# A MEDIÆVAL UNDERCROFT AT REIGATE.

BY

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THE bit of Old Reigate that is the subject of this Paper is a vaulted chamber, now underground, in the premises of Messrs. G. & R. Stannard, motor engineers, West Street. The existence of this chamber has long been known to students of the history and topography of the borough, but the attention of the public has recently been drawn to it in the preparation of the site for the erection of a garage. It has now (March, 1922) been cleared of accumulated mould and rubbish that nearly filled it, and some repairs approved by the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings* as necessary for its preservation are being carried out, the walls are being strengthened to carry a floor of iron girders and reinforced concrete free of the vaulting, and steps are to be laid down to afford access to the original entrance. I am indebted to the contractor, Mr. G. Martin, and his foreman of works, for assistance in the collection of notes for this Paper, and to Mr. W. F. Taylor for the loan of two beautiful photographs for reproduction.

*Description of the Building.*—The chamber is oblong in form, measuring internally nearly 17 ft. in length from south to north and nearly 12 ft. in width. The roughly-coursed rubble walls are 9 ft. high and about 18 in. thick. The floor is cobbled. The ceiling is a segmental or slightly concave stone vault, springing at a height of 5 ft. 8 in. from the floor, and is supported by a series of five massive transverse arches, springing at a height of 4 ft. and dividing the chamber into five narrow bays or compartments and one broader bay that ranges

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with the entrance at the south end of the west wall. The ceiling of the broad bay and of the third and fourth narrow bays with their supporting arch has entirely disappeared; that of the northernmost bay with its arch was recently demolished, but has been rebuilt. The arches are of the form technically known as three-centred—that is to say, they are not pointed but semi-eliptical or oval in shape, the greater part of their contour being segmental, with a small sharper circular curve at the two ends. The small curve at each end springs out of a large square block of stone, of which it is really a part, set in the thickness of the wall at the height of 4 ft. from the floor—the springing level. The voussoirs, or arch stones between the two springers, measure 10 in. in width, 8 in. from soffit or under-surface to ceiling, and are of great length, varying from 2 to 3 ft. or more. The height of the arches is 3 ft. from the springing-line, 7 ft. from the floor. The segmental ceiling appears to be a continuous tunnel-vault resting upon the hidden upper surface of the arches: in reality it consists of rubble in short courses of thin rough-hewn stones which cross between the voussoirs and are made to fit into rebates or notches cut in their side faces. For want of a better word, we may call this rubble vaulting the panelling of the vault. The panelling of each compartment springs at each end from a skewback or slope cut on the upper side of the springers. These details, illustrated in the Plate (No. 6), are important for a consideration of the date of the building. Mr. Taylor's photograph shows the eastern end of the two first arches with their huge springers, and also the character of the walling and panelling.

The vault or panelling above the first three arches has called for only slight repairs. The third arch has only two of its original voussoirs, and these are being secured in position by roughly cut stones resting on square piers of rubble that project inwards from the sides of the chamber, somewhat marring its design. The first and second arches, though badly flaked, are

otherwise complete and in fairly safe condition. The walls have called for a good deal of rebuilding or refacing. In the north wall most of the face of the left-hand portion has been renewed. The new work of the other three walls is sufficiently indicated in the elevations on the Plate of Illustrations.

The chamber was originally lighted by two unglazed square windows, one in the east wall and one in the south. The opening of the eastern window measures 1 ft. 8 in. in height by 8 in. in width; that of the southern one, 2 ft. 11 in. by 1 ft. 5 in. The sill of the former is 9 in. above the springing level of the arches; that of the latter, about 3 ft. above the floor level. Both were defended by iron bars, which have disappeared, and were closed by shutters, of which the hinge-hooks remain in the case of the southern window. In both the opening has a 4-in. bevel externally, and internally a 2-in. rebate for the shutter and a slighter bevel. Outside the eastern window, after the building was completed, a shaft was constructed with a smooth face at the back, measuring 17 in. across and 4 in. from front to back at the sill level. As the shaft rises the back slopes outwards, so that near the top (as the foreman tells me, for the top is now closed) it measures 14 in. It has been suggested that the shaft was designed for lowering food from above to the occupants of the chamber. Outside the southern window there is an added facing of rough masonry of about 7 in. projection on the east side, the purpose of which is obscure. Some rough masonry of greater projection on the other side is recent work in connexion with the preparation of the approach to the chamber.

We now come to the difficult question of the entrance and its approaches and the surrounding ground levels. Some indications of the original arrangement were revealed by recent excavation for the purpose of restoring the entrance. They are shown, as far as possible, in the ground plan and elevation (2). In digging down, the workmen came to a platform which seems to have formed the threshold at the level of the

uppermost of three steps. It extended to a line parallel with the nose of the step and $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. distant. On that line the face of the original excavation in virgin soil rose to a height of $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. The northern face of that excavation lined with the end of the steps, but it rose to a height of only 2 ft., and above it there was some later brickwork of which I could obtain no satisfactory description—I do not think that any importance attaches to it. As to the southern side of the platform, where new steps of descent to the door are to be laid down, the foreman assures me that he found no indication of steps, and the sudden ending of the western face of the virgin soil in a vertical cutting suggests that a trench cut by the builders of the under-croft sloped from the west down to the platform level. The floor of such a trench carried on along outside the south wall of the chamber would run about half a foot below the sill of the window in that wall, and would form an area to admit light through it as well as a way of approach to the entrance from the east. The present surface of the ground round the building is roughly level with the top of the vaulting and must be at least 2 ft. above the original surface level.

With regard to the doorway, it will be noticed that the south wall now presents a broken end upon the platform a few inches from the edge of the step and on the line of the exterior face of the west wall. Here one might have expected to find a clean face and quoin ; it is evident that the wall ran on, but probably only a few inches, sufficient to receive the wrought-stone bonders of the jamb of the door arch. All other indications of the doorway and all its materials have vanished, and I have not been successful in my attempts to restore it on paper, but I have ventured to show its probable position in dotted lines on the ground plan.

Inside the entrance the western half of the broad first bay of the chamber, which may conveniently be called the lobby, was certainly ceiled with a vault, the approximate form of which can be recovered. The

bay was divided into two halves by a small cross-arch. The arch has disappeared, but the springer remains in the south wall, and opposite to it a skewback cut on the face of the transverse arch just above the apex formed its abutment. The arch was three-centred; on its western face, looking towards the entrance, it was square-edged and rebated for vaulting; on its eastern face it was bevel-edged and otherwise plain. It is restored in dotted lines in elevation (No. 4).

Preserved in the undercroft there are two loose archstones which were found in the rubbish, one complete and the other broken. Careful measurements suggest that the complete stone formed half of a flat three-centred arch of exactly the span required to cross the lobby. The broken stone would seem to be part of the other half. The stones are square-edged, 10 in. in width, and rebated for panelling on both sides. In the elevation (No. 2) of the first transverse arch of the chamber it will be seen that at the left-hand end of the voussoir next to the springer the rebating is flat or vertical for about 10 in., and I believe that the end of the broken stone when it was complete and in position rested upon that flat bit of the rebating. The other end of the small arch, with its slightly tilted joint very roughly cut, would be inserted in the south wall opposite. It is worth noticing that the original walling rises exactly to the line where this arch-stone would rest and no higher, level with the top of the lintel of the window. Midway between such a vault-arch and the small cross-arch described in the previous paragraph there would be a similar vault-arch; and I find by setting out their position on paper (as shown in dotted lines on the ground plan), that they would be separated by the same interval as in the case of the great transverse arches of the chamber. This can hardly be accidental, and a solution of the manner in which the lobby was vaulted seems to have been reached. It does not fully account for the irregular rebating of the first transverse arch, on the face of which one would have expected to find a continuous skewback to receive the

arches and panelling of the lobby vault. The line of the rebating of the loose arch-stones shows that the panelling must have been slightly pointed. I have set out the restored arch in dotted lines in the elevation (No. 2).

The eastern half of the same bay presents some puzzling features. It had no vaulted ceiling : there is no rebate to receive panelling either on the small cross-arch or on the great transverse arch. The surface of the latter is pock-marked, suggesting that it has for some time been exposed to weathering. Moreover, some masonry that existed in the south-east corner was cleared away by the workmen before there had been opportunity to examine it, and the evidence left is insufficient to determine its character with any certainty. It is said to have been a recess covered with a stone slab. The face of the lower part of the wall on either side of the angle is much smoother than elsewhere in the chamber. On the south wall the smooth part is bounded at a height of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by a slightly concave course of thin stones running for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. from the angle. Immediately above this course a rough edge of rubble projects slightly from the face. On the right, the edge of the smooth surface slopes down to a stone, which projects some inches just above the floor. On the east wall the smooth part reaches up to the springing-line of the adjoining great arch, and upon that line there is a single thin course of the original walling. Above that course the walling is all new, and I am told there was no old walling there. What is the explanation ? I suggest that a stairway, possibly of wood, resting on masonry forming the recess, afforded communication with the superstructure of the undercroft.

*Materials.*—The stone used in the building of the undercroft came from quarries at Merstham and Gatton, worked in the formation known as Upper Greensand, which there crops out in a narrow strip along the foot of the chalk escarpment. It is of two kinds commonly called firestone and malm rock. Firestone, the more abundant, has been the common building stone of the

district from time immemorial,[1] while at certain periods under the name of Reigate stone it has been largely used in a wider field. It was the principal material used in the construction of Edward the Confessor's monastery at Westminster—the *pere bise* of one of *The Lives of the Confessor* published in the Master of the Rolls series[2]—and in the 13th-century parts of the Abbey, and also of Rochester Cathedral and Castle and many Kentish churches. It would be interesting to know how far afield it was used in later times. It is a poor building material, especially for outside work: it is very light, by far the lightest of the building stones in Gwilt's list (*Enclyclop. of Arch.*, p. 455, 1899 ed.); it has a low crushing point, and is easily disintegrated by atmospheric influences. It is a fine calcareous sandstone of a grey-green hue, containing green silicate of iron (glauconite), and numerous specks of some black mineral invisible to the naked eye, together with small gleaming plates of mica. All the cut and dressed stone of the undercroft and most of the rough stone is firestone. The malm rock, which occurs here and there in the quarries in thin bands above and below the firestone, is a finer sandstone of light-grey (almost chalky) hue, composed of the same materials minus the glauconite and having only a few of the particles of mica. In the undercroft it was used only in the panels of the vault, where it alternates with firestone. In the wide mortar-joints of the panels here and there a thin tile is seen—probably the panelling was originally faced with plaster—and the bed-joint of the springer in the south wall is levelled with pieces of tile. Here and there also in the walling bits of tile and brick occur,

[1] It was used in the building of St. Mark's Church, in 1860, and "the white new villas of Wray Park"; but I learn that the quarries are no longer worked.

[2] Line 2020.—It may be seen, together with small quantities of chalk and tufa, in the Chapel of the Pyx. With the help of Mr. Wright, senior, then clerk of the works, many years ago, by an examination of the base of a column under the floor of the Sanctuary, I satisfied myself that the Confessor's church was built of the same material.

and in the east wall, just above the floor, a "header" of small size (4 by $2\frac{1}{4}$ in.) is seen. Flat mussel shells, found in the neighbourhood, are inserted in some of the joints of the arches. The mortar, made of local sand from the Folkestone beds and showing white particles of imperfectly burnt lime, is still in fairly good condition.

*Form, Craftmanship and Date.*—We have no evidence of date of the undercroft other than is supplied by the form and craftmanship. The idea of a 13th-century date, mooted when the chamber was only partly cleared of rubbish, has by general consent been given up, and a 14th-century date seems to have found favour. I feel convinced, however, that the date cannot be put earlier than the second half of the 15th century, and that the Tudor period would more accurately define it. The most instructive feature is the form of the vault-arches. The foreman, who had to make centering (*i.e.*, a temporary frame of wood) for the rebuilding of the fifth arch, confirms the conclusion that I have drawn from careful measurement of the first arch, that they were constructed on the three-centres method. The principal radius employed was nearly 9 ft., and the two minor radii about 20 in., the centre of the former being (as required in this kind of arch) on the vertical axis, and the centres of the latter a little below the springing-line (and not, as normally, upon that line).[1] The three-centred arch was a favourite of the French architects of the Flamboyant or late-Gothic period, but it did not find favour with English architects. All that Mr. Francis Bond could say of it was that "it occurs occasionally with us, *e.g.*, in Bishop Alcock's chapel at Ely" (*Gothic Arch. in Engl.*, p. 267), the date of which is 1488. I doubt if it was ever used in England before the Tudor period. Many Tudor arches, like those of the windows of the aisles of St. Margaret's, Westminster, approach very closely to it, but most of them are really four-centred and slightly pointed, the two major radii

[1] One centering would serve for all the great arches, and after they were completed it would serve also for the panels. It would not have to be more than 9 ft. wide.

having their centres close to the vertical axis.[1] The form of the arches of the undercroft points to a Tudor date.

A late date is also favoured by the great length of the voussoirs. In the successive styles of Gothic architecture the voussoirs of arches gradually increased in length. In the late 12th-century arches of the nave arcades in Reigate Parish Church they average about 5 in. In our undercroft some of them exceed 3 ft.

Another significant feature is the rebating of the voussoirs. In Norman practice the rubble vaulting, say of an aisle, was laid upon the extrados, or flat upper surface, of the transverse arches; and in the early-Gothic styles the extrados of vaulting ribs was similarly left plain, the ends of the courses of the vaulting on either side meeting upon it. As the method employed is not visible in vaulting that remains *in situ* and sound, it has not been decided when and where the device of rebating voussoirs to receive panelling was introduced. Scott, in his Academy *Lectures* (ii, 194), merely remarked: "In later works the ribs were usually deeper from intrados to extrados, and were notched, or, as it is technically called, 'rebated,' to receive the vaulting, or at least the lower part of its thickness." Later writers have been content to quote Scott. G.W.H., on a post-card addressed to Mr. Seth-Smith, who has kindly handed it to me, shrewdly comments as follows on the implication of Scott's expression "later works": "I should say 14th century, when the vaulting ribs began to be multiplied and meet at all sorts of angles, so that the panels could not be carried by them but needed to be fitted in between them, or even to help to carry the

[1] Four-centred arches of wood may be seen in the frame of the roof of the north aisle of the parish church. If any reader should happen to light upon Sir Gilbert Scott's remarks upon the vaulting of the crypt of St. Stephen's, Westminster, built in the reign of Edward I, he must not imagine that it affords an early example either of three-centred or of normal four-centred construction. Scott's description (*Lectures*, ii, 216), strange to say, is not quite clear. I recently examined the vaulting in company with Mr. Wilson, clerk of the works, but this is not the place to enter upon a discussion of its interesting peculiarities.

W. F. Taylor, photo.

REIGATE UNDERCROFT.

PART OF FIRST TWO ARCHES.

STONE-CHOPPER TOOLING.

ribs. The whole (with liernes and tiercerons) needed to be fitted in together as a sort of mosaic." Liernes and tiercerons seem to have been invented in the west country, notably at Bristol and Gloucester, in the latter half of the 14th century. They were only gradually adopted elsewhere, and by the time our undercroft was built, the associated practice of rebating voussoirs was so widespread and common that it was here followed without hesitation, though it was not really necessary: the vaulting in this case could have rested quite securely on a plain upper surface, as in the practice of Norman builders, to whose work it is similar in principle. The rebating would not have been used had it not become a well-established practice: it thus supplies an additional argument for a date not earlier than the 15th century.

The rebates are from 2 to 3 in. wide, and are cut into the voussoirs so as to leave the portion of stone rising up between them wedge-shaped, as shewn in the sketch (No.6) in the Plate. In the part of the second arch shewn in Mr. Taylor's photograph only the narrow wedge-shaped portion remains, with the panelling on either side of it, the lower portion of the voussoir having broken away.

Other examples doubtless exist, but I know of none other in which the Norman principle of carrying a tunnel vault by a series of transverse arches was followed in Gothic style. It is a sound and suitable method as carried out in the undercroft.

The dressing of the wrought stone affords another remarkable feature of the work, pointing to a late date. Late in the 13th century and onwards a bankerman, the mason who worked at his banker or bench, first dressed his stones roughly, generally in cris-cross fashion, either with the old-fashioned Norman axe or with the "boaster" or broad chisel, plain or toothed, brought into England by William of Sens in 1176. Then he worked the face all over with a "drag" ("a fine plate of steel with fine teeth on one edge"), giving it an appearance on close inspection as if a fine comb had been drawn over it. This method of dressing soft stones was still in general use in the 15th century. The exposed faces

of the wrought stone in the undercroft were finished in this way, but here and there signs of the preliminary dressing remain visible, indicating that it was done with an uncommon and peculiar tool. The effect of this tool may be studied on the side of the springer just inside the entrance, originally covered but now exposed and as clean as when first set up. A part of it is shewn in Mr. Taylor's photograph. The tool had a cutting edge of 3 in. or more, and was cut into coarse teeth—about 8 to 3 in. At every stroke the edge cut fully half an inch across the surface of the stone. All this is apparent : what is not clear is the shape of the tool in other respects and the manner in which it was applied. A chisel struck with a mallet would make tooth-marks at right angles to the cutting edge, whereas the marks on our stone shew a slanting direction. The puzzle has been solved by an experienced old mason in Mr. Martin's employ. He remembers the time when men were employed in rough-facing firestone with a tool shaped somewhat like an adze. It was called a stone-chopper. The workman held it in both hands and bending forward with legs far apart he struck the stone laid on the ground immediately in front of him. Such tools, having a plain edge, are still in existence. A tooth-edged chopper would make the marks seen in the photograph. Similar tooling is to be seen in the north chapel of Merstham Church, which may be dated *circ.* 1572. I doubt if it came into fashion much before that date, or that it will be found far afield. Further research may determine the *terminus a quo* of its use.

To fill a vacant space in the Plate I have copied a number and a name cut on one of the voussoirs of the fifth arch. The number (5) was not exposed when the vault was complete, and may possibly have been cut by the bankerman to indicate the position to be occupied by the voussoir. I think the Editor, who is expert in this matter, will say that the form of the figure indicates a date hardly earlier than the 16th century. The name, F. Trueman, like the figure, though roughly carved, was not the work of an idle visitor or occupant,

but of someone skilled in the use of his tools. It was cut after the voussoir was placed in position and is very possibly modern.

*A Court House and Market House.*—It remains to consider the ancient surroundings and original purpose of the building of which the chamber was the undercroft. To clarify the discussion, I have inserted in the Plate a sketch map of the locality based upon the tithe map of 1835, preserved in the vestry of the parish church. It shows the buildings then in existence, some of which doubtless represent buildings existing before the Reformation in the 16th century. I have inserted the outline of the undercroft in place of a shed of a different plan shewn in the tithe map, and in the roadway immediately north of it I have reproduced from the 25-in. Ordnance map (surveyed in 1869-70, revised in 1912) an "Antiquity Cross," which the surveyors labelled "Site of Market House," thus recording the tradition that fixes the place of the mediæval market and suggests a close association therewith of the undercroft building. It lies at the crossing of Upper West Street with the line of Nutley Lane and Slipshoe Street. The privilege of holding a market at Reigate and receiving the dues thereof was granted in 1313 by royal charter to the Lord of the manor, John de Warren, Earl of Surrey, and the traditional place would be most suitable for the purpose. It was an open space lying in the angle formed by two main avenues of entrance into the town and directly on the line of a third, all meeting at the west end of High Street. It was easily reached by merchants and travellers coming from all directions. Roads from the north and east, from the direction of Ewell, Banstead, Chipstead, and Gatton, converged on the Downs to run down Reigate Hill; and near the bottom of "London Lane"[1] travellers wishing to go into the market would naturally make a short cut and track on the line of "Pudding

[1] The tithe map has no street names: those printed with inverted commas in the text are taken from *A Particular of the Borough of Reigate*, . . . . by W. B. 1786, printed in *A Description of the Borough of Reigate*, by R. Phillips, ed. T. R. Hooper, 1885.

Lane," *alias* Little West Street. Others coming from the direction of Dorking, instead of going on to the "Crossways," would diverge and make a similar short cut along the line of Upper West Street. These two tracks in the 16th century became known as "The Highway leading from the Castle of Reygate towards Dorking." Indeed, one can visualise the process by which such tracks of short cut eventually, as dwellings or shops were reared beside them, became lanes and then streets: thus the peculiar topography of the market and its surroundings was formed. But older still, older than the market itself, was the trackway on the line of Nutley Lane whereby pilgrims to Canterbury, and travellers long before the days of the pilgrims, coming from all the country of the west, whether by the ridgeway along the comb of the Downs or by the summer-way on the flanks or at the foot thereof[1] descended from Colley Hill to break their journey at Reigate: direct upon this trackway (still in its upper reach called Pilgrims Way) were the stalls of the market pitched. The Island, or "Middle Row," was the result of the intersection of these trackways; and through it two alleys have preserved additional right of way from West Street to the old market. In mediæval times the site must have been more open than is shewn in the map of 1835, and much more open than it is to-day. It is probable that the undercroft building, standing midway between the two alleys, was free and open on all sides except perhaps towards the south-west. There is no indication that any building ever stood on the west side, or on the east until Mr. Charles Holdsworth in 1803 erected there a builder's shed composed partly of brick and partly of old worked stones taken doubtless from the ruins of the superstructure.

A recent suggestion that the old market was held in the wide space of the Crossways at the end of High Street, based on the fact that a few stalls are sometimes

[1] See Papers by Dr. G. B. Grundy on *Ancient Highways and Tracks* in Vols. LXXIV and LXXV of *The Archæological Journal.*

set up there, cannot be maintained. But this space has its own interesting traditions. To the north of it stands the Red Cross Inn, the successor of a pilgrims' hostelry, and to the east of the inn three or four modern houses occupy the site of the Chapel of the Holy Cross. Manning says the chapel stood "in the middle of the north side of the principal street, near the west end" (Manning and Bray, *History and Antiquities of Surrey* (1804), i, 288). In 1718 it was in use as a barn (Aubrey, *Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey*, iv, 190). By 1804 it had been pulled down, and only its foundations remained. At the west end of High Street stood a cottage and a shop that aligned with the butcher's shop, and faced direct down the street—pulled down in 1905 to widen the beginning of West Street. Those buildings contained probably the remains of very ancient tenements, and they left only a narrow opening and alley between an old line of cottages running west from them along West Street and the line of cottages still forming the north side of the street.

In an account of its recent rediscovery published in *The Times* of February 17th, 1922, the undercroft was described as "a 13th-century crypt or dungeon . . . . formerly under the original Market House . . . . demolished at the Reformation . . . . near to an old church wall . . . . used by the lords of the manor of Reigate for centuries as a dungeon." The date has already been discussed in this Paper. As to an old church wall, I can only say that I have failed to discover in the immediate neighbourhood any remains that can be so designated, so that a further suggestion, that the chamber is the crypt of a destroyed church, may also be dismissed. Moreover, mediæval parish churches, after early Saxon times, had no crypt.[1]

[1] This statement must be qualified. Occasionally, but only very rarely, a crypt is found, as at Bosham, in Sussex, and at Sandwich, not under the chancel, but somewhere at the side, which was doubtless used as an ossuary. The famous crypt under the east end of Hythe Church was built for a procession path, and also used as an ossuary. But there is no record of a church, other than Holy Cross Chapel, anywhere near our undercroft.

As to the idea that the undercroft building was under the original "market house," we have seen that it is favoured by the position, but the expression is a little misleading unless rightly interpreted. I have failed to trace any authority for the statement that the undercroft was used as a dungeon by the lords of the manor, but if the words "for centuries" be deleted it may well express a sound opinion. These are the points we have now to consider.

The traditions attached to the building a century or more ago are preserved in Manning and Bray's *History*, published in 1804. Bray seems to have obtained his local information from one Richard Glover, F.S.A., a solicitor of Reigate, and a well-known antiquary, expert in the deciphering of old MSS. This is what he wrote:—"The Market Place of Reigate was antiently at the West end of the Town, near the entrance of a Road called Nutley Lane, till of late years leading from Reigate to London.[1] By a deed in the hands of Mr. Glover, dated 10th Dec., 19 Henry VI, William Richard and Johanna his wife of Reigate, granted to Thomas Sexteyn of Reygate a certain tenement with the appurtenances situate within the Borough of Reygate, between the tenement of Thomas Berkle on the East and the Market place (Forum de Reygate) on the West and South, and upon the Highway leading from the castle of Reygate towards Dorking on the North, and it appears this was used as the Market place in 25 Henry VIII, and this spot is at this day sometimes called *The Olde Market Place*. Here is a Vault or Crypt arched and ribbed with free stone, and there is great reason to suppose that the old Market house was erected over it. In a deed in the hands of Mr. Glover dated 20th Jan., 30 Elizabeth, relating to the same tenement, the market

[1] I feel sure this is a mistake. As explained in an earlier paragraph, Nutley Lane is on the line of an old trackway by which travellers coming from the west along the Downs descended to the town.

place is called *The Owlde Market Place.* The Market had then been moved to the South (*sic*) of the Town, and the Chapel which had before been dedicated to St. Thomas Becket, was then used as a market house. This must have first happened at the time of the Reformation, after that place had been discontinued as a place of religious worship. The Assizes were formerly held in the town, and the Chapel was used as the Court. About the year 1708 the Chapel was taken down and the present building erected, but upon the site of the Chapel. The Clock House was built for a prison for the Felons and others who were brought to the Easter Session held at Reigate ; and in 1801, when an enlargement was made for the better accommodation of the prisoners, the workmen came to the foundation of the Chapel."

The identification of the mediæval market-place with the ground south of the entrance to Nutley Lane seems to be beyond question, and it is remarkably confirmed by the fact that a very old house still exists in a position that exactly tallies with the description of the site of the tenement conveyed in 1440 to Thomas Sexteyn. The highway leading from the castle towards Dorking, which lay on the north of the tenement, can be identified with no other road than that now called Upper West Street, while the market-place lay on its west and south sides. On the sketch map I have identified the tenement with the house now occupied by A. J. Johnson, late Ewens, chimney sweep. Coming now to the question of the old market house, it is to be noticed that no mention of a market *house* is made in the old deeds. The earliest reference to such a market house is made by Bray, who, after mentioning "the vault or crypt," says there is great reason to suppose that the old market house was erected over it. He does not give his great reason : it seems to be pure supposition, which Palgrave, in his *Handbook to Reigate* (pub. 1860), accepted as established fact—a noteworthy example of the growth

of tradition.[1] But, nevertheless, the supposition may be a sound one, and, after carefully considering possible alternatives, I am myself inclined to accept it. It must not be supposed, however, that a mediæval market house erected over the undercroft could have been anything like the market house and town hall which Bray and his contemporaries looked upon at the east end of High Street. This building was erected by Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls, who became possessed of the manor of Reigate in 1717 and died in 1738, on a plan that came into vogue about that time or a little earlier. An early example exists at Ledbury, erected in 1633 on massive oak pillars. The ground stage opened to the surrounding market-place by arches,[2] affording space for the erection of stalls under cover, while an upper stage served as a court house and assembly room. The superstructure of the undercroft could not have been used for stalls, but it would seem to have been suitable for use as a general court and a room for the transaction of market business.[3]

Soon after the Suppression the Chapel of St. Thomas was adopted as a Sessions house, and doubtless as a

[1] Palgrave writes: "the ancient Market House stood at the Town's Western Entrance" (p. 29); and again (p.30), "a few mossy ribs of underground vaulting, used as a saw pit in Mr. Holdsworth's yard, mark the site of the 'Owlde Market House.'" By the substitution of *House* for "Place" in this expression Palgrave begs the question. Brayley, in his *History of Surrey* (1848), is more accurate. He omits Bray's erroneous description of Nutley Lane, and makes no mention of a market *house*. He writes "Anciently, the market-place was at the west end of the town, near the entrance of a road called Nutley-lane. The site, beneath which is a vault or crypt ribbed with free-stone, is still recognized as that of 'The Owlde Market Place.'"

[2] It is satisfactory to learn that the blocked arches of the Reigate example are to be opened out.

[3] The market place at Godalming affords an example of the adaptation of a court house of the 16th century, or possibly earlier, for market purposes. See the illustrations that accompany Mr. Ralph Nevill's Paper on *The Corporation of Godalming* in S.A.C. XIX, p. 104.

general court also, probably because it was larger and more convenient than the room previously used. The change in the locus of the market soon followed that of the court. This in itself suggests that a court house was associated with the market on the old site. The identification of such a court house with the undercroft building is further suggested by the fact that the building seems to have been demolished or allowed to fall into ruin about the same time. Houses built of stone in mediæval times in some cases had an undercroft—examples are given in a footnote[1]—but if our building had been a private house there would seem to be no reason for its abandonment so soon after its erection. Moreover, the design of the undercroft suggests a building suitable for a court house and unsuitable for adaptation as a dwelling-house after its abandonment—I imagine, a superstructure consisting of a single room with wooden ceiling and an entrance on the north side. The undercroft had an independent external entrance, convenient for the introduction of prisoners, and also (if my analysis is correct) an internal way of ascent to the court room. That the undercroft was used as a "cage" or prison seems evident from the construction of a shaft suitable for the conveyance of food from above down to the dungeon outside the east window. The construction seems to have been no part of the original design, but an afterthought: it may be almost contemporaneous with the original building.

Manorial courts, the Court Baron the Court Leet, and the Customary Court, were usually held in the hall

[1] Brayley (I, 330) describes two vaulted crypts at Guildford, one under the Angel Hotel in High Street, the other under a house on the opposite side of the street. Doubtless there are other examples in Surrey. In Kent there are several: in Maidstone, a 14th-century vaulted undercroft at the corner of High Street and Gabriel's Hill, and a similar one in the Old Palace adjoining an unvaulted early-Norman example (see Arch. Cant., XXIV, 91); in Rochester, a 14th-century vaulted cellar under Gundolf Hotel; Nettlestead manor house, 13th-century vaulted undercroft to 15th-century hall; Faversham, brick-sided cellar to 15th- or 16th-century half-timber house.

of the Manor House. At Reigate the castle was the manor house, but the lords of the manor had ceased to reside there—indeed, Lambarde (quoted by Palgrave, p. 48) says that in his day, in the reign of Elizabeth, there remained only "the ruyns and rubbish of an old Castle"—and it is reasonable to imagine that the lord's court had been removed to a building erected for the purpose in a more convenient position. That court, over which the steward presided, had already become a court for general purposes, exercising a jurisdiction in local government largely independent of the County Courts and absorbing the functions of various lesser courts. It carried on the administration of the land, fixing the rotation groups and the dates of the various agricultural operations; it managed the pastures and quarries, the care of the cattle and the breeding of stock; it suppressed nuisances, fined minor offences, chose the local officers, and tried petty actions for debt and damages.[1]

Such a building as I have pictured would serve equally well as a market house in which the steward or bailiff would supervise such transactions between seller and buyer as needed formal contract, would adjudicate upon any disputes that might arise in the market, and would receive stallage and piccage (*i.e.*, toll exacted for breaking the ground in setting up a stall), and other dues accruing out of the market to the lord of the manor. Possibly also, though evidence is lacking, there was held here a court of pie powder ("dusty foot"), "a summary court formerly held at markets and fairs to administer justice between itinerant dealers and others temporarily present.[2]

In late mediæval times people were still accustomed to transact much business, and courts of various kinds were still not infrequently held, in the open air. If

[1] Webb, *Eng. Loc. Gov.*, II, 4.—This description, written of a later period, is applicable to the conditions prevailing in the 15th and 16th centuries.

[2] *New Eng. Dict.*—On the court of pie powder at Godalming, *see* Mr. Nevill's Paper, already quoted, p. 109.

market houses of substantial construction had been common in the country we should possess some evidence of them. In the case of this bit of old Reigate, therefore, it is likely that we have a most interesting survival; for tradition and reasonable supposition and the character of the undercroft combine to support the suggestion that it belonged to a building specially erected in the Tudor period to serve the purposes both of a market house and of a court house.

The later history of the building is soon told. After its abandonment the upper part fell into ruins and was demolished, while the undercroft became a receptacle or rubbish. Eventually the northern part, with a floor level about 3 ft. above the original floor, was fitted up as a sawpit, the 4th arch being removed for the purpose. Opposite the sawpit, in the west end of the builder's shed described above, there is a low doorway through which timber was passed to the pit.

The grateful thanks of the people of Reigate and of all antiquaries are due to the gentlemen who have interested themselves in the preservation of the remains, the Vicar of the Parish (Canon F. C. Davies), Mr. W. H. Seth-Smith, Mr. E. Penfold and Mr. C. E. Salmon, and also to Messrs. Stannard for their willing consent and co-operation.