

RECENT RESTORATIONS AND DISCOVERIES AT THE GUILDHALL, LONDON.

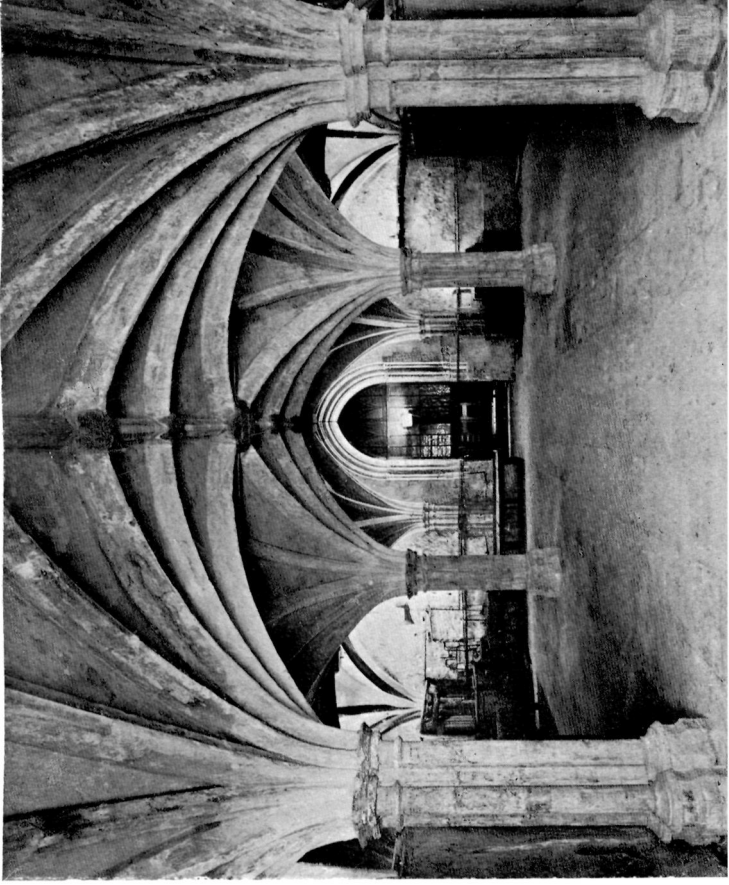
Inspected by the Society, November 26th, 1910.

By SIDNEY PERKS, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A., CITY SURVEYOR.

THE crypt has quite recently been restored; until then, the walls and vaulting were covered with dirt and grease, the shafts supporting the vaulting were quite black, and it was only after the removal of the grease and dirt that the colour of the blue Purbeck stone shafts could be seen. This eastern crypt was more expensively constructed than the western portion, it was probably used for certain meetings, and its importance was emphasised by the fine entrance, which is quite as elaborate as the fifteenth century porch. Unfortunately, it is impossible to take a good photograph of this entrance. Until about two years ago it was boarded up and completely obscured, the upper half by a lavatory, while the lower portion of the doorway formed the side of a dark lumber hole, only accessible through a trap door. Now a new staircase gives easy access to the crypt, and we can see the fine mouldings of the piers, the niches that no doubt held statues, and many other interesting details. Massive iron hooks still remain on which the heavy doors were hung. The bar that held them in position swung back heavily when unhooked, for a circular line was worn on the stone jamb, and can be seen to-day. This doorway was about 7 feet 10 inches below the level of the Guild-

hall yard, and was approached by a flight of steps, no doubt of stone. Excavations have been made recently, but no traces of these steps could be found; it was hoped there might be some lines showing where the stones were built against the outer wall of the porch, but none appear. The excavations were, however, only made along a small portion of the wall, and there may be traces along the remaining part. We are more fortunate with the indications of the access from the crypt door level to the floor of the crypt, for the old stone lines may still be seen, and the new staircase was kept well clear of them.

The question of the date of the eastern and western crypt is of the greatest interest, and, as Price states the eastern crypt was the crypt of the old chapel, it may be useful to criticise the evidence he lays before us. He states (see page 110 of his "History of the Guildhall") that a chapel was built about 1280, and used as a chapel until 1429; it was then discovered it "had become too small for the requirements of the citizens flocking to hear divine worship," and that Henry VI. accordingly "granted letters patent to pull down the old chapel, but as the crypt beneath the old chapel was substantial, it remained, and is the present eastern crypt." But surely he forgets the Guildhall was commenced in 1411, paved in 1422, and glazed in 1423, and the porch erected, "last of all," in 1425. How could the chapel above the crypt have existed where the Guildhall is now until 1429 when the entire Guildhall, on the same site, was finished about 1425? When Price suggests that this portion of the crypt belonged to an early chapel, we cannot help thinking it seems unlikely that a little cottage, like the previous



THE GUILDHALL CRYPT (EASTERN) AS RESTORED.

Guildhall, should have so large a chapel, and, further, does it not seem strange that if this portion was incorporated in the Guildhall, in 1411, having an area of 5,291 square feet, that the new chapel, erected in 1429, should only have an area of 4,234 feet, or 1,057 feet less? Let us also face the fact that the old chapel "had become too small for the requirements of the citizens to hear divine worship."

There is a theory that this eastern crypt was used as a chapel, and a little recess at the eastern end may have given rise to that idea. A few weeks ago, brickwork that had been built across the doorway opposite the main entrance was removed, and the steps and other details uncovered. These steps, which were also covered up, probably led to some official portion of the building.

It is often suggested that the cross wall, which divides the crypt in two parts, was not built at the same time as the vaulting was constructed in one of the two halves. This has been used as an argument by those who have advocated the theory that a part of the crypt formerly belonged to a previous building.

The western half of the crypt is supposed to have collapsed during the great fire, and Wren is credited with the restoration. This theory is no doubt correct. The architect, whoever he was, proceeded to rebuild the vaulting necessary to support the floor of the hall. He did it in the quickest way possible; he did not replace the old stone vaulting, but simply built a brick wall at each end of the space to be covered, and just inside the old stone walls, one being the cross wall and the other the west external wall, and in doing so he built up all the old stone responds, etc., and they have

been hidden from 1666 until a few weeks ago. Wren then built a series of brick arches, similar to a range of railway arches. He filled up the haunches and replaced the floor. The workmen filled in with any stone or brick debris handy, and hundreds of beautiful Gothic fragments exist to-day in these brick walls. While removing the brickwork to uncover the Gothic work shown in the illustrations a very large number of the fragments have been carefully removed and labelled, and are ready for depositing in the museum.

When clearing out some of the debris filled in just below the paving of the hall, I found a few pieces of stone, smooth and well worn on one side, tooled and rough the other side. They are portions of paving stones, and are Purbeck, and no doubt formed part of the paving of the hall, paid for in 1422 by the executors of the celebrated Dick Whittington, and referred to above. They are exhibited in the crypt.

To return to the cross wall of the crypt. An examination of the responds at the angles of the western half shows that each cap is formed of one stone, and beyond the stone the return faces are built so as to bond into the stonework. The square line of the cap stone is fair with the face of each wall, clearly showing that the cross wall was built when the east portion of the crypt was built. Another proof is the fact that the wall ribs of the vaulting are quite different from the main ribs at the crossing between the piers. In the latter case, the face of the rib is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, but where it is built into the cross wall it is 13 inches wide. I think these two facts clearly show that the eastern part of the crypt and the cross wall were built at the same time.

The next step is to prove that the cross wall was built at the same time as the vaulting in the western half. This was not so easy, because Wren's brick wall hid all the old stone work. I had some of this brick-work removed at the points where the old stone ribs must have joined the cross wall, hoping to find some link still existing if the work was carried out at one date. In order to do this a small portion of the paving of the great hall had to be removed. Afterwards I opened up below and found the old springers of the cross and diagonal ribs; all of them are there, built in and forming part of the old cross wall, and they will not be bricked up again. The discovery of these springers has revealed the necessary clue; they are of the greatest importance, for they prove conclusively that the whole crypt of the Guildhall, from end to end, was built at one date.

I found one other interesting point when opening up at the side of one of the piers in the main hall: the floor level was originally 6 inches lower than the existing floor; these 6 inches must have been very useful in adding to the effect of the bases which are now rather squat in appearance.

In the crypt where the wall is thickened, being the wall under the doorway between porch and hall, and the fourth way from the west end, there are some springers that puzzled Price, and as he could not understand them he assumed they formed part of an earlier building. The ribs are similar to the remains of other ribs, and the reason they spring from the main wall without any respond, as in other cases, is because the wall is so much thicker here; they are also of necessity wide apart, as the line of junction with the

wall is at a plane in advance of all the other points of springing.

One very remarkable feature is the vaulting in the centre bay at the eastern end of the east crypt. This is much higher than any other portion of the vaulting, and certain opinions are given at length in Price's book; his theory was that the floor above was originally higher, and that every bay, except the one in question, was lowered in order to have the floor of the Guildhall about 1 foot 9 inches lower than that of a previous building. Unless the previous vaulting had collapsed, it is hard to understand why such expense should be incurred for so trivial an object. We know it was usual in mediæval halls to have the dais higher than the remainder of the floor, and, bearing that in mind, the builders may well have raised the vaulting in this one instance to clear a high door which we see at the eastern end to-day, knowing that the difference in level would not affect the structure above, as the dais would in any event be higher than the body of the hall. The windows in this eastern half of the crypt differ in some respects from those in the western half, and just as the vaulting was more expensive and the whole construction of a more ornamental character, so we find the windows in the eastern half were glazed, while those in the western half were not glazed, but they had stout stay-bars outside, and the usual rebate for internal shutters.

With regard to the western half of the crypt, from the time of the great fire onwards this portion of the building has not been treated with the kindness it had a right to expect. It was always evident, from the responds along the side wall, that this portion of the

crypt was vaulted. Price quotes an opinion that "of any columns to support the centre of the floor we were unable to discover a trace."

Last December I took up some paving in a direct line between two responds, and one-third of the way across the crypt I carefully cleared away the earth, and just below the surface I found the foundations of a pier that supported the vaulting; at once I opened the paving in the corresponding positions, and in every case—there are eight in all—I found the foundations I wanted. We may therefore confidently say that we know exactly where the piers existed and the number of them; we can tell from the responds that the vaulting ribs spring direct from the shafts without any caps, as at Fountains Abbey, and every detail is at hand to enable the Corporation to restore the entire west end of the crypt, so that we could see it as in the fifteenth century. I also cut away the brickwork at the west end and was delighted to find the two responds I wanted in an excellent state of preservation.

Another very interesting discovery was a three-light window in the west wall of the building; this was entirely bricked up. It was, apparently, the only three-light window in the west end of the crypt. A portion of the cill remains. This is yet another link in the chain of belief that the building was an independent structure. Had the Guildhall been an extension of a previous building,* we might have looked for a door here, but, according to this discovery, apparently, there was no communication from the west end of the crypt. The doorways show communication north, south, and

* See J. E. Price's "Descriptive Account of the Guildhall."

east. The last doorway shows a rather peculiar state of things: apparently the opening was first intended to be of the width shown, and then it was decided to make it narrower, and build the dividing wall between the crypts across part of the jamb; this was done, and on taking away this portion of the wall the old structure, covered up since it was built in 1411, shows as sharp an arris as if it had been worked to-day; in other words, we see the jamb of the door which has been hidden for 500 years.

There is a very interesting staircase from the crypt to the side of the porch, which is almost entire. Needless to say it was partly bricked up until a few months ago. The entrance at the crypt level still has stout hooks, and the ceiling is simply vaulted by stones leaning against one another, a straight joint running from end to end.

As stated above, the whole of the western half of the crypt was constructed in a much less expensive manner than the eastern half. The windows have simpler heads, and were not glazed—glass was a luxury in those days; the piers of the vaulting were in ordinary stone, and not Purbeck, as in the eastern half, and there were no caps. It seems to me that a possible reason for the difference is that the eastern half was constructed for ceremonial purposes, and the western half for muniment purposes or domestic work. This may or may not be so, and I advance the theory as a practical solution of a difficulty. We get the magnificent entrance to the eastern half of the crypt, and we get the narrow little staircase at the side of the porch to the western half. This at once suggests what is now known as a trade entrance, and the two doors close together,

on the north side, indicate that access was sought to one portion of the crypt by persons who did not wish to pass through the other portion. In 1501, kitchens were erected at the north side of the building, opening off the western portion. Later on, the western end of the crypt was used for stables, for we read in 1683 that two aldermen were requested to report upon the "mischiefs arising from the keeping of a stable and a coach-house under the Guildhall."

The vaulting in the western half of the crypt is not planned conveniently for the main shafts above; in other words, the responds for the vaulting are not under the piers in the hall, but along each side wall there are other responds which are immediately under the piers of the great hall.

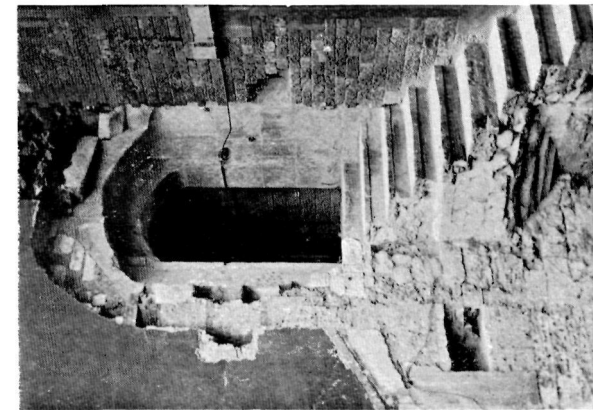
It has been suggested that this part of the crypt, being a portion of an earlier building, was retained when the great hall was erected; consequently it was necessary to add responds to support the piers above, cutting through the vaulting of an earlier date. This theory is, I think, incorrect. I had the necessary brickwork cut away and the stone work cleaned before a photograph was taken, and it is quite clear that the wall rib of the vaulting and a portion of the additional pier adjoining have been cut out of one stone; in other words, the vaulting and all responds were built at the same time. I have tested this in more than one place.

I had been puzzled for a very long while about the two stone staircases found in the thickness of the wall at the east end of the crypt. They start from the level of the east doorway, which was about 5 feet above the floor of the crypt, and turn outwards at a height of about

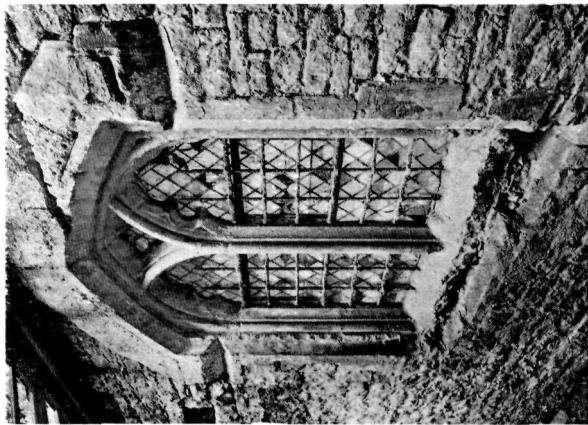
15 feet above the floor of the crypt. Nowhere have I seen any explanation for them. Price simply states that they communicated with the hall above the crypt. He evidently did not go up the stairs; had he done he would not have made such a mistake, for he would have found they turned outwards at the top, and not inwards. A possible solution seems to be this: I found at the British Museum, in the Crace collection, the maps of Overton and Pricke; these have been referred to above, and clearly show a building, apparently about 50 feet by 50 feet, at the east end of the Guildhall. These stairs, built, as was often the case, in the thickness of the wall, clearly show a connection between a building joining the east end of the Guildhall and the crypt. If a building did exist on that site in the fifteenth century, built apparently at the same time as the Guildhall, it seems likely that some connection should have existed between the main hall and that building. The plan of the hall shows a circular staircase at the north-east corner. Until a few weeks ago this was blocked at the foot by a boiler, and had not been used for very many years, the dust and debris being many inches thick on the treads. But on going up I found a doorway, bricked up as usual, opening outwards into space; this probably communicated with some building.

There is a similar doorway in the south-east turret leading into a complete small room. There was no staircase in this angle, consequently the room could only have been approached from a building at the east end of the Guildhall. In the circular staircase, about the level of the great hall, there is also a doorway; this was bricked up, and on removing the brickwork I came

GUILDHALL, LONDON.



SPLAY AT SIDE OF DOORWAY AND
CORBELLING UNDER STEPS.



RECENTLY DISCOVERED (AND ONLY
ORIGINAL) WINDOW, EXTERIOR.

upon a passage about 23 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 8 feet 5 inches high, which was also blocked with stone work, but the filling-in was removed with great care, and it was found the passage led into the great hall, passing through a buttress on the way. By a little expense, this ancient way can be restored, and communication opened up between the hall and crypt, which will be very useful for entertainments, etc.

The following extract from Maitland's History, Vol. II, may be of interest:

More to the South is Guildhall-court, which is well built and inhabited by the Chamberlain, Town-clerk, and some other Officers chiefly depending on the City Business transacted in Guildhall. This Court has a thoroughfare into Guildhall-yard, that opens between the Hall and the Chapel; and it leads into the great Hall by a back Stairs.

There is further proof of a building or buildings at that end of the hall, for there is evidence in the records that a house was approached by the lower gate. We read that on the twentieth day of February in the fifth year of the reign of King Henry VIth "John Penchricke, the Mayor's esquire, should have and hold the house or mansion situate above the lower gate of the Guildhall of the said City, and which John Merchaut late held and inhabited, to have to him so long as he shall have behaved himself in his office, etc., without paying for it any rent."

This lower gate is possibly the smaller entrance door on the south front shown on the illustrations previous to Dance's work, or, more probably, it was the entrance already referred to, from Basinghall Street, which Stow calls "the backe Gate of Guild hall."

Richard Blome, who wrote shortly after the great

fire, states "the roofs, floors, and what else was therein were consumed. These rooms, courts, and offices are appropriated to the same place, wherein they were kept formerly, but much more regular and loftier and more substantially built."

There is quite an interesting little history in connection with the east end of the ground floor of the building. The window as it is to-day has three main divisions, heavy transom, etc. There is also an old view showing the window as now and with Wren's flat ceiling and extra tier of windows. But another view shows the interior at an earlier date, with the lower part of the west window filled in with stonework and a monument against it. There are two other old prints in the Guildhall library, and it will be seen that the window is quite different in these illustrations: there are seven lights and no transom; consequently I naturally thought that the window had been renewed at some time, but I could find no reference to the cost. However, at the British Museum I traced two views of a State lottery held at the Guildhall. Apparently the illustrations are about the same date as the early prints in the Guildhall library, and the illustrations are referred to in "Political and Personal Satires," vol. 3, part i., No. 2435. These lottery views show the window as it exists to-day. I hacked a little of the cement work away outside the window, and found the old stone cills, mullions, and transoms underneath. The result proves that although the old window has been practically renewed, it follows the lines of the original. I have also seen at least one other incorrect view of the window, apparently made during the eighteenth century. These inaccurate old illustrations often give one a lot of

trouble, for it is not advisable to rely upon their evidence alone. The stonework was very much decayed inside, and was elaborately pieced about the year 1870.

Just under the great window there is a very fine stone canopy; this delicate piece of work can only be properly seen from a ladder, as the projection of the canopy of the wood screen below hides the view of it except from a distance. About the same level as the top of the wood panelling there is a horizontal line at the springing of the stone canopy. It is probable that tapestry was hung below. Stow relates that "Nicholas Alwyn, mercer, Mayor 1499, deceased 1505, gave by his Testament for a hanging of Tapestry to serve for principall dayes in the Guild hall 72 li, 6s 8d." There are also other references, one relates to the "hangyng and garnysshyng of the over and higher parts of the Guildhall." Consequently, there seems little doubt that the hustings were formerly hung with arras. The stone canopy at the back of some wood panelling which Wren erected, and his screen across the hall, are shown in old illustrations. Wren had the good sense to design his panelling so as not to obscure the stone work, which, unfortunately, is so hidden to-day.

In 1838 there was evidently a Gothic revival, for Wren's work was swept away, and William Montague, the City Surveyor, or "Clerk to the City's works," prepared an excellent "design for finishing the east end of Guildhall." I have the drawing in my office. The design was prepared to include three figures from the exterior of the Guildhall chapel, which are now in the Guildhall Museum. It is rather difficult to tell if the

niches were altered by Montague; on the drawing, the entire canopy is coloured with a different tint from the portion below; the colours are, however, very faint, but in consequence of the State lottery views and the excellence of the work, which is very similar to portions of the crypt entrance, I have no doubt that the canopy is original. I have in my office a report dated 1839 which confirms this view. It is beautiful work.

Now we come to what we see to-day. The east end and two return sides on the hustings are panelled in oak. This panelling was copied from a screen in Newark Church, and I think it was a great mistake to destroy Montague's design in stone and erect a copy of work, which, although excellent, was erected under entirely different conditions. Again, the proportions of the panels, etc., have been altered to make it fit in, and the effect is much inferior to the original screen at Newark.

It will be seen that the woodwork has a heavy projecting canopy, and this is immediately under the stone canopy. The result is that not only does the wood canopy prevent anyone near the east end from seeing the stone work above, but we get two heavy horizontal lines immediately under the window, which have the unpleasant effect of dwarfing the end of the hall. It is apparent to the most casual observer that the woodwork forms no part of the original design, for we see one canopy immediately under another, a senseless arrangement very detrimental to the dignity of the hall.

The original porch known as "The Guildhall Gate," was erected in 1425, and was very different from what we understand as an ordinary porch, for it was the full

width of the Guildhall yard, about 63 feet wide; it had two doorways in it, and was in part certainly three storeys high. The upper portion of the porch suffered considerably at the Great Fire of London, and was restored by Wren in 1669. He rebuilt the destroyed portions in a severely classical manner, the central feature reminding one somewhat of Temple Bar. Below Wren's work there were six of the original statues erected in the fifteenth century; these were only removed when Dance's front was erected in 1789, and they are traceable down to 1846, when they were sold for £100 to a Mr. Henry Bankes, M.P. for Corfe Castle. I have tried to ascertain if they are still in existence, but up to the present I have failed to get any information. These statues are often confused with those from the Guildhall chapel, which are exhibited in the Guildhall Museum.

The original porch, with Wren's alterations, was pulled down in 1788, a fact which is ever to be regretted. Dance's porch was very nearly treated in the same way, and a modern porch erected by Sir Horace Jones; but let us be thankful that that did not happen; he pulled a third of it down, and died.

I think it should be recorded that Dance first attempted to restore the Guildhall Front, only rebuilding a portion, and a contract was entered into for the work. I have the drawing in my office, but it was found that the fifteenth century work was in so bad a condition that the City Lands Committee reported to the Court of Common Council on June 4th, 1788, that "the stone being found in a much worse condition than was expected, and it appearing to us that the whole South front of Guildhall ought to be rebuilt at

the same time, we directed Mr. Dance to prepare a design for a new front with suitable decorations." The first contract was £1,900, and an additional sum of £1,800 was reported to be necessary.

For a moment let us consider Dance's work. In the first place we must remember he was a very good architect; he was one of the first Royal Academicians, and Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy; he was the architect for Newgate, a grandly designed prison, which, unfortunately, had to be pulled down a few years ago, as it was not suitable for modern requirements. Dance was trained on classical lines and had studied in Italy; it is quite clear to anyone that he had no knowledge of Gothic architecture, and he attempted to build a Gothic porch. The result is of the greatest interest to students. In the first place I know of no other attempt on his part to carry out Gothic work. What did he do? To begin with he was careful that his building should be similar to the old porch as far as the line and extent of frontage were concerned. Next he divided his building into three parts, the centre portion being higher than the two sides. This, again, as far as we can tell, was following the lines of the old building. His design was well-balanced and quaint in the extreme; it has an Eastern influence in it, and as we see it to-day it is a beautiful piece of colour. Horace Jones wanted to pull it down, and so did a few men recently, when the question of dealing with this part of the Guildhall was discussed last autumn. To me it seemed it ought not to be criticised solely from an æsthetic point of view; it is something more than a piece of architecture, it has the right to be considered as a landmark in the City; it has been reproduced on

programmes, gold caskets, etc., which are to be found in all parts of the world; it seems, in a sense, to be a trade-mark of the Corporation, and, good architecture or bad architecture, it seemed to me a pity that the Corporation had allowed one wing to be pulled down for the purpose of exposing quite a modern casing to an old building. The architectural Press carefully considered the matter, and such well-known men as Mr. Statham, the editor of the "Builder," and Mr. Maurice B. Adams, the editor of the "Building News," wrote strongly in favour of restoration. Mr. Thackeray Turner, the Secretary of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, Mr. St. John Hope, Assistant Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, and Mr. Ernest George, A.R.A., the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, wrote most valuable letters in favour of the restoration and against further mutilation. These letters were laid before the Court of Common Council, and, coming from such eminent men they naturally had great influence upon the Court, which decided, in its wisdom, that Dance's work was not to be destroyed, but that the missing portion should be restored. The work is well in hand, and should be finished this autumn.

I now come to the doorway to the room over the porch (see illustration). This is part of the original structure, the brickwork, etc., around it has just been cleared away and the big splay exposed; the corbelling out has also just come to light. I traced the splay through the stone casing of the exterior of the hall, and the history of this part of the building is now clear. Originally, the stairs were in the thickness of the wall; over them there was a big relieving arch, the springer at the

lower level is seen, this arch being carried right across the wall where the window now is. It is obvious there could have been no window there, such as we see to-day, and the line of the old wall is still distinctly seen at the top and at the bottom of the staircase, which was partly at the back of the fine entrance to the crypt. At a subsequent date the window was inserted, and the wall thickened, but this meant infringing so much on the width of the stairs that they would become useless. Consequently, the outer wall or face of the crypt entrance was mutilated and partly removed, and the steps, as existing to-day, were forced more to the south. This window was seen from the Guildhall-yard, and if Horace Jones had in view the exposure of the window when he pulled down Dance's work, it is clear that he was bringing to light something very modern. The casing and old face at the back are now exposed, and I hope always will be.

Until last summer, almost the entire wall surface of the Guildhall was covered with a preparation of cement about one-sixteenth of an inch thick. This had been painted and distempered, with the result that the sharpness of the mouldings had disappeared, and it was very difficult to distinguish between the original Gothic and the imitation work which has been carried out from time to time. I will be quite candid, and say that although, as a casual observer, I used often to enter the Guildhall previous to my appointment, with the exception of the porch I never considered the building genuine; but as soon as I studied it I found out my mistake, and I had small portions carefully cleaned off right down to the stonework, and these were inspected by members of the Corporation. This plaster and

paint work is said to have been started in Wren's time, the object being to paint the new stone used in restoration work after the fire, and also the stone blackened by the flames, so that the whole should have what was considered a pleasing and uniform appearance. When I first brought this matter forward I was asked if it was not a fact that portions of the stonework were damaged and greatly discoloured by the flames, and my reply was that as the Corporation apparently owned the only building in existence bearing traces of the Great Fire of 1666, this was the very reason for showing the large number of visitors a sight unique in London. That view was adopted and, as you may be aware, the work was carried out last year (Aug., 1909). The result is very interesting. We can see clearly the line of the old walls raised upon by Wren, we see the clean stone of the modern windows at a glance, the wheat is separated from the chaff, a stone building is on view in place of one of plaster and paint, so that he who runs may read. One point may be of interest; it was handed down by tradition that the fire was most fierce along the eastern end of the southern wall; that tradition proved true, for that part of the old stone is blacker than any other portion of the Guildhall, and the contrast with the light grey of the west end of the north wall is very great.

Two years ago the crypt was in a still worse state, and it was fitted up with gas pendants, common T pieces hung from the vaulting; these have all been removed, the gas-stoves are going, and the whole crypt has been lighted by electricity. I wanted to get a strong and well-diffused light, but I did not want to use pendants; I particularly wanted the vaulting to appear

as it was in the fifteenth century, and any line of pendants must have formed a perspective to detract from the line of the main ribs of the groins. Consequently, I had some simple shaded lights made in the form of a scoop; one is fixed on the wall in each bay. There is ground glass below and looking-glass at the back, the light is directed upward, and the crypt has the effect of being lighted by reflected rays, for there are no burners to catch the eye.

When Wren rebuilt the roof after the Great Fire he raised the walls as described by Richard Blome, who states:

The great hall being formerly in height, up to the upright of the walls, not above 30 foot, which now are raised 20 foot higher on either side and at both ends, where there are fair windows, and eight large windows on either side, of 16 foot high each window, where there were none before, and over all the flat roof and platform leaded, with battlements about it; whereas before the roof did meet at the top as in common buildings.

This refers to the storey with circular-headed windows which we have seen, and which remained until the present roof was erected in 1865.

Considerable interest was taken by the Press and by the public in the discovery, last autumn (i.e. 1909), of the one and only original and complete window in the great hall (see illustration). It has been stated that the discovery was "accidental," as if a plumber wanted to fix a waste pipe, and cut into the walling and found some fifteenth-century work, but there was nothing in the slightest degree accidental about it. The hall had just been cleaned, and it was possible to distinguish between old stone, new stone and cement

with the greatest ease. The window in question is next to a bay, which has a blind arcade into which a bronze memorial has been fitted. The bay, at the back of which existed the window, presented an almost identical appearance; the centre portion was divided into three parts, but there was this difference, the mullions of the bay in front of the old window were of cement and those of the bay containing the statuary were of stone. At first I naturally thought that the stone work in one bay had been damaged by the Great Fire and made good in cement, the adjoining bay being taken as a model, but a close examination showed that the main moulding that runs around the opening has a perfectly smooth face at the points of junction with the tracery. Now, had the entire original tracery been stone, the moulding would, in all probability, have been rough and indented, showing fractures at those points. This was the first indication that there might have been no tracery when the building was erected. I followed up this idea by having a small hole 4 inches by 4 inches made at the side of the moulding; had the stone been embedded in the wall, and formed portion of a continuing wall, it would probably have been somewhat rough, and certainly would have had the return face at right angles to the main face. Instead of that it was smooth and splayed. This showed at once there was a recess of some sort in the original structure; so the small opening was driven through until the jamb of the window appeared, then the whole of the brick and cement filling were removed, and the window appeared as you see it to-day. It seems that the window had twice been blocked out, for just inside it and, at the back of the recess, there

had been fixed some wood framing; this had been lathed and plastered, and then at a subsequent date, in front of this lath and plaster work, the brick filling had been inserted so as entirely to block up the recess and make the face level with the wall adjoining.

The recess opposite was treated in exactly the same way, but here the window was found much mutilated. I hope, however, it will be restored as soon as accommodation can be found for the occupants of the office at the back of it.

After the discovery, I naturally referred to old plans and views. I find one window shown upon a plan prepared about 1750, but there is no trace of a record of the other window.

In 1422 the executors of the great Dick Whittington glazed some of the windows of the great hall, and also of the Mayor's Court. In 1643 certain aldermen were instructed to examine the windows and have them destroyed if they considered "the pictures and figures in the glass windows within the Guildhall and Chappell idolatrous." This they considered they were, and they were destroyed. It is obvious that the windows had to be reglazed, and apparently some of the glass now in the window is the glass that was then fixed.

Only a portion of each light opened; this had an iron casement and frame, the remainder of the windows had the lead work fixed into a groove in the stone work. The iron latches, although very rusty, are charming in design, and I believe they are the original fastenings that were fixed at the time the hall was first glazed. Each is fitted with a spring very similar to the thumb latch of a cottage door of to-day, and not much like a modern casement fastening.

I know you will be glad to hear that the members of the Corporation take the greatest interest in the building, and in the opening up of old portions. The committee dealing with the structure is known as the City Lands Committee, and is the premier committee of the Corporation. Last year Mr. W. H. Pitman was the chairman, and he visited the building constantly, coming up to London to meet me during August and September, and helping in every way the good work so dear to him. This year the work is being energetically carried on by the chairman, Mr. Deputy Painter, who took his committee over the crypt only a few weeks ago. Do not think past neglect implies future negligence. Every member of the Council is anxious to do the right thing, and no fitter motto could be quoted in conclusion, with reference to the restoration, than that of the Corporation: "Domine dirige nos."