

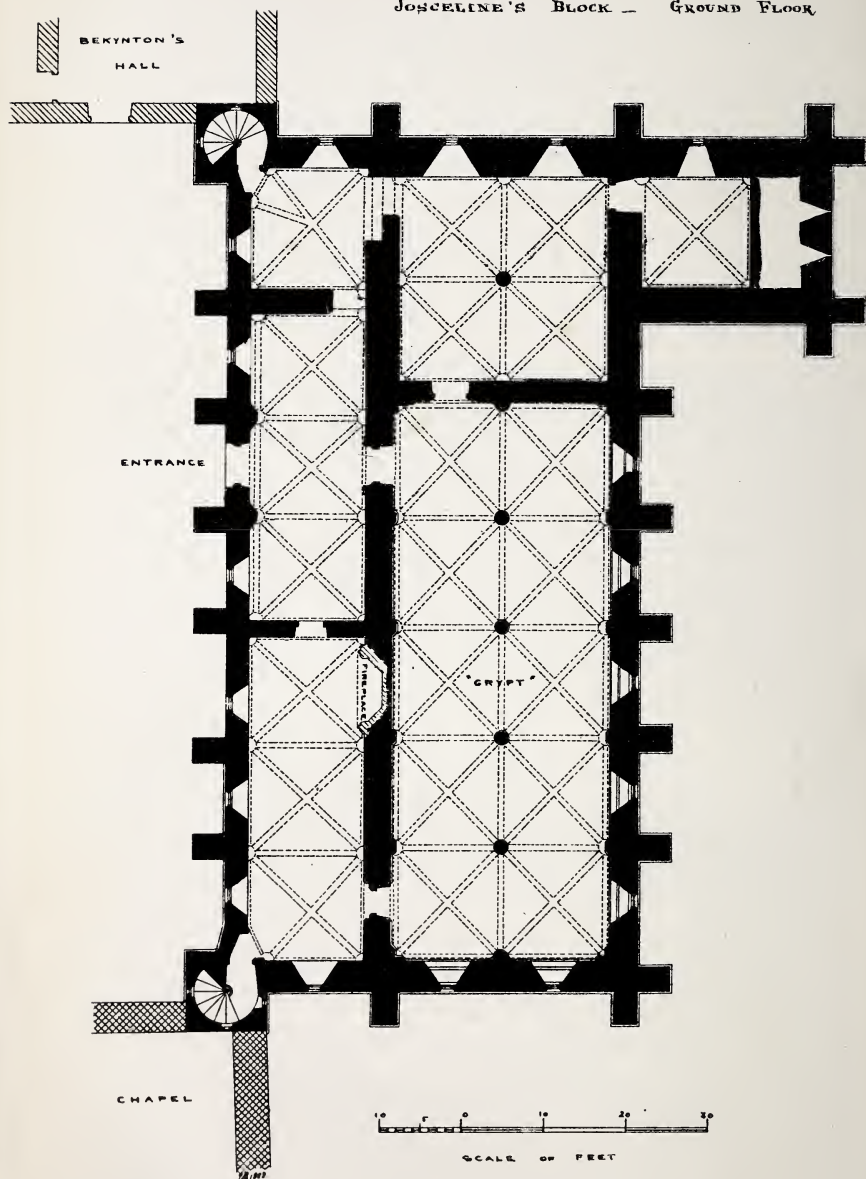
Wells Palace.

BY EDMUND BUCKLE.

GISA was Bishop of Wells from 1061 to 1088. He introduced the Rule of Chrodegang into his Church, built the Canons a cloister, refectory, and dormitory, and compelled them to live in common instead of in their own houses, as they had previously done. But this change was of short duration. His successor, John de Villulâ, pulled down these buildings and set up a house for himself upon the site. There must have been a house for the Bishop to live in at Wells much earlier than this, but we have no mention of it and no indication of the position which it occupied. It is clear, however, that John chose a fresh site for his building, since he took the ground which the Canons had previously occupied. The Canons' buildings doubtless stood round a cloister adjoining the Church, and Mr. Freeman accordingly states in his *Lectures on the Cathedral Church of Wells* that John's house must (unless the Church has since been moved) have occupied the site of the present cloister. But it appears to me that it is not necessary to assume this. The words of the Canon of Wells are, "Fundum in quo prius habitabant sibi et suis successoribus usurpavit, palatiumque suum episcopale ibidem construxit." If the whole area in which the Palace and cloisters now stand had been previously occupied by the Canons, and John took the whole for his own use, these words would describe the proceeding with sufficient accuracy, even though he did not build his house exactly where the Canons' buildings had stood. John was Bishop of Bath, and he lived at Bath; his Wells house was probably only a manor-

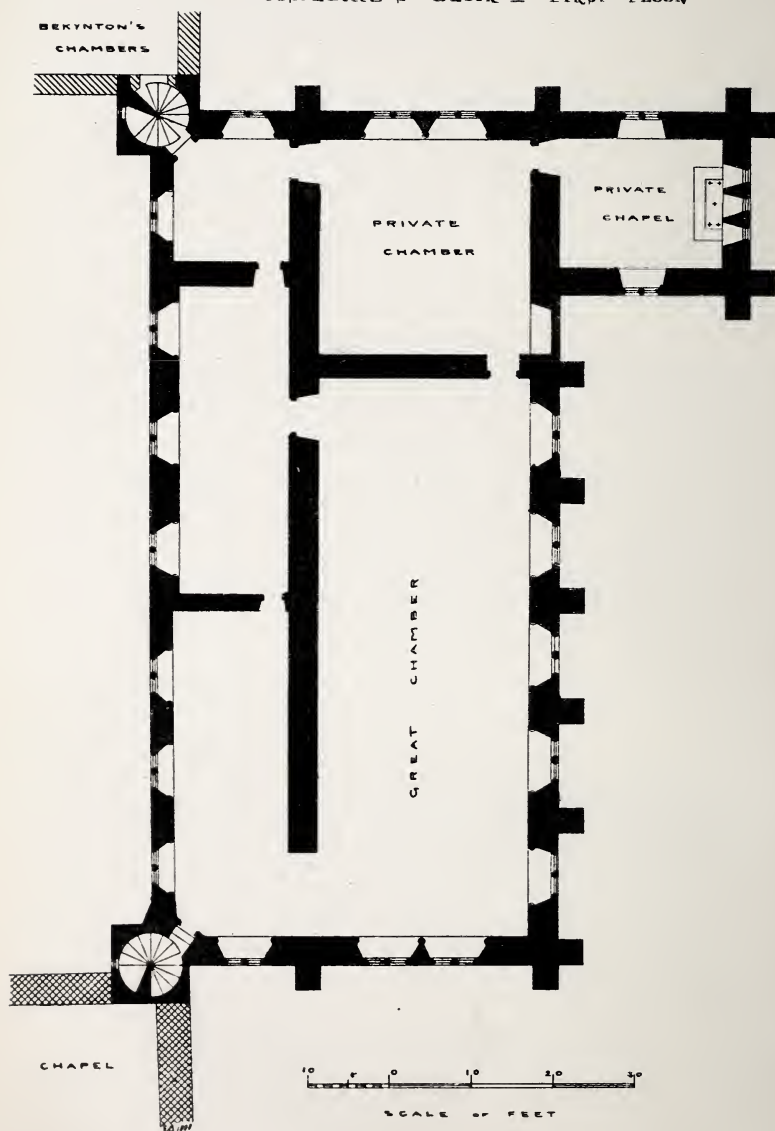
WELLS PALACE N^o I

JOSCELINE'S BLOCK — GROUND FLOOR



WELLS PALACE N° II

JOSCELINE'S BLOCK - FIRST FLOOR



house. But the Canon of Wells, writing in the fifteenth century, and thinking of the Palace as it existed in his day, naturally used the word *palatium*.

We do not hear of the Palace again until Josceline's time (1206-42). Of him the Canon writes, "Capellas cum cameris de Wellys et Woky nobiliter construxit;" and a great part of his work still remains. What may be called the principal block of the existing Palace (that which contains the entrance doorway and the sitting-rooms) is mainly of the thirteenth century. On Plates I and II, I give plans of the two floors of this building as I imagine them to have been originally arranged. The doorway stood one bay to the left of the present porch, and its masonry is still clearly visible outside. Within this door was an entrance hall of three bays' width, and exactly opposite the outer door was a handsome doorway leading into the principal room on the ground floor, now the Bishop's dining-room, and called the "crypt." This room has a row of Purbeck columns down the centre, and, as has been mentioned, a rather ornate doorway. In my opinion this must have been a living room, and not a store, as many suppose; though against this view must be set the fact that it certainly never contained a fireplace until the present Bishop inserted one. Perhaps it was originally warmed by baskets of charcoal standing on the floor. The iron rings which are built into the ribs of the vault seem also to favour the idea that the room was a mere store, but it must be remembered that in the old times one room was made to serve many purposes, and I do not think much reliance can be placed upon the argument from these rings. I imagine that this was the living room of the Bishop's servants and his guests of an inferior station; in fact the most public room in the house. The two windows at the south end of this room have been altered from their original form; these were lancets, like the others. In other respects this room remains precisely as it was originally built. To the north of this room is a square room with a column in the

centre (now divided up by various partitions), and to the east of this a small room of a single bay, with a space at its extremity, now completely walled up. This space appears to have contained two closets, or possibly a pit below closets on the first floor. What now forms the gallery on the ground floor was originally divided by two cross walls into three rooms. In the centre was the entrance hall mentioned above; to the right and left of that on entering were two passage rooms leading to staircases at the two angles of the building. That to the right was three bays long, and this I take to have been the principal entrance to the Bishop's apartments on the first floor; that to the left, which contains but one bay, led to a more private staircase. The windows on the west side of these rooms were doubtless lancets, like those in the crypt.

What I have called the principal stair still exists. It is that in the angle adjoining the Chapel. Ascending this, we should reach a lobby or waiting-room of three bays' length; for the first floor gallery was divided into three rooms, like the gallery below, as is clear from an examination of the different thicknesses of the outer wall. From this lobby there appears to have been a wide doorway into the Great Chamber; at any rate there is none of the ancient wall left for a space of about ten feet at the end of this chamber. This chamber was 68 feet long and 28 feet wide, and was open up to the rafters of the roof. But it must have been a chamber, not a hall. For there can never have been a kitchen or other offices attached to it, and it would have been most inconvenient to bring the food through the rooms below and up a turret staircase. At the end of the great chamber is a square room, which I believe to have been the Bishop's private Chamber, also open to the roof, and approached on the other side by a lobby from the private stair. The room within this, built out towards the east, I have little doubt was the Bishop's private Chapel; while the central room on the west side was very probably a wardrobe.

If the disposition of the rooms which I have just indicated is correct, there must have existed elsewhere a hall, with kitchen and other offices attached, and probably a chapel, if not other buildings; and the house must indeed have been a palace comparable with the King's palaces. We are dealing with the time of Henry III, and fortunately we have considerable information from the Liberate Rolls about the arrangements of Henry's palaces. From these rolls it is clear that the King's and Queen's apartments consisted each of a suit of rooms containing at least an oriel, a great chamber and a private chamber, while each had a private chapel, though generally separate from the other rooms; a wardrobe, often containing two rooms, and in the principal palaces a hall apiece. Various other chambers are enumerated in the inventories of the King's palaces, so that it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the whole of the first floor of this building was devoted to the Bishop's suite of rooms. It may be said that the large room is too big to be described as a chamber; but this is not the case; there is an account existing in the Pipe Rolls of the cost of erecting a hunting lodge at Woolmer for Edward I, which is quoted in Turner and Parker's *Domestic Architecture*, vol. i, p. 60, in which the great chamber is described as being 72 feet long and 28 feet wide, which is a trifle larger than the room in question; and as this occurs not in a palace, but a mere hunting lodge, the comparison seems not unfair. The thirteenth century houses, with which we are more familiar, consist merely of a hall and solar, but the remains which we have to deal with in the palace at Wells are undoubtedly much more extensive, and I can at any rate plead for my interpretation of these remains that it accounts for all the principal rooms, and that in a simple manner, consistent with common-sense planning.

The windows on the west front of this floor remain substantially as they were erected. In the year 1846 Bishop Bagot carried out considerable works of restoration and altera-

tion, with the late Mr. Benjamin Ferrey for his architect. At this time the marble shafts and bases were inserted within these windows, but the capitals and arches, and the stonework of the windows themselves (except for certain repairs) remain as they were before. Originally there was probably a short stone bench against each jamb of these windows. It is to be observed that the quatrefoils at the head of these windows are prepared for receiving glass, which was fixed in the stonework; but the jambs and mullions have a square rebate all round, which was intended to receive a wooden casement in which the glass was fixed; when the Bishop was absent these casements were doubtless taken out and shutters substituted, so as to avoid the risk of the glass being broken. Previous to 1846 there were plain sash windows on the east side, and in the large openings at the north and south ends of the building. But Ferrey found the old capitals and arches embedded in the wall, and he inserted under them the present windows, together with the internal marble shafts and bases. These windows are probably very like the original ones, but as they have been arranged so as to admit of sliding sashes, they clearly cannot be an exact reproduction. The windows on the east side have also had their sills lowered, as is manifest outside from the way the string course has been dropped, so as to pass under each of them. It will be observed that I shew on my plan two windows on the east side, where there are none at present, namely, in the two bays at the south end of the Great Chamber. It would be natural to expect windows in these bays, and previous to Ferrey's alterations there were two recesses in the wall in the positions which these windows occupy; but I can detect no sign of them on the outer face of the wall, and I am by no means sure that these windows ever existed. The large double windows at the north and south ends of the building must be viewed in connection with the quatrefoil openings in the galleries over; the rooms being originally open to the roof, these quatrefoils were also windows

in the ends of the rooms, and the whole group of windows in each end wall formed a single composition. The quatrefoils have each double tracery, there being a quatrefoil on the inner as well as the outer face of each wall. The pair of windows at the north end differ from all the other windows in the building, and are of decidedly later character, having fully developed bar tracery, instead of the plate tracery employed elsewhere. The capitals inside these windows are of a very remarkable character, having the foliage growing horizontally round the bell, instead of vertically upwards from the necking, as is usually the case in Early English work. Perhaps they were left in the block, and not carved until a much later period. The three windows of the room to the east, which I believe to have been a chapel, are all modern. I have shewn the doors on this floor in their present positions, but I have no means of knowing whether these represent the original arrangement. The fireplaces I have omitted altogether, for some of these have certainly been altered; before 1846 there was one fireplace near the centre of the present gallery, instead of the two now at the two ends; but there are sure to have been some fireplaces from the first. The whole of the interior of this building was plastered over and whitewashed, and the surface covered with red lines, in imitation of masonry joints. A fragment of this covering remains in one place on the vault of the crypt, and a large quantity of it is to be seen in the roof, in one part of which can be detected three coats of this whitewash, one over the other, and each decorated with red lines in a similar fashion.

The west front of this building has been much altered by Ferrey, but the other three sides are very well preserved. The roofs had originally a steeper pitch, as is shown by a piece of weather course remaining where the Chapel roof abuts upon the main building, which shews exactly what was the original pitch of this roof; the roof over the Great Chamber had probably the same pitch. But the walls are perfect up

to the corbel table under the eaves; and this corbel table, it is interesting to observe, is precisely similar to that which finishes the north aisle wall of the Church, though this latter has since had a parapet added above it. The buttresses had a very delicate little moulding for the nosing of each slope, but, except round the staircase turret, this nosing has everywhere been shorn off, for what reason it is difficult to guess, since the alteration has completely spoiled the outline of the buttresses. This nosing is exactly reproduced in the buttresses against the south wall of the cloister, but in this case the slopes occupy only the face of the buttresses, instead of being also returned round the sides, as they are at the Palace. Curiously enough, Ferrey appears not to have observed the injury which the buttresses have received, for in the buttresses which he added on the west face he has copied the existing buttresses in their present mutilated condition. A plain round string course is carried all round the building, immediately below the sills of the first floor windows, and this string keeps at the same level everywhere, except where it has been dropped by Ferrey for the purpose of enlarging the drawing-room windows, and on the east gable wall of the projecting building, where it is stepped up to a higher level. This shews that, except in this gable, all the windows were placed at the same height; but in this single instance the window was at a greater height above the floor. This variation is strong evidence in favour of my theory that a chapel occupied this position, for it would be natural to raise the sill of the east window over the altar above the level of the sills of the other windows. The small turret between this chapel and the main block is an addition of Ferrey's, as are the conservatory and staircase at the south end of the building.

On the west front the porch, the buttresses, and the upper storey, were all added by Ferrey, who at the same time scraped off the stucco which covered this face of the building. He told Mr. J. H. Parker that he had clearly seen the marks of the buttress slopes against the walls, and so had been enabled

to restore them faithfully. It is plain that there were buttresses against the lower part of the wall, but I feel some doubt whether they rose so high at the new ones do, and it is difficult to believe that these buttresses had no plinth. The plinth on this side of the building remains only round the staircase turret, but there are clear indications of this plinth, shewing where it has been hacked off, for a distance of two bays starting from this turret, and also on the further bay at the north end; and this plinth probably returned round the base of each of the buttresses. The plinth is, however, completely missing in the centre of the front, as though some other building had been joined on here, but it is difficult to see how this could have been the case. The only suggestion I can make is that there may possibly have been a sort of open cloister along the front of the building. This plinth is entirely above the ground, so that the soil here cannot have been raised much. As we shall see that elsewhere the ground has been considerably raised, it follows that this building must have stood upon a sort of terrace, with the ground rapidly sloping away in front. The trefoil-shaped labels over the first floor windows were added by Ferrey, but these were probably a restoration; for he does not show them on the elevation which he drew before he removed the stucco, and so I imagine he was induced to add them on account of traces of them which he subsequently found. But it may be noted that the only one of this series of windows which remains absolutely unaltered, that at the north end of the gallery, has no label, and never had one. The upper storey is entirely new. How this part of the house was originally roofed it is not now possible to determine with certainty. We know that the Great Chamber and the private chamber beyond were covered by one large roof, with a gable at each end. There are only three possible ways in which the rooms which now constitute the gallery could have been covered; either, as at present, by a roof parallel to the main roof, with a gutter between the two of

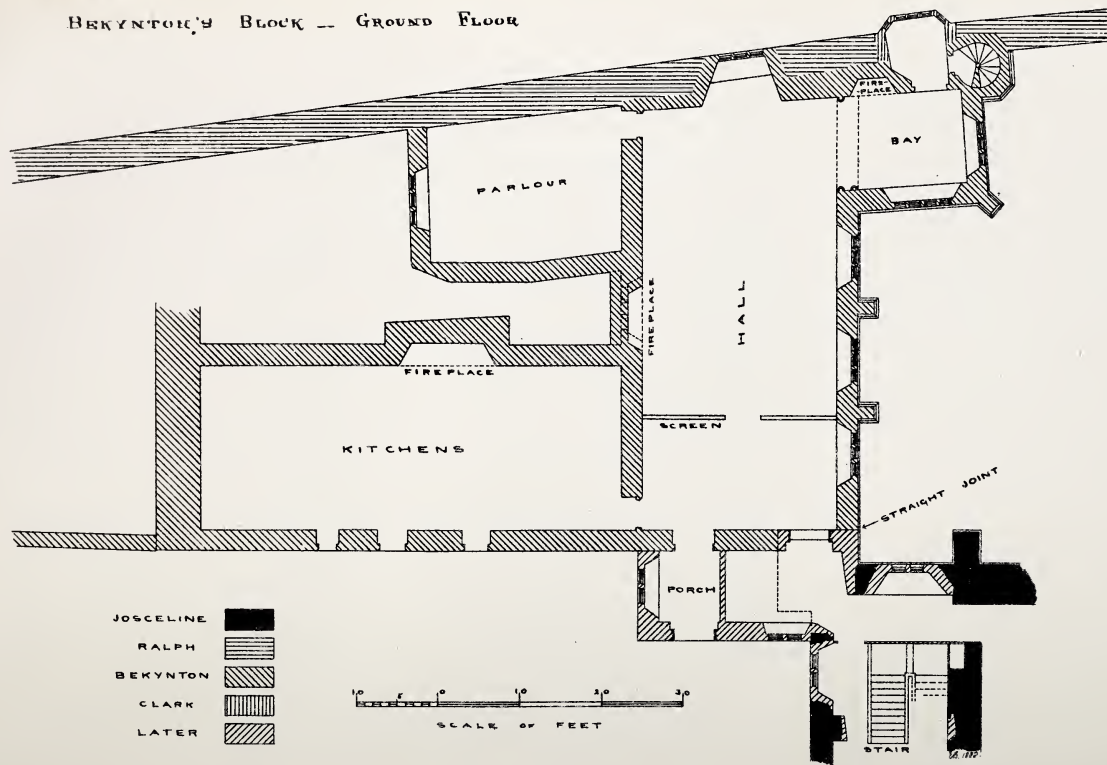
the whole length of the house; or by a series of cross roofs, forming a succession of gables towards the west front; or by a flat. None of these methods were usual in the thirteenth century. The ordinary practice was to build houses of but one room in width, so that a single span of roof covered the whole, or if there was a second room at the side it was covered in at a lower level by a lean-to roof, like the aisle of a church. Of the three methods possible, the one which on the whole appears to me the most probable is that last suggested, the flat roof. We usually associate flat roofs with a much later period, but evidence can be deduced from the Liberate Rolls to show that they were sometimes employed in the time of Henry III. Thus we find an order to "joist that oriol at Clarendon with cambred joists (*gistis cambris*), and to cover those joists with lead (28th Henry III)." By *cambred joists* are meant joists with a slight rise in the centre to throw the water off to right and left. Again, at Winchester, "joist and cover with lead the small chamber at the head of the same chamber, and make a cistern over it (30th Hen. III)."¹ The word *joist* signifies a piece of timber laid horizontally in a floor or flat roof, and is opposed to the word *couples*, the medieval term for a pair of rafters in an ordinary slanting roof; but in these two quotations the meaning is rendered quite unmistakeable by the addition in the first case of the word *cambred*, and in the second of the instruction to place a cistern on the roof. It is thus clear that lead flats were sometimes used at this period; but it is only fair to add that long lead gutters were also in occasional use, as, for instance, between the nave and aisle of Pilton Church, which we visited this year. There would, however, have been no convenient access to the gutter, whereas the flat could easily be reached by either or both of the turret stairs.

It will be observed that upon the accompanying plans I have shewn a turret stair at the north-west angle, similar to

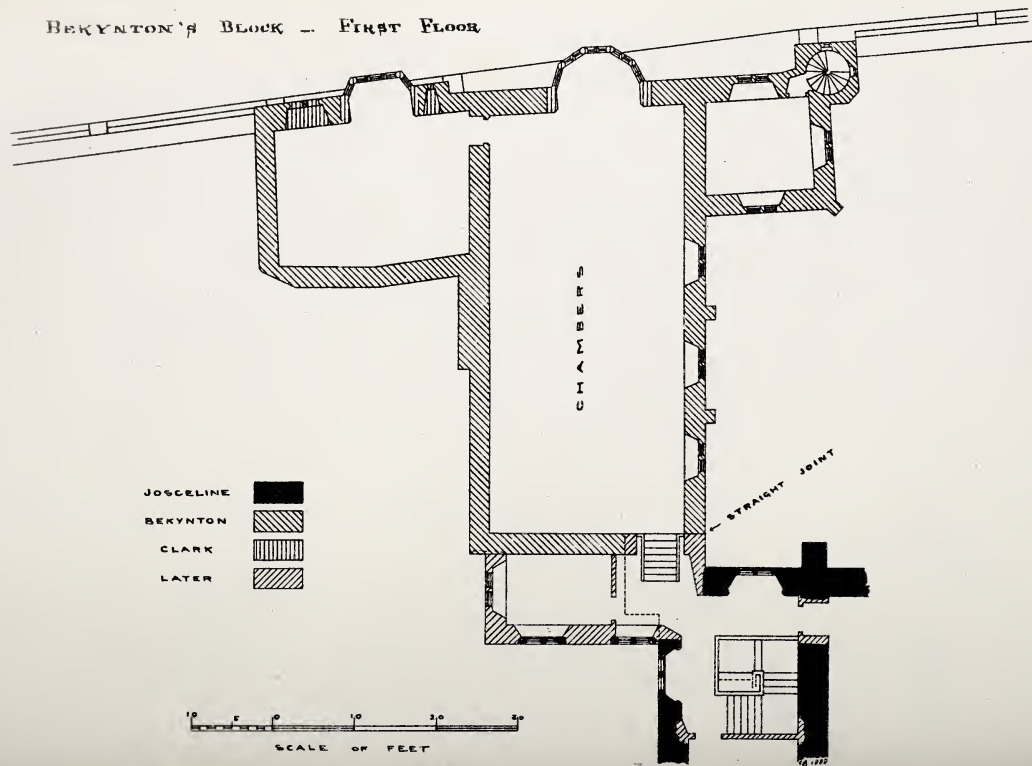
(1). Quoted from Turner Parker's *Domestic Architecture*, vol. i, pp. 203, 210.

WELLS PALACE No III

BEKYNTON'S BLOCK -- GROUND FLOOR



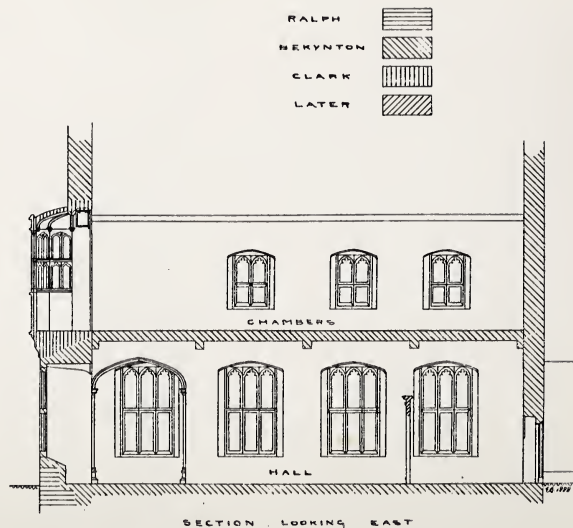
WELLS PALACE N^o IV
BEKYNTON'S BLOCK - FIRST FLOOR



that now existing at the south-west angle. No vestige of this turret remains, but I feel little doubt of its previous existence. On Plates III and IV, I have shewn a straight joint where the east face of Bekynton's Hall joins on to the older building. The straight joint is very marked upon the face of the wall, and it extends the whole height from the ground up to the parapet. Now there is a very curious feature about this joint; there are no quoins on either side of it, but the rough walling is built right up to the joint on either side, and there stops abruptly. This shews that when each of the walls on either side of the joint was built, there was already a wall on the other side of the joint for the building then being carried up to butt against. Consequently there must have been a wall older than either of the present walls which stopped at this point and was properly finished with stone quoins. Again, it was a common habit of the thirteenth century masons, when erecting a building in rubble stone, to raise what may be termed *internal quoins* of freestone, wherever two walls met at right angles; for instance, they built in freestone the part of the main wall against which a buttress abutted. They probably did this for the purpose of finishing the work neatly at these internal angles. At any rate, this was the method they employed at Wells, and it was this which enabled Ferrey to restore the buttresses on the west front. Now such an internal quoin occurs at the very point of the main building from which starts the short wall leading to the straight joint in question; and I have shewn that an older wall must have existed on one side or the other of this straight joint. So that it seems indisputable that a wall of the original thirteenth century building extended here as far as the straight joint. And the length of this wall differs by only six inches from that of the corresponding wall of the turret at the other end of the building. But this is not all the evidence. The staircase at present occupies the end bay of the galleries on the ground and first floors; but it is easy to see that this bay was

(on the ground floor) originally covered by a stone vault, for the greater part of the wall rib over the window still remains. By carrying on the curve of this rib down to the level of the capitals, it appears that this rib did not start from the extreme angle of the building, but left a space of about four feet in the corner. This space gives exactly room for a doorway cutting off the angle of the room, like the doorway into the turret at the other end. It is true that the vaulting over this bay cannot have corresponded exactly to that of the bay at the opposite end; but we know that the builders of this date were not in the habit of reproducing their work mechanically. Taking into consideration the two facts, that there was a wall of exactly the right length outside, and that there was exactly space enough left for a doorway in the natural position inside, I think there is a strong probability of such a turret having existed. Moreover, if such a turret existed, the present plan has developed quite naturally from the older one. The building we are discussing was originally completely detached. In the south-west turret are two windows—one near the bottom, the other near the top—now blocked up, which formerly looked out over the ground where the Chapel now stands; there are also windows looking east and west. So that no building can have joined on at this end; and I assume that none did at the other end. Subsequently the chapel was built up against the southern turret, and Bekynton's Hall against the northern one. On Plates I and II, I have shewn a part of these two buildings, in order to bring out clearly the fact that they were attached to Joscelyn's block in precisely similar fashion. Bekynton followed the precedent set by Burnell. On the first floor Bekynton probably cut an opening into the turret, so as to make the existing staircase serve also for his new chambers. This arrangement appears to have lasted until the time of Elizabeth, when turret stairs were very old fashioned. The turret was pulled down, leaving exposed the rough walling where Bekynton's building

WELLS PALACE N^o V
BEKINTON'S BLOCK — SECTIONS



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abutted upon it without quoins, and the corner was rebuilt as at present, the short wall forming the connection with Bekynton's Hall being rebuilt up to the straight joint, also without quoins, since none were needed; a handsome oak staircase was inserted, and a good approach formed to the chambers over Bekynton's Hall. All this seems very natural, but there is one fact which it does not account for, the presence of a genuine thirteenth century window on the first floor of this supposed Elizabethan building. The other windows are similar in general appearance; but these, like the windows on the ground floor of the west front, I believe to be actually of a much later date; but this is a subject I shall recur to later. The genuine window is of the same date as those on the first floor of the west front, and I can only suggest that the original plan differed in some respect from that shewn on my drawings, and that this window was preserved and re-used at the time of the Elizabethan alterations. I should add that the top storey of this building, connecting Bekynton's with Josceline's work, was added by Ferrey, who thus converted it into a sort of tower.

I have mentioned that Josceline's block stood completely detached, but I do not intend to imply that it formed the entire house. A hall with kitchen and offices there must have been, and stables and probably other sheds for storing and similar purposes. But it is quite probable that these may have been entirely of wood. Their situation we can only guess, but from the position of the Great Hall, which was the next permanent addition, it seems likely that the site of the Chapel was partly occupied, and that these buildings may have formed something of a quadrangle to the west of the main block, roughly corresponding to the inner court shewn on Plate VI. Then the Great Hall would have been the beginning of an outer court. The different buildings were probably all detached, but connected together by wooden covered ways. An examination of the various levels of floors and

plinths throughout the Palace shews that the ground generally within the wall of enclosure has been greatly raised, but round Josceline's block it has only risen a few inches, so that this block must originally have stood upon a terrace, whether natural or artificial it is now impossible to say.

I am indebted to Canon Church for the information that it was Josceline who first enclosed the park. On the north side the park extends to the southern wall of the cloister; and this wall and the doorway in it are of Josceline's date—indeed, the wall, as I have shewn, has the same mouldings upon the buttresses as occur in the buttresses of the Palace. So that this doorway was originally intended as a direct means of communication between the Church and the Bishop's Palace. At present the door opens inwards, towards the cloister, but it is easy to see that this was not the original arrangement. The rebate for the door remains on the outside, and a beautiful moulding has been ruthlessly destroyed to enable the door to be hung in its present position. Doors have always been hung so as to open *inwards*; consequently, the *outside* of this doorway was towards the cloister, which was regarded as the more public place, and the door led from that into the park. At present there is a flight of steps down into the park, but this is quite inconsistent with a door opening in this direction; indeed, such an arrangement would be both awkward and dangerous. The passage-way must have been on the level, and if the outside of the door was a covered cloister, the inside must also have been covered; otherwise the door would have been made to open the other way. Unless the cloister was merely a path enclosed by a high wall; if the cloister was, as is probable, covered in by wooden posts and roof, it seems to follow that a similar covered way of wood must have led from this doorway to the Palace. Of course the moat and wall did not exist at this date, and the passage-way could easily have been carried over the small streams which flowed from the wells toward the town.

For convenience, I have spoken of this block throughout as Josceline's, but upon a closer examination it does not appear to be entirely of one date. The walls vary considerably in thickness, those in the northern part being the thickest, and therefore presumably rather older than the rest of the work. Under the windows of the first floor, on the west front, there is a change of masonry, apparently due to the blocking up of older windows at a lower level, for the sake of inserting the present range. In these cases the blocking up has been done with Doultong stone, and it is very probable that some of this stone is wrought on the side embedded in the wall, having been taken out from an older building. A similar piece of stone, with dog-tooth upon it, is built into the wall lower down. Again, it has been pointed out that the great window at the north end is later than the rest of the building; this window is almost certainly later than Josceline. We are told that Josceline also added a chamber and chapel to the manor house at Wookey. The only thirteenth century work still existing there consists of a window jamb, which has been ornamented with a detached shaft and carved capital, and a doorway with detached shafts, carved capitals, and a moulded arch. Except for a slight variation in the moulding of the arch, these remains exactly correspond with the ornamental work at the Palace. And it is a fair conclusion that the ornamental work at the Palace is of Josceline's date. But it is quite possible that the main part of the walls was also built by him, and that he effected the alterations (if alterations there were) a few years afterwards. As he was at Wells for twenty-nine years, there was ample time for both. The Rev. J. A. Bennett read an interesting paper at the meeting of the Archæological Institute last year, in which he shewed that the distinguished architect, Elias de Derham, was closely connected with Josceline, and it therefore seems probable that he would have been employed to design the buildings erected by Josceline at Wells. It would be necessary to undertake a study of Elias's

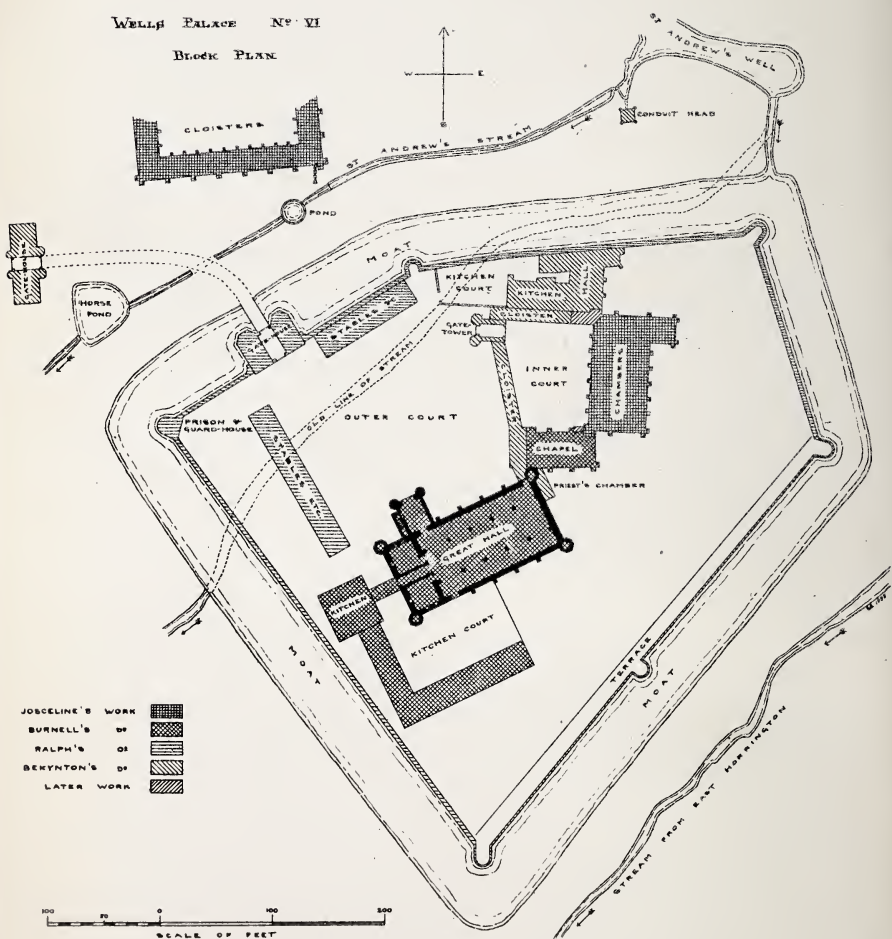
known work before giving an opinion whether or not he was the architect employed at Wells. But there is one difference between the architecture of Wells and that of Salisbury, and the King's Hall at Winchester, which is very striking, which consists in the wealth of carving alike in the Palace and in the West front of the Church, to which there is no parallel in the other buildings. In the case of Salisbury, this is easily accounted for. The undertaking was so great that we may well believe the architect had not the money at his disposal for carving many capitals. But it is not easy to account for the poverty of the hall at Winchester on any such hypothesis. Henry III spent money lavishly upon his buildings, and in particular we find him constantly giving orders for the adornment of Winchester Castle. But in this building I believe all the capitals are merely moulded, and the arch mouldings are very poor. At Wells, on the other hand, I doubt if there is a single capital of this period which is not carved, except those to the vaulting of the lower storey of the Palace, which was clearly an inferior storey. As a set off against this argument, it may be urged that the tradition was in favour of carving at Wells, for we have plenty of beautiful carving of both earlier and later dates. I certainly am not in a position to give an opinion upon this question at present.

THE GREAT HALL.

Of the present buildings the next in point of age is the Great Hall built by Robert Burnell (1275-92). The Canon of Wells says of Burnell "*aulam episcopalem Wellensem sumptibus suis fieri fecit,*" and there is no reason to doubt that the tradition is correct. This Hall is now a beautiful ruin, but sufficient remains to enable us to picture with considerable accuracy what was its original aspect. We have also a brief description of it by William Worcester (*Itin.*, Ed. Nasmith, 1778, p. 284): "*Memorandum quod aula episcopatus Wellensis continet per estimacionem circa 80 gressus super navem*

WELLS PALACE No. VI

Block Plan



et duos elas. Latitudo ejus continet circa 40 gressus. Et habet pulcrum porticum archuatum cum volta." This passage is rather difficult to understand. The first dimension of 80 steps must be intended for the length, in spite of the description that it is taken "over the nave and two aisles;" this phrase should apparently be transferred to the next line, which gives the width. The actual dimensions of the Hall are, according to Pugin's measurements, 115 feet by 59 feet 6 inches, internally; dimensions which do not agree at all with Worcester's figures. But the external dimensions, including the turrets, are about 163 feet by 80 feet; and these are, I imagine, the dimensions which Worcester intended, for I find from other instances that his step was about equivalent to two feet. And Worcester merely says that the length was "at a guess about 80 steps." But this method of measuring was hardly fair, since it includes in the Hall, the solar and offices under, which are enclosed within the main walls of the building. On Plate VI will be found a ground-plan of the Hall. The Hall itself, it will be seen, consisted of five bays, divided by piers into nave and aisles, as Worcester mentions (I have no authority for the exact positions of these piers); at the west end is a wide passage passing between the buttery and pantry and leading to the kitchen. Over these rooms was a large solar, and on the north side an ample porch, with a stair by its side leading up into the solar.

Even apart from Worcester's note upon the subject, we should have had no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that the Hall was divided up by two rows of piers; for we have abundant evidence, both documentary and from existing buildings, that such was the usual arrangement of the early halls; and we may feel considerable confidence that there was no carpenter in England in the thirteenth century who would have dared to throw a roof across a span of sixty feet. In fact there is but one medieval roof in this country which has so wide a span, the roof of Westminster Hall, which was

erected at the end of the fourteenth century. At the period we are speaking of Westminster Hall like that at Wells was divided into nave and aisles. There was, of course, no clerestory, and externally the roof would have appeared as though it consisted of but a single span; the pitch can be determined from the bottom stone of the coping at the east end, which still adheres to the north-east turret; this pitch was not far from 45° . Internally, however, the roof was supported by the columns as well as by the outer walls. These columns may have been of either wood or stone, for both were employed for this purpose. If of stone, they were probably connected by arches, so as to form a pair of arcades. Since, unfortunately, the two end walls of the Hall have completely perished, we are unable to determine this point with certainty; but from the vast size of the building, and the consequent great strength and height required for the piers, it certainly seems probable that they were built of stone and connected by arches. The walls are about 35 feet in height from the floor line to the roof plate, and about 45 feet externally, from the ground to the top of the parapet. The ridge of the roof must have been about 65 feet in height. The east end of the hall was of an unusual design. At the level of the parapets a gallery was boldly corbelled out, so as to form a passageway connecting the two corner turrets, as is clear from the remnants at the northern end. The principal windows in the east wall must have been kept below this gallery, and so could not have risen any higher than the side windows; though their sills being placed immediately over the high table, must almost certainly have been at a higher level. Perhaps there were no windows, or only one large circular one below the gallery. The triangular space formed by the gable end above the gallery seems to have been almost entirely filled with windows; at any rate, there were windows quite close down to the lower angles of the triangle, for the jamb of that at the northern end still remains. The west end of the Hall was formed by

a wall four feet thick, just to the west of the two doorways, the position of which is marked by the scar upon the two side walls where this wall joined them. Over this wall rose the west gable of the Hall roof; a lead flat extended from this wall to the west end of the building. That this was the case is evident from the marks of beams in the west wall, showing that they were laid transversely to the main roof, and from the fact that this part of the building has a horizontal parapet round three sides (the fourth side being formed by the gable of the big roof); it may further be noticed that the change of roof is marked by a change of level in the parapet on the north wall, the western portion of which is of a less height than the rest. On the north side of the Hall was a large porch, which rose almost as high as the existing walls, as is evident from Buck's view, and from the fragments of gutter, etc., which remain embedded in the wall. This porch had a flat lead roof originally (though at some subsequent period a slate roof at a higher level was substituted, of which also the mark remains), and there are openings left in the main parapet to enable persons to pass easily from the one roof to the other. By means of the two broad gutters along the sides, and the lead flat at one end, and the gallery corbelled out at the other, it was possible to walk all round the roof of the Hall. The parapet is formed into battlements all round; and the porch was finished similarly with battlements, and with turrets at the angles. This treatment suggests the idea that the Hall was intended to be capable of withstanding an attack. But this defensive architecture is, in fact, purely ornamental. There are no loops in the battlements, and the turrets would be quite useless in case of an attack, while no effectual means could be devised for protecting the great windows, which come down almost to the ground. The turrets are actually utilized as follows: that in the north-east corner contains a stair from top to bottom; that to the north-west, a stair leading from the window jamb of the solar up to the roof; in the south-west

turret is a small room on the first floor level, with an elegant groined vault, which contained two closets, with a pit underneath; there are, apparently, no openings into the south-east turret.

The solar was a fine room, 60 feet long by 23 feet wide, with a window at each end, and a window and a fireplace on the west side; on the east side there may have been some opening for looking down into the Hall. The doorway is in the north-east corner, and was approached by a flight of straight steps, which started from the outer end of the porch. In Buck's view the building containing these steps is shewn; it was covered by a penthouse roof against the side of the porch. We learn from Worcester that the porch was vaulted; over this vault was a room approached by the staircase leading to the solar, or possibly by a separate stair in one of the two porch turrets.

Beneath the solar were the pantry and buttery, each with two windows at the side and one at the end, and each containing a curious recess near the corner, which appears to have been a cupboard. Between these two lay the kitchen passage, as is proved by the doorway in the centre of the west end. The kitchen itself must have stood in the position indicated on Plate VI, and have been connected with this doorway by a covered way. The doorway on the south side would naturally have led to the kitchen court, and the Bishop tells me that in a dry summer the foundations of extensive buildings make themselves apparent through the grass in this part of the garden; so I have roughly indicated buildings round a court on this side of the Hall.

The plan of Hall and offices which I have thus sketched out is of the normal type, except in one point. It is not usual to put the solar at the lower end of the Hall, as in this case; its ordinary position is immediately behind the high table, and the present arrangement seems very inconvenient. There exists a small doorway in the corner of the Hall, by the daïs,

by which the Bishop and his principal guests could easily retire to the more private part of the house; but if they used the solar as a withdrawing room, it was necessary for them to pass down the entire length of the Hall and out into the porch. A possible explanation is that this solar was intended for use only upon grand occasions, when such a procession out of the Hall would have had a dignified effect. I shall have to recur again to this doorway on the daïs after speaking of the Chapel.

It is right to mention that this same Bishop Burnell built himself a house at Acton Burnell, in Shropshire, of which much remains. This is a comparatively small building, but with some resemblance to the Wells Hall. It forms a square, two stories high, with a large square turret at each of the four angles.

THE CHAPEL.

The similarity of style between the Chapel and the Hall is apparent at a glance. Indeed, it would not be easy to say which was the earlier building, but that an examination of the angle turret connecting the two buildings reveals the fact that this turret belongs to the Hall, and that the Chapel has been built up against it. This turret corresponds in its design to the three turrets at the other corners of the Hall; and it has a window near the bottom in a position which would have been out of the question if the Chapel had been already built, looking out almost into the Chapel wall. In its upper part, however, the plan of the turret is slightly altered, so as to make it do duty for both buildings; and I imagine that before it had been carried to this height the design of the Chapel had been determined on, and perhaps part of the work had been already executed. In plan, the Chapel consisted of an ante-chapel of one bay, with a choir of two bays beyond the screen; it was doubtless furnished very like the Vicars' Chapel in the Close, with a few stalls along the side walls

and return stalls against the screen. On the south side is a low-side window in the usual position near the west end of the choir. In the ante-chapel were three doors: the principal door at the west end, a priest's door on the south side, and a small door to the bell turret on the north. The priest's door is very awkwardly placed, being jammed close up against the turret of the Hall, and it is difficult to see the necessity for putting one at all. Was there a priest's chamber somewhere on this side of the other buildings? If there was not, the priest would have had to pass into the Hall through the porch, out at the other side, and so round the outside of the Hall, in order to get to this doorway at all. Subsequently a priest's chamber or vestry was built in the corner between the Hall and Chapel, as I have indicated on Plate VI. For a late doorway was inserted in the turret at a higher level, which must have opened into an upper storey or else on to leads. In either case there must have been something underneath. But this was not the original intention, for the priest's door opened inwards into the Chapel; if there had been a room directly outside this door, it would have been made to open the other way, into the room, and not into the Chapel. There is no fragment left of either screen or stalls, but I think their previous existence may be fairly inferred from the general disposition of the building. When the Chapel was built, the turret at the angle of Josceline's building was raised to the level of the new roof. Access was thus obtained to the roof from this stair, and also from the stair in the Hall turret; but in spite of the existence of these two stairs, a third was built in a square turret at the north-west corner of the Chapel, in which were also hung two small bells. The doorway through the foot of Josceline's turret into the east end of the Chapel is clearly modern.

In the architecture of the Chapel the beauty and variety of the carving are especially noteworthy. The Early English trefoil is still occasionally employed, but a great variety of

natural leaves are also introduced, and these leaves are sometimes arranged after the earlier fashion, growing upwards from the necking of the caps; sometimes they are disposed round the bell in the later fashion. The whole roof is an excellent example of a transitional stage in the history of carving. It may be remarked that the vault over the steps leading to the Chapter House is of the same date, and of similar workmanship. The west window is of later insertion, and the Chapel has been twice restored—once by Bishop Montague (1608-16), and again in this century. The large corbels supporting the vaulting shafts must be modern, and the levels at the east end and the arcading on the east wall are clearly not original. The general floor level has been slightly raised, but even now it is two steps below the ground level outside. The Hall floor was also slightly below the present ground level. This shews how much the level of the ground has been raised over this part of the area.

On the north side there is an indication of some structure having been formed at a considerable height above the ground between Josceline's turret and the next buttress. That this was a late addition is clear from an inspection of the doorway in the turret by which access was obtained to it. It will be observed that this structure was thrown across the upper part of the easternmost window, and would have partially hidden this window from the outside. It is not easy to say what this was intended for, but I incline to the opinion that part of the window was taken out, so that this external gallery looked into the chapel, and formed a private pew, the occupants of which could see without being themselves seen. The position of this gallery corresponds exactly to that of the Royal pew in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, and the Duke of Buckingham's at Thornbury, and (except that these were on the ground level, and indifferently north or south) of the Royal pews in the Saintes Chapelles of Paris and Vincennes.

I have mentioned the possibility that in Josceline's time the

plan of the house followed roughly the lines of the inner court shewn on Plate VI. Whether or not that was the case, it is not improbable that shortly after the completion of Hall and Chapel, a cloister was built in the position indicated, so as to divide the inner from the outer court. I shall be able to shew that such a cloister existed at a later period, and that something of the kind was built at this time is clear from a sinking in the wall of the Hall just to the right-hand side of the small doorway leading on to the daïs. This sinking was formed to receive a small shaft with its cap and base. The general outline of the capital is clearly visible, and it proves that the addition was made in the Decorated, and not in the Perpendicular style. It is equally obvious that this addition was not contemplated when the Hall was built. It is tolerably certain that this shaft belonged to an arcade, which extended at least across the west end of the chapel, and that the space between it and the Chapel was covered in; for a doorway, which appears to be original, is found in the bell turret, at a convenient height for obtaining access to the leads over. Whether this cloister was at this time carried on as shewn on Plate VI it is impossible to say; it may well be the case that only the part in front of the Chapel is of this date, and the rest of the cloister entirely Bekynton's work. At some later period a doorway was cut in the Hall turret, to connect that also with the leads over the cloister. In the wall of the Hall, over the doorway from the cloister to the daïs, is a long straight joint, formed with quoins on one side, looking like the jamb of a closed window. But there is no room for a window here, since this joint is quite close to the first of the great Hall windows, and it is impossible to believe that this wall is any older than the rest of the Hall. I may mention that Buck shews only three windows on this side of the Hall, and makes this end bay appear to be all solid masonry; although he does shew the four windows on the opposite side of the Hall. This I cannot understand, and I can make no

guess at the meaning of the straight joint to which I have called attention.

THE FORTIFICATION.

We now come to the time when the house was enclosed by fortified walls and moat. This was the work of Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (1329-63). Of him the Canon of Wells writes, in the first edition, "*Radulphus de Salopia palacium episcopale Wellense muro lapideo batellato et carnellato cum fossatis claudere fecit;*" and in the second edition, "*Iste etiam episcopale palacium apud Welliam forti muro lapideo circumcinxit et aquam undique circumduxit.*" The license to crenellate is dated 14th Edward III (1340), and is in these terms: "*Cimiterium ecclesiæ Cathedralis Wellen. et procinctum domorum suarum et Canonicorum infra civitatem Wellen. muro lapideo circumquaque includere et murum illum kernelare batellare ac turres ibidem facere;*" from which it appears that the fortification of the Palace was only part of a grand scheme which included the fortification of the cemetery and liberty. Apparently, however, the only part carried out was that which still remains around the Palace. The style of the work agrees with the date assigned to it, and some of the windows in the gate house are exactly like those which remain of Bishop Ralph's original buildings in the Vicars' Close. The space enclosed forms an irregular pentagon, with a bastion at each angle and an additional one in the middle of the south-east side. Five of these bastions are hollow, but the sixth, that in the western angle, contains a building of two storeys. The lower storey formed a prison for criminal clerks, which was subsequently known as the Cow-house. "*Prisona domini episcopi vocatur le Cowe-howse infra palatium episcopale.*" (Harl. 6,966, A.D. 1510.) Parker says that it was also called the Stock-house, but this name I have been unable to verify. Over the prison was a guard house, entered from the allure of the wall on either side. The wall is four foot thick, of which 2 feet 6 inches forms the allure; the remaining 1 foot 6 inches,

the battlemented parapet. On the south-east side, however, the earth taken out in digging the moat has been banked up against the wall; so that on this side the allure consists of a wide terrace. The gate-house has a vault over the roadway, and vaulted chambers on each side. The gate was defended by a portcullis and drawbridge, as is evident from the slits for the former and the chains of the latter. This gate-house has since been altered by the insertion of some renaissance windows which add considerably to its picturesque effect.

The formation of this wall and moat must have made a great difference in the appearance of the Palace and its surroundings, and it may be worth while to pause here to consider what was the original course of the streams from the wells. There are now three streams through the town. One comes down the valley from the direction of East Horrington, and passes close outside the moat on the south-east side, being only divided from it by the Bishop's drive to the gate on the Shepton road; it then follows the line of Silver Street to Southover. Though so close to the moat, this stream has no connection with it. The second stream starts from a sluice near the middle of the south-west side of the moat, and, after passing round two sides of the recreation ground, falls into the stream first mentioned. The third is St. Andrew's stream. This starts from a sluice near the west corner of the moat, turns the mill in Mill Lane, and eventually joins the other streams in the fields towards Glastonbury. In comparatively recent times this stream was fed direct from St. Andrew's well instead of passing through the moat, as at present, and the upper part of this old stream still exists. Leaving the well near Bekynton's conduit, it flows in a westerly direction for about fifty yards, but it then disappears underground, and its waters are conducted at right angles to its former course direct into the moat. Formerly, this stream fed a small stone-lined pool, midway between the cloister and the moat, and nearly opposite the cloister doorway (the purpose of which I do not know);

it then passed underground, beneath the Bishop's drive, to a horse-pond, close inside the Bishop's Eye; after which it took its present course towards the mill. So that this stream was not interfered with in any way by the formation of the moat; and there was a good reason for leaving it alone, for this stream provided the power for both the Bishop's and the town mills. It appears to have been a natural stream, and not a leet, both from its name, and from the length of its independent course; if it had been artificial, it could have been turned back into the main stream much sooner. It appears, then, that the water of the moat was obtained by diverting the second stream which I mentioned; that which starts from a sluice near the middle of the south-west side of the moat. Bishop Hobhouse informs me that part of the wall nearly opposite to this sluice is built upon arches, which are visible only when the moat is emptied; and he suggests that these arches indicate the position of the ancient stream, where it might have been difficult to obtain in any other way a good foundation. If this surmise is correct, it would seem that this stream left St. Andrew's well near its east end, and flowed to the north of the inner court of the house, much where the north limb of the moat now flows; but afterwards turned towards the south-west, and intersected the outer court. That this second stream is natural, and not a mere drain to take the overflow from the moat, is clear; since the easiest way to form such an overflow would have been by making a connection with the stream from East Horrington, somewhere on the south-east side of the moat, where a drain of a few yards' length would have sufficed. Josceline's block was probably placed on the highest ground to be found in a site which was inclined to be damp, since its floor-line is 18 inches higher than any of the other floors in the palace; but Ralph's alterations destroyed all the natural contours of the land, for he doubtless used the earth taken out of the moat for levelling up the lower parts of the space enclosed within the walls. Since

his time the ground must have been again raised, probably by the rubbish resulting from the destruction of buildings from time to time, and by again using the earth taken out of the moat, when it has been cleaned out, and when it was partially widened by Bishop Beadon.

THE BARN.

Before dealing with Bekynton's work, I ought to mention the Bishop's Barn, which was built probably in the first half of the fifteenth century. The barn formed the principal building of the Bishop's home farm; in it was stored the produce of the park and any other lands in the vicinity which may have been farmed by the Bishop. The Barn has been uninterruptedly used for the same purpose from the time of its building till the present year, when the Palace Farm has been rebuilt upon a fresh site, and the barn is, in consequence, of no further use to the farmer. The only features of special note about this Barn are its great length—it measures 110 feet by 25 feet 6 inches—and the large number of buttresses on the sides. These buttresses are only 6 feet apart in the clear, and there are twelve of them (besides those on the projecting gateways) on each side, just double as many as at Glastonbury, where the Barn is only 25 feet shorter. This Barn has, however, no sculpture or other carving, such as are found at Glastonbury and Pilton.

BEKYNTON'S WORKS.

Bekynton sate from 1443 to 1466, and he was a great builder, as the prevalence of his arms and rebus about Wells sufficiently attest. But this coat and rebus are not to be found within the walls of the Palace, except upon some shields, which have been discovered and built into the walls of the crypt and ground-floor gallery during the time of the present Bishop. All the same, Bekynton added considerably to the buildings of the Palace, as the following quotations will show.

“[*Ecclesia.*] habet insuper adjunctum ingens palatium, miro

splendore decorum, fluentibus aquis undique vallatum, et delectabili murorum turrillorumque serie coronatum; in quo præsidet dignissimus ac literatissimus præsul, Thomas, hujus nominis primus. Hic nempe sua industria et impensis tantum isti splendorum civitati contulit, tum ecclesiam portis, turribus, et muris tutissime muniendo, tum palatium in quo residet, ceteraque circumstantia ædificia amplissime construendo, ut non Fundator, imo potius decus ac splendor ecclesiæ, merito debeat appellari.” (MS. cclxxxviii, Library of New Coll. Oxon.) This passage occurs in a manuscript edited by Thomas Chaundler, Chancellor of Wells, A.D. 1452, and dedicated by him to Bekynton, by whom it was presented to the Chapter Library. It contains an illumination representing the city, Cathedral, and Palace of Wells; but, unfortunately, it is clearly drawn from memory, and I am unable to identify any of the Palace buildings. The passage quoted is in a very exaggerated style, and proves no more than that Bekynton did some work at the Palace.

Worcester was also a contemporary of Bekynton's, and he was not under the same temptation to flatter him. His notes are fortunately more precise:—“Item fecit fieri aliam portam ad introitum de le palays, et custus dictæ portæ fuit CC marcarum et ultra. Item fecit fieri de loco arborum in parte boriali aulæ archiepiscopi viz claustrum,¹ parluram, cameras pro dominis advenientibus, cum coquina largissima ex magnis sumptibus ultra mille libr. cum conductibus aquæ ad coquinam, ad le botrye, cellarium, le bakehous, ad lez stues ad nutriendos pisces. Item dedit communibus et burgensibus Wellens. conductum aquæ pro communi utilitate dictæ civitatis pro 20 libr.” (fol. 212). I will return later to a consideration of the precise meaning of this passage.

Bekynton himself states in his will that he had received

(1). Nasmith (p. 286) reads *claustri*, but the word is clearly written *claustrum* in the MS. The width of the Hall should be stated as 40 steps; not as 46, as quoted above from Nasmith.

nothing for dilapidations from his predecessor Stafford, although Stafford obtained for dilapidations on his accession from Bubwith's executors "in pecuniis 1600 marcas, ac in bonis aliis, ut in mitris, jocalibus (jewels), et rebus aliis pretiosis, ad valentiam 1200 marcarum Et nihilominus dictus predecessor meus omnia et singula pene manneria et loca, ad Episcopatum meum pertinentia, nulla quasi reparatione pro temporibus suis facta, (quanquam 18 annis et amplius in ista sede sederit) plurimam defectiva, ruinosa, et ad terram usque quasi pro majori parte collapsa, notorie dimisit, et super humeros meos onus omne reparationis ipsorum contra conscientiam reliquit. . . . Veritas est, quod citra consecrationem meam circa reparationem, refectionem et ædificationem maneriorum et locorum, ad Episcopatum meum pertinentium, expendi de meis plusquam 6000 marcarum, ut libri annales et rotuli ostendere possunt." Consequently he leaves to his successor a hundred pounds, provided he will accept that sum to cover all dilapidations, otherwise the money to be used by his executors to fight his successor's claim to dilapidations.

There are two points in this interesting document to which it is desirable to call attention. In the first place the dilapidations spoken of refer not to the Palace, but to the *manors and places* belonging to the see. In the second place Bekynton makes no claim that he is leaving the buildings in a condition to need no repairs; indeed it appears to be his opinion that the hundred pounds will not cover the necessary repairs, though he considers that this is as much as he is in equity required to find towards that object. This is important, for since the dilapidations had been assessed at 2800 marks 18 years before his accession, and nothing, or very little, had apparently been expended upon repairs during that period, it is probable that a large part of the 6000 marks he had spent would have been swallowed up in mere restoration, and we should expect to find no great quantity of new work during his

episcopacy. It is, however, quite consistent with this document to suppose that he may have left some of his manors in the ruinous state in which he found them, and may, at the time, have added considerable new buildings to the palace.

Unfortunately, Leland seems never to have got inside the Palace, and Godwin has no information to give, but what he derives from Bekynton's will. But there is an important passage in Chyle's *History*, circa 1680: "In the palace besides repaires he only added that middle Tower or Gate, under which is the passage, goeing from the greate Gate to the House, as also that Cloister, which heretofore joyned thereunto, and reachd to the end of the Greate Hall, as does and did appeare by his Coate of Armes and Rebus thereon infix't."

These passages clearly shew that Bekynton spent large sums upon the Palace, and did much building there. I shall presently recur to these quotations, and explain what I believe to be their exact meaning. Meanwhile, I will describe the buildings to which I understand them to refer; and I will begin with the block on the north side of the inner court. Plates III and IV shew plans of this block; and Plate V, two sections through it. These drawings do not shew the buildings as they were originally erected, but as they appeared after certain alterations were made in them. Bekynton's work can, however, be distinguished by the hatching. On the ground-floor we find a Hall, entered direct from the court-yard, as appears from Plate I, where the original arrangement of this end of the building is shewn. The Hall was 52 feet long, 24 feet wide, and 17 feet high, and was covered with a flat ceiling. There were three large windows on one side, and a fireplace opposite; a similar window at the end, cut through Ralph's enclosing wall; and a large square bay at the upper end, containing two large windows and a fireplace, which was separated by an arch from the main room. This arch still exists but it is hidden from view, being now enclosed, together with the heads of the windows of the bay, in a small cistern

room which has been formed in the space between the ceiling of the ground floor and the floor above. The fireplace opening here has been turned into a cupboard, but the flue above it remains. Beyond this bay is a small room, obtained entirely in the thickness of the wall, which is here very great; and this room seems to be original, though its window is later. This little room was subsequently used as the Bishop's wig room. From this room starts the turret stair which leads to the two small rooms in the tower over the bay. On the other side of the Hall from the bay is another room, which I am inclined to think may be of slightly later date, but which I shall for convenience describe along with these buildings. This is entered from the Hall, and must have had its window on the side opposite the door looking into the kitchen court. This room has a curious bend in the middle of one wall. At present the Hall screen is of Jacobean date, but it is probable that this screen replaced an older one in the same position. The hall fireplace occupies a position which was formerly filled by a window, and it will be seen from the plan that a window here would have looked out into a narrow court between the other buildings. Whether the Hall was originally built with a window here, or whether this old window is a sign that the wall is older than the Hall, I am unable to say. The line formed by the jamb of the window is now exposed in the servants' hall. The kitchen block extended along the side of the inner court of the house, and this block is difficult to understand. There is a large fireplace in the middle of its length, and a thick wall at the end, which must have contained further provision for cooking; but the difficulty consists in the three doorways opening into the court, which are shewn upon the plan. These doorways can be clearly seen upon the outer face of the wall, and they appear to be of the same date, but each is a different width. And I cannot see how the interior partitions can have been arranged so as to account for the presence of three doorways in this position. Two would be

natural enough; one into the main kitchen, the other to the back kitchen or scullery. There was also, without doubt, a door between the kitchen and the Hall; the position I have assigned to this is that of a door which has been recently blocked, owing to a re-arrangement of the kitchen offices. Apparently the present kitchen court follows the old lines, for the entrance to it is through a gateway of the fifteenth century.

The approach to the first floor was, I believe, by the old turret stair, in the manner shewn on Plate II. The large space over the Hall was no doubt divided by partitions into a suite of chambers. Probably there was no doorway through to the small chamber in the tower, which was reached by its own turret. In the tower there was another chamber over; the rest of the building was of two storeys only. It seems probable that there was no upper storey originally over the kitchens. It was not usual, and there remain traces of a broad string-course below the first floor window, which may well have been originally an eaves-course.

This building is now divided into three storeys in height, but the levels of the old floors can easily be traced. The design of the east front is also obvious. Over each of the large windows on the ground floor was a two-light window with a transom on the first floor. The eaves-course was surmounted by a parapet which was probably battlemented, and a large pinnacle rose from the top of each of the buttresses. The tower was likewise finished with a parapet and pinnacles, and was covered with a lead flat instead of the present slate roof. There is more difficulty about the north front overlooking the moat. The large bay windows are later, and the Early English windows are all modern. Probably there was one large flat window in the place of the great bay over the Hall window. But I think the room on the west of this one was lighted by a couple of two-light windows on this side. For a drawing by Hearne, in 1794, shews a square label in

the position where I have indicated in Plate IV a closed window. Just to the east of the bay window of this room there still exists a narrow loop, which must have lighted a small closet, since there cannot well have been a turret stair in this situation. The doorway and the bay window on the ground floor are both later insertions. It will be noticed that the upper storey of the building stands upon the top of Ralph's wall, and one window on the ground floor has been cut through this wall, shewing that at this period it was felt that the fortification was no longer necessary.

Buck's view, taken in 1733, shews the tower between the inner and outer courts which is mentioned by Chyle, and I have laid it down in Plate VI, as well as I can from that drawing; but since Buck's perspective is not perfect, it is not possible to ensure the accuracy of my plan. Chyle asserts that this tower, which was standing when he wrote, was decorated with Bekynton's rebus and arms, so that there can be no doubt that this was Beckington's building. Chyle also mentions as Bekynton's work "that Cloister, which heretofore joyned thereunto, and reachd to the end of the Greate Hall, as did appeare by his Coate of Armes and Rebus thereon infix't." Chyle is not to be depended upon as an antiquarian, but we may fairly infer that he is here writing about a building which had recently perished, and of which the tradition was still fresh; so that I feel no doubt that his statement in this instance may be believed, and that Bekynton either built a cloister here from the ground, or else repaired and adorned an older cloister, which had been erected at the end of the thirteenth century. Parker states, in his account of the Palace, that foundations have been found which seem to indicate the existence of a cloister also along the north side of the inner court. If there was such a cloister, it is probable that that also is of Beckynton's date, and I have accordingly so shown it upon Plate VI.

Bekynton was fond of handsome gateways. He was the

builder of the Dean's Eye and Penniless Porch; and, besides the inner gate tower I have just mentioned, he built the outer gate house, forming the entrance to the park from the market place, now called the Bishop's Eye. This is clear from his insignia upon it. This gate house is a large symmetrical structure with a wing on either side of the tower over the gate. It is possible that one wing was originally intended to contain, as it now does, the Bishop's Registry, and the other the rooms required for the transaction of Bishop's civil business, holding the Manor Courts, and similar purposes.

The conduit head near St. Andrew's well is certainly of Bekynton's date. Besides the note in Worcester's *Itinerary*, which I have quoted above, we have the Agreement between the Bishop and the Mayor and Burgesses, by which the Bishop agreed to supply the town with water, on the condition of certain prayers being said for the benefit of his soul; this is printed in full in Serel's *History of St. Cuthbert's Church*. It is a small building—square without and circular within—in the construction of which no timber has been used; the stone vault carries a stone roof, surmounted by a large finial in the form of an animal of uncertain shape.

Of the buildings which I have described, there can be no doubt that all should be ascribed to Bekynton, with the exception of the large northern block. Of the three notes which I have copied from Worcester, the first refers to the Bishop's Eye, the third to the conduit, the second is, I believe, intended to describe this northern block. But there are considerable difficulties about this explanation. There is the word *archiepiscopi*. This, I think, must be a clerical error. The passage occurs in the middle of a long list of Bekynton's works, all the others being easily identified with Wells buildings, and on a folio entirely devoted to Wells, except for two notes about Glastonbury. But if it be supposed that this work alone was not situate at Wells, it is incredible that Bekynton should ever have laid out a thousand pounds upon an Archbishop's

Palace, for he was never raised to the dignity of an Archbishop; he died Bishop of Bath and Wells. *De loco arborum* appears to indicate that there were trees previously upon the site, whereas I believe that older buildings had stood upon the north side of the court. It is probable, however, that these older buildings did not extend as far as Ralph's wall, and the trees may have occupied the space behind them subsequently covered by Bekynton's extension. The passage then reads as follows:—"Also, he had made of the place of trees on the north side of the Bishop's Hall a cloister, a parlour, and guest chambers, together with a very large kitchen, at the great cost of over a thousand pounds, with conduits of water to the kitchen, the buttery, the cellar, the bakehouse, and the tanks for breeding fish." By the parlour must be meant the ground-floor room, which I have called a hall; the rooms on the first floor would be the guest chambers; and we still have the kitchen adjoining the parlour, though the epithet *largissima* seems rather exaggerated. The bakehouse was probably at the end of the kitchen, but it is difficult to see where the buttery and cellar stood, though, of course, there must have been such offices, whether or not this passage refers to the building I have been describing.

But I do not rely entirely upon this passage. It is true that, at first sight, this block appears to have little in common with the rest of Bekynton's work about Wells. But there is one building to which it has a remarkable resemblance, and that is the conduit head in the garden. There is such a complete agreement between the mouldings employed in these two buildings, that I feel confident that the same masons were at work upon both at the same time. Probably, however, Bekynton employed another architect for all his other works. And if this block was not built by Bekynton, by whom was it built? Clearly not by Stafford, whom Bekynton so roundly abuses in his will; and the style of the architecture prevents our ascribing it to Bubwith. Indeed, the building looks, if any-

thing, rather later than Bekynton. But Stillington, his successor, was a courtier, who never lived at Wells, and though he rebuilt the Lady Chapel in the cloister, he certainly would not have cared to enlarge a house which he never occupied. Fox was Bishop for two years only, King lived at Bath, and neither of the two Cardinals ever set foot in Wells during their episcopacy. Then comes John Clark, who made alterations in a very different style. He threw out the two great bays towards the moat, as is clear from his escallop shells carved upon them, and he also, without doubt, threw out the small bay on the ground floor.

These works of Clark's were the last additions to the house before the destructive reign of Edward VI. Plate VI is intended to give an idea of the extent of the house in its most complete state. Except so far as concerns the buildings which still exist, the drawing makes no pretence to accuracy, but I have given my reasons for inserting each of the other buildings. There remains, however, the outer court. The two long buildings which I have indicated here would probably not have been sufficient to supply the stabling and storage necessary for a house of this size; but there would be no object in attempting the fruitless task of restoring these outbuildings. It is sufficient to indicate that they must have gone some way to fill up the part of this court adjoining the outer gateway.

THE REFORMATION.

In 1550 the Palace was alienated by Bishop Barlow, and passed to the Duke of Somerset. Upon his execution in 1552 the property lapsed to the Crown, but was subsequently granted back to the Bishop in exchange for other property. In September of that year, however, a letter was sent to the Bishop, "signifying His Majesty's contentation, that the Bishop, having many fit places within the precinct of the house of Wells to make an hall of and for his hospitality, may (edifying one thereon) take down the great hall now standing,

and grant the same away; commending unto him for that purpose Sir Henry Gates, upon knowledge had of the Bishop's good inclination towards him." (Styrye, *Eccl. Mem.*, II., ii., 272.) This reads like an answer to a request from the Bishop to be allowed to sell the Hall, in consequence of the way in which the See had been impoverished of late years. Sir John Harrington accuses Barlow of having taken down the Hall, and it is also said that while Barlow was Bishop of St. David's he had already despoiled the Palace there. It seems, however, that the agent employed was not Sir Henry Gates, but his brother, Sir John. Godwin ought to know, for he was a Canon of Wells shortly after, and he writes thus in 1595, referring to Burnell (so also *Wells MSS.*, p. 238—311):—"Inter multa edificia, quibus domos Episcopales ornavit iste Robertus, memoratur præcipue Aula illa magna et speciosa, quam Aulicus quidam nobilis ante 40 annos (ut plumbo, quo operiebatur, potivi posset) everti curavit, unà cum Capella beatæ Mariæ juxta claustra." (*Catalog. Ep. B. and W.*) And in the *De Præsulibus* of 1616, "aulam . . . ante annos sexaginta dirutam a Joanne Gatesio Equite aurato, qui justo Dei judicio, sacrilegii mercedem uno aut altero post anno accepit, capitis truncationem, ob perduellionis crimen sub Maria Regina condemnatus." The lead and the timber were taken down, but the walls were left standing as they are shewn in Buck's drawing and as they remained until part of them was taken down (I believe by Bishop Law) for the purpose of making a more picturesque ruin.

ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEOAN ALTERATIONS.

It is curious that Godwin makes no reference to any Elizabethan improvements. If his father, who was Bishop here from 1584 to 1590, had made any alterations, we may be certain that he would have mentioned it; so that we may fairly assume that whatever was done at this period was the work of Berkeley (1560-81). To Berkeley, then, we may perhaps

ascribe the beautiful oak staircase, which is apparently Elizabethan work. In order to insert this staircase it was necessary to remove the vault over the ground floor, and to take down the wall which divided the end bay where the staircase stands from the old entrance hall, and the wall above on the first floor. This was the period when long galleries were in fashion, and it seems highly probable that the other wall across the present galleries was taken down at the same time, and the two galleries thus formed. When the whole length on the ground floor was thrown open, it would also have been a natural proceeding to move the door to the centre of this length, whereas previously the door would have been more conveniently placed, as it was originally. If the old lancets still remained on this front, it is only natural that the Elizabethan Bishop should have taken them out, and replaced them by larger openings. Each of these changes seems to follow naturally from those preceding it, so that it is a probable hypothesis that all were carried out at the same time. The only difficulty lies in the windows. These have the form of thirteenth century windows, but they appear to contain no thirteenth century masonry. Certainly not one of the heads is of that date, as is apparent by the system of jointing employed. In the thirteenth century there would have been a joint over the centre of each light, and none over the centre mullion; and the backs of the stones would have been left irregularly shaped, instead of being neatly finished with a vertical and horizontal joint. Then, the whole of the masonry is very thin; it will bear no comparison with the massive work of the windows above. Also, the stone is everywhere prepared with a groove for glass, unlike the windows above, which have a rebate for a wood casement; and it is very improbable that windows in this position should have been permanently glazed in the first half of the thirteenth century. If the design is of the date to which it pretends, the complete set of windows must have been taken out, and a copy

made and inserted in their place,—for the present windows are all of one date,—an extremely improbable supposition. Inside, the alteration has been effected in a rather bungling manner, and the inner face of the wall opening is covered by a wood lintel, which cuts across the arch of the wall rib in a very awkward manner; a piece of construction natural in the sixteenth century, but highly improbable in the thirteenth. If I am right in supposing that this is the time at which the position of the doorway was shifted, it follows that one of these windows, at any rate, is no older—that one, namely, which occupies the position of the old doorway.

For the various reasons mentioned above, I have come to the conclusion that these windows are not genuine. And I think it will be admitted that if they are not of the thirteenth century, they can date from no time during the period that Gothic architecture was a living art. With the Renaissance came in a certain eclecticism in matters of art; Architecture ceased to be progressive; it contented itself with, and prided itself in, a reproduction of antique forms. And it is quite conceivable that in this case the Bishop may have ordered the new range of windows to be made to match those over them. If the windows are not of Berkeley's date, the question arises as to when they could have been inserted. Montague (1608-16) did a great deal of restoration work upon the Palace, as we shall presently see, and it is perhaps more probable that he put in the windows, completing the work which had been begun by Berkeley. After him we soon come to the pure Classic and Palladian period, during which the restoration after Burges's destruction took place; but they can hardly date from that time, and they do not belong to the modern Gothic revival, for they are shewn in Buck's drawing, dated 1733.

Of James Montague, Godwin writes, in his last edition of 1616:—"Welliam postquam venit, magnam insumpsit pecuniam in œdibus Episcopalibus reficiendis ornandisque tam Bauwell-

ensibus quam Wellensibus. Ac Welliæ quidem capellam illam à Jocelino Episcopo constructam, sed Episcopatu ad pauperbationem redacto, neglectam per annos jam collapsos sexaginta, maximo haud dubie sumptu curavit purgandam, reficiendam, organis musicis aliisque ornamentis instruendam, sic ut pulchritudine et magnificentia paucissimis Angliæ capellis hodie cedat, à me saltem hactenus visis." This restoration of the Chapel must have been carried out quite in the same manner as a modern restoration; for, except that the west window is probably of this date, the whole of the old work has been beautifully preserved, and no one would guess that anything had been done to it at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Montague also completed the Abbey Church at Bath, adding the fine plaster ceiling in the Perpendicular style, which has since been removed by Scott. From these instances it is clear that he had a fondness for the old Gothic, and perhaps it was he who put in the Early English windows above referred to. Godwin's reference to the poverty of the See for the last sixty years points in the same direction. Montague also, no doubt, inserted the Jacobean screen in Bekynton's Hall, and cut the Jacobean arch which forms the communication between this Hall and the principal part of the house. These later alterations were, perhaps, the more necessary now that this was the only Hall left to the Palace. The formation of this archway involved the alteration to which I have already referred—the taking down of the stair turret in this corner, and the building of the present walls in place of it, to enable a passage-way to be obtained between the two buildings upon both ground and first floor. These new walls, it may be remarked, are the only ones in the whole Palace which are faced with ashlar. But I am by no means clear about this part of the building. There is one undoubtedly thirteenth century window upon the first floor, which now lights the back staircase, and the two other windows (those on the stairs up to the second floor), though not so old, certainly look genuine. But the thinness of the

walls, and the character of the facing, point to a later date, and serve to corroborate the theory which I have advanced. Such windows as are of greater antiquity may have been preserved from the building which was taken down to make room for the present one.

MODERN TIMES.

During the Commonwealth, Cornelius Burges bought the Palace, the Deanery, and other ecclesiastical property in Wells. He set to work to despoil the Palace, "pulling off not only the Lead thereof, but taking away also the Timber, and making what money he could of them, and what remained unsold he removed to the Deanery improving that out of the Ruins of the palace, leaving only bare Walls, excepting the Gate Houses, which he tenanted out to some inferior people." (Chyle, Bk. II, Chap. II.) At the Restoration, however, Burges was ejected, and Bishop Piers returned to his See and the ruins of the Palace. At what time the buildings were restored I do not know, but they shew no sign of ruin (except for the Great Hall) in Buck's drawing of 1733. The cloister dividing the two courts had disappeared, but the gate-tower still remained. When this tower was taken down, I cannot say.

During the present century there have been several alterations made. Beadon (1802-24) re-arranged Bekynton's building so as to obtain three storeys in place of two. Hearne's view, taken in 1794, shews the appearance of the north side previous to this change. Probably Beadon also inserted the Early English windows on the south side of the kitchen block; at any rate, these are not later than the beginning of Law's episcopacy, for they are shewn on a drawing by Neale, published in 1828. Law's contribution to the changes consisted, apparently, only in pulling down two walls of the Hall, and carefully repairing what he left standing; several of the mullions and tracery bars were inserted by him. Bagot em-

ployed Ferrey to make the additions and alterations which have been previous enumerated, and he also put in the plaster decorations of the rooms on the first floor of Josceline's block. Lord Arthur Hervey has converted the crypt into a splendid dining-room, by paving it, inserting a fireplace, and other works; and he has also made some alterations in the offices, which involved the building of a new kitchen, and the consequent destruction of a short length of Ralph's wall.

I cannot conclude this sketch of the history of Wells Palace without acknowledging the great obligation I am under to the Bishop and Lady Arthur Hervey, for the facilities which they have so kindly allowed me for exploring the whole building, and without which I should have been unable to write even this imperfect account of its history.

APPENDIX.

THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE REFERRED TO.

1. The Canon of Wells. Two MSS. in the Chapter Library. *Hist. mi.*, circa 1380; *Hist. ma.*, circa 1420. Printed in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra* where the two are fused into one narrative.
2. *Itinerarium Willelmi de Worcester*. In Library of Corpus College, Cambridge. 15th century. Printed by Nasmith, 1778.
3. Two MSS., edited by Chaundler, dedicated to Bekynton, and by him presented to the Chapter Library.
 1. In Library of New College, Oxon. Part printed in Williams's *Bekynton*, Roll Series; also (translated) in Britton's *Wells Cathedral Church*.

2. In Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Contains an illumination which represents Chaundler presenting his work to Bekynton, apparently inside the Palace. This is by the same artist as the illumination in the last MS., and it is equally inaccurate. Re-produced in Mr. Reynolds's *Wells Cathedral*.
4. Bekynton's will, 1464. Part quoted in Godwin's *Catalogus Episcoporum Bath. et Well., q.v.*
5. F. Godwini *Catalogus Episcoporum Bath. et Well.*, 1595. Printed in *Duo Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores veteres, viz.*, Otterbourne et Whethamstede, 1732.
6. F. Godwini *De Præsulibus Angliæ Commentarius*, 1616. There are two previous English editions, published in 1601 and 1614.
7. Chyle's *History of Wells Cathedral Church, circa 1680*. In the Chapter Library. Part printed by Mr. Reynolds.
8. S. and N. Buck's *Antiquities*, 1774. Contains a view of the Palace from the roof of the Cathedral Church, dated 1733. Re-produced by Mr. Reynolds.
9. Hearne and Byrne's *Antiquities*, 1807. Contains a view of north side of Palace, drawn in 1794.
10. Neale's *Views of Seats, etc.*, vol. iv, 1828. Contains a view of the front of the Palace.
11. Pugin's *Examples*, vol. ii, 1839. Contains measured drawings of the Hall, of Bekynton's Conduit-head, of one of Josceline's Windows, and of the Fireplace in the present Entrance-hall.
12. Two sheets of drawings of the Palace previous to Ferrey's alterations by Mr. E. Hippisley, shewing the plan of first floor, west elevation of Josceline's block, south elevation of Kitchen block, and section across Josceline's block. In the possession of the Bishop.
13. Three sheets of drawings, shewing Ferrey's proposed alterations, 1846.
 1. A general ground-plan.

2. Ground-plan of Josceline's and Bekynton's blocks, with west elevation of Josceline's.

3. First floor and second floor plans. In the possession of Mr. James Parker.

14. Two tracings shewing Ferrey's amended elevation of the West Front (as it was carried out), and his addition of the Conservatory. In the possession of the Bishop.

15. Parker's *Ecclesiastical Buildings of Wells*. Contains an account of the Palace, with several illustrations.

16. Dollman's *Ancient Domestic Architecture*, 1864. Contains measured drawings of the Chapel.

