

The Mansion House.



THE MANSION HOUSE, 1751.

Dinner

TO MEET

H. H. H.

The Duke of Connaught,
K.G.

(Grand Master of Freemasons)

October 25th, 1909.

M

The Right Hon.

Sir George Wyatt Truscott, Bt.,

LORD MAYOR.

The Mansion House.

THE MANSION HOUSE was built between the years 1739 and 1753 from the design of Mr. George Dance, Clerk of the City's Works, and was first occupied by Sir Crisp Gascoigne, Lord Mayor in the latter year. The cost of building was nearly £71,000, and the nature of the soil entailed considerable delay in the work.

The main feature of the exterior is a portico of six lofty fluted Corinthian columns on a massive rustic basement: the alto-relievo in the pediment, intended to symbolise the wealth and dignity of the City of London, was from the chisel of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Taylor. The attic which formerly disfigured the front of the building, popularly known as "The Mayor's Nest," was removed in 1842; that at the back having been taken down when the alterations were made in the Egyptian Hall at the close of the 18th century.

The interior of the edifice formerly included a Court of elaborate character open to the sky, but this was afterwards roofed in and forms the present Saloon.

The other principal apartments include the Drawing Room, the Long Parlour, the Venetian Parlour, the Justice Room, the Egyptian Hall and, on the floor above, the Old Ball Room.

The Egyptian Hall was so called because of its conformity with the saloon described by Vitruvius under that name: the removal, however, of the upper row of columns has destroyed the appropriateness of this appellation. This Hall is 59 feet wide and 83 feet 5 inches long: it affords dining accommodation for 400 guests.

The stained-glass windows at either end are from designs by Mr. Alexander Gibbs, and were placed there in 1868. The west window represents, in the upper portion, King John signing Magna Charta, and, in the lower portion, Queen Elizabeth proceeding by barge to the Tower of London: the east window illustrates, in the upper portion, the death of Wat Tyler at the hands of Sir William Walworth, the Lord Mayor, and, in the lower portion, Edward VI. entering the City in procession.

The niches in the side walls are filled with statuary, all by English sculptors and all illustrating characters from the writings of English poets: the plate includes many interesting pieces, amongst which may be mentioned the Christopher Cup, the Oliver Cup, and the Irish Cup.

It is the custom for an annual addition to be made to the plate to commemorate each Mayoralty. The Saloon is adorned with statuary, including Foley's "Caractacus," and four panels of tapestry made at the Windsor Tapestry Works, which have now ceased to be carried on. They represent the Opening of the Royal Exchange by Queen Elizabeth, a Joust on London Bridge, Robert Fitz-Walter receiving the City Banner, and the Visit of the late Queen Victoria to the Mansion House in 1887.

“ The Loving Cup ”

IS a splendid feature of the Hall-feasts of the City and Inns of Court. The Cup is of silver or silver gilt, and is filled with spiced wine, immemorially termed “ Sack.” Immediately after the dinner and grace, the Master and Wardens drink to their visitors a hearty welcome ; the Cup is then passed round the table, and each guest, after he has drunk, applies his napkin to the mouth of the Cup before he passes it to his neighbour. The more formal practice is for the person who pledges with the Loving Cup to stand up and bow to his neighbour, who, also standing, removes the cover with his right hand, and holds it while the other drinks.—(*F. W. Fairholt, F.S.A.*)

Some deduce the expression “ I’ll pledge you,” in drinking, from the time when the Danes bore sway in this land. It is said to have been common with this ferocious people to stab a native in the act of drinking with a knife or dagger : hereupon people would not drink in company unless some one present would be their pledge or surety, that they should receive no hurt whilst they were in their draught. — (*Brand’s Popular Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 223.)

The story of the assassination of King Edward while drinking, by command of Elfrida, is sometimes quoted in illustration of a practice which existed among the Anglo-Saxons. Our forefathers were great drinkers, and it was customary with them, in drinking parties, to pass round a large cup, from which each in turn drank to some of the company. He who thus drank, stood up, and, as he lifted the cup with both hands, his body was exposed without any defence to a blow, and the occasion was often seized by an enemy to murder him. To prevent this, the following plan was adopted. When one of the company stood up to drink, he required the companion who sat next to him, or some one of the party, to be his pledge, and this companion, if he consented, stood up also, and raised his drawn sword in his hand to defend him while drinking. — (*Chambers’ Book of Days*, vol. i. p. 387.)

Ald. Sir Francis Hanson

Mr. Edmund A. Smith

Ald. Sir Horace Marshall

Mr. Sheriff Roll

Sir John Baddeley, J.P.

Mr. J. D. Langton

Sir Homewood Crawford

Col. W. Long, C.M.G.

Ald. Sir W. Vaughan Morgan, Bt.

Lt.-Gen. Laurie, C.B.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Bt., K.C.V.O.

Lord Harlech

The Earl of Dartmouth

The Rt. Hon. T. F. Halsey

Field Marshal H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, K.G.
(Grand Master)

THE RT. HON.
THE LORD MAYOR

Lord Amphil, G.C.I., G.C.I.E.

The Earl of Jersey, C.I.E., G.C.M.G.

Lord Egerton of Tatton

The Hon. & Very Rev. The Dean of Hereford

Mr. F. S. W. Cornwallis

Ald. Sir John Bell, Bt.

Col. Napier Clavering

Mr. R. A. McCall, K.C.

Major Davie

Mr. John T. Morland

Gen. W. Campbell, C.B.

Ald. Sir Alfred Newton, Bt.

Mr. J. S. Granville Gemmill

Mr. Frank Richardson

Sir Edward Letcher, J.P.

Major Malcolm Murray, C.V.O.

Ven. Archdeacon J. S. Sinclair

Ald. Sir Henry Knight

Colonel Caldwell

Mr. Hamon Le Strange

Mr. H. M. Kennard

Mr. G. Gordon Stanham

Ald. Sir David Burnett

Sir William Lancaster, J.P.

Ald. Sir Charles Wakefield

Mr. Ald. C. A. Hanson

Mr. Ald. Cooper

Mr. Sheriff Slazenger

Sir John Runtz, J.P.

ENTRANCE.