

Aylsham & District u3a Historical Buildings Group

Report on

12-13 Market Place Aylsham



Market Place frontage

Overview

Numbers 12 and 13 Market Place present themselves as a single continuous (essentially triple-fronted) building, probably dating from the first half of the 18th century. The building occupies the centre section of a terrace which runs the full length of the western side of the Market Place. No forecourt is present. The building was awarded a Grade II listing on 1st June 1984.

External details

The front face of the building is painted brickwork, with the northern and southern extents being demarcated by simple projecting brick pilasters. Where the paint is damaged/missing to reveal the bricks, they are pale yellow/buff coloured. In Norfolk, pale yellow/buff coloured bricks became widely available and fashionable around 1800. They remained fashionable through to around 1875 when red brickwork came to be seen as superior. As the building undoubtedly pre-dates 1800 and the front wall is 1½ bricks in thickness for its full height, the front brickwork is most likely a brick facing to an older wall. At the northern end of the building, a large inverted 'T'-shaped wrought iron plate has been bolted through the brickwork to tie the facing back onto the wall behind where it has previously started to separate.

Most of the ground floor wall to the Market Place has been replaced by a wide shopfront containing a central door set back in a short arcade. A second entrance door has been inserted immediately to the south of the shopfront. A total of 7 sash windows are present in the front wall. Although superficially balanced, the first floor windows are offset to the shopfront and have strange spacings to one another. The shopfront, second entrance door and sash windows all appear to date from the middle third of the 19th century. There is no indication that the projection of the shopfront has been compromised, so it

must have been fitted after or at the same time as the brick facing was applied.

The roof is steeply pitched and covered with faded black pantiles (smut pantiles) which were more expensive than red pantiles. These were fashionable from the later 18th century and through much of the 19th century until roofing slates became readily available with the arrival of the railways. The front roof slope becomes much shallower at the base of the roof, indicating it has been modified to extend further out beyond both the brick facing and 19th century style decorative timber eaves. This change of roof slope can be seen very clearly in the adjacent photograph, which also shows the inverted T-shaped wrought iron tie used to re-secure the brick facing to the wall behind.



Three equally spaced dormer windows light up the garret rooms (i.e. rooms contained entirely within the roof space). The dormer windows do not line up with the windows below.

Two chimney stacks are visible from the Market Place. The northern stack straddles the gable parapet that sits above the party wall, suggesting the chimney is shared with number 14. However this 'shared' chimney only contains two flues and the internal details of 12-13, together with the placement of the entrance doors to number 14, indicate the chimney may be wholly owned by 12-13 Market Place. The second chimney stack appears to house 3 flues and stands roughly where the division between numbers 12 and 13 would be expected to occur. Both chimneys were partially or wholly rebuilt in the late 19th century.

As shown below, the alignment of the building changes just above the southern end of the shopfront. Although now all one building, the change of alignment indicates we are dealing with what was originally two independently constructed buildings.



Further south along the terrace, the alignment of the building again changes where a dormer window sits at the junction between the butcher and charity shop. While these still resemble two independent buildings, the position of the dormer window suggests they were once in single ownership, with the dormer window dating from this time.

The above alignment changes indicate the likely presence of three independently constructed buildings (all of which would be two rooms in width). However, the uniformity of the eaves and roof alterations across the three buildings, hints that all three were at some time in common ownership and treated as a single building. This scenario is reinforced by the apparent continuance of the later brick facing across at least the adjacent butcher's premises, and the odd position of the butcher's dormer window.

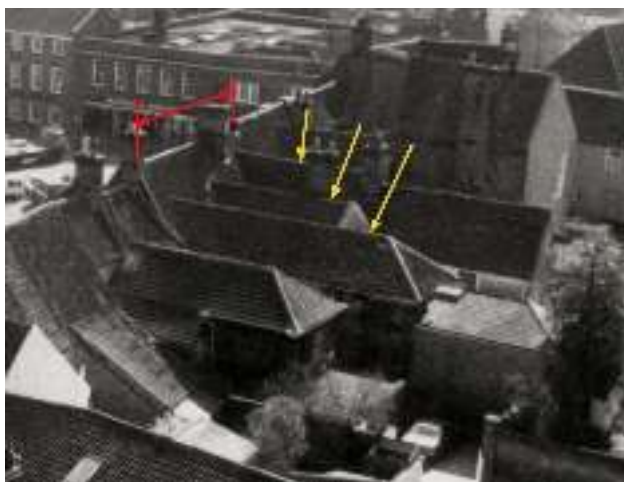
Photos in the Aylsham Town Archive taken by Walter Finch in the 1860s and 1871 (B8-10-13-1 to B8-10-13-3) show the brick facing extending across the butcher's premises but the eaves to the charity

shop are a different design and are lower than the butcher's eaves. These same photos also show the shopfront was already present. By the time of another photo taken in about 1875 (B8-6-12), the eaves to the charity shop are continuous with those of the butcher's and bank premises.

Three wings project from the back of 12-13 Market Place. The wings are of varying ages and sizes. The southernmost wing is now accessed from the adjacent butcher's premises. It is not possible to properly see and appreciate the wings from ground level due to their scale and various visual obstructions. Aylsham Town Archive possesses an aerial view of the Market Place taken in the 1970s which shows the three wings on the back of 12-13 Market Place really clearly.



Current view of the 3 rear wings. The red brick end of the left hand wing dates from around 1990 when the wing was truncated (see aerial view). The building on the extreme right is the wing now accessed from the adjacent butcher's premises.



Aerial view taken in 1970s. Extent of Market Place facade marked in red. The three back wings (indicated by yellow arrows) are clearly visible, with the one closest the camera being one room longer than now.

It is not apparent from the photographs, but the longest of the three wings (the one furthest from the camera in the aerial photograph – now accessed from the adjacent butcher's) is noteworthy for the extremely steep pitch of its roof, particularly the taller section to the left of the wing's central chimney. This indicates the roof was designed for thatch, making this wing potentially older than the section facing onto the Market Place. Externally, there is no reliable dating evidence for the three wings.

Internal details

Ground floor

The centrally placed shop entrance opens into a single space, running the full width of the shopfront, this space has been converted into a late 20th century banking hall. The north wall of the banking hall is now a flat, solid brick party wall. The south wall is solid brick and appears to have once been an exterior/party wall. Behind the banking counter is a short section of solid brick wall which is the remains of an exterior back wall. These walls form the outline of a building whose dimensions are consistent with two ground floor rooms, both facing onto the Market Place. The building would have been just over 27ft x 17ft internally, which allows for two good sized rooms but no hallway. Such an arrangement was common in Norfolk market towns throughout the 17th and early 18th centuries, with one room normally being larger than the other – the front door generally opening into the larger room. Evidence elsewhere within the building indicates the northern room was the larger of the two, and it once possessed an inglenook fireplace against the party wall. The fireplace was offset towards the front of the building to allow space for a half-spiral (newel) staircase in the back alcove. The smaller room did not possess a fireplace.

The entrance door immediately to the left of the shopfront opens into a narrow hallway that runs through to an archway inserted through the old back wall of the building. The hallway itself was once part of the room to the left (south side) of the hall – this room adjoins the neighbouring butcher's premises. Prior to its sub-division, this room was just under 17ft x 17ft and did not possess a fireplace. The wall constructed to create the hallway has unusually thick solid brickwork for an internal partition – this was evidently deemed necessary to cope with the insertion of a new chimney and associated major alterations to the structure of the floors and walls above. This 'new' chimney backs onto the hallway

and provided a fireplace within the room adjoining the butcher's premises. The panelling around the windows of this room is a nice example of work from the middle third of the 19th century. The panelled reveals originally incorporated folding shutters which should still be present. Due to the security boarding and thickness of the paint, it is not possible to tell if the shutters have survived intact.

The archway at the end of the inserted hallway opens directly into the middle one of the three rear wings. This area has been slightly remodelled to meet the needs of late 20th century banking premises but the original layout is still readily identifiable. A wide staircase, leading to the first floor, runs between the back wall of what would have been the smaller room before it was incorporated into the former shop and the original wall to a large back room. This back room was built with a fireplace. Underneath the wide stairs, there is a set of brick stairs leading down to the cellars.

The building seems to have been subjected to significant changes in the late 18th/early 19th centuries – around 1800 give or take about 20 years.



The mouldings on the arch at the end of the hallway are heavily obscured by thick paint but include shell motifs and are consistent with work from circa 1800.



The cellar stairs were almost certainly constructed at the same time as the staircase they run under – both are consistent with circa 1800 work.



Inserted chimney backing onto the hallway that already reduces the width of the room by 6ft. This chimney matches that in the large back room within the middle rear wing. The very deep alcoves allied to a moderate breast width are typical of circa 1800 work, but in this case leave one window almost completely obscured!



Opposite the windows of the reduced width room, a pair of double doors dating from circa 1800 once led into the southernmost rear wing. The double doors now just open into a deep storage cupboard.

The remodelling of the southernmost front room to provide a hallway leading to the middle rear wing, and the construction of the middle rear wing itself together with the stairs etc., all form a set of coherent alterations that appear to have been carried out in this late 18th/early 19th century period.

As part of the changes, a former back window in the old back wall that was affected by the new staircase was reduced in size but retained to help illuminate the cellar stairs. As can be seen in the adjacent photograph, this reduced window was later completely blocked using timber boarding – it is impossible to tell when this was done but timber boarding is unlikely to have been used for banking premises!



The area 'behind the counter' in the banking hall occupies the northernmost of the three rear wings. It is arranged as a single long room with a lobby and modern staircase running across the back wall. Only a single window is present – this is in the North wall and looks onto the neighbouring yard – suggesting the space was always a single room. The section containing the lobby and stairs has been completely rebuilt, presumably as part of the truncation of this wing (see external details).

Cellars

The cellars are split into two separate sections. The main section is a large roughly rectangular space with a good height flat ceiling, and is located directly beneath the original two rooms that became the banking hall. This is the oldest cellar but as an important storage area serving commercial premises, has been subjected to a variety of alterations over the centuries. The second section is a much smaller 'T'-shaped space with a barrel vaulted ceiling, and is located entirely within the middle rear wing.



Main cellar – wall on right is against the Market Place, wall on left is no older than the external facing to the building and is covering the original (presumably decayed/damaged) back wall. Section marked in red is the base of the original chimney backing onto the northern party wall, the brickwork above the dashes has been cut away but when present, the dimensions indicate it would have supported a typical late 17th/early 18th century inglenook fireplace in the room above. The fireplace is offset to create a large alcove (circled). In buildings of this age and type, the large alcove housed the original stairs, each flight consisting of a 180° turn round a central newel post.



The pole has been inserted to provide additional support to the centre of a timber beam that once supported both the wall between the two ground floor rooms above, and also the floor joists to those rooms. One end of the beam sat on the projecting brick pier to the left of the picture. The timber beam has almost certainly been replaced with concrete or steel. Beyond the pier, the clean looking bit of wall is where a loading door was created in the 19th century so as to open to a trap door set into the paving of the Market Place. This has subsequently been bricked up again.



Second cellar – typical domestic scale cellar dating from the late 18th/early 19th century.



'Dairy alcove' in second cellar with cold shelves for butter, cheese etc.

First Floor

The late 18th/early 19th century remodelling and construction works were not confined to the ground floor areas. If anything, the first floor alterations were even more extensive.



The stairs in the circa 1800 rear wing lead up to a fashionable landing designed into the layout which provides direct access to all first floor rooms.



The original party wall, between what is nominally numbers 12 and 13, was removed to extend the middle front room over the hallway (created out of the southernmost ground floor room). In the above picture, the party wall used to be where the edge of the step is next to the window.



Removing the old party wall gave the middle front room access to the chimney running up beside the ground floor hall, enabling a fireplace to be provided (now removed – location arrowed).



Close-up of door in left of previous picture – this was originally part of a full height panelled wall. The panelling is hand-made and could pre-date the building as currently comprised.

The extending of the middle front room means the southernmost first floor front room was reduced like the room below. Unlike how the ground floor previously was, there is no large intrusive chimney breast in the southern room – the chimney seems to have been reconstructed at first floor level and above in the late 19th century to take up less space, allowing the breasts to be concealed by a combination of wall thicknesses and shallow alcove cupboards.

Prior to the extending of the middle front room, the northernmost front room was originally the largest of the first floor front rooms but it doubled as a thoroughfare through the building. The original newel stairs leading from the ground floor would have occupied one corner (arrowed in adjacent picture), and the only access to the other first floor front room(s) was through this room. The stairs seem to have risen in an anti-clockwise direction. The late 18th/early 19th century improvements allowed the newel stairs to be removed and the door to the middle room to be bricked up. Following these changes, the room was upgraded to make it more fashionable by running a plaster cornice around the ceiling – although the cornice could date from the early 19th century, the design was still available a century later so it is not known when the fashionable upgrade occurred.



Like the room below it, the back room within the middle rear wing (see picture on left), has the very deep alcoves typically associated with circa 1800 chimney breasts. The chimney breast is notably off-centre. By not centring the chimney breast, the resulting wide right-hand alcove has enabled a doorway to be created into the southernmost rear wing – now blocked off but still clearly visible.

The northernmost rear wing has been comprehensively remodelled at first floor level to provide late 20th century toilet facilities and fire resistant stairs suitable for banking premises. Amazingly, despite this it still possesses several clues to at least two earlier wings on the same site, as well as confirming the location and rotation of the original stairs.

Chair rail clues – the beautifully detailed circa 1800 chair rail that runs up both sides of the staircase in the middle rear wing before running around the walls of the main landing.



Note how carefully the chair rail (arrowed) has been curved to take account of the level change on one side at the top of the stairs. It also continues through the archway at the top of the stairs – the wall with the archway separates the middle wing from the northernmost wing. The continuation of the chair rail through the archway indicates that some sort of northernmost wing already existed when the middle wing was added i.e. a northernmost wing was present prior to the construction of the late 18th/early 19th century middle wing.



Where the chair rail continues through the arch, it runs at the same height as when it passed through the arch, ignoring the additional stairs and level change. This indicates the pictured stairs and current floor level within the northernmost wing are the result of a later reconstruction.

Former doorway clues – the two posts set into the wall of the front room which are visible within the cupboard that hides the stairs to the garret rooms.



A pair of vertical timber posts (arrowed) in an otherwise brick wall. The posts mark the location of a narrow doorway from the corner of the northernmost front room – where the top of the presumed newel stairs were. For the door to be reached, the stairs must have risen in an anti-clockwise direction. A narrow door used to access a room from the top two or three steps of a newel staircase suggests the original northernmost wing was constructed shortly after the main building – say only 20-50 years later. The floor of the wing is now considerably higher than in the adjacent front room, again indicating that the wing's current floor level is the result of a later reconstruction.

Construction clues – the construction and style details visible within the cupboard that hides the stairs to the garret rooms, specifically the floor, plaster & lath, and staircase. Taken together these suggest the wing was reconstructed around 1900.



The floor joists are very narrow but deep. They support a plaster and lath ceiling for the rooms below but here is no bracing between the joists to stiffen the floor. This construction is typical of late 19th century work.



The (water damaged) plaster and lath ceiling within the cupboard. The timber laths themselves have been sawn from the original tree, marking them out as 19th century or later – 18th century and earlier laths were peeled from the tree. Although the plaster is lime it contains no hair, this is characteristic of early 20th century work.

The simple but sturdy stairs could be anything from late 19th century through to about 1920. The amount of wear on the treads does suggest late 19th century is more likely.



Second floor and roof space over northernmost wing

The circa 1900 staircase (see preceding page) is the only access to the second floor.

A small landing at the top of the stairs leads via a 'tunnel' into the main garret overlooking the Market Place. Opposite the 'tunnel' entrance, part of the plaster and lath wall has been removed to enable access into the roof space of the northernmost rear wing.

To permit access between the landing (within the northernmost rear wing) and the main garret, the lower sections of the rafters to the main roof had to be cut away below the overlapping rafters for the rear wing – the cutaway rafters would normally help to distribute the weight of the end of the rear wing's roof. The 'tunnel' was a way of providing additional support to the main roof where the rafters were cut.



View back through 'tunnel' to the landing with the opening into the roof space of a rear wing beyond.



The roof space over the northernmost wing seems to be a hybrid of three different periods. The roof appears to have been reconstructed in the late 19th or early 20th century but reusing some of the main structural components from an early to mid 19th century roof. In the adjacent picture, the entire end section (furthest from the camera) dates from the late 20th century.

The former garrets overlooking the Market Place have been stripped of their original floorboards, plaster, ceilings, and any partition walls (with any associated doors). This has created two unequal sized areas of rough storage partially separated by a chimney and open to the main roof structure. The roof structure itself has been heavily repaired and been substantially strengthened, particularly at its southern end where alterations had led to structural failure.



Despite the garrets having been stripped out, there is a small amount of evidence at the northern end as to their past use and the time periods involved.



Now faded wallpaper – each bunch of flowers contained 3 white and 2 blue flowers. The pattern is typically 1920s and suggests the rooms were no longer used as bedrooms after the 1930s.



Long board with coat pegs mounted on it possibly dating from around 1800 – the far peg is one of the originals, the near peg is one of several that were renewed around 1900.



Some iron coat pegs have been hammered into the timber to the right of the coat peg board to increase the number of pegs available. Difficult to date but probably mid 19th century.



An additional board with another 4 coat pegs was fitted to the left of the original board, probably around 1910. Interesting that the maker reverted to a simplified version of the original peg design rather than use the fancy scroll design of about 10 years earlier.

There are three different roof structures visible from within the former garrets.



The main roof structure covers the section of the building with the shop front. This area includes the middle and northern dormer windows. The roof is a well braced, pegged timber structure that could easily have been designed in the 17th century. Large timbers have been used throughout and a complete set of numbered trusses are present (I-V). Despite their impressive dimensions, many of the timbers are poor quality with large quantities of sapwood which has decayed – contributing to the need for extensive repairs in recent times. The scarcity of large section high quality timbers to realise a 17th century design, suggests the roof was constructed around 1700.

A totally separate roof structure covers the southernmost section of the building (with the inserted hallway). This area includes the southern dormer window. The roof is an unbraced pegged timber structure of 18th century design that enables large section timbers to be restricted to the trusses. The switch hasn't yet been made to softwood though suggesting an early to mid 18th century construction date for the roof, say around 1730. The roof is continuous with that over the adjacent butcher's premises and only a single truss is present – numbered III, indicating a matching pair should be next door.



One end of the roof structure (arrowed in adjacent picture) over the southernmost rear wing (accessed from the adjacent butcher's premises) is visible just behind the roof section that comes through from the butcher's premises. Note how sturdy the timbers are and how much steeper the roof is compared to the areas next to the Market Place. This most probably pre-dates the 18th century and started life as a thatched roof.

As surmised from the external inspection of the front, the base of the roof that faces onto the Market Place has been modified to reduce the slope and carry the roof tiles further out over the pavement. This was achieved by spiking short extension pieces onto the older rafters. This work appears to have been carried out during the 19th century.

Major alterations have been carried out to the roof section that comes through from the adjacent butcher's premises:

- The party wall/gable that originally separated the two roof sections has been completely removed – this used to be just a few inches to the south of the middle dormer window. Although the roof area with the middle dormer window is apparently older than that coming through from the butcher's premises, the older roof derived little or no support from the missing gable/wall so was not compromised by its removal. This suggests the older roof was built up against an already existing building when erected around 1700. By contrast, the missing gable/wall was integral to the later roof coming through from the butcher's premises. To achieve the removal, some roof timbers had their ends cut off leaving parts of the roof unsupported and ultimately leading to structural failure.

In the adjacent picture,

- the red outline indicates where the missing gable/wall was
- the timber to the left of the outline is the start of the earlier roof
- with the visibly truncated roof coming from the butcher's premises to the right of the outline – note how the unsupported end has dropped causing the nearby joints to break apart.



- The chimney that was built next to the inserted ground floor hall runs up through the roof section coming from the butcher's premises. This is set just a few feet in from where the supporting gable/wall used to be. To accommodate the chimney, some of the roof timbers simply had sections cut out, leaving parts of the roof unsupported... again. It is presumed this work was carried out at the same time as the removal of the supporting gable/wall.
- The roof section coming through from the adjacent butcher's premises did not originally contain any garrets or floor. The garret room that it now contains appears to have been created around 1800. As the roof was not designed to incorporate a floor, the roof should either have been rebuilt to cater for the floor, or a new floor assembly should have been fitted above the joists and trusses forming the base of the roof. Instead the floor was just laid over what was already there, resulting in different levels, beams sticking up from the floor and general unevenness. The new garret needed a window so the southern dormer window was constructed – necessitating the removal of more sections from the roof timbers. Once again the timbers were simply cut through leaving yet more of the roof unsupported and no additional strengthening was provided to cater for the extra weight of the dormer window (unsurprisingly, this ultimately led to yet more structural failure). There may have been two plastering schemes in this new garret over time – the initial plastering of the reeds that formed the underlay for the roof tiles to leave all roof timbers exposed, and a subsequent re-plastering onto timber laths that hid many of the timbers and created a flat ceiling area around 1900.

Although it may appear that the above alterations to the roof are the result of sub-standard work 'done on the cheap', it was normal practice to make structural alterations in that manner during the period 1750 to 1850. Until independent building inspectors became involved with major building alterations and new construction work in the later 19th century, nobody seemed to ever question what the longer term effect would be when cutting into or removing structural components! The rule of thumb seems to have invariably been if no immediate visible movement begins to occur when removing/altering part of the structure, it must be strong enough to withstand the change...

Known/suspected owners/occupants

(Names in **bold** indicate earliest known record of an owner)

	10 Market Place (charity shop)	11 Market Place (adjacent butcher's)	12 Market Place (originally half of adjoining butcher's, now part of 'TSB')	13 Market Place (main 'TSB' section)
pre-1615	Possibly owned by Robert Barker?	Possibly owned by Robert Barker?		House on site is called 'Leonards' and is owned by Robert Barker
1615	Possibly inherited by Christiana Orwell?	Possibly inherited by Christiana Orwell?		Christiana Orwell (married to William Orwell) inherited on death of her father Robert Barker
post-1620		Henry Mynne buys following death of Christiana Orwell?		On death of Christiana Orwell, her 3 brothers, John, Peter & Joseph Barker each inherit a 1/3 share. Two of the shares are subsequently sold to Robert Houghton and one to Henry Mynne
August 1634				Rowland Turner the tenant buys all 3 shares

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1636				Rowland Turner, locksmith, is re-granted the premises by the manor court following his marriage to Elizabeth. The premises are described as: the messuage called Leonards of the west side of the Market with 2 shops with cellar under the shops, a yard and garden adjoining the messuage being 1 rood, and all that part of the stable belonging to the messuage and access at all hours across all that other yard of the late Henry Mynn (called Dovehouse Yard) with horses and carts. Rowland Turner subsequently remarried to Alice and had a son – Thomas
1648				Rowland Turner dies – his widow Alice Turner remains in occupation along with John Barker
August 1649				William Doughty buys Leonards from Alice Turner's son Thomas Turner – it subsequently starts to be known as 'Turners'

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1678				Frances Doughty inherits on death of her husband William. The description of the premises is the same as when Rowland Turner had them 40 years earlier. Frances is also left several other properties (including one in the Market Place) by her father, John Durrant, when he dies in 1677
1691				Frances Doughty dies and leaves her properties equally divided between her 2 sons & 4 daughters – her son Robert Doughty buys out his siblings to assume full ownership
December 1698				Robert Doughty takes out a loan of £350 with Edward Reising
October 1700				Edward Reising acquires 'Turners' when Robert Doughty defaults on his loan
August 1703				Thomas Coulson buys 'Turners' (+ other properties) from Edward Reising
July 1726				Ann Bell acquires the premises from her father Thomas Coulson
October 1734				Coulson Bell inherits on death of his mother Ann Bell
November 1752				Thomas Hawkins buys the premises from Coulson Bell
Dates unknown	Robert Francis buys the premises	Robert Francis buys the premises		

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~1780				Charles Miller grocer takes on tenancy
December 1783				Robert Francis buys the premises from Thomas Hawkins jnr following the death of his parents Thomas & Mary Hawkins. Charles Miller remains as tenant
1807	Wife of Robert Francis retains life interest following death of her husband			
Date unknown	Anne Bircham, Sarah Parmeter & Thomas Clement Francis inherit following death of their mother (wife of Robert Francis)			
May 1820	Tenant is Richard Laxen saddler	Tenant is Charles Miller (who is retiring) and he has sub-let to Charles Rice Wade watchmaker	Tenant is Charles Miller grocer (who is retiring), first floor front room is sub-let to Charles Rice Wade	Tenant remains as Charles Miller but he is about to retire
April 1821		William Elden cordwainer buys premises for £250	William Elden gets first floor front room as part of his purchase of next door	
			Richard Ringer buys premises plus the first floor front room in a separate transaction	Richard Ringer buys premises
April 1821?			Richard Ringer takes out a mortgage on the premises with Charles Miller	
June 1821	Richard Laxen buys premises for £400			
1828	Richard Laxen mortgages premises to Mary Hewitt for £100 + interest			Richard Ringer becomes bankrupt so Charles Miller acquires premises as forfeit for the outstanding mortgage
January 1829				Henry Soame buys premises from Charles Miller for £607. Benjamin Powell grocer and linen draper becomes tenant soon after
1830	Richard Laxen becomes bankrupt and goes to debtors prison (Norwich Castle)			

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March 1831	Mary Hewitt takes possession following mortgage default. Richard Laxen jnr continues to occupy premises as tenant			
1831	E Steward pays off mortgage and becomes owner			
April 1831	Following death of E Steward, John Butler buys premises for £465			
May 1834			William Soame inherits premises following death of his father Henry Soame. Benjamin Powell remains as tenant	
1839 tithe survey – plot numbers allocated as formal identification	Plot 37 (Owned & occupied by John Butler sadler)	Plot 36 (Owned & occupied by William Elden boot and shoe maker)	Small part of rear wing is part of plot 36 otherwise it is all part of plot 34	Plot 34 (Owned by William Soame, occupied by Benjamin Powell)
April 1851			Benjamin Powell buys premises from his landlord William Soame	
April 1852	Henry Laxen buys premises			
1856			Benjamin Powell jnr inherits following death of his father Benjamin Powell snr	
April 1861		Elizabeth Ferry Adds buys premises from William Elden		
April 1862		Benjamin Powell buys premises from Elizabeth Ferry Adds		
1868		Thomas Miller boot & shoemaker	Benjamin Powell & Son cease trading	
~1875			Tenant is W D Meers grocer & draper	
Date unknown			Charles Harvey Ward draper buys premises	
December 1880		Charles Harvey Ward draper buys premises following death of Benjamin Powell		

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1881 census		Tenant is Thomas Miller bootmaker	Charles Harvey Ward (born 1829, Loddon), wife Mary Anne Ward (born 1834, Seething), son Robert Harvey Ward (single, grocers assistant), 2 drapers assistants, 1 drapers apprentice, 2nd grocers assistant, 1 grocers apprentice, 1 cook, 1 housemaid	
1890	Albert Richard Laxen saddler		C. H. Ward & Son grocers, provision merchants & drapers	
1891 census			Charles Harvey Ward, wife Mary Anne Ward, Robert Harvey Ward (grocer), 2 drapers assistants, 1 drapers apprentice, 3 grocers assistants, 1 milliners assistant, 2 general servants	
1900		Ann Miller boot & shoemaker		
1901 census	Albert Laxen saddler		Charles Harvey Ward (72), wife, son Robert H Ward (41) are running a grocers and drapers. Two shop assistants, cook and housemaid are also resident	
1906			Charles Harvey Ward dies age 77	
1909			Mary Anne Ward dies age 76	
1910 Valuation			Owned and occupied by Robert Harvey Ward	
1911 census		Ann Elizabeth Miller (51 and single) is running boot and shoemaker with sister Edith		
1912			Still apparently owned by Robert Harvey Ward but shop now trading as 'Ward & George'. See below for partial biography of Robert's partner Alfred George.	

	10 Market Place (charity shop)	11 Market Place (adjacent butcher's)	12 Market Place (originally half of adjoining butcher's, now part of 'TSB')	13 Market Place (main 'TSB' section)
1921 census	Albert Richard Laxen (born 1870, 50, saddler & harness maker), Retired to Lowestoft in 1939 with wife Gertrude and died in 1940 aged 71. Son Albert W Laxen born 1911.	Ann Elizabeth Miller (head, born 1859, 61, boot maker), Edith Miller (sister, born 1863, 57, home duties), Abraham Watts Miller (brother, born 1852, 69, boot & shoe maker/repairer employed by sister – widower, having married Catherine Laxen [born 1851] in 1879, no children, no recorded link to Laxen family next door). Ann & Edith retired to Denton, Norfolk. Ann died in 1946 aged 86.	Alfred Real George (36, born Poplar, grocer and draper), wife Marian Fanny (33, born Kent, occupation 'home duties'), boarder Robert Harvey Ward (single, 61, retired grocer and draper). Trading as Ward & George	
~1930		Irene high class ladies hair		
~1937			Ward & George cease trading	
1940	H.W. & C.H. Browne grocery & provisions		Salvage depot	
October 1942			Opens as branch of East Anglian TSB – not known if TSB is owner or tenant at this stage	
1953		Norwich Union		
October 1960			Owned and occupied by East Anglian TSB which reopens following internal reconstruction and modernisation works	
1963	G.H. Doncaster grocer			
~1970	Monica's ladies fashion house	J.S. Coxford butchers	Charringtons coal merchants occupy ground floor front room	
1975			Absorbed into TSB of Eastern England Charringtons continue to occupy front room	
1989	Swanns florist		TSB now occupy entire building	
1995			Absorbed into Lloyds TSB	
2002	Break charity shop			
September 2013			Demerged to become TSB	
June 2025			TSB closes branch leaving premises vacant	

Partial Biography of Alfred Real George

- Born 2nd quarter 1885 in Poplar, London
- **1901 Census household**
 - School House, Blickling, Aylsham
 - Head of household – Sarah George (Widow) age 43 Occupation School Mistress
 - 2 daughters – Edith 17yrs – teacher in Elementary school. Ethel 12yrs
 - Alfred 15yrs – Grocers assistant.
 - Marianne Fanny Sutherland 13yrs – visitor.
- Love struck, and Alfred and Marianne married on 28/03/1910 in St Andrews, Blickling. (NB her name is sometimes Marian.) She was also of good standing (in the **1891 Census** when she was aged 3yrs, her father was a Clerk of Works in Herts.
- **1911 Census**
 - Joint Head of households (TSB premises) listed as: Robert Harvey Ward – Head, single 58yrs, Grocer and Draper; Alfred Real George – Head, married 25yrs, Grocer and Draper
 - Marianne Fanny George wife 23 yrs
 - Plus 2 dressmakers assistants, 1 cook and one domestic.
- Assumption is Alfred was the assistant in Ward's Grocers and Drapers and worked up to Grocer.
- Details regarding Alfred and his WW1 service:
 - Physically fit – 5'6".
 - Signed up for short service at the recruiting office in Cromer on 5/6/1916 aged 30yrs 6mths having signed an oath of attestation in Nov 1915 so seemed to take some time to process.
 - Enlisted at Dover in Royal Garrison Artillery June 6 1916.
 - Following month transferred to Royal field artillery as a private.
 - Sept 1918 posted to 421 battery under orders for North Russia and sailed from Glasgow 10/10/1918 to join 6th brigade at Murmansk arriving 17/10/1918.
 - Served with North Russian Expeditionary force at Murmansk and Archangel until June 1919 when relieved by relieving force.
 - Demobbed at Penfleet on 24/6/1919. He'd achieved the rank of Acting full Bombardier.

Alfred was clearly educated and literate as befits a school mistress's son. He wrote a lengthy letter to the War Office explaining that he was given 2 military numbers when he changed from the royal garrison artillery to the field artillery. The military seemed to have no record of the altered numbers. History doesn't relate what the impact of this was.

Conclusions

From the building's detailing and construction, it is evident the building as it stands today is an amalgamation of parts from multiple periods and ownerships. Early suspicions that the history of the building could be entwined with that of numbers 10 and 11 have been confirmed by attempts to uncover the ownership and occupant history – which is particularly complex. From the information uncovered, the following deductions can be made as to likely periods of construction and alteration:

- **Circa 1600** There is no evidence of pre-1615 material within the current building, so the pre-1615 house known as 'Leonards' pre-dates the current building;
- **1636** the description of 'Leonards' matches the location of 13 Market Place, with 'Dovehouse Yard' matching the area behind 11 & 12 Market Place. The description is the same in 1678 when Frances Doughty inherits on the death of her husband and she is unlikely to have rebuilt the property prior to her death in 1691;
- **1698 / 1703** Although ownership of Francis Doughty's Market Place properties is split amongst her 6 children following her death, one of her sons – Robert Doughty – is sufficiently wealthy to buy out all of his siblings and in 1698 he takes out a loan of £350. This would have been sufficient for the redevelopment of 13 Market Place (either to cover building work just carried out or to fund work about to begin). The date of 1698 does fit with the evidence of when the building was most likely constructed. If the house was not rebuilt around 1698 by Robert Doughty, then it must have been redeveloped by Thomas Coulson following his purchase in 1703 (Edward Reising who acquired it in 1700 seems to have been more a financier and landlord than a developer);
- **1734** Coulson Bell inherits 13 Market Place – this is a viable date for the original construction of the northernmost rear wing. Interestingly, this date would also fit with the (partial)

redevelopment of 11-12 Market Place – coincidence or did Coulson also inherit these premises within the package of properties from his mother?

- **1783** Robert Francis buys the premises to consolidate his holding (of what is now 10-13 Market Place). This is most likely when the middle rear wing was constructed in tandem with the subdivision of 11 & 12 Market Place to incorporate number 12 into number 13. Robert already had an established tenant in Charles Miller who was evidently doing well as he took on number 11 then sub-let it – the alterations would have given Charles much larger residential accommodation with a proper residential front facade, as well as considerably increasing the value of the premises;
- **Circa 1805** the long term tenant, Charles Miller, updates the facade of everything he rents with a fashionable pale yellow/buff brick facing and more modern eaves. He most likely also adds extra dormer windows to the roof as part of the ‘loft conversion’ that creates the garrets over numbers 11 & 12. He is unlikely to have done the work any later as he would then have been getting close to retirement, much earlier and the work doesn’t fit with prevailing architectural fashions (if the work had been carried out by his landlord, then number 10 would also have been included);
- **1851** Benjamin Powell (another long term tenant) is doing well enough to buy the premises from his landlord and is highly likely to have wanted to upgrade the shop with the full width, fashionable new shopfront still present today. This also seems to be when the internal panelling and shutters around the front ground floor sash windows was fitted. If he didn’t fit the shopfront and upgrade the windows, these improvements must have been done by his son (Benjamin Powell jnr) when he inherited in 1856 – the son was prosperous enough to buy number 11 only 6 years later to once again bring 11, 12 and 13 into single ownership;
- **1890** The then owner, Charles Harvey Ward and his son, are doing very well with 7 live-in shop assistants plus 2 live-in servants and have just sold London House for redevelopment. This is therefore the most likely time for the extensive late Victorian improvements (i.e. when the upper floor of the northernmost wing was repaired/upgraded, the garrets improved, and the southernmost first floor front chimney breast was reconstructed along with the chimney above);
- **1960** The East Anglian TSB stripped out the interior of the former shop and partially reconstructed the ground floor to create modern banking premises;
- **Circa 1990** The TSB demolished approximately 1/3 of the northernmost wing and reconstructed the end of what remained to provide a new fireproof stairway and fire exit – there is a photograph of this work in progress in the Aylsham Town Archive (B8-6-35).

David M. Kinsey
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Additional census and biographical information supplied by Barbara Holroyd
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