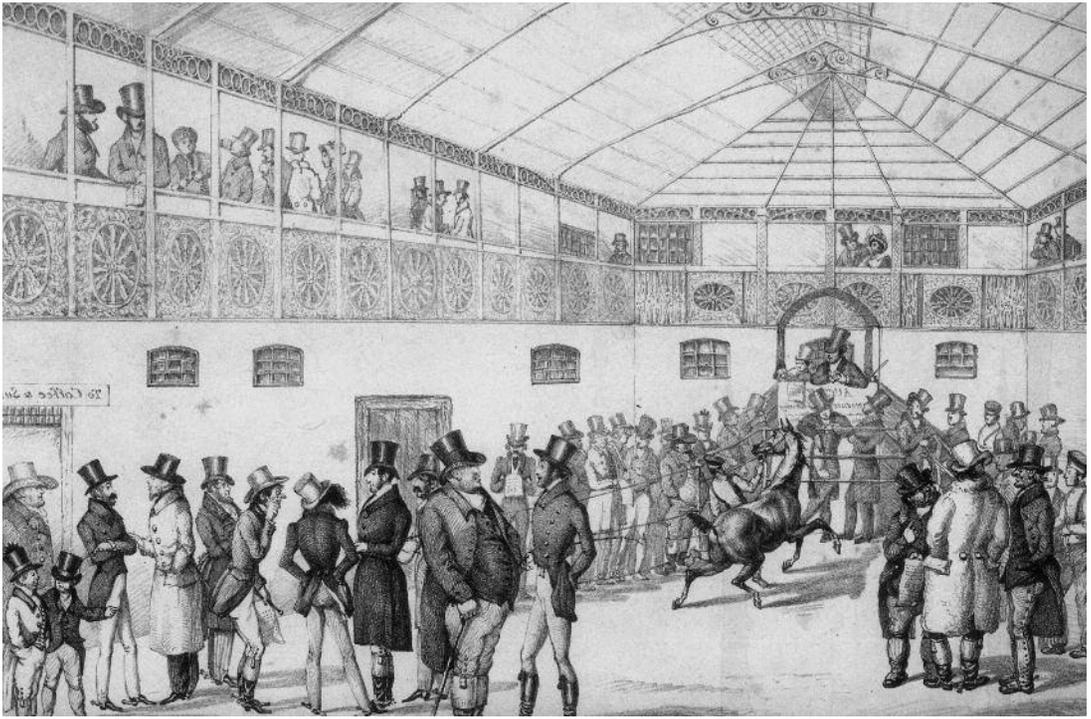


Fig. 7. Horse Bazaar, Baker Street. The Auction Room in 1824.  
*Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection 791.*

and was rebuilt quickly. It reopened on 20 March 1830, and was visited by Princess Victoria and her mother a month later.<sup>60</sup> In 1831 it was renamed the Queen's Bazaar in honour of Queen Adelaide. The Oxford Street façade of the new building was relatively modest, being only two bays wide and three floors high, but impressively surmounted by the royal arms.<sup>61</sup> The interior was more elaborate than before. According to *The Mirror of Literature*: 'the columns and supports painted to imitate bronze, and above all, the stained-glass ceiling have a remarkably novel and pleasing effect'.<sup>62</sup> A view of this interior (Fig. 6) was published by the tailor and printer Benjamin Read in 1833. This depicted the ornate architecture merely as the backdrop for a group of men and women modelling winter fashions, but the gallery can clearly be seen behind them, with elegant figures posing by the balustrade. This gallery

is said to have been 200ft long, and the tall, twinned columns which lined it may have been of cast iron. A doorway opening off a landing at the top of the stairs led to the British Diorama. Other rooms included 'dressing and retiring rooms', a furniture department, a kitchen and dining-room for the stallholders, and a house for the resident manager, Mr Wright.<sup>63</sup>

The Queen's Bazaar was put up for auction in April 1834 (one month before the Pantheon Bazaar opened across the street), and again in 1836, but each time it failed to find a buyer. On the verge of ruin, Hamlet attempted to run it as a theatre, and in 1840–41 the property was rebuilt as the Princess's Theatre.<sup>64</sup> The present building on the site was designed by Elcock & Sutcliffe in the 1930s, with a Woolworth store on the lower floors, and warehouse space for Waring & Gillow, the furnisiers, above.<sup>65</sup> Since 1986 it has accommodated a branch of HMV.

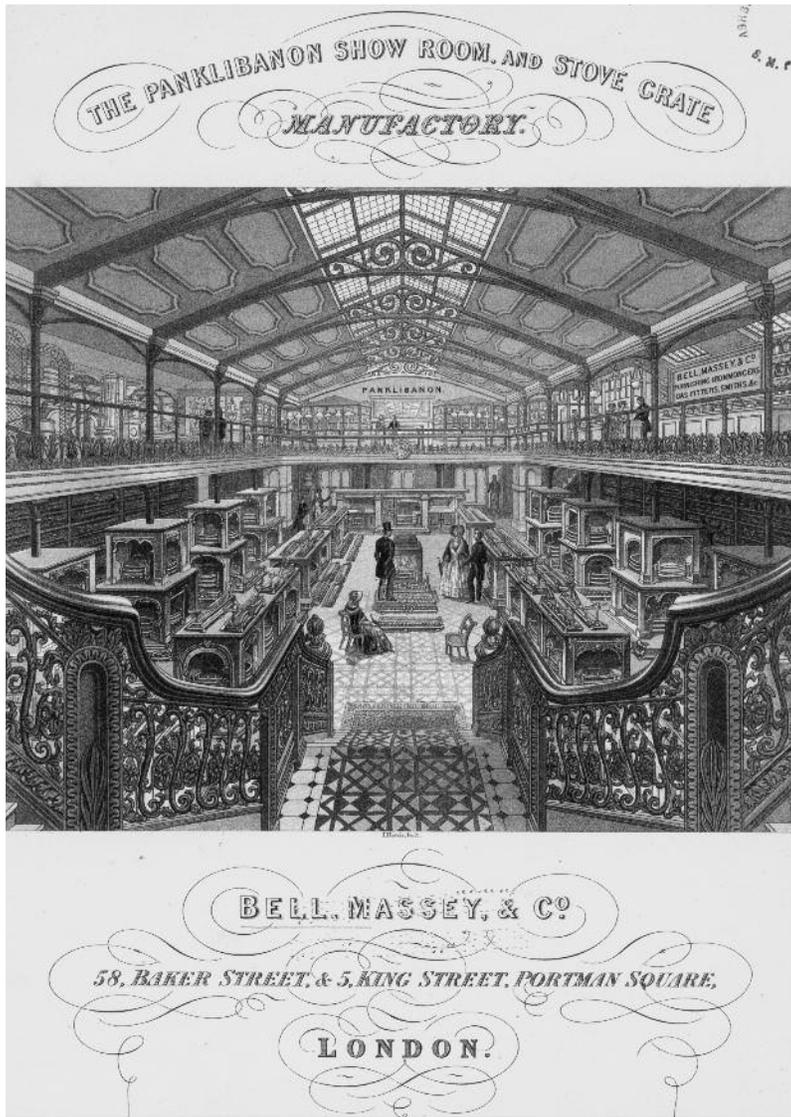


Fig. 8. Baker Street Bazaar. The Panklibanon in the 1860s.  
*Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection, 420/Bel.*

Another fancy bazaar founded in the mid-1820s, the variously-named ‘New Bazaar’, ‘Ladies’ Bazaar’ or ‘Miscellaneous Bazaar’, formed an adjunct to the Horse Bazaar on Baker Street. This was the first of a series of bazaars connected with establishments primarily devoted to the sale and/or storage of

horses, carriages and/or furniture. Most of these businesses, usually called repositories, were situated in wealthy residential areas, some distance from the main shopping thoroughfares of the West End and the City. The association of fancy bazaars with horse and carriage repositories, however, was far from

universal. The principal London repositories, Tattersall's at Knightsbridge Green, Aldridge's on St Martin's Lane, Dixon's at the Barbican and Sadler's on Goswell Street, never branched out in this direction.

With the backing of the MP John Maberly, the Horse Bazaar was set up by George Young on King Street, behind Baker Street, in May 1822. It occupied stables and a riding house which had been erected in 1780 for the 2nd Regiment of Life Guards.<sup>66</sup> These brick buildings formed a quadrangle, arranged around a parade, with a gatehouse to the south (King Street), ranks of back-to-back stables to east and west, and a tall riding house to the north. Unusually, the riding house had an upper storey, thought to have originated as a mess room.<sup>67</sup> An L-shaped yard or ride bordered the west and north sides of this complex, with additional stabling to the north (Dorset Street). Initially the bazaar had stalls for nearly 400 horses and, above these, space for 500 carriages. In addition, large harness and saddlery saloons occupied the gatehouse range on King Street while a riding school and private subscription rooms for the Turf were accommodated in the riding house. Elsewhere on the site were a waiting room, offices and coffee rooms, and many customers appear to have treated the establishment as a club. An engraving of 1824 (Fig. 7) shows an auction room with a cast-iron viewing gallery, an iron roof with light trusses, and a glazed ridge light. This space, created from a covered stable yard in the north-west corner of the site, was clearly influenced by riding house architecture. In later years similar auction rooms, with carriage galleries, were built for Aldridge's on St Martin's Lane (1843; for a time owned by the same proprietor as the Horse Bazaar) and Tattersall's on Knightsbridge Green (1865).<sup>68</sup> The best known surviving example of this building type is Cooper's Repository in Newcastle, built in 1897.

The Horse Bazaar soon evolved into a much more complex establishment. In 1825 the upper floor of the east range was converted into a fancy bazaar.<sup>69</sup>

A furniture department was installed on the upper floor of the south range, while carriages continued to be sold on the upper floor of the west range. By 1828 the subscription room over the riding school had become 'a splendid saloon for the reception and display of works of art'.<sup>70</sup> All of this combined to make the Baker Street Bazaar – as it was now called – a fashionable venue for the well-to-do. Indeed, if a department store is defined by the range of goods sold, this was a proto-department store in all but name, selling:

Horses, carriages, saddlery, furniture and looking glasses, pictures, plate, china and glass, watches, jewellery, cutlery and hardware, turnery, perfumery and toys, millinery, haberdashery, furriery, hosiery, woollendrapery, linen, lace, silks, hats, shoes and boots, tea and coffee, &c.<sup>71</sup>

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s the establishment continued to change. In 1835 Madame Tussaud's waxwork exhibition was installed in the saloon (see Fig. 1) and in 1838 horse sales ceased.<sup>72</sup> The furniture department expanded to include workshops, and its proprietor was somewhat irked to find that furniture stores in other parts of London began to assume the name 'bazaar'. In 1843 the auction room in the north-west corner of the site (see Fig. 7) was converted to accommodate a furnishing ironmongery called the Panclibanon or Panklibanon (Fig. 8). This seems to have retained the existing roof, although the galleries and staircase were rebuilt.<sup>73</sup>

By the late 1840s the Baker Street Bazaar was beyond any doubt the largest and, together with the Soho Bazaar, the most successful establishment of its kind in the metropolis, boasting a fancy bazaar (run by William Boulnois, now owner of the entire premises), an ironmongery (the Panklibanon), a glass showroom (Pellatt, Apsley & Frederick), a furniture department (Charles Druce & Co), a harness department (George Collins) and a carriage department (William Boulnois).<sup>74</sup> Although the fancy bazaar had closed by 1900, the business continued to sell carriages and



Fig. 9. London Horse and Carriage Repository, Gray's Inn Road, c.1828  
(from Thomas H. Shepherd and James Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements*, London, 1827–31, opp. p. 142).

to warehouse furniture into the 20th century. After the Second World War, the buildings were demolished to make way for the head office of Marks & Spencer, a company which had started out in the 1880s as a 'penny bazaar'.<sup>75</sup>

The London Horse and Carriage Repository (Fig. 9), or Horse Bazaar, which opened on the west side of Gray's Inn Road, near King's Cross, in 1828, was similar to the Baker Street Bazaar, but purpose-built. It was designed by the architect John Parkinson for the proprietor William Bromley.<sup>76</sup> Arranged around an open quadrangle, the stables could accommodate about 200 horses, while the galleries, fronted by a continuous 'balcony promenade', could hold about 400 carriages. In January 1829 the Grand Room in the south front, originally designed as a subscription room, was used as a bazaar 'for the

benefit of the Spanish Refugees'.<sup>77</sup> By January 1830 the Royal London Bazaar, managed by Mr Dalberg, was located here.<sup>78</sup> This was succeeded, in December 1831, by the Institution of the Industrious Classes or Equitable Exchange Bazaar, which was established 'on the principle recommended by Mr Owen [*i.e.* the philanthropist, Robert Owen] for co-operation and equitable exchange, without the intervention of the coin of the realm'.<sup>79</sup> The Institution issued its own notes for goods deposited. The goods were priced to return 6*d.* per hour for the time and labour of the person who made them. The scheme failed and in March 1836 the building came up for auction.<sup>80</sup> By the early 1840s it had become the North London Depository, for the sale and storage of carriages and furniture; today a garage occupies the site.

The Pantechnicon on Motcombe Street in Belgravia, which opened in June 1831, was undoubtedly inspired by the existing establishments on Baker Street and Gray's Inn Road, and was probably the only business to be designed from the outset as a combined repository and bazaar.<sup>81</sup> It was divided between two very different, but equally impressive, buildings. Positioned on opposite sides of the street, these buildings had been designed in the fashionable Greek revival style by the architect Joseph Jopling, with guidance from the owner, the speculative builder Seth Smith. The grandly-conceived façades contrasted sharply with the more humble exteriors of earlier bazaars, raising the building type to the same level as gentlemen's clubs, theatres and other public buildings.

Behind offices and reading-rooms in the street range of the north building of the Pantechnicon was a cast-iron warehouse of four floors, the lower floors devoted to the sale and warehousing of carriages, while the upper floors provided fireproof warehousing, in iron-lined rooms, for household goods.<sup>82</sup> The south building (Fig. 10), which opened in October 1831, had wine cellars, a double arcade and a bazaar, a combination which may have been unique. The two arcades, lined by shops, ran through the building from Motcombe Street to Halkin Street, while large rooms on the two upper floors housed the bazaar and various exhibitions. This lasted until 1864, when the building was taken over as a warehouse. The interiors of both of the Pantechnicon buildings were remodelled in the 1960s, but the façades survive.

Returning to the West End, the St James's Bazaar (Fig. 11), a stately classical building on the corner of St James's Street and King Street, was an early work by the architect James Pennethorne, who was then John Nash's principal assistant. It was built for the millionaire club-owner William Crockford, at a cost of £30,000, and opened in April 1832. The St James's Bazaar of 1816 (see above) must have been a quite separate institution rather than a predecessor. The



Fig. 10. Pantechnicon, Motcombe Street, south side.  
Photograph taken in 1942 by E.J. Mason.  
*English Heritage. NMR.*

new St James's Bazaar – sometimes called Crockford's Bazaar – covered two floors connected by a magnificent staircase with gilded balustrades, but accounts fail to specify whether or not there was a gallery. The counters were 'serpentine, ovals and circles, composed of beautiful polished mahogany'; shelves were inlaid with mirror glass, and the building was lit by expensive plate-glass windows.<sup>83</sup> Despite its grandeur, the St James's Bazaar was not a commercial success. Initially traders may have been deterred by the charge of 4*d.*, rather than the usual 3*d.*, per foot of counter daily, but trade does not seem to have picked up after this figure was reduced to 2*d.* in summer 1833. The bazaar continued for no more than four years, if that, and by 1838 had been reinvented as the St James's Wine Establishment.<sup>84</sup>

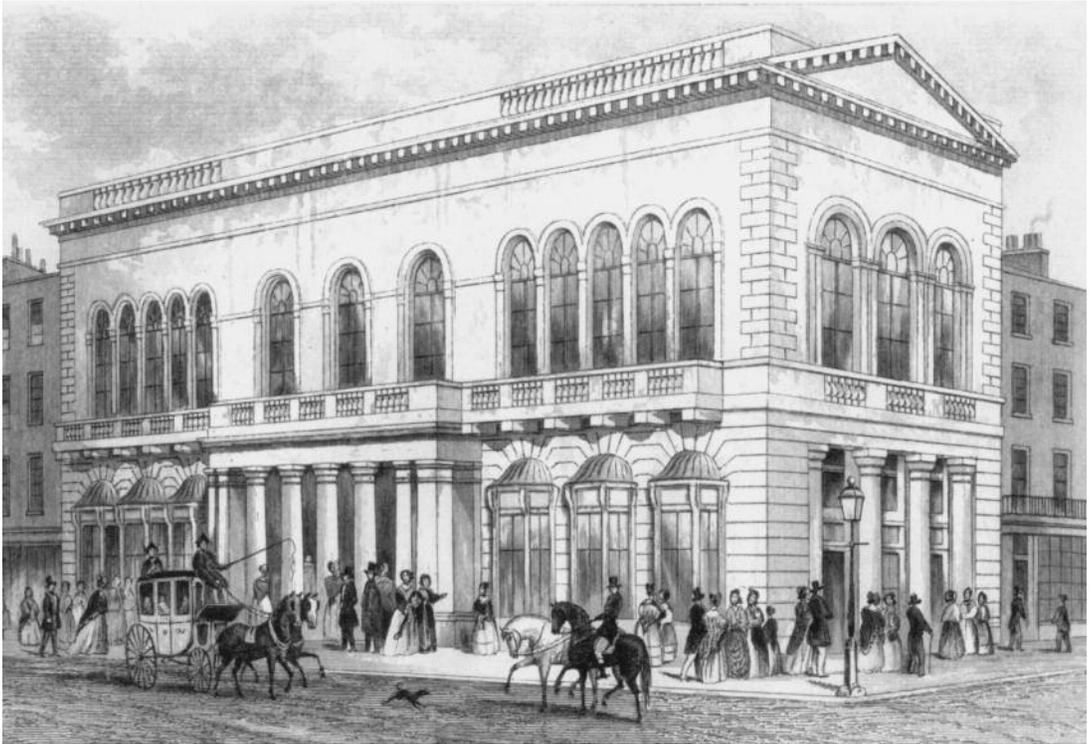


Fig. 11. St James's Bazaar, print of c.1832. *Museum of London*.

The building still survives, although altered: in particular, the lofty saloon (200ft by 40ft) on the upper floor is known to have been divided into two storeys, to create office chambers, in the 1840s.

Commercially, the St James's Bazaar was outstripped by the Pantheon Bazaar (Figs. 12 and 13) on Oxford Street. James Wyatt's late eighteenth-century Pantheon had been largely rebuilt in 1795, and again in 1812, as a theatre. The idea of converting it into a 'splendid promenade and bazaar' was mooted as early as 1821,<sup>85</sup> but was not carried out until 1833–4, when the building was gutted and reconstructed by Sydney Smirke, who retained only the main façade of Wyatt's original structure. The new Pantheon occupied the full depth of a block, stretching from Oxford Street to Great Marlborough

Street, with a side entrance on Poland Street. The core of the building, the so-called Basilical Hall (116ft by 88ft, and 60ft high), was constructed with a two-storey well surrounded by galleries and lit from above by curved skylights set into a barrel vault.<sup>86</sup> If this vast space was created with the help of cast iron, it was decorously concealed and contemporary commentators kept quiet about it. Much of the decoration was in papier maché by C.F. Bielefeld, who also created the ornamentation of Madame Tussaud's saloon at the Baker Street Bazaar. According to *Punch*, the Pantheon combined 'the attractions of the Zoological Gardens and National Gallery, with a condensed essence of all the most entertaining shop-windows'.<sup>87</sup> After closing in 1867 it became



Fig. 12. Pantheon, Oxford Street, c.1830s. *Guildhall Library*.



Fig. 13. Pantheon, Oxford Street. Interior of conservatory, c.1830s. *Guildhall Library*.

the head office of the wine and spirit dealers, W. & A. Gilbey's, who floored over the galleries. In 1936 Gilbey's sold the Pantheon to Marks & Spencer's, who built a new store on the site.

Confusingly, not every early nineteenth-century business bearing the title 'bazaar' followed the bazaar system of retailing. Both the widely-advertised London Stove Grate Bazaar on Fish Street Hill, and the popular Lowther Bazaar at 35 Strand were managed along conventional lines. The Lowther Bazaar, however, assumed many characteristics of a bazaar. The shop was originally described as a 'public lounge and fancy repository', but was dubbed 'bazaar' from 1836. The building may have resembled true bazaars: it was reconstructed 'on an

enlarged and novel plan' in 1841–2, with iron girders and a fashionable plate-glass shopfront.<sup>88</sup> Also like true bazaars, the Lowther Bazaar displayed exhibitions and was fitted out with counters selling all manner of fancy goods. But in 1843 Knight's *London* confirmed that it was 'simply a large shop, carried on by one owner'.<sup>89</sup>

The founder of the Pantheon Bazaar, William Walker, sold his interest in the enterprise for £10,000 in 1835, and sought to replicate his success with a new venture, the Langham Bazaar on Langham Place, in 1851. The site had been occupied from 1752 by the riding house and stables of the 1st Troop of Grenadier Guards.<sup>90</sup> The riding house was extended in the 1780s; it was Stacey's Repository in the 1790s,



Fig. 14. London Crystal Palace Bazaar, Oxford Street, 1858 (from *Illustrated London News*, 6 November 1858, 442).

Hall's Riding School in 1823, and Marks & Son's London Carriage Repository thereafter.<sup>91</sup> Although the carriage repository had been rebuilt in 1842, Walker employed the architect Mr Beasley (perhaps the theatre architect Samuel Beazley) and the builder Mr Woods to convert it into a bazaar, which opened in July 1851. Business failed to thrive and by June 1852 Walker was insolvent.<sup>92</sup> Under a new proprietor, the bazaar was renamed the Portland Bazaar. This establishment specialised in 'the greatest variety of toys in the metropolis, besides the usual miscellaneous articles for which such establishments are so well known', and by the late 1850s a large part of the building was occupied by Green & Co's furniture galleries and showrooms.<sup>93</sup> In 1860 it changed hands again, becoming the German Bazaar, though continuing to specialise in toys. No interior views have come to light, but descriptions make it clear that the building was constructed of cast iron, with galleries that were particularly spacious and well lit.<sup>94</sup> Claims that the structure was fireproof, however, were disproved in August 1863 when a destructive fire bent the girders and distorted the columns.<sup>95</sup> The Queen's Hall, built on the site in 1891–3, was destroyed by an incendiary bomb in 1941, and later rebuilt as the St George's Hotel.

The Langham was not the only bazaar to open in the year of the Great Exhibition, no doubt taking advantage of the influx of visitors to London. The Prince of Wales Bazaar opened in March 1851 in the exhibition rooms of the Cosmorama at 207–209 Regent Street. Intriguingly, advertisements claimed that it was 'fitted up in a style of decoration never before attempted in this or any other country'.<sup>96</sup> The proprietor of the Prince of Wales Bazaar appears to have shared Walker's fate, becoming bankrupt in 1861. The Islington Bazaar, described as an 'elegant and extensive building', opened in August 1851.<sup>97</sup> It appears to have done rather better than its two contemporaries, continuing to trade until at least 1875.

The Crystal Palace itself had a strong influence on the design of its namesake, the London Crystal Palace Bazaar (Fig. 14), which was located in the north-east quadrant of Oxford Circus. This bazaar was built in 1857 to a design by Owen Jones, who had been responsible for the interior decoration of the great exhibition building. Occupying the site of a former stable yard, the London Crystal Palace Bazaar had an L-shaped plan, with entrances on Oxford Street and John Street. It was covered by a barrel vault filled with coloured glass; additional light was provided by star-shaped gas pendants. As well as the usual conservatory, aquarium and aviary, it accommodated the studios of the photographer M. Laroche, and had a ladies' refreshment room and lavatories.<sup>98</sup> The importance of department-store restaurants in providing public meeting places for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been recognised by many historians, but it is seldom acknowledged that bazaars had blazed the trail. The London Crystal Palace Bazaar was taken over by Peter Robinson's drapery emporium in the 1870s; it was integrated with the store in 1889, and rebuilt about 1920. Today, the site is occupied by Top Shop.

Bazaars founded in the 1860s and 1870s boasted customer facilities of a standard usually attributed to later department stores. The grandest but most short-lived of these was the Corinthian Bazaar (Fig. 15), built in 1867 to a design by Owen Lewis, on the site of Argyll House, off Oxford Street.<sup>99</sup> The Pantheon Bazaar had just closed and its traders moved here. The Corinthian Bazaar comprised a lofty single-storey hall, rather like a market hall. Descriptions are difficult to understand: the individual stalls were 'arranged as pyramids', giving visitors a 'bird's-eye view' of the whole establishment.<sup>100</sup> The effect was enhanced by tall mirrors against the walls. Advertisements drew attention to the comfortable free seats scattered throughout the building, the cloakrooms, the lavatories, and the refreshment counter where ladies



Fig. 15. Corinthian Bazaar, Argyll Street façade in 1867 (from *The Lady's Own Paper*, 3 August 1867).  
British Library.

could partake of lunch or ‘effervescing’ drinks. Despite such services the bazaar failed in summer 1869, and two years later the building was fitted up as a circus. Its cement-rendered Corinthian façade now fronts the London Palladium, which was built in 1910.

One of the last bazaars, St Paul’s Bazaar, situated between St Paul’s Churchyard and Paternoster Row, opened in October 1874 and had a very brief existence.<sup>101</sup> Like the Corinthian Bazaar, this establishment attempted to sell itself by stressing its amenities. Described as ‘a most convenient and

agreeable resting place’ for visitors to the city, the bazaar boasted a refreshment saloon run by Hill & Son, cooks and confectioners to Her Majesty, ‘Faulkner’s Lavatories’ and ladies’ cloakrooms.<sup>102</sup> It cannot have succeeded: the premises were sold off in 1875,<sup>103</sup> and the site redeveloped after the Second World War.

The St Paul’s Bazaar was probably the last true bazaar to open in London. In the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, arcades experienced something of a revival, but the age of the bazaar was over. By 1900 most of London’s bazaar buildings had been

demolished or converted to new uses, with their great central halls floored over. Before long bazaars were forgotten by retailers, architects and the public alike. Even the word ‘bazaar’ changed meaning, being applied indiscriminately to a wide variety of different – usually lower-class – retail formulas.

#### AN ANALYSIS OF BAZAAR ARCHITECTURE

Any assessment of nineteenth-century bazaar buildings is hampered by the absence of surviving structures, and the paucity of interior views and descriptions. Nevertheless, the information which we possess makes it clear that bazaars pioneered and developed the spacious, top-lit, galleried interior as an effective form of retail architecture, and this at a time when the most prestigious drapery emporia simply comprised suites of small rooms. The first known example of this new retail architecture was the Western Exchange of 1817, followed by the first Royal Bazaar, the second Royal Bazaar, the Pantheon, the Panklibanon, the Langham Bazaar, the London Crystal Palace Bazaar, and possibly others. Though most provincial bazaars were makeshift affairs, a few similar bazaar buildings were erected outside London, for example in Norwich and Edinburgh.<sup>104</sup> Although we can speculate about the impact of French *bazars* (which seem to post-date the Western Exchange) and cast-iron construction (which was used overtly in bazaars from the 1840s, but perhaps covertly as early as 1817), we have disappointingly little evidence which might illuminate the processes and influences that led bazaar architects and proprietors to develop this type of building. Bazaars do, however, seem to have shared ideas with other building types designed principally to show and display objects.

One of the most striking aspects of London bazaars is their association with riding houses and horse and carriage repositories. In many ways this is

not surprising, as such buildings occupied some of the largest and most affordable sites in London’s central districts, expanding behind expensive street frontages and proving eminently suitable for redevelopment as bazaars. Despite this obvious explanation, it is worth considering whether such an inheritance affected bazaar architecture. Riding houses, in particular, may have suggested the form later assumed by bazaars. These were single-storey halls covered by particularly wide trussed roofs, and they often included a spectators’ gallery and skylights.<sup>105</sup> This form was later adopted for auction rooms in horse and carriage repositories, where galleries sometimes doubled as carriage showrooms. The auction rooms at the Horse Bazaar at Baker Street and Aldridge’s on St Martin’s Lane had rooflights and galleries, and it is probable that these features were widely adopted for this class of building. Leader’s carriage depository in White Hart Yard off Oxford Street included a gallery that may have influenced the form of its successor, the Royal Bazaar. And in a reversal of the usual developmental pattern, the premises of the Western Exchange Bazaar were taken over in the later nineteenth century by the coachbuilders Morgan & Co., followed by Armstrong Siddeley, providing further evidence that bazaars and carriage repositories had similar architectural requirements.

Parallels can also be drawn between bazaars and exhibition halls. In particular, galleries (albeit considerably more shallow than those of bazaars) and rooflights were features of several London museums and exhibition buildings, such as the main saloon of the Egyptian Hall (1812) on Piccadilly, the Adelaide Gallery (1831) on the Strand, the Polytechnic Institution (1838) on Regent Street and, the ultimate exemplar, the Crystal Palace (1851) in Hyde Park. The possibility that bazaar proprietors and architects looked to exhibition buildings for ideas is highly likely, considering the style of bazaar retailing and the association of bazaars with a wide range of attractions, but direct connections (through,

for example, the employment of the same architects or shared business interests) remain elusive.

Finally, it is striking that, despite the widespread adoption of the term 'bazaar', none of these establishments is known to have adopted an oriental style of architecture or interior decoration. One or two prominent shopfronts were designed in a Moorish style in the 1830s and 1840s, but none of these seems to have belonged to a bazaar. The style was later popularised by Liberty, and was widely adopted, especially for department-store tea rooms, in the 1890s.

#### THE IMPACT OF BAZAARS

Approximately 30 bazaars existed in nineteenth-century London, including several which have not been cited in this article because so little is known about them. Temporary charity bazaars, such as the bazaar 'for the benefit of the Spanish refugees' of 1829 (see above) and the Anti-Corn-Law League Bazaar which was held at Covent Garden Theatre in 1845, became increasingly common in the mid-nineteenth century. It was with this kind of bazaar that the word became most associated from the 1880s, although 'bazaar' was also used to describe special displays of cheap gifts sold in large stores in December ('Christmas bazaar'), and to describe small market stalls and shops which sold a miscellany of inexpensive objects ('penny bazaar'). In this way, the debasement of the term 'bazaar' ran parallel to the decline of the original concept. Bazaars simply ceased to be fashionable and their place was soon filled by the new department stores.

Although at least two well-known provincial bazaars (in Bath and Manchester) metamorphosed into large drapery emporia, and subsequently became department stores, this was not typical, and never happened in London. Any direct influence which bazaars, either individually or as a group, may have had on modern retailing cannot easily be

demonstrated, despite obvious and striking parallels with later department stores. As we have seen, these parallels include a relaxed, open-plan layout with solid counters rather than stalls; fixed, marked prices and a ready-money policy; a great variety of merchandise; attractive displays encouraging browsing (and, incidentally, shoplifting); refreshment rooms and lavatories for customers; impressive, well-lit interiors with galleries, and an array of peripheral amusements. All of this made the bazaar, and later the department store, an attraction in its own right, encouraging customers to linger, and to regard their visit as an enjoyable outing which may or may not result in a purchase. Gordon Selfridge wanted shoppers to treat his store as a club; bazaar proprietors seem to have had the same idea, almost a century earlier.

Despite their family resemblance, it is clear that bazaars had fallen out of fashion by the 1870s, when William Whiteley of Bayswater transformed himself into the Universal Provider, James Smith built the Bon Marché in Brixton, and the British department store was born. Architecturally, none of the first purpose-built department stores modelled themselves on bazaars, instead taking the traditional drapery shop as their starting point. It was only in the late 1880s that large drapery emporia and department stores began, at first modestly, to incorporate galleried wells, although some popular outfitters had seized the potential of that architectural form as early as the 1840s, followed by furniture dealers and ironmongers in the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>106</sup> The latter trend may have been influenced by the galleries of the Baker Street Bazaar, which can be seen, in this respect, as prototypes. The only London bazaar to be used as a department store in later years was the London Crystal Palace Bazaar, which became part of Peter Robinson's in 1889.<sup>107</sup> Its transformation into a department store was, therefore, the result of a straightforward takeover by a neighbouring business, rather than an evolutionary process.

The situation in France was quite different.

There the form of the *grand magasin* can be traced back to that of the early nineteenth-century *bazar* and *magasin des nouveautés*. After the demise of the bazaar, London had nothing to rival the vast and spacious interiors of Parisian stores until Whiteley's was built in 1910. The architectural lineage of Whiteley's spectacular light wells and glass roofs can only be tracked back to British bazaars, such as the Pantheon, via the agency of French and American stores, such as the famous Bon Marché in Paris and Marshall Fields of Chicago. The memory of London's great bazaars may, however, have lingered, and there may have been a consciousness that this was not an entirely foreign style of retail architecture.

Today only four of London's nineteenth-century bazaar buildings survive – the Soho, the Pantechnicon, the St James's and the Corinthian – but as shells, their interiors having been redeveloped to fit them for other uses. Although the age of the bazaar has left little tangible evidence of its short and colourful heyday on London streets, the study of these establishments has the potential to inform us about important social issues, such as the employment of women and the growth of shopping as a leisure pursuit, as well as economic concerns, such as the development of a 'modern' retail system and the emergence of large-scale retail businesses. Furthermore, the role of bazaars as precursors for the department store, both in terms of their retail methodology and their architectural setting, deserves recognition and further exploration.

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#### NOTES

- 1 To date, the most detailed overviews of London bazaars have been: J. Geist, *Arcades: The History of a Building Type*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1983, 49–51; Stella Margetson, 'Toys, traitors and tablecloths. Shopping bazaars in London', *Country Life* 13 November 1986, 1508–1509 and Kathryn A. Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping*, New Haven and London, 2003, 92–99. Bazaars were also mentioned in Alison Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping, 1800–1914*, London, 1967, 18–24, 49. Studies of some individual bazaars can be found in the relevant volumes of the *Survey of London*.
- 2 Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types*, London, 1976, 261.
- 3 For exchange shopping galleries see Claire Walsh, 'The Newness of the Department Store: A View from the Eighteenth Century', in Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (eds.), *Cathedrals of Consumption: the European Department Store, 1850–1939*, Aldershot, 1999, 46–71 and Morrison *op. cit.*, 2003, 30–34. The last exchange shopping gallery, Exeter Change on the Strand, closed in 1829. Latterly it had specialised in cutlery.
- 4 Arcades have captured the imagination of cultural analysts and architectural historians alike. See Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1999; Geist *op. cit.*, 1983; Margaret MacKeith, *Shopping Arcades: a Gazetteer of Extant British Arcades, 1817–1939*, London and New York, 1985, and Morrison *op. cit.*, 2003, 99–108.
- 5 Allegations that the Soho Bazaar was 'formed on the model of the Palais Royal' were refuted in 1816 [Rev. Joseph Nightingale, *The Bazaar: Its Origin, Nature and Objects*, London, 1816, 43 (British Library 8221.g.98)]. In fact, these establishments had little in common.
- 6 Robert Southey, *Letters from England*, London, 1951 (first published 1807), 53. The use of the term 'bazaar' at the Soho Bazaar was 'novel' according to Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 6.
- 7 John Timbs, *Curiosities of London*, London, 1855, 35; Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 20.
- 8 For the (ostensibly) female perspective on this issue see *Repository of Arts, Literature, etc.*, 3rd series, April 1816, 221–225.
- 9 Counters were rented at 3d. or 1d. per foot per day at the Soho Bazaar [Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 9 and 62]. Counters were still rented at 3d. per foot in the

- Queen's Bazaar in 1834 [London, Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection, 791], but cost 4d. in the St James's Bazaar in 1832 [London, Guildhall Library, *A Collection of Prints, etc.*, vol. XIII, newspaper cutting]. A mere twelve inches of counter, however, was never sufficient, and most counter holders paid a couple of shillings a day. Outside London charges varied from 1d. in Bath to 9d. in Brighton.
- 10 *The Times*, 28 March 1836. Similarly, in 1829 counter holders in the Royal Bazaar lost goods worth approximately £5,833 in a fire [*The Times*, 8 June 1829].
  - 11 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 11.
  - 12 See caption to fig. 4.
  - 13 *The Mirror of Literature*, 18 April 1829, 266.
  - 14 *The Times*, 22 June 1837.
  - 15 George August Sala, *Twice Round the Clock*, London, 1859, 175.
  - 16 M. L. [Mary Lloyd], *Sunny Memories*, privately printed, London, 1880, 31–38. Republished as 'A Memoir of J.M.W. Turner, R.A. by M. L.', in *Turner Studies*, no. 1, 1984, 22.
  - 17 According to Knight's *London*, 1843, 762, the pictures displayed in the Pantheon were 'of rather moderate merit'. A rather dismissive article in *Punch* 1842, 24, stated: 'an ancient attendant perfectly recollects the sale of one of these pictures some years back'. See also Sala *op. cit.*, 1859, 175.
  - 18 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 15.
  - 19 *Ibid.* 1816, 10, 16.
  - 20 *The Times*, 26 May 1817.
  - 21 *The Times*, 14 Sept 1843.
  - 22 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 16.
  - 23 Henry Mayhew (ed.), *London Labour and the London Poor*, London, 1967 (first published 1851), 217.
  - 24 Sala *op. cit.*, 1859, 181–182.
  - 25 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 43–44.
  - 26 *The Times*, 11 Nov 1844, 5 Dec 1844 and 11 Dec 1844.
  - 27 For a description and account of panoramas, dioramas and cosmoramas, etc., see: Richard Altick, *The Shows of London*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1978 and Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania! The Art and Entertainment of the 'All-Embracing' View*, Exhibition Catalogue, Barbican Art Gallery, London, 1988.
  - 28 Altick *op. cit.*, 1978, 51, 62, 80.
  - 29 Timbs *op. cit.*, 1855, 36.
  - 30 *The Times*, 31 December 1834.
  - 31 *The Mirror of Literature*, 16 August 1828, 99.
  - 32 This seems to have been repeated with different scenery the following year [*Punch*, 1843, 164; London, City of Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection 791].
  - 33 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 58–59.
  - 34 For example *A Visit to the Bazaar*, by the author of 'The Little Warbler of the Cottage, etc.', London, 1818, 5 [London, British Library CH.810/88]; Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London*, In London, 1828, 309.
  - 35 Furthermore, 'Peregrine Plainway' claimed that numerous bazaars had opened in London by August 1816 [*Repository of Arts, Literature, etc.*, 3rd series, August 1816, 76–79]; in 1855 Timbs stated that bazaars flourished for a short time after the opening of the Soho Bazaar, 'to the injury of shopkeepers' [Timbs *op. cit.*, 1855, 36].
  - 36 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 67.
  - 37 *The Times*, 18 April 1816.
  - 38 *The Times*, 27 June 1816, 9 January 1817.
  - 39 *The Times*, 24 May 1817, 17 January 1818.
  - 40 *Survey of London, Parish of St Anne Soho*, XXXIV London 1966, 462.
  - 41 *Illustrated London News*, 11 March 1865, 238 and 11 Jan 1868, 29.
  - 42 *The Times*, 26 April 1817.
  - 43 *Punch*, 1842, 14.
  - 44 Peter Jackson, *John Tallis's London Street Views 1838–40*, London, 1969, 51. A fire in 1836 appears to have destroyed the rear range, but left the façade unharmed.
  - 45 *The Times*, 26 April 1817, 12 May 1818, 10 June 1818, 31 Oct 1838 and 14 Feb 1839.
  - 46 *The Times*, 14 March 1823, 23 March 1824.
  - 47 *London*, Guildhall Library, *A Collection of Prints, etc.* vol. XIII. This fire spread into the Burlington Arcade, through the pastry cook's shop. It took six months to repair the building.
  - 48 *The Times*, 6 and 10 August 1846.
  - 49 *Post Office Directory*, 1848.
  - 50 *Country Life*, 12 Feb 1921, 200.
  - 51 Nightingale *op. cit.*, 1816, 54; *The Times*, 23 May 1816. Opposition to bazaars continued sporadically for decades. It can be detected, for example, in the tone of articles published in *Punch* in the 1840s.
  - 52 For example, George Cruikshank, *A Bazaar*, 1 June 1816; Thomas Tegg (pub.), *Genius, or Bazaar Arrived at London*, 29 May 1816; J. Sidebotham (pub.), *A London Bazaar*.

- 53 Humphrey Hedgehog (pseud. for John Agg), *The London Bazaar, or, Where to Get Cheap Things. A Humorous Pindaric Poem*, London, 1816 [London, British Library C.131.d.6 (13)].
- 54 *A Visit to the Bazaar cit.*
- 55 Bernard Marrey, *Les grands magasins des origines à 1939*, Paris, 1979, 18.
- 56 *The Times*, 17 March 1827; 11 November 1826. See also Ralph Hyde and Pieter Van Der Merwe 'The Queen's Bazaar', *Theatrephile*, 1985, 10.
- 57 *The Mirror of Literature*, 29 March 1828, 184.
- 58 London, Westminster Archives Centre, Ashbridge Collection 792.
- 59 *The Mirror of Literature*, 18 April 1829, 266.
- 60 *The Times*, 20 April 1830.
- 61 Jackson *op. cit.*, 1969, 105 (Tallis, 1838–40).
- 62 *The Mirror of Literature*, 3 April 1830, 238.
- 63 London, Guildhall Library, *A Collection of Prints, etc.*, XIII, Sales Particulars, 14 March 1836.
- 64 Timbs *op. cit.*, 1855, 719. Hamlet was declared bankrupt in March 1841.
- 65 London, London Metropolitan Archives, GLC/AR/BR/6/001006.
- 66 Several such sites were built in the late eighteenth century. [Giles Worsley 'A History and Catalogue of the British Riding House', *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, XLVII, 2003, 56–57].
- 67 *Ibid.*, Worsley 2003, 88, stated that riding houses never had two storeys, so this building may have been quite unusual. Alternatively, the floor could have been inserted.
- 68 Hermione Hobhouse, *Lost London*, London and Basingstoke, 1976, 188–189.
- 69 *The Times*, 5 Nov 1825, 26 Jan 1826.
- 70 Thomas Smith, *A Topographical and Historical Account of the Parish of St Marylebone*, London, 1833, 224.
- 71 *The Times*, 26 January 1826.
- 72 The Horse Bazaar was purchased in 1832 by Matthew C. Allen, following the bankruptcy of the original owner, John Maberly MP. In 1835 Allen acquired Aldridge's Repository, and from 1 January 1838 concentrated all horse sales there [*The Times*, 8 January 1838], although sales of carriages and saddlery continued at Baker Street until at least 1911 when the owner, the MP Edmund Boulnois, died.
- 73 *The Builder*, 24 June 1843, 254. The first proprietor of the Panklibanon, which opened in 1840, was Fallows, Thorpe & Co, but in 1847–48 it passed into the hands of Bell, Massey & Co. [Post Office Directories, 1847–48].
- 74 William Boulnois was the proprietor of the Pantheon Bazaar by 1838 and must have been one of the most successful bazaar entrepreneurs of the age [*The Times*, 5 Feb 1838].
- 75 Morrison *op. cit.*, 2003, 229–240.
- 76 *The Times*, 10 March 1828; Thomas H. Shepherd and James Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements*, London, 1827–31, 142–143. Various views of the exterior may be seen in the Noble Collection, Guildhall Library, London.
- 77 Shepherd and Elmes *op. cit.*, 1827–31, 143.
- 78 *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, No. 1779, 2 May 1830; *The Times*, 6 Jan 1830.
- 79 London, Guildhall Library, Noble Collection, cutting B.H4/GRA/roa, Sept 1832. See also *The Times*, 12 Dec 1831 and 13 Dec 1831.
- 80 Guildhall Library, Noble Collection, cutting B.H4/GRA/roa, 1836.
- 81 *Mechanics Magazine*, 13 August 1831, 393.
- 82 Christopher Hussey, 'Future of the Pantechnicon', *Country Life*, 31 March 1966, 714–716, with photographs of the interior.
- 83 London, Guildhall Library *A Collection of Prints, etc.*, vol. XIII, [newspaper cutting].
- 84 *Robson's Directory*, 1838.
- 85 *The Times*, 10 December 1821.
- 86 Timbs *op. cit.*, 1855, 36.
- 87 *Punch*, 1942, 24.
- 88 *The Times*, 11 March 1841, 20 May 1842 and 25 June 1855.
- 89 Charles Knight (ed.), *London V*, London, 1843, 73.
- 90 Worsley, *op. cit.*, 2003, 52 and fig. 5.
- 91 Horwood's map of London, 1792–99; Worsley, *op. cit.*, 2003, 53; Jackson *op. cit.*, 1969, 69 (Tallis 1838–40)
- 92 *The Times*, 19 June 1852.
- 93 *The Times*, 29 Nov 1852 and 31 Dec 1859.
- 94 *The Times*, 29 August 1851, 29 November 1852 and 29 April 1856.
- 95 *The Times*, 7 September 1863.
- 96 *The Times*, 15 Aug 1851 and 9 January 1861.
- 97 *The Times*, 26 Aug 1851 and 18 May 1875.
- 98 Bradshaw's *Guide Through London*, n.d. (circa 1857). By this time the Pantheon also included a photographic department [Sala *op. cit.*, 1859, 175]. This became the London School of Photography, which relocated to the Soho Bazaar upon the closure of the Pantheon.

- 99 *Survey of London, The Parish of St James, Piccadilly*, Part II North of Piccadilly, XXXI, 1963, 297–298; London, Westminster Archives Centre, Box 47, No 27c, Corinthian Bazaar, illustrated advertisement.
- 100 *The Times*, 30 July 1867; *The Lady's Own Paper*, 3 Aug 1867, 584.
- 101 *The Times*, 26 Oct 1874.
- 102 *The Times*, 4 January 1875.
- 103 *The Times*, 2 November 1875.
- 104 Morrison *op. cit.*, 2003, 95–96; *The Times*, 23 October 1833.
- 105 Worsley *op. cit.*, 2003.
- 106 Morrison *op. cit.*, 2003, 128–133.
- 107 By some definitions Peter Robinson's would be classified as a large drapery establishment, rather than a department store.



Detail from Queen's Bazaar, 73 Oxford Street.  
Aquatint by Benjamin Read, 1833.  
*Guildhall Library.*

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Richard Hewlings, at

ENGLISH HERITAGE  
24 Brooklands Avenue  
Cambridge CB2 2BU  
Telephone: 01223 582778  
Fax: 01223 582708  
Email: richard.hewlings@english-heritage.org.uk

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