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A PAIR OF VICTORIAN ENTRANCEWAY DOORS,

removed from Old Kensington Town Hall, Kensington High Street by Robert Walker
bt. 1888 - dem. 1982

with three moulded panels to each side of each leaf, the obverse painted,

DIMENSIONS: 241cm (95") High, 154cm (60^{3/4}") Wide, 5cm (2") Thick

STOCK CODE: 45643



HISTORY

Old Kensington Town Hall was commissioned to replace the mid-19th-century Kensington Vestry Hall in Kensington High Street, a site previously occupied by the Kensington National School.

The new building, which was designed by Robert Walker in the Italianate style, was built by Braid and Co. and was completed in 1880.

The design involved a frontage of seven bays facing onto the High Street; the central section of three bays featured a doorway with stone surround and canopy on the ground floor; there were tall windows with integrated oculi interspersed with Corinthian order columns on the first floor and a large carved pediment and flagpole above. It went on to become the headquarters of the Royal Borough of Kensington when the area secured Royal borough status in 1901.

After the council moved to Hornton Street in 1977, the old town hall closed and was partly-demolished on the instructions of the Leader of the council, Nicholas Freeman, "in controversial circumstances" involving an impending conservation order, in June 1982. Although demolition was temporarily halted, by the time that happened, the main frontage and the interior had been so badly damaged that what remained had to be completely cleared in 1984. The Royal

Fine Arts Commission deplored the actions of the council as “official vandalism” and the Kensington Society predicted that the council would be “completely condemned” for their actions. A journalist writing in The Times recorded the council as being “deeply shamed for the example it had set to other listed-building owners”.

These doors were salvaged from that demolition.