

ROUNDAABOUT
RINGWOOD & FORDINGBRIDGE

NOW and THEN

Old Market House/Scrivens, Ringwood

Old Market House 1866



August 2009

One of the earliest old photographs of Ringwood taken in 1866 shows the Old Market House which used to stand in the Market Place, in front of what is now the shops of Gibb menswear, Du Barry ladieswear and Brewers decorators. The Market House was built in 1734 and had an open arched ground floor with a large room above it. It was used by farmers on Market day to show off their wares, then principally cheese and corn. Town meetings and public occasions were celebrated in the room above.

By Victorian times the old Market House was considered dingy and outdated, so the Lord of the Manor, John Morant, decided to build a new Town Hall (now the dilapidated old cinema). In 1867 the old Market House was removed 'thereby greatly improving the town and increasing the convenience and safety of travelling. Though ample perhaps in its dimensions for the trade of the town, the old building was re-

garded as not only unsightly but very inconvenient', according to a writer at the time.

The building is not entirely lost to us today because some of its materials, especially the stone dressings from its imposing frontage, were used to reconstruct the building on the south side of the High Street. Known in later Victorian times as Town House, this building is now Scrivens Opticians. Next time you pass it, have a close look at the side facing on to Lynes Lane. The two arches and the pediment visible in the old photograph are still to be seen. (see photo left)

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Market Place in 2009 viewed from the same position almost 150 years later.