

## Nominate a Heritage Asset

**No. 4 Marston Street, Formerly the Cutler Boulter Dispensary and Russian Orthodox Church**



1. <b>WHAT IS IT?</b> Is it one of the following?	Tick
a <b>building or group of buildings</b>	y
a <b>monument or site (an area of archaeological remains or a structure other than a building)</b>	
a <b>place (e.g. a street, park, garden or natural space)</b>	
a <b>landscape (an area defined by visual features or character, e.g. a city centre, village, suburb or field system)</b>	

2. <b>WHY IS IT INTERESTING?</b> Is it interesting in any of the following ways?	Tick / Rank
<b>Historic interest</b> – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry	y1
<b>Archaeological interest</b> – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
<b>Architectural interest</b> – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials	y2
<b>Artistic interest</b> – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	

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What is it about the asset that provides this interest?

**Historic Interest.** This is a later 19<sup>th</sup> century dispensary built in 1892 to replace the apothecary and almshouses of the Cutler Boulter Charity on St Clement's Road and remaining in use until 1948, when the NHS act made the provision of such charitable care unnecessary. It was one of two dispensaries built in Oxford by the charity, the other at Gloucester Green has since been demolished. Medical care was provided in return for a regular affordable subscription, whilst those who could not afford the subscriptions could resort to the Parish relieving officer for support. It provided the main medical provision within the suburb until 1948.

Historic Interest. From 1948 the building served as a Russian Orthodox Church and was owned by Charles Gibbs, the tutor to the Russian royal family from 1908 until 1918 and was for several years a museum exhibiting his collection of mementoes of his time with the Romanovs.

**Architectural Interest.** The building stands out as distinct from the adjacent houses in the street scene due to its later 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture and ornamental stone detailing including sill and lintel string courses, and moulded architraves with rusticated keystones and brick platt bands. The large double doors to the street also have a non-domestic character. Two dormer windows above are a recent addition following conversion of the building into flats in the late 1980s. Surviving internal features relating to the use as a dispensary include the preservation of the receptionists hatch in the ground floor foyer.

<b>3. WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED?</b> Is the interest of the asset <b>valued locally</b> for any of the following reasons?	Tick / Rank
<b>Association:</b> It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area	y1 and 3
<b>Illustration:</b> It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character	y1
<b>Evidence:</b> It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history	y2
<b>Aesthetics:</b> It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously	y3
<b>Communal:</b> It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community	y5
How is the asset locally valued as heritage?	
<p><b>Illustration and Association:</b> This building illustrates an aspect of the provision of health care and social welfare facilities in Victorian and early 20<sup>th</sup> century East Oxford, which is an important theme in the history of the East Oxford suburb.</p> <p>Evidence: The survival of internal features relating to the past use as a dispensary provides evidential value that could be combined with further study to provide understanding of how the building was used in the past.</p> <p><b>Association and Communal:</b> The Association with Charles Gibbs provides a connection with a locally notable individual. His use of the building as a church provides communal value for the Russian and Serbian religious community in Oxford who may have worshipped there.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics:</b> The building is attractive, retaining much of its 19<sup>th</sup> century design and makes a distinctive contribution to the Victorian character of the street that is greater than the general positive character of the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century houses of the street.</p> <p><b>Association:</b> The building formed part of the civil protection infrastructure of Oxford during the Second World War when it was used as the Air Raid Precaution (ARP) Post with soldiers billeted upstairs, whilst remaining in use as a dispensary.</p>	

<b>4. WHAT MAKES ITS LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SPECIAL?</b> Do any of the following features make the heritage significance of the asset stand out above the surrounding environment?	Tick
<b>Age ...</b> Is it particularly old, or of a date that is significant to the local area?	y1
<b>Rarity ...</b> Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?	y1
<b>Integrity ...</b> Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?	y2
<b>Group value ...</b> Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or	y1

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communal association?	
<b>Oxford's identity</b> ... Is it important to the identity or character of the city or a particular part of it?	
<b>Other</b> ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?	
<p>How does this contribute to its value?</p> <p><b>Rarity:</b> This is the only known 19<sup>th</sup> century dispensary in Oxford. The other known example at Gloucester Green having been demolished.</p> <p><b>Age:</b> the building illustrates the period at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when various public services were being developed in East Oxford in response to the growth of the population and their various needs it forms an integral element of the wider Victorian and Edwardian character of the suburb.</p> <p><b>Integrity:</b> Albeit with the addition of dormer windows, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century character of the building has been well preserved, including the numerous architectural details that distinguish it from the surrounding houses.</p> <p><b>Group value:</b> The dispensary is one of a small group of buildings in East Oxford that relate to the provision of health care and social welfare that together chart the development of facilities for the sick and poor (others include St Barnabas Chapel and Farmhouse, the Stone's Almshouses, St John's Home, the former chapel of the New Union Workhouse (now the Asian Cultural Centre, Manzil Way) and Nazareth House (now James Mellon Hall, Rectory Road).</p>	

### Sources

Courtney-Thompson, F. 1997, *Just by Chance: The story of Marston Street and the growth of the East Oxford Suburb* (Privately Published).