



## Leche House, Chester

By FRANK SIMPSON, F.S.A.

*(Read 21st October, 1913).*



HIS old house is situated in Watergate Street, nearly opposite Goss Street. Strange to say, it is, perhaps, the least known of all the old half-timbered houses in Chester, yet it contains some remains of its ancient grandeur, not at the present time to be seen elsewhere in the City. The half-timbered front may safely be included among the six best specimens of this old Cheshire style of architecture still remaining in the City, and in this case it has never undergone any modern restoration. It has always been described as the town house of the Leches of Carden, near Chester, erected about 1570; but the architectural details of the building do not support this view.

This ancient family were the former owners of Chatsworth; branches of it finding their way to Cheshire and Flintshire. The founder of it was John Leche, surgeon, or leech, to Edward III. The Leches originally came into the Cheshire estate by marriage with one of the daughters and co-heiresses of William de Cawarden about the time of Henry IV. John Leche of Lower Carden, husband of Eleanor de Cawarden, was a younger brother of the family of Leche of

Chatsworth, which became extinct in the reign of Edward VI.

According to an Abstract of Deeds, Harleian MSS., 2119-50, the family appear to have been settled in Carden as early as 20, Edward III. [1346-7], when Eva, widow of Hugh de Warin, released lands in Caurthin to John Leche, and Lucy his wife, her sister, which John is said to be father [? son] of John Leche, Surgeon to Edward III., who by pat: 50, Edward III., was grantee of Castle Warin and other lands in Kildare; and was father of John Leche to whom Jane, wife of John Preston, delivers land in Carden, 2, Henry IV. [1401-2]. On the *Cheshire Recog: Rolls* is the following:—

“1381-2 January 17. Grant to John Leche, the King's Surgeon by the King [Richard II.] of an annuity of £10 to be received out of the issues of the Mills of the Dee, in lieu of a like annuity granted to him by Edward, Prince of Wales, to be received at the Exchequer at Chester.”

With the exception of one, William, all the possessors of Carden have borne the name of John.

The arms and crest of the family are:—

Arms: Ermine on a chief dancettée, gules: three ducal coronets, or.

Crest: On a ducal coronet,<sup>1</sup> or, a cubit arm proper, the hand grasping a snake, vert.

Motto: *Alla corona fidissimo*. (Most faithful to the crown).

The family has in its possession an old parchment deed, emblazoned with arms of Caurthyn, or Cawarden, and Leche; it commences:—

<sup>1</sup> This was formerly on a wreath.

“Richard, Viscount Avranches, in Normandy, married Margaret, daughter unto Her: Poyne, a nobleman, by Arlotta, his wife, mother unto King William the [Conqueror . . . .]”

and carries down the pedigree to 1613. It goes on to say:—

“The present coate of the ancient family, one whereof living in Berkshire, near Windsor, in y<sup>e</sup> time of King Edward III., three Kings were entertained and feasted in his house, one y<sup>e</sup> King of England, y<sup>e</sup> King of France, and y<sup>e</sup> King of Scots, which two Kings were at that time prisoners to King Edward, which King, Edward, to requite his good entertainment and other favours, gave him three crowns on his chief, indented, gules, y<sup>e</sup> field ermine, which coate is borne by the name and family dispersed into many other countries as Bedfordshire, Notts, Yorks, Derby, Chester, Lancaster, and many other places of this day.”

George Leche was the second son, by survival, of John Leche of Carden, by Margaret, daughter and heiress of John Mainwaring of Ightfield. He eventually settled at Mollington, and founded there a branch of the Leche family. He had for his arms those of Leche of Carden, with a crescent on a crescent for difference, as allowed by Sir W. Dugdale. George Leche is always described as “Merchant of Chester.” He was an Alderman, and one of the Sheriffs of Chester, 1536-7. He and his brothers, Henry and William<sup>2</sup> (the latter of whom was one of the City

<sup>2</sup> This William Leche appears to be the one who sold the three shops, then in a very decayed state, at the north-east angle of the Cross, to the City for £20. They were, at that time, May, 1593, known as the “Butter shops.” The site is now occupied by the clothiers, grocers, etc., we see to-day. The receipt for this transaction is in the Muniment Room at the Town Hall. In the Freeman’s Rolls, he is described as an Ironmonger, but in Hanshall’s *Cheshire*, p. 176-7, he is described as a Draper.

Sheriffs in 1544-5, and the former in 1564-5), were admitted to the Freedom of the City, December 4th, 1552.<sup>3</sup>

George Leche married Alice, daughter of John Dutton of Helsby, by whom he had three sons:— William Leche;<sup>4</sup> Robert Leche, LL.D., Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester, 1562-1587;<sup>5</sup> Richard Leche, who became a Citizen and Merchant of London.

The latter married a daughter of — Deane of Reading, Berks.; and had issue one son, John, who was apprenticed to William Pixley, of Chester, Mercer, from whom he took up the Freedom of the City, January 29th, 1584.<sup>6</sup> He, like several other members of the Leche family, became Sheriff, 1628-9, and an Alderman of Chester. William Pixley, or Pichley, was related, by marriage, to John Leche; the former having married Dorothy, daughter of Henry Leche, second son of John and Margaret Leche of Carden, and brother to George Leche. In the *Cheshire Funeral Certificates* he is described as “William Pichley of the City of Chester, Gent., he dyed *sans yssue*.” His widow eventually married her fifth husband, “John Aldersey of the City of Chester, Alderman and Justice of Peace, [who] was maior of the City 1603. She died on the xxvj<sup>th</sup> day of May 1611, and was interred in St. John’s Church in the City aforesaid.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Freemen’s Rolls*.

<sup>4</sup> William Leche married Elizabeth, daughter to Thomas Clud de Orton, in the county of Salop, by whom he had issue two sons, John and George, and two daughters, Ann and Jane. He died November 27th, 1618, and was buried in St. Michael’s Church, Chester (*Cheshire Funeral Certificates*).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Leche was appointed by patent from William (Downham) bishop of Chester, December 9th, 1562. He was buried at Malpas, November 5th, 1587. His widow died August 31st, 1601.

<sup>6</sup> *Freemen’s Rolls*.

<sup>7</sup> *Cheshire Funeral Certificates*. Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, Proceedings, vol. 6 p. 2.

Leche House divides the parishes of St. Peter and the Holy Trinity. In the Registers of the latter I find the name of John Leche frequently mentioned; but not that of any other member of this family except Randle (once) and William, which points to the fact that Leche House was not the Town-house of Leche of Carden, but that it was the residence of John Leche, grandson of George Leche—the founder of the Mollington branch of that name; and nephew of Robert Leche, Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester.

In the Register of Baptisms is the following:—

- “1609 13 January William son of John Leche, Mercer.  
 1610 April 27 Rebecca da[ughter] to John Rogers,  
 Mercer. John Leche, Gent, Godfather.  
 1613 1<sup>st</sup> May Jacob fil[ius] M<sup>r</sup> Fran: Knowles,  
 Ironmonger, M<sup>r</sup> William Leech, Gent, & M<sup>rs</sup>  
 Wright, Gossips [God-parents].  
 1623 1<sup>st</sup> May . . . William Leech Gossip  
 1634 24 April Ann da[ughter] to Jo. Leech, Alder-  
 man.”

And in the Burial Register:—

- “John son of John Leech, Mercer bur[ied] in St Pat-  
 ricks Isle 3 May, 1616.  
 1639 M<sup>r</sup> John Leech Alderman bur 3 Feb. 1639, in  
 St. Werburghs.”

The date of the burial, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, is rather confusing, as the Alderman was drowned at Darbeston Bridge, Staffordshire, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1639, whilst on a journey to London to see some of his relatives. His body was brought to Chester and deposited in a vault he had had made in the North Aisle of the Choir of the Cathedral; of which, unfortunately, there is now no trace, as the lettering on many of the stones is obliterated.

Alderman John Leche had been twice married; first to Margret, co-heiress of John Frodsham, Rector of Eccleston, by whom he had issue Francis,<sup>8</sup> his son and heir, born 1619) who subsequently purchased the Mollington estate), and Mary. His second wife was Ann, daughter of John Peyes<sup>9</sup> of Hull, in the County of York, merchant, by whom he had two daughters; Ann who died during childhood, and Margret.<sup>10</sup>

The following year, 9th October, 1640, his widow married Thomas Aldersey,<sup>11</sup> who that year, 1640-41, was Mayor of Chester.

On the west wall of the south transept, Chester Cathedral, is an oak tablet, by Randle Holme, to the memory of "John Leche of the City of Chester Alderman dyed on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of Decemb: 1639."<sup>12</sup> This bears his arms; the quarterings are:—

1. Leche of Carden.—Ermine, on a chief indented gules, three ducal coronets or.
2. Cawarden or Carden.—Sable, a staff sling between two pheons argent.
3. Unidentified.—Argent, a mullet between three buckles sable.
4. Mainwaring of Ightfield, co. Salop.—Argent, two bars gules and a crescent for difference.
5. Randle Blundeville, Earl of Chester.—Azure, three garbs, two and one, or.
6. Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester.—Azure, a wolf's head erased, argent.

<sup>8</sup> His grandson Thomas, in 1699, sold the estate to John Hunt, of Chester.

<sup>9</sup> Ormerod's *Cheshire*, vol. 2, p. 381, gives the name as George Pease.

<sup>10</sup> *Funeral Certificates*, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, Proceedings, vol. 6, page 12.

<sup>11</sup> *Holy Trinity Marriage Registers*.

<sup>12</sup> This date on the panel is probably the date of burial, not death.

7. Warren of Ightfield, co. Salop.—Checky argent and sable.

8. Mainwaring of Peover, co. Chester.—Argent, three bars gules.

9. Broxton.—Or, a cross formée fitchée, sable.

The Will of John Leche, dated 1641, though mentioned in the list of wills published by the Record Society, is not now to be found at the Probate Office, Chester; but there is an inventory of his goods occupying three long sheets of vellum, written on both sides. This is dated “the 27th of January, 1639.” It includes many interesting items, and names various rooms:—

“In the Hall.

Imp One table & forme	01	06	08
One grate	00	05	00
One skreene	00	02	06
One little table	00	05	00
2 chaires	00	03	00
One complete armour	02	00	00

In the Parlor.

Imp One faire wrought chest	08	00	00
One table & forme	01	03	00
One court [coat] cupboard and a drawer	00	06	08

[Total value of Goods £14 8s. 4d.]

In the closet goods to the value of „ 19 8

In the chamber „ „ 2 8 8

In the Dynnige Room }  
 over the kitchen } „ „ 19 7 0  
 including:—

One Drawinge table	03	00	00
One Carpett cloath beinge greene	02	00	00
One little table	00	12	00
One court cupboard	00	06	00

One chair with armes and 6 high chairs & 6 stooles all p of a sute	03	10	00
In the chamber (the litle chamber) goods to the value of	03	01	04
In the litle chamber { neare the gardaine } " "	00	16	04
In the Lower Bed Chamber One clock & chymes	05	00	00
In the Chamber over the Parlour goods to the value of	09	11	02
In the Maids Chamber " "	02	08	00
In Mrs. Leche her closet " "	13	07	00
[Included in this is] 'All the Books'	04	00	00
In the street chamber [This appears to have been the shop; the inventory includes]:—			
Damasks, cushions, etc.	94	12	07
The Lynens	49	14	04
Beddinge	32	15	09
In Pewter.			
Imp 248 pounds of Pewter @ 12 <sup>d</sup> y <sup>e</sup> pound	12	08	00
One band-pott of pewter	00	10	00
One faire flaggon	00	06	00
More 2 small flaggons	00	06	08
One pottle one quart one pynt and one halfe pynte	00	08	00
2 chamber potts	00	03	06
11 pewter candlesticks	01	00	00
	15	02	02
In Brass.			
A considerable number of small articles reckoned at 16 <sup>d</sup> the pound	04	05	04
In Pott Brass [heavier articles] at 14 <sup>d</sup> the pound	10	11	09

In the Seller.

In 48 caskes containing five score & seaven hundred three quarters & thirteene pounds of neat fresh tallow @ 37 <sup>s</sup> cent five score and inclue (?) to the hundred	236	05	00
[Total in this cellar]	241	07	07
In the Kitchen, goods to the value of	12	05	00
In Plate as followeth :			
[A list of the silver is given, the total value being]	86	16	05
Wearing Apparrell	39	06	00
[This includes a 'Murrey Gowne £8 0 0, 5 sutes of wearing appell, hats hose shoes & linen £6 0 0']			
Bed Coverings	10	15	06
Goods in the House in the Bridge Street.			
In the Hall	20	03	04
In the parlour	01	19	00
[This includes 'the Kinges Armes & 2 Escutcheons 5/-']			
In the chamber over the Parlour	12	08	06
In timber bordes & other things about the Cittie & in other places as followeth :— "			
[A long list is given of various things to the value of many pounds].			

The front of Leche House contains some interesting details of carving. The whole length of the lower beam is carved with a running vine and bunches of grapes. Above and below this beam a row of dentels is cut out of the solid oak. The oak pilasters on either side each bear at the top grotesque heads, below which are two naked figures, male and female, each wearing a crown. The beam inside the Row is sup-

ported by three oak pillars with attached brackets carved with a floral design. The two centre pillars are round. The beam above the window is decorated with a scroll and leaf ornamentation, in which are carved five grotesque heads. The fascia board below also bears the leaf ornamentation. The eight plaster panels above are partly filled in by shaped pieces of oak, on each of which is carved the fleur-de-lys. The two centre panels still show some of the old design of plaster decoration, bearing in each division a three leaved ornament. Above these panels is another massive beam on which are carved some scroll decoration and grotesque heads of animals. The scroll pattern at the extreme right, or west end, terminates with a carved thistle and leaf, and at the extreme east end with a fine Tudor rose and another large thistle leaf. The gable above is filled with curved and straight struts, the spaces between being filled in with plaster. The panels at the extreme ends, and in the centre, still show the original designs of ornamentation; in the centre of each is a Tudor rose. The barge boards are cusped; between each circle is a six-leaved flower, and along the top a row of carved dentels. In the centre of the gable is a fine finial carved with some floral decoration, and at the base a large head, above which is a large leaf. The finial is surmounted by a carved fleur-de-lys.

The building is entered at the Row-level. Passing through the doorway of what is now an antique dealer's, the visitor immediately enters what was originally the vestibule, which extended to a depth of nine feet; adjoining was the banqueting hall; remains of the old floor are still to be seen in the shape of stone slabs, which extend from just below the first

beam to the rear of the shop. To the left is a large open fire-place measuring, inside, eight feet eight inches by five feet two inches; over which is a massive oak lintel resting on corbels. In the lower part of the lintel can still be traced remains of a bold moulding, but whatever carved decoration it formerly possessed has been roughly cut away. A fine massive chimney-piece rises to a height of nineteen feet four inches. The hall formerly measured twenty-five feet by twenty feet, and twenty feet six inches in height; but the insertion of a modern floor has reduced the room to half its former height.<sup>13</sup> To see the full beauty of the chimney-piece it is necessary to ascend to the room above, where it is possible to examine closely the upper portion. The lower part, above the fire-place, is composed, for a depth of fifteen inches, of herring-bone brickwork, and above this three square panels containing ovals in which the plaster decoration is almost obliterated. In the upper portion is a shield bearing the arms, and above, the crest of the Leche family of Carden, Cheshire, with a crescent on a crescent for difference; which in heraldic language are:

Ermine, on a chief dancettée gules, three ducal coronets or, with a crescent for difference; that is to say, on a field of ermine is placed at the top a red band, the lower edge indented in a large and broad manner, on this three golden coronets, or crowns; in the centre of the field a crescent denoting that the arms are those of a second son.

Crest: on a wreath a cubit arm proper, the hand grasping a snake vert.

<sup>13</sup> Since writing the above, part of this floor, at the writer's suggestion, has been cut away so that a better view of the entire chimney-piece may be obtained.

Below the arms, in a scroll, is the motto:—

*Alla corona fidissimo.*

The shield is flanked on either side by pilasters and scroll work, and beneath the whole is a moulded plaster cornice supported by four circular shafts with square caps, which are cut off five inches below the neck for the insertion of the floor already mentioned. A massive principal with heavy brackets spans the whole width of the room, east to west; in the centre of which is a heavy four scrolled pendentive with a pulley for a swinging lamp. The base of the pendant is beautifully ornamented in plaster with the vine and bunches of grapes, the lower part being decorated in a similar manner with roses and leaves, and four gorgons' heads. No similar specimen is to be seen in any of the old Chester houses.

The ceiling still shows some remains of the original plaster decoration, which is of plain moulded character.

In the south wall is a framed opening oval in shape measuring thirteen and a half inches by eleven inches, which appears to have been a squint. This, some forty years ago, was covered with a Spanish or egg-shaped shield of oak grilled with paly concave divisions, and scroll border. About thirty years ago it was shown to Mr. Frank Williams, of this City, by the late Mr. Crawford, antique dealer, of Watergate Street Row, who had procured the same from Leche House. All trace of it is now gone.

An open gallery four feet wide partly surrounds the hall.

Beyond the banqueting hall, on the second floor, is a room surrounded by a frieze three feet four inches in depth, containing some interesting examples of plaster decoration.

On the north side is a shield which, it is said, bore the arms of Catherine of Arragon, but nothing is to be seen on it at the present time. Above this is a smaller shield bearing a bull's head with horns; on either side are flying horses, some scroll work, roses, and pomegranates. It is evident, therefore, that this decoration has reference to this Spanish princess, for she had for her badges the rose, a sheaf of arrows, and the pomegranate, the latter of which she introduced into this country. On the opposite side of the room the Tudor rose is very prominent, as also is a small shield containing a bull's head, similar to that on the north side. This decoration evidently refers to King Henry VIII., who, it will be remembered, took for his first wife Catherine of Arragon, the young widow of his brother, Prince Arthur. Prince Arthur was closely connected with the city's history, not only as Earl of Chester, but with the City Gilds or Companies, for he it was presented to the Smiths' Company, in 1499, a silver badge. It happened thus:—

The Prince came to Chester August 4th, 1499, his visit continuing to September 9th. During his stay his horse cast a shoe; the services of a smith were requisitioned, and the head smith of the City, Thomas Edyan, who was Alderman of the Company, performed the work in so satisfactory a manner that the Prince presented him—as head of the smiths—with a medal, which is still in the possession of the Company, in recognition of his services.<sup>14</sup>

During the same year (1499) the Prince married Catherine of Arragon, the Spanish princess being represented by proxy. In 1501, Catherine arrived

<sup>14</sup> *History of Smiths, Cutlers, and Plumbers' Company*, by Frank Simpson, *Journal*, Vol. XX.

in England, and the ceremonial was again gone through, at St. Paul's, on the 6th of November. He held his Court at Ludlow, and died April, 1502, aged sixteen.

Above the lintel of an inner doorway leading to an ante-room are two fine Tudor roses, each surmounted by a royal crown. Mr. Frank Maddocks of this City informs me that when he was a boy he slept in this room. The ceiling at that time was decorated all over with heads, scroll-work, and other ornamentation, somewhat similar to that now to be seen in the frieze; but one morning, just as his mother was leaving the room, it came crashing down. It was then replaced by the plain ceiling now seen there. He also remembers, on the east side of the room, a fine stone chimney-piece on which were carved all sorts of animals. Mr. Ellison, the present owner of the property, tells me that some twenty years ago the chimney-breast in this room fell down and damaged the chimney-piece, evidently that referred to by Mr. Maddocks; it was then removed and stored in the basement, eventually finding its way into the possession of a local antique dealer.

Entering the ante-room we see on the opposite wall the Prince of Wales' feathers, with P on the dexter, and C on the sinister side, the whole inclosed by the garter, with coronet above; and on either side a fleur-de-lys. The letters P and C appear to allude to Catherine, whom the King had divorced on the ground that the marriage was illegal, he having married his brother's widow. The King allowed Catherine to retain her former title, that of Princess Dowager of Wales. The Princess died at Kimbolton Castle, co. Huntingdon, January 8th, 1535, and was buried in

the north side of the Choir of Peterborough Cathedral betwixt two pillars near the great altar.

Over the lintel of the doorway is a fine shield with cressure border, charged with a lion rampant, for Scotland. On either side is a fleur-de-lys.

By way of a staircase the visitor ascends to a large attic in the front gable (now used as a workshop). Over the principal roof-beam is a decoration in plaster, consisting of a grotesque head within scroll-work, with supporters of the lion and unicorn, but in this case they are reversed, the unicorn being on the dexter and the lion on the sinister, instead of *vice versa*.

In the rear of the banqueting hall, on the ground floor, is a small room panelled all round with oak. The window opens upon what was formerly called the Court-yard. Although it is now only fifteen feet by twelve feet, it was originally much larger and continued under the gallery to the outside wall on the west side, and probably much further south. The gallery on the west side is five feet six inches in width, and rests on a massive carved beam supported by a fine fluted oak column with stone base. In the upper portion are thirteen flat oak pilasters, of Jacobean design, filled in with plaster. This, with the plaster decorations of the lion rampant of Scotland, and the unicorn of Scotland, is further evidence that the building was erected subsequent to 1603. The gallery is known as "The Lady's Bower," probably owing to the fact that it was so named by the late Mr. T. P. Ivison, a well-known local artist, who executed a series of pen and ink drawings in connection with this house. It is entered from the landing by two steps. Below the treads is a moulding in which beautiful dentels are carved; and on the inner side of the doorway

a fine moulding is carved in the oak frame, the lintel of which is scribed to the jambs, and not mason-mitred as is usually the case. Below the gallery a modern brick wall has been built on either side of the fluted pillar so as to continue the passage from the row, and gain private access to a more modern house in the rear, which may also be entered from a passage in Commonhall Street, known as "Jupp's Court." Along the west side of Leche House is a passage leading to the court-yard. On the east side the dividing wall is formed into panels of oak framing, thirty-seven inches by thirty inches, with brick filling. On the west side the brickwork is divided by fifteen oak struts, varying in size from six to ten inches in breadth. From some of these are short oak beams, evidently for the purpose of supporting the gallery above (that going round the banqueting hall and Lady's Bower). The oak struts continue to the gable of the building. Mr. Ellison informs me that a few years ago, whilst the plumbers were repairing the roof gutter, they discovered that these struts were all carved on the outside. These, no doubt, at one time would be exposed to view, but when the plain brick frontage of the adjoining house (west) was erected at a greater height than formerly, they were hidden. The iron spout-head on the latter bears the date 1844. Along the base of the passage wall is a solid oak plinth, and at the top similar beams, forming a cornice, that under the Lady's Bower bearing finely-carved ornamentation.

The house in the rear, known as "Lion House," stands on part of the garden originally belonging to Leche House. It contains several interesting features, including a very fine stone chimney-piece, elaborately carved. On the lintel, of three pieces, are depicted a

number of animals, including the fox, dogs, squirrels, deer, and various species of birds, the elephant and houdah, etc.; the key-stone, or centre piece, being decorated with a heraldic lion crowned holding a trident. The jambs are ornamented with a running vine, from which hang large bunches of grapes, much to the delight of the birds pecking at them. The Tudor rose is also conspicuous. The room opposite, now used as a scullery, is entirely panelled with oak; the upper panels are all carved, and bear grotesque heads, scroll ornaments, and the running vine. In a room above is a carved oak over-mantel, let into the chimney-breast, representing a man on horseback, with a falcon on his arm, followed by a cart drawn by oxen with driver and attendant. In another room the stone lintel of a small chimney-piece is carved with a design representing the running vine, and the Tudor rose.

Above the door, at the Commonhall Street entrance, is a very tall window filled on the inside by what appears to be a collection of stained glass, of various periods. The sill, composed of two blocks of stone, is seven feet two and a half inches in length and nine inches deep. It is carved with a running floral design and roses, one of which is a large Tudor rose. The window and sill are modern insertions, the latter projecting a foot more on one side than the other. It is quite evident that the interesting specimens named formed no part of the original building, but that they were brought from elsewhere and inserted in this house. The design and workmanship being exactly similar to that in Leche House, it seems only reasonable to assume that most of them originally formed part of the latter building.

About fifty years ago the whole of this property, extending from Watergate Street to Commonhall Street, was owned by Mr. William Jupp, Confectioner, Bridge Street, and he resided in the house now known as Lion House. Here he made considerable alterations; probably the panelling, etc., was removed from Leche House to the latter at that time. Some few years later the property was purchased by Mr. Woodward, Plumber, etc., who went to reside there. The interesting specimens named were at that time in Lion House, and it is evident that the mixed collection of stained glass was put in the window by Mr. Woodward, as he would have many opportunities of obtaining it. At his death the property passed to his daughter, Mrs. Ellison, who, with her family, went to reside there. Mr. Ellison survived his wife some few years; owing to his death in March, 1914, the property is now for sale. Several offers, so I have been informed by the executors, have been made for the carved mantel-piece, and oak panelling, by various antique dealers, and others, but these have been refused. Each of the premises may shortly be put up to public auction. It is deplorable to think of the number of old Chester houses, whose ancient oak panelling has been dismantled and removed elsewhere. Let us hope that someone will purchase these two houses, so that these ancient relics may still remain in their original homes.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Since the foregoing was written, Lion House has changed ownership; the oak panelling, fireplaces, etc., have been taken down and removed from the city. I understand also that certain alterations are to be made in the rear of Leche House; the property having been purchased by a member of the Chester Archaeological Society, I feel sure we may trust him to do everything possible to save its historic treasures.