

= Vine Street , London =

Vine Street is a street in Westminster , London , running from Swallow Street , parallel to Regent Street and Piccadilly . It is now a dead end that was shortened from a longer road in the early 18th century owing to the building of Regent Street .

From the 18th to 20th century , it was home to Vine Street Police Station , which grew from a watch @-@ house into one of the busiest police stations in the world . The Marquess of Queensberry was charged with libel against Oscar Wilde here in 1895 . There was also a court house in the 18th and early 19th century . The street 's association with law has led to it being grouped with Bow Street and Marlborough Street on the standard British Monopoly board .

= = Geography = =

The street is approximately 70 feet (21 m) long and is a dead end , running east and parallel to Piccadilly near Piccadilly Circus . It consists mainly of the rear facades of buildings facing onto other streets . It connects to Swallow Street at its western end and an alleyway , Piccadilly Place halfway along . At the eastern end , the Man in the Moon Passage provides foot access to Regent Street . The nearest tube station is Piccadilly Circus .

= = History = =

The street is named after The Vine , an 18th @-@ century public house , which in turn may have been named after a former vineyard that was based at this location in Roman times . It was documented on ratebooks as Little Swallow Street in 1675 . It was laid out around 1686 and originally ran further , along what is now the Man in the Moon Passage . John Rocque 's Map of London , 1746 shows Vine Street extending from Piccadilly northeast to Warwick Street . In 1720 , the main properties on the street were a brewery and a carpenter 's yard .

Vine Street was split into two sections following the construction of Regent Street between 1816 and 1819 . The Man in the Moon Passage was created at this time , named after a former pub at this location . The northern section towards Warwick Street was renamed Great Vine Street , and then a branch of Warwick Street itself . It ceased to exist after the reconstruction of the Regent Street Quadrant in 1920 .

In 1853 , Charles Moreign purchased several small houses at the end of Vine Street so they could be redeveloped into St James 's Hall , Piccadilly . A rear entrance to the hall backed onto the street . The hall was demolished in 1905 and replaced by the Piccadilly Hotel , which also backs onto Vine Street .

= = = Police and law = = =

Vine Street has long been associated with the police and law . Around 1751 @-@ 2 , a court house was built at the western end of the street , on the corner of what is now Piccadilly Place . It closed in 1836 following the reorganisation of the court system around Westminster and was subsequently occupied by the lawyer Edward Gaffin .

The Vine Street Police Station was at No. 10 . It was originally built as a watch @-@ house around 1767 , and rebuilt following a fire in 1786 that destroyed several properties on and around the street . A school operated on the first floor , and two cells were in the basement . A further storey was added to the building in 1816 . It was renamed Vine Street Police Station in 1829 following the establishment of the Metropolitan Police District . The school moved from the building to Swallow Street in 1836 , where it stayed before closing in 1881 . The police station went on to become one of the main stations in Central London . In 1850 , it was extended over the 18th century courthouses . At one point in the 19th century it was one of the busiest police stations in the world . An Arts and Crafts extension wing was built on the station in 1897 , that faced onto Swallow Street . The Man in the Moon pub , adjacent to the station , was bought by the police receiver in 1931 .

The station closed in 1940 (along with nearby Marlborough Street Magistrates Court) to be replaced with an integrated West End Central Police Station at Savile Row , with the street being renamed Piccadilly Place . A subsequent rise in foot traffic around the area , and associated crime , led to the station being re @-@ opened in 1966 , with the street being renamed back to Vine Street in 1972 . The police station closed in 1997 and the building was demolished in 2005 for redevelopment .

= = Events and incidents = =

The Dutch artist Peter Scheemakers moved into a house on the western edge of Vine Street around 1741 . He stayed there until 1769 , when he returned to Antwerp .

On 2 September 1791 , composer Frantisek Kotzwara died at prostitute Susannah Hill 's house at No. 5 Vine Street from erotic asphyxiation following a sexual act that involved tying his neck to a doorknob . Hill was charged with Kotzwara 's murder but later acquitted .

In 1895 , the Marquess of Queensbury was charged at Vine Street Police Station with libel against Oscar Wilde . This ultimately led to Wilde 's arrest and subsequent imprisonment . On 29 May 1901 , the stonemason James Schultzy reported he had information about the murder of Mary Ann Austin but refused to reveal details anywhere except the Vine Street Police Station . The information was discarded by the Metropolitan Police as little value .

In 1928 , an officer working at the station was sacked after it was revealed he had been gathering bribes from local nightclubs and brothels , acquiring over £ 17 @,@ 000 (now £ 924 @,@ 000) in the process . The officer subsequently committed suicide and the station is believed to be haunted by his ghost . Related incidents include reports of papers being inexplicably moved , and an officer hearing footsteps despite knowing he was the only one in the station .

The street and station is mentioned in the Pogues ' song " The Old Main Drag " on their 1985 album Rum Sodomy & the Lash . It refers to the station and street 's unpopularity with some of London owing to their distrust of the police force . Because of its relatively hidden location and proximity to Piccadilly Circus , the street suffers from crime , which has led to Westminster City Council gating off the Man in the Moon Passage so service vehicles can access connecting buildings safely .

The street features as a property with a purchase price of £ 200 on the British Monopoly board . It is one of a group of three , coded orange , with connections to law , and is named after the police station . The other two orange properties , Bow Street and Marlborough Street , which are both valued at £ 180 , are named after the Bow Street Runners and Marlborough Street Magistrates Court respectively . Since the Man in the Moon is now closed , students on a Monopoly board pub crawl drink in one of the nearby pubs , such as those on Swallow Street , instead .