

= Piccadilly =

Piccadilly (/ ˈpɪkəˈdɪli /) is a road in the City of Westminster , London to the south of Mayfair , between Hyde Park Corner in the west and Piccadilly Circus in the east . It is part of the A4 road that connects central London to Hammersmith , Earl 's Court , Heathrow Airport and the M4 motorway westward . St James 's is to the south of the eastern section , while the western section is built up only on the northern side . At just under 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) in length , Piccadilly is one of the widest and straightest streets in central London .

Piccadilly has been a main road since at least medieval times , and in the middle ages was known as " the road to Reading " or " the way from Colnbrook " . Around 1611 or 1612 , a Robert Baker acquired land in the area and prospered by making and selling piccadills . Shortly after purchasing the land , he enclosed it and erected several dwellings , including his home , Pikadilly Hall . What is now Piccadilly was named Portugal Street in 1663 after Catherine of Braganza , wife of Charles II , and grew in importance after the road from Charing Cross to Hyde Park Corner was closed to allow the creation of Green Park in 1668 . Some of the most notable stately homes in London were built on the northern side of the street during this period , including Clarendon House and Burlington House in 1664 . Berkeley House , constructed around the same time as Clarendon House , was destroyed by a fire in 1733 and rebuilt as Devonshire House in 1737 by William Cavendish , 3rd Duke of Devonshire . It was later used as the main headquarters for the Whig party . Burlington House has since been home to several noted societies , including the Royal Academy of Arts , the Geological Society of London and the Royal Astronomical Society . Several members of the Rothschild family had mansions at the western end of the street . St James 's Church was consecrated in 1684 and the surrounding area became St James Parish .

The Old White Horse Cellar , at No. 155 , was one of the most famous coaching inns in England by the late @-@ 18th century , by which time the street had become a favourable location for booksellers . The Bath Hotel emerged around 1790 , and Walsingham House was built in 1887 . Both the Bath and the Walsingham were purchased and demolished when the prestigious Ritz Hotel was built on the site in 1906 . Piccadilly Circus station , at the east end of the street , was designed by Charles Holden and built between 1925 ? 28 . It was the first underground station to have no above @-@ ground premises ; the station is only accessible by subways from street level . The clothing store Simpson 's was established at 203 - 206 Piccadilly by Alec Simpson in 1936 . During the 20th century , Piccadilly became known as a place to acquire heroin , and was notorious in the 1960s as the centre of London 's illegal drug trade . Today , Piccadilly is regarded as one of London 's principal shopping streets . Its landmarks include the Ritz , Park Lane , Athenaeum and Intercontinental hotels , Fortnum & Mason , the Royal Academy , the RAF Club , Hatchards , the Embassy of Japan and the High Commission of Malta .

Piccadilly has inspired several works of fiction , including Oscar Wilde 's The Importance of Being Earnest and the work of P. G. Wodehouse . It is one of a group of squares on the London Monopoly board .

= = History = =

= = = Early history = = =

The street has been part of a main road for centuries although there is no evidence that it was part of a Roman Road , unlike Oxford Street further north . In the middle ages it was known as " the road to Reading " or " the way from Colnbrook " . During the Tudor period , relatively settled conditions made expansion beyond London 's city walls a safer venture . Property speculation became a lucrative enterprise and developments grew so rapidly that the threat of disease and disorder prompted the government to ban developments . Owing to the momentum of growth , the laws had little real effect .

A plot of land bounded by Coventry , Sherwood , Glasshouse and Rupert Streets and the line of

Smith 's Court was granted by Elizabeth I to William Dodington , a gentlemen of London , in 1559 ? 60 . A year or so later it was owned by a brewer , Thomas Wilson of St Botolph @-@ without @-@ Aldgate . The grant did not include a small parcel of land , 1 3 ? 8 acres in area , on the east of what is now Great Windmill Street . That plot may have never belonged to Crown and was owned by Anthony Cotton in the reign of Henry VIII ; John Cotton granted it to John Golightly in 1547 and his descendants sold it to a tailor , Robert Baker , in c . 1611 ? 12 . Six or seven years later , Baker brought 22 acres of Wilson 's land , thanks largely to money from his second marriage .

Baker became financially successful by making and selling fashionable piccadills . Shortly after purchasing the land , he enclosed it (the parishioners had Lammas grazing rights) and erected several dwellings , including a residence and shop for himself ; within two years his house was known as Pikadilly Hall . A map published by Faithorne in 1658 describes the street as " the way from Knightsbridge to Piccadilly Hall " . A nearby gaming house , known as Shaver 's Hall and nicknamed " Tart Hall " or " Pickadell Hall " , was popular with the gentry of London . In 1641 Lord Dell lost £ 3000 in cards gambling there .

After Robert Baker 's death in 1623 and the death of his eldest son Samuel shortly after , his widow and her father purchased the wardship of their surviving children ; the death of the next eldest son , Robert , in 1630 , allowed them to effectively control the estate . Their only daughter died and her widower , Sir Henry Oxenden , retained an interest in the land . Several relatives claimed it , but after Mary Baker 's death in c . 1665 , the estate reverted to the Crown . A great @-@ nephew , John Baker , obtained possession of part of it , but squabbled over the lands with his cousin , James Baker ; trying to play one another off , they paid or granted rights to Oxenden and a speculator , Colonel Thomas Panton , but the pair eventually lost out to them . By the 1670s , Panton was developing the lands and , despite the claims of some distantly related Bakers , he steadily built them up .

= = = Later 17th century = = =

Piccadilly was named Portugal Street in 1663 after Catherine of Braganza , wife of Charles II . Its importance to traffic increased after an earlier road from Charing Cross to Hyde Park Corner was closed to allow the creation of Green Park in 1668 . After the Restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 , Charles II encouraged the development of Portugal Street and the area to the north (Mayfair) and they became fashionable residential localities . Some of the grandest mansions in London were built on the northern side of the street . Edward Hyde , 1st Earl of Clarendon and close political adviser to the king , purchased land for a house ; Clarendon House (now the location of Albemarle Street) was built in 1664 , and the earl sold the surplus land partly to Sir John Denham , who built what later became Burlington House . Denham chose the location because it was on the outskirts of London surrounded by fields . The house was first used to house the poor , before being reconstructed by the third Earl of Burlington in 1718 . Berkeley House was constructed around the same time as Clarendon House . It was destroyed by a fire in 1733 and rebuilt as Devonshire House in 1737 by William Cavendish , 3rd Duke of Devonshire , and was subsequently used as the headquarters for the Whig party . Devonshire House survived until 1921 , before being sold for redevelopment by Edward Cavendish , 10th Duke of Devonshire for £ 1 million . Burlington House has since been home to the Royal Academy of Arts , the Geological Society of London , the Linnean Society of London , the Royal Astronomical Society , the British Astronomical Association , the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Royal Society of Chemistry .

The land to the south of Piccadilly was leased to trustees of the Earl of St Albans in 1661 for a thirty @-@ year term , subsequently extended to 1740 . No. 162 ? 165 were granted freehold by the king to Sir Edward Villiers in 1674 . The White Bear Inn had been established between what is now No. 221 Piccadilly and the parallel Jermyn Street since 1685 . It remained in use throughout the 18th century before being demolished in 1870 to make way for a restaurant .

St James 's Church was first proposed in 1664 , when residents wanted to become a separate parish from St Martin in the Fields . After several Bill readings , construction began in 1676 . The building was designed by Christopher Wren and cost around £ 5 @,@ 000 . It was consecrated in

1684 when the surrounding area became St James Parish .

By 1680 , most of the original residential properties along Portugal Street had been demolished or built over . The name Piccadilly was applied to part of the street east of Swallow Street by 1673 , and eventually became the de facto name for the entire length of Portugal Street . A plan of the area around St James Parish in 1720 describes the road as " Portugal Street aka Piccadilly " . John Rocque 's Map of London , published in 1746 , refers to the entire street as Piccadilly .

= = = 18th ? 19th centuries = = =

Piccadilly was increasingly developed and by the middle of the 18th century it was continuously built on as far as Hyde Park Corner . The development of St James 's and Mayfair in particular made Piccadilly into one of the busiest roads in London . Hugh Mason and William Fortnum started the Fortnum & Mason partnership on Piccadilly in 1705 , selling recycled candles from Buckingham Palace . By 1788 , the store sold poultry , potted meats , lobsters and prawns , savoury patties , Scotch eggs , and fresh and dried fruits .

The street acquired a reputation for numerous inns and bars during this period . The Old White Horse Cellar , at No. 155 , was one of the most famous coaching inns in England but was later destroyed . The Black Bear and White Bear (originally the Fleece) public houses were nearly opposite each other , although the former was demolished in about 1820 . Also of note were the Hercules ' Pillars , just west of Hamilton Place , the Triumphant Car , which was popular with soldiers , and the White Horse and Half Moon . The Bath Hotel emerged around 1790 and Walsingham House was built in 1887 . The Bath and the Walsingham were demolished when the Ritz Hotel opened on the site in 1906 .

No. 106 , on the corner of Piccadilly and Brick Street was built for Hugh Hunlock in 1761 . It was subsequently owned by the 6th Earl of Coventry who remodelled it around 1765 ; most of the architecture from this renovation has survived . In 1869 , it became home to the St James 's Club , a gentleman 's club which stayed there until 1978 . The building is now the London campus of the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology .

Several members of the Rothschild family had mansions at the western end of the street . Nathan Mayer Rothschild moved his banking premises to No. 107 in 1825 , and the construction of other large buildings , complete with ballrooms and marble staircases , led to the street being colloquially referred to as Rothschild Row . Ferdinand James von Rothschild lived at No. 143 with his wife Evelina while Lionel de Rothschild lived at No. 148 . Melbourne House was designed by William Chambers for Peniston Lamb , 1st Viscount Melbourne and built between 1770 and 1774 . In 1802 , it was converted to apartments , and is now the Albany . The house has been the residence for the British Prime Ministers William Ewart Gladstone and Edward Heath . St James 's Hall was designed by Owen Jones and built between 1857 ? 8 . Charles Dickens gave several readings of his novels in the hall , including Great Expectations and Oliver Twist . The hall hosted performances from Antonín Dvořák , Edvard Grieg and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky . It was demolished in 1905 and replaced by the Piccadilly Hotel .

In the late @-@ 18th century , Piccadilly was a favoured place for booksellers . In 1765 , John Almon opened a shop in No. 178 , which was frequented by Lord Temple and other Whigs . John Stockdale opened a shop on No. 181 in 1781 . The business continued after his death in 1810 , and was run by his family until 1835 . The oldest surviving bookshop in Britain , Hatchards was started by John Hatchard at No. 173 in 1797 , moving to the current location at No. 189 @-@ 90 (now No. 187) in 1801 . Aldine Press moved to Piccadilly from Chancery Lane in 1842 , and remained there until 1894 .

The Egyptian Hall at No. 170 , designed in 1812 by P. F. Robinson for W. Bullock of Liverpool , was modelled on Ancient Egyptian architecture , particularly the Great Temple of Dendera (Tentyra) . One author described it as " one of the strangest places Piccadilly ever knew " . It was a venue for exhibitions by the Society of Painters in Water Colours and the Society of Female Artists during the 19th century . It contained numerous Egyptian antiquaries ; at an auction in June 1822 two " imperfect " Sekhmet statues were sold for £ 380 , and a flawless one went for £ 300 .

== 20th ? 21st centuries ==

By the 1920s most old buildings had been demolished or were in institutional use as traffic noise had driven away residents but a few residential properties remained . Albert , Duke of York lived at No. 145 at the time of his accession as King George VI in 1936 .

The clothing store Simpson 's was established at 203 - 206 Piccadilly by Alec Simpson in 1936 , who provided factory @-@ made men 's clothing . The premises were designed by the architect Joseph Amberton in a style that mixed art deco and Bauhaus school design and an influence from Louis Sullivan . On opening it claimed to be the largest menswear store in London . It closed in January 1999 and its premises are the flagship shop of the booksellers Waterstones .

During the 20th century , Piccadilly became known as a place to acquire heroin . Jazz trumpeter Dizzy Reece recalled people queuing outside Piccadilly 's branch of Boots for heroin pills in the late 1940s . By the 1960s , the street and surrounding area were notorious as the centre of London 's illegal drug trade , where heroin and cocaine could be purchased on the black market from unscrupulous chemists . By 1982 , up to 20 people could be seen queueing at a chemist dealing in illegal drugs in nearby Shaftesbury Avenue . No. 144 was occupied by squatters in 1968 , taking advantage of a law that allowed disused buildings to be used for emergency shelter for the homeless . The radical squatting movement that resulted foundered soon after due to the rise of drug dealers and Hell 's Angels occupying the site . An eviction took place on 21 September 1969 and the events resulted in licensed squatting organisations that could take over empty premises to use as homeless shelters . In 1983 , A. Burr of the British Journal of Addiction published an article on " The Piccadilly Drug Scene " , in which the author discussed the regular presence of known dealers and easy accessibility of drugs .

Today , Piccadilly is regarded as one of London 's principal shopping streets , hosting several famous shops . The Ritz Hotel , the Park Lane Hotel , the Athenaeum Hotel and Intercontinental Hotels are located on the street , along with other luxury hotels and offices . Having been an established area for gentlemen 's clubs in the 20th century , this has declined and only the Cavalry and Guards Club and the Royal Air Force Club are left .

== Transport ==

Piccadilly is a major thoroughfare in the West End of London and has several major road junctions . To the east , Piccadilly Circus opened in 1819 connecting it to Regent Street . It has become one of the most recognised landmarks in London , particularly after a statue of Eros was constructed on the junction in 1893 , and the erection of large electric billboards in 1923 . At the western end of Piccadilly is Hyde Park Corner , and the street has a major road junction with St James 's Street and other significant junctions at Albemarle Street , Bond Street and Dover Street .

The road is part of the A4 connecting central London to Hammersmith , Earl 's Court , Heathrow Airport and the M4 motorway . Congestion along the road has been reported since the mid @-@ 19th century , leading to its progressive widening and removing the northern portions of Green Park . Traffic signals were installed in the 1930s . In the late 1950s , the Ministry of Transport remodelled Hyde Park Corner at the western end to form a major traffic gyratory system , including enlargement of Park Lane . It opened on 17 October 1962 at a cost of £ 5 million .

The London bus routes 9 , 14 , 19 , 22 , 38 , C2 , N9 , N19 , N22 , N38 and N97 all run along Piccadilly . Part of the Piccadilly line on the London Underground travels under the street . Green Park , Hyde Park Corner , and Piccadilly Circus stations (which are all on the Piccadilly line) have entrances in or near Piccadilly .

== Cultural references ==

The music hall song " It 's a Long Way to Tipperary " mentions Piccadilly and Leicester Square in its lyrics . It was written in 1912 about an Irishman living in London , but became popular after being

adopted by the mostly Irish Connaught Rangers during World War I.

Piccadilly is mentioned in several works of fiction . Raffles , E. W. Hornung 's " gentleman thief " lives at the Albany as does Jack Worthing from Oscar Wilde 's *The Importance of Being Earnest* . According to author Mary C King , Wilde chose the street because of its resemblance to the Spanish word peccadillo , meaning " slashed " or " pierced " .

In Evelyn Waugh 's novel *Brideshead Revisited* , the mansion , Marchmain House , supposedly located in a cul de sac off St James 's near Piccadilly , is demolished and replaced with flats . In the 1981 Granada Television dramatisation , Bridgewater House in Cleveland Row was used as the exterior of Marchmain House .

In Arthur Machen 's 1894 novella *The Great God Pan* , Helen Vaughan , the satanic villainess and offspring of Pan , lives off Piccadilly in the pseudonymous Ashley Street . Margery Allingham 's detective , Albert Campion , has a flat at 17A Bottle Street , Piccadilly , over a police station , although Bottle Street is fictitious .

Several P.G. Wodehouse novels use the setting of Piccadilly as the playground of the rich , idle bachelor in the inter war period of the 20th century . Notable instances are present in the characters of Bertie Wooster and his Drones Club companions in the Jeeves stories and the character of James Crocker in the story *Piccadilly Jim* .

The street is a square on the British Monopoly board , forming a set with Leicester Square and Coventry Street . When a European Union version of the game was produced in 1992 , Piccadilly was one of three London streets selected , along with Oxford Street and Park Lane .

In 1996 , Latvian singer Laima Vaikule released an album " Ya vyshla na Pikadilli " (" I Went Out on Piccadilly ") .