

## THE TWO CORN EXCHANGES OF MARKET RASEN

"SO THE TRADERS WERE SPLIT AND TWO RIVAL CORN EXCHANGES WERE OPENED IN MARKET RASEN."

**Corn exchanges were found in most Market towns in 19th Century England. They were designed as places where farmers of the locally grown grains (corn etc.) would meet the merchants who purchased it from them.**

In Market Rasen, however, there was some dispute about where a Corn Exchange should be located. Two sites were proposed –the corner of market place itself and a site in Queen Street. The market place site was seen to be the best spot, but the land was owned by the vicarage and would have to be leased to the traders for a fixed term of 99 years, before being returned to them. There was also some concern that if the Queen Street site wasn't snapped up, it would be sold for other purposes.

So in 1853 the decision went to the vote and the Queen Street site won hands down – but still some traders wanted to secure a site in the market place. So the traders were split and two rival Corn Exchanges were opened in Market Rasen.

The Queen Street Corn Exchange opened in July 1854; the Market Place Corn Exchange opened in September 1854, but soon ran into problems. By December 1855, the market place traders saw that Queen Street was more successful, and made an offer to rent some of the buildings there. The answer? NO! But then the Queen Street traders offered to lease some of the Market Place buildings for a different purpose....and negotiations continued until August 1856.

Finally the traders put their heads together and came up with a plan. The Market Place Corn Exchange would be used as a Market Hall selling things like butter and eggs; the Queen Street site would continue being the Corn Exchange.



Original Architect's Drawing of the Corn Exchange, c 1854



Corn Exchange in 1955, now the Town Hall Cinema  
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The Queen Street corn exchange today, Grade II listed,  
opened in July 1854 and renovated in 2008

Years later the Market Place Corn Exchange became the Market Rasen Town Hall, and in 1914 a Picturedome [one of the first cinemas] but was sadly pulled down in 1960. The Queen Street Exchange went on to be used for many balls, concerts and meetings. Today it serves as office space, is a Grade II listed building and still boasts many of its original features.

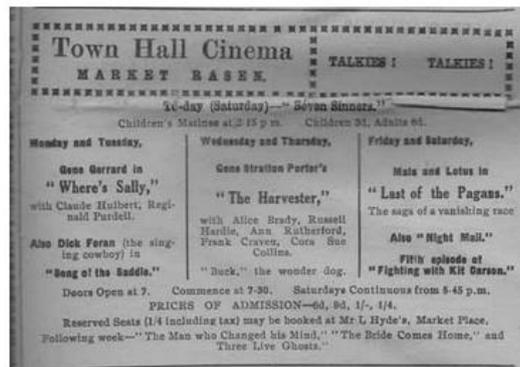
REFERENCES

- Minutes of the Corn Exchange of Market Rasen Association: Lincolnshire Archives 4-BM/5/2
- Lincolnshire Chronicle 2/12/1853
- Lincolnshire Chronicle 15/9/1854
- Letter in the Stanford Mercury 3/2/1854 from Thos Rhodes dated 31/1/1854
- An Early Victorian Market Town -Market Rasen Branch -Workers Educational Association published 1971.
- Rasen Mail November 1960
- Rasen Mail for dates on cinema
- A scanned file of Firths Picture of Market place hall showing it as a cinema in the 1950s with copyright permission to use it
- Original Architects drawing
- Photo of market hall in snow from Rase Heritage Society collection.

Find more stories, photos and videos at: [MarketRasenHeritageTour.co.uk](http://MarketRasenHeritageTour.co.uk) Supported by The National Lottery through The Heritage Lottery Fund. A project by the Market Rasen Business Improvement Group (MR BIG) and Rase Heritage Society



Horse and Dog Show Poster, 1895, at the Town Hall, Market Rasen



Town Hall Cinema advert boasting TALKIES! 1938 (Market Rasen Mail)



'Hobson's Choice' at the Town Hall Cinema, performed by Market Rasen Amateur Dramatic Society, 1936