

# THE LIBERTY SHOPS

*Great Marlborough Street and Regent Street, Westminster*

*by*

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# LIBERTY SHOPS



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## THE LIBERTY SHOPS, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET AND REGENT STREET, WESTMINSTER

Liberty's buildings in Regent Street (East India House) and the Tudor building in Great Marlborough Street were built to the designs of Edwin Thomas Hall and his son and partner Edwin Stanley Hall between 1922 and 1925. The buildings, one in the Tudor style and one in a Beaux Arts classical style, are the most prominent on Regent Street and are still in use as the high-class department stores still partly owned by the original clients, the Liberty family. After Harrods and Selfridges, Liberty is probably the most famous shop in London. Both buildings were built to very high standards of materials and craftsmanship, and the Tudor building, in my view, deserves to be upgraded from grade II to II\* because of the quality of the interior. This report summarises the architectural history of the buildings and makes a case for upgrading. Patience Trevor from the Listing Team has agreed to visit Liberty's to revise the list description.

### BACKGROUND HISTORY

Arthur Lasenby Liberty, the son of a Chesham lace manufacturer, opened his shop at 218a Regent Street in 1875, calling it East India House and selling coloured silks from the East. He was soon selling oriental goods of all kinds, particularly Japanese objects and fans. By 1883, he had acquired two shops further south in Regent Street. Later he took over all the late Georgian buildings from Nos. 140 to 150 Regent Street and named his extended premises Chesham House. Trading from here in the first decade of the twentieth century, Liberty and Company established their reputation as up market purveyors of 'Art Fabrics and Furniture'. The firm printed fabrics with a handprinting press using their own blocks, at workshops in Merton; Thomas Wardle, a friend of William Morris, block-printed designs on Indian silk for Liberty's at his factory in Leek. Early customers included the artists Rosetti, Burne Jones, Watts, Leighton, Whistler and Alma Tadema, and Gilbert and Sullivan used their fabrics for the costumes in the 1881 production of *Patience*. By 1888 Arthur Liberty himself was an active participant in the Arts and Crafts Society. The range of products sold was extended to include a wide range of furniture, silver, pewter, jewellery, wallpapers, carpets and soft furnishings.

From the 1900s, the Chairman of Liberty's, Mr Harold Blackmore, acquired parcels of land and buildings around the Liberty's premises in Regent Street. Growth of the business by the early 1920s prompted the idea to build a new shop on the sites acquired and then to erect a new building on the site of the Regent Street buildings. A site was cleared on the south side of Argyll Place, re-named Great Marlborough Street in October 1925. This was for the first stage of rebuilding, the Tudor building, which lasted from 1922-1924: the Regent Street store was commenced after the completion of the new shop, and was finished by 1925, with a bridge over Kingly Street linking the two shops. Liberty's wholesale warehouse in Foubert's Place, a white-and green tiled building was designed in 1911 to the designs of J.N. Randall Vining. Storage buildings on the other side of Foubert's Place, next to the shop, were built in the 1960s, and a second bridge built over Kingly Street by William Holford and Partners, in 1974.

## THE TUDOR BUILDING

As the site in Great Marlborough Street was freehold the covenants imposed by the Crown Estate restricting the appearance of the buildings in Regent Street did not apply. Instead of a Nash-inspired classical envelope, one of the directors, John Llewelyn, suggested clothing the shop in Tudor dress. Llewelyn was himself a fan of the Tudor style and lived at Ashwell Court near Great Missenden, a mock Tudor house incorporating genuine work from the 16th century French abbey at Blois. Quoted in the building press of the day, Llewelyn explained that he favoured the Tudor style because it was 'quintessentially English' and because a Tudor shop would evoke 'the great days of guilds of craftsmen and the intrepid merchant adventurers who displayed their wares in the beautiful buildings of Old London, the productions of their handicrafts and the treasures for which they had sailed so far and endured so much.' (*The Architects' Journal*, June 24 1924).

The client's idea was to keep the scale of the shop small and domestic, and to make the elevation appear to comprise a group of shops, like those in The Rows in Chester, rather than a monolithic structure like the Selfridges store then nearing completion. The Rows comprised medieval houses with covered galleries on the first floor for use as shops. The late fifteenth-century ornamental decorative fronts overlooked the street and behind these was a great hall rising to the roof; this may have been a source of inspiration for the architects of Liberty's. One Chester facade in particular, a reconstruction of the medieval 'God's Providence House' of 1862, instantly recalls Liberty's to mind. The Victorian lettering of the motto 'Gods Providence is Mine Inheritance' is reminiscent of the lettering of the motto about Time underneath the Liberty Clock on the Kingly Street bridge.

The Tudor style, it was felt, embodied the glamorous reputation of the Tudor monarchy for a lavishness and love of ornament, and the style of architecture would befit the quality of the products within: the richly-coloured fabrics and handprinted silks from the workshops at Merton Abbey, brocades from Europe and the Far East, silk and woollen carpets from the Middle East, jade and porcelain from China. It was felt that, in order to best display these precious goods, a certain grandeur and spaciousness of rooms was required, but combined with a sense of the intimacy of a domestic interior. Liberty and Company had their own trained craftsmen, carpenters, carvers and metalworkers based at their workshops in Highgate, who were to be employed on fitting out the interior of the shop.

## EXTERIOR AND PLANNING

The design produced by the architects comprised a four-storey, timber-framed building with a basement; with a studied variation of gables and window levels, with triple gables on stone towers and carved barge boards flanking the main entrance onto Great Marlborough Street. Once work had begun, the external frame was properly and authentically assembled with mortices, tenons and pegging, with supporting brick infill. The timber for the frame came from the breaking up of two early 19th century 'men of war' sailing ships, *H.M.S Hindustan* (whose length was the same as the Argyll Street frontage), and *H.M.S Impregnable*, with the oak floors from the decks providing the flooring for the new building. Steel work was excluded as far as possible. The material between the external timbering consisted of brick with a white Portland cement stucco finished with a sand-coloured render. Blocks of Portland stone were chisel-worked rather than sawn to give a particular hand-crafted texture.

This is particularly noticeable around the bases of the entrance towers. On the gable facing Regent Street was the carved coat of arms of Queen Elizabeth I designed by Mr Kruger Gray and made by Mr Laurence Turner; those of Henry VIII and his wives were placed on the entrance doors. All this detail survives to this day. High above on top of the building is a gilded model of the *Mayflower* as a weather vane. The ornately decorated lead rainwater goods, with trailing foliage, were designed by the architects and made by J.Emms using traditional methods of casting. The roofs were covered with hand-made Loughborough tiles, with a Herefordshire stone-slab pent roof over the main entrance.

The final addition to the building was a three-storey arched bridge with enclosed passages over Kingly Street to connect East India House with the Tudor building. Close inspection of the bridge is worthwhile as it is so finely detailed, with a magnificent clock at the centre. The clock was designed by Mr Hope Jones, Chairman of the British Horological Institution. Forming the spandrels of the clock face are four winged heads representing the four winds. The crowing cock and rising sun symbolise morning; an owl and the moon, the night time. Originally in the recess above, at the chiming of the hour, St. George would fight the dragon. On the keystone of the arch is a carved figure of Father Time and the inscription: 'o minute gone comes ever back again, Take heed and see ye do nothing in vain.'

The plan of the building remains largely unaltered. It is roughly rectangular in shape, and divided into a series of galleries, four stories high grouped around three wells, not unlike the courtyards of an Old English Inn. Each layer of wide galleries is divided into eight fire-proof compartments. The wells are top-lit with open timber roofs. The roofs comprise carved trusses with pendant hammerbeams supporting the pitched glazed coverings.

At the west end of the western gallery is a wide staircase of oak adorned with carved post and panelled balustrades. A secondary staircase is situated in the south-east angle. Originally there were seven staircases altogether, four of which extended from basement to roof and gave access to the street, three subsidiary staircases and four lifts.

Most of the gallery space was originally devoted to exhibiting the goods with a dozen fitting rooms. Offices, workrooms, four dining halls, kitchens, rest room, and cloak room were located on the top floors serving over 1,000 staff. Below this, on the third floor, were the banking offices and telephone exchange. Today most of this has been given over to retail use and the administrative offices are located in Liberty House, part of the Regent Street building.

## HEATING AND VENTILATION

Lighting throughout the building was by electricity, with an electrical switchboard room located in the basement. The electricity was provided by two different companies in case of failure, and the shop window lights could be timed to switch off during the night. Ventilation was by fresh air inlets and outlets, with the basement having a special system of ventilation, the 'Ozonair' system of ventilation. Fresh air was brought from the above the roof to an ozonising plant which 'washed' the air, passed it through a heating battery and ionised it. In hot weather the effect of the cleansing process cooled the air. From the plant room the air was carried through steel ducts with outlets throughout the building, and stale air was removed by suction. Hot water was provided by steam boilers located in the basement and serving the radiators of all three buildings. It is not known how much of this original plant survives.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

Most of the original fittings inside the shop were of carved oak (stairs and newels, balustrades and panelling, dadoes carved with linen fold), and teak. Messrs Liberty's craftsmen designed and made the panelling and shop fittings, as well as the fibrous plaster decoration to the friezes and beam soffits in the showrooms, using motifs inspired by the Tudor period but without slavishly copying them. The main entrance led to a vestibule opening into the central gallery, from where one could look up through four storeys to the open timber work roof, with pendant hammerbeams to the trusses.

In the roof of the east central gallery there are six shields, those of Ben Jonson, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sydney, Francis Bacon, George Herbert and William Shakespeare. A small panelled room on the ground floor guarded by a heavy iron gate was used to show fine jewellery to important customers, including Queen Mary, wife of George V.

In the basement there was a tea room fitted out to look like a castle dungeon with thick stone walls, massive round pillars and circular canopied fireplaces. These have gone, but many of the original Tudor style fireplaces survive on each floor of the building.

All the casement windows had leaded lights each with a central panel of painted glass of ships and figures in the style of Durer.

## THE ARCHITECTS AND CONTRACTORS

The architect Edwin Thomas Hall F.R.I.B.A. (1851-1923) was born at Lowestoft, the son of an architect. He trained at South Kensington School of Art and in the office of the engineer Joseph Fogerty. Hall's knowledge of engineering helped him, when he began his own practice in 1875, to get work building factories and hospitals, and indeed hospitals and sanatoria remained the backbone of the practice until his death. Hospitals by Hall include: Manchester Royal Infirmary; Park Hospital, Hither Green and two hospitals in Leeds. Exceptional Commissions were Dulwich College Library; St Pauls Church, Edenbridge in Kent, and his last work, the Liberty stores. Of this last the architect Paul Waterhouse wrote in Hall's obituary: 'It will be recalled that though a stone treatment is to prevail on the western front of the design, the frontage in Argyll Place is of the half-timber type. Hall, having with characteristic persuasion won his way with the County Council as to the legitimacy of timber framing as a fire-resisting material for an external wall. London awaits with interest the result of this bold experiment, the completion of which is in the capable hands of his son and partner Mr. E Stanley Hall.' (*The Builder* April 20, 1923). Waterhouse went on to praise Hall's knowledge of the building regulations and his statutory work on improving them. Several commentators pointed out, that despite its 'old world appearance Liberty's was the last word in hygienic, fire-resisting and fire-escape requirements'. Hall became a Fellow of the R.I.B.A. in 1885 and was appointed vice-president in 1908. Edwin Hall was succeeded by his son Edwin Stanley Hall, who later joined Murray Easton and Howard Robertson. The practice continues as Easton, Robertson, Preston and Partners.

The contractors were Higgs and Hill, founded in 1874 and builders of some of London's major buildings including the Tate Gallery, India House, Victoria Station and two other London department stores, Dickens and Jones and Harvey Nichols. The foreman of the

Liberty job, J. Corfield, was trained as a carpenter and oversaw all the work done by the craftsmen and sub-contractors. The firm went on to build East India House, and just two years afterwards, a large house in Headley, Surrey, for the Hon. Geoffrey Cunliffe, also designed by Edwin Stanley Hall.

## VIEWS ON THE FINISHED BUILDING

The Tudor building was generally well received. In 1924 *The Architects Journal* reported: 'From the architects' point of view, and from the builders' and craftsmens' the building must have been one of the most interesting and edifying that has been erected in the last fifty years.' The quality of craftsmanship was high and the journal noted how the craftsmen took their families around the building when it was finished, such was their pride in their work. Over twenty months, more than twenty carvers made the shop frames and barge boards, the posts, staircases and balustrades. They felt enormous pride in achieving what their medieval predecessors would have taken years to make.

What most commentators enjoyed was the high degree of symbolism in the carving, and the high quality of work, particularly the shields and coats-of-arms designed by Kruger Gray and carved by Laurence Turner (who was also responsible for the carving on 23 Savile Row). They singled out for admiration details such as gilded *Mayflower* vane and the leaded casement windows with a painted picture on glass of ships etc. carried out by Wainwright and Waring ; this seemed to have more appeal than acres of plate glass more usual for central London's shop windows. The elaborate brick chimneys were also admired, as was the unpainted timber within the building (except on the ground floor where a treaclish varnish coating had been applied ).

For one major architectural writer Liberty's Tudor building was anathema, the very worst kind of retrospective pastiche. Nikolaus Pevsner wrote in the 1950s: ' At the west end of Great Marlborough Street the thoughtful traveller will stop and consider which of two evils of our present civilisation he may be readier to put up with. On the left is Palladium House, an architectural parallel to the Wurlitzer in music-black sheer granite and rich gilt with the lush floral motifs of the Paris exhibition of 1925. On the right is Liberty's Tudor store, 1924 by Hall, half-timber and all. The timbers are the real article; they come from genuine men o' war; they are not just stuck on. So technically there is nothing wrong, but functionally and intellectually everything. The scale is wrong, the symmetry is wrong, the proximity to a classical facade put up by the same firm about the same time is wrong, and the goings on of a store behind such a facade are wrongest of all.'

Some of the points could have been easily countered by those involved in the decisions: the scale was kept deliberately small, the lack of symmetry was also conscious and the choice of style an affirmation of independence from Crown Commissioners rules governing Regent Street. The 'goings on' that Pevsner objected to remain a mystery.

The consensus among the commentators was that, although perhaps not at the cutting edge of architectural style, the Liberty Tudor building was well constructed and extremely jolly. It clearly succeed in embodying the philosophy of the importance of the quality materials and craftsmanship held by Arthur Liberty; in short, the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement. Liberty's is a late but full-blooded example of an Arts and Crafts building.



## THE TUDOR BUILDING TODAY.

In 1950, some walnut panelling close to the windows was removed by *avant garde* window dresser E. E. Lucking. A new department was created for modern furniture and a false ceiling was added. Post-war building control records show that in 1974 a new bridge was built over Kingly Street by William Holford and Partners who have worked at Liberty's over the years for minor alterations and additions, including including extension of a staircase in 1995. A suspended ceiling in the Jewellery Department on the ground floor was given consent by Westminster Council in July 1997. Most of the building is intact as it has been listed since 1971, but small alterations, like the insertion of a ceiling and ventilation and heating units, have begun to erode the homogeneity of the style of decoration inside the shop.

Some good fireplaces survive; others have gone or have been blocked up, which may be contributing to the problem of overheating of the building in the summer.

## EAST INDIA HOUSE.

Comprising a basement, ground and five floors East India House was allegedly designed before the First World War by Edwin Thomas Hall (*The Builder*, July 1923) but not erected until after the completion of the Tudor building in 1924. Faced in Portland stone, with a base two stories high surmounted by an Ionic order of three stories, an attic storey and with end pavilions, East India House neatly fitted the requirements of the Crown Estate, but showed invention and originality where possible, such as in the curved central recess of the facade. Adorning this was a frieze 115 feet long designed by E.T. Hall and sculpted by Charles Doman and Thomas J. Clapperton. The theme celebrates the wealth of distant countries being borne by camel, elephant and ship to Great Britain, represented by the central figure of Britannia. Life sized figures appear to look over the frieze at the crowds below. The shop fronts are of Swedish granite and bronze, and the lamps on the balustrade above the base are also of bronze. On the ledge above the entrance are perched four Japanese 'Iohan', disciples of Buddha, that came from the original shop.

Externally the building's use of high-quality materials and a bank-like dignity and respectability distinguish it from most its Regent Street neighbours. Unfortunately much of the interior has been subdivided and leased to other shops and a bank, and little of interest survives of the original fittings.

Recent alterations include the insertion of escalators in 1975; new roof-level plant housing added in 1980; the removal of a staircase and the insertion of suspended ceilings throughout, new heating, ventilation and electrical system installed by Derek Roberts and Partners of Harrow in the 1980s.

## RECOMMENDATION

The novelty and creative juxtaposition of the styles of the buildings, the quality of materials and craftsmanship, the displaying of tastefully designed domestic products within a consciously historical and aesthetic commercial environment all express the belief held by Arthur Liberty in the value of the hand-made or individually designed object. This is what distinguishes the Liberty's buildings from London's internationally- respected department stores.

The only other stores listed grade II\* are Simpsons of Piccadilly, Peter Jones in Chelsea and Derry and Toms, Kensington High Street. These are all 1930s building in the 'modern style', with some sophisticated and progressive construction techniques. The list descriptions of these also indicate the survival of interiors of quality. Selfridges store, begun in 1909, was an early large-scale structure in London which fully exploited a steel frame with reinforced concrete construction. It was a daring commercial and architectural venture for the period, but has undergone much alteration to the interior, which may be why it is only a grade II.

Although not in the vanguard of architectural thinking of the inter-war period, the Liberty Tudor building with its fine interior (woodwork, panelling, plasterwork, fireplaces etc.) justifies recognition, in my view, in an upgrading to II\*. It also needs an amended list description to highlight an interior currently left vulnerable to unsympathetic or insensitive alteration through further installation of new heating, lighting or ventilation units.

Susie Barson  
February 1999  
H.A.R.T. team, English Heritage

## SOURCES

*The Builder* April 28 1922 p.646

*The Builder* July 27 1923

*The Architectural Review* May 1924 pp 180-185

*The Architect* July 4 1924

*The Architects' Journal* June 4 1924 pp 934-950

Alison Adburgham : *Liberty's, the Biography of a Shop* 1975

Stephen Calloway: *House of Liberty: Masters of Style and Decoration* 1992, particularly 'The Liberty Shop' by Wendy Hitchmough p.p.132-140

Nikolaus Pevsner *The Best Buildings in England* Ed. Bridget Cherry, 1986.

Liberty Archives, Westminster Archives Centre, Class 788, includes plans of the Tudor Shop: Hillier Parker plans: Acc. 388 roll 5. Also 34 sketches of the interior dating from the 1930s.

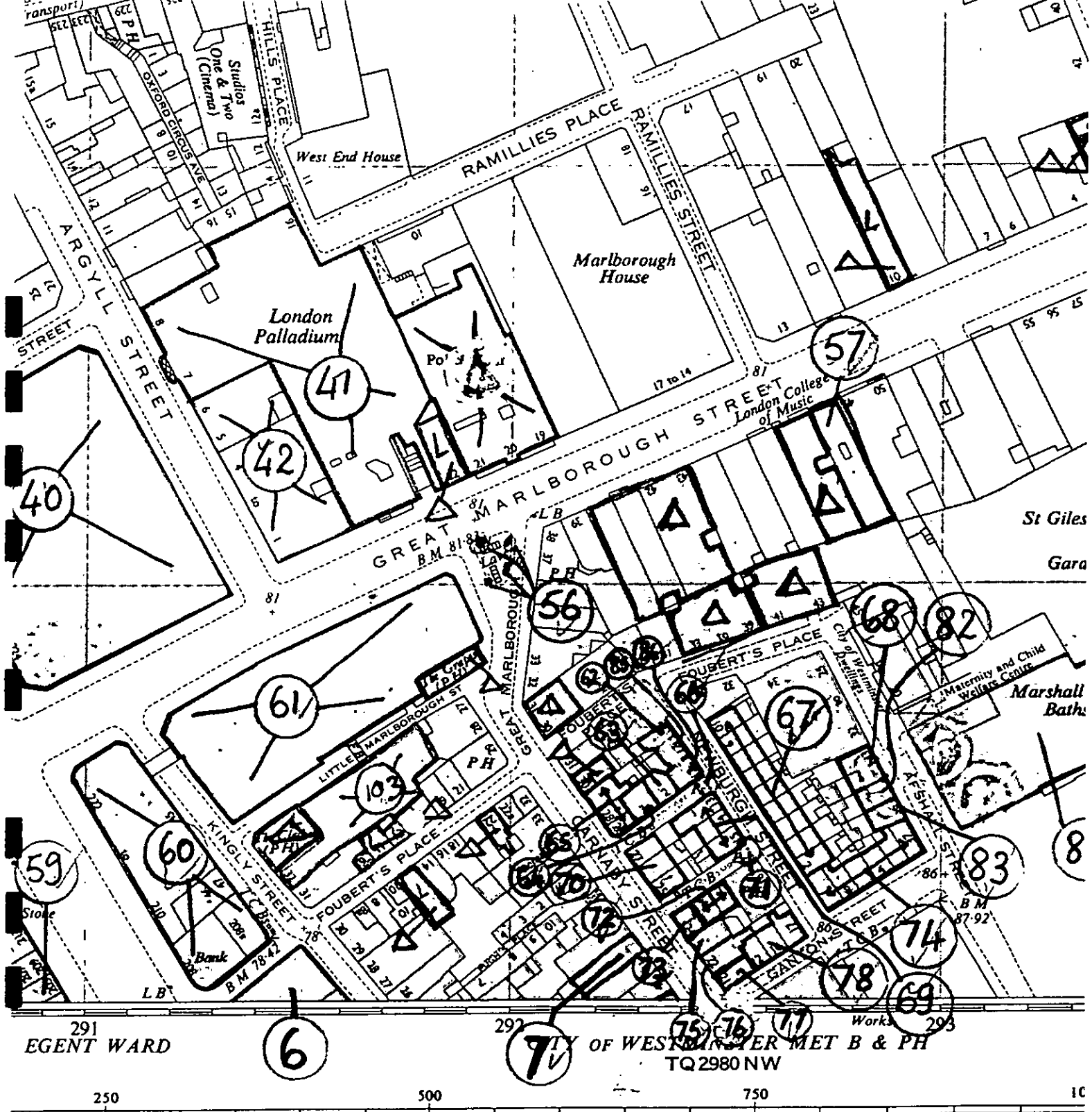
788/128: has exteriors and interiors including architectural perspectives 128 (1) and 128 (2).

788/127: Bedford Lemere photographs (19) of the interior and exterior of the Tudor shop. Reprints are expensive and photocopying is not allowed.

London Metropolitan Archives: Higgs and Hill collection c/o Tim Harris: drawings & photographs.

Printed on: 12 January 1999

<i>ID</i>	<i>Admin. County</i>	<i>Admin. District</i>	<i>Admin. Parish</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Building Name</i>	<i>Street Name</i>	<i>No.</i>
207639	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	MARYLEBONE	II		WIGMORE STREET W1	27-37
425216	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	PADDINGTON	II	WHITELEY'S STORE	QUEENSWAY W2	
209887	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II	PREMISES OF MESSRS LIBERTY AND COMPANY LIMITED (TUDOR BUILDING)	GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET W1	
422461	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II		OXFORD STREET W1	164-182
425632	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II	LIBERTY'S	REGENT STREET W1	208-222 AND 208A
423869	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II*	SIMPSONS	PICCADILLY W1	203-206
422564	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II	SELFRIDGES STORE	OXFORD STREET W1	400
425633	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II	DICKINS AND JONES	REGENT STREET W1	224-244
425635	GREATER LONDON	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	WESTMINSTER	II	PETER ROBINSON	REGENT STREET W1	272-286
436111	GREATER LONDON	CROYDON	CROYDON	II	FORMER GRANT'S DEPARTMENT STORE	HIGH STREET	14, 16 AND 18
203550	GREATER LONDON	KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	CHELSEA	II	HARRODS	BROMPTON ROAD SW3	87-135
423991	GREATER LONDON	KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	CHELSEA	II*	PETER JONES STORE	SLOANE SQUARE SW1	
203569	GREATER LONDON	KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	CHELSEA	II	PETER JONES STORE THAT PART PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS NUMBER 25	SYMONDS STREET	
418139	GREATER LONDON	KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	KENSINGTON	II	MESSERS BARKERS' STORE	KENSINGTON HIGH STREET W8	63-97
418201	GREATER LONDON	KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA	KENSINGTON	II*	DERRY AND TOMS AND BRITISH HOME STORES	KENSINGTON HIGH STREET W8	99-121
203157	GREATER LONDON	KINGSTON UPON THAMES	KINGSTON UPON THAMES	II		MARKET PLACE	6-9



291  
EGENT WARD

292  
CITY OF WESTMINSTER MET B & PH  
TQ 2980 NW

Ordnance Survey, Chessington, Surrey, 1962

# 70 REFERENCE

For fuller information see Reference Card published separately.

## NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE

The lines on the plan form part of the National Grid and are spaced at 100 metre intervals.  
To give a large scale reference defining the position of a point to the nearest 10 metres proceed as follows:—

EXAMPLE: No 31 FOUBERT'S PLACE	
EASTING	NORTHING
Take west edge of square in which point lies and read the figures opposite this line on NORTH and SOUTH margins. Estimate tens of metres from the grid line	Take south edge of square in which point lies and read the figures opposite this line on EAST and WEST margins. Estimate tens of metres from the grid line
292 3	810 8
2923	8108

TEN METRE REFERENCE: TQ 29238108

For further information see "The Projection for Ordnance Survey Maps and Plans and the National Reference System"  
The representation on this plan of a road, track or footpath is no evidence of the existence of a right of way.  
1 square inch on this plan represents 249 of an acre on the ground.  
The alignment of tunnels where shown is approximate.

- ↑ Surface Level..... +
- ↑ Revision Point or Traverse Station.....
- △ Triangulation Station.....
- above the Newlyn Datum.
- obtainable from the Director General, Ordnance Survey.
- OC S Face of Wall..... FW
- CR Side of River, etc..... SR
- CS Track of Hedge..... Tk H
- RH Track of Stream..... Tk S
- FF Defaced, Undefined..... Def, Und

TQ 2981 SW  
57/61

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

GREAT MARLBOROUGH  
STREET, W1

Premises of Messrs.  
Liberty and Co. Ltd.  
(Tudor Building)

GV

II

Department store. 1924 by Edwin T. Hall and E. Stanley Hall. The block facing Great Marlborough Street and Little Marlborough Street is timber framed and also has stone cladding, tiled roofs. Self consciously "Tudor" design, 4 storeys, and gabled attics. Long range with close set leaded casements to upper floors in exposed teak framing. Centrepiece with main entrance has corbelled canted bays surmounted by overhanging gables, Tudor arched doorway and above elaborate clock with carillon and moving figures. Ground floor display windows, all Tudor-arched. Gables have decorated barge boards and the roofscape is animated by a flamboyant display of cut and moulded brick Tudor chimney stacks. The interior has exposed timber framework with galleries with carved beams and "Tudor" detailing, etc. Stone faced bridge across Little Marlborough Street to Regent Street building. N.B. See also Nos. 208-222 (even) Regent Street (East Side).

TQ 2981 SW  
57/71

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

GREAT MARLBOROUGH  
STREET, W1

Ventilation standard and  
Bollards at junction  
with Carnaby Street  
approach

GV

II

Ventilation standard. Late C19. Circular section cast iron standard with moulded decoration on pierced square base and supporting above capital a Nico lantern with finial. The standard vents the public conveniences on traffic island, its 3 corners marked by later C19 cast iron bollards on battered square bases with acorn finials.

TQ 2981 SW  
57/57

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

GREAT MARLBOROUGH  
STREET, W1

23.11.78

No. 48

II

Terrace house. c.1709, altered late C18 and C19 with top floor added. Red brick, concealed roof. 4 storeys. 3 windows wide. Ground floor has much altered mid C19 shop front with end brackets to fascia. 1st and 2nd floors have exposed frame slightly recessed arches under flat gauged arches; mid C19 stucco and keyed flat arches to attic floor. Original moulded cornice over 2nd floor and crowning cornice. Interior retains original cornice to 1st floor front room and elegant wooden geometrical staircase of c.1800.

Survey of London; Vol. XXXI.

TQ 2981 SW  
57/60

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

REGENT STREET, W1  
(East Side)

22.11.73

Nos. 208A, and No's 208  
to 222 (even)(Liberty's)

GV

II

Department store block. 1925-26 by E.T. and E.S. Hall. Grand Portland stone faced block in Neo Grec style enlivened by incurving the front and use of sculpture. 5 storeys (ground and 1st floors/mezzanine as podium) and tall attic, concealed roof. Symmetrical elevation with 9 bays wide hemicycle above mezzanine flanked by single bay pavilions with concave corner treatment. Ground floor and mezzanine arranged as 3 major bays, between pavilions with central entrance, black marble and wood framed door and display windows in triple groups; stone mullioned mezzanines with bronze guard rails in front, articulated by Roman Doric columns carrying balustrated entablature with bronze enriched obelisk dies. Rusticated piers to ground floor and mezzanine of pavilions with bowed cut corner entrances, the obelisk balustrade reappearing over them. Upper floors of hemicycle have recessed metal casement windows articulated by giant engaged Ionic colonnade carrying enriched entablature above which rises a deep blind attic fully sculpted relief with figure of Britannia as centre piece animated by stone figures peering over parapet. The pavilions have tripartite grouped windows to upper floors flanked by panelled quoin piers; main cornice broken forward over them and bent back in over concave corners; attic storey with blocking course raised in shallow solid pediment, to front and side elevations.

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EDWIN T HALL VP RIBA



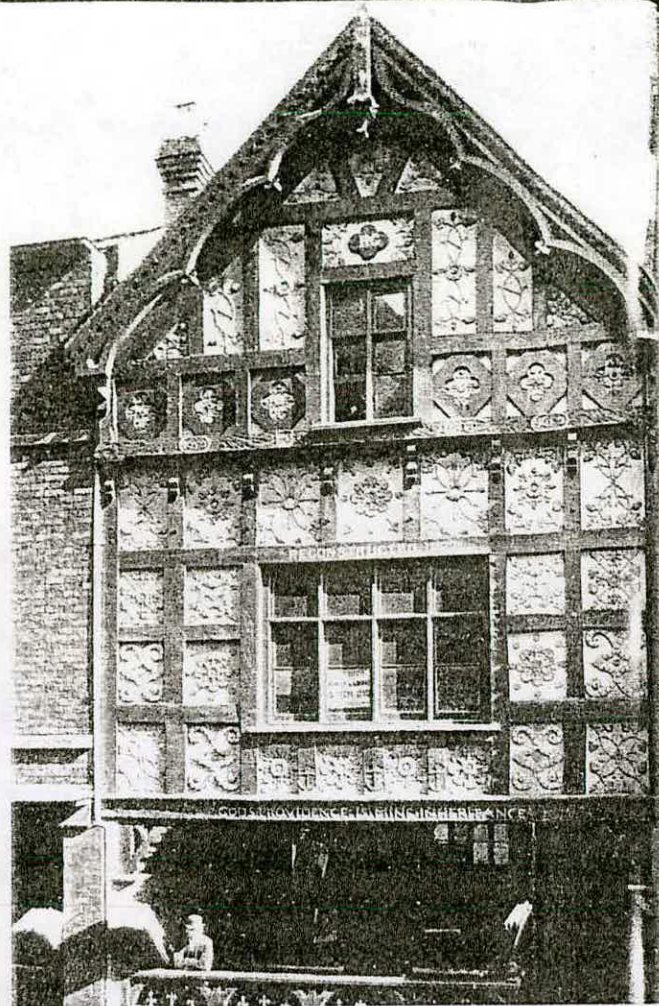
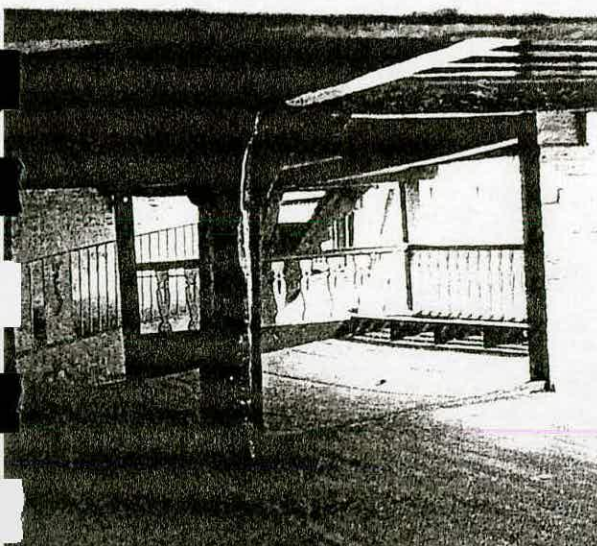
Nineteenth-century romantics thought of Chester as the archetypal medieval town. Ironically, it was their enthusiasm for its restoration that turned it into a predominantly Victorian and Edwardian creation, albeit of outstanding architects such as TM Lockwood and John Douglas. The great exception is the Rows. These medieval houses have covered galleries on their first floors that were built for use as shops and are without exact parallel in Europe. The best preserved of the Rows are found in Watergate Street; this runs west from the High Cross, which marks the junction of the two main streets.

Historians and archaeologists discovered that, because Chester's bedrock was just beneath the surface, the builders of the Rows chose not to excavate deep cellars but instead to construct undercrofts slightly below street level and place the shops above. It then became more practical to link all the shops by a first-floor gallery than provide a separate flight of

## ROWS CHESTER

steps to each. Another reason for the creation of these galleried shops was that from Roman times the land behind the main streets had silted up with debris, so that, at the back, the first floor was at ground level.

Although Chester was one of the principal towns of Roman England, little of substance from that period is still to be found there today. However, the main



This reconstruction shows the Leche house on Watergate Street, which was built around 1725 undercroft, dating from the late 14th century for storage. The timber-framed house dates from the latter part of the following century when it was a shop behind a walkway along the street and behind it a carriage passage rising to the roof with a gallery above bedrooms and a kitchen at the back of the house. The street facade and upper chamber date from the early 17th century, as do the fireplace plasterwork and panelling in the

streets substantially follow the rectangular plan of the Roman *castrum*, or military camp, which gives the city its name. Chester acted as the mustering point for Edward I's campaigns against the Welsh in 1277 and 1282, and for the subsequent building of the great medieval Edwardian castles and walled towns in North Wales. Hundreds of craftsmen, carpenters, masons and labourers were summoned from all over the country to carry out the work.

William of Donecaster, the leading local merchant during Edward I's reign (1272-1307), had property in Watergate Street, as did some of the richest families in Elizabethan times: the Bavands, Mainwaringes, Challenors and Alderseys. Later, Cheshire families with large country estates, like the Grosvenors of Eaton Hall, the Cottons of Combermere and the Booths of Dunham Massey, had town houses in the street. In the 1620s Watergate Street was described by William Webb, a local antiquarian, as "well-furnished with buildings, both ancient and new."

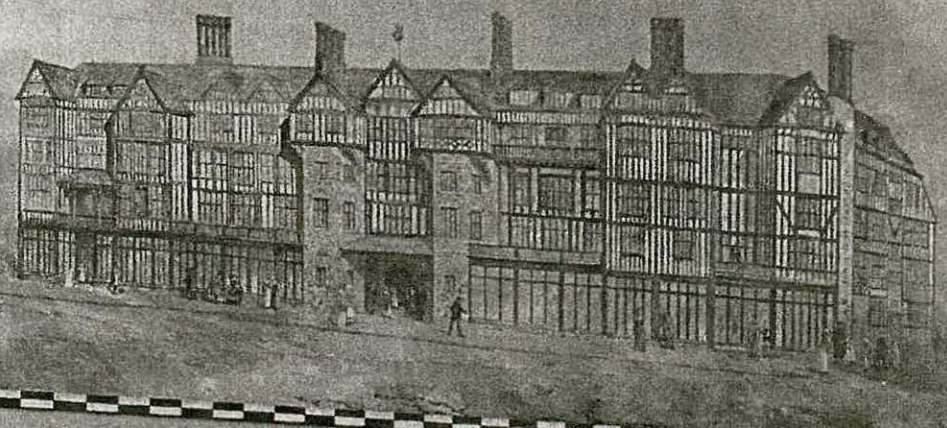
Watergate Street broadly follows the longer of the two main streets bisecting the town. The Rows in this street have survived thanks to decline and neglect. When the River Dee became seriously silted up in the 18th century, Watergate Street's appeal lessened and other streets offered more fashionable places to live







# LIBERTY'S NEW BUILDING



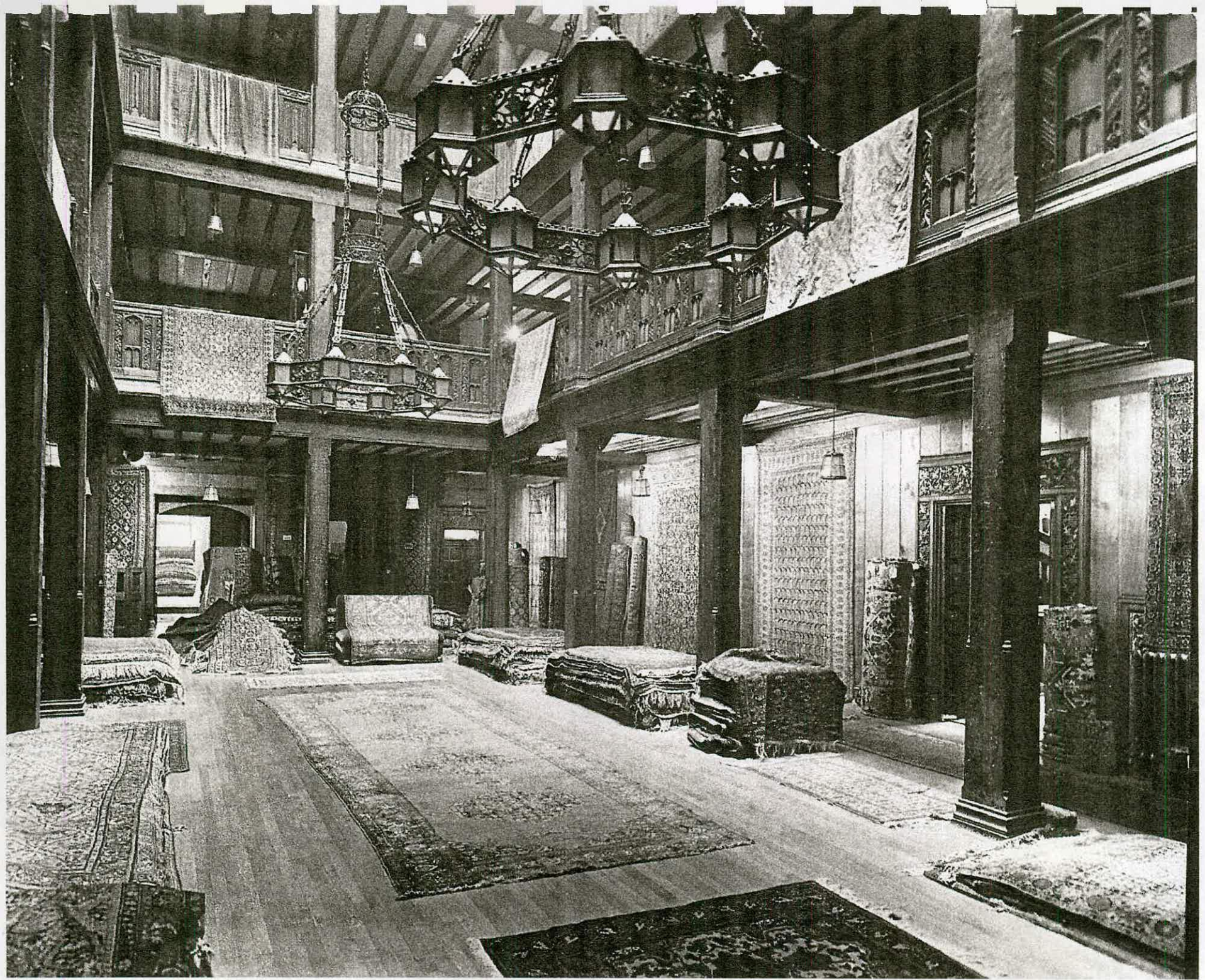
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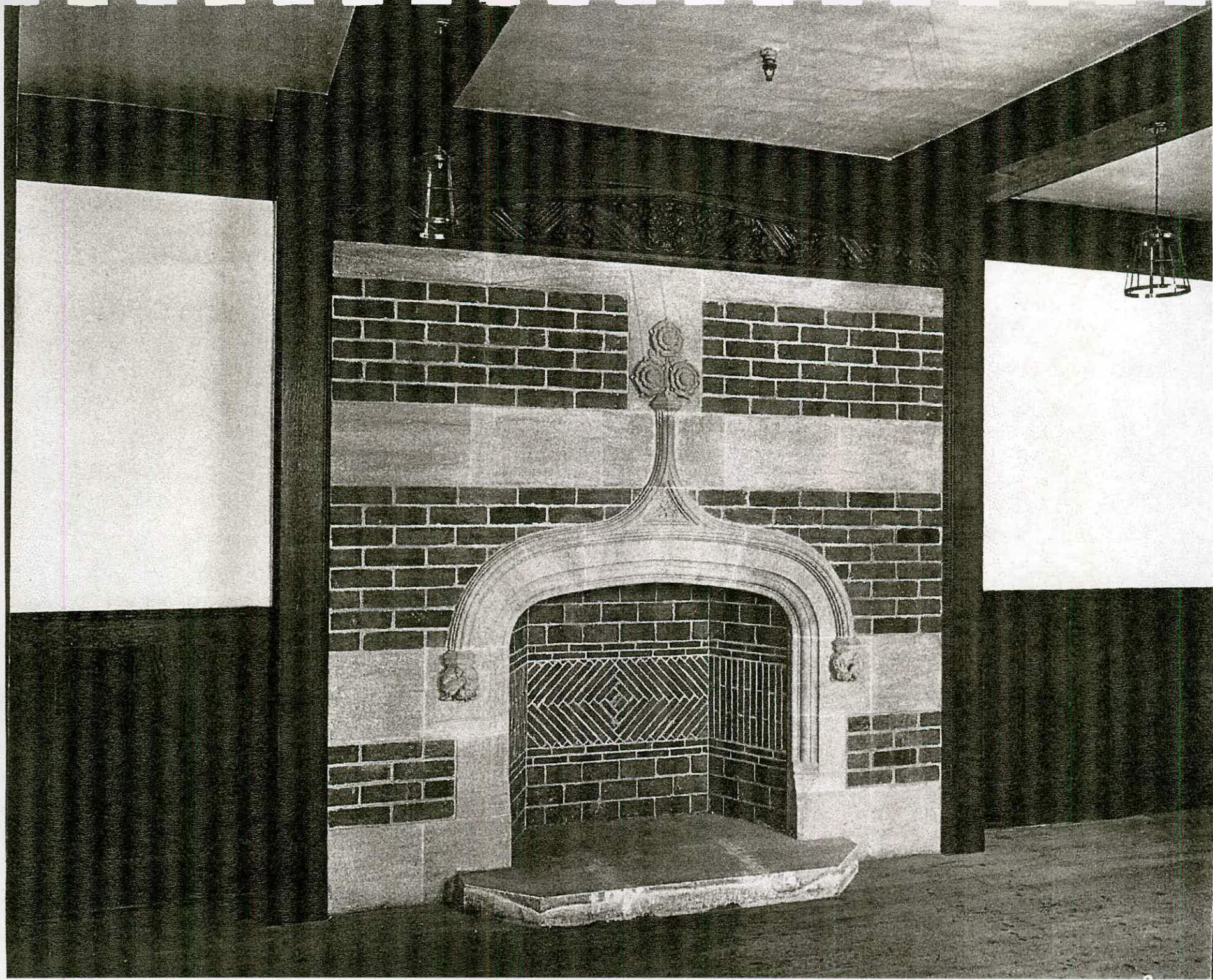


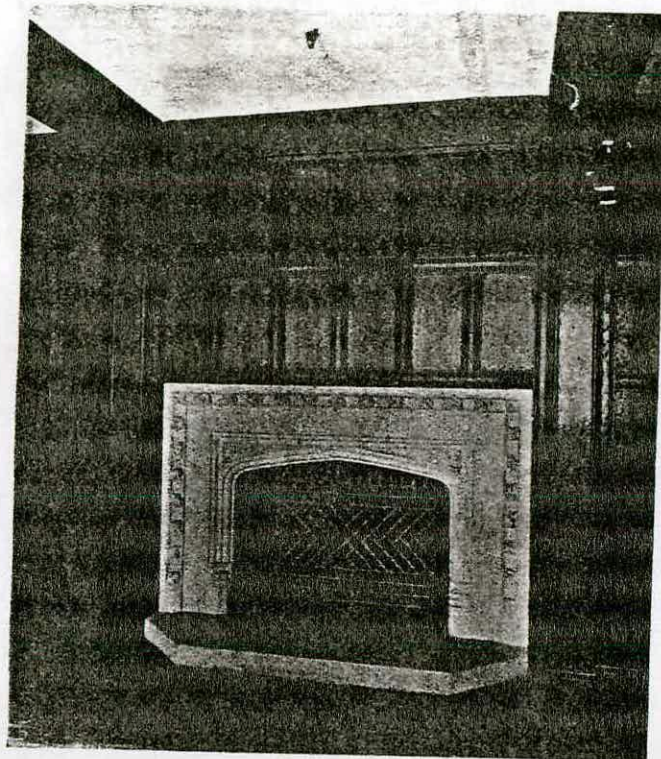
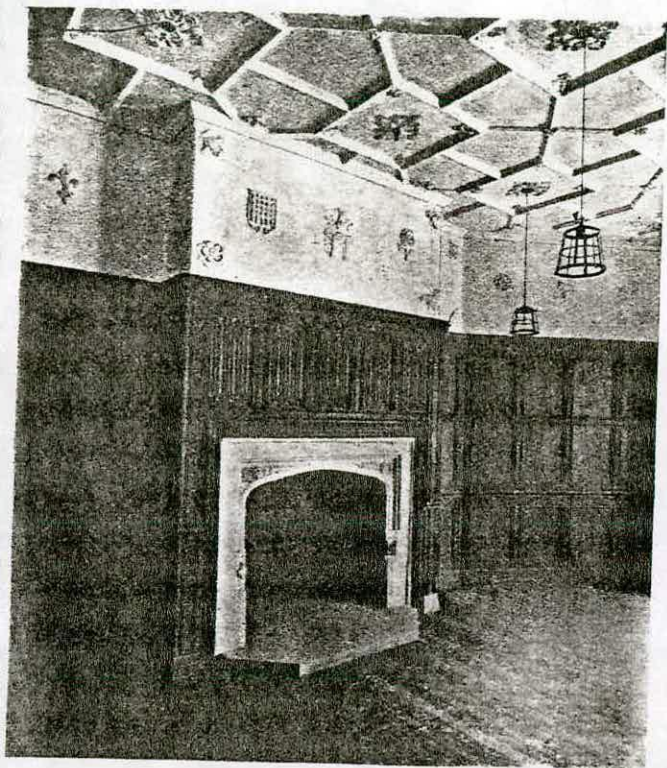




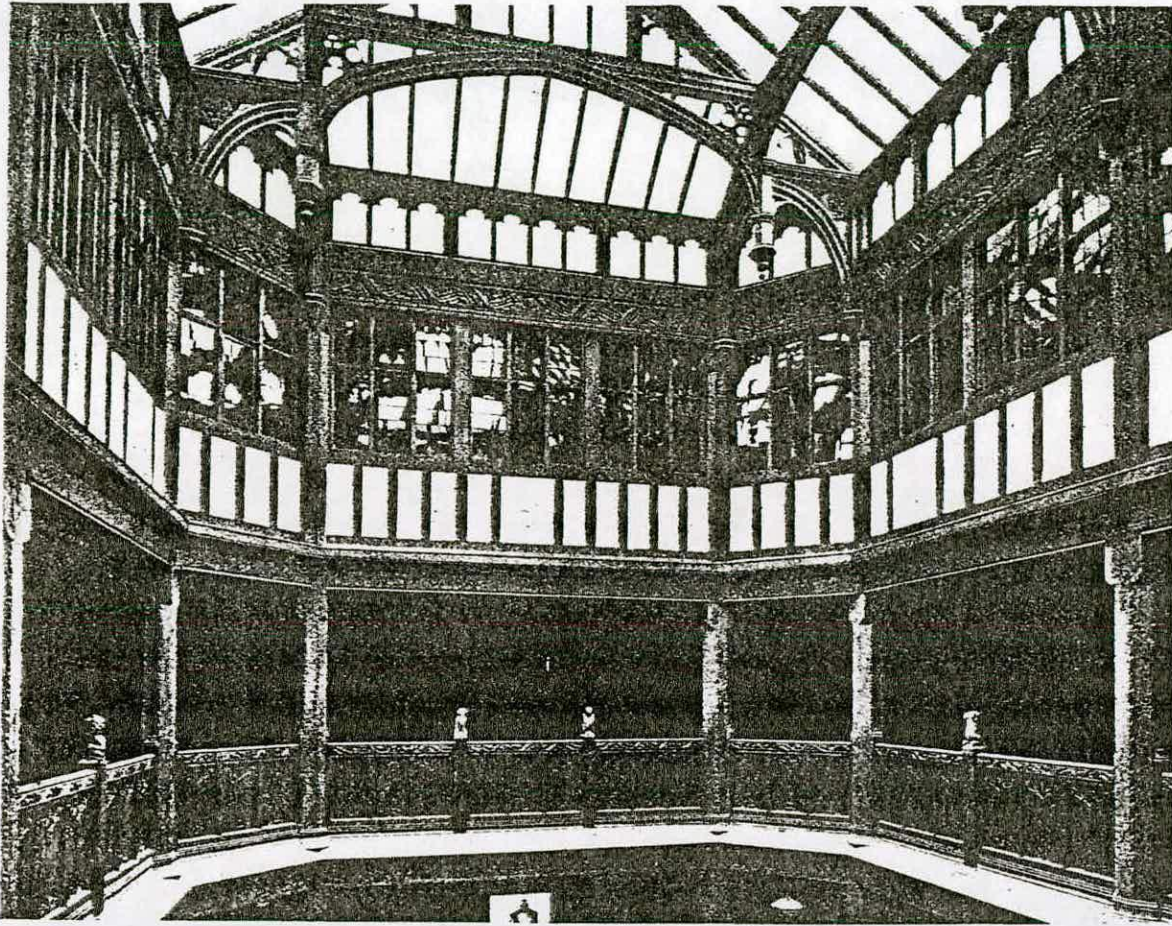




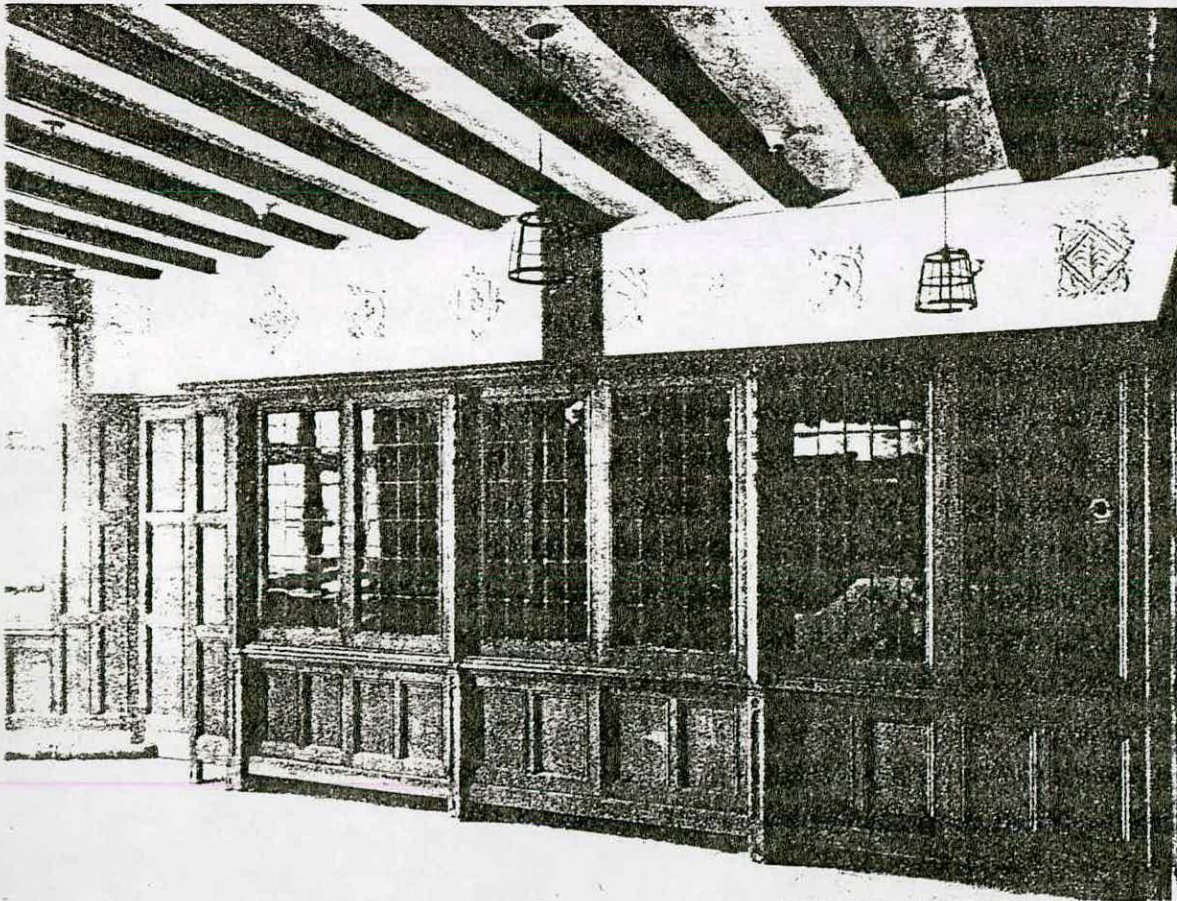




MESSRS. LIBERTY & CO.'S NEW PREMISES, ARGYLL PLACE, LONDON: VIEWS OF SOME OF THE FIREPLACES.  
EDWIN T AND E. STANLEY HALL, ARCHITECTS.



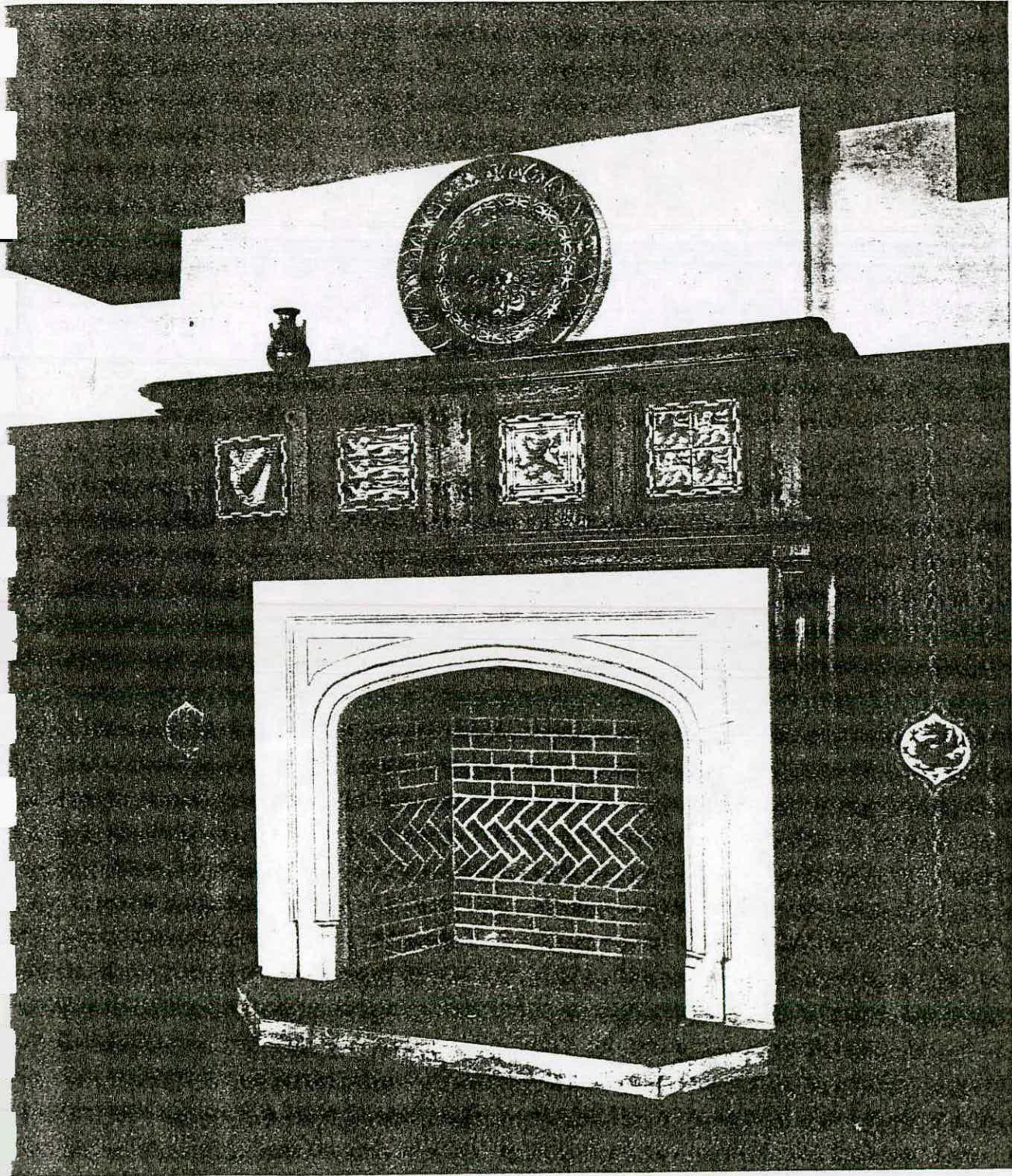
ONE OF THE CENTRAL GALLERIES.



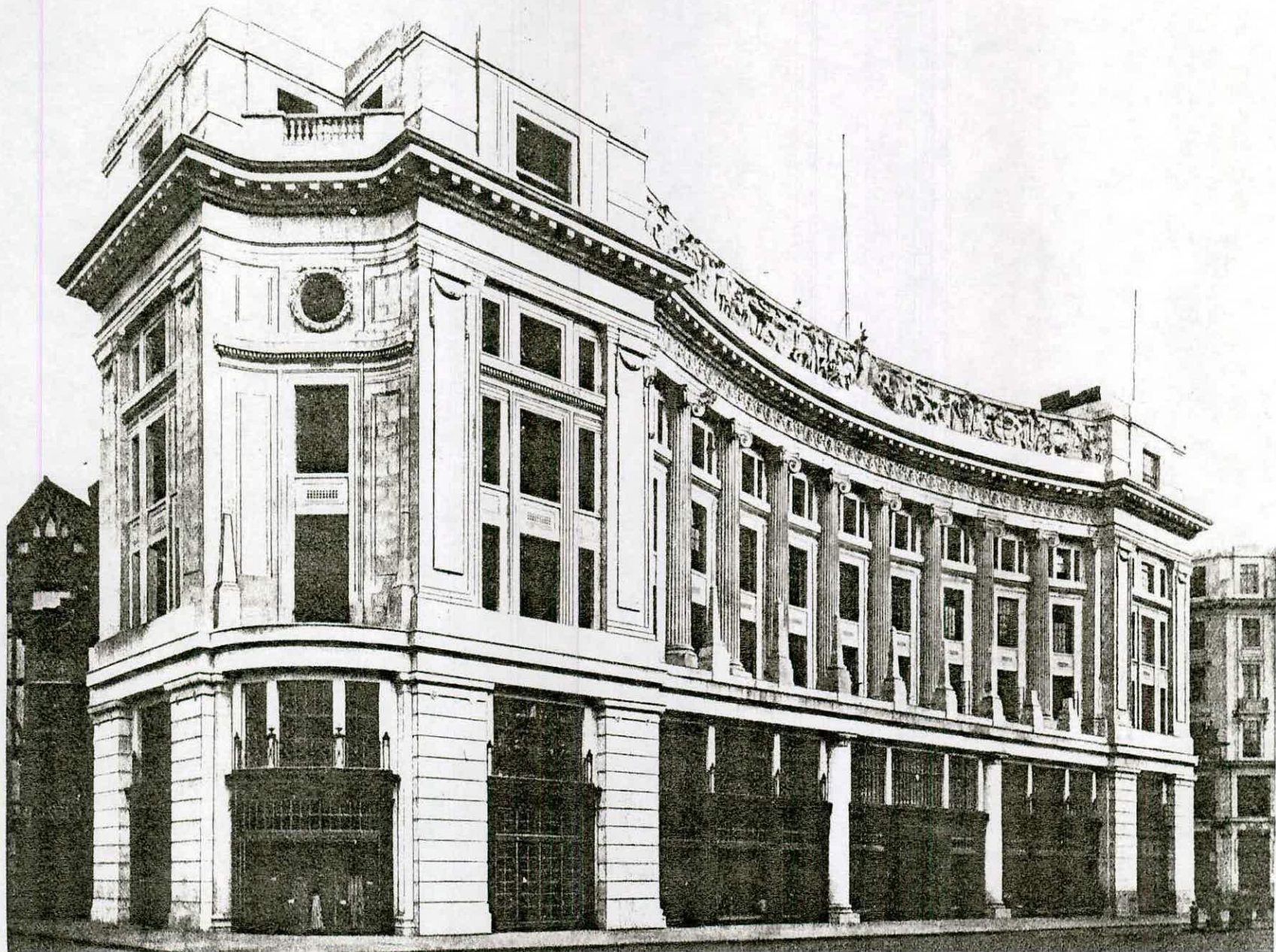
A SHOW CASE.

Current Architecture. 236.—Messrs. Liberty & Co.'s New Premises,  
Argyll Place, London : A Fireplace

Edwin T. and E. Stanley Hall, Architects



Inside the new "Liberty" building, one's attention is focussed on the beautiful wood-carving and panelling, which are to be seen everywhere.





Liberty Tudor Building interior: roof



Ceiling and fireplace, top floor



Lift, interior panelling





Lift door



Fireplace, top floor



Corner fireplace, top floor