

HISTORY OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARY-THE-VIRGIN, ALDERMANBURY

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ORIGIN OF ALDERMANBURY.

ALDRESMANESBERI and Aldermannesberin in 1120-30; Aldremanesburi in 1130-50; Aldermanesbury in 1189-99; Aldermannebury and Aldermannesbury in 1202-3; Aldermanburi in 1213; Aldermanbiri in 1278; Aldermygbure in 1353.

Stow, writing in 1598, says "how Aldermanbury streete took that name, many fables have been bruited, all of which I overpass as not worthy the counting" but he proceeds to say that "it took the name of Alderman's burie (that is to say a court)."

The Street obtained its denomination from having situated on its east side, the "berin," "beri," "buri," or "bury," ancient terms for a fortified enclosure, court hall, or capital mansion. The meaning is obvious—the Ealdorman's mansion or enclosed place, and betokens the place where the Ealdorman or Aldorman, a man advanced in years, held his "bury" or court, to exercise judicial as well as consultative duties, long before Aldermen, as we understand the office to-day, were first elected to represent the citizens of the district, and where the court persisted for nearly three centuries while the form of civic government was in the making. "Bury" may be taken in the sense of a house or mansion, such as Gorham Bury, the mansion of Robert de Gorham; Bucklersbury, the residence of the Buckerels; Canonbury, the Canon's house.

The twelfth century form, Aldresmanesberi, is of Saxon origin and points conclusively to the genitive singular, as the "bury" of an individual Ealdorman.

The same word appears in the Swedish language, *viz.*:—Alder-man, the chief or oldest man of a craft gild, and it rather implies that in the time of Edward the Confessor and William the Norman, the manor or territorial district was a sort of island of jurisdiction and rights.

In theory, the Ealdorman, appointed by the King, transmitted the office to his descendants, and so, in the absence of other evidence, it may be that the Ealdorman referred to as possessing

the "bury" or mansion, was the chief of the gild and also a member of one of the most interesting of early London families: a Norman immigrant, from whom was descended our earliest traceable holder of the liberty of jurisdiction, namely, Berengar, who, as we find, held it *circa* 1120-30, as its noble or baron. He was succeeded by his son, Reiner Fitz-Berengar, who died about 1175.

When the time arrived to elect new Ealdormen to represent the citizens of the district for the purpose of settling disputes, and administering justice, the ancient "bury" was probably found to be too small, and otherwise unsuitable to the requirements of the newly-elected body. There is no evidence where the first "bury" or court was situated. The lord of the manor may possibly, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, have provided the Ealdormen with accommodation in his manor house. Be that as it may, a new hall or court became necessary, and so we have it recorded that Reiner's son, Richard Fitz-Reiner, the rich cloth merchant and joint-sheriff in 1188-89, for the purpose of erecting a more pretentious "bury" or hall, gave from his estates, a portion of the land which he and his father before him held "by hereditary right." This new "bury" was erected on a spot close to the west end of the site upon which the Guildhall now stands, and it became the meeting place of the then civic fathers. It passed through sundry transitions, whether by alterations or enlargements, from time to time, but it persisted in the privileged area for over two centuries (the term "bury" being displaced by "Gialla," "Gyhall" and "Gyhald" in 1292), until a new or enlarged Guildhall was erected on the site occupied by the present structure, with a portion extending westward towards Aldermanbury, which, according to the 15th-century chronicler, Alderman Robert Fabyan, was begun in 1411 and finished about 1431.

Referring to the year 1411, Fabyan writes, "in which yere was ye Guylde Halle of London begon to be newe edyfyed and of an olde and lytell cotage made into a fayre and goodly house as it now apperyth." This, undoubtedly, points to part of the ancient "bury" being incorporated with the new building.

In any event, part of Fabyan's "lytell cotage" was certainly abandoned early in the 15th century, for John Stow, writing in 1598, states that the "hall of old time stood on the east side of Aldermanbury, not far from the west end of Guildhall now used." The supposed ruins of the old "bury" or "Gyhall"

were said to be visible in the 16th century, in justification of which statement, Stow again comes to our aid. He says, "I myselfe haue seene the ruines of the old court hall in Aldermanbery Streete which of late hath beene employed as a carpenter's yard."

In Ogilby and Morgan's 1677 plan, Carpenter's Yard is shown as a very narrow lane, giving entrance to gardens in the precincts of the 1411-31 Guildhall, and some 70 or 80 feet distant from the north-west corner of the Common Hall. The narrowness of the yard was such as hardly to provide space for a structure such as the Ealdormen would have required, for the volume of business must have been considerable, even in those days, so that we are led to assume that Stow's "ruines" may have consisted of masonry and other building material, which had been removed from the old court hall, and stored in Carpenter's yard. The "ancient bury," referred to by Stow, was that built on the land given by Fitz-Reiner in the late 12th or early 13th century, and replaced by the enlarged structure, completed in 1431, with an extension towards the west, the old entrance to which is known to have been from Aldermanbury. In one of the City Letter-books there appears an entry which also associates the western end of Guildhall with an entrance on the west, open to the roadway. Ogilby's plan, too, shows that a lane or alley formerly existed immediately opposite the centre of the west end of Guildhall.

It is therefore contended that the site of the "ancient bury" is that represented by the houses in Dyer's Court, contiguous to the west end of the Guildhall, the entrance to which being some 80 or 90 feet further south of Carpenter's Yard, and between the existing Nos. 11 and 12, Aldermanbury.

THE SOKE OR MANOR.

The life of the inhabitants of this corner of the City, up to the 11th century, is enveloped in obscurity, and one of the many difficulties confronting the student is, that of tracing records which afford any reliable information about its topography before the end of the 6th century. If this interesting quarter of London was to any extent inhabited by the Romans, all evidence has completely disappeared, save that afforded by the venerable fragment of Wall which is known to exist beneath the mediaeval structure on the north side of the street, London Wall, and also a few Roman rubbish pits, containing

fragments of pottery and shells, discovered in the present century, at the extreme south-east corner of the parish. Moreover, if any Roman buildings ever existed here, the stones of which they were constructed were removed and employed by the Saxons in the making of their roads, when, in the 6th century, St. Ethelbert, King of Kent, not only subjugated Essex and Sussex, and made himself overlord of all the lands round London; but obtained a nominal suzerainty over the other kingdoms, with the exception of Northumbria, and no Saxon work in the soke has withstood the wastage of the centuries.

Ethelbert took possession of a vast expanse of open land for his demesne, probably all that north of Cheapside, and west of Walbrook, and having firmly established himself in the extreme north-western part of it, he proceeded to erect his royal residence.

Tradition has assigned this island site of the Saxon Palace between the Church of St. Albans and that of St. Mary the Virgin, bounded by what to-day is Wood street, Addle street, Love lane and Aldermanbury. Mathew Paris, who died about 1258, in a reference to the Church of St. Albans, writes:—"there to be the Chapel of Offa of Mercia whose royal Palace was contiguous to it, but through the carelessness and sloth of his successors, was by unjust seizing or encroaching thereon by neighbouring citizens, reduced (though still retaining its ancient liberty) to a small house,"

from which statement we are led to assume that the King of Mercia (755-794) built the Palace.

There is, however, a refutation of this in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, in the form of a document of sixteen folios, containing a minute account of the "expens and chargis in the clensyng of certeyn olde ruinouse houses and groundes lying in Aldermanbury, sumtyme the Place [Palace] of Saincte Aethelbert Kyng . . . and in the erection, settingg uppe and makyng of fyve new Tenementes . . . which began in London Tuysday the xxix day of Auguste the xxiiij yere of the reigne of Kyng Henry Grace the viijth."

Although the ruins referred to at that date may not have been wholly those of the royal residence, built in the 6th century, yet it is not altogether improbable that some of the old foundations were then still existing, with the ruins of later erections on a portion of the site of the palace which had been the royal dwelling in London. The sites of the "fyve new

Tenementes," mentioned in the document, were undoubtedly marked by those standing on the north-east corner of the church, as shown on Ogilby and Morgan's 1677 plan.

It was probably in this Palace that Ethelbert drew up his code of laws, and where, in conjunction with Mellitus, Bishop of London, he designed and gave to London its first Cathedral Church of St. Paul and the See of London, in 604. That St. Paul's was built by Ethelbert was proved nearly five centuries later, by the charters of William the Conqueror.

From various sources we gather that the Palace, built by St. Ethelbert, remained the royal residence of the Saxon kings for over four centuries, until Edward the Confessor abandoned it in favour of his palace at Westminster, which he caused to be built adjoining the monastery there in 1061.

If evidence is needed that the palace in Addle street existed as late as the close of the 7th century at least, we find mention is made of the King's Hall in London, by St. Ethelbert's two great-grandsons (Hlothære and Eadric), in their "enactments and dooms" up to Eadric's death, in 685, three-quarters of a century before Offa was born, in 755; while Mathew of Paris states that Offa used St. Albans as a chapel, which was contiguous to the Royal Palace.

Newcourt, in his "Repertorium," goes further, and asserts that the royal house was east of the church of St. Albans, with an entrance from Addle street, which it is said derived its name from Atheling (Athelstan); but, as to this, we shall have something to say later.

As this part of the royal demesne was the place of the King's residence, it would have been under the special protection of the King's Reeve, who would have had jurisdiction over a wide area, and, in order to develop the open spaces which existed during the Saxon times, surrounding the royal residence. King Alfred, during his reign (871-901), would probably have granted areas of land to influential Ealdormen, that they should encourage the formation of a gild or an association for the increase and protection of trade, for mutual protection and defence, and the exercise of good fellowship, and also that they should exercise jurisdiction for the maintenance of law and order, and, no doubt, such a policy was followed by Athelstan and Edward the Confessor.

The early history of the soke is very obscure, and it does not appear that the soke or manor of Aldermanbury had yet

been created. We have no evidence by whom or when it was created; but it was probably about 1060, which date synchronised with the abandonment of the royal residence by the Confessor, whereby a development took place with the prosperity of London as a trading centre and increasing land values. This released area was, no doubt, split up for the creation of sokes. One of these privileged areas was that of Aldermanbury, and, perhaps, the most important, since it included the site of the Royal residence, and, owing to the encroachment upon it, the ancient liberties were transferred to the Ealdorman who already had, or later built, his "bury," opposite the church of St. Mary the Virgin.

The two earliest references to the soke of Aldermanbury so far discovered, are those appearing in the original MS. in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, *circa* 1120-1130, giving the measurements of the lands owned by St. Paul's within the city:—

"The land of Goldwin the clerk is 30 feet broad and a hundred fourscore and four feet long at the end of the same on the eastern part [there is] a shrubbery . . . and pays . . . to the soke of Aldresmaneberi, three halfpence. . . ."
 "In Aldresmaneberi, the land of Wlured pays 3/- in fee and 1½ to the soke. It is 133 feet in length, and 41 feet in breadth."

These references prove conclusively that the soke or manor was in existence in the first quarter of the 12th century; but they do not preclude the supposition of an earlier existence.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that King Alfred restored London and committed the burgh to "the keeping of the Aldorman Æthelred," and, this being so, it may have been the starting-point for the appointment of Ealdormen for various areas in the City.

If the grant in the first instance was made to the Ealdorman which gave the soke its name, the evidence would point to a chief, or simply the Elder man of the "frith" or "peace" gild of the City, an institution which existed as far back as the time of Athelstan, whose ordinances were more particularly directed to the improvement of the system of mutual assurance and association which held so great a place in Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, and his "*Judicia Civitatis Lundoniæ*" were highly valuable in connection with the gilds and civic associations.

The gild made its own laws for the punishment of evil-doers, and was a sort of friendly society, formed with the

object of maintaining order and bringing felons to justice, and generally for the benefit of the inhabitants, but it also had a social side. The formation of *gilds* in Athelstan's time, to which members subscribed *gild* payment, was intended to provide the Saxons with a hall or "bury," in which its members might meet at stated times for social gatherings and for refreshing themselves with ale-drinking. Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald de Barry), writing in the reign of Henry II, states that the Guildhall of London was so named from the fellowship drinkings held there.

The *soke* of Aldermanbury certainly did not derive its name from an Alderman of the City as we understand the office to-day, for the reason that the creation of the *soke* pre-dates the earliest election of Aldermen by more than half a century.

It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the *gilds* had a "bury" or court house, at this early date, in which the members met for "mutual pledging," as well as for religious purposes. Here, they deliberated upon matters affecting the well-being of the inhabitants, for the *soke* was exempt from jurisdiction of any other part of the City, and it possessed the privilege of holding a court, as well as the territory in which such privilege was exercised by the Ealdorman of the *gild*.

We make some advance when we find that one, Berengar, or Berengarius, probably one of William the Norman's retinue, held the *soke*, *circa* 1120-1130, and that, about the year 1156, Henry II confirmed to his son, Reiner de Aldermanbury, otherwise Reiner Fitz-Berengar, all the liberties and customs of the *soke*. This confirmation is not only clear evidence that Berengar was the baron of the *soke*, or manor, but also that such fact offers some justification in assuming that Berengar's father may have enjoyed the liberties before him. This, then, is the beginning of the manor of Aldermanbury.

For two consecutive years (1158-59), Reiner Fitz-Berengar was one of the five Sheriffs of London, and, with William Fitz-Isabel, he held the office jointly for seven years, 1163-70. That he was a wealthy and influential man is shown by the fact that he possessed his own seal, bearing the equestrian effigy in armour, with the legend, "*Sigillum Reineri filii Berengarii*." He had four sons (Richard, William, Henry and Simon), and, at his death, in 1175, the *soke* passed to his eldest son, the wealthy Alderman Richard Fitz-Reiner (Sheriff in 1188-9).

Richard died in 1191, without issue, leaving his brothers, William and Henry, his heirs. The King's brother (John) presided at a court of arbitration for the division of the property between the brothers, who came to an agreement, under which William became possessed of lands, including those at Edmonton and in the Vintry, while Henry received the lands in Aldermanbury and elsewhere. Owing to his adherence to the barons, the lands of William Fitz-Reiner were seized by King John, notwithstanding the financial help he had received from the Reiner family before he ascended the throne, and, at the death of Henry Fitz-Reiner, the soke passed to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, for it is recorded that the Dean and Chapter "granted to Baldwin Crispus (Crisp) and his heirs the land which Henry the son of Berengarius formerly held." Simon de Aldermanbury (Sheriff in 1200), who had previously married Crisp's daughter, Margaret, now inherited the soke. He shortly afterwards transferred it by sale to Alan de Aldermanbury and his brother, Gervase de Aldermanbury (Chamberlain of London, 1196-99), after having first provided that if his wife should outlive him, she should hold the property for the term of her life upon payment of two silver marks yearly. Simon died without issue in the early years of the 13th century. The brothers, Alan and Gervase, then obtained from Richard the First, a confirmation of all the liberties and customs of the soke or manor, conceded by Henry II, to Reiner de Aldermanbury, in 1156. Upon the death of Alan, the soke passed to his nephew, also named Gervase, who, on the 16th February, 1247, made a grant to Alderman Adam de Basynges or Basing, citizen of London of the gift of Gervase:—

"All the messuage in Aldermanbury, sometime of Gervase the father of the donor . . . also to the said Adam, his heirs and assigns of all the liberties and free customs, which King Henry II granted to Reiner de Aldermanbury, sometime the holder of the said messuage, and which King Richard afterwards granted to Gervase and Alan, so that the said Adam shall hold all his lands within and without the City of London with soc and sac . . . together with the advowson of the Churches of St. Mary Aldermanbury, St. Mary Magdalene, Melk strete and of S. Michael Bassishagh, which were appurtenant to the manor."

Adam de Basing was a very wealthy cloth merchant, the King's tailor and chief financier, and the holder of the Manors of Bloomsbury, Holborn, St. Pancras and Finchley. After having served his year of office as Mayor of London, the King granted him relief from further administrative service in the

City. Several years earlier, he had installed himself quite a favourite of Henry III, who granted him a special charter:—

"Henry by the grace of God . . . to his Archbishops, Bishops. . . . Know ye that we have granted and confirmed to our well beloved Adam de Basing . . . all the gifts," etc.

Alderman Adam de Basing (Mayor in 1251), died in 1262, leaving two daughters by his first wife and a son (Thomas) by his second wife, Thomas then being eight years of age. Thomas de Basing, now the lord of the manor, had, during his early years, engaged in riotous living, which led to the sale of considerable property, and within a few weeks after reaching his majority, he died in 1275, bequeathing Aldermanbury manor to his wife, Margery, for her lifetime, with remainder to his half-brother, Richard Aswy, comprising lands and houses he had not already disposed of to meet his debts. Upon Margery's death, in 1298, the manor descended to Adam de Basing's only surviving granddaughter, Joan de Hadestoke, who had previously married Adam de Bedyk. After Adam's death, in 1303, Joan, his widow, married Sir Roger Sauvage, and they, in 1306, granted to Sir John de Drokenisford their capital messuage of Aldermanbury, with six shops adjoining, together with the advowson of the church of St. Mary. Sir John reconveyed the grant. Upon the death of Joan, the manor descended to Henry, her son by her former husband, Adam de Bedyk. In his will, dated 1335, Henry left the capital messuage to Joan, his wife, with remainder to his sons, Thomas (afterwards Sir Thomas) and John, in tail. Joan, in 1347, granted the manor house to Master Henry de Chaddesdene, Archdeacon of Leicester, and, three years later, Sir Thomas sold the reversion of the manor to him. In 1354, he left to his three executors, "his tenement manor or hostel at Aldermanbury," and they, in 1357, disposed of the "Inn of Aldermanbury . . ." to Sir John Beauchamp and John de Bovenden. Sir John died in 1360, and by his will, the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's became possessed of the manor. The Dean and Chapter, in 1374, granted it to Alexander de Bedyk, at whose death, in 1417, the whole of the family descended from King Henry's "Well Beloved" Adam de Basing, became extinct, and the residue of the manor reverted to the Crown; but some remnant of de Basing's vast estate, which had been so cut up and squandered by his spendthrift son Thomas, and, later, by Sir Thomas Bedyk, eventually came into the hands of the parish

trustees, consisting of the sites of several houses on the east side of Aldermanbury and in Love lane.

Whether the manor house, formerly owned by Reiner Fitz-Berengar, Gervase de Aldermanbury, and later by the de Basing family, was wholly demolished after it reverted to the Crown, and a new building erected on the site to suit the requirements of an inn, or that the purchaser allowed the original edifice to serve that purpose is not beyond conjecture.

With the death, in 1417, of Alexander de Bedyk, comes the end of the story of the Manor House as the residence of the lords of the manor; but, later on, we take up the story again from 1424, of the mansion existing as a brewhouse and inn, with the sign of "ye Ax yn Aldermannebury."

As already stated, the soke of Aldermanbury was, perhaps, the most important of those created in the city. It certainly covered a large area, originally extending, roughly speaking, towards Cheapside on the south, and to the soke of St. Martins-le-Grand on the north, which latter extended from London Wall to what is now Aldermanbury Avenue. On the east, it included land beyond Basinghall Street, and on the west it extended to a line midway between Philip Lane and Wood Street. To show the antiquity and extent of the soke or manor of Aldermanbury, it might be advanced that about the year 1121, when Henry I created Robert, his natural son, Earl of Gloucester, he also endowed him with a soke bearing his name, which, from its situation, clearly shows that it originally formed part of the soke of Aldermanbury.

THE PARISH.

The assumption that Roman London thoroughfares would necessarily be symmetrically planned, with streets crossing at right angles, is decidedly not supported by the irregular planning of the streets in the parish of St. Mary the Virgin, if, by the widest stretch of imagination, it can be said that the Romans did actually construct them, nor was the Saxon lay-out any better in the matter of alignment, if we are to accept the belief that they were planned in the late Saxon times, and if we have little to remind us of Roman occupation, we have no remains at all to perpetuate the Saxon period, although Alfred the Great may have witnessed the construction of streets and the erection of buildings upon the sites where Roman buildings may have previously existed.

However, we have ample proof that the Saxons were domiciled

here, and, if nothing has been identified as of characteristically Saxon origin, we certainly have names of streets which proclaim Saxon occupation. For instance, in an early 16th-century document we have Athbryght, later Adbryght Lane, which were evidently derived from Ethelbert, whose palace stood on the site abutting on the Æthel Lane or Addle Street. Could we but glimpse back to the days of Henry the First, and behold the open spaces between the few dwelling-houses which then stood on the highway, afterwards called Aldermanbury, with the ruinous Saxon palace towards the west rearing its broken towers behind the squat church of St. Mary the Virgin, and four or five low cottages, built of wood or unhewn stone, roofed with straw, reed or thatch, dotted about the narrow and tortuous highway almost impassable from pot-holes; could we observe the massive city wall to the north and beyond it behold the sterility all around, save the plots of ground under cultivation surrounding the tiny villages of Haggerston and Islington; could we recognise in this scene the flourishing parish as we saw it before December, 1940? Yet such would have been the appearance of the parish in the 11th and 12th centuries, when the bondsman was beginning to cast off the yoke of Norman servitude in favour of citizenship, with the right of bequeathing his own property, as well as that of being judged by his own tribunals at the "bury."

In the early years of the reign of Henry the First, with the ringing of a merry peal of bells of the church of St. Giles, the citizen or freedman would, for a few moments, leave his seld, brewhouse, warehouse or other business calling, to witness the progress of the pious and charitable Matilda, the idol of the people, who bestowed upon her the affectionate title of "Good Queen Maud." She, with her retinue, would be on her way to Edward the Confessor's built palace at Westminster, coming round by the church of St. Alban, in Wood Street, and passing on her right, the ruinous Saxon palace in the narrow lane, afterwards called King Adel street, thence into the main thoroughfare, where, on the east side, immediately opposite the lane, the Ealdorman's "bury" or manor house lifted its rude structure. This is the sight that would have confronted one just prior to the date at which we find the earliest reference to anyone possessing land or premises in the parish, that of the first years of the 12th century, when two properties are mentioned as belonging to Goldwin and Wlured.

At this period it was a parish of open spaces, almost entirely free from buildings. The paucity of dwelling-houses at this time is referred to by the chronicler Fabyan, and such few as there were, some of them doubtless standing on the ruinous foundations of earlier structures.

The only correct idea that can be formed of the life of the people in the parish in the following two or three centuries, must be gathered from historical documents, ancient deeds, etc. From these we may gather a general idea of the character of the residents and comparative unimportance of the street.

Although, in the 13th century, commerce began to spread with the entrance into London of the wealthy Corsini family of Lombards, the Buckerels and merchants from other lands, who resorted to the City for purposes of trade, the business life of the parish can only be conjectured.

In the 14th century, the main street, which for two centuries past had become Aldermanbury, with its northern adjunct, then called "Gaysporelane" or "Gayspur lane," was a narrow, irregular and winding thoroughfare (between 15 and 20 feet wide, broadening out near the church to between 40 and 50 feet) of gabled timber-built houses, with over-sailing upper storeys which, in the narrowest part, nearly touched the houses that might perchance be facing them on the opposite side, thus contracting the air space between them and shutting out the broad expanse of blue sky and sunlight, while keeping the streets damp and muddy. The streets were of the roughest description, consisting of large stones interspersed with smaller ones and a slight depression in the centre for drainage; no foot-paths; dogs the principal scavengers and rain the only cleanser, for the "rakyers" (scavengers) had great difficulty in compelling householders to clear away filth deposited at their doors by neighbours. Plagues in those early centuries were very prevalent, no less than eight occurring between the years 1348-1499, causing extensive mortality, and small wonder, when one considers the filthy condition of the streets in those times. Notwithstanding that several persons of easy competence came to reside in Aldermanbury with progressive ideas, the parish did not entirely escape the visitations. From the overhanging upper storeys, jutting out into the narrow roadway some poles about 7 feet long, may have been seen carrying signs to indicate ownership or the trade of the occupant, for houses were not numbered until some three centuries later.

The houses were rarely more than three storeys high, sometimes with access to the upper rooms by means of outside staircases or ladders leading from the roadway.

At night, the streets were dimly-lighted; but, by the first quarter of the 15th century, an organised system was introduced by which lanterns holding candles of a prescribed size and character ("12 to the pound weight"), every citizen was compelled to hang at his window or door at the hour of "vij of the bell at night." In later years, there were a few stately houses with fair patches of garden ground at the rear. There were still many open spaces reaching up to the mediaeval wall.

When we look back on the habits and diversions of our forefathers we feel sometimes inclined to wonder how they employed their spare time, for there were no books and no news-sheets. Happily, however, for our worthy citizens, news on a small scale filtered through. Yet in well-authenticated experiences and in goodly yarns, as well as passing scandals, our 14th-century citizens probably found sufficient to amuse if not to edify them. For their games and amusements, they would have horseracing, shooting, cockfighting, wrestling, leap-frog, and even the forbidden football.

Aldermanbury exhibited an interesting and picturesque scene two centuries later, with the line of more artistically designed houses, with their projecting upper storeys supported by dolphins or angels; their plaster fronts; their low, arched doorways, with large pillars, displaying examples of carving; their diamond-paned casements and their high, pointed gables.

Some distance beyond the wall, admission to which was by Aldermanbury postern, opposite Gaspore lane, were patches, verdant with clumps of trees, farmed lands and dairies, playing-fields and sylvan hedgerows, by the side of which the inhabitants took their walks; but they would have to return to their homes before sunset, when the gates were closed, while the postern wicket would shut out everybody with the last stroke of the curfew.

If we divest our minds of the knowledge of Aldermanbury as we knew it in 1940, and call to mind some country-town where the old houses stood flush with the cobbled sidewalk, we would then be in a position to visualise the parish as it was in the 16th century. At a later period, some of the larger houses were forsaken and divided into tenements, while a few others which had been the mansions of the more wealthy and

influential parishioners, whose descendants had migrated westward, were converted to suit the requirements of merchants.

Gardens were a necessity to the social life of the time, when the citizens had to live at their places of business; but the garden plots were at the rear of the shop or dwelling-house. At the end of the day, when work was finished, the citizen would enjoy the pleasure of the garden, or he would take a walk through the quiet street, whether for recreation or on business bent. Were he to pass Elsing churchyard, which, at that time, had become a garden with a gallery over the cloisters, and proceed through the postern wicket, a few minutes' walk would take him to the rising country, and the yet wide belt of uncleared forest beyond, portions of which still remain at Hampstead and Epping, and towards the west was the extensive ward of Farringdon. He would pass several farm homesteads which still supplied agricultural produce for the City.

In the following century came the plague, and its cleanser, the Great Fire. During the plague, Aldermanbury suffered to the extent of 109 deaths, the month of September alone accounting for 53. In the following year, the Great Fire destroyed almost every house in the parish. The quantity of water drawn from the spring supply, to fight the flames in the neighbouring district, was so great, that Estfeld's conduit in Aldermanbury and that at the south end, in what was then called Lad lane, were completely dry and useless. Those who had lost so much in the terrible conflagration speedily set to work to rebuild, and, by way of encouragement, Charles II remitted the 2s. hearth tax for a period of seven years on newly-built houses.

That the houses existing in the parish in the 17th century, and destroyed in the Great Fire, were fairly spacious, is clearly shown in Oliver and Mills' *Surveys*, giving the frontages of four, measuring between 65 and 71 feet; nine between 30 and 40 feet; ten between 20 and 30 feet, and about eight measuring less than 20 feet; while, in depth, the measurements ranged between 30 and 80 feet.

The post-Fire buildings conformed to the old tortuous line of the street, faithfully preserving the outlines of those that had perished in the flames. Many of the new erections were substantial houses, some of them standing until the end of the 18th century: but the narrowness of Aldermanbury now offered

still greater difficulties to pedestrians, by reason of the ever-increasing use made of it by carriages and carts. In 1718, several inhabitants complained that one Pickering, or his servants, in loading and unloading goods in the street, proved a great annoyance to others handling goods, and, by blocking up the highway they prevented coaches and wagons entering the thoroughfare, and also delaying customers coming to their shops. At this period there were 135 houses in the parish, some of them still occupied as private residences, while others were tenanted by merchants and tradesmen, in which to transact business during the day, and yet still living with their respective families over the shops or warehouses; but serious changes were now beginning to take place in the gradual disappearance of the old half-timbered houses and cottages, and the substitution of more business premises. By the end of the 18th century there was a more extensive transition from the comparatively quiet residential quarter, to one of trade, particularly on the east side, accommodating glovers, haberdashers, and those engaged in the sale of other soft goods, completely changing the character of the parish. This feature was much more marked in the early 19th century, when houses were being demolished for the erection of warehouses, while a few on the west side of the street still continued as private residences, shortly to be elbowed out to provide accommodation for traders.

A considerable amount of rebuilding was carried out between the years 1860-70, and in the eighties, the west side of the street was widened at its northern end.

By this time, there were few private residents; towering warehouses having displaced them completely.

The parish comprises both sides of Aldermanbury, parts of Addle Street, Philip Lane, Love Lane, and two houses in London Wall. Except the Church, the newly-erected Chartered Insurance Institute, and about ten business houses—some of them gutted or seriously damaged—the entire parish was laid waste by enemy action on the night of the 29th December, 1940.

Aldermanbury is pierced by several courts, alleys and side streets, all very narrow, the widest of them affording only room for one vehicle to enter. In the main, these old-world courts, where one might have expected to find a scrap or two of their ancient history, only exhibited a few grim-looking buildings, terminating in a cul-de-sac.

From an early date, up to the first quarter of the 19th century, there were premises at the extreme south end of the parish on the east side, known as the "Baptist's Head" coffee-house and hotel, a house of accommodation, in later times, for commercial travellers. It was of considerable standing in its time. The name, doubtless, had its origin in the days of the Commonwealth, when the example of the Protector was imitated by all ranks to the extent of christianising persons and things. It was at one time called Aldermanbury Coffee House, next to it is situated Fountain Court, which was built about 1670, out of a mansion house, formerly the residence of Sir Erasmus de la Fontaine. The importance of the mansion will be realised when it is stated that more than a century later, in 1771, it was rated at £90, an assessment which was considerably increased during the succeeding half-century. In the early days it had an entrance into Church Alley, which led to Cateaton Street—now Gresham Street.

Dyer's Court, with an entrance at No. 11, Aldermanbury, may be said to have been erected on historic ground, for on the east, part of it would appear to occupy the site upon which formerly stood the "bury" or court house of the Ealdorman from the 12th to the beginning of the 15th century, when it was abandoned by the mayor and aldermen for their enlarged or newly-erected Guildhall, begun in 1411. At this time, Alderman Sir William Estfeld (Mayor in 1429 and again in 1437), is known to have been in possession of a mansion contiguous to the site of the "bury," if it did not actually form a part of the court-house itself. It was situate at the rear of the houses in Aldermanbury, which afterwards became Nos. 15 and 16, and north of the parish land adjoining Dyer's Court, near the west end of Guildhall.

In the middle of the 15th century, Aldermanbury was one of the few districts possessing a conduit, for the supply of water to the inhabitants. For this, the parish was indebted to the munificence of Sir William. He was a public-spirited man, and a great benefactor of the church and parish alike. The "fayre conduit by Alderman berie church" was connected with the pipes conveying sweet water from Tyburn brook, and stood in the centre of the street at its widest part, the junction of Aldermanbury and Love lane, almost opposite the entrance to Estfeld's mansion.

The work of erecting the conduit was begun by Estfeld in



1444, and, by a codicil in his will, dated 15th March, 1445, he directed that the work began by him should be completed by his executors, at the expense of his estate. It was completed in 1471. In 1485, there was an ordinance by the Mayor and Aldermen that a warden be assigned for the "Conduit of Aldermannebury." It fell into decay, and was almost newly-built by the parish in 1633, destroyed in the Great Fire, again rebuilt in 1677, and taken down in the 18th century. Several years later, some of the old wooden pipes connected with it were dug up, and, in 1890, a drinking fountain was erected against the church railings, the gift of Deputy Alderman Sir Robert H. Rogers. In his will, dated March, 1445, Sir William Estfeld made bequests to the poor of the parish; to various hospitals and prisons; lepers in and near London, and to various orders of friars and nuns. Among other bequests, he left £100 for the repair of highways, precious stones and pearls to the shrines of two churches, and £100 towards the repairs of the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury.

Sir William, as it would appear, had been anxious to erect for the use of his household, a chapel at the rear of his dwelling-house, and he applied to the mayor and aldermen for permission to make such an extension. In a document dated 6th August, 1428, the Mayor and Aldermen granted permission to Sir William to construct a "haultpace," upon which to erect the chapel at the back of his house, towards the east, up to the end of Common Hall, called "la Guyhall," containing in length, between east and west, 28 feet, and, in breadth, between south and north, 12 feet 10 inches, "rendering yearly a red rose fashioned upon a rod, to be carried according to ancient custom, before the Mayor, when he goes to St. Paul's Cathedral."

This document clearly defines the position of Estfeld's house and its nearness to the conduit he caused to be erected for the parish.

After Estfeld's death, in 1448, the "capital messuage . . . together with four tenements in the parish of the Blessed Mary of Aldermanbury" subsequently passed to William Buck, at whose death, in 1502, his fourth son, Thomas, acquired the property, for we find that the "capital messuage, with gardens, cellars, solars, conduits and other houses and easements to the same belonging, in the parish of the Blessed Mary in Aldermanbury, and four other tenements adjoining the said capital messuage and of a parcel of land with a chapel thereupon built

in the said parish, to the use of the said Thomas Buck, Merchant Taylor." The capital messuage and the four tenements were held of the Prior of Holy Trinity, Aldgate, by fealty and the yearly rent of 13s. 4d.; while the parcel of land upon which the Estfeld chapel was built, was held of the Chamber of London by 1 lb. of wax, to be paid yearly to the church of St. Paul, at the rent of a rod and a rose for the Mayor at Penticost.

At the time of Thomas Buck's death on 20th November, 1523, Richard, his son and heir, was aged $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, and by will, Thomas Buck appointed George Rolle and three others, his executors, to apply the rents, etc., to the use of his wife, Alice, and also to that of his brother, Matthew, for their lives, by way of repaying a debt, the remainder to his son, Richard, and his heirs.

The property eventually came into the possession of Sir John Swynnerton (Lord Mayor in 1612-13). He was farmer of the impost on wines, an office from which he acquired considerable profits. He was one of the founders of the East India Company. During his Mayoralty a pageant was performed at the opening of the New river; or, as it was called, "The running streame from Amwell Head into the cisterne neere Islington." The pageant was arranged under the joint management of John Heminge and Thomas Dekker, the poet. At Sir John's death, in December, 1616, he was succeeded by his third son, Thomas, then 16 years of age. The property he inherited consisted of several houses in Aldermanbury, including the house his father had occupied. He married Joanna Symonds, and, in 1650, their daughter and heiress, Thomasine Swynnerton, married William Dyer (Sheriff of Essex, 1677-8), bringing him a fortune of £30,000, as well as the Aldermanbury mansion and other houses.

The mansion, measuring 70 feet east to west, and 55 feet north to south, was destroyed in the Great Fire, and rebuilt. Upon the sites of the houses adjoining it on the south, and the parcel of land upon which stood the old chapel, Dyer erected, in 1668-9, a tolerably large square, consisting of six imposing houses, with an open entrance for coaches and carriages leading from Aldermanbury, which houses were subsequently occupied by persons of some standing.

William Dyer, who was created a Baronet in 1678, died in 1681. He was succeeded by his son, Sir John Swynnerton Dyer,

and the family may have held the property during the early years of the following century, for we find one Sir John Swynnerton Dyer, shooting himself in a fit of insanity, and receiving burial in Aldermanbury in 1801.

Fifteen or sixteen houses which, in the nineteenth century, stood on ground owned by Sir John Swynnerton, were subsequently pulled down and new premises erected. About 1824, they were converted into warehouses by Messrs. Bradbury Greatorex and Company, and, in 1845, they, with other properties, were destroyed by fire, to the value of nearly a quarter of a million pounds. The present extensive premises, numbered 2 to 11 Aldermanbury, occupy not only the old site in Dyer's Court; but, in order to increase accommodation, additional ground was taken in, leaving the carriage entrance as it was in Sir William Dyer's time.

Next to Dyer's Court is Messrs. Sugden's gutted warehouse, No. 12, which occupies the site where formerly stood two houses owned by the parish. Nos. 13 and 14 were the premises of the Ward Sunday Schools, 15 and 16 are warehouses belonging to the City Corporation, at which was established, in 1880, the first Guildhall School of Music. In the years 1800-19, Dr. William Babington resided at No. 17, at that time one of the very few persons occupying premises as a private residence. Between Nos. 16 and 17 is Carpenter's Court. In Stow's time it was known as Carpenter's Yard, which he held to be the home of the ancient "bury"; but it is contended that it was more likely to have been the yard used by the sworn carpenters and masons as city officials, whose duties, at that time, were to deal with encroachments upon the public thoroughfares, to settle disputes as to boundaries and to determine upon other questions concerning the division of land. In the 15th century they were called upon to enquire into a nuisance concerning some posts fixed in an alley in the parish.

In 1599, John Newman gave to the Mayor and Commonalty his "interest or share in a certain capital messuage in the parish of St. Mary Aldermanburyes and in a yard called Carpenters yard adjoining the same messuage." The name was changed to Carpenter's Court about 1720.

It is not unreasonable to assume that the Court commemorates the name of John Carpenter, the Town Clerk of London in the reign of Henry V, who gave £35 towards the paving of the great hall.

Aldermanbury has the doubtful honour of being associated with the notorious Judge Jeffreys. For ten or more years that remarkable, if inhuman, man had his mansion on the east side of Aldermanbury, erected by the City Corporation on land owned by the parish.

It stood at the back of two houses which, before the Fire of 1666, were occupied by Abraham Nunn and Serjeant, afterwards Judge Guibond Goddard respectively. There was a large garden attached to the mansion with a forecourt leading into Aldermanbury, and a side entrance into Three Nun Court, at that time called Bassishaw Alley, which ran between the mansion and the "Axe" inn on the north.

In March, 1671, George Jeffreys was elected to the office of Common Serjeant of the City, and the newly-built mansion was leased to him at an annual rent of £20.

In December, 1671, it is recorded in the minutes of the Corporation that:—

"It is granted out of special favour to George Geoffries, Esqr., Common Serjeant, that he shall hold and enjoy the back tenement in Aldermanbury, contiguous to the wall enclosing Mr. Town Clerk's Courtyard which (with two other tenements before the same next the street) are now built by the City upon the ground lately purchased of Sergeant Goddard for and during so long tyme as he shall continue Common Serjeant."

At 30 years of age he became Recorder of London in 1678, and, in 1680, when the House of Commons compelled him to resign the Recordership, he was also called to account for the "great sums of money disbursed in fitting up his dwelling-house in Aldermanbury, which he held of the City." He became Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1683, but, in spite of the conditions upon which the lease was granted to him, he continued to occupy the mansion, as may be gathered from an entry in the church books: "Received of Sir Peter Rich, Chamberlain, for ground rent of three houses held by the City of London from the parish, that is to say the houses occupied by Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, Mr. John Needless and William Baker." As a reward for his exertions in punishing the adherents of the Duke of Monmouth, he was made Lord Chancellor of England by James II, in 1685; but even then he did not surrender the lease, but granted it to one named Normansell, at the considerably increased rent of £82 per annum; being £62 in excess of the rent he paid to the City Corporation. With the flight of King James, Lord Chancellor Jeffreys attempted

to escape in the disguise of a common seaman. He took lodgings at an alehouse called the "Red Cow," in Anchor and Hope Alley, Wapping, and was incautious enough to appear at one of the windows, when he was recognised by a Chancery clerk, whom Jeffreys had previously subjected to insult. Information was lodged that led to Jeffreys' arrest, and he was taken before the Lord Mayor, whose consternation at having to sit in judgment upon one so ruthless and dreaded as the brutal Chancellor, resulted in a seizure, of which he shortly afterwards died.

Jeffreys' insolent coarseness and atrocious cruelty rendered him the object of abhorrence, and it was with some difficulty the crowd was prevented from subjecting him to rough treatment, and he had to be rescued from the mob by a Company of Trained Bands. He was confined in the Bloody Tower, where he died in April, 1689. Finally, in November, 1693, his remains were conveyed from the Tower and buried in the vault under the communion table in the church of St. Mary the Virgin, where lie the bodies of Lady Sarah, his first wife, and several children by her, also Lady Ann, his second wife.

The mansion, which had been rebuilt, was standing as late as 1860, and the two parish houses which had stood in front of it became Nos. 18 and 19, Aldermanbury, now the gutted premises of Messrs. Courtaulds.

The extensive business carried on in the street seemed to call for banking accommodation, and, about 1836, there were established at No. 18, the Bank of Australia and the Bank of South Africa. The premises at an earlier date had been occupied by the Hunterian, Anti-Slavery, the City of London and Yorkshire societies.

North of these premises is a passage, which has been, at different periods, known by various names. In 1275, it was Basingelane, Basseshaw alley, in 1677; Church alley, 1720-90; Church passage, 1792; Church court in 1817; and from the year 1820, as Three nun court, so-called from the figures of three nuns on a signboard there, a sign frequently used by drapers in the 17th and 18th centuries. Basingelane was so named after Adam de Basing (Mayor, 1251), who shortly after he had acquired the Manor, in 1247, proceeded to enlarge his mansion by erecting a hall on the north side of the passage.

On the site of the newly-erected Chartered Insurance Institute in Aldermanbury, until 1932, stood the "Axe" inn, Nos. 20

and 21, with the claim that it had for its predecessors, the mansion of the barons; or, lords of the manor, dating back to the early 12th century, when the soke or manor of Aldermanbury was granted to Berengar, whose son, Reiner Fitz-Berengar, received from Henry the second, a royal confirmation of liberties over all his lands in respect of the soke. After Reiner's death, *circa* 1175, the soke passed through several hands, namely, Richard Fitz-Reiner, his brother, Henry; the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's; Baldwin Crispus; Simon de Aldermanbury; Alan de Aldermanbury; Gervase de Aldermanbury; Alderman Adam de Basing and his son, Thomas, Adam de Bedyk and his son, Henry, Sir Thomas Bedyk; Archdeacon Henry de Chaddesdene, whose executors, in 1357, disposed of "the Inn in Aldermanbury" to Sir John de Beauchamp. In 1417, the manor reverted to the Crown. There is evidence that the mansion, in 1424, existed as an inn, for, in the Brewers' Company accounts for the years 1418-1440, under the date, 20th November, 3 Henry VI, there appears the entry, "William Cokreth atte Ax yn Aldermannebury." This is the earliest mention of the inn by name—a name that was to be associated with the site of the capital mansion for five succeeding centuries, either as a brewhouse, inn or tavern.

When and how the sign originated is not easy to explain; but it was certainly not adopted from the badge or arms of any of the lords of the manor. Two axes are, however, incorporated in the arms of the Coopers' Company, whose hall was situate in the immediate vicinity; but "le Ax yn Aldermannebury" existed nearly a century before the grant of arms was made to the company.

Before the 15th century, it was customary for travellers to rely upon religious houses for hospitality; but at the date to which we have now come, "le Ax yn Aldermannebury" was then a hostelry for the convenience of travellers. It had been acquired by one Raphe Collye, who, in July, 1566, bequeathed it to John Whitehorne, Clothworker. Three years later, Whitehorne died, and "was seised in his demesne as of fee of one large messuage or mansion House called 'le signe de la Ax,' lately a brewhouse. . . ." Whitehorne's son, Augustyne, conducted the business of the Inn until 1581, in which year he granted a twenty-one years' lease of it to Mathew Chamberlayne, selling the freehold two years later to Roger Wilcocks for £460 of 'all that greate messuage or tenement . . . called

or knowne by the name or Signe of the Axe, now or late in the tenure or occupation of Mathew Chámberlayne . . . given to John Whitehorne by Raphe Collye'."

Wilcocks did not hold the freehold for any length of time, for, in 1584, he granted to Thomas Audley, Skinner, "the capital messuage called 'le Axe,' with all and singular house, roomes, buildings, yarges, barnes, stables and hayloftes, which messuage and tenements the said Roger Wilcocks acquired from Augustyne, son and heir of John Whitehorne . . . by bargain and sale 30 April, 25 Elizabeth."

At this time, Chamberlayne had resided in the parish for some 10 years, and still held the lease, with an unexpired term of 14 years, and, in consideration of Chamberlayne surrendering the former lease, Audley agreed to grant him a ninety-nine years' lease.

In the days of the 16th century, inns formed a necessary part of the life of the people; they were to the inhabitants exactly what the coffee-houses were to the people of the 18th century. They were recognised centres of information, entertainment and resort. There exists ample evidence that the life of the tavern was extremely picturesque and pleasant, affording something approaching the home character, a cheerful fire, an inviting meal and a genial and kindly host. Similar to other galleried inns, the "Axe" had an arched entrance, leading to a courtyard, around which the rooms and offices formed the four sides of the square, while stabling and accommodation for wagons, carts and coaches were necessary for the conveyance, warehousing and distribution of merchandise.

In the year 1598, Shakespeare went to lodge with a wig-maker named Montjoy, or Mountjoy, at the corner of Silver and Monkwell Streets, about 200 or 300 yards distant from the Inn, and it is quite conceivable that he, with his friends, Condell and Heminge, frequently visited the inn and its genial host, to quaff "a pot of good double beer," as well as for the purpose of a chat concerning the latest play.

The inn had become a favourite house of call, and well-known to travellers, and the first regular wagon service, from London to Liverpool, was established here about 1630.

"Dapper Dick" Brathwaite, familiarly, if unjustly, described as "Drunken Barnabee," once visited the inn, for, in *Barnabæ Itinerarium*; or, *Barnabee's Journal*, our frolicsome tourist is

found guilty of a tippling round, as related by him in the following rhyme:—

“Country left, I in a fury
To the Axe in Aldermanbury
First arriv’d, that place slighted
I at the Rose in Holborn lighted.”

Our “dry-throated Dapper Dick” would have entered the low-pitched gateway to find himself in a rough, half-paved courtyard encumbered with loaded wagons and surrounded by galleries from which earlier visitors would be viewing the excitement of the fresh arrivals. As a hostelry and carriers’ centre, it would be safe to state that few, if any, of the inns in the City transacted anything approaching the amount of business as that conducted at the “Axe.”

Chamberlayne died in 1600, and three months later his widow married John Waterworte, who carried on the business of the inn until his death, when it passed to his son, John, who subsequently assigned the lease to John Griffin. In 1656, Edward Jackson acquired a 21 years’ lease of “the messuage or inn called the Axe.” In the Great Fire, the “Axe” did not escape. It was rebuilt and completed, *circa* 1670, for, in the church records appears “1670 Edward Jackson atte ye Axe lent £10 towards the rebuilding of the church.” The importance of the “Axe” in the years immediately following the Fire, may be gathered from its situation and dimensions being clearly defined in Ogilby and Morgan’s 1677 plan of the city, while, in Morgan’s 1681 map, it is shown with a courtyard surrounded by the inn buildings, said to be capable of providing sleeping quarters for over a hundred guests. Although the inn was “substantially built, with good and sufficient materials,” it was lacking in every respect the mellow appearance of its predecessor, with its heavy timbers fast crumbling away.

In Oliver and Mills’ *Survey* of the city after the Fire, the foundations of the inn, as set out in the *Survey*, are shown to agree, both in alignment and measurement, with the site now occupied by the Chartered Insurance Institute building, after making allowance for ground cut off to enlarge the passage from Aldermanbury to Basingshaw, 26th November, 1669. The superficial area so appropriated for the widening of the passage now known as Three Nun Court was 180 feet, that is to say, a strip 90 feet by 2 feet.

The fact that, in 1682, it is described as a coaching inn, is clear evidence that it was rebuilt to serve the purpose of a coaching and wagon centre as well as to invite good cheer.

When Jackson rebuilt the inn he caused three houses to be erected on the north-west corner of the building adjoining the George Yard entrance. Jackson died in 1675, and his widow married Robert Leigh, who remained in possession of the inn for at least 16 years. Sometime between the years 1698 and 1707, Mr. Henry Watts became the landlord, and continued in possession until 1714. Later on, George Lansdell acquired the lease, and appears to have gained the respect of the parishioners.

With the ever-increasing growth of the soft goods trade in the parish, the "Axe" had become an important meeting-place for wool merchants, at which to transact and complete deals over a glass of wine, or at the luncheon table. James Holt, of "Flying Wagon" fame, was the proprietor between the years 1790 and 1820. Up to this period, the inn carried two numbers, 20 and 21, but, owing to the demand for show-rooms, warehouse and office accommodation, the greater part of No. 21 was let to merchants, agents, etc. In 1820, Holt transferred the "Axe" to Mr. William Miller, who continued proprietor until 1826, when it was leased to Nathaniel Hartley, who held it until 1844. At the expiration of Hartley's lease, the site having been considered too valuable for its occupancy as a tavern, new premises were erected for showrooms, and the ancient inn, which had now descended to that of a public-house, was driven from the position which it had enjoyed for several centuries fronting the main street, to an insignificant corner of the original site in Three nun court. During a period of 43 years (1846-1889) the lease of the tavern had changed hands seven times. In 1890, Mr. C. D. Mackness obtained possession, and, after a tenancy of 23 years, it was let on a 14 years' lease, 1913-1927, and was successively under the management of Messrs. Murton, Bowman Condon and Gerrard. Upon the expiry of the lease, in 1927, the tavern was let on a further three years' agreement while Mr. Gerrard was in possession.

In 1930, Mrs. Ricketts obtained an agreement at a rent of £200 and a premium of £750; but she subsequently sub-let it to Mr. Wright, and, with his tenancy, came the end of the remnant of the ancient and one-time flourishing carriers' inn, its painted signboard to the last swinging and displaying upon

its dark red field, composed of twenty-one miniature axes, a large diagonal-wise axe, with the motto, *In hoc signo spes mea*. With the remorseless insistence for improvement and progress, the tavern at last closed its doors, and, by the beginning of the year 1933, nothing remained on the site upon which, during the period of seven hundred years, had successively stood a manor house, the home of barons, lords of the manor and merchant princes, hostel, brewhouse, coaching and carriers' inn, hotel and tavern.

Those days are gone, and, with them, much that was historically interesting, and the one-time famous "Axe," a place of life and bustle in the coaching days, has now been transformed into an important edifice, opened by His Majesty King George the Fifth, 28th June, 1934.

Next to the Chartered Insurance Institute, at No. 22, was George yard, presenting a forlorn and neglected appearance, formerly a carriers' yard, attached to the George Inn, which closed its doors in the last years of the 19th century.

On its site there existed as early as 1360, a large messuage or mansion, occupied by Sir Ralph de Bassett, Lord of Drayton. He was descended from the Ralph Bassett, Lord of Drayton, in Staffordshire, who joined the baronial party against Henry III. Bassett died in 1265, being slain at Evesham. His lands were forfeited for rebellion, but were restored to his widow, Margaret, and their son, Ralph, by reason of the fact that the widow happened to be the daughter of Roger de Someri, an enthusiastic royalist. Their son, Ralph, who served in the French and Scottish wars, died in 1299, and the property descended to his son, the third Ralph, Constable of Dover Castle. He married Joan, niece of Sir John Beauchamp, who, for a short period, held the manor of Aldermanbury. At Bassett's death, in 1344, he was succeeded by his grandson, the fourth bearing the name Ralph, who was then eight years old. When of age, he came into possession of the mansion in Aldermanbury, afterwards known as "Bassettisyn" (Basset's Inn), and at once joined the army of the Black Prince. He was summoned to Parliament in December, 1357, and died in 1390, when the barony fell in abeyance. Shortly afterwards, the mansion was acquired by Ralph Holand, sheriff in 1429, and, in May, 1452, he bequeathed to "the Fraternity of Tailors and Armourers (Merchant Taylors) divers lands and tenements at the corner of Adelan . . . as well as a tenement or hostel

called "Bassettsyn," formerly belonging to Sir Ralph de Basset, Knt. late Lord of Drayton . . . situate in the parish of S. Mary de Aldermanbury . . . for the relief of poor members of the Fraternity."

According to an entry in one of the court books of the Merchant Taylors' Company, dated the 3rd March, 1591, the company granted an annuity of £5 to the churchwardens of St. Botolph, Aldersgate, out of their inn in Aldermanbury, in consideration of £100, given by John Conyers.

On the 18th of July, 1661, the Merchant Taylors' Company demised to Godfrey Lee, in trust for George Witham, "the messuage called Basset's inn, with the yard, gatehouse and two tenements on the street side for the term of thirty-two years at a yearly rent of £8." Lee appears to have conveyed the lease to Thomas Bland, and, in 1666, the property was consumed in the Great Fire. Bland caused material to be prepared with a view to rebuilding; but, owing to alleged claims upon the estate by John Warren, John Whitehorne, and others, as well as the refusal of the Master and Wardens to grant an extension of the lease, the work of rebuilding was held up for eleven years. On the 2nd July, 1677, at a court of judicature for determining differences touching property destroyed in the Fire, Bland petitioned against the Master and Wardens, and it was decreed that Thomas Bland be encouraged to rebuild the premises, and that he be granted an extension of the lease to sixty years at the former rent of £8, during the life of George Witham, such rent to be increased to £40 at the death of George Witham, and paid to his son, Henry Witham.

Half a century after the Great Fire, "Bassettsyn" had become the "George Inn," a sign probably adopted in compliment to our first George of England, and originating in loyalty to the powers that then were. It was a fairly large and important coaching establishment in its day, with an extensive yard.

It passed through many vicissitudes, but, up to the last, it was in the possession of the Company of Merchant Taylors, for, in 1831, it was let on a sixty-one years' lease at a rent of £165. As in the case of the "Axe," the "George Inn" was frequented at times by the churchwardens of the parish, for we find such references as:—

" 1761	At ye George 3 meetings	£11	5	0
1767	Dinner at ye George	£3	18	0
1811	Paid Mr. Briant, George Inn, for the dinner	£24	9	0."

In the year 1835 an inquisition was held at the George hotel, on the bodies of Samuel and Francis Holden, which were discovered in the vestry of St. Mary's Church, with their throats cut.

Up to the year 1833, it was known as the "George Inn," at No. 22 Aldermanbury, and between the years 1817-33, the premises exchanged hands six times. In 1834, it became the "George Inn and Hotel," and continued under that sign for twenty-eight years, with W. Waterhouse, Mary Phillips, James Crocker and Frederick Scotson as the respective proprietors. In 1862, under Mr. J. Clarke, it became simply the "George Hotel," and between that date and 1885, the business was conducted by four different innholders. In 1886, it was designated the "Old George Hotel," and, during the succeeding years, the licence passed through four hands.

About the year 1840, Mary Phillips, the then proprietress, established a "tap" in connection with the hotel, and for that purpose acquired part of the premises of the "Axe." At this time, some dozen or more carriers were using the "George" for conveying goods to and from the railways. The "tap" continued from that time until the expiry of the lease under the management of nine different persons, when, in 1892, both the hotel and the "tap" gave way to premises let to merchants, agents of other offices.

Nearby, John Swynnerton, senior, father of Alderman Sir John, had his residence, after leaving the parish of St. Alphage, and from this point Gasporelane or Gayspur lane extended northwards to London Wall, comprising some thirty tenements, and forming the eastern boundary of Elsing Spital in the early centuries. It was first mentioned in 1330, Gaysporelane in 1333; Gay spur lane and Gayspur lane in 1598, and later corrupted to Giltspur street in 1720, Jasper street in 1746-1820, in which latter year it became absorbed in Aldermanbury. The origin of the name is obscure, the two latter forms are merely corruptions, and give no clue as to its real origin.

From the site of the George inn northwards, the premises were mostly small and unimportant; but, upon an examination of the foundations, it will be seen that four or five of the buildings had frontages measuring between thirty and forty feet. At number 36 was Miller's court, which, in the late 18th century, consisted of four dwelling-houses, Mr. Miller residing in one of them. Adjoining it on the north was Green School Court,

with an entrance to it from London Wall, the extreme north-east limit of the parish. On the west side of the street is Aldermanbury Avenue, of modern construction, having been cut through some property belonging to Sion College at No. 49 in the year 1880.

At No. 57 is Addle Street, now without a single building standing. During the centuries it had been known by various denominations, all of which occur in early records—Athbryght Lane and Aldbryght Lane, the latter appearing in the Harleian MS., names probably derived from Ethelbert, or Ethelbryght, who had his palace adjoining this thoroughfare. About the year 1250, it was called Atheling Street; Addelane, in 1305; Athelane, in 1367; Adlynstrete, in 1400-13; Adlane, alias Addellane, in 1560; Addlestreete, in 1598, 1611 and 1677, and, in some documents, it was described as Addle Street, anciently called King Adel Street.

It has been suggested that the name originated in the Saxon word Aetheling, meaning noble or princely; or, in the nobility of the residents who, in the early centuries, may have established themselves in the vicinity of the palace. In any event, the adjective "noble" could hardly be applied to this narrow highway at the present day, inasmuch as it is only just wide enough for one vehicle to enter, and therefore it would have been ill-adapted for the residence of noblemen in an age when a coach-and-four was the fashionable luxury. In the early days it was merely a footpath for servants going to and from the palace grounds. Later, it became a cart track or lane, and, by reason of gradual encroachment on the palace ruins in the 14th and 15th centuries, it became widened and described as a street.

In 1790, there was a mansion in the lane of such importance as to be rated at £100, while, ten years later, the handsome Brewers' Hall, in the same street, was only rated at that figure, notwithstanding increased assessments. The Plasterers' Hall, close by, was rated as low as £38. At this period, the street was largely inhabited by joiners and all kinds of woodworkers.

Described, in 1756, as a "neat pretty building," the Brewers' Hall, before December, 1940, stood on the north side of Addle Street, at No. 19, adjacent to "Ye Old Cheshire Cheese" hotel. It occupied the site of a hall which was in existence as early as the middle of the 15th century, and which was probably the identical building mentioned by Stow as a "fair house." It

was almost entirely destroyed in the Fire of 1666, and from the subscriptions raised by the members of the Guild, augmented by the proceeds from plate pawned by the Master and Wardens, it was rebuilt in 1673 by Wren, who incorporated in the new building parts of the early structure. This most interesting building was repaired in 1828, and the houses, adjoining it in Addle Street, were rebuilt in 1875. The Fraternity of Brewers was connected with the church of All Hallows on the Wall in 1361, and the company was incorporated in 1438.

In 1527, it received its first mention in the records, under the name of "Brueres" Hall. In it, not only have Ward and other meetings been held in the long past, but, during the last quarter of the 17th century, the Company permitted the holding of church services there.

In his will, dated 1545, William Elder, plasterer, gave to the Master and Wardens of the Guild of Plasterers, his messuage called "The Pynners Hall in Adelstrete," which he acquired from the Master and Wardens of Merchant Taylors. There is no mention of it as the Plasterers' Hall earlier than the last years of the 16th century; but it is possible that Elder's messuage dated back to much earlier times. It was destroyed in the Fire and rebuilt by Wren. For many years, however, the premises had been occupied as a warehouse. The hall stood on the north side of Addle Street, at No. 23.

North of the church were five houses, the sites of which are mentioned in a document of the time of Henry VIII, and shown on Ogilby's plan, Nos. 58-62, and beyond the church on the south is Love lane, a single carriageway, with very narrow footpaths. Before the war, the lane was almost solely occupied by agents of soft goods and manufacturers. The origin of the name, as Stow would have us to understand, is from its being frequented by wantons. It may be that in early days it had become the trysting place for young men and maidens. This would appear to be a more reasonable, and certainly a more pleasing, explanation as to its origin.

Near the corner of the lane, on the south side, was Berry court, and, immediately opposite, next the church, were two houses, Nos. 11 and 12, erected on the Glebe land. Before the Fire of 1666, the leases were held by Mrs. Elizabeth Herring. They were destroyed in the conflagration, and, in consideration of an undertaking to rebuilt them, Mrs. Herring, widow of Alderman Herring, obtained an extended lease, made up to

sixty-one years from 1668, and, in addition, she was granted a considerable slice of the churchyard on the west side of the path leading to the church door on the south, that she might make of it a garden for her house, paying £6 per annum and £30 as a fine. Mrs. Herring afterwards married Alderman Christopher Pack, and continued to reside at No. 11. Alderman Pack had served as Lord Mayor in 1654-5. He it was who submitted a proposal that Cromwell should accept the Kingship. Sometime between the years 1676-1680, the property was let to Mr. Robert Aske, a great benefactor to the parish, and at one time was Master of the Haberdashers' Company. In 1703, Mr. Jacobs, the then tenant, obtained permission to make a doorway from the garden to the pathway leading from the south door of the church to the lane, and to have the use of it during his tenancy, for which concession, he paid for a bottle of wine every year for the churchwardens, of their own selection. The door was afterwards bricked up; but it was shown as existing in 1814. The garden existed down to the year 1860; but, later, had been covered by the building No. 12, afterwards forming part of the premises of Messrs. George Soley and Company's warehouse. It is stated that a vault had been built under the garden, with an entrance to it from the south-west corner of the church. No. 11, before 1940, was still standing as one of the immediate post-Fire houses, built either by Wren or by one of his imitators. The view of the church shows the house west of the church and the doorways to the garden and to the lane.

Alderman Sir Hugh Windham, a Royalist, imprisoned by the Roundheads, occupied a house, the parlour door of which opened into the churchyard. The churchwardens caused the doorway to be bricked up, and he left it in 1649; but the succeeding tenant was granted the use of the churchyard, in consideration of a chaldron and a half coal per annum.

W. Holman Hunt, painter, was born in the Lane.

Nos. 9, 10, 11 and 12 Love lane were let for a term of 49 years (from September, 1860) to Henry E. Knight, afterwards Alderman Sir Henry E. Knight, Lord Mayor in 1882-3. He was appointed a trustee of parish funds in 1886.

At No. 66, Nathaniel Stanton lived, beside which, there were other houses owned by him. The celebrated Dr. Thomas Timms occupied a large house, No. 68, and, on the south side

of that dwelling, were two immediate post-Fire houses, Nos. 69 and 70, in which resided two brothers, John and Richard Chandler respectively. In the 17th century, armorial bearings or badges were frequently affixed to houses; but very few remain with us to-day. On the facade of John's house, No. 69, was a stone sign or family badge, in the form of a sculptured "Pelican in her piety," feeding her young with her blood, the symbol of charity, and representing the crest of the two brothers. The badge which ornamented the pre-Fire house had been carefully removed by the builder and neatly let into the newly-fashioned front. There is still a fragment of the front standing, with the piece of sculpture over what was the doorway. Richard, known as Squire Chandler, who was a great benefactor to the parish, occupied No. 70, the interior of which, it is stated, was interesting, displaying good taste in its construction. He owned seven or eight houses in the parish.

The parish has not only the distinction of being the birthplace of the Guildhall, and its home for more than three centuries, and also the royal residence of the Saxon kings for four and a half centuries; but it also has the exceptional honour of giving to all lovers of Shakespeare, indeed to the world at large, the first folio edition of the works of the great dramatist, so that Aldermanbury will for all time be associated with the publication of the exceedingly rare volume.

But for the veneration of the immortal bard's genius, held by his two friends, Heminge and Condell, who collected and jealously preserved the MSS. of twenty-two plays, which had not previously been published, it is quite conceivable that we, to-day, would not have had the distinction of including in our English literature the works of the greatest of all poets, and the world would have been so much the poorer for the loss of such a priceless treasure. In his will, dated March, 1616, Shakespeare bequeathed to "my fellowes John Heming . . . and Henry Condell . . . xxvjs viijd a peece to buy them ringes." Although these two men were great actors, their chief fame rests in the publication of the 1623 folio.

Aldermanbury, therefore, has the privilege of having been the home of two worthies who, seven years after the poet's death, gave to us the precious folio of the works of their fellow actor and close friend, and whose names will be ever warmly cherished by all who love the works of the great dramatist.

John Heminge lived in the parish for 42 years, serving the

church as sidesman in 1602, and, six years later, as churchwarden and trustee of parish property, an office he held again in 1619. At first he lived at what became No. 68, and, later, at No. 73, at the south-west end of Aldermanbury, from which he later removed to take up his abode at a house in Addle Street at the north-west end, between Nos. 4 and 9. He married Rebecca Knell in 1588, at the church of St. Mary the Virgin, and their fourteen children—nine daughters and five sons—were baptised there. Heminge ceased acting in the year 1623, and it is some gratification that this worthy citizen, after rendering such splendid service to the parish, found his final resting-place in the chancel of the parish church, in the year 1630, eleven years after the passing of his wife.

Henry Condell was prosperous in his profession, and his theatrical engagements brought him into close relations with Shakespeare. While actively engaged as an actor, he was living in a house, No. 74, immediately adjoining on the south that which his friend Heminge had previously occupied. He not only purchased this house, but had acquired another close to it, and, later, he purchased several other properties in the City and at Fulham. He had lived in the parish for about 30 years, and was one of the parishioners who negotiated the purchase of the advowson in 1621. He had been associated with the church, first as sidesman, in 1606, churchwarden in 1617, and trustee in 1619 and 1621. He retired from the stage in 1623; but continued to reside in the parish with his nine children, all of whom were baptised in St. Mary the Virgin between 1598–1614. In 1625, he left No. 74, and went to live at Fulham, where he died in 1627, and was buried in the church of St. Mary the Virgin.

Aldermanbury may justly claim a further link with Shakespeare, for between the years, *circa* 1598–1612, the poet lodged with the Huguenot wigmaker, Christopher Montjoy, in a house close by, at the corner of Silver and Monkwel Streets, where he may have written some of his dramas, and, no doubt, frequently found his way into Aldermanbury, to visit his two actor friends for the purpose of exchanging ideas concerning his latest plays.

For many years, Alderman Sir Henry Knight, Lord Mayor in 1882–83, had his office at No. 75, which, in the 17th century, had been known as the "Flying Horse."

Hard by, was the "Swan with two necks," in Lad Lane,

dating as early as the middle of the 16th century. It was an important carriers' inn in 1630. The gateway is said to have been so narrow that it required an expert to drive a team out of the courtyard without getting jammed in the gateway. Early in the 19th century the proprietor, named Chaple, occupied quite half-a-dozen other London inn yards, and had over a thousand horses running coaches on the various old country roads—quite a dozen coaches leaving London every day.

When the residue of Alderman Adam de Basing's Manor of Aldermanbury reverted to the Crown in the early years of the 15th century, it comprised, with other lands and tenements, six houses, which ultimately became the property of the parish, either by gift or purchase; but, at a later date, they were appropriated by the Crown. In 1619, however, James the First, by letters patent granted them to Alderman Sir John Leman, the bachelor Lord Mayor in 1616-17, and Cornelius Fish, Chamberlain of the City.

By an indenture dated 1st of May, 1620, Sir John Leman and Cornelius Fish conveyed the premises to a committee of parishioners of St. Mary the Virgin, in trust, for the benefit of the parish, and, in the following year, the advowson was acquired by purchase, which still remains with the parishioners, who appoint to the living when a vacancy occurs.

In the early centuries, "cages" were erected in some parts of the city and liberties, for the confinement of petty malefactors and sometimes for scolds. It was a sort of "lock-up" and, in the 16th century, Aldermanbury found it necessary to instal one in the parish, for, in 1621, it is recorded that, "having got out of repair vij^s was paid to the Alderman's deputie towards the repayringe of the cage."

A curious incident occurred in the parish as chronicled by William Gregory, the 15th-century Mayor, the compiler of one of the best-known civic chronicles. It is that in the year 1222, "the King [Henry III], had purposyd hym to have do kaste downe the wallys of London. Ande the same yere the ordyr of Friar Menours came fyrste in to Inglonde, and a man that faynyd hym selfe Cryste, he was crucifyed at Alddermanbery at London."

FOUNDINGS.

As in many other parishes, householders were troubled with mothers of unwanted babies visiting the parish to deposit their offspring on the doorsteps of houses, in the hope, probably, that

the child might be fortunate enough to be adopted by the occupant of a house so favoured. For many years it was the custom to register the foundlings with the name of the parish as a surname; but, in 1685, it was found that Aldermanbury was rather much for a child to carry through life, so, for this particular purpose, it became curtailed to "Berry" or "Bury," and, in that form, the surname of the foundlings continued up to the late 18th century. Many a respectable family of to-day owes its beginning to no better source than this, whether the origin of the surname be parish, street or lane, given to signify the spot where the first possessor was discovered. In the parish books, the following, out of many entries, occur:—

1586	Reward for carrying the child abroad for four days to learn the mother of it	£0	2	0
1592	For seeking out the mother of the child left in the parish ..		4	0
1655	Paid for nursing and clothing John Aldermanbury for one year	6	4	0
	Paid for nursing and clothing of a child called Abraham Aldermanbury for one year	6	4	0
	Paid for nursing and clothing Mary Aldermanbury	6	4	0
	Paid for nursing and clothing Rebecca Aldermanbury and burial of same child	4	1	0
	Paid for linen for a child left at Mr. Simons' door		5	0
1683-5	Paid for nursing and clothing Charity Aldermanbury, afterwards changed to Charity Berry			
	Paid for nursing and clothing William Aldermanbury, afterwards changed to William Berry			
1686	Mary Berrey, a foundlin child taken up from the Church Steppes against carpenter yard about eleven o'clock at night			
1690	A foundling child taken up at Mr. Lamb's door			
1709	Paid for nursing and clothing Joseph Berry			
1709	Paid to a woman in labour to get her out of the parish ..	0	3	0
1712	Paid for nursing Mary Berry, dropt in Dyer's Court, 16 weeks at 2/6		2	2
1716	Paid a woman finding the father of James Berry	0	5	0
1717	Paid to remove several women in labour in the street ..	0	11	0

In 1673 a person was employed by the vestry at 50s. per annum to patrol the streets to keep on the move, suspicious-looking women frequenting the parish, to avoid possible offspring becoming a charge on the parish.

EARLY PROPERTY OWNERS.

Cir. 1189-1196 Grant by William, Bishop of Ely, the King's Chancellor, to Geoffrey Blund, of the land and messuage in the parishes of St. Laurence Jewry and St. Mary of Aldermanbury, that he bought of Walter Lorengs for which Blund paid £90.

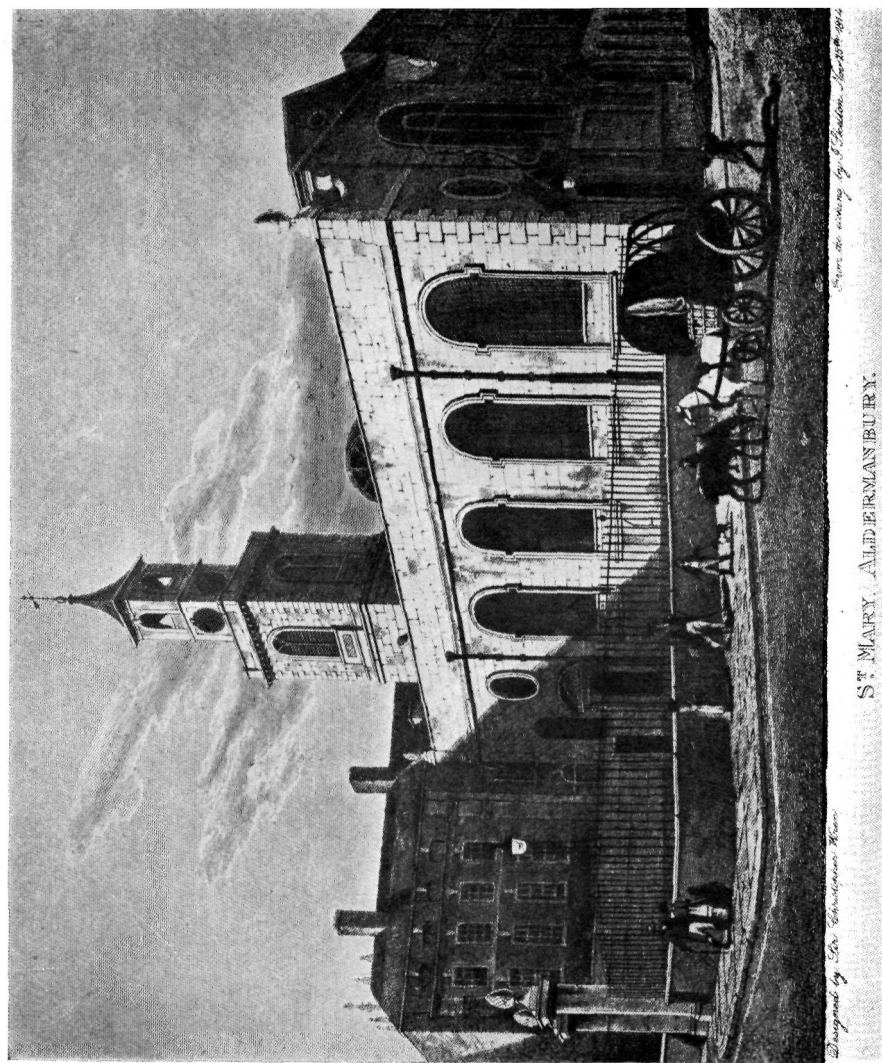
- Cir. 1189-1196 Grant to Aelicia (Alice) daughter of Alvred Mercer to Henry and Richard, sons of Henry Blund her kinsmen, of the land her father left her in Aldermanesbury and Bassieshaghe paying 6/- yearly.
- Cir. 1200 Alvred Mercer confirmed to Henry Blund and Richard his brother, the land that Alice his sister granted them in Aldermannesbury and Bassieshaghe, which land he also releases to them.
- 1203 Deed of sale and release by Alice daughter of Alvred Mercer to the Prior and Canons of Holy Trinity, London, for 50/- of a quit rent of 6/- which she had for lands that Henry and Richard, sons of Henry Blund held of her situate as described in Bassishaghe and Aldermannebury. In the same year this sale was confirmed by Henry and Richard Blund.
- 1228 Grant by Richard the prior and convent of Holy Trinity, to Robert de Gypewyz, Goldsmith, of land with the buildings thereon, situate in St. Mary's parish Aldermanbury, the extent of being specified in iron ells of King Henry III, and also 4/- quit rent for the whole tenement that was William Wites in the same place at a yearly rent of two marcs.
- 1270 Grant by M. de Sancto Albans to Prior, etc. of land with the houses thereon by the Guildhall in frank Almoyn, paying yearly 20/- to Thomas, son of Adam de Basinges.
- 1275 John de Minour left to [his son-in-law] Hugh de Biflete and Isabella his wife his garden in the parish of the Church of Alderesmannebury.
- 1278 William Bokerell left to his wife Dionisia his house at Aldermanbiri for life.
- 1279 Stephen Costentine left to Juliana his wife a house in Basinge Lane in the parish of Aldermanechurche.
- 1280 Thomas de Hereford left to Joanna his daughter a house and rents above Aldermanebiri in the parish of S. Mary.
- 1296 Bartholomew de Castle left to Sir William de Carleton his houses in the parish of St. Mary de Aldermannebury for life.
- 1310 Grant, in fee, to Master Peter de Novo Castro, King's surgeon for his service to the late King of the messuage in the parish of St. Mary Aldermanbury, formerly held from the late King by Master Peter de Pekham subject to the yearly rent of 4d.
- 1312 John le Blund left his son John, the tenement of Hugh Motoun in the parish of S. Mary Aldermanechirche.
- 1313 William de St. Alban left a tenement in the parish of S. Mary de Aldermanberi.
- 1315 Isabella de Higham left tenements.
- 1318 Agnes de Stanes left her maids houses in the parish.
- 1322 William le Lacer left to John his son a tenement in the parish.
- 1323 Ralph de Higham left to Sarah his wife houses upon Aldremanbere for life.
- 1329 Margaret de Bevere left to Peter le Rous her tenements in the parish of S. Mary, Aldermanbury, Sir William de Boudon being allowed to continue as tenant.
- 1332 Richard Costantyn left to Richard his son tenements in the parish.
- 1332 Thomas Poyntels left shops, etc., in the parish.

- 1333 Stephen de Hale left to Matilda his wife a tenement in Gaysporelane (north end of Aldermanbury) in the parish of S. Mary de Aldermannebury.
- 1337 Roger Poyntel left tenements in the parish.
- 1338 Stephen de Clopton left to the Priory of S. Bartholomew de Smethefeld his shops in the parish of St. Aldermanbury.
William de Everdon left houses in the parish.
- 1349 Richard de Basyngstoke left to Thomas his son a tenement in the parish.
- 1386 John Tours left to Dionisia his wife his dwelling house in Aldermanbury.
- 1502 William Buck lived on the east side, his house being situate in Aldermanbury, and his garden extending into the parish of St. Laurence, Old Jewry. Before his death in 1532 he possessed a capital messuage and four tenements which he left to his wife Margaret for life and remainder to his eldest son John Buck.
- 1565 Dame Margaret Howard possessed one capital messuage and two other messuages lying in the street called Aldermanburye.
This property was formerly held by Richard Charleton who forfeited it to Henry VII. The King granted it to Richard Hawte for faithful service. Upon the death of Hawte's wife, the property was sold to John Mundaye, who in 1509 granted it to Alderman Sir John Tate and Alderman William Brown. In 1527 Alderman Nicholas Jenyns acquired the property for 100 marks, and at his death it passed to his widow Margaret who married one Howard.
- 1578 Thomas Godfrey lived in Aldermanbury and possessed in addition to his dwelling house four tenements, one shop and fourteen cottages in the parish.
- 1579 Roger Coys who died in 1579 was seised in his demense as of fee of one large capital messuage and one garden, and two small tenements adjoining the said messuages in which he dwelt; also two messuages and one yard or waste ground adjoining the capital messuage and garden, all lying in the parish of the Blessed Marie in Aldermanburye, and which he purchased in 1561 from Stephen Reames of Estfarleigh, Kent, [and] 8 messuages with all the shops, cellars, etc. thereto belonging, lying near the Wall of the said city in the parish of the Blessed Mary in the street of Aldermanbury.
This property was situate in what at this date (1579) was known as Gasporelane, afterwards forming a continuation of Aldermanbury up to London Wall.
- 1603 Mathewe Paris dwelling in Aldermanbury left property to Mary, his mother's servant.
Nathaniel Stanton, left several houses in Aldermanbury.

EARLY RESIDENTS IN THE PARISH.

- 13th Century Adam de Basing, 1247-62. Thomas de Basing, 1275. Iter Bochard, 1271. Thomas de Wynburn. Isabel Bokerel. Sir Roger de Mortuo Mari.
- 14th Century William de Elsinge, founder of Elsinge priory of which he was the first prior.
- " John Brian, parish clerk, of S. Mary de Aldermanbury lived in Addle Street, 1361.

- 14th Century Chief Justice Sir Robert Tressilian, 1383.
- 15th Century Alderman Sir William Estfeld lived in Dyer's Court. He died 1446.
- " William Buck, lived in the house formerly occupied by Estfeld. He died 1502.
- 16th Century Lord John Williams of Thame, Master of the King's Jewels, 1541.
- " Sir Erasmus de la Fountaine, after whom Fountaine Court was named.
- " Dame Margaret Howard, 1565.
- " Thomas Buck, in Dyer's Court. He died 1523.
- " Thomas Godfrey, 1578. He lived in Aldermanbury.
- " Roger Coyes, 1579. He lived on the north-east corner of Gaspore Lane.
- " John Newman, *circa* 1590.
- 17th Century John Swynnerton, Senior, near George Yard, 1580-1608, Master of Merchant Taylor's Coy. He entertained King James I to a sumptuous dinner in the Company's Hall.
- " Sir John Swynnerton (Lord Mayor, 1612-13). He lived in the mansion in Dyer's Court formerly occupied by Sir William Estfeld. He died in 1616.
- " William Isborde, 1600.
- " Alderman Edward Rotherham.
- " Sir Robert Harley was residing in Aldermanbury in 1626, and in July 1627 he wrote to his father-in-law, Lord Conway, asking that he may remove from Aldermanbury to Lord Conways house in Little Britain because of the appearance of small pox in the family.
- " Sir Richard Young resided here between the years 1620-1646.
- " Edmund Calamy, Nonconformist divine, 1639-62.
- " Dr. Simon Ford, Minister.
- " Dr. Thomas Taylor, Minister.
- " John Heminge, lived at Nos. 69 & 73 Aldermanbury for 42 years, 1588-1630.
- " Henry Condell, lived at No. 74 Aldermanbury for about 30 years, 1595-1625.
- " Alderman Michael Herring, at No. 12 Love Lane, *circa* 1640-53.
- " Alderman Christopher Pack (Lord Mayor 1654-5). He lived at No. 12 Love Lane.
- " Sir William Dyer, Sheriff of Essex. He died 1681. Lived in the Court named after him.
- " Sir John Swynnerton Dyer. Lived in Dyer's Court.
- " Lord George Jeffreys lived in Aldermanbury, between 1678-88.
- " Robert Aske, he died 1680.
- " John Chandler, he died 1686. Lived at No. 69 Aldermanbury.
- " Alderman Richard Chandler, he died 1691. Lived at No. 70 Aldermanbury.
- " Sir Hugh Wyndham, English Judge, he died 1684. In 1648, he occupied a house with a window opening into Carpenter's Yard.



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ST. MARY, ALDERMANBURY.

Designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

17th Century William Russell, cophin maker lived at the sign of the "Four Cophins" in Aldermanbury.

18th and 19th

- Centuries Dr. Thomas Timms lived at No. 68 Aldermanbury.
 " Nathaniel Stanton at No. 66.
 " Dr. William Babington at No. 17 in the years 1800-19.
 " Alderman Sir Henry Knight (Lord Mayor 1882-3). Occupied No. 75 Aldermanbury.
 " W. Holman Hunt, painter, born in Love Lane.

RESIDENTS AT THE TIME OF THE GREAT FIRE.

Robert Adcock, Mrs. Katherine Alie, Sir Thomas Allen, Mr. Ashburn, John Atkinson, William Avery, John Baker, William Baker, Philip Barder, Mr. Bell, John Bewley, Sir Theophilus Bidolph, Mrs. Mary Buckeridge, Sir Thomas Clarges, Mr. Coxiter, John Cutlore, Mrs. Davies, Mr. Deane, John Dicker, Sir William Dyer, Judge Guibond Goddard, Mr. Havise, Mr. Holand, Mrs. Hughes, Thomas Hogkin, Edward Jackson, Thomas Jackson, William Miller, Mr. Morice, Mr. Neale, Thomas Needler, John Needless, Mr. Noden, Abraham Nunn, Mr. Oglethorp, Mr. Osley, Walter Pell, Mrs. Eleanor Pricke, John Redman, Alderman William Ridges, Mr. Selsby, Ralph Stayersley, Thomas Stayersley, Mrs. Joanna Swynnerton, Mrs. Tearnar, Charles Todd, Alderman Timothy Wade, Mr. Wilson, John Winter, Mr. Witherd.

THE CHURCH.

Among the earliest references to the church, which is a perpetual curacy, and dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, are Sancte Marie de Aldermannesberia, Sancte Marie de Aldermannesburi (*circa* 1189); Sancte Marie Aldermannebirii (1225), Sancta Marie de Aldermannebury (1231).

It was notable among London churches, and its antiquity is said to ante-date existing records.

The discovery of a sepulchral stone, inscribed, "John Constantine," and dated 1116, is recorded to have been in the old edifice before the Fire. From this, John Stow formed the opinion that the church was founded by the Saxons. Malcolm states that "the existence of the church may be traced before the reign of Henry II," which began in 1154, and, in *Ancient Deeds* (A.7309), Robert the Priest of Aldermannesberi before 1148, is referred to.

The earliest reliable record of it, however, is that of the "Inquisition" of the churches in London, in 1181 (*Hist. MSS. Com. 9th Report*), giving a list of the ornaments in each church. Fitzstephen, too, writing in the 12th century (*circa* 1180), speaks of the 126 parish churches then existing, which suggests that all the parish churches had been founded by the end of that century. Even if that were so, there is no sound reason

for assuming that St. Mary the Virgin was not ancient even at that date.

Parochial boundaries were established as early as the 10th century, and such boundaries were governed by the then disposition of land, primarily the manor; but this does not appear to be so in Aldermanbury, for the soke or manor originally included the parish of St. Michael Bassishaw and that of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street.

With the development of the soke in the early centuries, it is probable that an ecclesiastical expansion also began. The lord of the soke of Aldermanbury, desiring to have a church or monastic institution to serve his liberty, may have caused to be built St. Mary the Virgin, which is close to the site of the manor house and also to that of the "bury," that he might give it to a relation or friend to serve.

Of the first edifice, however, no certain traces of an architectural character have been discovered.

"A grant by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to John de Sancto Laurentis of the church of St. Mary, Aldermanbury, to hold in perpetuity dated 1204-15" is recorded in the *Ninth Report of the Com. on Hist. MSS.*, p. 17.

It would appear that the church fell into decay, for, in 1437, we find that Alderman Sir William Estfeld, who, as it has already been stated, was a great benefactor to the church, not only rebuilt the steeple at his own expense; but caused the five old bells to be recast "into more tunable ones," and gave £100 towards other church improvements. He directed that he be buried in the church, and that the funeral be conducted without display, the torches used at the funeral to be afterwards distributed among various churches.

According to Stow, the churchyard was formerly enclosed by cloisters, and probably they existed long before Estfeld's time, although there is no mention of any part of his gift being employed in repairing them, and the records are otherwise silent in the matter, but reference is made to a chapel in the north, and a loft over the porch.

Looking up the lane from Gresham Street, the church formed a picturesque background to the lane projecting into the roadway, and one might well imagine oneself entering an ancient provincial town with a market place about the church, for the street, which is about 15 or 16 feet wide, opens out to three times that width by the time Love Lane is reached.

Attached to the church was the parsonage house, purchased from the Crown in 1610, in which Calamy lived, and, in later years, another was erected in Addle Street, for Dr. Simon Ford's occupancy for so long as he continued to serve the parish.

It would appear that during the ministry of Dr. Thomas Taylor, one of the lecturers engaged by him to preach from Midsummer to Michaelmas, had greatly disturbed the peace of mind of one of the congregation, for one Gabriel Brown, writing, in 1626, to a priest in Spain, which communication was intercepted, he stated that "certain zealous persons were stirred up by the sermons of a Calvinistic sot in Aldermanbury to deface our Saviour's picture."

The church awakens many interesting associations. In it, on the 12th November, 1656, the poet, John Milton, went through the marriage ceremony a second time with Catherine Woodcock. They were married by Alderman Sir John Dethick, a Justice of the Peace for the City. She was buried in the church.

Edmund Calamy, the celebrated Nonconformist divine, was presented to the living in 1639, and his week-day lectures were so extremely popular, that crowds were accustomed to flock to hear him preach, and "the narrow streets leading to the place of worship were blocked up service after service" and "seldom were there so few as sixty coaches" awaiting his enthusiastic supporters near the church doors. In 1639-40 Robert Earl, of Warwick, applied to the churchwardens for sittings in the church, and he was given the choice of occupying Mr. Calamy's family pew, or of building himself one at the end of a little gallery. This seems to show the great popularity the preacher had gained within a few months. About this time, Robert Woodford, Steward of Northampton, came to London to hear Calamy, and in his diary under date, 17th November, 1640, he writes, "I was at Aldermanbury church about 14 hours together, where three ministers prayed and preached one after another—Mr. Calamy and two strangers." Calamy promoted the Restoration; but he lived to repent it, and, after the passing of the 1662 Act of Uniformity, to which he would not submit, he was ejected, but continued to preach in the open, or, in his own house, which example was followed by many of the ejected clergy.

He, however, continued to live in the parish and to attend the church. In the December of that year, he was one of the congregation assembled to hear the sermon arranged for the day,

but the preacher did not appear, and Calamy was importuned by the congregation to take his place. He thereupon took his stand at the reading desk, at which it had been his custom to preach for 23 years, and delivered an oration with considerable warmth. For complying with the wishes of the congregation, he was rewarded by being conveyed to Newgate in January, 1663, by the Royalist party, for unlicensed preaching; but Newgate Street became so blocked with the coaches of his visitors, that by the King's express order he was released. Shortly after the Great Fire, Calamy desired to journey to Enfield, and he hired a coach in which he was driven through the city amidst the ruins. The sight of the hideous destruction of the once flourishing city so affected him, that he retired to his room, which he never again left, and expired within a month, on the 29th October, 1666.

It was the intention to place his body under the reading-desk which he had for so long used, the debris after the Fire was so deep that it was difficult to locate the position exactly, so the coffin was placed as near to it as possible.

In 1633, the church was repaired and beautified by parochial contributions; but it was a complete ruin after the Fire. It was the ninth in order of the churches decided to be rebuilt. The church, before December, 1640, was stately and spacious. It was designed by Wren, much on the plan of the former building, and the work was carried through under his supervision in 1677-8. It is interesting to note that the famous architect did not accept the commission, to build the church as a matter of business, for it is on record, that, in consideration of the kindness shown by Sir Christopher and Mr. Robert Hooke in expediting the work of rebuilding, and by way of encouraging them to assist in perfecting that work, the rebuilding committee presented Dr. Wren with £21 and Mr. Hooke with £10, in 1672. Wren not only returned the whole of the sum presented to him, but he also gave £25 towards the purchase of the clock.

In its construction, much of the material of the destroyed church of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, was incorporated. The east front, which still stands, displays an exceedingly bold design, with its handsome cornice and pediment supported by heavy scrolls, and its central arched window embellished with large carved scrolls at the sides. The roof was covered with lead.

Interiorly, twelve pillars of the composite order supported the vaulting of the nave, which was ornamented by bands of

panels and roses stretching between the pillars. It was enriched by a fine altar-piece, adorned with cherubs and composed of two composite pilasters, imitations of lapis-lazuli, with gilt bases and capitals and a divided pediment admitting the royal arms. The walls were wainscotted and the pulpit was enriched with cherubims. The communion-table, standing on marble, was enclosed with rails and banisters; but the church had been modernised, and excepting the pillars and ceiling, little of Wren's work remained.

Over the door in the north-west corner was a fine painting of the "Last Supper," by Franks, originally intended for the altar, presented by Mr. Alexander Whitechurch, Clerk to the Company of Brewers, whose Hall was in the immediate vicinity of the church. There is still a small statuette of the Virgin and Child over the south door. This formerly adorned the iron gates at the churchyard entrance.

Towards the cost of the rebuilding and decoration of the church after the Great Fire, the vestry granted £800, supplemented by £650 borrowed from forty persons, on the understanding that the lenders should be repaid from the duty on coals.

Amongst the names of lenders are Thomas Page, £50; John Davis, £40; John Dubois, £60; William Dyer, £30; and William Houldgate, or Holgate, whose house abutted on that of Sir John Swynnerton, £55. In addition to these loans, Sir John Langham gave £250, and Alderman Walter Pells gave £100. Two or three years later, five persons similarly lent the sum of £20 each to pay for woodwork.

The church was beautified in 1720, the steeple was repaired in 1736 and work of restoration, repairs and alterations was carried out in 1777, 1808, 1830, 1844, and in 1863-64, at the considerable cost of about £3,400, the edifice was modernised; but the broad effect of the once fine façade was said to be greatly marred by the substituted filled-in tracery, for the original oval windows.

The church was the victim of a theft in the year 1890, when the fine old plate mysteriously disappeared. This, it may be said, is not the only instance of valuables escaping from the custody of churchwardens, and yet not a single word of protest has appeared in the press as to the disappearance from our city churches of plate and pictures.

Some of the church windows were shattered during the

Zeppelin raid over the City on the night of 8th September, 1915, at which time several adjacent buildings were completely destroyed by incendiary bombs.

In 1920, it was one of the nineteen churches calmly scheduled for demolition by the City of London Churches Commission; but the campaign of protest was so strong and so bitter against the proposal, that the bill was rejected by the Privy Council.

It was seriously damaged by enemy action on the night of 29th December, 1940, leaving a mere shell of the edifice, but with the tower still standing, minus the turret and vane. The effect of the blast resulted in the uncovering of some Tudor brickwork which, as it would appear, had been re-used by Wren when rebuilding the church after the Great Fire.

In the seventh report of the *Historical MSS. Commission*, it is recorded that one Daverson, a Scot, preached in the church on 29th June, 1588, "with a kerchief on his head, a velvet nightcap upon that, and a felt hat over that, and prayed a long prayer with all on," after which, removing his hat, said, "let us sing a psalm to the praise of God."

During Calamy's ministry, a quaker named Solomon Eeles was prosecuted for "coming into the church naked in ye time of Mr. Calamy's preaching, January 1, 1660," which prosecution cost the parish £1 5s. 10d.

The little graveyard is reminiscent of Shakespeare, for, on the south side, there still stands, under the shadow of two large plane trees, a strikingly handsome red granite monument, erected in 1896 to the memory of two men—John Heminge and Henry Condell—who gave to the world the first folio edition of the plays. The monument, which was the gift of Mr. Charles Clement Walker, of Lilleshall Old Hall, Shropshire, is surmounted by a bust of the dramatist. It was sculptured by Charles J. Allen, and it takes the form of an open book. On the verso is represented the title-page of the plays, and on the recto is an extract from the preface, bearing the signatures of the two editors.

The principal tablet on the pedestal carries the following inscription:—

"To the memory of John Heminge and Henry Condell, fellow actors and personal friends of Shakespeare. They lived many years in this parish and are buried here. To their disinterested affection the world owes all that it calls Shakespeare. They alone collected his dramatic writings regardless of pecuniary loss, and without hope of any profit, gave them to the world. They thus merited the gratitude of the world."

PATRONAGE.

It has been shown that the patronage was originally in the gift of the barons of the soke or manor, with whom it remained for two centuries or more. At the death of Henry Fitz-Reiner, the right of presentation passed to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's who, in the early years of the 13th century, granted it to Baldwin Crispus. It then passed to Simon de Aldermanbury, who had married the daughter of Crispus. Simon transferred it to Alan de Aldermanbury and his brother Gervase.

In 1231, according to Newcourt, in his "Repertorium," a question as to the presentation to the church was raised by Gervase de Aldermanbury, by virtue of the King's writ before the Justices. Gervase alleged that his father, Alan de Aldermanbury, presented one William de Aldermanbury to the church, "who died parson of the same, thirty-one years past, and that the church had been void from that time." This would date the presentation earlier than 1200, at which time, Alan de Aldermanbury was the holder of the soke. It was, however, shown that John de Sancto Laurence had held the living (1204-15) and that John de Gloucester and John de S. Peter had held it between the years 1200-1231.

On the 16th February, 1247, we find in a Charter Roll:—

"Grant to Adam de Basing . . . of the gift of Gervase de Aldermaniebury all the messuage . . . in Aldermaniebury sometime of Alan the father of the donor with all the land before the said messuage with the advowson of the Church of St. Mary Aldermanbury. . . ."

Adam de Basing died in 1262, when the manor etc. was inherited by his son Thomas, at whose death, in 1275, Margery, his widow, became possessed of the manor and the right of presentation. At the death of Margery, the property was inherited by the surviving granddaughter of Adam de Basing—Joan de Hadestoke—who had previously married Adam de Bedyk. After Bedyk's death, in 1303, Joan married Sir Roger Sauvage, and they, in 1306, "granted to Sir John de Drokenisford the capital messuage of Aldermanbury . . . together with the advowson of the church of St. Mary Aldermanbury. . . ." Drokenisford re-conveyed the manor, etc., to Sauvage. At Joan's death, her son by her former husband—Henry de Bedyk—became the next holder. In his will, dated 1335, Henry left the capital messuage to his wife, also named Joan, with remainder to his son, Sir Thomas. Twelve years later, his mother granted the manor to Master Henry de Chaddesdene,

to whom, in 1350, Sir Thomas sold the reversion of the estate. Seven years later, Chaddesdene's executors, by deed of sale, disposed of the property, including the advowson of the church, to Sir John Beauchamp and John de Bovenden, in 1359. The following year, Sir John died, and by his will the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's became possessed of the advowson, and, ultimately, it passed to the Crown in 1417.

James the First bestowed the right of presentation with certain messuages, tenements, etc., in 1606, upon two of his favourites, Robert Morgan and Thomas Butler. On the 29th April, 1619, they conveyed a moiety of the property, with the appurtenances, to Robert Rante and his son, by whom for a consideration of £220 it was conveyed to Sir John Davey and other parishioners on the 15th June, 1621. Morgan and Butler, on the 8th May, 1619, had conveyed the other moiety to Thomas Clarke, who, for £220, sold it to Sir John on the 3rd July, 1621. With Sir Richard Young, Henry Condell, and twenty-seven other parishioners, Sir John Davey had thus acquired the advowson for £440. That sum was secured by the sale of two houses belonging to the parish, realising £260, and the balance of £180, by means of private subscriptions, such purchase being subject to a yearly rent charge of £11, payable to the Crown, and certain payments to St. Paul's, amounting to £1 1s. 11d. The sum of £11 being paid out of the rent of two houses forming part of the rectory. The parishioners, since 1621, have had the right to choose their own rector, subject to him being licensed by the bishop.

During the 14th and 15th centuries, there were several lawsuits concerning the right of presentation, and there are deeds in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's as to the right of collation to a chantry in the church, amongst the parties named are Sir Thomas de Bedyk, Henry de Chaddesdene and Sir John de Beauchamp, Sir Roger de Taleworth, Arnold de Mounteneye.

CHANTRIES.

- 1251 Adam de Basing, Sheriff in 1251, and holder of the soke, in his will left money to found a chantry.
- 1273 Walter de Kingstone left certain quit rents to provide a Chantry for S. Mary de Aldermannechurche.
- 1275 Thomas de Basing left rents for a lamp and chantry, and for the maintenance of the chapel.
- 1280 Isabella Bokerel relict of Stephen Aswy, and the mother of William Bokerel left to William de St. Alban a house in the parish of S. Mary

- de Aldmannebyri, and ordains her heirs shall provide a chantry in the said Church.
- 1311 William de Carleton left to his cook his tenement in the parish of S. Mary de Aldermannebery . . . charged with the maintenance of a chantry in the said church. The houses devised to him by Sir Bartholomew de Castello (1296) to remain to Bartholomew, nephew of the same.
- 1335 Henry de Bydyk left money for two Chantries.
- 1335 Laurence Botoner left a bequest for two Chantries.
- 1353 Roger de Taleworth bequeathed to the High Alter of St. Mary, Aldermymbure.
- 1357 Henry de Chadesdene left money to found a Chantry.
- 1367 William de Bristowe left to his wife Matilda all his lands and tenements in the city for life, and after her decease his tenements in Athelane in the parish of S. Mary de Aldermanbury to his son Simon for life for pious purposes, remainder to William his son, charged with the maintenance of a chantry in the church of S. Mary de Aldermanbury.
- 1386 John Tours left a tenement to the Rector for the maintenance of the Beam light.
- 1399 Simon de Wynchecombe desired to be buried in the Church and made provision for a Chantry there.
- 1431 John Constantyn left to William his son lands, tenements and rents in the parish for founding a chantry in the Church of S. Mary.
- Dennis Towers gave all his tenements in the parish to found a priest and an anniversary.
- 1446 William Estfield founded a chantry at the altar of St. George, to which he appointed the Company of Mercers patron.

BENEFACTORS.

- 1260 Alderman Adam de Basing—Rents for charity.
- 1307 Hugh de Glovernia—Rents of a tenement, for the poor in bread, clothes, shoes and money.
- 1361 Richard Lacey—Gift for charity.
- 1374 Simon de Bristowe—bequest for charity.
- 1430 Alderman Sir William Estfield—bequest for the poor, £100 to the Church, etc.
- 1560 Lady Gresham—bequest of £3 annually for the poor.
- 1560 Alderman Sir Rowland Hill—bequest for coal to the poor.
- 1599 John Newman—gave his share in a capital messuage.
- 1620 Sir John Davy—£100 for the poor.
- 1620 Sir John Leman and Cornelius Fisk—Land and tenements.
- 1639 Robert Ecclestone—£60 for the poor.
- 1655 Lady Swynnerton—£20 to the poor.
- 1672 Alderman Walter Pell—£100 to the church.
- 1672 Alderman Sir John Langham—£250 to the church.
- 1672 Samuel Smith—Gave the pulpit.
- 1675 Alderman Richard Chandler—Gave the Font and £50 to the Church.
- 1676 Sir Christopher Wren—£25 towards the purchase of the Clock.
- 1677 Richard Wynne—£10 for the poor.
- 1680 Robert Aske—£80 to the Church.

- 1707 Christopher Morgan—£50.
- 1720 Sir John Bateman—£20 to the poor.
- 1720 Ambrose Newton—£25 to the Church.
- 1723 Samuel Lambert—£500 to the Church.
- 1742 Elizabeth Ashby—£20 to the poor.
- 1748 Mary Mitchell—£20 to the poor.
- 1751 Susanah Edmonds—£20 to the poor.
- 1751 Samuel Smith—£20 to the poor.
- 1762 Thomas Benn—Land of the value of £3 to the poor. The land was sold in 1821 and the purchase money £294 was invested in 4% Consols, and subsequently sold and applied in the redemption of the land tax on part of parish property.
- 1763 John Snee—£20 to the poor.
- 1777 Alexander Whitechurch—Franck's painting of the "Lord's Supper."
- 1788 R. Hogg—£50 to the poor.
- 1792 William Smith—£50 to the Church.
- 1834 J. Baggallay—Oak lecturn and £20 to the Church.

After the Great Fire, a committee was formed to obtain loans towards the rebuilding of the church. A subscription list was opened, and some forty parishioners contributed £650, in varying sums of £5 to £45, on the clear understanding that such monies would be repaid. The whole of the amount lent was repaid in the year 1674, from the coal dues.

BURIALS.

- 1116 John Constantine.
- 1391 Simon Winchcombe.
- 1422 Robert Combarton.
- 1428 John Wheatley, mercer.
- 1448 Ald. Sir William Estfield, Mayor.
- 1472 John Middleton, Mayor.
- 1486 John Tomes, Draper.
- 1501 William Bucke, Tailor.
- 1507 Sir William Browne, Mayor.
- 1515 Stephen Jennings, Mayor.
- 1528 Lady Gresham, wife of Sir John Gresham.
- 1569 Elizabeth Davey.
- 1574 Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Norris.
- 1577 Thomas Godfrey, Remembrancer.
- 1586 Alderman Ralph Woodcock.
- 1595 Thomas Diggs, famous mathematician.
- 1608 John Swynnerton, Senior.
- 1614 Sir Thomas Hayes, Lord Mayor.
- 1616 Sir John Swynnerton, Lord Mayor.
- 1627 Henry Condell.
- 1630 John Heminges.
- 1635 Mrs. Henry Condell.
- 1666 Edmund Calamy.
- 1671 Lord Kimbolton, Earl of Manchester.

- 1675 Alderman Walter Pell.
- 1677 Dame Jeffreys, wife of Judge Jeffreys.
- 1690 Bishop Hopkins.
- 1693 Judge Lord Jeffreys.
- 1703 Margaret Bagnall.
- 1713 Ann Betton.
- 1727 Samuel Lambert.
- 1728 Joseph Bagnall.
- 1729 Sir Clive Moore.
- 1730 Revd. Joshua Smith.
- 1731 Sir Joseph Edmund Moore.
- 1732 Dr. Edmund Calamy.
- 1733 William Dyer.
- 1736 William Dyer.
- 1739 Ann Dyer.
- 1782 Elizabeth Smith.
- 1789 Samuel Smith.

In a vault on the north side of the communion-table rest the remains of the infamous Judge Jeffreys, whose body was removed hither from the chapel in the Tower in 1698. Lord Campbell informs us that when the church was repaired in 1810, the coffin was found still fresh, with the one-time dreaded words, "Lord Chancellor Jeffreys," engraved on the lid.

One of the monuments deserving of attention was executed by Dominico Cardelli in 1789. It represents a female figure seated on a gun, her hands crossed on the pedestal of a fractured rostral column. It was erected to the memory of Lieut. John Smith, who was engaged during the American Civil War, and was drowned on the 7th September, 1782.

The two brothers, Richard and John Chandler, were buried in the family vault in the north-west corner of the church, and, on the monument, with busts, erected to their memory, appeared their arms, exactly corresponding with the sculptured sign on the string-course of their house at No. 70 Aldermanbury. The inscription was:—

"Here lyeth the body of Richard Chandler, citizen and haberdasher of London, Esq., who departed this life November 8th, 1691, eighty-five. Also the body of John Chandler, Esq., his brother citizen and haberdasher of London, who died October 14th, 1686, aged 69."

Amongst other monuments and tablets, are:—

Robert Aske, 1688; Edmund and Mary Hack, 1704; Dr. Joseph Letherland, 1764; John Fryer, 1796; Thomas Taylor, 1815; William Rust, 1826; James Holt, 1827; Sarah Willott, 1838; John Taylor Willott, 1841; Rev. John Philipps Bean, 1854; and John Emery.

An order made by Her Majesty in Council, in 1853, directed that burials in vaults and the churchyard should be discontinued.

ELSYNGE SPITAL.

In the year 1329, a licence was granted to William de Elsyng, Mercer, to alienate in mortmain certain houses in the parishes of St. Alphage and St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury, for the purpose of founding a hospital for the sustentation of one hundred blind men. The deed of foundation was confirmed in 1331. It was one of the earliest almshouses, and it may be said to have been one of the noblest acts of pious charity recorded in the early centuries of the history of the City of London.

Elsyng Spital had formerly been a nunnery, situated on the west side of Gayspur Lane, with an entrance from the street, London Wall. Being much decayed and uninhabitable, Elsyng speedily converted it into a priory, described as the Priory or Hospital of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury, for Augustine Canons, he himself becoming its first prior. It remained a priory until the Reformation, when it was confiscated by the Crown. At this time, the church of St. Alphage, adjoining the city wall, was in a ruinous condition and was taken down. Elsyng chapel, after various alterations, now became the parish church of St. Alphage in place of the decayed church by the wall.

The priory and adjoining premises, except the church and the tower, passed into the possession of John Williams (afterwards Lord Williams of Thame), Master and Treasurer of the King's Jewels. He converted the prior's quarters, several lodgings and the hospital itself, into a great dwelling-house. The churchyard became a garden and a gallery was erected over the cloisters, whilst the apartments intended to shelter the blind and the aged were translated into stabling. On Christmas Eve, 1541, a fire broke out, when the whole house and adjoining buildings, with many of the royal jewels, were destroyed.

The great house was rebuilt, and, on the death of Lord Williams, the property was purchased for £700 by the very wealthy landowner, Alderman Sir Rowland Hayward (Lord Mayor in 1570 and again in 1590), at whose death, in 1594, George Hayward, his son, sold it to Sir Robert Parkhurst, who, in 1626, conveyed the property to the Rev. Dr. John Simpson and John Keeling, for uses under the will of the Rev. Dr. Thomas White, the founder of Sion College. Dr. White left to his executors the sum of £3,000, to build a college for the use of London clergy, and almshouses for 10 men and 10 women. He further bequeathed £160 per annum—£120 for the

maintenance of the almshouses and £40 for the support of the college. Dr. Simpson subscribed £2,000 towards the cost of providing a library, and the erection of a house as a residence for the governor.

In the Great Fire, the almshouses, student's quarters, librarian's house, and nearly half of the valuable collection of books were destroyed. The college was rebuilt, and the library enriched with a portion of the collection of books, seized in 1672, belonging to the Jesuits. Lord Berkeley, at a later date, presented part of the library belonging to his uncle, Sir Robert Cooke. Apart from many legacies, and donations, each incumbent *within the city and suburbs*, upon taking possession of his living, was expected to present a book of the value of ten shillings at least. The college was removed under an 1884 Act of Parliament to a new building on the Victoria Embankment, and the almspeople were pensioned out of funds arising from the sale of the Elsyngre estate, set apart for the purpose.

Until recently the old tower was standing, but it and the ancient porch, which was used as a chapel for rest and prayer, were destroyed by enemy action in 1940.

CHURCH OF ST. ALPHAGE.

At the north-west corner of Aldermanbury, anciently called Gaspur Lane, there formerly stood the rebuilt church of St. Alphage (Aedfheah). The canonised prelate, to whom it was dedicated, was Archbishop of Canterbury, stoned to death by the Danes at Greenwich in 1072. The church, built originally against the old Roman city wall, is said to have been founded prior to the Charter of William the Norman, but the earliest mentions of it found in records are, St. Elfego, 1108; St. Alfego, 1189 (*Ancient Deeds*, A.7926).

Immediately opposite, on the south side of the street (London Wall), stood the 14th century Chapel of Elsyngre Spital, forming part of the priory of that name, founded by William de Elsyngre, in 1331, which, with other religious houses, was confiscated by the Crown in 1536. By this time, St. Alphage, adjoining the city wall, had become much decayed, and the parishioners petitioned for licence to rebuild it, but they could only obtain permission to use the old materials—stone, lead and timber, to repair and make good the confiscated Priory Chapel of Elsyngre Spital, which the Crown sold to them for £100, the

old fabric was therefore taken down. After various alterations had been effected, the Elsynges' Priory became the parish church of St. Alphege.

In 1718, it was found to be in a bad state of repair, and the parishioners submitted a petition to the House of Commons, pointing out that the church received some damage in the Great Fire, and that it was in a ruinous condition, the tower having already received attention, to prevent danger from its falling, and that the adjoining houses had been burnt down. The petition appears to have been ineffective, for, in 1747, it is recorded that the parish church, being very ancient and much decayed, was sadly in need of repairs.

In 1760, it was ordered that the tower and the porch be repaired, that the front be walled and the back be bricked.

In 1774, the church was pronounced to be in such a dangerous state that it was agreed to pull it down and to rebuild it. The work was completed in 1777.

In 1909, a windfall of £3,000 was handed over to the parish for the work of restoration and the building of a new north porch, which was completed in 1914. Three years later, the parish was united with that of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury.

The church was closed in 1917, and taken down in 1920, and the site was sold, the only portion which was allowed to remain being the vestry room and the 14th-century tower, which, until its destruction in December, 1940, was the only fragment of any mediaeval hospital left in London.

The little graveyard by the wall was closed by an Act of Parliament in 1853. On the stonework of the wall is fixed a tablet, stating it is the "Old Roman Wall." There was certainly no Roman work above ground, whatever there may have been below the surface. The portion of the wall that is still visible, however, is of interest as showing the remains of the mediaeval battlements with stone copings, which were added in the reign of Edward IV.