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ANCIENT CRYPT, CHILDS BANK, TEMPLE BAR.

## NOTES ON EXCAVATIONS AT TEMPLE BAR.

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It is now a matter of history that the old "Devil Tavern" stood next door to the "Marygold," and that in the year 1787 it was purchased by Messrs. Child and Co., and shortly afterwards demolished. In the year following, a row of houses, called Child's Place, and No. 2, Fleet Street, was erected upon the site of the famous old tavern. This sombre row of houses was pulled down in April 1878 in order to make way for the new bank of Messrs. Child and Co., and at the same time the old buildings at the back of the "Marygold," once known as the "Sugar Loaf and Green Lettice," of which Pepys records in his Diary, under date 10 March, 1669: "Mr. Burges, we by water to Whitehall, where I made a little stop: and so, with them, by coach to Temple Bar, where, at the 'Sugar Loaf,' we dined; and then comes a companion of theirs, Colonel Vernon, I think they called him, a merry good fellow, and one that was very plain in cursing the Duke of Buckingham, and discovering

of his designs to ruin us, and that ruin must follow his counsels, and that we are all an undone people."

The tavern room of which Pepys wrote, and in which he dined, was the kitchen of the old bank. It had been necessarily much altered about the reign of Queen Anne; still various portions of the old tavern could distinctly be made out.

It never could have been such a place of fashionable resort as were the "Devil" or the "Rainbow," and, notwithstanding it was only once mentioned by Pepys in his Diary, yet a farthing token was issued by the proprietor of the "Sugar Loaf," or "Suger Lofe," as it is called in Boyne.

I possess a halfpenny token of the "Sugar Loaf," which was found a few months ago under one of the old houses in Elm Court, Temple; it is not dated, but from its appearance is evidently a token of the seventeenth century. It reads, "George Bryar at y<sup>e</sup>     " and on the reverse, "Without Temple Barr—His halfe peny." Boyne, in describing the farthing token, gives the name of George Bryant as the issuer, and places it in Ram Alley, Fleet Street, by Temple Bar; on my token the name is Bryar, at the "Sugar Loaf," without Temple Bar. Notwithstanding the apparent discrepancy, I am inclined to believe that it is intended for the same tavern, as it was situated immediately in the rear of the "Marygold," and was approached from Fleet Street by a narrow passage similar to that of the "Cock Tavern" and "Dicks." It led southwards into the Temple, and, furthermore, the parish boundary went through a portion of it, so it might have really belonged to the parish of St. Clement's,

and so be without Temple Bar, notwithstanding it was approached from Fleet Street, in the parish of St. Dunstan's, and that the passage in question was Ram Alley. The old kitchen always reminded me of what the coffee-room of "Dick's Tavern" was some fifteen years ago. On the south side of it was a large window, beneath which, and in a recess, a thick wooden bench was fixed into the wall; this formed part of the inner room, where George Bryar possibly entertained his familiar friends, and where, some forty or fifty years later, Dorothy Biggins kept her score against Captain Trevor, a copy of whose bill for mountain, syder, and port, lopsters (*sic*), and sallmon, I published in my paper on "Ye Marygold." Beneath the old kitchen two perfect vessels of the fifteenth century were met with.

Very extensive cellarage extended under the whole area of Child's Place, the majority of which were undoubtedly the cellars of the Devil tavern, where Simon Wadlow kept his rare wines. A portion of this cellar had a pointed roof and was supported by several large stone pillars, which have been worked into the supports of the new strong rooms of the Bank. Three feet beneath the flooring of this old cellar a layer of large square tiles, having a coating of green and yellow glaze, was discovered, and at the further end of it, in a vaulted chamber, was a well. It is highly probable that these cellars formed part of a building that existed on the site even before the days of the "Devil tavern," and may have some connection with the remains of arches which I propose to describe further on in this paper. Under the old

houses of Child's Place many cesspools were found, in which were a large quantity of tobacco-pipes, such as were used at the end of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; one or two of these pipes were of unusual length. In those days it may be presumed that pipes when once used were thrown away, hence the large quantity that were met with. Besides them a considerable quantity of grey-beards or Bellarmines\*, jugs of cream-coloured ware, with green glazed tops, of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, tygs, stoneware jugs, small ointment jars, and the stumpy glass wine-bottles of the same period.

The most interesting find I have to record was a full bottle of wine, which was found in a part of the old cellar, deeply buried in rotten saw-dust. It holds about a pint of a rosy-coloured wine, probably port; the bottle is coated with a splendid iridescence, and the cork is apparently sound. It has evidently been well resined over, which has had the effect of preserving the cork and the liquid.

In making preparations for erecting the new premises the builders had occasion to what they term underpin the last house on the west side of the Middle Temple Lane, which is occupied by the under-porter of the Inn. In doing so they came upon a large

\* The Bellarmine, or grey-beard, was a stone jug with a long neck, and rudely executed face and beard beneath it. They were imported from Flanders, and much used in ale-houses in the 16th and 17th centuries. They took their name from a Cardinal Robert Bellarmin, who rendered himself obnoxious to the progress of the reformed religion in the Low Countries. The belly is usually ornamented with a badge of some town in Holland.

quantity of human bones, which were disposed in five regular rows; the workmen had to cut through this layer, and removed more than a cartload of leg-bones: the remainder of the skeletons are left under the house. They appear to lie north-east and south-west, and no vestige of wood was found with them. What could they have been all buried in one grave for? It must have been an ancient interment, belonging probably to the time when the Temple extended further westward towards Temple Bar than it does at present. It is hardly likely that it could have been an old plague-pit, as that part of London was too much occupied for pits to have been opened in the days of the last Great Plague, besides which the skeletons would hardly have been placed so uniformly as they were found.

Temple Bar, originally designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and erected in 1670, was partially taken down in January 1878, with considerable care, the stones having been all first numbered and then taken off to Farringdon Street, to be stored, until an opportunity might occur of rebuilding the old gateway. It was proved that it had been built of stone which had previously taken part in the construction of some older building, probably destroyed in the Great Fire of London, as many of the stones were moulded and otherwise ornamented, the carved portions being turned inwards and then refaced.

In March 1879 the north buttress was removed, and in June of the same year the south buttress was taken down. It was then discovered that between the south wall of the south arch over the foot-way

and the wall of the bank there existed a recess three feet in breadth, in which was found a flue and the remains of what had been a circular stone staircase leading up into the Bar. This proves that Temple Bar was originally built to accommodate a custodian, and that it was approached by this staircase from the south side. The building consisted of a lobby on the south side leading into a large chamber, which had a fire-place in it, and had been used by Messrs. Child and Co. for nearly two centuries as a library for their old books: it was secured by an iron door, and was wainscoted with oak paneling. Out of this room was another small chamber on the north side, with a ladder which led up into a sort of prison cell; this was a stone chamber, having two narrow loop-holes at both the south and north end for the convenience of light, in front of which were massive iron bars; the entrance was guarded by a heavy iron door. I am inclined to think that Temple Bar was originally intended as a guard-house, and that, in case any disorderly person should be arrested, this upper chamber was constructed as a temporary lock-up.

This upper chamber proved of great value as a store-room for the old files of vouchers previous to the year 1800. A little to the eastward of the recess before mentioned in the south wall of the arch was evidence of a low doorway, which had been at one time used as an entrance into the "Marygold," probably the only one in the early history of the house; it would have opened out into the middle of the old shop, where, it will be remembered, there was a sky-

light and a space dividing the house on the east from that on the west side of Temple Bar. This space was originally occupied by a staircase which led through a door into each floor. The old doors remained in the wainscoting of the front rooms as evidence of their former use, until they were pulled down.

When the workmen were taking off the upper portion of the south arch they discovered several plaster casts of torsos\* embedded in the mortar, carefully placed between the layers of stone. They consisted of five nude torsos, one draped female, one torso of shoulders, one bull, two cherub heads, and one head of a female. They are of exceedingly fine work, certainly much earlier than the days of Charles II. It was suggested by Mr. Shoppee that these casts might have been copies of the original fine works which were done for the Earl of Arundel in Rome, for the decoration of Arundel House, which formerly stood comparatively close to Temple Bar, and when they had served their object were thrown aside as useless, and it is thus that they were laid in between the stones of Temple Bar, and so handed down as we now see them. Besides these, in other parts of the south pier, a farthing token of Bristol was found. Obverse, a ship in full sail, with THE ARMES OF BRISTOLL in the margin; reverse, C.B. 1652 A BRISTOLL FARTHING. Also a large quantity of oyster-shells, and a farthing of Charles II., now in possession of Mr. Burt, the contractor, who removed Temple Bar.

\* These are now in the Museum at the Guildhall.



Beneath that portion of the Bank called "the shop," being on the west side of Temple Bar, were some ancient arches, which were visible in the old wine-cellar. Upon removing all the superstructure and clearing away the adjoining walls in order to develop the whole of these arches, the workmen exposed to view a large central pier, composed of upper greensand (the firestone of Kent), with four arches of the same material springing from it—two extended east and west and two north and south. The north, south, east, and west ends of the arches rested upon an ancient wall composed of blocks of chalk, indicating that the whole had formed a square chamber, and it is generally supposed by architects who visited the excavations that the roof had been groined, and that it must have carried a large building, and that the date of the arches was the thirteenth century.

A wall of chalk blocks, varying from 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet in thickness, extended the whole length of the area from north to south, beginning near the street immediately beneath the wall of Temple Bar, so that this wall might possibly have been a portion of the boundary wall of the liberties of the city of London. The thickness of the ancient wall to the south, abutting against Fleet Street, was  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

At the base of the pier was a brick pavement, a few inches above which was a layer of cinders, then a narrow stratum of concrete above it; this extended over the whole area excavated;  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet above this was the layer of flat bricks which composed the floor of the cellars. A little west of the pier, but under the arches, was a well, which was  $9\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep

beneath the level of the cellar: in it a jug of cream-coloured pottery, with green glazed top, the usual type of the fourteenth century, and a pipkin covered with yellow glaze of rather later date, were found. This well probably belonged to the sixteenth century. Under a portion of the chalk wall, resting upon and being in gravel, a copper cauldron or cooking-pot, standing upon three stout legs, was discovered; this was of the usual style of copper vessels of the time of King John. As that monarch died in 1216, the building of which these chalk walls formed part could not well be later than the commencement of the thirteenth century, and perhaps dated as far back as the latter part of the twelfth century.

The cellars which were built into these arches were exceedingly massive and were supposed to be of the sixteenth-century work. On the eastern side of the chalk wall, which ran north and south, immediately beneath the building known as "Y<sup>e</sup> Marygold," a very large slab of Portland stone was found at a depth of about 13 feet from the surface; it had evidently formed some part of the previous building, and was too heavy to move. It had two steps cut in it.

At the time of the discovery I made all sorts of inquiries as to what building could have stood upon this site, but failed to find any record. It could not have formed part of the former Temple Bar, as the house which stood above it was at least three centuries old. The Middle Temple has not any early records of its property, so I could not inspect any early plans of the site.

I had recourse to Stow's "Survey of London" and

his "Annals of England," from which I culled the following particulars:—In the 19th year of King Henry the First, *i.e.* 1119, "Certaine noblemen of the horsemen being religiously bent, bound themselves in the hands of the Patriarke of Hierusalem to serve Christ after the manner of regular Chanons, in chastitic and obedience, and to renounce their owne proper will for ever. Of which order the first was the honourable man Hugh Paganus, and Gawfride de Saint Audemare, and where at first they had no certaine habitation. Baldwine, King of Hierusalem, graunted them a dwelling-place in his pallace by the Temple, and the Chanons of the same Temple gave them the streate thereby to build their houses of office in, and the Patriarke, the King, the Nobles and Prelates, gave them certaine revenues out of their lordships. Their first possession was for safeguarde of the Pilgrims, to keepe the wages against the lying in waite for thieves. Ten yeares after they had a rule appointed them and a white habit by Pope Honorius at that time; where they had been nine in number they began to increase in great numbers.

"In 1185 Heraclius, the Patriarke, dedicated the church of the New Temple, then first builded in the west part of London by the Knight Templars of England; he also dedicated the Priory of St. John of Jerusalem by Smithfield.

"After a time they waxed insolent and would only associate with noblemen. In 1308, after the Epiphany of our Lorde, all the Templars in England were apprehended and committed to prison and to divers

places. They were tried and condemned to do penance for the rest of their lives in several monasteries.

“In 1313 Edward II. gave unto Aimer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, the whole place and houses called the New Temple at London, with the ground called Ficquetes Croft, and all the tenements and rents, with the appurtenances, that belonged to the Templars in the city of London and suburbs thereof.” This paragraph proves that the Temple extended much further in those days than at present, as Ficquetes Croft is now Lincoln’s Inn Fields. After the death of Aimer de Valence we find the possessions again reverted to the Crown.

“In 1324 the landes, lordships, possessions of the Templars were given to the Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem through the whole realme, to be by them possessed for ever for the defence of Christendome against the infidels.”

We read that in 1381 the rebels of Essex and Kent, under Wat Tyler, destroyed and plucked down the houses and lodgings of the Temple, took out of the church the books and records that were in hutches of the apprentices of the law, carried them into the streets, and burnt them; the house they spoiled and burnt for wrath that they bare Sir Robert Halles, Lord Prior of St. John’s in Smithfield; but it has since again at divers times been repaired, namely, the Gate House of the Middle Temple in the reign of Henry VIII. by Sir Amias Paulet, Knt. upon occasion as shown in Stow’s Annals.

The fact of the existence of the layer of cinders and fragments of charcoal all over the area excavated,

proves to my mind that the buildings which occupied this site must have been destroyed by fire; the base of the pier likewise bore evidence of having been subjected to burning. The various architects who saw the arches at the time of the excavation all agreed that they must have carried a large ecclesiastical building, or a gate-house, and that the style was of the thirteenth century. After due consideration of all these facts, and from what I have read you from Stow's Annals, I conclude that these relics belonged to some large building of the Temple, possibly the Master's house, and that it was destroyed by Wat Tyler's mob in 1381.

Among the various antiquities discovered during the excavations was a large stone, found in the front part, bearing a date, 1645, and a mason's mark, M.H.

A glass flask with flat sides, time about sixteenth century.

A sixpence of Elizabeth, 1580.

A pipe-clay roller for curling wigs.

A large quantity of broken Bellarmines, mostly found in a cesspool, but many near the base of the pier; some had a claret-coloured glaze, which I think would be of late date.

A vase of red earthenware.

Beneath the house in the Strand, formerly occupied by Huggins the chemist, and latterly by Preedy the hatter, was found a glass badge, or seal, of the Earl of Thanet, which had been affixed to a bottle.

The town-house of the Earls of Thanet formerly

stood upon that site, which would of course account for the seal being found there.

List of coins and tokens found at Temple Bar :

- Elizabeth sixpence, 1580.  
 Charles I. Tower shilling, edges clipped.  
 Do. 2 royal farthing tokens.  
 Do. 2 Irish royal farthing tokens.  
 Charles II. 2 farthings.  
 James II. a gun money-piece, probably a shilling.  
 William and Mary, 3 half pennies, 1694.  
 William III. 2 half pennies, 1697.  
 Do. 1 farthing, 1696.  
 George I. 2 farthings.  
 George II. 2 half pennies. 1735, 1739.  
 George III. farthing (early).  
 Bristol farthing token, 1652.  
 Token, John Spicer in Crown Court : a crown in field; reverse, "In Russell Street, 1667; his half penny;" a lute.  
 Farthing token, Andrew Ragdale, in Bow Lane.  
 Do. Joseph / — at y<sup>c</sup> — ; reverse, Temple Barr Without; <sup>\*G\*</sup><sub>I\*I</sub> in the field.  
 Three Nuremburg tokens.  
 Several foreign coins and tokens, many illegible.
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