



Odeon Temple Fortune, Finchley Road, London, NW11 6XU
Seating 2,800



Located in the neighborhood of Temple Fortune, located halfway between the districts of Golders Green (a mile to the south) and Finchley (a mile to the North), which are in northwest London. The cinema was on Finchley Road between Childs Way and Birnbeck Close. The Orpheum Theatre opened on 11th October 1930 with Ronald Colman in "Condemned". It was built for an independent operator and was designed by the architectural firm, Yates, Cooke & Darbyshire.

The large cinema was equipped with a Compton 3Manual organ which was opened by Lewis Gerrard. The proscenium was 35 feet wide, the stage 40 feet deep and there were ten dressingrooms. There was a cafe provided for the convenience of patrons. Initially it operated a policy of Pictures & Variety. In 1932 it was taken over by Associated British Cinemas(ABC) and then from March 1934 it was taken over by the County Cinemas chain. County Cinemas were taken over by Oscar Deutsch's Odeon Theatres Ltd. in early 1937,

and the Orpheum Theatre was re-named Odeon in 1945. In its last couple of years of operation it was known as the Odeon Golders Green.

Although a cinema, there was also much use of the stage at the Odeon, even in later years, when Ralph Reader's Gang Show (for the Boy Scouts) was an annual event, as well as many other touring stage shows and pantomimes.

In 1972, the Odeon was re-decorated prior to a visit by H.M. The Queen, when she came to see the Gang Show. Just two years later, on 27th April 1974, the Odeon was closed with the double bill programme "Digby, the Biggest Dog in the World" and "Doctor in Trouble". The cinema was just too big and too far from a major shopping centre to be viable in the lean cinemagoing years of the 1970's. It lay empty and unused for many years, eventually being demolished in May 1982, and a block of flats was built on the site.

Contributed by Ken Roe