

THE CRYPT AND CHAPEL OF LAMBETH PALACE.

(NOTES ON THEIR HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE.)

BY

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LAMBETH PALACE¹—or, rather, a more ancient house on its site—first came into the possession of the Archbishops of Canterbury as their residence in 1189–90, when Archbishop Baldwin received certain lands in Lambeth in exchange for the Isle of Grain from Bishop Gilbert de Glanville, of Rochester, and the Prior of St. Andrew's, Rochester. This exchange resulted from the quarrel between the archbishop and the monastery of Christchurch, Canterbury, respecting the college of secular canons founded by Baldwin at Hackington, near Canterbury. The monks complained that their rights and privileges had thereby been impaired, and Baldwin agreed to transfer his college to Lambeth. This compromise, however, did not satisfy the monks, and the Pope, being appealed to, ordered the archbishop to yield to their objection. Baldwin died soon afterwards (1190), and Archbishop Hubert Walter revived the scheme, which was again condemned by Pope Innocent III, the clerks at Lambeth being absolved from their oath to the archbishop, and as a result of the quarrel their newly erected chapel was

¹ Until comparatively recently the title of Palace was not used. "Lambeth House" was the correct title of the archbishop's London residence.

demolished in 1199, although the house was not destroyed.

The objection of the monks was based partly upon their jealousy of the secular canons, but it probably owed its *gravamen* to the obvious intention of the archbishop to transfer his court from Canterbury to Lambeth—as to which very natural objection we may find a parallel in that other historical instance of the silver-smiths of Ephesus.

It was in 1197, when this quarrel was raging most fiercely, that Archbishop Hubert Walter acquired the manor of Lambeth, and he no doubt then, or soon afterwards, began to occupy as a dwelling-house the old manor-house which had existed from far back in pre-Conquest times, or else the house of the clerks, which was probably contiguous. It was in the former, in 1041-2, that Harthacnut died at the wedding feast of Gyva, daughter of Osgood Clappa, falling to the earth “with a terrible struggle, as he stood at his drink.”

As showing the earliest links of the Archiepiscopal See with Lambeth, even before the manor came into the archbishops' hands, it should be mentioned that Archbishop Anselm ordained Sampson, Bishop-elect of Worcester, both deacon and priest, together with the Bishop of Hereford, at Lambeth, in 1096. Again, in 1097 he ordained Hugh, Abbot of St. Austin, *at Lambeth, in the chapel of the church of Rochester, where the archbishop then lodged.* He also presided, in 1100, at a council held at Lambeth, which decided the legality of Henry I's marriage with Matilda of Scotland.

Archbishops Ralph, William Corbeil, Theobald, Richard, and Baldwin were all consecrated here during the 12th century; and although there is, I believe, no actual record of Thomas à Becket's residing here, yet it was at Lambeth that the suffragan bishops assembled and made choice of Roger, Abbot of Bec, to be his successor; but that prudent man declined the rather dangerous honour.

Whatever its character may have been, no trace remains of the group of buildings that constituted the

Saxon and Norman manor-house, and the house of the clerks of Lambeth and their chapel in which these early consecrations and ordinations took place. I am not aware that any masonry, or even isolated stones bearing distinctive tooling or mouldings of Norman character, are to be met with in the chapel and its undercroft, or in the old stones piled together outside. We cannot even say—though it appears highly probable—that the earlier chapel occupied the site of the present one. Perhaps the older chapel was first of wood, and then in the 11th, or early in the 12th century, was rebuilt in stone. Be this as it may, we know that it was violently destroyed in 1199, while yet a new building, in the disputes between Archbishop Hubert Walter and the Canterbury monks.

Archbishop Hubert Walter (whose beautiful coped tomb in Canterbury Cathedral was opened and examined some years ago by the late Sir Wm. St. John Hope) relinquished the compromise of 1202, by which he was to have built elsewhere in Lambeth a church and house for not more than twenty Premonstratensian canons; but he made Lambeth his chief residence, and doubtless began to rebuild the demolished chapel.¹ He must have used some other building, perhaps a temporary one of wood, meanwhile, for the divine offices. Probably his successor, the great Stephen Langton, carried on the work.

In 1261 we find Pope Urban IV ordering Archbishop Boniface to build and repair the house at Lambeth, but the crypt had then been standing for quite half a century; and the chapel over it, though also Boniface's work, had been completed some fifteen years—say between 1241 and 1245; the actual foundations on which the crypt stands being those of the earlier building of Hubert Walter, demolished in 1199.

I can find no axe-tooling in the crypt: all the stonework, where the tooling is still visible, appears to have been dressed with a broad chisel—a method

¹ He was Chancellor, and the settlement of the Exchequer at Westminster made it incumbent upon him to live usually in the neighbourhood.



P. M. Johnston, photo.

LAMBETH: Crypt under Palace Chapel, c. 1210.



P. M. Johnston, photo.

LAMBETH PALACE CHAPEL: W. Doorway, a firestone and Purbeck marble c. 1210.

that came into vogue during the last decade of the 12th century, and continued till the third decade of the 13th, when claw-tooling superseded it.

What appears to be a horizontal break in the work may be detected in the west wall of the crypt, where are also the bottom stones of a wide doorway in the southern bay. This may indicate the earlier work of Archbishop Hubert Walter.

The crypt is in four bays, 70 ft. 6 in. in total length, by 23 ft. 8 in. in width, vaulted throughout, the bays measuring 17 ft. 6 in. centre to centre, and almost the same distance—17 ft. 8 in.—to the end walls. The vaulting is a truly excellent piece of work, without any sign of failure, and almost as perfect as when it was constructed over 700 years ago. There is a central line of three columns, 10 in. in diameter, which with their circular bases and capitals are of Purbeck marble: but in place of responds there are excellent corbels, as also in the four angles, and these are of firestone, with impostes of Purbeck marble, differently moulded from the capitals of the columns. The transverse arches are rather sharply pointed, but the diagonal, longitudinal and wall-ribs are of semi-circular form—all broadly chamfered. The south wall has no windows, the two eastern bays being blank. There is a plain doorway of early 13th century date, but altered at a later period, near the west end, and another in the next bay, not coeval with the building but inserted in *c.* 1261. These and the doorway in the east wall have their cills 3 or 4 ft. above the original floor of the crypt, and must always have had a flight of stone or wooden steps down into it, but it is noteworthy that the door in the western wall has jambs from the floor level.

To understand the lighting and approaches to the crypt it is needful to know something of the disposition of the various buildings of the Palace in relation to the crypt and the chapel over. The windows in the east and west walls of the crypt prove that those sides were originally open. The north side of the crypt was always, as it practically now is, clear of buildings, but on the south

it was planned to suit the contemporary cloister, which occupied a square corresponding to the length of the crypt, and had its northern walk abutting upon the south wall. This cloister, probably at first built of firestone and Purbeck marble, with simple pointed arches on coupled shafts, was finally swept away in early 18th century alterations, but the original stonework had been replaced by wood in Cardinal Pole's time.¹ The alleys were paved with encaustic tiles, some of which were discovered in recent restoration work. Southward of the square cloister was the Great Hall, rebuilt by Archbishop Juxon—built 1610, but refaced and the roof added by Juxon. Whether there were an earlier tower on the site of the so-called Lollards' Tower, or Water Tower, built by Archbishop Chichele (1414—1443), is very doubtful. I think not. What served the same purpose was a small square bell-turret containing a vice, or circular stair, which still exists, incorporated in the masonry of the tower, at the south-west angle of the chapel. It has long been disused, and the upper part has been demolished. Probably a bell was hung in this above the roof.

The absence of window openings in the two eastern bays of the south wall of the crypt is explained by the cloister abutting against that wall, while the doorway in the western bay was entered from the western walk of the cloister, the floor of which was some 3 or 4 ft. higher than that of the crypt. The reason for the insertion of a second doorway in this bay immediately to the eastward, later in the 13th century, and is not easy to explain. It also would give upon the northern walk of the cloister.

Such lighting as the crypt now has it gets from the north, and even there the windows of the eastern bay are obscured by the building known as Cranmer's Tower, but now thought to have been built, or at least completed, after Cranmer's archiepiscopate, by Cardinal Pole. On the floor above it forms the vestry to the chapel (with

¹ Pole's cloister had an upper gallery of timber and plaster, with windows, and the cloister had a continuous stretch of oak-mullioned windows.

a contemporary fireplace of stone), but here serves for domestic offices. The windows in this crypt north wall are, save in the western bay, symmetrically

arranged in pairs, having segmental arched heads to the inside with a wide pier dividing each pair. These have very slight splays through the 4-ft.-thick wall, and on the outside the openings have segmental heads crowned by a blind trefoil arch—a very unusual, if not unique, treatment. The external opening (Fig. 1), on the inner side, is rebated for a shutter and is doubly guarded, first by a wrought-iron grille set in the opening, and outside that another grille of square meshes projecting from the face of the wall and covering the entire window.

These wrought-iron grilles, which are now very imperfect, are of the highest archæological interest, as they are coeval with the building. It is a marvellous thing that they have defied the assaults of time and man, *plus* the river fogs and London smoke, for 700 years.

The stonework is also noteworthy, and, like the grille, is all original—in Surrey freestone. The lintols of these

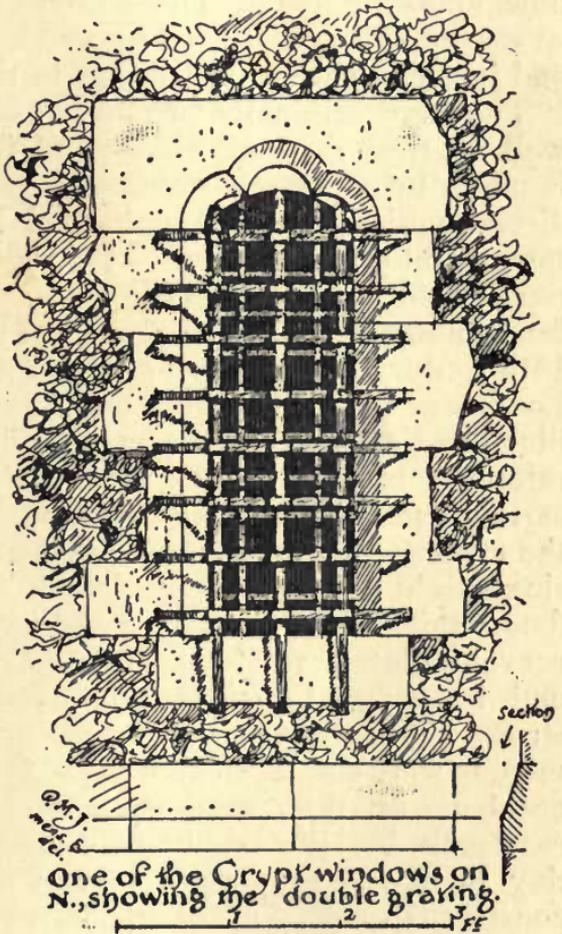


Fig. 1.

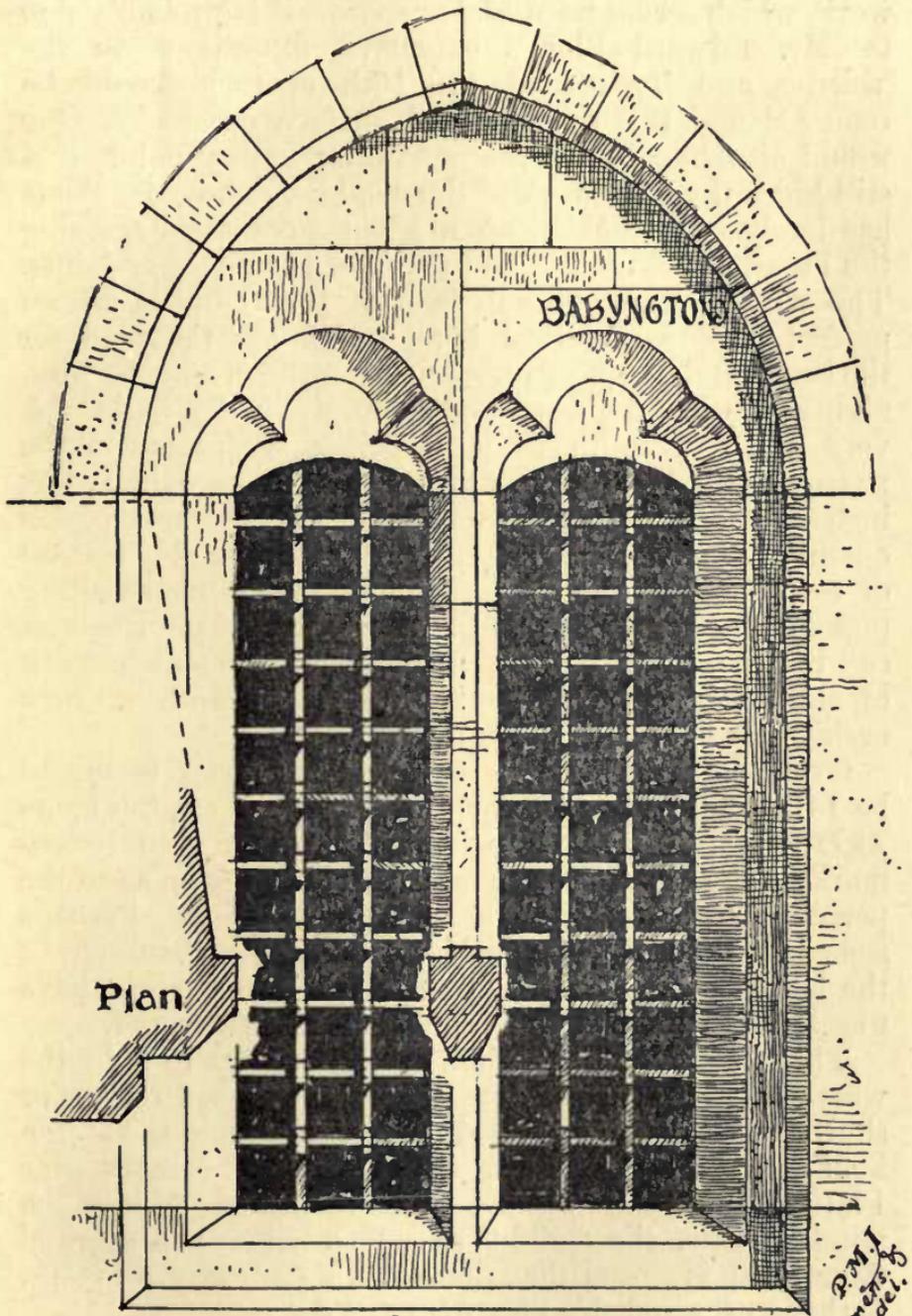
windows are in a single large stone, the segmental arch of the opening and the trefoiled arch over being cut out of it. Beneath the windows is a shallow plinth (about 2 in. projection), with a steeply-chamfered top course, now almost buried. The western of the pair in the westernmost bay has been altered into a square opening and its splay cut away, perhaps in the 16th century.

The were originally two 2-light windows in the east wall of the crypt, of which that in the northern bay remains in a perfect state, while the other, at some distant period, has been gutted of its inner order and turned into a doorway. The perfect window, here reproduced from my drawing (Fig. 2), is at once the least known and the best preserved example of an early-13th century window—and that of a very rare type—in London or Surrey.¹ It has not, to my knowledge, been illustrated or called attention to before, save for a general reference by Mr. W. D. Carøe, F.S.A., who recently carried out some repairs of a very conservative nature in the crypt.² In Mr. Carøe's opinion this and the similar single-light windows show French influence. I cannot detect this. The work is as purely English as is the coeval architecture of the choir of Rochester Cathedral and its crypt, to which this Lambeth crypt bears so strong a resemblance that I have little doubt the same masons were employed on both.³ Owing to the fortunate accident of this window having been covered in externally by later buildings, it has come down to our day in almost as perfect a state as when it was first constructed. A skin of modern wall, plastered and painted, covers the surrounding wall surface and frames in this remarkable window. One wishes this modern

¹ The same round-lobed trefoil blind arch over a segmental-arched opening is found in work of precisely the same date (the beginning of the 13th century) in Chipstead Church, Surrey, in the curious doorway in the west wall of the north transept (illustrated in *S.A.C.*, VII, 260). The similar priest's doorway in south of chancel is a modern copy. Possibly masons from Chipstead worked on the Lambeth crypt.

² *V. C. H.*, Surrey, Vol. IV.

³ *Cf.*, also the fragments of an Early English cloister adjoining the Treasury in Canterbury Cathedral.



E. Window of Crypt, LAMBETH Palace.

Ins. 12 6 0 1 2 3 Ft

Fig. 2.

work, which serves no useful purpose—it is probably due to Mr. Edward Blore's extensive alterations in the 'thirties and 'forties of the 19th century—could be removed and this ancient wall surface exposed. One would also like to see the remaining yellow paint, that still hides the stonework of the window, removed. Some has lately been pickled off to great advantage, showing the broad chisel tooling and many of the masonry joints. The wrought-iron grille in each of the lights is almost perfect, the two vertical bars, which are threaded for the horizontals, being $\frac{3}{4}$ in. square and the cross-bars $\frac{1}{2}$ in., giving a space between of about $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. A very odd feature in work of this early period is the narrowness of the dividing mullion. It is $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide, instead of 8 or 9 in., as one would expect; and, consequently its chamfers are cut to a steep angle, instead of to the 45° of the opposite jambs, with the resulting piquant distortion of the trefoiled arch heads. I cannot call to mind a similar instance of such treatment in work of this early period: though in 14th or 15th century architecture it would be quite natural.

Over the right-hand head, in what appear to me to be 14th century semi-Lombardic letters, is cut the name **BABYNGTON**, with a flourish or contraction-mark at the end. We have at present no clue as to the person who has left his name on this stone. Perhaps someday he will be identified. Had the character of the letters been a century or so earlier, one might have guessed that the master-mason was commemorated.

This window and the similar one opposite to it in the west wall are rebated internally for the glazed frames or shutters that originally filled the openings, and the hinge-hooks for these shutters remain in the rebates (See Plate II). Both windows are furnished with stone window-seats, the height of which from the original floor level suggests that there was a gangway, or steps, perhaps of wood, leading up to them.

A word more is necessary as to the doors in the south wall. The western of the two is undoubtedly the original, though now very battered and form-less, and



P. M. Johnston, photo.

LAMBETH PALACE: Window in W. wall of the Chapel Crypt.



P. M. Johnston, photo.

LAMBETH PALACE: Vault-Corbel in Crypt.

the square lamp-niche, to the west of the doorway, is possibly as old as the 13th century. An early chamfer stop remains on the east inner jamb. The doorway in the next bay to the eastward has late-13th century mouldings, continuous to arch and jambs of the outer door-case (See Plan, page 132), and has a pointed segmental arch, the rear-arch being plain segmental. It is difficult to see a reason for a second doorway so close to the other, and inserted not more than sixty years after the building of the crypt. It probably formed part of Archbishop Boniface's work of 1261.

The vaulting is sex-partite in form, with broadly-chamfered ribs, all of the same diameter, and semi-octagon section, the stones being of Surrey firestone, very accurately cut and jointed (Plate I). There does not appear to be any failure or irregularity in the whole crypt, and the construction is as masterly as it is daring, when one considers that upon three slender shafts, only 10 in. in diameter, descends all the weight of the cluster of vault-ribs, and that the span of the transverse arches is about 11 ft., that of the longitudinals 13 ft., and of the transverse about 16 ft. Safety is ensured by the massively buttressed 4-ft.-thick walls, but nevertheless the skill and boldness of the construction are remarkable.

The shafts, with their simply-moulded circular capitals and bases, are of Purbeck marble (Fig. 3), and instead of wall-shafts or piers to correspond, the vault-ribs spring from circular-moulded corbels of a different section, each in three stones, of which the abacus appears to be marble, while the others are firestone, the bottom member tapering into a slender, rounded cone. It is worthy of note that to guard against movement or strain the shafts of the little columns are housed into the base and capital behind the rounded necking (see Fig. 3), and that the abacus is in a separate stone from the rest of the capital. There is a slight difference in the section of the mouldings of these capitals, as may be seen in the illustration (Fig. 3). This is probably only an instance of the love of variety so commonly met with in mediæval work, and does not indicate a pause in the execution.

The filling of the vault severies is in neatly-faced, fine-jointed ashlar—apparently hard chalk or clunch—narrowly coursed in small oblong blocks, and still coated in most places with the original lime-plaster, not more

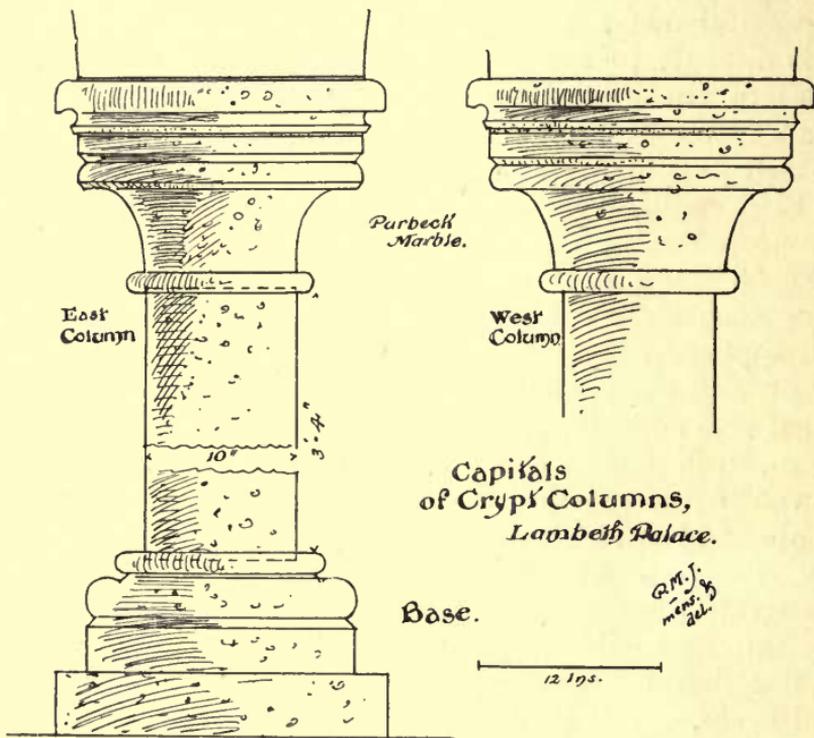


Fig. 3.

than $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick. On this are remains of a coat of lime-white, ruled out in red masonry joints; and the splays of the window in the west wall (Plate II) show the same treatment, the red lines being $\frac{3}{16}$ in. wide, about 7 in. apart, and terminating against a thin black vertical line, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. from the edge of the splay. The same simple treatment was probably continued over the wall-surfaces, but the rough usage of centuries has caused it to disappear. The crypt walls on the inside are built or faced with chalk and firestone, roughly coursed and

thinly plastered, but the plastering for the first 3 ft. or so has disappeared.¹ (See Plate I.)

Passing to the exterior of the north wall, two or three interesting points may be noted.

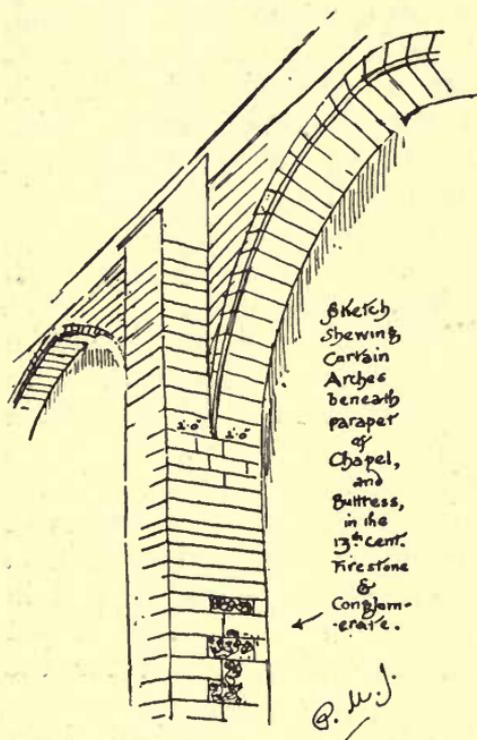
One is that the rubble used for the outer face is not firestone or flints, such as one would expect to find, but a material not to be found, so far as I am aware, at the present day in any other ancient building in London, save in parts of the Tower of London, viz., the blood-red conglomerate (or "pudding-stone") with which we in Surrey are familiar from its occurrence in a group of churches in the western part of the county, viz., Cobham (tower), Chobham, Send, Ripley, Byfleet, Wisley, Horsell and Woking. Why then, it may be asked, should this unusual and peculiar-looking material be found, far away from these, at Lambeth? The gravelly heaths of western Surrey, to which they were in close proximity, offered no facilities for the Lambeth Chapel. I think the solution of the problem lies in the extensive use of this same material in the churches of Essex, and in the greater convenience of water-carriage. The lumps of conglomerate were doubtless shipped in barge-loads up the Thames from some convenient spot on the Essex shore and landed at Lambeth for the chapel.

The effect of the work when new must have been very striking. Centuries of soot and grime have effectually robbed the conglomerate of its natural colour. If we wish to see what it looked like when the walls were first built, let us go to Cobham and see the Norman Tower when it has been washed by a driving rain, and the westering sun is bathing it in level rays. It is no exaggeration to say that it looks then as though built of rubies. So must the Lambeth Chapel have looked before coal-smoke and the acids from Doulton's Potteries dimmed the lustrous red and pearly white of its walls.

¹ It may be conjectured that this first yard of walling represents the crypt that was begun in the last years of the 12th century, and then pulled down, or at least partially demolished, at the bidding of Pope Innocent III. This would account for the absence of a coat of plaster.

This red conglomerate—which, by the way, is nearly as imperishable as flint—is worked into the coursed ashlar in the lower parts of the great buttresses, as well as in the walls, and these buttresses, with the remarkable

curtain arches (Fig. 4) that span them in the bays of this north wall, are of delicate creamy-white firestone, mostly the original work of the 13th century and in wonderful preservation, considering its age and the adverse conditions against which it has had to contend. The work is finely jointed in narrow courses, averaging 8 in. or 9 in. in width. The arches have only a narrow chamfer and spring direct in a full sweep—two-centred, not a mere segment—from the return face of the buttresses, their plain square soffits overhang-



Sketch showing
Curtain
Arches
beneath
parapet
of
Chapel,
and
Buttress,
in the
13th Cent.
Firestone
&
Conglam-
erate.

Fig. 4.

ing the wall-face no less than 2 ft.¹ This ponderous construction of arches and buttresses—the latter also of exceptional size and height, though they have long since lost their original cappings—makes it practically certain that stone groining was intended for the chapel, as for the crypt beneath; but such groining, though both design and construction demand it, was apparently never carried out till Mr. Edward Blore introduced the present rather clumsy imitation vaulting of timber and plaster in 1846,

¹ Cf., the arch and buttress construction of Kildare Cathedral Ireland. There are other examples of this arching across from buttress to buttress in the larger Irish churches of the 13th century.

destroying thereby the flat, wooden ceiling of panelled and painted work put by Archbishop Laud in Charles I's reign.¹

In plan, the chapel of course follows that of the crypt beneath, but its walls are thinned down internally from the 4 ft. of the crypt to 3 ft., increasing thereby the length and width of the chapel, which measures

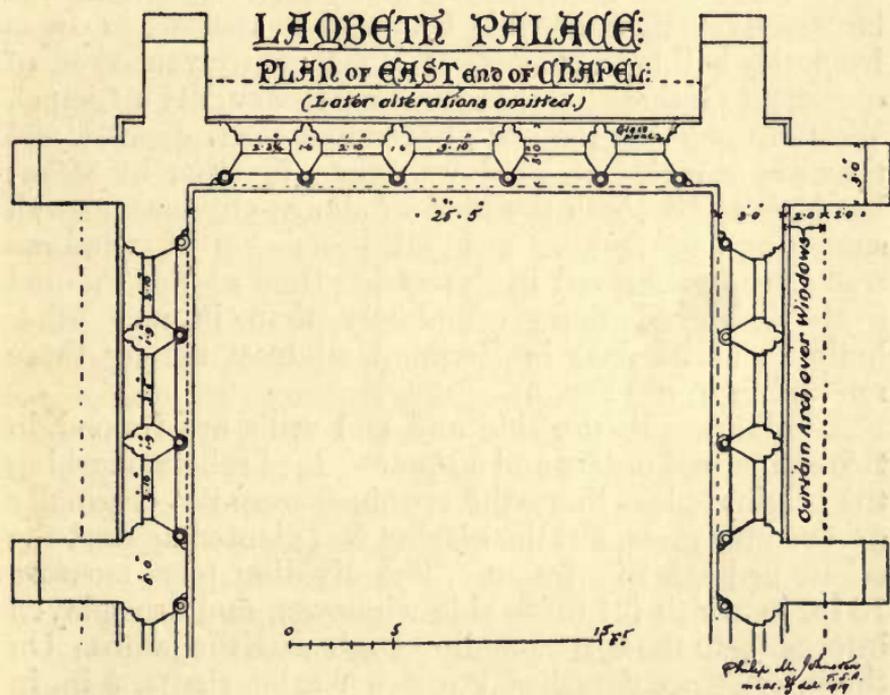


Fig. 5.

72 ft. 5 in. by 25 ft. 5 in. Hemmed in on three sides by the buildings that have grown up around it, it is difficult to imagine its beauty and dignity in the days when it was fresh from the mason's mallet and chisel, when the four bays of its sides, each with a

¹ Sir Gilbert Scott wrote (*Lectures on Mediæval Architecture*, Vol. I, p. 174): "A very good Early English chapel, though somewhat dishonoured by plaster vaulting, the ribs of which I myself saw being prepared for by a core of spikes and tar-cord. Let us hope that this is the last instance of such construction, especially of its introduction in a time-honoured building like this!"

stately triplet of lancets recessed beneath curtain arch and corbelled parapet, and the noble quintuplet of graduated lancets in both the east and west walls, stood free and open to new.¹ Nowadays, the only external view obtainable is from the north, and here, although the buttresses, the curtain arches and the walling of the crypt are original, the exterior stonework of the triplets has been renewed by Blore in Bath stone.

It is to the interior we must turn to realise the lantern-like effect of this beautiful chapel when fresh from the builder's hands. It is frequently remarked of our latest Gothic churches, such as Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster, that the walls have almost disappeared, and they are a series of windows strung together by piers; but here at Lambeth the idea of almost eliminating wall spaces and of making a great procession of windows was already achieved in the spring-time of the Pointed Style—achieved more completely than in any other building of its date in England, at least among those remaining to us (Fig. 5).

The lancets in the side and end walls are framed in two chamfered orders and a square-edged rebate, marking the original glass line—the openings were not originally grooved for glass, but the glazing was planted against the rebate or hung in a frame. The dividing piers measure 18 in. in width (21 in. to side windows), and are splayed internally to the corresponding angle with the jambs. On the interior are detached Purbeck marble shafts, 5 in. in diameter, and the outer jambs have similar shafts, flanked by a bold hollow, all in the marble together with the capitals and bases. The pointed arches to the interior are boldly moulded in hollows and bowtells, but without a label, which would have looked too heavy. A moulded string-course in stone runs below the windows inside and out. The capitals and bases are moulded. A very effective feature is the graduated height and width of these lancets. Thus, in the quintuplets east and west,

¹ Groups of five lancets are not very common, but we have at Ockham, Surrey, a very beautiful group of seven lancets, illustrated in our Society's *Schedule of Antiquities in the County of Surrey*, p. 47.

the outermost lights are 2 ft. 4 in. wide in the clear; the next 2 ft. 10 in., and the central light no less than 4 ft. wide. In the triplets the central light is 3 ft. 5 in., and the side lights are 2 ft. 10 in.

The arrangement of five lancets, graduated in width and height, is exactly repeated in the west wall, with this difference, that the cill is placed much higher up, in order to allow of sufficient height for the great entrance doorway. Owing to these five lancets in the west wall being enclosed externally by Archbishop Chichele's Water Tower (built between 1414 and 1443),¹ the external face of the lancets is in almost perfect preservation, in the original firestone, the tool marks being plainly visible. These windows now serve to give access to the tribune or gallery, and to the organ loft. A quaint little oriel, with canted sides, was inserted by Archbishop Juxon in the wide central light, to replace a squint put there by Archbishop Chichele, and two doorways of 15th century character, also Chichele's work, retaining their coeval doors and fittings, in the flanking lights. These interesting features have not received the notice they merit. The squint was to enable the inmates of the Water Tower to assist at Mass.

The plan of the chapel follows the collegiate type. There would always appear to have been a narthex, or ante-chapel, at the west end, with a wooden screen separating it from the rest of the chapel. The present screen dates from Archbishop Laud's primacy (1633-45), and bears his arms. We have no record of the mediæval screen that preceded it.

Laud's desk-fronts and standards, a good deal repaired, remain in the quire, and the altar-rails of his period or Archbishop Juxon's, which had been removed to the private chapel at Addington, have lately been brought back. All this Carolean woodwork is deserving of close attention and illustration. The actual stalls and their elbows are Blore's work of 1846.

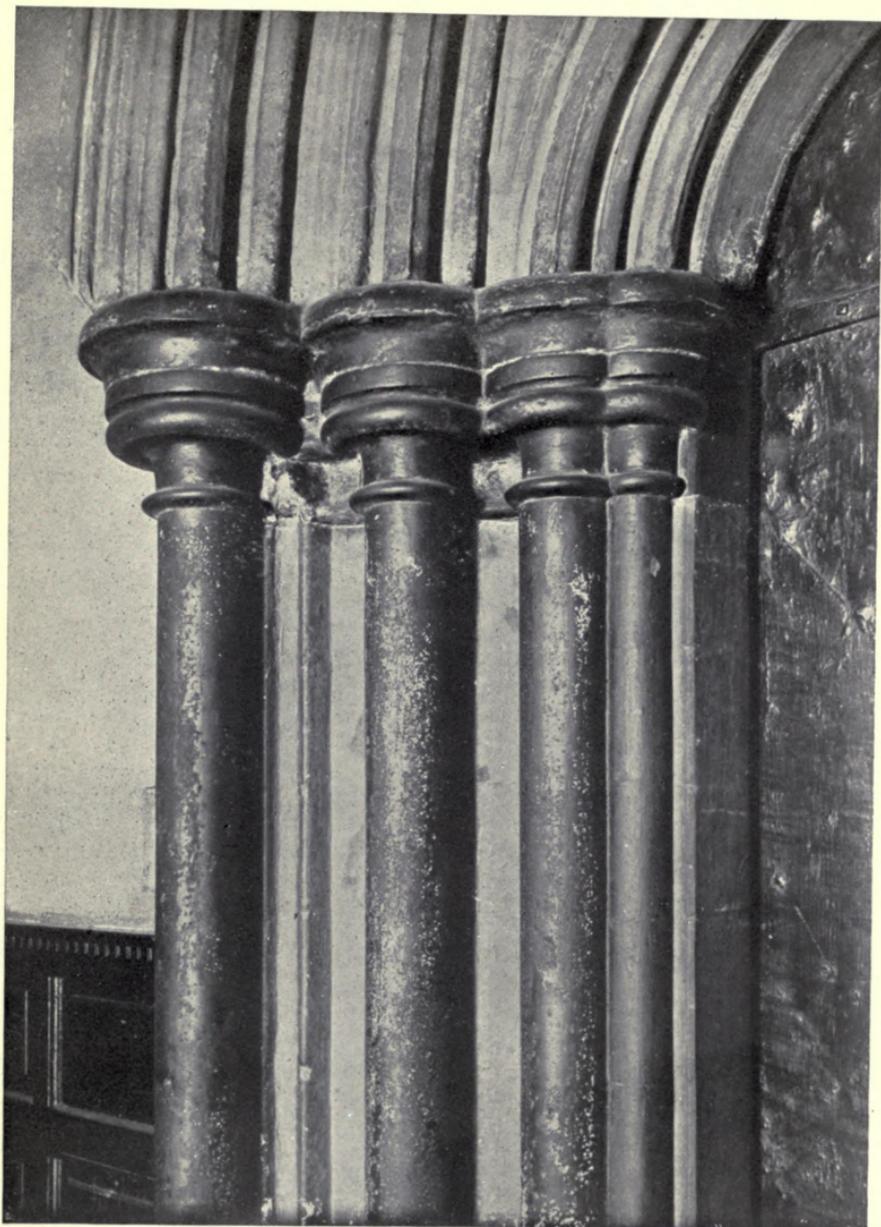
¹ It is almost a square on plan, 28 ft. 10 in. by 27 ft. 11 in. internally, and is actually some feet wider to the southward than the chapel against which it abuts.

Clayton & Bell's glass in the side windows and the east quintuplet is admirable as modern work, and has this amount of antiquarian interest, that the subjects are drawn from the types and ante-types of Scripture, and that Cardinal Morton, when Archbishop of Canterbury, 1486—1500 (builder of the Gateway Tower), filled the windows with a similar scheme, which Archbishop Laud and Mr. Secretary Dell repaired and largely remade in 1633—their work being destroyed in the commotions of the Civil Wars. It is said that no fragments remained in 1846.

It is remarkable that no aumbry, piscina, or image-niche now appears in the chapel, though almost certainly there must have been such features when it was built: neither is there provision for, or any indication of, a minor altar, which the collegiate type of plan practically rules out.

There are many striking points of resemblance between the triple-aisled choir of the Temple Church (consecrated 1240) and the chapel of Lambeth House, including the triplets of lancets, and the extensive use of Purbeck marble. Taking these points and the sections of mouldings, etc., into consideration, I am disposed to place the general building of the chapel as we now see it (excluding the west doorway), at about the same date, *i.e.*, 1241 to 1245, early in the archiepiscopate of that turbulent prelate Boniface of Savoy, uncle to King Henry III. In 1280 Archbishop John Peckham is recorded to have made extensive *repairs* to the chapel, which would suggest that it had been already some time in existence.

The double doorway in the west wall (Plate IV) is a most remarkable feature, uninjured by restoration, and in excellent preservation, as, like the quintuplet over, it has for many centuries been enclosed by the Post-room in the Water Tower. It probably dates somewhat earlier than the chapel, or, in other words, is of the same age as the crypt. The photograph reproduced here was specially taken under my direction a few years ago. It has a circular outer arch, richly moulded, the pointed



P. M. Johnston, photo.

LAMBETH PALACE CHAPEL: Shaft to N. jamb of W. Doorway.

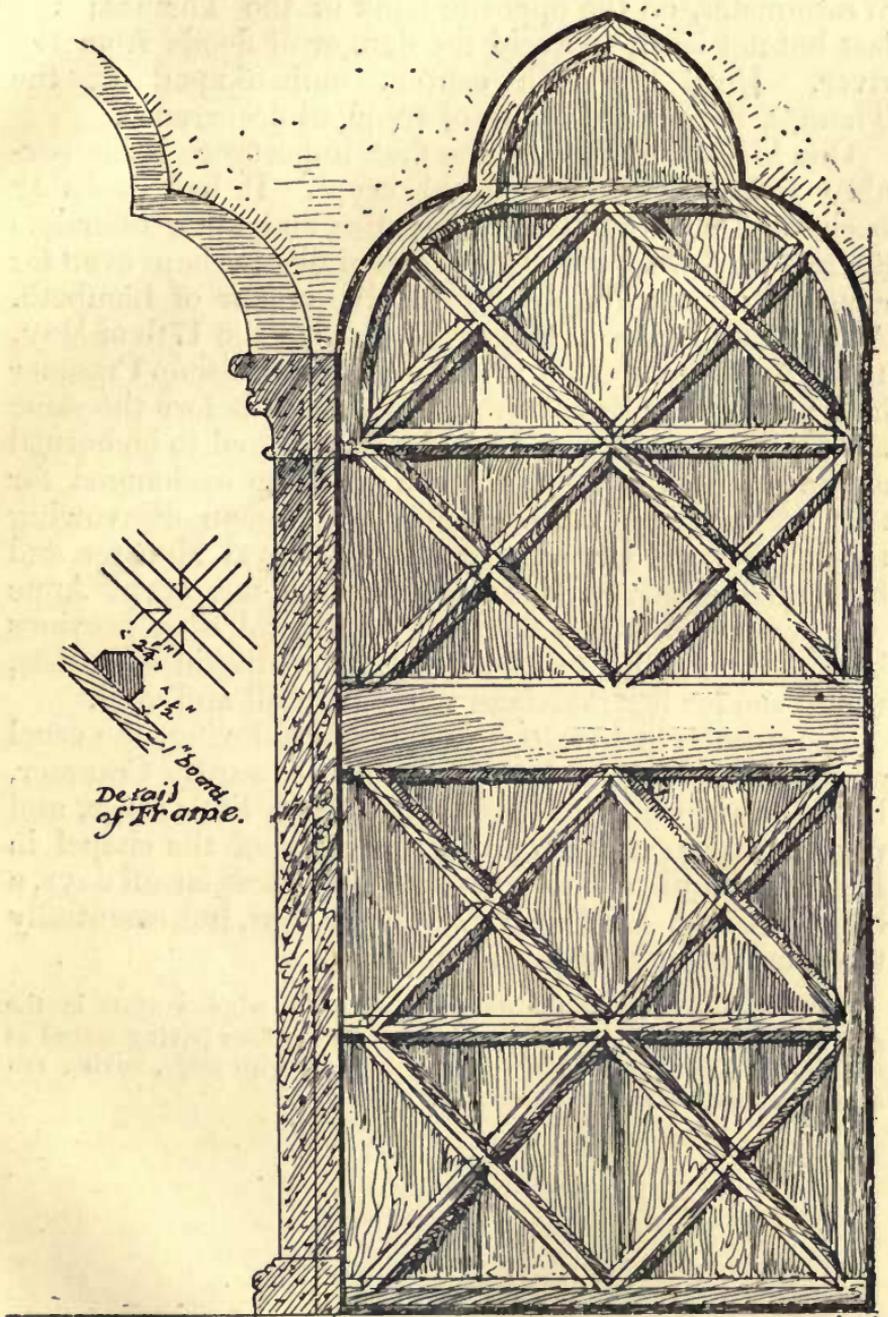
bowtell being repeated, with ordinary rolls and deeply undercut hollows. This arch, with the rest of the stonework, is in firestone, but is coated so thickly with old yellow-wash that the jointing is almost entirely hidden. As far as one can judge, the voussoirs appear to be in small stones with very fine joints. There is a label in the suite of mouldings. The stone tympanum within this arch is pierced by the richly moulded trefoil heads to the twin openings below, and further lightened by a sunk and moulded quatrefoil, in which was originally an image of the Blessed Virgin and Child. Now it is partly filled by Laud's arms on a cartouche, surmounted by a mitre. The central shaft dividing the doors—what in France would be called a "trumeau"—and the three shafts in the jambs, with their capitals and bases, are of Purbeck marble, artificially darkened by varnish. Note the unusual double shaft of the innermost order (Plate V), and the different section of the capitals in the jambs to that of the central shaft. The latter is a trefoil in plan, rebated on the inside for the doors. The whole row of capitals in each jamb are cut out of one long block of Purbeck marble, which acts as a bond to the masonry. (See Plate V.) The shafts are detached, and the jamb behind them starts with a deep hollow having rounded angles and terminating in a trefoiled stop. It continues as a flat splay of stonework till it reaches the actual frame or jamb of the doorway. The bases of the three shafts, like the capitals, are worked out of a continuous block of the marble together with the chamfered sub-base or plinth, the top of which is on the same level with the step or cill at the entry of the twin doorways. This plinth and the step or door-cill originally showed a clear height of about 6 in.—now only 2 in., owing to the floor of the Post-room being raised. (See Plate IV.) The marble door-cill is marvellously little worn, yet it is the original of c. 1210, across which so many feet of prelates, statesmen, royal personages, nobles and commoners have stepped in seven centuries of English history.

On the inner side, this beautiful doorway is suitably finished with two hollow-moulded orders and angle shafts

having moulded capitals of different section to those on the western face. The arch springing from these is of segmental form, the deeply undercut mouldings being returned at right angles to the capital. The internal opening is 7 ft. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. in the clear, while the twin doorways measure 3 ft. 4 in. in width. One is reminded by this doorway of the choir arcades of Boxgrove Priory, Sussex, and St. Thomas à Becket, Portsmouth, both works of contemporary date, where we find in conjunction the semi-circular arch with Early English mouldings, Purbeck shafts and capitals, and, in the former, a sunk quatrefoil in the tympanum.

Strange as it is that this beautiful doorway, round which centres so much history and romance, has hardly been noticed by antiquaries and is quite ignored by our latest architectural writers—doubly strange when we reflect that it is *sui generis* of its precise period in London and set in a building which is itself unique—it is equally a matter for wonder that the coeval oak doors have not attracted notice (Fig. 6). It is true that they are only of plain inch boarding, with the plainest of strap-hinges, laid upon a chamfered framework, set lozenge-wise, but still they are early-13th century doors, in a very perfect state, hardly touched by repair, and retaining even the old latch and bolt. The framing is very slight, consisting of a central lock-rail 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide and this diagonally crossed arrangement of chamfered bars, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. There are two horizontal bars in the head, the trefoiled form of which is outlined by a similar chamfered fillet, and there is a chamfered cill at bottom. It would be a great gain to the doorway if its thick coating of colour-wash could be carefully removed and to these venerable doors if the paint that smothers them were pickled off.

As to the purposes served by the crypt of the chapel, it is perfectly certain that it was not built or used for religious worship any more than was the undercroft of Ely Place Chapel, Holborn, another prelate's town house. It was built for storage, or other purely domestic uses, and to elevate conspicuously the important chapel over it—precisely as in the case of St. Stephen's Chapel,



Internal Elevation of W. Doorway,
showing 13th Century Oak Door.

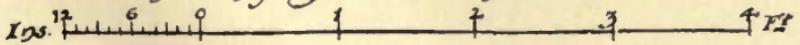


Fig. 6.

Westminster, on the opposite bank of the Thames; and last but not least, to avoid the danger of floods from the river. Until the 19th century embankment of the Thames, these floods were of frequent occurrence.

One historical event of the first importance is inseparably linked with the chapel crypt. It had probably been used for the trial of heretics and other offenders against the laws ecclesiastical and civil—perhaps even for courts of the archbishops' extensive manor of Lambeth. At any rate it was in this crypt that, on the 17th of May, 1536, Anne Boleyn, on whose brows Archbishop Cranmer had placed the Royal Crown, was tried before the same time-serving prelate, and by him condemned to be burned at the stake as an adulteress—a sentence exchanged for that of beheadal, on the wretched woman disavowing the legality of her marriage to the Royal Monster and bastardizing her child Elizabeth. In this crypt Anne was persuaded into some sort of avowal of a previous betrothal, which, in the view of mediæval canonists, would render her marriage to Henry null and void.¹

Anne Boleyn, frivolous and pleasure-loving, the cruel and fickle Henry, and the weak and cowardly Cranmer, have long since acted out their part on life's stage, and passed to their account; but this crypt of the chapel in Lambeth House stands where it did in those far-off days, a little dirtier, a good deal darker, perhaps, but essentially the same as on May the 17th, 1536.

¹ The raised level of the doorways and the window seats in the east and west walls is, perhaps, explained by the floor having served as the well of the court, and a wooden gangway, with steps, having run along the east, south and west walls.