

THE TABARD INN, SOUTHWARK,
THE QUEEN'S HEAD, WILLIAM RUTTER,
AND ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH.

By PHILIP NORMAN, F.S.A.

AT the General Meeting of the Surrey Archæological Society, held in Southwark, May 12th, 1858, a paper was read by the late Mr. George R. Corner, F.S.A., entitled "Ancient Southwark Inns," which has formed a capital basis for subsequent research on the subject. The oldest of these was the Tabard, immortalised as the starting place of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims. Mr. George Rutter Fletcher, F.S.A., has lately discovered at the Public Record Office, when gathering information about his family, an important document concerning this famous inn. It is a copy of the lease of the Tabard to William Rutter, enrolled in the Court of Augmentation, upon its confirmation, in Easter term 1 April, 31 Henry VIII. This document is referred to by Corner, who quotes from a description of the property in the particulars of a grant by the king to John and Thomas Master in 1544, but it does not appear that he either saw it or even knew that it was still in existence. The lease, which Mr. W. F. Noble has kindly helped to decipher, is now printed in full, merely adding, by way of preface, that the Tabard, or at least the property on which it stood, had belonged to the monastery of Hyde-by-Winchester ever since the year 1304, the abbot's town-lodging being within the inn-yard; and that the last abbot was John Capon *alias* Salcot, D.D., described by Henry VIII (July, 1531) as "a great clerk and singularly learned in divinity." He aided the king in his divorce from

Catherine of Arragon, was consecrated Bishop of Bangor in 1534, but continued Abbot of Hyde, holding the bishopric in commendam, until the suppression, when he surrendered the abbey to the king, and was shortly afterwards translated to the see of Salisbury, which he held till his death in 1557. On the accession of Mary he returned to the Roman Catholic faith.

In the Public Record Office.) AUGMENTATION OFFICE RECORDS, Volume 240, page 73.

Miscellaneous Books.

This Indenture made the 6th daye of September in the xxxth yere of the reign of our soveraigne Lorde Kinge Henrie the eight betwente the Reverend ffather in God John Capon by the permission of God Busshopp of Bangor and Comendatorye for his liif of the monesterye of Sainte Peters of Hyde nygh to the Citie of Wynchester in the Countie of South̄ And the Covent of the same place on the one partie and William Rutter of Southwark in the Comtie of Surrey on the other partie Witnessyth that the said Busshopp Comendatorye and Covent wyth there hole Assent and Consent have demysed grunted and to ferme letten to the seid William his executores and assignes All there mese or Inne callyd the Tabbard with thappurtennees sett lying and being within the pisshe of Sainte Margarett in Southwark wherein one Richard Robart Patty late dwellyd together with certeyne utensiles and stuff of houshold expressed in a payer of ceduls indentyd to theis indenturs annexed excepte and always reserved to the said Bushopp Comendatorye and his successors and assignes a message callyd the Abbotts place and a gardyn and stable callyd the Abbotts stable set and beinge within the seid Inne callyd the Tabbard with all comodities to the same Abbotts place gardyn and stable belonginge together with fire entre and issue to and from the same place for the said Bushopp Comendatorye his successors there servaunts and assignes with there horses cartes and all other thyngs necessarye for the seid Bushopp his successors and assignes for the same place as well by nyght as by daye To have and to holde the seid message or Inne callyd the Tabbard wth the appurtenments togethers wth the seid utensills and staff of houshold expressyd in the same Cuedull indentyd excepte before excepted unto the said William Rutter and his assignes from the feaste of Sente Michell tharchangell nexte after the date hereof unto thendd and terme of xlj yeres then nexte folowinge fully

NOTE.—This is evidently the scribe's error. "Richard" is at the bottom corner of one page, and "Robart" at the top of the next. From another source of information, we know that the name was "Robart."

the end

to be complete and ended yeldyng and paying therefore yerely to the seid Bushopp Comendatory his successors or assignes nyne poundes of good and lawfull money of England at iiij termes in the yere that is to saye at the feaste of the natyvytie of our Lord Jhesu Criste thammunciation of our ladye the natyvytie of Seinte John Baptist and Seinte Michael tharehangel byc evyn porcions And the seid Bushopp Comendatorye and his successors and Assignes All the seid Meše or Inne with thappurtements except wallynge bevyng grounde settinge and grounde pynnyng planekyng of stabulls and all other reparations of the said meše or Inne vij ffote high And excepte also all and singular the reparations of the house nowe of late buyldyd and edfydd within the said meše or inne nowe newe sett beinge and adjoynyng to the kechyn of the said meše and beyng also of the south side of the well there being within the said meše And except Glasynge and latysynge of the new lodgyng newly edfyed within the said Inn shall repayre susteyne and maynteyne as often as nede shall require duryng the said terme at there owne proper coste and charges And the said William covenentyth and grauntyth for hym and his assignes that all the said reparations of ground pynnyng ground sellynge planekinge of stabulles wallyng and bredinge of the said meše or Inne and every parcell therof at his owne proper costes and charge shall repayre susteyne and mayntayne as often as nede shall require duryng the said terme the said Busshop Comendatorye and his successors fyndyne hym tymber stone ertle lyme and sande and all other stuff necessarye for the same And that the seid William his executors and assynes shall well and sufficiently repayre susteyne and maintayne the sed new buyldyd house adjoynyng to the seid kechyn on the south side of the seid well in all manner of reparations and as oft as nede shalbe duryng the seid terme And also all the glasyng and latysynge of the seid newe lodgings newly edified as often as nede shall require duryng the seid terme And also the same well and suffitiently repayred susteyned and maynteyned shall leve all the same in thend of the seid terme And over that the seid William his executors or assignes shall do to be purged voydyd and clensyd all the seages belonginge to the same duringe the seid terme as well and cleane leave yt att thend of the said terme and over that they shall make cleane all the said stables and other places and yardes of the seid meše or Inne at thend of the said terme without any delaye And yf yt happen the seid yerely rente of ix^l to be behyndd unpayed in parte or in all after any terme or daye of payment thereof as is aforesaid that it ought to be payed by the space of xv dayes And lawfully askyd that then it shalbe lawfull to the said Bushopp Comendatorye his successors or assignes into the seid

meaſe or Inne callyd the Tabbard with thappurtenances to enter and ^{message} diſtrayne and the diſtreſe ſo there taken lawfully to bere back dryve and cary awaye and that to retayne And kepe till they of the ſeid yearly rents and tharrerages of the ſame be fully contentyd and payed And yf it happen the ſeid yerely rente of ix^l or any parcel thereof be behynde in parte or in all after any terme of paymente thereof as ys aforsaid And ought to be payed by the ſpace of ij monthes and lawfully aſkyd that then yt ſhalbe lawfull to the ſaid Buſhopp Comendatorye his ſucceſſors or aſſignes to reenter into the foresaid meſe or Inne callyd the Tabbard with thappurtenances and every parcell therof and all the ſame to have ageyne and reſeſſe as in there former eſtate And the ſeid William and all other therof to expell and amove theiſ indentures in any thynge notwithstandinge And the ſeid William Rutter covenantith and grauntyth by theiſe preſents that he his exeutors or aſſignes at thend of the ſeid terme ſhall yelde upp and leave unto the ſeid Comendatorye and his ſucceſſors all the ſeid utensyls uſilments of houſold in the ſame ſeedule indentyd in as good degre and condicion as the ſame William Rutter then receyved of the ſeid Comendatorye reaſonable uſe and were of the ſame alwaye excepted And the ſeid Buſhopp Comendatorye and his ſucceſſors all manere quyt rents and all other charges due and goinge out of the ſame meſe or Inne callyd the Tabbard with thappurtenances ſhall bere paye and ſupporte from tyme to tyme at there owne proper coſte and expence duryng all the ſaid terme provyded alwaye that it ſhalbe lawfull unto the ſaid William his exeuto^{rs} or aſſignes duryng the ſeid terme to ſuffer or p^mnytt any aſſiſe ſeſſyons or any other Courte to be holden or kepte by any perſon or perſons wythin the preeynete or circuyte of the ſaid Meſe or Inn Callyd the Tabbarde or any parte therof withoute the expreſſe aſſente or agrement of the ſame Buſhopp Comendatorye or his ſucceſſors in that partie to be hadde In Witnes whereof as well the Buſhopp Comendatorye and Covent as the ſeid William Rutter to theſe indentures interchanageablye haue ſette there ſeele the daye and yere above wrytten.

This Seedule Indentyed Witnessith that hereafter foloweth all ſuche inſtylments and utensyles of houſehold as the ſaid Buſhopp Comendatorye hathe lefte in the ſeid Inne callyd the Tabbarde withe thappurtenances that is to ſaie fiſt in the roſe parlar ij locks ij keyes and a ſkrene in the half a longe ſittith a borde ij treſtylles ij benchys ^{(?) hall seat} and a ſerene in the clyff parlar a ſerene a hooke and a keye in the kechyn a bokett a corde ij ſhelves a dreſſynge borde and a pulleye to the well in the greate chambre ij lockes and ij keyes in the little ſeller

ij lockes and ij keyes in the newe seller And in the chamber above
 the same seller ij lockes and ij keyes in the taward chamber a lock
 and and (*sic*) a keye and att the stayer fote of the halle a lock and a
 gate keye in the great yate of the Inn ij planckes in the Crowne Chamber
 a lock a key a skrene and a little shelve in the drynkyng bower a
 tabull naled to ij postes ij benches vj bordes and iij lattys of wikers
 in the Keye chamber a locke and a keye in the be^h 2 lockes and a
 keye in the ij tents next the be^h ij lockes and ij keyes in the Corne
 Chamber iij lockes and iij keyse in the courte of the Inne a bokett a
 cheyn of Iron and trowgh Iim V bedstedes in iij severall chambers
 wthin the said Inne Item there is vj lockes uppon the newe buylding.

Richard

Witnessed by Rieo. Riche Milite Apud
 Westminster xxiiij die Novembr^o Anno
 Regni nri xxxij^{do}.

Beyond the notice of the abbot's lodging, and the house "of late buildyd and edyfydd within the said messuage," the great interest of the above document consists in the enumeration of the rooms and their fixtures, given in the schedule, which may not unlikely represent the inn very much as it was seen by Chaucer. The description is upwards of sixty years older than one given by Mr. Hubert Hall, F.S.A., in his excellent book, *Society in the Elizabethan Age*, p. 162, from a writ of Elegit issued in the case of "Partridge v. Mabbe," 7 May, 43 Eliz. There also the rooms are enumerated as "Maister Hussye's" chamber, "the flower de Luce," &c., but the names do not correspond with those in our lease.

The custom of naming the rooms of an inn was common in Tudor times and is still kept up, to a certain extent, in the country. In Shakespeare's King Henry IV, Part I, Act 2, Scene 4, Prince Hal puts into the mouth of an "under-sinker" or drawer the words:—"Score a pint of bastard in the Half Moon." "Score a pinte of sake in the Conney" occurs in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*. In *The London Chaunticleres*, 1659, the tapster of an inn thus describes his morning's work:—"I have cut two dozen of toste, broacht a new barrell of ale, washt all the cups and flaggons, made

a fire i'th'George, drained all the beer out of th'Half Moon the company left o'th'floore last night, wip'd down all the tables, and have swept every room." Other instances were given by the late Mr. Halliwell Phillipps (then Halliwell) in the notes to his folio Shakespeare.

William Rutter, the lessee of the Tabard inn, appears to have been a man of good position. The following entries in the Churchwardens' Accounts of St. Margaret, Southwark, no doubt refer to him.

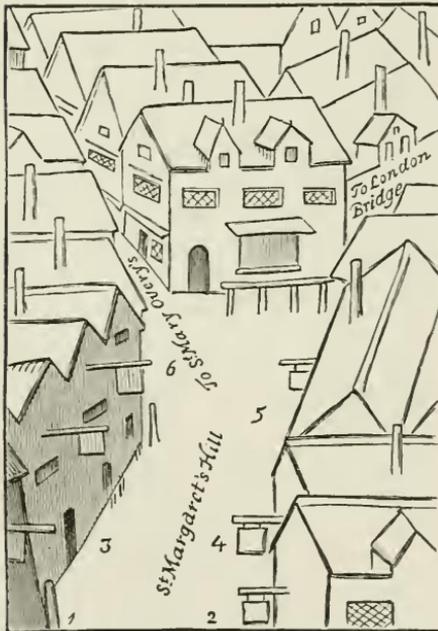
"The xxij day of Marche in the ix yere of Kinge Henry the viii the accompte made of Wylm Rutler and John Smythe churchewardenens for ij yere and made the battementes and enery thyng clere accompted. At the which accompte the same wardens be clery discharged and every thing to them alowed." William clearly

Again—

"Be yt knowne by thys present Record that in the yere of our Lorde gode $\text{M}^{\text{li}}\text{V}^{\text{c}}\text{XXXIII}$ then bi a consent of then-habitans of the parysshe of Saynt Margaretes in Southwarke lowenly by ther good wysdom bought and purchesed by one Thomas Onley Esquier and his wyffe a certayn olde place with the gronde be longyng to the same some tyme called Lorde Ferrers place, sett and beyng within the same parisshe. The byers thereof, Thomas Bulley, John Smyth, *W^m Rutter*, John Kitton, Raffe Copwood, John Garner, John Crosse, Rob^t Petty, Willyam Jeffrason, William Chammdeller, Nicholas Stoxbridge, John Sparrow, wyth the ayde of all the hole body of the parisshe for the somme of one hundredthe and tene poundes sterling wyche was gathered among the forsaied byers and the inabbytors of this same parisshe with tene pound that the pryor of Saynt Marionerais gane to the same purches. And all they wylling to make a churche yerde, they havynge so small and skant Rome in the tyme of necessitie that they were fane to berry thre or fore ded bodis withinne one sepulker one a pone another. The wyche churche yerde was adiont and halowed the xxvth day of Septembare in the yere of our Lorde God $\text{M}^{\text{li}}\text{CCCCXXXVJ}$."

This same year, namely in 1536, an Act of Parliament was passed to enable the parish to hold the churchyard in mortmain, from which we learn that it was about an acre in extent, and that it was then partly occupied by "certeyne olde houses in verye extream ruine and decay." The old church stood in the middle

of the roadway immediately opposite the entrance to the Tabard. In the year 1540 it was suppressed, and the priory church of St. Mary Overy became by purchase the church of the united parishes of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Margaret, being henceforth generally called St. Saviour's. Stow, writing in 1598, says, "A part of this parish church of St. Margaret is now a Court wherein the Assizes and Sessions be kept, and the Court of Admiralty is also there kept. One other part of the same church is now a prison called the Compter in Southwark." Beyond this very little was known about St. Margaret's Church, until in 1847 the parish documents from which we quote were discovered in a chest at



ST. MARGARET'S HILL IN THE YEAR 1600.

St. Saviour's, and shortly afterwards transcribed and explained by the late Mr. J. P. Collier. They extend from 1444 to 1536, and among other interesting facts one learns from them that the church had an antechapel, an organ, plate, and costly vestments, and that for some years dramatic entertainments were given there on St. Margaret's and on St. Lucy's day.

Our illustration of St. Margaret's Hill is from Norden's map, date 1600. The building facing us is the Court House, on the site of the church, part of which, though not apparent in the view, may still perhaps be incorporated in it; the gateway of the Tabard would be across the road

on our right. Whether this Court House had been previously rebuilt is an open question, but in 1676 there came a general clearance in the shape of the great Southwark fire, which, as we are told in a contemporary account, began at an oil shop "over against the Counter (or Compter) on St. Margaret's Hill." Ten years later a new Town Hall was built here at the charge of the City of London and decorated with a statue of Charles II; an illustration of it is given in Wilkinson's *Londina Illustrata*. By the year 1793, having become ruinous, it was rebuilt. A view by T. H. Shepherd in 1830 shows the Town Hall which took its place, and joining it on the right the Protector Fire Office, first erected as the banking-house of Sir James Saunderson, Harrison and Co. These buildings in their turn were removed in 1859; the Southwark branch of the London and County Bank and Town Hall Chambers now occupy the whole of the site.

But to return to the lessee of the Tabard. Mr. Rutter Fletcher, to whom our best thanks are due, has copied the will of his namesake. It is dated 22 Oct. 1540, and was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 8 Oct. 1541. He is therein described as William Rutter, of the parish of St. Saviour, Southwark, Innholder. He mentions his wife Elizabeth, brother Thomas Rutter, sister Mary, son William Rutter, and Robert Fleming that married his (Testator's) daughter Johan. He devises a farm in Oxfordshire, and house and land in Grinstead; which circumstance seems to identify him with William Rutter, collector of subsidy for East Grinstead, 13 Henry VIII, and with William Rutter, member for East Grinstead in the Parliament of 21 Henry VIII, A.D. 1529 to 1536. If so, he followed the example of Henry Bailley, Chaucer's host, who was member for Southwark in 1376 and again in 1379.

A few more words on the Tabard Inn. The first known mention of the change of sign to that of the Talbot occurs in certain Chancery proceedings of 27th June, 1599. Robert Mabbie, plaintiff, there states that

his father, John Mabe,¹ in his lifetime, "owned the messuage tenement and garden thereunto belonging, with appurtenances, commonly known and called the *Talbotte*." Farther on, in the same document, he says that his father in his lifetime owned in fee "the demesne commonlie called the *Tabard*, and some gardine thereunto belonginge, and one messuage wth appert'nances, and the reversion thereof, winding to the back of the said inn called the *Tabarde*." By a coincidence, in Mr. Crispe's present instalment of Surrey Wills, extracts are given from the will of John Preston, who owned the Tabard after the Mabe family. How it came into his hands has been related elsewhere;² and Speght in his second edition of *Chaucer* (1602) tells us how Preston repaired and added to it.

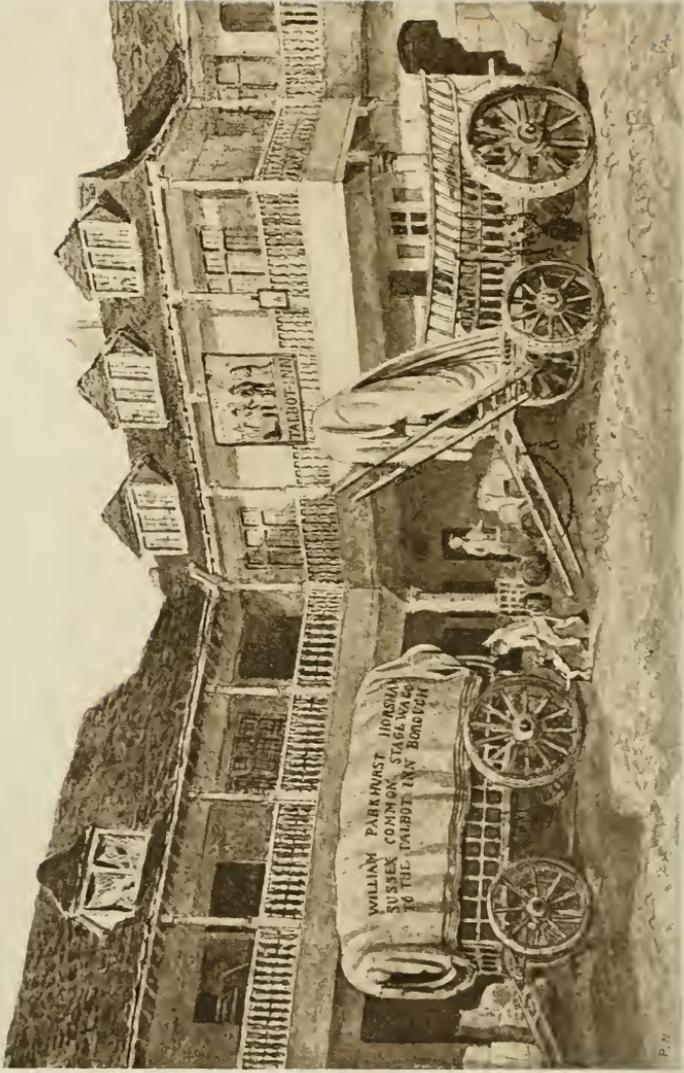


THE TABARD (FROM URRY'S "CHAUCER").

His grandson, Philip Bernard, who inherited the Tabard, mentions in his will (1629) that the abbot's lodging was then converted into a brew-house. The

¹ John Mabe, a freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company, was elected Chamberlain of London, 13th December, 1577, and retained the office till his death in 1582.

² *The Inns of Old Southwark*, by Rendle and Norman, p. 186.



Tarbot Inn, 1810

P.N.

inn was burnt down in the great Southwark fire of 1676, but rebuilt in the old style and on the old foundations; it was latterly always called the Talbot until its final destruction in 1875. Our full-page illustration was copied by the writer from, or rather founded on, a waterecolour drawing by the well-known topographical artist, George Shepherd. The smaller view, with the Canterbury pilgrims in the foreground, has been said by Corner and others to represent the inn before the great Southwark fire. It is from Urry's *Chaucer*, published in 1721, fifty-five years after that event. There is no allusion to it in the text, and we are ignorant of the artist's authority for his drawing. The Tabard preserved its picturesque appearance until the end.

In conclusion it may be added, that of the picturesque hostelries which even a generation ago still lined the Borough High Street, only a few fragments now remain. As lately as December, 1895, the main structure of the Queen's Head (the next inn south of the Tabard) was levelled with the ground. Some months earlier the plaster covering had been stripped off, when it was found that there was a frame of massive oak timber; the plaster work inside being composed of unburnt clay mixed with straw and spread on oak laths. An old brick chimney at the back had evidently been a later addition. A carved oak mantelpiece on the first floor was Jacobean in style, perhaps even a little earlier; above were garrets or "cock-lofts." This inn, next south of the Tabard, was once the Crossed or Crowned Keys, so marked in a Record Office map of about 1542, and had belonged to the Poynings' family, who in 1518 let it for 40s. the half-year; in 1529 it was a store place for "the king's harness," no doubt for arms and armour. In 1558 Richard Westray, ale-brewer, bequeathed to his wife Joane, his "messuage called the Cross Kayes with the brewhouse garden and stable as it is now newly builded" by his son Thomas. In 1587 it was an inn, and had become the Queen's Head, named no doubt after Elizabeth, as the King's

Head, originally the Pope's Head, had been named after her father Henry VIII. About 1636 it had a notable owner, John Harvard, who afterwards went to America and helped to found Harvard College, Cambridge. In spite of a statement to the contrary in a broadsheet published at the time, this inn escaped the fire of 1676, owing perhaps to a tenement at the gateway being blown up with gunpowder by way of precaution; and it continued to flourish until within the last few years. I am inclined to think that the structure just destroyed was that which in the 16th century had been "newly builded" by Thomas Westray. The galleries on the north side still exist. Of other famous Southwark Inns mentioned by Corner, the last remains of the King's Head were pulled down in 1885; the old White Hart, or what was left of it, disappeared in July 1889. Since then the George Inn has been sadly curtailed, but the south side, partly galleried, is still in good condition and used for its original purpose.