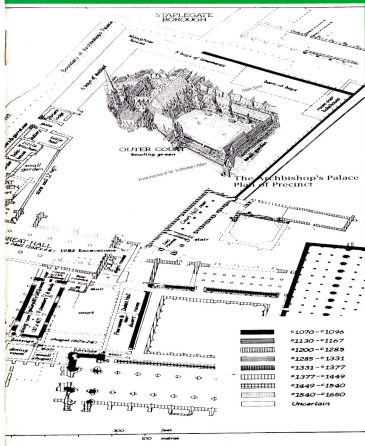


Palace Street

Historical Guide



CHAS SCANS

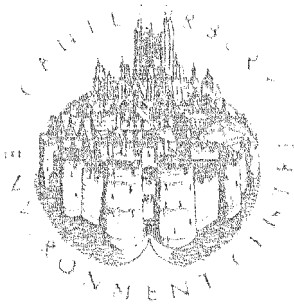
Between 1977 and 2002 Canterbury Urban Studies Centre and Canterbury Environment Centre published around 30 guides and city trails describing various aspects of Canterbury's past. Both organisations were based in St Alphege church.

Between them they produced 14 titles in the 'Trails' series, and a further 16 titles outside the main series. All are now out of print and many are difficult (a few impossible) to find through normal second hand sources. Many contain information that is not readily available in other printed or on line sources.

CHAS (Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society) is scanning a selection of these publications for uploading to the CHAS website as PDFs. In this way a new generation of readers and researchers can have access to this unique resource.

A full list of these publications appears on the CHAS website:

<http://www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk>



Palace Street

Historical Guide

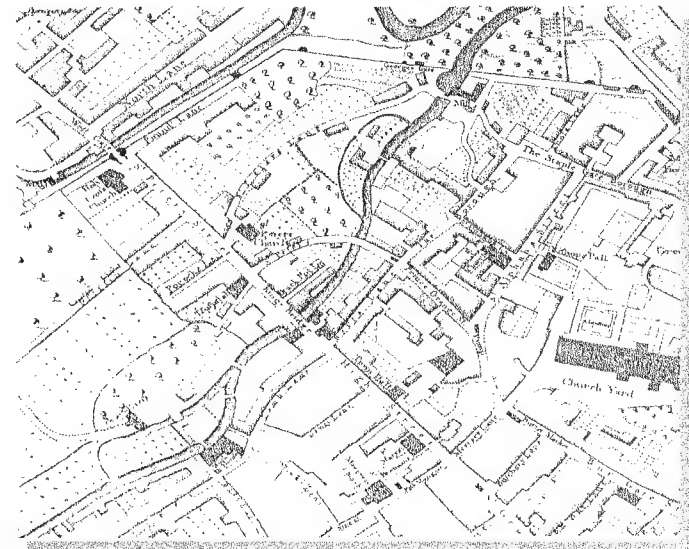
Written and produced by The Canterbury
Environment Centre, with grateful thanks
to the following people:-

Audrey Bateman
Philip Bunce
Jenny Ferrer
David Utting
Philip Rogers



When Lanfranc was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070 one of the first things he did was to restore the Cathedral. After that he built himself a palace and the site he chose was just inside the north wall, despite the fact it was already full of domestic housing. A total of 27 houses were pulled down to make way for it and the street in which they stood was diverted westwards, creating the awkward double bend at one end of Palace Street where it joins the Borough. Until then the street had run straight from Northgate into the city. It seems possible that the 27 dispossessed tenants were re-housed on the opposite side of Palace Street for (not counting St Alphege Church) there are exactly 27 plots on that side of the street today.

The fine map of Canterbury, produced by Andrews and Wren in 1778, refers to Palace Street as Alphaba Street and St Alphege Church as St. Alphaba's. This gives some indication of the importance of the church in its relationship to the rest of the area at that time. The map also pinpoints the red pump that stood at the junction of Palace Street with Orange Street, then called Prince of Orange Street. One of the pump's uses in medieval times was to keep the rushes damp in the nearby rush market, rushes being used in most households as floor coverings. At one time the stretch of road from Orange Street to St Alphege Lane was actually known as the Red Pump.



No. 1

*T*oday the red pump is fastened to the wall of *No. 1* beside the double doors on the first floor. For at least a hundred years there have been leather merchants at this address. During the latter part of the 19th century it was occupied by Mummery Bros., who described themselves as tanners, curriers and legging manufacturers. The building is mid to late 19th century. It is on three storeys, of buff brick, with a tiled roof containing four gables. The first floor has double-hung sashes set in stone architraves with cornices and pilasters. The building is squared off at the corner and its original entrance on the ground floor covered with wood panelling.

No. 2 was a butcher's shop but over the years it has engaged in a number of different trades ranging from a chemists to a green-grocers. It is an early 19th century building that was altered at a later date, three storeys high, of buff brick. On the first floor are three sash windows set in cambered recesses. The shop front is late 19th century with panelled risers.

*No. 2*

No. 3 was once an old-established butchers belonging to Thomas W. Young. In existence in 1882, it was still going strong 40 years later. The original building has been replaced by a modern infill of brick and glass, three storeys high, with a flat roof.

Nos. 4 and 5 are part of a single timber-framed building three storeys high, of painted brick, with a moulded eaves cornice. The shop fronts are early 19th century and No. 4 has panelled risers. Towards the end of the last century No. 4 belonged to a cork cutter called Brooks and No. 5 to Thomas Eaton, a boot and shoemaker. In the 1920s, No. 4 had become a boot-makers and No. 5 a tailors.

*Nos. 4 and 5*



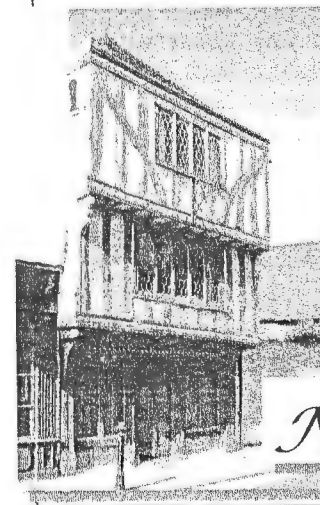
No. 6

On the corner of Palace Street and Turnagain Lane is *No. 6*, which has an 18th century façade. Its frontage appears to be brick but on closer examination proves to be mathematical tiles, painted over. It is three storeys high with a wooden modillion cornice. The side elevation, which is stuccoed, has a round-headed door-case with a fanlight and a six panelled door. This site was occupied by Hugh, servant of the Infirmary, c. 1166. Then obscurity, until in the late 19th century a succession of Italian families came to live here. F. Offredi was a confectioner and pastry cook who occupied the premises from 1882-1898. In 1902 it was a restaurant in the hands of Signore Mazzuchi and Locatelli. By the 1920s the Mediterranean influence had gone and it had become a teashop whose proprietor was A. Tyrrell.

On the opposite corner of Turnagain Lane is *No. 7* a timber-framed building with an 18th century façade. It is on three storeys, stuccoed, with a stone coping. The shop front is early 19th century and has a cornice with brackets, panelled risers and reeded pilasters. On the left is an iron bracket holding a lantern. Inside the building is a finely moulded staircase and 18th century embossed plasterwork on the ceiling. Now a leather clothing shop, in the past few decades it has twice been a grocers.

No. 8 is believed to have been built originally about the year 1250 as the priest house of St Alphege Church. It was then a small dwelling in typical Norman style with a first floor hall and an under-croft, measuring some 16 by 25 feet. Both the church and the priest house remained unaltered until about 1495 when the plain stone front of the house was replaced by timber framing with an overhang to the first floor. By 1665 the priest house must have become too small for its purpose and a new larger rectory house was built on the glebe land between the house and the church. At the same time *No. 8* was enlarged. The roof was removed, a second floor added and another roof put in place. Its function as a priest house was now at an end and it was let to private occupiers.

Inside *No. 8* the most striking feature is a central pier with double stone arches supporting massive oak joists. Above it is the room where the priest once had his living quarters, the floor paved with heavy stone flags. The walls of this 13th century part of the building are of flint rubble with stone dressings nearly two feet thick.



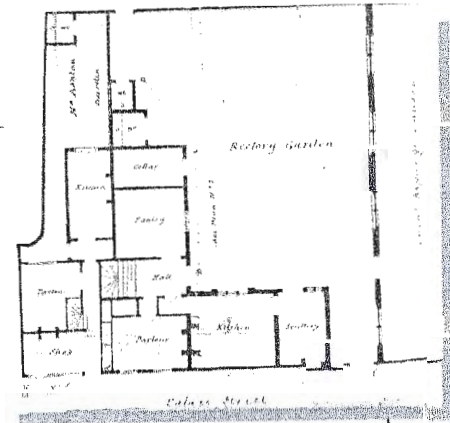
No. 8

In the latter part of the 19th century the ground floor had a small shop in front of the central pier and a parlour behind it. Alterations and additions were made at the rear and this involved the occupiers in a lawsuit with neighbours, who were awarded £34 in damages. It was about this time that the premises became freehold so the defendants in the lawsuit may well have been the first owners.

Edwin Holtum, described as a tobacconist and haircutter, lived in the house from 1882 to 1908. During this time the first of several dramatic alterations took place. In 1888 an old shop-front was brought from elsewhere and fitted to the front of the house. Scroll-work and coil moulding were applied to the bressumers and strips of oak used to renovate the old timbers. Today it has an impressive medieval façade with exposed joists and curved braces under an old tiled roof. The windows are continuous lancets with leaded lights, the double lancets on the ground floor having Victorian Tudor Rose ornaments between them. Grotesque carved brackets support the second floor overhang. On the ground floor, also acting as supports, are painted figureheads, said to be the legs of an antique table, each side of a studded oak door.

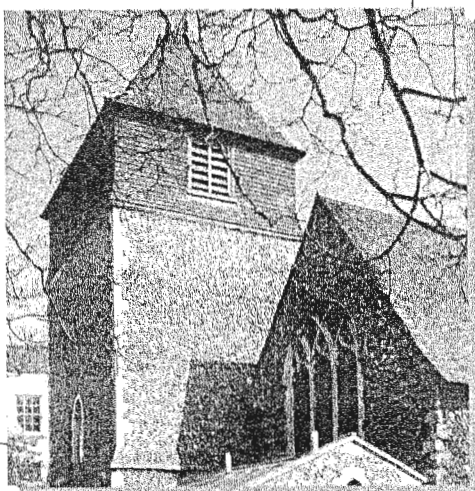
Connecting No. 8 with St Alphege Church is a brick wall, cement rendered. Behind

this wall there once existed the *Old Rectory*, built in 1665 when the priest house was no longer required. It was finally demolished in 1876 when the living of St Alphege was transferred to the Master-ship of Eastbridge Hospital. In the wall nearest the church is a Gothic 13th century stone doorway through which access was made to the rectory. Nothing now remains of the rectory except traces of brick foundations in the garden and part of the roof where it joined No. 8.



Church of St. Alphege with St. Margaret

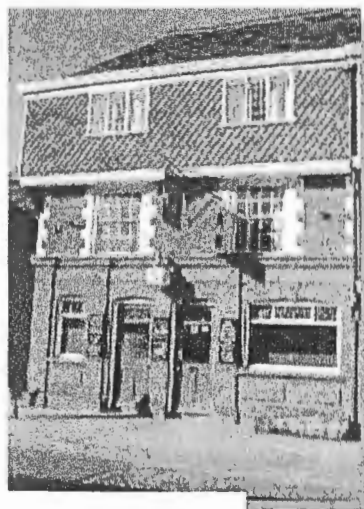
Bede mentions a church hereabouts in his account of a great fire in Canterbury in the year 624. The earliest site is thought to have been a little to the east of the present one. Its name is derived from Canterbury's Archbishop Alphege who conducted a spirited defence of the city at the time of the Danish invasion in 1011. For twenty days the Danes laid siege to the city, finally gaining entry when a traitor, said to be Aelfmar, the abbot of St Augustine's Abbey, opened one of the city gates. Alphege took refuge inside the cathedral with his monks but, when the carnage became too dreadful, ran outside and begged the enemy to be merciful. He was clapped in chains and the cathedral set on fire. At the same time many of the city's inhabitants were taken prisoner and sold into slavery at the North Gate. Alphege was dragged about the country by his captors, eventually meeting his death when he was pelted with ox bones during a drunken feast at Greenwich.



The present church of St Alphege is 14th to 15th century, built of flint with stone quoins and having a renewed tiled roof. It has a tower to the southwest with a tile-hung section and lancet windows surmounted by a hipped, tiled roof. At the tower base is a door set in a four-centred arch with hood moulding. The main windows of the church are double or triple lancets, some of which contain fragments of medieval stained glass. Most of the interior fittings and glass date from 1888 when the church was restored by R. Carpenter. Past members of its congregation included John Caxton, a mercer, who died in 1485 and was buried in St Alphege's churchyard. In his will he mentioned a brother, Thomas, who was a monk, but it is thought there was a second brother, William Caxton, the printer.

Another parishioner was Edmund Staplegate, an eminent citizen and bailiff during the reign of Edward III, who took his name from the district at the north end of Palace Street. A second member of the family, Robert Staplegate, is described as being 'of St Alphege' and of 'possessing several tenements of the hamlet'.

In April 1982, due to a decline in attendance, the church ceased to be used as a place of worship. In 1983 the Canterbury Urban Studies Centre moved in and converted the building. An independent educational charity, now called the Canterbury Environment Centre, its aim is to promote interest in Canterbury and its surroundings, the future of the city, its people, planning and buildings. There is a full programme of exhibitions and events catering for schools, visitors and local people and the building and its resources are used by many sections of the local community.



No. 10

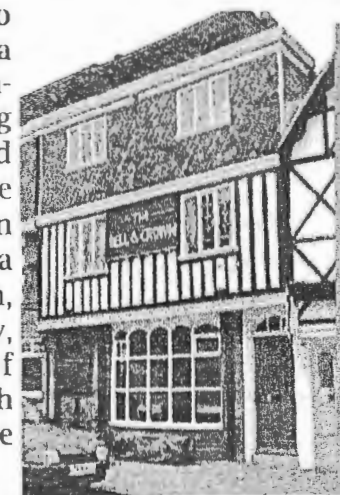
The Bell and Crown Inn

stands on the other side of St Alphege Lane, opposite the church. The Inn was first licensed in 1862 and its name chosen to commemorate the marriage of Princess Alice,

Queen Victoria's second daughter, to Prince Louis (afterwards

Grand Duke of Hesse). The 'Bell' stands for the church bells which in those days were rung to celebrate royal occasions. The bridal couple were the maternal grandparents of Earl Mountbatten of Burma and his sister, Alice, mother of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. In the year 1200 the house on this site (No. 10) was occupied by a man named Peter Cook who paid a quarterly rental of 18 pence. Others who followed him were Arnold of Eastry, Thomas Chilham and Adam Lebel. Walter Rosewyne was a tenant here in 1433. In 1862 Thomas Newman obtained his licence and put up the sign of the Bell and Crown. Even then the inn could only have occupied the premises of No. 10 (not 10 and 11 as it does now) for in 1882 Henry Bailey was the innkeeper of No 10 while next door at No 11 was Nathan Moses, a fruiterer.

The inn today consists of two timber-framed houses, re-fronted, three storeys high, of brick with an old tiled roof. The upper storey of No 10 is tile-hung and its windows are restored casements and sashes. On the first floor the windows are set in a surround of wide and narrow quoins. No. 11 has imitation timber-framing on the second floor which overhangs the floor below. On the first and second floors are mullioned windows and there is a bay on the ground floor. There is a door-case to the right with a semi-circular fan-light. Two hanging signs are attached to the building, one of them the inn sign, the other a smaller sign which, rightly or wrongly, states: 'Home of the Great British Shepherd's Pie since 1724'.



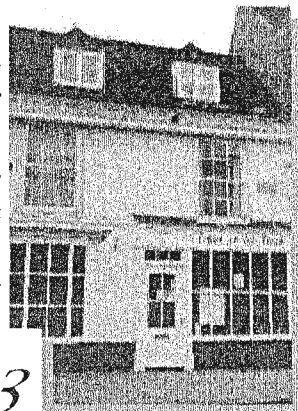
No. 11

No. 12

mullioned window and on the top floor a smaller window, also mullioned.

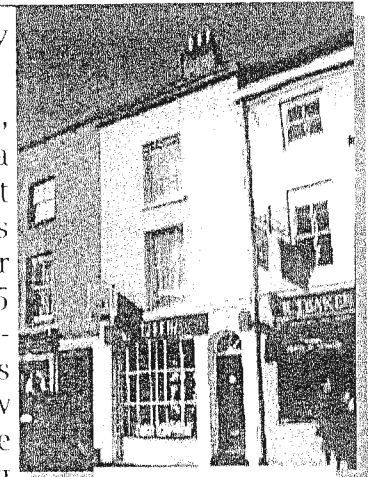
In 1882 *No. 12* was a boot warehouse belonging to Thomas Lavender. Forty years later it was a confectioners run by a Mrs M. Gardner. The building is 16th century, timber-framed and re-fronted, with a tiled roof. It is on two storeys and has a gable that is imitation timber-framed and plastered. There are decorated barge-boards with pendants. On the first floor is a

A hundred years ago *No. 13* belonged to James Thomas Samson, a cork manufacturer, but for 60 years at least it was a fried fish shop but is now a restaurant. It is an 18th century building on two storeys, of painted brick. It has a restored, tiled roof with two hipped dormers. Under the edge of the roof is a moulded, wooden eaves cornice. It has a 19th century shop-front.

*No. 13*

No. 14. The building is actually one of a late 18th century pair.

No. 15. Built on three storeys, No. 14 is of red brick with a simple 19th century shop-front which, at about the time it was fitted, accommodated a butcher named George Wilkinson. No. 15 is colour washed with a rusticated base. It has a stone eaves cornice, a restored bow window and a round-headed door-case with a fanlight. This building was for many years a private residence and only comparatively recently has the ground floor been used as a shop.

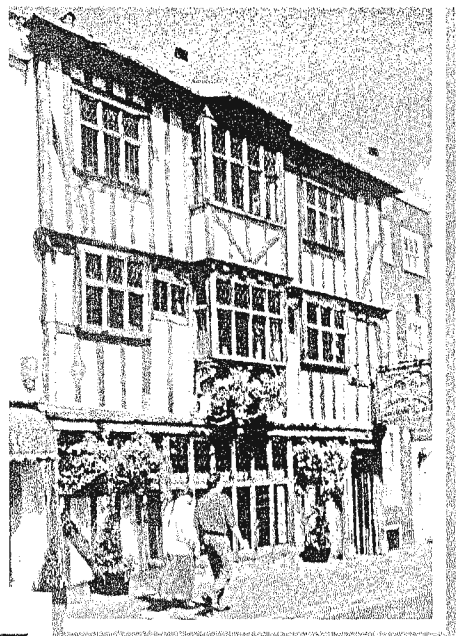
*No. 15*

No. 16 was once the Albion Inn, certainly in existence in the latter part of the 19th century. In the street directory of 1882, the licensee's name was John Jackson. By the 1920s it had become a hairdressers which, it remained until recently. An 18th century building, it is on three floors, of painted brick, with an old tiled roof. It has an early 19th century shop-front and a recessed door-case to the right with a moulded architrave.

*No. 16*

Although outwardly a 16th century timber-framed house, *No. 17*

Conquest House, dates from the early years of the Norman Conquest. In 1170 it belonged to Gilbert the Citizen (his neighbours to the north were Anselm, secretaries, and beyond him, Eadward, son of Odbold). For a few hours this house became the headquarters of the four knights who murdered Thomas Becket. De Tracy, de Morville, FitzUrse and Le Breton gathered here with their men before seeking an interview with the Archbishop at his Palace across the road. One of Becket's clerks, William FitzStephen, who was with him on the fateful night of December 29th, 1170, described it thus: 'Their men had been collected in a great house just opposite the gate of the Archbishop's courtyard'. That house was almost certainly *Conquest House*, that has a Norman undercroft old enough to have belonged to Gilbert's house.



No. 17

The present frontage is a reconstruction by an owner named Powell early this century. Three storeys high, timber-framed with a plaster infill, it has three mullioned windows, one of them a bay through two storeys, supported on carved brackets. The ground floor has two recessed three-light mullions and a continuous mullioned bay of eight lights. There is a door-case to the right which has fine, moulded spandrels. The roof is of the collar purlin type but without a crown post and is set transversely across the hall, ending in a half-hip on the garden side. The ground floor room has a fine 17th century fireplace of narrow red brick above which was discovered the painted royal coat of arms of Charles I. The room above, a timber-framed hall, half of which is open to the roof, the rest being overhung by a large gallery, has a similar but smaller fireplace, also decorated with a coat of arms. This house has served many purposes in its day, having been from time to time an antique dealers, a grocers and a knitwear shop.

No. 18 is a 17th century timber framed building standing on a narrow plot only 11 foot wide. Some ancient walling still survives in the cellar, all that remains of an early stone and flint building which stood here. There is much to suggest that no.18 was once an outbuilding to Conquest House. A tunnel leading from the north end of the Norman undercroft would seem to confirm this. There is also a stone flagged passage which once connected Nos.17 and 18 but is now blocked off inside the lobby entrance to no.17. The upper storeys of No.18 still extend over the rear part of the passage. People living in the vicinity claim that horses once used this passage to gain access to a yard and stable at the rear. The building, which has an 18th century façade, is three storeys high, of red brick, and has a basement. There is a stone coping and two sash windows set in moulded architraves. On the right is a door-case with pilasters and a dentil band, so called because it bears some resemblance



to teeth. There are two steps leading up to the front door. Both nos.17 and 18 carry 'Historic Building of Kent' plaques.

No. 18



No. 19

A hundred years ago, *No. 19* the home of Miss Nethersole, a dressmaker. Forty years later it was being used as tearooms. It is a timber framed building with an early 19th century façade, three storeys high and hung with fish scale tiles. On the first floor is a tree light bay window with decorative iron work at the base. The ground floor has an early 19th century shop-front with a reeded band and pilasters.

No. 20 seems always to have been in the catering business. For many years a bakers and confectioners, an additional service was introduced in the twenties with teas and light refreshments (no doubt in opposition to No.19). Today it is an Indian restaurant. The building is timber framed with an early 19th century façade. On three storeys and colour washed, it has a 19th century shop front with panelled risers. There is a three light bay window on the second floor. Linking Nos.20 and 21 is a single



storey building, cement rendered, with a slate roof and three sets of doors. A hundred years ago it housed a painter's stores whose proprietor, Robert Ratcliff, also had an address at no.22 where he described himself (street directory of 1882) as a plumber and gasfitter.

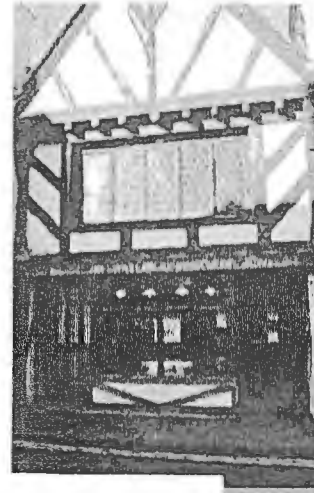
No. 20

No. 21 was once the Unity Inn. Apart from its name and list of licensees, little is known about it. A man named Charles Sibley was the licensee in the late 19th century. It is a timber framed building on three floors, stuccoed, with a hipped, tiled roof and moulded eaves cornice. There is a bay window on the second floor and another on the first floor that oversails the shop-front. The door-case has a moulded surround with a rectangular fanlight.

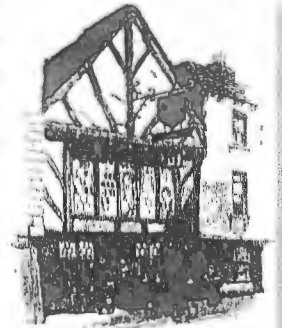
*No. 21*

No. 22 is also timber framed, refaced. It is on three storeys, of painted brick with a hipped, old tiled roof. It has a moulded wooden eaves cornice and end quoins. There is an overhang to the 19th century shop-front.

Most of the properties along this side of Palace Street belonged to Huguenot or Dutch weavers during the 16th century. When the refugees first arrived in Canterbury, certain restrictions were placed on their trading so that they would not affect the livelihood of local weavers. In return they were allowed to pursue the religion for which they had been persecuted abroad. For a time they shared the church of St. Alphege 'in such sort and in such tyme as their parishioners there be not hindered or disturbed at their common prayer'. Later, when this arrangement proved impractical, they were allowed to worship in Ernulf's Crypt at the western end of the Cathedral. In time the congregation there numbered two thousand.

*No. 23*

No. 23 is called the Old Huguenot Weaver's House. Now an antique shop, it was once occupied by a manufacturer of mineral water named Mrs M.A. Robins. It is a fine 16th century timber framed house with three storeys and a gable. It has a well preserved moulded bressumer and an overhang supported on joists with two medieval grotesque brackets. On the first floor is a long, mullioned window with leaded lights. The ground floor shop front is also mullioned.



Nos. 24 and 25 are 18th century pair, on three storeys, of painted brick with a hipped, tiled roof. There is a rainwater head between the two premises. The ground floor has early 19th century shop-fronts and a door-case that has a pilastered surround. No. 24 seems to have accommodated at least two tailors in the last hundred years but No. 25 has had a variety of businesses, from selling bicycles to making watches.

Next to them is No. 28, *the old King's School Shop,*

known also as Sir John Boys' House.

Sir John Boys was a recorder of Canterbury and a distinguished local figure who died in 1612. There is no evidence, however, that he owned the house or lived there. The date on the apex of the gable is 1617, five years after Sir John's death and anyway, according to the Canterbury archives, he lived in Broad

No. 28

Street. Another name for the house is the Old Dutch House, a reference to the immigrant weavers who seem to have lived in it originally. Certainly, the long, horizontal windows are indicative of the weavers' houses. In the main it was occupied by wealthy men, in 1841 by a man named William Goulden. In 1882 it had become a confectioners, the proprietor Edmund Edney.



Then it became a teashop, called initially 'Ye Old Curiositee Shop'. It is a timber faced building with plaster infilling grooved in imitation of masonry. It is of four storeys, with each floor overhanging the one below. These are supported by finely carved grotesque brackets. The windows on the first and second floors are mullioned and transomed. A most curious feature is the slanting doorway, caused by the building leaning strongly to the north. It is thought that the house was once twice its present size, as the Commissioners' Report of 1841 describes it as 'part of a corner house' and that Nos 26 and 27 were built on the site of the demolished part. It is separated from them by a gap about nine inches wide, now boarded up. This would account for its 'lean' although this has now been made safe by forcing the weight of the house back onto the central chimney by means of upright beams.

Returning down the opposite side of Palace Street, next to the entrance to the Mint Yard is an 18th century terrace which follows the line caused by the building of Lanfranc's Palace, described on the next page. Today it consists of twelve separate establishments, all with 19th century shop-fronts. Built of red brick (Nos. 35 and 36 are painted over) it is on two storeys with an old tiled roof. Set in the roof are seven tall chimney stacks and eleven dormers, eight of them hipped. By the late 19th century, No. 29 was occupied by Stephen Hudson, a blacksmith, while next door at No. 30 lived a sewing machine agent named John Corner. Other occupants of the terrace included a wardrobe dealer, an umbrella maker, a potato merchant and greengrocers, and a lady, Mrs F Eyles, who described her premises as a milliner. There was also a boot-maker with the unlikely name of Crispin Shovelier.

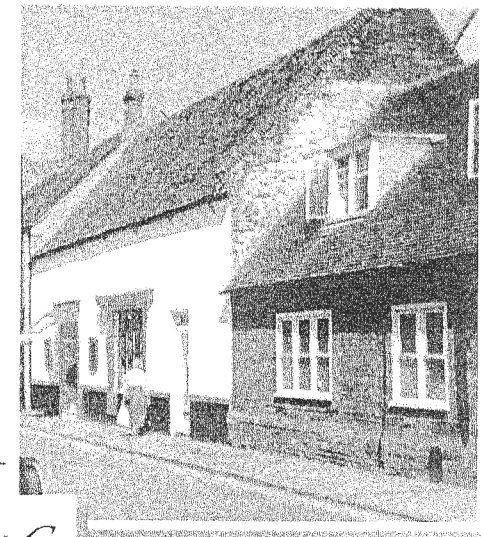
Gateway to the Archbishop's Palace

Originally constructed of stone and flint, the great gateway was rebuilt by Archbishop Parker in 1561 and restored in the 20th century. The stone jambs are all that remain of an earlier gateway. No's 41-43 are on three floors and 44-45 on two, all with mullioned windows in red brick surrounds. No. 45, which is stuccoed, has an early 19th century shop-front. In the centre of the ground floor is the stone arch through which numerous archbishops and crowned heads of England, among them Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, passed through to various functions in their honour. The lower part of the archway is fitted with massive oak doors, the upper part with glass. Above the apex is a stone plaque bearing the Archbishop's coat of arms.

Lanfranc's palace, of course, has long since gone. It caught fire several times, was rebuilt, additions were made and in the 17th century it was partially destroyed by Cromwell's soldiers. Fragments of the original building may be seen in the present Old Palace that, despite its name, is comparatively modern. At the time of Becket's murder, the palace enclosure was very large and stretched all the way from the Borough to Sun Street. No one today can be sure what it looked like. William Gostling, the historian, said in 1774 that 'after so much destruction and so many alterations it is hardly possible to form any conjecture', but it seems reasonable to assume that the Great Hall was on the south side of the yard, running from east to west, with the dining-room on the first floor and the kitchen at one end, immediately opposite St Alphege Church.

Nos. 45-46 is a single-storied, stuccoed building with a tiled roof and two 19th century shop-fronts. During the latter part of the nineteenth century this was the home of the Cathedral Fire Brigade. A steam engine, between 60 and 70 horsepower and with half a mile of hose, was kept in the Palace Yard. In 1882 it was captained by H. G. Austin, Esq., J.P., assisted by secretary, George Henry Delasaux and manned by seven volunteer firemen. The Brigade, by courtesy of the Dean and Chapter, was allowed to attend 'all fires in the county' (a reference to Canterbury's county status, 'distinct and quite separate from that of Kent', which it was granted in 1461 and enjoyed for 500 years).

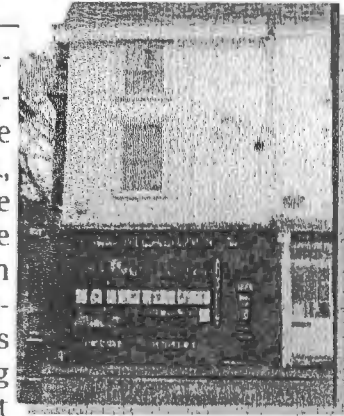
No. 47 is also single-storied but of brick with an old tiled roof containing three skylights. It was originally an out-building to Walpole House next door.



No. 46

No.48 Walpole House, King's School is a late 18th century building set back from the street behind a wall containing three separate gateways. Its classrooms were built for the Junior School in 1914. In 1935 it was named after Sir Hugh Walpole, the novelist, who came here as a schoolboy in 1896. Another novelist, Somerset Maugham, began his schooldays at this house in 1885, describing his arrival in 'Of Human Bondage'. 'When they got out of the train at Tercanbery, Philip felt sick with apprehension and during the drive into the town sat pale and silent. The high brick wall in front of the school gave it the look of a prison.' The building is of red brick, three storeys high, with a semi-basement. It has a parapet with a stone coping and a stuccoed stringcourse. There is a recessed bay window with arcing over the first floor windows. The door-case had a segmental fanlight, reeded frieze and two six-panelled doors. Five steps lead up to it with a handrail on either side, and a foot-scraper. The rear elevation contains 13th century remnants of the Archbishop's Palace, including the porch. Beyond the building may be seen a delightful close-up view of the twin west front towers of the Cathedral.

Nos. 50-51 are contained in a single 18th century building on three storeys, of painted brick, with a tiled roof. On the two upper floors are three sash windows with vertical bars. A three-light sash window was put in downstairs during the late 19th century. At that time the premises were occupied by a Mrs E. Escott, a stay and corset-maker. Next door at 51 is at present an empty shop.

*No. 50*

Nos. 52-54 are also part of an 18th century building on three floors, of painted brick, although the lower floor of No. 53 has been left in its natural state. It has a tiled roof and a rainwater head. Samuel Cordwell, who was an 'artist in glass', lived at No. 52 in 1882. Next door to him were empty premises but on the other side, lived J. M. Watson, who was a travelling draper.

*No. 52*



No. 55

Nos 55-56 are of the same period, also on three floors, of painted brick, with an old tiled roof. Clement Clarke, the opticians, occupied No. 55 in the 1920's and at 56 (and 57) was W.A. Roper, a boot-maker.

No. 57 is 18th century, on two storeys, of painted brick with a tiled roof containing one dormer window. It has a stone coping with two cambered sash-windows and an early 19th century shop-front with two simple door-cases.

No. 58 is also 18th century, three storeys high, of painted brick. On the first floor is a recessed French window set in an inverted bow with pilasters and two columns supporting a cornice. In front of it is a wrought-iron balcony of a later date. There is a rainwater head between Nos. 58 and 59.



No. 58

The Mayflower Restaurant

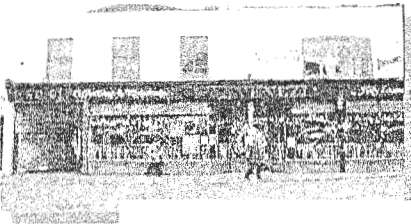
was once an Inn where in 1620 Robert Cushman transacted the hire of the famous ship, the 'Mayflower', which took the Pilgrim Fathers to America. Robert married Sarah Jekel in St. Alphege Church, an indication perhaps that the church had Puritan tendencies. In 1603 he was excommunicated for refusing to attend established church services and was gaoled in the city's Westgate.



No. 59

Five years later he took refuge with other Puritan exiles in the Low Countries. He and his son, Thomas, eventually sailed to the New World in the 'Speedwell'. Thomas married Mary Allerton, who also came from Canterbury, and one of their descendants was the American General, Robert E. Lee. Another passenger on the 'Speedwell' was Phillipe de la Noye who lived in Palace Street, Canterbury and later settled in New Plymouth, Massachusetts. In America he married into another family from Palace Street, the Cooks, and it was from this union that the American President, Franklyn Delano Roosevelt, was descended. The building has an 18th century façade and is of painted brick, three storeys high. There are two sash windows set in moulded architraves. A painted board, depicting the 'Mayflower', is attached to the wall between the first floor windows. Above the shop-front is a red blind with iron fittings. In 1882 the proprietor was George Mence Smith, 'the oil and colour man', a forerunner of the well-known chain of hardware stores.

Nos 60-61 are one building, the last in Palace Street before it joins up with Sun Street. It is early 19th century, re-fronted, on two storeys, No. 60 cement rendered and No. 61 painted brick. In 1878 it was occupied by John Hobday who, like so many of his contemporaries in Palace Street, was a man of many occupations. In an advertisement inserted in the Canterbury Directory of that year he claimed to be a cabinet maker, upholsterer, auctioneer, appraiser, house agent, home decorator and an undertaker (and as if that was not enough he added the word 'etcetera'!). Yet it is still not economically viable enough (some would say fortunately) to tempt any of the big national chain stores to open a branch there. In the 19th century the multiplicity of occupations of some of its inhabitants would indicate that just one calling was insufficient to make a decent living. In the same era, the preponderance of tearooms and eating establishments are evidence that a great many visitors must have wandered down here, perhaps after looking round or worshipping at the Cathedral. Many of the buildings are enormously rich in historic documentation. There can be few streets in England with so much evidence of early occupation.



Nos. 60-61

Throughout its history, Palace Street

has been influenced by its connections with the Cathedral. In its earliest days it was the Palace and its environs, occupying almost the entire east side of the street, which was the dominant factor. The Church of St. Alphege was another powerful influence, at one time a haven for the Huguenot refugees who do doubt laid the foundations of the Puritanism so evident in Robert Cushman's time. Today it is a street of small businesses, the church once redundant but took on a new role quite some time ago of involvement with the community. Unlike Castle Street with its blend of commercial and residential establishments, Palace Street has few domestic households.

Text: Audrey Bateman

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