

The Occupants of 13 Devonshire Square

Built in the gardens of a former mansion, this house was a home for several wealthy merchants, three doctors, the offices of a Jewish welfare organization, several wine merchants, solicitors, and birthplace of at least 23 babies

1567 **Jasper Fisher**, a Clerk in Chancery and warden of the Goldsmiths' Company, built an imposing mansion house in Devonshire Square, but ruined himself in the process and the building became known as **Fisher's Folly**. Subsequent owners were **Mr Cornwallis**, then **Sir Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland**, and then **Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford**, Lord Chamberlain to **Queen Elizabeth I** (who is known to have lodged there). On his death it was sold to **Archibald Campbell, 6th Earl of Argyll**. He tried but failed to sell it to the East India Company, and instead sold to **James Hamilton, 2nd Marquis of Hamilton**. He died and it was sold to **William Cavendish, 1st Earl of Devonshire** and the house became **Devonshire House**. His son **William, 2nd Earl** died in the house from excessive indulgence in good living. The **3rd Earl** was born in the house; his widow **Lady Elizabeth Cecil, Duchess of Devonshire** entertained **King Charles II and the Queen** in the house. Part of the house was used as a **Quakers** meeting-house.

1678 **Nicholas Barbon**, economist, physician, and financial speculator, buys Devonshire House for development. Nicholas was son of Praise-God Barebon (or Barbone), radical preacher, and liveryman of the **Leathersellers' Company** (*Barebones* became the contemptuous name for Cromwell's parliament). Nicholas restored his surname Barbon and didn't use his middle name *Unless-Jesus-Christ-Had-Not-Died-For-Thee-Thou-Hast-Been-Damned*. **Devonshire Square** was laid out across the garden. All 17 houses were occupied by **1692**. The entrance to the square was via *Devonshire Street* (now *Row*) with another to the south, now known as *Barbon Alley*. The houses weren't then numbered but No 12 and No 13 are the only surviving houses from that time.

1692 **Mr Richard Craddock**, merchant, and agent and later a director of the **East India Company**, was the original occupant until he died in 1712. He was also a director of the Hudson Bay Company, the Bank of England, and the Royal Africa Company. His widow sold the house in **1713** to **Sir Richard Hopkins**, merchant, director of Royal Exchange, the South Sea Company, London Assurance Company, Liveryman of the **Cutlers' Company** and Prime Warden of the **Fishmongers' Company**. He was **Sheriff** and **MP for the City of London**, and died in 1735. His widow **Lady Anne Hopkins** lived here until **1742**, and sold it to **Daniel Booth**, merchant, Freeman of the **Company of Weavers**. His son Daniel Jnr lived next door in No 12. In **1755** the owner was **Richard Baker Esq**, merchant, director of the South Sea Company (after the South Sea Bubble). He died in 1767, and his widow continued to live here.

1781 **Issac Baruch Lousada** was a London West India merchant from an Iberian Jewish family of ancient descent. His 11 children were born here, and he died here in 1831, after which his three spinster daughters stayed for a year. His investments were in loans and mortgages, often in the Caribbean.

1834 **Dr Samuel Ashwell** was a physician and leading academic in midwifery at Guy's. Two more of his children were born here, and he operated consulting rooms in the building. In **1842** the owner was **Dr Henry Oldham**, a colleague of Ashwell's from Guy's. Six more children were born here including Henry Jnr who became Lieutenant of the **Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms**. By **1854** another doctor owned the house, **Dr Robert Barnes**, who established the British Gynaecological Society, and was a director of Prudential Assurance.

1860 **Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild** bought the house for the **Jewish Board of Guardians**, a welfare organization. Secretaries who lived on-site included **Samual Landeshutt** and his family in 1872, and **Morris Stephany** in 1881. His wife gave birth to six more children in the house. From 1860 the building was also occupied by other tenants: in 1861 wine merchant **Richard William Motion**; in 1883 wine and spirit importer **Maurice Lissack & Son**, originally from Prussia, who sold the business in 1896 to **Willis Snelgar & Co** who were here until 1913. There was also a cigarette manufacturer, whiskey merchants, distillers, a button merchant, a costume manufacturer, a farrier, an Argentinian Railway Company and other assorted wine merchants. Solicitors included **Tatham & Lousada** (Herbert Lousada, great-grandson of earlier occupant Issac Barach Lousada).

1910 The house was sold to **Goodman Saunders Squires**, solicitors, who called No 13 **Montague House**, but by **1922** it was in poor repair. The **European Gas Company** moved in, with residential tenants upstairs the Rose family, and after WW2 the families of Cohen, Myers, Binckes and Graham. The Auxiliary Fire Service moved here in 1945, and in the 1950s a firm of insurance brokers under a freehold of the **Salters' Company**.

1957 The **Worshipful Company of Coopers** bought the freehold at auction for £24,000 to replace the third **Coopers' Hall** of 1868 in Basinghall Street, destroyed in the blitz, with that site sold to the City of London for £48,500. After two years of significant refurbishment and serious repair, the first meeting here was in 1959. The building remains the smallest livery hall in the City, and the furthest East. Only 36 of 111 livery companies have sole freehold ownership of a Hall.