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King Str.

Duke Str.

Str.

St. James's

Square

York Str.

Street

Wells Str.

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Water-
loo
Place

Eagle
Place

Market Str.

Piccadilly

Chesham Str.



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Pam

1984 is a particularly significant year in the history of National Westminster Bank at 1 St. James's Square for two reasons. The year marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the office, which was the first branch of a joint stock bank to be established in London. It is also the occasion of combining its business with that of its distinguished neighbour across Charles II Street and the completion of the extensive alterations to the premises necessitated by this merger.

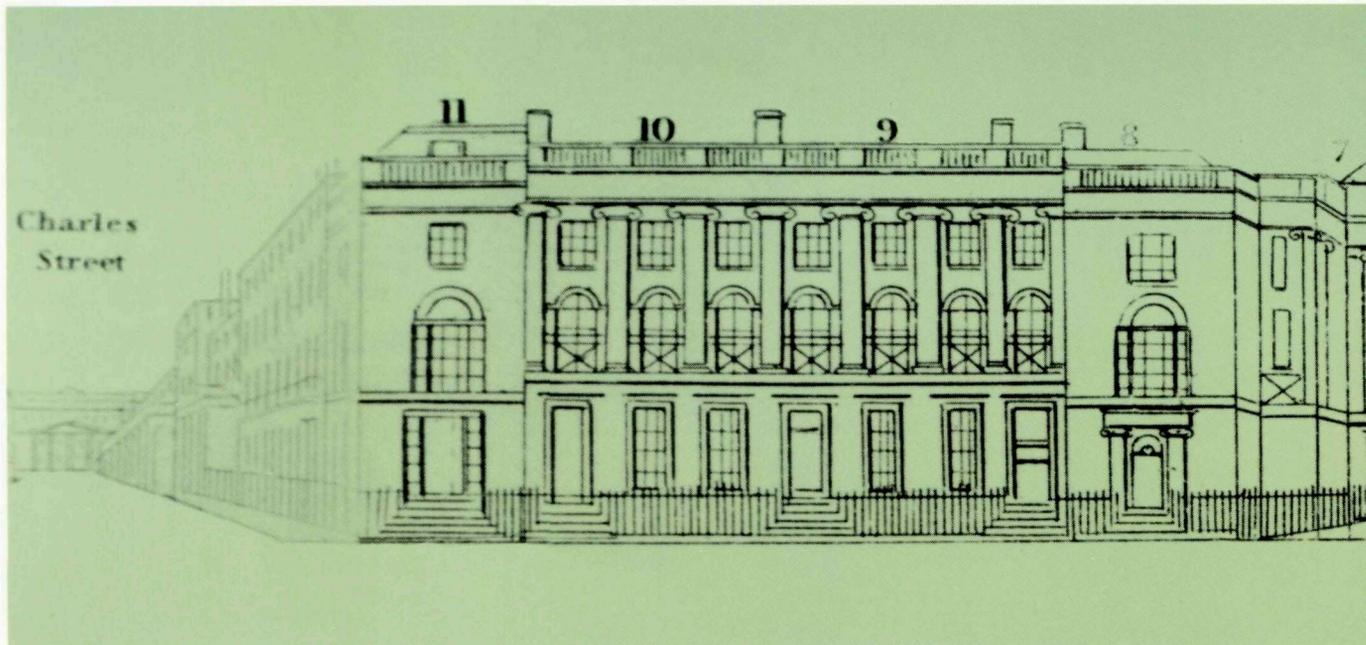
The story of 1 St. James's Square is inextricably bound up with that of the London & Westminster Bank. This bank was the first to take advantage of legislation of 1833, passed in the teeth of opposition from the private bankers and the Bank of England, to allow joint stock banks to open in London. Indeed the founders of the London & Westminster Bank were foremost in urging this reform on Parliament. In the prospectus, issued in 1833, the founders announced that:

'... the Establishment shall be forthwith formed in the City, and for the accommodation of the Public a Branch Bank will be simultaneously established in the West End of the Town'.

Below: James Gilbart, first General Manager of London & Westminster Bank

Right: Oliver Vile, Manager of Westminster Branch 1834-1855





Part of Tallis's view of Waterloo Place c 1838 showing Westminster Branch's first premises at no. 9

Thus it called itself the London & Westminster Bank and, under the leadership of James Gilbart as General Manager, soon became a major force in the financial life of the Capital.

On 10th March 1834 the bank opened in the City at 38 Throgmorton Street and in Westminster at 9 Waterloo Place. The Westminster Branch's first manager was Thomas Moxon but he was succeeded after a few months by Oliver Vile who was to preside over the growth of the branch until his retirement in 1855 in his 76th year.

In 1838 the London & Westminster City Office was moved into a new building on an adjoining site at 41 Lothbury and this address has been Head office to 1 St. James's Square ever since. By 1841 Westminster Branch too was outgrowing its original offices and the Board discussed the possibility of moving into the premises of the Palladium Assurance Co., also in Waterloo Place. However it was in 1844 that a solution was found in the purchase from the Earl of Dartmouth of 1 St. James's Square. Alterations were then undertaken to equip the building as a banking office and residence for Mr Vile and the branch opened in its



The Bank's brougham used between St. James's Square and the City from 1862 to 1932 when the coachman, Henry Morrish, retired

Design from West End Office cheque 1928

new home on 30th December 1844. In 1848 windows at the bank were broken during the Chartist Riots and firearms were issued to the staff. The two swords displayed at the office today were also procured around that time.

Sadly, violence was to come again to St. James's Square in the spring of 1984 when shots were fired from the Libyan People's Bureau, situated at number 5, on a small demonstration of Libyans opposed to their country's rulers. A number of protestors were injured and Woman Police Constable Yvonne Fletcher, on duty controlling the demonstration, was killed. In the ensuing siege of the Bureau and expulsion of the occupants 1 St. James's Square was the nerve centre of the police operations.

Further evidence of the standing of the bank in this most select of London residential squares was the need in 1858 to purchase part of an adjoining house to expand the branch premises. During 1862 a brougham was acquired to transport cash and valuables between the branch and Lothbury. This survived in use until 1932. In the 1860s too the



Part of a procession of Chartists proceeding through London in 1848. BBC Hulton Picture Library

Street sign, 21 Lombard Street, the emblem of London & County Bank



Westminster Branch cheque 1874



THE MANCHESTER & COUNTY BANK

LIMITED.

An Office of this Bank will be Opened
On the 2nd November, 1931,
AT
14, WATERLOO PLACE,
LONDON, S.W.1,

UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF
Mr. T. P. MACDONALD.

Hours of Business:
Daily 9 a.m. to 3-30 p.m.
Saturdays 9 a.m. to 12-0 noon.

Current and Deposit Accounts are opened, Interest is allowed in accordance with the current value of money, and all the usual Banking facilities are offered to the Customers of the Bank.

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS OPENED.

In addition to its numerous Branches, the Bank has Agents in all the chief cities and towns in the United Kingdom, and has Correspondents in the Colonies, the United States of America, South America and on the Continent of Europe, and is thus enabled to issue Drafts and Letters of Credit and to purchase Coupons and Foreign Bills of Exchange on advantageous terms.

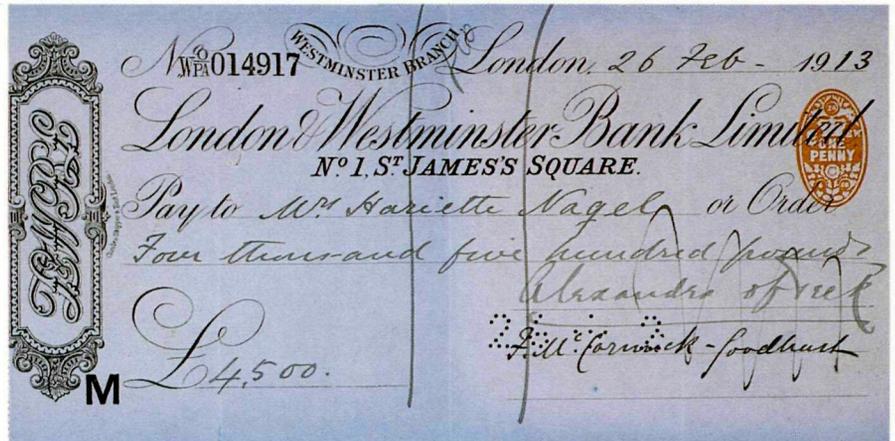
The Officers of the Company are bound to secrecy in respect of the transactions of its Customers.

E. O. LEES,
H. DUCKWORTH,
Joint General Managers.

Manchester,
October, 1931.

Opening notice, Manchester & County
Bank's London Office in Waterloo Place

1908 Cheque used in 1913 by which time the Bank's title was London County & Westminster



Shields of Parr's Bank as displayed in Bristol City Office

Universal Private Telegraph Co. connected 1 St. James's Square with Head Office, this system being replaced by the telephone in 1905.

By 1890 the London & Westminster Bank had 15 branches in London and Westminster Branch was given special status and the distinctive title 'West End Office' which it held until the review of branch names for the National Westminster Bank merger of 1970. However, the first great merger for the bank came in 1909 when the London & Westminster amalgamated with the London & County Bank, founded in Southwark in 1836. The London & County brought to the new London County & Westminster Bank increased strength in London and representation throughout south eastern England.

During the 1914-18 War many men from 1 St. James's Square served in the forces and a rapid expansion in the employment of women took place, the branch having sixteen on the staff by the end of the War. Before hostilities were over the amalgamation movement among the British banks had been resumed and in 1918 it was announced that the London County & Westminster Bank was to merge with Parr's Bank. Parr's had been founded in Warrington in 1788 but by the time of the merger was a major bank with many branches in London, the west country, and the east midlands as well as the north west. Thus West End Office found itself part of a bank with a truly nationwide branch network, one of the 'big five'.





Arms of the District Bank

Left: District Bank's Waterloo Place Branch on Coronation Day, 2 June 1953

Handwritten passbook of 1849

The lettering on the outside of 1 St. James's Square had to be further extended for the long new title London County Westminster & Parr's Bank until the shorter title of Westminster Bank was adopted in 1923.

1939 saw the return of war to Europe and in the blitz of 1940 1 St. James's Square was an early casualty. At 7.30 in the evening of Monday 14th October the adjoining Canada Life Assurance Co. offices were completely demolished by a high-explosive bomb and the bank so extensively damaged that only the ground floor of the greater part of the building could be retained. A counter service was operated from nearby St. James's Street Branch while the wreckage was cleared and for the remainder of the War the branch operated from half the banking hall and the basement where a makeshift counter in the strongroom entrance was manned during the flying-bomb attacks in 1944. After the War many members of staff returning to the bank and civilian life attended refresher courses held in adjoining upper rooms in Charles II Street.

The London and Westminster Bank					
(WESTMINSTER BRANCH.)					
D ^r		in Acc ^t	with C ^r		
Mr. G. T. Clark		(addressed to)			
1849			1849		
Jan 1	Bal ^{ce}	99 51	Jan 2	Geo Esps	10
Jan 3	p Austin	50	3	Eagle Hotel	111 3
13	Wm Cash	50	4	Quens	313
14	Wm Lloyd 40	18	6	Gilbert	211 5
25	Cash	130	Jan 7	Esps	10
May 2	Wm	100	8	Wm in Bank	66
11	Manchester	19	23	Wm in Hotel	4 55
22	Wm Cash	100	Jan 7	Esps	10
		566 51			487 1

In 1956 the remainder of the old building was demolished and the present enlarged premises erected on the site. Early in the 1960s computer accounting was introduced to the branch and all banking services were developing in ways which would have astonished Oliver Vile and his colleagues. On 26th January 1968 the City and the public were surprised by the announcement that a merger had been agreed between the Westminster Bank and another 'big five' bank, the National Provincial. This was completed on 1st January 1970 when the two banks, plus the District Bank already owned by National Provincial, were brought together in the new National Westminster Bank. So the former National Provincial branch at 33 St. James's Square and that of the District in Waterloo Place became allies instead of respected competitors.

The forerunner of the National Provincial's branch at 33 St. James's Square had been opened by the Union of London and Smiths Bank in

Right: Westminster Branch in 1910

Interior of the former National Provincial branch at 33 St. James's Square





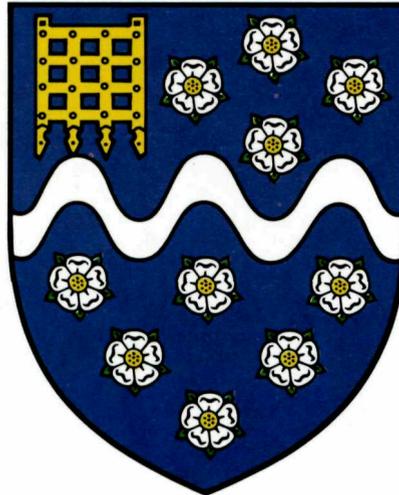
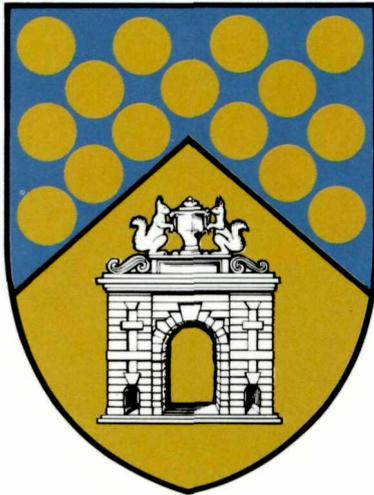


1911. The branch was first located on the corner of St. James's Street at 162 Piccadilly and known as Piccadilly Branch. However, at the end of 1917 the Union of London and Smiths Bank amalgamated with the National Provincial Bank and to distinguish the Union Bank branch from that of the National Provincial at 208 Piccadilly it was renamed St. James's Street Branch.

In 1942 the branch moved into St. James's Square, changing its title once more. The building taken over by the bank at number 33 had been designed in 1772 by the Adam Brothers. From the middle of the 19th century the house became the town residence of the Earls of Derby. In 1910, with the growing commercialisation of the square, it was first turned to office use.

Left: The war-scarred premises in 1948

Arms of the National Provincial and Westminster Banks



The District Bank's links with St. James's Square originated in the Manchester & County Bank which in 1931 decided to open for business in London and chose premises at 14 Waterloo Place close to the site





The banking hall in 1984

Left: The branch premises in 1984 seen from the square

where 1 St. James's Square had begun nearly 100 years before. In 1935 the bank merged with its old Manchester rival the District Bank. The District had its principal London Office at 75 Cornhill and the Waterloo Place London Office became known as Pall Mall Branch. Following the National Westminster merger Pall Mall Branch was closed and the business merged with that of 33 St. James's Square from 15th September 1972.

So the further combination of the business of 33 St. James's Square with that of 1 St. James's Square in 1984 brings under one roof elements of each of the three great banks that merged in 1970. The office has been extensively altered and re-equipped to accommodate the greatly

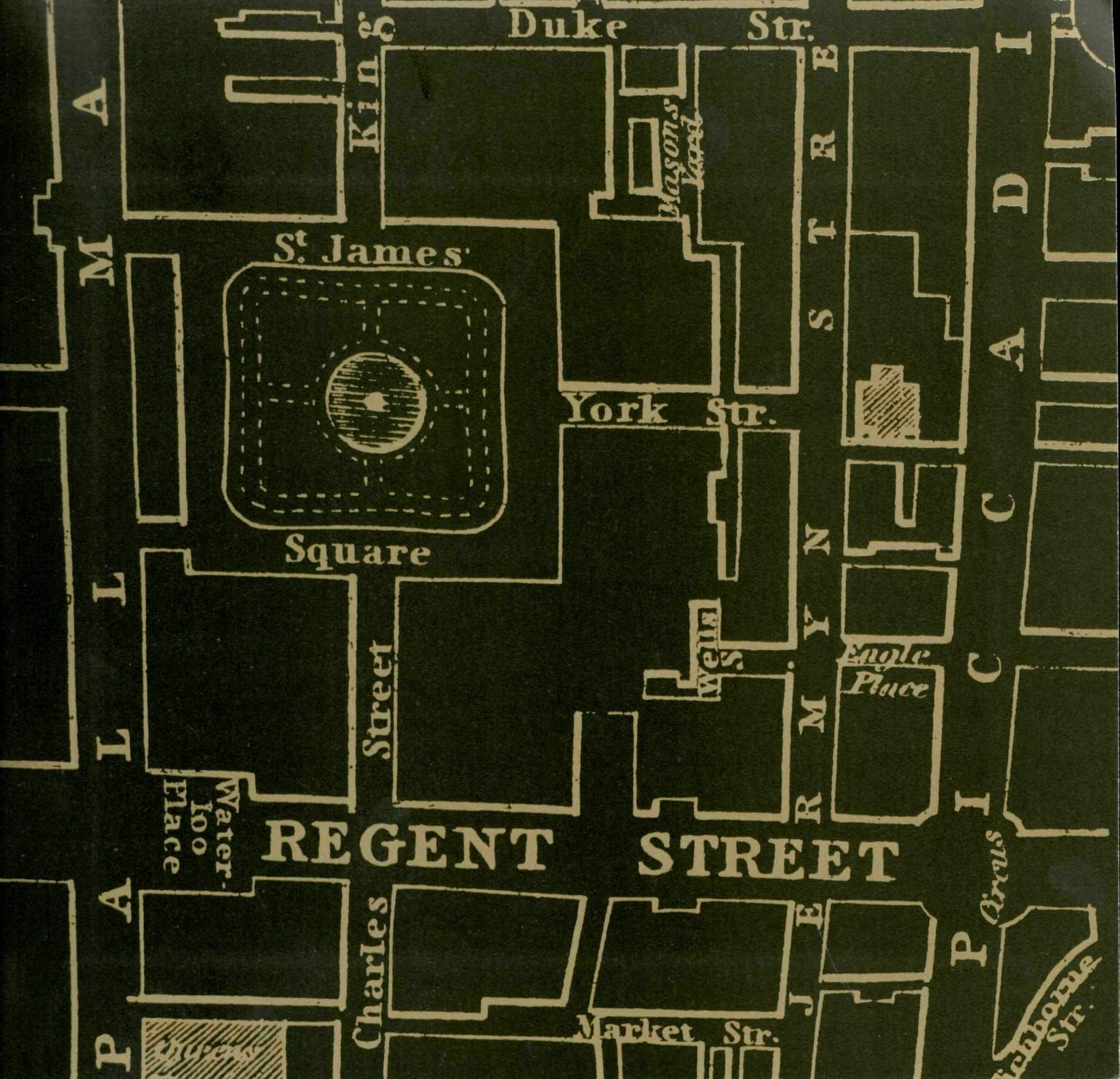
expanded business and to meet the demands of an electronic office in the final years of the 20th century. But unchanged are the traditions of service to customers built up by each of the old banks and so much cherished by National Westminster Bank today. It is interesting to reflect that the name 'Westminster' in the title of what has become one of the world's leading international banks stems from the decision to open the office whose 150th anniversary we are proud to celebrate this year.



Managers

Thomas Moxon	March-July 1834
Oliver Vile	1834-1855
J W Weldon	1855-1881
G R Hemmerde	1882-1898
W D Nichols	1898-1907
A Harding	1907-1913
N H Lubbock	1913-1923
G P Fisher	1923-1938
R O W Williams	1938-1948
H C Reddall	1948-1954
C K Shone	1954-1970
P L Berry	1970-1974
G W Clarke	1974-1978
M A Porter	1979-1981
R J Staniland	1981-





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KING'S

Duke Str.

Str.

S T R E E T

R M Y N

P I C A D I L L Y

S^t. James

Square

York Str.

Street

Wells

Engle Place

Water 100 Place

REGENT STREET

Charles

Market Str.

J E

Richborne Str.

