

## INIGO JONES AND THE NEW EXCHANGE

By LAWRENCE STONE

This article is based on documents at Hatfield House, and I am deeply indebted to the Marquis of Salisbury for permission to examine and use this material. The following abbreviated references are all to MSS. at Hatfield House: Salis. MSS.; Accounts; Bills; Deeds; General; Legal; Box R; Box S; Box G.

On 24th March, 1603, Queen Elizabeth died and James was proclaimed King of England, events which involved not only a change of dynasty but also a shift in political power. In 1600-01 three groups had joined to bring down Essex. They were Sir Robert Cecil and Lord Buckhurst, the Howards, and Essex's great enemies, Raleigh, Cobham, and Grey of Wilton. Of the three, the first two had spent the next two years in preparing for the peaceful accession of James, the perpetuation of their own authority, and the destruction of the third group. And so the breath was hardly out of the Queen's body before Cecil wrote to the Bishop of Durham, urging him to eject Raleigh from his town house in the Strand where for twenty years he had lived rent free under the Queen's protection. A couple of months later Raleigh was abruptly thrown out into the street<sup>1</sup>. The reason for this move was soon apparent, for within two years Cecil had secured a slice down the east side of the Durham House estate on which to enlarge his adjoining town residence, Salisbury House<sup>2</sup>. By a series of most complicated transactions, he then proceeded to acquire control of part of the Strand frontage of Durham House, including the gatehouse and the old stables to the west of it (fig. 1)<sup>3</sup>. In 1607 he bought out Dudley Carleton's interest in an 80-year lease, and the next year obtained full possession of the lease from Toby Matthew, the late bishop's son, in return for £1,200. In 1609 he extracted from the bishop a lease of the courtyard behind the frontage, and in the Parliament of 1610 he secured his title by an Act which transferred this property to him in perpetuity in return for a rent of £40 a year<sup>4</sup>. The bishop was extremely anxious to avoid any appearance of surrendering the patrimony of the see under political pressure, and he repeatedly emphasized that both parties to the agreement were above reproach. Indeed, Salisbury treated him with scrupulous fairness, connecting new drains to Durham House and building a new stable for the bishop's horses in Saint Martin's Lane<sup>5</sup>.

This additional Strand frontage was not acquired for any further extension of Salisbury House, but for a novel commercial venture, the erection of a 'New Exchange' as a West-End rival to Gresham's famous building in the City. As in the latter, space under an arcade was provided for the general assembly of merchants and citizens, acting as a sort of stock exchange and estate agency. Within were rows of small shops on two floors, a kind of bazaar for the upper-class clientele

<sup>1</sup> *H.M.C. Salis. MSS.*, XV, 37, III. E. Edwards, *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh* (1868), II, 262-70.

<sup>2</sup> *Legal*, 67/24. 3 Jas. I, Private Acts, 1. *L.C.C., Survey of London*, XVIII (1937), 120-21.

<sup>3</sup> The stables and gatehouse are clearly visible on Norden's map of 1593 (*op. cit.*, Pl. Ib). The

site, which is at present being levelled for road-widening, lies to the east of Charing Cross Station, between the Strand and Durham House Street.

<sup>4</sup> Deeds, 226/14; III/18; Accounts, 112/6; *Legal*, 233/14.

<sup>5</sup> *Salis. MSS.*, 126 ff. 83, 129.



Unexecuted design for the New Exchange, by Inigo Jones, 1608  
(Worcester College, Oxford; *Jones Drawings* II, f.82. Reproduced by permission of the Provost and Fellows)



which normally passed along the Strand between the Law Courts and the royal Palace at Westminster, and the Inns of Court and the City to the east. It is impossible to say whether the original idea came from the Earl himself or from his *homme d'affaires*, Thomas Wilson, who was certainly intimately involved in all stages of its early history. There can be no doubt, however, that the Earl took up the idea with enthusiasm. His motives were probably mixed. No doubt he hoped it would be a profitable investment, and that the rent would provide a fair interest on the capital. It would also add greatly to his reputation. On both architectural and economic grounds it was bound to attract attention, particularly as the expected customers would be drawn from the influential classes rather than mere merchants and shopkeepers. Cecil could hope to achieve even greater renown than the building of the Royal Exchange had already conferred on Sir Thomas Gresham.

He was therefore entirely unmoved by the indignant protests of the shopkeepers of the Royal Exchange, who were naturally afraid of this new competitor.

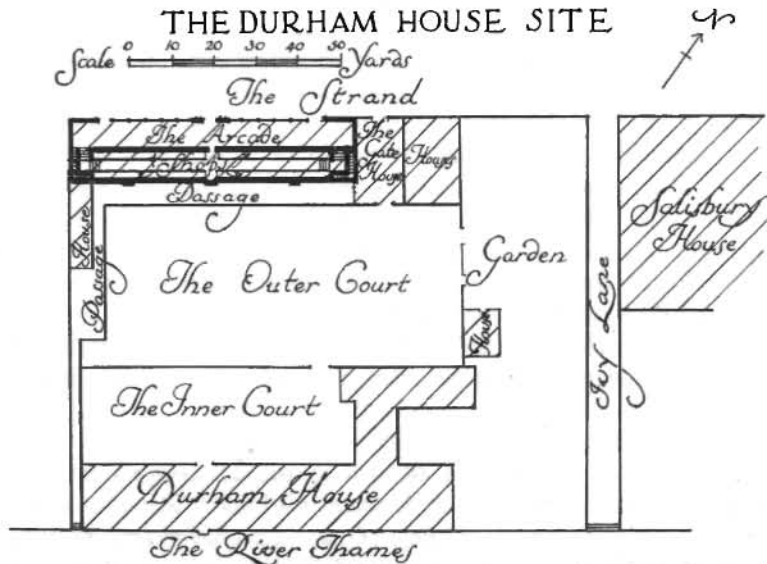


Fig. 1. The Durham House site, based on the sketch plan of 1621, and John Smythson's ground-plan of the Exchange as illustrated in A. W. Clapham and W. H. Godfrey, *Some Famous Buildings and their Story*, figs. 67, 68

Their appeal to abandon the project was supported by the Lord Mayor, who feared a general westward drift of business:

'It is generally conceived that yf such a worke be erected, the situation of the place respected, beinge neere unto the Court of Whitehall in the midst of the Nobility and where much of the Gentry lodge and reside as also in the high waie by which all Teamers passe to Westminster, It will have such advantages of our Exchange as will make it of noe use for salesmen at all,

besides a greater inconvenience to this Cittie. For a Pawne beinge there erected and put into a pryme course of Trade will take all resorte from this place and put by that recourse from the Cittie which occasions much profit to all sortes of Retailors in other places leadinge to the Exchange, and in tyme will drawe Mercers, Goldsmynes and all other chiefe Traders to settle themselves out of the Cittie in those partes, for the supplie of Tearmers and such as reside thereabouts, to the greate decay of the Trade within the Cittie. . . .

Cecil's reply was tactful but firm. He repudiated any wish or intention to harm the interests of the Londoners, doubted whether there would be any serious competition between the two Exchanges, and reminded the City that it should not begrudge sharing some of its prosperity with others. 'When I ballance London with Westmynster, Middlesex, or rather with all England, then I must conclude that London might suffer . . . some little quill of profit to passe by their mayne Pipe'. In conclusion he expressed his determination to leave to the present and future inhabitants of Westminster 'some such Monument as may adorne the place, and happely derive some effect of present benefitt and future Charity to the whole Liberty'<sup>1</sup>. In other words, he was hoping to stimulate the economic growth of the West End, even if this meant drawing a certain amount of business away from the City.

In the summer of 1608 the Earl of Salisbury was at the peak of his career. For ten years he had been both Secretary of State and Master of the Court of Wards. In the spring he had added the Lord Treasurership and was therefore now in a commanding political position, besides holding two of the most lucrative offices in the state. He had already begun the huge building project of Hatfield House<sup>2</sup>, he was still extending and improving Salisbury House, and was about to start converting Cranborne House from a medieval fortress into a convenient and charming country house. To all this he now added the building of this new exchange.

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There is reason to believe that before he finally decided upon the design, Salisbury approached more than one architect for advice. Among the Inigo Jones-John Webb Collection at Worcester College, Oxford, is a large architectural elevation nearly 30 ins. long, on the back of which is written 'For ye new Exchange' (Pl. XXIV)<sup>3</sup>. There can really be very little doubt that this endorsement is in the hand of John Webb, for the word 'Exchange' is identical in all respects with the same word written unquestionably by Webb on a folio in the same collection with theoretical designs for an exchange (Pl. XXVA). From this endorsement and from the fact that the drawing is found in this particular collection, there is a strong presumption that it is the work of either John Webb or Inigo Jones. The drawing is wash-tinted, a technique which Webb did not employ in the years before the Civil War,

<sup>1</sup> Salis. MSS., 195 ff. 24, 30. City of London Record Office, Remembrancia, II, ff. 323, 355.

<sup>2</sup> L. Stone, 'The Building of Hatfield House', *Arch. Journ.*, CXII (1956).

<sup>3</sup> In formulating the subsequent arguments about the date and authorship of this drawing,

I am deeply indebted to most generous and detailed advice from Sir John Summerson. Indeed, it was he who marshalled the arguments which finally convinced me that the date must be 1608 and not 1638-39.

when he used strong cross-hatchings<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, close examination of the statuary shows that the structure of the human body is built up by the use of a number of dots and tiny loops, which is a peculiar characteristic of Jones's draughtmanship<sup>2</sup>. It seems fairly certain therefore that the drawing is the work of Jones rather than Webb.

Historically there are only two possible dates for this rejected design: either 1608, when the building was first erected, or 1638-39, when the top floor was reconstructed. Between these dates the Exchange languished, and in any case there could be no possible reason for completely refronting a new building, if indeed so important a reshaping was ever contemplated. There are some arguments that might be put forward for regarding the drawing as a project for 1638-39. In this year substantial alterations were decided upon, and it is possible that a reconstruction of the whole frontage was under consideration. The 2nd Earl was certainly in a position to afford a substantial outlay this year, for he then received £18,000 as the portion of Jane, daughter of James Maxwell, on her marriage to his son and heir Viscount Cranborne<sup>3</sup>. Salisbury, now a prominent courtier and Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners, would naturally have turned to the great court architect Jones and his assistant Webb. Unfortunately, although full accounts survive of all the Earl's expenditure for this period, there is no sign whatever of any gift, reward, or fee paid to any architect, either for preliminary drawings or for the executed alterations. Webb's endorsement on the back of the Exchange drawing might suggest that it dates from the 1630s, after he had entered Jones's service, but of course he could easily have written it on a design that was already over twenty years old when it came into his hands.

There are certain stylistic links with the Jones-Webb drawings of the 1630s, in which can be found some of the detailed features of the design, such as the  $\Delta$  motif, the beribboned cartouches, and the pediments with statuary and reclining figures<sup>4</sup>. The most striking comparison, however, which has been pointed out to me by Mr. H. M. Colvin, is with an unpublished design in Worcester College for a new spire for Saint Paul's. This drawing, which appears to be the work of Jones or Webb, shows the same ogee curve as is twice repeated in the central tower of the New Exchange drawing, the apex with  $\Delta$  motif is identical with those of the two side towers, there are the same flambeaux at either side, and the same Venetian window below. More significant still, perhaps, is that the spire displays the same rather clumsy handling of motifs. The two drawings would thus appear to belong to the same period. Unfortunately, this Saint Paul's drawing is not dated. Historically, the most likely dates would be 1620-21, when the Commission for repairs was first set up, or the mid-1630s, when Laud's appeal for the restoration of the Cathedral was producing substantial sums, when Inigo Jones was busy remoulding the nave and west end, and the rebuilding of the spire was under consideration. On the other hand, there had been talk about restoring the Cathedral

<sup>1</sup> M. Whinney, 'Some Church Designs by John Webb', *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VI (1943), 143.

<sup>2</sup> P. Simpson and C. F. Bell, 'Designs by Inigo Jones', *Walpole Soc.*, XII (1923-4), Pl. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Accounts, 157/3.

<sup>4</sup> M. Whinney, 'John Webb's drawings for Whitehall Palace', *Walpole Soc.*, XXXI (1942-43), Pls. IX, XIV, XIXb, XXV. J. A. Gotch, *Inigo Jones* (1928), Pl. XXV. *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VI, Pl. XLb.

ever since the spire fell down in 1561, and it is not entirely impossible that Jones did a drawing for a new spire in about 1608-10.

None of this is very conclusive, but there is one fact which definitely precludes the 1638-39 date: the fenestration and arcading on the Jones drawing are quite different from those on the existing building. The drawing therefore cannot be regarded as a project for the remodelling of 1638-39 since it would have involved tearing down the whole of the existing arcading and first floor front, and starting again. This is a procedure which no patron would attempt or architect suggest, merely in order to alter the second floor of a building 30 years old. This difference in the arcading therefore makes it certain that the Jones drawing must antedate the erection of the Exchange in 1608.

Once this is established all the other arguments for the earlier date fall into place. Evidence is accumulating to suggest that in the first Earl of Salisbury Jones found one of his most important early patrons. In the spring of 1608 he was employed for the decor of a show arranged by the Earl in the library of Salisbury House, he was employed again for the show at the opening of the Burse in the spring of 1609, and there is some reason to believe that he was used in an architectural capacity at Hatfield House in the winter of the same year<sup>1</sup>. It would not be surprising therefore to find him consulted about the design for the Exchange. The stylistic evidence also favours the earlier date. Advanced though the drawing is for an English architect in 1608, it is perfectly possible for a Jones who had already been once to Italy and who had made a close study of the two great source books of Serlio and Palladio<sup>2</sup>. Though organized and blended by Jones's personal genius, many of the most characteristic features of the drawing are to be found in these volumes. The  $\triangle$  motif for towers and finials which occurs so frequently in the drawing, the pediments flanked by outward curving wings, even the Venetian window under the central pediment which had not yet been seen in England, are all to be found in Serlio<sup>3</sup>. The armorial scrolls within the pediment and the three statues above are almost universal with Palladio, a triple-pedimented façade by whom seems to be one of the sources which Jones used for his design (Pl. XXVB). The general idea of a niched first-floor with statues and an arcade below could both have been derived from Gresham's Royal Exchange<sup>4</sup>, while the detailed treatment of the pillars and arches comes from Serlio's design for an exchange at Lyons (Pl. XXVc). Moreover, it is very significant that some features, such as the  $\triangle$  motif, the central dome with its cramped pilasters, and the beribboned cartouches, can be seen in some of Jones's drawings only a few years later<sup>5</sup>. All this merely proves that Jones *could* have made this design in 1608. What suggests most strongly that he *did* make it then and not in 1638-39 is the clumsy and immature handling of the three towers, particularly the central one with its extravagant scrolls. All this is very unlike the work of Jones in the 1620s and 1630s, but is readily explicable as the concept of a man who was still primarily a stage designer. Finally, there

<sup>1</sup> Bills, 22; Accounts, 160/1. Stone, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-20.

<sup>2</sup> S. Serlio, *Tutte l'Opere d'Architettura e Prospettiva* (Venice, 1584). A. Palladio, *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (Venice, 1570).

<sup>3</sup> Serlio, *op. cit.*, lib. III, 68; lib. IV, 155, 156,

175 v.; lib. V, 215 v.; lib. VI, 20 v.

<sup>4</sup> A. M. Hind, *Wenceslaus Hollar* (1922), Pl. XXXII

<sup>5</sup> *Walpole Soc.*, XII, Pl. VIII. J. Lees-Milne, *Age of Inigo Jones* (1953), fig. 11. Gotch, *op. cit.*, Pls. VI, X.

is the fact that in the 1670s or 1680s John Aubrey observed that 'The next step in Roman Architecture was the New Exchange in the Strand, which was surveyed by Mr. Inigo Jones'<sup>1</sup>. We know that Aubrey saw some Webb-Jones drawings, and among these there may have been this or another version of the proposed front<sup>2</sup>.

For some reason or other, Jones's design was not accepted. Perhaps Salisbury's essential conservatism revolted against so un-Jacobean a project. Indeed, his insular and cautious temperament must have been very frustrating for Jones, for whom the cosmopolitan and classically-minded Earl of Arundel was to be a much more congenial patron. Nevertheless, the rejected drawing may well have had its effect upon the accepted design, about the authorship of which it is impossible to be certain.

The man in charge of erecting the building was Simon Basil, the holder of the most important architectural post in the country, the Surveyorship of the King's Works. From the moment he first began building, Cecil had been employing officials of the royal works. Some plans for the major alteration of his house in Chelsea in 1597 had been made by William Spicer, Surveyor of the Queen's Works; Simon Basil, then Comptroller of the Works, was certainly employed on Salisbury House in 1601, being rewarded for his services through Cecil's control of patronage of wards. Though he had picked on an unknown carpenter, Robert Liming, as the architect of his great house at Hatfield, the latter was evidently advised at all stages by Basil<sup>3</sup>. At the New Exchange, Basil's control was more direct. He signed all the bills, even of the most trivial nature, and helped to recruit the workmen. In the accounts, which unfortunately only begin in Michaelmas, 1608, there is no record of any other architect being concerned with the actual building. The clerk of the works and principal mason was a William Southes (Southeast, Suthes, or Soothes), who was already employed under the Crown, and was to end his days as Master Mason at Windsor Castle. He was evidently in full charge on the site and his expense account included such items as 'Smale whipcord to sett out the woork and to make lynes, levells and plum rules', and 'for playning and shooting of bords at sunderie tymes to make mouldes and templettes'<sup>4</sup>. There is nothing to suggest, however, that Southes was anything more than the executant of the designs of others.

But such was the nature of the architectural profession that the fact that Basil was in full administrative control does not necessarily mean that he was solely responsible for the design. The concept of a large central feature and two smaller pavilions at the ends, and the organization of the arcade and first-floor pilasters are both basically derived from the rejected Jones design. If Jones did in fact design the south front at Hatfield he was certainly capable of the mixture of Jacobean and classical features that appears in the Exchange (Pl. XXVIA). Could it be that Aubrey saw an elevation by Jones for the building as it was erected, or

<sup>1</sup> J. Aubrey, *Chronologia Architectonica* (Bodl. Libr., MS. Top. Gen., C 25, f. 169).

<sup>2</sup> H. M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1660-1840* (1954), 656.

<sup>3</sup> A. W. Clapham and W. H. Godfrey, *Some Famous Buildings and their Story* (1913), 86-7. *H.M.C. Salis. MSS.*, XI, 343, 349, 385; XVI, 346. Stone, *op. cit.*, 102-3.

<sup>4</sup> Bills, 29.



did he fail to compare the extant elevation with the building and draw unwarranted conclusions of authorship from a rejected design?

To sum up: There is every reason to believe that the unexecuted elevation is by Inigo Jones and dates from 1608. It is consequently the only known architectural drawing of Jones before the revolutionary second Italian tour in 1613-14 and is a document of major importance in the study of his style. Furthermore, if, as seems not unlikely, the accepted design owed something to his first draught, moderated and made more conventional by advice from Basil and the wishes of Salisbury, it falls into place with the south front of Hatfield, redesigned the next year by the same trio. These two buildings and the rejected design help to explain the description of Jones in 1613 as 'our kingdome's most Artfull and Ingenious Architect', and his appointment to the reversion of Basil's office in the same year<sup>1</sup>.

It is impossible to be absolutely certain about the precise appearance of the Exchange as it stood on completion in 1609. The Earl of Shrewsbury had commented in 1608 'And for your Range in ye stronde, we trust it will farr exceede the fayre Longe shop in cheepsyde, though it hould yt forme'. Indeed the plan of the Burse was certainly very similar to that of any one side of its rival<sup>2</sup>. Facing the street there was a long covered arcade 201 ft. long, 17 ft. high, and 21 ft. deep, while within was a narrow corridor 10 ft. wide flanked on either side by rows of small booths no more than 5½ ft. deep (fig. 1). Below there was a range of cellars, and above, reached by stairs at either end, were two corridors with more rows of shops running out over the ground floor arcade.

The southern façade, looking out on a passage leading to the river and beyond on the outer court of Durham House, seems to have been a very simple affair with rows of rectangular mullioned windows below a gabled and battlemented roof. This is how it is shown both in the rough sketch map of 1626, and in the Hollar drawing of about 1630<sup>3</sup>. More intriguing, and more difficult to determine, is the appearance of the main front facing on to the Strand. The only evidence available is a drawing by John Smythson in about 1618-19, and a late 17th or early 18th century engraving by John Harris, after considerable alterations had taken place (Pls. XXVIA and B). Smythson is unfortunately a somewhat untrustworthy authority, who appears to have done much of his work from memory, supplemented by imagination, at his drawing board at home<sup>4</sup>. It will be noticed that while the general appearance of the ground and first floors is more or less the same in both drawings, Smythson's shows pilasters between the windows which are omitted by Harris. Now a pilastered first floor was present at the Royal Exchange<sup>5</sup>, and this may have played tricks with Smythson's memory; alternatively, of course, it is equally possible that the pilasters were removed in subsequent alterations. Both show medallions or circular openings between the windows, and a pair of niches flanking the central porch on the first floor. The Smythson drawing indicates that the building had

<sup>1</sup> J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, 1530-1830 (1953), 71.

<sup>2</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 37/27.

<sup>3</sup> T. N. Brushfield, 'Britain's Burse, or the

New Exchange', *Brit. Arch. Ass. J.*, n.s., IX, 1903, 34 and plan facing 33.

<sup>4</sup> I owe this warning to Sir John Summerson.

<sup>5</sup> Hind, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXXII.

a total of twelve niches on the ground and first floors and it seems likely that the intention, which perhaps was executed, was to fill all twelve with statuary. Certainly the Royal Exchange was lavishly adorned with statues all round the first floor, and Salisbury may have wished to emulate this example. At all events in August Wilson reported that 'I have according to your lordships comand in this last letter sett Colt aworke with one of the Apostles, and of all 12 I have gotte the true portraits'. Maximilian Colt was the 'Court' sculptor of the day, who had just finished the tomb of Queen Elizabeth, and he was therefore an obvious choice. And he certainly did one or two statues, for two large blocks of Gloucestershire stone were delivered 'for Coult to make fuger to stand in the neece'. Over ten other carvers were fully employed on the site from the end of August till April, 1609—indeed, in September there were no less than fifteen—but there was a great deal of decorative stonework to be carved, and it is very doubtful whether they could have completed another eleven statues in the time<sup>1</sup>.

Another problem concerns the windows on the street front. Whereas Harris shows some very peculiar pointed windows on the first floor, Smythson has made them round-headed, which, though still rather odd, is not impossible for the period. It is clear either that Harris invented these improbable windows, or that Smythson's improving imagination has again been at work. Strange though they are in the Harris drawing, it is just possible that an explanation could be found for them. Owing to the need for speed a great deal of stone came from the monastic buildings of Saint Augustine's, Canterbury. It might perhaps be, therefore, that these Early English windows in a Jacobean building are re-used 13th century stonework from Canterbury. On the whole, however, it seems more likely that in this case Smythson is the more reliable of the two<sup>2</sup>.

The last question about the original appearance concerns the roof line, which differs considerably in the two drawings. But the Harris drawing shows the front after later reconstructions and the accounts confirm the reliability of Smythson. They indicate a pitched slate roof with a row of plain dormers at the back, and five dormers at the front concealed behind the elaborate Jacobean gables shown by Smythson. These decorations were certainly carried out, for the accounts mention the royal arms, types, pyramids and cups, and the falcon perched on top of the central gable<sup>3</sup>.

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There is one unusual feature about the building of the New Exchange, and this is the astonishing speed with which it was erected. The first stone was laid on 10th June, 1608, by July it was progressing fast, and by the end of August all the arches of the main arcade were already up<sup>4</sup>. The normal custom of abandoning

<sup>1</sup> Bills, 29.

<sup>2</sup> Of the two drawings showing square-headed windows, one is known to be 19th century, and the other appears to be much later than the destruction of the building. It is noticeable that both show the niches for statues as windows, an error unlikely to have been made while the building was still standing (A. W. Clapham and

W. H. Godfrey, *op. cit.*, fig. 70 A. *L.C.C. Survey of London*, XVIII, Pl. 58c).

<sup>3</sup> Accounts, 160/1; Bills, 29, 40. P.R.O., S. P. Dom., James I, 37/84.

<sup>4</sup> J. Stow, *Survey of London* (1633), 494. N. E. McClure, *Letters of John Chamberlain* (Philadelphia, 1939), I, 259. Salis. MSS., 195 f., 40.

work during the winter was evidently not observed, and by 11th April, 1609, the building and interior fittings were sufficiently advanced to be ready to receive King James at a formal opening ceremony. By the autumn the shopkeepers were installed and business had begun.

The reasons for this extraordinary speed can only be guessed at. Of course, the building was a commercial venture, and the sooner it was finished and occupied the sooner a fair return would be obtained on the capital invested. On the other hand, the hasty mobilization of men and materials must have added substantially to the initial cost, and the financial motive can therefore hardly have been decisive. The most important reason must have been the wish to reduce to a minimum the opposition of the City. So long as building was proceeding and the Exchange was not actually in operation, the City would probably maintain its agitation. It must be remembered that on 28th July, 1608, Salisbury had introduced the New Impositions, which substantially raised the customs duties on imports<sup>1</sup>. All in all Lord Treasurer Salisbury cannot have been a popular figure in City circles this year, and he probably thought it wise to press on with the building as fast as possible, so as to minimize the period of agitation against the idea of a new exchange.

This decision to push on with the maximum speed put a very severe strain on the organization of men and materials. The business arrangements for all Cecil's buildings were in the very competent hands of Thomas Wilson, who lived next door to the site, at Salisbury House. The first problem was to muster the necessary man-power. Though most of the building was of brick, the whole of the street front was faced in stone<sup>2</sup>, which meant that very large numbers of masons were required. At the beginning of July Basil, Wilson and Southes made a journey into Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and parts of Warwickshire and Northamptonshire 'for the providinge of fourtie masons'. But this was still not enough and at about the end of the month Southes set off on another recruiting drive into Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire. By now he was drawing heavily on the available skilled labour in the area, and he had some difficulty in reaching his target. He found himself obliged to take the risk of distributing small advances 'to som of the masones which were stubburn'<sup>3</sup>. The result was a dramatic rise of the labour force. Work began in June with 43 masons and 9 labourers in addition to an unknown but very large number of bricklayers employed on contract. The total force was probably at least one hundred. By early August the number of masons had risen to 64, working six days a week with two hours a day overtime 'for the more expedition of the woork'. By the 11th the forty Cotswold recruits had arrived and there were 108 masons at work, while by the end of the month the second group had swollen the numbers to the extraordinary figure of 124, a level which was maintained at least till the end of September. It looks as if a fair proportion of the skilled masons of the West Midlands had been mustered, presumably at the cost of current projects at Oxford and elsewhere.

These masons were supported by large numbers of labourers, while the elaborate sculpture of the street frontage demanded a small group of highly skilled carvers.

<sup>1</sup> S. R. Gardiner, *History of England*, 1603-1616 (1863), I, 439.

<sup>2</sup> Bills, 29, 40. See also Count Magalotti's

description in 1669; L. Magalotti, *Travels of Cosmo III* (1821), 295-6.

<sup>3</sup> Bills, 29.

In August and September, 1608, there were 175 workers on time-rates on the site, together with an unknown number of bricklayers and about a dozen joiners on contract. The total labour force at the peak period must have been about 250 in all. The most highly paid were, of course, the two leading carvers, John de Beeke (de Book or Book), who had done a lot of work at Salisbury House, and the Dutch tomb-carver, Garret Christmas, who was fully employed on the sculpture of the Exchange from the end of August until April of the next year. They received 3s. a day, their subordinate John Barker 2s. 8d., the masons between 1s. 8d. and 2s., and the totally unskilled labourers 1s. The variation in wage-rate between the least and the most skilled was therefore as much as 300%<sup>1</sup>.

Having recruited so large a force of men, the next problem was to provide them with sufficient building stone to keep them employed. There was no chance of obtaining in a hurry sufficient quantities of a single type, and as a result a wide range of sources had to be drawn upon. The greatest reliance was placed on the monastic buildings of Saint Augustine's, Canterbury, which Cecil had recently acquired as a bribe for favourable treatment from the wife of the attainted Lord Cobham, the Countess of Kildare<sup>2</sup>. Basil, Wilson, and Southes went to inspect the site, and a demolition contractor was put in charge, with orders to pull down the buildings. The stone was sent by lighter to Sandwich whence small ships of twenty to twenty-four tons brought it to Tower Wharf in London. There it was again transhipped and sent by lighter up river to Durham House stairs. Demolition went forward rapidly, in spite of considerable opposition from the inhabitants to the destruction of the monastic gateway, and despite a shortage of money to pay the workmen due to failure to sell stone locally to cover the costs. In the summer of 1608 five hundred and twenty tons of stone were obtained from this source to be used at the Exchange and at Hatfield<sup>3</sup>.

But this was nothing like enough. The pillars for the arcade came from Buxted, and window stone from Shadwell. This Sussex stone was sent overland by cart to Vauxhall or Lambeth, and then taken across the river to Durham House stairs by barge. More hardstone for windows and steps came from a quarry at Boughton Monchelsea, near Maidstone, and ordinary ashlar from Kent, Oxfordshire, and Yorkshire. One pillar for the arcade came from Plymouth, while Caen stone for the sculpture was bought from the royal master-mason Cornelius Cure, —or rather from his executors<sup>4</sup>. Marble for the black and white paving of the arcade gave particular trouble. Not enough Purbeck marble could be obtained quickly, despite heroic efforts to overcome transport difficulties in winter<sup>5</sup>. Some came from Berwick, but it still was not enough, and in October Cecil appealed urgently to his old friend Gilbert, Earl of Shrewsbury, asking him to enquire about developing a quarry in Derbyshire. Shrewsbury did his best, though the results were not very encouraging. In November he told Cecil that 'as many handes is workynge at ye blackstone quarrie in the Peake as can possiblie worke together, which are but a few, and so soon as is possible it shall be sent to London'<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bills, 29, 40.

<sup>2</sup> Deeds, 102/40. *H.M.C. Salis. MSS.*, XVII, 176.

<sup>3</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 35/35, 61; 36/12, 35.

Bills, 29. *Salis. MSS.*, 143 f., 115.

<sup>4</sup> Bills, 29, 40; Accounts, 160/1.

<sup>5</sup> See Stone, *op. cit.*, 109.

<sup>6</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 37/27, 64.

Despite all these difficulties the building was ready for the formal opening ten months after the laying of the first stone. The occasion was marked by a state visit by the royal family and the court: 'On Tuesday being the 10th day of April . . . divers of the upper shops were adorned in rich and beautiful manner, with wares most curious to please the eye. . . . On the day following it pleased his highnesse, with the Queene, Prince, the Duke of Yorke, & the Lady Elizabeth, to come thither, attended on by many great Lords and choise Ladies<sup>1</sup>. On arrival they were presented with some of the rareties from India and China that were on display, and were entertained with a show. The text was by Ben Jonson, the scenery by Inigo Jones, and the whole entertainment cost £179.

The script of the show has not survived, but we have an outline by Thomas Wilson of the proposed programme. After a fanfare of cornets and other loud instruments an actor emerged, who represented the keeper, grumbling to himself and defending the Exchange from its many traducers. The two other actors, of whome one was masked, began to play their 'montebanke tricks'. In due course 'he shall unmaske as a marchant that sells not *merces adulterinas*' and the show ended with a presentation by him of the rareties<sup>2</sup>.

James's chief responsibility on this occasion was to give the building a name. There had already been some discussion, and Wilson had sent Cecil a mock-serious essay on the subject. After canvassing various alternatives, such as 'Cecil Castle', 'Bell Arma', 'Salisbury playne', and 'English rialto', Wilson finally recommended 'The Mercuriale, bycause Mercury is the god of marchants and of craft and cunninge'. But when he arrived on 11th April James firmly baptised it Britains Burse, a name whose overtones of Anglo-Scottish unity in one realm suggest that it was the choice of the king himself<sup>3</sup>.

By the summer of 1609, the finishing touches had been put to the building. The footpath of the Strand in front of the building had been paved, the joiners had built the shops, Richard Butler the glazier had made and set up five large windows, with the arms of the King, the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales, and two of Salisbury himself, and the fashionable interior decorator Rowland Bucket had given the right air of opulence to what was hoped to be one of the more attractive features of the building, an insurance office run by Wilson<sup>4</sup>.

Wilson, who was building himself a house abutting on the south-west corner of the Burse, was at first in full managerial control of this commercial venture. One of his first concerns was to draw up elaborate regulations governing the shop-keepers. Leases were to be granted only to traders in clothes, books, fancy goods, perfumes, and other personal articles likely to be in high demand by an upper-class clientele. Holidays and opening hours were regulated and elaborate provisions made to prevent disputes and brawling. After only a month or two's experience Wilson had discovered the unruly nature of 17th-century shop-assistants and apprentices, who created disorder by 'hunting of doggs with greate noise & howling, playing of foyles and cudgles, stricking ye ball (which breaketh ye windowes), buffitting and fighting one with another'. These were to be punished by corporal

<sup>1</sup> Stow, *op. cit.*, 494-5.

<sup>2</sup> Accounts, 160/1; Salis. MSS., 195 f., 100.

<sup>3</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 44/46. Stow, *op. cit.*, 465.

<sup>4</sup> Accounts, 160/1; Bills, 40; Box S/7, f. 85.

punishment, while stocks were provided for pilferers. One of the most intractable problems was sanitation, even though a 'pissing place' had been provided and linked by a sewer to the river. Under pain of 1s. a time, traders were forbidden to 'throw or poure out into the walk or range or outt att any of the windowes any piss or other noysome thing', and the porter or housekeeper was enjoined 'not to suffer pissing or other filthy thing about the house'<sup>1</sup>.

It was one thing to draw up regulations, another to attract the shopkeepers. John Donne might well ask

'Whether the Britains Burse did fill apace  
And likely were to give the Exchange disgrace'<sup>2</sup>.

The shops were offered on eleven-year-leases at £30 fine and £10 a year rent. This was not cheap, and from the first some difficulty was experienced in filling up the vacancies. By the autumn some twenty-seven leases had been taken up, mostly by milliners, linen-drapers, and haberdashers, but as there was something like one hundred shops altogether, this was not very encouraging. In November the resourceful Wilson analysed the causes of the trouble:

1. Want of houses to dwell in for the shopkeepers
2. The small circuet of inhabitants for buying about the place, being but one street
3. The want of stowage in their shoppes for their wares, the shops being as it were smale chests rather than shoppes
4. The mallice of the confederate Londoners to keep out those that wold come'.

Even its author regarded the proposed solution as somewhat bold: 'haply your lordship will smile att it as a folly'. It was to buy up the whole site of Durham House behind the Burse, pull down the old palace, and erect 100 houses, at an estimated cost of £20,000<sup>3</sup>. Salisbury was already cautiously developing the west side of Saint Martin's Lane as a residential area, but he was in no position to finance so gigantic an undertaking on top of all his other building commitments. Nevertheless, he was evidently tempted by the idea of exploiting and encouraging residential building in the area, and, no doubt as an alternative to Wilson's scheme, he approached the Earl of Bedford early the next spring with a request to buy Covent Garden. Bedford had led a riotous youth and had dissipated part of his estate some time before. But his relatives and heirs had obliged him to give a series of huge bonds not to disperse any more of the entailed estate, and the Earl had therefore to tell Salisbury that it was beyond his power to meet his request<sup>4</sup>. So died a suggestion which might radically have altered the fortunes of the Russells and the Cecils from that day to this.

<sup>1</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 49/5, printed in a bowdlerized version by Brushfield, *op. cit.*, 92-4. Bills, 40.

<sup>2</sup> H. J. C. Grierson, *The Poems of John Donne* (1912), I, 106.

<sup>3</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 49/6.

<sup>4</sup> S. P. Dom., James I, 53/127; 26/34. Lord Chamberlain's Office, *Recognisances for Debt*, 192, p. 385; 193, p. 327; 195, p. 201; 196, p. 143.

The total cost of building the Burse had been £10,760, to say nothing of the £1,200 paid to Toby Matthew for his lease. Since the current interest rate was 10% and there were the normal costs of upkeep to be met, it was necessary for Salisbury to achieve an annual income from the shopkeepers of at least £1,200 a year, if he was to obtain a reasonable return on his investment. The nearest he came to achieving this figure was in the first years of the Burse's life, between 1611 and 1617. During this period direct management of the concern had been leased for £1,000 a year to a merchant syndicate of customs farmers. This was part of a very complicated transaction by which the farmers had taken over £20,000 worth of the Earl's debts, and much of this £1,000 a year was used to cover part of the interest payments<sup>1</sup>.

This arrangement broke down in 1616 when the farmer of the Burse had to have his rent reduced to £700 and Salisbury again took direct control of part of the building. Nevertheless, the gross rental seems to have remained at about £1,000 till 1620-21, when the eleven-year leases of 1609-10 all ran out. The expiry of the leases coincided with the most serious trade depression of the century and the result was that new tenants could be found for only about half the shops. The rents received in 1621 were only £361, and though the rental crept up slowly in the next few years, it had still not risen above £415 in 1627<sup>2</sup>. It is clear that the position caused the gravest anxiety to the Earl and his advisers. In 1623 it was reported that he had sold for £6,000 the whole of the first floor to Lady Hatton, Sir Edward Coke's formidable and affluent wife, to be converted into her town house<sup>3</sup>. But the project fell through and it looks as if most of the upper floor remained untenanted during the 1620s. And so in 1627 it was decided that drastic measures were necessary. 'Surveys and plotts' were made by a carpenter-architect, one Thomas Avys, and the next year the work was carried out under the direction, and presumably in accordance with the design of a Mr. Carter, 'the Surveyor of the Burse building'<sup>4</sup>. This was probably Francis Carter, who was associated with Inigo Jones in 1611-12, made estimates for the Banqueting House in 1619, and died in about 1630 a Chief Clerk of the Rolls<sup>5</sup>. The shops were ripped out and sixteen small flats were created. Although wash-houses were provided below, sanitation again proved a difficult problem. The best that could be done was to bind the tenants in their leases not to let filth or urine seep through on to the heads of the shopkeepers below, and to institute a 10s. fine for emptying slops out of the windows. On the whole the operation seems to have been a fair success. This was a time of tremendous pressure for residential housing in this area—Covent Garden, Drury Lane, and Lincoln's Inn Fields were all being developed just now—and within three years all sixteen of these rather inconvenient dwellings were occupied. They were let on twenty-one-year leases at rents of £12 to £15 a year each, with fines varying inversely between £20 and £10, though it is noticeable that the fines had

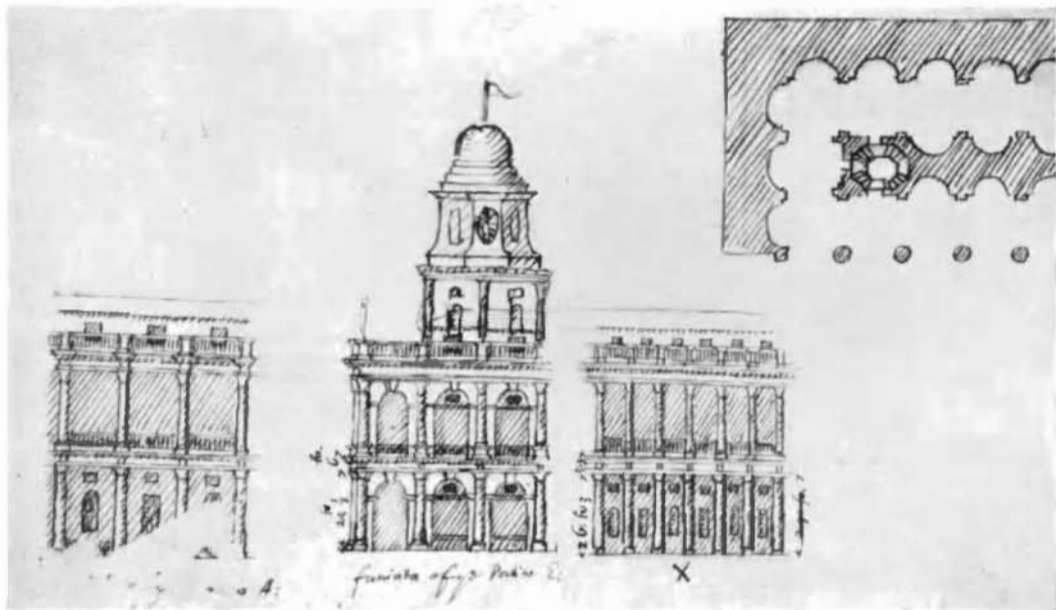
<sup>1</sup> Salis. MSS., 141 f., 352; Box G/13; Box S/7, f. 49; Accounts, 128/1; Deeds, 216/8; 244/13, 46/25.

<sup>2</sup> Bills, 108; Accounts, 160/5, 17/8, 20/8, 133/1.

<sup>3</sup> McClure, *op. cit.*, II, 535.

<sup>4</sup> Accounts, 160/6, 157/3.

<sup>5</sup> I owe this information about Carter to the kindness of Sir John Summerson.



A. Design for an Exchange, by John Webb, c. 1630-40  
(Worcester College, Oxford; Jones Drawings II, f.75. Reproduced by permission of Provost and Fellows)

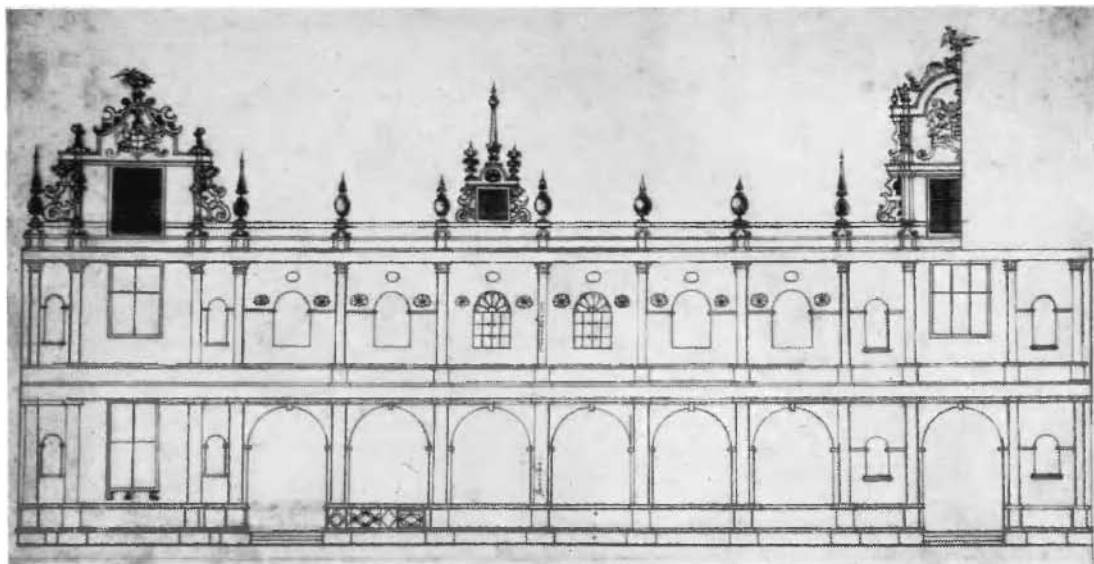


B. Design from A. Palladio, *I Quattro Libri dell' Architettura*, Venice, 1570, lib. II, p. 51

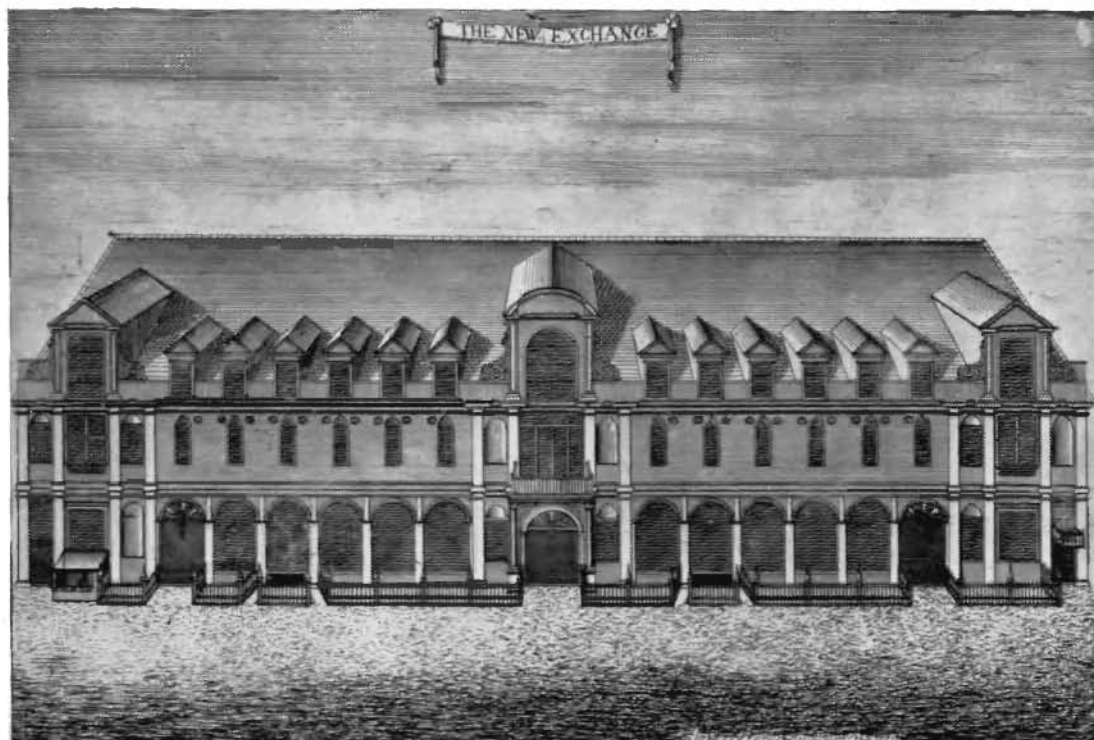


C. Design for an Exchange from S. Serlio, *Tutte l' Opere d' Architettura e Prospetiva*, Venice, 1584, lib. VII, p. 195





A. The New Exchange, by John Smythson, c. 1618–19  
 (Reproduced by permission of the Royal Institute of British Architects)



B. The New Exchange, by John Harris, late 17th or early 18th century  
 (B.M., Crace Collection, XVII, no. 47. Reproduced by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum)

to be waived in order to fill the last tenancies<sup>1</sup>. As a result, by 1631 the Burse was showing a rental of £387 for the ground floor and £205 for the flats<sup>2</sup>.

In the 1630s, however, the economic climate changed again and the shops in the Burse began to prosper. There was no difficulty about renewing the eleven-year leases of the shops in 1633, and by now the outer arcade had been filled with two rows of small wooden booths, thirty in all. Though a third less valuable than the shops in the inner walk, they nevertheless added to the total rental<sup>3</sup>. This revival of the Burse as a fashionable shopping centre in itself might have tempted the Earl to buy out the lessees of the flats and to reconvert the first floor back into shops. In 1638, however, there was added the pressure of royal authority. For years the Crown had been trying to control building in central London, so as to prevent insanitary overcrowding and the growth of liability to epidemics and disastrous fires. New houses had to obtain a royal licence, but this was a formality with which Salisbury had failed to comply when he built his tenements in 1628. In the 1630s the desire to raise revenue by fines for non-compliance and the determination of a strong paternalist government to enforce measures that it deemed socially desirable led to a tightening up of the regulations, and on 4th May, 1638, the Privy Council ordered Salisbury to clear out the inmates of his tenements forthwith<sup>4</sup>. Since these instructions for once were not in conflict with the economic interests of the landlord, Salisbury carried them out with a promptitude that must have astonished authorities used to more dilatory tactics. The work, which was done between Michaelmas, 1638, and Michaelmas, 1639, was described as 'the altering of the upper part of Brittaines Burse and reducing it unto Shoppes', and the result is shown in Harris's engraving (Pl. XXVIB). It cost the large sum of £1,030, all of which was spent on purely structural items, since the partitions and fittings for the shops themselves were built by the tenants in return for being given twenty-one-year leases for low fines. The alterations included the central balcony on the first floor with its large new window, and also a complete re-roofing. The Jacobean gable-ends on the street were removed and there were inserted rows of simple pedimented dormers<sup>5</sup>. Although there is no mention of any reward to an architect, it should be noted that the carpenter employed was Richard Ryder, probably the father of Captain Richard Ryder, who was later to emerge as an architect in his own right.

This reconstruction of the Burse was a great success. The upper floor was rapidly occupied and rents rose from £600 to £897. Though naturally affected by the outbreak of war in 1642, rents were back to £840 by 1647 and to £890 by 1661<sup>6</sup>. The next twenty years saw the Burse at the peak of its prosperity. The surrounding area was now fully built over, but was still the most fashionable residential area in London. As Pepys's diary shows, the Burse became the Bond Street of post-Restoration London, with a milk-bar in the cellar frequented by lawyers on their way to Westminster Hall, and in the arcades above the smartest emporia for

<sup>1</sup> Box S/8.

<sup>2</sup> Accounts, 29/1.

<sup>3</sup> Box R/5.

<sup>4</sup> *Cal. S. P. Dom.*, 1637-38, 402.

<sup>5</sup> Accounts, 157/3, 135/4, 162/1.

<sup>6</sup> Accounts, 161/2, 40/1, 44/1, 50/1.

gloves, stockings, garters, lace, and other finery<sup>1</sup>. Of the 109 shopkeepers in 1657 there were 42 milliners, 32 sempsters, and 8 tyre-makers<sup>2</sup>.

The result of this increase of business was that the profits of the Burse rose steeply. No attempt was made to raise rents, which remained fixed at 12s. to 13s. 4d. a foot frontage, but larger and larger entry fines were charged at each eleven-year renewal of the leases. In 1647-48 the fines were set at one to one-and-a-half years of the old rent, in 1658 they were three to three-and-a-quarter years, and by 1681 they had risen to ten or more years. About £6,000 was received in fines in 1675 and £4,700 in 1681<sup>3</sup>. Between 1660 and 1680 the annual average return from the Burse increased by over 50%.

Soon after, however, the Burse went into a slow decline. In the first place it had to face increasing competition. In 1672 the Earl of Salisbury was prompted by the success of the Burse to convert a long upper room in Little Salisbury House into another bazaar, called the Middle Exchange. At first the venture prospered, but within ten years it was in low water, due partly to the competition across the street from the Earl of Exeter's similar venture launched in 1676, called Exeter Exchange. The Middle Exchange sunk lower and lower, both in prosperity and reputation, acquired the unfortunate nickname of 'the Whores' Nest', and was pulled down in 1694<sup>4</sup>. A more fundamental cause of the decay of the prosperity of the Burse than competition from these two rivals was the social deterioration of the neighbourhood due to the steady westward shift of the fashionable quarter. By now the nobility and the rich professional classes had moved on to Saint James's Square and beyond, and with their departure went the economic foundation of the Burse.

As the social standing of the customers went down, the shopkeepers resorted to more dubious advertising stunts, which in the long run did more harm than good. From the start one of the attractions of the Burse had been the physical appearance of the shop-girls. As early as 1619 it was observed that

'. . . thy shops with prettie wenches swarm,  
Which for thy custome are a kind of charme  
To idle gallants'<sup>5</sup>.

In 1666 Pepys 'walked up and down to see handsome faces, and did see several', and he succeeded in striking up a more intimate acquaintance with one or two of them<sup>6</sup>. By 1699 the reputation of these shop-girls seems to have become more doubtful. Admittedly Ned Ward was a professional pornographer, but his description of his visit does not inspire confidence. 'We came to the New Exchange', he begins, 'into which Seraglio of Fair Ladies we made our Entrance, to take a pleasing view of the Cherubimical Lasses, who I suppose had Drest

<sup>1</sup> H. B. Wheatley, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 1893-99, *passim*; for the milk bar, see III, 150, 261; IV, 120, 177, 241, 427; V, 332. The bar consisted of a series of small wainscoted rooms with benches round the walls, a store-room, a kitchen, and a scullery with sink and running water (Deeds, 203/33).

<sup>2</sup> Accounts, 162/3.

<sup>3</sup> Accounts, 47 A/14, 162/3, 57/12, 136/14, 136/22, 61/2.

<sup>4</sup> Accounts, 135/9, 55/5, 154/3, 165/1. *L.C.C. Survey of London*, XVIII, 122, 125.

<sup>5</sup> Pasquin's *Palinodia* (1619), quoted in Brushfield, *op. cit.*, 45.

<sup>6</sup> Wheatley, *op. cit.*, IV, 9; VI, 40, 318; VII, 119; VIII, 220, 286.

Themselves up for Sale to the best advantage, as well as the Fripperies and Toyes they Deal in<sup>1</sup>.

What with the unsavoury reputation of the place, and the steady social decline of the neighbourhood, the Burse in the early 18th century fell upon evil days. Tenants could not be found for the shops, and more and more of them fell empty. The rental, which had been £936 in 1687, fell to £553 in 1721 and £495 in 1731, while fines must have dwindled away to nothing<sup>2</sup>. At last, in 1737, the end came: Britains Burse was pulled down, and eleven houses built on the site<sup>3</sup>.

The story of Britains Burse in its 130 years of existence is of considerable interest both to the architectural and the economic historian. It was the cause of the first known architectural design by Inigo Jones, which on any assessment is of great importance. And it is probable that in the more conventional building as executed we have a collaborative effort of Jones and Basil, of which the south front at Hatfield seems to provide another example. The fluctuating fortunes of the building, its optimistic beginning in 1608, its early years of prosperity, the slump of 1621, the revival in the 1630s, the mild set-back in the 1640s, the boom of the 1660s and 1670s and the subsequent slow decay till 1737, are all closely linked with the changing economic climate of west central London. The rise and fall of the New Exchange is an illuminating episode in the steady westward drift of the world of fashion.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Ward, *The London Spy*, July, 1699, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Accounts, 138/5, 90/6.

<sup>3</sup> *L.C.C. Survey of London*, XVIII, 96.