

TO THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF WIGAN,

ALDERMAN JAMES SMITH, J.P.

DURING WHOSE OCCUPANCY

OF THE CIVIC CHAIR

THE NEW COUNCIL CHAMBER

TO WHICH THESE PAGES RELATE

WAS OPENED

THIS DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE COMPILER.

FOR the first time in the history of the reformed Corporation of Wigan, the Municipal Council is to be housed in a manner befitting the age, reputation, and dignity of the governing body of the Ancient and Loyal Borough. Up to 1868 the Council met in a room, altogether inadequate for the purpose, in the now demolished New Town Hall, which stood in the Market Place, and which consisted of a curious combination of shops and public offices.

In 1868 the Borough Courts and Offices were opened, and they included the Council Chamber which has been in use to the present time, and which, of course, represented a vast improvement over the old arrangements. But the room was not designed for a legislative assembly. It was intended to have been for purposes of Police Parade, but it is a singular fact that there are not more than one or two important rooms in the whole building which are in use for the purpose which the original scheme of the Architect contemplated.

Not only was the form of room awkward for adaption to a Council Chamber, but the model taken for the fittings was of an antiquated type. The

result was a great deal too much table, scanty passages around it, and inconvenient crowding when all the members of the Corporation wished to take part in deliberation.

The New Council Chamber is the latest instance of the application of one of the principal apartments in the building to a purpose altogether different from that for which it was devised. Originally its chief aim was to have been to provide accommodation for Quarter Sessions, and it was fitted with a jury-box and other details in which the Court presided over by the Recorder differs from a Magistrates' Justice Room. On the removal of the Moot Hall, which stood at the junction of Wallgate with the Market Place, the County Justices had to be provided with a Court, and they continued tenants of the Corporation for this room until the opening last year of their handsome premises in Crawford Street.

There can be no doubt that the Members of the Corporation generally were glad of the opportunity of increasing the number of rooms available for town's purposes only, and it is equally certain that the way of doing this which most commended itself to them was to convert the Court into a Council

Chamber, leaving the room hitherto devoted to that purpose applicable to other uses, while the Court of Quarter Sessions had already found a home in the apartment at first intended for Petty Sessions only.

There were many suggestions as to the method of making a change; eventually the disposition of the seats shown on the accompanying ground plan was adopted, and on the suggestion of one of the Corporation Officials it was decided that the scheme of decoration should be fundamentally heraldic, so that while contributing to the general tasteful effect, the windows, walls, and ceiling should contain an interesting record relating generally to the history of the Municipalities of the County Palatine, and especially to that of Wigan and its neighbourhood.

On each side of the building the principal mural decoration consists of Arms of the various Lancashire Boroughs, prominence being given on the wall opposite the Mayor's chair to four of the old towns holding grants of Quarter Sessions, and to Preston, as the seat of the County Council of Lancashire. Shields are also introduced, containing as complete a list as the compiler could obtain of the names of the Mayors of Wigan, some of whom were of great dignity, from 1409 to 1836, when the great reform of

Municipal Corporations took place. From that year onward the names of the Mayors will be found underneath the frieze surrounding the chamber. On the north-west wall are recorded the names of the present Aldermen and Councillors of Wigan, who are the last representatives of the old wards as constituted in 1836.

The Ceiling has been devoted to the Arms of old families now or at some period connected with the Borough. Many are extinct, and some have an exceptional connection with the Town. For instance, there are six Bishops of Chester, who were also Rectors of Wigan, a reminder of the days when the question of distance was not allowed to interfere with the desirableness of associating a poor bishopric with a rich rectorate and lordship of the manor. The arms of another Rector are those of the famous Thomas Linacre, a great English scholar of the Renaissance.

In preparing the designs for the Ceiling, a liberal use has been made of the works of Gregson and Baines, and other genealogical and heraldic authorities, and it is gratifying to know that for this purpose it has not been necessary to proceed beyond local collections of books, for all the information

required has been found either in the Reference Department of the Wigan Public Library or in the valuable Library of the Hon. and Rev. Canon Bridgeman, Rector of Wigan, who has given most serviceable assistance in this compilation.

The chief feature of the decorations remains to be described. When the room was used as a Court it was lighted entirely from the roof, but it was found that the south-east wall was admirably adapted for the introduction of windows, and no form of ornamentation can be so effective in a Hall of this kind as stained glass. The Windows have been so constructed that in the event of it being determined at any future time to remove the Council Chamber into such a Town Hall as Wigan might desire to possess, this can be done with great facility as far as they are concerned. In the centre light the place of honour is given to the Arms of the County Palatine of Lancaster, and a similarly prominent place is accorded in the dexter and sinister lights, to the Seal of the Wigan Statute Merchants, A.D. 1455, and the Seal of the Wigan County Council.

Wigan has no Arms in the ordinary use of the phrase, but the Common Seal of the Town has been

generally accepted in substitution, and when banners or anything of the like have been required, the Seal has been taken as the heraldic embodiment of such dignity as the Borough may claim in this relationship. The Statute Merchant Seal contains a portrait, supposed to be of King Edward the Second, and, whatever doubt there may be upon this point, it cannot be questioned that it was in actual use in 1455, for it is preserved on a document executed in that year. The Seal of the Town peculiarly adapts itself to heraldic display, and Wigan may be better without Arms, if the adoption involves the disuse of the quaint design which now serves its purpose.

Every care has been taken that the whole of the Arms contained in the windows shall be heraldically accurate, and at the same time distinctly representative of local people, who with great kindness have assisted in the work, and must be considered largely responsible for the bearings assumed on their behalf.

The Room is lighted by Wenham Lights, specially designed by Messrs. Mercier and Corlett, of Wigan; the Windows are the production of Messrs. Shrigley and Hunt, of London and

Lancaster; the Mural Decorations and Ceiling have been done by Mr. Gaskell, of Wigan; Messrs. Pendlebury and Ainscough, of Wigan, supplied the Upholstery and Fittings; the Woodwork and Carving are the handiwork of Messrs. Hampson and Sons, of Wigan; and the whole undertaking has been under the supervision of Mr. William Bolton, the Borough Engineer, to all of whom, as also particularly to Mr. Edward Edwardson, the Assistant Borough Engineer, the Compiler begs to tender his grateful acknowledgements.

Wigan Public Library,
October, 1890.

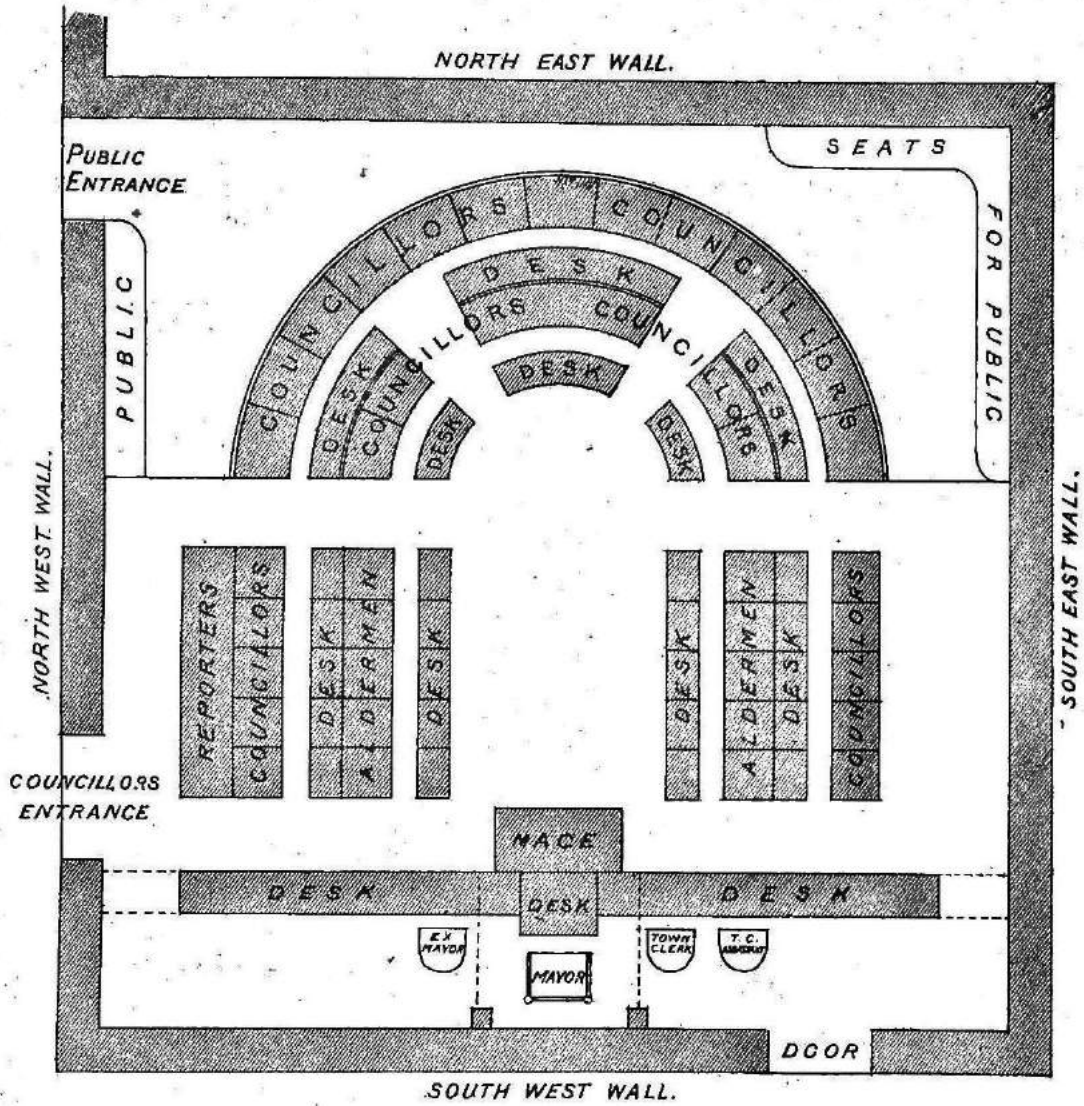
H. T. F.

WIGAN
COUNTY COUNCIL
CHAMBER.

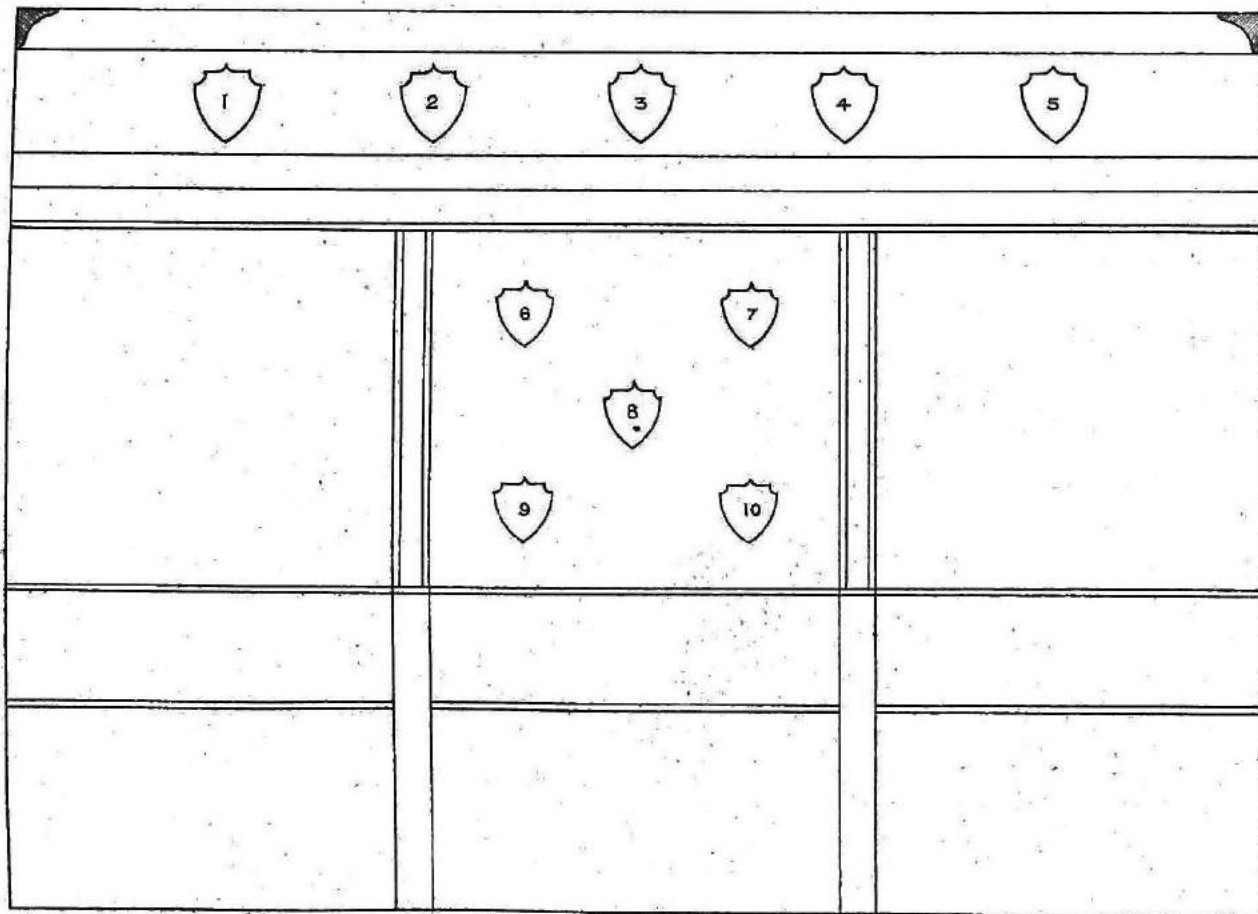
SKETCH
ILLUSTRATIONS.

1890.

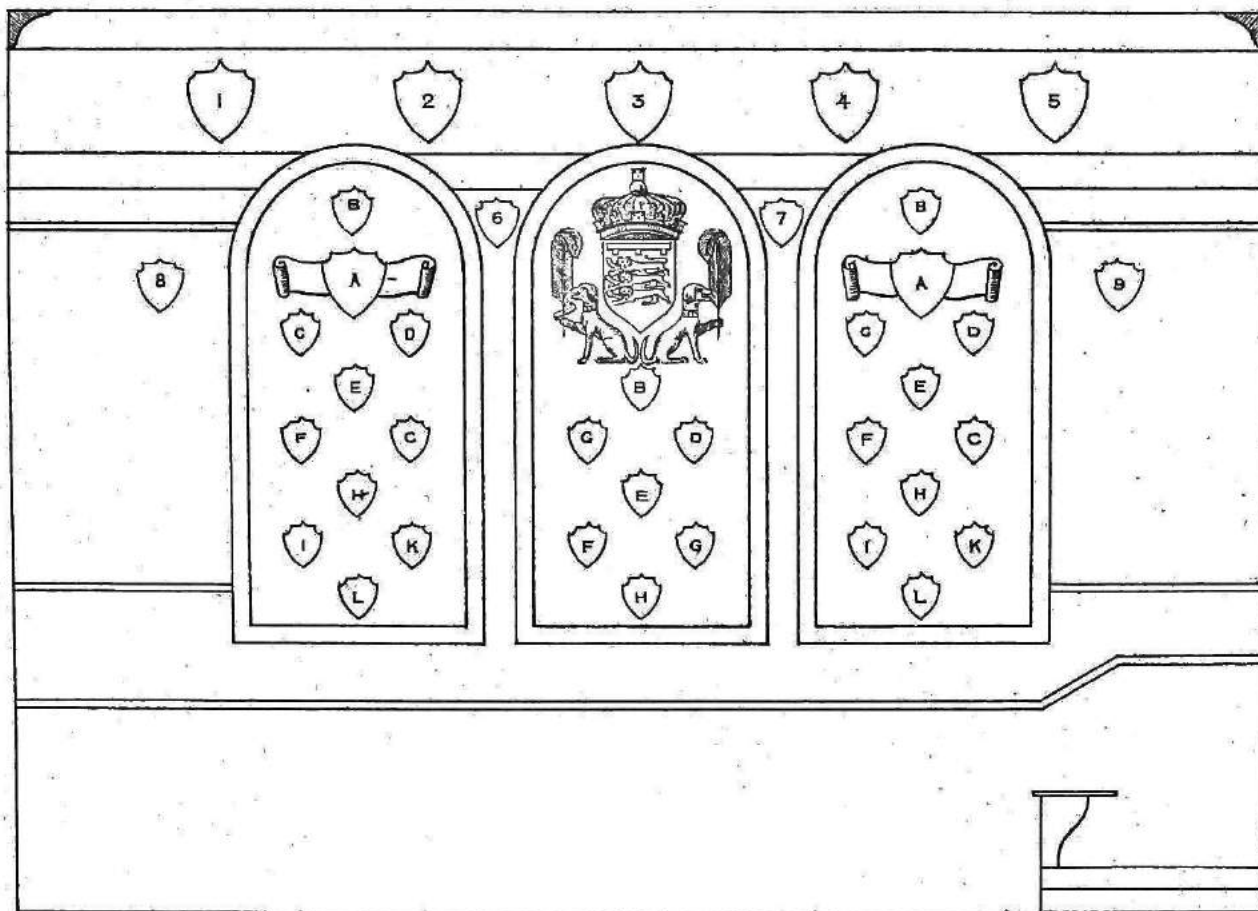
COUNCIL CHAMBER GROUND PLAN.



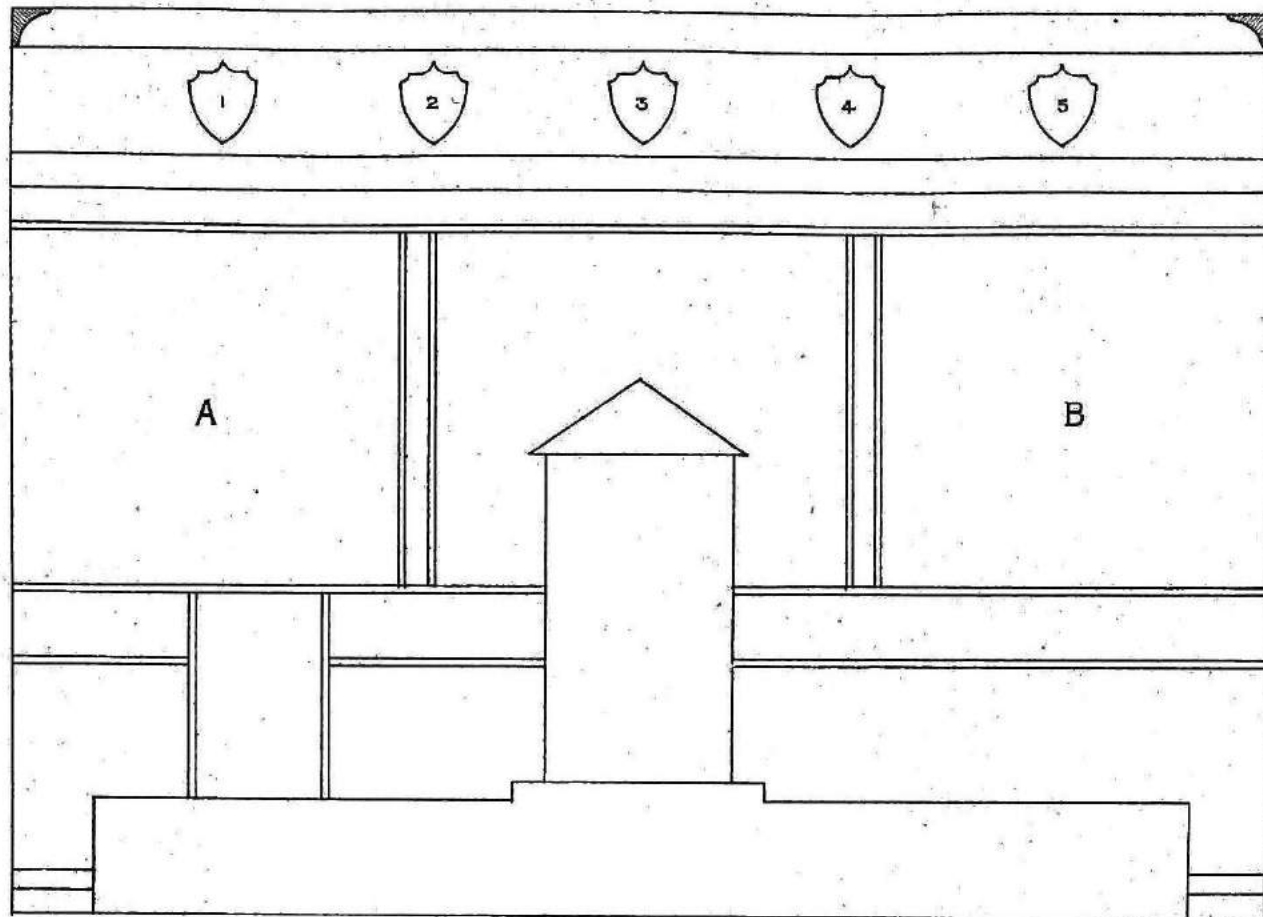
❧ NORTH EAST WALL ❧



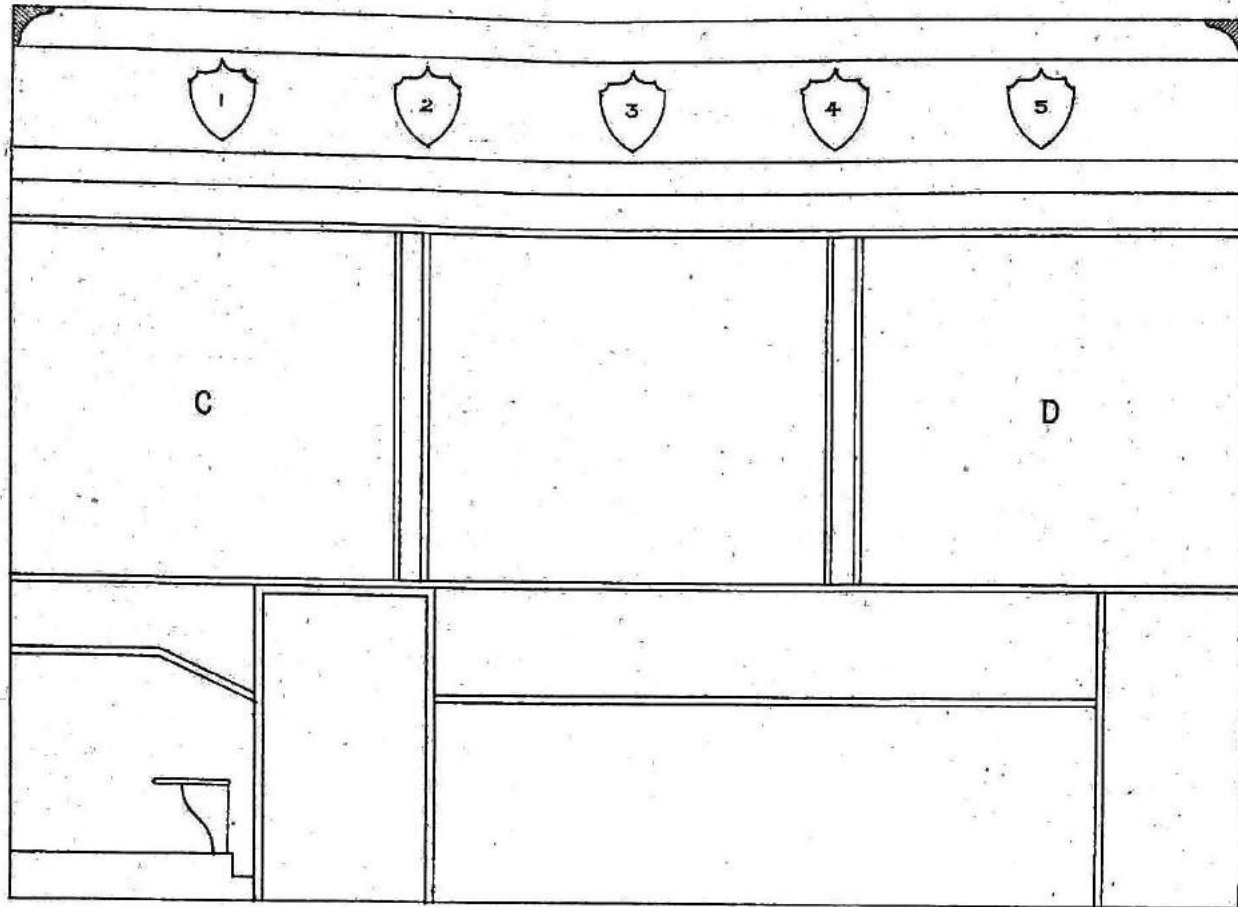
SOUTH EAST WALL.



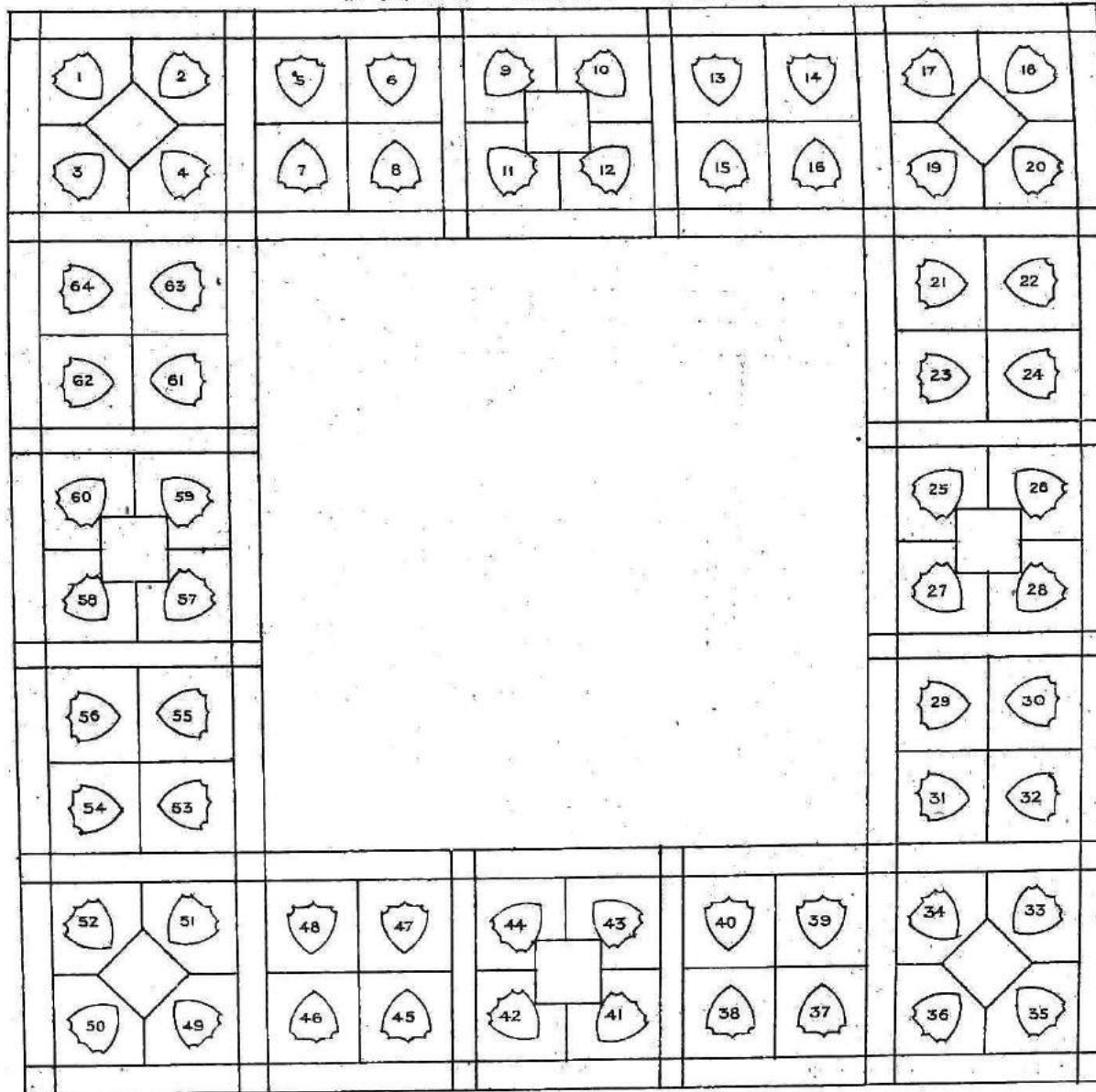
☉ SOUTH WEST WALL. ☽



❧ NORTH WEST WALL. ❧



NORTH EAST WALL



CEILING.

N.W. WALL

S.E. WALL

SOUTH WEST WALL

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TO

SKETCHES.

NORTH-EAST WALL.

- 1 Arms of the Borough of Burnley.
- 2 " " Blackburn.
- 3 " " Salford.
- 4 " " Oldham.
- 5 " " Rochdale.
- 6 Arms of the City of Liverpool.
- 7 " " Manchester.
- 8 Arms of the Borough of Preston.
- 9 " " Wigan.
- 10 " " Bolton.

SOUTH-EAST WALL,

- 1 Arms of the Borough of Barrow-in-Furness.
- 2 " " Accrington.
- 3 " " Ashton-under-Lyne.
- 4 " " Middleton.
- 5 " " Bacup.
- 6 " " Darwen.
- 7 " " Nelson.
- 8 " " Blackpool.
- 9 " " Mossley.

SOUTH-EAST WALL.

ARMS IN THE WINDOWS.

DEXTER LIGHT.

- A Statute Merchant Seal of Wigan, A.D. 1455.
- B Henry Woodcock, Esq., J.P.
- C Humphrey J. Walmesley, Esq., J.P. (of Westwood).
- D Charles Scarisbrick, Esq. (of Southport).
- E W. E. Murray Tomlinson, Esq., M.P.
- F Richard Walmesley, Esq., J.P. (of Bath).
- G Charles Clifton Dicconson, Esq. (of Wrightington).
- H Herbert Woodcock, Esq., J.P.
- I Roger Leigh, Esq., J.P.
- K Mrs. Eleanor Starkie Letterewe Bankes (of Winstanley).
- L The Hon. Edward Kenyon, J.P.

CENTRE LIGHT.

- A Arms of the County Palatine of Lancaster.
- B The Hon. and Rev. Canon George Thomas Orlando Bridgeman.

CENTRE LIGHT.—CONTINUED.

- C The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.
- D The Right Hon. the Earl of Lathom.
- E The Right Hon. the Earl of Crawford.
- F Thomas Taylor, Esq., J.P.
- G Francis Sharp Powell, Esq., M.P.
- H Captain Henry Ashton Case-Walker.

SINISTER LIGHT.

- A Seal of the County Council of Wigan.
- B Col. Henry Blundell-Hollinshead Blundell,
C.B., M.P.
- C Alderman Richard Atherton ffarington, J.P.
- D Alderman Walter Mayhew.
- E James Henry Johnson, Esq.
- F Thomas Heald, Esq. (Clerk of the Peace).
- G Alderman William Crompton, J.P.
- H William Court Gully, Esq., Q.C., M.P. (Recorder).
- I Alderman Henry Park, J.P.
- K William Rogers, Esq., J.P.
- L Birkenhead Glegg, Esq.

SOUTH-WEST WALL.

1	Arms of the Borough of Clitheroe.
2	„ „ Chorley.
3	„ „ Lancaster.
4	„ „ Stalybridge.
5	„ „ Heywood.

IN PANEL A.

Mayors of Wigan.

1409	William de Wynde.
1419	Henry de Byrkhed.
1613	Peter Marsh.
1614	James Ford.
1618	William, Earl of Derby.
1627	Thomas Banks.
1631	Richard Worsley.
1634	William Forth.
1635	Robert Markland.
1637	William Pilkington.
1638	John Brighthouse.
1639	James Molyneux.
1640	John Bullock.
1641	Edward Lloyd.
1647	Richard Pennington.
1648	Ambrose Jolley.
1649	Joseph Rigbye.

IN PANEL B.

Mayors of Wigan.

1735	James Tempest.
1736	Robert Holt.
1737	Alexander Leigh.
1738	George Brown.
1739	Thomas Bankes.
1740	James Ford.
1741	Edward Holt.
1742	John Markland.
1743	William Curghey.
1744	James Hartley.
1745	Edward Holt.
1746	Thomas Bankes.
1747	John Auzlark.
1748	Richard Holmes.
1749	John Percival.
1750	William Curghey.
1751	John Clayton.

IN PANEL A.

Mayors of Wigan.

1650 Robert Barron.
 1651 Alexander Thompson.
 1652 William Glover.
 1653 James Scott.
 1654 Gerard Banks.
 1655 Ambrose Jolley.
 1656 Edward Sumpnor.
 1657 William Tempest.
 1658 Robert Barron.
 1659 William Glover.
 1660 Nicholas Pennington.
 1661 Roger Bradshaigh.
 1662 Ralph Markland.
 1663 William Daniell.
 1664 Matthew Markland.
 1665 James Ford.
 1666 Myles Turner.
 1667 Robert Longshaw.
 1668 William Laithwaite.
 1669 Robert Leatherbarrow.
 1670 Myles Turner.
 1671 Ralph Markland.
 1672 William Glover.
 1673 Robert Barron.
 1674 Nicholas Pennington.
 1675 James Ford.
 1676 Alexander Rigbye.
 1677 Ralph Holmes.

IN PANEL B.

Mayors of Wigan.

1752 Richard Holmes.
 1753 William Curghey.
 1754 John Percivall.
 1755 Thomas Leatherbarrow.
 1756 William Ollerhead.
 1757 William Curghey.
 1758 William Ollerhead.
 1759 Alexander Leigh.
 1760 Richard Holmes.
 1761 Edward Clayton.
 1762 Robert Ward.
 1763 Thomas Barton.
 1764 William Ollerhead.
 1765 John Percivall.
 1766 James Hervey.
 1767 Robert Green.
 1768 George Kenyon.
 1769 James Scott.
 1770 William Ollerhead.
 1771 Alexander Ratcliffe.
 1772 James Scott.
 1773 Robert Green.
 1774 William Ollerhead.
 1775 James Scott.
 1776 Alexander Ratcliffe.
 1777 Robert Green.
 1778 John Latham.
 1779 Alexander Ratcliffe.

IN PANEL A.

Mayors of Wigan.

1678 Robert Leatherbarrow.
 1679 Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
 1680 Thomas Banks.
 1681 Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
 1682 William Daniell.
 1683 Thomas Turner.
 1684-85 Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
 1686 Lawrence Anderton.
 1687 Robert Ford.
 1688 James Scott.
 1689 John Baldwin.
 1690 Thomas Bankes.
 1691 Thomas Cooper.
 1692 Sir Richard Standish.
 1693 Hugh Jolley.
 1694 Peter Shackerley.
 1695 Gerard Ford.
 1696 Thomas Ford.
 1697 James Hervey.
 1698 Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
 1699 John Markland.
 1700 William Woods.
 1701 William Scott.
 1702 Gilbert Ford.
 1703 Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
 1704 Adam Bankes, sen.
 1705 Adam Bankes, jun.
 1706 Thomas Martin.

IN PANEL B.

Mayors of Wigan.

1780 Robert Green.
 1781 William Ollerhead.
 1782 Robert Green.
 1783 William Ollerhead.
 1784 James Hodson.
 1785 Robert Rowbotham.
 1786 James Hodson.
 1787 Thomas Barton.
 1788 John Vause.
 1789 James Hodson.
 1790 Thomas Barton.
 1791 Robert Morris.
 1792 Robert Rowbotham.
 1793 Thomas Barton.
 1794 Robert Rowbotham.
 1795 Thomas Doncaster.
 1796 Robert Morris.
 1797 Thomas Barton.
 1798 Thomas Doncaster.
 1799 Robert Morris.
 1800 John Vause.
 1801 William Clayton.
 1802 Thomas Woodcock.
 1803 William Clayton.
 1804 Thomas Woodcock.
 1805 Robert Bolton.
 1806 Thomas Woodcock.
 1807 William Eccles.

IN PANEL A.

Mayors of Wigan.

1707	Robert Hollingshead.
1708	Thomas Bankes.
1709	Henry Bradshaigh.
1710	Henry Mason.
1711	Thomas Bankes.
1712	William Bradshaigh.
1713	James Ford.
1714	Robert Hollingshead.
1715	Adam Bankes.
1716	William Woods.
1717	William Baldwin.
1718	James Ford.
1719	Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
1720	Roger Bradshaigh, Esq.
1721	James Brown.
1722	John Markland.
1723	John Baldwin.
1724	Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
1725	James, Earl of Barrymore.
1726	Lekh Master.
1727	Alexander Leigh.
1728	James Tempest.
1729	Sir Roger Bradshaigh.
1730	Robert Holt.
1731	George Brown.
1732	James Brown.
1733	James Ford.
1734	James, Earl of Barrymore.

IN PANEL B.

Mayors of Wigan.

1808	Thomas Woodcock.
1809	John Hopwood.
1810	Alexander Haliburton.
1811	Joseph Bevan.
1812	John Hopwood.
1813	John Hodson Kearsley.
1814	Thomas Newsham.
1815	Robert Bolton.
1816	William Eccles.
1817	Thomas Woodcock.
1818	Joseph Bevan.
1819	John Hodson Kearsley.
1820	Henry Bullock.
1821	Henry Gaskell.
1822	Henry Bullock.
1823	Thomas Darwell.
1824	Alexander Haliburton.
1825	John Hodson Kearsley.
1826	Thomas Hardman.
1827	Henry Bullock.
1828	Thomas Hardman.
1829	Henry Bullock.
1830	Thomas Darwell.
1831	John Lord.
1832	John Woodcock.
1833	James Eckersley.
1834 to 36	John Lord.

The Mayors from 1836 to 1890 are set forth under the frieze surrounding the Chamber as follow :—

1836	John Spier Heron.	1860	Richard Taylor.
1836 and 56	Reece Bevan.	1861	William Waddington.
1837 and 54	Thomas Cook.	1862-63	John Cross.
1838	David McNeillie.	1864-65	Thomas Knowles.
1839, 53, and 54	Joseph Acton.	1866 to 68	Thomas Heald.
1840, 41, 43, 45, 47	John Lord.	1869 and 78	William Crompton.
1842, 44	Thomas Eckersley.	1874 and 75	James Burrows.
1846	Thomas Morris.	1876 and 77	Walter Mayhew.
1848	Thomas Byrom.	1879	Richard Atherton ffarington.
1849-50	Ralph Darlington.	1880	William James Lamb.
1851, 52, and 1870 to 73	Nathaniel Eckersley.	1881	Richard Fogg Hopwood.
1854	Thomas Taylor.	1882 to 86	Henry Park.
1855	Henry Woods.	1887	Thomas Stuart.
1857	Jonathan Lamb.	1888	William Rogers.
1858	Henry Woodcock.	1889	James Smith.
1859	William Johnson.		

NORTH-WEST WALL.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Arms of the Borough of Bootle. |
| 2 | „ „ Bury. |
| 3 | „ „ Southport. |
| 4 | „ „ Warrington. |
| 5 | „ „ St. Helens. |

IN PANEL C.

Aldermen and Councillors of the County Council
of Wigan, October, 1890.

Alderman James Smith, J.P., Mayor.

Robert Halliwell, J.P., Deputy Mayor.

Alderman William Crompton, J.P.

„ Richard Atherton Warrington, J.P.

„ William James Lamb, J.P.

„ Walter Mayhew.

„ Maskell William Peace.

„ Henry Ackerley, J.P.

„ Samuel Alker.

„ Richard Fogg Hopwood, J.P.

„ Henry Park, J.P.

„ James Smith, J.P.

IN PANEL C.

CONTINUED.

COUNCILLORS :—

ALL SAINTS' WARD.

Samuel Laycock.
Jonathan Phillips.
Richard Johnson.
William Roger,
James Edwardson, J.P.
Thomas Stuart, J.P.

ST. GEORGE'S WARD.

William Chalk.
John Johnson, J.P.
William Halliwell.
James Jackson.
John Harrison.
Robert Layland.

QUEEN STREET WARD.

George Duckworth.
Henry Riddlesworth.
Charles Butler Holmes.
Joseph Wilson, J.P.
N. Farington Eckersley.
John Woods.

SCHOLES WARD.

Charles Cockson.
James Hilton.
John Gee.
Robert Richards.
Daniel Dix.
Cornelius Macleod Percy.

SWINLEY WARD.

Robert Johnson.
George Stephen.
Matthew Benson, J.P.
Richard Edward Kellett.
Robert Halliwell, J.P.
William Millington.

Arthur Smith, B.A., LL.B.,
Town Clerk.

ARMS PLACED UPON THE CEILING.

- 1 Walmesley of Ince.
- 2 Gerard of Ince.
- 3 Bryn of Brynn and Ince.
- 4 Ince of Ince.
- 5 Worsley of Worsley Mesnes.
- 6 Atherton of Atherton.
- 7 Chisnall of Arley Hall.
- 8 Bannister of Wigan.
- 9 Egerton, Lord of the Manor of Norley.
- 10 Langton of Low Hall.
- 11 Molyneux of Hawkley Hall.
- 12 Leigh of Lyme, formerly Lord of the Manor
of Norley.
- 13 Culcheth of Culcheth.
- 14 Abraham of Abram.
- 15 Tyldesley of Tyldesley.
- 16 Hindley of Hindley.
- 17 Norreys of Blackrod, the last of whom married
a Bradshaigh.
- 18 Lindsay of Haigh.
- 19 The same.
- 20 Bradshaigh of Haigh.

ARMS PLACED UPON THE CEILING
CONTINUED.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| 21 | Wilkins | } | Bishops of Chester and Rectors
of Wigan. |
| 22 | [Mitre] | | |
| 23 | Pearson | | |
| 24 | Bridgeman | | |
| 25 | Holt-Leigh of Hindley Hall. | | |
| 26 | [Helmet] | | |
| 27 | [Helmet] | | |
| 28 | Holt of Ince. | | |
| 29 | Cartwright | } | Bishops of Chester and Rectors
of Wigan. |
| 30 | Hall | | |
| 31 | Stratford | | |
| 32 | [Mitre] | | |
| 33 | Holland of Upholland. | | |
| 34 | Bootle, Lord of the Manor of Upholland. | | |
| 35 | Derby, formerly Lord of the Manor of Upholland. | | |
| 36 | Wilbraham, as succeeding Bootle. | | |
| 37 | Linacre, Rector of Wigan. | | |
| 38 | Markland of the Meadows. | | |
| 39 | Kenyon of Swinley. | | |
| 40 | Brown of Brinsop. | | |
| 41 | Dicconson of Wrightington. | | |
| 42 | Gerard of Brynn. | | |
| 43 | Walmesley of Westwood. | | |
| 44 | Clifton, as succeeding Dicconson. | | |

ARMS PLACED UPON THE CEILING
CONTINUED.

- 45 Ashurst of Ashurst.
- 46 Dalton of Bispham.
- 47 Lathom of Parbold.
- 48 Bispham of Billinge.
- 49 Bankes of Winstanley.
- 50 Billinge of Billinge.
- 51 Holmes of Winstanley.
- 52 Winstanley of Winstanley.
- 53 Prescott of Dalton.
- 54 Orrell of Orrell.
- 55 Clayton of Adlington.
- 56 Ratcliffe of Standish.
- 57 Standish of Standish.
- 58 Worthington of Worthington.
- 59 Anderton of Euxton and Ince.
- 60 Langtree of Langtree.
- 61 Pennington, Recorder of Wigan.
- 62 Dukinfield of Hindley.
- 63 Thicknesse of Beech Hill, Wigan.
- 64 Woodcock of Wigan.