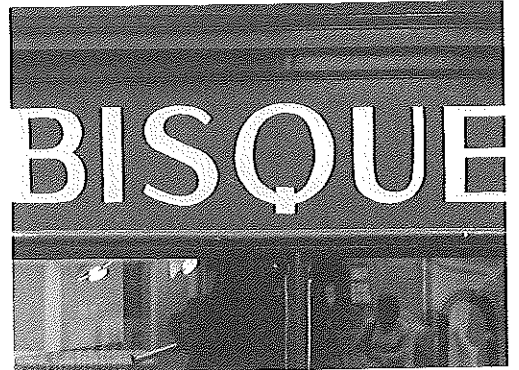


Signs and Lettering

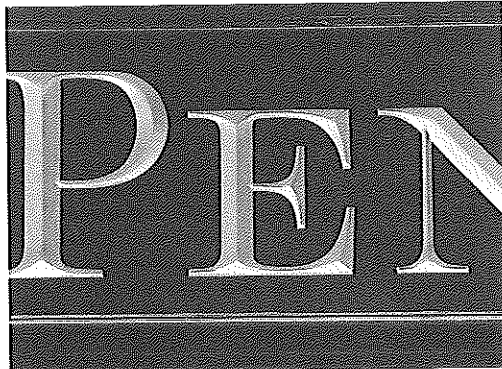
4 Beau Street [left] Detail of glass fascia sign



15 Kingsmead Square [right] Effective architectural lettering



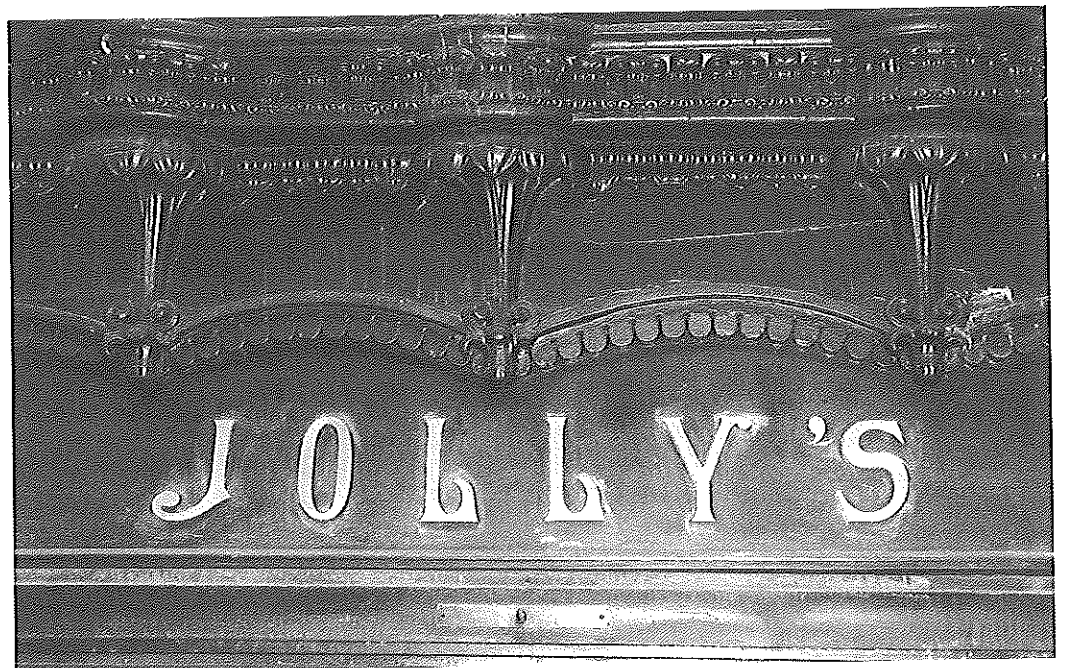
12 Northumberland Place [left] Modern glass-fronted fascia sign in traditional style



5 Walcot Buildings [right] Early example of sans serif 'gothic' letterform (Stephens Shanks No 3) circa 1890



11-13 Milsom Street Artistic fascia lettering



- e **Raising and Shading** The effectiveness of traditional letter forms was heightened by the addition of simulated three dimensional returns (raising) with graded shading and shadows and the use of novel colour combinations. This technique can often be seen to good effect in railway or pub lettering.
- f **Decorative Lettering** From the early 19th century a variety of decorative letter forms were developed, some of which were produced as stock letters in three-dimensional materials (8.2d), and which were particularly effective as fascia lettering.
- g **Artistic Lettering** In the later 19th century various artistic letter forms appeared which owed their inspiration to the Art Nouveau style.
- h **Early Modern Lettering** This was usually sans serif and geometric in character. It was either used with discipline (as in Gill Sans) or creatively (as in Art Deco).
- i **Later Modern Lettering** Present day shopfront lettering is of wide variety, making use of both new and earlier styles.

8.5 SIGNS AND LETTERING: GUIDELINES

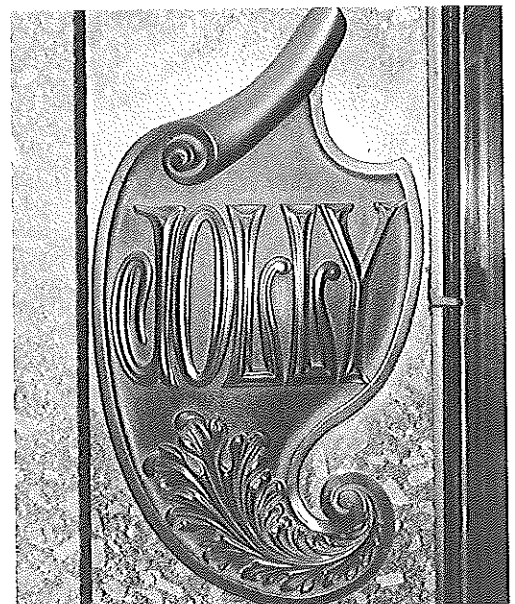
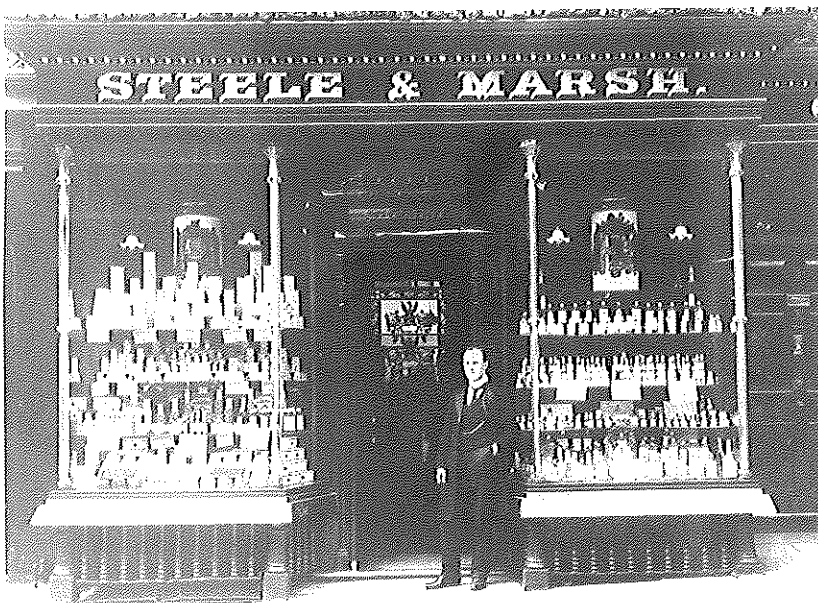
Signs and lettering must accord with the advertising policies of the City Council.

- a **Style** The design and disposition of signs, and the style of the lettering should always be historically credible, and correct in design and detail for the style of the shopfront. Ideally they should be of the appropriate original style, but could be 'later additions'.
- b **Historic Letter Forms** A revival of historic letters forms for use on shopfronts of appropriate style will be encouraged.
- c **Design** The lettering should be well-proportioned in relation to the length and depth of the fascia or other signboard and in its placing on it. The shape of the lettering as a whole should be satisfying. The wording should normally be as simple and direct as possible.
- d **Signwriting** Signwriting should only be commissioned from signwriters sympathetic to the style and quality required. Gilding is recommended as creating real quality at relatively little additional expense.
- e **Numbering** The shop should always have a street number, for ease of identification, either on the fascia, where it should be in the same style as the fascia lettering, or in another easily visible position (e.g. the large brass '7' on the door pilaster to 7 Old Bond Street).

- f **Signs and Lettering in Other Materials** Traditional three-dimensional lettering (8.2.d), glass-fronted signs (8.2.e) and engraved lettering on brass stall plates (8.2f) will be encouraged where appropriate.
- g **Hanging Signs** The revival of early trade symbol signs will be encouraged in appropriate streets or groups. Well-designed hanging board signs will be encouraged in appropriate streets or groups.
- h **Brackets** Hanging signs should be hung from well designed and detailed metal brackets made by a skilled ironworker (not to be confused with the inappropriate curly brackets often used).
- i **Fixed Projecting Signs** These, being inherently clumsy in comparison with hanging signs, will generally be discouraged unless they are particularly well designed and suitable for their context.
- j **Box and Illuminated Signs** These are inappropriate on traditional shopfronts.
- k **Signs and Lettering in Other Positions** Additional signs and lettering of appropriate design may be acceptable in other positions particularly for Victorian/Edwardian shopfronts, consistent with the general design of the shopfront.
- l **Box and Illuminated Signs** The addition of trivial additional features, such as small flags or lights will be resisted.

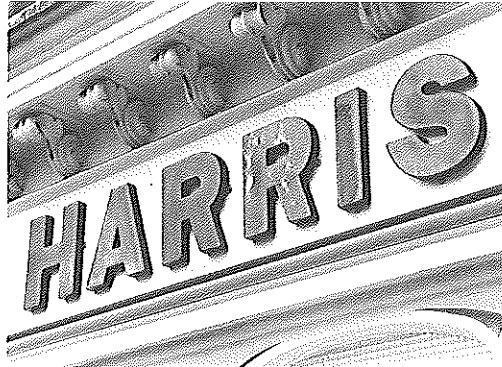
6 Milsom Street [lower left]

11-13 Milsom Street
[below right] Bronze cartouche

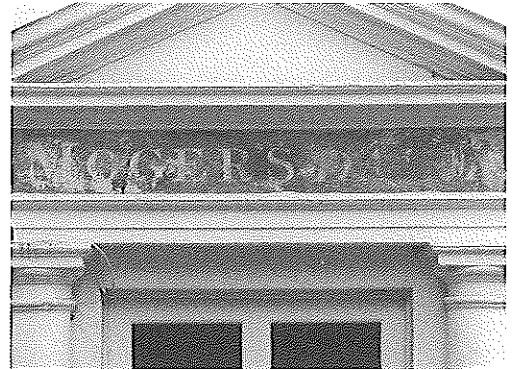


Signs and Lettering

14 Green Street [left]
Three-dimensional wood
lettering



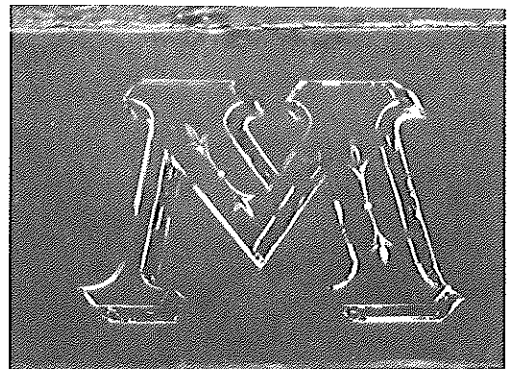
Ston Hill [right]
Rare survival of original
English lettering painted in
white on a black background



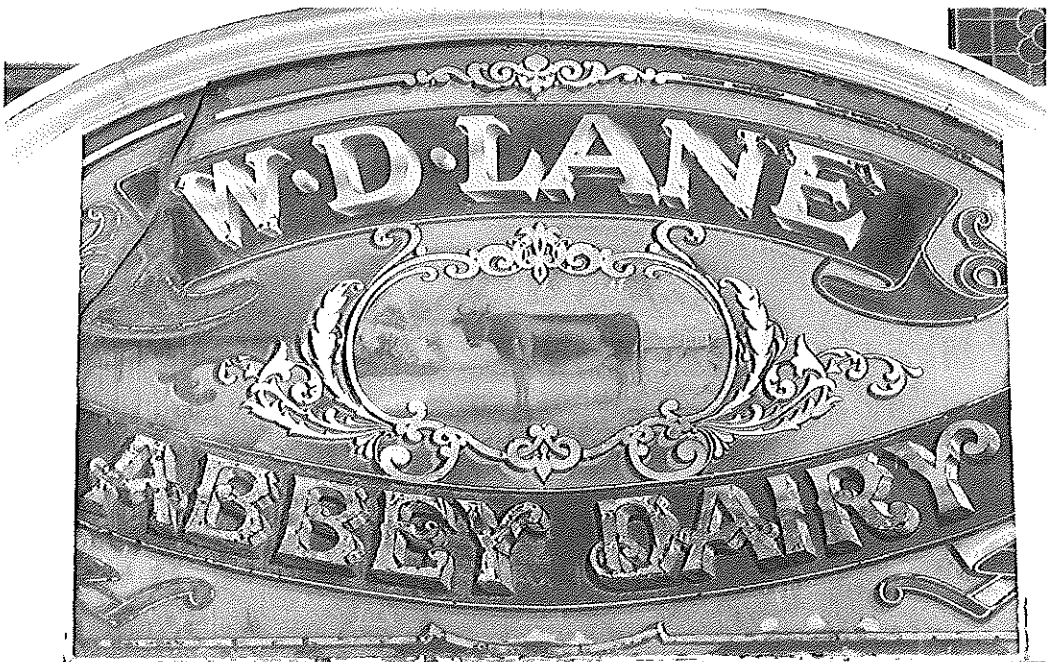
18 The Corridor [left]
Engraved brass stall plate.
'Bussy' was a firm of stationers



17 Margaret's Buildings
[right] Engraved brass plate
'Marie Goll'



13 Lower Borough Walls
Glass-faced sign for Abbey
Dairy



Other Aspects

Protection from the Sun and Weather

Security

Ventilation

External Illumination

Access for People with a Disability

Floral Display

9-1 PROTECTION FROM THE SUN AND WEATHER

- a **Generally** Protection from direct sunlight is needed for goods displayed in shop windows. The colours of fabrics or books are liable to fade, and food to deteriorate if unprotected. It may also be desirable to keep the interior cool and to protect goods displayed in front of the shop, and to provide shelter for customers and passers-by.
- b **Vertical Blinds** Roller blinds were available from the early 18th century, and it is presumed that they were used on early shopfronts. Victorian photographs show both external curtain blinds and internal curtain or roller blinds as protection from the sun.
- c **Projecting Roller Blinds** Projecting blinds appear on shops in the High Street shown on a watercolour of c1776 (front cover of Bath History, Vol. 2). At first the blind box was simply added on top of the cornice (35 Broad Street). It was not until the general re-think of shopfront design following the increased use of plate glass (*circa*1845) that the blind box was integrated into the design of the shopfront. From then onwards no shop with any pretensions was without its roller blind(s), and they gave an air of prosperity to the main shopping streets. Roller blinds were usually of un-coloured canvas, with or without side valances, though some had painted lettering. Many blind boxes survive in Bath, and some are in use (32 Milsom Street, 12 Northumberland Place). There is a modern type of roller blind, without a blind box, but with a surface mounted roller and cranked arms (3 and 33 Milsom Street, 8 Westgate Street).
- d **Dutch Blinds** *Dutch* or *Continental* blinds are a relatively recent importation. With their curved canopy and filled ends they have a solid look in contrast to the two-dimensional appearance of the roller blind. Although capable of folding back they are usually left in the open position. They are made either of coloured canvas or shiny plastic, often in bright colours, and are usually fixed below the fascia, thus appearing to lower the shopfront opening and spoiling its proportions, possibly also obscuring interesting architectural features such as arcading. A mixture of *Dutch* and projecting roller blinds in a street can be visually confusing.
- e **Canopies** Traditionally, butchers' shops had flat or inclined canopies above the fascia instead of a cornice, to protect the display in front of the shop. These should normally be retained where they survive (27 Belvedere, 10 and 15 Green Street). Recently a new type of rigid canopy with a sloping top has appeared. This is usually fixed below the fascia. Though neater in appearance than *Dutch* blinds they may still spoil the proportions of the shopfront.

f Other Methods of Protection from the Sun These include Venetian blinds, solar glass, solar film and yellow plastic sheet.

g Protection from the Sun and Weather: Guidelines

i External Projecting Roller Blinds The use of external projecting roller blinds on Victorian/Edwardian shopfronts is generally encouraged where appropriate. The traditional type should be used where the blind box already exists or on new shopfronts of Victorian/Edwardian style, where it can be built in. Alternatively a modern roller blind could be acceptable, according to the design of the shopfront.

ii Dutch Blinds Dutch blinds are not appropriate for shopfronts in the city.

iii Canopies Modern rigid canopies are not appropriate for traditional shopfronts in the city, and may not be acceptable for modern shopfronts.

iv Other Methods of Protection from the Sun Solar glass and solar film are acceptable providing they are clear and uncoloured.

9-2 SECURITY

a Generally Security in some form or another is normally required to prevent break-ins and the stealing of stock, and as a separate issue protection may be required against the wilful breaking of glass.

b Wooden Shutters From the mid 18th century to the 1870's and beyond, lifting wooden shutters were provided as the general means of security and protection for shop windows and doors. (4.4l, 4.4t)

c Roller Shutters These were introduced in the early 19th century. (5.5a) The early ones have wooden slats, modern ones usually have metal slats. A large box is required to house the rolled shutter, and the side guides can be visually obtrusive. When the shutters are down the effect is featureless, and may be detrimental to the character of the street.

d Security Grilles Retractable security grilles are frequently fitted behind the glass. Some types are more visually distracting than others, particularly those with a criss-cross mesh.

e Safety Glass Toughened glass is designed to resist breakage, and to disintegrate into harmless fragments if broken, laminated glass or security film will prevent the glass scattering if broken.

- f **Anti-bandit glass** Anti-bandit glasses generally have thicker interlayers than laminated safety glasses, and are used for jewellers' windows.
- f **Burglar Alarms** Bell boxes can be visually distracting, particularly if unnecessarily large, brightly coloured or insensitively placed.
- g **Security Locks etc.** These include mortice locks, security bolts and removable bars to shop doors, and security bolts and fixed bars to fanlights.
- h **Security: Guidelines**
 - i *Generally* The shop should be provided with security and protection measures appropriate to the risk.
 - ii *Wooden Shutters* Lift-off wooden window and door shutters are a practical means of protection, and the use of correctly designed and detailed shutters is generally acceptable for use on classical shopfronts and early Victorian shopfronts with shutter slots and doors with shutter recesses.
 - iii *Roller Shutters* External roller shutters are not generally acceptable.
 - iv *Security Grilles* Internal security grilles are only acceptable if they are the only satisfactory means of protection appropriate to the risk, and are of visually discreet design.
 - v *Security Film* Security film is acceptable providing it is clear and uncoloured.
 - vi *Burglar Alarms* Bell boxes should be of visually discreet design and colour and should be placed in an unobtrusive position. Wiring should be concealed.

9.3 VENTILATION

- a **Generally** All shops require ventilation, for the benefit of the stock, the staff and the customers. The amount needed will vary according to the trade and the extent of protection required from the sun. In many shops the doors are left open for most of the time, thus providing sufficient ventilation. Unventilated shop windows are liable to condensation. Additional ventilation is commonly provided, particularly for food shops.
- b **Traditional Means of Providing Ventilation** Full-width plain or decorated grilles over shop windows, for greengrocers' shops etc. (6 George Street, 78 Walcot Street). Sash windows for butchers' shops (16 Cheap Street). Opening fanlights above shop doorways. Grilles in stall risers in association with grilles in stall-boards. Grilles in panels of shop doors, in fanlights over, or in overdoors. Grilles in soffits of lobbies. Added small-pane opening lights to shop window (11 Queen Street). At the back of the shop or in roof lights.

c Ventilation: Guideline

Provide adequate ventilation to the shopfront as appropriate for the position, trade, and style of the shopfront.

9.4 EXTERNAL ILLUMINATION

- a **Generally** External lanterns were sometimes provided to 18th century and early 19th century shopfronts, usually over the shop doorway. Oil-burning lamps with glass globes and metal tops were used. These were usually of similar type to those used for street lighting, or fixed to overthrows in front of houses (Lansdown Crescent). They were superseded first by gas-burning, and then by electrical lamps. Sometimes a larger lantern supported on an elaborate bracket was provided as a special feature.

At present, with higher levels of street lighting and of window lighting generally, there is less need of external illumination. However, some traders like to spot-light their fascias or hanging signs, particularly for restaurants open in the evening.

b External Illumination: Guidelines

The character of a shopfront and of the street will be altered by external illumination. This is often not acceptable, particularly where the shopfront is part of a listed building. Where provided it should be kept to the minimum and be of low-key type.

- i *Traditional Lamps may be acceptable for classical and early Victorian shopfronts where of suitable scale and design.*
- ii *Modern Light Fittings may be acceptable generally, where of discreet design (i.e. of matt black finish rather than brass) with a concealed or low-key light source, and with concealed cables and gear. The installation of swan-neck light fittings is unacceptable.*

9.5 ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

- a **Generally** As far as possible access to shops for people with a disability should be provided to the standards laid down in current legislation and administered by the Building Control Officer. Where this would involve alterations to a shopfront which is part of a Listed building, the Listed Buildings Architect should be consulted.
- b **Steps** Many traditional shopfronts in Bath have a step or steps to the shop doorway. This was usually a consequence of early conversion from a house to a shop, and is almost always impractical to eliminate, due to physical restraints and to Listed Buildings considerations.

- c **Ramps** Where there is only one low step and it is well set back from the front of the shopfront, it may be possible to form a short ramp (maximum 1:12). This should be provided with a non-slip surface (37 Milsom Street).
- d **Access for People with a Disability: Guideline** Provide adequate access for people with a disability as far as the circumstances allow without detriment to the design of the shopfront.

9.6 FLORAL DISPLAY

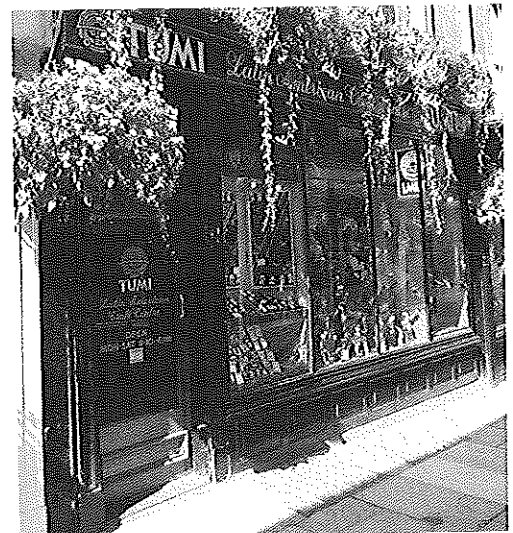
- a **Generally** The display of flowers on shopfronts is one of the attractions of the city. The tradition is not new (see photograph showing hanging baskets in The Corridor, 1905). Typically, flowering plants are planted in boxes placed on the cornice, or in wire baskets suspended from brackets on the shopfront or the front wall of the building.

b FLORAL DISPLAY: GUIDELINES

- i **Floral Displays** *Floral Displays on shopfronts are generally acceptable. The arrangement of the flower boxes or hanging baskets should be in sympathy with the design of the shopfront and should not obscure interesting architectural elements, particularly those of shopfronts of exceptional interest. Flower boxes should be removed at the end of the flowering season.*
- ii **Flower Boxes** *Flower boxes should be waterproof, and be of a recessive colour such as dark green or black, or white on a white shopfront. Boxes imitating stone or other materials should not be used.*
- iii **Brackets** *Brackets should be in metal of simple traditional design and construction.*
- iv **Water** *Care should be taken in the placing of flower containers, and in watering, to avoid any flow of water onto of the shopfront, as persistent run-off can cause decay.*

2 Abbey Street (left)

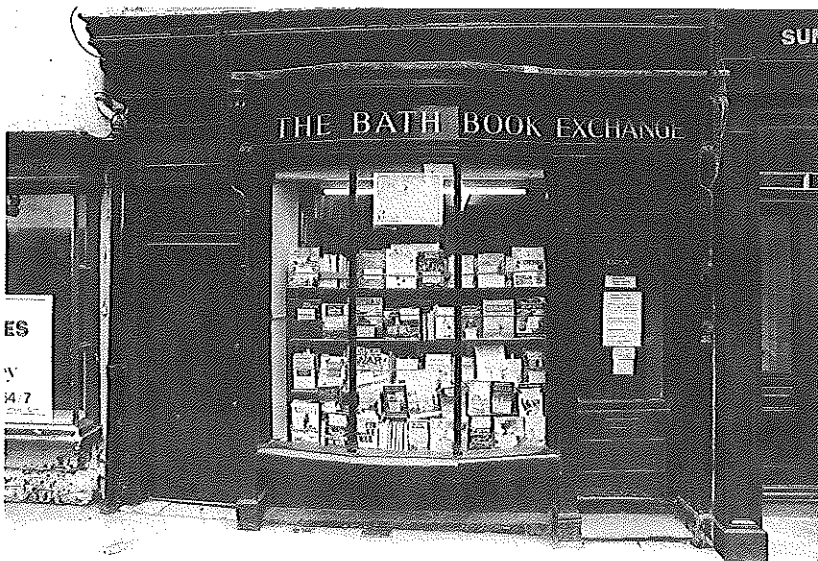
New Bond Street Place (right)



Other Aspects

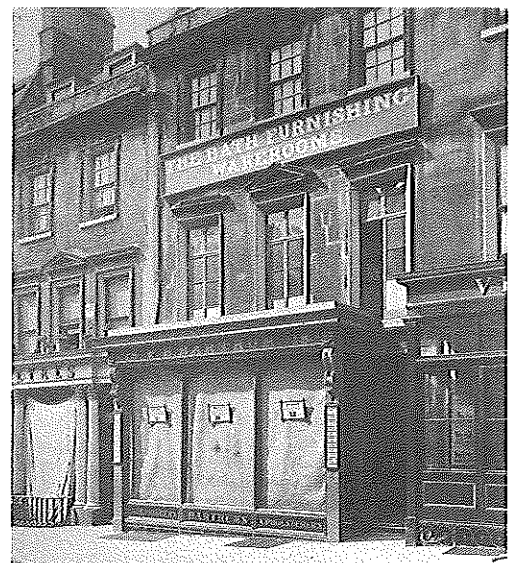
35 Broad Street Blind-box added over cornice.

Note that on the left, 34 Broad Street the glazing bars have been removed from the front face of the window, but remain in the returns

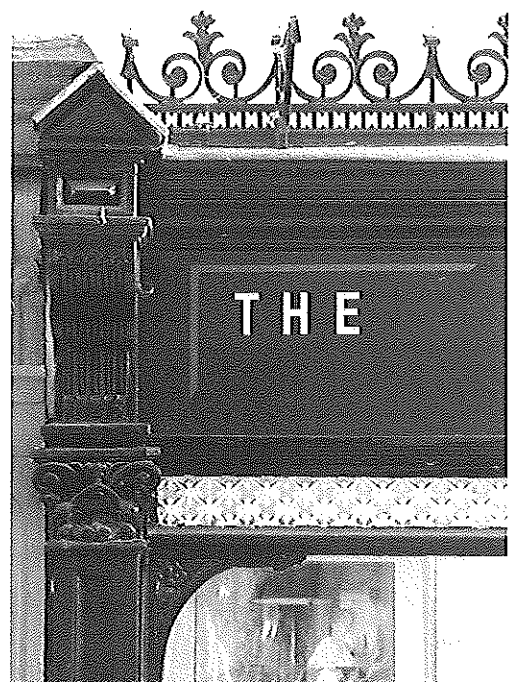


18 Milsom Street 1884

Before rebuilding of front of building. Note external curtain blinds to number 17 and internal curtain blinds to number 18



27 Belvedere Butcher's canopy



78 Walcot Street Decorative cast iron ventilation grille to window head

Materials and Construction

10.1

This section describes the materials and construction recommended for new classical and new Victorian/Edwardian shopfronts, and is based on the premise that to be authentic, new work in traditional style should employ the same materials and construction as the original work, or their close equivalents. There is no reason why this should not be substantially achieved as the traditional materials and skills are generally available.

10.2 WOOD

- a **Wood for General Use** Baltic redwood was used in the 18th and early 19th century, for shopfront joinery generally and is still suitable if well selected. Of these, best quality redwood is most suitable. Douglas Fir is an alternative where a higher quality wood is required, though it may be subject to ecological considerations if it is not from a sustainable source.
- b **Hardwood** Hardwood, usually mahogany, was often used for high quality shopfronts, particularly those of Victorian and later date. It is well suited to fine glazing bars and carved detail. The use of new tropical hardwood is now discouraged for ecological reasons, though the use of good quality re-cycled hardwood is acceptable.
- c **Wood for Specific Purposes** Parana pine is suitable for fascias, as it is available in long lengths, and widths up to 300 mm, and has a fine surface for painting and lettering, though it requires restraining to prevent warping. English oak is suitable for thresholds and steps. French oak is suitable for glazing bars.
- d **Framing and Panelling** Framing and panelling are basic to traditional joinery. Panels should be made of solid natural wood. Modern sheet materials with applied mouldings should never be used as a substitute.
- e **Modern Sheet Materials** Modern boards such as plywood, blockboard or chipboard are too mechanical in appearance, retain an open texture even after painting, and their exposed edges require lipping, and should therefore not be used on the exteriors of traditional shopfronts. Medium density fibreboard (MDF) is a higher quality material. It is too regular in appearance for authentic classical work, but could be suitable for some new late Victorian/Edwardian work as a more perfect finish was originally aimed for.
- f **Moulded Sections** These are expressive of style, and therefore must be correct for the style of the shopfront. They can either be based strictly on original examples or be knowledgeably developed from them. A length of the original moulding with the paint stripped off is the best guide for commissioning a moulding, but a careful drawing prepared with the aid of a fine profile gauge, with an allowance made for the paint thickness, is the next best thing. Mouldings should always be drawn full size, in order to establish the scale of the work, and avoid inaccuracy in manufacture. The basic geometry of the moulding should be analysed to establish its true character. At present, mouldings will generally need to be specially cut for each shopfront. Stock mouldings are usually generalised versions of Victorian mouldings and are therefore not suitable for classical shopfronts. They are likely to have only limited value for authentic Victorian/Edwardian style work.

- g **Architectural Elements** The larger architectural elements, such as cornices, columns and pilasters usually made up of smaller sections. This is practical in construction, economical in material, and less liable to distortion. However, the large consoles of Edwardian shopfronts are typically carved out of one piece of mahogany.
- h **Curved Work** Curved work is not unusual in shopfront design and should not present any disproportionate difficulty. The horizontal glazing bars of bow-fronted windows should be curved in plan on the outside, and straight on the inside. They are glazed with flat glass. Curved fascias are made by steaming and bending a thin (12 mm) solid pine board to the curve required.
- i **Dimensions** Before metrication, all shopfronts were built to finished imperial dimensions. Some of these dimensions were regularly repeated, and can easily be recognised, such as pilaster widths of 3, 4, 5 or 6 inches, or clear fascia depths between 6 and 10 inches. Imperial dimensions should therefore be maintained for traditional work generally by using the nearest metric equivalent.
- j **Finish** Visible machine marks on exposed joinery are obviously undesirable as they destroy the feeling of authenticity, and should therefore be avoided. Prominent external angles should be lightly rubbed down to reduce the likelihood of damage.
- k **Fixing** Applied mouldings should be either screwed or nailed as appropriate, using non-ferrous or plated screws or nails. Exposed screw holes should be pelleted.
- l **Turning** Turning, using a suitable close-grained wood, is employed for making colonnettes, pendants, paterae, balusters supporting window shelves, etc.
- m **Carving** Capitals, consoles, modillions and other sizeable architectural elements of wooden shopfronts should normally be carved in wood. Yellow pine is suitable for this purpose where the shopfront is to be painted. Small scale enrichment or decoration can either be carved, or cast in *compo*. *Enrichment* refers to repetitive decoration of mouldings, *decoration* to individual decorated elements.

10-3 OTHER MATERIALS

- a **Composition *compo*** Small-scale or low relief enrichment or decoration was often made of composition. This is a hard putty-like material made from whiting, glue and linseed oil, formed by being pressed into a mould. Many of the original hardwood moulds dating from the 1780s have been retained by one long-established firm, who can supply castings from them. They can be fixed with woodworking adhesive. *Compo* should not be used in exposed positions unless well protected. Plaster is not recommended as a substitute for *compo*; as it is far less precise and is also more fragile.

- b **Wrought Iron** Wrought iron is a versatile material and was used for most of the metalwork on 18th century shopfronts (railings, grilles, shutter bars and brackets, door furniture, etc.). It is more rust resistant than mild steel, its modern replacement. It is not generally available, except for the product of a rolling mill in Ironbridge and for re-cycled material. Ideally wrought iron should be used where finesse in form and detail is required.
- c **Cast Iron** Cast iron superseded wrought iron in the early 19th century for many purposes. It was the ideal material for reproducing the formalized decoration of the Greek Revival on shopfronts (decorative railings, grilles, clerestory glazing divisions, door furniture, etc.). It was also used for the structural columns required when forming openings for shopfronts. Later its use was sometimes extended to encompass almost all the elements of a shopfront, though there are few examples of this phase in Bath (12 George Street has cast iron colonettes and cresting). Cast iron is available in a wide range of traditional designs.
- d **Lead** The top surface of the cornice should normally be protected by leadwork. The lead should project to form a drip to throw the rainwater clear of the woodwork, and should never be turned under, as this directs the rainwater over the woodwork. The standards and details recommended by the Lead Sheet Association should be followed.
- e **Stone** In Bath this means Bath stone. The stall risers of most early shopfronts are in stone as they were part of the front wall of the building. Bath stone was often used in the mid/late 19th century for party-wall pilasters and capitals. Granite was used from the late 19th century for stall risers, cills, plinths and columns. Marble (usually white) was used for thresholds, flooring to entrance lobbies, and for the stall risers and counter slabs of butchers' and fishmongers' shops.
- f **Mosaic** Marble mosaic was used for floors to entrance lobbies.
- g **Glazed Tiling** Glazed tiling was used both internally and externally. Sometimes the whole shopfront was tiled, including moulded decoration and lettering (3 Bladud Buildings is tiled, but now painted). Attractive painted tile panels were sometimes included.
- h **Brass** Brass was used for nosings and threshold plates, engraved stall plates, handrails, lettering in lobby floors, name and number plates, and door furniture. Often these were latter additions, added to fulfil particular practical or promotional requirements.

- i **Bronze** From the late 19th century onwards, bronze was sometimes used as an integral element of the design (window and door frames, glazing bars, doors) and also for decorative features, lettering etc.
- j **Glass** Crown glass contributes to the character of an early shopfront by its brilliance and sweeping form, cylinder glass by its texture. Ideally glass should be of the type used in original examples of that style, particularly in conservation work. New cylinder glass, though obtainable through one specialist supplier, is expensive, and crown glass (recently revived) still more so. They are only made in thicknesses of up to 3mm. Glass made to imitate crown glass is not recommended. Modern float glass is therefore the most practical option for general use. Either cylinder or greenhouse glass could be used in fanlights or for clerestory glazing if texture is required.

Curved glass is not as expensive as might be thought, especially in narrow widths, particularly if standard radii are used. Traditional decorative glass (bevelled, cut, ground, etched, coloured or stained) will be appropriate in the right context. Modern decorative glass should never be used on shopfronts of earlier date or style than its first use, nor should tinted or non-reflective glass (which gives a dead effect). Requirements for minimum glass thickness and for safety glass are given in the Building Regulations.

10.4 SECONDARY ELEMENTS

- a **Fanlights** Fanlights should be correct in style and construction for the date or style of the shop. The combination metal fanlights of *circa* 1780-1840 consisted of structural fins of non-ferrous metal or tinned wrought iron set in a wooden frame, with a moulded lead facing, and cast lead ornament (9 and 16 Argyle Street). There is a specialist fanlight maker who can make fanlights of authentic design and construction. The common substitution of leaded lights for the fanlights of classical shopfronts is inappropriate, looks too flat, and is liable to sag.
- b **Door Furniture** Door furniture should either be correct for the date of the shopfront, or clearly be a later addition of compatible type. 18th century and early 19th century door furniture was of wrought or cast iron, or brass of modest size. The modern tendency to use overlarge brass door furniture on doors of this period should be resisted. Never use modern *black ironwork* as a substitute for either wrought or cast iron. Re-use original examples of traditional door furniture if suitable examples are available.
- c **Shutters** Lifting window and door shutters were provided to all classical shopfronts with only rare exceptions, and to early Victorian shopfronts with shutter slots above the windows. The shutters are usually 1 inch thick and flush panelled with half-round beads. Window shutters have rebated stiles; they often have split wrought iron protective angles either to the bottom corners or to all four corners.

- d **Shutter bars and keeps** The full set of shutter bar(s), shutter bar keeps, support brackets and lift handle(s) should be correctly designed and detailed. Coach bolts and sash bolts are readily available. Stubs and plates for the tops of door shutters are obtainable from at least one architectural ironmonger.

10-5 FINISHES

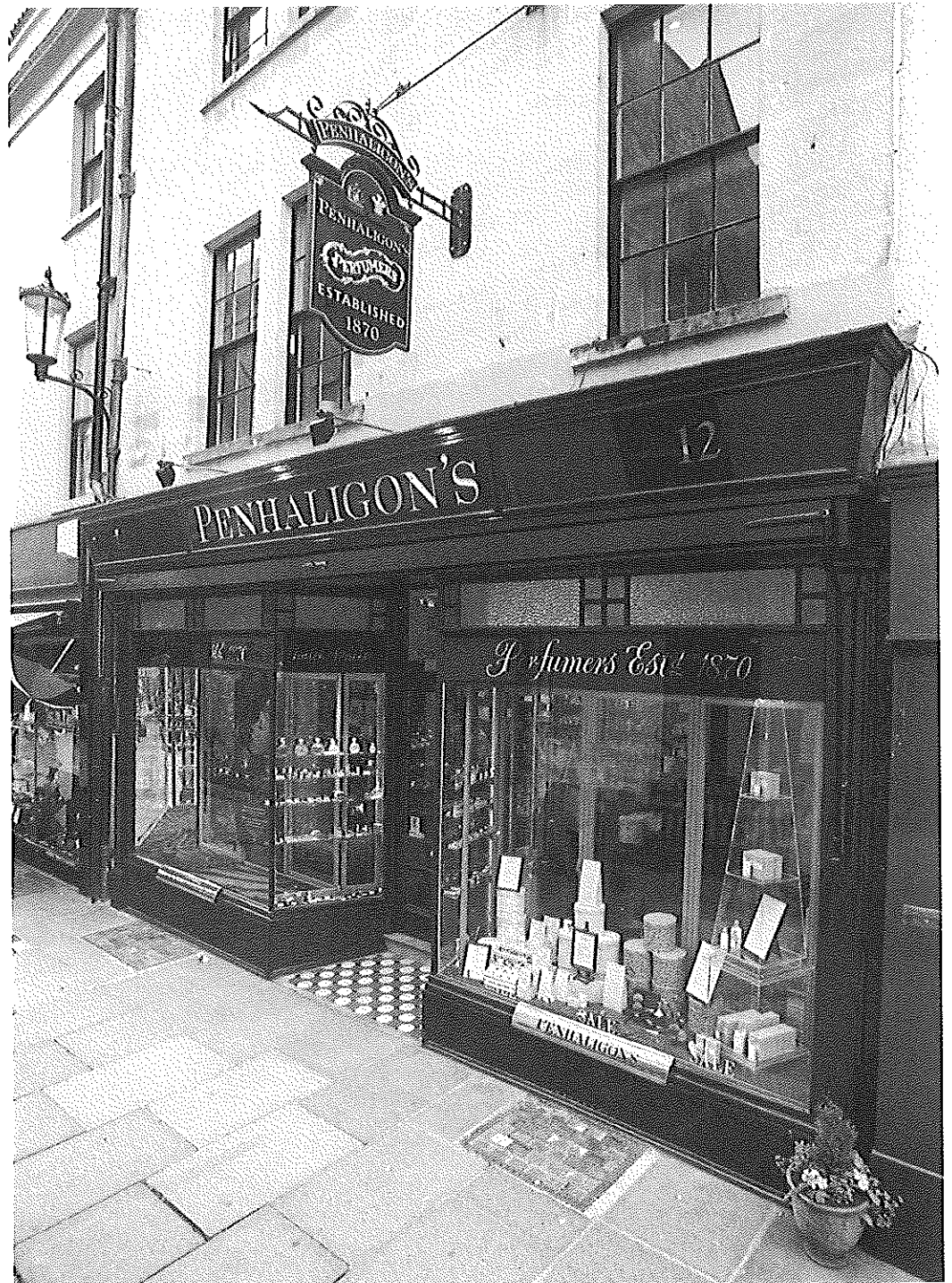
- a **Paintwork** Generally 18th century and early 19th century shopfronts were designed to be painted. The lead paint used was less glossy than modern high gloss paints. A semi-gloss paint is therefore appropriate and looks well on classical shopfronts, though gloss is entirely acceptable as it has long been the traditional finish. Paints containing either pigments available historically, or modern matching colours, can be obtained from specialist paint suppliers. Shopfronts constructed in softwood were never left unpainted and finished only in stain or varnish.
- b **Graining, Marbling, Bronzing** In the early 19th century in particular, these techniques were used for simulating expensive natural materials and were frequently used on shopfronts. They are only convincing and aesthetically satisfying if carried out expertly.
- c **Signwriting and Gilding** Surfaces to be signwritten or gilded should be given a thorough preparation, including additional coats of paint well rubbed down. Gilding gives a brilliant effect and is suitable for all types of shopfront. Gold paint is generally less suitable, depending on quality, and will look grainy and dull by comparison. Transfer lettering is not appropriate; the standard faces and sizes available are limited and the effect is mechanical.

10-6 CONTRACTORS AND TRADESMEN

It is advisable to employ contractors and tradesmen skilled in their trades and sympathetic to the traditional approach to materials and construction proposed in these guidelines.

Materials and Construction

12 Northumberland Place



Conservation

- 11-1 *Conservation: General Approach* The conservation of traditional shopfronts may raise further issues beyond those relevant to new work. The shopfront may possess architectural or historic interest which make it irreplaceable. It is all too easy to lose these qualities as a result of ill-considered repair or restoration.

11-2 RESEARCH, SURVEY AND EVALUATION

Conservation, in the case of a shopfront, is a broad concept embracing all the interventions made to ensure its survival, enhancement and continued validity. It usually includes repair, often includes restoration, and sometimes includes alterations or additions.

The necessary preliminaries, common to all conservation work, are thorough research, survey and evaluation before commencement.

- a **Research** Consult the Shopfront Record on the shopfront in question and also an adjacent or comparable shopfronts if relevant. Follow up any references given and carry out additional research. Search for old photographs of the shop held by owners, previous owners or adjoining shopkeepers. Assess the context of the shopfront at all levels particularly by comparison with other shopfronts of interest in the street or group, and of similar type elsewhere.
- b **Survey** Take record photographs at the outset before anything is removed. These should include an elevation of the shopfront including its relationship with the building above and with adjoining shopfronts, and details of any features of interest. Remove any obviously valueless modern coverings. Prepare a measured survey and a schedule of condition.
- c **Evaluation** Analyze all defects and establish their cause. Look for evidence of missing features such as the tenon holes of mullions or glazing bars. Establish extent and sequence of any alterations and additions and list all additional elements to be retained. Investigate paintwork. Agree a Conservation Strategy with officers of the City Council, differentiating between works of repair, restoration and alteration or addition.

11-3 REPAIR

- a *Repair: General Approach* The repair of traditional shopfronts of interest should follow the principles of conservative repair, where the intention is that only the minimum of original material should be replaced. The material of which the shopfront is made, the techniques of its construction and its finer points of detail are all integral to its interest.

Replacement for its own sake for the purpose of making new again has no place in this approach, as it would remove the signs of authenticity which may be part of its character and interest.

- b **Safeguarding Repair** Repairs in this category are usually a matter of eliminating the source of damp, and should be dealt with as first priority. They may include refixing or renewal of leadwork, the repair or replacement of rainwater gutters or pipes, the filling of open joints or holes, or re-painting.
- c **Structural Repair** Establish the cause of any structural failure and correct it preferably using material and techniques to match those of the original. Alternatively, if these are considered inadequate, provide discreet strengthening in another material or technique such as steelwork or epoxy resin.

Sometimes it is not possible, or desirable, to straighten a distorted shopfront. The distortion may have become a pleasing aspect of its character (29 Walcot Buildings). It is difficult to straighten a bulging bow window, for example, without extensive replacement of the glazing bars, as the joints will have broken. It would be preferable either to leave it alone, or to provide strengthening in the form of discreet steel straps or cables.

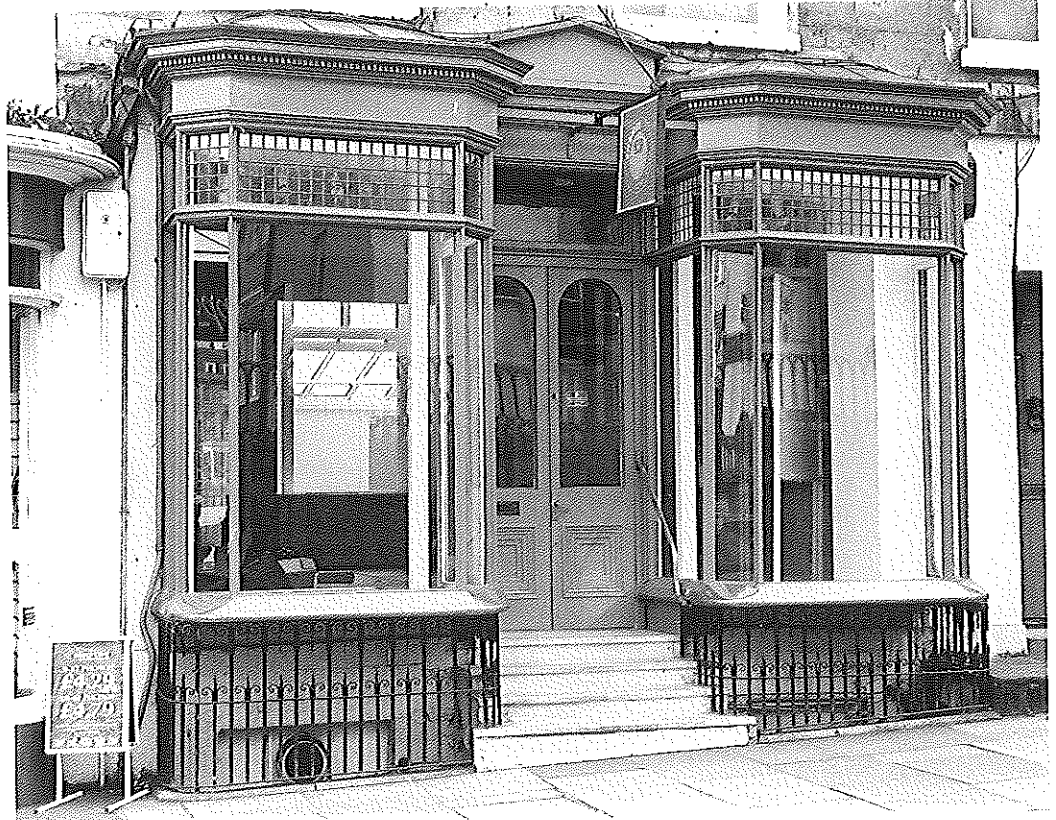
- d **Repair of Woodwork** Woodwork may be affected by wet rot or dry rot, damaged by impact, abrasion or repeated fixings, or by the failure of joints or fixings. Woodwork affected by wet rot should be cut out, removing no more than is necessary. Where there is dry rot the surrounding woodwork and masonry should be treated, but the extensive removal of sound woodwork should be resisted, as this should not be necessary if the cause of the outbreak has been eliminated. Replacement of full lengths of mouldings is rarely required. The profiles of the new sections should match those of the old exactly. Use wood of similar species and moisture content so that it will behave in a similar way. Selected second-hand wood is suitable for this purpose. The use of epoxy resin fillers can reduce the amount of wood replacement necessary, particularly for small holes and splits..
- e **Stripping of Paintwork** Unless it has been stripped at some time or another, an old shopfront will be coated with many layers of paint. This gives a sure sign of authenticity and may contribute to its interest and aesthetic appeal. The paint layers may conceal the original or later colour schemes of interest, and also fascia lettering. Early fascia lettering would be of special interest, as very few examples survive; should any examples be discovered the later layers of paint should be removed by a conservator.

Stripping and scraping usually cause damage to mouldings. If the paintwork is in sound condition and few repairs are required, there is no point in complete stripping. Any local areas requiring stripping to aid investigation, paint analysis or repair can be built up again to the previous surface level. Generally stripping should be carried out with non-caustic chemical strippers. Either burning off or hot air stripping should be avoided as this dries out the wood, making it very easily damaged. The paint should be removed from fine mouldings by brushes rather than scrapers.

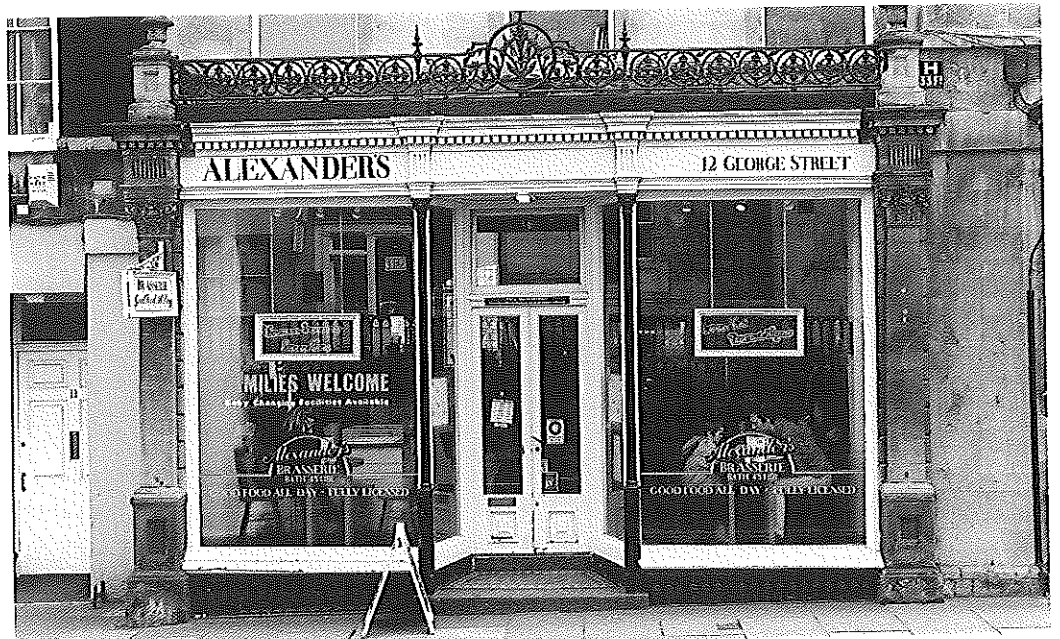
- f **Repair of Stonework** The correct method of repair depends on the position and condition of the stonework, but in general decayed or damaged stonework should be cut out and replaced by matching stone, rather than made good with plastic stone or rendering. Reconstructed stone should not be used as a substitute for natural stone.

Conservation

9 George Street



12 George Street



- g **Repair of Leadwork** Failure of leadwork is usually due to poor design. If the spacing between joints is too great or the lead is too light in weight for its length, it will form ridges when subject to thermal movement, and these will eventually crack. Any long-term repair will require replacement of the leadwork to an improved design.
- h **Retention of Early Glass** Where crown or cylinder glass survives it should be retained. If the glass is to be re-set the putty should first be softened by means of a low heat source.
- i **Repair of Fanlights** Combination metal fanlights are difficult to repair in situ, except for the replacement of missing cast lead ornament, which can be fixed with an epoxy adhesive. More extensive repairs should be carried out in a workshop. This will involve the removal of the fanlight complete with its wooden frame. Stripping of paintwork to fanlights in position is not generally advisable as the leadwork is easily damaged. In any case the paintwork may contribute to its character and interest.
- j **Paint Stripping to Composition Ornament** Composition is easily damaged by stripping and this should only be done if skill and patience can be relied on. The paintwork should not be burnt off but should be removed by using a non-caustic chemical stripper. The stripper should not be allowed to remain on long enough to soften the composition, and should be removed as soon as it shows through, and then neutralized.

11.4 RESTORATION

- a **Restoration: General Approach** Restoration is the re-creation of something which once existed, either to its original state, or possibly to a later state. If the restoration is not accurate it will not be a true restoration, but will be a change to something else. **The new work should match the original or later work of interest, in material, construction and design. Restoration should be based on sound evidence.**
- b **Restoration: Evidence** Evidence should be gathered from all available sources, including:

*A physical examination of the shopfront.
(This is the most reliable form of evidence).
Early or later photographs.
Working or design drawings.
Engravings, artists' drawings or watercolours.
By comparison with shopfronts of similar type and date.*

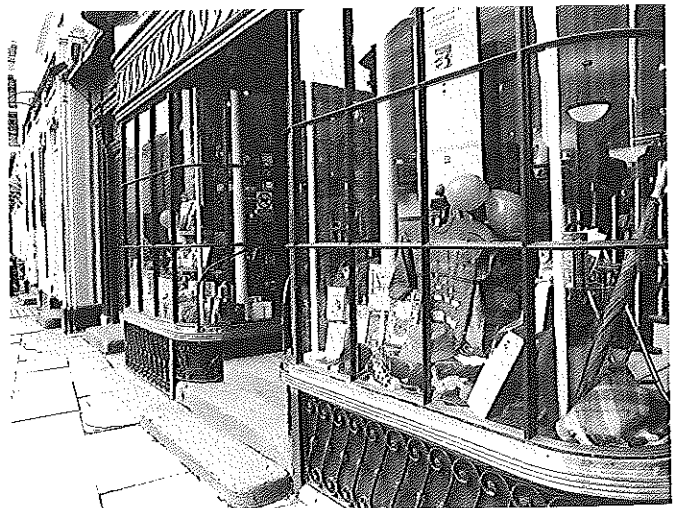
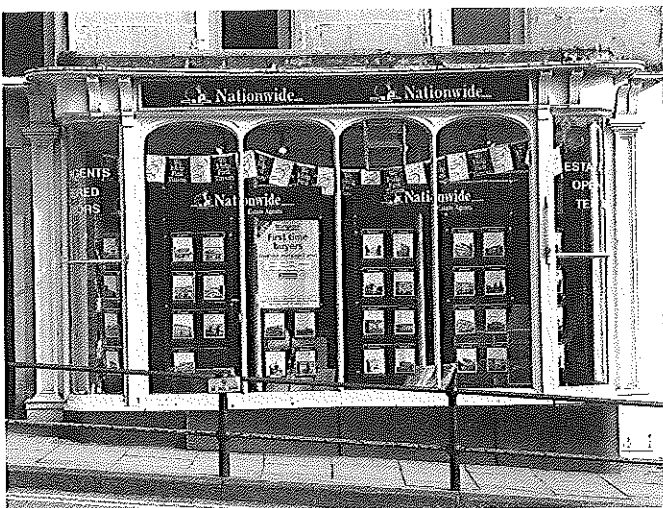
- c Restoration: Detailed Aspects** The detailed aspects of restoration work have much in common with those of new work, and the relevant sections of these guidelines should therefore be consulted (Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 for design aspects, section 10 for materials and construction).
- d Elements Which May Justify Restoration** Subject to individual circumstances, missing, altered, or replaced elements may justify restoration. These may include any of the elements listed in the schedules of architectural elements of either classical (4.4) or Victorian/Edwardian shopfronts (5.5), original or later colour schemes of interest, signs and lettering, projecting roller blinds or traditional lamps.

11.5 ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

- a Existing Alterations** Generally alterations occurred either when classical shopfronts were altered to suit Victorian ideas, for example by the removal of glazing bars and the substitution either of mullions or of plate glass, or by the modernisation of traditional shopfronts in the 20th Century to suit modern ideas by the enlargement of the fascia and/or removal of architectural features. Sometimes the Victorian alterations are of interest in themselves (8 George Street, 32 Gay Street) and should be retained, others are not, such as the squaring or splaying of quadrant-ended bays, and should normally be reversed. Typically, modern alterations contradict the nature of traditional shopfronts, and are rarely of value in the context of these guidelines. Shopfronts were also altered to suit specific trade requirements, in particular those of butchers or fishmongers. Colour schemes and fascia lettering of early shopfronts have usually been altered many times.

32 Gay Street (left)

14 Abbey Churchyard (right)



- b **Existing Additions** Additional minor elements such as wall and hanging signs, glass fascia lettering, external showcases, enamelled advertisement panels, brass cill plates, trade figures, and door furniture, were sometimes added, and may contribute to the special character of the shopfront. If these additions are interesting or attractive they should be retained, preferably in their original positions. Alternatively, where acceptable, they could be covered over, displayed elsewhere in the shop, or given to a local museum or collection. Changes of a radical nature, such as moving door positions, where these affect the special interest of the shopfront, are normally not acceptable. These may, however be viewed more favourably if they can be shown to produce a permanent benefit such as the provision of a door to the upper floors.

11-6 CONTRACTORS AND TRADESMEN

It is advisable to employ only contractors and tradesmen skilled in their trades and sympathetic to the conservative approach to repair and to the traditional approach to restoration, alterations and additions.

Examples

Examples of successful conservation work to shopfronts:

14 Abbey Churchyard (Restored 1976) General restoration including the reinstatement of glazing bars.

12 Northumberland Place (Altered 1988) Comprehensive addition of new elements including glass fascia and other signs, stall plates, window backs, roller blind etc. to co-ordinated detail and colour.

9 George Street (Restored 1987) Extensive repair (bottom ends of mullions, cill etc.) and restoration (clerestory glazing, cornice, small pediment over doorway, brass stall plates, removal of rendering to reveal undercill railings), using evidence from an early photograph.

1a Victoria Buildings, Lower Bristol Road (Restored 1992) Replacement of pilasters to main front, cills and bottom ends of window frames, plinth blocks and double doors.

General Guidelines

The general guidelines are applicable to all styles of shopfront design, and cover general aspects of design not dealt with in the individual sections.

12.1 SHOPFRONT PRINCIPLES

- a **First Principle: *Context*** The context, or general setting, of Bath should be understood, respected and reflected in any proposed work to shopfronts.
- b **Second Principle: *Quality*** Design, materials and workmanship should be of the highest quality.

12.2 CONTEXT

- a **The City** The importance of the City of Bath as a Georgian city of exceptional quality and completeness is well recognised, especially by the inscription by UNESCO on the List of World Heritage Sites. The shopfronts of the city constitute one of its most prominent elements and have a significant effect on its overall interest.
- b **The Street** Each shopping street in Bath is different in character, in status, and in the trade of its shops. A shopfront appropriate in one street might not be so in another (e.g. a shopfront in Milsom Street will be of higher status, physically taller and probably later in date and of a different trade than one in Walcot Street).
- c **The Group** The majority of shopfronts in Bath are in informal groups, and were designed individually, usually at different times and by different people. They therefore vary in design and detail, and this is an essential aspect of the interest of the group. Any new shopfronts introduced into the group should possess individual identity, though at the same time respecting the common characteristics of the shops within the group. There is normally no need for precise lining up of cornices, window heads or cills between adjacent shopfronts, particularly as many of Bath's shopping streets were built on sloping ground.

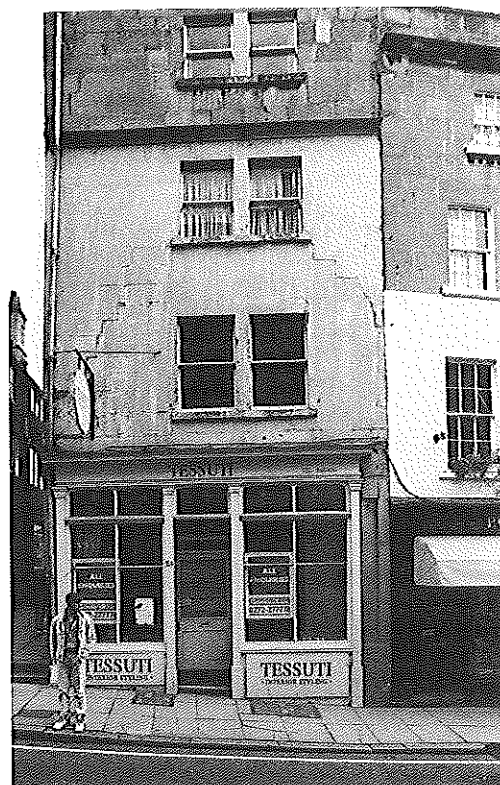
There are a few formal groups in the city where the shopfronts were either designed as part of the overall architectural composition (e.g. the approaches to Cleveland Bridge; 4 Cleveland Terrace being the only surviving original shopfront), or were part of a coordinated group of shopfronts added to an earlier building (1-5 Wood Street). Any new shopfront introduced into a formal group should be designed to conform in all respects, both to the overall design of the group and to its particular part in the design.

- d **The Building** In Bath, the typical pattern of development was for shops to be converted from the ground floors of existing houses. The shopfronts were usually designed in sympathy with the building, but the strong horizontal separation formed by the cornice enabled their design to be free of any need for vertical alignment with elements of the upper storeys of the buildings.

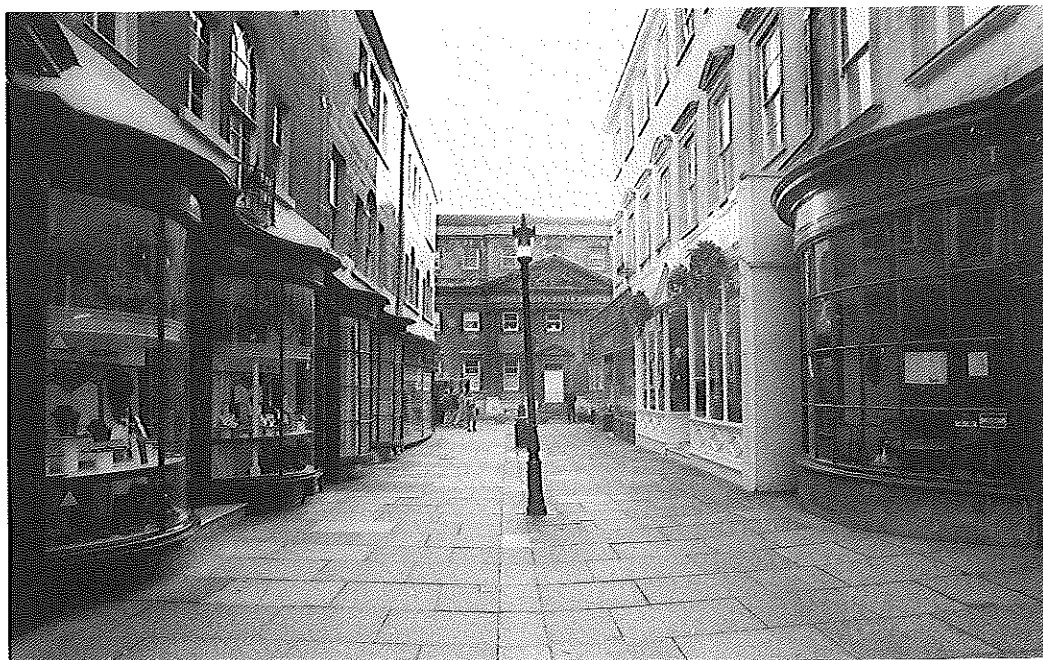
General Guidelines

1 John Street [left] The design of the shopfront co-ordinated with that of the building above

24 Broad Street [right] The design is free of any need for vertical alignment with the elements of the upper storeys of the building



Old Bond Street [left] View looking south. 'The Shopfronts of the City constitute one of its most prominent elements'



38 Broad Street [page 83] Weaver & Son, Manufacturers of all kinds of Spring Beds, Wool and Hair Mattresses Featherbeds etc. This early 19th century shopfront was replaced by the present front in 1883 (Bath Industrial Museum)



The height of the shopfront should be in proportion to the front of the building and should not look too tall or too low. There should not be an excessive dimension between the shopfront and the first floor window cill or string course.

12.3 STYLE

- a **Style in Context** The proposed or altered shopfront should be historically credible in context; it should not be of an earlier style than the building of which it will be a part, nor should it be earlier in style than the first conversion to shops in the street or group (as appropriate).
- b **Style: in Specific Streets or Groups** The City Council may bring forward further guidelines for the style of shopfronts in particular streets or groups.
- c **New Classical Shopfronts** of appropriate style are suitable, in principle, for classical buildings of all dates.
- d **New Victorian/Edwardian Shopfronts** of appropriate style are suitable, in principle, for Victorian/Edwardian buildings of all dates, and may also be suitable for classical buildings.
- e **Modern Shopfronts** of appropriate style are suitable in principle for buildings of modern style, and may also be suitable for earlier buildings.
- f **Style: Quality** Each proposal will be expected to be a good example of its particular style both on overall design and in detail, and will be assessed against the rules, conventions and standards of that style.
- g **Style: Definition of Chosen Style** The selected style should be specific, and capable of clear description. It should not be generalised, nor an amalgam of various styles, unless this takes the form of an historically credible inclusion of later alterations or additions. It could be a knowledgeable development of a specific style (e.g. progressive classicism or progressive Arts and Crafts).
- h **House Styles** House styles which do not meet the requirements of these guidelines in all respects, including signs, lettering, colour, and other aspects, are not acceptable. Multiples will be required to adapt their proposals to the special conditions of the city, in the same manner as other applicants.

12.4 DESIGN

- a **Standard Designs** All shopfronts should be specifically designed for their particular context. Standard designs, of any sort, are not acceptable, nor are designs assembled from modern kits of parts.

- b **Detail** Quality of detail is the key to all shopfront design. The use of historically correct detail is an indispensable element in achieving authenticity in traditional design.
- c **Proportion** Proportion is the hidden music behind all good design, particularly in classical work. It should be present in the design as a whole, in the design of and relationship of its elements, and in the small scale detail of its mouldings.
- d **Scale** The scale of a shopfront is somewhere between the large architectural scale of buildings and the smaller scale of vehicles or of large pieces of furniture. The dimensions of its elements and detail should reflect its true scale, being neither too heavy nor too light for its context and character.
- e **Form** A shopfront exists in three dimensions rather than two. The classical architectural elements are effective when viewed from all angles, particularly when modelled by light and shade. The same principle applies to all shopfront design, and is expressed through the studied projection and recession of planes and detail, even though sometimes of very slight variation; by the use of planes at right angles or at other angles to the face plane; or by the dynamic effect of curved forms, particularly those of windows.
- f **Mass and Line** Contrast between mass and line can be very effective and should be exploited. The solid forms of fascia, pilasters or cill will contrast with the linear nature of glazing bars, grilles, railings or the fine fillets subdividing curved mouldings.
- g **Composition** The composition of a shopfront should be basically simple, even if it is elaborate in detail. It should either be symmetrical, or have an equilibrium achieved through asymmetry: its basic rhythm should be clear, using either regular repetition or alternation.
- h **Consistency** The design should be carried through with consistency of style, detail and colour in order to leave a clear and unified image in the mind.
- i **Special Features or Finishes** The inclusion of special features or finishes such as unusual detail, enriched mouldings, carving, coats of arms, fine lettering, gilding, rich colours, or the simulated finish of graining or marbling was frequently a feature of traditional shopfronts. Such features or finishes can raise the shopfront to a higher level of interest and make it more memorable.
- j **Beauty** Beauty is an elusive quality, though often found in the art and architecture of the past. Its creation is one of the basic requirements of shopfront design; the shop should look attractive to its customers and should enhance the street scene. Its production should be the central aim of all designers proposing shopfronts in the city.

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George Street View of the south side showing informal grouping of shopfronts

