

The crypt of St Mary-le-Bow Conservation Management Plan



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1 Message from the PCC of St Mary-le-Bow, Executive Summary and Acknowledgements

1.1 Message from the PCC of St Mary-le-Bow

The Rector and PCC of St Mary-le-Bow welcome this Conservation Management Plan, having adopted it in full at the PCC meeting on 19 July 2007, and is committed to using it for guidance in developing future policies and plans.

1.2 Executive Summary

This is a Conservation Management Plan for the 11th-century crypt below the Wren church of St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, City of London. The Plan summarises the known history of the building, from its construction about 1080, through the Great Fire of London of 1666, its incorporation into the Wren church of the 1670s, and the rebuilding of the church and crypt after World War II by Laurence King in the 1950s. The crypt today is an attractive space, used for several public and religious functions. The Plan describes the uses of the crypt and its vulnerability as one of London's oldest standing stone structures. The significance of the structure is outlined; some aspects of its importance are European in scope. Policies of care and management for the future are then proposed.

The crypt has a specific problem of efflorescence of salts on parts of the walls of the crypt, and a possibly related problem of crumbling old brickwork in other parts. The question of what to do about this efflorescence and crumbling is addressed, and the way forward explored.

This Conservation Management Plan, with all its policies, is being adopted by the Rector and PCC of St Mary-le-Bow; and is to be used as the basis and first step of a continuing management regime for the crypt.

1.3 Acknowledgements

The authors thank the following for information and advice received during the writing of this plan: Sara Crofts, Andrew Derrick, Dr Richard Gem, Professor Derek Keene, Dr Brian Ridout and Kathryn Stubbs. Several photographs of the crypt were taken by Derek Kendall of the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments (England) in 1998; they appear by courtesy of the National Monuments Record and are Crown Copyright.

This Conservation Management Plan has been written following the guidance in the draft guideline *Conservation Management Plans: Guidance for Major Churches* by Dr Joseph Elders of the Council for Care of Churches (consultation draft, 2006).

The authors also thank all those who responded to the Consultation Draft of this Plan in 2007.

2 Introduction

2.1 The present church and parish of St Mary-le-Bow

St Mary-le-Bow enjoys an iconic and international reputation by virtue of its historical associations with the principal ancient thoroughfare of the City of London; its Bells (Bow Bells) the sound of which are defining of the provenance of all ‘cockneys’; and the superlative tower and spire designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

The church at pavement level was rebuilt after severe damage in the War as a faithful copy of Wren’s original, but with the features of a Liturgical Movement space – that is, as informed by scholarship then current of what obtained in the earliest church; an expansive sanctuary with a forward altar (and originally with a bishop’s throne in the aedicule against the east wall, alongside seats for clergy), a small south chapel with a sacrament house plainly designed as a complement to Wren’s tower, and no other altars. The seating is flexible (although it seems that pews had been envisaged).

The church has two pulpits – more prominent perhaps than might be expected for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel, and these have become a justly famous feature as a result of a post-War tradition of hosting debates, dialogues and other exchanges.

The south west corner contains the memorial to Captain (later Admiral) Arthur Phillip, first Governor of New South Wales (who had been baptised in the adjacent, and, following demolition, absorbed parish of St Mildred, Bread Street) and is the home to other Australian features. St Mary-le-Bow is the Australian church in London.

The parish is unusual in having very few resident parishioners (most of whom live in the Cathedral School) to whom ministry might normally be expected to be directed. Consequently the church conceives its task as keeping Christian wisdom alive in a commercial and business area – for the benefit both of institutions and individuals. In substantial part the dual pulpits were conceived by Joseph McCulloch, rector from 1959, as a conscious engagement of the Church with the thinking of the day. He conceived a programme of ‘Dialogues’ (over 400) in which he would hold discussion across the nave with lay and less often, ecclesiastical figures of breathtaking distinction. Although this particular model of engagement, radical indeed in the mid 1960s, has been remodelled and reinvented by successors of McCulloch it remains a guiding vision and one which has arguably encouraged a generous and open attitude. This tradition of dialogue is currently recast in two streams of debate - JustShare (which seeks to keep the needs of the world’s poor before the City in economic debate) and Cheapside (in which issues of contemporary concern -about which Christians and others may be expected to have views - are discussed publicly).

Sunday worship was abandoned in the early 1960s and that issue has not been revisited, no doubt in part because of the proximity of St Paul’s Cathedral. But St Mary-

le-Bow is emphatically a liturgical church, celebrating all the major feast days which fall in the week with ceremonial and music. The parish is currently appealing for £350,000 to replace a worn out organ with an instrument able to sustain this tradition. We are in particular approaching developers on Cheapside to assist with this community asset.

2.2 The Conservation Management Plan for the crypt

The objectives of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) are to:

- **Understand the site** by drawing together information including documents and physical evidence in order to present an overall description of the place through time.
- **Assess its significance** both generally and for its principal components, again with supporting detail.
- **Define issues** affecting the significance of the site and building remains, or which have the potential to affect them in future.
- **Develop conservation policies** to ensure that the significance of the site is retained in any future management, use or alteration. If possible the site and its significance should be enhanced through implementation of the conservation policies.
- At the end of the CMP, when all the above have been thoroughly discussed, a **current problem with efflorescence of salts and crumbling old brick in the crypt** is outlined and a course of investigation proposed.

The ‘site’ considered here is only the 11th-century crypt which lies beneath the Wren building. This CMP is not about any other part of the church itself.

This plan has been written by John Schofield and the rector, George R Bush. During its compilation two pieces of work were commissioned: a new metric survey of the crypt by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS), and an inspection of the stones used in the walls and columns of the crypt by Dr Bernard Worssam, a geologist with special knowledge of Romanesque churches.

2.3 Relationship with other plans and sources

An extract of the latest Quinquennial Survey of the church, by Julian Harrap Architects in 2006, which deals with the crypt is given below as appendix 8.2. In the past few years there have been reports on the environment in the crypt by specialists Ridouts, as the heating regime was modified, and these are summarised in section 5.1.

The policies of the Corporation of London which apply to the crypt as part of a Listed Building and as being in a Conservation Area are briefly summarised in section 3.3.

The parish has considered the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as they might apply to the church and the crypt, and their present position about the consequences of the Act for the crypt are given in section 5.3.

In general, this Conservation Management Plan attempts to follow the principles of the thinking behind Conservation Plans in this country in general, and the principle that recording the ancient fabric as carefully as possible will inform practical decisions which have to be made to ensure its future in tomorrow's society (Clark 1999; 2001).

3 Understanding the place and community

3.1 The history of the building and its site

Introduction

A new survey of the interior of the crypt has been undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS), given here as Fig 3 and available in digital form.

The crypt is only partly co-terminous with the Wren footprint, that is on the north and east sides of the crypt. The south wall of the crypt is about 3.7m (12ft) inside the south wall of the Wren building, and the west wall of the crypt is about 7.4m (24ft) inside the west wall of the Wren building. This is shown in the site outline, taken from the MoLAS survey of 2006 (Fig 1), and in a section drawn by John Clayton about 1848 (Fig 2). How the church above grew to its present area is outlined in this description. (Note that the ‘outline of the Wren building’ in Figs 1 and 3 includes the secular properties forming the north-east corner of the block. This is so that the corner of Bow Lane and Cheapside is evident in the plan).

The crypt is presently divided into a chapel (the south aisle), the Court of Arches (the open east half of the central nave), the boiler room, ancillary rooms and the sacristy for the south chapel (the west half of the nave) and the restaurant (the north aisle) (Fig 3). The term ‘Court of Arches’ will be retained here for the east part of the nave, though it seems to be a post-War usage and, as stated below, it is highly likely that the medieval Court of Arches met in the church above.

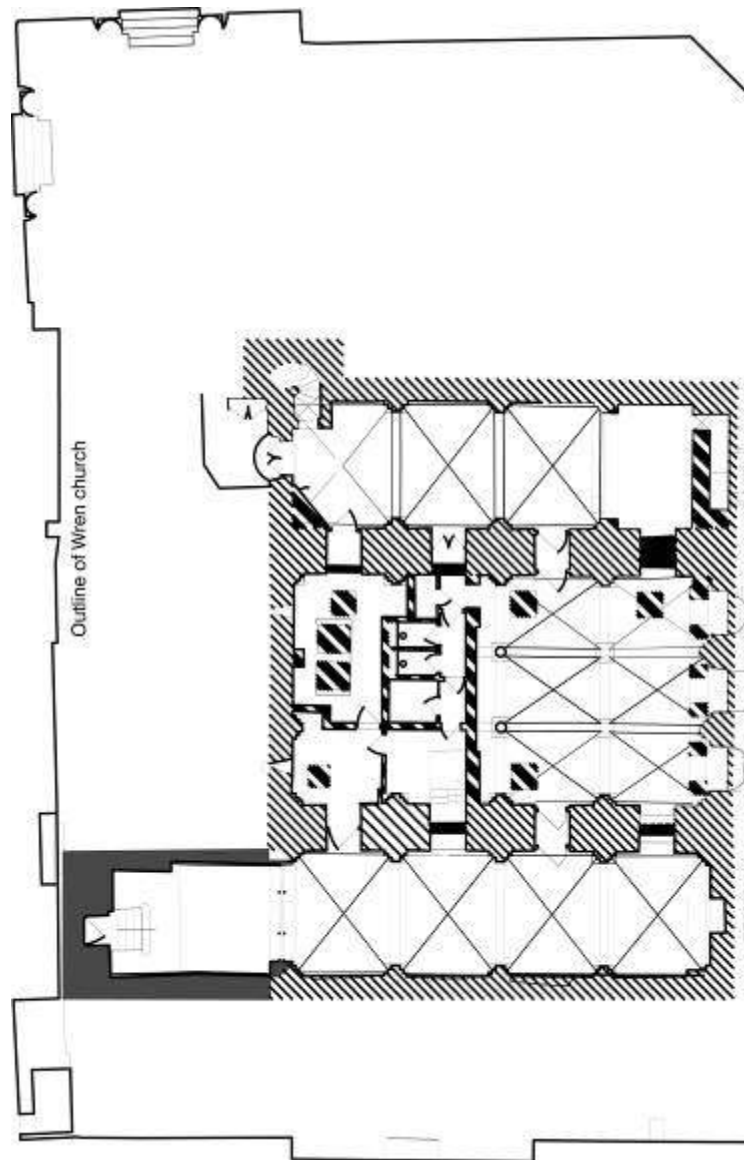


Fig 1 The areas of the crypt and the Wren church compared (from the MoLAS survey, 2006; given in detail in Fig 3)

The north aisle which houses the restaurant is shown from the west in Fig 4; and a view of the central nave, the Court of Arches area which is also used by the restaurant, from the south, in Fig 5.

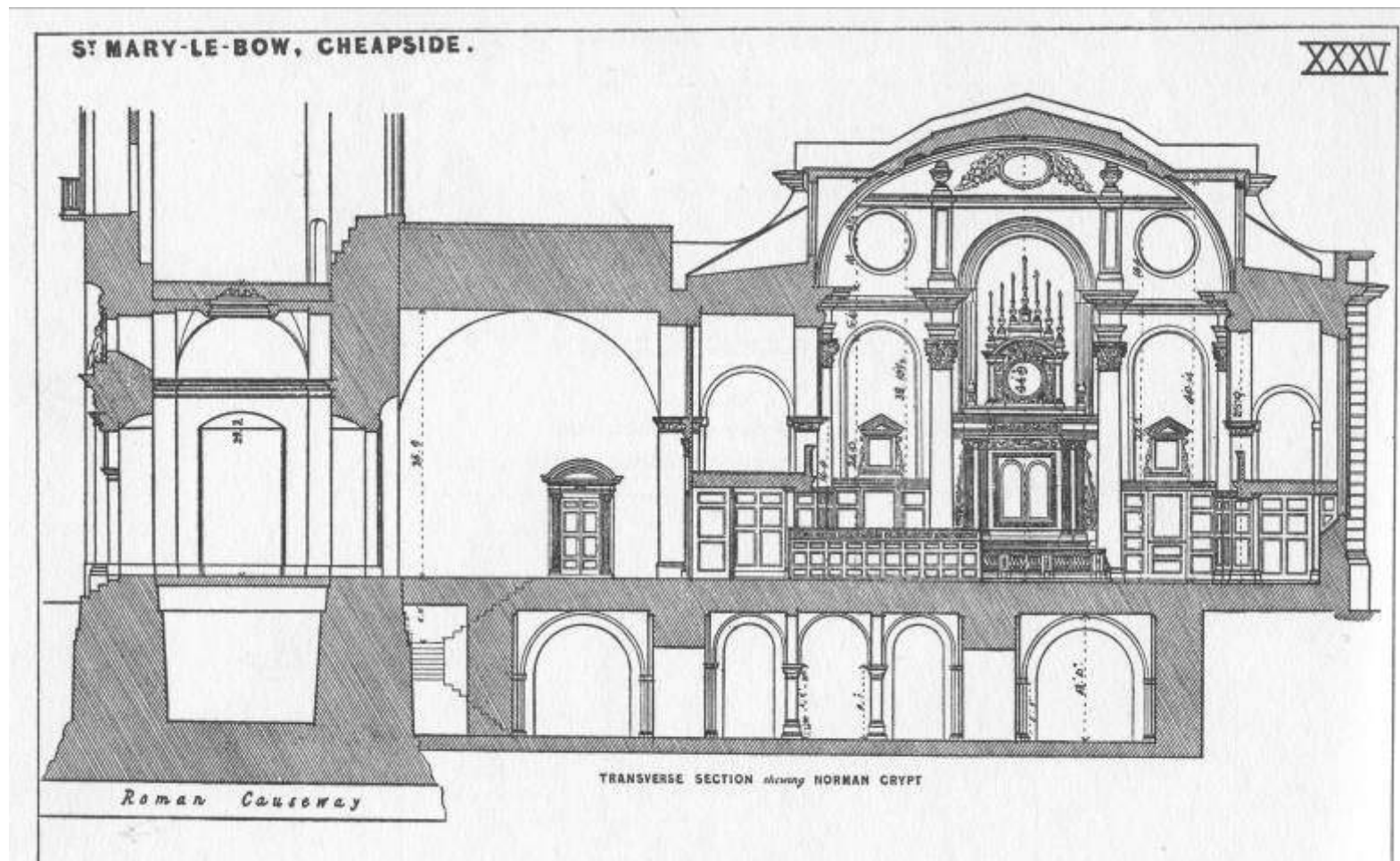


Fig 2 Section of the Wren church and the underlying crypt, looking east, by John Clayton (c 1848) (Wren Society ix, 44)

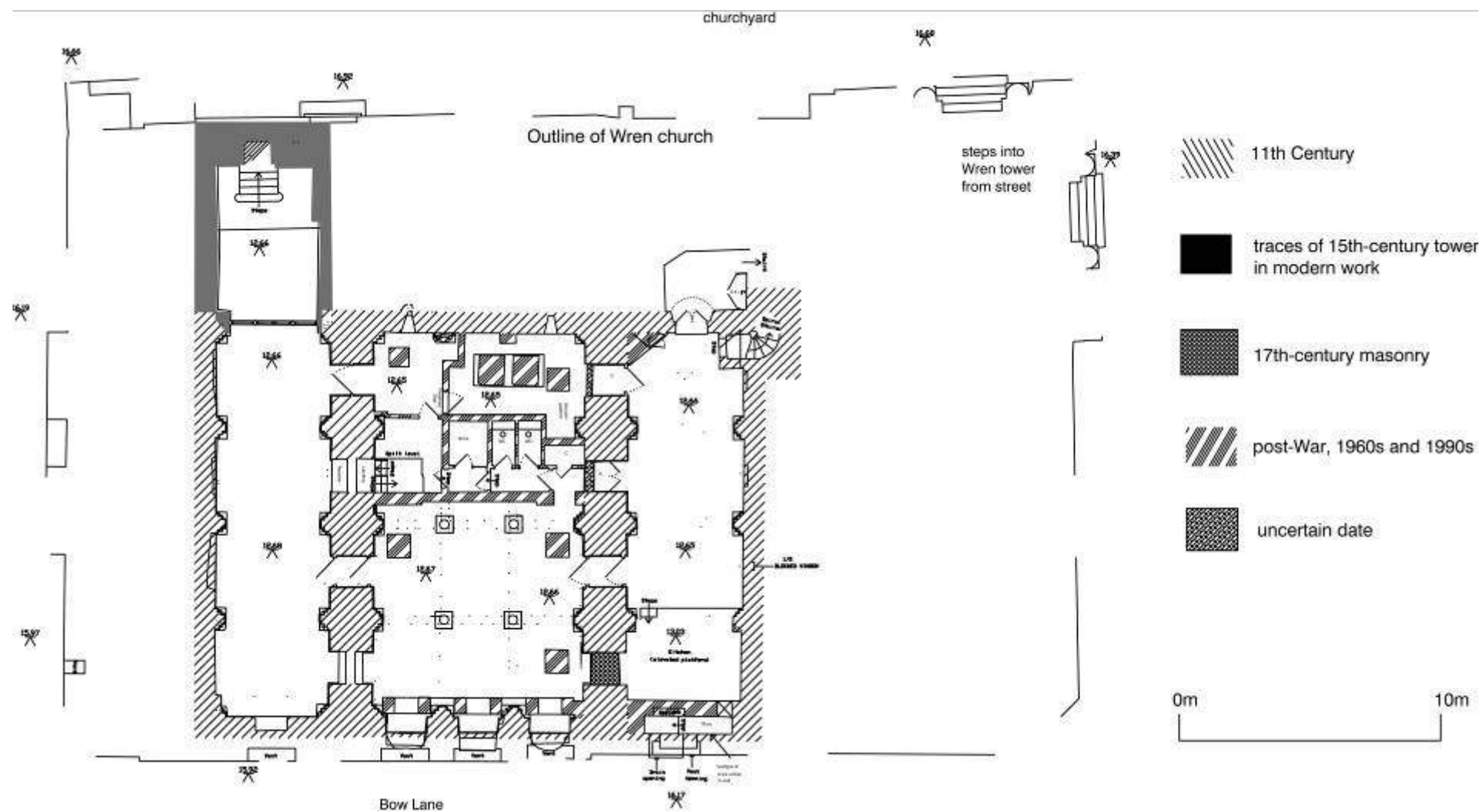


Fig 3 Survey of the crypt by MoLAS (2006). North is to the right



Fig 4 The north aisle of the crypt, looking east (© Crown Copyright, NMR)



Fig 5 The east part of the crypt, lately used as the Court of Arches, and daily as part of the restaurant, looking north (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

The area in Roman and Saxon times

The site of St Mary-le-Bow, in the middle of Cheapside on its south side, is in the centre of the Roman city of London. Cheapside today partly coincides with the main Roman street of Londinium. Wren found this road or 'causeway' and put his new tower on it in the 1680s (Fig 2). According to *Parentalia*, the volume of remeniscences of Wren written by his son and published by his grandson, this road, of stones and gravel, was 4ft (1.2m) thick (Wren 1750, 265).

A small trench dug in the floor of the crypt in the east aisle, between the two columns, was reported by Frank Lambert in 1915. This found the foundations beneath each row of columns, of ragstone, chalk, flint and Roman tile; that on the north side was barely wider than the column bases, but that on the south 'almost six feet' wide. The trench also uncovered what appears to be the piled west side of a stream running south-west, probably part of the Roman topography. It is also possible that some reused worked stones, visible in the walls of the crypt, come from either Roman buildings or even a previous, Saxon stone church. This question is dealt with below, in the section on the nature of the walls.

Fig 6 is a map of the parish of St Mary-le-Bow in the medieval period, with four adjacent parishes. This derives from the intensive study of the medieval documents for land-holding in these parishes by Derek Keene and Vanessa Harding (1987). The map was compiled for the archaeological report (Schofield et al 1990) of four sites which are shown on the map as black dots. Though that report was about the Saxon and medieval periods, the map is useful as a guide to surrounding Roman topography, since Roman remains were found on the four mentioned sites: Milk Street (excavated 1976–7), Ironmonger Lane (1980) north of Cheapside; and Watling Court (1978) and Well Court (1979) south of Cheapside. The Roman levels have also been published, separately (Perring and Roskams 1991).

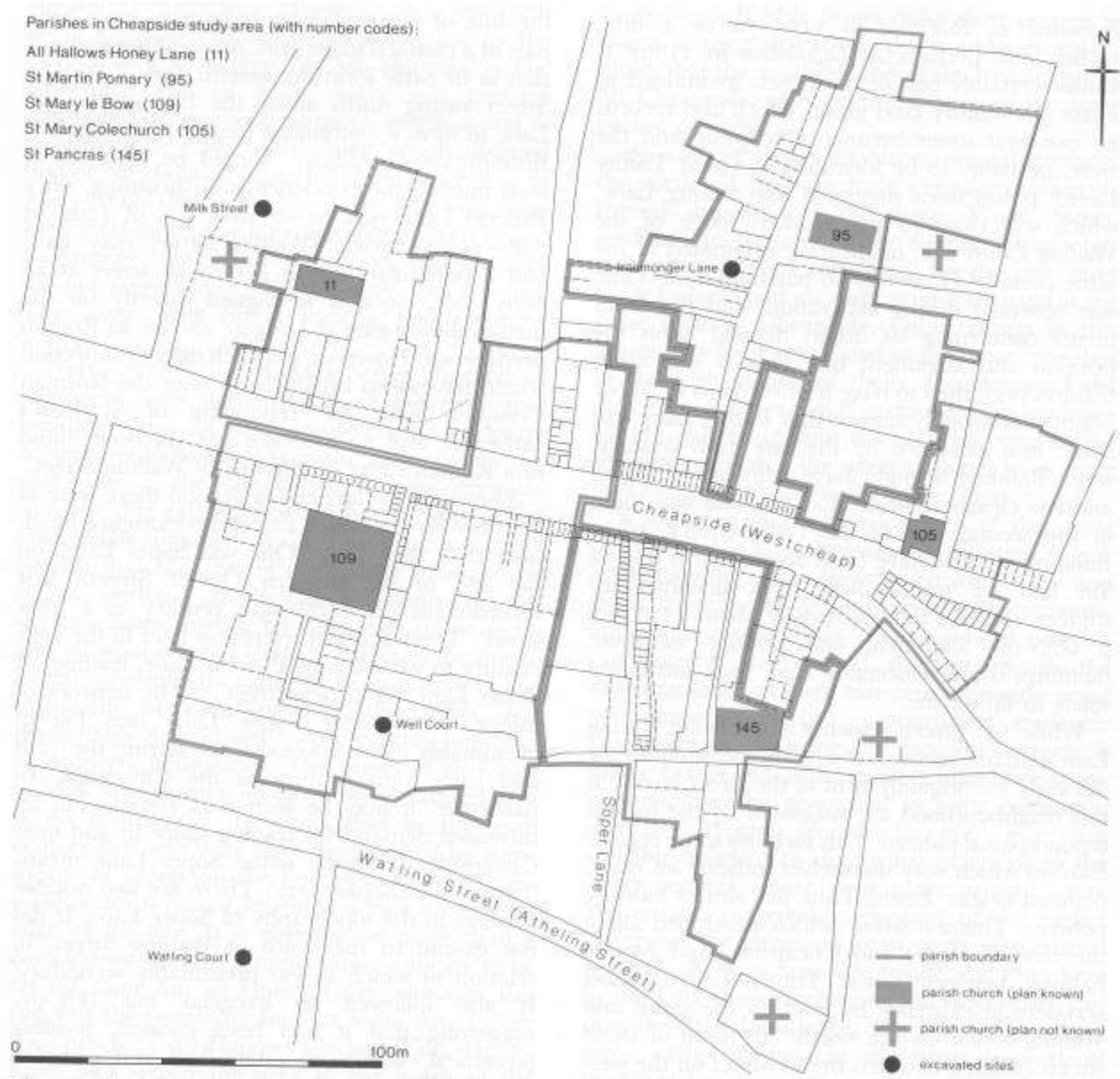


Fig 6 Medieval parishes in the study area of Keene and Harding (1987); St Mary-le-Bow is marked as church 109, though the correct number within the study should be 104. The sites of excavations of the 1970s and 1980s are also shown (from Schofield et al 1990)

For the present purpose, it need only be mentioned that Roman buildings of the 1st to 3rd centuries were found at Milk Street, Ironmonger Lane, Well Court and extensively at Watling Court; and have since been found at many sites around. The site south of St Mary-le-Bow at Well Court is of more immediate relevance, as a north-south Roman street just east of the line of Bow Lane was recorded beneath the Victorian buildings, just beneath the basement floor. The level of this street, which like other Roman streets probably survived into the Saxon period, is the main reason for suggesting that the original floor level in the crypt of St Mary-le-Bow was at or just below ground level in the 11th century. Evidence for medieval buildings and the

alignment of the 11th-century Bow Lane was also recovered, and is summarised in Fig 7.

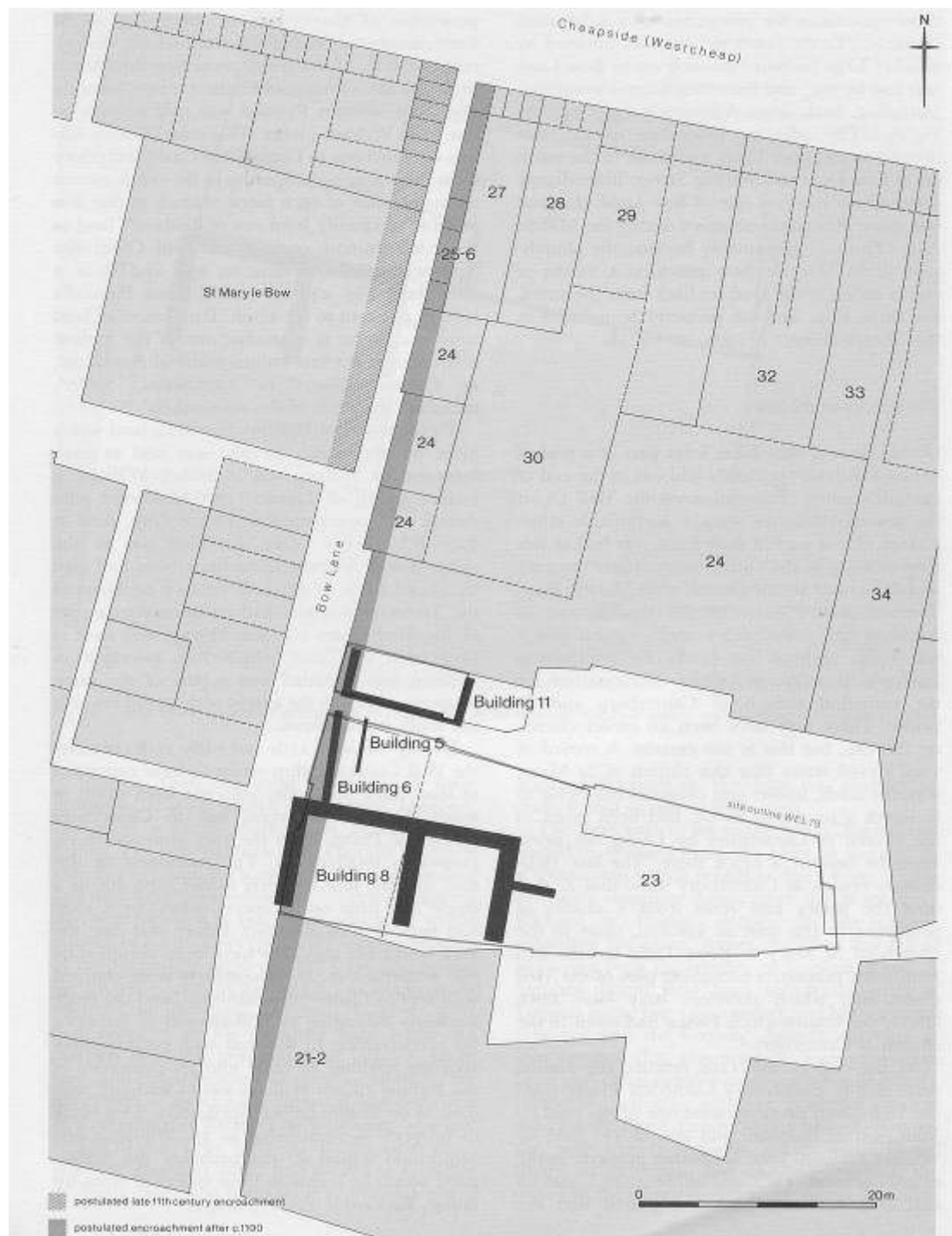


Fig 7 Bow Lane in the medieval period, after excavation at Well Court in Bow Lane in 1979, and related documentary study (from Schofield et al 1990). The numbers 21 to 34 refer to properties within the parish, as numbered in their study by Keene and Harding (1987)

More about the late Saxon (10th-century) occupation of the area will come from the publication of excavations on the large Poultry site, 100m east of the church, in the 1990s (Burch et al in prep).

The building of c 1090

The first closely datable mention of the church is in an early 12th-century chronicler's account of a storm in October 1091, which removed part of the roof of the church. It is likely that the crypt, which is in the architectural style of the late 11th century, was then standing as part of the church, which is called 'Sancta Maria quae dicitur ad Arcus' in the account (so the name can only be taken back to the early 12th century). There is also a reference datable to between 1098 and 1108, when Living the priest gave the church of St Mary and the lands, houses and churches belonging to it, to Canterbury Cathedral Priory, when he became a monk there. This estate must have been large, since the priory valued it at £40 p.a. (Kissan 1933–7; 1938–40). It may be that Archbishop Lanfranc, who died in 1089, intended St Mary's to be the centre of an urban base for the cathedral; but his successor was apparently the first of the archbishops to stay at Lambeth, where they have been ever since. Around this time the site of the church, a stone house on its north side, and the cemetery to the west occupied an area about 36.6m (120ft) square, with the east side of the crypt and its church above fronting onto Bow Lane (Keene and Harding 1987, **104/1**). We have no certain information on entrances to the crypt or to the church above, though there may be some hints in the fabric, as detailed below.

The crypt comprises three spaces which are conventionally called the north and south aisles and, between them, the 'nave'. The aisles are each of four bays, and the nave is also four bays long, but three bays wide; it originally had six free-standing columns to mark the bay divisions, and four can be seen today (two are wholly or partly replacements after the War, see below). The nave is divided from the aisles by masonry walls, each with four arches. Leading off westwards from the west end of the south aisle is one further bay, of a different size, which was the lowest stage of the late medieval tower.

The widths of the walls of the crypt are only partly known. The north and south walls cannot be measured; the east and west walls seem to be about 1m (3ft 3in) wide. Investigations immediately after the War found that the foundations of the crypt walls went down '5-6 feet [1.5-1.8m] below floor level to soft wet earth'. The present floor is at 12.67m OD, with no perceptible steps between the aisles and nave. As far as can be seen, the present floor is at the same level as the original. Present-day ground level, shown on all four sides in Fig 3, is 16.92m OD on the west side in the Churchyard. The height of the vault has not been measured for this survey, but Keene and Harding say it is 3.81m (12ft 6in) high [internally, to the post-War vault].

We have no idea what the outside of the crypt walls looked like. The interior sides of the exterior walls have been patched and rebuilt many times, especially after the War, but were probably somewhat as they look now, of randomly coursed rubble; the responds at bay-intervals and at the corners are in squared ashlar. The arched walls which divide the nave from the aisles are totally in squared ashlar; their arches have

mostly been repaired, but they were probably also in squared ashlar voussoirs, in some cases with arches of Roman brick above (Fig 8). All the walls have been repointed, most recently in the 1960s, with a mortar which is hardly appropriate in appearance.



Fig 8 Roman bricks used above the second arch from the east in the north arcade, from the south (i.e. the Court of Arches)

For this survey, and apparently for the first time, a geologist has been employed to specify what the main building stones are. Dr Bernard Worssam concludes that the main building stone is from Caen in Normandy, with a little Reigate stone (though this could always be a later insertion, even post-War). There is also a little calcareous tufa showing in the walls. The chamfered tops of the imposts and much of the chamfered plinth are of Taynton stone, from upper Oxfordshire, which was used in contemporary building of the late 11th century at the Tower of London, St Paul's, and further afield at Rochester Cathedral and Castle. The two original columns in the nave of the crypt are also of Taynton stone. The geology of the capitals has not yet been identified. The shaft of column 4 is probably Portland stone, as is its plinth. Some of the arches also employ Roman tiles, laid radially (eg Fig 8). There are two cases of reused stone, which may be Roman; but whereas the first is probably in its 11th-century setting, the second is suspect and is probably from the post-War rebuilding.

In the west wall, in the comparatively undisturbed part now a boiler room, are three circular stones which look like reused columns (Fig 9).



Fig 9 Three circular stones in the west wall, which look like reused columns, perhaps from a demolished Roman building (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

Second, a fragment of what seems to be a moulded string-course, about 0.3m long, is embedded in the north wall of the crypt; but as noted below, all the masonry of the north wall elevation is suspect as it may have been rebuilt after the War. Even so, this piece must have come from somewhere, and may have come from elsewhere on the church site.

As noted above in the description of the area in Saxon times, it seems likely that the Lane to the east, around 1100, would be about 1.8m (6ft) below the present surface, so the crypt stood out of the ground for at least half its height, thus allowing for windows. We assume the ground level was about the same on all four sides.



Fig 10 The west wall in the present sacristy, the west end of the nave, showing the remains of one of the window embrasures and the adjacent respond, now without its vaulting (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

At present, the inner edges of original window embrasures can be detected in the north and west walls only with certainty. Each of the four bays of the north wall has an infilled embrasure; these were filled first with brick, then with masonry in the 1960s. In the west wall of the nave there are two embrasures open for much of their depth (the southern one shown in Fig 10), and records of another; all three aisles of the nave would be lit from the west. The comparable openings in the east wall of the nave have been damaged by 17th-century and later adaptation, and it can only be an assumption that there were original windows here to the lane in all cases. A drawing by Gwilt of about 1818, in Guildhall Library, suggests that the second bay from the north in the east wall (called Bay 6 in a listing of the bays employed below) had a window with a round-headed embrasure, as now reconstructed for those in the north wall. The traces of straight embrasures to the opening in the wall in the central bay of the crypt (Bay 7, next to the south) may indicate a doorway to the lane, which was first observed by Underwood after a piece of brick fell down in 1913 (1915, 38–9). On the south wall are later medieval openings, now filled with masonry, but possibly there were original windows here also. Here the south wall of the crypt is well within the south wall of the Wren building, but in the medieval period there were buildings and probably open spaces which functioned as light wells on the south side of the crypt and the medieval church above. Reconstruction of the site of the church by

Derek Keene and Vanessa Harding (Fig 19 below) suggests that the south wall of the crypt bordered a medieval alley.

In the late 11th century, when the crypt was built, there must have been open space on the north side of the crypt, so that the windows there could function. It is likely that in the later medieval period, adjacent buildings were constructed against the north side of the church, obscuring the north windows.

In the north-west corner of the crypt is a projecting block of masonry which houses a spiral stair (Fig 11). This was known about before the War, but only uncovered in the post-War rebuilding. It must have communicated with the church above (or, in addition, the first tower: see below). Apart from this, there are no other original entrances to the crypt remaining or known. The present entrance (and stair) at the west end of the north aisle is 19th-century, by Gwilt in 1818–19, though possibly on the site of a post-Fire stair and entrance.

Thus the only known medieval way into the crypt was via the spiral stair, hardly a stately route. This corroborates the suggestion that the crypt was always a subsidiary structure. Contemporary crypts in larger Norman churches, such as Canterbury Cathedral, Rochester Cathedral and St Paul's, had altars in them and in the first case had decent access. But no evidence of either is forthcoming for St Mary's.



Fig 11 Two views of the spiral stair: left, as uncovered in 1959, looking north (MoL); and right, the entrance to the spiral stair today, looking north-east (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

At present four columns stand in the Court of Arches. There must have been two more in the west half of the crypt, now covered by the offices, boiler room and toilets, but they were probably removed in the rebuilding after 1666. The office and boiler room area has original wall responds which show that the vaulting arrangements covered the entire nave of the crypt. The side aisles were vaulted differently.

For the present study, the columns have been numbered 1–4: the east pair are 1–2, the west pair 3–4, counting from north to south, like this:

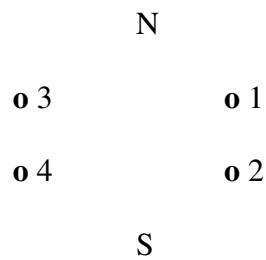


Fig 12 The east half of the nave (the Court of Arches), looking south-east and showing Columns 1 (foreground) and 2 (rear) (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

Columns 1 and 2 are original in their fabric, but an old photograph (Fig 13) seems to indicate that in both cases, the two lower blocks of the base has been replaced in the post-War rebuilding (compare with Fig 12).



Fig 13 The east part of the nave, looking west, in the early 20th century (Guildhall Library). This shows the character of the Wren vaulting

The site of Column 3 was occupied in 1929 by a large block of brickwork, one of those put in by Wren to support the north arcade of the church above (rear right in Fig 13). It seems unlikely that he built this around Column 3 (though the RCHME survey (p.79) allowed for this possibility), and it seems probable that Column 3 is a post-War creation. Column 4 (Fig 14, its present appearance) had its column obscured by Wren brickwork; it is shown in early 20th century from the east in Fig 13. Another photograph held by the parish shows the capital and its column intact from the west; the column must be original. Bernard Worssam, in his geological report (Appendix 1, below) suggests that the plinths may be Portland Stone, in which case they are probably post-War replacements. This is the opinion of the Quinquennial Report of 2006, by Julian Harrap (below, appendix 8.2). Also notable are slight differences between the cubic capitals. Columns 1 and 2 have simple grooves at the corners, but the capital on Column 4 has spear-shapes forming the corners or arrises (Fig 14).



Fig 14 Capital of Column 4. The little spear-heads or leaves at the corners have so far not been noticed in other churches of this date

In both aisles and the nave, the vaulting is carried by responds in the corners and along the walls to form the bay divisions (see the MoLAS survey in Fig 3 or the plan by RCHME in 1929, before the south aisle was opened up, Fig 15). Each respond has three rectangular orders, and chamfered caps and bases; the abacus of the capital is commonly between 70 inches and 73 inches above the floor. The three projections lined up with the transverse arches between bays (the large projection in the middle), the vaulting of each contiguous bay (the second order or projection) and some form of arching along the walls (shown by the outer order). In several cases the stone courses of the central part of the respond, facing the internal space, are alternately formed of large blocks which span the width of the central part and two blocks which have narrow faces outwards (it is possible they are turned round through 90°) (eg in background of Fig 5). This happens so often it must have been the original intention. Though King, in his restoration, has reproduced the effect, it is shown in the original section, for instance of the west wall (Fig 10).

All the floors must be considered post-War creations. The chapel in the south aisle is floored with 18th- and 19th-century ledgers, probably those previously flooring the north aisle (see Fig 16 below).

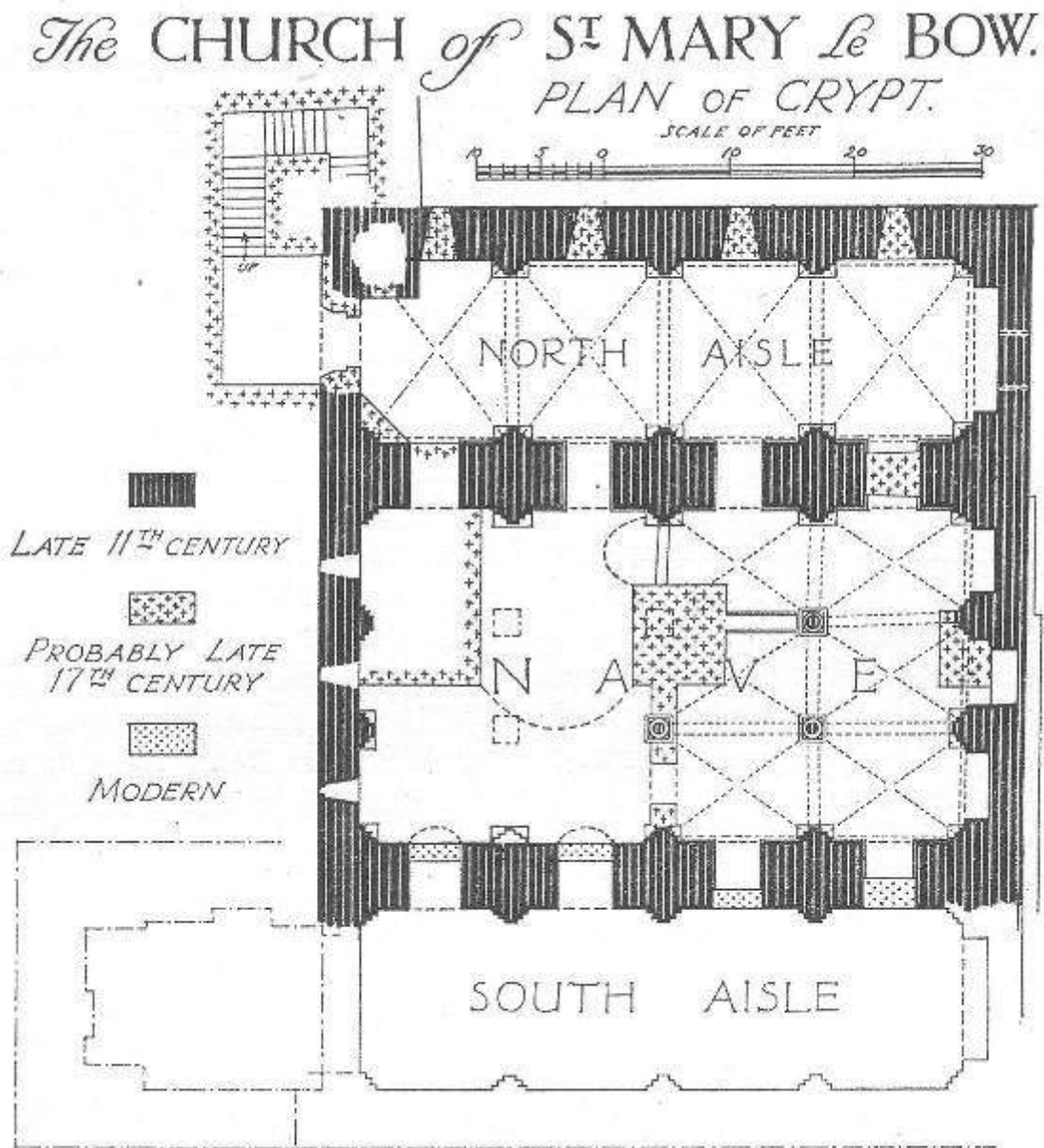


Fig 15 Plan of the crypt in 1929 (RCHME). The south aisle was then inaccessible

The present vaults are all post-War rebuilds, but what lies behind the white vault surfaces is not completely clear. It seems to have been his intention, at least, to remove all the earth between the vaults, whether of stone or brick, and the church floor above; this earth had become very wet through the bombed church having no roof for several years (in King's report on the state of the fabric, 1955). The usual view is that King replaced all the vaults with the present ones of 'fibrous plaster'. This type of plaster was used in post-War reconstructions in the City of London, but is now thought 'anachronistic and comparatively mechanical and lifeless' (Rowell and Robinson 1996, 73). The crowns of the vaults in the nave are about 3.1m (12ft 6in) above the floor.

The survey of 1929 by RCHME includes a photograph of the north aisle which shows it retained its original stone vaulting: the text of the survey says 'the vaulting of the aisle is of original stonework the surfaces badly perished, with round arched wall-ribs and transverse ribs' (RCHME 1929, 80 and plate 143). The original vaulting of the south aisle is not known, since it was bricked up from the 1860s until after the last War; but a plan by Laurence King attached to a faculty application in 1953 (the application actually about removing human remains for cremation) labels the vaulting of the south aisle to be like the north aisle, 'rubble groined vault' (GL, MS 18319/182). It therefore seems quite probable that both north and south aisles retained their original 11th-century vaulting, though with some local brick repairs, until 1955.

If the aisle vaults were originally at the same height as the vault of the nave section, then since the aisle bays were larger in area than the bays in the nave, the vaulting of the bays in the nave would have appeared more stilted or pushed up, to reach the same general height.

The parish holds a photograph dated 'about 1931' which is a similar view to that in the RCHME volume (Fig 16). This is valuable as showing the state of the north wall before King's restoration (compare Fig 4). This photograph was probably ordered by E Underwood, the parish architect in the 1930s; it was probably used by Laurence King, since his name and address is marked in pencil on the back.

Fig 16 shows two features later overtaken by the post-War restoration. First, four of the responds (the second and third pair away from the camera) have most of their middle projection missing; only the bottom two stones remain. Thus the present form of these middle projections in the crypt must be post-War. Second, the walling in the bay on the left seems to show vertical lines of an opening, or patching with brick, below the window embrasure. This will be commented on below when each of the outer wall bays is examined.



Fig 16 View of the north aisle, looking east, 'about 1931' (original now in Guildhall Library). It is believed the ledger slabs in the floor were moved into the south aisle after the War. Note the brick infilling in the embrasure, and compare with Fig 4 today. The square holes in the brick infilling were done in 1913

One intriguing and important feature of the crypt is several incised designs on the newel of the spiral stair at the north-west corner (Fig 17). They resemble the designs being cut on bone objects and perhaps on leather in the workshops in streets around the church in the 11th and 12th centuries, as found on the excavated sites such as Milk Street to the north-west. Their purpose here is unknown.



Fig 17 The incised designs on the north side of the newel of the stair (© Crown Copyright, NMR)

The original and early use of the crypt, from about 1100, is not known. There were no altars in the crypt, as far as is known, in the Middle Ages. There were no known burials here until after the Fire (and then in coffins, not as far as is known in graves in the crypt floor). Keene and Harding (1987, **105/1**) suggest that in view of its architectural elaboration, it may have been used for the safekeeping of valuables.

There are two usual beliefs about the crypt, as given in Gerald Cobb's 1974 (revised 1977) survey of London churches, that (i) the name of the church derives from the arches or 'bows' in the crypt, and (ii) the Court of Arches met in the crypt in the medieval period (Cobb 1977, 162). Sadly both of these are without foundation, and are both unlikely. There is no evidence that the Court of Arches (first mentioned in 1251) ever met in the crypt in the medieval period, and this is most unlikely. Although there is no detailed evidence suggesting where the Court met, one possible site below the tower in the north-west corner of the church is put forward here. Medieval courts did not need much space, and one bay would have been sufficient for the main people involved. The crypt would always have been of subsidiary importance, and its main function was to provide a podium for the church above. Parallels for the crypt and discussion are placed at the end of this survey.

From 1100 to 1666

By 1196 the church had a tower, though where is not stated, since in that year William fitzOsbert, a popular leader, took refuge in it. In 1271 part of the bell tower collapsed towards Cheapside, damaging the stone house between the church and the street. This tower must have been on the north side of the church, and was probably the same as the one mentioned in 1196; Keene and Harding (1987, **104/1**) suggest, from measurements of 1523, that this tower was outside the west end of the north aisle, i.e. where the foot of the access stair to the crypt (beneath the Wren vestibule) is now, and extended about 6.1m (20ft) to the west (their reconstructed plan of the church at church floor level is given here as Fig 18). If this was so, the foundations of the tower would probably have precluded the possibility of an original entrance to the crypt in the position of the present one. We do not know how the known spiral stair from the crypt upwards functioned in or as an appendage of this tower; but a simple solution would be to suggest that the stair went on up past the medieval church floor level and into the tower, no doubt with a door to the church floor.

Since the crypt stuck out of the ground for perhaps 3m (10ft), a valid question is how did people get into the church above. Perhaps there was an entrance, with steps, through the north-west tower which would probably have been accessible from the churchyard to the west. Later medieval parish churches in the City of London often had their main entrance to the church through a western tower (Schofield 1994, 55).

By the 13th century part of the crypt was being let out to householders who lived nearby, presumably for storage; so there must have been an external entrance somewhere, perhaps from Bow Lane on the east. Letting the crypt for storage is also recorded in the 16th and 17th centuries. Letting out crypts below churches is documented at several other City parish churches, both in the medieval and post-medieval (1500–1666) periods.

Clearly the church of St Mary ‘de Arcubus’ was a prominent local landmark in the 13th century. In 1244 there is mention of Ralph de Arcubus, grocer, who was one of the sheriffs; he presumably took his name from living near the church.

The tower which fell in 1271 does not seem to have been substantially rebuilt, though it was still known as the ‘steeple’ in 1523. By this time there was another, larger and grander tower at the south-west of the church, represented today by the bay forming the entrance to the south aisle of the crypt. Keene and Harding suggest that by 1523 the west wall of the church above coincided with the west wall of both towers (though the earlier of 1271 may have been only a stump), as shown in their drawing here Fig 18. The south-west tower is shown in several panoramas and a painting of the 16th and 17th centuries. Its date of construction is not known, but a 14th-century date is likely from the documentary references to it (a bequest of 1348 was to the new work of the belfry). By the middle of the 16th century (and possibly by 1492) it had a door on the south side, and thus formed an entrance to the church itself. Arches of Caen stone were added to the top in 1515–16, and these formed a distinctive part of the skyline of the City thereafter up to the Great Fire of 1666. A great bell called ‘Bow bell’ is mentioned in the 14th century, and by the middle of the 16th century it rang at 9 o’clock each night. Presumably this bell was in the newer south-west tower.

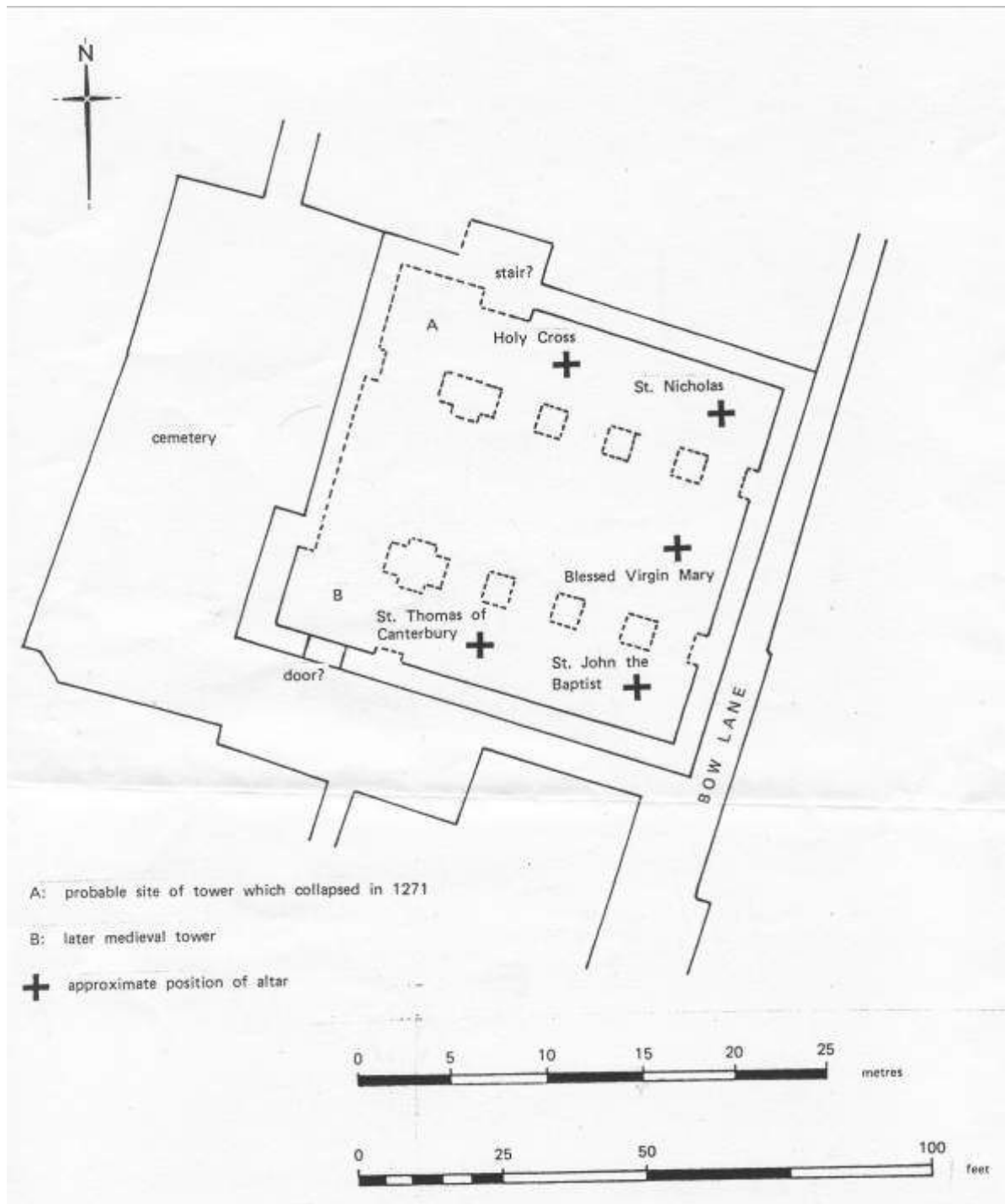


Fig 18 Reconstructed plan of the medieval church by Keene and Harding (1987) (drawn by Derek Keene). One possible site for the medieval Court of Arches is at A, under the old tower

Little is known about the medieval architectural development of the church above the crypt, but the following is provided by the intensive study of the church and its parish in the medieval period by Keene and Harding (1987, site **104/0**) (and see Fig 18):

‘The arrangement of the body of the church probably reflected that of the crypt below, with a nave separated by arcades from narrower aisles to the N. and S. Wren’s description of the church as ‘mean and low’ may indicate that at the time of the Great Fire the building still retained much of its Romanesque character. The high altar of the church, facing the nave, was presumably dedicated to the Virgin Mary. John Holegh in 1348 left money for painting an image of the Virgin in the choir and to buy a crown to be placed on its head: the image, mentioned again in 1380, was probably near the high altar. This part of the church was probably the chapel of Our Lady in which Ralph Davies wished to be buried in 1517. There was a rood between the chapel and the nave in 1511, and it was probably for the maintenance of *le Bemelight* before this crucifix that income from a property in Bow Lane was assigned in 1472. The next most important altar in the church was that dedicated to St Nicholas, which was probably at the E. end of the N. aisle. In 1348 John Holegh wished to be buried there in ‘the chancel of St Nicholas the bishop’ in the tomb of his wife, over which was to be placed a marble stone with 2 images and letters of latten. In 1361 William Spark wished to be buried under the altar of St Nicholas, and in 1423 John Prentout was to be buried in his wife’s tomb in the chapel of St Nicholas. In 1447 John Coventre wished to be buried at the back of the presbitery between the high altar and that of St Nicholas. Further W. in the N. aisle, or between that aisle and the nave, there appears to have been an altar of the Holy Cross, which in 1406 was said to be on the left side of the church.

In the S. part of the church, next to the way leading from the churchyard to Bow Lane, there was a chapel of St Thomas the Martyr. This was near the house in the churchyard which had once belonged to St Thomas’s sister Agnes. Parishioners wished to be buried in this chapel in 1459 and 1501, and one of them, John Lok, in 1459, left money to purchase cloths for St Thomas’s altar and for painting the retable behind it. By 1468 there was a priest celebrating at the altar of the Holy Trinity in the church, and there are references in 1479 and 1486 to intended burials in the chapel of the Holy Trinity, one of them before the altar of St Katharine there. The fraternity of the Holy Trinity at the church of St Mary-le-Bow was in existence by 1437, but there are no clues as to where the altar was located within the church.’

On the south side of the medieval church by the 15th century were two chapels, to St Thomas and possibly to St John the Baptist. These were probably within the south aisle, but their dimensions are not known, so the exact position and alignment of the south wall of the medieval church cannot be predicted. It lay somewhere between the line of the south wall of the Norman crypt and the present Wren south wall. What also follows from the reconstruction in Fig 18 is that secular medieval buildings and the alley south of the church will have their remains in the block of earth inside, north of, the south wall of the Wren church. This block of strata beneath the south side of the Wren church is shown most clearly in the Clayton section, Fig 2. A trial hole opened up in the south-east corner of the Wren building during the first investigations after the War in 1954 found what was thought to be a medieval wall lay under the Wren south wall, though at a slightly different angle. This may be the same as a similar wall seen from the outside, beneath the alley, in 1930.

There is one other enigmatic medieval survival. A 13th-century pier base for a pier of clustered columns was found in the post-War rebuilding, in the crypt; though clearly it did not belong there. Perhaps it is a relic of an otherwise undocumented rebuilding of

an aisle in the church above. The pier base is now in the vestibule of the Wren church (Schofield 1994, 119). At 98cm (about 3ft 3in) in diameter it seems quite large for such a small church, and perhaps it came from somewhere else. But it does look like some of the pier bases in the choir at Canterbury Cathedral, of after 1170 (Bond 1906, 451).

In 1932 E Underwood recorded a medieval wall beneath the present alley on the south side of the church. It may be that the Wren wall was partly based on it. The recorded wall was 14ft (4.3m) high and 16ft (4.9m) long, running west–east to a corner which then turned south 4ft 6in (1.4m) from the south-east corner (MoL site code GM262; Schofield 1994, 119). There are no illustrations of this discovery so it is hard to judge it. Perhaps this wall formed both part of the south side of the church and the start of a secular building south of it, now under the alley.

The stone house on the north side of the church

By the late 12th century there is also mention in the records of Canterbury Cathedral Priory of a stone house on the north side of the church, between it and Cheapside. This may have been built as early as the church itself, and acted as a domestic annexe for the archbishop and his staff; but it would have not been used much directly by the archbishop after the establishment of Lambeth Palace in the 1190s. The house was rebuilt in 1272–9, and was thereafter a notable stone structure on Cheapside. There was a tavern in its cellar (Keene and Harding 1987, site **104/20**). The arrangement is shown in a plan produced by Keene and Harding, Fig 19.

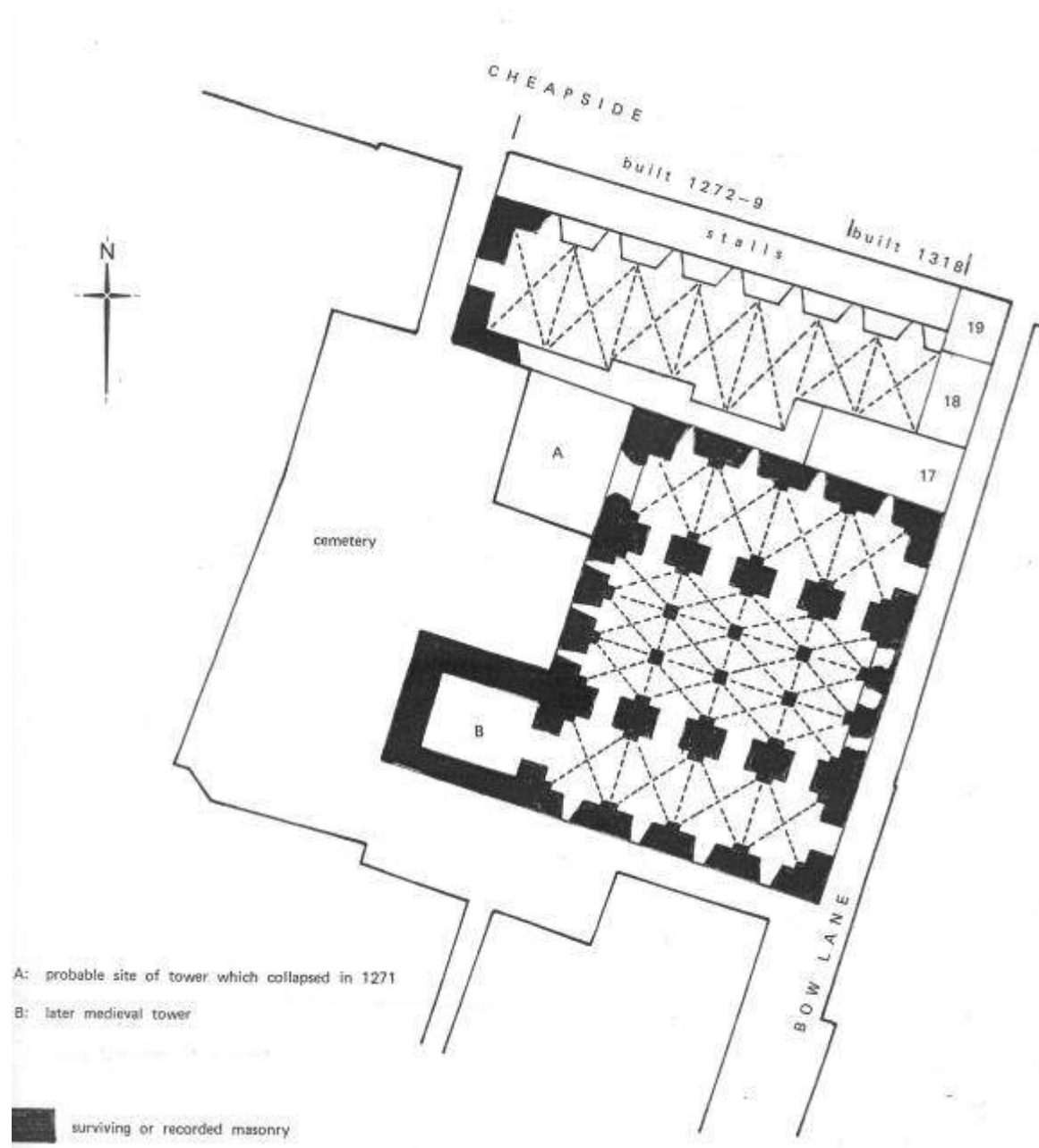


Fig 19 Reconstructed plan of the crypt and the undercroft of the stone house of 1272–9 on the north side, drawn by Derek Keene (Keene and Harding 1987)

The west end of the undercroft or cellar of this building was briefly exposed in 1959 immediately west of the Wren tower, and probably still survives beneath the ground. A trial pit dug to investigate the Wren foundations uncovered about two-thirds of one bay of a medieval undercroft; evidently this was the westernmost bay of an undercroft running east–west, one bay wide. It had quadripartite vaulting in a style that would be expected in the 1270s. In the north wall of this bay there were traces of a window to the street, and there was probably an entrance to the churchyard in the end (west) wall. The undercroft was floored in brick, just over 12ft 6in (3.81m) below the modern ground level. Its walls had been reduced and it was put out of action after the Fire, since Wren’s tower of 1680 occupied the middle part of it. The ground of the

end bay was made part of the churchyard after the Fire, thus preserving it to be found in 1959 (Grimes 1968, 168–70; plan and section, fig 37).

Rebuilding by Wren, and history to 1941

Like most of the City, St Mary-le-Bow was badly damaged in the Great Fire of 1666. In the post-Fire rebuilding, the south side was extended to its present alignment. There was discussion about enlarging the church also to the west and north, but in the event the site of the south-west tower was given up, and only the present tower built nearer Cheapside, on a new site (Keene and Harding 1987; Jeffrey 1996, 278–84). The decision to build the new tower must have been made during 1671, and the construction of the church and tower went on until 1680. The resulting fact that the 11th-century crypt occupies only part of the Wren footprint is shown in two section drawings by John Clayton in 1848: the first, looking east, has been given above as Fig 2; the second, Fig 20, looks south. Both of these sections ‘restore’ the crypt to its original appearance with all columns intact, but are useful for showing how the crypt is within the footprint of the Wren building.

In its own way, the revaulting of the crypt in brick by Wren, carried out by bricklayer Anthony Tanner who is mentioned in the accounts, is remarkable (WS X, 57, 60). Brick piers of different but large sizes were built in the nave of the crypt to support the new north arcade in the church above. This support included three cubic constructions of brick; the largest occupied roughly the same space as the tank in the present boiler room. A brick wall was also built across the nave from north to south, on the line of Columns 3 and 4, between one of the brick pier-blocks and the south wall of the nave (Fig 15). Although it appears that the original stone vaulting of the north aisle was left intact (to be photographed by RCHME in 1929, as noted above), the south aisle was given a tunnel vault at least partly in brick; Wren reported in about 1674 that part of the vault had collapsed during or after the Fire, from the weight of debris on it (WS XVIII, 39). Wren made some ‘convenient Staires from ye Pavement of ye Church into ye Vaults’, but it is not clear where these were. There are enigmatic references to Thomas Cartwright, mason, being paid for steps of Purbeck marble ‘going into ye Vaults’ and for Portland ashlar ‘in makeing up ye dore going into ye Vaults at ye east end’ (WS X, 63, undated but probably 1675); this implies some kind of entrance on the east side. In 1929 the investigators of RCHME thought that the brick infilling of the windows on the north side was ‘late 17th century’, and so would be by Wren (Fig 15). This is quite likely, as buildings touched the church on this side.

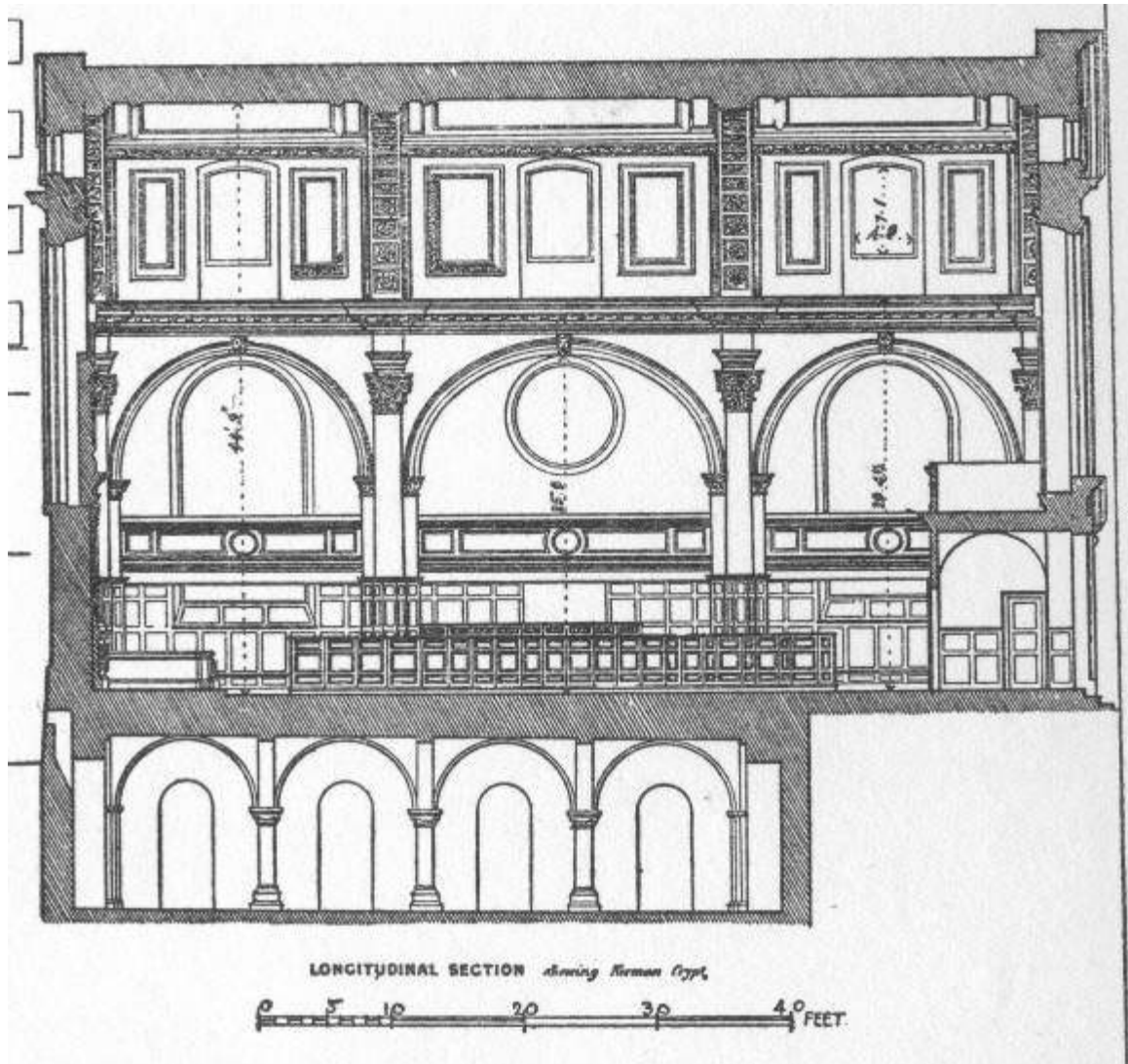


Fig 20 Section by John Clayton, c 1848, looking south (Wren Society X, 45). The line of the section is through the nave of the crypt, i.e. the central section. The columns in the crypts are 'restorations' since Wren's work in the crypt including removal of one column is not shown

The crypt was gradually filled with coffins. There are some ledger slabs in the present south aisle which date from the late 18th century; they were previously in the north aisle (Fig 16), and were apparently moved in the post-War rebuilding. But it is not certain that they were originally laid to cover burials in the floor of the north aisle of the crypt, and could have been brought in from outside, e.g. by Gwilt. A parish history by the rector Arthur Hutton of 1908 says the porch below the Wren tower and the adjoining lobby were then partly paved with ledgers which had been brought from All Hallows Bread Street in 1877 (Hutton 1908, 25).

The tower of the church was restored by George Gwilt in 1818–20; he had to take down the upper part and rebuild it. The foundations of the church were 'strengthened', during which work Gwilt studied and drew attention to the remains of the 11th-century crypt (paper by Gwilt in *Vetusta Monumenta* v, 343–6) (Colvin

1995, 438). Gwilt's drawn sections of the crypt and the Wren church above were later engraved by James Basire. In 1864 the south aisle, full of coffins, was sealed up. The church was badly damaged by bombs in 1941, though there is no recorded damage to the crypt, apart from probable damage by rain water in the ensuing years.

The post-War rebuilding

St Mary's was rebuilt in 1956–64 by Laurence King (Bradley and Pevsner 1997, 242–3). In the crypt, King replaced the Wren brick vaulting in the east half of the nave and both aisles with fibrous plaster vaults which imitated the originals; Bradley and Pevsner (1997, 243) suggest that only about 60% of the original material survives. The current view (in a thesis by A Derrick, not consulted in detail) is that King removed all the vaults, and that inside the present vault there is only a void, up to the church floor.

The parish has lodged with Guildhall Library three reports of 1955 which outline the discussions then taking place. A report on the state of the fabric by King (February 1955) incorporates the conclusions of two other reports, an initial assessment by the church's supervising architect Edgar Underwood in 1949, and a report by engineers Hurst, Pierce and Malcolm to King in February 1955 (here, Appendix 8.5). The experts then assembled decided, after some investigation, that the crypt and its vault were in too decrepit a condition to support a rebuilt church above. Their only solution was to remove the load from the crypt by taking out the vaults and inserting the present arrangement of brick piers in the crypt, on pile-driven foundations, and the related foundation along the east wall of the crypt, with its concrete arches. The scheme suggested that the south aisle could become a chapel, as it now is, and brick supports were not put in it; the scheme is also the origin of the idea of the present steps and entrance from the churchyard into the south aisle and chapel. If their engineering plan was successful, then it removed most of the load from the crypt, and enabled its restoration.

A coloured drawing by King at the present church shows that he had one idea that the entire crypt, to the west end, would be restored, presumably with at least four new columns; but this was clearly impractical. Notes on surviving King plans for the restoration state that the north wall, at least, was to be refaced with old materials, and a 1993 report by John Phillips, the architect for the parish, states that (i) a system of piled foundations and underpinning was carried out to support the church above, including the concrete pillars along the east wall of the central crypt nave and three other new concrete piers within the aisles of the Court area (Fig 22) and (ii) the north wall of the north aisle and the east respond of the south arcade had to be reconstructed 'using the original facing materials.' Most of the arches of the two arcades were restored. During this reconstruction the present boiler room was set up in the west part of the crypt (Fig 21); presumably the large supporting mass of Wren brickwork here was removed. The subsidiary uses for the west bays of the nave since 1666 and up to the present is the chief reason why two 11th-century window embrasures survive in good condition in the present west wall. King did not introduce his imitation vaults here, i.e. in what became the present boiler room and now (after further work of the 1990s) toilets, office and sacristy. In both west and east halves of the nave area, brick

pillars were introduced to support the church floor above. They seem almost to be randomly placed, and the logic of their placement is not evident (see the plan below, Fig 26).

King's philosophy and the problems he faced are summed up by some words of his which survive on the back page of the Order of Service for the Rededication of the Crypt Chapel as the Chapel of the Holy Spirit (24 February 1960): 'in carrying out the restoration of the Crypt two objects have been kept in mind. One has been the revealing of as much of the ancient work as possible, and preserving it, and the other has been the insertion of modern systems of construction to enable the ultimate restoration of the whole church to be carried out on a sure foundation. In many respects these two objects have conflicted with one another, but it was felt that it would be wrong to try and disguise the reinforced concrete beams and columns by falsifying the vaulting. So the new work stands with the old, and the vaulting remains where it has always been albeit constructed in a new material'.

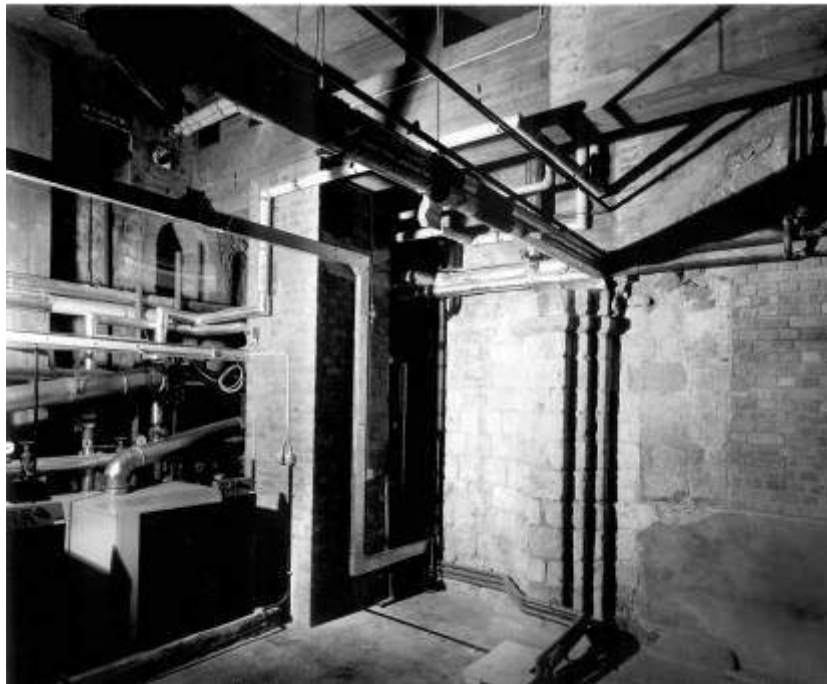


Fig 21 The boiler room in the west half of the nave part of the crypt, looking north-west (© Crown Copyright, NMR). The northern of the two surviving window embrasures can be seen in the west wall



Fig 22 King's concrete arches along the east side of the main crypt chamber, with one of the 11th-century responds behind

It is clear that King restored much of the stonework of the north aisle, but how much is very difficult to establish. One clue is afforded by the photograph of about 1930 given here as Fig 16, from which details are now given in Fig 23 and Fig 25. These show that almost every respond had some stones missing, so those now composing those parts of the responds must be post-War insertions (or at least, date from after about 1930, but 1950s is most likely). The second respond from the right (along the south side of the north aisle), shown in Fig 23, is shown in Fig 24 in its present appearance.



Fig 23 Detail from Fig 16, showing the south wall of the north aisle, with missing stones on the central part of both responds (the innermost order)



Fig 24 The second respond on the south side of the north aisle today; compare with Fig 23. Stones from the third course above the floor (level with the table top) upwards to the capital are 1950s insertions. King's new vault rises above



Fig 25 Second extract from Fig 16, showing north wall of north aisle, with further examples of missing stones on the responds

There are no monuments in the crypt apart from the slate ledgers which now form the floor of the south aisle chapel. This absence of monuments, particularly on the walls, gives the nave and its two aisles a clean, uncluttered and attractive appearance.

Present internal appearance of the bays of the outer walls

This section considers the internal aspect of the individual bays of the north, east and south walls, in which some historic changes can be seen. This examination could not take place for the west wall as the present boiler facilities are in the way.

Fig 26 shows the numbering of the bays for this purpose. Bays 1–4 are the north wall, bays 5–9 are the west wall, and bays 10–13 are the south wall.

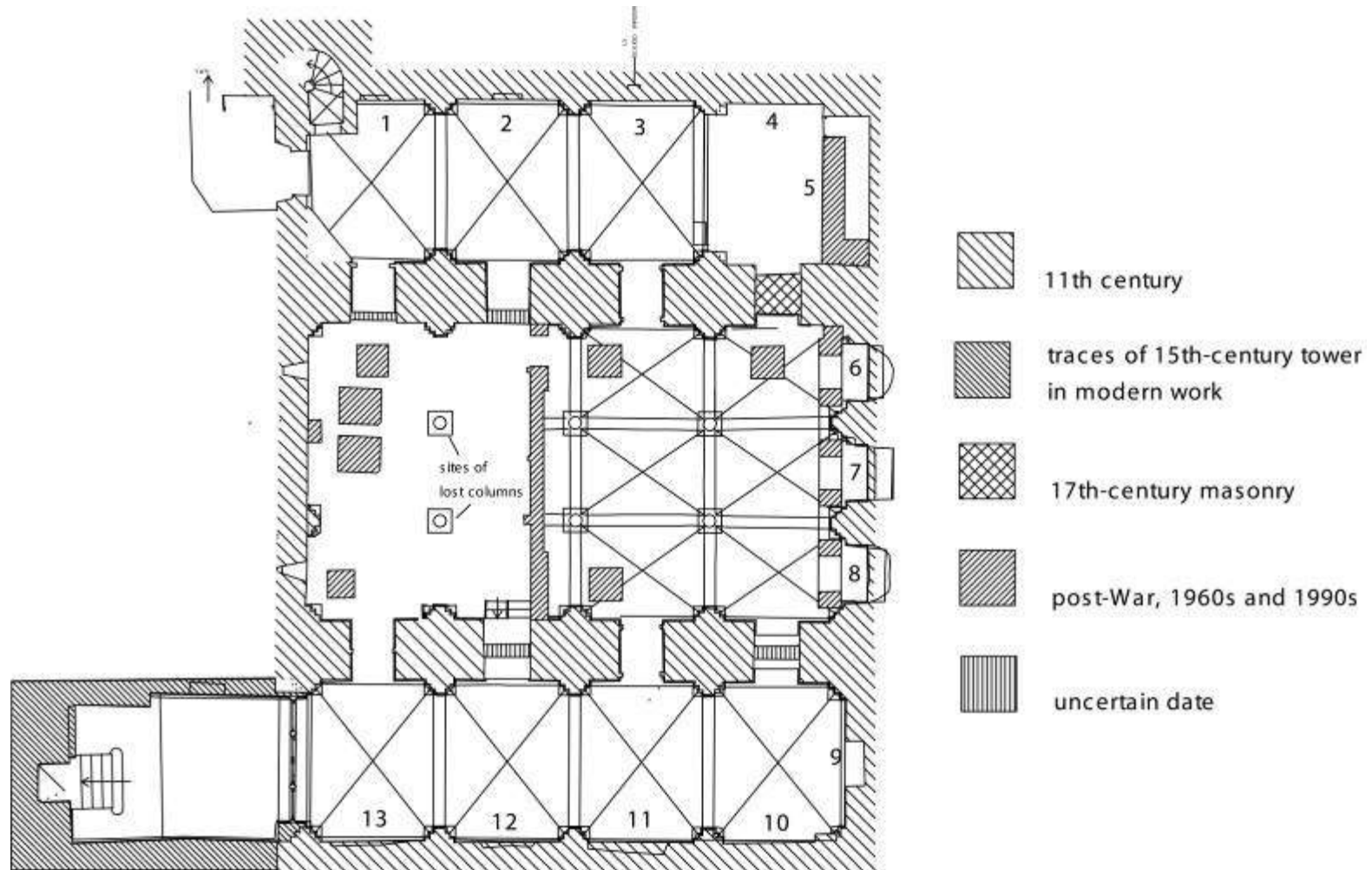


Fig 26 Plan of the crypt, showing the numbering of the bays of the exterior walls. North is to the top of this plan, as viewed from this direction

BAY 1

Fig 27 The north wall in Bay 1

This bay has a filled-in window embrasure, in the middle of the bay but the newel stair projection at the north-west of the crypt almost intrudes on it. The infilling is probably by King; we have no other photographs of this area.



BAY 2

Fig 28 The north wall in Bay 2

Bay 2 has a window embrasure. This is shown in the pre-War photograph Fig 16, though it was then filled with brick. The vertical lines then below the window are not presently explained; their traces were removed by King.



Bays 3, 4 and 5 are covered with fixtures of the restaurant, and could not be surveyed. It seems likely that the bays in the north wall, 3 and 4, have some indication of their former window embrasures, filled in, like bays 1 and 2. The wall in Bay 5, the first bay of the east wall, can be seen in the background of the view in Fig 16: there was a rectangular opening filled with brick, within what look like the original window jambs.

BAY 6

Fig 29 The recess in Bay 6, looking east; framed by one of the concrete arches of the post-War work

Bay 6 forms the northernmost of the three bays in the central nave chamber of the crypt. The recess (Fig 29) is a conglomerate of original 11th-century work, including traces of a ?window sill towards the bottom, and 17th- to 19th-century brickwork above.



BAY 7

Fig 30 The recess in Bay 7, looking east. The sill of a former opening is shown by the stones in the foreground

The recess in Bay 7 (Fig 30) also has the remnants of the sill of a former opening (an entrance or a window?), but the walls of the opening are mostly formed by 18th- or 19th-century brick. Beneath the church floor, several courses of 1960s brick. It is possible that there was an entrance here in Gwilt's time



BAY 8

Fig 31 Recess in Bay 8, looking east

The recess in Bay 8 (Fig 31) has no evidence of a window, though presumably there was one originally. Like the other recesses of the east wall, it is heavily altered with 18th- and 19th-century brickwork.



BAY 9

Fig 32 Bay 9, the east end of the south aisle

Bay 9 is the wall forming the east end of the south aisle (Fig 32). The bay is occupied by a brick wall, with stone arch above. The present survey has no evidence for the date of this feature; the arch must be post-War, but the bricks are older, and the bay is shown blocked in the RCHME plan of 1929 (Fig 15). So perhaps the arch has been inserted into an existing, older brick wall



BAY 10

Fig 33 Bay 10, first bay of the south wall, looking south

Bay 10, the first bay of the south wall from the south-east corner (Fig 33), has a vertical line of stones or a jamb within it. Without further examination, it is not possible to establish the history of this adaptation.



BAY 11

Fig 34 Bay 11, looking south

Bay 11 has two vertical lines in its masonry (Fig 34). There is the start of a chamfered jamb about 0.86m west of the respond forming the east side of the bay, and a further vertical line of stones which have 18th-century bricks to the west. This looks like there may originally have been a window in this bay.



BAY 12

Fig 35 Bay 12, looking south

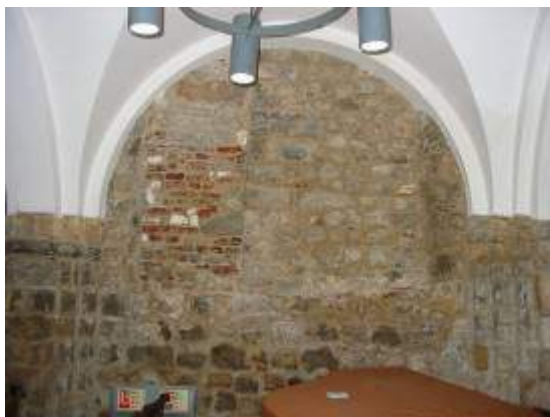
Bay 12 has a chamfered recess in it which looks like a medieval window or possibly a doorway (Fig 35). This is 1.36m wide.



BAY 13

Fig 36 Bay 13, looking south

Bay 13, the westernmost bay of the south wall of the 11th-century undercroft, contains an opening 0.76m wide now filled with 18th- or 19th-century brick (Fig 36). This is to one side, not in the middle of the bay



More work is required to elucidate the building history of these bays of the north, east and south walls. At the moment, for instance, there is no physical evidence for original 11th-century windows in the south wall; the openings evident in the stonework, which might be either windows or doorways up to the ground on the south side, denote much larger and probably later medieval features.

Some of the brickwork is clearly 18th- or 19th-century; many of the bricks are hand-made, and there is a variety of brick sizes. Some of the brick patches clearly fill openings, while others have less evident functions.

Parallels for the Norman crypt

Parallels for the late 11th-century Norman crypt can be sought first within England, and second on the Continent. The crypt at the east end of Rochester Cathedral was built in 1077–83, and is similar to that at St Mary-le-Bow, but it does not have transverse arches in the vaulting (Ferne 2000, 115–16). A parallel where the arches are employed is provided by the crypt at Worcester Cathedral, of before 1095 (Fig 37). This gives an impression of what the original vaulting was like at St Mary-le-Bow. Other examples are in Canterbury: the first phase of the crypt below the cathedral and a similar crypt at St Augustine's monastery, outside the city. These are all major, important churches. Richard Gem (pers comm) suggests that the fact that the north aisle had a vault with transverse arches in rubble is significant. The change from rubble to ashlar arches occurs part way through the construction of the second phase of the crypt at Canterbury Cathedral.

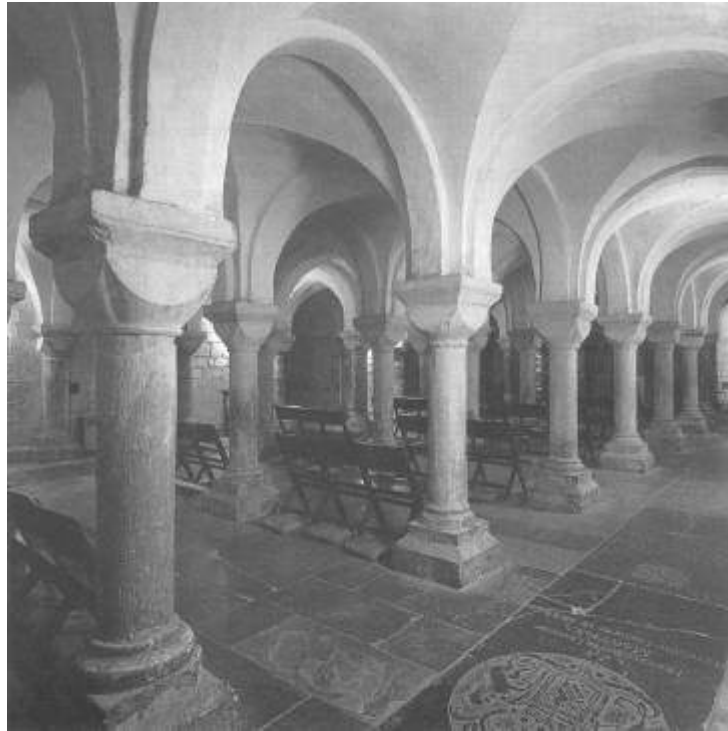


Fig 37 Crypt beneath the choir of Worcester Cathedral, before 1095, looking north-east (from Fernie 2000)

A further parallel is provided by records of 1832 of an undercroft south of Tooley Street, Southwark, which is probably part of the 12th-century town house of the Earls of Warenne (Schofield 2003, 231–2; Fig 38). This has similar transverse arches and groin vaulting.

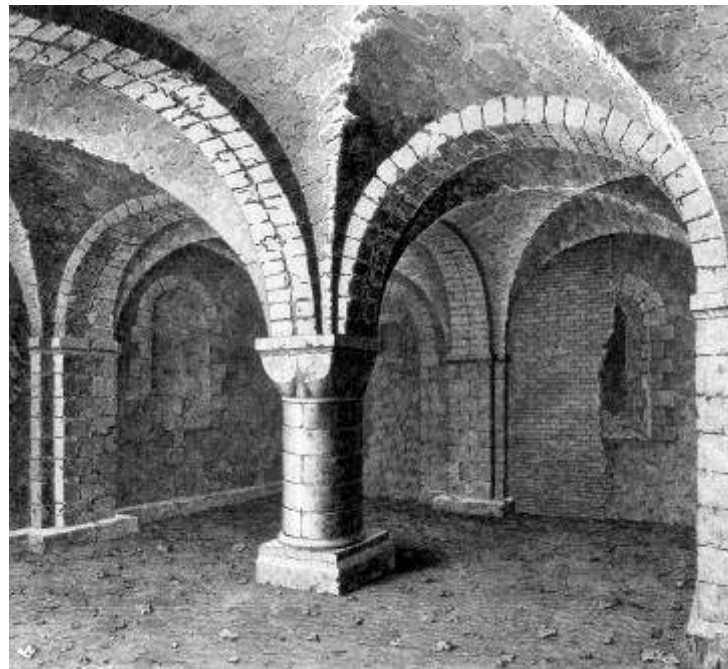


Fig 38 Undercroft probably of the Inn of the Prior of Lewes, Tooley Street, Southwark, recorded in 1832; of 12th-century date (Museum of London)



Fig 39 The crypt of St Maria im Kapitol, Cologne, of around 1045–9, looking east (Binding and Kahle 1983, fig 59)

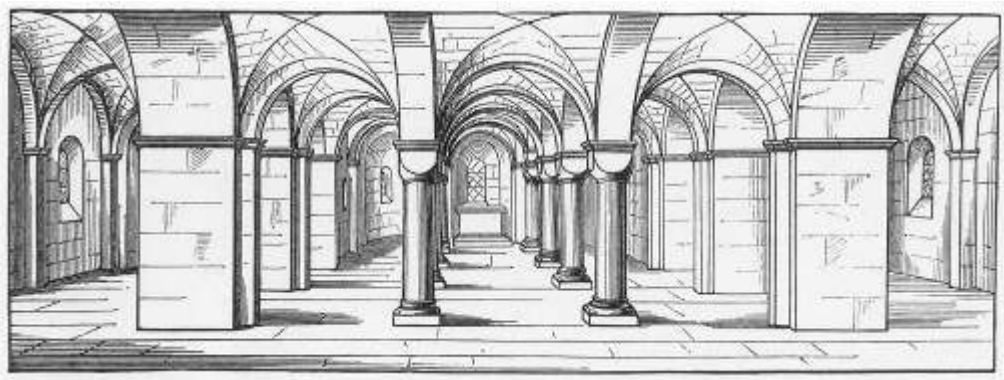


Fig 40 The crypt of St Georg, Cologne, of 1059–67, looking east (Binding and Kahle 1983, fig 57)

Abroad, there are significant parallels with two churches in Cologne. The crypt of St Maria im Kapitol, built in 1045–9, is much larger in scope but has a central nave area of five by three bays, and two rows of four columns which closely resemble those of St Mary-le-Bow (Binding and Kahle 1983, 38–9; Fig 39). An even closer parallel is provided by St Georg in the same city, where the crypt was built in 1059–67. This has three apses forming its east end, but otherwise resembles St Mary's in having a central nave of three aisles (in this case, because of the apse, four pairs of columns) and the side aisles with thick walls between; it also has the different sizes of bays, with the aisle bays larger than those in the nave section (Binding and Kahle 1983, 38; Fig 40). In this case the church above, of 1059–67 with vaulting of 1150, survives to give an impression of what St Mary's church may have looked like, with impressive arched nave arcades (ibid, 37, pl 56). The arches of St Mary's name may have been the nave arcades of the church above the crypt. Arches of any substantial kind would have been very imposing, in such a small square space, in the 1090s. The cubic

or block (or ‘cushion’) capitals are also generally thought to be Germanic in origin; there are few in comparable French buildings. The earliest dated examples seem to be in the surviving undercroft at Speyer Cathedral, around 1030 (Conant 1978, 131). They appear in Britain at both the cathedral and St Augustine’s Abbey around 1070 (Gem 2004, 512). The archbishop at the time, of course, was Lanfranc.

Two judgments about the reason for the building of the crypt (and the lost church above) in the late 11th century can be cited. In their study of the church and parish, Keene and Harding (1987, site **104/0**) say

‘By the late 12th century there was a stone house, under the direct control of Canterbury Cathedral Priory, between the church and Cheapside, but even this was probably too small for an archiepiscopal residence, and it seems more likely to have had a primarily commercial function. If Lanfranc was involved in the construction of St Mary-le-Bow, his intention was probably to create an impressive symbol of Canterbury authority in the heart of the City, which might also, in the shape of the house next door, provide an occasional lodging for the officers of his priory, and a focus for the priory’s economic and other business interests in London.’

As to the church above, it has already been suggested that the ‘arches’ of St Mary’s name (ad Arcus, 1091) may refer to the lost architecture of the church rather than the crypt. One significant parallel is provided by the bishop’s chapel of the 1090s at Hereford Cathedral. Here the upper of two storeys of a rectangular building a little smaller than St Mary-le-Bow contained impressive arches. [figure showing Hereford chapel dropped]

In a study published in 1990, Richard Gem considered the most important Norman buildings of London. He asserted that London, like Canterbury was participating in the forefront of ‘High Romanesque architectural creativity’, as it had already done before the Conquest with the building of Westminster Abbey by Edward the Confessor. The main examples of this high level of building in London were the White Tower, St Paul’s Cathedral, Bermondsey Abbey, and the crypt of St Mary-le-Bow. For Gem, the crypt was important in two ways. It was built as a mark of prestige; or as part of an architectural formula which required two storeys. Such a formula was standard for royal and episcopal palace chapels; and is partly reproduced in the chapel of St John in the White Tower of the Tower of London. The tradition began with Charlemagne’s palace chapel at Aachen around 800. Gem suggests also that a building date of shortly after one of the City’s serious fires, in 1077, is a possibility (Gem 1990, 48–62). The crypt at St Mary-le-Bow was probably the brainchild of Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury, and its Caen stone might have come as part of the considerable supply organised for Lanfranc’s new cathedral at Canterbury.

The historical and archaeological importance of the crypt is further summarised in section 4.2 below. Unanswered questions about the structure, which might be addressed in any programme of repair or restoration, are listed in section 4.3.

3.2 Present uses of the crypt: the restaurant, chapel, and Court of Arches

The crypt and the restaurant as part of the ministry of the church

As noted above, since the early 1960s the church has had a reputation for engaging - in various forms - with Christian thought and the contemporary world on its own terms.

St Mary-le-Bow is also active in the field of inter-faith relations, contributing to projects which seek to alert the business community to issues of Faith as it impacts upon commerce. The church above the crypt is a home for numerous exhibitions and concerts and, in due course the parish hopes to convert the Inner Vestibule (the lobby between the tower and the church) into a permanent exhibition space.

In practice the crypt or undercroft is much less well known and visited than might be expected. Wren was plainly little interested in it and it became used as a burial space, the burials being sealed into the south aisle in the 19th century.

The north aisle and central nave of the crypt are mentioned as available for visiting in mid 20th-century guides, but it was only after the Second World War that the space was substantially refurbished.

The north aisle of the crypt (to which access from the Vestibule had been created by George Gwilt in the early 19th century) was established as a café-restaurant called 'The Place Below' in 1989. Originally serving supper, it is now restricted to self service provision of breakfast and lunch. It has proved highly successful (and a model for such other adaptations of church spaces) and has encouraged a constant footfall through the building and thereby exposure to the life of the Church and the ministry of St Mary-le-Bow; this is hard to measure – but the impression of life and activity is plainly beneficial.

The Place Below expanded irregularly into the central aisle of the crypt and this was regularised by a judgement of the Consistory Court in 2000. In the 1990s further works to the crypt by the architect Patricia Brock developed lavatory, office and storage facilities together with improved sacristy provision for the chapel in the crypt. Although it is now difficult to imagine the crypt in its original form it remains a distinctive and admired space.

When the crypt restaurant was opened there were few catering facilities in Cheapside and the surrounding area. This has changed and will continue to change. Yet the distinctive place of a vegetarian café/ restaurant is assured and it currently serves about 110 sit-down and 60 takeaway orders each day. The crypt is used in this way for business team and personal meetings and for social groups (e.g. recently a group for those working in senior executive positions recovering from mental illness).

A substantial part of Laurence King's remodelling of the crypt was the creation of a discrete chapel with a new entrance from the churchyard (the present entrance at the south-west corner of the church) into an antechapel, with some fittings by John Hayward, and dedicated to the Holy Spirit. This was reconsecrated on 24 February 1960 and used for worship pending the reconstruction of the church proper. The chapel is a most effective space for small scale worship and is used for the Morning Office and for the Eucharist each Tuesday

morning, followed by breakfast. In this way an intimate and supportive community is enabled – quite unlike the relative anonymity (if desired) of the very public space above. It is also used for small group courses and talks. The chapel, nearly fifty years on, would repay attention to its lighting and seating.

The Court of Arches

The association in the legal, ecclesiastical and public mind of the Court of Arches, the court of appeal of the Province of Canterbury from decisions of the consistory – or diocesan – courts, with the crypt is established. The central space has long conveniently been referred to as ‘the Court’. But it seems likely that this is a post-War usage. There is also a confusion in that the Vicar-General’s (of Canterbury Province) Court at which the election of diocesan bishops is confirmed is often referred to as if it was the Arches Court; perhaps because the judge in each case has sometimes been one and the same person. The Court sits when there is an appeal from a southern province consistory court.

As outlined above, the Court of [the] Arches is first mentioned in 1251, its earliest recorded judgement concerning an appeal from the diocese of Bath and Wells about providing a rector for the parish of Congesbury in Somerset (information from Professor Donald Logan, who has written a history of the Court: Logan 2005). We know that the Court moved to Doctor’s Commons (south of the cathedral) after the Fire and after the demolition of that building in the 19th century went to Church House or some other central building. It is unclear when precisely the Court returned to St Mary-le-Bow.

The response to the first draft of this Plan by the Dean of Arches, the Vicar General and the Registrar of the Province of Canterbury is given below as Appendix 8.4. The Vicar General should be consulted about any future proposals affecting the crypt. The Dean of Arches would expect to be consulted by the Chancellor during the process of applying for faculty for any proposal.

Prospects in 2007 for the church and crypt

From 2007–10 there will be a considerable extension of retail and restaurant provision from St Paul’s along Cheapside and into a new Walbrook Square. This is likely to be seven day a week activity which may require St Mary-le-Bow to revisit the policy of not having Sunday worship. A closed church, and crypt, amidst an open and active environment might well reverse St Mary-le-Bow’s reputation for openness and engagement.

3.3 Formal designation and local planning policies

The crypt, as part of the Wren church, is Listed Grade I. The listing text, composed originally in 1950, might be improved as regards the crypt: it reads only ‘To the north of the

church is a vestry and beneath this and the main building is a good but altered C12 [sic] crypt'. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within or below the church. The church is also in the Bow Lane Conservation Area, designated by the City of London. Within a Conservation Area, the Corporation of London has definite policies to safeguard the quality of detail and materials, lighting, historical and archaeological references, decoration and open spaces (Corporation of London Planning Department guideline, *Conservation Areas in the City of London*, 1994). The Corporation would also carry out the responsibilities of a local planning authority as regards the church as a listed building.

The primary control over the building and its contents, as well as over its archaeology, is provided by the Faculty Jurisdiction. Policies and guidance concerning archaeology are being developed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the Council for Care of Churches and the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists.

4 Assessment of significance

4.1 Introduction

The crypt of St Mary-le-Bow has importance and meanings that are perceived in different ways by a variety of audiences: the parish, the City of London and its working population, historians and archaeologists, and the wider public interested in and concerned about their architectural heritage. But ‘importance’ and the related word ‘significance’ are tricky, slippery concepts. We must say why something is important, and not just assume it or state it without justification.

Significance is essentially a hierarchical concept, using ascending levels of value. These follow guidelines established by James Semple Kerr (*The Conservation Plan*, 1996) and adopted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and others. The levels of significance are:

- *Exceptional* – important at national to international levels, reflected in the statutory designations of Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings and equivalent nationally graded sites (including those of ecological and nature conservation value).
- *Considerable* – important at regional level or sometimes higher, eg Grade II Listed Buildings.
- *Some*, of local to regional significance, often for group value (eg a vernacular architectural feature).
- *Little*, of limited heritage or other value.
- *Negative* or *intrusive* features, ie those that actually detract from the value of a site. A modern corrugated iron shed adjacent to an important medieval building might be a good example.

A low designation of significance does not necessarily imply that a feature is expendable. Furthermore there are many instances where parts or aspects of the place may be susceptible to enhancement or reduction of significance as currently perceived, especially where there is a lack of information or understanding at the moment.

In the following discussion of significance, as a short-hand these levels are ranked with numbers:

Exceptional:	1
Considerable:	2
Some:	3
Little:	4
Negative or none:	5

4.2 Key significance elements and reasons

The significance of the crypt can be described under two headings:

- (1) General significance (religious, archaeological, architectural, historical, cultural)
- (2) Detailed grading of elements comprising the fabric of the crypt, using the five levels of significance outlined above

General significance

Religious

- the church has been a centre of Christian worship since at least 1090 and possibly before
- the church, and its crypt, have an important part to play in the spiritual welfare of an area of the City of London which is in the throes of a great rebuilding, and its potential number of parishioners is bound to increase

Archaeological

- there is a considerable amount of historical information still present in the structure despite its many rebuildings

Architectural

- the crypt is a valuable example of the ecclesiastical architecture of the late 11th century in Britain, despite its originally subsidiary purpose
- it is the largest remaining fragment of an 11th-century religious building in the London area
- it is important as an example of an 11th-century church crypt within Europe
- it is the only surviving remnant of the medieval church from before the Great Fire of 1666, with a long and complex history
- though its character stems now chiefly from the rebuilding of the 1950s, the church above is an example of an adaptation of a medieval structure (the crypt) by Christopher Wren

Historical

- detailed study of the parish and the area around by historians and archaeologists is showing how the church of St Mary-le-Bow was a focus of London life from the 11th century, in its prominent location on London's main Saxon and medieval street
- the church was evidently part of an intention by Archbishop Lanfranc to establish an urban base in the City of London for the archbishopric of Canterbury

Cultural

- the crypt is valued as a component of the cultural life in the present City of London, both spiritually and at the day-to-day level of the provision of the restaurant.

Detailed grading of elements comprising the fabric of the crypt

<ul style="list-style-type: none">all the parts of the crypt which (perhaps after further scrutiny by archaeologists and geologists) can be identified as of the original late 11th-century build are of exceptional significance. But these comprise only the walls, arcades, parts of the columns and the spiral stair, not [at present] the vaulting or any of the floors	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the traces of openings in the south wall, probably of medieval date, are important as they may with study illuminate the relation of the crypt to the south part of the medieval church above	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">it is likely that pockets of undisturbed archaeological strata survive below the floors; they hold unique information about the topography of the area before 1090, and of the construction of the crypt itself	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">it is highly likely that the block of strata outside the south wall of the crypt, beneath the south aisle of the Wren church and within its footprint, contains elements of the medieval church; any work on the crypt, particularly from the outside, should bear this in mind	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the ledgers comprising the floor of the chapel in the south aisle are the only relics now of burials in and around the church in the 17th to 19th centuries	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the restoration by King, comprising the present vaults and cosmetic work elsewhere, for instance the blocking of the windows in the north wall, is of significance as an example of a certain post-War approach to church restoration, but has its problems [see also next]	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the pointing of all the walls in a gritty orange mortar, part of the King work, is regrettable. It is almost certainly not what the medieval builders intended.	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the boiler room and toilets which comprise the west half of the nave area are necessary and competently arranged; they have no real significance, but do not detract if they are accepted as being necessary	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the John Hayward fittings in the south aisle chapel	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the presence of the restaurant	3

At present the various patches of 18th- to 20th-century brickwork in the bays of the external walls are not rated, since more work is required to distinguish between them, find out if possible when each patch was inserted, and for what purpose.

4.3 Areas of ignorance about the crypt's history

The crypt itself is a document in stone and brick, parts of which are still available to be read. Some unknown aspects of its history are probably still contained within its walls, vault and floor. An assessment of the structure's significance should include those important questions which still remain to be answered, and which should be kept in the foreground when any new work or repair for the place is considered:

1. where were the original entrances from outside, if any?
2. is there evidence for windows in any the bays of the east (Bow Lane) side, as is assumed?
3. what is the nature and importance of the reused stones in the walls?
4. how important is the undisturbed window opening in the sacristy?
5. what are the blocked openings in the south wall, and their history?
6. how was the crypt used, from the 11th century to the 17th century?

Nor should it be forgotten that the history of the crypt may be illuminated by any disturbance of the ground immediately around it, ie. on the exterior. The parish should look out for and support opportunities to examine the outside of the crypt walls, if they arise.

A second area of ignorance is the true nature and extent of the King destruction of the Wren vaults of all areas of the crypt. This should be looked into, and if necessary a programme of investigation of the vault might be appropriate. Is there any Wren brickwork at all surviving in the vaults? Is it true that inside the vaulting there is a void throughout the structure? We do not know in detail, and investigation would inform us.

5 Assessment of vulnerability

5.1 Current problems with the masonry

There is a particular problem with the walls of the crypt: chemical changes to the surfaces at various points in two ways, the production of white crystalline salts, and the crumbling of old bricks into dust. These two forms of efflorescence have been noted in virtually all the internal spaces. Efflorescence on stone walls is commonly attributed to repeated wetting and drying cycles, which lead to powdering and fragmentation (Ashurst and Ashurst 1988, 3).

In 2003 and in late 2004 Ridout Associates, consultants in this field, placed data loggers throughout the crypt to monitor temperature and humidity fluctuations. The heating regime was adjusted between these two periods of testing, and the new programme 'has reduced fluctuations in the eating area and boiling room' (letter to the church by Dr Brian Ridout, 23 January 2005). Rapid fluctuations in the previous regime, a product of the heating being periodically switched off, have been removed. In both periods of testing it seemed to the specialists that the air in the crypt remained dry, and there was little if any movement of water through the walls. The new heating regime was judged to be better and safer for the walls than the old regime.

The present advice of Ridouts is contained in an email to John Schofield from Dr Ridout on 30 November 2006: ' We concluded that the environmental modifications introduced after 2003 were helping but not solving the problem and suggested that the hard pointing should be removed so that salts could migrate through the joints. If you wish us to re-consider this work we will be happy to do so but I do not see how further monitoring will produce any different information.'

One question being raised is whether the efflorescence has anything to do with the mortar used to point nearly all the historic walls by the King restoration. This certainly looks wrong, both in appearance of the mortar mix and especially in that the mortar is laid on thicker than previously, i.e. the joints now appear wider; this is more apparent on some wall surfaces than on others. A photograph, probably of the arch forming the present entrance to the nave from the north aisle, shows the stonework before the last War, and probably therefore indicates what the original medieval mortar looked like (Fig 41); it can be compared with the same view today (Fig 42).



Fig 41 A pre-War photograph of the arch in the north arcade now forming the entrance to the nave from the north aisle, showing the pointing of the stones (Guildhall Library); compare with Fig 42



Fig 42 The arch comprising the entrance from the north aisle to the central nave today; compare with Fig 41

While the example in Fig 42 is not bad and shows some restraint, other parts of the walling are badly pointed. The following photographs show the excessive pointing and two cases of the efflorescence of salts



Fig 43 An example of the bad pointing; the corners or arrises of the stones are obscured by too much mortar



Fig 44 The mortar is mostly of this speckled, gritty character. Here also is an example of the salts coming through



Fig 45 Another example of the salts

We do not know how far the pointing shown in pre-War photographs such as Fig 42 resembled the original, eight and a half centuries previously. Perhaps there would have been a combination of ribbon-pointing and rendering of the rougher masonry. There is no wish to get back to a fabricated and probably groundless appearance for the pointing; but it is better done elsewhere, and one example is given here (Fig 46).

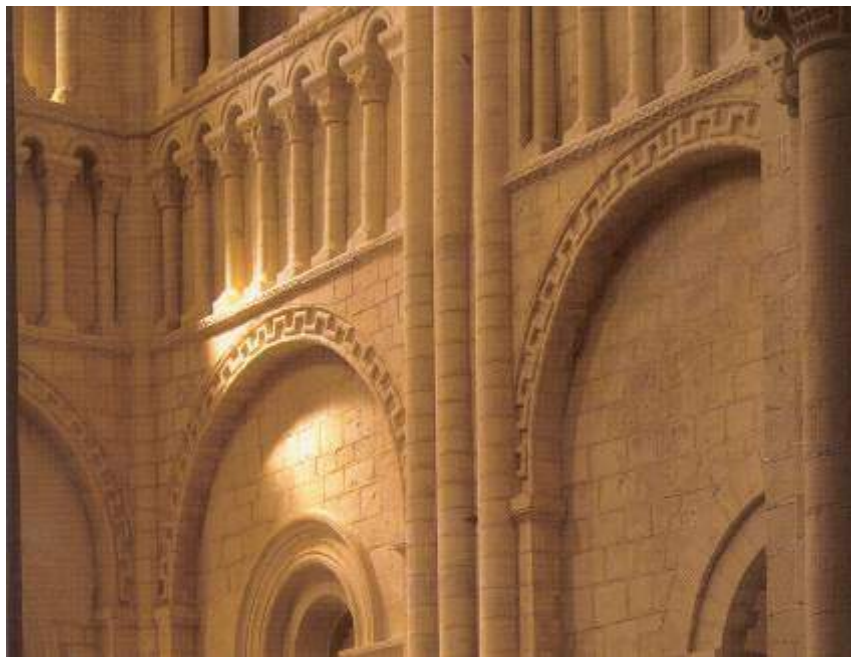


Fig 46 A detail of the south transept of the church of Abbaye aux Dames, Caen (Calvados, Normandy), showing how Caen ashlar is pointed today

5.2 Advice already received

As part of the compilation of this CMP, two pieces of advice were acquired. The first comprised a kind visit by Sara Crofts of the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings to look at the efflorescence problem. She said one management solution was just to wipe off the salts, along with the powder produced by decay of the mortar and brick. We flag this up for consultation as a point of method. She also suggested that the parish might try investigative and remedial work on a trial area, preferably not in the public zones, and here the arch between the south aisle chapel and the sacristy would be suitable. Here the soffit of the arch appears to be modern concrete; it might be impeding the movement of moisture.

The second piece of advice was sought from David Manktelow of Stonewest, a well-known and respected firm who work on stone restorations of all kinds. He reports:

To be able to resolve the problems encountered within the crypt and associated areas below ground level affecting the masonry, the root cause or causes must first be established and understood. The appearance of efflorescence on the surface of masonry is generally recognised as a sign of moisture which has evaporated leaving behind soluble salts, these occur naturally in mortars and traditional building materials.

The removal of the efflorescence is usually dealt with by careful brushing and does not normally give undue cause for concern. However if the migration of salts is restricted and they become rapped and are allowed to build up beneath the surface or within the body of the masonry then deterioration of the material can take place.

It must be assumed that as the crypt and chapel are at a level beneath ground surrounded by compacted and possibly loose soil and rubble infill, built without modern tanking systems and waterproof membranes, surface and ground water will have a tendency to be absorbed by the masonry and evaporated through the walls to the internal space.

There have been number of major alterations made to these spaces over many years which undoubtedly would affect how they perform, combined with the continuous external redevelopment of the surrounding area the water table would have a tendency to raise and fall. Unless records provide the necessary information it may be difficult to ascertain when the problems that now are obvious first materialised and if they are more or less prevalent following the introduction of a controlled heating regime.

The extensive previous re pointing of the masonry may well be a major contributing factor to the problem. If the mortar used is cement rich it could be preventing the migration of moisture from within the walls forcing it to find other means of escape which may be through the masonry itself. With the joints effectively blocked the evaporation process must continue by another route. By taking mortar samples and masonry dust particles from a number of areas it should be possible to determine the make up of the mortar used and the salt content of the masonry from Soluble Salt Tests

In conjunction with these tests, readings could be taken at various points to help map out the concentration of trapped moisture within the walls and establish if higher readings coincide with areas of increased deterioration. Consideration should be given to the removal of plaster or render from walls which are clearly being affected by the ingress of moisture. Once removed it will provide a much clearer picture of how to deal with the problem.

5.3 Other issues and potential areas of conflict

(i) disabled access

An Access Audit of the church and crypt was conducted by Living Stones and reported in June 2003. It acknowledged that ‘short of drastic architectural intervention’ there was probably no way of securing access for wheelchair bound or severely mobility impaired visitors. The report suggests that images of the crypt should be displayed in an accessible location. Additionally it is proposed that there should be an additional handrail to the chapel entrance (such a rail might impede deliveries to the café at the Vestibule staircase). Markings have been introduced on the crypt chapel steps.

The report suggests that because both access and escape routes are relatively ‘tortuous’, care should be taken to avoid unreasonable numbers being present in the entire crypt level at any one time. No figure has yet been arrived at. The report also proposes the step hazard at the entrance to the north aisle should be reformed as a ramp. The step hazard has recently been marked with white paint and safety has noticeably improved.

(ii) exploration of potential areas of conflict

In the vocabulary of Conservation Plans, there are several groups and interested parties which are ‘stakeholders’ in the use and future of the crypt. They include:

- (a) those using the south chapel for worship or private prayer
- (b) the Court of Arches
- (c) the restaurant and its clientele
- (d) the visiting public, including City workers.

The crypt is well known to a particular customer constituency as a result of its weekday restaurant use; although most users may be unaware of the full significance of the space. There is little concrete evidence that the restaurant is creating or exacerbating damage to the structure, although this requires constant monitoring. If there were more tourists wishing simply to visit the site this could conceivably create a conflict of interest with heavy use at lunchtime; in practice most would buy a cup of coffee and sit and admire. The chapel is widely used by groups at lunchtime – but the dull murmur of the café is not especially obtrusive. Indeed arguably the footfall through the crypt is of great usefulness to the wider profile of St Mary-le-Bow. The Court of Arches has protected its own rights in the restaurant licence for use of the crypt by the Court with due warning; it may however be that a new licence will encourage the Court to see the upper church as its true home. This needs discussion with the Provincial Registrar and the Dean of the Arches. Much progress needs to be made on access for disabled persons in the upper building and, since it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to secure such access to the crypt, consideration should be given to images, photographic or electronic, which can promote and explain the space.

Appreciation of the crypt is difficult for the visitor who cannot subtract the post-War partitions and changes. Much has to be recognised as irreversible in the medium and longer term. A policy can however be adopted which identifies the integrity of the 11th-century spatial concept as of special importance, and that commits managers to making every opportunity of enhancing by appropriate means the perception and appreciation of the wholeness of the original crypt (we are grateful to Richard Gem for this form of words).

6 Formulation of policies

6.1 Introduction: principles of investigation and remedial work

This section sets out policies retaining the crypt's significance in any future use, alteration, repair or management. Policies may derive from national or local planning guidelines or policies; identify appropriate uses; consider disabled access and security matters; and identify appropriate controls on future development. Most importantly, the policies are grounded in the assessment of significance above.

General principles of good conservation practice will be followed. These include:

1. All treatment must be adequately documented.
2. Structural and decorative falsification should be avoided.
3. All processes and treatments should be reversible.
4. Decayed parts should be conserved and not replaced.
5. The consequences of ageing of the various materials ('patina') should not be disguised or removed.
6. Conservation programmes should be preceded by rigorous research on the building or that part to be affected, so that the conservation is best informed.

6.2 Policies

General

Policy 1: the church will retain its primary use as a place of worship and mission, and the uses of the crypt will be facilitated when these are subservient to the primary use and not damaging to the fabric.

Policy 2: subject to financial constraints, the Rector and PCC and relevant partners will use the adopted Conservation Management Plan to assist them in managing the historic asset which is the 11th-century crypt. Management decisions will be taken in accordance with the principles and policies set out in the Plan, which will be subject to periodic review in the future at intervals of five years.

Policy 3: any remedial or repair works to the crypt will be undertaken only after the appropriate amount of technical and historical research has been carried out, and will be done to the principles of good conservation outlined in this Plan.

Policy 4: the parish will take any opportunities to enhance understanding of the building that may arise from external circumstances (eg re-paving, insertion of new services or floodlighting).

Policy 5: the parish will actively monitor planning applications for the immediate surroundings of the crypt, and oppose planning applications which in its view detract from the significance of the crypt or its setting.

Policy 6: proposals for repair, alteration or refurbishment will be designed to protect the special architectural and historical importance of the building and will not be detrimental to its fabric.

Specific policies for the crypt

Policy 7: the Rector and PCC identifies the integrity of the whole crypt as of special importance, and will take every opportunity to enhance by appropriate means the perception and appreciation of the wholeness of the original crypt.

Policy 8: any restoration work, especially any removal of fabric, will be accompanied by an appropriate level of archaeological assessment and recording, according to current best practice. Full records will be lodged with appropriate archives and libraries.

Policy 9: the parish will ensure that there is periodic monitoring of the environmental conditions in all parts (public and private) of the crypt, and of possibly relevant external factors such as ground water.

Policy 10: the parish will maintain its system of quinquennial survey for the crypt, and act on the recommendations received.

Policy 11: only suitably qualified and experienced professional advisors and contractors will be used to advise on, repair or alter the fabric.

Policy 12: the parish will encourage the study of the crypt by professional archaeologists and historians to be better informed in management decisions about it.

Policy 13: any new work of adaptation to the structure, for instance for a new purpose or function, will be reversible and not damage original fabric.

Policy 14: where works are required to comply with legislation, where possible they should not be allowed to compromise the fabric and should be reversible.

Policy 15: the parish will consider carefully the potential negative consequences of allowing any wall monuments such as plaques in the crypt, and monitor any such developments closely. In particular the parish will actively discourage the addition of any wall monuments or plaques to the arcades of the crypt or any walls prior to the 20th century.

7 Conclusions

The crypt is one of the two substantial surviving 11th-century structures in the City of London and is a historical and architectural monument of high significance. The other such structure (the Tower of London) is the principal element in a World Heritage site. As a the base of Canterbury authority and activity in the city from the late 11th century, the church and associated buildings were an important and highly visible element in the city's life.

The main proposals for action which arise from this plan are:

1. Further research should be undertaken to explain the variety of patches of brickwork in the bays of the external walls; the likely date of each patch of brickwork if possible, and related matters such as the adaptation of bays for entrances, and the meaning of the filled openings in the south wall. This research should include professional photography of each of the openings, which can be further used in any remedial works proposed.
2. The parish should continue to monitor and take appropriate technical advice on the cause of the efflorescence of salts in the walls of the crypt, and form a plan for dealing with it which is consistent with the principles and policies laid out in this document, as well as all relevant national and international codes of practice in the conservation of historic buildings.
3. It may be advisable to think about the unsightly orange pointing used by King throughout the crypt. Other late 11th-century and 12th-century buildings in London such as the chapel in the Tower of London and St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, seem to have done this better and should be studied.
4. Thought must be given to a clear long-term strategy, especially in prioritising works which may be necessary to prevent any further deterioration of the fabric, in identifying longer-term objectives for reversing previous inappropriate interventions and, where possible without causing damage, for achieving a greater understanding of the character and development of the structure.

8 Appendices

8.1 Geology of the stones used in the crypt

Bernard Worssam

The predominant building stone of the crypt of St Mary-le-Bow is Caen stone, a fine-grained yellow limestone from Caen in Normandy. It occurs as small squared blocks in regular courses with wide mortar joints. In the north wall of the crypt chapel at its eastern end, for instance, the blocks are 20 to 30cm in length and 15 to 20cm in height, with mortar joints 2cm wide.

The imposts of the pilasters on the crypt walls that support its groined, vaulted ceiling are of a grey to yellowish oolitic limestone. With little doubt this is Taynton stone, from quarries in the Windrush valley upstream from Burford in Oxfordshire (Arkell 1947; Worssam and Bisson 1961; Sumbler et al 2000). The stone consists of ooliths, small rounded grains of 0.4 to 0.6mm diameter, closely set in a matrix of crystalline calcite. Its texture is to be seen with the aid of a hand-lens in a few places where the stone is freshly exposed, for instance in the impost of the westernmost pilaster of the north wall of the chapel, and in the impost and shaft of a pilaster on the west wall of the vestry. As an oolite, Taynton stone is further characterised by the presence of hard shelly layers, that stand out as ribs on weathered surfaces. These are shown by a block of the stone, 80cm in length, incorporated in the rubble walling on the north wall of the bay protruding from the south-east corner of the crypt (i.e. beneath the south-west tower).

Taynton stone is harder than Caen stone and was evidently available in larger blocks, hence its suitability for imposts and capitals. It is also very probably the stone used for the chamfered plinths, 15cm in height and 90cm in width, of pilasters on the south wall of the chapel, and for a similar plinth course along the north wall of the chapel. No fresh exposures of this plinth stone were to be seen, however.

In the main body of the crypt, the stone used for the three original free-standing columns is also nowhere freshly exposed beneath a grimy surface coating. In view, however, of the large dimensions of the blocks that were employed, with the shafts of the columns being monoliths of 140cm (about 4ft 6in) height and of 30cm (1ft) diameter, they are unlikely to be of other than Taynton stone. The base of the fourth (north-western) column resembles the bases of the other three in having a rather weathered and corroded appearance, so may also be original. The shaft of this fourth column, a 1950s replacement after war damage, seems to have some sort of surface coating, so that identification of its stone type presents difficulty. In the writer's opinion the stone is an oolitic limestone, perhaps Bath or even Portland stone. Each of the four columns stands on a chamfered plinth about 60cm square and 15 to 20cm in height. A scar where one corner of the plinth of the north-western column has been chipped shows the characteristic texture of Portland stone, a white fine-grained

oolite, so these plinths, which have quite sharp arrisses, may date from the 1950s restoration.

Two varieties of stone that were widely used in London in the early Norman period make only a token appearance in the crypt. The first is Reigate stone, of which there is one ashlar block at shoulder height in the north wall of the entrance passage from the chapel to the vestry, and another block adjoining the east side of the pilaster to the east of the entrance from the north to the central part of the crypt. Reigate stone is soft, grey and finely granular. Under a hand lens it shows abundant tiny black grains of the mineral glauconite together with sparse glistening mica flakes. The second type of stone, calcareous tufa, is possibly represented by one quoin stone with a cavernous appearance, on the east side of the arch framing the window between the central part of the crypt and the chapel.

Caen stone was widely used in southern England from the time of the Norman Conquest onwards. As for Taynton stone, quarries at Taynton are mentioned in the Domesday Book, and a well-known example of Norman use of the stone is the tower of Burford church (Oxon). In recent years evidence has been accumulating for employment of the stone beyond Oxfordshire in the Norman period, at least in localities accessible to river transport along the Thames. One such place is Reading Abbey, from which elaborately-carved mid-twelfth century capitals of a cloister arcade in Taynton and Caen stone are on display in Reading Museum.

Another locality is St John's Chapel (late 11th-century) in the White Tower of the Tower of London. The official guide book (Hammond 1987, p.19 of 1996 reprint) describes the capitals of the columns in this chapel, and by inference their shafts and bases as well, as being of Caen stone. In fact the capitals and bases of the columns are of Taynton stone (Worssam 2006, 239) while the shafts (Tatton-Brown 1991) are a mixture of blocks of Caen and Quarr stone (the latter from the Isle of Wight).

Lastly, Taynton stone has recently been shown to have been used in the keep of Rochester Castle, which dates from 1127, for the capitals of columns and for the imposts of attached columns within arches, the shafts of which are of Caen stone; while in the crypt of Rochester Cathedral, as rebuilt in c.1180 to 1200 after a major fire in 1179, there was extensive use of Taynton stone, for columns with monolithic shafts as well as for dressings throughout (see Worssam 2006, and references therein). It is of much interest, therefore, to find that the crypt of St Mary-le-Bow can be added to this list of localities.

8.2 Quinquennial Report 2006

Here is the part of the 2006 Quinquennial Report, by Julian Harrap and Associates, which deals with the crypt.

This survey has not looked in detail at the kitchen and only makes general comments on modern internal finishes of the whole area of the restaurant. The area is to be the subject of a study which will bring together a historical review as well as an archaeological support on the ancient stonework. This will be integrated with proposals for local repointing of

brickwork and conservation of significant stonework. As the steps down to the crypt descend and turn beneath the floor of the vestibule, the wall panelling ceases and gives way to white plaster over the stepped wall profile. The signage and lighting have been improved. The rough concrete vault is finished with a plaster skim coat and paint. There are signs of salt penetration on the West wall. The stone stairs are sound. The lobby at the base of the stairs has an oak cupboard housing the main electrical switch-gear for the restaurant. Surface trunking from this extends up, round the top and both sides of the door in the adjacent wall. The arch headed double doors themselves are in reasonable condition. The painted corner cupboard and the attendant storage do not contribute to a beneficial impression for the entrance to the restaurant. There is a single step down into the restaurant itself which is necessarily highlighted with unsightly hazard tape. Within the main room of the restaurant the walls are of medieval stonework, which is cut away from just above the imposts. The groin vaults above are of fibrous plaster and form part of the 1950s reconstruction.

The floor is finished in 1950s composition tiles over a concrete floor. The kitchen occupies the eastern bay of the room and seems to grow ever larger with food preparation taking place in the restaurant itself. A new servery has been provided on the south side. Adjacent to the entrance a stone arch leads to the surviving base of the former tower staircase. The stonework of this is all in reasonable condition, although the arch itself is pointed with modern cementitious pointing. This area continues to be used as a storage space, which is an unsuitable use and it should be discontinued. A new light should be fitted at high level to display this area. The north wall of the room [i.e. the north aisle] is formed in rough stonework with recesses, which presumably housed three former windows. The opposite wall is in more formal coursed high quality stonework with a very gravelly mortar. The recesses in that wall were previously openings into the Court of Arches and are now infilled as cupboards with a variety of finishes which would benefit from rationalisation. All the stonework has light deposits of salts on its surface which has been brushed off as a temporary measure. Dr Ridout's reports are attached [to the Quinquennial Report]. The kitchen at the east end is set at a raised level. Its ventilation system still requires review. The doorway through the thick wall to the Court of Arches is fitted as a lobby with a door on each face. The door on the north face is a flush door with a slightly raised threshold, whilst the south face door is an oak panelled door. Both doors are kept wedged open. For the approved means of escape an electromagnetic hold open device has been installed. The floor finish changes within the lobby, on an uneven line, from the tiling of the restaurant to the yorkstone paving of the Court of Arches. The lobby has an arched soffit which has an unsightly strip of cementitious mortar where cabling to the emergency light has been inserted.

The Court of Arches has retained its medieval walls, but the vaults have been reconstructed in fibrous plaster as in the restaurant. The 4 medieval columns have also survived but are set over the 1950s structural floor on new stone plinths. One shaft and two capitals are also new. The floor is paved in modern regular yorkstone with one inscribed panel relaid near the centre. The room was reduced in size in the 1950s, by the insertion of the boiler room (now partially adapted to provide public WCs and a small office). The remaining court-room is dominated by the 1950s structural insertion of an exposed aggregate concrete arcade across the face of the east wall and three massive square columns with concrete cores within plastered brick facings which support the new church floor slab above. The layout of these interventions entirely ignores the composition of the medieval room. Some improvement could be made in due course by removing the brick casings to the three columns.

Consideration is being given to colour washing the exposed concrete aggregate of the 1960s arcade to improve its presentation. In the south wall there are two arched openings leading to the crypt chapel. One is fitted with an oak panelled fire door and the other with a window. The window is of a simple design set over a warm air heater. A single sheet of obscure glass with an etched decorative design is set on each side of an iron grille. The doors to the heater cupboard below need overhaul. The stone walls are again showing deposits of salts generally on the surface with some pronounced areas in the east wall window reveals and on the south wall. They have recently brushed down and local repointing of the brick patches is proposed. The north wall is relatively free of this problem. The stonework on the east wall is also dirtier than the other walls. The west wall is of modern plastered brickwork, inserted to form the boiler room and now separates the Court of Arches from the public WC's. A new colour scheme for the whole room which harmonised the painted plaster work with the natural stonework would improve the presentation of the room. The small office in the lobby beyond the former shower leads up to the mezzanine stores or through to the Sacristy. The repair to stonework of its south wall at the bearing of the mezzanine beam is to be reviewed. The stone wall is again showing signs of salts deposits. The adjacent Sacristy is well heated and appears to have little air movement, despite the presence of a ventilation grille over the door. The salts are consequently more pronounced in this area. The panels in the oak door leading to the crypt chapel are all split. The room is dominantly occupied by another square concrete and plastered brick column. The adjacent boiler room has no notable defects except a lack of adequate ventilation.

Crypt Chapel [i.e. the south aisle]. The crypt chapel has stone walls and four bays of fibrous plaster vaults matching the rest of the crypt rooms. The north wall is of the regularised high quality stone of the Court of Arches, whilst the south wall is of random stonework with patches of various dates, some in brickwork. The brickwork is decaying from salt penetration and is to be repointed in the near future.

The central section of the east wall has been rebuilt in modern brickwork with a secretly lit recess which accommodates the crucifix. The arch is formed with stone imposts and arch stones, which may have been re-used pieces. They are unsuitably pointed in cementitious pointing. The back of the recess is plastered and this is suffering from salts damage, as is the base of the whole east wall and the floor abutment. The south wall is again salty. The floor has a modern small stone slab perimeter around a series of salvaged inscribed stones which occupy the centre section of the whole area including the adjacent lobby. Many of these slabs have been previously broken. The repairs to these breaks and the jointing between the slabs is not carried out to a high standard. The altar is a robust modern stone altar with a stone slab top. The furniture is otherwise all loose. Some pointing is to be removed in the brickwork patches to assist with the release of moisture pressure behind. There is a glazed screen with an etched design and double doors leading to the lobby to the west. The lobby has a flat ceiling at two levels. A large air grille is let into the ceiling. The north wall is a random stone wall infilled with brick at low level. The whole is poorly pointed with cementitious pointing. This area of brickwork is to be repointed in the near future.

There is a little evidence of salts damaged in the cooler environment of this lobby, except a small area on the south wall, another on the ceiling and a larger patch adjacent to the glazed screen. A short flight of steps leads up to the corner lobby and the stairs up to the churchyard entrance. This corner lobby is lit behind a lighting pelmet in a rather basic fashion and has a red wall facing the upper stair flight. The escape signs are also basic and the ceiling is very low. It does not at present provide a very enticing entrance to the crypt

chapel. The flight of stone stairs down from the churchyard is in good order. The walls are rendered and suffer from damp damage. The soffit is a stepped concrete soffit, with lighting hidden between the sections of different heights. The whole approach to the Chapel is of a rather utilitarian nature, which could be improved with inventive redecoration, re-lighting and new signage. Provision for the ambulant disabled could be improved at the same time. The proposed archaeological survey will be very valuable as it will enable a level of significance to be attached to each area of walling, floor and vault.

Recommendations arising from the Quinquennial Inspection

Immediate Action 1. Monitor the level of salts in the Crypt, the Chapel Sacristy and the Cafe area. Note any noticeable changes as part of the forthcoming archaeological and historical study proposed for this area.

8.3 Gazetteer of archaeological sites in the vicinity

This is a gazetteer of archaeological sites for about 100m around the church. It is adapted from the gazetteer in an archaeological desk-based assessment being written by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) for a Street Scene landscaping scheme by the Corporation of London for the churchyard west of the church. A map of these excavations and observations (from the MoLAS assessment) is given as Fig 47.

No.	Description	Site code
	Sites investigated by the Guildhall Museum before 1973 (summaries in Schofield with Maloney 1998)	
1	Blossoms Inn, 3–4 Trump Street, EC2: in 1956 I Noel Hume found a Roman stream, a Roman timber well, and two post-medieval wells	GM20
2	Bow Bells House, 11 Bread Street, 46–55 Cheapside, EC4: in 1958 E Rutter recorded an undated chalk-lined well	GM21
3	67–69 Cheapside, 1–5 Queen Street, EC4: in 1937–8 F Cottrill recorded a Roman road in three places, 26ft 6in (8.1m) wide, a timber-lined well and a medieval foundation. This site was later excavated as CED89.	GM34
4	100–116 Cheapside (Sun Life Assurance), EC2: in 1955–6 I Noel Hume recorded on this site after the excavated by Grimes (WFG40). Noel Hume recorded a late 1st c Roman bath-house with six rooms, two on hypocausts. This was rebuilt in the 2nd c into a complex of eleven rooms. Several medieval and post-medieval cesspits were also found.	GM37
5	Cheapside (opposite Milk Street), EC2: in 1964 P Marsden recorded a lead water pipe under the N carriageway of Cheapside, 10ft 6in (3.2m) down.	GM39
6	St Alban's House, 124 Wood Street (formerly Goldsmith House, Goldsmith Street), EC2: in 1961 P Marsden recorded parts of several Roman buildings and part of a medieval building fronting onto Wood Street or Gutter Lane. This site was excavated again as ABS86.	GM66
7	33 King Street, 8–9 Lawrence Lane, EC2: in 1938 F Cottrill recorded Roman walls and possibly a Roman street.	GM85
8	34–35 King Street, 6–7 Lawrence Lane, EC2: in 1955 I Noel Hume recorded a Roman courtyard and a timber-lined well containing 3rd – 4th c pottery.	GM86
9	67–69 Watling Street, EC4: in 1961 P Marsden recorded a Roman tessellated pavement behind the frontage of present day Watling Street.	GM161
10	Watling House, 12–16 Watling Street, 31–37 Cannon Street, EC4: in 1954 I Noel Hume recorded early 1st c (Neronian and Flavian) levels and buildings; the 2nd c Hadrianic Fire; and medieval cesspits.	GM213
11	St Mary Le Bow church, Cheapside, EC2: in 1913 there was a small excavation in the crypt, reported by F Lambert in 1915, which found the plank-revetted edge of a small stream below foundations of the crypt of 1090. In 1932 E Underwood, the parish architect, recorded part of a medieval stone building beneath the S wall of the Wren church.	GM262
	Sites excavated or observed by Professor Grimes, 1946-72 (summaries in Shepherd 1998)	
12	Cheapside (South Side), Cheapside, EC2: in 1955 W F Grimes found the main E-W Roman road beneath Cheapside in two small trenches, and a roadside ditch containing 4th c pottery.	WFG38
13	Bow Churchyard, EC4: in 1955 W F Grimes also recorded, along with RCHME, one bay of an undercroft which had been destroyed by the construction of the Wren tower. This undercroft is probably the documented house built here in 1272–9.	WFG39
14	Cheapside and Honey Lane, All Hallows Honey Lane, 107–111 Cheapside, EC2: in 1954–5 W F Grimes dug three trenches and found burials of All Hallows Honey Lane church (destroyed 1666), clay and timber Roman buildings, and later Roman masonry buildings.	WFG40
15	Blossom's Inn and Lawrence Lane, Lawrence Lane, EC2: in 1955 W F Grimes recorded 1st and 2nd c buildings and external surfaces.	WFG41
16	Cheapside & Lawrence Lane, 94-96 Cheapside, 1-3 Lawrence Lane, EC2: in 1961 W F Grimes recorded a Roman hypocaust of a building which may lie under Cheapside to the S.	WFG42
	Sites investigated since 1973 (all Museum of London; summaries in Schofield with Maloney 1998 for sites up to 1991)	
17	St Alban's House, 124 Wood Street, EC2: in 1984 P Chitwood and J Hill recorded up to 5m of strata in areas left by the post-War building: natural, 1st and 2nd c	ABS86

No.	Description	Site code
	buildings and surfaces, an 11th-12th c quarry pit, a 12th c foundation and medieval timber structures.	
18	Bow Bells House, Bread Street, EC4: in 2005–6, I Howell recorded natural deposits, Roman quarry pits, the major road beneath Cheapside, late Saxon pits near Watling Street, and chalk foundations of medieval buildings.	(BDE00), BBB05
19	Blossom's Inn, 20–27 Lawrence Lane, EC2: excavation here in 1990, 1995 and 2000 found Roman buildings and external surfaces, dark earth, medieval walls and cesspits (including some attributable to the medieval Blossom's Inn), burnt debris from the Great Fire of 1666.	BLO95, BSS90, BSO00, GHT00
20	49–52a Bow Lane, EC4: in 2000 Saxo-Norman deposits, medieval stone walls, a brick-lined well and debris of the Great Fire were recorded.	BOC00
21	40–43 Bow Lane, 67–69, 70–71 Watling Street, EC4: in 1998 D Bowsher recorded Roman clay and timber buildings of the 1st and 2nd c; part of a Roman road beneath Watling Street; and a post-medieval brick cellar.	BWL98
22	45–48 Bow Lane, EC4: in 2001 D Jamieson recorded medieval or post-medieval chalk foundations.	BWN01
23	64–66 Cheapside, EC4: in 1991 T Thomas recorded 1st c Roman buildings fronting onto the Roman predecessor of Cheapside on the N, and medieval foundations and cesspits.	CED89
24	120 Cheapside, EC2: in 2004 L Casson recorded natural brickearth, Roman occupation and demolition layers, and a number of medieval and post-medieval pits.	CDP04
25	36–37 King Street, EC2: in 1985 P Rowsome recorded two meeting Roman roads, established AD 50–65; probably debris of the Boudiccan fire of 60–1; timber and later more substantial buildings; two late Saxon sunken buildings, a hut and another larger structure; and fragments of medieval chalk foundations.	KNG85
26	Bow Churchyard (south side), EC4: in 1992 T Mackinder recorded 1st or 2nd c Roman buildings, a possible Roman street, dark earth, medieval foundations and a cellar of brick and reused stone, including 14thc window tracery.	MBL92
27	1–6 Milk Street, EC2: in 1976–7 S Roskams, P Allen and J Schofield recorded 1st and 2nd c Roman buildings including a figured mosaic (now in the Museum of London), a Roman street, dark earth, two late Saxon sunken-floored buildings, many 11th-12thc pits, an early 12th c stone building, and later stone cesspits (Perring and Roskams 1991 for the Roman period; Schofield et al 1990 for the post-Roman).	MLK76
28	Watling Court, 41–53 Cannon Street, 11–14 Bow Lane, EC4: in 1978 D Perring recorded extensive 1st and 2nd c Roman buildings, including several floors in decorated opus signinum, several late Saxon sunken buildings, 11th c to 13th c pits, medieval foundations and post-medieval brick cellars (Perring and Roskams 1991 for the Roman period, Schofield et al 1990 for the post-Roman).	WAT78
29	Well Court, 44–48 Bow Lane, EC4: in 1979 D Perring and P Rowsome recorded a N-S Roman street probably of the Flavian period, a series of late 1st c and 2nd buildings with it, including one with a portico, evidence of the Hadrianic fire, dark earth, a late Saxon street, several sunken-floored structures, and a series of medieval stone buildings, two of which were refurbished in the post-medieval period (Perring and Roskams 1991 for the Roman period, Schofield et al 1990 for the post-Roman).	WEL79
30	130–131 Cheapside [Woolworth's], EC2: in 1979 J Millner observed three phases of Roman occupation, probably the Boudiccan and Hadrianic fires, dark earth and medieval stone foundations, possibly of the Cross Keys Inn in Wood Street (Perring and Roskams 1991 for the Roman period).	WOW79

8.4 Comments on the Conservation Management Plan by the Dean of Arches, the Vicar General and the Registrar of the Province of Canterbury

A copy of the consultation draft of the Plan was sent to the Dean of Arches, and on 11 June 2007 Mr John Rees, Registrar of the Province of Canterbury, sent the following comments on behalf of the Dean of Arches, the Vicar General and himself. One comment in response by the Rector is added at the end of paragraph 5 (marked *).

Use of the Crypt by Ecclesiastical Courts

1. Since the restoration of the church was completed the crypt has been used for the following purposes from time to time (i) as the Court of Arches (ii) as the Vicar General's Court for the confirmation of election of diocesan bishops, and (iii) as the venue for some sittings of the Consistory Court of the diocese of London (see paragraph (3) of the judgment in *re St Mary-le Bow* dated 7 November 2000).
2. The present Dean of the Arches can vouch for all three of these uses. Her predecessor, Sir John Owen, used different venues for hearings in the Court of Arches, but after the number of judges was increased to three from one by the Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991 he commenced sitting in the crypt of St Mary-le Bow. The present Dean was a member of the Court which heard the appeals in *re St Luke's Maidstone* (1995) and in *re St Mary Sherborne* (1996), and both were heard in the crypt at St Mary-le Bow. The present Dean has now sat 5 times at St Mary-le-Bow using either the crypt, the chapel, or the nave of the church as seemed convenient or appropriate in the case in question. This flexibility is valued by the Court, and it also operates to the advantage of the parish because it means that the Court does not override other weekday activities in the building. It is to be hoped that this same flexibility can be amicably retained for the future. It would be regrettable if at any time the Archbishop's Courts had to rely upon their historic rights and assert them against the Rector and the parochial church council.
3. The present Dean was appointed as Vicar-General of Canterbury in 1983 and it was the usual practice, in the time of her immediate predecessors and in her time, until comparatively recently, to hold the ceremony of Confirmation of Election of a diocesan bishop in the crypt with a service, including the litany, being conducted in the adjacent chapel beforehand. There was a temporary break with this practice when Lord Carey was Archbishop as he requested that the majority, but not all of the ceremonies, be held at Lambeth Palace. Although the Court ceremony is now conducted in the nave and the chancel, it is possible that an occasion could arise in the future when the Vicar-General's Court would wish to sit in the crypt for judicial business, such as a disciplinary hearing against a bishop under the Clergy Discipline Measure. The Vicar-General, therefore, has a continuing interest in the possibility of sitting in the crypt and should be consulted about any future proposals affecting the crypt.
4. The crypt was used by Chancellor Newsom, as Chancellor of London, during the 1980's for a number of sittings of the Consistory Court of the diocese of London, and not simply for the hearing of petitions relating to St Mary-le-Bow. The present Dean, as the former

Chancellor of London, did not follow this practice and only sat in the crypt to hear the petitions which were the subject of the judgment of 7 November 2000 already referred to above, but there is precedent for the Chancellor to use the crypt if he wishes to do so.

5. It goes without saying that no changes can be made to the crypt without a faculty and in the course of the faculty proceedings it would be expected that the Chancellor would consult the Dean of the Arches and the Vicar-General at an appropriate stage, if the petitioners had not already done so before submitting their petition. The 2000 faculty contained a condition as to closure of the Place Below to facilitate ‘the sitting of the Court of Arches or the Vicar-General’s Court or the Consistory Court of the Diocese of London’ on the giving of not less than 14 days’ notice. This is a necessary safeguard to protect the rights of the ecclesiastical courts.* However, as long as goodwill prevails all round, so that the Court concerned can be conveniently accommodated elsewhere in the building on the dates requested, then it should not be necessary to invoke this right, although its protective function should continue in future licences to ensure that the rights of the Archbishop’s judges are not adversely affected by any changes to the crypt.

* The present incumbent while acknowledging with pleasure the place of the ecclesiastical courts at St Mary-le-Bow and wishing to facilitate their continued access, asserts the freedom of the benefice under the Faculty Jurisdiction.

The Vestry Room

There is clearly some evidence that the Court of Arches sat in the Vestry in the past. This has not been a venue for the Court for a long time and it would be unnecessarily disruptive to parish administration to suggest that the Vestry should be used again, certainly for the foreseeable future. It is good of the Rector and his staff to accommodate the judges, and the participants at the ceremony of confirmation of election, as the vestry makes a very convenient robing room on these occasions. It is to be hoped that this facility will continue to be made available to the Archbishop and his judges when required.

The Church

When a sitting of the Court of Arches involves a number of people, particularly when parties are represented it has been most satisfactory to conduct the hearing in the nave, but where only a small number is involved and when the parties are appearing in person it can be friendlier to hold the hearing in the crypt, which is less daunting. It is therefore important that the Court is able to choose either the crypt or the main part of the church for an individual sitting depending upon the particular type of appeal in question.

8.5 Survey report by Laurence King, 1955

on the following pages

Appendix 8.5: Survey report by Laurence King

2.55

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY-LE-BOW, CHEAPSIDE

Report upon the State of the Fabric

Scope of Report:

This Report describes the serious state in which the fabric of the Church and Crypt was found to be when detailed examinations were made at the commencement of the work of restoring the Crypt. Recommendations are made as to how the fabric may best be made sound, and approximate estimates of the extra cost of the work so involved are given.

Investigations into the Rubble Vaulting over the Aisles of the Crypt:

The first stage of the work authorised in the Contract dated the 6th October, 1954, for the restoration of the Crypt was the removal of the filling over the Nave of the Crypt down to the brick work of the vaults. These excavations are a necessary part of the work of reinstating both Church and Crypt: they also afforded the opportunity desired for a detailed investigation of the existing fabric, such as is only possible when unseen work is uncovered.

As the excavations proceeded it began to appear that proper abutments to the rubble vaulting of the South Aisle might be lacking on the North side, and the District Surveyor advised that consideration be given to centering this vaulting before proceeding any further with the excavations, especially on account of the longitudinal crack which was observed when the South Aisle was opened up for the removal of mortal remains. Inspection holes, therefore, were formed in the vaulting of the South Aisle and stagings were erected in both Aisles so that the rubble vaulting could be examined at close quarters.

Investigations
into the Rubble
Vaulting over
the Aisles
continued -

The Consulting Structural Engineers, Messrs. Hurst, Peirce and Malcolm, reported as follows:-

"The result of this examination is profoundly disturbing. The vaulting is composed of lime mortar, in which irregularly shaped stones have been bedded in what can only be described as a haphazard manner. As might be expected in lime mortar of such a great age, it has lost all its "virtue", and is now little more than powder. Some of the stones are hard and sound, but in some cases they are merely chalk lumps which are wet and soft.

Numerous cracks have developed in the vaulting, and in many cases the soffits have distorted where the weak lime mortar has allowed local sagging to occur.

The condition of the South Aisle vaulting is, in our opinion, dangerous. The Nave floor over this portion of the Crypt has been open to the weather ever since the Church was burnt out, and it is obvious that the concrete slab cast over the Nave floor after the fire has not prevented the percolation of rain water into the vault roof. As a result, the mortar is wet and soft and has no cohesion.

Even in the North Aisle, which has been protected from the weather by the Vestry, the mortar is damp and soft, and we can only conclude that water has found its way in by capillary attraction from the wet filling under

the/

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Investigations
into the Rubble
Vaulting over
the Aisles
continued -

the Nave of the Church, and possibly also from the rubble in the vacant site in the angle between the Tower and the North wall of the Vestry.

Though we have not yet had sufficient time to give full consideration to the problem of remedial measures, we feel that the condition of the mortar, combined with the poor quality of construction of the three central bays of vaulting over the South Aisle, can only be remedied by their demolition and reconstruction in brick vaulting. The extreme East and West bays of this Aisle have already been rebuilt in brick and appear to be sound."

As the result of this report, a meeting of all parties concerned took place in the Crypt. This meeting included besides the Architect:-

The District Surveyor.

The Dangerous Structure Surveyor.

Mr. Malcolm, of Messrs. Hurst, Peirce & Malcolm,
Consulting Structural Engineers.

The Quantity Surveyor.

A representative of the Inspectorate of Ancient
Monuments, together with an Architect and
a Structural Engineer from the Ancient
Monuments Department of the Ministry of
Works.

At this meeting the District Surveyor ruled that as the Crypt is the lower part of the Church, which is a building to which the public will be admitted, he himself would be unable to sign the customary

certificate/

Investigations
into the Rubble
Vaulting over
the Aisles
continued -

certificate vouching for the safety of the public if the existing rubble vaulting of both the South and North Aisles of the Crypt was left in its present condition.

After very careful discussion at which every attempt was made to find means of saving and strengthening the existing vaulting, it was reluctantly agreed that by no known method of construction could the safety of these vaults be guaranteed short of demolishing and rebuilding them, as was done many years ago in the case of the rubble vaulting over the Nave.

Preliminary
Investigations
into the Crypt
Walls:

In the meanwhile, preliminary investigations of the piers separating the Nave from the Aisles of the Crypt had suggested that their condition was also even worse than had been feared, and it was, therefore, decided that before any of the work in restoring the Crypt was begun, trial holes ought to be sunk so that the walls and foundations of both the Crypt and the Church could be examined, and the best means of restoring the fabric deduced. For it is clear that before any work on the rebuilding of the Church can be begun the Crypt must be made structurally sound, since it forms in part at least the foundations of the Church.

Provision had, of course, been made in the Bills of Quantities for carrying out such work as might be found necessary in repairing the fabric, but as it was now clear that the sums of money provisionally allotted for such work would be materially exceeded, further instructions were asked of the Diocese, and authority received to make a full investigation of the fabric.

Investigations
into the Crypt
and Church Walls:

Four trial holes were, therefore, dug at suitable points, two in the Crypt and two in the Church pockets were cut in the walls so that the condition of their core might be ascertained.

The information gained is the subject of a separate report by the Consulting Structural Engineers, Hurst, Peirce & Malcolm. Their report, which is attached to this document, is briefly summarized.

Church Walls:

The Consulting Structural Engineers report that the walls of the Church at ground level and above are generally in a sound condition.

Below ground level the East and North walls of the Church are for most of their length built up of walls of the Crypt, and these are discussed last.

The West wall of the Church has its foundations of the Crypt, and appears to consist of a series of brick piers with arches between. The piers are on made-up ground, and the loads which would be on them when the Church is rebuilt would be very heavy in relation to the ultimate bearing capacity of this made-up ground. Figures given show these loads to be one and-a-half times more than would be considered safe on the foundations of a new building in this site.

The South wall of the Church, near the South-East corner where the trial hole was dug, is bedded on an old foundation which is carried down 26 feet on ballast (gravel).

Investigations
into the Crypt
and Church Walls
continued -

The Consulting Structural Engineers consider that if this foundation extends for the full length of the wall, it is adequate to support the loads to be imposed on it by the rebuilt Church. It would, however, be necessary to ascertain by further trial holes whether, in fact, the foundation extends for the full length of the wall.

Crypt Walls:

Trial holes sunk in diagonally opposite corners of the Nave of the Crypt showed the foundations to consist of rubble and mortar. The lime mortar has completely lost all power to bind the stones together, so that the foundations are no more than stones and clunch (hard chalk) loosely set in dirty sand.

The foundations are carried 5-6 feet below floor level on to soft wet earth. The East and North walls of the Nave, which have the Church walls on top of them, transmit to this earth three times more load than would be considered safe were a new building to be erected on such subsoil.

The Crypt walls above floor level consist of a very thin facing of cut stone with a core of stone and chalk rubble in mortar which has lost all its value as a binding agent.

In view of the poor condition of the stone skins of these piers, the Consulting Structural Engineers are amazed that the East wall of the Crypt and the heavily loaded piers under the North wall of the Church have not already collapsed.

Engineers'
Conclusion:

The conclusion which the Consulting Structural Engineers draw from this appreciation is that no single unit of the Crypt can, in its present precarious condition, be safely incorporated into any scheme of reinstatement, and that though the main walls of the Church are reasonably sound, their foundations, with the possible exception of the South wall, are inadequate.

Proposals for
Reinstatement
of Church and
Crypt:

It is assumed that every effort should be made to retain the existing walls of the Church at ground level and above, so that the Church together with the Tower and Steeple may be restored.

Reinstatement
of the Crypt:

Since the East and North walls of the Nave of the Crypt form the lower parts of the East and North walls of the Church, it is essential that they be made sound and be provided with a proper foundation. But the only way in which to ensure the safety of these walls is to rebuild them.

Moreover, if the Crypt is to be restored in accordance with the proposals already approved, all other walls within it must be rebuilt also, together with their foundations.

It is true that much of the existing facing of the walls of the Crypt could be used in this reinstatement, but it is questionable whether the expense is justifiable on archaeological and aesthetic grounds, for the work envisaged can no longer be properly called a restoration, involving as it does the rebuilding of the entire fabric.

But if the decision is taken, however reluctantly, to abandon the full restoration of the Crypt as was intended, on the grounds that it has reached such a

state/

Reinstatement
of the Crypt
continued -

state of decay that it can no longer serve its function as the foundation of the Church, and that it is beyond repair, an alternative scheme might be considered as follows.

Alternative
Scheme for
Restoration
which involves
retaining only
South Aisle of
Crypt:

The loading on the East and North walls of the Nave of the Crypt, together with the North Aisle walls, would be transferred on to new brick piers on pile foundations. Similar brick piers would be built in the Nave of the Crypt to carry the North Arcade columns of the Church, with further piers in convenient positions to carry the floor of the Church.

By this means, all the walls of the Church would be carried down to a new and solid foundation, and as much as is practicable of the old walls of the Crypt would be retained undisturbed as an archaeological record, for they would no longer be carrying any weight.

It would also be possible to restore the South Aisle of the Crypt as an Undercroft Chapel, thus retaining some part of the original scheme. For although the vaulting in this Aisle must be demolished, the walls may stand as they are, and the spacing of the brick piers carrying the loads can be contrived so that none are built within it. Thus it may be partitioned off from the rest of the Crypt (which may be used for heating plant and for storage), and be provided with a staircase and entrance from the West front of the Church.

Work in Bow
Lane:

It has been assumed in the approximate estimates given later in this report that Bow Lane (which runs the length of the East wall of the Church) can be closed to wheeled traffic for some nine to twelve months during

the/

Work in Bow
Lane continued - the work of excavating for and underpinning the East wall of the Church.

It is anticipated, however, that although the Corporation are willing and anxious to co-operate with the Church, they might feel obliged in the interests of the public to insist on the continuance of traffic during the week, with the result that week-end work only would be possible. This could increase by several months the time necessary to carry out the underpinning, and add a considerable sum to the costs anticipated in this report. It is, therefore, recommended that the matter be discussed with the Authorities at the highest level.

Reinstatement
of the Church: New foundations would also have to be provided to the West wall of the Church, and to the South wall in any part where the existing foundation is not carried down to the ballast which appears to underlie the site at about 25 feet below street level.

Comparative
Costs: Subject to the discovery of any further unforeseen difficulties which might appear in the course of the work, it is likely that the cost of underpinning the walls of the Church and of restoring the Crypt as was intended would be of the order of £80,000. This figure would be reduced to perhaps £55,000 if the alternative scheme proposed above were to be adopted.

In neither case can any significant contribution to the cost be expected from the War Damage Commission, nor, of course, is the cost of the restoration of the Church above ground level included, though this would be largely paid for by the War Damage Commission.

Comparative
Costs contd.

The present Contract for the restoration of the Crypt is in the sum of £20,000, so that the extra expenditure involved would be of the order of £80,000 or £35,000, according to which scheme is adopted.

Basis for
Approximate
Estimates:

It should be strongly emphasised that the estimates of cost given by the Quantity Surveyor and quoted in this report can be regarded as no more than rough guiding figures. It will be appreciated that time precludes the basing of these estimates on detailed study, and that the possibility of further unforeseen difficulties cannot be excluded. For instance, it has been assumed for present purposes that the South wall of the Church is well founded for its whole length. If, in fact, excavations were to show that this is not so, and that the reasonable foundation which has been exposed in the South-East corner does not run for the full length of the wall, a further £15,000 might well be added to the cost of the work.

Summary of
the Report:

The state of the Crypt and of the foundations of the Church is so bad that before restoring the Church it would be necessary to underpin the greater part of its walls, and either to rebuild the Crypt or else abandon its restoration except for the South Aisle.

In order to give some idea of the scale of the works involved, the following tabulation is made, based as it is on slender evidence, and on no more detailed consideration than suffices to show the practicability of the schemes in essence.

Scheme	Conjectural Cost	Conjectural Time required to design and execute
Underpin Church Foundations and rebuild Crypt	Approximately £80,000	Approximately 2½ years.
Underpin Church Foundations and restore South Aisle of Crypt	Approximately £55,000	Approximately 2 years.

Conclusion: The necessity of reporting such disappointing news is deeply regretted. Experience in the restoration of old buildings shows, however, that all too frequently extra expenditure and changes in plan become necessary when the work is opened up. Yet it is confidently felt that despite such setbacks the scheme can be carried to a successful conclusion.

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