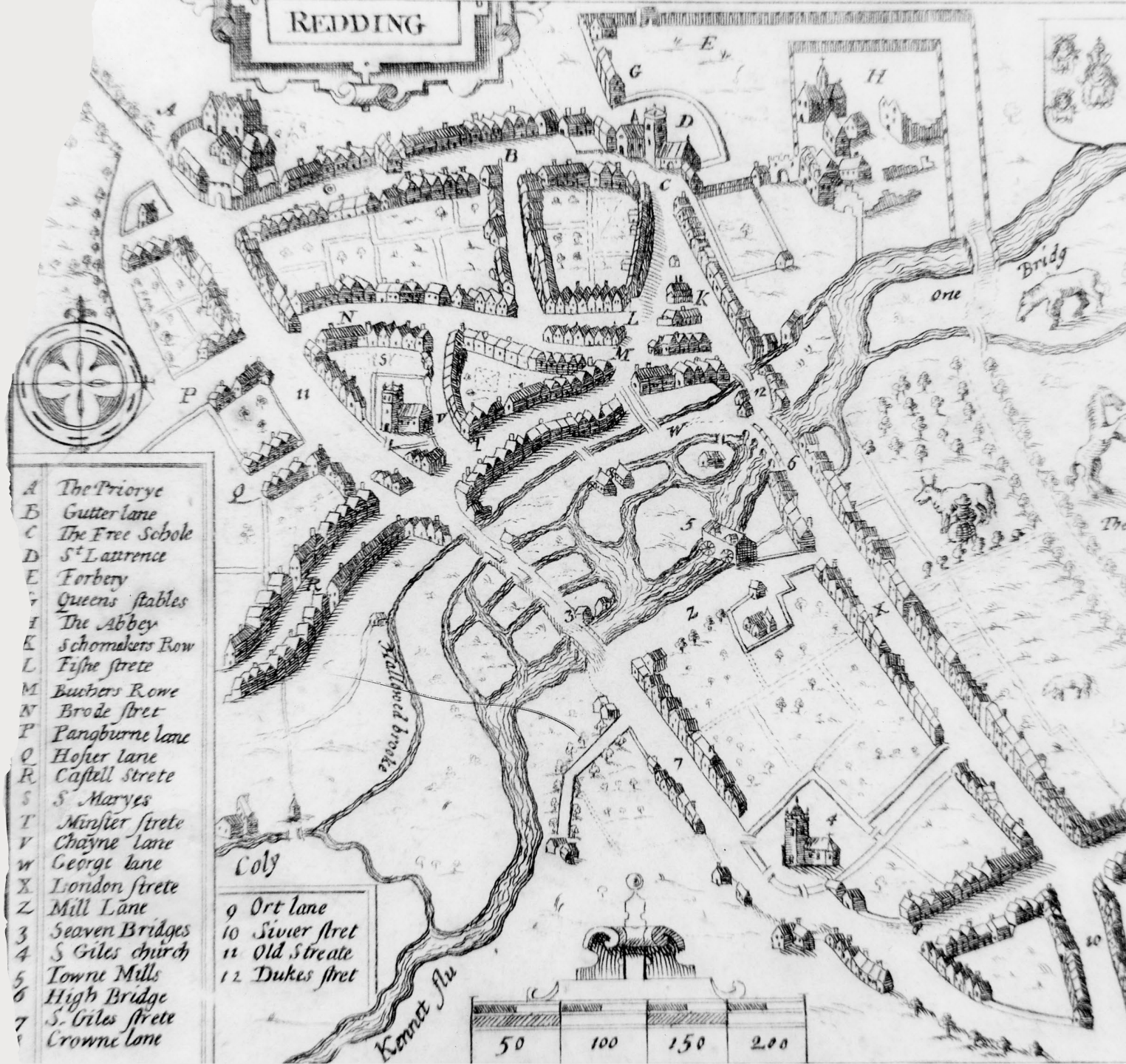
Reading's digital Revolution

Reading Museum

www.readingmuseum.org.uk

Earliest map of Reading, 1610



Bilbey’s Furniture Store

22 Castle Street

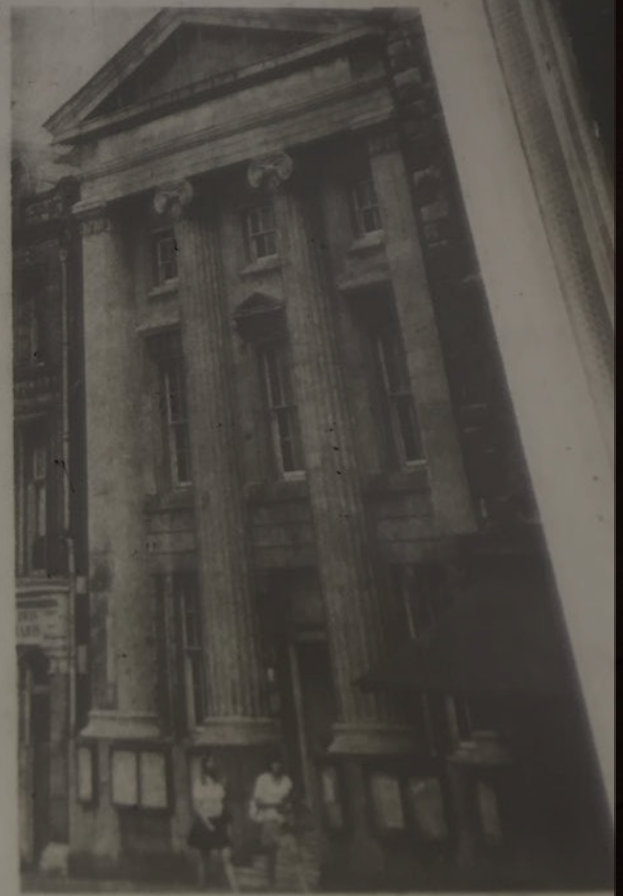
Home to DEC’s first UK office - 1964

The place where Reading’s Digital Revolution Began!

BREWDOG

Property news
by Bill Day

Historic 'home' for Digital . . .



STANDARD HOUSE (pictured right), once the home of the old Reading Standard newspaper, has been acquired by a fast-growing computer firm.

Digital Equipment Company Ltd, whose headquarters are in Arkwright Road, Reading, have taken the building — in London Street — on a short-term lease. Negotiations have been handled by Martin and Pole, the Berkshire estate agents.

The company will use Standard House solely as a training centre for new recruits. Decorators have moved in to prepare the building, which comprises 6,000 square feet, for occupation in the very near future.

Digital, who started United Kingdom operations six years ago from a small first floor office in Castle Street, Reading, will remain in their Arkwright Road premises; supplying computers for both British and foreign markets.

Standard House has a distinguished history. Once the Great Hall of the town, such figures from the past as Charles Dickens, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes and Charles Reade have visited the town centre property.

It was opened in 1843 as the Mechanics Institute, under the patronage of the Prince Consort. And it cost, at the time, only £5,000.

The building contained a hall — then called the Great Hall of Reading — waiting rooms, committee rooms, vestibules, kitchen, cellerage and other smaller rooms. The roof was elliptic, so that it could be used for concerts and art exhibitions, balls, lectures and meetings.

In 1860 the Institute closed, and the building was sold to the Primitive Methodists for £5,370.

The Ministry of Works requisitioned the property during the last war, and in 1957 a London company bought it. Later, Reading Corporation bought it for £5,000 and adapted it as a theatre.

In 1960, the Reading Standard purchased the building.

...ICTIMS'

Centuries for sale . . .

DEC made Reading home to computing giants

- Microsoft
- Hewlett Packard
- Oracle
- Cisco Systems
- Symantec
- McAfee
- Verizon

Computer Giants led to IT cluster – Thames Silicon Valley

- **Snyk**
- **Qmee**
- **Sage People**
- **Digit (ALL)**
- **Pulsant**
- **Cloud Factory**
- **DataSift**
- **Ensygnia**
- **HSO**

Reading Town 2023

- The UK 2019 Digital Technology Census found that Reading has the third largest amount of tech businesses and organizations, being beaten only by London and Manchester.

- Galleries at Reading Museum

DIGITAL Heritage at Risk

Made possible with Heritage Fund

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF COMPUTING

READING MUSEUM

Reading's digital Revolution