



# Lost Victorian Britain: How the Twentieth Century Destroyed the Nineteenth Century's Architectural Masterpieces

*Gavin Stamp*

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These days it seems obvious that stupendous constructions like St Pancras Station should be preserved and restored. But as recently as the 1970s Glasgow's superb St Enoch's Hotel made way for a shopping centre, and in the 1960s St Pancras itself was also earmarked for demolition. "Victorian" was a term of abuse. Add in wartime bombing by the Luftwaffe, and town planners eager for ring roads and multi-storeys, and the destruction is shocking. This poignant, angry book, full of stunning images, chronicles the catastrophic swathe cut through Britain's architectural heritage by the twentieth century's sustained antipathy to the nineteenth, entirely through buildings that have disappeared. Of the 200 notable examples of Victorian architecture illustrated in this book, from the magnificent Imperial Institute in Kensington to the vast country house of Eaton Hall, not one still exists. A photograph is all we have left. As well as architectural causes célèbres like the Euston Arch and London's Coal Exchange, Gavin Stamp turns up many lesser-known Victorian buildings, like the extraordinary Gothic battlements of Columbia Market in East London, or Chatsworth's soaring glasshouse streamlined like a spaceship. Surprising, chastening, but also uplifting, *Lost Victorian Britain* is a memorable journey back into a world that should never have been lost.

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