

Winster Market House



The Market House at Winster dates from the late 17th or early 18th century. It is now restored and houses a National Trust information room.

- 🕒 Open: End Mar - end Oct. Times vary.
- 💷 Cost: Free
- ♿ Access for disabled: The information room is reached via a flight of stairs.
- 🏠 Suitable for school groups. Contact the Ilam office (below) for more details.
- ➔ Location: 4 miles W of Matlock on S side of B5057 in main street of Winster. Bus: Hulley's 172 Matlock-Bakewell. TP Trent buses Derby-Bakewell. Call the Traveline on 0870 608 2 608 for more information. Cycle: 1 ¼ miles from National Cycle Network route 1.

For more information contact us at: 01335 350503 (White Peak Estate Office) or email peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk

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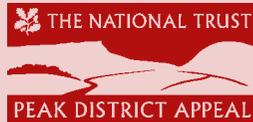
- is a registered charity
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- relies on the generosity of its supporters, through membership subscriptions, gifts, legacies and the contributions of thousands of volunteers;
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- spends all its income on the care and maintenance of the land and buildings in its protection.

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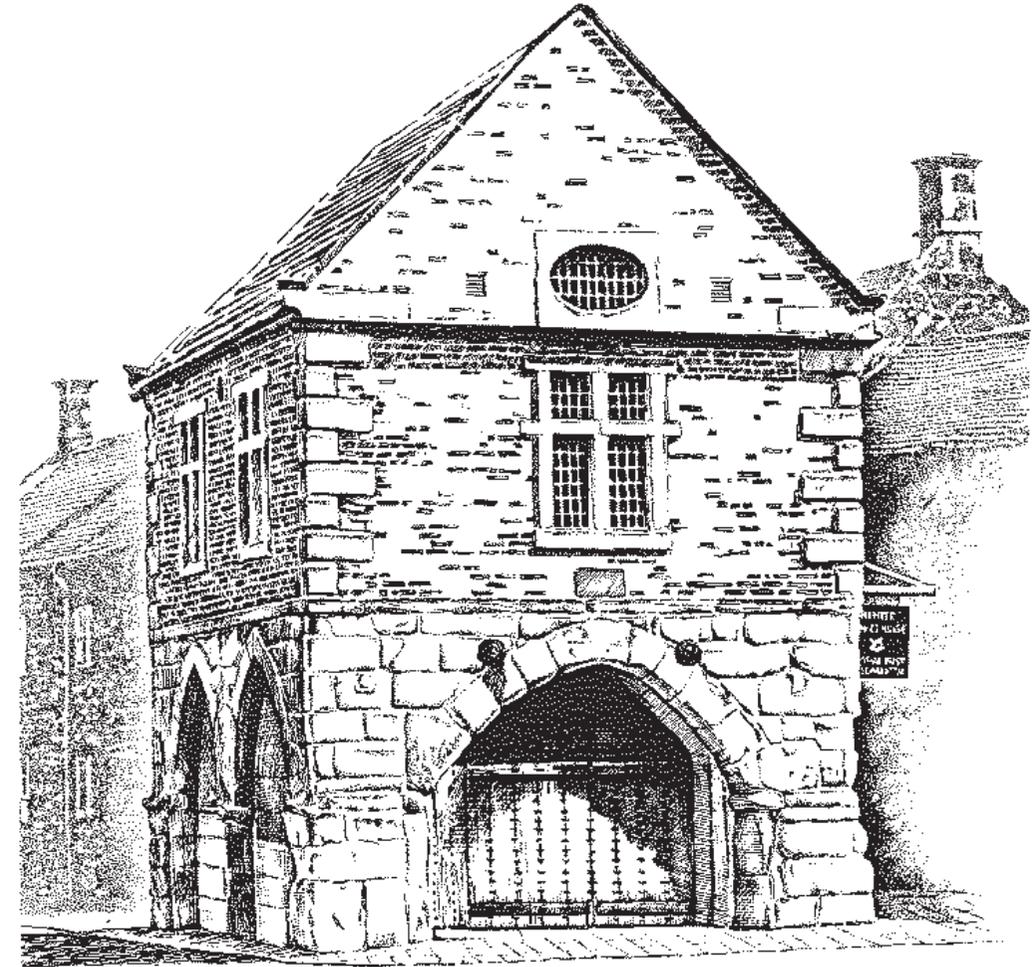
- becoming a member
- volunteering some of your time, or
- sending a donation to the National Trust Peak Appeal.



 THE NATIONAL TRUST

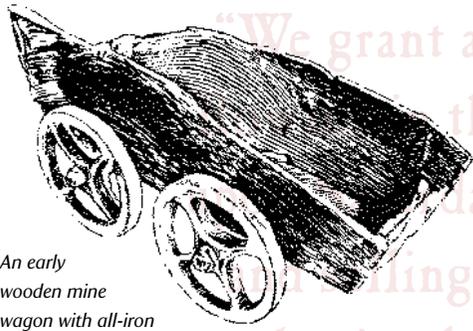
Winster Market House

Monument to a once thriving lead mining village



White Peak

Standing almost in the centre of the main street, Winster Market House is the central, dominating feature of the village, and stands as testimony to its once thriving past. Indeed, the famous antiquarian, Llewelyn Jewitt who lived in Winster for many years, once wrote: "Its market was once very flourishing, with long rows of stalls and the people so thick and throng together you could a walk'd atop o'their heads!."



An early wooden mine wagon with all-iron wheels as used in the lead mines around Winster

"We grant and concede to Thomas Eyre of Rowtor in the County aforesaid one market upon Saturday each week for ever for buying and selling all manner of goods and cattle and animals/beasts and four fairs each year for ever viz. on 23 June, 16 October, 28 November and 20 April unless any of these days should be a Sunday for buying and selling all manner of goods and cattle and beasts together with a court of pie powder at the time of the fairs and with all tolls and profits to the markets and fairs pertaining."

On the 9th of November 1711 a Grant was made for the holding of a Fair in Winster. Such fairs or markets soon became an important element of life in Winster, and the Market House became a focal point of the village. Poultry, eggs and butter were traded in the upper storey of the Market House, while lead was weighed out by merchants and miners below. Outside in the streets, traders displayed their goods on stalls.

The lead mines around Winster were worked for centuries but as demand for the ore dwindled and prices fell, so the mines gradually closed down and the population of the town rapidly decreased. A description of Winster in 1799 mentions that "Many houses are deserted and the little employment the remaining inhabitants can now obtain is in the cotton business..." As the town grew less prosperous the Fairs, which had formerly been so prominent and vital a feature of the village, fell into disuse.

The Market House

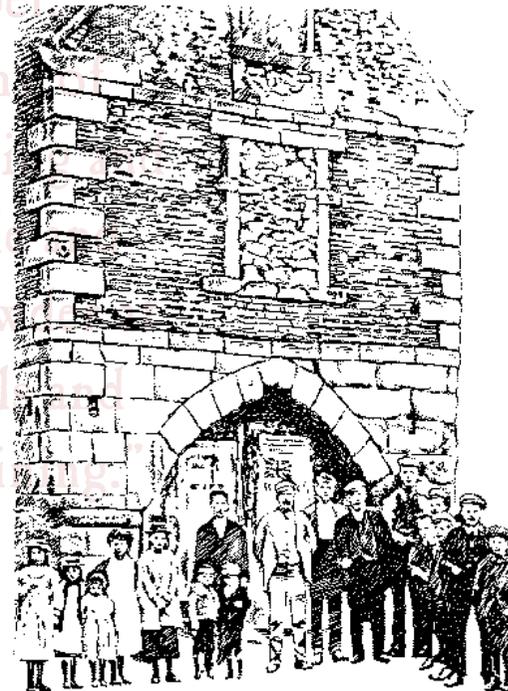
There is no documentary evidence to indicate a precise date for the construction of Winster Market House, but it is generally believed to have been erected during the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

The House itself is two storeys high and rests upon a massive stone base. It follows the traditional pattern of such buildings, originally having the whole of the ground floor open with the upper storey supported by five arches. The date at which these arches were filled in is not known but it was probably during the

decline of the market, between 1795 and 1855. The upper chamber is mainly of brick resulting in an attractive contrast with the stone arches and facings.

In 1717 the market (though with no record of the Market House) and its dues was the property of Thomas Eyre of Row Tor, Birchover. The Market House passed from the Eyres to the family of Massarene by female descent where it remained until at least the early nineteenth century. In the days when they were in use the stocks were close by, as was the busy Angel Inn.

After the lead mines closed the markets were less important and the Market House became neglected. By the end of the nineteenth century it was in a ruinous condition and the upper storey had to be removed for safety in 1904. In 1906 the building was bought from Mr Joseph Greatorex for the National Trust, largely from a fund raised by Mrs Childers Thompson. Under the direction of Mr Henry Rye of Bakewell, architect for the Duke of Rutland, local labour was employed to reconstruct the building, the plans being drawn up by Mr Weir, the National Trust's architect.



Winster Market House c.1900

Wherever possible the old materials were used, and the original lines of the building were followed. The total cost of restoration was about £165. Winster Market House was one of the earliest buildings to be taken into the care of the then recently formed National Trust, and the first property to be acquired in the Peak District.

Winster today

Little but this Market House now remains of the original thriving and prosperous market town. However, some of its elderly residents can still recall the annual cattle markets held before the First World War, when sheep were herded along Pump Lane, and cattle and horses were sold in front of the Miner's Standard public house.



Winster's unique Morris dancers

Winster still does host its own special events, however. There is still a market and fair held every May, there is a Carnival Wakes Week in June featuring Winster's own Morris men, and on Shrove Tuesday every year there is a pancake race along the main street. The village has other interesting features too, including the Old Hall with its pilasters and balustraded parapet built with stone from Darley Dale, and there are at least sixty other listed buildings (although few are earlier than eighteenth century). The Market House is the only building in Winster owned and protected by the National Trust, and is now open to the public as an Information Centre.

REFERENCES

Winster and eighteenth century lead mining. L. Willies. Newspaper cuttings related to Sheffield. Vol 26. p20. Framed buildings of England. R. T. Mason Winster Past and Present. J. Merill

The rise and decline of Winster

In 1577 a survey revealed that Winster had no inn, tavern or alehouse, which indicates that it must have been a very small place indeed. Two hundred years later, at the 1761 census, the population of Winster was 1,563, but by this time, however, it already appeared to be in decline. At its height, during the heyday of lead mining in the 18th century, the population was probably in excess of 2,000 people. The village quickly assumed the present-day plan of streets with scores of houses on the bank south of the main street, near to the mines, which were the main source of employment. Three of the greatest mines at that time were Yatescoop, Placket and Portaway.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries many of the Winster men worked at nearby Mill Close Mine, the largest lead mine in the Peak District and one of the most productive in the world. As the village grew so too did the number of its trades and services, including smiths, carpenters and builders. (At one time Winster could even boast more than twenty public houses!)