

THE ORIGINAL BANBURY CAKESHOP MURAL

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Numbers 12, 13, and 14 Parsons Street were demolished in 1968. Better known as "*The Original Cake Shop*", number 12 was a fine example of a medieval timber-framed building. Its layout, now fully understood following its demolition, was a single range lying along the frontage of its tenement, in three units. A cross-passage separated the units, the single one furthest from Cornhill. The chimney-stack was sited in the middle room, backing onto the passage. Behind this, a staircase gave access to the upper floors. The street elevation was decorated with pargetting of late seventeenth or eighteenth centuries in date, but the fabric of the building itself was much earlier. In the eighteenth century a rear wing in red brick was added, which included a stone stack containing an oven.

The loss of this architectural and social treasure has been discussed widely, both in this journal and in others. Even today the shop is remembered with affection and its rude departure recalled with annoyance. However, the subject of this piece is not the shop but the Mural, a survivor.

Mr Wilfrid Brown, proprietor of The Original Cake Shop, returned from active military service in 1946 and straight away embarked on a project to enlarge the Cake Shop. The family already owned the adjoining properties, nos 13 and 14, the former being leased to Mr J Pilsworth who traded from the property as a grocer. Mr Brown commissioned Oxford architect *T Lawrence Dale* and builders *Hinkins and Frewin* to deliver his vision.

The detail from the plan facing is taken from the survey carried out by Mr Dale in December 1946; it shows clearly the medieval house plan described above (Drawing Room Cellar Under; Parlour; Salesshop on plan).

Mr Brown's vision was to increase the size of the business by extending into No 13 (Sale Shop Cellar Under on plan). This was to become a seating area for approximately 50 people. In addition, the passage-way, originally giving access to the Salt Warehouse and separating the original shop from the new seating, was to be incorporated into the original shop providing an internal space to accommodate the lengthy queue that formed in front of the counter.