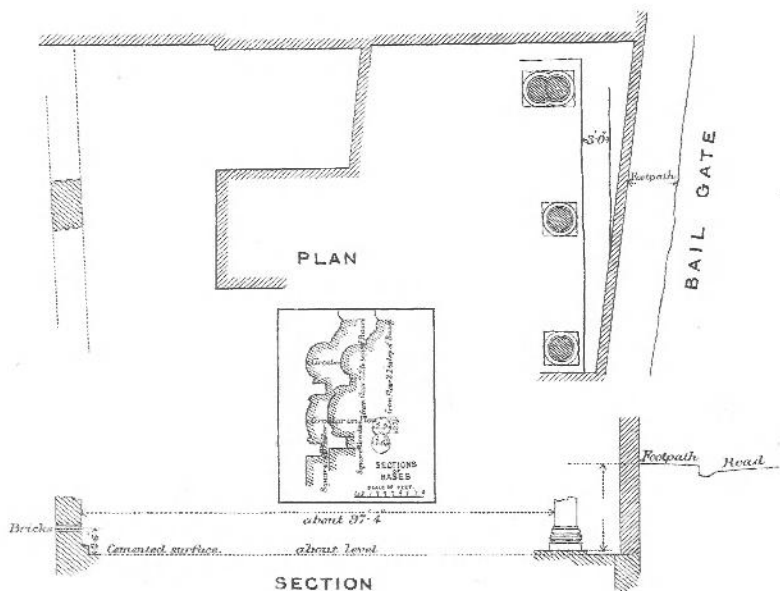


# ROMAN REMAINS BAIL GATE, LINCOLN.

SCALE  $\frac{1}{16}$  TO ONE FOOT.



## NOTES ON THE DISCOVERY OF A ROMAN PORTICUS AT LINCOLN.

By J. H. PARKER, C.B.

When I first saw the two photographs of the bases of columns found at Lincoln in the Bailey they rather puzzled me, and interested me very much. They looked like Roman, but the mouldings, and more especially the deep hollow moulding that would hold water, I had never seen in Roman work to the best of my knowledge, and they appeared to be *Transitional Norman* of the time of Richard I. I found that Mr. Pearson and Mr. Irvine and other good English architectural antiquaries were of the same opinion. As the outer bailey of Lincoln Castle probably included this site, it might have been a grand Late Norman hall like that at Oakham. The photographs had been sent to me both by my friend Canon Venables, and indirectly by the Dean through Lady Frederick Cavendish, a mutual friend, and, as they all desired my opinion, I went to Lincoln to study the subject. I hesitated at first even on the spot, though the evidence came out more strongly in favour of Roman every day. The level is the same as that of the Roman gate very near to it, about ten feet below the present level of the ground. On the other hand the Roman gate itself has only one wall that is really Roman, that is the inner wall with two arches in it, one large for horsemen, the other smaller for foot passengers. This Roman wall bears evident marks of fire, and the other walls are built of old materials after the fire, and abut against the original wall. Considerable remains of burnt materials were found in the cellar also with these bases, as if they had been built after the great fire by which the Roman city was destroyed. But the outer wall of the house to which these bases belonged is not in the same line as the present line of the street, shewing that the plan of this part of the city had been altered since that house was built, and in this outer wall are layers of Roman bricks; these I did not see, but Mr. Codd, the excellent clerk of the works to Mr. Pearson, found them afterwards, and sent me tracings of his drawings. This puts the matter beyond doubt; it is Late Roman work, probably of the fifth century, and the bases belong to the *porticus* of the house, the inner arcade round the court. The two bases put together at an angle are evidently one corner of this *porticus*, which was an arcade with columns built up against the square piers. It must have been a large house or villa, and no doubt the Roman wall called the Mint wall belonged to the same house, as was shewn to me on the spot. Mr. Pearson also assured me that the moulding that holds water is common in Asia Minor in Ionic bases, and he referred me to Mr. Pullan's work for examples. I have never been in Asia Minor, and therefore

this was new to me, but I could not doubt the fact on such evidence. The discovery at Lincoln therefore gives us a fresh piece of architectural history. These base mouldings at Lincoln are Late Roman, but they are *the same* as we commonly find in Transitional Norman work of the time of Richard I. Therefore some of the English soldiers of Richard I. in his Crusade were architects or builders, and brought back with them in their sketch books these mouldings, just as Wilars de Honcourt might have done. It had been before observed that Byzantine-Greek foliage and ornaments were introduced in the Transitional Norman style, but no one had thought that this plain hollow moulding came from the same source. It shews how much at all periods the architects copied each other. Wilars de Honcourt had evidently made careful sketches of all the newest cathedrals to help him in his own which he was building, and no doubt in the same manner any architects or builders going with the army, and forming part of it, would also bring back sketches of any thing that was new to them. It was in this manner that the pointed arch came into use. They had seen it in the east, and also saw how useful it was; when they had an oblong bay to vault over they could not do so without giving round arches to the two wide sides, and pointed ones to the ends, as we see under the central tower of Oxford Cathedral, and at Clee at the mouth of the Humber, both of this period. Clee was the stepping stone to St. Hugh's choir at Lincoln, the earliest pure Gothic building in the world. This period of transition is always the most interesting, and these Lincoln bases throw a new light upon it.

Mr. Codd agrees that this Roman porticus must have been an arcade, with the columns of which we have the bases attached to the square piers; this was a usual Roman construction, and the two bases at an angle (one of them partly inserted in the other) would belong to this plan, the wide distance apart of the bases also confirms the idea that they stood against arches.