

Information Sheet

Archaeology Series No.18

THE BISHOP'S PALACE, LINCOLN



Fig. 1 Artist's reconstruction of the Bishop's Palace in the late fifteenth century. Drawn by David Vale

INTRODUCTION — EARLY HISTORY

The Bishop's Palace at Lincoln is one of the most important medieval buildings in the county. Over eight hundred years old the ruins of the palace lying under the shadow of the Cathedral Church of St. Mary still reflect the pomp and splendour, wealth and power of the medieval Bishops of Lincoln. Although parts of the palace are now in ruins, there is still a considerable body of information available which can be drawn together from the surviving documentary records, and from archaeological and architectural examination, to provide an outline picture of its long existence. Much of the detail, however, has been inevitably lost, and although continued archaeological work on the site will in time further our understanding of its development, there are gaps in our knowledge which can never be filled.

The earliest mention of buildings on the present site is to be found in two twelfth-century documents. The first is a charter, dating to 1135-38, which records that King Stephen gave to

Bishop Alexander land near St. Michael's church on the condition that "the bishop should build a dwelling house on it for himself". Whether or not Alexander did build such a house is as yet unknown, but it seems unlikely, for twenty years later another charter granting an area of land a little further to the east was issued in 1155-58 by King Henry II to Bishop Alexander's successor, Robert de Chesney. The boundaries of the Bishop's land were closely defined by the charter, and still serve as the boundaries of the palace grounds today. On the east side, the wall of the lower Roman city formed a ready made boundary, while to the north the south wall of the upper Roman city together with its defensive ditch served as the northern boundary of the palace precinct. Bishop Chesney also received permission in his charter to make a gateway through this wall for access to the Cathedral. On the west and south sides of the area massive stone walls were built in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries to complete the enclosure, and although modified and in part rebuilt since that date are still standing.

This then was the area within which building took place in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A papal bull or edict of 1163 mentions the 'house of the bishop in the city of Lincoln next to the bail on the south' and this suggests that by this date Robert de Chesney had begun to build here. This is further borne out by a reference in a work known as the *Life of St. Remigius*, written by Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald the Welshman) and revised by him probably between 1213 and 1214. Giraldus tells us that Bishop Chesney constructed 'episcopal buildings at Lincoln' and that 'the land on which they were sited had been procured at great expense'. It was long thought that all trace of Chesney's buildings had disappeared, but between 1968-72 archaeological excavations carried out at the Bishop's Palace by the Department of the Environment provided the evidence which had long eluded earlier historians. For the first time the relative dates of the two medieval halls which still stand on the site could be established. The excavators were able to show without doubt that the East Hall was constructed at an earlier date than the West Hall, which is known to have been begun by Bishop Hugh of Avalon (1186-1200). The East Hall, therefore, must have been begun before about 1186 — but how long before? Medieval pottery recovered from a bank of rubble which accumulated during or after the construction of the East Hall, but before the construction of the West Hall, was dated by the excavators to about 1175. Further precision was not possible, but the archaeological evidence, in conjunction with the documentary and architectural evidence, strongly suggests that the East Hall belongs to Bishop Chesney's original building programme.

The next major building operation to take place on the site is well known. Giraldus Cambrensis records that Bishop Hugh of Avalon began to construct 'splendid episcopal buildings, and that he intended, with God willing, to complete them in grander and more magnificent style than the earlier ones'. Bishop Hugh, later to become the St. Hugh of Lincoln, came to Lincoln in 1186 and his building programme must date between this date and his death in 1200. John de Schalby, a canon of Lincoln in the early fourteenth century, records how Bishop Hugh "built anew the fabric of his mother church from its foundation, and he began to build a splendid episcopal hall".

This hall had not been finished by 1200, for John de Schalby also tells us that 'the episcopal hall begun by St. Hugh in splendid fashion . . . and the kitchen was brought to completion with costly workmanship, by Bishop Hugh of Wells' (1209-1235). We know that Hugh of Wells was still building the hall in 1224, for two writs issued by Henry III in 1223 and 1224 mention the building work, and also give an interesting insight into the source of some of the building materials. The writ of 1223 directed the Mayor and bailiffs of Lincoln to allow the Bishop to quarry stone for his house from the adjacent city ditch and the writ issued in 1224 commanded Hugh de Nevill to deliver 40 trees from Sherwood Forest 'where they can best and most conveniently and at least distance be got, for the use of the bishop, in order to make beams and joists for his hall at Lincoln'. The 40 trees from Sherwood Forest presumably reflect the final stages of the building operation and it seems reasonable to suppose that the grand hall, which can be identified on archaeological and architectural grounds as the surviving West Hall, was completed soon after 1224.

The next recorded building programme was that of Bishop Henry Burghersh (1320-40). On 28th September 1329, Burghersh obtained a licence from the king, Edward III, "in

consideration of his profitable services and the great place he holds in the direction of the king's affairs . . . to repair, raise, crenellate and turrellate the walls of his palace adjoining the precinct of St. Mary's Lincoln, now partly enclosed with a stone wall crenellated and turrellated and if necessary to make new walls in the circuit of the palace . . . " The reason for this licence was one of prestige. **Crenellation** served to symbolize in architectural form the status of a building's owner and during the fourteenth century was a fashionable architectural exercise. Some 170 licences to crenellate were given by the king between 1327 and 1350.

The king also granted to Burghersh the "old wall . . . adjoining the palace on the east . . . which wall contains 18½ perches . . . and the like licence to crenellate . . ." How much of this wall, the east wall of the lower Roman town, was still standing at this date is uncertain. Archaeological examination between 1968-72 showed that although the core of the Roman wall still survives, the wall has been extensively refaced and repaired from the early medieval period onwards. As later repair work may quite possibly have destroyed all traces of earlier repairs, the extent of any work which Burghersh may have carried out on this wall is impossible to assess. The grant of the wall allowed a more convenient entrance to be built at the north-east corner of the palace. The present gateway at this point is a Victorian replacement of an earlier original gateway. At what precise date after 1329 this was built is uncertain, but it seems likely that it would have been constructed soon after the grant was given. A second gateway into the precinct lay on the west side at the end of Christ's Hospital Terrace. It was closed up shortly before 1840, but at what date it had been built is not known.

During the episcopate of Bishop William Alnwick (1436-1449) the palace went through an extensive programme of modernization and improvement. Two fine new buildings were added to the palace — a gate tower, which still stands, although heavily restored in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and adjoining it to the east a chapel range of which only traces now survive. Both these buildings were designed to provide a measure of comfort and convenience which the older buildings lacked. Other improvements consisted of a new bay window and stair turret inserted into the north-west corner of the West Hall, a flight of stairs outside the west wall of the kitchen, and a general levelling and cobbling of the courtyard between the two halls. It was also at this date that a flight of steps leading down the courtyard from the gate-tower towards the south was constructed against the west side of the East Hall. The levelling of the courtyard and the construction of these steps necessitated the blocking of the lancet windows in the west wall of the East Hall.

In the chapel courtyard archaeological excavation in 1968-72 showed that large scale earth removal had taken place in the first half of the 15th century, and the area had then been back-filled. The reasons for this are obscure but almost certainly relate to Alnwick's building programme.

Further work during the fifteenth century included the building of a small kitchen block in the hall courtyard. This was some 5m square, built in stone with a brick floor and hearth and a central drain. Just above this kitchen was a stone-lined well.

In the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century the outer gate to the palace precinct was built. It bears the arms of Bishop William Smith (1496-1514).

LATER HISTORY

The sixteenth century was to see the slow, but inexorable decline of the medieval palace. In a period of rapid change created by the violent upheavals of the Reformation, the Bishops of Lincoln chose to stay at their other residences within the diocese, and the palace at Lincoln seems only to have been used occasionally after the mid-sixteenth century. Even by 1522 at the installation of Bishop Longland (1521-47) the palace was in a poor state of repair, and in 1536 during the Lincolnshire Rebellion the precinct was broken into and the palace suffered at the hands of the rebels. The extent of the damage is not known, but by 1541 it had presumably been rectified as Henry VIII and his queen Catharine Howard stayed there as guests of Bishop Longland on their way to York. Gervase Holles, the Lincolnshire antiquary

writing just before the Civil War, recorded that the coat of arms of Henry and Catherine was to be seen decorating the palace and its chapel, doubtless commemorating their visit of 1541.

The palace was still in a fit state for Bishop Neile (1614-17) to receive King James I at a banquet in March 1617, although slightly later in the seventeenth century large scale repairs were being undertaken by Bishop John Williams (1621-41). John Hacket, his biographer, described his restoration programme — “for although it did seem irreparable in the Dilapidations and Workmen did ask so much as the Neighbours of the Close did think it would deter the Master of it, yet in three years he brought it on, and up, to as much strength and comeliness as when it was first inhabited”. Williams even bought a collection of books “because he found a decay of Learning in those remote parts for want of good books” and “Timber was hewn out, and dispos’d in the Yard to make a capacious Room to hold these books but unkind Troubles stopp’d the advance of it so long, that the Timber came into the Hands of Souldiers to make fortifications, and the Books became a Prey to every Vultur that could catch them”. Williams, despite his repair work seems to have lived at his residence at Buckden in Huntingdonshire after the accession of Charles I in 1625.

In 1647, during the Civil War, a detailed survey of the Palace was carried out by three Parliamentary surveyors, and their description of the palace buildings provides us with an exceptionally important body of information about their state at this time. Thomas Boughton, John Robinson and William Nelson had been appointed to survey and assess the value of the buildings as a preliminary step towards the “sale of Archbishops and Bishops lands” by Parliament. The survey describes the “situation and site of the palace . . . it being included with a verve stronge stone wall of about 16 foote high having highe mounted longe walkes on the one syde, set with fruit trees, and is a greene courte, a bowlinge greene, orchard, a garden etc. conveniently seperated and divided with stone walls . . .” Each building is then described in turn and the value of its building materials and fittings assessed. “The totall of grownde, buildings and materials is £1587 12s 1d, which may bee estimated to bee the full value of the scite and seate of the grownd, materials, utilences etc. of the Pallace aforesayde, over and besydes the charge of taking downe”. The survey also gives some idea of the gradual process of decay — “the leade uppon the roof (of the Greate Kitchin) there hath beene aboute foure yeares since carried away by Captain Hotham, as wee are informed”, and later, “the most parte of the leade pipes about the house are cut off by one Mr. Emas, an alderman there, but cold shew noe warrante for his soe doinge” — this despite the presence of “Henry Mansford, of Lincolne Close an antient Bayliffe to the late Bishop and his predecessors (who) cleymeth by patent from Bishop Williams dated 17 November 1641 the keepinge of the Pallace there, and the yearly salerie of £3 for the terme of his owne lyffe and his sonne”.

The survey was undertaken just in time, for in June of the following year the palace was caught up in the harsh reality of the Civil War. In the face of a large body of Royalist troops under the command of Sir Philip Monckton, the small parliamentary garrison of Lincoln, thirty men under their officer Captain Bee, was forced to retreat into and defend the palace precinct. The royalist troops overcame the garrison with little difficulty and set fire to the palace. Although the extent of the damage is not recorded, it is likely to have been very severe for many of the buildings in the Close were badly damaged during the Civil War, especially in the battle of 1644, and this incident is not likely to have been the only time at which the palace suffered damage.

An engraving produced by Samuel Buck in 1726 shows the palace almost completely ruined. The West Hall and East Hall, still complete in 1647, were now simply shells. The only building to have survived was the Alnwick chapel, which had been bought in about 1652, along with the rest of the palace, by a Colonel Berry, later to become one of Cromwell’s major-generals. Berry had turned the chapel into a private house and as the Buck view shows had divided the chapel into two storeys. A range of stables had been built down the west side of the West Hall, and the Alnwick Tower altered.

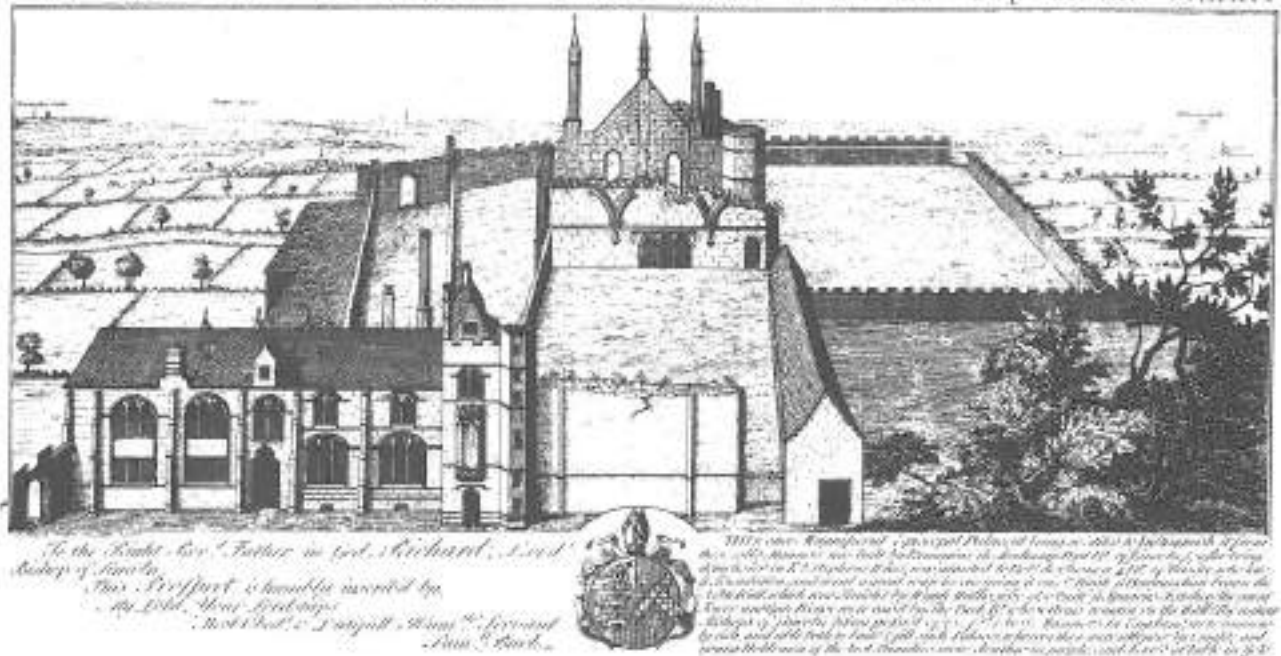


Fig. 2 The Bishop's Palace from the north by Samuel Buck, 1726

In 1726, the year in which Buck published his view, the chapel was almost totally demolished after Bishop Reynolds had given permission to the Dean and Chapter to use the palace ruins as a stone quarry for repairs to the Cathedral. The Alwick Tower was also badly damaged at this date. This decision in effect destroyed much of what still remained despite the ravages of the Civil War.

In 1727 the ruined palace and its grounds were leased by the bishop to Edward Nelthorpe, who rebuilt or enlarged a house on the west side of the grounds which had formerly been leased to James Debia. A renewal of Nelthorpe's lease in February 1733 allowed "... the tenant to make use of timber, brick, tiles of the old palace and of its stones of the old tower for repairing the dwelling house". This gradual process of destruction and decay continued throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, and a series of engravings published during that period shows how badly the palace suffered. An engraving published in 1811 shows the top storey of Alwick Tower in ruins, and Buckler's view of 1809 shows the chamber and pantry range at the south end of the West Hall roofless and overgrown. On 29th June 1791, John Byng on a tour of Lincolnshire wrote in his diary "... I went to view the ruins of the old bishops palace, which I was shewn by a silly gardener; and if a sight of caverns, sutteranes, doorways and ruins, is wish'd for, here is enough to serve an antiquary for a week: a glut likewise for a draughtsman. I left no corner unexplored; the gardener remark'd 'that those were fine places before they were inherited'; any words at random the lower people use. ... now within these walls, in what he calls the old bishops dining room, has the gardener turned in hares, who breed abundantly. Some of the inner grounds the gardener has fill'd; the rest is overgrown by weeds, elder-trees etc. and the walls are cover'd by wild flow'ring plants. This place might be adorn'd; and would then be visited, and admired as the completest parcell of ruins in the kingdom'.

In 1838 the lessee of the palace, Charles Mainwaring began a scheme of improvement to the medieval palace which was reported in the local newspaper. "Very extensive alterations are being made ... In addition to restoration of certain parts and the removal of the rubbish (the accumulation of centuries) from the large vaults beneath ... the worthy owner ... has pulled down the old stables which occupied a most unseemly situation ... and has agreed with Mr. Durance to build new ones on the south side of the entrance gate in a beautiful style of gothic architecture, which will greatly improve the views in front of the house; for now ... opens at once in all its splendour, the ruins of the spacious dining-room of the old palace, and though little remains of this now but the walls and mutilated window frames the profusion of

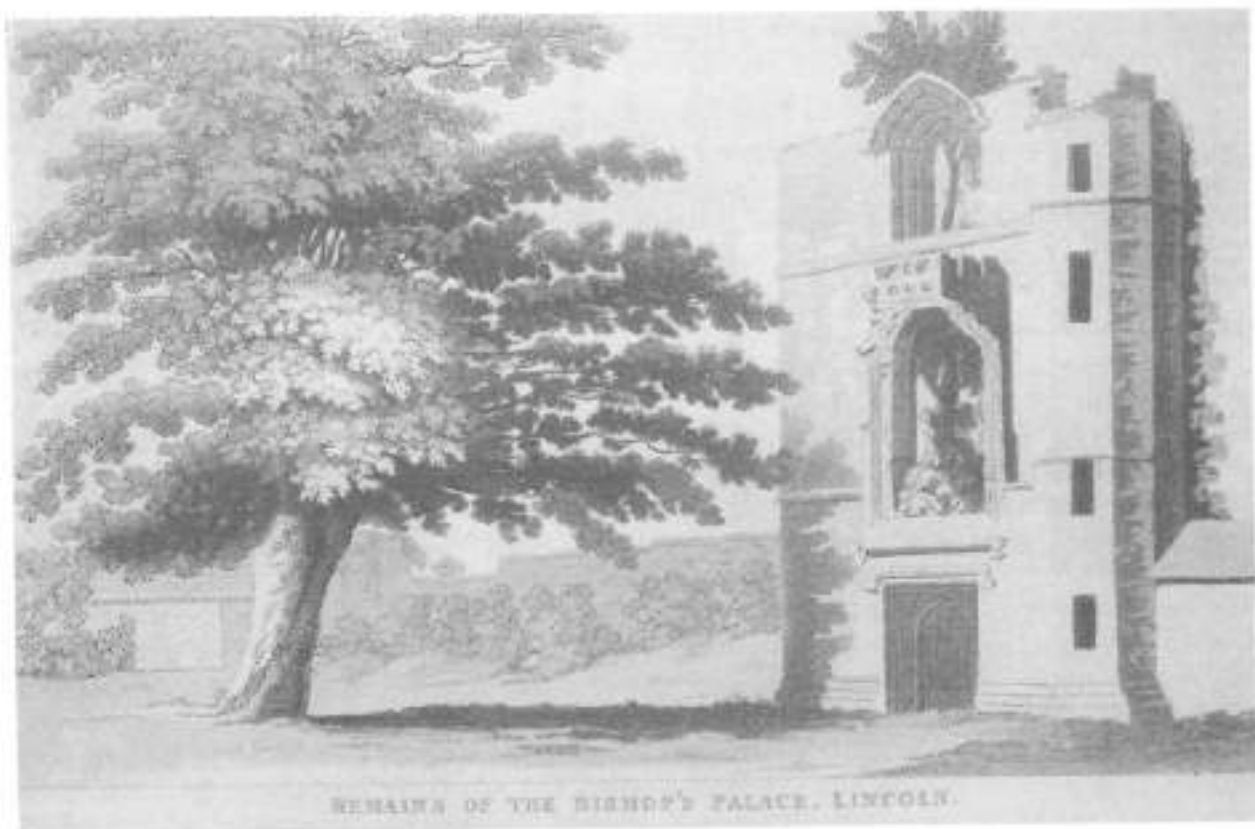


Fig. 3 The Alnwick Tower from the north-west, 1826

richly sculptured caps, bases, spandrels, columns etc. that have recently dug out from among the ruins, afford ample evidence of its by-gone splendour". Although well intentioned, Mainwaring in effect destroyed at a stroke a good deal of archaeological information crucial to the understanding of the development of the medieval palace, in the process of 'restoration'. Mainwaring's structural work, however, doubtless did help "to stay the destructive progress of time" in the words of Edward Willson, the Lincoln historian who published an important account of the palace in 1850.

Interest in the palace again revived during the episcopate of Bishop Wordsworth (1869-1885). In 1840 the diocese of Lincoln had been reduced in size, and the Bishop's main residence, hitherto at Buckden in Huntingdonshire, was moved to Riseholme, a few kilometres north of Lincoln. Wordsworth wanted to sell Riseholme and build a house on the site of the old palace, but his scheme never materialized. The Alnwick tower, however, was restored at this time to provide rooms for the 'Scholae Cancellarii', the first stone being laid on 24th February 1876. Wordsworth's plan was later taken up by Bishop King (1885-1910). Riseholme was sold, and the proceeds went towards a new house at the old palace, designed by Ewan Christian in Tudor style. It incorporated Edward Nelthorpe's old house, to which was added a mansard roof, and was begun in 1886. The chamber block at the south end of the old West Hall "long a roofless ruin" was restored as a chapel. The bishop moved into his new home in March 1888, and the chapel was consecrated in October of that year. The Lincoln and Nottingham Architectural Society commented on the house somewhat disparagingly — "we regret to have to describe it as devoid of architectural feeling, unpleasing in its outline, and poverty-stricken in its details". As to the chapel, the Society felt that "the external appearance of the chapel cannot be commended. The whole building has a very squat effect owing to the extreme lowness of the pitch of the roof, while the entire absence of windows or any break whatsoever in the north wall . . . is greatly to be lamented".

In 1945 the bishop's residence again moved, to Bishop's House in Eastgate, and Bishop King's house became the Diocesan House and a conference and retreat centre. In 1954, the ruins of the old palace were taken into the care of the Ministry of Public Building and Works, later the Department of the Environment, and the site is now open to the public.

THE BUILDINGS

THE EAST HALL (see plan on pages 8-9)

Bishop Chesney's twelfth-century range, the East Hall, consists of two halls — upper and lower — with a range of chambers added at a later date in the twelfth century at their southern end. Little survives today of the upper hall, except for the main entrance and part of a window in the west wall, and the much altered wall arcade in the north and east walls — sufficient perhaps to give some impression of the overall design. In 1647, the Parliamentary survey described the East Hall range as "a long range of Freestone buildinge called the dyninge room range . . . conteynge by estimacion 30 foot in breadth, 114 foote longe having Faire cellars underneath vaulted with stone, and over the dyninge roome are garret chambers, all in good repayre". The roof was covered with lead.

At the south end of the hall was a large **chamber** with a spiral staircase at its south-west corner, and a fireplace in the west wall. To the east was the **wardrobe** with two stone-vaulted **garderobes** beyond, much restored during the fifteenth century. The layout of these rooms at the south end of the hall is still quite clear, although little survives.

On either side of the lower hall, the ground level in the courtyard and the chapel courtyard has been considerably raised since the twelfth century. This change in ground level necessitated the blocking of the **lancet** windows along both the east and west sides of the hall in the fifteenth century, and as the 1647 survey so described it, the hall now has the appearance of a cellar, accentuated by its fine stone barrel vault. But originally it would have served as a hall. Features of interest are the large fireplace built into the west wall, the well in the north wall and the remains of a fine spiral staircase leading to the upper hall in the south-east corner. To the south of the hall lies another large chamber, with wardrobe and garderobes on its eastern side repeating the arrangement in the upper hall range above.

At the northern end of the lower hall, the natural limestone bedrock had been quarried away by the twelfth-century builders to a depth of about 2 metres before building began. The east wall of the hall is here half vertical rock face, and half built masonry. Presumably the reason was to create a level platform terraced into the side of the hill. Archaeological excavations here in 1968-72 showed that the line of the east wall of the East Hall followed a natural cleft in the bedrock, which may account for its curious alignment.

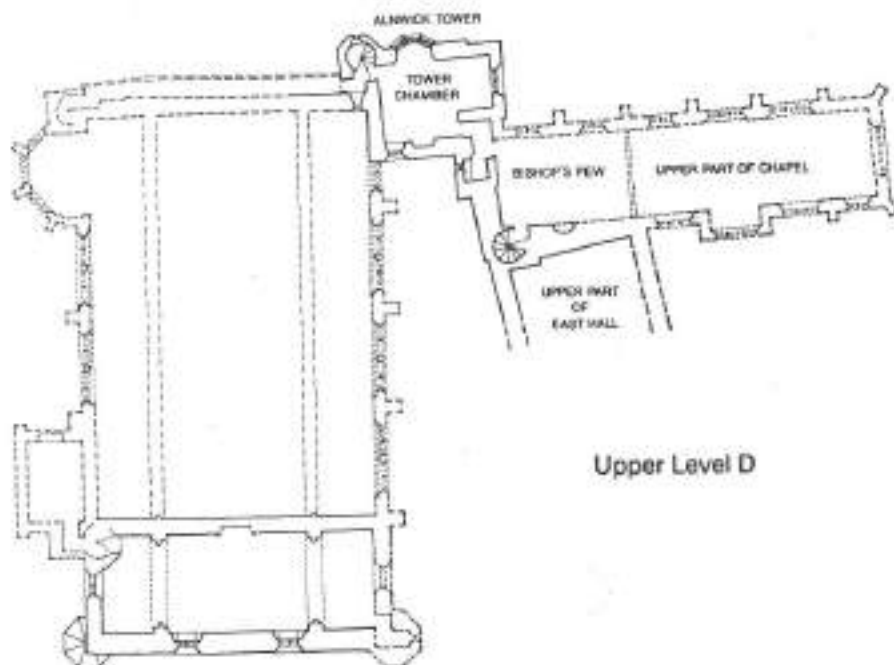
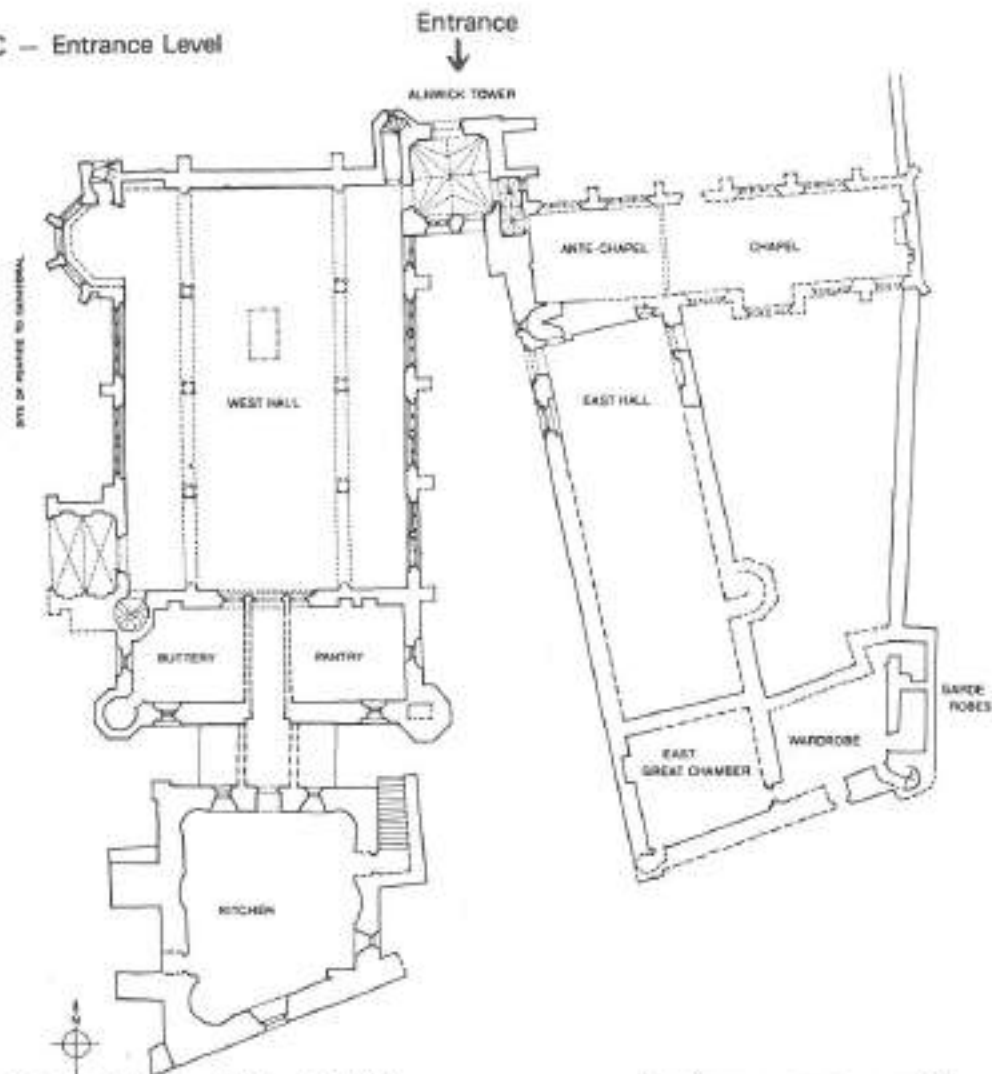
THE WEST HALL (see plan on pages 8-9)

The splendid ceremonial west hall, begun by Bishop Hugh of Avalon in the late twelfth century, and completed by Hugh of Wells before 1235, would have been one of the most magnificent buildings in the city of Lincoln during the Middle Ages. Its description by the parliamentary surveyors in 1647, before it was destroyed, is of great interest. "The greate hall is very faire, large, lightsome and stronge ffreestone buildinge in good repaire, beinge 60 foot of assise in breath, and 90 foot of assize longe, the forme of the buildinge consisteth of one large middle allye, and two out iles on eyther syde with eight gray marble pillars bearinge up the arches of ffreestone windows very full of stories in paynted glasse of the Kings of this land. The ffyre is used in the middle of the hall. The roofe of very stronge tymber covered all over with leade".

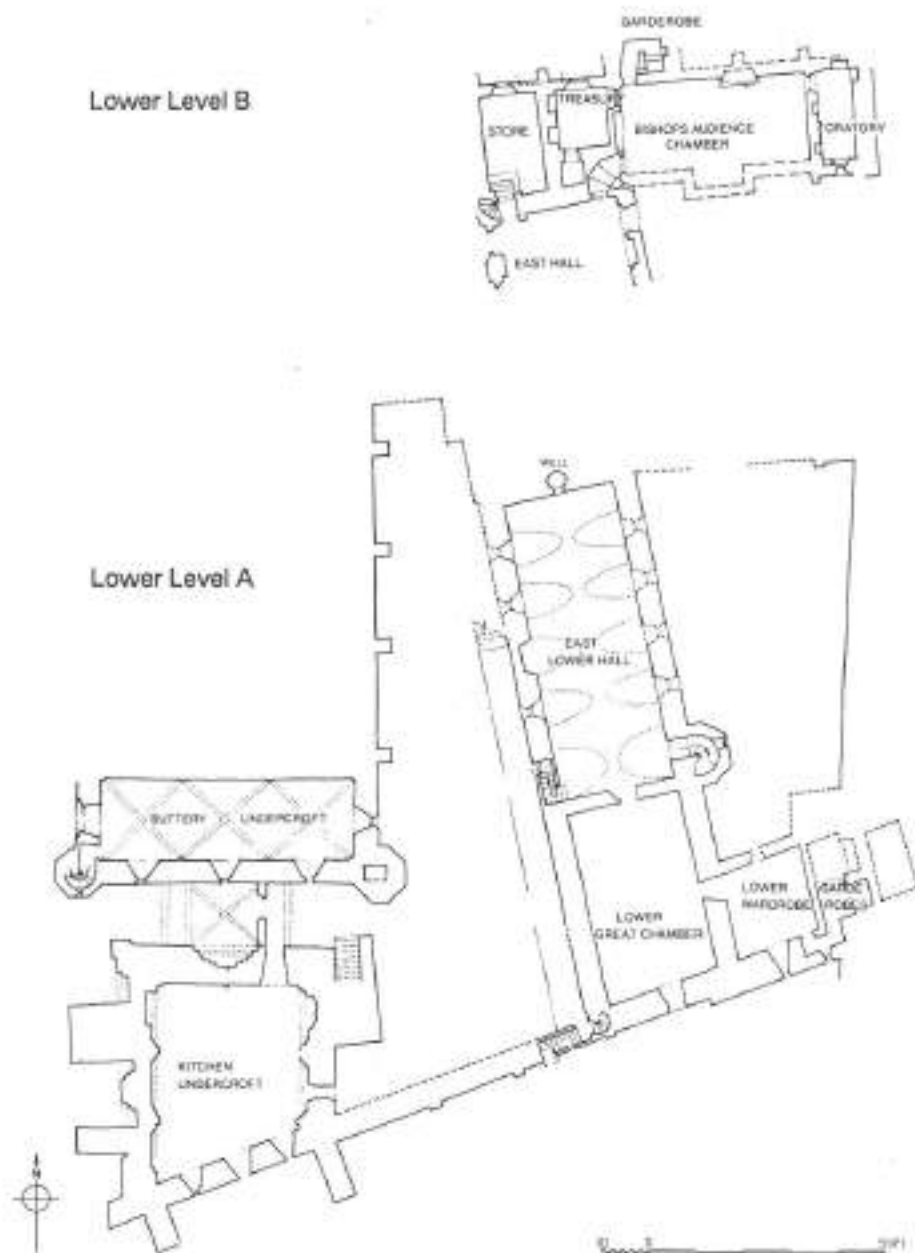
Gervase Holles recorded the details of the stained glass in the windows of the hall in about 1636. The bay window inserted at the north-west corner of the hall by Bishop Alnwick was filled with glass depicting the figures of English kings. In the other windows were displayed the coats of arms of the different kingdoms of the medieval Christian world.

Today only the shell of this building remains. The lines of the "two out iles" are still to be seen with the positions of each of the six piers together with the position of the central hearth marked out in the grass-covered floor of the hall. As the survey makes clear this arrangement gave the impression of an aisled church nave. The **responds** to the arcades, which still partly survive in the north and south walls are made of grey Purbeck marble. The piers consisted of a central column surrounded by four large and four small shafts, similar to those in the

Level C – Entrance Level



Plan of Bishop's Palace, 1974 – Upper Levels D and E



Plan of Bishop's Palace, 1974 — Lower Levels A and B

Cathedral nave. The hall was lit with pairs of twin-light windows along both outer walls, and the remains of these can still be seen. The lower parts of these windows, below transom level would have been closed with shutters, the upper parts glazed. In Bishop Alnwick's time the lower half of each window was blocked.

At the south-west corner of the hall was the main entrance consisting of a magnificent two-storey porch with a stone vault and at first floor level "... a faire chamber ... and there a chimney and faire windowes, and well covered with leade, and on the rooffe strong tymer".

The hall was the ceremonial core of the palace in the Middle Ages. It served, along with its kitchen to demonstrate the social standing and munificence of the bishop. At the north end of the hall was the bishop's "high table", perhaps raised on a wooden dais. The bay window in the north-west corner inserted by Bishop Alnwick in the fifteenth century was intended to highlight this end of the hall. Down both sides of the hall were wooden tables for the officers and members of the household and visitors.

Facing the high table, at the south end of the hall were three service doors. These were blocked up when the chamber block at this end of the hall was converted into a chapel by Bishop King in 1886-88. The central doorway opened into a passage to the kitchen lying beyond this block to the south. On either side were the doors to the **buttery** and **pantry** from which were issued ale and bread and other provisions. Passage, buttery and pantry formed the ground-floor of this block. The medieval windows at this level still survive, but were blocked at some time before the 1886-88 conversion.

Above, at first floor level, was a large state chamber with a fireplace on the south wall. Access to this chamber was by a doorway, now blocked, to the west of the three service doors, which led to a spiral staircase. This stairway also gave access to the chamber above the porch and entrance to the hall. Below the service level was a stone vaulted undercroft or cellar range, reached by a spiral staircase in a turret at the south-west corner of the buttery. On the south-east corner of the block was an octagonal garderobe turret, now damaged, which served the chamber. Excavations on the garderobe pit at the base of the turret in 1968-72 produced a group of mid-fifteenth century pottery, with fish, meat and bird bones from its final filling, showing that it had gone out of use sometime in the mid-fifteenth century.

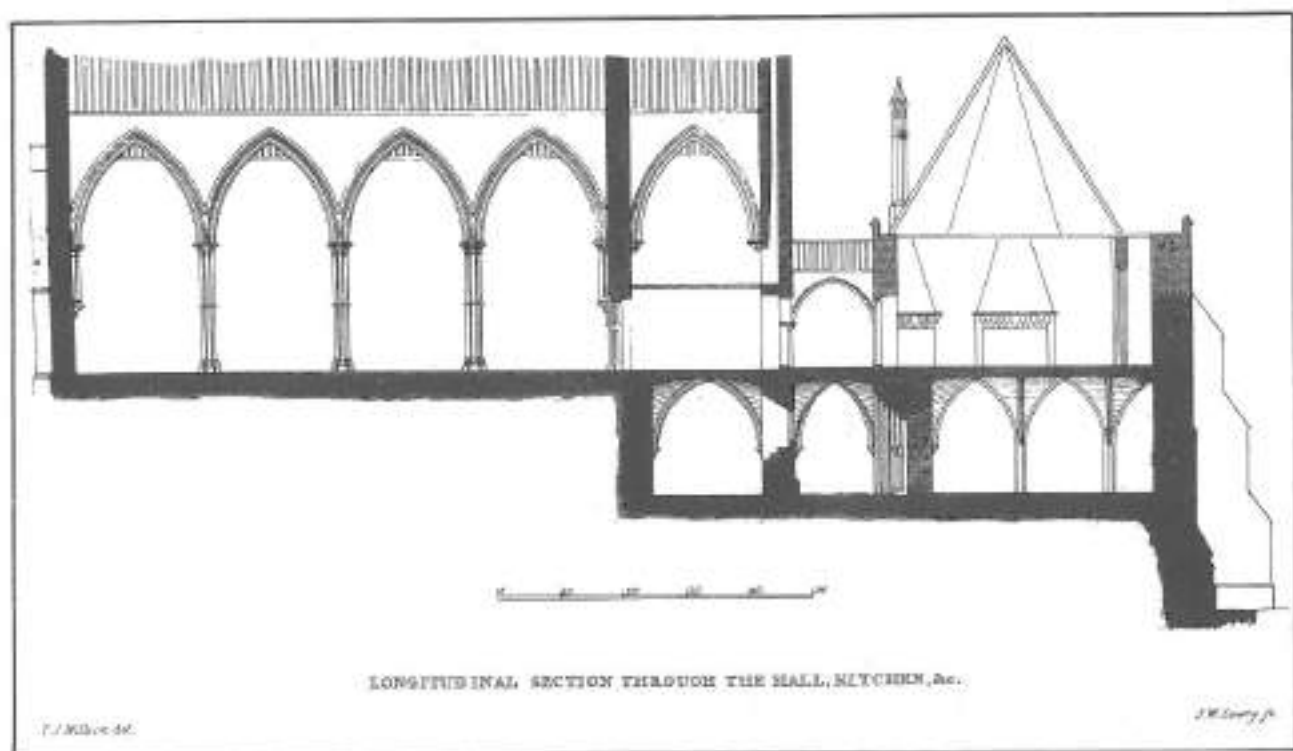


Fig. 5 Section through the West Hall and kitchen by E.J. Willson, 1850

THE KITCHEN

To the south of the west hall lay the great kitchen. The kitchen itself was at hall level, and joined to the hall by a passageway, flanked by larders, carried on an elaborate bridge which still survives. Below the kitchen was a vaulted **undercroft** or cellar. Traces of the vaulting still remain. The kitchen itself is "of Freestone Buildinge with foure chymneys and an open rooffe of a greate height: the forme is of 8 cants 36 foote diameter, being over and uppon a stone vaulte. Allsoe with a brewhowse under the vaulte, very necessary coveniente for such uses, havinge some vessells and a furnace of leade . . . the tymber uppon the sayd rooffe is by estimacion 6 tunne." Various alterations have been made to the original construction. Bishop Alnwick built an external staircase on the east wall to provide secondary access to the kitchen from the hall courtyard, and at an unknown date alterations to the vault of the "brewhouse below" necessitated the blocking of a northern doorway, which was then moved a little to the



The West Hall from the north-west with fifteenth-century bay windows in foreground and Bishop King's chapel beyond



The south side of the Great Kitchen

east. Massive buttresses on the west and south sides were necessary to support the building. The kitchen itself had five fireplaces, but only their back walls faced with tile now survive. Stukeley's view of the palace in 1726 shows two chimneys still standing on the west side of the building.

THE ALNWICK RANGE

THE GATE-TOWER

Bishop Alnwick's fine three-storey gate-tower, with his arms displayed above its entrance, was built during his episcopate between 1436 and 1449. The ground floor served as a gate-passage with doors giving access to the West Hall and the chapel range, and to the south the hall courtyard and the East Hall. It is still in use today as the entrance to the building complex and the outer door with its design of tracery in the Perpendicular style is original. In the north-east corner of the West Hall a stone staircase gives access to the main chamber of the Tower at first floor level. Its fine oriel window which forms such a distinctive feature of the north side of the gate-tower was heavily restored in the nineteenth century. A drawing of 1784 by Grimm shows how badly the window and the upper storey of the tower had been damaged since Buck's view of 1724. On the south wall of this chamber is a stone fireplace, while in the south-east corner a door gave access to a garderobe and the Bishop's private pew at the west end of the chapel. At second storey level, again much restored, was another private chamber with fireplace and garderobe.

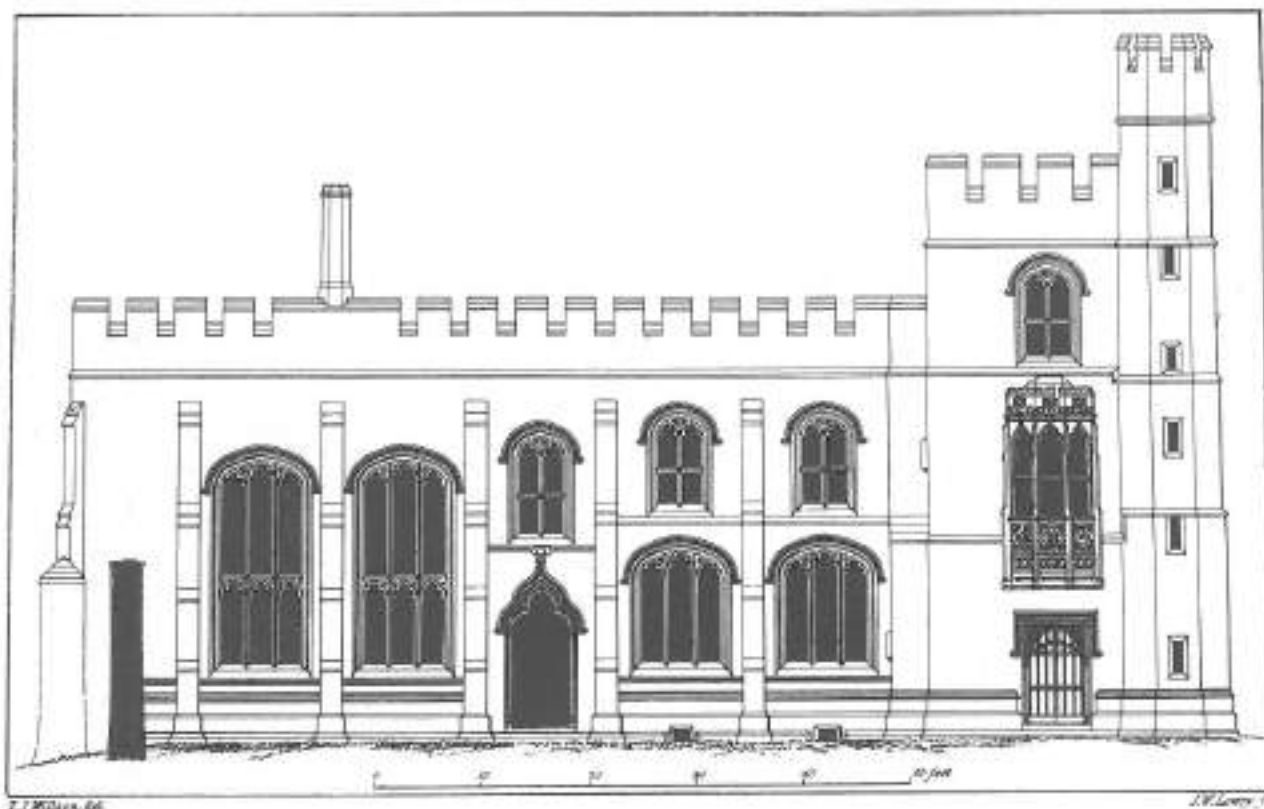


Fig. 6 Reconstruction of Alnwick's Chapel and Tower from the north by E.J. Willson, 1850, based on Buck's view of 1726 and surviving remains

THE CHAPEL

The chapel adjoining Alnwick's gate-tower was almost totally demolished in the few years after Buck's engraving of 1724. Today little remains of what was once a notable fifteenth-century building, but it is possible to reconstruct it with tolerable accuracy. The difference in



The Hall courtyard from the south with Alnwick's gate-tower beyond



The remains of Bishop Alnwick's chapel range with Mainwaring's stable range of about 1838 behind

ground level to north and south may complicate the picture for the visitor, but the two main elements to the range consisted of a ground floor audience chamber with a large bay window on the south side looking onto the chapel courtyard and on the north wall a fireplace similar to those in the tower chambers. A garderobe survives in the north-west corner of the chamber. At the east end is a small stone-vaulted oratory or private chapel with cupboards let into the thickness of the walls. At the west end of the chamber beyond an elaborate canopied sideboard recess was a strong room, either a treasury or document store. Access to this ground floor chamber — the bishop's private accommodation — was via a stairway at the north-east corner of the East Hall. To the west of the treasury was a store-room.

Above these rooms was the chapel with ante-chapel at the west end and above this the Bishop's private pew. Apart from the lower part of the large east window little of this now survives. The main entrance was in the middle of the north side, while a spiral staircase with a recessed handrail led from the upper end of the East Hall into the antechapel and private pew above. The form of the handrail which is a distinctive fifteenth-century feature, can be matched on Alnwick's kitchen staircase, the stairs from the bay window in the West Hall and in the Alnwick tower.

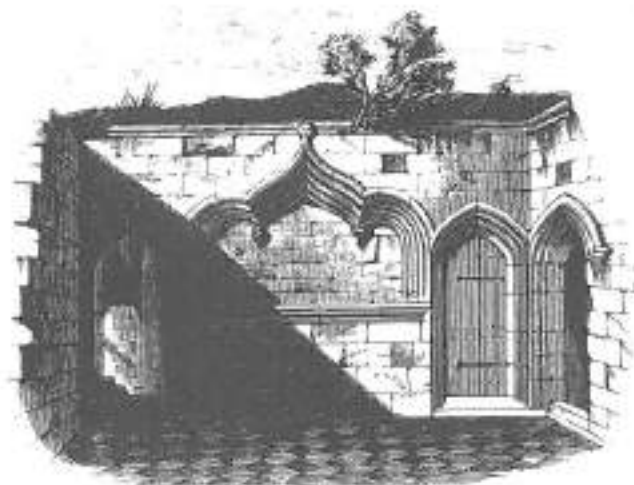
The reconstruction drawing by Edward Willson after Buck's engraving of 1724 gives a reasonably accurate impression of the north front of the chapel range. As to its fittings, Gervase Holles recorded between 1634 and 1642 "in ye Chapell in every window memorialls of ye saide Alnwick, as

'O Benedicte Satis Flos et Rosa Virginitatis
Luminis ad regnum duc Alnwick, Virgo, Wilelmum'
or 'O Lux Aeterna, qua fulget turma superna
Post vitae cursum rapias Alnwick Tibi sursum'"

This complex, gate-tower and chapel range, at the time it was built formed up-to-date and convenient accommodation for the bishop. It is possible that it replaced an earlier domestic chapel range, but at present there is no archaeological evidence for such an earlier arrangement.

OTHER BUILDINGS

Little is known of other buildings within the precinct. The Parliamentary Survey of 1647 describes a range of stone buildings to the west of the West Hall as "being builte uppon the Palace Wall conteyninge 8 bayes of buildinge, and consistinge in all of rooms and chambers over, and garret in the rooffe, being 12 roomes." According to Willson this range lay on the south side of Bishop King's house, but no trace of it now survives. Further archaeological work within the precinct may provide more evidence of buildings in the future.



Drawing of the west end of Bishop Alnwick's audience chamber by E.J. Willson, 1850

GLOSSARY

Crenellation	—	battlements along wall
Lancet	—	long narrow window with pointed head
Wardrobe	—	storage rooms for clothes
Garderobe	—	toilet
Chamber	—	room
Respond	—	half pillar attached to wall to support an arch
Transom	—	horizontal bar of stone in window
Buttery	—	wine and beer store
Pantry	—	bread store
Undercroft	—	basement or cellar

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WRITTEN BY

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City and County Museum, Lincoln

May 1980

LOCATION MAP



INFORMATION

For information about admission charges, opening times and other facilities, contact The Custodian, Bishop's Palace, Minster Yard, Lincoln (Lincoln (0522) 27468) or Lincoln City Council: Information Office, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln (Lincoln (0522) 32151).