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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

The Parish Exposed:
London Parish Life and the Great Fire of London

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Stephen Arthur Teske

March 2015

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Thomas Cogswell, Chairperson

Dr. Randolph Head

Dr. Jonathan Eacott

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The Dissertation of Stephen Arthur Teske is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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Throughout the process of writing this dissertation I have often been asked how I cope with the solitude of academic research. Reflecting on the process now, as it nears its end, it is abundantly clear how much writing a dissertation is a team sport. None of this could have been accomplished without Dr. Thomas Cogswell, who patiently guided me through this process from start to finish. If the reader finds any part of this dissertation engaging, it is almost certainly the result of Tom's ear for a good story, and his never-ending drive to see that story completely extracted from the source material. I owe Dr. Randolph Head a significant debt, not only for his support of this project, but also for modeling the kind of diligence and rigor that makes academic research possible. I must thank Dr. Malcolm Baker for helping me to see structure and space as primary sources, and to Dr. Kristoffer Neville, for teaching me to engage with these sources. I cannot forget to thank Professor Jonathan Eacott who provided some much need last minute support for this project. Thanks are also due to Dr. Robert Ingram who has grown from a no-nonsense advisor into a wonderful friend. I am indebted to both the University of California, Riverside's History Department, and to its Graduate Division, for their generous financial and administrative support. In particular, I would like to thank Susan Komura, Iselda Salgado, and Deisy Escobedo, whose help brought order to an otherwise chaotic experience.

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Thanks are due to my Mom and Dad, to whom this dissertation is dedicated, for always patiently and generously allowing me to pursue even my most unusual interests. Lastly, thank you to Anna Dodge. Thank you for tolerating six years apart while I pursued this degree. Thank you for reading so much academic prose when you were busy with your own graduate work. Thank you for welcoming nearly five-hundred thousand Londoners into your life and managing them with a deftness that would make Sir Christopher Wren envious. Thank you for this and so much more.

DEDICATION

To Mom and Dad,

For all of their support and encouragement.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Parish Exposed:
London Parish Life and the Great Fire of London

by

Stephen Arthur Teske

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, March, 2015
Dr. Thomas Cogswell, Chairperson

This dissertation examines the reconstruction of the fifty-one parish churches in the city of London after the Great Fire of 1666. It is not primarily focused on the architectural elements of the rebuilt churches or the role played by Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor of the King's Works, in their reconstruction. Instead this dissertation explores the reconstruction of London's parish churches as an effort by neighborhood communities to recover after an unprecedented disaster. The parish church was not simply a physical manifestation of local identity or a focus for neighborhood pride. These churches transcended their most basic function as a site for religious worship - they served as the central location for myriad political, economic and social functions essential to a parish community. Given the centrality of a church to nearly every aspect of life in a city parish, it is unsurprising how aggressively London's parishes attempted to direct the reconstruction of their churches and the reconstitution of their parish communities – through both legal and extra-legal means. This struggle to preserve these centuries-old urban communities was particularly important for those parishes whose churches were eliminated after the fire – a loss that could leave these now homeless parishes at the mercy of less than

accommodating neighbors. Ultimately this dissertation will reveal how active most Londoners were in the recovery of the city after the Great Fire, as well as how central the parish community was to the early modern English, even in a city as diverse, dynamic, and multifaceted as Restoration London.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Bell | <i>The Great Fire of London</i> , by Walter George Bell |
| BL | The British Library |
| Bodl. Rawl. | Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Manuscripts Collection |
| CCPH | Calendar of Cecil Papers, Hatfield House |
| CSPD | Calendar of State Papers, Domestic |
| CSPV | Calendar of State Papers, Venetian |
| Evelyn | Diary of John Evelyn |
| Fincham, <i>Altars</i> | <i>Altars Restored</i> , by Kenneth Fincham, Nicholas Tyacke |
| FSL | Folger Shakespeare Library |
| GL | Guildhall Library Archive |
| Hyde | <i>The Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon</i> , by Edward Hyde |
| ML | Museum of London |
| Nott. | University of Nottingham, Special Collections |
| <i>ODNB</i> | Oxford Dictionary of National Biography |
| Pepys | Diary of Samuel Pepys |
| Reddaway | <i>The Rebuilding of London After the Great Fire</i> , T. F. Reddaway |
| Stow, <i>Survey</i> | <i>A Survey of London</i> , by John Stow |
| Strype, <i>Survey</i> | <i>Survey of London</i> , by John Strype |
| Tinniswood | <i>His Invention So Fertile, A Life of Christopher Wren</i> by Adrian Tinniswood |
| WS | Wren Society |

Days of the months are old style but all years are taken to begin on January 1.

The spelling and grammar from early modern sources have been kept in their original forms.

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* Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (New York: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982).

**Part I:
Before the Fire.**

**Introduction:
A Tale of Two Londons.**

In early September 1666 a fire devastated the city of London. From September 2 until September 5 the Great Fire of London destroyed 13,200 houses, eighty-seven parish churches, countless civic buildings and Saint Paul's Cathedral. The destruction caused by the fire was unrivaled in British history until the London Blitz of 1940-41. Much like the Blitz, the destruction caused by the fire, as well as the courage with which many Londoners met the disaster, has afforded the Great Fire of London a remarkable degree of popular awareness. The fire is memorialized by the Monument to the Great Fire – an imposing pillar on Fish Street Hill, and numerous books, both scholarly and popular, recount the events of the Great Fire.¹ The event has even been turned into a complicated, but not unpleasant, board game.

Like the fire itself, the city's recovery after the Great Fire holds a significant place in London's public memory. This is in part due to how transformative the recovery was for the city, as well as how long lasting the changes to the city were. Much of the city's most basic infrastructure, including the city's roadways and the Thames waterfront, was modernized and took on its present form after the fire. Many of the city's most iconic buildings, including Saint Paul's Cathedral and the Guildhall, emerged in their current form after the fire as well. The sheer number of structures built after the fire completely transformed the skyline of the city of London. Even today, with a skyline consisting of

¹Walter George Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666*, (London: The Bodley Head, 1923); Neil Hanson, *The Great Fire of London: In That Apocalyptic Year, 1666*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001); Stephen Porter, *The Great Fire of London*, (Gloucestershire: The History press, 2011); Tinniswood.

some of the world's tallest and most uniquely shaped skyscrapers, the city is still largely defined by these buildings that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the Great Fire. The importance of Saint Paul's Cathedral to the city was perhaps most clearly indicated by the pains Sir Winston Churchill took to protect it during the Blitz – commissioning a special unit of firefighters to protect the Cathedral at all costs. These buildings are so numerous and so essential to the shape of the modern city of London that it is unsurprising how frequently they feature in any tourists' visit of the city. Among these visitors to London one word echoes from the speakers atop tour buses or calls out, disembodied, from the center of crowds obstructing the sidewalk – Wren.

Sir Christopher Wren was Surveyor of the King's Works from 1669 until his death in 1723, as well as Britain's premier architect in the second half of the seventeenth century. There is no person who is more directly responsible for the recovery of London after the Great Fire than Wren. Wren directed the construction of many of the structures completed after the fire, including Saint Paul's Cathedral and fifty-one parish churches. These churches represent such an impressive and diverse sample of English baroque architecture that it has secured for Wren not only a reputation as the masterful organizer of a city wide disaster recovery effort, but also as one of England's architectural virtuosos – especially for his work on Saint Paul's Cathedral.

No visit to London would be complete without a visit to Saint Paul's. Its massive dome catches your eye as you wander the city, peeking between buildings and down alleyways until you are suddenly upon it – looming above you, dominating the skyline. Until the early 1960s Saint Paul's was the tallest structure in the city of London. Even now,

sharing a skyline with a cluster of glass and steel skyscrapers, there are few buildings in London with the same magisterial presence as Saint Paul's Cathedral. Even for those who care not for the “beauty of holiness” exemplified by Saint Paul's, the sheer scope of the place can leave one awestruck.

Much in the same way that Saint Paul's plays a major role in defining London's skyline, it is also at the center of the city's memory. The Cathedral was forged in the Great Fire of 1666, and withstood the destruction of the London Blitz. It is the site of the city's collective mourning and shared celebration. State Funerals, Royal Weddings, and Jubilee Celebrations all take place within the Cathedral, along with the daily religious services of an active working church. The interior of the church is littered with monuments to English notables, including John Donne, Lord Nelson, and the Duke of Wellington – all marked by ornate sculptures. The Cathedral's Crypt contains an additional two hundred memorials – many ornately decorated. One of the memorials in the crypt, however, is conspicuous in its simplicity – that of Sir Christopher Wren. The grave is marked by a simple plaque that reads “*LECTOR SI MONUMENTUM REQUIRIS CIRCUMSPICE*” - Reader, if you seek his monument – look around you. Saint Paul's Cathedral stands as a testament to the many talents of Sir Christopher Wren. The beauty of the cathedral speaks to his eye for design – refined through tours on the European Continent and hours spent engaged with architectural treatises by Italian masters. The great dome reveals his mind for practical engineering – something he had little real experience with, but decades of mathematical training more than made up for it. Every stone, carried from quarries outside of London and meticulously placed, indicate that Wren's most valuable gift was his ability to manage

a construction project of great complexity and importance. More than anything else, however, Saint Paul's is a celebration of Wren's ability to manifest his ambitions for the city of London in the service of the public good.

Just as Saint Paul's Cathedral is a monument to Wren's desire to transform the city of the London, the fifty-one parish churches rebuilt after the fire are a monument to a very different experience of the city's recovery. These churches reflect the efforts of many Londoners – ministers, churchwardens, vestry men, and average parishioners – to save what, even in the metropolis of London, constituted the primary landscape of their lives. London's parishioners actively fought to preserve the autonomy and traditional structure of their parish communities though petitions, bribes, legal action, and even clandestine construction projects, along with countless other methods of political action. Despite the active role played by these Londoners in directing the shape of their city, much of what is known about these parish communities has been lost – their churches demolished and replaced with public parks, tube stops, cellular phone dealers, and cash points. These urban communities themselves are almost entirely gone as well. In the 1660s the population of the city of London rose to 300,000 – a number that, despite the Great Plague and the Great Fire, appeared to be endlessly growing as the end of the century approached. Today the population within the old city walls numbers only 7,000, with the equivalent of the seventeenth-century population of the city commuting into and out of London for work. Even with the massive scale and economic centrality of modern London, it is in many ways a mere shadow of its early modern self.

The absence of these urban parish communities from the historical narrative is

particularly alarming relative to the knowledge of rural English parishes. While there are a handful of impressive studies of early modern London parish life most notably, Paul Seaver's *Wallington's World, a Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* and Peter Lakes's *The Boxmaker's Revenge, 'Orthodoxy', Heterodoxy' And the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London*, most studies of London parish life are local antiquarian studies that examine the parish without much reference to the context of the larger city.² The addition of this larger civic or national context is in part what makes such studies so difficult for London parishes, as they are often eclipsed entirely by the flashier action at Whitehall or Westminster.

Without close proximity to national centers of power and influence parish studies focused on rural England have flourished, especially in the 1960s, complemented by the

²Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge*; Seaver, *Wallington's World*; Arthur Atkinson, *St. Botolph Aldgate, the Story of A City Parish*, (London: Grant Richards, 1898); Caroline Barron, *The Parish of St. Andrew Holborn*, (London: Diamond Trading Co., 1979); Michael Byrne; George Bush; Rowan Williams, *St. Mary-Le-Bow: A History*, (Barnsley: Wharncliffe Books, 2007); Pierson Carter, *History of the Church and Parish of St. Alphage London Wall; with extracts from Vestry Minutes and Churchwarden's Accounts*, (London: W.H. & L. Collingridge, 1925); Howard Colvin, "The Church of St. Mary Aldermary and Its Rebuilding After the Great Fire of London," in *Architectural History*, Vol 24, (1981), pp. 24-31; Dotted Crotchet, "A Famous City Church: St. Giles, Cripplegate," in *The Musical Times*, Vol 44, No. 727, (Sep. 1, 1903), pp. 581-589; Crotchet, "St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, London Churches," in *The Musical Times*, Vol. 46, No. 745 (Mar 1, 1905), pp. 153-165; Terry Friedman, "The Church of St. Peter-Le-Poer Reconsidered," in *Architectural History*, Vol 43, (2000), pp. 162-171; George Gater; Walter Godfrey, *Survey of London Vol. 15, The Parish of All Hallows Barking*, (London: Country Life for the London County Council, 1934); Charles Goss, *The Parish and Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury*, (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1945); Lilian Redstone, *The Parish of All Hallows Barking*, (New York: AMS Press, 1971); Peter Scott, *The Parish of Saint John the Evangelist: A Brief History and Guide*, (Higher Denham: Harest, 2000); Thomas Smartt, *A Brief History of the Parish of St. Botolph Bishopgate*, (London, W.R. Newman, 1856); E. A. Webb, *A Guide to the Ancient Parish Church of St. Nicholas Chislehurst: with a short Account of the Church of the Annunciation and the Church of St. John the Baptist and Christ Church*, (London: George Allen, 1901); H. B. Wilson, *A History of St. Laurence Pountney, London*, (London: C., J., and F. Rivington, 1831); Ecclesiological Society, *The Past, Present and Future of St. Ethelburga Bishopgate*, (London: Ecclesiological Society, 1994); T. Winyard, *The Priory Church of St. Bartholomew the Great: The Oldest Parish Church in London*, (Cupar: Edenside Printing Works Ltd, 1981).

county studies which populated the 1970s and 1980s.³ The rural parish, which served as a center for political and social authority at the periphery, as well as the primary generator and repository of primary sources in the region, made them a logical focus for countless regional studies. Beyond the practical utility of the parish community as a discrete unit for organizing historical scholarship, the parish was the essential unit by which the early modern English identified themselves and conceived of their communities and their local history.⁴ Rural parish studies, most aggressively exemplified in Eamon Duffy's *The Voices of Morebath, Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village*, present a narrative of local communities that are rich with individual agency, without losing contact with the broader narratives of early modern history and devolving into local histories.⁵

³Keith Wrightson: David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700*, (New York: Academic Press, 1979); but more recently, Daniel Beaver, *Parish Communities and Religious Conflict in the Vale of Gloucester, 1590-1690*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Judith M. Bennet, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside, Gender and Household in Brigstock Before the Plague*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Ken Farnhill, *Guilds and the Parish Community in Late Medieval East Anglia, c. 1470-1550*, (York York: Medieval Press, 2001); Steve Hindle, *On the Parish: The Micro-politics of Poor Relief in Rural England, c. 1550-1750*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Marjorie McIntosh, *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Havering, 1500-1620*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); McIntosh, *The Royal Manor of Havering, 1200-1500*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Pamela Sharpe, *Population and Society in an East Devon Parish: Reproducing Colyton, 1540-1840*, (Devon: Exeter University Press, 2002); Richard Dean Smith, *The Middling Sort and the Politics of Social Reformation, Colchester, 1570-1640*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc, 2004); Margaret Spufford, *Contrasting Communities, English Villagers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); Spufford, *Figures in the Landscape: Rural Society in England 1500-1700*, (London: Ashgate, 2000); *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725*, ed. Margaret Spufford, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Joan Thirsk, *English Peasant Farming, Agrarian History of Lincolnshire from Tudor to Recent Times*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1957); Albion M. Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, 1780-1865*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Susan Wright, *Parish, Church and People: Local Studies in Lay Religion 1350-1750*, (London: Hutchinson, 1988); Margaret Yates, *Town and Countryside in Western Berkshire, c. 1327-c.1600*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007).

⁴In 1700 Richard Gough completed a study of his own parish – Myddle in Shropshire – which he organized by leading his readers through his parish church pew by pew, recounting the lives of parishioners who occupied each place. Richard Gough, *Antiquities & Memoirs of the Parish of Myddle*, (London, 1700).

⁵Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003);

The primary aim of this dissertation is to established the effectiveness of the parish study when it is applied to the city of London, even when examining a subject as well-understood as the recovery of London after the Great Fire of 1666. The recovery after the Great Fire is most completely examined in T.F. Reddaway's *The Reconstruction of London After the Great Fire*.⁶ Reddaway's study examines the reconstruction of the city's houses and civic buildings in great detail, but he, to a large extent, ignores the reconstruction of the city's parish churches. The churches are ignored, by Reddaway's own admission, because so much is known about their reconstruction.⁷ Reddaway is referring to the rich scholarship on the city's churches produced by art historians.⁸ This scholarship, not

⁶Reddaway.

⁷*Ibid*, p. 13.

⁸Arthur Thomas Bolton, *The Parochial Churches of Sir Christopher Wren, 1666-1718*, (London: The Wren Society, 1932); *The Life of Works of Sir Christopher Wren, From the Parentalia*, eds. Edmund Hort New; Ernest J. Enthoven, (Cornell University Press, 1903); Ronald D. Gray, *Christopher Wren and Saint Paul's Cathedral*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Lawrence Weaver, *The Complete Building Accounts of the City Churches Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, (London: Hall, 1915); Andrew Thomas Taylor, *The Towers & Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, (London, 1881); Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, His Family and His Times*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Company, 1881); William John Loftie, *Inigo Jones and Wren: or, The Rise and Decline of Modern Architecture in England*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893); Colin Amery, *Wren's London*, (Luton: Lennard Pub., 1988); Geoffrey Beard, *The Work of Christopher Wren*, (Edinburgh: J. Bartholomew, 1982); Martin Briggs, *Wren, the Incomparable*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1953); Eric de Mare, *Wren's London*, (London: Folio Society, 1975); Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada, 1982); Downes, *Christopher Wren*, (London: Penguin Press, 1971); Eduard F. Sekler, *Wren and His Place In European Architecture*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1956); Eduard F. Sekler, *Wren and His Place In European Architecture*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1956); Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, (London: Hambledon Press, 1996); Lisa Jardine, *On A Grand Scale, The Outstanding Life of Sir Christopher Wren*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2004); Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007); Leo Hollis, *The Phoenix: The Men Who Made Modern London*, (New York: Hachette, 2011); Giles Worsley, "Wren, Vanburgh, Hawkesmoor, and Archer: The Search of an English Baroque," in *Studies in the History of Art*, Vol. 66, (2005), pp. 98-117; John E. Moore, "The Monument, or Christopher Wren's Roman Accent," in *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 80, (September, 1998), p. 498-533; Kerry Downes, "Sir Christopher Wren, Edward Woodroffe, J. H. Mansart and Architectural History," in *Architectural History*, Vol. 37, (1994), p. 37-67; Geoffrey Beard, *The Work of Christopher Wren*, (Edinburgh: J. Bartholomew, 1982); James Campbell, *Sir Christopher Wren, the Royal Society and the Development of Structural Carpentry: 1660-1710*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999); John Christopher, *Wren's City of London Churches*, (London, Amberley,

unexpectedly, tends to focus on the work of Wren and his associates, as well as the physical forms of the churches themselves.⁹

This dissertation will complement the work undertaken by art historians by expanding the source base to include the documents that constitute the basic records of the city's parish communities. This includes the Churchwarden's Accounts Books, Vestry Minutes, and even miscellaneous receipts, all of which reveal the concerns parishioners voiced in their vestry meetings and the how they ultimately spent their parish's often limited resources. These sources allow for the creation of a narrative of the recovery of London after the Great Fire from a perspective that illuminates the anxiety and vulnerability felt by most Londoners in the fire's aftermath.

These sources, rich as they may be, are not without their limitations. The standards of record keeping in the late seventeenth-century were remarkably varied. Some churchwardens kept meticulously itemized records of church expenses while others simply kept rough tallies of their parish's spending. The Vestry Minutes are equally diverse, ranging from complete transactions of the meeting's concerns to a list of dates on which vestry meetings were held. These records are particularly thin in the immediate aftermath of the Great Fire, as some parishes simply stopped maintaining records and electing parish officers, while others appear to have sunk into a parish wide malaise that prohibited energetic record keeping. Many of these sources are also incomplete, as some were

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⁹John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 36.

destroyed during the fire itself, while others were damaged or destroyed during the London Blitz. In some cases the gaps in these sources can be filled by relying early modern studies of the city's parishes, especially John Stow's *The Survey London* written in 1598, or through reliance on the work of antiquarians produced before World War II – scholarship which often records the essential details of a missing source while unfortunately not developing it in the service of a broader narrative.

This dissertation aims to transform narratives of the recovery of London by re-centering them on the tumultuous local politics that influenced and complicated the reconstruction of the city's churches after the Great Fire. It will reveal a complex recovery that is difficult to see in the impressive and varied baroque facades and steeples that emerged during the reconstruction of the city. This dissertation also looks beyond the micro-politics of the city's recovery after the fire, towards broader questions about religious worship in Restoration England. While confessional preference can be somewhat difficult to pin down in a city as diverse and dynamic as Restoration London, Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke in *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547 – c. 1700*, have made it overwhelmingly clear that religious practice, especially the paraphernalia and spaces required for specific kinds of worship, can be a useful indicator in charting a parish community's confessional identity.¹⁰ In the aftermath of the Stuart Restoration, it has been argued, the religious landscape of London was remarkably homogenous – a reaction against the religious chaos of the Civil Wars and Interregnum.

¹⁰ Fincham *Altars*.

This understanding of Restoration religiosity reveals a remarkable confidence in the ability of leading clergymen to enforce the 1662 *Act of Uniformity* – a difficult task at best, and nearly impossible in the city of London. The cost of religious uniformity was high, demanding more than adherence to prescribed forms of worship, but also the installation of costly architectural features to the church interior, and the acquisition of expensive religious paraphernalia. These expenses were so extreme that exaggerated claims of poverty could allow less orthodox parishes to avoid adhering to the *Act of Uniformity*, while avoiding the consequences of outright refusal. Furthermore, it overlooks how effectively Londoners were able to ignore the provisions of the *Act of Uniformity* in the period before the Great Fire of London, especially on the issue of the railed altar table.¹¹

This dissertation will examine a period in which London's parishes did not passively avoid religious prescriptions from above in order to prevent deviation from their own confessional predilections, but actively attempted to secure control of their church's physical shape and furnishings, and as a result the forms of worships which these spaces could facilitate. This dissertation will present a London that was confessionally fractured well before the events of the late 1670s and 1680s allowed these divisions to boil over onto the national stage. Scholars have divided London in two. One London is the center of macro-narrative history, while the other London exists in the work of antiquarians – with little overlap. This dissertation is an attempt to reveal the scholarly utility of reunifying early modern London.

¹¹Kenneth Fincham, "According to Ancient Custom: The Return of Alters in the Restoration Church of England," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13, no. 1. (2003), pp. 29-54.

Part I
Chapter 1:
Our Goodly Metropolis.

The King had waited long enough – the moment had come to return to London. London was a city in crisis, but it was now safe enough for Charles II to return to his capitol and relieve his afflicted subjects. Nearly six years earlier Charles II had entered the city of London for the first time in over a decade. The streets were lined with exuberant subjects – optimistic that the uncertainty and repression of the Protectorate was now behind them. Triumphal arches wreathed in flowers celebrated the restoration of the King and the city resounded with the peeling of church bells – an echo from a distant, merrier memory. It was equal parts fanciful and genuine.

However, on this February morning as the King moved his household back to London from Hampton Court Palace there were no crowds to great him, nor any great population in the city to ignore him. Those Londoners who could afford to flee the Great Plague of 1665 had long since left the city. Those unfortunate enough to stay in the capitol had died en masse over the course of the previous year.¹ Not even the city's ever present stray dogs and cats acknowledged the return of the King – they had all been destroyed by the Lord Mayor earlier that year to mitigate the spread of the disease.² Triumphal arches did not line the streets this time – instead the King found street after street illuminated by massive fires to purify the air and burn the dead. The banners of celebration that hung from

¹The *Bills of Mortality* for indicate that 75,000 and 100,000 Londoners died from the plague in 1665, out of an estimated population of 460,000.

²A. Lloyd Moote; Dorothy C. Moote, *The Great Plague: The Story of London's Most Deadly Year*, (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2008), p. 155.

awnings and windows six years earlier were replaced with marks of quarantine – warnings of danger, suffering, and death. Less than half a decade into the reign of Charles II the city that had once shone with unrestricted optimism was now lost in grim despair.

In early 1666 London was more cadaver than city, but by the end of the year, the capitol appeared to be in a state of recovery. The plague was beginning to subside, and Londoners were slowly, but steadily, returning to the city. This restoration of the city proved illusory as both nature, and baked goods, conspired to see the London not simply killed, but cremated. The story of the Great Fire of London is one of great loss, and the story of its recovery is, at its most essential, a conflict between nostalgia for what was lost, and ambition for what the city could be. This chapter examines what so many Londoners fought to recover, and what so many others worked to replace.

I. The Suburbs of Hell:

The skeleton of the city that John Evelyn once called “the Suburbs of Hells,” was its expansive network of roads.³ In the seventeenth century the basic framework of London's major roadways had changed little over countless centuries and betrayed the Roman origins of the city. While some of these major thoroughfares, especially the Roman roads, were wide, level pathways suitable for urban traffic, many of the city's streets were not nearly so reasonably constructed.

The vast majority of the city's network of roads emerged out of necessity – forming

³John Evelyn, *Fumifugium or the Inconveniencie of the Aer and Smoak of London Dissipated*, (London: 1661).

organically as the city grew over time. These roads were often narrow and projected out of larger roadways along paths that made the city a confusing tangle of awkwardly aligned streets. These narrow passages were in turn punctuated by ever more narrow alleyways in between buildings that could not accommodate carts, and often could barely accommodate pedestrians – the structures on either side of the alleyway leaning into the street towards each other so aggressively that they nearly touched at their roofs.⁴

The streets themselves were infrequently paved as the paving of roadways in the city was the responsibility of the properties bordering the roads. Major civic buildings usually paved the streets surrounding their property, and the city's parishes often paved the streets around their parish churches when they could afford the material and labor.⁵ These parishes might also pave streets and alleys throughout their parish, if funds were available. Even paved, however, these streets were far from safe or stable. Some of the streets were paved with soft rag-stone, which would wear down quickly and needed frequent replacement. Other streets were paved with flint plates, which would break and crack on the uneven streets – turning a smooth flat street into a jagged mess that made travel difficult. Streets were also paved with small loose pebbles that could very quickly get washed away.⁶

Those streets that were not paved by their residents would have been cobbled.

⁴Picard, *Restoration London*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 19.

⁵ For examples see: P69/MRY10/B/005/MS01341/001 [*Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], April, 1680, p. 226; P69/MRY13/B/001/MS01542/002 [*Saint Mary Colechurch Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1681, p. 210; P69/ANA/B/010/MS00587/002 [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Churchwarden's Accounts Book, Volume 1*], 1656, p. 163.

⁶Picard, *Restoration London*, p. 7.

While these streets certainly had a lengthier half-life than paved roads, they were not without their disadvantages. The stones themselves were often uneven and slippery which made traversing the city in carts difficult, and on foot dangerous and occasionally deadly.⁷ The uneven surface of these cobbled streets also collected mud, water, and both human and animal waste that was discarded into the road, making the streets even more slick and hazardous. Some of the streets had runoff drains to alleviate the collection of waste, but these were few and far between, and were themselves so overwhelmed with waste that they were often clogged and seldom cleaned.⁸ In 1666 the waste in the streets was an overwhelming concern as a drought, by then nearly a year in duration, had not provided the rain necessary to wash waste from the city's streets.⁹

In most cases pedestrians walked in the muddy, uneven roadways alongside animals and carts, although some parts of the city did have sidewalks, they were seldom much better than the roads themselves. The sidewalks were often crowded with animals, goods, and sometimes even structures. Merchants and vendors would set up temporary shops in carts along roadways, which could make the streets of the city impassible during the day. Some churches even rented segments of their property out to shopkeepers, who set up more permanent stalls on the edges of a churchyard, further encroaching on the already narrow streets.¹⁰

⁷John Evelyn, *London Revived: Consideration for its Rebuilding in 1666*, (London: 1666), p. 12.

⁸Bell, p. 12.

⁹*Ibid*, p. 13.

¹⁰For example see P69/SWI/B/004/MS00559/001 [*Saint Swithin London Stone Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], April, 1651/2, p. 52.

The streets were so narrow, and ill-suited to travel on foot, by cart, and even by horse, that any Londoner who wished to travel the city with any speed would have used the Thames. The river was usually full of boats carrying people and goods to the countless wharfs throughout the city. They also carried traffic to the suburbs of the city or across the river to Southwark. The Thames was the closest thing to a major highway that early modern London had to offer. The river was more than simply a pragmatic solution for traversing the city – it was also a stage. The sheer inconvenience of traveling by land through the city meant that London's wealthiest and most notable residents traveled by boat – including the Royal Household on elegant barges. The river was also the stage for many civic performances, including the Lord Mayor's Parade¹¹

Despite these displays of civic pride and celebrations of Royal Majesty, the river was not naturally a majestic sight. Wren would not canalize the river until after the fire and ramshackle wooden wharfs and docks littered the edges of the Thames on both sides. The water itself was often slow moving, and resembled, at times, a large swamp.¹² This was exacerbated by the waste that was emptied into the river. The trenches in the city streets drained into sewers which would in turn empty into the Thames. Some waste, including the corpses of those killed by the plague, might simply be tossed into the river.¹³ The smell must have been unbearable for passengers in boats – a commute made all the

¹¹Picard, *Restoration London*, p. 66.

¹²*Ibid*, p. 65.

¹³*Ibid*, p. 66.

worse by the fact that the water moved so slowly, and rain was so infrequent in 1665 and 1666, that much of the waste simply remained in the river, collecting at the muddy edges instead of washing out to sea.¹⁴

At the Restoration the Thames still only had one bridge to Southwark. It was as busy as any of the streets in the interior of the city. Congestion on the bridge was exacerbated by all of the buildings upon it. Like the streets of the city, the bridge was covered with precariously placed shops and houses. The street was also crowded with the vendors and carts. The area underneath the bridge was the only portion of the Thames River that traveled with any velocity, and there were two large waterwheels on the bridge, that pumped water into the elm water pipes throughout the city.

In 1666 London was still largely a city of timber. Leaning over the narrow, filthy streets were large, timber houses and shops. Large civic buildings like the Guildhall and Livery Company Meeting Halls might be made of stone or brick, as were many of the city's parish churches and the old city walls, but in the early 1660s London was still mostly constructed of wood. These wooden structures were often no taller than two stories in height, with the second story projecting as much as eighteen inches beyond the floor below it – a feature which contributed to the narrowness of the city's streets. These short wooden houses created a relatively low, even skyline for the city, intermittently punctuated by a handful of simple stone towers and steeples from London's parish churches.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 15.

2. An Assembly of Rational Creatures:

In many ways the city of London was less of a Royal Capitol and more a separate kingdom under the nominal, but restricted and incomplete, control of the crown. The ancient foundation of the city afforded London a degree of autonomy that allowed the city to be, at best, a thorn in the side of the sovereign, and at worst, a nail in their coffin. Within the walls that separated London, both legally and physically, from the rest of England there were countless, smaller spheres of political coherence that made London one of the most tumultuous, and legally byzantine, cities in the early modern world.

Formally the city was governed by the Corporation of the City of London – a body which consisted collectively of the Lord Mayor of London, the Court of Aldermen, and the Court of Common Council. The Lord Mayor was selected from among the city's elected Aldermen – one from each of the city's twenty-six wards. The Court of Aldermen, although traditionally responsible for the management of the city from the Guildhall, was increasingly in the early modern period supplanted in this role by the Court of Common Council – a body made up of representatives elected from the city's wards.

While formal political power in the city was located in the Guildhall, major political actors in and around the city could exercise a degree of informal influence. This included the King, especially when in residence at Whitehall, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. The most significant actors in city's government, however, were London's livery companies. These companies regulated the practice of trades within the walls of the city. These livery companies could be very wealthy and influential, such as the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths or Worshipful Company of Drapers, or could be

less influential, like the Worshipful Company of Paviers. These one-hundred and ten trade associations were made up of liverymen who participated in the election of the Lord Mayor. Within the city the companies exerted a degree of more local influence, especially in the areas around their company meeting halls, or in the parish churches affiliated with specific livery companies. The companies also functioned as charitable organizations, as well as essential nodes in networks of patronage, especially in the city's churches. They also played a significant role in personal lives of Londoners – it is telling that Londoners elected to any public office, from Lord Mayor to parish churchwarden, were identified chiefly by their membership in a specific company.

Despite the significance of these institutions of civic government, the most dynamic units of urban cohesion were also the most local – the city's parishes. Like the city corporation, the city's parishes were responsible for the maintenance of some segments of the city's infrastructure, including roadways and walls surrounding a parish church and its properties. Much like the livery companies, the parishes were also charitable organizations, ensuring the most basic well-being of the parish's poor and elderly. In some cases the parishes were responsible for the management of significant financial networks in the city, collecting rents and lending money throughout London.

The ninety-four parishes the city were often the sole experience most seventeenth-century Londoners would have with both suffrage and office holding. The parish vestry council could consist of a handful of vestrymen elected from within the parish, or in the case of general vestry, it could be made up of most of the parish membership. The parish's churchwardens, although more likely to be members of livery companies – but not always

– would upon election find themselves in control of wealth and property that dwarfed anything they might encounter privately. Along with great responsibility these positions carried with them certain social privileges within the parish, most notably special pews for the vestrymen and churchwardens that set them apart from most parishioners and were often finely crafted – and in some cases canopied.

Parish governance could also allow Londoners access to vast networks of clerical patronage that linked some of the most significant actors in Royal, Civic, and Ecclesiastical politics. As religious institutions the parishes universally fell under the influence of the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury who, in the seventeenth century, were not above meddling in church management, the election of church officers, and even the basic constitution of a parish's vestry.¹⁵ The parishes also interacted with a wide variety of patrons who held advowson for the parishes. The crown controlled five parishes, with the Archbishop of Canterbury holding the advowson for eleven, and the Bishop of London, nine. Westminster Abbey was the patron of three parishes, as was Christchurch, Canterbury, and the city companies held nine, and the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral controlled presentation in sixteen parishes. The remaining livings were held by a diverse population of individuals and organizations including educational institutions such as Eton College or Balliol College, Oxford, as well as individuals, both notable, such as the Duke of Buccleuch, and common, as was the case with All Hallows the Less whose patronage fell into the hands of two unmarried women.¹⁶ While these patrons could exert a great deal

¹⁵Fincham, *Altars*, p. 319; J. F. Merrit "Contested Legitimacy and the Ambiguous Rise of Vestries in Early Modern London," in *The Historical Journal*, Volume 54, Issue 1, pp. 25-45.

¹⁶A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, (London: Archibald Constable, 1895), p. 303; Bell, p. 308.

of influence over a parish – especially through their role in presenting a minister for the parish – it was not unheard of for parishioners to actively pursue the removal of an unpopular minister.¹⁷

In the 1660s London was, for the most part, enthusiastic for the restoration of the King – although this enthusiasm was far from universal or without reservation. On the eve of the Great Fire this commitment to monarchy was tested, not only by the plague, but also by the King's failure to deliver religious toleration to his subjects, or alleviate their ever increasing tax burden.¹⁸

3. The Beauty of Holiness:

On April 4, 1660 Charles II issued the Declaration of Breda as a sign of his commitment to mending the wounds of the 1640s and 1650s. Along with payment for the army, and amnesty for many Parliamentarians, Charles pledged to support religious toleration, as “the passion and uncharitableness of the times have produced several opinions in religion, by which men are engaged in parties and animosities against each other”¹⁹ This initial impulse for toleration on the part of the King was dramatically tempered in the first years of his reign by the machinations of some of his most aggressive and committed supporters while in exile – both the cavaliers and orthodox clergy.

¹⁷Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England*, p. 203.

¹⁸Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 61.

¹⁹Charles II, *The Declaration of Breda*, April 4, 1660.

Despite Charles' extroverted and boisterous demeanor, his time in exile transformed the King into a remarkably cautious politician. In 1660, on the eve of his restoration, Charles clearly thought it more politically prudent to leave his loyal supporters temporarily disappointed than to irreparably alienate old enemies. This was in part due to the fact that as King, Charles could easily repair relations with old allies through the judicious use of offices and Royal Pensions. It had more to do, however, with the fact that a response to apologetic Parliamentarians which was too heavy-handed might damage the probability of his restoration beyond recovery. With this in mind Charles committed to protect, to a degree, the rights of Parliamentarians to properties and titles seized from Royalists during the Interregnum.²⁰ This slight against his most loyal supporters would complicate the King's desire for religious toleration as the Cavalier Parliament passed an act which restored the authority of the Church of England while simultaneously complicating the lives of English Dissenters.

Unlike their King, his allies in Parliament clearly held a deep desire for revenge. This impulse in the Cavalier Parliament, however, paled relative to the same desire among the clergy. The Protectorate had sapped the Church of England of much of its prestige, and nearly all of its wealth. It had dramatically decreased the income for clergymen fortunate enough to maintain their livings during the Interregnum, while a remarkable number of clerics were deprived of their livings. These deprived clergy were often forced to wander the countryside, dependent on the largesse of others for their most basic needs, and the

²⁰*Ibid.*

safety and survival of their families. Many more went into exile, and the least fortunate among them spent the Interregnum in prison. Beyond a simple desire for revenge, many of the clergy involved in the restoration settlement were motivated by a strong commitment to Laudianism.²¹ It is not surprising that in the early 1660s so many of these churchmen aggressively supported and enforced policies that restored the Church of England to a place of prominence, and reversed the gains made by nonconformists.

The anti-toleration legislation of the 1660s would collectively come to be known as the Clarendon Code, despite Edward Hyde's aversion to most of the ramifications of the acts. *The Corporation Act of 1661* required that any office holder in a city or corporation receive orthodox communion, and take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy while renouncing the Solomon League and Covenant – an act pointed at forcing Presbyterians out of positions of political authority.²² The next year the Cavalier Parliament passed the *Act of Uniformity*, which imposed the Book of Common Prayer on parish churches, and restored to these churches furnishings which were removed during the Interregnum out of fear of idolatry.²³ In 1664 and 1665 Parliament passed two additional acts pointed at dissenter services – *The Conventicle Act*, which made unauthorized religious services illegal, and the *Five Mile Act*, which prevented dissenting ministers from coming within five miles of towns or their former livings.²⁴

²¹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 309.

²²*The Corporation Act*, 1661, (Cha. II St. 2 c. 1).

²³*The Act of Uniformity*, 1662, (Cha. II, St 12 & 14 c. 4).

²⁴*The Conventicle Act*, 1664, (Cha. II St. 16 c. 4); *The Five Mile Act*, 1665, (Cha. II St. 17 c. 2).

The *Act of Uniformity* had perhaps the most wide ranging effects on both clergy and parish communities. The compulsory use of the Book of Common Prayer led to the ejection of 2,500 dissenting ministers in England, further alienated from their former flocks by the *Conventicle Act* and *Five Mile Act*.²⁵ Dissent could be difficult to detect in the city of London and as a result these acts could be difficult to enforce in the crowded, chaotic city and its liberties.²⁶ The city appears to have had the highest concentration of dissenter meeting houses per capita in the country, with some wards containing nearly three meeting houses per 1,000 residents. The sheer number of meeting houses could make avoiding detection as a regular attendant of nonconformist service relatively easy, especially if one attended one of the meeting houses in the liberties of the city, or in the ever expanding suburbs – locations where nonconformist meeting houses were almost as numerous as in the city itself. Furthermore, at least a quarter of the city’s dissenters were drawn from the higher orders in the city’s social and economic structure. London’s dissenters might be provided a degree of legal insulation if they found themselves worshiping alongside the city’s nonconforming notables. The prescribed forms of worship demanded in the Book of Common Prayer often required the reacquisition of religious paraphernalia, including the railed alter table. Despite efforts by churchmen to rapidly restore these features to England’s churches, many churchwardens, especially in London, dragged their feet installing the required furnishings.²⁷

²⁵Alexander Gordon, *Edmund Calamy*, ODNB.

²⁶Harris, *London Crowds*, p. 67.

²⁷Kenneth Fincham, “According to Ancient Custom’: The Return of Altars in the Restoration Church of England,” in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, (2003), p. 29.

A. Parish Churches:

The Tudor Reformations had a profound impact on the physical structure of England's churches, as external ornamentation was removed and often destroyed.²⁸ This same impulse led to a period of remarkable neglect for the maintenance of church buildings. By the early seventeenth century many of London's churches were falling into states of severe disrepair. In the early seventeenth century, however, just as James I was considering restoring the decaying structure of Saint Paul's Cathedral, many of London's parishes were beginning to make repairs to their churches.

In the city of London, the church of Saint Mary-Le-Bow was repaired in 1604.²⁹ Christ Church, Newgate Street, perhaps the most severely decayed church in the city, began its refurbishment two years later.³⁰ This was followed by a flood of church reconstruction in 1607, which included All Hallows, Bread Street, Saint Michael Bassishaw, Saint Mary Woolchurch, Saint Mary Woolnoth, Saint Margaret Pattens, Saint Botolph Billingsgate, Saint Martin Vintry, Saint Magnus the Martyr and Saint George Botolph Lane. These repairs could range from simply enlarging the church's nave, as was done at Saint Mary Mounthaw in 1609, to adding fine stained glass windows to Saint Stephen Walbrook in 1613. Other parishes completely rebuilt their churches during the early seventeenth century,

²⁸Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Laws Against Images*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 182.

²⁹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 92.

³⁰*Ibid*, pp. 92-3, 101.

such as Saint Leonard East Cheep and Saint Katherine Creed. Saint Alban's Wood Street even hired the preeminent English architect of the day, Inigo Jones, to oversee the reconstruction of their church from 1633 to 1634.³¹ While these repairs varied in their cost, and scale, they all tended towards the implementation of Laudian preferences in architectural aesthetic.³²

These church restoration projects, especially in the city of London, were stopped during the chaos of the 1640s. As the influence of religious radicals among Parliament's forces increased, maintaining the physical structure of a parish church became more and more difficult. As the impulse towards repair and restoration gave way to periods of iconoclasm or simple neglect, many churches were left to once again fall into a state of disrepair, such as Saint Antholin Budge Row's church, whose south wall was on the verge of collapse in the late 1650s.³³ Other parochial churches, such as All Hallows Barking were helped on their way to ruin when all of the church's stained-glass windows were smashed in 1643.³⁴ This aversion to church maintenance extended into cases where the repairs were not ornamental, but necessary for the stability of the church and in the few cases where churches were repaired during the Protectorate they tended to be simple structures. Saint Alphage London Wall, worried about its collapsing church tower in 1649,

³¹*Ibid*, pp. 1, 30, 32, 51.

³²Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), p. 134.

³³P69/ANL/B/001/MS011045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], June, 1660, p. 62.

³⁴Fincham, *Altars*, p. 277.

decided that instead of repairing and strengthening the tower, they would simply lower it by one level and accept a remarkably short tower.³⁵ In 1658, All Hallows Barking rebuilt the entirety of its church tower.³⁶ The resulting church, a short, simple, brick structure, was one of the few examples of Protectorate church architecture.³⁷

After the Restoration there was once again an increasing desire to repair ailing churches. Much of this impulse came from well above the level of local parish politics, especially from Bishops and Archbishops – although enthusiasm for repairs among churchwarden's and vestrymen was not unheard of and some parishes, such as Saint Olave's Silver Street did undertake some repairs in the early 1660s.³⁸ The relative independence enjoyed by parish communities, especially in the city of London, during the Interregnum led many parishes to delay the commencement of reconstruction projects – both those prescribed from above and demanded by popular sentiment, up until the Great Fire.³⁹

The push to repair parish churches in the early seventeenth century included efforts to refurnish the church interiors as well. The 1630s in particular saw the installation of elaborate carvings and brasses, fine furnishings and paintings, and most controversially the railed and raised altar table, to English Churches – sometimes at the direction of

³⁵Philip Norman, *The London City Churches*, (London: The London Society, 1929), p. 55.

³⁶*Ibid*, p. 2.

³⁷Bell, p. 3.

³⁸J. G. White, *The Churches and Chapels of Old London*, (London: 1901), p. 149.

³⁹John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646 – 1689*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 19.

parishioners, and at other times under pressure from leading churchmen.⁴⁰ In the 1640s and 1650s much of this ornamentation was removed, destroyed or defaced with very few exceptions.⁴¹ After the Restoration many parishes were under pressure to restore the furnishings lost during the Interregnum. Most parishes quickly installed the most affordable changes, usually fabrics, but were more hesitant when changes required substantial reconstruction to the interior of their parish church.⁴² This included the reorganization of church pews and more controversially the installation of a railed altar table. These structural changes to church interiors, while undertaken in a limited way before the Great Fire, became far more common during the reconstruction of the city after the fire.⁴³

B. Parish Communities and Forms of Worship:

In the 1630s religious worship was dominated by the unusually active presence of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. Laud aggressively supported the imposition of the forms of worship most pleasing to him – elaborate ceremony carried out with elaborate furnishings in elaborate settings. This support was no doubt partly responsible for the number of parishes that repaired and refurnished churches in the early seventeenth century

⁴⁰Fincham, *Altars*, p. 187.

⁴¹Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*.

⁴²Kenneth Fincham, “‘According to Ancient Custom’: The Return of Altars in the Restoration Church of England,” in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13, (2003), pp. 33-4.

⁴³Fincham, *Altars*, pp, 319, 327; Kenneth Fincham, “‘According to Ancient Custom’: The Return of Altars in the Restoration Church of England,” pp. 35, 38.

– although some church’s needed more pressure from Laud than others.⁴⁴ This enthusiasm for meddling played no small part in the complete reversal of Laudianism's fortunes in the 1640s and 1650s.

The Civil War and Interregnum saw the near complete destruction of Laudian style worship in England, especially in London where nonconformist support for Parliament was unusually potent. Their open hostility to elaborate church ornamentation – an impulse that destroyed nearly every stained-glass window in the city – extended to elaborate ceremony as well, out of concern that it might be a first step towards a Popish yoke. This aversion to the Church of England did not, by and large, extend to the myriad forms of nonconformist worship that thrived in the shadow of London's city walls. Furthermore, the complete breakdown of the Episcopal hierarchy in the city meant that a great many parishes in the city of London were left to their own devices, to explore their own religious predilections – and embrace even the most radical ministers – provided they did not worship in a way which resembled the Laudian orthodoxy of the 1630s. However, this did not stop some defiant churches from worshipping with the Book of Common Prayer for the whole of the 1650s.⁴⁵ The list of churches that persisted in worshipping in the old style intermittently throughout the Interregnum includes Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, Saint James Garlickhythe, Saint Peter, Paul’s Wharf, Saint Clement’s Eastcheap, and Saint Gregory by Saint Paul’s.

The return of Charles II initiated an effort to restore and strengthen the Church of

⁴⁴Fincham, *Altars*, pp. 137, 143, 187-8.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 282.

England – as this church was understood by a group of leading Royalist clergy with Laudian leanings.⁴⁶ The open worship enjoyed by many dissenters in London during the 1650s proved an insurmountable obstacle to this ambition and the King was unable, and out of a desire to keep the peace unwilling, to completely suppress loyal dissenters. Furthermore, the taste of nearly unrestricted self-government experienced by the city's parishes made them slow to accept religious prescriptions from above – although some parishes did embrace them enthusiastically.⁴⁷

C. Saint Paul's Cathedral:

The damage done to London's churches was most obvious in London's Cathedral. From the middle of the sixteenth century Saint Paul's Cathedral entered a period of profound decline. During the reign of Edward VI much of the church ornamentation was destroyed by waves of iconoclasm.⁴⁸ The dissolution of the monasteries also led to the sale of much of the property around the Cathedral, crowding the churchyard with merchant's stalls and workshops.⁴⁹ In 1561 lightning badly damaged the Cathedral's steeple, which was repaired soon afterward – although hastily and without much care.⁵⁰ In the 1620s James I commissioned the architect Inigo Jones to repair the church – although he only managed

⁴⁶*Ibid*, p. 309.

⁴⁷Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*, p. 19; Fincham, *Altars*, pp. 319, 327.

⁴⁸William Benham, *Old Saint Paul's Cathedral*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), p. 43.

⁴⁹Picard, *Restoration London*, p. 19.

⁵⁰Ian Atherton, *Ambition and Failure in Stuart England: The Career of John, First Viscount Scudamore*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 110.

to rebuild the western front of the church before the political tumult of the 1640s put a stop to Jones' progress. The Cathedral's steady decline accelerated under the Cromwellian Protectorate. What remained of the Cathedral's ornamentation, including Jones' new western portico, was defaced by Parliament's Army and the Cathedral's nave was used as a stable for the horses of the Parliamentarian Cavalry.⁵¹ The Interregnum left Saint Paul's Cathedral little more than a ruin.

One of the primary ambitions of the first years of Charles II reign was to restore Saint Paul's Cathedral, no doubt with some enthusiastic pressure from the Archbishop of Canterbury. John Denham, Surveyor of the King's Works, was an obvious choice to make the initial survey of the Cathedral. Unfortunately, in 1665, Denham was not prepared to undertake the restoration of the Cathedral, as he had been driven mad by the revelation an illicit relationship between his wife and James, Duke of York, and believed himself to be the Holy Ghost.⁵² Instead Charles appointed two men to survey the church, and submit a design for its restoration. Charles appointed the client of his closest adviser the Earl of Clarendon, Sir Roger Pratt, a talented gentleman-architect. Charles also commissioned Christopher Wren, the young mathematician, to work alongside Pratt, much to Pratt's annoyance.

For much of 1666 the Cathedral was covered in wooden scaffolding as Wren and Pratt surveyed Saint Paul's and submitted plans for its improvement. The more pragmatic Pratt suggested that the King simply wait for the Cathedral to reach a point where repair

⁵¹George Godwin *The Churches of London: A History and Description*, (London: Tilt, 1839), p. 47.

⁵²Leo Hollis, *The Phoenix: The Men Who Made Modern London*, (New York: Hachette, 2011), p. 94.

could no longer be avoided. To Pratt's dismay, and no doubt to the King's delight, Wren submitted plans for the Cathedral that would have been both grand, and unreasonably expensive.⁵³

IV. Conclusion:

Despite the challenges facing the city of London in late 1666 the capitol appeared to be on a trajectory toward recovery. The plague was dissipating and Londoners were returning to their homes. Manufacturing and commerce were recommencing in the city's markets and workshops. Charles II was increasingly inclined towards the improvement of the city - especially its most significant buildings. The King was essential to the effort to repair and restore Saint Paul's Cathedral in 1665, and had also considered making changes and improvements to the palace at Whitehall, even drafting a plan for the palace himself.⁵⁴ Additionally, Charles actively pursued more basic improvements to the infrastructure of the city – advocating for legislation to improve the safety and salubrity of the city's streets, buildings and waterways.⁵⁵ The King also surrounded himself with advisers who shared his enthusiasm for a clean, modern, and beautiful capitol – most notably John Evelyn, and the young, but talented mathematician and amateur architect Christopher Wren. This enthusiasm for improving the city of London would be severely tested and irreparably transformed by the first week of September in 1666.

⁵³Gordon Higgon, "The Fabric to 1670," in *St. Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), eds. R. Arthur Burns; Derek Keene, p. 186.

⁵⁴Evelyn, October 28, 1664.

⁵⁵FSL C3250 [*By the King. A Proclamation Concerning Building, In, and About London and Westminster;*] 1661.

**Part I:
Chapter 2:
Ringing the Bells Backwards.**

I. Saturday, September 1 – Before the Fire:

London stank. In early September the city had largely been emptied by the Great Plague, which had only just subsided. Despite the increasingly apparent drop in population – the vacant houses, and the empty church pews – the city still smelled foul. Human and animal waste collected in the gutters along the edges of the narrow streets. Tanners and blacksmiths, glaziers and tallow chandlers, produced myriad odors in the normal course of their trades – odors which were often dangerous, and always offensive. Any breeze that might come in from the Thames carried with it the smell of the trash slowly accumulating at the edges of the river, waiting for the tide to carry it away. That September had been unusually warm and dry – there had been very little rain in the city since November, 1665 – which only served to make the city even more uncomfortable.¹

While the city outside stewed in a miasma, Pudding Lane smelled of something far more pleasant. Thomas Farriner spent much of the morning on September 1 burning dry timber to heat the great oven in his bakery. Despite the intensity of both the heat and Farriner's labor, the inside of his shop would have smelled of baking bread. Farriner was responsible for supplying biscuits to the Navy Victualing Office, and given the war with the Dutch, he was no doubt busily working to meet demand. As his ovens cooled in the late afternoon, Farriner would have switched to pies – filling the street with a different, but

¹*CSPD*, September, 1666.

no less pleasant scent. As night fell on Pudding Lane, Farriner and his daughter Hanna stopped baking, and prepared for the next day's work – roasting and stewing meat for Sunday's pies. Together they brought fuel wood indoors from behind the shop – to keep it dry in the unlikely event of rain – and climbed the stairs to their home above the bakery to sleep.²

II. Sunday, September 2 – A Local Fire:

Around 1:00 in the morning on Sunday, September 2, Farriner, his daughter, and their two servants awoke to a smell that was not roasting meat. Farriner rushed down the stairs into his shop to find the whole ground floor engulfed in fire and smoke. Trapped, the occupants of the bakery fled back into the upper floors of the house. Farriner, Hanna, and one of the servants opened a window and scrambled across an awning into a neighbor's yard to escape the fire. Farriner's maid, however, hesitated before the window and was consumed as the floor collapsed beneath her.³ Farriner and his daughter frantically attempted to rouse their neighbors for help in fighting the fire. Soon a small crowd formed and the residents of Pudding Lane began battling the blaze with buckets and shovels from their own houses.⁴

In the absence of a formal fire department, urban firefighting was centered on the parish church. The parishes were managed by notable parishioners as well as a minister,

²Stephen Porter, *Thomas Farriner, ODNB*.

³*Ibid.*

⁴For additional accounts of the Great Fire see; Walter George Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666*, (London: The Bodley Head, 1923); Neil Hanson, *The Great Fire of London: In That Apocalyptic Year, 1666*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001); Stephen Porter, *The Great Fire of London*, (Gloucestershire: The History press, 2011).

any of whom could serve as a figure of authority to direct any effort fight a fire. In addition, provided they were of sufficient wealth or authority, these parish notables could convince parishioners to tear down their houses to create fire breaks. Churches also housed the firefighting implements owned by each parish. These included buckets, ladders, shovels, and hooks to tear down houses, as well as remarkably inefficient small metal water squirts. Some parishes also owned impressive metal pumps on sleds called fire engines which could pump water from the city's water pipes, or the Thames, directly onto a fire.

Despite some delay, the parish constables of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr did eventually arrive in Pudding Lane and they attempted to fight the fire in the expected manner – by using the parish's fire hooks to tear down the structures surrounding the bakery to cut the fire off from fresh fuel and prevent it from spreading. Farriner's neighbors, however, demanded to know by what right the constables could order the destruction of their property. The residents of Pudding Lane refused to begin tearing down houses to create a fire break. Unless a person of sufficiently high rank arrived, there was no way to ensure that they would be compensated for the voluntary destruction of their property.⁵ The Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Bludworth, was summoned to deal with the crowd.

If there was one person responsible for the widespread destruction caused by the Great Fire of London it was almost certainly Sir Thomas Bludworth. Bludworth, a wealthy vintner, was a dedicated, if self-interested, politician. He was, however, ill-suited to the actual task of governing a city in crisis. In better times Bludworth might have made an

⁵Reddaway, p. 23.

admirable Lord Mayor, but the demands of his time in office, both the plague and the fire, reveal just how limited his competency was for the post. Samuel Pepys recalled of Bludworth's efforts to fight the fire, "People do all the world over cry out of the simplicity of my Lord Mayor in general; and more particularly in this business of the fire, laying it all upon him."⁶

Upon his arrival Bludworth was faced with a fateful decision. He could order the destruction of the properties around Farriner's Bakery, and contain what was then still a small house fire. This would, however, require Bludworth to assume responsibility for the property lost in the process. Alternatively, and more attractively to the craven Lord Mayor, he could abdicate this responsibility and seek the approval of the property owners before advancing with any effort to fight the fire. Bludworth, true to form, chose the latter and sought out the property owners.⁷ While some were present to protest to Bludworth, many more had fled the city to escape the plague. Bludworth, paralyzed by indecision, opted instead to fight the fire with buckets, hoping foolishly that the fire could simply be drowned – going so far as to boast that a woman could “piss [the fire] out.”⁸

Bludworth's futile efforts to fight the fire allowed the blaze to spread rapidly through the streets around Pudding Lane. The largely timber houses, dry from months of drought, were quickly consumed. The fire spread east and west to neighboring houses, but also spread south to the river, where warehouses serving the city's wharfs held the highly

⁶Pepys, September 10, 1666.

⁷Hyde, p. 100.

⁸Walter George Bell, *The Great Fire of London In 1666*, (London: Haycock Press, 1951), p. 24.

flammable commodities of oil, tallow, tar, pitch, and resin.⁹

Along with many houses and shops, Pudding Lane was also in close proximity to three parish churches, and these were the first to be destroyed. Saint George Botolph Lane backed into Pudding Lane, and was quickly consumed, along with the church furnishings which, rare for the city, survived the iconoclasm of the Tudor Reformations.¹⁰ Saint Margaret, New Fish Street was also consumed in the early hours of the fire, along with the nearby church of Saint Leonard, Eastcheap, which had been saved from a similar fate in 1618. Soon afterward the flames spread to engulf Saint Michael, Crooked Lane, a peculiar of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and eventually to Saint Lawrence Pountney, where it appears that very little was done by the parishioners to save the church.¹¹

In the early hours of the morning, as the sun rose over London, the ever growing blaze aroused the attention of servants in the household of the English Naval Board member Samuel Pepys in Seething Lane, still awake preparing for their employer's feast day. They saw the fire in the distance and alerted Pepys, perhaps out of concern that it was part of a naval attack by the Dutch, seeking revenge for Holmes' Bonfire, the razing of the Vlie Estuary in the Netherlands by the English Navy less than a month earlier. Pepys, after observing the fire from his house, was unconcerned and returned to bed, only to be awoken a few hours later by the same servant. She alerted him that the fire had by then destroyed

⁹Pepys, September 2, 1666.

¹⁰Stow, *Survey*, p. 79.

¹¹Gordon Huelin, *Vanished Churches of the City of London*, (London: Guildhall Library Publications, 1996), p. 12.

many houses and was dangerously close to London Bridge.¹²

Pepys dressed and rushed to the Tower of London, a short one-hundred meters from his home, in part to sate his curiosity about the fire, but also to see to the powder stores beneath the Tower. Pepys climbed to the top of the Tower, with the son of Sir John Robinson, the Tower's Lord Lieutenant. From there Pepys could see that London Bridge was ablaze, and that the Church of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr was already consumed by the fire. Unsatisfied with his view from the tower, Pepys traveled by boat up the Thames to survey the fire more closely.

Along the river, Pepys passed the homes of friends already lost to the fire, as well as the Old Swan Tavern, which had completely burned to the ground. Londoners were rushing to the water front, flinging goods into boats, and even into the river. Pepys observed that Londoners refused to “leave their houses, but hovered about the windows” until they were no longer safe to occupy, or already on fire.¹³ These Londoners also refused to fight the fire, instead ferrying their goods to the water front and leaving their houses to burn. As Pepys passed the church of Saint Lawrence Pountney, he could clearly see that the timbers on the roof of the steeple were aflame and burned wildly until the entire tower collapsed into the churchyard below.

Pepys also noticed that the fire was beginning to spread west, towards the Royal residence at Whitehall, and rushed to inform the King of the danger that threatened both his capitol, and his home. Alarmed by the news that the Lord Mayor was struggling to

¹²Pepys, September 2, 1666.

¹³*Ibid.*

fight the fire, in part because of his own incompetence, Charles II ordered Pepys to go with all immediate haste to the Lord Mayor and inform him that he had Royal permission to begin tearing down structures to create fire breaks. James, Duke of York, perhaps even less confident in Bludworth's competence than his brother, offered to send the Royal Life Guard with Pepys to enforce the King's orders and help fight the fire. Pepys, no doubt graciously, turned down the Duke's offer and prepared to leave and seek out the Lord Mayor. Before departing in the coach of Captain Cocke, Pepys was approached by Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, who was concerned that Pepys may have turned down the Duke's offer of troops out of anxiety over bringing Royal Soldiers into the city of London. Arlington further pressured Pepys to accept the Duke's offer, in secret.¹⁴

The trip from Whitehall to Pudding Lane was slow and difficult. London's streets were narrow and congested in the best of times. Now they were packed tightly with Londoners – both those fleeing the fire and those rushing towards the fire to help fight it. Many Londoners were pushing carts full of goods and possessions or carrying goods on their backs. Pepys even passed a number of sick Londoners being carried away from the fire in their beds.¹⁵ The Thames was choked with small boats, full of both people, as well as goods. Strong winds were blowing the fire out over the river, and those in boats were singed by the embers that blew out over the water towards Southwark. The streets were also clogged by the massive metal and wooden fire engines being pushed on sleds from parishes around the city. These engines would have pumped water from the elm pipes laid

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵*Ibid.*

throughout the city, had they not already been ripped out of the ground by desperate Londoners.¹⁶ Furthermore, the water wheels that pumped water to these pipes on London Bridge were also on fire. The great engine of Clerkenwell attempted to maneuver closer to the Thames to pump water directly from the river, only to topple over the edge.¹⁷ Cocke's Carriage could only carry Pepys' as far as Saint Paul's Cathedral before the congestion stopped his progress completely, and he was forced travel down Watling Street on foot.¹⁸

Pepys found Bludworth in Canning Street with his handkerchief tied about his neck, exhausted from attempting to contain the fire. Pepys delivered the King's orders to Bludworth. In response, "Bludworth cried, like a fainting woman, 'Lord! What can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it.'"¹⁹ Bludworth turned down the use of the Duke of York's Royal Life Guard, and went home to sleep, leaving the firefighting effort in complete disarray. Without the Lord Mayor, there was no one with sufficient rank or authority to order Londoners to tear down houses. It appeared the complicated arrangement of property rights and bureaucratic limitations in the city of London would result in its complete annihilation, as those still attempting to fight the fire retreated into Lombard Street, and Pepys retired for dinner. All seemed lost, were it not for the timely arrival of the King.

¹⁶Liza Picard, *Restoration London*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 9-10.

¹⁷Rege Sincera, *Observations, Both Historical and Moral, on the Burning of London*, (London, 1667: Wing O92), Sect. VIII.

¹⁸Pepys, September 2, 1666.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

Charles II took his Royal Barge from Whitehall down the Thames into the city to survey the course of the Fire. The King, no doubt, expected to find the Lord Mayor valiantly leading the effort to tear down houses to isolate the fire and save the city. Instead, he found an out of control inferno, subjects scrambling into small boats, and no Lord Mayor. Charles began commanding Londoners to tear down buildings to create a fire break, but the fire had advanced beyond mere containment in the area around Pudding Lane. The King continued his survey of the fire on the Thames, leaving his brother, the Duke of York, behind to direct the effort to fight the fire at Queenhithe. Charles also called upon the city Aldermen, former Lord Mayor, and Parliamentary Army Officer Sir Richard Brown and William, Earl of Craven, one of the few aristocrats left in the city after the plague, along with a contingent of Cold Stream Guards, to aid in fighting the fire.²⁰

Not all Londoners felt a strong compulsion to aid in fighting the fire. The young London student, William Taswell, left a morning church service at Westminster Abby early to see the fire, only to observe mobs roaming the streets seeking out Roman Catholics and Frenchmen in the city, whom they blamed for starting the fire.²¹ While standing on the steps of the Abby, Taswell watched as a blacksmith, encountering an innocent Frenchman, “felled him instantly to the ground with an iron bar.”²² He also observed crowds destroying the shop of a French tile maker, and while they refused to tear down their own houses to

²⁰Bell, p. 44; Pepys, September 2, 1666.

²¹Taswell, September 2, 1666.

²²*Ibid.*

create fire breaks, they were more than happy to tear down the residence of the tile maker, which was not, at that time, in any danger from the fire. These mobs grew throughout the day, and eventually began arming themselves. The disorder was exacerbated by reports that “four thousand French and Papists were in arms, intending to carry with them death and destruction and increase the conflagration.”²³ Taswell watched as the mob shifted its attention from the fire, to “...oppose this chimerical army.”²⁴

In the evening, Pepys retired to the southern bank of the Thames with his family to watch the fire from the relative safety of Southwark. He could see:

the fire grow, and as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire... it made me weep to see it.²⁵

He would have seen the destruction of around one-thousand private homes and shops. The meeting halls of the Vintners, and the Fishmongers were both beyond saving.²⁶ Nine Churches had by Sunday evening burned to the ground. Saint Botolph Billingsgate lost, not only its church, but failed to save any of the documents stored within, including all of the deeds to its properties throughout the city.²⁷ All-Hallows-the-Great and its neighbor All-Hallows-the-Less burned down together late in the day.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵Pepys, September 2, 1666.

²⁶Tinniswood, p. 56.

²⁷LMA P69/GEO/D/001/MS11020, [*Decree of the Fire Judges Court Settling a dispute between the Corporation of London and the Parish of St Botolph Billingsgate*], April 7, 1671.

Pepys returned home and recalled that “the churches, houses, and all on fire, and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking houses at their ruin... and there find everybody discoursing and lamenting the fire.”²⁸ Pepys invited a neighbor to stay in his house, and to store his goods there for the duration of the fire, but admitted that he too was preparing to flee the oncoming conflagration. As the fire spread throughout the night, those parish churches that still stood rang their bells backwards – with muffled ringers – to sound the alarm. Even as the flames threatened the churches of Saint Andrew Hubbard, Saint Mary-At-Hill and Saint Mary Abchurch, their bells could still be heard – a resounding, desperate echo throughout the city.

III. Monday, September 3 – An Unbound Conflagration:

Early Monday morning the fire was rapidly moving further to the north and the west from Pudding Lane. Samuel Pepys and his household were frantically packing their possessions, preparing to flee from the fire.²⁹ Many of the city's wealthier residents were attempting to move great stocks of furniture and other luxuries to safety. Those who could afford to might attempt to move their goods out of the city by boat – an increasingly difficult task as the Thames River filled with boats and barges. Some residents simply tossed their goods into the river, hoping to recover them later. Londoners could also carry their goods out of

²⁸Pepys, September 2, 1666.

²⁹*Ibid*, September 3, 1666.

the city, either on their backs or by hiring porters and carts.³⁰

London's many livery companies were also struggling to save their possessions from the fire. The Grocers' Company failed to collect their company plate before the fire could consume their meeting hall, and it completely melted – slowly seeping into the rubble left by the fire.³¹ The Goldsmiths carried their stock, valued at £1.2 million to Whitehall for safekeeping.³² Other companies, such as the Stationers, hid their stock of paper in the vault of Saint Faith under Saint Paul's. Like many Londoners, the livery companies assumed a church would keep their wealth safe.³³ Still more Londoners simply observed the fire – crippled with fear and overwhelmed with despair. In dismay John Evelyn recalled,

The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that, from the beginning, I know not by what despondency, or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it; so that there was nothing heard, or seen, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods.³⁴

Those Londoners without the wealth necessary to leave the city might simply flee to the safety of a church, or to one of the refugee camps slowly emerging around the city. They could also stand to make a profit during the fire. While some of the city's porters and boat man charged the usual rates for their trade, or refused payment all together, others

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹GH CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/004, [*Court Minute Book of the Worshipful Company of Grocers*], July, 1666, p. 740.

³²BL MSS 15057, f. 44 b, [*Letter concerning the London Fire in 1666*], April 7, 1676.

³³Evelyn, September 7, 1666.

³⁴*Ibid.*, September 3, 1666.

were not so generous.³⁵ Price gouging was particularly problematic and many porters charged as much as twenty times the normal rate for the use of a cart.³⁶ Other Londoners were eager to loot during the fire. This could take the form of traditional breaking and entering, but other thieves utilized more elaborate plans – the porters hired by William Taswell's father simply never returned any of the goods they were contracted to carry to safety.³⁷ This looting complicated the firefighting effort by drawing potential firefighters away from the task of saving the city. The City Militia, summoned by the Earl of Arlington to help fight the fire, spent most of Monday, September 3 preventing looting.³⁸

Londoners who fled to parish churches to save their property, and seek refuge from the fire found their faith in the strength of their parish church's walls wildly misplaced. Saint Andrew Hubbard, recently renovated in the 1630s, burned early on Monday morning, along with Saint Mary-at-Hill, which burned until only three walls and its western tower remained. The fire soon spread to Saint Clement's, Eastcheap and Saint Mary Woolchurch Haw. Saint Mary's parishioners allowed their own property to burn to the ground as they dragged books and furnishings out of the blazing church.³⁹ Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook and Saint Swithin, London Stone also burned that morning.

³⁵*CCPH*, Vol. 22, Household and Privy Purse Expense, 1666, Michaelmas to 1667, Michaelmas.

³⁶F. P. Verney, *Memoirs of the Verney Family in the Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 2, (London: Longmans Green & Co., 1925) p. 255.

³⁷Taswell, p. 13.

³⁸*CSPD*, September 3, 1666.

³⁹GL P69/MRY14/005/MS011013/001, [*Saint Mary Woolchurch Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1669, p. 234.

Strong winds blew the fire further into the area to the north of Pudding Lane. The parish churches of Saint Nicholas Acons, Saint Edmund, King and Martyr, Saint Benet Gracechurch, and Saint Michael's, Cornhill all caught fire in late morning. After the flames consumed the north-east of the city, only the towers of Saint Michael and Saint Benet survived. However, the wooden supports inside Saint Michael's tower did catch fire, which caused the church's bell to crash into the body of the church and badly damaging the tower.⁴⁰ After pushing north the fire continued to progress further west. The flames soon reached the churches of the parishes of Saint Thomas the Apostle, Saint Antholin, Budge Row, and Saint James Garlickhythe. As the fire moved along the edge of the Thames it also burned Saint Nicholas Olave, Saint Mary Somerset, Saint Michael-Le-Querne and Saint Peter, Paul's Wharf. The fire soon stopped spreading west, and turned north towards Saint Paul's Cathedral.

Unchecked the fire spread rapidly and by early morning the fire had progressed to the houses and shops on London Bridge. The fire, however, stopped short of spreading into Southwark, in part because of a fire break between the structures on the bridge created during an earlier fire in 1633. By the early afternoon the Royal Exchange was ablaze and Londoners began fleeing beyond Baynard's Castle in the west of the city. It was hoped that the stone edifice would stop the fire, and save the remainder of the western city. However, the flames licked up and around the walls of the castle, and as Londoners fled further west, they would have passed the King himself, wet and covered in soot as he stood in a line of

⁴⁰Neil Hanson, *The Great Fire of London: In that Apocalyptic Year 1666*, (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2001), p. 86.

men passing buckets of water to the fire.⁴¹ Baynard's Castle was soon engulfed in flames, along with its neighbor the parish church of Saint Benet Paul's Wharf.

As the fire approached the church of Saint Dunstan-in-the-East, William Taswell found himself in the company of John Dolben, Dean of Westminster.⁴² Dolben was leading a line of students through the rows of flaming houses towards the threatened church. The students under Dolben's direction valiantly fought the fire for hours, and in doing so saved the church. Satisfied with their work, Dolben and his students departed – only to have the church again catch fire and quickly burn to ruins. More successful than Dolben, however, was Admiral William Penn. Penn led a contingent of sailors from a nearby navel yard to the church of All Hallows-by-the-Tower which was increasingly surrounded by the fire.⁴³ Penn ordered the sailors to tear down the houses in the blocks around the church, successfully saving the church – making it one of the few churches inside the area afflicted by the fire to survive.

Those Londoners not saving goods, looting, or fighting the fire were engaged in the popular London pastime of mob violence against foreigners in the city. The rumors that the fire was part of a Dutch or French invasion, or the efforts of a Papist Fifth Column had only gotten worse since they began the day before – perhaps fanned by the fact that the heavy winds were carrying embers to the furthest corners of the city, starting fires far away

⁴¹Bodl. Hodgkin MSS 306 [*Letter concerning the Great Fire from Henry Griffith*], August 16, 1672.

⁴²Taswell, September 3, 1666.

⁴³*Ibid.*

from the main blaze as part of what appeared to be a coordinated act of terrorism.⁴⁴ London was not a hospitable place for foreigners, even in the best of times. Increasing religious tension on the continent drove many to flee to England as confessional refugees. This paranoia was not limited to common Londoners and the Earl of Arlington closed the port at Dover to prevent any suspected saboteurs from fleeing the country.⁴⁵ Dutch and Portuguese residents of London were arrested, sometimes for their own protection, and the French were beaten in the streets.⁴⁶

By late afternoon the fire was so completely out of control that it was clear to all observers that the present efforts to fight the fire were woefully inadequate. The obvious choice to address this was General George Monck, Captain General of the King's Armies. Monck was, however, at sea preparing to engage the Dutch Fleet, and was more than a day's travel from the capitol. In Monk's absence, Charles left command of the firefighting to his brother James, Duke of York.

If the Great Fire illuminated the incompetence of Sir Thomas Bludworth – who was by Monday afternoon nowhere to be found – it also made clear that the Duke York was not shy about assuming command. James II, panicking and hysterical as he fled before the armies of his son-in-law was not present that day in the streets of London. Instead, the Duke of York enthusiastically took command of fighting the fire. He created a ring of

⁴⁴Hyde, p. 85.

⁴⁵*CSPD*, September 3, 1666.

⁴⁶Hyde, p. 85.

outposts around the fire, commanded by members of the Royal Court. While he directed what amounted to a siege of the fire, James himself rode through the city's streets stopping looters, and saving foreign residents of the city from mob violence. One Londoner recalled that, "The Duke of York hath won the hearts of the people with his continual and indefatigable pains day and night in helping to quench the Fire."⁴⁷

Despite the Duke's valiant efforts, the fire continued to burn widely into Tuesday morning. Evelyn estimated that by night fall ten thousand houses had been destroyed, and the sky was choked by cloud of smoke "near fifty miles in length."⁴⁸ As he noticed the flames begin to singe the wooden scaffolding around Saint Paul's Cathedral he lamented "Thus, I left it this afternoon burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—'*non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem*';⁴⁹ the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more!"⁵⁰

IV. Tuesday, September 4 – The Miserable Sight of Paul's Church:

At daybreak Pepys deposited some of his possessions in a small boat on the river, and carried the remainder with him along Tower Street, with Admiral William Penn.⁵¹ As the

⁴⁷*Notes and Queries*, 5th Series, Vol. V, (London: 1876), p. 307.

⁴⁸Evelyn, September 3, 1666.

⁴⁹"For here we have no lasting city." - Hebrews 13:14.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹Pepys, September 4, 1666.

two men traveled they observed Londoners tossing possessions from their windows into the road as they rapidly attempted to escape the oncoming fire. Pepys noticed Sir William Batten, a neighbor, burying his wine in a hole in his yard to protect it from the fire.⁵² Pepys was so struck by the practicality of this idea that Penn and Pepys dug a hole themselves, and buried in it their wine, and a wheel of Parmesan Cheese.

Tuesday was perhaps the most destructive day of the fire, despite the best efforts of the King and the Duke of York. The Duke was fighting the fire from Temple Bar, dispatching his firemen to build a firebreak along Fleet Street. Late in the morning, however, the flames jumped the River Fleet, and continued to spread towards Whitehall. By the afternoon the fire continued to jump firebreaks in the east and the north, threatening more and more of the city. The fire also spread to the parish church of Saint Mary-Le-Bow. After sounding the alarm for two days the great bells of Bow Church fell silent.

On Tuesday afternoon the fire destroyed the church of Saint Lawrence Jewry. Where there was once some of the finest medieval stained glass in the city, now stood empty windows, adorned with smoke and flame.⁵³ Despite the fire, the parishioners did manage to save a mantelpiece crafted by the Spanish artist Jusepe de Ribera.⁵⁴ The fire eventually jumped from the church to its neighbor, the medieval Guildhall. The fire spread around the Guildhall and burned the church of Saint Michael Bassishaw, as well as the

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³George Goodwin, John Britton, *the Churches of London: A History and Description of the Ecclesiastical Edifices of the Metropolis*, (London: C. Tilt, 1839), p. 388.

⁵⁴Philip E. Norman, *London City Churches*, (London: The London Society, 1929), p. 16.

meeting halls of the Coopers, the Weavers, and the Masons. The walls of the Guildhall stood firm against the firestorm, but the flames tore through the doors and out of the windows, emptying the inside, destroyed countless company records, and relics of the city's independence. One observer lamented that the charred shell of the Guildhall was “our body politic's sad skeleton.”⁵⁵

While the city's militia did its best to protect foreign residents of the city of London, the inertia of mob violence was hard to divert – fortunately attacks were often directed at property, or isolated to individuals who were refugees from the continent and would not be missed. No high profile foreigners were threatened, until Tuesday afternoon. The fire slowly approached Covent Garden, where the Swedish Envoy to the court of Saint James had been in residence for months. From the windows of their houses near the garden they observed mobs attacking foreign residents of the city, with trepidation and concern.⁵⁶ As the fire approached, the envoy, about fifty men, decided to heavily arm themselves and travel in a convoy from Convent Garden to Palace Yard.

The fears of many Londoners would have seemed realized as this crowd of armed Swedes marched through the city. They did eventually make it to Place Yard – despite the best efforts of the London mob – and agreed it was in their best interest to remain indoors, save for one member of the envoy who left to seek out a lover in the city.⁵⁷ Caught by the

⁵⁵John Crouch, *Londinenses Lacrymae, London's Second Tears Mingled with her Ashes*, (London, 1666: Wing C7299), pp. 201-2.

⁵⁶CSPD, September 4, 1666.

⁵⁷Nott. Portland MSS III, p. 298 [*Letter concerning the Great Fire from Denis de Repas to Sir Edward Harley*], September 13, 1672.

mob, he was beaten, strung up and would have died were it not for the timely arrival of the Duke of York who cut the man down and carried him away on his horse.⁵⁸ The servant who accompanied the Swede was not so lucky.

London's many livery companies were, from the early hours of the fire, shuttling goods to Saint Paul's Cathedral and its neighboring church Saint Faith beneath Saint Paul's. As the Embroiders' and Drapers' halls burned, other companies loaded carts which traveled towards sanctuary at the Cathedral. They had hoped, much like many of London's parishioners, that the high thick stone walls of the city's churches would stop the fire, and protect the valuable goods and documents stored inside. The Cathedral's exterior, however, was covered in wooden scaffolding – part of Christopher Wren and Sir Roger Pratt's survey of the church for repairs completed just before the fire.⁵⁹ The flames climbed the scaffolding and ignited the wooden beams at the edges of the roof in the late evening, and by nine o'clock William Taswell recounted that the blaze on the cathedral roof was bright enough to read by.⁶⁰ The lead roof quickly melted in the intense heat, and the Cathedral bled out streams of molten lead, which horses refused to cross.⁶¹ The flames also cracked the masonry of the Cathedral, causing it to collapse and crush the goods stored inside. As the Cathedral collapsed, the debris blocked the roads leading up to the Cathedral, cutting

⁵⁸P.D.A. Harvey, "A Foreign Visitor's Account of the Great Fire, 1666," in *London and Middlesex Archeological Society*, Series 20, 1961, p. 84.

⁵⁹Evelyn, September 3, 1666.

⁶⁰Taswell, September 4, 1666.

⁶¹Evelyn, September 4, 1666.

off firefighters from approaching the blaze. Some of the stones fell into the streets, and shattered “like grenades”, injuring fleeing Londoners.⁶² Those who scrambled over the debris found that the pavement around the Cathedral had heated to the point of “a fiery redness,” and so none could approach.⁶³ John Evelyn recalled of the fire at Saint Paul’s “The eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the Almighty power of God was able to stop them; for vain was the help of man.”⁶⁴ Saint Paul's was soon completely destroyed, along with Saint Faith under Saint Paul's, and Saint Gregory's by Saint Paul's – another church attached to the Cathedral.

Along with Saint Paul's Cathedral, Tuesday was also the most destructive day for the city's parish churches. As Saint Mildred, Bread Street burned, its silver church plate was thrown into a passing carriage and carried away to safety.⁶⁵ Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, along with the nearby houses of many wealthy merchants – most likely outside the city hiding from the recent plague – burned to the ground with nearby All Hallows, Honey Lane, a plain church with few furnishings and monuments.⁶⁶ The fire consumed Saint Olave, Old Jewry, along with the much smaller church of Saint Martin Pomary, with whom it shared a small churchyard. Saint Sepulchre-without-Newgate church burned so

⁶²*Ibid.*

⁶³*Ibid.*

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵LMA P69/MIL1/B/004/MS03470/001, [*Saint Mildred Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], September 4, 1666.

⁶⁶Stow, *Survey*, pp. 258-276.

intensely that all the metal in the church, including the lead roof and the church plate, melted into a single pool. After the fire the Churchwardens attempted, with the help of a blacksmith, to separate the precious metals from the more common ones.⁶⁷ These, along with forty-two other churches caught fire on Tuesday. Some, like Saint Michael Queenhithe left behind ruined church walls, and both All Hallows Lombard Street, and Saint Anne and Saint Agnes still possessed standing church steeples. The vast majority, however, left no sign, save for rubble, that any church stood there at all. The luckiest of the parishes to be threatened by the fire was Saint Andrew's, Holborn, which, just as the flames approached the church, was saved by a sudden shift in the direction of the wind, which carried the fire away.⁶⁸

Throughout the day the garrison at the tower of London waited for direction from the Duke of York. The Tower housed a powder magazine which posed a grave threat to the already suffering city. Late in the evening, having waited hours for any word from the Duke, the garrison took it upon themselves to prevent the Tower from catching fire, along with the gunpowder inside. They moved barrels of gunpowder into the streets around the tower, and used them to rapidly destroy rows of houses.⁶⁹ This fire break saved the Tower of London and successfully halted the spread of the fire in the east of the city. Near midnight as the Queen and her household fled from the fire the wind that had fanned the

⁶⁷LMA P69/SEP/B/001/MS03149/002, [*Saint Sepulchre, Holborn Vestry Minutes Book*], December 21, 1666.

⁶⁸Bell, p. 158.

⁶⁹Rege Sincera, *Observations*, p. 326.

fire for three days, suddenly subsided.

V. Wednesday, September 5 – A City of Ashes:

By Wednesday morning the Duke of York's perimeter of fire breaks, aided by a lull in the strong winds, brought the fire to a halt in the north and the west of the city. As residents in the western suburbs realized they might save their homes, they shifted their efforts from saving possessions to fighting the fire.⁷⁰ The Duke's men were able to move from halting and containing the fire, to the task of actually fighting it. That being said, little could be done for those areas of the city already ablaze, and most burned to smoldering ashes. By Wednesday afternoon the danger from the fire had all but subsided. However, Evelyn observed that the ruins from the fire continued to burn and glow well into the evening of September 5, and that the ruins of Saint Faiths under Saint Paul's, full of the paper stock of the Stationers' Company, continued to burn until September 7.⁷¹ The Clothworkers' Company Meeting Hall, its basement full of oil, continued to burn as a single great flame for three days.⁷² Of those who remained in the city, Evelyn recalled, “the people, who now walked about the ruins, appeared like men in some dismal desert, or rather, in some great city laid waste by a cruel enemy; to which was added the stench that came from some poor

⁷⁰Pepys, September 6, 1666.

⁷¹Evelyn, September 7, 1666.

⁷²Pepys, September 6, 1666.

creatures' bodies, beds, and other combustible goods."⁷³ The ground was so hot that those touring the destruction, including both Pepys and Evelyn, lamented that it burned their shoes.⁷⁴ Even though much of the city still burned, the fire was contained, and the city was saved – although a different kind of danger now threatened London.⁷⁵ The city might tear itself apart as mobs sought justice, and retribution, for the fire.

In the immediate aftermath of the fire there was a very real concern that a foreign power, particularly the French or the Dutch might take advantage of the fire and invade. However, news of the Fire did not reach the continent for a week, and Louis XIV only found out on September 16 and his response was much more compassionate than it was bellicose.⁷⁶ Despite this, rumors circulated around the city that such an invasion might occur, or was at that moment occurring. These rumors became particularly problematic when they reached the refugee camps around the city.

There was a great deal of debate over the actual cause of the fire. While it was clear to some that it had been an accidental fire which started in Farriner's Pudding Lane Bakery, others saw the marks of outside interference – with some explanations more reasonable than others. Some Londoners believed that the fire was caused by direct military action

⁷³Evelyn, September 7, 1666.

⁷⁴*Ibid*; Pepys, September, 5, 1666.

⁷⁵ See Fig. 1 - *Panorama of London Before the Great Fire and After* by Wenceslaus Hollar and Fig. 2 - *Survey of the Destruction Caused by the Great Fire of London* by John Leake for visual representations of the Great Fire's destruction.

⁷⁶*CSPI*, October 5, 1666.

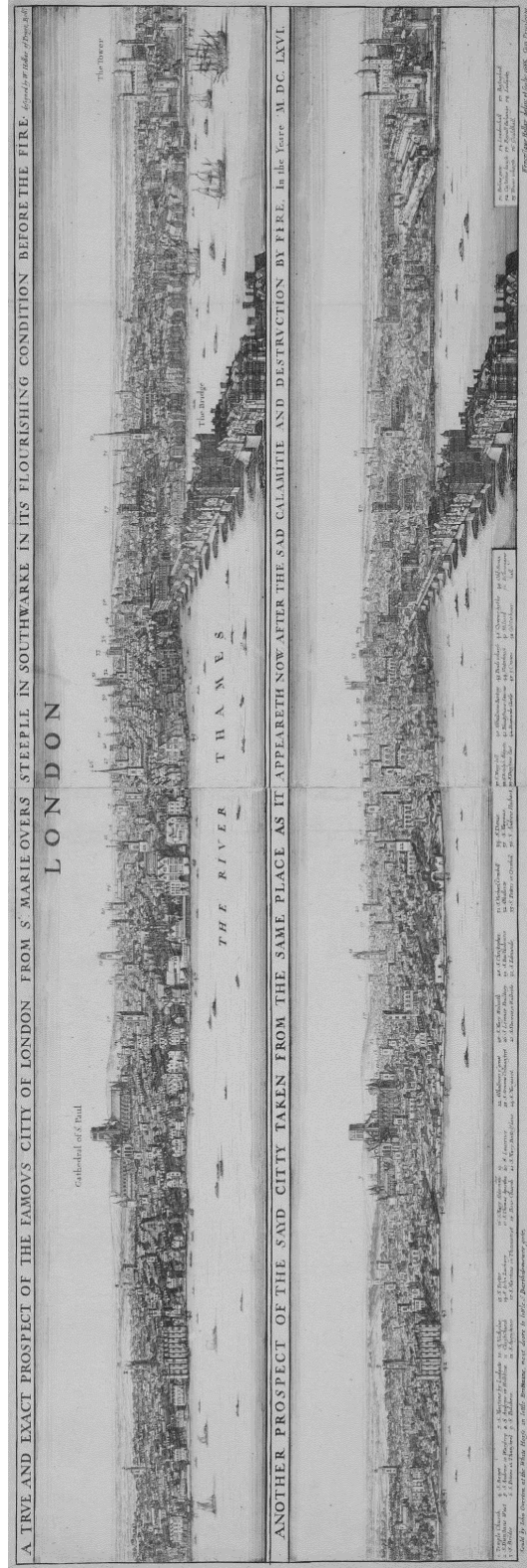


Fig. 1
Panorama of London Before the Great Fire and After by Wenceslaus Hollar.

on the part of the Dutch. The English were at war with both the Dutch and the French in 1666. The English had previously razed Dutch coastal cities, and, as evidenced by the Raid on Medway in 1667, the Dutch Navy was more than capable at striking inland.

There was also some concern that the fire had not been started by an invading army, but rather by a fifth column hiding in London, perhaps for decades. This explains much of the violence against foreign residents of the city of London, even those who had fled their homelands out of fear of religious persecution. Even more alarming than foreign residents of the city were crypto-Catholics. The great specter of the early modern English imagination, crypto-Catholicism, cast a long shadow over the Great Fire. Fear of a vast Papist Conspiracy, held together with a network of Jesuits, seemed a perfectly reasonable explanation for the fire. When Charles II addressed the crowds in Moorfields on Thursday morning, he assured his subjects that the fire had been an act of God, and not the result of any foreign plot.⁷⁷ It is likely, however, that the King agreed with John Evelyn who placed the blame for the Great Fire squarely on the unreasonable layout of the city and the unsafe material of which it was constructed.⁷⁸

While the King assured his subjects that the fire was a judgment from God instead of a foreign plot, he did not speculate about the motivation for such extreme divine punishment. Other Londoners were not so restrained, especially the Puritan Minister Thomas Vincent. Vincent was a fixture of the puritan community in London, especially

⁷⁷BL MSS 15057, [*Letter concerning the London Fire in 1666*], April 7, 1676, f. 44b.

⁷⁸Evelyn, September 5, 1666.

during the plague of 1665, during which time he proved a prolific preacher – alerting all who would listen to the true cause of the plague – the moral degeneration of the city.⁷⁹ After the fire Vincent published *God's Terrible Voice in the City by Plague and Fire*. In this tract Vincent extended his existing theory about the city's plague to explain the fire as well.⁸⁰ Even John Evelyn, upon reflection prompted by the Fast Day for the fire on October 10, attributed the fire and plague to London's “prodigious ingratitude, burning lusts, dissolute court, profane and abominable lives.”⁸¹

The suspicions of many Londoners were confirmed as city and Royal officials began formally investigating the cause of the fire. Farriner refused to acknowledge that the fire could have been the result of an accident in his bakery or of his own negligence.⁸² This led to a search for a more nefarious cause which would have in all likelihood resulted in no arrests – were it not for Robert Hubert. Hubert, a twenty-six year old watchmaker's son from Rouen and committed Protestant Huguenot, was attempting to leave England for the Continent by way of Romford Port in Essex.⁸³ This ambition was rendered impossible by the closing of the ports in response to the blaze. As a foreigner attempting to leave the country he was questioned about the fire by magistrates at the port at which time he

⁷⁹Beth Lynch, *Thomas Vincent*, *ODNB*.

⁸⁰Thomas Vincent, *God's Terrible Voice in the City*, (London, 1667: Wing V440).

⁸¹Evelyn, October 10, 1666.

⁸²Pepys, February 24, 1667.

⁸³Hyde, p. 94.

confessed to the starting the blaze.⁸⁴ Hubbert claimed to have been part of a large catholic conspiracy – despite his well-known Protestantism – to start a fire in London in the area around Whitehall.⁸⁵ Despite incorrectly locating the origin of the fire, he was sent back to London under heavy guard for further questioning. After arriving in London Hubbert's story began to change. The number of people involved in the conspiracy changed with each retelling, as did the location of the fire, and the method with which he started it.

Despite the acknowledgment by many, including Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon, that Hubert was clearly innocent, Hubert was still executed for starting the fire. Hyde believed that given how pitiful Hubert was, “a wretch weary of life” the magistrates and crowd simply gave Hubert the death he desired.⁸⁶ That being said, it is also likely that Hubert was simply used as a scapegoat, to satisfy the mob of Londoners attacking foreigners throughout the city. On October 29, 1666 Hubbert was hanged at Tyburn. His last words were a full recantation of his many, varied confessions.⁸⁷ As Hubbert's body was moved from Tyburn to the meeting hall of the Company of Barber-Surgeons, it was torn limb from limb by an angry crowd.⁸⁸

While it was fortunate that a disaster as destructive as the Great Fire of 1666 did

⁸⁴Bell, p. 191.

⁸⁵*Ibid*, p. 194.

⁸⁶Hyde, p. 96.

⁸⁷*Ibid*, p. 194.

⁸⁸*CSPI*, November 12, 1666.

not take more lives, it did mean that a huge number of Londoners were now homeless. John Evelyn estimated that around 200,000 Londoners were displaced by the fire.⁸⁹ Some were able to leave the city to take shelter in surrounding towns and villages, and others were fortunate enough to take shelter with friends in the suburbs, or the sections of the city which did not burn. Most, however, were forced to flee to the makeshift refugee camp in fields around the city.

The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields, and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and several miles in circle, some under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels, many without a rag, or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicateness, riches, and easy accommodations in stately and well-furnished houses, were now reduced to extreme misery and poverty.⁹⁰

These camps were often, overcrowded, under supplied, and full of Londoners suffering from severe burns and smoke inhalation – and many more on the verge of death from starvation.⁹¹ They could also prove dangerous and unruly, and London's trained bands were dispatched to keep order in the camps. The camps were also sights of potential violence against foreign residents of London, or any stranger foolish enough to wander the streets alone.⁹² Evelyn had even taken a French prisoner into his personal custody to keep him safe, although by September 6 he was attempting to relieve himself of the responsibility.⁹³ Most of the city militiamen, however, were dispatched to guard piles of

⁸⁹Evelyn, September 7, 1666.

⁹⁰*Ibid*, September 5, 1666.

⁹¹*Ibid*, September 7, 1666.

⁹²Pepys, September 6, 1666.

⁹³Evelyn, September 6, 1666.

valuables deposited by the city's livery companies in Lincoln's Inn Field, Gray's Inn Field, and Hatton Garden – or were attempting to save their own houses.⁹⁴ These guards did not stop all the looting, and Pepys observed some Londoners stealing their neighbors wine from piles of goods in the streets.⁹⁵ The King personally toured the camps, as did John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys. During both Pepys' and Evelyn's surveys on September 7, rumors circulated through the refugee camps that the French and the Dutch were invading, and mobs in the fields assembled to save their goods and property, and to repel the invaders. The mob eventually became so violent and aggressive that soldiers and the Trained Bands were sent to the camps to control the crowds, and maintain order throughout the night.⁹⁶

The death toll of the Great Fire is difficult to determine. Very few deaths were accounted for, although it is likely that many deaths went unreported within the city, especially in the chaos of the fire. Furthermore, it is unknown how many Londoners died afterward from injuries caused by the fire, including infected wounds and burns, as well as smoke inhalation. The conditions in the refugee camps were far from suitable for the number of Londoners displaced by the fire, and it is likely that many died from starvation and disease while in the camps.

The ultimate material cost of the destruction caused by the Great Fire was immense. The Great Fire destroyed 13,200 houses resulting in £600,000 in lost rents, and displacing

⁹⁴Bell, p. 121.

⁹⁵Pepys, September 8, 1666.

⁹⁶Evelyn, September 7, 1666.

70,000 Londoners.⁹⁷ Forty-Four Company Halls were destroyed, along with countless public buildings, including both Newgate and Bridewell Prisons, the Royal Exchange, the General Letter Office and the Customs House.⁹⁸ Along with these buildings, a great deal of material wealth was destroyed in the fire. The Stationers' Company lost £200,000 in the collapse of Saint Paul's Cathedral – the remains of the burnt paper carried in the wind as far as Eton College near Windsor.⁹⁹ The total value of the goods destroyed in the fire is more difficult to determine, although it was estimated to be nearly £10 million.¹⁰⁰ Around £2 million was lost to looters, which was also the amount paid to carry goods out of the city to save them from both the fire and looting.¹⁰¹

After the fire burned itself out, after Robert Hubbert was executed, and the city's lust for foreign blood was sated, even after the rubble was cleared from the city's streets, it was not entirely clear if the city of London would ever fully recover from the disaster. Furthermore, could the city afford to rebuild itself? Where would the money, and construction materials for the reconstruction come from? While the city was exposed, defenseless would a foreign power attempt to invade? Would the King himself finally punish the city for the death of his father – his troops were already roaming the streets?

⁹⁷Thomas Delune, *The Present State of London: Or, the Memorials Comprehending a Full and Succinct Account of the Ancient and Modern State Thereof*, (London, 1681: Wing D889), p. 456; Pepys, September 12, 1666.

⁹⁸Delune, p. 455.

⁹⁹Hyde, p. 99.

¹⁰⁰Delune, p. 457.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*

Even if all these uncertainties could be overcome, these great dangers avoided, the question still remained – what would a rebuilt London look like? Would the city be restored – the clock turned back? Would a rebuilt London be more, or perhaps less, than it was? Perhaps the most palpable loss, however, was the eighty-seven parish churches destroyed by the fire. While many of Restoration London's most essential spaces would be rebuilt, and fifty-one of the parish churches would be reimagined by Wren and his colleagues, for thirty-six parishes in the city of London their parish church was lost forever. The loss of a church could scar a parish community for decades, jeopardizing the most basic patterns of urban life as these Londoners progressed into a profoundly uncertain future.

**Part II:
After the Fire.**

Part II:
Chapter 3:
“Regulation, Uniformity and Gracefulness.”

On September fifth, just as the fire began to subside, Charles II issued a proclamation from Whitehall for the “present remedy and redress” of those “most severely dispossessed by the fire.”¹ This rapid response to the needs of his subjects may in part have emerged from Charles' “Princely compassion and very tender care,” for the condition of his “many good subjects.”² Charles, and his brother the Duke of York, were at the center the attempt to save the city during the fire, and Charles had even put himself in danger alongside his subjects by personally directing efforts to fight the blaze.

However, the King's actions during and after the fire might have been motivated by more than a sovereign's affection for his subjects. Charles almost certainly feared Londoners “made destitute of habitations and exposed too many exigencies and necessities.”³ He knew better than most exactly how dangerous an aggrieved London could be to a distant and disinterested monarch. He attempted to curtail any chance of rebellion with a bulwark of material charity and regal benevolence. The King ordered that bread and provisions be distributed to the sites of destroyed markets throughout the city, as well as to the many refugee camps.⁴ He also ordered that those towns close to London should “without any contradiction receive the said distressed persons and permit them free

¹ML 4239 14, [*Declaration for the Relief of Homeless Londoners*], September 5, 1666.

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

exercise of their manual trades.”⁵

With the immediate needs of his subjects provided for, Charles and his Parliament could focus on the recovery of the city itself. Even with access to basic necessities Londoners would not long tolerate homelessness in the liberties. Early efforts to rebuild the city were delayed by a variety of factors, the most significant, however, was the city's byzantine property laws.⁶ This was compounded by the sheer volume of cases the city's courts anticipated hearing in the period after the fire. In order to circumvent these legal obstacles Charles II signed the *Fire of London Disputes Act of 1666*. This act established a court made up of judges from the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Court of the Exchequer, who would hear and adjudicate cases between the landlords and tenants of properties afflicted by the fire.⁷ From 1666 until 1670 twenty-two judges sat on the court. These judges were empowered by the act to break and redraft leases in order to facilitate the redevelopment of damaged properties, and were even allowed to permit tenants to rebuild on damaged properties if the landlord was unable to fund the reconstruction himself – often with a significantly lower rent on a generously extended lease.⁸

The lack of a suitable labor force also delayed the pace at which reconstruction

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*An Act For Erecting a Judicature for Determination of Differences Touching Houses Burned or Demolished by Reason of the Late Fire which Happened in London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 18 & 19 c. 7).

⁷For a very complete discussion of the reconstruction of secular London see T.F. Reddaway, *The Rebuilding of London After the Great Fire*, (Edward Arnold & Company: London, 1941).

⁸*An Act For Erecting a Judicature for Determination of Differences Touching Houses Burned or Demolished by Reason of the Late Fire which Happened in London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 18 & 19 c. 7).

could begin. Even before the fire, London was increasingly abandoned as those who could afford to leave fled the city, and its plague. The Great Fire drove still more Londoners into the countryside. This problem was exacerbated by the restrictions placed on construction labor by the city's livery companies who regulated the practice of trades in the city, including those essential for the rebuilding of London. The 1666 *Act for Rebuilding the City of London* lifted many of these restrictions, which in turn attracted builders and craftsmen from all over England. These provincial craftsmen could demand much higher wages in London than they were able to at the periphery, while still providing Londoners with a relatively inexpensive labor force.⁹

For Charles rebuilding London was not simply a matter of recovery, but also one of re-imagining. A significant portion of Charles' ambition for the rebuilt capital included enhancing the safety and salubrity of the city. As early as 1661 Charles personally cautioned against the use of wood in construction, and raised concerns about the narrowness of the city's streets as a potential fire hazard – a prophetic warning that was not heeded by Londoners.¹⁰ Furthermore, Charles enjoyed a close patron-client relationship with John Evelyn. Charles was so enthusiastic for Evelyn's 1661 indictment of the city's air quality, *Fumifugium*, that he ordered Evelyn to draft a bill for Parliament to meet the concerns raised in the pamphlet.¹¹ These concerns for the rebuilt city were reflected in the

⁹*An Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 19 c. 8).

¹⁰FSL C3250, [By the King. *A Proclamation Concerning Building, In and About London and Westminster*] August, 16, 1661.

¹¹Reddaway, p. 40.

1666 *Act For Rebuilding*, which widened streets, improved the drainage of sewage, restricted the use of timber in construction, and even quarantined particularly loud or toxic trades to segments of the city away from main thoroughfares.¹² This vision of London appears to have been shared by influential members of the Royal Society close to the King – many of the plans submitted for the rebuilt city, especially those by Evelyn, Sir Christopher Wren, and Robert Hooke, reflect a more open city plan with wider streets and a canalized Thames.¹³ Restoration London would not simply be rebuilt, but it would also be modernized.

That said, Charles II's ambitions for the city transcended any limited notions of the practical or the modern. London was, after all, Charles' "Imperiall Seate ... renowned for Trade and Commerce throughout the world."¹⁴ The rebuilding of London would not only solve many of the city's long standing structural problems, but was also an endeavor of "greate honor and importance to his Majestie," as it provided the King with an opportunity to fundamentally transform the city itself.¹⁵ While Charles, unlike his father and grandfather, had been born in England, he was exiled for many of his formative years in the meticulously planned, well-regulated, and increasingly wealthy and cosmopolitan cities of the Netherlands. Furthermore, Charles spent a portion of his time in exile seeking the

¹²*An Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 19 c. 8).

¹³See Fig. 3 - Sir Christopher Wren's Plan for Rebuilding London; See also Fig. 4 - Richard Newcourt's Plan for Rebuilding London, Fig. 5 - John Evelyn's Plan for Rebuilding London and Fig. 6 - Valentine Knight's Plan for Rebuilding London.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵*Ibid.*

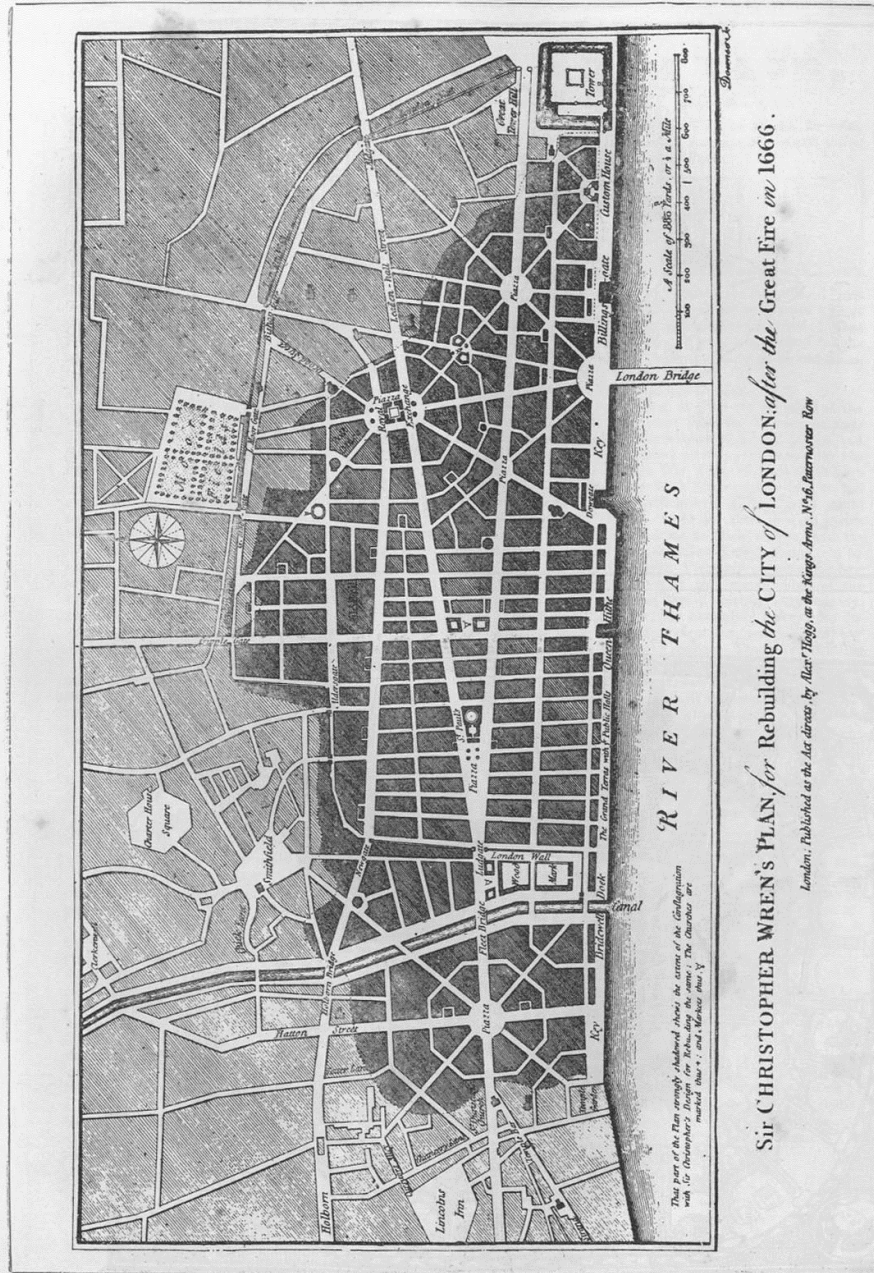


Fig. 3
Sir Christopher Wren's Plan for Rebuilding London.

the picture magazine v4 1894

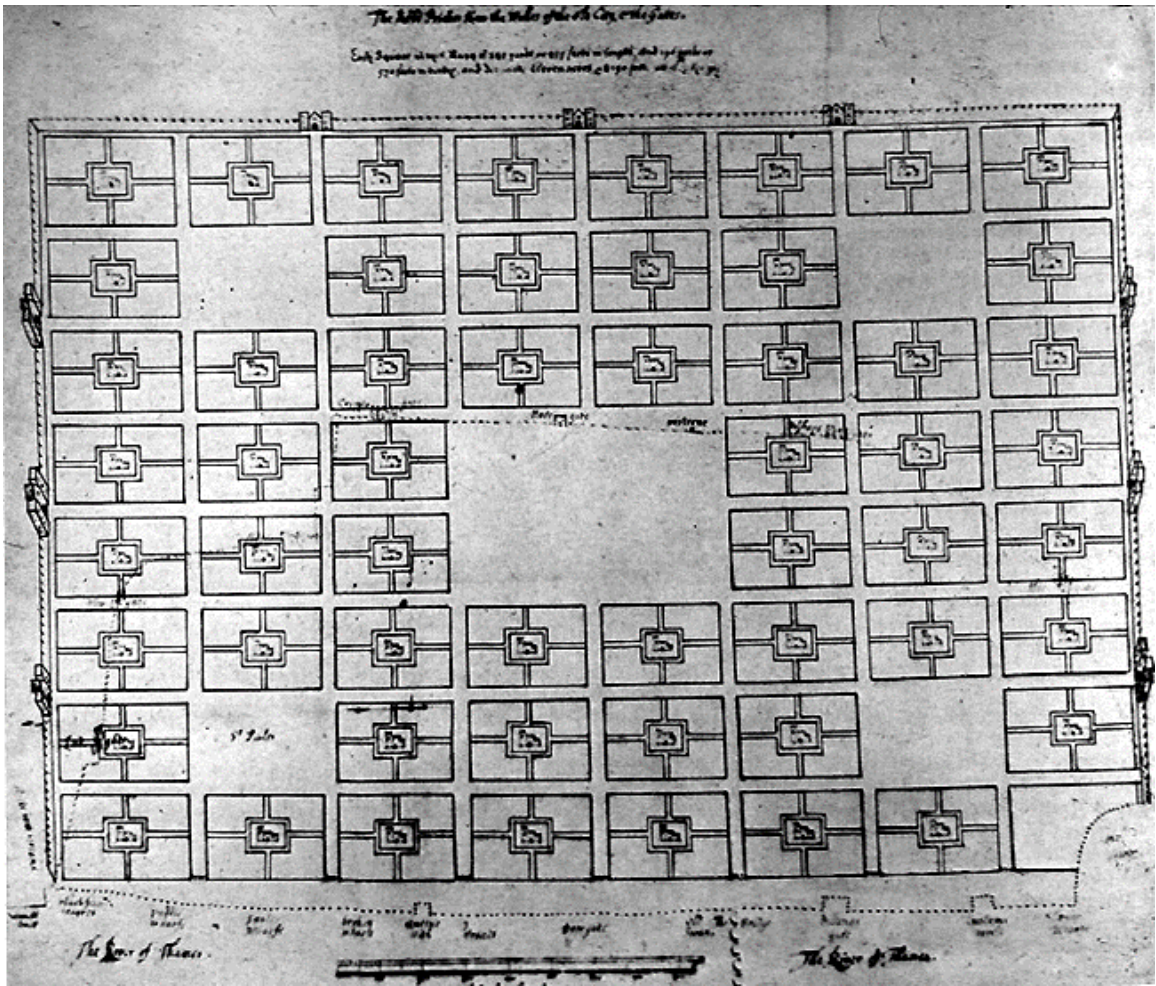


Fig. 4
Richard Newcourt's Plan for Rebuilding London.

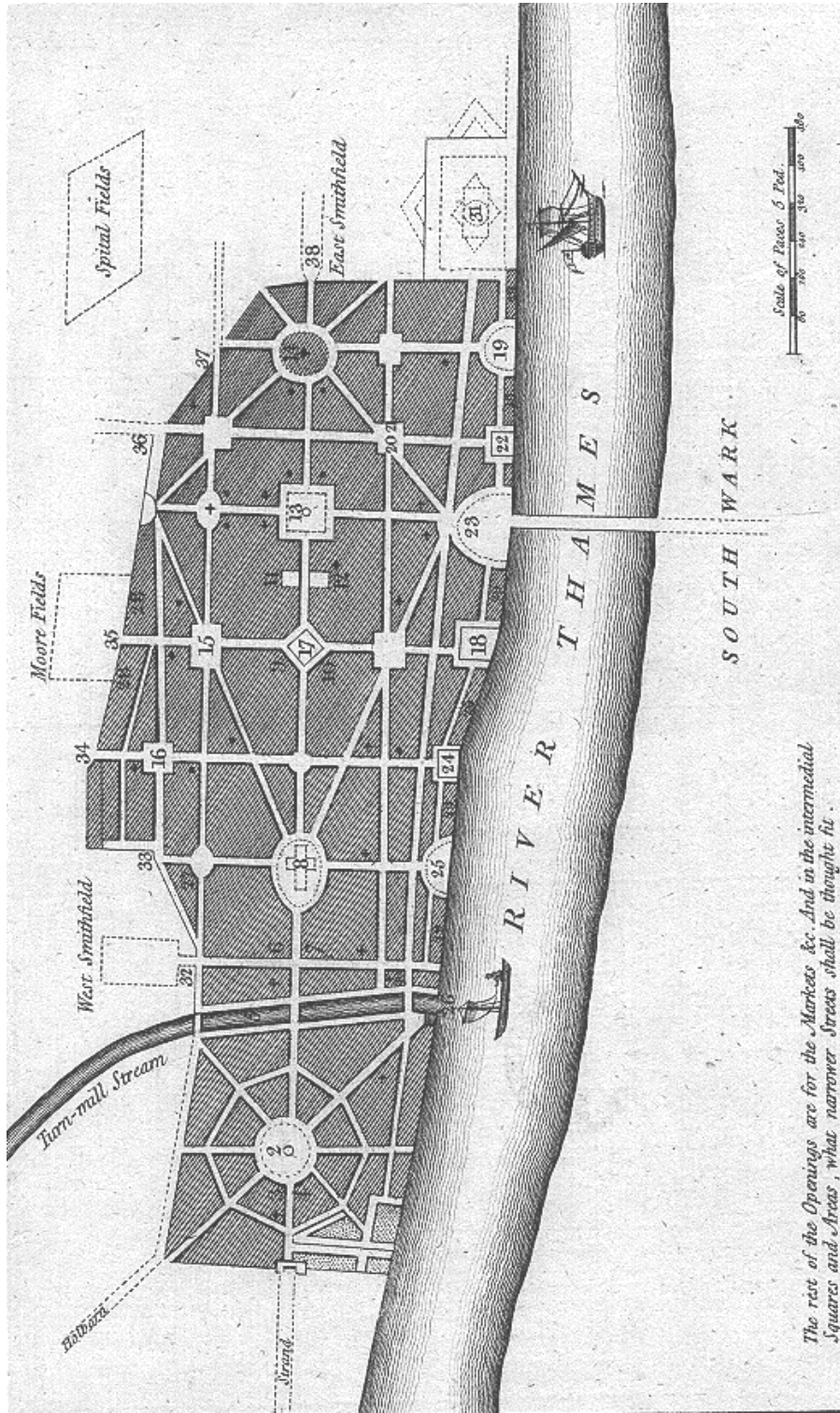


Fig. 5
John Evelyn's Plan for Rebuilding London.

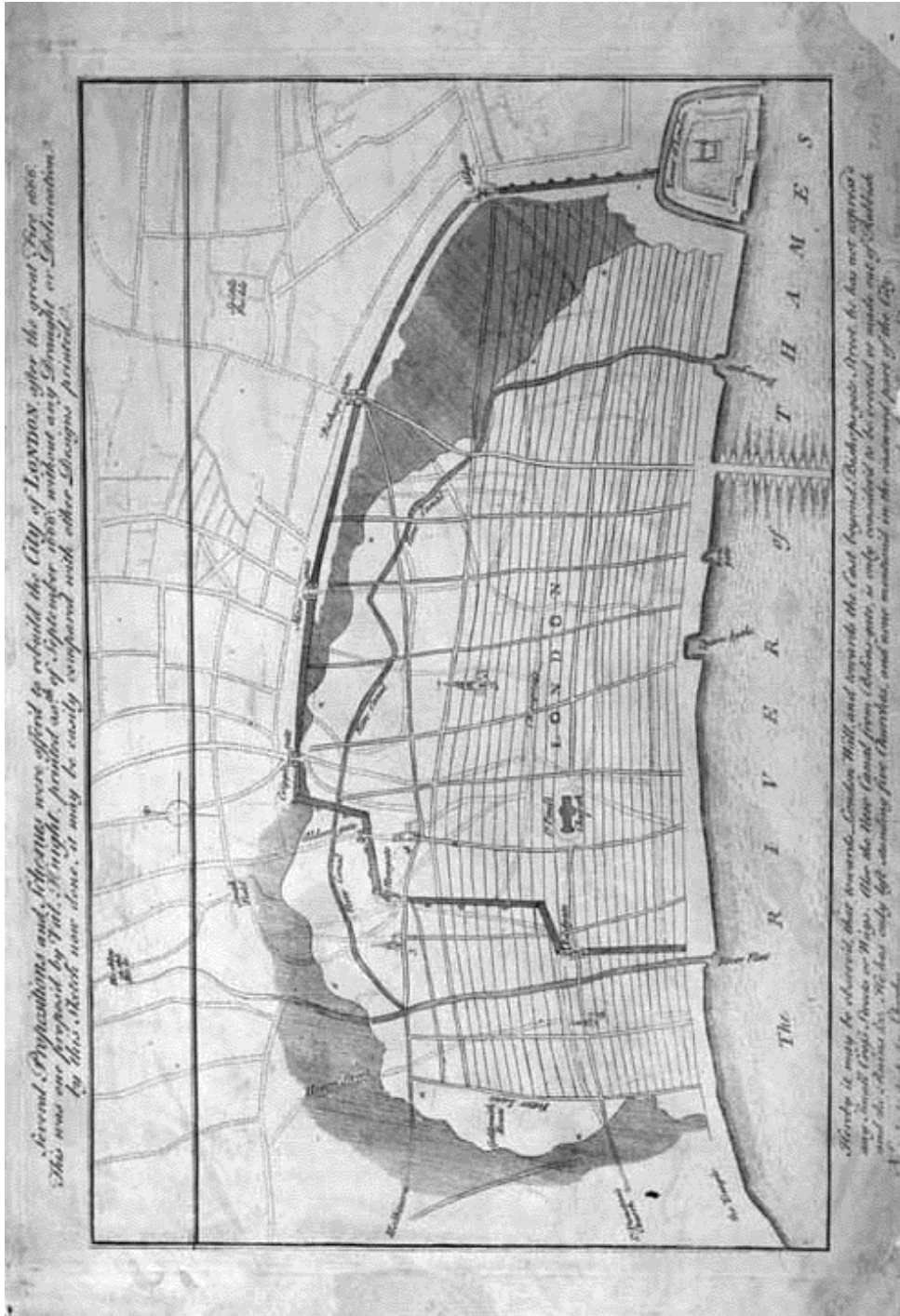


Fig. 6
Valentine Knight's Plan for Rebuilding London.

aid and support of his French cousin, Louis XIV. Louis, unlike Charles, had emerged from a rebellion in the Fronde in a position of relative strength and this strength allowed Louis to attract to Paris the talents of many of continental Europe's most significant architects, including Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Charles' experience of Paris – a city rapidly evolving into an architectural celebration of one of Europe's most formidable sovereigns – almost certainly shaped his desire to rebuild London as an awe-inspiring royal capital. He shared this vision with many at his court, especially Sir Christopher Wren.

The Great Fire provided Charles II with more than an opportunity to direct the rebirth of the city of London – it was also an opportunity for retribution. The emergency legislation approved by Parliament in the immediate aftermath of the fire permitted the seizure of property and wealth at the discretion of the King, or his proxies, to aid in the city's recovery. It also allowed him to disrupt the traditional privileges and monopolies enjoyed by the city's companies, dramatically marginalizing their influence in the city when their cooperation was most needed. Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon, recalled that Hugh May, Paymaster of the King's Works, advised that this was the moment for Charles to press his advantage, as “the walls and gates being now burned and thrown down of that rebellious city, who was always an enemy to the Crown.”¹⁶ May counseled the King to “never suffer to repair and build them up again,” and to “keep all open that his troops might enter ... whenever he thought necessary.”¹⁷

Charles' ambitions for the city of London would never come to pass. The inertia of

¹⁶Hyde, p. 101.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

the city with its wealth and influence proved to be too potent an adversary for the King. The traditional rights and privileges enjoyed by the city, as well as the protections afforded to property owners by the Fire Court, allowed Londoners to limit the influence any central urban planner could have on their city.¹⁸ The rebuilding of London's parish churches – desperately in need of aid for their recovery after the fire – had the potential to provide Charles with a chance to complete a small portion of his vision for London. They also offered the King an opportunity to impose the forms of worship prescribed in 1662 *Act of Uniformity* on the London parishes, where the act had largely been ignored.¹⁹

I. Discreet, Intelligent Persons:

The 1666 *Act for Rebuilding* left the management of private reconstruction projects, with the exception of the new building regulations, to owners and tenants.²⁰ Furthermore, major reconstruction projects, such as Saint Paul's Cathedral and the Guildhall fell under the influence of major city or ecclesiastical patrons capable of influencing the direction of their particular projects without concern for outside impediments. The reconstruction project with the most points of contact, and conflict, between Londoners and both city and royal officials was the effort to rebuild the eighty-seven parish churches destroyed by the fire. These churches were governed by a complicated network of parish priests, notable patrons, and the parishioners themselves – many of whom served their parishes as both

¹⁸See Reddaway.

¹⁹Kenneth Fincham, "According To Ancient Custom': The Return of Altars in the Restoration Church of England," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society Vol. 13*, (2003), pp. 29-53.

²⁰*Ibid.*

churchwardens and vestrymen. These parish communities proved remarkably active as lobbyist for the reconstruction of their parish churches.

This parish activism was made all the more urgent and necessary by the regulations for church reconstruction laid out by the 1666 *Act for Rebuilding*. In the act Charles II ordered that no more than thirty-nine of the eighty-seven parish churches destroyed by the Great Fire were to be rebuilt, with those eliminated parishes to be unified with rebuilt or surviving parishes.²¹ In addition, the act ordered that the wealth, property, and construction materials salvaged from the churches of the eliminated parishes would be seized by the Lord Mayor of London, the Bishop of London, or the Council of Aldermen.²² This stone, brick, iron and lead would be used in, or sold to fund, the reconstruction of other parish churches.²³ Failure to successfully lobby for the survival of one's church did not simply mean decades as a displaced parish, or a small and plain rebuilt church, but the complete destruction of a space central to the identity of a dynamic urban community.

The committee appointed to select those churches to be rebuilt consisted of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and the Lord Mayor of London. While these men each had their own concerns and ambitions for the reconstruction of the city, the restoration of London's parish churches does not appear to have been essential for any of them. With the exception of fifteen parish churches deemed indispensable in the committee's earliest meetings, the criteria for the selection of the remainder of the churches

²¹*An Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 19 c. 8).

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Ibid.*

to be rebuilt remained unclear until the 1670s.²⁴ Samuel Pepys observed that the resulting settlement did not pay particularly close attention the characters or desires of the parishes to be united.²⁵

A. The Rebuilding Commissioners:

1. The Lord Mayors of London:

The Lord Mayor of London sat on the Rebuilding Commission to represent the interests of the city of London in the reconstruction of the city's parish churches. Unlike the two bishops who served as the other commissioners, the Lord Mayors' much shorter tenure of office meant that three different men served as the city's rebuilding commissioner during the critical period from 1670 until 1672. Sir Samuel Starling served as Lord Mayor from 1669 until 1670. Starling, a brewer, is perhaps best known for sending William Penn to trial for preaching in Grace Church Street in 1670. Starling appears to have been remarkably self-interested, even for a Lord Mayor, having paid a paltry sum to thirty poor men during the fire to save his house as his neighbor's homes burned to the ground – only to accuse the men of theft after their work was completed.²⁶ Sir Richard Ford held the office from 1670 to 1671. A skilled linguist and ambassador, Ford moved in circles of prominent Anti-Dutch members of the Africa Company.²⁷ Prior to his election as Lord

²⁴GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission], June 13, 1670, p. 3.

²⁵Pepys, May 6, 1668.

²⁶*Ibid*, September 8, 1666.

²⁷Sir Richard Ford Memorial Inscription, Bexley Church, Kent; Steve Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.

Mayor, Ford was censured as a city alderman for attempting to pass his own drafts for rebuilding legislation as legislation already approved by the Council of Aldermen to be put before the Commons.²⁸ George Waterman was Lord Mayor from 1671 until 1672, and of the three lord mayors was the most committed to protecting Londoners from the machinations of the Restoration Court. In 1672 Waterman was pressured by the King and the Earl of Arlington to persecute dissenters worshipping in public – an order he refused to carry out with strong support from the city's influential dissenter communities.²⁹

Despite the regular rotation of the Lord Mayor on the Rebuilding Commission, these three men pursued two goals with remarkable consistency. The Lord Mayors were primarily interested in completing the construction as quickly as possible – many of the orders from the committee to hasten the reconstruction bore the signature of a Lord Mayor.³⁰ Additionally the Lord Mayors appear to have been strong supporters of projects which touched on civic and secular properties throughout the city, such as the seizure of land to widen roads, or to improve the Guildhall.³¹ They also pushed for the stabilization or removal of those steeples that were damaged during the fire, but did not collapse – many of which posed a serious threat to neighboring houses and streets.³²

252, 303.

²⁸*Repertory of the Court of Aldermen of the City of London*, Vol. 71, p. 172.

²⁹Gary S. De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659 – 1683*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 121.

³⁰GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*].

³¹*Ibid*, p. 20 May 13, 1671.

³²*Ibid*, p. 30, July 8, 1671.

2. Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury:

As the preeminent churchman on the Rebuilding Commission Gilbert Sheldon should have played a central role in rebuilding the parish churches of London after the Great Fire. Sheldon was educated at Oxford University where he flourished as both a student and an academic. While at Oxford Sheldon forged a close relationship with William Laud, who was the Chancellor of the University during Sheldon's tenure.³³ During the Civil War Sheldon proved a committed Royalist – sharing political leanings with his close friend Edward Hyde and his coterie of constitutional Royalists. During Charles I's occupation of Oxford, Sheldon waited personally on the King, and was a fixture of his court for the remainder of the King's life.³⁴

Sheldon continued to participate in a network of correspondence with important Royalists, including Hyde, during the Interregnum. After the Restoration Sheldon was rewarded for his loyalty with the Deanery of the Chapel Royal – a position which allowed Sheldon to preach before Charles II at Whitehall. Sheldon received further preferment in 1663 when he became the Archbishop of Canterbury³⁵ In 1667, however, with the fall from favor of the Earl of Clarendon, Sheldon's fortunes began to fade – along with his tolerance for the King's increasingly public sexual transgressions.³⁶

³³John Spurr, *Gilbert Sheldon, ODNB*.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*

Sheldon's dwindling influence at the royal court and as his advanced age – he was seventy-two during the earliest Rebuilding Commission meetings – may have contributed to his increasing disinterest in the rebuilding. During the Interregnum Sheldon pushed for a decade to repair Saint Paul's Cathedral and was central to the effort immediately before the fire to repair the structure.³⁷ His interest in the rebuilding of the parochial churches is less evident, however, as he attended by far the fewest Rebuilding Commission meetings, and appears to have had a particular loathing for issues of funding and property management.³⁸

3. Humphrey Henchman, Bishop of London:

Henchmen, the son of a London skinner, was a much more active participant on the Rebuilding Commission than his colleague and patron Archbishop Sheldon. HENCHMEN attended Cambridge University, but left the university in 1623 to serve as a Prebend of Salisbury Cathedral under his future father-in-law, John Davenant, Bishop of Salisbury. During the Civil War HENCHMEN was deprived of his benefices, in part because he was in communication with members of the Royal Army.³⁹

During the Interregnum, HENCHMEN stepped out of public life, but continued to participate in networks of correspondence with exiled royalists and secretly visited Charles

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission].

³⁹John Spurr, *Humphrey HENCHMEN*, ODNB.

II at Hale House after the Battle of Worcester in 1651.⁴⁰ For his service to the crown, and his close relationship with Archbishop Sheldon, Humphrey was elevated to Bishop of London in 1663.⁴¹ A few days before the Great Fire on August 27, HENCHMAN examined Saint Paul's Cathedral in preparation for repair and refurbishment, and even began planning for a subscription to raise money for the project.⁴²

Despite the both Sheldon and HENCHMAN's enthusiasm for rebuilding Saint Paul's Cathedral, the Rebuilding Commission was under qualified to meet the practical demands of rebuilding a major city. With this in mind a second committee was convened to assess the state of each of the eighty-seven parish churches destroyed by the fire. This committee would be made up of three representatives appointed by the King, the Royal Commissioners for the Rebuilding, as well as three representatives appointed by Lord Mayor of London and the Court of Aldermen to represent the city's interests, the City Surveyors. This committee was tasked with surveying and remapping the destroyed churchyards, estimating the costs of repair for each of the parish churches, and making recommendations to the Rebuilding Commission on the course for the reconstruction. The Royal Commissioners and the City Surveyors were also responsible for tearing down the damaged churches, and collecting any construction materials which could be salvaged

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²*Ibid.*

B. The Royal Commissioners for the Rebuilding:

1. Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor of the King's Works:

In 1666 Wren would not have seemed an obvious choice to direct the rebuilding of the city of London after the Great Fire. To nearly every other Royal Commissioner and City Surveyor, Wren would have appeared young, inexperienced, and impractical – and they would have had a point. Many of his colleagues had years of experience as architects and master builders, or were familiar with managing the finances and labor required for large construction projects. Wren was trained as a mathematician at Wadham College, Oxford. While at Wadham Wren's scholarship was in part focused on the role played by advanced mathematics in property surveying, but he had little practical experience with it.⁴³ This interest was expanded in the 1650s to include mathematically informed urban planning. Before the Great Fire, Wren had occasion to experiment with architecture by building two small churches. In 1663 his father added a small chapel to Pembroke College, Cambridge which Wren designed, based a Roman temple.⁴⁴ He also designed a chapel for All Souls College, Oxford University in 1664. Despite these early efforts Wren's experience as an architect and builder paled in comparison to the lengthy careers of many of his colleagues.

Wren's inexperience may have made him ideally suited to reflect the somewhat unreasonable ambitions of Charles II – in many ways Wren's architectural aesthetic made him a perfect match for royal patronage. Wren also reflected the high church sensibility of

⁴³J. A. Bennet, *The Mathematical Science of Christopher Wren*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 87.

⁴⁴Kerry Downes, *Sir Christopher Wren*, ODNB.

the King. His father was the Dean of Windsor, a prominent Laudian and Royalist who continued to support Charles I during the Civil War.⁴⁵ Wren's uncle had been the Bishop of Ely and was imprisoned by the Protectorate for his outspoken Royalist sympathies.⁴⁶ Wren's own religious preferences reflected this lineage. Wren also represented an avenue through which Charles II could impose his interest in scientifically informed urban planning on the city of London. Charles' support for the Royal Society grew out of his personal interest in natural philosophy, especially optics – a field in which Wren did some of his most impressive academic work⁴⁷.

Charles may have intended to develop Wren's interest in the practical aspects of building by involving him in some of the earliest architectural efforts of his reign.⁴⁸ In 1661 Wren was appointed by the King to unofficially advise on the repair of Saint Paul's Cathedral – the Protectorate having left the Cathedral to fall into ruin. During this time Wren received a commission from Charles II to design fortifications for Tangiers. With these projects in mind Wren traveled to France in 1665. This trip was in part undertaken to meet his scientific counterparts on the continent, but also to meet and observe the work of the French architect Francois Mansart, and the Italian artist Gian Lorenzo Bernini – the latter would serve as a model to which Wren himself clearly aspired, but never truly

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

matched.⁴⁹ Wren's time observing art and architecture in France and Italy developed his taste for the ornate, baroque architecture of the European continent, an architectural vocabulary that applied as much to Wren as it did to Charles II – as evidenced by the initial drawings of a redesigned Whitehall produced by Charles himself, which passed through John Evelyn to Wren for the completion of a formal model.⁵⁰ This friendship with the King would be a secure source of preferment for Wren – Wren was the first Surveyor of the King's Works to be appointed not for life, but at the King's pleasure. Despite this fact Wren served in the position for four decades, outlasting the reigns of two monarchs.⁵¹

The way in which Christopher Wren would direct the rebuilding of London – transforming the city while clashing and cooperating with its residents – was shaped by Wren's experience of three men. The first man was his father, Christopher Wren Sr. the Dean of Windsor. Wren Sr.'s experience of the 1640s and 1650s informed Wren's political leanings and his understanding of both sovereignty and majesty. The second was Wren's uncle, Matthew Wren, the Bishop of Ely, from whom Wren inherited his religious preferences. Both of these men suffered severely during the Civil War and Interregnum, and Wren's intimate experience of their suffering may have informed his near constant antipathy, and occasional hostility, too many of the Londoners for whom he rebuilt churches. Wren experienced the third man more distantly than the first two. Despite this distance, Gian Lorenzo Bernini and his architectural work left a lasting impression on the

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹*Ibid.*

young city planner and architect.

Wren's father was chaplain to the King from 1628 until 1635, when he was elected the Deanery of Windsor.⁵² These positions brought with them income and prestige that eclipsed Wren Sr.'s earlier position as the rector of East Knoyle, and afforded his young son Christopher a degree of affluence in his early years. As Dean of Windsor, Wren Sr. was also the register for the Order of the Garter. Wren Sr. relished the position as register, not only for the access it gave him to the King, his household, and other notables both in Britain and abroad, but because he took very seriously, perhaps as seriously as Charles I himself, the chivalric trappings of the Order and their implications for Charles' kingship.⁵³ Young Christopher, a child whose infirmity required he be educated at home, was exposed regularly to symbols and signs that would transform him into a committed Royalist.

During the 1640s Windsor was looted by Parliamentary Forces, and despite Wren Sr.'s best efforts, much of the Order's wealth and documentation was seized and either destroyed or sold.⁵⁴ Wren Sr. would spend much of the 1650s attempting to recover the lost wealth of the Order of the Garter – continuing to perform the duties charged to him by the King in the 1635 even after the Charles I's execution in 1649. Wren Sr. and his family spent the late 1640s and 1650s living in the household of his son-in-law William Holder, on whose largesse he was completely dependent for his own well-being and that of his family – suddenly affording his son Christopher with a much less comfortable lifestyle. It

⁵²Nicholas W. S. Cranfield, *Christopher Wren*, ODNB.

⁵³Lisa Jardine, *On A Grand Scale, The Outstanding Life of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 36.

⁵⁴Cranfield, *Christopher Wren*, ODNB.

speaks to Wren's Sr.'s commitment to the crown that he did not simply sell those artifacts, mostly documents, of the Order of the Garter he was able to recover – the liquidation of which would have generated some income, and might have renewed Wren's access to patronage by indicating a severe break in his commitment to the monarchy. It is from Wren's father that he inherited his desire to serve to the crown. Not just any crown, however, but one ornamented in the regalia and tradition of the Order of the Garter. It almost certainly planted the seeds within the young mathematician of hostility to those political agents that deprived his family of their comfortable life at Windsor, and so completely destroyed his father.

Wren's uncle, Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely, was an outspoken Laudian, and committed adversary of religious heterodoxy.⁵⁵ After a somewhat meteoric rise to the position of bishop, Wren's fortunes shifted after the impeachment of Archbishop Laud. Parliament passed nine articles of impeachment against Bishop Wren soon afterward in 1641. By 1642 he was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and would remain there for nearly two decades. During his imprisonment, Bishop Wren continued to attempt to manage the affairs of his diocese.⁵⁶ Christopher Wren appears to have inherited his uncle's preference for religious worship in the Laudian Style and his commitment to the use of the Book of Common Prayer.

An architectural autodidact, Wren's education was primarily drawn from texts, in particular Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola's study of the works of Vitruvius in *The Five Orders*

⁵⁵Nicholas W. S. Cranfield, "Matthew Wren," *ODNB*

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

of Architecture.⁵⁷ Wren was also enthusiastic for architectural thought experiments, perfecting his eye for design and developing his hand at drafting through hypothetical designs of ancient buildings such as the Temple of Solomon and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.⁵⁸ Wren's practical studies of building began through observations of the buildings designed by Inigo Jones, the great architect of Wren's youth.⁵⁹ Despite the shadow cast by Jones on English architecture in the seventeenth century Wren was less interested in living up to Jones, than he was in emulating the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Bernini, one of continental Europe's finest artists and architects, fascinated Wren, who visited the Bernini's workshop while traveling in France in 1665.⁶⁰ Bernini is primarily known for his work in Rome as a client of the pope Urban VIII. He refurbished many of the city's churches, and played a role in shaping the general aesthetic of Rome – projects which would influence Wren's ambitions for both his parochial churches and the city of London more broadly. Ultimately, however, Wren never had the influence necessary to transform London into a new Rome. This ambition was a fool's errand not simply for the popular hostility to such a transformative agenda for the city, but also because Wren could simply never live up to the quality of workmanship Bernini was capable of producing. Despite Wren's desire to emulate Bernini, his own work was informed more by mathematics than an eye for beauty – and as a result often resembles the work of Bernini's

⁵⁷Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 41.

⁵⁸*Parentalia*, Tract on Architecture IV.

⁵⁹Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 45.

⁶⁰*Ibid*, p. 57.

rival and sometimes collaborator Francesco Borromini. Furthermore, Wren was limited by the tastes, both artistic and religious, of his English audience. Bernini produced works for Roman Catholic patrons and audiences accustomed to lavish ornamentation. Wren's churches, on the other hand, often prioritize the audibility and visibility of the minister to ornamentation.⁶¹ While Wren's architectural style is by no means simple or plain, the interiors of his parochial churches are more likely to be illuminated by the light of strategically placed windows and skylights than by the glitter of gilt ornamentation or stained glass.⁶²

2. Sir Roger Pratt, The Gentleman Architect:

Sir Roger Pratt was by far the most preeminent member of the Rebuilding Committee. Pratt studied at Oxford and Inner Temple, and while he was trained to practice the law, he developed a strong interest in architecture. Pratt expanded this interest in the later 1630s and 1640s through intense personal study, as well as a tour of the continent and during the Civil War Pratt matriculated into the School of Law at the University of Padua. During his time on the continent Pratt studied the great buildings of Italy, France and the Netherlands, and it was this study which would serve as the foundation for the development of his own architectural vocabulary.⁶³

⁶¹Thomas Roger Smith, *A Rudimentary Treatise on the Acoustics of Public Buildings*, (1861), p. 121.

⁶² Wren did not avoid stained glass because of its association with Roman Catholicism, but instead out of a personal aversion to this particular decoration. See Trevor Brighton, "William Peckitt and the Quest for Color in Eighteenth-century Glass, in *The British Art Journal*, Vol. 5, No 1, (Spring/Summer 2004), p. 46.

⁶³John Bold, *Sir Roger Pratt*, ODNB.

After the Restoration Pratt served as architect to Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon, for whom he built Clarendon House from 1664 to 1667. Pratt's relationship with Hyde led to increased preferment, and Pratt was commissioned in 1663 to direct an inquiry, along with Christopher Wren, into potential improvements to Saint Paul's Cathedral.⁶⁴ While serving with Wren on the committee to repair Saint Paul's Cathedral Pratt's more conservative style appears to have clashed with the young, inexperienced academic.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Pratt expressed some reservations to the Bishop of London about Wren's unreasonable ambitions for the cathedral – the steeple in Wren's initial design would have been extremely costly and extended well beyond the modifications to the cathedral authorized in their commission.⁶⁶

As an architect, Pratt was particularly interested in the way people moved through rooms and corridors in houses.⁶⁷ This interest in the flow of traffic almost certainly influenced the committee's desire to widen streets to solve some of the congestion on the city's major roadways.⁶⁸ This may, however, have been the only major contribution Pratt made to the rebuilt City of London. Despite being a very qualified choice for Surveyor of the King's Works, or simply for the position of primary architect of the rebuilding, he was overlooked in favor of Wren. Pratt's patron, the Earl of Clarendon, fell out of royal favor

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵Gordon Higgon, "The Fabric to 1670," in *St. Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), eds. R. Arthur Burns; Derek Keene, p. 186.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷Bold, *Sir Roger Pratt, ODNB*.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*

in 1667, and was forced to flee to France. With the loss of his primary patron, Pratt left public life until his death in 1684.⁶⁹

3. Hugh May, Paymaster of the King's Works:

Unlike the other two Royal Commissioners who were interested in decorative architecture, Hugh May was a practical builder. In 1653 May undertook his first construction project – an irrigation canal in Cambridgeshire commissioned by a relative. This early construction venture had little to do with his later fortunes as a royal client. Instead he was recognized for his impressive organizational abilities. During the 1650s, May was employed by George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham.⁷⁰ In Buckingham's service May smuggled works of art from York House to the Duke on the continent. While on the continent he toured the Netherlands with the court in exile, and observed the local architecture – an experience which would influence May's later building projects.⁷¹

For his loyalty to the crown May was appointed Paymaster of the King's Works, under Surveyor John Denham and at the time of the fire was serving as acting Surveyor of the King's Works – the result of Denham failing health. May hoped to replace Denham at his death, but was passed over in favor of Christopher Wren.⁷² The crown was cognizant of the slight, and offered May a pension of £300 per annum. They also retained his services

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰John Bold, *Hugh May, ODNB.*

⁷¹*Ibid.*

⁷²*Ibid.*

in the 1670s to restore the palace at Windsor, which had fallen into disrepair during the Interregnum.⁷³

C. The City Surveyors:

1. Robert Hooke, Professor of Geometry:

Robert Hooke, like Christopher Wren, was not a trained architect. He was, however, interested in the reasonable reconstruction of the city of London, and produced a plan for the city which, like all the submitted plans, was never implemented. Despite his architectural inexperience, Hooke was a brilliant and hardworking academic, natural philosopher, and mathematician. Hooke was educated at Christ Church, Oxford University, where he served an indispensable assistant to Robert Boyle during his experiments with vacuum pumps. His work with Boyle allowed Hooke to socialize in circles of some of the most significant intellectuals in England, including Wren.⁷⁴ Hooke's talent for conceiving of and carrying out experiments led to his appointment as the curator of experiments to the Royal Society. His service to the Royal Society resulted in his elevation to Fellow in 1663, and provided him with the influence necessary to become the Professor of Geometry at Gresham College in London.⁷⁵

Hooke's status as one of London's leading scientific minds certainly made him a reasonable choice for the Rebuilding Committee. Hooke was a remarkably skilled

⁷³*Ibid.*

⁷⁴Patri J. Pugliese, *Robert Hooke, ODNB*.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

draftsman, and was meticulous in carrying out his work for the committee.⁷⁶ He was also the only member of the committee that continued to work with Wren after his appointment as Surveyor of the King's Works. Hooke, a close colleague and friend of Wren, was probably better equipped to tolerate Wren's idiosyncrasies, and his robust work ethic complimented Wren's more intellectual approach to architecture. Hooke worked with Wren as more than a dedicated assistant – he also designed many of the rebuilding projects himself, including a handful of the parish churches, and the Great Fire Monument, which Hooke left hollow to allow for scientific experiments on high-altitude barometric pressure and pendulums.⁷⁷

2. Edward Jermain, London Carpenter and Surveyor:

Edward Jermain was the son of the master of London's Worshipful Company of Carpenters, and played a central role in many city construction projects in the 1650s and early 1660s. Jermain was most often employed as a surveyor and worked for many of the city's livery companies, with whom he forged many close professional relationships.⁷⁸ His ties to the livery companies, some of the most influential institutions in the city, almost certainly played a role in his appointment as a city surveyor.

While Jermain did bring much needed practical experience to the Rebuilding Committee, he only served on the committee from October 1666 until March 1667. It is

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷*Ibid.*

⁷⁸John Newman, *Edward Jermain, ODNB*.

not clear why Jermain resigned from the committee, but soon after his resignation he began to attract much more lucrative commissions to repair and rebuild the city's company meeting halls, as well as the Royal Exchange.⁷⁹ At the time of his death in 1668 he was either redesigning or rebuilding the meeting halls of nine of London's livery companies.⁸⁰

3. Peter Mills, London Bricklayer:

Like Edward Jermain, Peter Mills was appointed to the Rebuilding Committee for his practical experience in construction. Mills was perhaps the most prominent and talented bricklayer in the city of London.⁸¹ He owed part of his success to his ability to adapt his architectural style to suit the preferences of his patrons. During the Interregnum Mills built Thorpe Hall in Peterborough in a style designed to stand in clear opposition to the ornate baroque aesthetic of Charles I and his court architect Inigo Jones.⁸² Less than a decade later, however, Mills was building triumphal arches for the Restoration in a style more suited to the tastes of Charles II.⁸³ Mills also played a role in preparing the city for the wedding of the King to Catherine of Braganza in 1662.⁸⁴ Given Mills' practical talents as a builder and planner, he almost certainly would have played a central role in rebuilding

⁷⁹*Ibid.*

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹John Bold, *Peter Mills, ODNB*.

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴*Ibid.*

the city of London as an adviser to the much less experienced Wren, had he not died in 1670.

II. What Has Rome to Do with Amsterdam:

While Wren was clearly the primary creative agent behind the reconstruction of London's parish churches as a city-wide project, at the level of individual churches there is some debate as to the true architect. A handful of churches, especially Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf and Saint Edmund the King and Martyr, but also Saint Martin Ludgate, Saint Mary-at-Hill and Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, are attributed to Wren's closest collaborator, Robert Hooke.⁸⁵ This is in part the result of how frequently Wren relied on Hooke to direct practical matters of construction – preferring a more hands off approach to managing the actual rebuilding of the city's churches. Furthermore, some of the churches, in particular Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf, closely resemble architectural projects known to have been undertaken by Hooke, such as Saint Mary Magdalene in Willen, Milton Keynes or the case of Saint Antholin, Budge Row, which resembles Hooke's design for the theater at the College of Physics.⁸⁶ Questions about any church's actual architect, however, are most deeply rooted in the architectural education of both Wren and Hooke, and their relation to the prevailing architectural trends of the day.

Both Wren and Hooke were architectural autodidacts, not uncommon among the architects of the seventeenth century. What separated Wren from Hooke, however, was

⁸⁵ Tinniswood, p. 221.

⁸⁶ Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 152.

primarily a question of means. Wren was able to travel abroad in both France and Italy, allowing him to observe, and become enamored with, both French and Italian Baroque architecture. Hooke, on the other hand, drew his architectural vocabulary from texts on contemporary building and engineering which accompanied shipments of scientific texts procured from the Netherlands.⁸⁷ As a result Wren's architectural style tended towards the Italian, whereas Hooke's was undeniably influenced by the Dutch Baroque.

The Italian influence on Wren are mostly clearly seen in the physical footprint of his London churches. Wren made extensive use of the Greek Cross to his London churches, unusual for a city accustomed to gothic churches with extended naves.⁸⁸ Wren also regularly produced of domed ceiling's and roofs, most notably in Saint Paul's Cathedral, but also in his parish churches. The domed roof, especially when combined with the Greek Cross floor plan was a complete innovation in English architecture – although it was far more traditional on the continent. While Wren could not make use of the elaborate painting and sculpture present in Italian churches – no doubt fearing accusations of Popery – he did make extensive use of another Italianate trope, high tall windows, in order to fill his churches with dramatic light and shadow, especially at Saint Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange.⁸⁹ Many of Wren's steeples, most notably Saint Vedast Foster Lane, include undulating concave and convex surfaces – a common feature of church architecture in

⁸⁷ Anthony Geraghty, "Robert Hooke's Collection of Architectural Books and Prints," in *Architectural History*, Vol. 47, (2004), p. 113-125.

⁸⁸ Kerry Downes, *English Baroque Architecture*, (London: Zwemmer, 1966), p. 26; Tinniswood, p. 221.

⁸⁹ *Parentalia*, p. 334.

Rome.⁹⁰ Wren also incorporated these geometrically complex surfaces into his church interiors, most clearly in Saint Michael, Crooked Lane.⁹¹

Hooke also displayed the geographic origins of his architectural aesthetic preference in the footprints of his churches. Many of the churches attributed to Hooke make use of the cross-in-square plan which Hooke borrowed from Jacob van Campen.⁹² Hooke also made extensive use of decorative gables in his design for Saint Edmund the King and Martyr, another feature of the Dutch Baroque.⁹³ The smaller windows and extensive use of brick may also be derived from Hooke's reverence for the Dutch style, but may also have been the result of Wren's desire to undertake the most expensive projects himself.

While Wren and his assistants certainly had the ambition, and talent to rebuild, the city of London it was unclear if it would be possible to simply supply bricks and stone to meet Wren's demands, let alone pay for them. The necessary funds would be derived from a duty on coal, the essential fuel of the seventeenth century. Coal was, for the English, a plentiful and valuable commodity that would readily supply Wren and his workshop with sufficient funds – if given enough time. The coal duty was an attractive option for taxation

⁹⁰ Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 118.

⁹¹ Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 176.

⁹² Tinniswood, p. 221; Ronald D. Gray, *Christopher Wren and Saint Paul's Cathedral*, p. 21.

⁹³ Alison Stoesser-Johnston, "Robert Hooke and Holland: Dutch Influence on his Architectures," in *Bulletin KNOB* 99.4, (2002), p. 132.

as it touched the lives of Londoners from every social class – spreading the burden with relative equity. In addition, coal was already taxed and metered, and so no new tax collection apparatus needed to be created for the collection of the duty.⁹⁴ Despite this, the coal duty was overwhelmingly unpopular with most Londoners – nearly every civic official with any connection to the collection of the duty was voted out of office in the 1670s.⁹⁵

The slow rate at which the duty was collected was complicated by dramatic fluctuations in the price of coal.⁹⁶ The price of coal was expected fluctuate with the seasons along with demand. Furthermore the price would shift in proximity to the arrival of a fleet of ships from the Newcastle Colliers with a fresh supply.⁹⁷ In 1666 this fleet was frequently slow to arrive, as it waited for an escort to protect it from Dutch raids.⁹⁸ In the winter of 1666 the price of coal had reached the unusually high price of £3 3s for 1.75 tons.⁹⁹ The price then, unexpectedly rose in the summer, when it should have fallen, to £5 10s for the same quantity of coal – only to collapse to 29s within the year.¹⁰⁰

The 1666 *Act for Rebuilding the City of London* set a duty of 10s on every 1.75 tons of coal brought into the city of London. The funds initially collected were earmarked for

⁹⁴Reddaway, p. 195.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁹⁶See Fig. 7 - Fluctuations of Coal Duty Income (1668 to 1688)

⁹⁷Liza Picard, *Restoration London*, (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1997), p. 147.

⁹⁸Picard, p. 147; Bell, p. 267.

⁹⁹Picard, p. 147.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*,

the widening of streets, and the reconstruction of the wharves and prisons – facilities necessary for the essential commerce, and basic safety of the city.¹⁰¹ It became apparent almost immediately that the coal duty would take longer than expected to fund all of the

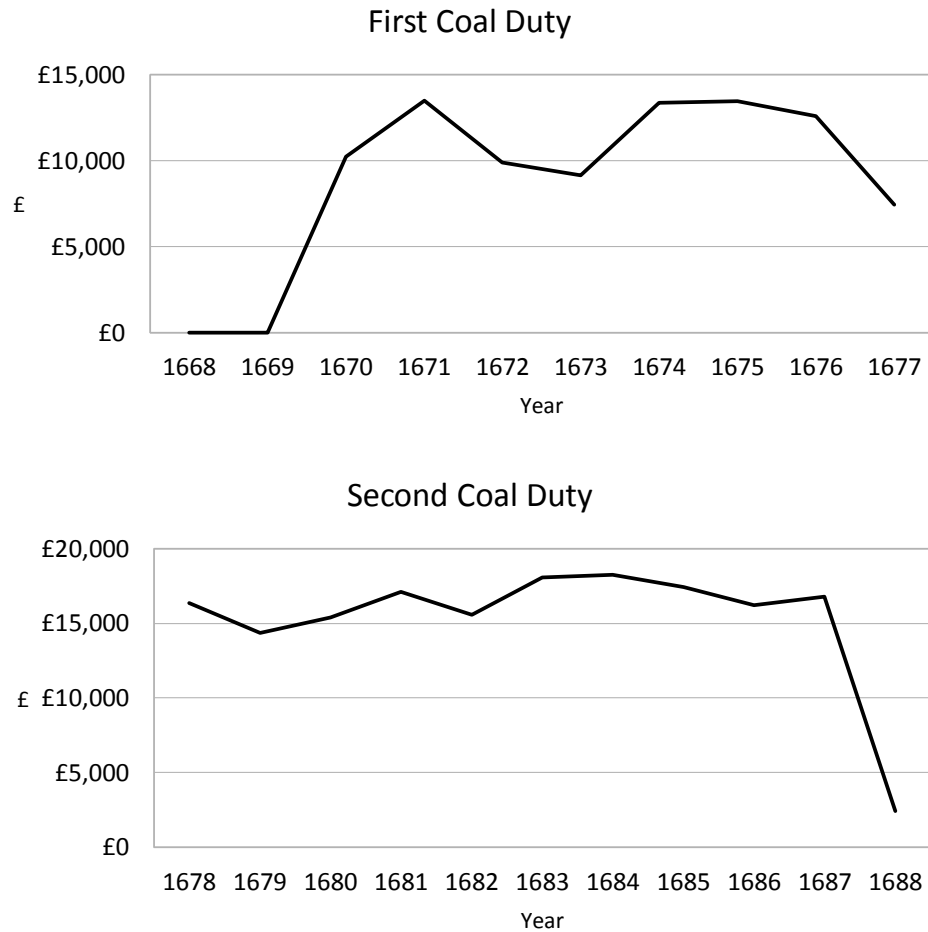


Fig. 7
Fluctuations of Coal Duty Income (1668 to 1688).

¹⁰¹Bell, p. 252.

necessary projects, and so the initial term of the duty, active until 1677, was extended in the *Rebuilding Act of 1670* to 1687.¹⁰² The *1670 Rebuilding Act* added an additional 2s to the coal duty, with three quarters of that extra income earmarked for the reconstruction of the city's churches.¹⁰³ By 1670, the coal duty had only collected £32,630 – with the estimated cost of the first wave of public buildings set at around three times that amount.¹⁰⁴ During the 1670s in their entirety, the coal duty never collected more than £15,000 per annum.¹⁰⁵ The shortfall would be met by accruing debt against future coal dues, further diluting the effectiveness of funding the reconstruction of the city's churches from the coal duty alone.¹⁰⁶ In 1674 alone the city accumulated £128,569 in debt against profits from future coal dues.¹⁰⁷

In total the city's parish churches revived £265,467 3s from the coal duty from 1669 until 1688.¹⁰⁸ This sum was woefully inadequate for the reconstruction of the city's churches. Rebuilding the churches would require the city to acquire heavy debt, or wait decades to begin rebuilding the churches. This concern was, to a degree, alleviated as parish churches began approaching the Rebuilding Commission, ready to advance cash for

¹⁰²*Ibid*, p. 257.

¹⁰³*Act for the Rebuilding of the City of London, Uniting Parishes and Rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches with the Said City*, 1670, (Cha. II St. 22 c. 11).

¹⁰⁴Bell, p. 285.

¹⁰⁵Reddaway, p. 183.

¹⁰⁶Bell, p. 311.

¹⁰⁷Reddaway, p. 275.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid*, p. 187.

the reconstruction of their church. Parish action in the late 1660s and early 1670s shifted from a battle to save a parish church, into a race to raise funds to rebuild the church itself. The parishes pursued their fundraising efforts with enthusiasm, and availed themselves of all methods available to them, both legal and extra-legal.

III. From Thirty-Nine to Fifty-One – Criteria for Reconstruction:

The 1666 *Act for Rebuilding the City of London* acknowledged that all eighty-seven parish churches destroyed in the Great Fire could not be rebuilt and limited reconstruction to thirty-nine churches.¹⁰⁹ Initially, Parliament and the King were anxious about the prospect of eliminating parishes in the city, and the task of planning for the unification of the city's parishes fell to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London.¹¹⁰ The inaction of the bishops on this particularly pressing issue stood in stark contrast to the London parishes, who aggressively lobbied and petitioned the Court of Aldermen to save their parish churches.¹¹¹ Ultimately, however, the selection would be made by Parliament, who appear to have been primarily concerned with maintaining powerful networks of clerical preferment in the city, and appeasing the patrons at the center of these networks – including the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and many of the city's livery companies.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹*An Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 19 c. 8).

¹¹⁰*Journal of the Court of Common Council of the City of London*, Vol. 46, p. 133.

¹¹¹*Repertory of the Court of Aldermen of the City of London*, Vol. 74, p. 309.

¹¹²*Journal of the Court of Common Council of the City of London*, Vol. 46, p. 146.

Parliament handed down its selection of parishes in 1670 with *The Additional Act for Rebuilding the City of London*. The act reflected just how complicated the task of unifying London's parishes had become between 1666 and 1670.¹¹³ The initial estimate of thirty-nine parish churches to be rebuilt was raised to fifty-one to accommodate London's anxious church patrons.¹¹⁴ The act also clarified the rules for presentation in the unified parishes – the parish patrons would present in turns, although the first presentation would fall to the wealthiest parish, ensuring the early influence of the more affluent patron.¹¹⁵

The Right of Presentation in the city of London became a particularly valuable commodity in 1670 after the passage of *The Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the parishes burnt by the late dreadful fire*. Prior to the Great Fire “tithes in the city of London were levied and paid with great inequality.”¹¹⁶ Before the fire the living of All-Hallows-the-Less was held by two unmarried women, who left a mere £8 for compensating the parish’s minister.¹¹⁷ The minor canons of Saint Paul’s Cathedral were even less accommodating, seizing the entire living of Saint Gregory By Saint Paul’s leaving nothing for the payment of a minister.¹¹⁸ This method of compensating

¹¹³See Fig. 8 - Parish Church Unification List.

¹¹⁴*Act for the Rebuilding of the City of London, Uniting Parishes and Rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches with the Said City*, 1670, (Cha. II St. 22 c. 11).

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹¹⁶*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

¹¹⁷ Bell, p. 308.

¹¹⁸ *A Brief Account of the Maintenances Arising by the Tithes, Glebe, and Other Profits to the Several Ministers of Parish-Churches Demolished by the Late Dreadful Fire In London: Together with the Names of the Present Incumbents Thereof*, (London: 1671).

| Surviving Parish Church: | United with: |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Saint Alban, Wood Street | Saint Olave, Silver Street |
| All Hallows Bread Street | Saint John the Evangelist Friday Street |
| All Hallows the Great | All-Hallows-the-Less |
| Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe | Saint Ann Blackfriars |
| Saint Anne and Saint Agnes | Saint John Zachary |
| Saint Antholin, Budge Row | Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook |
| Saint Augustine, Watling Street | Saint Faith under Saint Paul's |
| Saint Benet Gracechurch | Saint Leonard, Eastcheap |
| Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf | Saint Peter, Paul's Wharf |
| Christ Church Greyfriars | Saint Leonard, Foster Lane |
| Saint Clement's, Eastcheap | Saint Martin Orgar |
| Saint Edmund, King and Martyr | Saint Nicholas Acons |
| Saint George Botolph Lane | Saint Botolph Billingsgate |
| Saint Lawrence Jewry | Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street |
| Saint Magnus-the-Martyr | Saint Margaret, New Fish Street |
| Saint Margaret Pattens | Saint Gabriel Fenchurch |
| Saint Mary Abchurch | Saint Laurence Pountney |
| Saint Mary Aldermary | Saint Thomas the Apostle |
| Saint Mary-at-Hill | Saint Andrew Hubbard |
| Saint Mary-le-Bow | Saint Pancras, Soper Lane All Hallows, Honey Lane |
| Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street | Saint Gregory by Saint Paul's |
| Saint Mary Somerset | Saint Mary Mounthaw |
| Saint Mary Woolnoth | Saint Mary Woolchurch |
| Saint Matthew Friday Street | Saint Peter Westcheap |
| Saint Michael Paternoster Royal | Saint Martin Vintry |
| Saint Michael Queenhithe | Holy Trinity the Less |
| Saint Micheal Wood Street | Saint Mary Staining |
| Saint Mildred, Bread Street | Saint Margaret Moses |
| Saint Mildred, Poultry | Saint Mary Colechurch |
| Saint Alban, Wood Street | Saint Nicholas Olave |
| Saint Olave, Old Jewry | Saint Martin Pomery |
| Saint Stephen, Walbrook | Saint Benet Sherehog |
| Saint Swithin, London Stone | Saint Mary Bothaw |
| Saint Vedast Foster Lane | Saint Michael-le-Querne |

Fig. 8
Parish Church Unification List.

clergy was problematic enough without the added complication of the reconstruction of London after the Fire. With many of the property lines in the city redrawn, and the structures built upon them dramatically improved – not to mention the unification of the parishes themselves – the real value of practically every living in the city was greatly increased over their traditional clerical compensation. With this in mind the act ordered an assessment to be made no later than July 24, 1671.¹¹⁹ This assessment would set a fixed amount to be collected and paid by each parish for the payment of its minister. These rates would remain in place until 1804. Some wealthy parishes, such as Saint Mary-le-Bow paying their minister the relatively high fee of £200, while some poorer parishes, such as All Hallows, Lombard Street, paying the still sufficient rate of £100.¹²⁰

The *Additional Act for Rebuilding* also settled some questions about the management of unified churches left deliberately vague in the 1666 *Act for Rebuilding*. Parishes would collect duties and tithes separately, but would jointly use them to pay for expenses of the unified parish.¹²¹ Church plate and goods would be shared, but would be owned and managed by a separate churchwarden for each parish, and all pre-unification debts would be payable by the churchwarden of the parish that accrued them.¹²² The eliminated parishes would be allowed to keep their churchyards, but they would be required

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ See Fig. 9 - Clerical Compensation in London's Parishes, 1670.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

| Parish | Per Annum |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| All Hallows, Lombard Street | £100 |
| Saint Bartholomew by the Exchange | £100 |
| Saint Brides | £120 |
| Saint Bennet Fink | £100 |
| Saint Michael, Crooked Lane | £100 |
| Saint Dionis Backchurch | £120 |
| Saint Dusntant in the East | £200 |
| Saint James, Garlickhithe | £100 |
| Saint Michael, Cornhill | £140 |
| Saint Michael Bassishaw | £132 |
| Saint Mary Aldermanbury | £150 |
| Saint Martin Ludgate | £160 |
| Saint Peter, Cornhill | £110 |
| Saint Stephen, Coleman Street | £110 |
| Saint Sepulchre | £200 |
| All Hallows, Breat Street | £140 |
| All Hallows the Great | £200 |
| Saint Albans, Wood Street | £170 |
| Saint Anne and Saint Agnes | £140 |
| Saint Augustine, Watling Street | £172 |
| Saint Andrew by the Wardrobe | £140 |
| Saint Antholin Budge Row | £120 |
| Saint Bennet , Gracechurch | £140 |
| Saint Bennet, Paul's Wharf | £100 |
| Christchurch, Newgate Street | £200 |
| Saint Edmund the King | £180 |
| Saint George Botolph Lane | £180 |
| Saint Lawrence, Jewry | £120 |
| Saint Margaret, Lothbury | £220 |
| Saint Magnus-the-Martyr | £170 |
| Saint Michael Paternoster Royal | £140 |
| Saint Matthew, Friday Street | £150 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Saint Margaret, Pattens | £120 |
| Saint Mary-at-Hill | £200 |
| Saint Mary Woolnoth | £160 |
| Saint Clement, Eastcheap | £140 |
| Saint Mary, Abchurch | £120 |
| Saint Mary, Aldermary | £150 |
| Saint Mary-le-Bow | £200 |
| Saint Mildred, Poultry | £170 |
| Saint Michael, Wood Street | £100 |
| Saint Mildred, Bread Street | £130 |
| Saint Michael, Queenhithe | £160 |
| Saint Mary Magdalene, Old Fish Street | £120 |
| Saint Mary Somerset | £110 |
| Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey | £130 |
| Saint Olave, Old Jewry | £120 |
| Saint Stephen, Walbrook | £100 |
| Saint Swithin London Stone | £140 |
| Saint Vedast, Foster Lane | £160 |
| Total: | £7,164 |

Fig. 9
Clerical Compensation in London's Parishes, 1670.

to wall them in, and were only permitted to use them for burials.¹²³ *The Additional Act for Rebuilding* also exempted ministers from fines and penalties associated with failing to read the Thirty-Nine Articles and other regulations, until their churches were rebuilt and fit for worship.¹²⁴ This allowance would have certainly assuaged some of the anxiety felt by many Londoners about the recovery of the city's churches. In addition it may have been an informal acknowledgement of how heterodox worship had become in the city during and immediately after the Interregnum.

The Rebuilding Commission very quickly settled on the first class of fifteen parish churches to be rebuilt.¹²⁵ These parishes were selected for a variety of reasons, although they tended to be some of the wealthiest parishes, or those parishes deemed essential to the layout of the city.¹²⁶ The commissioners also settled on those parishes to be eliminated, often in order to use their churchyards for other construction projects, such as building a new market at Honey Lane.¹²⁷ Saint Martin Orgar even saw its parish church turned over to French Huguenot refugees in the city.¹²⁸

¹²³*Ibid.*

¹²⁴*Ibid.*

¹²⁵The first class of churches to be rebuilt included, in the order listed by the Rebuilding Commissioners: Saint Mary-Le-Bow, Saint Sepulchre-without-Newgate, Saint Lawrence Jewry, Saint Micheal's Cornhill, Saint Christopher Le Stocks, Saint Bride's Church, Saint Benet's Gracechurch, Saint Olave, Old Jewry, Saint Mary-at-Hill, Saint Augustine, Watling Street, Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, Saint Magnus-the-Martyr, Saint Michael Queenhithe, Christ Church Greyfriars, and Saint Vedast Foster Lane.

¹²⁶GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], July 13, 1670, p. 7.

¹²⁷GL CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/004, [*Worshipful Company of Grocers Minutes Book*], 1668, p. 50.

¹²⁸LMA COL/CA/05/02/002, [*Miscellaneous Petitions to the Court of Aldermen*], p. 10.

While the ultimate survival of the first class of parishes was assured in 1670, the remaining parishes might have to wait decades for their churches to be rebuilt. During this time their parishes might be removed from the list of churches to be rebuilt, as was the case with Saint Botolph Billingsgate. With this in mind parishes attempted to make the reconstruction of their parish church as attractive, or as urgent, as possible.

IV. Gilded Sheds – Tabernacles in the City of London:

By 1673 the Rebuilding Commission had largely settled the question of how the reconstruction of the city's parish churches would be ordered. The construction of many of the in the first class of churches – selected for their centrality to city life – were well underway. Some, such as the church of Saint Mary-Le-Bow were so close to completion that the second class of churches were already preparing for reconstruction.¹²⁹ Despite this early progress many parishes were slow to raise funds sufficient to secure a space in the order of rebuilding and parishes would continue to advance funds to the Chamber of London well into the 1680s.¹³⁰ It would have been abundantly clear to many Londoners that the rebuilding settlement was far from reliably settled, and that they would in all likelihood have to wait, perhaps for decades, to worship in their own parish church.¹³¹

These initial delays would be compounded throughout the 1670s and 1680s by setback after setback. The lack of suitable construction materials limited the number of

¹²⁹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], August 11, 1671, p. 22.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*

¹³¹ See Fig. 10 – Parish Church Reconstruction Time Line.

| Parish | Start | End | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Saint Alban, Wood Street | 1682 | 1688 | Saint Matthew Friday Street | 1682 1685 |
| All Hallows Bread Street | 1681 | 1698 | Saint Michael Bassishaw | 1676 1713 |
| All Hallows the Great | 1677 | 1683 | Saint Micheal's Cornhill | 1672 1677 |
| All Hallows Lombard Street | 1679 | 1694 | Saint Michael, Crooked Lane | 1684 1698 |
| Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe | 1695 | 1694 | Saint Michael Pater-noster Royal | 1685 1717 |
| Saint Anne and Saint Agnes | 1677 | 1687 | Saint Michael Queenhithe | 1676 1686 |
| Saint Antholin, Budge Row | 1678 | 1684 | Saint Micheal Wood Street | 1670 1675 |
| Saint Augustine, Watling Street | 1680 | 1695 | Saint Mildred, Bread Street | 1677 1683 |
| Saint Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange | 1675 | 1679 | Saint Mildred, Poultry | 1671 1676 |
| Saint Benet Gracechurch | 1681 | 1685 | Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey | 1672 1678 |
| Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf | 1677 | 1683 | Saint Olave, Old Jewry | 1671 1679 |
| Saint Benet Fink | 1670 | 1675 | Saint Peter upon Cornhill | 1677 1684 |
| Saint Bride's Church | 1673 | 1680 | Saint Stephen's, Coleman Street | 1674 1691 |
| Christ Church Greyfriars | 1677 | 1687 | Saint Stephen, Walbrook | 1672 1679 |
| Saint Clement Danes | 1680 | 1682 | Saint Swithin, London Stone | 1677 1686 |
| Saint Clement's, Eastcheap | 1683 | 1687 | Saint Vedast Foster Lane | 1695 1701 |
| Saint Christopher le Stocks | 1669 | 1671 | | |
| Saint Dionis Backchurch | 1674 | 1684 | | |
| Saint Dunstan-in-the-East | 1668 | 1671 | | |
| Saint Edmund, King and Martyr | 1670 | 1679 | | |
| Saint George Botolph Lane | 1671 | 1676 | | |
| Saint James Garlickhythe | 1676 | 1683 | | |
| Saint Lawrence Jewry | 1670 | 1687 | | |
| Saint Magnus-the-Martyr | 1671 | 1687 | | |
| Saint Margaret Lotbury | 1686 | 1690 | | |
| Saint Margaret Pattens | 1684 | 1687 | | |
| Saint Mary Abchurch | 1681 | 1686 | | |
| Saint Mary Aldermanbury | 1671 | 1676 | | |
| Saint Mary Aldermary | 1679 | 1682 | | |
| Saint Mary-at-Hill | 1670 | 1674 | | |
| Saint Mary-le-Bow | 1671 | 1680 | | |
| Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street | 1683 | 1687 | | |
| Saint Mary Somerset | 1686 | 1695 | | |
| Saint Martin, Ludgate | 1677 | 1684 | | |

Fig. 10
Parish Church Reconstruction Time Line.

construction projects Wren could undertake at any one time.¹³² While the Coal Duty granted to Wren by the Rebuilding Commission would be sufficient to fund the reconstruction, the rate at which the money was collected was far from adequate to meet Wren's demands.¹³³ Many of the first class of churches, especially the most expensive among them like Saint Mary-Le-Bow, cost double their initial estimated budget, and warranted multiple grants from the Rebuilding Commission during their construction.¹³⁴ Furthermore, fluctuations in the price of coal, especially during the Dutch Wars, could quickly empty the Rebuilding Commission's coffers.¹³⁵ Political tumult in the city itself could also slow construction, and the parish churches of both Saint Michael Paternoster Royal and Saint Mary Somerset saw their construction completely stop during the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution.

While the lack of a place to publicly worship was problematic enough for London parishioners, the essential utility of a parish church extended well beyond the spiritual. More practically a parish church was used as a location to hold Vestry and Churchwardens Meetings. Without a parish church, Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook along with six other parishes, stopped holding vestry meetings in the immediate aftermath of the fire, save

¹³²Reddaway, p. 73.

¹³³Tinniswood, p. 188.

¹³⁴GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], August 11, 1671, p. 26.

¹³⁵Bodl. Rawl. MSS B 387 B, [*City Church Warrants*], p. 101.

for a single notice in 1668 concerning one instance of unpaid rent on a house owned by the parish.¹³⁶ In the most extreme case the parish of Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf did not convene a post-fire parish meeting until 1674.¹³⁷

Some parishes took advantage of close relationships with London's Livery Companies to convene vestries and hold services in their meeting halls. All-Hallows-the-Less was fortunate enough to meet in the Tallow Chandlers Hall until 1675 and Saint Swithin, London Stone held their vestry meetings in the hall of the Salter's Company until 1678¹³⁸

Other parishes, and especially their churchwardens, met in less formal, more public locations. The churchwardens of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr and Saint John Zachary met in the Swan Tavern, while the churchwardens of Saint Mary Woolnoth met in the Miter Tavern and Saint Botolph Billingsgate met at the Feathers Tavern while they waited for a suitable meeting place in their new parish church.¹³⁹ Saint John Zachary also held many of its Churchwarden's meetings in coffee houses throughout the city.¹⁴⁰ The churchwardens of

¹³⁶Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf, Saint George Botolph Lane, Saint Matthew Friday Street, Saint Laurence Pountney, Saint Olave, Silver Street, Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook, and Saint Margaret Pattens all failed to hold parish meetings from 1666 until 1670 or later; LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Upon Walbrook Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 133.

¹³⁷LMA P69/BEN3/B/001/MS00877/001, [*Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf Vestry Minutes Book*], 1674, p. 235.

¹³⁸LMA P69/ALH8/B/001/MS00824/001, [*All Hallows the Less Vestry Minutes Book*], 1675, p. 93; LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minutes Book*], 1678, p. 38.

¹³⁹LMA P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minutes Book*], May 2, 1674, p. 38; LMA P69/BOT3/B/001/MS00943/001, [*Saint Botolph Billingsgate Vestry Minutes Book*], December 18 1682, p. 44; LMA P69/JNZ/B/014/MS00590/001, [*Saint John Zachary Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1684, p. 23.

¹⁴⁰ LMA P69/JNZ/B/014/MS00590/002, [*Saint John Zachary Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], July 1685, p. 31; February, 1688, p. 65.

Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook were so enthusiastic about meeting outside of their parish church that the parish vestrymen ordered that they stop meeting in public houses and return to their unified parish church in 1696 – a church completed in 1684.¹⁴¹

Beyond serving as a site to hold community meetings, the parish church could also become a store house for the goods and wealth of a parish, and occasionally its parishioners – during the Great Fire many booksellers attempted to save their stock by storing it in their parish church of Saint Faith under Saint Paul's.¹⁴² Many parishes owned some quantity of church plate made of precious metals, as well as furnishings of expensive textiles and woods. These parishes might also contain decorative construction materials of some value, especially if it were imported from the continent including tiles and wrought iron screens. While many of these goods were destroyed in the fire, some was saved or salvaged – especially the church plate. Without a church to hold this wealth, it was at risk for theft, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the fire.¹⁴³ At least four parishes scattered their church plate among many different parishioners after the Great Fire for safekeeping.¹⁴⁴ Saint Mary Woolchurch went even further “removing the beste plate books and furnishings

¹⁴¹ LMA P69/JNB/B/001/MS00578/001, [*Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook Vestry Minutes Book*], 1696, p. 29.

¹⁴² Pepys, October 5, 1666.

¹⁴³ LMA P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Alban Wood Street Churchwardens' Account Book*], 1666, p. 88.

¹⁴⁴ LMA P69/MGT4/B/001/MS04571/001, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Vestry Minutes Book*], April 23, 1679, p. 45; LMA P69/ANN/B/021/MS01061/009, [*Saint Anne Blackfriars Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 167; LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], July 15, 1682, p. 28; LMA P69/MIC6/B/005/MS04825/001, [*Saint Michael Queenhithe Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], August / September, 1673, p. 186.

in the tyme of the fire to severall places in the country.”¹⁴⁵

London's parish churches also served as the central hubs for some of the most essential economic and charitable networks in the city. The collection and distribution of the parish poor roll made London's parishes indispensable charitable organizations, as well as conduits for a steady, and often impressive, flow of wealth. London's parishes also managed both residential and commercial properties in the city – responsible for their maintenance, and in some cases collecting sizable rents from these houses and shops. There was also a degree of money lending which took place through the parishes.¹⁴⁶ These essential economic activities were complicated without a central location to carry out business, or to store and protect the various deeds, receipts, and records such business required.

The most obvious way to accelerate the reconstruction of a parish's church was to provide Wren with some sort of gift or bribe. The use of inducements were far from uncommon in the early modern period. Bribes were far from indicators of deleterious corruption in early modern London. Instead the practice of gift giving served as lubrication, reducing the friction of that made the early modern civil service in London so inefficient.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵LMA P69/MRY14/B/006/MS01013/001, [*Saint Mary Woolchurch Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1669, p. 259.

¹⁴⁶For example, the Worshipful Company of Dyers were frequently in debt to All-Hallows-the-Less; LMA P69/ALH8/B/013/MS00823/002, [*All Hallows the Less Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1655, p. 49; also, LMA P69/LAW1/B/008/MS02593/002, [*Saint Lawrence Jewry Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1686, p. 322; LMA P69/ALH7/B/013/MS00818/001, [*All Hallows the Great Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1669, p. 64.

¹⁴⁷Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 8.

Wren appears to have been particularly amenable to inducements – especially since his salary for rebuilding London’s churches was set at £100 per annum, with another £200 per annum for work on Saint Paul’s Cathedral.¹⁴⁸ Wren’s financial position was particularly problematic after 1696 when the commissioners of Saint Paul’s agreed to withhold his salary until the church was completed. He would not be paid for his work on the Cathedral until 1710.¹⁴⁹ During his work on London’s city churches Wren received all manner of gifts, ranging from fine meals, to material gifts such as plate, as well as simple cash inducements. Saint Lawrence Jewry spent £8 entertaining Wren in 1670 and Saint Margaret Pattens spent £10 in 1682, while Saint Michael Bassishaw spent £9 9s on dining with Wren in 1693.¹⁵⁰ Cash bribes were usually around £20, with some parishes making multiple gifts in roughly that amount, including Saint Lawrence Jewry in 1679, Saint Mary Abchurch in 1684 and 1686, and Saint Benet Fink, who made their £20 gift in gold plate.¹⁵¹ Many parishes made gifts of wine, including Saint Magnus-the-Martyr, who gifted Wren with a hogshead of claret, and Saint Clement Eastcheap who also sent a hogshead of unidentified wine.¹⁵² Despite accepting these gifts, Wren did not always feel obligated to

¹⁴⁸ WS XX, p. 204.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale*, p. 175; *Saint Michael Bassishaw, Churchwarden's Accounts Book*, p. 41. LMA P69/AND1/B/009/MS02088/001, [*Saint Andrew By the Wardrobe Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1686, p. 71; Bell, p. 263.

¹⁵¹ WS XIX, p. 6; Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 64; LMA P69/MRY1/B/006/MS03891/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1681/2, p. 252; 1684, p. 286; 1685/6, p. 300; 1686/7, p. 318; LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1684, p. 72.

¹⁵² WS XIX, p. 27; LMA P69/CLE/B/007/MS00977/001, [*Saint Clement, Eastcheap Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1685, See also LMA P69/MRY15/B/007/MS01003, [*Saint Mary Woolnoth Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1685.

reciprocate them with service. Furthermore, he was not so financially desperate that he would reciprocate woefully paltry gifts – although he would accept them – as was the case with Saint Michael Wood Street’s gift of 10s 9d.¹⁵³

Wren’s centrality to the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire also created a network of gift giving which could enrich those around the Royal Surveyor. This did little to help Wren’s primarily collaborators, including Robert Hooke, or Thomas Cartwright, who were frequently, although not always, overlooked by parishes. Cartwright received 5s 6d in 1673 from Saint Bartholomew by the Exchange, less than half of the value of the gift given to Wren for the same visit with the parishioners.¹⁵⁴ Hooke was entirely overlooked for his work on Saint Martin Ludgate, while Wren received a gift of £4 2s worth wine from the parish in 1685.¹⁵⁵ Instead, bribes found their way into the pockets of individuals who could direct Wren’s focus, including his clerks - who received 40s each from Saint James Garlickhythe and £4 from Saint Andrew-by-the Wardrobe - and even his wife, who received a silk purse containing £20 from Saint Stephen’s Walbrook in 1679.¹⁵⁶

Some parishes grew impatient with the pace of the rebuilding and were unwilling to wait for action from the Rebuilding Commissioners. As early as 1668 All-Hallows -the-

¹⁵³ Tinniswood, p. 207.

¹⁵⁴ LMA P69/BAT1/B/006/MS04383/001, [*Saint Bartholomew by the Exchange Vestry Minutes Book*], 1670, p. 192; August, 1673, p. 198.

¹⁵⁵ BL Harlein. MS 4941, [*Misc. Construction Labor Warrants*] 1685, p. 76.

¹⁵⁶ LMA P60/JS2/B/005/MS05810/002, [*Saint James Garlickhythe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], July 19, 1682; LMA P69/STE2/B/008/MS00593/004, [*Saint Stephen Walbrook Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], February, 1673.

Great was selling rubble salvaged from its churchyard and earmarked the profits for the construction of a shed for the use of the parish.¹⁵⁷ By 1669 All-Hallows-the-Great had nearly completed its shed, which would come to be known as a tabernacle.¹⁵⁸ This solution to the slow pace of the reconstruction did not go unnoticed by the Rebuilding Commissioners, especially as parishes, particularly those who had advanced funds towards their reconstruction began requesting that a tabernacle be built in or near their parishes, with Saint Stephen's Coleman Street requesting one in May 1671, and Saint Dunstan in the East following in November.¹⁵⁹

In 1670 the Rebuilding Committee began pursuing the construction of tabernacles as an officially sanctioned and centrally funded project within their greater plan for the city's reconstruction. On October 7th, 1670 the Rebuilding Commissioners ordered the first ten tabernacles to be built under Wren's direction.¹⁶⁰ The earliest tabernacles were conceived of as temporary structures to be “made of cheape materialls and the least workmanship for the present service of God”¹⁶¹ These temporary wooden sheds soon became, under the influence of London's parishes, major construction projects in their own

¹⁵⁷LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/002, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], April, 1667, p. 33.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid*, April, 1667, p. 34.

¹⁵⁹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], May, 13 1671, p. 16; November 26 1671, p. 24.

¹⁶⁰GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], October 7, 1670, p. 10; The first ten tabernacles ordered by the Rebuilding Commission were, in the order listed by the commissioners: Saint Micheal's Queenhithe, Saint Bride's Church, All-Hallows-the-Great, Saint Michael, Crooked Lane, Christ Church Greyfriars, Saint Alban's, Wood Street, Saint Margaret Lothbury, Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, Saint Margaret, New Fish Street and Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street.

¹⁶¹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], October 7, 1670, p. 9.

right.¹⁶²

The twenty-seven tabernacles constructed by Wren's workshop range in costs from £264 at Saint Mary Abchurch, to the simplest tabernacle at Saint Pancras, Soper Lane, at a cost of £50.¹⁶³ These projects employed anywhere from one to nine skilled builders – the simplest utilizing a single carpenter while grander projects required the labor of masons, plumbers, plasterers and glaziers.¹⁶⁴

The primary challenge facing Wren's workshop in erecting the tabernacles appears to have been allocating sufficient space to accommodate the parishioners. After the fire many Londoners fled the city, only to return gradually as shelter and employment became available. This meant that parish communities could swell unexpectedly, or remain diminished for decades. Furthermore, the unification of parishes could instantly double the occupancy of a tabernacle. Overcrowding became a problem – especially in the most extreme case of Saint Gabriel Fenchurch, whose tabernacle needed to be dramatically expanded by Wren after most of its parishioners returned to the city in 1680.¹⁶⁵

The completion of properly sized and conveniently located tabernacles did not end the attempts of parishes to improve them – almost to the point of making them into churches themselves. Many parishes expended funds to improve the exteriors of their tabernacles,

¹⁶² See Fig. 11 - Tabernacle Construction Costs.

¹⁶³Bodl. Rawl. MSS B 389 A, [*City Tabernacle Warrants*].

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵GL MS 25542 1, [*Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral Miscellaneous Receipts*], 1680, p. 5.

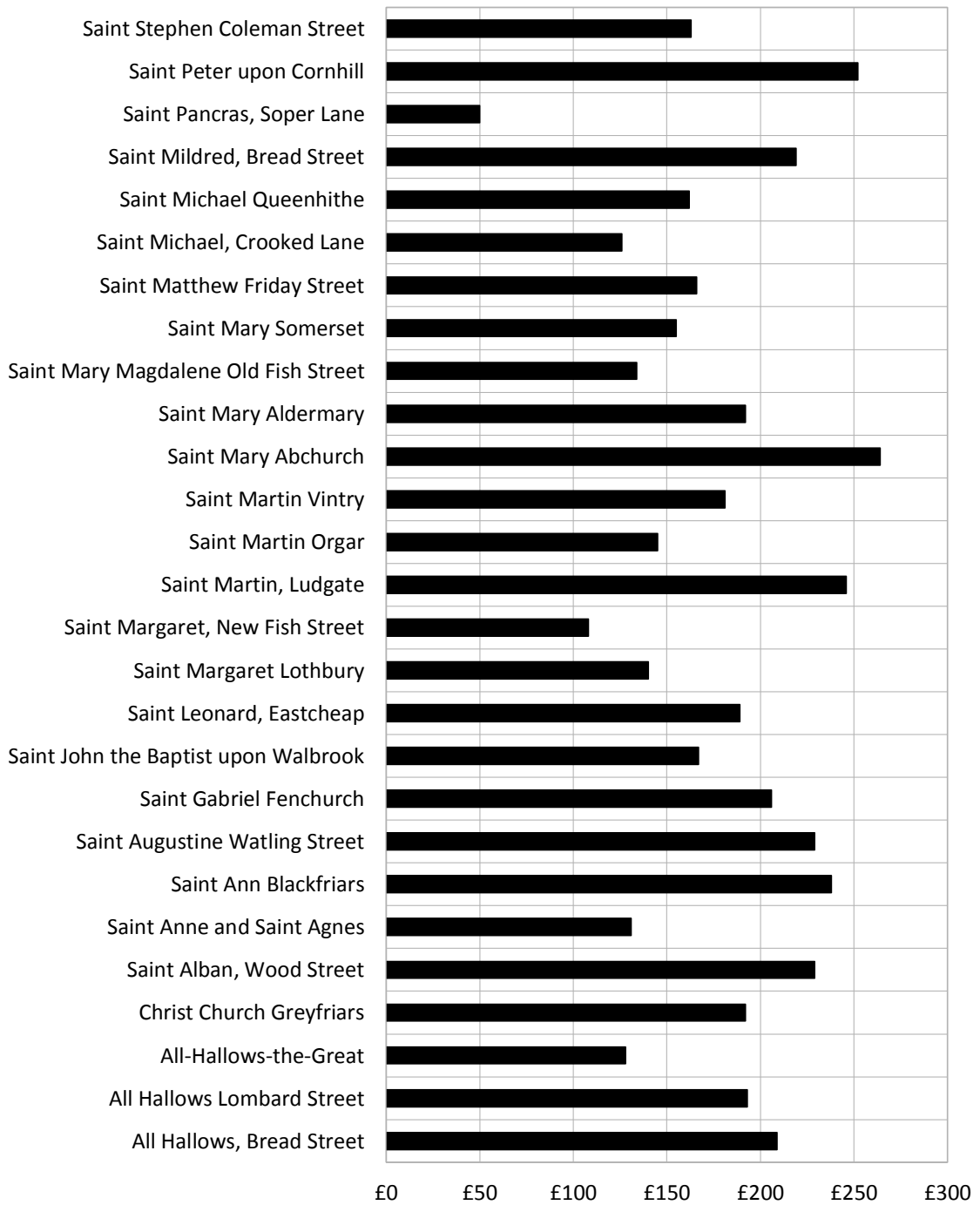


Fig. 11
Tabernacle Construction Costs.

employing masons and bricklayers to enhance the simple wooden walls of the tabernacles provided by the Rebuilding Commission.¹⁶⁶ Others paved the area surrounding their tabernacles, and added raised steps, in order to make access to the temporary structure more convenient.¹⁶⁷ All-Hallows-the-Great even voluntarily turned over property to widen All Hallows Lane to allow for easier access to their tabernacle.¹⁶⁸

The enhancement of these tabernacles did not end at the entrance to the shed, and a great many parishes attempted to improve the interiors of their temporary homes. Perhaps the most extravagant expense was Saint Mary Somerset's use of imported Flemish tiles for the floor of its tabernacle, at the cost of £26.¹⁶⁹ However, the vast majority of parish spending on the improvement of tabernacles was directed at pews. The most basic tabernacles included among their furnishings plain wooden benches – although the centrality of both pew quality and layout to the social hierarchy of a parish community left many parishioners desirous of more elaborate seating. All-Hallows-the-Great spent money to add special pews for parish notables to its tabernacle, at the cost of not repairing the foundation of its tabernacle, which was in 1675 completely flooded.¹⁷⁰ Saint Anne and Saint Agnes and Saint John Zachary – a newly unified parish – had custom pews installed

¹⁶⁶Bodl. MSS Rawl. B 389 A, [*City Tabernacle Warrants*].

¹⁶⁷Bodl. MSS Rawl. B 389 A, [*City Tabernacle Warrants*]; LMA P69/MRY10/B/005/MS01341/001, [*Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1680, p. 226; LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/001, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], February 20, 1693, p. 48.

¹⁶⁸LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/001, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], June 12, 1691, p. 31.

¹⁶⁹ Bodl. MSS Rawl. B 389 A, [*City Tabernacle Warrants*], p. 35.

¹⁷⁰LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/001, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], October 18, 1670, p. 48, 1675, p. 62.

after some conflict. Neither parish could agree on the form or layout of their tabernacle pews, and so agreed to divide the church in two and commission separate carpenters to construct each parish's pews.¹⁷¹ The parishes rearranged these pews twice as parishioners complained about their distance from the pulpit – unable to hear the minister from their tabernacle's pews.¹⁷²

While the tabernacle did provide an increasingly extravagant solution to the issue of delayed parish church reconstruction, not all parishes enthusiastically welcomed them in their parish. Saint Michael Queenhithe, parishioners refused to clear their churchyard of rubble and debris and were in fact using the churchyard to store other goods and materials displaced by the fire.¹⁷³ The Rebuilding Commission issued several warnings to the parishioners, indicating that through their inaction they were delaying the reconstruction of their church as well as the installation of a temporary tabernacle. The tabernacle was eventually constructed after the intervention of the Lord Mayor.¹⁷⁴

After a parish's church was rebuilt, these tabernacles were often simply torn down. Some parishes salvaged materials from the tabernacle for furnishing or completing their parish church – the parishioners of Saint Anne and Saint Agnes removed their expensive tabernacle pews in order to install them in their newly completed parish church.¹⁷⁵ Other

¹⁷¹LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, p. 10, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], July 5, 1679, p. 11.

¹⁷²*Ibid*, September 8, 1680, p. 20.

¹⁷³GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], August 11, 1671, p. 23.

¹⁷⁴*Ibid*.

¹⁷⁵LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], September 8, 1680, p. 20.

parishes continued to use their tabernacles as storage warehouses, and Saint Thomas the Apostle converted its shared tabernacle with Saint Mary Aldermary into a school, until the students so completely vandalized the gravestones in the churchyard that they were forced to tear it down.¹⁷⁶

V. Conclusion:

By 1672 the Rebuilding Commission had completed preparations for the rebuilding of London's parish churches. The Rebuilding Commissioners spent the remainder of the century transferring funds from the Chamber of London to Wren's workshop to pay for the reconstruction as the money was collected from the coal duty. The ruins of the churches afflicted by the fire had all been cleared and their rubble accounted for. For the earliest churches to be rebuilt timber scaffolding soon gave way to stone structures which looked more and more like churches. Those parishes who would have to wait decades for the completion of their parish churches began meeting in newly constructed tabernacles – all of which slowly evolved to reflect the characters of their parishioners. Gradually, as Londoners returned to their parish communities, the patterns of parish life slowly began to resemble London before the Great Fire.

This facade of stability concealed a much more chaotic interior. The Rebuilding Commission, the chief antagonist in the struggle of London's parish communities for

¹⁷⁶LMA P69/TMS1/B/001/MS00663/001, [*Saint Thomas the Apostle Vestry Minutes Book*], June 13, 1677, p. 53.

survival, had by 1672 been reduced to a bank. London's parishes now had to contend directly with the much more imperious Surveyor of the King's Works, Sir Christopher Wren. Wren had been known to express his ambition for rebuilding Saint Paul's Cathedral without concern for cost or the demands of his patrons, and there was no guarantee that this impulse would not manifest itself in his work on the parochial churches. Furthermore, Wren's own personal taste in both religious worship and architectural aesthetic did not always reflect that tastes of London's parishioners.

Perhaps even more problematic than Wren were the new faces present in any of the city's parish tabernacles. The unification of two, and in some cases three parishes could seriously complicate the reconstruction of a parish church. The combination of parish resources and wealth could result in aggressively fought, decades long struggles between neighbors. Additionally, the religious, aesthetic and political characters of the newly unified parishes might be completely opposed to one another, further hindering the process of rebuilding. These conflicts within unified parishes were also closely linked to the financial health of the whole rebuilding project. The revenues from the Coal Duty were variable, inconsistent, and fell well short of what was required for the complete reconstruction of the city's churches. This financial shortfall was exacerbated by Wren's inability to restrain spending on the first tier of churches, especially in cases like Saint Mary-Le-Bow and Saint Bride's Church – both of which vastly exceeded their initial cost estimates. In desperate need of funds, more and more of the cost of reconstruction would have to be borne by the parishes themselves. Unwilling, or unable, to afford their own reconstruction, parishes maneuvered to avoid paying for the reconstruction, or failing that,

other financial obligations such as parish debts or the Poor Roll. In the case of unified parishes, one parish might attempt to shift a disproportionate percentage of the financial burden to their sister parish – often resulting in increased inter-parish tensions in the late 1670s and 1680s as money became more and more scarce. The period from 1672 until the final days of the reconstruction was as much about reconstituting communities as it was rebuilding churches.

**Part II:
Chapter 4:
The First Fifteen.**

The 1670 *Rebuilding of London Act* settled much of the anxiety about which churches would be rebuilt, which parishes would to lose their churches, and how parishes would be unified. Unsurprisingly, this settlement did not please all parties – especially Londoners whose parish churches were not to be rebuilt. However, the 1670 *Rebuilding Act* did mark the end of a period of four years of profound uncertainty for many parish communities, and while the future of these parishes might have been far from ideal they were no longer wandering directionless in the desert.

Unfortunately, the 1670 *Rebuilding Act* was far from a comprehensive settlement. Samuel Pepys' lament that the rebuilding legislation was too deeply invested in the concerns of parish patrons, and woefully uninterested in the character and concerns of the parish communities was a fair assessment.¹ The 1670 *Rebuilding Act* very clearly sets out which parishes are to be rebuilt, and with equal clarity sets out rules for shared presentment in unified parishes, as well as the stipends attached to the livings in those parishes.² These would have been essential concerns to any parish patron and their clerical clients, but would have been secondary concerns for most London parishioners. The 1670 *Rebuilding Act*, in short, reduced London's parishes to nodes in city patronage networks, instead of acknowledging them as the dynamic social, political, economic, and religious entities

¹Pepys, May 6, 1668.

²*Act for the Rebuilding of the City of London, Uniting Parishes and Rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches with the Said City*, 1670, (Cha. II St. 22 c. 11).

which they truly were.

While the 1670 *Rebuilding Act* did address parish property on which a parochial church was built – the church foundation and churchyard – it only regulated its disposal for use in the improvement of the city through civic construction projects, widening roads and opening up public squares.³ This ignored the myriad ways in which parishes might dispose of their churchyards, and in the case of unified parishes, who had the right to develop the property. The 1670 *Rebuilding Act* also ignored perhaps the most significant feature of urban parishes, especially those located in the capitol. While rural parishes might, along with their church and churchyard, possess a tract of arable land, and a few modest houses for the parish's destitute, London's parishes often possessed a wider variety of properties. London's parishes received rents from the houses of parishioners, as well as from workshops, taverns and small commercial stalls. Some parishes even received regular rents from the city's livery companies, and those near to the Thames might collect rent from warehouses, or fees for the use of docks.

The 1670 *Rebuilding Act* also failed to address certain forms of parish income and wealth. Funds collected for the relief of the poor were left unsettled, while a great deal of attention was paid to the use and sale of parish construction material, including rubble from the demolished or damaged churches.⁴ Parishes might possess less liquid wealth in the form of bell metal, fabric, church plate and other furnishings which were fortunate enough

³*Act for the Rebuilding of the City of London, Uniting Parishes and Rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches with the Said City*, 1670, (Cha. II St. 22 c. 11).

⁴*Ibid.*

to survive the Great Fire. The sale of these commodities could be complicated, however, as many did not have clear owners after parishes were unified and their assets combined in various and inconsistent ways.

Even more troubling was the lack of a settlement for parish leadership. Along with the city's clergy, London's parishes were managed by locally elected churchwardens and vestrymen. While these positions could be a burden – so much so that some parishioners petitioned for exemption from parish service – serving as a church warden or vestrymen included a certain amount of local influence and prestige.⁵ The unified parishes would have to develop a unification settlement on their own – a process which was not always characterized by cooperation or geniality.

These concerns paled next to the questions surrounding the order for rebuilding the parish churches. Serving as a vestryman might seem impressive, but one wonders if the view from the vestry pew was less impressive in a wooden shed than it might be in a completed church and debates about which church plate to use might have seemed trivial when this church plate was still stored in the basements of local parishioners. After the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act* the most pressing concern for London's parishes was ensuring a speedy reconstruction for their parochial churches.

The inconsistent yields of the coal duty, alongside the shortage of construction materials in London, meant that reconstruction might be delayed decades if not longer. A long delay increased the probability that a parish church might be removed from the list of

⁵LMA P69/MIL1/B/001/MS03469/001, [*Saint Mildred Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], January 19, 1652, p. 45.

those to be rebuilt as changes in funding, or in the plans for improving the city, demanded. This led some parishes to independently rebuild their churches, some hiring workmen before the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act*, unaware that they would be refunded the cost of their reconstruction by the Rebuilding Commission. After the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act* many parishes began lobbying to ensure the speedy reconstruction of their parish church, through both legal and extra legal means.

I. The First Class of Churches:

Not every parish, however, spent the 1670s lamenting the long delayed reconstruction of their parish church. In 1670 the Rebuilding Commissioners identified fifteen parish churches that would constitute the first class of churches to be rebuilt.⁶ These parishes were selected for a three reasons. The first class included parish churches considered important to the city. Other churches in the first class were selected because their physical structure served as a landmark in the city – to mark the transition between wards, or gates in the city walls. These projects often included efforts to beautify and widen portals between areas of the city. Lastly, churches were selected for the first class in cases where the structure of the church itself was largely still standing after the Great Fire, allowing Wren to rapidly rebuild these churches simply by repairing them. Despite the speed with which these early churches were completed, with ready access to scarce funds, labor and building materials, and with much more focus from Wren, the first class of churches were

⁶GL MS 25540 1, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission, Volume I*], June 13, 1670.

not rebuilt without complication or conflict.

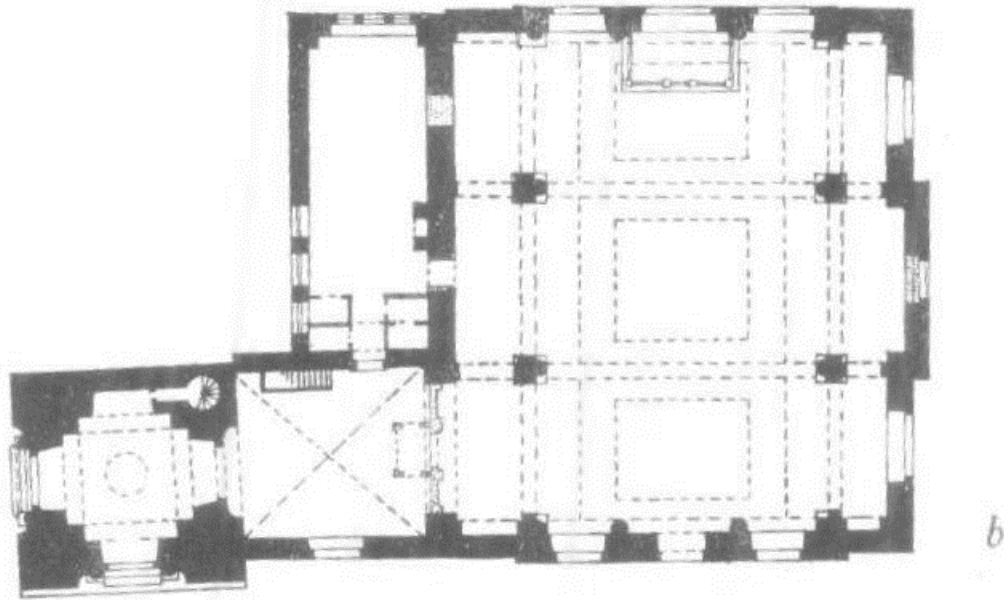


Fig. 12
Plans for Saint Mary-le-Bow.

1. Saint Mary-le-Bow, united with All Hallows, Honey Lane and Saint Pancras, Soper Lane:

In a city of nearly one-hundred parish churches, most ancient and many elaborately decorated and well built, Saint Mary-Le-Bow was acknowledged as one of the city's most important religious sites. John Stow, in his survey of London, identifies Saint Mary-Le-Bow as the second most significant church in the city, behind only Saint Paul's Cathedral in primacy.⁷ Its importance was in part due to its patron, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁷Paul Jeffery, *City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), p. 58.

The medieval church was also a fine architectural specimen, especially the two stone arches or bows from which the church derived its name.⁸ The church also sat in a place of importance on Hosier Lane near West Cheap, on a major West-East thoroughfare through Cheapside. In addition, the church housed the Court of Arches, the ecclesiastical court of appeals, chaired by Sheldon, who took a special interest in the church's reconstruction.⁹

Saint Mary-Le-Bow is unique in that the post-fire settlement united the parish with two parishes instead of one. All Hallows, Honey Lane was an obvious choice for unification with Saint Mary-Le-Bow – the patrons of the parish, the worshipful Company of Grocers, had attempted to unify the two parishes in 1658, but nothing came of the effort.¹⁰ The parish was located in the north end of Honey Lane in Cheap Ward. The church was also an easy choice for elimination, in part because of the size and poverty of the parish. The parish covered a single acre in the city, mostly comprising the houses which surrounded its church yard and small church. Furthermore, the parish was unusual in that the church had no civic use or any bequests for the poor.¹¹ John Stow also indicated that the parish possessed no monuments of note.¹²

The church itself was of little value to its patrons – for the Grocers the land on

⁸Styve, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 20.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰GLCLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/004, [*The Worshipful Company of Grocers Minutes Book, Volume 4*], 1658, pp. 712-13.

¹¹George Waltar Thornbury; Edward Walford; *Old and New London: A Narrative of its History, its People and Its places*. (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., 1880), p. 376.

¹²Stow, *Survey*, p. 243.

which the church stood held much greater potential. The Grocers, as revealed in their initial 1658 unification scheme, wished to use the property for the development of a city market, an impulse which resonated with Wren's desire to improve the overall state of the city.¹³ As a result, the parish was slated for unification very quickly after the fire and its property seized by the Rebuilding Commission for use in the construction of Honey Lane Market. For the seized property the parish was paid £400 by the Rebuilding Commission, but only in 1687 after some lobbying by the parishioners.¹⁴

Saint Mary-Le-Bow was also united with the parish of Saint Pancras, Soper Lane, a client parish of the Archbishop of Canterbury, located on Soper Lane in Cheap Ward. After the unification of the parishes Saint Pancras' churchyard became the burial ground for all three parishes – although the parishioners did often use the ruins of the church “for the conveniency of drying of clothes.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the parish continued to rent a small house at the edge of the churchyard at £2 per annum.¹⁶ While, like All Hallows, Saint Pancras was a small church, the parish was made up of many wealthy parishioners who often acted as “liberal benefactors” of the parish.¹⁷ This did not stop one leading parishioner, from stealing all of the church plate during the fire.¹⁸

¹³GL CLC/L/GH/B/001/MS11588/004, [*Worshipful Company of Grocers Minutes Book*], 1658, pp. 712-13.

¹⁴Aubrey Edward Douglas-Smith, *The City of London School*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), p. 74.

¹⁵GL P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book*], May 12, 1675, p. 289.

¹⁶Robert Seymour, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark and Parts Adjacent*, (London: 1733), p. 529.

¹⁷Stow, *Survey*, p. 198.

¹⁸Bell, p. 302.

Saint Mary-Le-Bow was one of the first churches to be rebuilt, with the body of the church completed from 1671 to 1673. The steeple, which rises to one hundred and twenty-two feet, was finished in 1680. The church was Wren's most expensive parish church, costing £15,473 to complete, well over the initial estimates for its cost.¹⁹ Of this total cost, £8,071 18s 1d was spent on the body, with an additional £7,388 8s 7d spent on the steeple alone.²⁰ Given the prestige of the patrons of the parish – Sheldon, but also Lady Williamson who gifted £2,000 to the parish for reconstruction, and countless goldsmiths who worshiped in the parish – it is not surprising that Wren took an active interest in this particular church.²¹ Wren also employed some of his most talented assistants in the construction of this church, including the master mason Thomas Cartwright, and William de Keyser, son to the Hendrick de Keyser, the official sculptor and stone mason to the city of Amsterdam.²² Despite Wren's interest in the church, even going so far as to supervise the construction of the steeple personally, the parishioners still had to maintain his attention with the occasional gift.²³

The rebuilt church body is a barreled vault, which appears to have been based on a

¹⁹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission, Volume I*], May 13, 1671, p. 17.

²⁰George Waltar Thornbury; Edward Walford; *Old and New London: A Narrative of its History, its People and Its Places*. (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., 1880), p. 338.

²¹Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale*, p. 299. Bell, p. 310.

²²Peter Guillery, "Suburban Models, or Calvinism and Continuity in London's Seventeenth-Century Church Architecture," in *Architectural History*, Vol. 48 (2005), p. 105.

²³Tinniswood, p. 210.

Wren's study of the Basilica of Maxentius in Rome.²⁴ The body of the church was very finely furnished, including an ornately carved oak pulpit in the north of the church, and a marble font in the west end – a gift from Francis Dashwood in 1675.²⁵ The church tower was enlarged by Wren and shifted off of its original foundations consuming two neighboring houses.²⁶ Originally the tower was to be a pepper-pot steeple, but this plan was discarded before work on the steeple began.²⁷ The rebuilt steeple consists of three stories, with the top story serving as a belfry decorated with Ionic Pilasters.²⁸ The belfry sits beneath a balustrade and cornice, which in turn is topped with lantern spire. Atop the spire is a weather vane decorated with the dragon from the city's crest.²⁹ The late completion of the steeple was in part due to efforts taken by the parishioners of Saint Mary-Le-Bow to save the medieval bowed steeple. After the fire, the tower was very badly damaged, but was still standing. Even before the Rebuilding Commissioner's met to organize the rebuilding of the city's churches “the tower of Bow Church was begun to be repaired by the Churchwardens of the parish soon after the fire and considerably expended upon in hopes of preserving it.” The patched up tower served the parish for a time, but by

²⁴Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, (London: Penguin Press, 1971), p. 147; Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 37.

²⁵A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, (Westminster: Archibald, Constable and Co., 1895), p. 248.

²⁶Reddaway, p. 298; Arthur Thomas Bolton, *The Parochial Churches of Sir Christopher Wren, 1666-1718*, (London: The Wren Society, 1932), p. 74.

²⁷Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 129.

²⁸A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 248.

²⁹*Ibid.*

May 1671 it was reported to the Rebuilding Commission that the tower was a danger to neighboring houses and pedestrians in the streets below it, and they began work to tear it down.³⁰ It was only after the tower was safely removed that Wren was able to begin construction on one of the most unique steeples in the city.

Despite the speedy completion of the new church, and the fine nature of the church itself, this parish unification was one of the most tumultuous of the first class of churches to be rebuilt by Wren. In 1671 the living of the united parish was set at £200 per annum, but it was unclear how the joint rector would be appointed.³¹ While all unified parishes dealt with this concern – and accepted the standard practice of allowing the patrons to present in turns, with the more lucrative living presenting first – the united parish at Saint Mary-Le-Bow consisted of three different livings. Two of the parishes, Saint Mary-Le-Bow and Saint Pancras, Soper Lane, were clients of the Archbishop of Canterbury, while All Hallows, Honey Lane was a client of the Worshipful Company of Grocers. The intended order of presentation was to alternate, as Saint Mary-Le-Bow was the wealthiest living before the fire, and Saint Pancras the least wealthy. For unknown reasons, however, the Archbishop presented twice, usurping the Grocer's prerogative – a slight that was not officially challenged until 1771.³²

³⁰GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission, Volume 1*], May 13, 1671, p. 17.

³¹*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

³²George Godwin, *The Churches of London: A History and Description of the Ecclesiastical Edifices of the Metropolis*, (London: Tilt, 1839), p. 322; Thomas Waltar Williams, *An Abridgment of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Law*; (London: G. And J. Robinson and G. Kearsley, 1798), p. 802.

While there may have been tension between the patrons of the unified parish, there was even clearer tensions between the parishioners of then unified parish. While there is little documentation of any disagreement, the parish records drafted for the unification do indicate a unique settlement, especially for one of the first class of churches to be rebuilt. In their earliest joint effort, the pewing of the rebuilt church in 1674, the united parishes adopted an equal division of cost, but by 1697 as cost shifted from reconstruction to general maintenance and furnishing of the church, the parishes shifted this relationship to insistent that Saint Mary-Le-Bow shoulder a much heavier financial burden – five ninths of the resulting cost.³³ The next year in 1698 the parishes drafted an official union agreement— Saint Pancras began calling for one as early as 1681 – which laid out rules for the management of the united parish.³⁴ The united parishes kept a special joint vestry book after 1682, which contained its own earlier union agreement, but these notes contain little on the actual finances of the parishes, and almost certainly fell short of Saint Pancras' expectations.³⁵ The rents received from the property of the united parishes would be divided evenly, as would the space for burials in the churchyard and crypt.³⁶ Collections

³³LMA P69/MRY7/B/023/MS07810 [*Agreement Between the Churchwardens of the united Parish of Saint Mary le Bow, Saint Pancras Soper Lane, and All Hallows Honey Lane*], January 11, 1674; LMA P69/MRY7/016/MS08638, [*Churchwarden's Disbursement Accounts for the United Parishes of Saint Mary le Bow, Saint Pancras Soper Lane, and All Hallows Honey Lane*] April, 1682, p. 3.

³⁴LMA P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book, Volume 1*], 1681, p. 151.

³⁵LMA P69/MRY7/B/002/MS05009/001, [*Vestry Minutes of the United Parishes of Saint Mary le Bow, Saint Pancras Soper Lane and All Hallows Honey Lane*], April, 1682, p. 4.

³⁶LMA P69/MRY7/B/008/MS08657, [*Memorandum of Draft Agreement between the United Parishes of Saint Mary le Bow and Saint Pancras Soper Lane*], July 14, 1698.

carried out by the parishes would remain separate, and would be carried out at a separate door for each parish, through which specific parishioners had to exit and enter the church.³⁷ Any expense undertaken by the parish in excess of 40s had to be approved by all three churchwardens, one from each parish, and in the event that one was unavailable, a general united vestry would need to be called for approval.³⁸ The most unique aspect of the act of union, however, limits the use of the bells, for which each parish would pay a fee to use, and only Saint Mary-Le-Bow and All Hallows, Honey Lane could do so without the approval of the other parishes.³⁹ Saint Pancras appears to have taken some umbrage at this, and began reporting the ringing of bells “for any private affair or other account without the joint consent of all the churchwardens of the united parishes concerned therein,” in 1694.⁴⁰

Saint Pancras' interest in a formal parish agreement appears to have emerged out of concerns for the finances of the unified parish – not surprising given the funds tied up in its reconstruction. Saint Pancras, unusually in both 1678 and 1685, began sending their churchwarden to audit, not the united parish books, but only those of Saint Mary-Le-Bow.⁴¹ Following this audit it was agreed that Saint Mary-Le-Bow had spent parish funds beyond their right to do so for at least two years, resulting in the shift of parish expenses more

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰LMA P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019/002, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book, Vol. 2*], November 6, 1694 p. 405.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, April, 1678, p. 356; 1685, p. 469.

heavily towards Saint Mary-Le-Bow.⁴² Just before the union agreement was drafted in 1691 the parishes began keeping more robust joint parish books, which all three churchwardens would audit yearly.⁴³

2. Saint Sepulcher-without-Newgate:

Saint Sepulcher stands on the Holborn Viaduct, near Old Bailey, near the outer edge of the old city wall, close to Newgate. The church's proximity to one of the western portals of the city almost certainly influenced its selection as one of the first fifteen churches to be rebuilt. The rebuilt spire of Saint Sepulchre would not only serve as a landmark to indicate an observer's proximity to London's western gate, but it would also be one of the first structures any visitor to the city would encounter if they entered through Newgate – and as such needed to serve as a both a parish church and leave an impression which would benefit the city.

Saint Sepulchre's selection for the first class of churches to be rebuilt may have also depended on the speed and ease with which the church could be rebuilt. By the time of the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act*, the parish community had already begun repairing and rebuilding their church.⁴⁴ The parish was only able to begin rebuilding so early because the fire had spared much of the church's essential structure.⁴⁵ The Great Fire destroyed the

⁴²*Ibid*, July, 1678, p. 357.

⁴³*Ibid*.

⁴⁴Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 56.

⁴⁵Reddaway, p. 244.

roof and furnishings of the church, but spared the outer walls, church tower, and porch. Furthermore, Dr. William Bell, the rector of the parish, advanced £200 to patch up the church to allow for its occupation by his parishioners very soon after the fire – well before it was clear that the rebuilding commission would reimburse the parish for the expense.⁴⁶ As a result, much of this church was built, not by Christopher Wren, but instead by a master mason in Wren's service, Joshua Marshall.⁴⁷ While the rapidly repaired church attracted Londoners from other parishes for religious worship, the perhaps premature reconstruction was not without disadvantages. The tower, which was patched up in the 1670s by Marshall, needed urgent repair in the early eighteenth century, well before the other churches rebuilt by Wren.⁴⁸

Before the Interregnum the parish appears to have leaned toward the Laudian, and its interior contained a particularly impressive gilt communion table, a donation of by the parishioner Robert Peak, a goldsmith, in 1605.⁴⁹ After the Interregnum, the parishioners – at least those that sat on the vestry council – appear to have fallen under the sway of the Presbyterian vicar Thomas Gouge. In April, 1662 Gouge convinced the vestry it was in their best interest to prevent the appointment of William Rogers to the post of Churchwarden.⁵⁰ Gouge argued that Rogers would reinstate the Book of Common Prayer

⁴⁶Lawrence Weaver, *The Complete Building Accounts of the City Churches Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, (London: Hall, 1915).

⁴⁷Christopher Hibbert, *The London Encyclopedia*, (New York: Macmillan, 2010), p. 170.

⁴⁸Tinniswood, p. 224.

⁴⁹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 100.

⁵⁰GL MS3149 1, [*Saint Sepulchre without Newgate Vestry Minutes Book*], April, 1662, p. 259.

and the railed altar. Rogers, however, appealed to the Privy Council for aid, and was confirmed by Bishop Sheldon, despite the misgivings of the parish vestry.⁵¹ After his confirmation Rogers did indeed restore the Book of Common Prayer, as well as many other improvements to the church fabric and furnishings including a painted font, repaved floor, and new windows.⁵² Rogers also used his authority as churchwarden to have the bells rung in celebration of Gouge's eventual ejection for failing to accept the *Act of Uniformity*.⁵³

The living of Saint Sepulchre was under the control of the fellows of Saint John's College, Oxford. The living's stipend was fixed in 1671 to £200 per annum, one of the few churches in the city to pay so well.⁵⁴ The rebuilt church resembles, by demand of the parishioners, the original medieval church.⁵⁵ The church tower contains four individual steeples at the corners – one of the few four-steepled churches in the city of London.⁵⁶ Along with the original tower and walls, the parishioners were also able to save the original parish bells, paying £221 18s to extract the bell metal from the rubble after the fire and recast them.⁵⁷ The parish interior was renovated in the nineteenth century, and as such little is known about the internal structure, although it is likely that it continued to reflect the

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

⁵⁵WS XI, p. 20.

⁵⁶Bell, p. 145.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

remarkably Laudian form it took in the early 1660s. The parish appears to have further entrenched its commitment to “the beauty of holiness,” through the installation of an impressive pipe organ produced by the English master organ maker Renatus Harris.⁵⁸ The parish churchyard was slightly shorted, however, and part of the property was used to widen the street before the church.⁵⁹ The parish church of Saint Sepulchre without Newgate was one of the few parishes after the fire that was not converted into a unified parish after the Great Fire. It was also one of the only churches to be largely completed before the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act*.

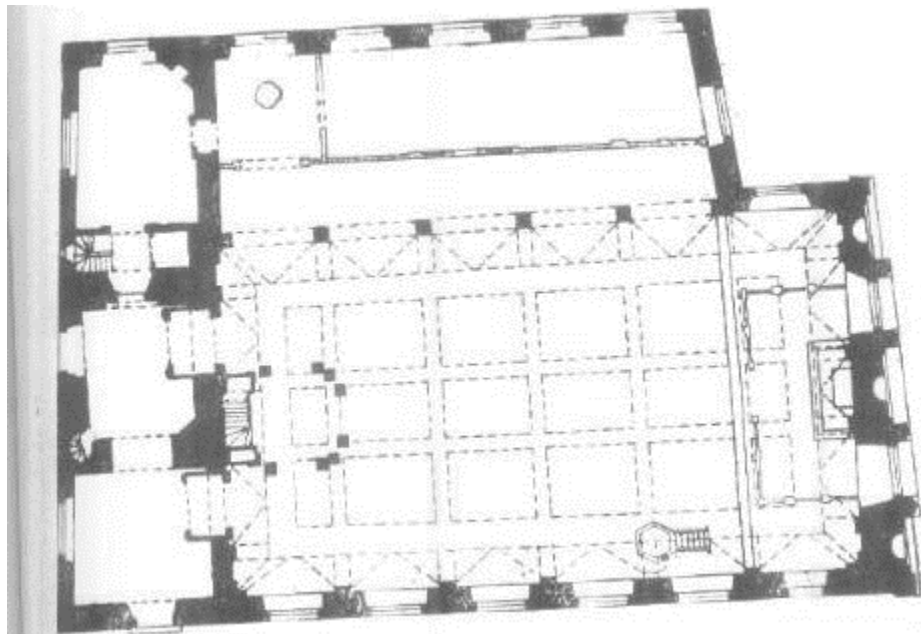


Fig. 13
Plans for Saint Lawrence Jewry.

⁵⁸Nicholas M. Plumley, *The Organs of the City of London: From the Restoration to the Present*, (Oxford: Positif Press, 1996), p 208.

⁵⁹*Journal of the Court of Common Council of the City of London*, Vol. 46, pp. 148-9.

3. Saint Lawrence Jewry, united with Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street:

The large parish church of Saint Lawrence Jewry is located in the south west corner of the Guildhall yard on Gresham Street. In the early seventeenth century the parishioners spent a sizable amount to replace all of the church's windows with stained glass – all of which was destroyed in the great fire a few decades later. After the Great Fire Saint Lawrence was united with the parish of Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, whose small church was located in the north of Cheapside in Cripplegate Ward Within. The church was surrounded by the houses of some of the city's wealthiest merchants.⁶⁰ The parish had been a Presbyterian stronghold during the 1640s, but their minister, Thomas Case, opposed the execution of Charles I and was deprived of his living in the 1650s. However, during the Interregnum, the church became a popular location for services using the Book of Common Prayer and the old liturgy.⁶¹ After the fire the parish's property was seized by the Rebuilding Commissioners, and used to build Honey Lane Market.⁶² The unified parish was a client of Balliol College, Oxford who was the patron of Saint Lawrence, and the Dean of Chapter of Saint Paul's.⁶³

The new church was rebuilt from 1671 to 1676 with the steeple completed in 1687. The reconstruction cost £11,970, making it one of Wren's most expensive parish churches.

⁶⁰Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 74.

⁶¹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 297.

⁶²Reddaway, p. 139.

⁶³James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 268.

The only foundations and ruins of the church were used, which resulted in a crooked east wall.⁶⁴ Wren may have attempted to correct this by more aggressively embellishing the east wall of the church with pilasters, along with re-casing all of the walls in fresh stone. The east end was also decorated with niches containing engravings of fruit.⁶⁵ The interior is largely decorated with very elaborately molded stucco.⁶⁶ The ceiling is a series of sunken panels. The rebuilt church, while still spacious was smaller than the original, as part of its north east corner was seized by the Corporation of London to expand the Guildhall.⁶⁷

While the church's proximity to the Guildhall virtually ensured its reconstruction. The church's place in the order of reconstruction appears to have been shakier before 1671, and the parishioners of the unified parish were unusually active in lobbying for the speedy reconstruction of the church.⁶⁸ In 1670 the parishes spent £8 entertaining Wren and George Hall, Bishop of Chester, no doubt in an effort to sway the young Surveyor of the King's Works in their favor. They may also have been helped in their case by their vicar, John Wilkins, who had been the master of Trinity College Cambridge, and was a close friend of Wren's and an advocate for his appointment as Surveyor of the King's Works.⁶⁹ The

⁶⁴Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, (London: Penguin Press, 1971), p. 150; Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 60.

⁶⁵James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 268.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale*, p. 300.

⁶⁸Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 64.

⁶⁹Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale*, p. 175.

parishes were helped in their pursuit of reconstruction through a sizable gift from Sir John Langham, an MP and wealthy merchant who traded in Turkey, as well as lesser gifts from many parishioners.⁷⁰ The church also received a guarantee of necessary funds from the Court of Alderman.⁷¹ Despite these advantages, the work on the church did take longer than the parishioners were willing to tolerate. Having forgotten how effective their “entertainment” of Wren had been in the early 1670s, the parishes complained to Wren on two occasions about the pace of his work – complaints which Wren simply ignored.⁷² The construction on the church did not accelerate until 1679, only after the parishes gifted Wren with thirty guineas, to thank him for the quality of his work up until that point.⁷³

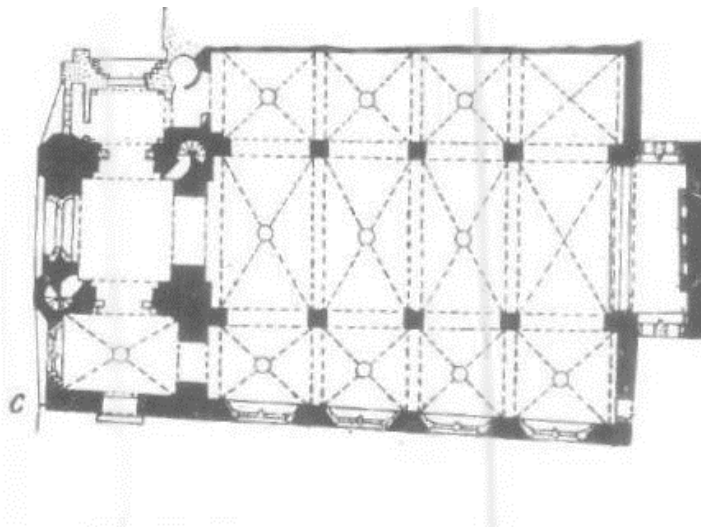


Fig. 14
Plans for Saint Michael, Cornhill.

⁷⁰James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 268; Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale* p. 301.

⁷¹Bell, p. 311.

⁷²WS XIX, p. 6.

⁷³*Ibid.*

4. Saint Michael, Cornhill:

The “fair and beautiful” parish church of Saint Michael, Cornhill is located on the south end of Cornhill on Saint Michael Alley.⁷⁴ The church was badly damaged by the Great Fire, but the medieval tower and the church's foundations both survived, although the tower was still in desperate need of repair.

Wren directed the church's reconstruction from 1672 until 1677, although the parishioners themselves began rebuilding the church before the passage of the 1670 *Rebuilding Act*.⁷⁵ The parishioners rebuilt the church to appear much like its medieval predecessor, including using the old foundations without modification, despite having shifted severely over time, resulting in a church containing few right angles.⁷⁶ The parishioners also attempted to save the original tower with rudimentary repairs. This effort did little to extend the life of the tower, and Nicholas Hawksmoor was employed to tear down the medieval tower and install a new one in the early eighteenth-century.⁷⁷ The resulting tower was Gothic in its design, although at least one tower plan was discarded, indicating a preference on the part of the parishioners for something more traditional, and less ambitious.⁷⁸

The rebuilt church, funded by gifts from a few wealthy parishioners, including £500

⁷⁴Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 143.

⁷⁵Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 56.

⁷⁶Reddaway, p. 298.

⁷⁷Tinniswood, p.224.

⁷⁸Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, (London: Penguin Press, 1971), p. 131; Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 126.

from Sir John Langham, contained both an organ, and an altar piece raised on a stepped ascent.⁷⁹ The church was rebuilt mostly of stone, save for the marble paneled chancel.⁸⁰ The church furnishings, including the pulpit and pews, were made of oak, and the body of the church body contains six small windows in its south end.⁸¹

The selection of this parish church for first class of rebuilt churches is unusual in that its patron was not a major cleric, but was instead the intensely influential and wealthy Worshipful Company of Drapers. Its selection for the first tier of churches to be rebuilt was most certainly the result of the its near complete reconstruction before 1671, which allowed Wren to rapidly complete the church, at a cost of £4,686 and move on to other projects – at least until the faulty workmanship on the tower became apparent three decades later. The completion of the church was not an entirely smooth process for Wren or the parishioners – when the Rebuilding Commission refunded the parish for its expenses in rebuilding the church, the churchwardens discovered around £250 missing from their reimbursement.⁸² The parishioners attempted to appeal to Wren, and even threatened to go over his head to the Lord's Commissioners, although it is unclear how the matter was resolved, if at all.⁸³

⁷⁹Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2 p. 143

⁸⁰David Hughson, *London: Being and Accurate History and Description*, Vol. 2, (London: J. Stratford, 1805), p. 131.

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²Tinniswood, p. 210.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 211.

5. Saint Christopher le Stocks:

In the Bread Street Ward, on the southern side of Threadneedle Street stood the church of Saint Christopher le Stocks – so called because of its proximity to the Stocks' market. The church was damaged in the Great Fire, but much of its structure remained after the fire had passed, including the walls of the body of the church, and the tower.⁸⁴ The survival of so much of the church structure almost certainly contributed to its selection for early reconstruction by the rebuilding committee.

Wren began rebuilding the church in 1671, completing it within the year – the first church undertaken by Wren to be finished. Wren's workshop was able to quickly complete the church's reconstruction by simply re-casing the original church structure in fresh Portland stone.⁸⁵ This initial reconstruction, however, appears to have been focused on simply bringing the church structure to the point of suitability for parish occupancy and Wren returned to the parish in 1696 to make additional adjustments to its architecture.⁸⁶ The total cost of the reconstruction was £2,098 12s 7d. The rebuilt church, which did resemble the original in its basic form. The church possessed only three large windows which arched under the roof on three sides.⁸⁷ The tower was topped with an octagonal turret with battlements and vanes. It was similar in appearance to the tower of Saint

⁸⁴Bell, p. 182.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 310.

⁸⁶Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 246.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

Sepulchre, Newgate Street – another church rebuilt under Wren's direction.⁸⁸

The church was torn down in the late eighteenth-century to expand the nearby Bank of England, and as a result there is little known about the interior of the church, aside from its resemblance to many of Wren's other churches in design -a nave and aisles separated by rows of small columns beneath a paneled ceiling.⁸⁹ However, as the church was torn down as part of a controlled demolition, as opposed to a sudden catastrophe, many of the church's furnishings were gifted to other parishes. The paneling for the pulpit installed by Wren was gifted to Saint Nicholas Church, Canewdon. Many of the church monuments moved along with the parishioners to Saint Margaret Lothbury when the parishes were eventually united. In 1671, the parish of Saint Christopher le Stocks was not united with any other parish after the Great Fire. Given this fact, and the speed with which Wren was able to complete their rebuilt parish church, it is not surprising that this parish weathered its recovery after the Great Fire in relative peace.

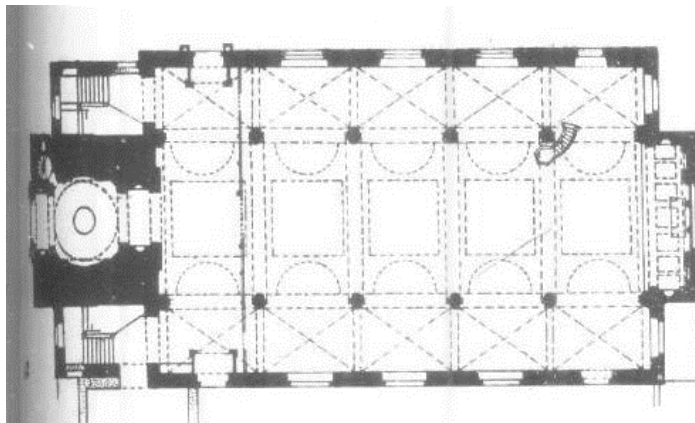


Fig. 15
Plans for Saint Bride's Church.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

⁸⁹*Ibid.*

6. Saint Bride's Church:

One of the oldest Churches in the city, Saint Bride's church is located on Fleet Street. Just before the Great Fire, the parish was badly afflicted by the plague, losing 238 parishioners in a single week.⁹⁰ These deaths so crowded the parish vaults that many parishioners were forced to resort to bribes to find burial space for relatives – most notably Samuel Pepys who paid the grave digger to “juttle together” the corpses to accommodate Pepys' brother.⁹¹ The most notable feature of the medieval church was added around 1480, when William Venor Esq, funded many expansions to the church body, and left his signature on those parts of the church he improved with carvings of vines and bunches of grapes – a play on his surname, pronounced Vyner.⁹² The church had also been more recently repaired by the parishioners in 1630, 1631, 1632.⁹³ The right of presentation for this parish belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

The church's selection for reconstruction in the first class of churches appears to have been an accident of city geography. Saint Bride's was located just outside the western edge of the city wall, along a major roadway which entered the city through Ludgate. Any church built on the site of Saint Bride's Churchyard would have dominated the approach to

⁹⁰Dewi Morgan, *The Phoenix of Fleet: 2000 Years of St. Bride's*, (London: C. Knight, 1973), p. 131.

⁹¹Pepys, March 18, 1663.

⁹²Styve, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 265.

⁹³*Ibid.*

the city from the west by road given the remarkably low and even nature of the rest of London's skyline in the seventeenth century. The church is also quite close to the Thames, and would have been highly visible during an approach by water. The rebuilt church would serve as a visible land mark for the western edge of the city. For Wren it is likely that Saint Bride's was an essential facet of his ambition for the rebuilt city, not as a community church, but instead as a fragment of a much larger transformation of the city's skyline.

Saint Bride's church is one of the largest and most expensive churches undertaken by Wren in London – costing £11,430 to complete. The church's original foundations were used, which resulted in a church that, in footprint, resembles its medieval precursor.⁹⁴ The interior, and tower, however, are extreme departures from the original church. From 1672 until 1679 Wren constructed a stunning church interior based on a study of the Basilica at Fano by Vitruvius, part of Wren's personal syllabus for the study of architecture.⁹⁵ Despite its Italianate floor plan, other elements of the interior are more Protestant in their construction, including the three quarter pillars fused together into a single column used throughout the church, which are more common to Dutch churches.⁹⁶ Wren also restored the railed altar to this parish, and placed it in a chancel recess.⁹⁷

Even more impressive than the interior, however, is the church's remarkable steeple. Construction on the tower began in 1701, and the resulting spire is formed by four

⁹⁴Bell p. 310.

⁹⁵Tinniswood, p. 219.

⁹⁶ Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 62.

⁹⁷*Ibid*, 61.

octagonal stages diminishing in diameter as they climb, culminating in an obelisk. When the tower was completed in 1703 it measured two-hundred and thirty-four feet in height – now measuring a still impressive two-hundred and twenty-six feet after a lightning strike knocked the top of the tower off. After the completion of Wren's churches in the city of London, Saint Bride's was the second tallest structure in the city, dwarfed only by Saint Paul's Cathedral, and rivaled only by Saint Mary-Le-Bow – which, while possessing a shorter spire sits on a higher elevation than Saint Bride's.

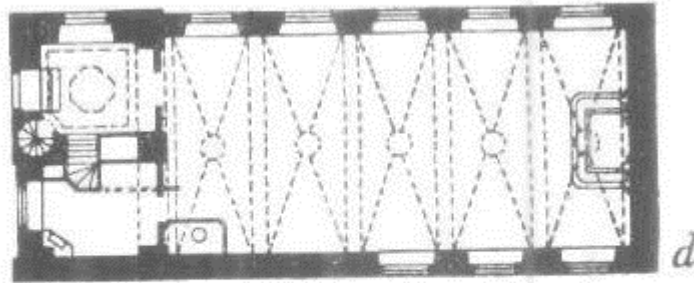


Fig. 16
Plans for Saint Benet Gracechurch.

7. Saint Benet Gracechurch, united with Saint Leonard Eastcheap:

The church of the parish of Saint Benet Gracechurch was located at the junction of Gracechurch Street and Fenchurch Street in Bridge Ward, in close proximity to the hay market from which it derived its most common alias – Saint Benet Grass Church. The church was the site of frequent redecoration in response to prevailing sentiment towards iconoclasm – replacing wall decorations during the reign of Edward VI with excerpts from

the Bible, only to plaster over them during the reign of Mary I.⁹⁸ Again in the 1640s the church attacked its own superstitious decor, by removing altars cloths and decorative brasses – defacing what could not be removed.⁹⁹ The steeple also had a cross removed in 1642.¹⁰⁰ The church was repaired in 1630, at the cost £700, which included a new clock and chimes, and in 1633 a turret for its steeple, built under the direction of John Cudney and John Offely.¹⁰¹ Many of the defaced monuments survived the fire, and were by 1720 still showed signs of iconoclasm.¹⁰² The living was the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's.

After the Great Fire only the tower remained. It was so badly damaged, however, that it was torn down soon afterward for the safety of neighboring buildings. After the church yard was cleared Wren began construction on the new church in 1681 and by 1686 the parish was celebrating the completion of the church body with the Lord Mayor.¹⁰³ The steeple would be finished the next year, at a cost of £4,583.

The 1670 *Rebuilding Act* united Saint Benet Gracechurch with the Church of Saint Leonard, Eastcheap on Fish Street Hill in the ward of Bridge Within. The medieval church appears to have been built of salvaged Roman bricks and was a client church of the

⁹⁸James Peller Malcolm, *Londinium Redivivum, or An Ancient History and Modern Description of London, Volume 1*, (F. & C. Rivington, 1803), p. 314.

⁹⁹*Ibid*, p. 317.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid*.

¹⁰¹Styve, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 177.

¹⁰²*Ibid*.

¹⁰³WS XIX, p. 8.

Archbishop of Canterbury. After its destruction in the Great Fire, the churchyard was converted into a graveyard for the united parishes. The parish of Saint Leonard, Eastcheap was both very small, and very poor. After a fire in 1618 the church was badly damaged, and the parishioners attempted to raise the £850 necessary from within their ranks, without success. After appealing to the King the parish was granted permission to collect outside the city.¹⁰⁴

Wren's church was rectangular in shape, occupying much of the old church yard, with a tower at the northwest corner, at the junction of Gracechurch Street and Fenchurch Street. The body of the church is punctuated with five round windows. The interior is deceptively small, given the exterior's size.¹⁰⁵ The floor plan is plain and open, with the east wall dominated by a painting of crimson and gold curtains. The pulpit contained many decorative carvings and is now housed in the parish church of Saint Olave, Hart Street.¹⁰⁶ The church tower was topped by a cupola with an obelisk at its peak, and rises one-hundred and forty-nine feet into the air.¹⁰⁷ By 1687 the parishioners were restoring the furnishings of the parish at their own expense, including the purchase of a new altarpiece, along with a rail to enclose it.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴Stype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 176.

¹⁰⁵George Godwin, *The Churches of London: A History and Description of the Ecclesiastical Edifices of the Metropolis*, (London: Tilt, 1839), p. 272.

¹⁰⁶A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 186.

This church was almost certainly selected for reconstruction in the first class to be rebuilt to benefit the church patrons, especially the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Archbishop sacrificed control of the small, poor parish of Saint Leonard Eastcheap, in favor of influence over a much larger and more lucrative living in the new united parish. While the parishioners were themselves an afterthought they also benefited from the union, especially the parishioners of Saint Leonard, who found themselves the residents of a much finer parish church.

Somewhat unique among the first class of churches to be rebuilt, the united parishes were forced to wait a decade before construction started on their church. A delay of this duration allowed for united parishes outside of the first class to develop all manner of inter-parish tensions. Uncertainty about financing the eventual reconstruction of a parish church – especially as the Coal Duty proved to be a remarkably unreliable method of fundraising – could exacerbate disagreements over even the most mundane issues of parish management, such as poor roll collection or the paving of streets. These tensions were not present in this case and may be related to the fact that while there was a delay in reconstruction of the united parish church, from 1671 the parishioners knew that their church would be rebuilt as soon as possible, with money from the coal duty, and as a result the parishes were not forced to liquidate assets or accrue debt to advance the fortunes of their parish church. Additionally, they received one of the finer tabernacles in the city, costing £189 instead of the estimated £150 allotted for their reconstruction, but also included a functioning church bell – unique among the city tabernacles.¹⁰⁹ While these

¹⁰⁹LMA P69/BEN2/B012/MS01568, [*Saint Benet Gracechurch Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], June, 1694,

benefits seem to have solidified the relationship between the unified parishes, it did not stop them from directing their attention towards Christopher Wren, whom they called upon in 1680 and 1683 in pursuit, no doubt, of the speedy completion of their church.¹¹⁰

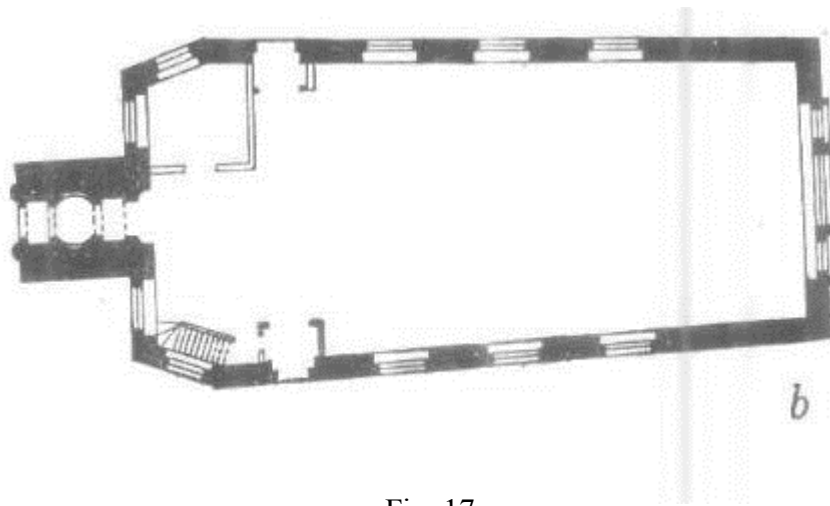


Fig. 17
Plans for Saint Olave, Old Jewry.

8. Saint Olave, Old Jewry, united with Saint Martin Pomary:

In Cheap Ward, near the streets of Old Jewry and Ironmonger Lane stood the church of Saint Olave, Old Jewry. While little is known of the medieval church's structure the old foundations were used in its reconstruction, and, with the exception of the tower, likely resembled the medieval church in shape.¹¹¹ It is, however, clear that the medieval church was largely built of recycled Roman bricks.¹¹² The church was occasionally called Saint

p. 170.

¹¹⁰*Ibid*, pp. 170, 188, 1697.

¹¹¹Bell, p. 310.

¹¹²Simon Bradley; Nikolaus Pevsner, *London: The City Churches*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 122.

Olave, Upwell, as church was built over a well that fed a pump in the east end of the church.¹¹³ The church also had a small adjoining churchyard.

This small churchyard was shared with the neighboring parish church of Saint Martin Pomary. Saint Martin Pomary, like its neighbor Saint Olave, was a royal peculiar. The church appears to have been very small and plain and John Stow does not recall any monuments of note in his survey.¹¹⁴ Despite this, at the time of the fire the church had recently been repaired and redecorated, in both 1627 and 1629, at substantial cost to the parishioners.¹¹⁵

After the Great Fire, when both parish churches were destroyed, the Rebuilding Commission decided to rebuild the church of Saint Olave Jewry, and unite the parish with the parish of Saint Martin Pomary whose church would not be rebuilt. This decision was almost certainly dependent on the state of the both parish's church ruins, as Saint Olave's foundations were still in serviceable shape, and that Saint Olave's church was the larger of the two before the fire. The land once occupied by the church of Saint Martin Pomary was retained by the united parish, to enhance the small churchyard shared by the parishes. The workshop of Sir Christopher Wren began construction on the parish church in 1673 and completed work in 1676, with the tower completed in 1679.

The completed church cost £5,580, including £10 for stone rubble from the ruin of

¹¹³James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 324.

¹¹⁴Stow, *Survey*, p. 242.

¹¹⁵Richard Newcourt, *Repetorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense*, Vol. 1, (London: 1708), p. 410.

Saint Paul's Cathedral.¹¹⁶ The church itself was a plain brick building with stone borders on the windows and doors.¹¹⁷ The interior of the church is a rectangle with a low, plain ceiling over walls containing large windows, with four on the north and south walls, one on the east and two at the west.¹¹⁸ The windows were decorated with carvings of cherubs and flowers.¹¹⁹ The tower is unique in that instead being placed above the body of the church, it extends out from the west end of the church.

The union of these two parishes appears to have been a relatively smooth one. This was almost certainly due to the fact that the churches were already in relatively close proximity to begin with, and that the church was rebuilt and suitable for use so quickly. Additionally, the parishes gained an increasingly rare commodity in the city of London, space to bury the dead. The conversion of the church property of Saint Martin Pomary into a churchyard added badly needed burial space to the city, especially as the recent plague literally swelled other churchyards.¹²⁰ This not only allowed the residents of the united parishes to readily and comfortably bury their dead, but also to charge nonresidents for easy burial in the parish – which in some cases might include a sizable bribe.¹²¹

¹¹⁶Fincham, *Altars*, p. 101.

¹¹⁷James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 324.

¹¹⁸ George Godwin, *The Churches of London: A History and Description of the Ecclesiastical Edifices of the Metropolis*, (London: Tilt, 1839), p. 149.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*

¹²⁰Evelyn, October, 17, 1671.

¹²¹Pepys, March 18, 1663.

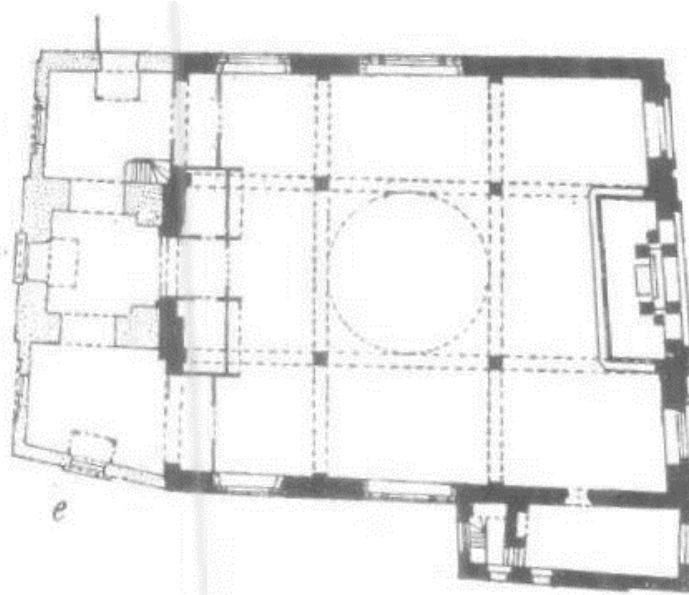


Fig. 18
Plans for Saint Mary-at-Hill.

9. Saint Mary-at-Hill, united with Saint Andrew Hubbard:

The parish church of Saint Mary-at-Hill is located on Lovat Lane in Billingsgate Ward. By 1616 the church was in a state of disrepair, and John Styrpe indicates that the church was then repaired, and routinely repaired afterward, keeping the parish reasonably well-maintained up until the fire. In 1664, Saint Mary-at-Hill was one of the only parishes in the city to immediately begin implementing the *Act of Uniformity* as it applied to the communion table – raising it onto a platform in the church chancel.¹²² After the Great Fire Saint Mary-at-Hill was united with the nearby parish of Saint Andrew Hubbard. Saint Andrew, located down the street from Saint Mary had, in 1630, been beautified at the

¹²²LMA P69/MRY4/B/001/MS01240/001, [*Saint Mary at Hill Vestry Minutes Book*], 1664, p. 317.

parishioners' expense of £600.¹²³ The interior of the church was somewhat unique in its organization – during the 1630s the parishioners moved the communion table into the unorthodox position of the middle of the quire, but spent £6 to rather conservatively rail the table in.¹²⁴ The living of the unified parish was set at £200 per annum in 1671.¹²⁵

Despite being very close to Pudding Lane, and the origin of the Great Fire in Thomas Farriner's Bakery, the church was not entirely destroyed by the fire. The fire only completely destroyed the eastern end of the church, leaving the three other walls, and the tower badly damaged, but in a condition that allowed Wren to refurbish them, instead of carrying out a more expensive complete reconstruction of the church. The prospect of a quick, and affordable rebuilding project almost certainly influenced its selection for reconstruction as one of the first fifteen parish churches to be rebuilt.

Indeed Wren's reconstruction of the church did go quite quickly, lasting from 1670 to 1674. The cost of the reconstruction was £3,980, 12s 1d, which was certainly not the cheapest of the churches to be rebuilt, but falls below the average cost. The affordability of this church's reconstruction was enhanced by the value of the property of the united parish. This total cost was mitigated by the fee paid for all of the property of Saint Andrew Hubbard, which was used to widen the streets around the old churchyard, and to build the Royal Weigh House.¹²⁶

¹²³Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 171.

¹²⁴LMA P69/AND3/B/001/MS01278/002, [*Saint Andrew Hubbard Vestry Minutes Book*], pp. 103, 214.

¹²⁵*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

¹²⁶Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 171.

While the old foundations of the medieval church were used in its reconstruction, the church does not entirely resemble the old church, especially the interior. The rebuilt parish church of Saint Mary-at-Hill is one of the earliest Wren church to make use of the Greek Cross church floor plan – the church interior so strongly resembles the church designs of the Dutch architect Jacob van Campen that the church is usually attributed to Hooke, instead of Wren.¹²⁷ Wren did, however, make minor adjustments to the church tower, repairing it and adding a lantern to its pinnacle. His efforts to save the tower in the 1670s appears to have fallen well short of what was necessary, as it was in danger of collapsing in the 1690s, and was torn down and replaced with a new brick tower in 1692, at around £2,000 expense to the parishioners.¹²⁸

The union between these two parishes appears to have been a peaceful one. While the complete sale of a parish's properties might have given Saint Andrew Hubbard cause for animosity, the commissioners paid a reasonable amount for the land, and ensured that the funds were first used to cover the cost of parish reconstruction for Saint Andrew Hubbard, even using them to furnish and pew the church.¹²⁹ This allowed Saint Andrew Hubbard to weather the recovery after the fire at very little cost to its parishioners – which was not the case for many of the eliminated parishes after the first class of churches to be rebuilt.

¹²⁷Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p 63; Tinniswood, p. 221.

¹²⁸ A. Trower, *The Parish of St. Mary-at-Hill, Its Church estates and Charities*, (London: 1878), p. 3.

¹²⁹Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 171.

The smooth unification and reconstruction of this parish church was also the result of the reasonable method undertaken by both parishes manage the reconstruction. Instead of leaving the management of the church reconstruction to the entire vestry, which could slow the process with debate and disagreement, Saint Mary-at-Hill selected six parishioners and empowered them to “treat and conclude concerning the church.”¹³⁰ While these men were to consult with the elected churchwardens they were not themselves elected to their positions, which allowed for a degree of continuity in the direction of the reconstruction. Furthermore, unlike many other parishes who might limit the committee to a single parish and meet with representatives of their partner parish from time to time, Saint Mary invited Saint Andrew to appoint its own representatives to join a single committee which the parishioners of Saint Andrew accepted.¹³¹ While the parishes both maintained their own vestries and churchwarden's after the fire, there was a remarkable amount of cooperation, at least between the churchwardens of the unified parishes, who by 1690 were very heavily linked, managing dual collections, for church furnishings and necessities such as communion wine.¹³²

¹³⁰LMA P69/MRY4/B/001/MS01240/001, [*Saint Mary at Hill Vestry Minutes Book*], May 10, 1670, p. 90.

¹³¹*Ibid.*

¹³²LMA P69/AND3/B/007/MS05068A, [*Saint Andrew Hubbard Miscellaneous Churchwarden's Vouchers*], 1690, p. 81.

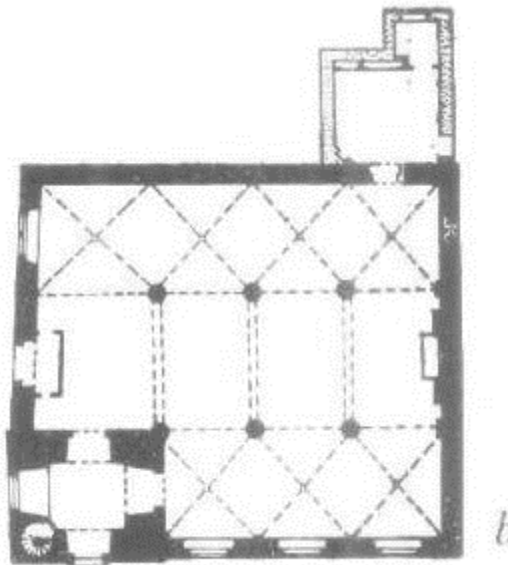


Fig. 19
Plans for Saint Augustine, Watling Street.

10. Saint Augustine, Watling Street, united with Saint Faith's under Saint Paul's:

Just to the east of Saint Paul's Cathedral stood the church of Saint Augustine, Watling Street. The church had been repaired by the parishioners in 1630, at the parishioners' expense of £1,200. The church was destroyed in the Great Fire, but its foundations were in a suitable state for reuse, and the church construction materials were not badly damaged and were easily salvaged for the reconstruction of the church. The sheer wealth of material left after the fire may have contributed to its selection for the first class of churches to be rebuilt.

After the Great Fire the parish of Saint Augustine, Watling Street was united with the parish of Saint Faith's under Saint Paul's. Saint Faith's was a parish without a home as its church had been eliminated in 1256 to allow for an expansion to Saint Paul's Cathedral. After the destruction of their church the parishioners of Saint Faith's worshiped in the western crypt of Saint Paul's or in Jesus Chapel – where the parishioners, the vast majority

of whom were book sellers from Paternoster Row, were segregated behind a screen.¹³³

The new church was rebuilt from 1680 to 1683, during which time the parishioners worshiped in a fine tabernacle costing £229 to build. The steeple was completed in 1695, and the complete reconstruction cost £2,400 making it one of Wren's more inexpensive churches. The church was very small – despite using the old foundations, even smaller than the original church – most likely to avoid competing for visual attention with the nearby Saint Paul's Cathedral.¹³⁴ The church steeple was roofed with lead, and formed a plain, slender needle.¹³⁵ Nicholas Hawksmoor drafted plans for a lantern for the termination of the steeple, but it was discarded before the tower was completed.¹³⁶

The inexpensive completion of this church, coupled with the expensive Tabernacle provided for the parishioner almost certainly contributed to the smooth union of these two parishes. Furthermore, Saint Faith's finally had an official church in which they were not separated from the other parishioners by a partition. The two parishes gained more than just space to worship, however, as the two parishes both lacked a burial ground. After the Great Fire the unified parish received a section of the crypt beneath the rebuilt Saint Paul's to accommodate their dead as part of the rebuilding settlement.¹³⁷ While the rebuilt church was relatively plain and simple, its furnishings merit some attention, especially the altar

¹³³Gordon Heulin, *Vanished Churches of the City of London*, (London: Guildhall Library Publishing, 1996), p. 7.

¹³⁴Tinniswood, p. 212.

¹³⁵Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 117.

¹³⁶*Ibid*, p. 128.

¹³⁷A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 136.

table of engraved wood, costing the parish £200.¹³⁸ The completion of this relatively ornate altarpiece marks a dramatic shift in the parishes confessional identity, as the parish spent £1,200 in the 1630s to refurbish their parish in a very anti-Laudian style, including east end pews, placed around and above the communion table.¹³⁹ So aggressive were the unorthodox innovations to the church that Laud forced them, through the Court of High Commission, to remove the offending pews.¹⁴⁰

11. Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, united with Saint John Zachary:

The parish church of Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, unique in the city of London for its double dedication, is located on Gresham Street in Aldersgate Ward. Along with the two dedications, the church also possessed two churchyards, both heavily planted with willow trees before the fire.¹⁴¹

After the Great Fire Saint Anne and Saint Agnes was united with the parish of Saint John Zachary – a church which was under repair for almost the entirety of the early seventeenth century.¹⁴² Saint John Zachary sat in the north end of Gresham Street, and was a favorite burial site for notable goldsmiths before the fire.¹⁴³ After the Great Fire the

¹³⁸Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 140.

¹³⁹Fincham, *Altars*, pp. 107, 187, 248.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid*, p. 187.

¹⁴¹Strype, *Survey*, Vol.3, p.101.

¹⁴²*Ibid*, Vol. 3, p. 96.

¹⁴³Bell, p. 111.

church was not rebuilt, but its foundations and churchyard were converted into a graveyard for the unified parish.¹⁴⁴ The united parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral and the Bishop of London.¹⁴⁵

Wren's workshop began reconstruction of the church in 1677, while parishioners waited in small inexpensive tabernacle – it was constructed for £131, £19 under the cost estimated by the Rebuilding Commissioners. The work was completed in 1681, not under the direction of Christopher Wren, but instead under Robert Hooke.¹⁴⁶ The church was built in a Greek cross pattern, which closely resembles the churches of Saint Martin Ludgate and Saint Mary-at-Hill. It also appears to owe much to churches built by Jacob van Campen in Holland, who Hooke appears to have emulated.¹⁴⁷ It should also be noted that the church is decoratively plain and simple, which more clearly reflects Hooke's aesthetic, than the refined complexity of Wren's work.¹⁴⁸

The rebuilt church was largely constructed of brick, primarily the work of John Fitch – a bricklayer who attempted to gain the contract for brick work on Saint Paul's Cathedral by bribing Lady Wren with china.¹⁴⁹ The interior ceiling was painted light blue, supported by four large Corinthian columns.¹⁵⁰ The interior walls were oak paneled, a

¹⁴⁴John Timbs, *Curiosities of London*, (London: Dav. Bougue, 1855), p. 102.

¹⁴⁵Henry Benjamin Wheatley, *London, Past and Present, Vol. 1*, (London: J. Murray, 1891), p. 48.

¹⁴⁶Tinniswood, p. 221.

¹⁴⁷Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 63.

¹⁴⁸Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, (London: Penguin Press, 1971), p. 150.

¹⁴⁹Tinniswood, p. 209.

¹⁵⁰A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 134.

selection not made by Wren or Hooke, but rather by both parishes at a joint rebuilding committee meeting.¹⁵¹ The church steeple was one of the simpler built during the reconstruction of the first class of churches, rising only ninety-five feet, and was topped with a small wooden lantern.¹⁵² The willow trees that characterized the churchyards before the fire were replaced by the parishioners with by Lime trees.¹⁵³

The parishes were able to facilitate a relatively smooth union by actively attempting to ensure each parish retained a remarkable degree of autonomy within the unified parish. In 1679 the parish vestries met together in the tabernacle to form a committee which would then direct the construction of the church's interior, its redecoration and the reacquisition of church fabric.¹⁵⁴ Along with the selection of the oak wall panels, and the commissioning and placement of the pulpit, they also agreed to divide the church in two, with Saint John Zachary receiving the entire south side of the church for its pews and furnishings.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, the churchwarden of each parish was empowered to engage with carpenters of their choosing for the installation of pews, provided the work did not exceed a cost of forty-six shillings per square foot for the leveling and paving of the church floor.¹⁵⁶ While

¹⁵¹LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], November 3, 1679, p. 8.

¹⁵²A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 134.

¹⁵³Styve, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 101.

¹⁵⁴LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], October 31, 1679 p. 7.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*

this solution may have prevented a complete union of the parishes, it did avoid some of the inter-parish conflicts that would characterize many of the parishes unified after the first class of churches to be rebuilt.

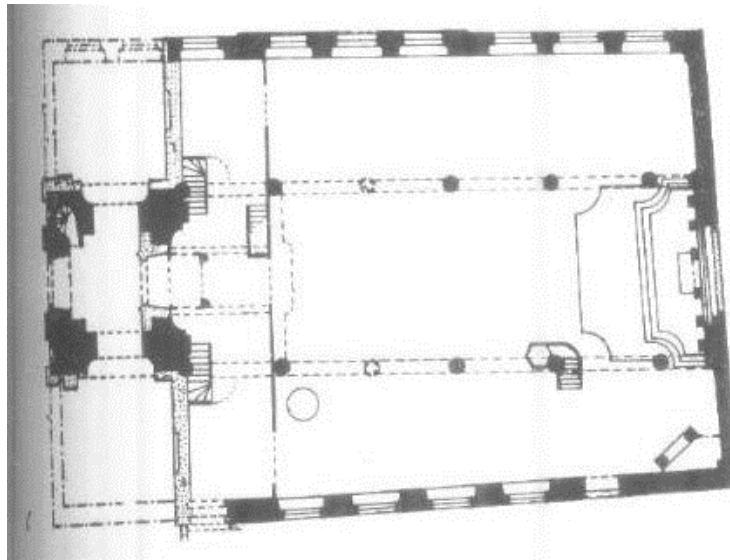


Fig. 20
Plans for Saint Magnus-the-Martyr.

12. Saint Magnus-the-Martyr, united with Saint Margaret, New Fish Street:

The parish church of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr sits on lower Thames Street near the original entrance to London Bridge in the ward of Bridge and Bridge without. The church only just survived a smaller fire in 1633, which burned half of London Bridge. The fire, started by a maid-servant carelessly disposing of a tub of coal ashes on February 13, consumed many of the buildings around the church, and was difficult to put out as the river Thames was still frozen over making access to water difficult.¹⁵⁷ During the 1640s the

¹⁵⁷Richard Thomson, *Chronicles of London Bridge by an Antiquary*, (London: Smith, Elder and Col, 1827),

church hired laborers to remove church furnishings deemed too Laudian, including stained glass, and the rail around its altar. After the Restoration, however, the parish was among the minority of parishes in the city, four in total, to re-erect the rail around its communion table before the fire, but after the ejection of Joseph Carly, an independent minister and the parish's rector from 1645 to 1662. This made Saint Magnus-the-Martyr one of the minority of churches in the city of London to install their own railed altar before the Great Fire.¹⁵⁸

After the Great Fire Saint Magnus was united with the parish of Saint Margaret, New Fish Street. Saint Margaret was located on Fish Street hill, and was described by John Strype as a “proper church”, but one that lacked any notable monuments.¹⁵⁹ The parish property of Saint Margaret was purchased by the Rebuilding Commission for the Monument to the Great Fire.¹⁶⁰ After the fire the living of the united parish was set at £170 per annum.¹⁶¹

The church was selected for reconstruction in part because of its conspicuous location at the entrance to London Bridge.¹⁶² The church was also well on its way to completion by 1671, as the parishioners had, at the own expense commissioned the master

p. 394.

¹⁵⁸Fincham, *Altars*, p. 317.

¹⁵⁹Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 2, p. 176.

¹⁶⁰GL MS94 5 [*London Redivivum* by John Evelyn], 1666.

¹⁶¹*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II, St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

¹⁶²Bell, p. 310.

mason George Dowdeswell to begin rebuilding in 1668. The reconstruction was assumed by Wren in 1671, and was largely completed by 1676, although some work was still being done as late as 1687.

The rebuilt church cost £9,579 19s 10d to complete, and is considered one of Wren's finer churches – which is not surprising given how involved Wren was in its reconstruction. Saint Magnus is one of the few churches for which drawings of the church exist in Wren's own hand.¹⁶³ The united parishes also made Wren's care in rebuilding the church worth his time, providing the King's Surveyor with one hogshead of wine, probably claret, to celebrate the fine work done on their church.¹⁶⁴

The body of the church was faced in Portland Stone.¹⁶⁵ The steeple appears to have been based on the church of Saint Charles Borromeo in Antwerp and was completed after the body of the church in 1705.¹⁶⁶ It consists of a six story octagonal tower with a cupola and lantern.¹⁶⁷ There is also a walkway built into the east side of the church, which may have been an effort by Wren to widen the street at the entrance to London Bridge without sacrificing the church's property, or shape.¹⁶⁸

While Wren was given more or less free rein over the exterior of the church, the

¹⁶³Tinniswood, p. 212.

¹⁶⁴WS XIX, p. 27.

¹⁶⁵Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 178.

¹⁶⁶Tinniswood, p. 225.

¹⁶⁷John Timbs, *Curiosities of London*, (London: Dav. Bogue, 1855), p. 135.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*

interior was a much more hotly contested space. As was the case in 1641 when the railed altar was removed from the church, and in 1663 when the communion table rail was restored, the matter of the railed altar in 1677 caused some contention and debate in the parish.¹⁶⁹ As the body of the church was nearing completion the joint commission established by the unified for refurnishing the parish church agreed to place the altar table behind a rail on a marble ascent.¹⁷⁰ The next year, however, the same committee decided to place the table in the body of the church.¹⁷¹ They even went so far as to hire laborers to move the table, provided it could be done lawfully.¹⁷² Their efforts were unsuccessful, however, as the Henry Compton, Bishop of London may have intervened, and the table remained where Wren placed it, on an ascent behind a rail of imposing wrought iron.¹⁷³

The union of the parishes was reasonably peaceful, and although they did meet in both separate and combined vestries. Saint Magnus did settle a dispute in 1667 between the parish and their Minister Robert Ivory over the right to property in the parish seized by the Rebuilding Commission, for which the parish paid Ivory £20 per annum for his tenure with the church.¹⁷⁴ The parishes themselves appear to have gotten on fine, forming a joint committee for rebuilding and redecorating their unified parish church, and sharing any bills

¹⁶⁹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 327.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*

¹⁷²*Ibid.*

¹⁷³*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴LMA P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minutes Book*], 1667, p. 30.

for the reconstruction.¹⁷⁵ This joint committee, along with managing the reconstruction also drafted an agreement which split responsibility for managing the parish functions equally, while dividing the actual costs of parish maintenance along lines that reflect the smaller, and poorer state of Saint Margaret's parish – Saint Magnus would pay five eighths of all shared costs.¹⁷⁶

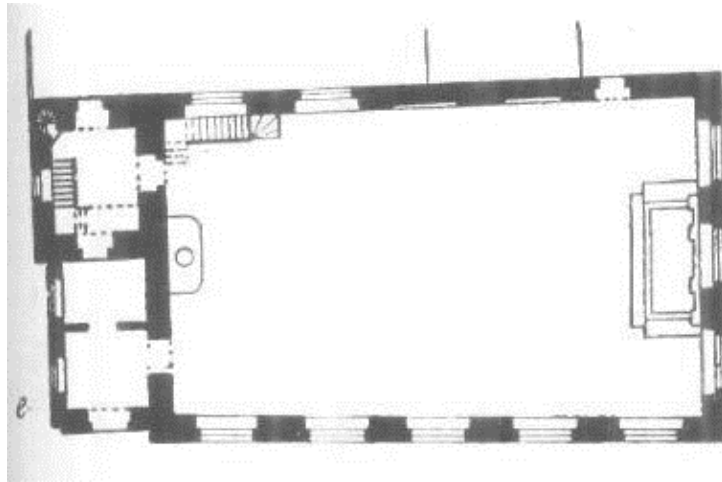


Fig. 21
Plans for Saint Michael Queenhithe.

13. Saint Michael Queenhithe, united with Holy Trinity the Less:

The parish church of Saint Michael Queenhithe sat in the upper end of Thames Street, near the Queenhithe dock on the Thames. Before the fire, the body of the church was in a fine state, but its monuments had all been defaced during earlier waves of iconoclasm and had

¹⁷⁵LMA P69/MGT3/B/001/MS01175/002, [*Saint Margaret New Fish Street Vestry Minutes Book*], June 2, 1679, p. 83.

¹⁷⁶LMA P69/MAG/B/010/MS01183/001, [*Minutes Book of the Committee of the United Parishes of Saint Magnus the Martyr with Saint Margaret New Fish Street*], October, 1667, p. 2.

not by the time of the fire been restored.¹⁷⁷ The patron of the parish was the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's.

After the fire, the parish was united with Holy Trinity the Less, located in the east end of Knighttrider Street near to the parish church of Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey. The parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. After the fire Holy Trinity's neighboring church of Saint Nicholas Cole Abby attracted the attention of a group of Swedish Lutherans in the city, seeking a church in which to worship. King Charles II assented to the plan, but the parishioners of Saint Nicholas pushed back against it, and Charles sacrificed Holy Trinity to the Germans to please both parties.¹⁷⁸ The Lutherans were able to complete a church, called Swedes Church, on the sight by 1673.¹⁷⁹ After Holy Trinity the Less was united with Saint Michael Queenhithe, the parish living was fixed at £160 per annum.¹⁸⁰

This church of Saint Michael Queenhithe was likely selected for reconstruction because of the state of its foundations and church ruins in the aftermath of the fire. Wren, no doubt, saw a reasonably convenient reconstruction project, although what he found was something far more problematic. When Wren visited the site in 1671 he found the parishioners using the churchyard and church ruins as common land for the storage of

¹⁷⁷Styve, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 212.

¹⁷⁸*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).

¹⁷⁹Richard Newcourt, *Repetorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense*, Vol. 1, (London: 1708), p. 555.

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*

goods, and was forced to seek the aid of a city constable to remove them as “the ground is encumbered with divers warehouses pyles of glyes and other material.”¹⁸¹

Wren was finally able to begin work on the church in 1676, and finished the church in 1686, at a cost of £4,375.¹⁸² The church was rebuilt using the medieval walls that largely survived the fire. The steeple was one hundred and thirty-five feet high, with a lead spire on top of three arched stories.¹⁸³ The spire was topped with a weather vane in the shape of a three masted barque. The church exterior is simple in its design, and unusually shaped as the church was extended to fit the edges of its irregularly shaped parcel of land.¹⁸⁴ The interior is also simple in layout, especially the ceiling which, unusually for Wren, is a single flat panel.¹⁸⁵ The parishioners did make some improvements in the 1680s, hiring a painter to gild some of the church ornaments.¹⁸⁶

The union of these two parishes was a smooth one, in part because Saint Michael Queenhithe fully absorbed the leading parishioners of Holy Trinity. Most notably Edward Jermian, a surveyor and mason from Holy Trinity, who turned down a position assisting Wren during his initial assessment of the city. Jermain with his architectural expertise,

¹⁸¹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], October 7, 1671, p. 15.

¹⁸²Bell, p. 335.

¹⁸³Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 717.

¹⁸⁴George Godwin, *The Churches of London: A History and Description of the Ecclesiastical Edifices of the Metropolis*, (London: Tilt, 1839), p. 3.

¹⁸⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶LMA P69/MIC6/B/013/MS22896, [*Estimates for Maintenance and Repair Work to the Church of Saint Michael Queenhithe*], p. 2.

proved a potent advocate for the united parish, eventually serving as a parish officer and providing a new bell to the parish upon his death.¹⁸⁷ Despite the cooperation of parish elites, however, the parishes appear to have kept fundraising for church furnishings, something many unified parishes collaborated on, separate.¹⁸⁸ The parishes also never combined their vestries, meeting together as was needed instead of regularly, and the churches, even by 1725 continued to refer an original agreement that maintained their parish rights and privileges.¹⁸⁹ Despite the formal distance between the parishes, Holy Trinity did assume one-third of the debt accrued in the reconstruction of the Church of Saint Michael Queenhithe, despite much of it having been accepted by the vestry of Saint Michael alone.¹⁹⁰

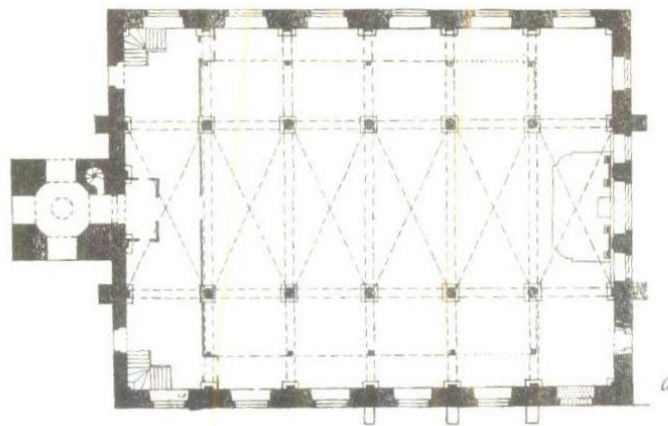


Fig. 22
Plans for Christ Church, Newgate Street.

¹⁸⁷Reddaway, p. 109.

¹⁸⁸LMA P69/MIC6/B/005/MS04825/001, [*Saint Michael Queenhithe Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], pp. 102, 106.

¹⁸⁹LMA P69/TRI3/B/004/MS04835/001, [*Holy Trinity the Less Churchwardens Accounts Book, Volume I*], 1666, p. 32; LMA P69/TRI3/B/004/MS04835/002; [*Holy Trinity the Less Churchwardens' Accounts Book, Volume II*], 1725 p. 7.

¹⁹⁰LMA P69/TRI3/B/004/MS04835/001, [*Holy Trinity the Less Churchwardens' Accounts Book, Volume I*], November 23, 1677, p. 95.

14. Christ Church, Newgate Street, united with Saint Leonard, Foster Lane:

Near Saint Paul's Cathedral on Newgate Street is the parish church of Christ Church Newgate Street. After the Great Fire the church was united with the parish of Saint Leonard, Foster Lane. Saint Leonard's church was located in Aldersgate Ward on the western side of Foster Lane. Before the fire in 1631, the Saint Leonard's church was largely repaired and expanded at a cost of £500 to the parishioners. These improvements appear to have included pew in the east end of the church and in the chancel, which attracted the ire of Archbishop Laud. In 1632, Laud used the Court of High Commission to force the parishioners to arrange their pews and communion table to more clearly reflect religious orthodoxy.¹⁹¹ The Saint Leonard's church was left in ruins after the fire, and the land was converted into a graveyard for the united parishes. This conversion, however, appears to have amounted to simply burying people in the old church foundations, as the church ruins stood in the churchyard until the nineteenth century. The living for the united parish was set at £200 in 1671.¹⁹² This living was presented alternatively by the Governors of Saint Bartholomew's Hospital, the patrons of Christ Church, Newgate Street, and the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.¹⁹³

The rebuilding of Christ Church, Newgate Street lasted from 1677 to 1687, and was one of the more expensive churches to be rebuilt, at a total cost of £11,789 9s 7.25d, before

¹⁹¹Fincham, *Altars*, pp. 187-8.

¹⁹²*An Act for the Better Settlement and Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt in the Late Dreadful Fire There*, 1671, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15)

¹⁹³A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 155.

the addition of the church tower in 1704 – which in turn cost another £1,963 8s 3.5d. Part of this immense cost was born by the parishioners, who were able to raise £1,000 for the reconstruction of their church. The foundations of the medieval church were in serviceable shape after the fire, and Wren clearly intended to use them in the reconstruction of the church. The original sketches for the rebuilt church, done in Hooke's hand, made use of the entire medieval foundations, but was rejected by the parishioners.¹⁹⁴ This division between Wren and the parishioners may have been the cause of the unusual delay in the reconstruction, as well as the impulse for the fundraising undertaken by the parishioners. The accepted plan was much smaller than Wren's original design, or indeed the medieval church. This sacrifice of interior space appears to indicate that the parishioners would have preferred, and eventually acquired, an expanded churchyard next to their new church. During the decade long delay in the church's reconstruction, the parishioners of the united parish would have worshiped together in a tabernacle, constructed at a cost of £192.

The church interior is noteworthy for its use of large round arched windows, which would have provided plenty of natural light to the nave, divided from the aisles by rows of Corinthian columns. While John Strype described the new interior as spacious, it was much smaller than the original church.¹⁹⁵ The steeple, added in 1704, stands one-hundred and sixty feet high, and is constructed of three diminishing platforms, with the middle of the three made up of a colonnade of Ionic columns. The east and west ends of the church have buttresses, unlike any other Wren Church in the city, and the peaks of the roof are marked

¹⁹⁴Tinniswood, p. 212.

¹⁹⁵Strype, *Survey*, Vol. 3, p. 129.

with sculptures of pineapples.

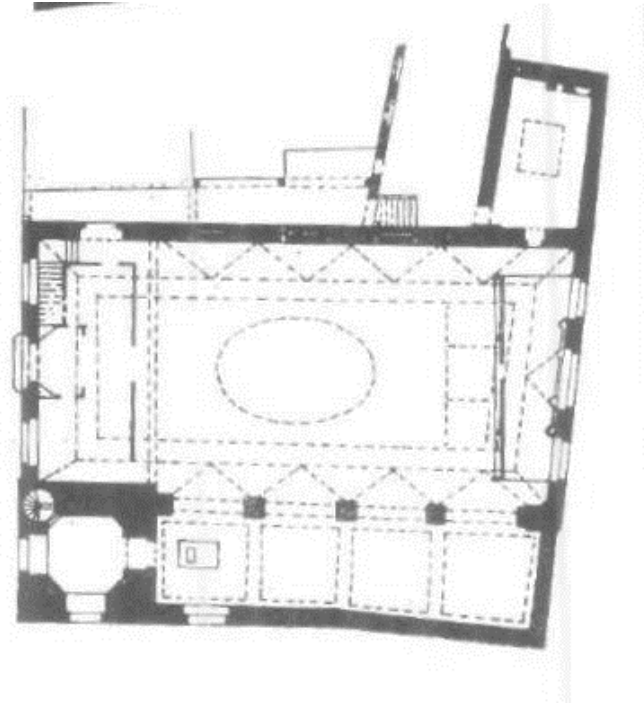


Fig. 23
Plans for Saint Vedast, Foster Lane.

15. Saint Vedast Foster Lane, united with Saint Michael-le-Querne:

The church of Saint Vedast is located on the east side of Foster Lane in Cheap Ward, in close proximity to the northeast corner of Saint Paul's Cathedral. Before the Great Fire Foster Lane was primarily occupied by Jewelers and Goldsmiths, unsurprising given its close proximity to the Hall of the Goldsmith's Company.¹⁹⁶ After the fire the parish of Saint Vedast Foster lane was joined with the parish of Saint Michael-le-Querne, whose parish church was also destroyed in the Great Fire. Saint Michael's church was located in

¹⁹⁶Henry Benjamin Wheatley, *London, Past and Present, Vol. 1*, (London: J. Murray, 1891), p. 69.

the north east of Paternoster Row in Farringdon Within Ward. The church was selected for elimination so that its property, along with the property of the nearby parish of Saint Michael at the Corn Market, could be used to widen the entrance to Cheapside, and relieve some of the area's highly problematic roadway congestion.¹⁹⁷ The united parish living was set at £160 per annum in 1671.¹⁹⁸ The appointment the living of the unified parish was undertaken alternatively by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral.

The Rebuilding Commissioners appears to have had little choice in selecting this church for the first class to be rebuilt – in fact their relationship with the church appears to have amounted to refunding the parish for rebuilding the church at their own expense. This was in part possible because the church's body was not entirely destroyed in the Great Fire, and the medieval south wall was more or less in tact after the fire.¹⁹⁹ The initial reconstruction largely amounted to patching up holes in the church body, and replacing the roof, which cost the parishioners £1,834 5s 6d.²⁰⁰ This first wave of repairs, however, appears to have been poorly carried out, as Wren had to return to the parish from 1695 to 1701. This second wave of construction included recasing the walls in fresh Portland stone. The final church body is somewhat plain, but noteworthy for the sheer number of high

¹⁹⁷James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), p. 304.

¹⁹⁸John Entick, *A New and Accurate History and Survey of London*, (London: 1766), p. 165.

¹⁹⁹Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 57.

²⁰⁰*London Parishes To Which is Prefixed, An Account of the ... Church of England*, (London: B. Weed, 1824), p. 96; Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 57.

windows with carvings of cherubs at the interior keystones.²⁰¹ The inside of the church contains many reliefs, including one above an arch at the entrance of the figure of religion and charity before the city walls, with panels on the side compartments containing images of Bishop's Miters.²⁰²

By 1709 it was clear that the church tower would also need repairs. It was torn down and repaired at the expense of the parishioners, costing £2,958. The tower was built based on plans by Nicholas Hawksmoor, who had by then usurped Wren as the primary actor in the reconstruction of the London city churches. The steeple consists of a simple tower rising from a double base, with a pyramid at its peak. The steeple also contains a clock unique to the city of London in that it chimes the hours, but does not display the time on any visible dial or clock face.²⁰³ This steeple is one of the most Italianate in the city, and with its heavy use of concave and convex surfaces has been compared to the work of Francesco Borromini – a contemporary and rival of Gian Lorenzo Bernini.²⁰⁴

The union between the parishes of Saint Vedast Foster Lane and Saint Michael-le-Querne appears to have been a model union. The parish of Saint Michael stopped appointing parish officers entirely in the aftermath of the fire, and the parishes began

²⁰¹John Entick, *A New and Accurate History and Survey of London*, (London: 1766), p 165; Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 535.

²⁰²Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster and Southwark, Vol. 3*, (London: G. Virtue, 1839), p. 535.

²⁰³Reddaway, p.110.

²⁰⁴Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, (London: Granada Publishing Limited, 1982), p. 118.

meeting as a united vestry after the 1670 *Rebuilding Act*.²⁰⁵ The united parishes selected two churchwardens, usually one from each parish, to manage the united parish wealth and property and by 1675 were maintaining duplicate copies of united parish accounts.²⁰⁶ The properties and goods themselves, however, continued to be referred to as the property of the original parish to possess them.²⁰⁷

II. Conclusion:

In 1671 Rebuilding Commissioners selected the first class of churches to be rebuilt for a wide variety of reasons. Some were simply too prominent to not rebuild quickly, while others were selected to protect, or enhance particular patronage networks in the city – especially the network of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Undoubtedly influenced by the recommendations of Sir Christopher Wren, the commissioners also selected churches that featured prominently in Wren's plans for a city marked by fine churches and wide streets – a skyline punctuated by soaring spires to greet visitors to the capitol arriving by land or by water. It must have also pleased Wren to see so many churches in the first tier that could be quickly and cheaply rebuilt – the result of proactive parishioners, or the good fortune to avoid complete destruction by the Great Fire. These criteria for selection linked together a wide variety of churches and parishes, including both the most expensive and least expensive churches of Wren's entire reconstruction project.

²⁰⁵LMA P69/MIC4/B/005/MS02895/002, [*Saint Michael Le Querne Churchwardens' Accounts Book*].

²⁰⁶*Ibid*, 1675, p. 150.

²⁰⁷*Ibid*, 1675, p. 152.

While these parishes were by no means homogenous, their experience of the reconstruction of London did share much in common. Most notably they were by and large spared the inter-parish conflicts that plagued parish churches slated for reconstruction after the first class. This was in part due to that fact that nearly one third of the first tier of churches were built for single parishes, instead of unified ones. It may also have been dependent on how quickly construction began on the first class of churches – which may have been a period too brief for unified parishes to sour towards one another in the absence of a church. Furthermore, these first fifteen parish churches were assured access to sufficient funds from the coal duty to rebuild their churches, and as a result were not forced to rapidly raise money, sell property, and assume massive debt like many of the parishes later rebuilt Wren's direction.

The parish churches scheduled for later reconstruction did not enjoy these benefits. Their reconstruction remained an uncertainty until Wren's workmen finally started laying stones and bricks. Even after reconstruction began on a church its completion could, at a moment's notice be delayed by shortages of money, labor and materials, as well as political turmoil both at home and abroad. In the case of Saint Benet Gracechurch and Saint Leonard Eastcheap, where the reconstruction of the parish church was delayed for a decade, there was very little parish conflict, in part because its reconstruction, and the funding of that reconstruction were guaranteed. As Wren expended, perhaps even squandered, his initial funds on the construction of a handful of churches in the first fifteen, especially Saint Mary-Le-Bow and Saint Bride's, it would have become clear to many Londoners that the funds simply would not last. This anxiety was particularly disruptive in unified parishes were

external financial concerns could rapidly become aggressively fought inter-parish conflicts. The Rebuilding Commissioners did little to ameliorate these conflicts as they provided very little direction as to how the parishes should be formally united – a degree of ambiguity motivated by trepidation on the part of the commissioners, which in turn left the parishes to their own devices. This allowed the parishes to formulate their own models for unification which included complete unification, complete separation, and a wide variety of both successful and unsuccessful middle roads.

Part II:
Chapter 5:
Thirteen Churches for Thirteen Parishes.

While the ultimate survival of the first class of London's parish churches was assured in 1670, the remaining parishes might have to wait decades for their churches to be rebuilt. During this time churches already under reconstruction could be halted prior to completion, as was the case with Saint Mary Colechurch.¹ With this in mind parishes attempted to make the reconstruction of their parish church as attractive, or as urgent, as possible.

The earliest parishes to be rebuilt were selected for their centrality to the city, and while few parishes could claim the visibility of Saint Mary-le-Bow, some still attempted to make this argument to the Rebuilding Commissioners. Saint Magnus-the-Martyr argued that given its “standing contiguous to the Thames on one side and being also one of the greatest roads from the sea port on the other will be in sight of most passengers,” it would need to be rebuilt, with the addition of a steeple cupola and facade to befit London's increasingly complex skyline.² Not long after the approval of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr's updated plans, All-Hallows-the-Great – also visible from the water – requested the addition of a steeple cupola similar to that of Saint Magnus-the-Martyr, a request which was not granted.³ Saint Mildred, Bread Street was visible from the entrance to London by road, being “conspicuous to the street and in one of the thoroughfares of the city,” and as such

¹*An Additional Act for the Rebuilding of the city of London, uniting of Parishes and rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches within said City*, 1670, (Cha. II St. 22 c. 11).

²GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], August 23, 1679, p. 67.

³*Ibid*, March 5, 1682/3, p. 82.

was also guaranteed reconstruction.⁴ Even in cases where the reconstruction of the church might not otherwise have occurred, a church's location might still save it. This was the case with the impoverished parish of Saint Martin, Ludgate – although its reconstruction was contingent on the seizure of a section of its churchyard by the Rebuilding Commission in order to open up a square before the church to alleviate roadway congestion.⁵

Other parishes argued that the speedy reconstruction of their church was urgent as they were already fully reoccupied by parishioners. Many Londoners remained outside of the city during the first years after the fire – an unsurprising choice given the lack of suitable housing, as well the accommodations ordered by the King for London craftsmen practicing their trades outside of the city.⁶ However, by 1676 the parish of Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey was “almost wholly built and inhabited”, and requested a church be built in the parish, or least in a nearby parish, as the parishioners were “finding a great inconvenience unto themselves and their families for lack of a church.”⁷ The desire to quickly fill vacant parishes with parishioners led many of London's parishes to manipulate leases in order to draw residents back to the city, or to attract new residents from other parishes in the city. Often this meant more than simply rebuilding the houses damaged by the fire. Saint Mary Abchurch and Saint Magnus-the-Martyr began buying tenants out of their leases as early as 1667, in order to open their properties for use by new renters who

⁴*Ibid*, March 14, 1681, p. 77.

⁵*Ibid*, September 20, 1676, p. 60.

⁶ML 4239 14, [*Declaration for the Relief of Homeless Londoners*], September 5, 1666.

⁷GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], August 11, 1671, p. 32.

were still in residence in the city.⁸ These properties usually had their leases restructured at unusually low rates for unusually long periods of time – a move clearly designed to draw new residents to these parishes. Lease manipulation was not limited to standing houses, however, and Saint Lawrence Jewry began renting properties completely cleared of buildings by the fire in 1667, hoping that new residents would build on the sites at their own expense.⁹

While centrality and occupancy were significant criteria for the Rebuilding Commissioners as they planned for the reconstruction of London in the early 1670s, their primary concern appears to have been funding the rebuilding projects. Despite the use of many of London's most highly skilled, and highly paid, builders and artisans the primary expense for Wren's workshop was construction materials.¹⁰ The delay in beginning the reconstruction of the parochial churches allowed private construction projects to monopolize the limited rebuilding materials available in the city.¹¹ This was compounded by the new building regulations contained in the *Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, which required that the primary material of pre-fire London, wood, be replaced with much more expensive and scarce stone and brick.¹² While London had a long history of brick

⁸LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], February 19, 1667, pp. 194-5; P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minutes Book*], July 3, 1668 p. 5

⁹LMA P69/LAW1/B/001/MS02590/001, [*Saint Lawrence Jewry Vestry Minutes Book*], 1667, p. 595.

¹⁰Bodl. Rawl. MSS B 387 B, [*City Church Warrants*].

¹¹Sir Christopher Wren "Letter on Church Building," in Lucy Philimore, *Sir Christopher Wren: His Family and His Times, 1585- 1723*, p. 308.

¹²*An Act for Rebuilding the City of London*, 1666, (Cha. II St. 19 c. 8).

production, London's Bricklayers' Company prevented freemen bricklayers from meeting the increased demand produced by the fire.¹³ When these restrictions were eventually lifted bricklayers from around England flooded the city, and many city notables, including John Evelyn and William Penn, funded the construction of brick kilns in the city – an investment which was both civic minded and lucrative.¹⁴

By 1670 it became increasingly apparent that parishes who could relieve the Rebuilding Commission of some of the burden of seeking out and providing construction materials would be rebuilt. Some parishes were only partially damaged by the fire, such as Saint Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street. Saint Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street's parish church would be rebuilt almost entirely on its old foundations which, unlike many of the other destroyed churches were in good shape after the fire and did not need to be expanded or repaired.¹⁵ Other parishes, such as Saint Michael Queenhithe still had church walls standing after the fire.¹⁶ This made their churches more likely to be rebuilt as well. This interest in standing church ruins, however, did not extend to church steeples. The steeples that continued to stand after the fire were far from stable, and Wren would have to expend

¹³Gerard Lynch, *The History of Gauged Brickwork*, (London: Routledge, 2010); Wren also appears to have disliked the bricks produced by the London bricklayers, attributing their structural weakness to the bricklayers themselves as “the earth about London rightly managed will yield as good brick as were the Roman Bricks.” Wren instead recommended Roch-Abby or Portland Stone for church building. See Philimore, *Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 308.

¹⁴David A. Weiss, *The Great Fire of London*, (Bloomington: Trafford Publishing, 2012), p. 88.

¹⁵LMA P69/MRY10/B/005/MS01341/001, [*Saint Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 27.

¹⁶G. Heulin, *Vanished Churches of the City of London*, (London: Guildhall Library Publications, 1996), p. 50.

funds and labor carefully dismantling them for the safety of the rest of the city – taking particular care to save any reusable stone or brick.¹⁷

Not all parishes were fortunate enough to have a section of their church's structure survive the fire. Those with sufficient funds could, however, rebuild portions of their church in advance of the Rebuilding Commission's survey. These rebuilding efforts were frequently rushed, and did not always achieve the desired results. Saint Mary-Le-Bow attempted to shore up its bell tower after the fire, but by 1670 the Rebuilding Commission, inundated with complaints from neighbors of the church, ordered that the ramshackle tower be torn down before it collapsed.¹⁸ Saint Magnus-the-Martyr hired master builder George Dowdeswell to begin work on their church in 1668, but the work was so poorly carried out – the walls of the church were made of loosely packed rubble under plaster – that in 1671 the parishioners sent a request to the Rebuilding Commission asking for Wren's help in completing the repairs to their church, along with one hogshead of wine for his trouble.¹⁹ This was not always a guarantee of reconstruction, however, as Saint Pancras, Soper Lane learned. Saint Pancras began to rebuild its church walls in 1667. This labor was for naught, however, as the Rebuilding Commission united the parish with Saint Mary-Le-Bow in 1670.²⁰

¹⁷Bodl. Rawl. MSS B 387 B, [*City Church Warrants*], p. 55; GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001 [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], July 8, 1681, p. 30.

¹⁸GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001 [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], May 13, 1671, p. 25.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 1671, p. 28.

²⁰LMA P69/PAN/B/014/MS05018/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1667, p. 70.

Many parishes were not wealthy enough to fund a substantial rebuilding project in the immediate aftermath of the fire as much of the city's parish wealth in the city had been destroyed. Furthermore, the rents and collections which formed the foundation of parish income could no longer be relied upon. Many parishioners fled the city before 1666 to escape the plague and the fire drove even more Londoners out of the city. In cases where residents of a parish remained in the city, a ruling from the Fire Court or the benevolence of the parish churchwardens could make collecting rents on damaged properties complicated or impossible.²¹ Saint Mary Abchurch deferred many of its tenants' rents after the fire, as did Saint Anne and Saint Agnes, Saint Mildred, Bread Street, and Saint Mary Woolchurch Haw, for periods ranging from five months to five years.²²

These impoverished parishes frequently had access to the increasingly valuable commodity of construction materials. Many of the houses and shops destroyed by the Great Fire were made of wood, and as a result were completely consumed by the fire. This was not the case for the city's churches as only the mortar between the stones and bricks burned. As a result the churches were not completely incinerated by the fire but rather collapsed into their churchyards or onto neighboring houses. While some of the masonry was destroyed during the collapse or cracked in the intense heat of the fire, much of this

²¹ Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook lost a suit the Swan Tavern in Dowgate, and Saint Botolph Billingsgate was forced to accept a very disadvantageous rent agreement with the White Bear in Botolph Lane as the only copy of the rental agreement burned in the church vestry house during the fire.

²²LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1672, p. 16; LMA P69/ANA/B/010/MS00587/002, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1671, p. 114; LMA P69/MIL1/B/001/MS03469/001, [*Saint Mildred, Bread Street Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1678, p. 122; LMA P69/MRY14/B/006/MS01013/001, [*Saint Mary Woolchurch Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1671, p. 261.

rubble was suitable for use in future construction projects – especially in the interior of walls under a facade of new stones or bricks. Alongside stone and brick, the city churches were largely made of lead. The church roofs, the joints between stones, and the pipes and gutters around the church were all lead fixtures which survived the fire. Instead of burning, the lead melted and collected in pools beneath the rubble of the collapsed churches. Much of this lead, once salvaged, could be made suitable for future use. Parishes with large quantities of useable church rubble possessed a degree leverage in lobbying for their reconstruction. This prompted Saint Swithin, London Stone to purchase all of the rubble from the ruined church of Saint Mary Bothaw, even funding both the demolition of the church's ruins and the collection and sorting of its rubble.²³ Construction materials became so valuable after the fire that some parish patrons began gifting materials to parishes. Saint Mildred Poultry's churchwardens, in lieu of money, accepted one ton of iron as a gift to the parish from the Iron Master William Morgan.²⁴

A stock of construction materials, a well-populated parish, and a central or visible location in the city of London could significantly contribute to ensuring a church's reconstruction after the fire, but it was hardly a guarantee. Parishes could, however, ensure the timely commencement of the reconstruction of their parish church by providing the Rebuilding Commission with the one thing it had in short supply – money.

Only days after the announcement of the first fifteen churches to be rebuilt, the

²³LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minute Book*], August 10, 1669, p. 142; June 15, 1670, p. 146.

²⁴LMA P69/MIL2/B/001/MS00062/001, [*Saint Mildred Poultry Parish Donors' Book*], 1668, pp. 19-20.

parishioners of Saint Edmund, King and Martyr sent representatives to the Rebuilding Commission to lobby for the reconstruction of their parish church. The parish representatives hoped that their church would be the first church in the second class of churches to be rebuilt.²⁵ This request was rapidly approved by HENCHMAN and STERLING, as the commissioners were willing to advance £500 to the cash-poor Rebuilding Commission – a loan to be repaid at the time their parish church began reconstruction out of money collected from the coal duty.²⁶

The generosity of Saint Edmund, King and Martyr prompted the Rebuilding Commissioners to dramatically shift their plans for the reconstruction of London's parish churches. Instead of waiting for the coal duty to provide sufficient funds they believed that by allowing parishes to advance money to the Chamber of London they might alleviate their financial woes.²⁷ Furthermore, by allowing London's parishes to secure a spot in the order for reconstruction the commissioners could avoid struggling to produce a construction schedule on their own – an essential task delayed by either the complexity of the issue at hand, or the antipathy of the commissioners to it.

Very soon after calling on parishes to advance money to the Rebuilding Commission, the commissioners were forced to qualify this request. Parishes clamored to advance any money that they could to the Rebuilding Commission, but they frequently offered up funds that were judged insufficient by the commissioners. As a result the

²⁵GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001 [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], June 13, 1670, p. 8.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*, June 20, 1670, p. 10.

Rebuilding Commissioners allowed Saint Edmund, King and Martyr to set the precedent for all future deposits – no deposit less than £500 would be accepted by the Chamber of London, although smaller funds would be held by the chamber for parishes who wished to advance their £500 in installments.²⁸

While £500 pounds was readily available for some of the parishes destroyed in the fire – Saint Stephen Coleman Street advanced £2,000 to the Chamber of London – others were not so fortunate.²⁹ Much of the church wealth in the city had been destroyed in the fire or was lost to looters soon afterward. Parish income, primarily derived from rents and collections, was frozen as Londoners fled the city for refugee camps in the liberties. From 1670 until 1672, before the lion's share of the reconstruction had started, many parishes in the city of London scrambled to raise money to secure their church's reconstruction. In this endeavor there were many sources of income, both legal and extralegal, which London's parishes might pursue.

The most fortunate parishes were able to look to wealthy benefactors to provide funds to advance to the Rebuilding Commission. Saint Mary Aldermary was by far the luckiest of these parishes, as they attracted the attention of the widow of Henry Rogers. Rogers had left a bequest in his will to be used to repair of one of the city's churches, and by 1670 his widow had not yet executed his request. After the fire, Mrs. Rogers offered Saint Mary Aldermary £5,000 for the reconstruction of their church.³⁰ Sir Robert Vyner,

²⁸*Ibid*, July 13, 1670, p. 12.

²⁹*Ibid*, August 11, 1674, p. 52.

³⁰*Church Commissioners Report on the Charities in the Parish of Cannington, Volume 15*, p. 352.

Goldsmith and future Lord Mayor of London, offered “great sumes of mony” to Saint Mary Aldermanbury sufficient to not only rebuild the church, but also to remove it from the list of churches to be eliminated.³¹ Saint John Zachary received multiple gifts from the widows of Sir James Drax and Sir Thomas Bludworth to finance their churches reconstruction and redecoration, including small gifts of candles at a cost of 7s from Lady Drax and an unidentified item from Lady Bludworth which was £2 in value, as well as yearly gifts of around £5 until 1696.³² Other parishes were able to rely on close relationships with London's Livery Companies to raise money for their church's reconstruction. The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers made multiple gifts to the church of Saint Thomas the Apostle in 1667 for the reconstruction and repair of their church.³³ Saint Olave, Silver Street received a gift of £5 to rebuild their church from the Barber Surgeons Company in 1666, as did the Church of Saint Mary Magdalen, Milk Street from the Worshipful Company of Mercers, although the funds were insufficient to guarantee reconstruction in both cases.³⁴ The patronage of a company was not a guarantee of reconstruction, even when the company support was overwhelming. By 1670 the Worshipful Company of Mercer's had spent considerable funds preparing to rebuild Saint Mary Colechurch only to

³¹GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001 [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], February 7, 1670, p. 18.

³²LMA P69/JNZ/B/014/MS00590/001, [*Saint John Zachary Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], pp. 11 January 16, 1684, p. 11; April 8, 1685, p. 22; 1694, p. 95; 1696, p. 134.

³³LMA P69/TMS1/B/008A/MS00662/001, [*Saint Thomas the Apostle Churchwardens Account Book*], 1667, p. 15.

³⁴LMA P69/OLA3/B/002/MS01257/001, [*Saint Olave Silver Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1666, p. 16; LMA P69/MRY9/B/007/MS02596/002, [*Saint Mary Magdalen Milk Street Churchwarden's Cash Book*], 1666, p. 119.

have the Rebuilding Commissioners decide not to rebuild the church. The 1670 *Act for Rebuilding the City*, did, however, allow the Mercers to construct a free school on the old churches foundations – provided they exhumed the parish's dead and reburied them in the company's chapel.³⁵

A much less attractive, but more readily available alternative to the gifts of wealthy benefactors was the prospect of incurring debt to repair a parish church. All Hallows, Bread Street used loans, £500 in total, to pay for their deposit to the Rebuilding Commission in the early 1670s, and continued to pay the interest on those loans into the late 1670s.³⁶ While All Hallows, Bread Street managed to meet their debt commitments without incident, other parishes were not as fortunate. The parish of Saint Botolph Billingsgate was unable to pay the interest on its loans in 1676, and was forced to renegotiate the loan payments into smaller installments.³⁷ Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf was entirely unable to pay its debts in 1674, and as a result was forced to raise an additional subscription from its parishioners to raise sufficient funds, around £45.³⁸

While charitable gifts and loans were perhaps the quickest ways to raise money to advance to the Chamber of London, some parishes spent the 1670s attempting to repair more traditional methods of parish income. The primary source of income for parish

³⁵*An Additional Act for the Rebuilding of the city of London, uniting of Parishes and rebuilding of the Cathedral and Parochial Churches within said City*, 1670, (22 Cha I c. 11).

³⁶LMA P69/ALH2/B/001/MS005049/001, [*All Hallows, Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], May 2, 1677, p. 33.

³⁷LMA P69/BOT3/B/001/MS000943/001, [*Saint Botolph Billingsgate Vestry Minute Book*], 1676, p. 5.

³⁸LMA P69/BEN3/B/001/MS00877/001, [*Saint Benet Paul's Wharf Vestry Minute Book*], 1674, p. 135.

churches in the city of London was rent. Unlike many rural parishes, which might own an arable field or some form of low-rent housing for the parish's poor, London's parishes frequently owned property of relatively high value. These parishes not only owned residential properties, but also properties containing large merchant houses, and smaller plots of land used for commercial stalls.³⁹ They might also collect rents from the city's Livery Companies, or from taverns and inns throughout the city.⁴⁰ The fire, however, had severely limited this as a source of income for many of the city's parishes. While some parishes were repopulated after the fire very quickly, others lagged well into the 1680s.

Some parishes attempted to attract new tenants to their vacant properties in order to begin collecting regular rents again. This was complicated in part by the fact that many Londoners were left homeless by the fire, and were either unable to pay their rents, or fled the city and were unavailable for the collection of their rents. Those who remained in the city often took advantage of the Rebuilding Acts newly convened Fire Court to avoid paying rents on properties that were not suitable for occupation. Additionally, some parishes simply stopped collecting rents, mercifully unwilling to collect rents from homeless tenants.⁴¹ Not all parishes, however, were as sensitive to the needs of those who

³⁹LMA P69/SWI/B/004/MS00559/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1652/3, p. 9.

⁴⁰LMA P69/MIL1/B/004/MS03470/001A, [*Saint Mildred Bread Street Churchwarden Account Book*], 1658, p. 133; LMA P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minute Book*], 1668, p. 5; LMA P69/BEN2/B.012/MS01568, [*Saint Benet Gracechurch Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1686, p. 790; LMA P69/MIC4/B/005/MS02895/002, [*Saint Michael-le-Querne Churchwardens Accounts Book*], 1674, p. 126; LMA P69/LAW1/B/008/MS02593/002, [*Saint Lawrence Old Jewry Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1679, p. 197.

⁴¹LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minutes Book*], 1670, p. 195; LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1669, p. 133.

rented their properties. In 1678 and 1680 the pensioners of Saint Mildred, Bread Street harassed the owners of the Little Rose Tavern, who were themselves struggling to pay their rent while rebuilding after the fire.⁴² Saint Mary Abchurch even pressed the influential Worshipful Company of Merchant Tailors to resume paying their rents immediately after the fire.⁴³

While many Londoners fled the city after the Great Fire, abandoning properties rented from parish churches, it would be wrong to assume that no one was interested in renting property in the city of London. The sheer number of properties left vacant after the fire required many parishes to manipulate and modify leases to drive old residents out, and provide attractive new rental arrangements to compete for tenants. Saint Swithin, London Stone offered leases extended to a period of fifty-years for new renters, and Saint Lawrence Jewry rented completely unoccupied lots at discounted rates, in the hopes that new residents would use the savings to build on the property.⁴⁴ The most prolific lease modification, however, took place in the parish of Saint Mary Abchurch, which extended and modified countless leases in an effort to attract residents back to the parish, and glean some income from their properties in the city.⁴⁵ Failing that, Saint Mary Abchurch was one of the few parishes willing, and able, to buy residents, such as Mr. John King out of

⁴²LMA P69/MIL1/B/001/MS03469/001, [*Saint Mildred Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], 1678, p. 33; 1680, p. 59.

⁴³LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1671, p. 23.

⁴⁴LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minutes Book*], 1667, pp. 126-7; 1668, p. 130; 1669, p. 135; LMA P69/LAW1/B/001/MS02590/001, [*Saint Lawrence Jewry Vestry Minutes Book*], 1668, p. 595.

⁴⁵LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], February 1667, p. 1.

their rental agreements, to offer them to more amenable, and solvent, tenants like Mr. John Smyth, for £16.⁴⁶

While the elimination of parish churches could cost a parish community a great deal, it did open up land for redevelopment. Saint Botolph Billingsgate built a new house over the site previously occupied by its church vault. This house was then rented to poor parish residents of the parish at £4 per annum.⁴⁷ This not only provided the parish with some, albeit meager, income, but it also hastened the return of some residents to the parish. Saint Magnus-the-Martyr enlarged neighboring shops into land once occupied by its cloisters, and Saint Margaret Pattens sold strips of newly vacant land to fund its church's reconstruction.⁴⁸ Even those parishes whose property was seized by the Rebuilding Commission stood to gain from the transaction, as was the case with Saint Pancras, Soper Lane, who petitioned for compensation for the property taken from them to build Honey Lane Market.⁴⁹ The near constant realignment of property lines around parish churches in the city did, however, promote a certain amount of foul play – the shops and houses that bordered Saint Lawrence Pountney's churchyard attempted to take advantage of the increasingly fluid nature of parish's property to expand their own lots, much to the concern

⁴⁶*Ibid*, October, 1668, p. 3.

⁴⁷LMA P69/BOT3/B/007/MS00942/001, [*Saint Botolph Billingsgate Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1689, p. 71.

⁴⁸LMA P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minutes Book*], 1672, p. 67; LMA P69/MGT4/B/001/MS04571/001, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Vestry Minutes Book*], 1671, p. 57.

⁴⁹LMA P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book*], September 5, 1687, p. 46.

of the parish vestrymen.⁵⁰

The construction of a tabernacle, a shed built to act as a temporary church, in a parish could also present a parish community with the opportunity to raise money. All-Hallows-the-Great rented its tabernacle to other parishes and Saint Mary-Le-Bow allowed both Saint Michael-le-Querne and Saint Leonard, Foster Lane to use their quickly completed parish church – even allowing them to select a minister, with Saint Mary's approval.⁵¹ Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook rented its tabernacle to livery companies whose meeting halls were destroyed in the fire, at a rate of £1 10s per use.⁵²

Before the Great Fire parishes frequently used subscriptions to raise funds. These subscriptions were often directed at charitable causes, such as for the relief of Protestants abroad, especially on the continent or in Ireland as well as prisoners, wounded soldiers and the redemption of slaves.⁵³ The charitable subscriptions often raised funds between £12 and a few shillings – falling short of the amount required to defray the cost of rebuilding a church. During the 1670 and 1680s, however, many parishes used this method of raising charitable funds to finance various aspects of the rebuilding of their parish churches. All-

⁵⁰LMA P69/LAW2/B/001/MS03908/001, [*Saint Lawrence Pountney Vestry Minutes Book*], April 3, 1678, p. 23.

⁵¹ LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/001, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], 1675, p. 381; LMA P69/MRY7/B/002/MS05009/001, [*Saint Mary Le Bow Vestry Minutes Book*], 1691, pp. 38-9; 1698, p. 45.

⁵²LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1677/8, p. 144.

⁵³LMA P69/MGT4/B/001/MS04571/001, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Vestry Minutes Book*], 1690, p. 54; LMA P69/MTW/B/005/MS01016/001, [*Saint Matthew Friday Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1681, p. 20; LMA P69/ALH8/B/001/MS00824/001, [*All Hallows the Less Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1689, p. 24; LMA P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Alban Wood Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1656, p. 30; LMA P69/MGT2/B/004/MS03476/002, [*Saint Margaret Moses Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1689, p. 17.

Hallows-the-Great and All-Hallows-the-Less used a joint subscription to raise money, and Saint Mary-At-Hill as able to raise £100 from a subscription in its parish from 1671 to 1673 and the parish of Saint Benet Fink was able to raise £115 in 1677 alone.⁵⁴

Subscriptions were not the only method of charitable collection used by parish churches to raise money to advance a deposit to the Rebuilding Commission. Some parishes manipulated their poor roll in order to raise additional funds from their parishioners. All Hallows, Bread Street doubled its collection for the poor in 1682 in order to raise three-quarters of funds for the rebuilding and All-Hallows-the-Great used their entire poor roll collection to fund portions of their church's reconstruction from February, 1682 to March 1683.⁵⁵ In 1673 Saint Mary Abchurch and Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe petitioned the Lord Mayor for relief from dispensing the funds collected for its poor in order to use those funds for the improvement and repair of their parish church, without success.⁵⁶ The parishioners of Saint Margaret Pattens simply refused to pay the poor roll in the immediate aftermath of the Great Fire, and the parish only began collecting it again

⁵⁴LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/002, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], 1686, p. 17; LMA P69/ALH8/B/001/MS00824/001, [*All Hallows the Less Vestry Minute Book*], 1677, p. 5; also LMA P69/BEN4/B/001/MS000838/001, [*Saint Benet Sherehog Vestry Minutes Book*], 1677, p. 17; LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1673, p. 27; LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], 1693, p. 117; LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John Walbrook Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1673, p. 116; LMA P69/MGT3/B/001/MS01175/002, [*Saint Margaret New Fish Street Vestry Minutes Book*], 1670, p. 21; LMA P69/MIC6/B/005/MS04825/001, [*Saint Michael Queenhithe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1667, p. 173.

⁵⁵LMA P69/ALH2/B/001/MS05039/001, [*All Hallows Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], 1682, p. 59; LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/002, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], February, 1682, p. 108;

⁵⁶LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1673, p. 28; LMA P69/AND1/B/009/MS02088/002, [*Saint Andrew by the Wardrobe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1673, p. 21.

after a warning from the Lord Mayor.⁵⁷

An essential part of preparing for rebuilding the parish churches was clearing the churchyards of debris, and tearing down ruins that had survived the fire, but were so badly damaged they could not be salvaged with repairs. While some parishes attempted to carry out demolition projects on their own, much of the work fell to Sir Christopher Wren's master mason Thomas Cartwright.⁵⁸ Every order issued to Cartwright to clear a churchyard and tear down its ruins included a request that the debris be sorted into recyclable and useless classes – along with a warning not to tolerate the theft of any of the materials to be salvaged from each parish church.⁵⁹ The Rebuilding Commissioners felt justified in their management of church rubble as the Acts for Rebuilding required them to pay for any necessary rebuilding materials with the coal duty, albeit at a fixed price.⁶⁰ This empowered the Rebuilding Commission to purchase all construction materials from the parishes at this fixed rate.⁶¹ The Commissioners also prohibited the parishes from seeking outside buyers for their rubble, either for the reconstruction of other parishes, or for use in private rebuilding efforts throughout the city.⁶²

⁵⁷LMA P69/MGT4/B/001/MS04571/001, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Vestry Minutes Book*], May 20, 1672, p. 52; LMA P69/MGT4/B/004/MS04570/003, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1672, p. 99.

⁵⁸LMA P69/ALH7/B/001/MS00819/002, [*All Hallows the Great Vestry Minutes Book*], August 23, 1669, p. 42; LMA P69/ALH8/B/001/MS00824/001, [*All Hallows the Less Vestry Minutes Book*], 1671, p. 78.

⁵⁹ Bodl. Rawl. MSS B 387 B, [*City Church Warrants*], p. 478.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 18, 27, 83.

⁶¹*Ibid.*

⁶²*Ibid.*

The jurisdiction of the Rebuilding Commission extended to brick, stone, iron and lead. The one exception was bell metal, which was considered a furnishing.⁶³ Some parishes used this exception to raise money for their reconstruction. Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street sold bell metal in the immediate aftermath of the fire for £13, and Holy Trinity the Less was selling bell metal as late as 1675 for £24.⁶⁴ Saint Alban, Wood Street was able to raise £124 16s when the parish sold its bell metal in 1668, while Saint Andrew by the Wardrobe appears to have lost much of its bell metal in the rubble left behind after the fire, raising a mere £5 9s in 1668.⁶⁵ Saint Olave, Silver Street sold all of its parish wealth covered by the exemption for parish furnishings, including its church plate, and all of the parish's books.⁶⁶ The sale of parish goods could prove problematic, however, as the unification of parish churches would make it unclear exactly who owned what furnishings – Saint Stephen's, Walbrook sold the bell metal of its new parishioners from Saint Benet Sherehog without permission, much to their chagrin and disadvantage.⁶⁷

⁶³GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001 [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], June, 1670, p. 6.

⁶⁴LMA P69/TRI3/B/004/MS04835/001, [*Holy Trinity the Less Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1675, p. 12; LMA P69/MRY10/B/005/MS01341/001, [*Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1666, p. 131; also LMA P69/MIC6/B/005/MS04825/001, [*Saint Michael Queenhithe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1667, p. 167, LMA P69/ALH8/B/013/MS00823/002, [*All Hallows the Less Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1669, p. 159; LMA P69/LAW2/B/001/MS03908/001, [*Saint Lawrence Pountney Vestry Minutes Book*], p. 22; LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1689, p. 76.

⁶⁵ P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Alban, Wood Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 104; P69/AND1/B/009/MS02088/001, [*Saint Andrew By the Wardrobe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 76.

⁶⁶LMA P69/OLA3/B/002/MS01257/001, [*Saint Olave Silver Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], November, 1672, p. 79.

⁶⁷LMA P69/STE2/B/027/MS07628, [*Saint Stephen Walbrook Miscellaneous Receipts*], June 6, 1685, p. 83.

While some parishes were happy to have their rebuilding accounts credited for the useable rubble salvaged from their churches, others were less enthusiastic. Some parishes, such as Saint Michael Queenhithe, simply refused, with a “scandalous demeanor,” access to Cartwright and his workmen, preventing them from carting away their potentially valuable rubble.⁶⁸ Others, especially those parishes which were not to be rebuilt, attempted to liquidate their stock of rebuilding materials to make money. Along with its bell metal Saint Swithin, London Stone sold lead – in explicit violation of the orders issued by the Rebuilding Commissioners, as did All-Hallows-the-Great for £5 and Saint Pancras, Soper Lane for £24.⁶⁹ Both Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe and Saint Pancras, Soper Lane sold iron from their churches for £1 8s and £31 respectively, and Saint Ann Blackfriars and Saint Zachary sold loads of stone for around £1.⁷⁰ The churchwardens of Saint Mary-At-Hill recorded income of at least £1,500 from the sale of illegal debris in the 1670s, although it is likely that further illicit sales went unrecorded.⁷¹

So great was the value of this church rubble that many parishes took great pains to protect it from theft. Many parishes made immediate preparations after the fire to repair

⁶⁸GL CLC/313/J/10/MS25540/001, [*Warrants of the Rebuilding Commission*], October 7, 1671, p. 23.

⁶⁹LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001. [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minutes Book*], 1672, p. 124; LMA P69/ALH7/B/013/MS00818/001, [*All Hallows the Great Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1671, p. 58; LMA P69/PAN/B/014/MS05018/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1671, p. 60.

⁷⁰ LMA P69/AND1/B/009/MS02088/001, [*Saint Andrew by the Wardrobe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1668, p. 6; LMA P69/PAN/B/014/MS05018/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1671, p. 60; LMA P69/ANN/B/021/MS01061/001, [*Saint Ann Blackfriars Churchwarden's Accounts*], 1678, p. 157; LMA P69/JNZ/B014/MS00590/001, [*Saint John Zachary Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1672, p. 136.

⁷¹LMA P69/MRY4/B/001/MS01240/001, [*Saint Mary-At-Hill Vestry Minutes Book*], pp. 79-80, May 10, 1670.

their parish walls to keep intruders at bay. They also installed new locks, and repaired churchyard doors.⁷² These precautions were taken to prevent the grave robbing and looting which was expected in the aftermath of any disaster, but special attention was paid to the safety of the parish's lead, bell metal and stone rubble. Some parishes went so far as to build watch houses and hire guards, and often provided rewards for protecting construction debris.⁷³ Despite these precautions parishes were still the victims of looting. While Saint Swithin, London Stone was able to apprehend their thieves, Saint Alban, Wood Street could not, and lost much of their parish lead in the process.⁷⁴

The remainder of this chapter will discuss the parishes rebuilt after the first class of churches which were not unified with other parishes. These parishes, like the unified parishes rebuilt contemporaneously, struggled with concerns about the work delays and questions about funding discussed in above. They also struggled to secure the construction of a church of which they approved, working both with and against Wren to ensure that their place of worship met practical and theological demands of the parish. Despite these

⁷²LMA P69/SWI/B/004/MS00559/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1675, p. 61; LMA P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book*], 1681, p. 129; LMA P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Alban Wood Street Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1672, pp. 76-7; LMA P69/NIC1/B/004/MS04291/001, [*Saint Nicholas Acons Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], 1674, p. 6.

⁷³LMA P69/MRY14/B/006/MS01013/001, [*Saint Mary Woolchurch Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1668, p. 104; LMA P69/MGT4/B/004/MS04570/003, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1668, p. 46; LMA P69/MAG/B/001/MS02791/001, [*Saint Magnus the Martyr Vestry Minutes Book*], 1669, p. 31.

⁷⁴LMA P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Albans Wood Street Churchwarden's Account Book*], 1667, p. 101; LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minute Book*], 1679, p. 26; Saint Gabriel Fenchurch lost most of its parish furnishings to theft and did not replace them until 1693, LMA P69/GAB/B/001/MS04583/001, [*Saint Gabriel Fenchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1693, p. 11.

concerns, these single parishes were fortunate in that they avoided the ambiguity which accompanied a parish unification, and the conflict these unions often caused among the effected parishes.

I. Single Parishes:

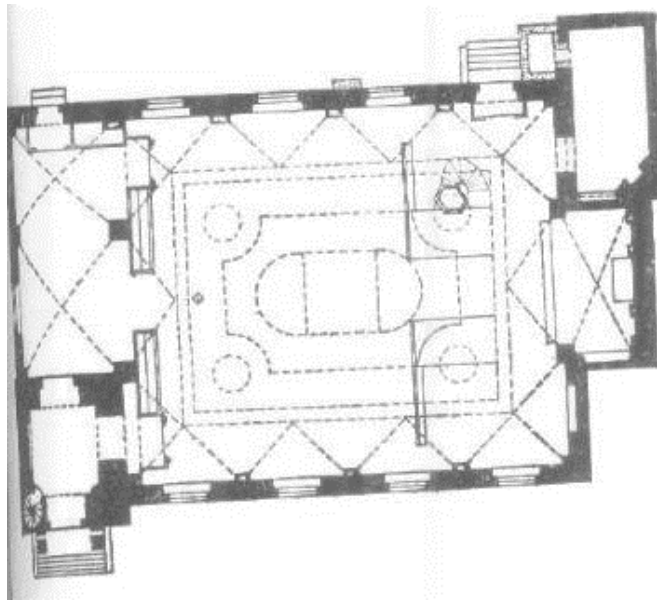


Fig. 24
Plans for All Hallows Lombard Street.

1. All Hallows Lombard Street:

The parish church of All Hallows Lombard street was located in the north end of Lombard Street in Langbourn Ward and was a client of the Archbishop of Canterbury, although they also had a close relationship with the Worshipful Company of Pewterers.⁷⁵ The church was

⁷⁵*The Life of Works of Sir Christopher Wren, From the Parentalia*, eds. Edmund Hort New; Ernest J. Enthoven, (Cornell University Press, 1903), p. 176.

last repaired before the fire from 1622 to 1623 by its parishioners at a cost of £1,711 9s.⁷⁶ The church was seriously damaged in the Great Fire, but the church's walls and towers did not collapse. The parishioners attempted to restore much of what remained of the church's basic structure immediately after the fire, using straw and lime to patch up the badly burned walls and tower.⁷⁷ In 1679, the parishioners were so confident in their repairs that they attempted to hang a bell in the damaged steeple. This proved too much for the integrity of the tower and Wren was forced to intervene soon afterward, and began rebuilding a completely new church on the site.⁷⁸ The rebuilt church was completed in 1694 – reconstructed on its original foundations and at a cost of £8,058.⁷⁹ The rebuilt steeple on the south-west corner of the church was very plain and cased in stone.⁸⁰ It consisted of three levels built on top of the ground story. The second stage of the tower contained the belfry, and was embellished with circular windows. The peak of the tower consisted of a plain cornice and an arcaded parapet.⁸¹

Despite the church's plain and simple exterior, the interior was much more finely ornamented. Despite being a simple open rectangle without aisles and a single pillar in its west end, the interior contained many fine wooden and stone carvings.⁸² The walls are oak

⁷⁶Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 154.

⁷⁷A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches*, p. 116.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

⁷⁹Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, His Family and His Times*, p. 271.

⁸⁰A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches* p. 116.

⁸¹Andrew Thomas Taylor, *The Towers & Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 30.

⁸²Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, His Family and His Times*, p. 271; A. E. Daniel, *London City*

paneled up to a height of nine feet and the ceiling culminates in an oblong skylight. The altar table cost the parish £186, and was purchased with a subscription collected from among the parishioners.⁸³ In 1695 the parishioners also installed a new organ produced by the master organ maker Renatus Harris.⁸⁴

This church's reconstruction without unification was almost certainly dependent on its powerful patron, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who sat on the Rebuilding Commission. Furthermore, the parishioners' speedy, albeit insufficient, efforts to repair their church immediately after the fire meant that no changes to the church could be made to accommodate new parishioners without great difficulty after 1670. If the initial repairs had been undertaken with more care, it is unlikely that Wren would have interacted with this parish at all.

2. Saint Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange:

Saint Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange, a royal peculiar, sat on Bartholomew Lane behind the Royal Exchange.⁸⁵ In 1620 the church was repaired under the direction of William Drew and Lancelot Johnson, its churchwardens at the time.⁸⁶ Before the Great Fire the churchyard was crowded by shops and stalls, rented out by the churchwardens for use by

Churches p. 118.

⁸³Edward Hatton, *A New View of London, Volume 1*, (1708), p. 109.

⁸⁴Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p. 118.

⁸⁵James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, p. 41.

⁸⁶Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 121.

poor tradesmen in the parish – property which was subsidized by the parishioners at a cost of £100.⁸⁷ After the fire the parish's minister had the shops demolished, but kept the £100 as part of his living.⁸⁸ The church was damaged in the Great Fire of London, but the tower survived – although it was badly damaged. In 1674 the tower was torn down out of concern for the safety of the streets and houses around the churchyard.⁸⁹

The church was rebuilt by Christopher Wren from 1675 until 1683 at a cost of £5,077. The rebuilt church is unusually shaped as the medieval foundation were reused in its construction.⁹⁰ The exterior is simple, as only the western wall of the church is exposed the street. On this wall there were three large bay windows and the center window was decorated in the Venetian style.⁹¹ The tower sat on the south-west corner of the church, and was built of brick and topped with a parapet. The interior consisted of a nave between two aisles separated by rows of columns.

Before the Reconstruction of the parish church the churchwarden's called on Wren twice – once during a survey of their churchyard at which time they paid Wren 13s 6d and his assistant Thomas Cartwright 5s 6d, and once in August 1673, when they went by water to engage with the Royal Surveyor.⁹² This active approach in dealing with Wren was

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

⁸⁹Robert Hooke, *Diary*, p. 114.

⁹⁰LMA P69/BAT1/B/006/MS04383/001, [*Saint Bartholomew by the Exchange Vestry Minutes Book*], p. 7

⁹¹*Parentalia*, p. 334.

⁹²LMA P69/BAT1/B/006/MS04383/001, [*Saint Bartholomew by the Exchange Vestry Minutes Book*], 1670, p. 192; August, 1673, p. 198.

apparently not a unanimous decision among the parishioners, as this was one of the few parishes that acknowledged any debate at all about even going to see Wren – although the cause of this hesitation is unclear. Given its royal patron, however, this parish church would receive Wren’s attention with or without the confidence of its parishioners.

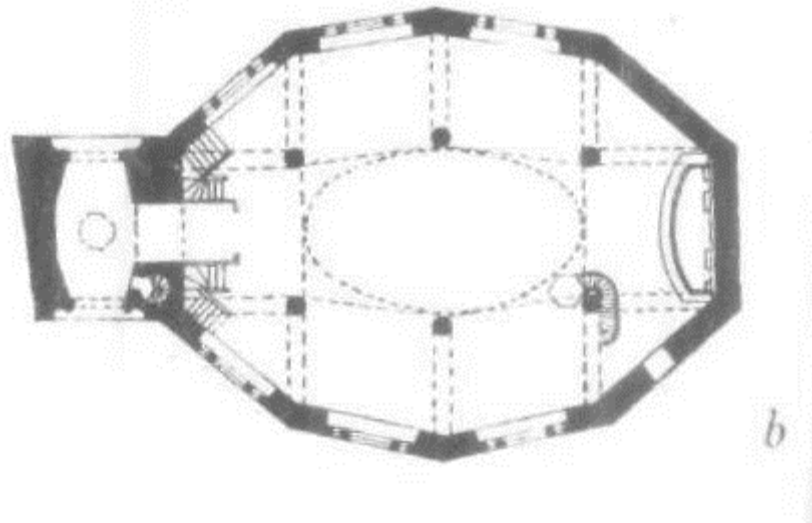


Fig. 25
Plans for Saint Benet Fink.

3. Saint Benet Fink:

The parish church of Saint Benet Fink, a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle, sat on Threadneedle Street. The medieval church was a simple rectangle in shape and was repaired by the parishioners in 1633 at a cost of £400.⁹³ After the Great Fire the church of Saint Benet Fink was one of the first churches outside of the

⁹³Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 119.

first tier to be rebuilt – construction began in 1670 and was completed in 1675 at a cost of £4,129. This speedy reconstruction was in part due to the successful fundraising efforts undertaken by the parish, but also on the fact that a small parcel of land was seized by the Rebuilding Commission to widen Threadneedle Street – an infrastructure improvement project which quickly caught Wren's attention.⁹⁴ It certainly did not hurt that the parishioners sent Wren a gift of plate at a cost of £21 15s in 1672.⁹⁵

The seizure of property to improve Threadneedle Street left Wren with an unusually shaped site on which to rebuild. Wren dealt with this by building the church as a decagon, not unlike Bernini's Sant'Andrea al Quirinale in Rome – Wren was able to see the plans for this church during his visit to Paris in 1665.⁹⁶ The church was built of brick, but was cased in Portland stone. The church's tower was on the western side of the church, and consisted of a squared dome – not unlike the dome eventually used in Saint Paul's Cathedral. The dome was topped with a lantern to house the church bells. The interior of the church also contains the two pews gifted to George Holman for his gift of £1,000 after the fire for rebuilding the church. These pews would not be unusual were Holman not a known Roman Catholic.⁹⁷ Holmen was the eldest son of a wealthy London Scrivener, who returned from a tour on the continent in 1659 having converted to Roman Catholicism. Holman's Roman Catholicism would become more problematic later in the century when his father-in-law,

⁹⁴Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 216.

⁹⁵*Ibid*, p. 64.

⁹⁶Ronald D. Gray, *Christopher Wren and Saint Paul's Cathedral*, p. 21.

⁹⁷G. Goodwin, *The Churches of London*, p. 119.

the Catholic nobleman William Howard, 1st Viscount Stafford, was executed for treason after being named as a conspirator in the Popish Plot. For the parishioners of Saint Benet Fink, however, the cost of tolerating Roman Catholicism was exactly £1,000 – an usually tolerant attitude which speaks to the importance many parishes placed on the speedy reconstruction of their church after the Great Fire. Additionally, Holman did offer to provide the parish with an organ, which they refused.

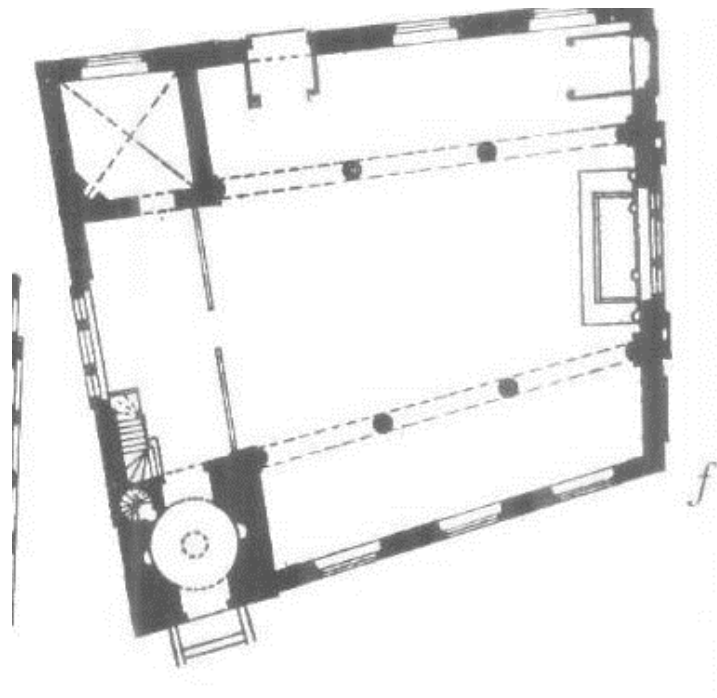


Fig. 26
Plans for Saint Dionis Backchurch.

4. Saint Dionis Backchurch:

The parish church of Saint Dionis Backchurch, a client of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, was located on the west side of Lime Street in Langbourn Ward.

The church managed to retain its marble ascent for the communion table, installed in 1629, when the church was almost completely rebuilt during the 1640s and 1650s. This was also one of the few churches in the city of London to install a communion rail before the Great Fire.⁹⁸ During the fire the church collapsed into its church yard, leaving it full of rubble and debris after the end of the fire. The parishioners did little to clear their churchyard before the surveyors arrived, and after complaints from the church's neighbors the Rebuilding Commissioners contracted the debris' removal, taking great care to ensure that no bell metal or lead was stolen.⁹⁹

The reconstruction of the church body was completed in 1675, with the steeple completed a decade later, at a total cost of £5,757. The tower and ornamental pillars are constructed of stone, with the walls built chiefly of brick.¹⁰⁰ The front facade on the east wall was decorated with ionic columns which continued inside the church.¹⁰¹ The interior also contained a pulpit carved by Grinling Gibbons.¹⁰² The tower reached a height of ninety feet in three stages and was topped with a plain turret to house the church bells.

The unusual delay of a decade in the completion of the church's tower was due to the fact that in 1677 funds for church reconstruction were so insufficient that the Rebuilding Commission halted the construction on all church towers, deeming them non-essential for

⁹⁸Fincham, *Altars*, pp. 317, 327; Styrpe, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 152.

⁹⁹GL MS 25542 1, [*Misc. Receipts, Wren's Workshop*], August, 1671, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰*The Life of Works of Sir Christopher Wren, From the Parentalia*, eds. Edmund Hort New; Ernest J. Enthoven, (Cornell University Press, 1903), p. 181.

¹⁰¹Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, His Family and His Times* p. 194.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

basic worship.¹⁰³ The parishioners of Saint Dionis Backchurch drew up a petition requesting that Wren complete their tower. Soon afterwards the parishioners insisted the Wren forward this petition to the Bishop of London for his signature – certain that they could also acquire the signature of the Lord Mayor which would transform the document from a parish petition into an order from the Rebuilding Commission. Wren never turned over the petition, eventually apologizing to the parishioners for misplacing it.

5. Saint Dunstan-in-the-East:

Between Tower Street and Thames Street in Tower Street Ward sat the parish church of Saint Dunstan-in-the-East, a client of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The church was largely repaired in 1633 at a cost to the parishioners of £2,400.¹⁰⁴ The Great Fire badly damaged the church, but much of its structure remained standing after the flames had subsided and the church was repaired by the parishioners from 1668 to 1671. The tower was replaced by Wren from 1695 to 1701. It was built to match the existing medieval body of the church in a Gothic style, consisting of a slender stone spire, but which incorporated some baroque elements such as arches supported by Tuscan Columns.¹⁰⁵ The stone spire was a near exact copy of the medieval steeple of Saint Mary-Le-Bow – likely requested by the parishioners who admired the old steeple of Bow church.¹⁰⁶ While the interior was

¹⁰³GL MS 15540, [*Misc. Leases*], 1677, p. 48.

¹⁰⁴Styve, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 42.

¹⁰⁵*The Life of Works of Sir Christopher Wren, From the Parentalia*, eds. Edmund Hort New; Ernest J. Enthoven, (Cornell University Press, 1903), p. 182.

¹⁰⁶Kerry Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 130.

largely medieval, some of the furnishings were added after the fire, including wooden carvings by Grinling Gibbons, and a new organ. After the fire the living of the parish was set at the relatively high rate of £200 per annum.¹⁰⁷ The Rebuilding Commission had little choice but to provide funds for this church's reconstitution, as so much of it was already completed before their earliest meetings.

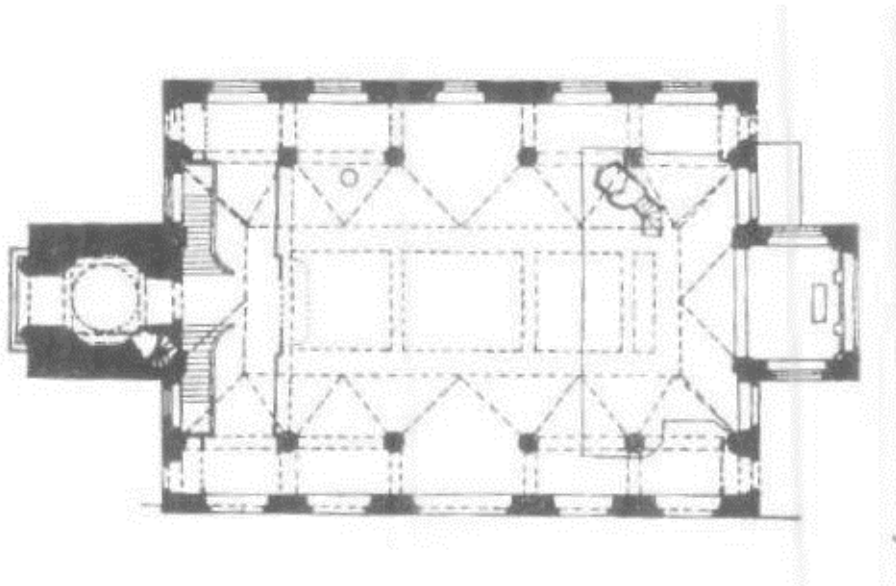


Fig. 27
Plans for Saint James Garlickhythe.

6. Saint James Garlickhythe:

The church of the parish of Saint James Garlickhythe is located in Vintry Ward on the banks of the Thames. The parish was a client of the Bishop of London and was one of the many

¹⁰⁷*An Act for the Better Settlement of the Maintenance of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates in the Parishes of the City of London Burnt by the Late Dreadful Fire there, 1671/2, (Cha. II St. 22 & 23 c. 15).*

churches repaired in the early seventeenth century, with repairs and beautification undertaken on the whole church in 1624.¹⁰⁸ During the Interregnum the parish rector was deprived of his living for continuing to use the Book of Common Prayer. The parishioners provided a small pension for this minister during his deprivation, out of affection for the churchman.¹⁰⁹ During the Great Fire the church was entirely destroyed.

In 1676 the foundation for the rebuilt church was laid under the direction of the parish churchwardens.¹¹⁰ Wren completed the reconstruction of the church in 1683 at a cost of £7,230, although the parishioners were worshiping in the church a year earlier. The construction of the church tower was delayed – despite a gift of 40s to two of Wren's clerks “for the speedy finishing of the steeple.”¹¹¹ Nicholas Hawksmoor finally completed the church's steeple in 1717.

The rebuilt church was a rectangle, with its tower protruding from the western wall of the church body, with a projected chancel on the east wall. The church was built primarily of stone faced with stucco.¹¹² The southern end of the church, which is currently the church's front, was, in the seventeenth century, covered by a neighboring building, and so lacked all of the windows and ornamentation now present in the church. The tower stands at one-hundred and twenty-five feet, and was cased in stucco. The tower is relatively

¹⁰⁸Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 10.

¹⁰⁹Elizabeth Young; Wayland Kennet, *London's Churches*, p. 111.

¹¹⁰Ronald Guy Ellen, *A London Steeplechase*, p. 48.

¹¹¹LMA P60/JS2/B/005/MS05810/002, [*Saint James Garlickhythe Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], July 19, 1682.

¹¹²Paul Jeffery, *The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales*, p. 219.

plain, with round belfry windows, topped by a parapet with urns at each corner of the tower. The parapet is topped with a steeple in three stages, decorated with still more urns. The tower also contained a projecting clock, similar to the clock added to Saint Michael Paternoster Royal at the same time.¹¹³

The church interior has the highest ceilings of any of Wren's parochial churches, rising to a height of forty feet. The east end is decorated with quite large, tall windows, as it was the only wall of the rebuilt church that was exposed to the street. The interior is punctuated by rows of ionic columns running east to west. The projecting chancel was marked by pilasters supporting a barreled vault, unlike the relatively flat, high ceiling of the rest of the church, under which sat the church alter table.¹¹⁴

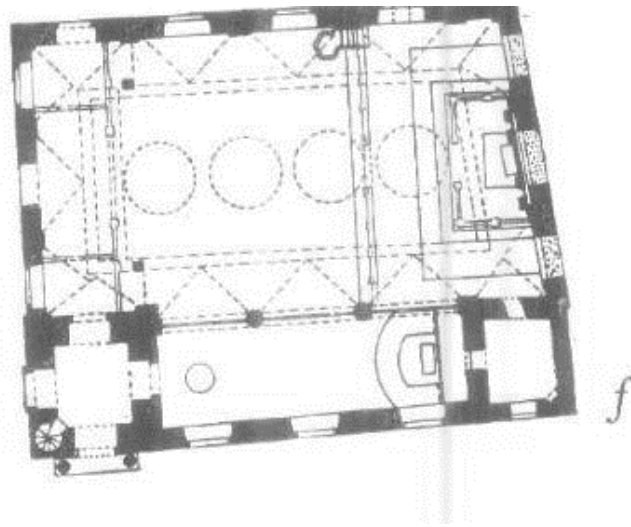


Fig. 28
Plans for Saint Margaret Lothbury.

¹¹³Goodwin, p. 15.

¹¹⁴Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Wren*, p. 61.

7. Saint Margaret Lothbury:

The parish church of Saint Margaret Lothbury, a client of the Bishop of London, is located on the boundary between Coleman Street Ward and Broad Street Ward. The church was repaired by the parishioners in 1621, but was badly damaged in the Great Fire. Christopher Wren rebuilt the parish church from 1686 to 1690 at a cost of £5,430. The church was rebuilt of Portland stone. The tower is quite broad, and incorporates a small dome topped with a spire.¹¹⁵ The roof of the body of the church is flat, and is unsupported in the interior of the church.¹¹⁶ The rebuilt church contained a marble bowl in the font with depictions of the Fall of Man, the baptism of Christ and Noah's Ark produced by Grinling Gibbons.¹¹⁷ The interior walls were decorated with wooden carvings, added by Wren after the completion of the church.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵*The Life of Works of Sir Christopher Wren, From the Parentalia*, eds. Edmund Hort New; Ernest J. Enthoven, (Cornell University Press, 1903), p. 184.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹¹⁷Fincham, *Altars*, p. 347.

¹¹⁸Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, His Family and His Times*, p. 267.

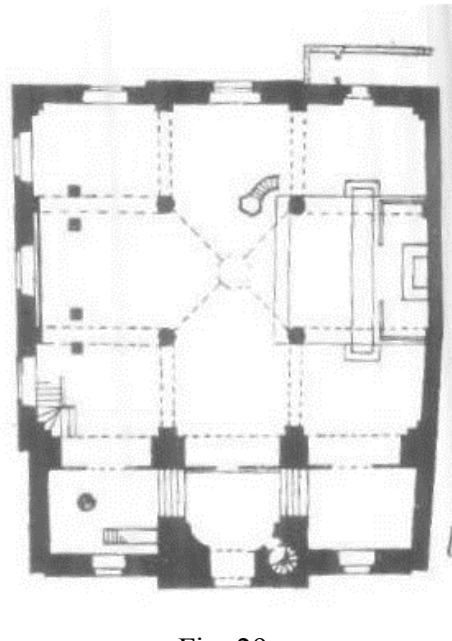


Fig. 29
Plans for Saint Martin Ludgate.

8. Saint Martin Ludgate:

The parish church of Saint Martin Ludgate is located on Ludgate Hill in Farringdon Ward, and in the seventeenth century was closely crowded by neighboring houses.¹¹⁹ The parish was a client of the Bishop of London, although they had a very close relationship with the Stationers' Company, whose meeting hall was nearby. The church was repaired by the parishioners in 1623. The Great Fire not only destroyed much of the church, but also revealed a Roman graveyard over which the medieval church was constructed.¹²⁰

While the parishioners worshiped in the Stationer's Hall, Wren directed the church reconstruction from 1677 to 1684 at a cost of £5,378, although it is more likely that Hooke

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*

¹²⁰Sir William Purdie Treloar, *Ludgate Hill: Past and Present*, p. 18.

designed the church. The rebuilt church would have been Hooke's second design presented to the parish, with at least one discarded design in Hooke's hand in existence.¹²¹ Despite Hooke's work on the church the parishioners provided Wren with a hogshead of wine at the cost of £4 2s.¹²² The rebuilt church interior was a cross in square plan, most likely borrowed from Hooke's study of churches rebuilt by Jacob Van Campen in the Netherlands.¹²³ It may also have been influenced by Wren's theoretical reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon, which closely resembles the rebuilt church.¹²⁴ The church also added an organ in the aftermath of the Great Fire, designed by Bernard Schmidt.¹²⁵ The walls of the church are decorated with carvings done by Grinling Gibbons. The tower consists of three stories topped with octagonal cupola which terminated in a tapered lead spire. The rebuilt church is slightly larger than its pre-fire form, as a small strip of land was purchased from the Stationers' Company to extend the church body – a transaction which further attests to the close relationship between the parish and the company.¹²⁶

¹²¹Adrian Tinniswood, pp. 212, 221.

¹²²BL Harlein. MS 4941, [*Misc. Construction Labor Warrants*] 1685, p. 76.

¹²³Tinniswood, p. 221.

¹²⁴Maarten Delbeke; Anne-Francoise Morel, *Metaphors in Action: Early Modern Church Buildings as Spaces of Knowledge*, pp. 16-17.

¹²⁵Styve, *Survey*, Bo3, p. 175.

¹²⁶Goodwin, pp. 17-18.

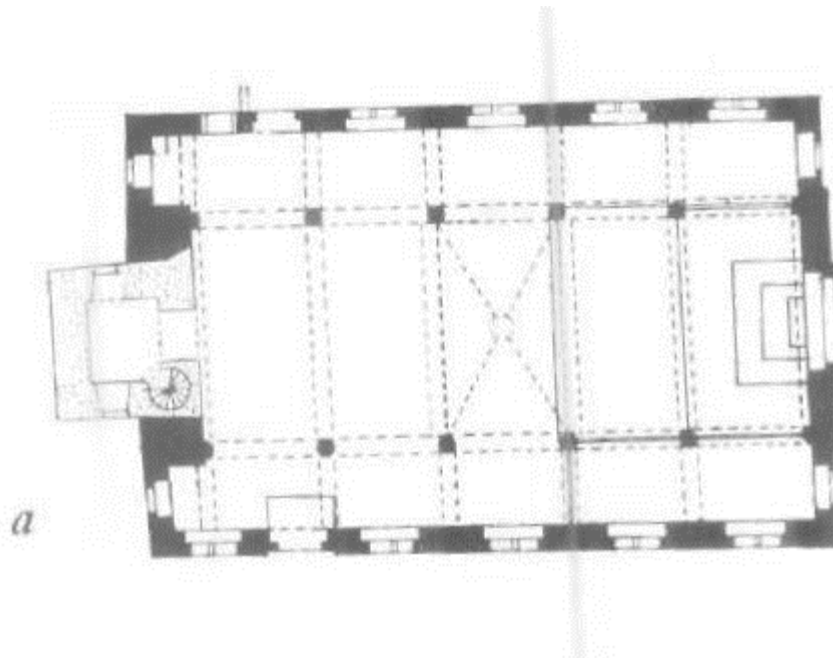


Fig. 30
Plans for Saint Mary Aldermanbury.

9. Saint Mary Aldermanbury:

The parish church of Saint Mary Aldermanbury sat on Love Lane. The patronage of the parish was unusual in that Henry VIII gifted the living to the parishioners, who appointed their own vicar, and continued to do so at the time of the Great Fire.¹²⁷ The parishioners repaired and beautified the church in 1633.¹²⁸ During the Civil War the parish rector was the Presbyterian Edmund Calamy, who so aggressively supported the Restoration that he was offered the Bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield in 1660 for his loyalty.¹²⁹ Calamy

¹²⁷A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches* p. 228.

¹²⁸Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 18.

¹²⁹A. E. Daniel, *London City Churches* p. 229.

declined the offer, preferring to stay in the city parish, only to be deprived of his living in 1662 with the passing of the *Act of Uniformity*. Calamy continued to attend services in the parish, and died there just after the Great Fire.

Wren completed the reconstruction of the church in 1678, although the parishioners attempted to accelerate Wren's work with a twenty guinea bribe.¹³⁰ The rebuilt church followed the medieval foundations completely, including the base of the tower.¹³¹ During the reconstruction the parishioners met in the Brewers' Hall.¹³² The church was rebuilt by Wren of Portland Stone at a cost of £5,237. The tower projects from the west end of the church and consists of a cornice and parapet, topped with a square turret with a clock. This square turret is in turn topped with a circular turret terminating in a weather vane. The church interior is supported by six large composite columns. The north and south walls contain four corresponding windows on each side, with a large central window on the east wall.

¹³⁰LMA P69/MRY3/B/004/MS08999, [*Saint Mary Aldermary Churchwarden's Accounts Book*], April 10, 1673.

¹³¹Goodwin, pp. 18-19.

¹³²Bell, p. 300.

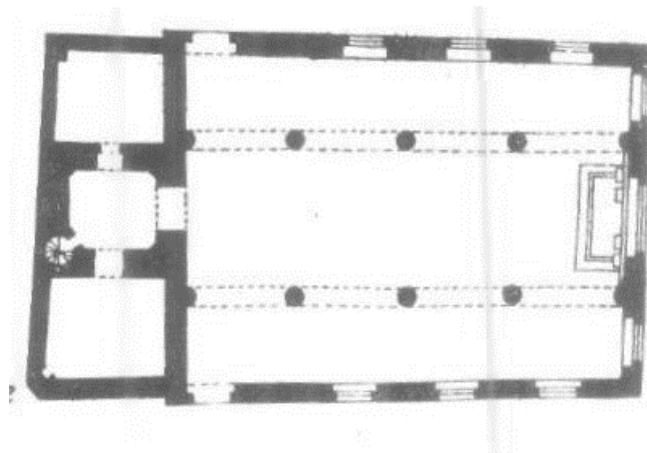


Fig. 31
Plans for Saint Michael Bassishaw.

10. Saint Michael Bassishaw:

Saint Michael Bassishaw's parish church was located in Bassinghall Street. The parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. In 1630 the church was largely repaired by its parishioners, only to be completely destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The parish, impatient with the progress made by the Rebuilding Commission, directed their own reconstruction in 1675.¹³³ They employed the contractor John Fitch to rebuild the church. Fitch completed his work in 1679, but the resulting church was poorly built, with improperly laid foundations and walls. Most alarming, however, was the fact that many of the load-bearing supports in the church interior were made mostly rubble hidden behind plaster, which put the church in danger of collapsing. In 1693 the parishioners spent £9 9s for two dinners with Wren to lobby for his help in repairing their church.¹³⁴

¹³³Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 298.

¹³⁴*Saint Michael Bassishaw, Churchwarden's Accounts Book*, p. 41.

Wren's workshop did not begin repairing the church until 1713. The total reconstruction cost was £5,704 with £2,822 going to Wren's repairs, and consisted of removing the upper portions of the walls, replacing the entire church roof, and adding a steeple.¹³⁵ The tower was in all likelihood designed by Hooke, and was constructed of the same inexpensive brick Fitch used on the church body. It consisted of an octagonal drum topped with a lantern and spire. The interior was irregularly shaped to make use of the entire building site, but was smaller than the medieval church. The interior consisted a nave and two aisles separated by rows of Corinthian columns.

11. Saint Michael, Crooked Lane:

The parish church of Saint Michael, Crooked Lane was located on the east end of Mile's Lane in Candlewick Ward. The medieval church was very small, and plain. Perhaps more problematic were the environs of the church, which were filthy as the city's butchers stored livestock in the lots surrounding the church.¹³⁶ The church was extensively repaired in 1621, when the entire roof was replaced with lead, at a cost of £500.¹³⁷ The parish was a client of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The rebuilt church was completed in 1688 at a cost of £4,541, and further beautified in 1698, when the steeple was also completed.¹³⁸ The rebuilt church was much more

¹³⁵ Samuel Tymms, *The Family Topographer: London*, p. 68.

¹³⁶ Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 185.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

attractive than its medieval predecessor, but made little use of ornamental pillars so common in other Wren churches. The church does contain many concave and convex churches – resembling the geometrically complex but decoratively plain churches of Francesco Borromini in Rome.¹³⁹ The church tower is cased in Portland stone, and consisted of three stories topped with a parapet and a lead lantern.¹⁴⁰ The interior was uncluttered by pillars making the space light and open. It also appears to have been designed with preaching acoustics in mind – the clearest expression of Wren's sensitivity to clerical audibility.¹⁴¹

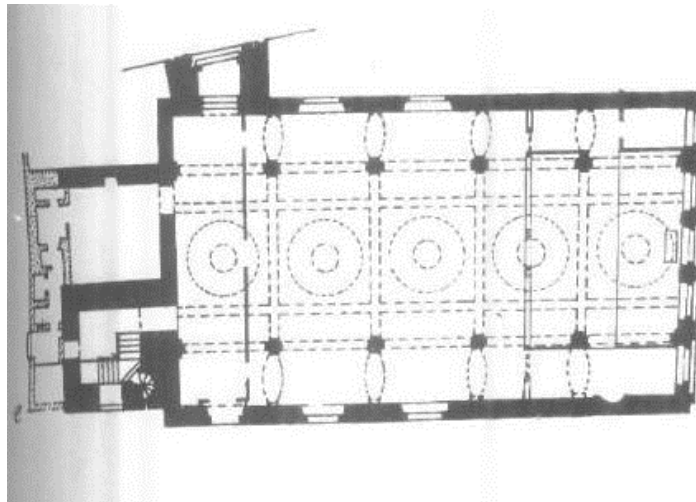


Fig. 32
Plans for Saint Peter-upon-Cornhill.

¹³⁹Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 176.

¹⁴⁰Andrew Thomas Taylor, *The Towers & Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 41.

¹⁴¹James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, p. 303.

12. Saint Peter-upon-Cornhill:

The parish church of Saint Peter-upon-Cornhill sits on the corner of Cornhill and Gracechurch Streets and the patronage of the church was held by the Lord Mayor and the Common Council of the City of London. The church was repaired in 1632 at a cost of £1,400, but much of this was destroyed in the Great Fire, although the basic structure of the church survived.

After the church was damaged in the Great Fire, the parishioners attempted to patch it up and avoid rebuilding. Their efforts were unsuccessful and Wren rebuilt the church from 1677 until 1684 at a cost of £5,647. The rebuilt church was smaller than its medieval predecessor, as a ten foot strip of land was seized for the widening of Gracechurch Street – most likely as part of the arraignment for Wren to assume reconstruction from the parishioners. Gracechurch Street is a fine example of Wren's architectural prowess – a stone cased facade punctuated by five high arched windows and ionic pilasters. The interior is aisled, with a barreled vault above the nave. Wren also installed a screen to divide the nave of the church from the chancel – a particularly Laudian addition to the church. The chancel itself was decorated with carved oak panels.¹⁴² Even more alarming than the screen, the brick tower was topped with a large gilded key a symbol of Saint Peter after whom the church was named – although some saw it as a clear allusion to the Pope.¹⁴³

¹⁴²Goodwin, p. 23.

¹⁴³Fincham, *Altars*, p. 344.

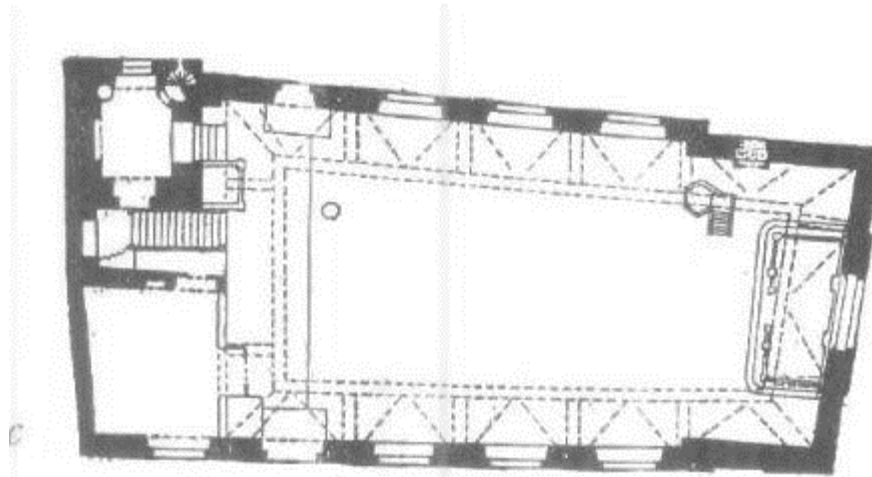


Fig. 33
Plans for Saint Stephen's Coleman Street.

13. Saint Stephen's, Coleman Street:

Saint Stephen's church sat on Coleman Street. The medieval church was renovated twice in the early seventeenth century, once in 1622 and again in 1629.¹⁴⁴ The parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The church was destroyed in the Great Fire, although the south wall survived. Wren completed the reconstruction of the church in 1677 upon the church's original medieval foundations. Wren returned to the parish in 1691, when an influx of funds from the Coal Duty allowed Wren to add a burial vault, and refurbish the gallery, bringing the total reconstruction cost £4,517. The rebuilt church was irregularly shaped, smaller in the east end than the west, as the medieval foundations were not a perfect square. The south wall of the church was only repaired by Wren, and is part of the pre-fire church.¹⁴⁵ The church was made of rubble cased in brick and decorated with

¹⁴⁴Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 59.

¹⁴⁵Goodwin, p. 24

stucco. Its primary entrance on the eastern end of the church revived a facade of Portland stone, decorated with a finally carved pediment containing the image of a rooster flanked by two stags. The tower sits behind the church, and is so short as to not be visible from the church entrance. It contained a small lantern belfry, with a weather vane of a rooster. The church interior was open, with a flat ceiling unsupported by columns.

II. Conclusion:

While these thirteen churches did have to deal with long delays in the reconstruction of their churches, along with resource shortages and the seizure of property by the Rebuilding Commission to improve the city, they were fortunate to avoid being forced to accommodate the addition of new parishes as part of the post-fire parish unification scheme. This allowed the parishes to weather the reconstruction of London after the fire in relative peace – but it was not without its disadvantages. The union of parish wealth, and the development of unused churchyards, could provide unified parishes with the wealth necessary to fund more impressive construction projects than the single thirteen parishes – who were for the most part modest churches. Furthermore, the unified parishes required expanded church bodies to accommodate two sets of parishioners – while the single parish churches could remain quite small. Without the fine workmanship of the first tier of churches to be rebuilt, or the wealth or population capacity of the unified parishes, many of these thirteen parishes became increasingly obsolete. This was in part why so many of these parishes were eliminated, not after the London Blitz destroyed their churches, but during the nineteenth century when their property was seized to improve the city.

Part II:
Chapter 6:
A Church Divided.

Every parish whose church was rebuilt after the Great Fire had to contend with the ambitions of Christopher Wren. The Royal Surveyor might dramatically transform a parish church for the benefit of the city instead of its parishioners. He might also use his authority to settle old religious and political scores. The parishes built after the first class of fifteen churches also had to deal with the shortages of labor, materials, and funds which plagued the entire rebuilding project. They were also at the mercy of the political tumult of the late seventeenth-century - rebuilding completely stopped in response to the uncertainty surrounding the Glorious Revolution.

Some parishes had to weather further complications to the reconstruction of their parish church. Outside of the first class of churches, forty-six parishes were combined together in hastily planned unions. These parishes were forced to navigate their unification without much direction, drafting their own unique unification agreements. These unions could be a great boon for parish communities as they could extend wealth and access to patronage to parishes badly in need after the fire. They could also be deleterious, introducing parishes to debt, overcrowding, and powerful enemies. These unions could be peaceful, hardly effecting life in the city. They could also bring together allies in an effort to lobby Wren and the Rebuilding Commission. In some cases, however, these parish unions bred hostility, paranoia, and discord.

Given how little direction the rebuilding legislation gave to London's parishes as to the nature of the unification, it is not surprising that the resulting unions took on a variety

of different forms. Some parishes were quick to sort out the nature of their union, producing formal agreements of unification that facilitated a smooth unification of parish assets while establishing limits to allow each parish a degree of autonomy in its economic and political management. Saint Mary-le-Bow appears to have had some difficulty in this matter, discarding its 1671 union agreement in for a completely new arrangement 1681.¹ Saint Michael Queenhithe and Holy Trinity the Less were more successful, and continued to refer to their original parish unification agreement as late as 1725.² Other parishes were content to allow their unification arrangement to emerge organically, recording each decision in their vestry minutes as it became necessary, like Saint Mary Aldermary and Saint Thomas the Apostle. Other parishes did little to sort out the question of their unification – although this usually indicated a significant disparity in wealth and influence between the parishes had allowed one parish to simply consume the other, as was the case with All Hallows Bread Street and Saint John the Evangelist Friday Street in 1698.

The resulting unions could allow for a varying degree of collaboration and autonomy between the parishes. Saint Mary-at-Hill and Saint Andrew Hubbard maintained separate groups of parish officers, although these officers meet together after 1690.³ Saint

¹ LMA P69/MRY7/B/023/MS07810 [*Agreement Between the Churchwardens of the united Parish of Saint Mary le Bow, Saint Pancras Soper Lane, and All Hallows Honey Lane*], January 11, 1674; LMA P69/PAN/B/001/MS05019/001, [*Saint Pancras Soper Lane Vestry Minutes Book, Volume 1*], 1681, p. 151.

² LMA P69/TRI3/B/004/MS04835/002; [*Holy Trinity the Less Churchwardens' Accounts Book, Volume II*], 1725 p. 7.

³ LMA P69/AND3/B/007/MS05068A, [*Saint Andrew Hubbard Miscellaneous Churchwarden's Vouchers*], 1690, p. 81.

Anne and Saint Agnes and Saint John Zachary's parishes were so completely autonomous after their unification that they divided the church in two, and hired different carpenters to pew their half of the church.⁴ Saint Vedast Foster Lane, and Saint Michael-le-Querne, however, completely unified all of their parish offices after 1670, resulting in complete unified parish records after 1675.⁵

The primary concerns addressed in the parish unification settlements were the collection and spending of parish income. Saint Mildred, Poultry and Saint Mary Colechurch were so concerned about the unification of their parish collections that they insisted on collecting them by individual parish at separate church doors.⁶ The dispensation of church wealth was usually calculated based on the relative wealth of the parishes involved. Saint Magnus-the-Martyr paid five eighths of the cost of upkeep in its unified parish with Saint Mary Somerset assuming two thirds of the total cost in its union with Saint Mary Mounthaw.⁷

1. Saint Alban, Wood Street, united with Saint Olave, Silver Street:

In 1633 Sir Henry Spiller, Inigo Jones, Captain Leak and Captain Williams arrived in Wood

⁴ LMA P69/ANA/B/001/MS01604/001, [*Saint Anne and Saint Agnes Vestry Minutes Book*], October 31, 1679 p. 7.

⁵ LMA P69/MIC4/B/005/MS02895/002, [*Saint Michael Le Querne Churchwardens' Accounts Book*]. 1675, p. 150.

⁶ LMA P69/MRY8/B/001/MS00064, [*Saint Mary Colechurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1682/3, p. 124; July 17, 1685, p. 134.

⁷ LMA P69/MAG/B/010/MS01183/001, [*Minutes Book of the Committee of the United Parishes of Saint Magnus the Martyr with Saint Margaret New Fish Street*], October, 1667, p. 2; LMA P69/MRY12/B/002/MS05714/001, [*Saint Mary Somerset Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1679, p. 199.

Street to survey the parish church of Saint Alban.⁸ The church, a client of the Fellows of Eton College, had fallen into a state of severe disrepair, and the four men quickly agreed that no repairs could be made – and that attempting to repair the structure would put laborers in severe danger from the collapsing church. Over the next year, the church was completely torn down. Jones began rebuilding the church in its entirety in 1634 – despite the misgivings of the parishioners who would have continued worshiping in their ruin of a church were it not a threat to their lives. While any record of the appearance of the rebuilt church has been lost, Jones likely produced a church that looked little like the original gothic structure. While many of the parish's wealthiest members provided funds and materials for the reconstruction, there was no mandatory subscription and many poor parishioners did not volunteer gifts. As a result the construction was woefully underfunded. These unwanted, costly repairs, were for naught, however, as the Great Fire badly damaged the church, although the ruins were still suitable for temporary use.⁹

After the Great Fire Saint Alban, Wood Street was united with Saint Olave Silver Street, a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The church was located in south end of Silver Street in Aldersgate Ward, and by seventeenth century the church had fallen in a state of decay and contained no monuments of note.¹⁰ The church was repaired in 1602, 1609, and for the last time in 1662, at a cost of £50 7s 6d.¹¹

⁸Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 76.

⁹Reddaway, p. 124.

¹⁰Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 99.

¹¹James George White, *The Churches and Chapels of London: with a short account of those ministered in them*, (London: C. E. Gray, 1901), p. 148.

The parishioners of Saint Alban, Wood Street were as stubborn as ever in the 1670s, and demanded the church be rebuilt in the Gothic style. It appears to have irritated Wren that the parishioners had “set their face against modernity and the better style.”¹² Despite his misgivings, Wren completed the church in 1685, at a cost of £3,165, apparently reversing all of Jones' architectural innovations. The church tower stood at ninety-two feet, and was topped with four pinnacles – it may have been a modification of the tower at Magdalen College, Oxford.¹³ The interior was more dramatically transformed, including the addition of a large brass hour-glass for use of the minister – a gift from the parish clerk Thomas Waidson in 1685.¹⁴

The primary conflict in the reconstruction of this parish church appears to have been between Wren and the parishioners of Saint Alban's, Wood Street. The church was most likely selected for reconstruction because its ruins were in reasonably safe shape after the fire, which resulted in a remarkably inexpensive church. The biggest complication for the unified parish appears to have been furnishing the church, especially those furnishings crafted of precious metals. After the fire, the lead from Saint Alban's church was stolen and never recovered – depriving the parish of its sale to raise funds for the reconstruction.¹⁵ This forced the parish to sell their more valuable bell metal to raise £124 – resulting in a

¹²*WS XI*, p. 20.

¹³Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 129.

¹⁴Goodwin, p. 5

¹⁵LMA P69/ALLB/B/003/MS07673/002, [*Saint Alban's Wood Street Churchwardens' Accounts Book*] June 5, 1668, p. 101.

rebuilt church without metal to recast a bell.¹⁶ In 1672, the parishioners of Saint Olave, Silver Street were ordered to deliver their church furnishings to the churchwarden's of the united parish – which would have solved much of Saint Alban's problems had Saint Olave not sold most of their furnishings in 1671.¹⁷ They did eventually turn over their remaining furnishings.¹⁸ Saint Olave, Silver Street continued to maintain and improve their churchyard, which was converted into a joint burial ground after the Great Fire.¹⁹ While they were able to worship in the ruins of Saint Alban, Wood Street, the parishioners continued to meet occasionally in their graveyard for a glass or two of wine.²⁰

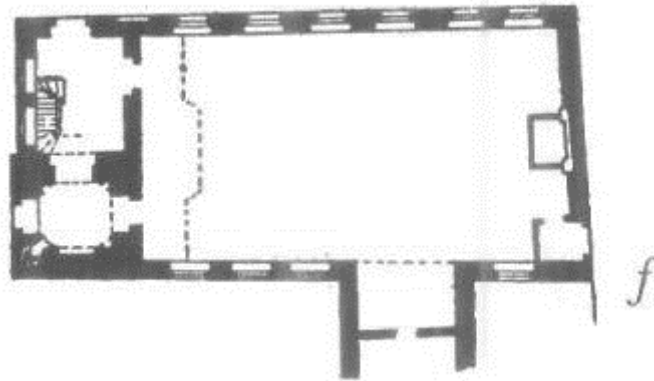


Fig. 34
Plans for All Hallows, Bread Street.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 1668, p. 102; 1668, p. 104.

¹⁷LMA P69/OLA3/B/002/MS01257/001, [*Saint Olave, Silver Street Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1671, p. 2; 1672, p. 81.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, November 21, 1672, p. 82.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 1671, p. 74.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 1679, p. 106.

2. All Hallows, Bread Street, united with Saint John the Evangelist Friday Street:

In Bread Street Ward, at the corner of Bread Street and Watling Street sat the parish church of All Hallows, Bread Street, a client of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The church was in a state of decay in the early seventeenth century, and was repaired and richly beautified by the parishioners in 1625.²¹ The parish had a very close relationship with the Worshipful Company of Salters – perhaps most evident in the small chancel in the south end of the medieval church called the Salter's Chapel, ornamented with the gifts from notable members of the company.²²

After All Hallows, Bread Street was destroyed in the Great Fire it was united with the parish of Saint John the Evangelist Friday Street. This parish's church was located near All Hallows in Bread Street Ward, at the corner of Bread Street and Friday Street. The parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, and was primarily populated by Fishmongers.²³ The parish had been experiencing a period of relatively good fortune on the eve of the fire, as they were the only parish in the city not to register a death from the Great Plague of 1665.²⁴

The reconstruction of this church was complicated by the political and economic turmoil of the Glorious Revolution. The body of the church was completed under Wren's direction from 1681 to 1684. Wren began work on the church tower soon afterward, but

²¹Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 199.

²²*Ibid.*

²³Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 205.

²⁴*Ibid.*

in 1689 ran out of funds from the Coal Duty, halted all work, and covered the top of the unfinished tower in wooden boards.²⁵ The parishioners waited nearly a decade for work to recommence on their church tower, during which time they sent gifts of wine to both Wren and to his assistant Nicholas Hawksmoor, who was by then responsible for completing many of the parochial church steeples. The parishioners also called on Wren twice in both 1683 and 1686, without success.²⁶ Only after the parishioners asked the Lord Mayor, then Edward Clarke, to go to Wren on their behalf was construction recommenced. The tower was completed one year later in 1698.

The rebuilt church cost £4,881 to complete and was built primary of Portland Stone. The front facade faced Watling Street and was ornamented with eight rounded windows. The space itself was an irregular quadrilateral, with a chancel protruding from the southern wall. The interior of the church was relatively open, and not divided by columns. The long delayed five-story tower was square with a steeple built atop arched openings, marked with obelisks at each corner. The church body was relatively plain, decorated in the Tuscan style.²⁷

The union of these two parishes appears to have been a peaceful one, despite the doubled poor roll used to pay for furnishing the new church in 1682, to be continued until the amount of £1,000 was raised by the parishes.²⁸ This may have resulted from the

²⁵Jeffery, *City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 182.

²⁶LMA P69/ALH2/B/001/MS05039/001, [*All Hallows, Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], 1683, p. 70; 1696, p. 131.

²⁷James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs*, p. 10.

²⁸LMA P69/ALH2/B/001/MS05039/001, [*All Hallows, Bread Street Vestry Minutes Book*], July 4, 1682 p.

parishioners expending all of their political energy dealing with Wren over their delayed church tower. It may have also been the case that Saint John the Evangelist was a parish truly destroyed by the Great Fire. The first joint meeting for the management of the united parishes was woefully under attended by representatives of Saint John's parish.²⁹ By the end of the century attendance by Saint John's parishioners continued to decline severely, with Saint John's parish providing only six of the twenty-two vestrymen for the united parish. This, no doubt, limited their ability to influence the governance of their newly unified parish, and perhaps indicating indifference to the matter.³⁰

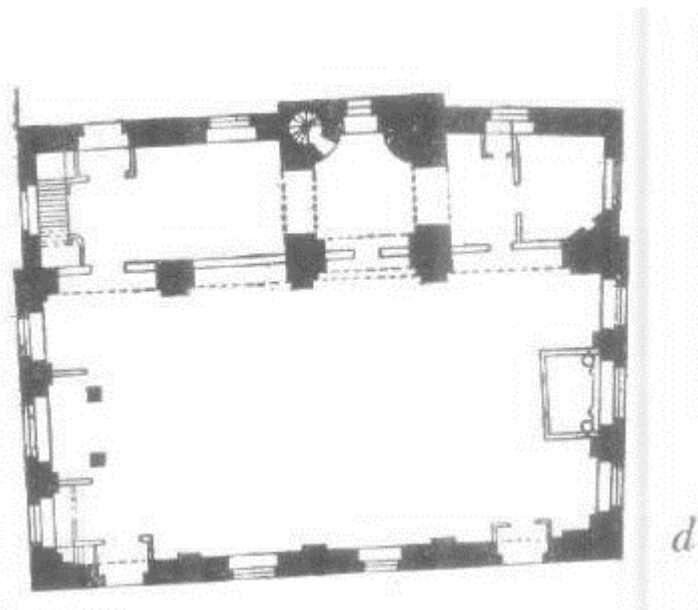


Fig. 35
Plans for All Hallows-the-Great.

59.

²⁹*Ibid*, 1683, p. 70.

³⁰*Ibid*, 1698, p. 138.

3. All-Hallows-the-Great, united with All-Hallows-the-Less:

The parish church of All-Hallows-the-Great sat on upper Thames Street. During the Interregnum, the parish contained an unrepresentative sample of the city's fifth monarchists, who after the Restoration aggressively petitioned the Archbishop of Canterbury to prevent their incumbent minister, Robert Bragge, from being ejected – without success.³¹ The church itself was in fair shape, repaired regularly from 1627 to 1629 and again in 1632 – although the churchyard was in less suitable shape, being “fouly defaced and ruined.”³² The living of the parish was held by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

All-Hallows-the-Great was united with the nearby church of All-Hallows-the-Less after the Great Fire. All-Hallows-the-Less was located on Thames Street in Dowgate Ward, directly to the east of All-Hallows-the-Great. The church itself was quite small, and the interior was poorly lit, even after the addition of new windows in 1616.³³ After the fire the church's property became a joint burial ground. The living for this parish was held by two unmarried women – who alarmingly kept most of the living's income for themselves, leaving only £8 per annum for the use of the minister.³⁴

After the Great Fire the unified parishes jointly funded a private tabernacle in 1669, where they waited for the completion of their church – rebuilt from 1677 to 1684. The

³¹Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610- 1692*, (New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1994), p. 205.

³²Styve, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 205.

³³*Ibid*, p. 206.

³⁴Bell, p. 308.

parishioners also rapidly began repairing their church ruins after the fire, and applied for the repayment of funds as early as 1670.³⁵ This may have been motivated by the fact that initial city wide rebuilding plans would have sacrificed the parish church – transforming it into a storage yard for rebuilding materials.³⁶ They also built a small watch house out of concern for grave robbers – perhaps a wise decision given how much valuable bell metal was scattered beneath the rubble of the church. The rebuilt church cost £5,641 to complete and is an irregular rectangle built of brick.³⁷

The church tower survived the fire, and after the bell metal was salvaged and recast, it was hung in the damaged tower. It quickly became apparent, however, that the tower could not support the weight of the bell, and it was torn down in 1684, and rebuilt in stone. The parishioners asked Wren to add a cupola or spire for the top, given how visible the tower was from the Thames – a request he did not honor. The completed tower was eighty-six feet high in four stories, topped with a parapet and flat lead roof.³⁸ The church interior is one of two churches in the city to contain a rood screen, made of oak and added in emulation of the one in Saint Peter-upon-Cornhill. The east end of the church also contained a fine carving of Moses and Aaron – commissioned by the joint vestry in 1683.³⁹ The ornament that was nearly removed after parishioners were observed genuflecting to

³⁵*Ibid*, p. 306.

³⁶*Ibid*, p. 310.

³⁷Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, his Family and His Times*, p. 240.

³⁸Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 240.

³⁹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 344.

the image.⁴⁰

This parish union was peaceful one, unsurprising given the relative proximity of the two churches, and the fact that the parishioners of All-Hallows-the-Less were now not only allowed to worship in a much nicer church, but could afford to pay a reasonable wage to their minister. Furthermore, the parishes jointly directed the furnishing of their new parish, although All Hallows the Less funded it disproportionately with both subscriptions – which raised around £400, and the sale of their bell metal, the income from which is unrecorded.⁴¹

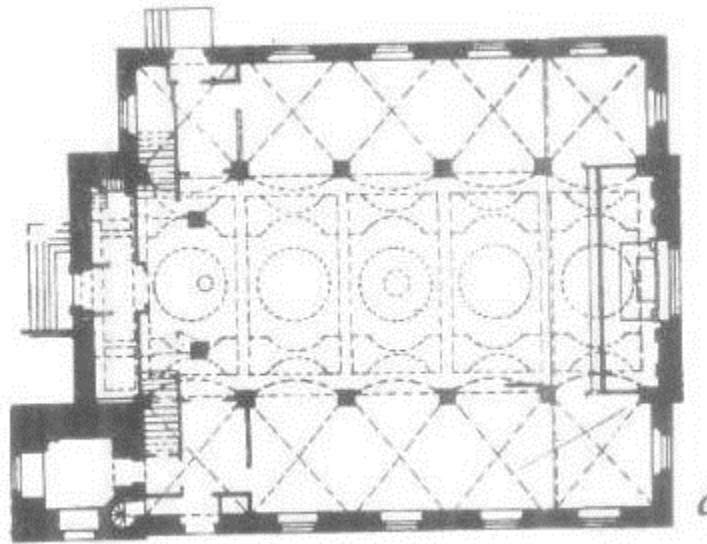


Fig. 36
Plans for Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe.

⁴⁰J. P. Malcom, *Londinium Redivivum or An Ancient History and Modern Description of London, Volume 4*, (London: F. & C. Rivington, 1807), p. 43.

⁴¹LMA P69/ALH8/B/001/MS00824/001, [*All Hallows the Less Vestry Minutes Book*], 1681, p. 113; 1682, p. 120; 1685, p. 129.

4. Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, united with Saint Ann Blackfriars:

The parish church of Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe is located on what is now Queen Victoria Street in Castle Baynard Ward. This church was repaired in 1627, although these improvements to the parish church were largely reversed by the Great Fire.⁴² After the Great Fire Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe was united with the parish of Saint Ann Blackfriars, whose church was located on the south side of Ludgate Street in the Ward of Farringdon Within. Saint Ann's was one of the few London parish churches to be repaired into the last 1630s, at a cost of £500.⁴³ During the Interregnum the church was primarily populated by the hotter sort of Protestants, under the direction of their long time minister William Gouge, most famous for authoring *Of Domesticall Duties*, a text on female submission within the family. The pre-fire church was noted as being both large, and very well-ornamented.⁴⁴ After the fire the ruins of this once fine church were converted into a joint burial ground for the united parish. The unified parish church was completed in 1695, and was one of Wren's less ornate churches. The exterior was built of red brick with stone at the corners and the interior was a barrel vault.⁴⁵ The church tower is eighty-six feet tall and built of brick and stone. It consists of four stages, punctuated by circular windows and a clock, topped with a cornice and an open balustrade.⁴⁶ The rebuilt church cost £7,060 to

⁴²Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 223.

⁴³*Ibid*, pp. 3, 180.

⁴⁴*Ibid*, p. 177.

⁴⁵Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 147.

⁴⁶Andrew Thomas Taylor, *The Towers & Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 31.

complete

While the union of these parishes was a relatively peaceful one, the unified parishes appear to have experienced a period of poverty after the fire. They routinely needed to request aid from the Lord Mayor for paying their poor roll, and often failed to acquire necessary furnishings, especially books, until after funds could be raised jointly.⁴⁷ This is shocking given that Saint Andrew's liquidated their bell metal to help fund the rebuilding, and were fortunate to be able to replace them, not out of their parish funds, but with the surviving bells from Saint Ann's church.⁴⁸ Saint Andrew's was also able to find the necessary funds to bribe Wren's clerks, at four guineas a piece to request the removal of corpse to expand the vault in 1686, a request that Wren appears to have indulged as the parishioners spent £5 for corpse removal soon afterwards.⁴⁹ Along with the bells, Saint Ann's was generous in assuming its share of the reconstruction cost, both for building materials and furnishings.⁵⁰ These assertions of poverty, however, may have been exaggerations. It was not unheard of for less charitable parishes to avoid paying or distributing their poor roll in order to put the funds to some other use in the parish, or to simply keep the funds in the purses of the parishioners. Furthermore, parishes, especially parishes with the confessional predilections like those of Saint Andrew's, might claim to

⁴⁷LMA P69/AND1/B/009/MS02088/001, [*Saint Andrew By the Wardrobe Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1672, p. 21; 1686, p. 71.

⁴⁸*Ibid*, 1675, p. 34.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 1686, p. 71.

⁵⁰ LMA P69/ANN/B/042/MS07751, [*Saint Ann Blackfriars Misc. Receipts*], 1692, p. 8; LMA P69/ANN/B/021/MS01061/002, [*Saint Ann Blackfriars Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1696, p. 59.

be unable to afford furnishings they objected to on theological grounds – a very common strategy for avoiding the installation of a raised and railed communion table.

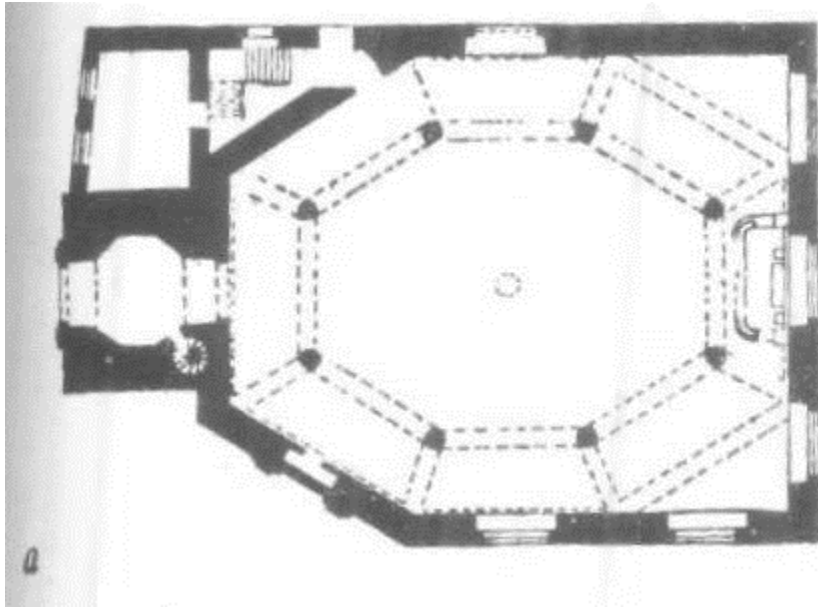


Fig. 37
Plans for Saint Antholin, Budge Row.

5. Saint Antholin, Budge Row, united with Saint John the Baptist upon Walbrook:

Saint Antholin's parish church was located on Budge Row in Cordwainer Ward and was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The church was repaired in 1616 at a cost of £1,000 raised by the parishioners. On the eve of the fire, however, the south side of the church was in danger of collapsing.⁵¹ After the Great Fire Saint Antholin's parish was unified with the parish of Saint John upon Walbrook, whose church was located in Walbrook Ward. After the fire Saint John's property was converted into a joint burial

⁵¹LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], 1660, p. 14.

ground – with segments of the churchyard seized by the Rebuilding Commission to widen nearby streets.⁵²

The church was rebuilt under the direction of Sir Christopher Wren from 1678 to 1684. The new church cost £5,685 to complete and was built primarily of stone. The exterior of the body of the church was relatively plain, although the tower was much more impressive. The tower, which stood one-hundred and fifty-four feet height in two stories was octagonal in shape topped with the head of a composite column. The interior's most striking feature was its oval dome ceiling – a display of Wren's prowess as an engineer and practical mathematician. The dome was supported by eight columns.⁵³

It is likely that much of the work on this church was done by Robert Hooke.⁵⁴ The church possessed many Dutch features, including its oval windows. Furthermore, the actual floor plan of plan of the church reassembled the theater of the College of Physics, also built by Hooke.⁵⁵ The church may have also been a second attempt to implement the plans initially drawn by Hooke for Saint Benet Fink, but which that parish rejected.⁵⁶

The union of these two parishes went smoothly, and they met jointly to direct the reconstruction of their parish church.⁵⁷ The two parishes also shared the parish furnishings

⁵²LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], p. 73.

⁵³Peter Cunningham, *Handbook of London, Past and Present*, p. 24.

⁵⁴Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 15; LMA P69/ANL/B/004/MS01046/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Churchwardens Accounts Book*], March, 1679, p. 114; LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], 1679, p. 97.

⁵⁵Downes, *Christopher Wren*, p. 152.

⁵⁶Kerry Downes, *The Architecture of Christopher Wren*, p. 92.

⁵⁷LMA P69/ANL/B/012/MS01054, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Rebuilding Subscription*], 1693, p. 128; LMA

which survived the fire, owning them jointly.⁵⁸ While the parishes maintained separate churchwardens, these two churchwardens worked relatively closely on most matters of parish finance, from the management of church wealth to the commissioning of preachers.⁵⁹ The parishes did, however, carry out subscriptions and tithes separately, allowing the churchwardens to buy jointly owned supplies from their respective parish incomes.⁶⁰ The real conflict in this parish union appears to have been isolated to Saint John's parish. While the parish attempted unsuccessfully to recover lost rents from the destroyed Swan Tavern in the Fire Court, the parish's churchwardens began dispensing church funds without the assent of the vestry – who themselves refused to meet anywhere but in public houses, even after the unified church was completed.⁶¹ These particularly brazen churchwardens, along with the relative disorder of the governance of Saint John's parish, may have been the reason why parish incomes remained entirely separate after the unification of the parishes.

P69/ANL/B/013/MS07622, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Misc. Repair Receipts*] April 22, 1682, p. 3; LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], April 16, 1675, p. 72; September 16, 1678, p. 95.

⁵⁸LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], October 4, 1679 p. 99.

⁵⁹*Ibid*, pp. 61, April 3, 1673, 63 August 27, 1673.

⁶⁰LMA P69/ANL/B/001/MS01045/001, [*Saint Antholin Budge Row Vestry Minutes Book*], February 25, 1691, p. 108; LMA P69/JNB/B/006/MS00577/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Upon Walbrook Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1682, p. 11.

⁶¹LMA P69/JNB/B/001/MS00578/001, [*Saint John the Baptist Upon Walbrook Vestry Minutes Book*], October, 1697, p. 22; May, 1698, p. 27; May, 1698, p. 29.

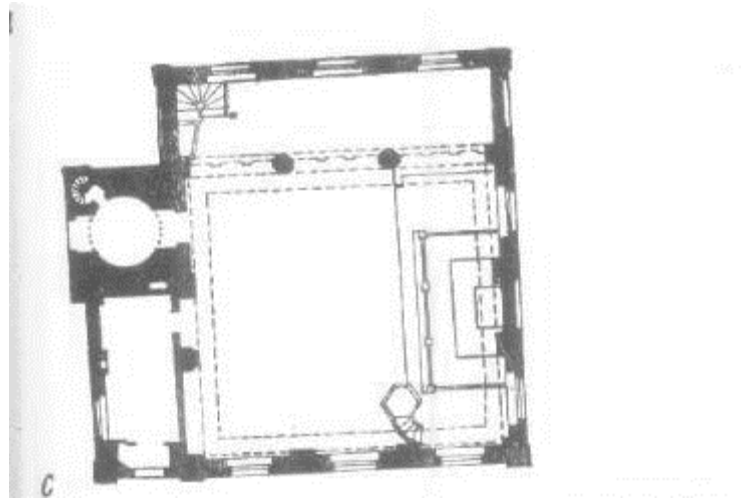


Fig. 38
Plans for Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf.

6. Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf, united with Saint Peter Paul's Wharf:

Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf – the church of the College of Arms – is located in Baynard Castle Ward on Thames Street. Saint Benet's was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral and by 1632 the church was in a state of sever disrepair.⁶² After the Great Fire Saint Benet's was united with the nearby parish of Saint Peter, Paul's Wharf on Saint Peter's Hill in Thames Street, with whom Saint Benet's shared a patron. Saint Peter's church was so small that it was occasionally called Saint Peter Little, and contained nearly no monuments of note.⁶³ During the Commonwealth Saint Peter's was one of the few parishes to defiantly use the Book of Common Prayer.⁶⁴ After the Great Fire Saint Peter's church

⁶²Strype *Survey*, Book 3 p. 222.

⁶³*Ibid*, p. 214.

⁶⁴Fincham, *Altars*, p. 282.

was converted into a joint burial ground.

The rebuilt church was constructed from 1677 to 1683. The church was designed by Wren, but primarily rebuilt by one of his master masons, Thomas Strong. The church is built primarily of red brick ornamented with stone garlands.⁶⁵ The church itself appears more Dutch than English, and designs may have been Hooke's work, not Wren's.⁶⁶ The church tower is one-hundred and fifteen feet high, divided into three stages, and topped with a dome and cupola. The interior is a near perfect square adorned with carvings by Grinling Gibbons.⁶⁷ The communion table added after the fire was quite ornate – the legs were carved angels supporting the table top.⁶⁸ The parish union was relatively uneventful – no doubt in part due to the poor state of both parish churches before the fire. Saint Benet Paul's Wharf did, however, accrue substantial debts during the years immediately after the Great Fire. Surprisingly they did not attempt to force Saint Peter's to assume some portion of this debt which may have been why it did not cause any inter-parish tension.⁶⁹

⁶⁵Goodwin, p. 10.

⁶⁶Tinniswood, p. 251.

⁶⁷Goodwin, p. 10.

⁶⁸Fincham, *Altars*, p. 348.

⁶⁹LMA P69/BEN3/B/001/MS00877/001, [*Saint Benet's Paul's Wharf Vestry Minutes Book*], 1672, p. 11; 1672, p. 15.

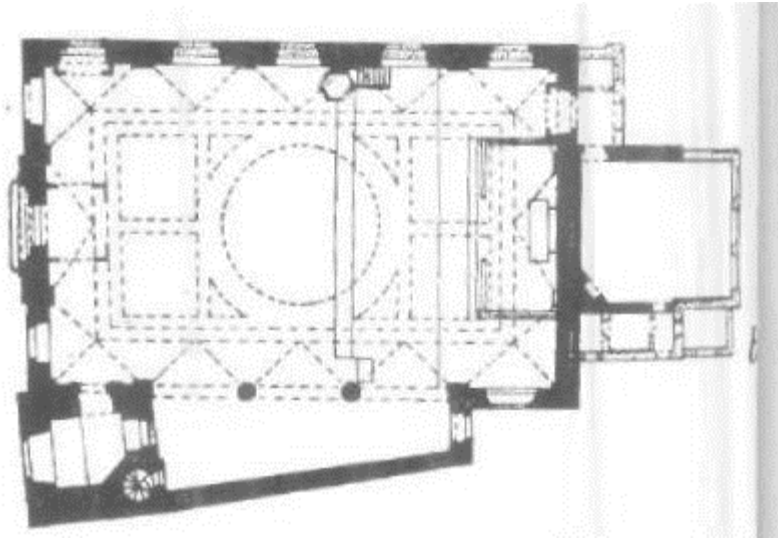


Fig. 39
Plans for Saint Clement's Eastcheap.

7. Saint Clement's Eastcheap, united with Saint Martin Orgar:

On Clement's Lane in Candlewick Ward sits the parish church of Saint Clement's Eastcheap. The medieval church was repaired by the parishioners in 1630 and 1633, but was badly damaged in the Great Fire.⁷⁰ The parish was a client of the Bishop of London and was one of the few parishes to continue to use the Book of Common Prayer during the Interregnum.⁷¹ The foundation and walls were repaired in 1658, unusual for a London church.⁷² The medieval church was small, and lacked any noteworthy monuments.⁷³

⁷⁰Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 183

⁷¹Fincham, *Altars*, p. 282.

⁷²John Timbs, *Curiosities of London*, (London: David Bogue, 1855), p. 158.

⁷³Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 183.

After the Great Fire the parish was united with the parish of Saint Martin Orgar in the southern end of Eastcheap. Saint Martin Orgar was a very small church, and was last repaired in 1630 at a cost of £122 6s 6d.⁷⁴ After the fire the ruins of Saint Martin Orgar were not converted into a joint burial ground, but were instead turned over for purchase by a group of French Huguenots who refurbished the church and worshiped there until the early nineteenth century. Saint Martin's parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral.

The Rebuilding Commission attempted to seize a parcel of land from the west end of Saint Clement's churchyard to widen Clement's Lane and alleviate traffic congestion. The parishioners of the unified parish fought the seizure, as a small church would not be large enough to house two parishes. The foundation of the church were shifted east fourteen feet to accommodate both a large church and the widening of Clement Lane.⁷⁵ The church was completed under Wren's direction in 1687 at a cost of £4,365. The parishioners were so pleased with the church's progress that they gifted Wren one third of a hogshead of wine, at a cost of £4 2s as well as a purse of 10 guineas as the church neared completion.⁷⁶ The church tower is made of brick with stone dressings. The church interior is irregularly shaped, and the south aisle gets gradually thinner as it progresses into the east end of the church.⁷⁷ The church itself was built of brick and stone, with a flat roof, and

⁷⁴*Ibid*, p. 187.

⁷⁵Leigh Hatts, *London City Churches*, (London: Bankside Press, 2003), p. 36.

⁷⁶LMA P69/CLE/B/007/MS00977/001, [*Saint Clement, Eastcheap Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1685.

⁷⁷Goodwin, p. 12.

walls ornamented with composite pilasters.

The gift of Saint Martin Orgar's church to French Huguenots may have been more than a pragmatic use of church's ruins by the Rebuilding Commission. Bishop Humphrey Henchmen had long been suspicious of Saint Martin's parishioners, concerned that they may be driving their more orthodox ministers away by some covert means.⁷⁸ This may have been a punishment for causing the Bishop so much concern. The parishioners apparently felt the Bishop's ire as acutely as he might have intended, and they petitioned the Court of Aldermen for release from unification as they were deeply concerned about Frenchmen worshiping in the presence of their parish dead, fearing they would dig "up the corps of several hundred or so many of which were friends and relations."⁷⁹

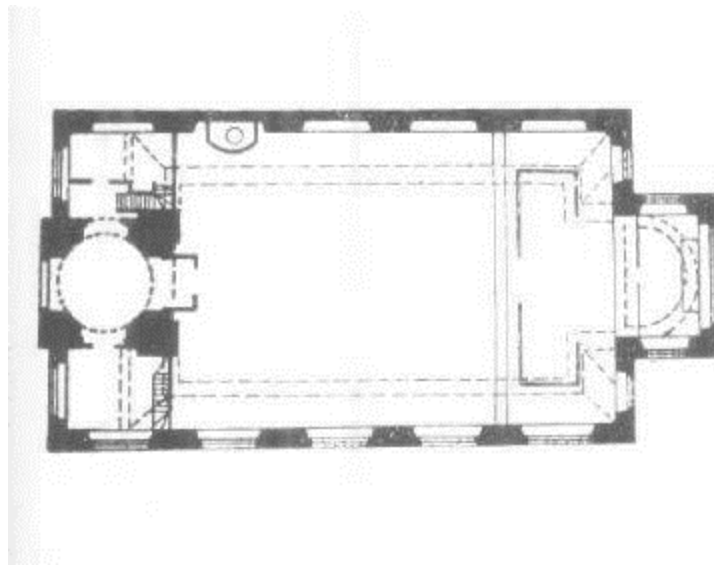


Fig. 40
Plans for Saint Edmund, King and Martyr.

⁷⁸BL Harlien MS3785 [*Letter from Humphrey Henchmen*] p. 216.

⁷⁹LMA COL/CA/01/01/068, [Misc. Petitions to the Court of Aldermen], p. 10.

8. Saint Edmund, King and Martyr, united with Saint Nicholas Acons:

The parish church of Saint Edmund, King and Martyr is located on Lombard Street in Langbourn Ward. The church was repaired from 1631 to 1632 at a cost to the parishioners of £248.⁸⁰ The parish was a client of the Crown. After the Great Fire Saint Edmund was united with the parish of Saint Nicholas Acons. Saint Nicholas Acons was located on Nicholas Lane, and was repaired by its parishioners in 1615 before being destroyed in the Great Fire. This parish was also a royal peculiar.

This united parish was one of the first to advance money to the Rebuilding Commissioners. Their church was rebuilt in stone from 1670 to 1679 based on a remarkably ornate design produced by Christopher Wren. The drawings for the church, done in Hooke's hand are unique in that they do not simply contain Wren's signature of approval, but the King's as well.⁸¹ The rebuilt church was so unlike the medieval one that the construction site could not accommodate it, and the church is unusually oriented north south, with the alter table oriented north instead of east in a chancel recess.⁸² The church tower is decorated with flaming urns at its corners – a memorial to the Great Fire. The interior was finely decorated, including a canopied pew for the vestrymen containing carved images of the twelve apostles.⁸³ The church is oblong in shape, open and without

⁸⁰Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 156.

⁸¹*WS IX*, plate 15.

⁸²Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 156.

⁸³Fincham, *Altars*, p. 347.

aisles.⁸⁴

The union of these two parishes went smoothly, no doubt the result of the speed with which the church was completed, and the impressive church which resulted from the early reconstruction. While the hasty completion of the church hinged on the successful fundraising of the parishioners, the quality of the resulting church was most likely dependent on the active and interested role played in its reconstruction by the King. In fact, the only real concern faced by the united parishes were the church's interior furnishings – as funding it required them to mortgage much of their remaining property in 1674 for £300.⁸⁵

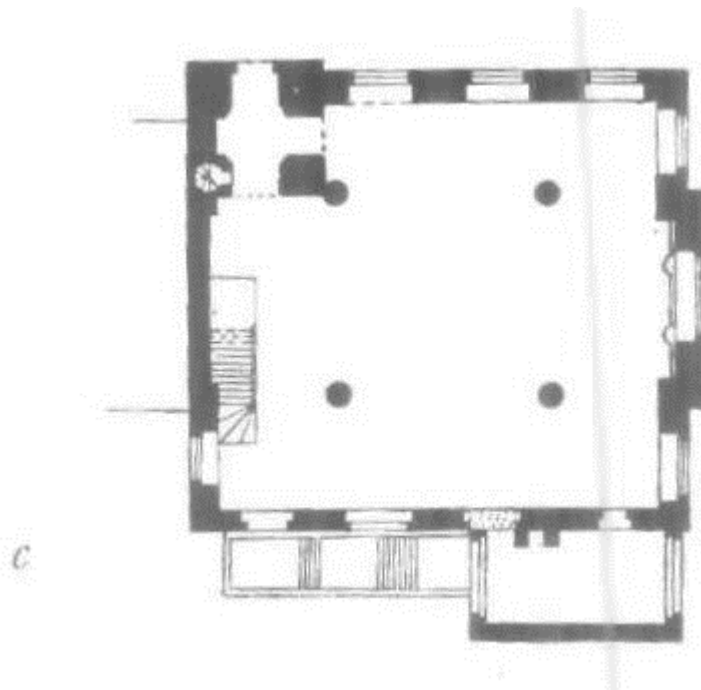


Fig. 41
Plans for Saint George, Botolph Lane.

⁸⁴Goodwin, p. 12.

⁸⁵LMA P69/EDK/B/017/MS20392, [*Saint Edmund the King and Martyr Misc. Receipts*], 1674.

9. Saint George, Botolph Lane, united with Saint Botolph Billingsgate:

The parish church of Saint George, Botolph Lane was located on Thames Street in Billingsgate Ward and was a client of the Crown. The church was renovated as recently as 1627 – improving one of the most well-preserved churches in the city, as much of its ornamentation survived the waves of iconoclasm that accompanied the Tudor Reformation.⁸⁶ The parish church backed into Pudding Lane, and it was very quickly devastated by the Great Fire.

After the Great Fire Saint George's parish was united with the parish of Saint Botolph Billingsgate. This parish's church was located on the south side of Thames Street near Botolph Lane and was largely repaired in 1624 although many of its monuments had long been defaced and remained that way until the fire.⁸⁷ The patron of the parish was the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. After the fire the church yard was used as a joint burial ground, save for a few parcels of land on which houses and shops were built and rented out by the parish.⁸⁸ Some of the churchyard was also sold for £33 5 s 7d to widen nearby streets.⁸⁹

The unified parish church was rebuilt from 1671 to 1676, under the direction of

⁸⁶Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, pp. 171, 172.

⁸⁷*Ibid*, p. 166.

⁸⁸LMA P69/BOT3/B/007/MS00942/001, [*Saint Botolph Billingsgate Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], April 26, 1695, p. 71.

⁸⁹*Ibid*, 1682, p. 33.

Christopher Wren. The rebuilt church cost £4,466 – most of which was spent on rubble from the destroyed Saint Paul's Cathedral which made up the bulk of the construction materials for the new church.⁹⁰ The church's foundation needed to be raised, as the medieval church was built on a downward slope towards the Thames. The unified church is square in shape, with Portland stone dressings and a tower in the North West corner. The tower is three square stages with a belfry and parapet topped with urns at its corners. The interior was paneled with oak carvings beneath a barrel vault modeled a study of Vitruvius' Basilica at Fano.⁹¹

The union of these two parishes was relatively amicable. The parishes did experience some financial trouble during the rebuilding, in part due to their expensive taste in church furnishings, especially their communion table – “gilded with the purest gold.”⁹² Between the cost of furnishing the new church, and the sexton demanding excessive fees for his services – he was eventually discharged from his post – the parish was in a difficult financial position at the beginning of the 1670s.⁹³ In order to alleviate this shortfall the parishes agreed to the unprecedented move of turning over the year's rents and revenues to anyone willing to immediately advance the necessary funds – an offer no one appears to have taken.⁹⁴

⁹⁰Jeffery, *City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 243.

⁹¹Downes, *Architecture of Christopher Wren*, p. 63.

⁹²LMA P69/BOT3/B/001/MS00943/002, [*Saint Botolph Billingsgate Vestry Minutes Book*], 1674, p. 10; 1674, p. 12.

⁹³*Ibid*, 1675, p. 6.

⁹⁴*Ibid*, 1674, p. 4.

The earliest unification agreement indicated that the parishes would jointly “maintaine the Rights of thes parishe by legal proceedings as conflect shall arise.”⁹⁵ This may in part have been motivated by an interest in promoting a more unified parish, but was almost certainly a call for help in dealing with the London merchant Sir Josiah Child. Child misrepresented himself to the official surveyors, seized a parcel of land from the parish church of Saint Botolph Billingsgate, and used it to seal up a passage to Botolph Wharf. He then used the property to build a series of storage warehouses conveniently close to the Thames, which he rented at £500 and £600 per annum. Child was able to fight legal opposition from the parishes, while collecting rents, until 1690 when the parish reacquired the property.

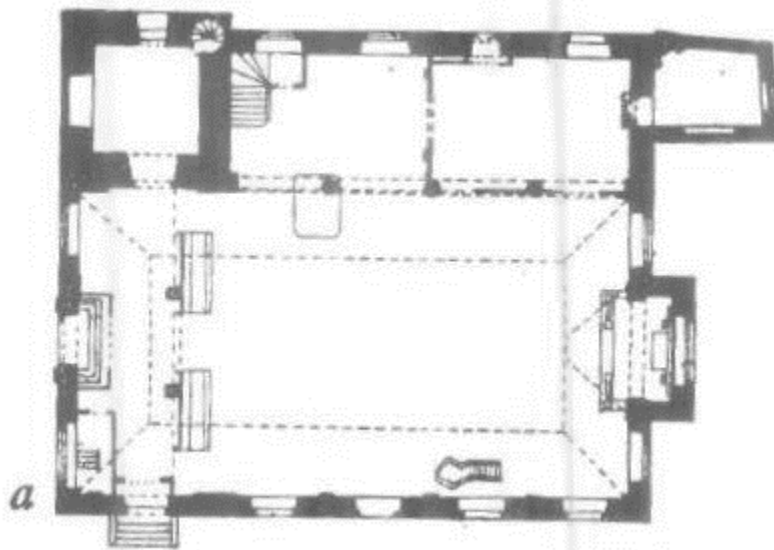


Fig. 42
Plans for Saint Margaret Pattens.

⁹⁵LMA P69/GEO/B/001/MS00952/002, [*Saint George Botolph Lane Vestry Minutes Book*], April 3, 1688, p. 12.

10. Saint Margaret Pattens, united with Saint Gabriel Fenchurch:

In Eastcheap on Saint Mary's Hill, sits the parish church of Saint Margaret Pattens. The church was repaired in 1614 at the parishioners expense of £71 15s 6d and again in 1632 at a cost of £275 5s 6d.⁹⁶ The parish was a client of the Mayor and Court of Common Council of the City of London. After the Great Fire the parish was united with the Saint Gabriel Fenchurch. Saint Gabriel sat between Rood Land and Mincing Lane and was a client of the Lord Chancellor. The church was considered small, although it was expanded in 1631 at a cost of £587 7s 10d.⁹⁷ After the Great Fire the parish's property was completely seized by the rebuilding commission, and used to improve the traffic flow of nearby streets.⁹⁸

The unified parish church was completed under Wren's direction in 1687 at a cost of £4,986. The church is a simple rectangle built of stone. The exterior's primary features is its two-hundred foot high tower with a lead spire, built to resemble the medieval church, although taller than Saint Margret's original tower. The interior is unique in that it contains the only completely canopied pews in London – carved of oak and set aside for the churchwardens.⁹⁹

The unique churchwardens' pews are not surprising as the churchwardens of this

⁹⁶Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 170.

⁹⁷*Ibid*, p. 151.

⁹⁸Reddaway, p. 293.

⁹⁹*An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London, Volume 4*, (London: Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1929), plate 68.

unified parish knew exactly how to influence Wren, and treated him to dinner many times during the rebuilding, one such meal on August 5, 1682 costing £10.¹⁰⁰ This appears to have paid off as a small strip of land was, unusual for Wren, purchased by the Rebuilding Commission to enlarge and improve the shape of the church.¹⁰¹ Despite the fine church which resulted from their lobbying, the vestrymen and churchwardens found the unified parishioners difficult to manage – during the rebuilding they refused to pay their poor roll. This issue required the intervention of the Lord Mayor before it was resolved.¹⁰²

The parishes drafted a formal union agreement in 1710. In the agreement the parishes established to proportional payments for church upkeep and supply, but equal representation in parish governance.¹⁰³ The parish furnishings and plate were jointly held, although under somewhat unique security. Both parishes dealt with looting in the aftermath of the fire, and the settlement reflected this – guards were frequently hired to watch the church for weeks at a time.¹⁰⁴ The plate was kept in a chest in the vestry house with three locks – one key was held by the joint vestry, while the other two were held by the

¹⁰⁰Bell, p. 263.

¹⁰¹Reddaway, p. 298; LMA P69/MGT4/B/004/MS04570/003, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1682, p. 99.

¹⁰²LMA P69/MGT4/B/001/MS04571/001, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Vestry Minutes Book*], May 20, 1690, p. 52.

¹⁰³ LMA P69/MGT4/B/011/MS04578, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Union Agreement*], 1710.

¹⁰⁴LMA P69/MGT4/B/004/MS04570/003, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1666, p. 46; LMA P69/GAB/B/001/MS04583/001, [*Saint Gabriel Fenchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1693, p. 11.

churchwardens from each parish.¹⁰⁵

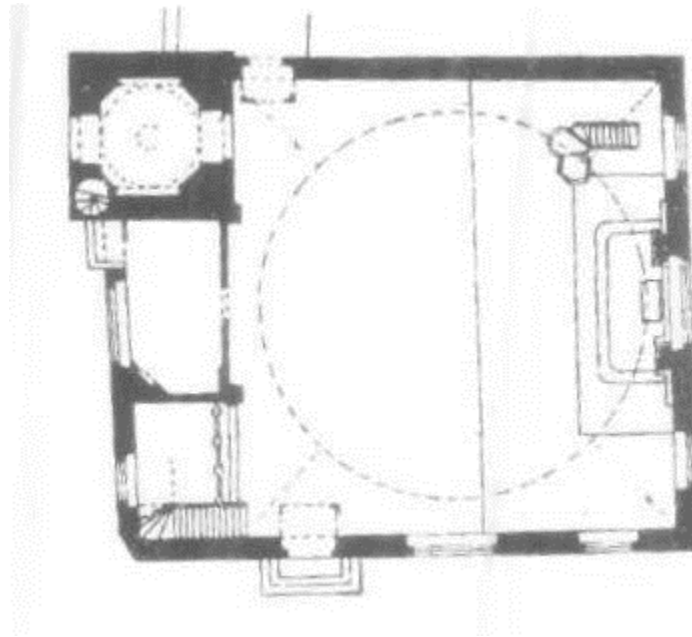


Fig. 43
Plans for Saint Mary Abchurch.

11. Saint Mary Abchurch, united with Saint Laurence Pountney:

Saint Mary Abchurch is located on Abchurch Lane on a small hill. It was beautified by its parishioners in 1611, but all the improvements were lost in the Great Fire.¹⁰⁶ After the Great Fire Saint Mary Abchurch was unified with the parish of Saint Laurence Pountney located in Candlewick Ward. The church was refurbished in 1631 to 1632 – repairs which included five new bells.¹⁰⁷ Both Saint Laurence and Saint Mary Abchurch were clients of

¹⁰⁵ LMA P69/MGT4/B/011/MS04578, [*Saint Margaret Pattens Union Agreement*], 1710.

¹⁰⁶Styve, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 183.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid*, p. 189.

the Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. The site of Saint Laurence's church was converted into a burial ground for the joint parish after the fire.

The rebuilt church was completed by Christopher Wren from 1681 to 1686 at a cost of £4,922. The church is built primarily of brick with stone ornamentation. The fifty-one foot tower is divided into four stories topped with a lead spire. The church is smaller than the initial plans indicate, a choice made by Robert Hooke who directed its actual construction. The church interior is capped with a dome and is decorated with oak carvings by Gibbons.¹⁰⁸ The church itself is relatively simple and plain in its design and decorations – most likely the result of Wren's increasing distraction by his work on other construction projects.¹⁰⁹ The parishes frequently lobbied Wren with gifts, granting him six guineas and then twenty guineas on two separate occasions and also bribing his clerks, to no avail.¹¹⁰ Some property was seized from the churchyard to widen streets near the church resulting in a relatively cramped churchyard.¹¹¹

The parish union was not entirely harmonious. They were one of the few parishes who completely combined their tithes.¹¹² They did experience some financial hardship

¹⁰⁸William John Loftie, *Inigo Jones and Wren: or, The Rise and Decline of Modern Architecture in England*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), p. 210.

¹⁰⁹Taylor, *The Towers & Steeples Designed by Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 26.

¹¹⁰LMA P69/MRY1/B/006/MS03891/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1681/2, p. 252; 1684, p. 286; 1685/6, p. 300; 1686/7, p. 318; LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1684, p. 72.

¹¹¹LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1676, p. 37.

¹¹²*Ibid*, 1671, p. 12.

despite this cooperation, and deferred most of their debts, and the collection of their rents, for the period of the rebuilding.¹¹³ These financial hardships came to a head over the construction of the vestry house, which Saint Laurence Pountney “absolutely refuse to be contributing to.”¹¹⁴ While Saint Mary waited for their payment, they denied Saint Laurence the right to vote in matters of parish governance, and even went so far as appointing Joseph Fowler the clerk for Saint Laurence's parish without their consent – threatening that if they rejected him he would be renamed as their sexton.¹¹⁵ Saint Laurence eventually advanced the funds by selling their bells, and the parishioners were invited to join the unified parish rebuilding committee.¹¹⁶ The parishes once again clashed over the purchasing of a pulpit, which the churchwardens of Saint Laurence did not assent to, and so refused to fund.¹¹⁷ After some legal coercion they ended up paying for this as well, although it was at a rate “at as reasonable a rate as the aforesaid churchwardens can oblige.”¹¹⁸

¹¹³*Ibid*, 1673, p. 17; 1672, p. 19.

¹¹⁴*Ibid*, April 5, 1675, p. 35.

¹¹⁵*Ibid*, October 28, 1679, p. 53.

¹¹⁶LMA P69/MRY1/B/001/MS03892/001, [*Saint Mary Abchurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1684, p. 72; LMA P69/LAW2/B/001/MS03908/002, [*Saint Laurence Pountny Vestry Minutes Book*], December 4, 1677, p. 22.

¹¹⁷ LMA P69/LAW2/B/001/MS03908/002, [*Saint Laurence Pountny Vestry Minutes Book*], December 8, 1686, p. 50.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, April, 12 1687, p. 54; December 4, 1695, p. 85.

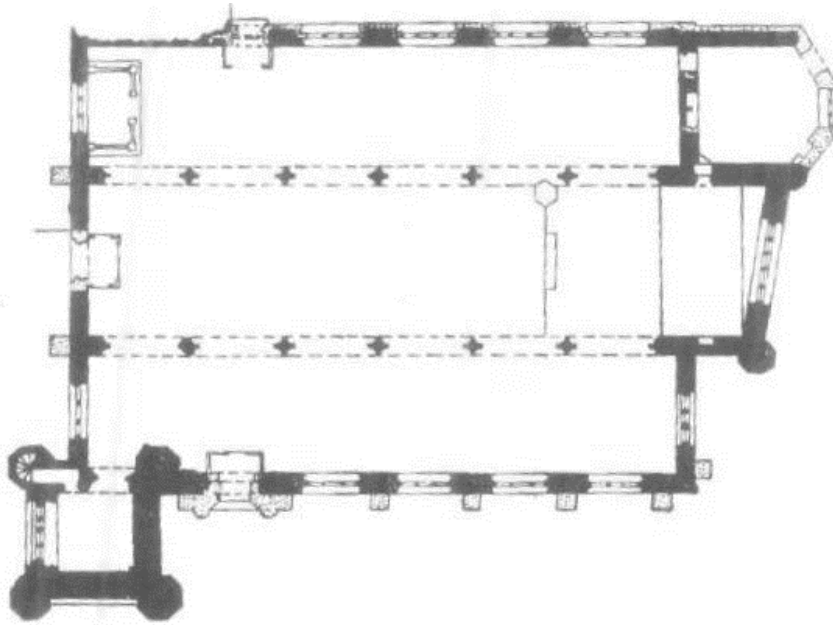


Fig. 44
Plans for Saint Mary Aldermary.

12. Saint Mary Aldermary, united with Saint Thomas the Apostle:

The parish church of Saint Mary Aldermary, a client of the Archbishop of Canterbury, is located on the south side of Budge Row. The oldest church of Saint Mary in the city, it was described by Stow as a “fair church.”¹¹⁹ It was repaired by the parishioners in 1632.¹²⁰ The parish was damaged by the Great Fire, but much of its basic structure survived – including its tower.

After the fire Saint Mary's parish was united with the parish of Saint Thomas the Apostle in Knightrider Street. The parish church was littered with ancient monuments that

¹¹⁹Stow, *Survey*, p. 250.

¹²⁰Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 18.

by the seventeenth century were all defaced.¹²¹ A client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral, the parish was populated by committed Royalists during the civil war, and their rector spent the 1640s imprisoned for his political sentiments.¹²² After the destruction of the parish in the Great Fire, its property was seized by the rebuilding commission and used to widen nearby streets.

The church was rebuilt under Wren's direction in 1681, but not based on his – or any other member of his workshop's design. The parish was fortunate enough to receive a gift of £5,000 left by Henry Roger for the repair of a church – which his widow granted to Saint Mary's and covered the entire cost of its reconstruction. Roger's widow was, however, an admirer of the pre-fire church, and insisted that her funds be used to restore the old church instead of building something more modern. Wren agreed, in part because of the attractiveness of the widow Roger's gift, but also because the parishioners had already gone a long way towards repairing their Gothic tower, especially its lower portion, before construction could begin.¹²³ As a result the rebuilt church is Gothic in style and is almost identical to the medieval church in form. The interior has fan vaulting on the ceiling.¹²⁴

The parish union was complicated by how many parishioners fled Saint Thomas the Apostle after the fire, including the entirety of the parish trustees.¹²⁵ Despite being

¹²¹*Ibid*, p. 7.

¹²²BL Harlein Miscellany Vol. 7, [*A General Bill of Mortality of the Clergy of London, printed against St. Bartholomew's Day*] 1661, p. 183.

¹²³Goodwin, p. 19.

¹²⁴*Ibid*.

¹²⁵LMA P69/TMS1/B/001/MS00663/001, [Saint Thomas the Apostle Vestry Minutes Book], 1672, p. 18.

underrepresented, the parishioners formed a joint committee after the fire and by 1704 were readily working together to undertake repairs to the churchyard wall – acquiring land to extend it into the roadway.¹²⁶ Saint Thomas did, however, express some anxiety about the shared possession of its bells which survived the fire – and asserted that any future sale of the bells would only be undertaken by their churchwardens, with the proceeds being dispensed to the unified parish at their discretion.¹²⁷

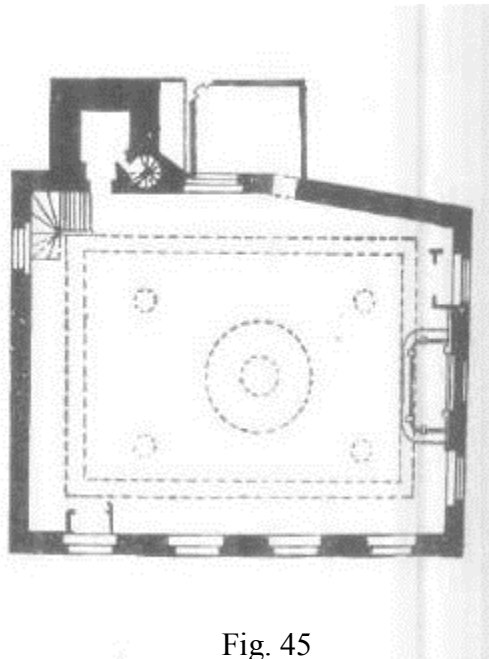


Fig. 45
Plans for Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street.

¹²⁶Bodl. MSS. Rawl. B 383 [*Misc. Letters and Contracts*], 1704, p. 24.

¹²⁷LMA P69/TMS1/B/008A/MS00662/001, [*Saint Thomas the Apostle Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], May, 1674, p. 42; LMA P69/MRY3/B/015/MS09048, [*Saint Mary Aldermary Vestry Minutes Book*], 1681, p. 5.

13. Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street, united with Saint Gregory by Saint Paul's:

Castle Baynard Ward was home to the parish church of Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street – a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The church was repaired in 1640 at a cost of £140, but the innovations were destroyed in the Great Fire.¹²⁸ After the Great Fire Saint Mary's parish was united with the parish of Saint Gregory by Saint Paul's. The parish, also located in Castle Baynard Ward, sat up against the wall of Saint Paul's Cathedral. It was not rebuilt after the fire so that its property could be used to expand the Cathedral. The parish church was threatened with destruction under similar circumstances in the 1640s, when Inigo Jones attempted to seize the church for his repair of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The parishioners fought Jones, who began tearing their church down only to have the House of Lords order him to rebuild it in 1641 out of his materials for Saint Paul's Cathedral.¹²⁹ During the Interregnum the church continued to use the Book of Common Prayer and their rector was executed for royalist leanings by Cromwell.¹³⁰ Their commitment to the King and to the established church might have saved their parochial church, were it not so immediately in the way of Wren's ambitions for Saint Paul's Cathedral. They did, however, benefit from the parish union as their patrons, the Minor Canons of Saint Paul's Cathedral, took the entire living for the parish, leaving no funds for a minister who the parishioners then had to pay themselves.¹³¹ After the unification the

¹²⁸Strype. Book 3, p. 227.

¹²⁹Michael Leapman, *Inigo: The Troubled Life of Inigo Jones, Architect of the English Renaissance*, (London: Headline Publishing, 2004), p. 274.

¹³⁰Fincham, *Altars*, p. 282.

¹³¹ *A Brief Account of the Maintenances Arising by the Tithes, Glebe, and Other Profits to the Several*

joint living was set at £120, which released the parishioners from paying for a minster themselves.

Immediately after the fire Saint Mary's parishioners attempted to patch up the roof of the ruined church, but it was beyond repair and needed to be completely rebuilt.¹³² The church was rebuilt by Christopher Wren in 1687, at a cost of £4,315. The rebuilt church was a slightly crooked rectangle, narrower at the north end than at the south. Built mostly of rubble it was cased in Portland Stone under a balustraded roof. The tower sat in the North West corner of the church. The spire was made of stone topped with an eight-sided pyramid and a lantern with a steeple – Wren appears to have derived the design from a study of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus. During the reconstruction the parishes frequently lobbied Wren, and even went so far as to bribe his clerks.¹³³

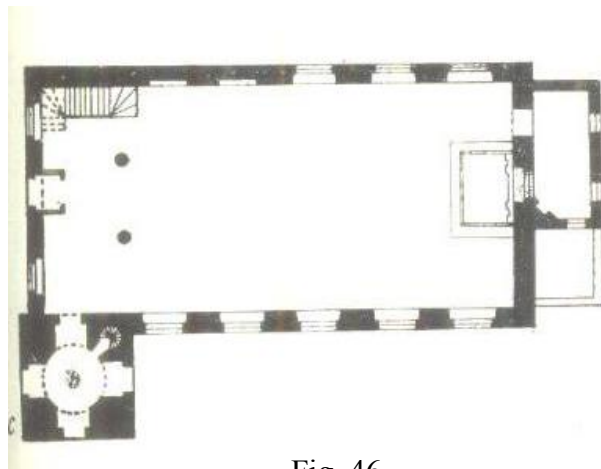


Fig. 46
Plans for Saint Mary Somerset.

Ministers of Parish-Churches Demolished by the Late Dreadful Fire In London: Together with the Names of the Present Incumbents Thereof, (London: 1671).

¹³²Bell, p. 300.

¹³³ LMA P69/MRY10/B/005/MS01341/001, [*Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1685, p. 254; July 17, 1686, p. 259.

14. Saint Mary Somerset, united with Saint Mary Mounthaw:

The parish church of Saint Mary Somerset is located on Upper Thames Street. The church was repaired in 1624 by its parishioners.¹³⁴ The parish was a client of the bishop of London. After the Great Fire Saint Mary Somerset was unified with the parish of Saint Mary Mounthaw. Saint Mary Mounthaw, located in Old Fish Street in Queenhithe Ward, was completely rebuilt in 1609, under the direction and patronage of Robert Bennet the Bishop of Hereford – that bishopric holding the living of the parish.¹³⁵ After the fire the parish property was converted into a joint burial ground for the unified parish.

Wren began construction on the unified church in 1686 and complete it in 1694. This was an unusually long time to wait for the commencement of reconstruction and an even longer period of time spent rebuilding the church itself. During the period from 1686 to 1694 the church was not continuously under construction and work was delayed for years around the Glorious Revolution as it was unclear if church building would continue in the same way under William and Mary as it had under Charles II and briefly under James II. When the church was finally completed in 1694 it cost the parishes frequently lobbied Wren with gifts, granting him six guineas and then twenty guineas on two separate occasions and also bribing his clerks.¹³⁶

¹³⁴Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 213.

¹³⁵*Ibid*, p. 212.

¹³⁶LMA P69/MRY12/B/002/MS05714/001, [*Saint Mary Somerset Churchwardens' Accounts Books*], 1689, p. 286; 1690, p. 300; 1692, p. 317.

The rebuilt church was somewhat smaller than the medieval church, and consisted of a small whitewashed room without aisles and a flat roof. The tower is more impressive, reaching one-hundred and twenty feet in five stories cased in Portland stone. The tower is decorated with windows with cherubs at their keystones. The peak of the tower is marked by eight pinnacles and twenty foot obelisks. The tower itself was completed so late in the construction project that it was most likely built under the direction of, if not designed by, Nicholas Hawksmoor. Hawksmoor was also the recipient of the parishes' gifts around the time the tower was completed.¹³⁷ The interior did receive some furnishings from parish notables, including an ornate font from Ward Deputy John Tooly in 1699, accompanied by a foot pace of checkered marble.¹³⁸

The unified parish was remarkably poor, and after the fire could not afford to furnish itself. Wren paid for the furnishing of the church out of the Coal Duty – in exchange for this generosity he seized a portion of the churchyard to widen Thames Street, which contributed to the smaller rebuilt church. The parish union was a complicated one as matters of church maintenance and repair were decided jointly, while parochial governance was directed by each parish individually.¹³⁹ The church rates were also unequally divided with Saint Mary Somerset paying two thirds of the total cost.¹⁴⁰ This caused constant

¹³⁷Ibid, 1685, p. 256.

¹³⁸Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 213.

¹³⁹*Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, Volume 3*, (London: The Bishopgate Institute, 1870), p. 264.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

disputes over how the money should be expended on repairs that continued well into the eighteenth century.¹⁴¹ The parish was also frequently afflicted with fears of crypto-papists in the parish – an unfounded concern which almost certainly exacerbated tensions in the parish.¹⁴²

15. Saint Mary Woolnoth, united with Saint Mary Woolchurch Haw:

Saint Mary Woolnoth's parish church is located on Lombard Street in Langbourne Ward. The parish was a client of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. After the fire the parish was united with the parish of Saint Mary Woolchurch Haw, a client of the Crown in Walbrook Ward. The medieval church of Saint Mary Woolchurch was large and attractive, and was repaired by the parishioners in 1629.¹⁴³ After the fire the church's propriety was seized by the Rebuilding Committee for the expanding the stocks market – along with many of the neighboring houses owned by parishioners.¹⁴⁴ Had the property not been so essential to the rebuilt market Saint Mary Woolchurch, with its fine church and royal patron, would have almost certainly have been chosen for reconstruction.

After the Fire Saint Mary Woolnoth's church was badly damaged, but was in a far better state than many of the other parishes in the city afflicted by the fire. Wren patched

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*

¹⁴²LMA P69/MRY12/B/002/MS05714/001, [*Saint Mary Somerset Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], 1679, p. 199.

¹⁴³Styve, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 195.

¹⁴⁴Reddaway, pp. 139, 298.

up the church quickly after the fire, and by 1672 the tower was suitably stabilized that it could hold two new bells. The repair was funded in large part by the Sir Robert Viner, a goldsmith who lived near the church, who is remembered in the structure by the vines adorning the church.¹⁴⁵ The reconstruction, however, was hastily done, and by 1711 the church was demolished and rebuilt by Nicholas Hawksmoor, as part of Queen Anne's effort to construct new churches in the city. Wren's church was built of brick with stone ornaments with a square short tower.¹⁴⁶ The parishioners were so pleased with the resulting church that they gifted Wren with a hogshead of wine worth £4 2s.¹⁴⁷

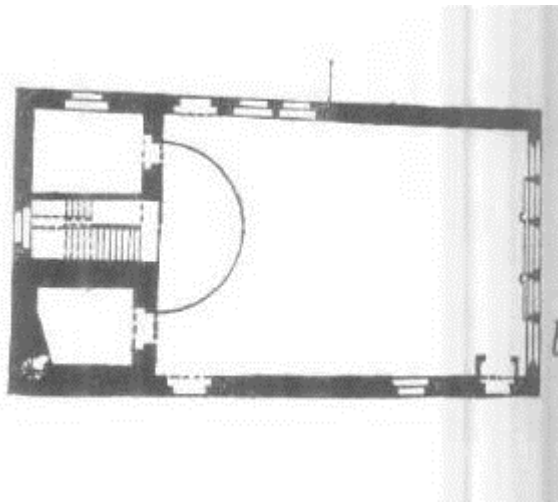


Fig. 47
Plans for Saint Matthew, Friday Street.

¹⁴⁵Styve, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 160; Goodwin, p. 20.

¹⁴⁶Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren*, p. 208.

¹⁴⁷LMA P69/MRY15/B/007/MS01003, [Saint Mary Woolnoth Churchwardens' Accounts Book], 1685.

16. Saint Matthew, Friday Street united with Saint Peter, Westcheap:

On Friday Street in Cheapside sat the parish church of Saint Matthew, Friday Street, a client of the Bishop of London. The church was repaired by its parishioners from 1630 to 1633 at a cost of £140.¹⁴⁸ In the 1630s the parish was a haven for dissenters – their minister Henry Burton was deprived, and mutilated, under Archbishop Laud. When the *Act of Uniformity* imposed orthodoxy in the church, the parishioners reacted aggressively – disturbing the church services by yelling and destroying the Book of Common Prayer.

After the Great Fire Saint Matthew's was united with the parish of Saint Peter Westcheap. The parish was a client of the Duke of Buccleugh and was located on Wood Street in the Ward of Farringdon Within. The parishioners repaired and improved their church from 1616 to 1617 at a cost of £314 although this was all lost in the Great Fire.¹⁴⁹ The site of the church was converted into a joint burial ground for the unified parish.

Saint Matthew's medieval church was far too small to accommodate the population of the unified parish, and the Rebuilding Commissioners initially planned to move the church to a larger location, but instead bought land around the medieval foundations to build a larger church. The reconstruction began in 1682 and was completed three years later at a cost of £2,309, making it one of Wren's most inexpensive churches. The church body was a slightly skewed rectangle, which consisted of a plain open room with a flat ceiling.¹⁵⁰ The church itself was cased in brick, with a stone facade in the east. The tower

¹⁴⁸Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 139.

¹⁴⁹Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 125.

¹⁵⁰Goodwin, p. 3.

is also the simplest in the city, made of brick with space for only a single bell – it would have been completely invisible from the street before the church.

Saint Matthew's dissenters, especially Burton, had been enemies of Bishop Wren, the Royal Surveyor's uncle. This may in part have motivated the Rebuilding Commissioners, and especially Wren, to provide them with such a small and inconvenient church – although the dissenting parishioners likely welcomed such a plain, simple space in which to worship. Despite this the interior appears to have been quite well furnished. The parishioners of Saint Peter Westcheap provided, not only half of the necessary funds for pewing the chapel, but also provided a railed alter table, and a fresh set of the King's Arms.¹⁵¹ This may have contributed to the tense character of this parish unification, as the parishes clashed over the joint use of church goods such as church plate and books in the early 1670s.¹⁵² The vestry of Saint Matthew Friday Street had to order the churchwarden of Saint Peter's to allow the minister for the united parish, a Mr. Thompson, to access their parish's goods, including what appears to have been the united parish's only remaining Bible after the fire.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹Thomas Allen, *The History and Antiquities of London, Westminster, Southwark and Parts Adjacent*, (London: Cowie and Strange, 1829), p. 534.

¹⁵²LMA P69/MTW/B/001/MS03579, [*Saint Matthew Friday Street Vestry Minutes Book*], September 27, 1672, p. 156.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

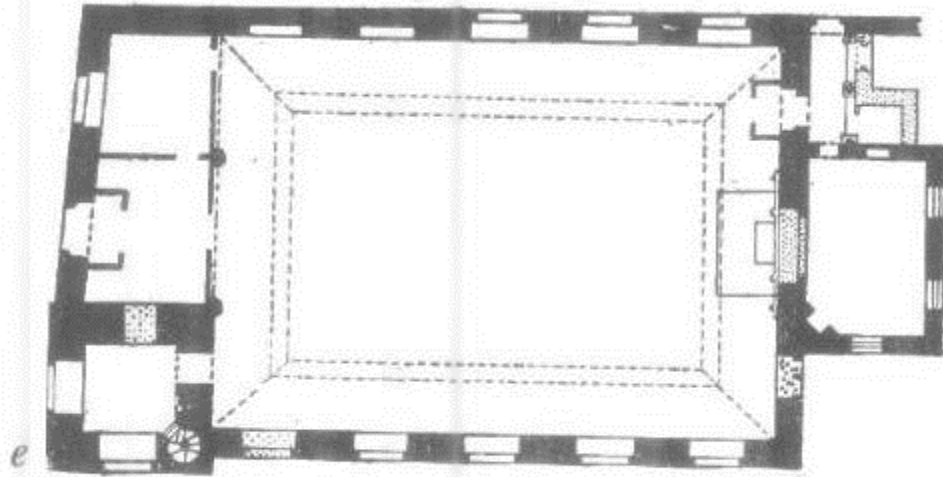


Fig. 48
Plans for Saint Michael Paternoster Royal.

17. Saint Michael Paternoster Royal united with Saint Martin Vintry:

Saint Michael Paternoster Royal was a client of the Bishop of London, and is located on Paternoster Lane. The parish church was destroyed in the Great Fire and afterward was united with parish of Saint Martin Vintry in Vintry Ward on Upper Thames Street. Saint Martin was a client of the Bishop of Worcester. The church was last repaired in 1632.¹⁵⁴

The body of the united parish church was rebuilt under the direction of Christopher Wren from 1685 until 1694 at a cost of £7,455. Work completely stopped in 1688 in part due to waning funds, as well as the political chaos of the Glorious Revolution. The steeple was not added until 1717 – an addition which brought the total cost of construction to £8,937. The church was rectangle in shape, cased in Portland stone at the front, with brick

¹⁵⁴Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 8.

on the other three sides. The church entrance is beneath the tower on the south-west corner of the church – a ninety-foot high tower topped with a square belfry and parapet made of Portland Stone capped with a dome. The late completion of the tower almost certainly indicates that it was the work of Nicholas Hawksmoor. The interior is open, without aisles.¹⁵⁵ The unification of the two parishes was remarkably quiet and without incident – especially given the delays in the completion of the unified church.

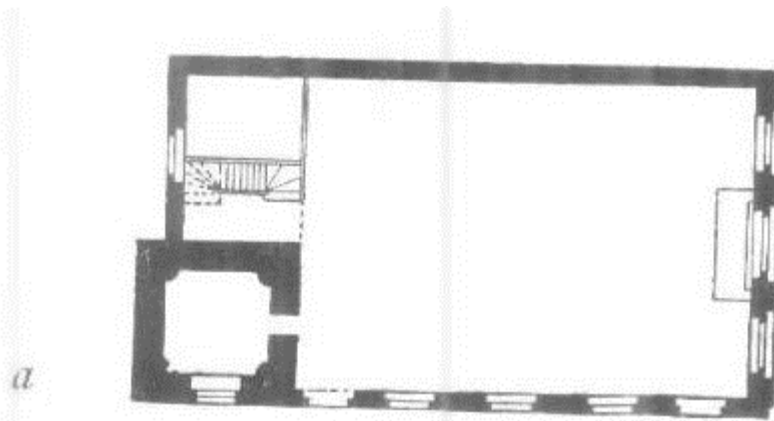


Fig. 49
Plans for Saint Michael, Wood Street.

18. Saint Michael, Wood Street, united with Saint Mary Staining:

Saint Michael's parish church was located on Wood Street in Cripplegate Ward. After the Great Fire Saint Michael was united with the parish of Saint Mary Staining whose church was located on Oat Lane near Saint Paul's Cathedral. The church was very small, and although it was repaired and beautified by the parishioners in 1630 there were no

¹⁵⁵Goodwin, p. 21.

monuments of note.¹⁵⁶ While Saint Mary's patron was the Lord Chancellor, Saint Michael's living was presented by the parishioners themselves – a fact that gave them very little leverage with the Rebuilding Commission and in turn with Wren. After the fire Saint Mary's became a joint burial ground for the united parish.¹⁵⁷

The unified parish church was rebuilt from 1669 to 1675 under the direction of Christopher Wren. The church body was cased in stone with a flat roof. The parishioners very quickly began worshiping in the church ruins which were so sturdy after the fire to allow a temporary roof to be erected on them.¹⁵⁸ The parishioners attempted to entice Wren to alter the design of their tower during its construction, by gifting him 10s 9d – far too meager a sum to motivate Wren who left the parish with its old Gothic tower intact.¹⁵⁹ The relatively stable state of the ruins allowed Wren to produce one of his less expensive churches at Saint Michael Wood Street – the total construction costing a mere £2,554. Despite the relatively simple and cheap reconstruction of their unified parish church – and Wren's relative ambivalence to the demands of the parishioners – the union of these two parishes was without incident.

¹⁵⁶Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 96.

¹⁵⁷LMA P69/MRY13/B/001/MS01542/002, [*Saint Mary Staining Churchwardens' Accounts Book*], March, 1676, p. 60.

¹⁵⁸Bell, p. 300.

¹⁵⁹Tinniswood, p. 207.

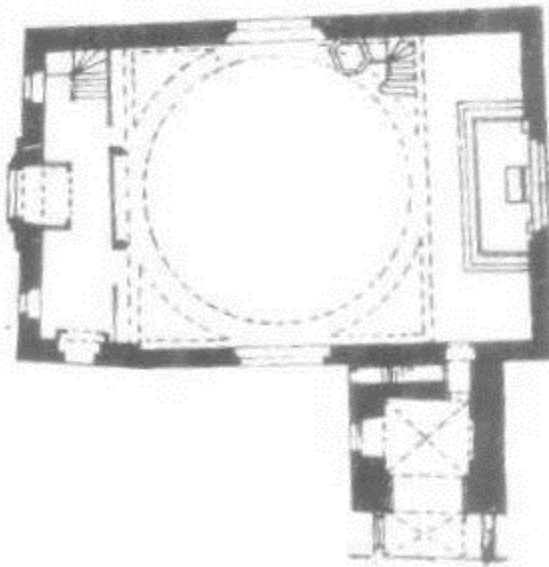


Fig. 50
Plans for Saint Mildred, Bread Street.

19. Saint Mildred, Bread Street, united with Saint Margaret Moses:

The parish church of Saint Mildred sat on Bread Street in Bread Street Ward. The church was repaired by the parishioners in the late 1620s.¹⁶⁰ At the time of the fire the advowson of the parish was held privately by a royalist merchant Sir Nicholas Crisp. Crisp lavished gifts on the parish, and as such the pre-fire church was well appointed and furnished.¹⁶¹ The parish church was destroyed in the Great Fire and united with the parish of Saint Margaret Moses. Saint Margaret, a client of the Lord Chancellor, was located on Friday Street in Bread Street Ward and was repaired by its parishioners in 1627.¹⁶² After the Great Fire the

¹⁶⁰Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 201.

¹⁶¹*Ibid*, p. 202.

¹⁶²*Ibid*, p. 205.

church property was converted into a joint burial ground, save for strips of land at the edge of the site that were used to widen neighboring streets.

After the fire the ruins of Saint Mildred's church were largely still standing, and the parishioners attempted to place a roof over the standing walls and resume services. The structure proved too unstable, however, and the ruins were torn down.¹⁶³ The united church was rebuilt from 1677 to 1683, under Wren's direction at a cost of £3,705. The interior was small and rectangular – its floor plan open without aisles, and supported a large dome which may have been a test of the larger design used in Saint Paul's Cathedral.¹⁶⁴ The church was largely built of brick with the front on the western end cased in Portland Stone. The tower, which rose to a height of one-hundred and forty feet was also made of brick, was topped with a lead spire. The interior was paneled in carved oak, and was furnished with much of the silver plate gifted to the parish by Crisp and saved by the churchwardens during the fire. Wren also furnished them with a pulpit and altarpiece.¹⁶⁵ The simple design of the church may have been the result of a distracted Wren, who was designing structures not just in the city, but in Dublin and Oxford as well during the period of Saint Mildred's reconstruction. Despite this, the union of these two parishes went smoothly.

¹⁶³Bell, p. 300.

¹⁶⁴Tinniswood, p. 221.

¹⁶⁵Samuel Tymms, *The Family Topographer, Middlesex, London, and Westminster*, (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1843), p. 68.

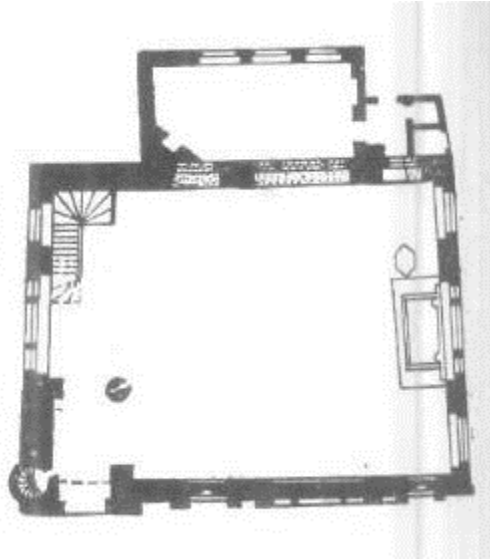


Fig. 51
Plans for Saint Mildred, Poultry.

20. Saint Mildred, Poultry united with Saint Mary Colechurch:

The parish church of Saint Mildred, Poultry was located in Cheapward on the North side of Poultry. The parish was a client of the Crown. After the Great Fire Saint Mildred was unified with the parish of Saint Mary Colechurch. Saint Mary's church was located in the southern end of Old Jewry. The parish was remarkably wealthy – being well maintained by their patrons the Worshipful Company of Mercers – and its church was finally appointed and beautified in 1623.¹⁶⁶

The unified church was rebuilt by Christopher Wren in 1676 and was in part funded by a gift from Lady Elizabeth Allington of £200 which allowed the parishioners to begin rebuilding before Wren even arrived in the parish.¹⁶⁷ The total reconstruction cost £4,654.

¹⁶⁶Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 34.

¹⁶⁷LMA P69/MIL2/B/001/MS00062/001, [*Saint Mildred Poultry Vestry Minutes Book*], March 1, 1676, p.

The church was complete quickly, largely because of how simple it was, consisting of a single open room with a flat ceiling that was slightly tilted in the west end. The front of the church was the only portion of it which is ornamented, and then only with simple ionic pilasters and carvings of foliage. The tower rose to seventy-five feet in three stories high and was topped with a small cupola with a weather-vane in the shape of a ship.¹⁶⁸ The entire church is faced in stone.

The union of these two parishes was not a smooth one, and the mollicoddled parishioners of Saint Mary were offended by the parishioners of Saint Mildred whom they found loud and unruly¹⁶⁹ The location of the unified parish was also far busier than they were used to, and the church was so small there was nearly no space to bury their dead.¹⁷⁰ It is somewhat surprising that Wren would have eliminated the finer, wealthier of the two parish churches. Additionally, if the account of Saint Mildred parish by the parishioners is taken at their word, the church could have easily been sacrificed to widen streets and alleviate congestion. This may be the clearest case of the Rebuilding Commissioners acting against reason in favor of maintaining a significant patronage network, that of the Crown. Saint Mildred's aversion to the parish union was particularly potent in the financial management of the unified parish – they insisted on collections at separate doors, and very

102.

¹⁶⁸Simon Bradley, *London: The City Churches*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 122.

¹⁶⁹Representations to Wren's Rebuilding Committee, 1670," in Philip Norman, *The London City Churches*, (London: The London Society, 1921).

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*

aggressively maintained that the church plate of the unified parish, was theirs alone, if only in name.¹⁷¹

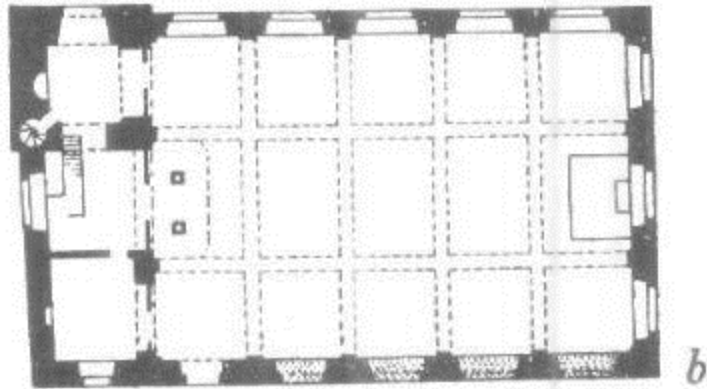


Fig. 52
Plans for Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey.

21. Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey united with Saint Nicholas Olave:

The parish church of Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey, a client parish of the crown, is located in the western end of Knightrider Street. The parish was populated primarily by Fishmongers who lived nearby.¹⁷² During the Civil War the parish was a client of Colonel Francis Hacker, a puritan who participated in the execution of Charles I. The parish was repaired in the 1620s and 1630s, including the installation of new bells in a completely new steeple.¹⁷³ After the Great fire Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey was united with the parish of

¹⁷¹LMA P69/MRY8/B/001/MS00064, [*Saint Mary Colechurch Vestry Minutes Book*], 1682/3, p. 124; July 17, 1685, p. 134.

¹⁷²Styve, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 209.

¹⁷³*Ibid.*

Saint Nicholas Olave, located on Bread Street Hill in Queenhithe Ward. The parish was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's Cathedral. Many fishmongers also worshiped in this parish, which may have contributed to the relatively smooth unification of the parish – which occurred without incident.¹⁷⁴ Saint Nicholas' churchyard was converted into a joint burial ground for the unified parish.

Wren rebuilt the church from 1672 to 1678 at a cost of £5,042. The church is a brick and stone square and the southern and western walls are simply repaired versions of the medieval walls which survived the fire. The church body is capped with a balustrade, save for the northwestern corner where a tower rises to a height of one-hundred and thirty-five feet, and is topped with a small lead spire and a belfry only large enough for a single bell. The interior contained a railed altar, added by Wren, as well as a finely carved pulpit.

The reconstruction of this church was uncertain in the years after the Great Fire, but the parishioners appear to have been remarkably active lobbyist in favor of their church's survival. Charles II initially wished to gift the site of the church to a group of Lutherans from the continent, but the parishioners aggressively fought this, and their parish was passed over for this in favor of Holy Trinity the Less.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴*Ibid*, p. 211.

¹⁷⁵*CSPD* 1668-9, p. 369.

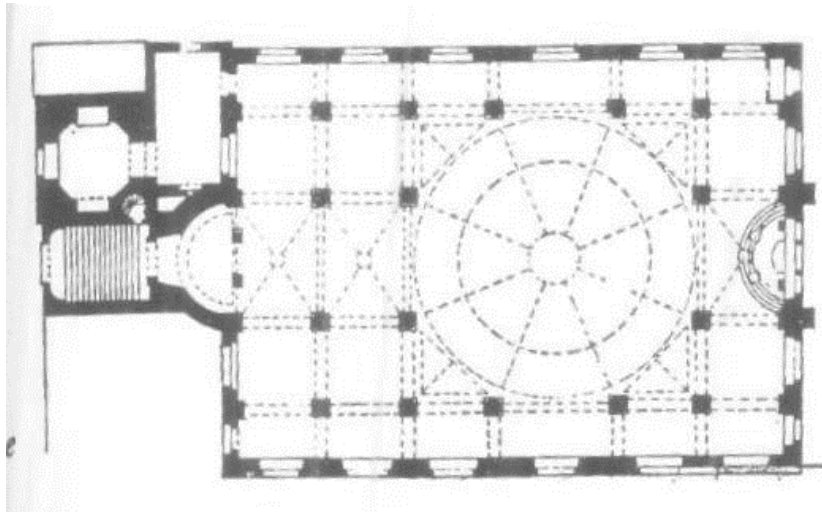


Fig. 53
Plans for Saint Stephen's Walbrook.

22. Saint Stephen's, Walbrook, untied with Saint Benet Sherehog:

The parish church of Saint Stephen's is located on the east side of Walbrook Street. The church was repaired regularly from 1622 to 1633 at a total cost the parishioners £510 15s 6d.¹⁷⁶ The parish was a client of the Worshipful Company of Grocers. After the Great Fire destroyed Saint Stephen's church, the parish was united with the parish of Saint Benet Sherehog. Saint Benet was located in Cordwainer Ward and its parish church was small, and by 1628 had decayed nearly to ruin, but was repaired by the parishioners – a project which included shifting marble blocks from beneath the pews into the body of the church to improve its appearance.¹⁷⁷ Saint Benet's was a remarkably poor parish despite being a client of the Crown. In the aftermath of the fire the parish possessed no revenue – they had

¹⁷⁶Strype, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 196.

¹⁷⁷Strype, *Survey*, Book 3, p. 27.

even lost their church plate and furnishings as a churchwarden had stolen them around the time of the Great Fire.¹⁷⁸ After the fire the parish property was retained as a burial ground for the unified parish.

The church was rebuilt under Wren's direction from 1672 to 1679 – at a cost of £7,692. The church is a rectangle topped with a dome. The church design was a miniature version of Wren's original plans for Saint Paul's Cathedral, without an additional porch on the north end of the church which Wren never built.¹⁷⁹ The church is largely made of stone, with a dome made of wood and plaster cased in copper. The tower sits in the north western corner of the church. The interior had a fine stepped entrance at its front, and a side entrance in the north, which the parishioners sealed with brick in 1685 as it was too close to the butchers slaughterhouses for their comfort. The interior contained an ornate alter table on a stepped rise made of black and white marble, within a rail.¹⁸⁰ Much of the furnishing for the parish was provided by the Grocers' Company, especially the wainscoting and pews – their choice of furnishings appears to have upset Wren.¹⁸¹ The parish is also smaller than the medieval church, most likely because of the completely reworked design of the church itself.¹⁸² The rebuilt church is considered one of Wren's finer churches, especially the church is illuminated by the variety of windows in the church body.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸*Ibid*, p. 28.

¹⁷⁹Tinniswood, p. 220.

¹⁸⁰Fincham, *Altars*, p. 325.

¹⁸¹Bell, p. 311.

¹⁸²Styrye, *Survey*, Book 2, p. 161.

¹⁸³Kerry Downes, 'Sir Christopher Wren, Edward Woodroffe, J.H. Mansart and Architectural History,'

The parishioners appear to have been quite pleased with Wren's work and they gifted Wren with a hogshead of wine for his labor.¹⁸⁴ They also sent a silk purse containing twenty guineas to Wren's wife in 1679.¹⁸⁵ The parishes did, however, petition the Corporation of London to avoid the construction of the north end porch present in Wren's original design, while simultaneously demanding the completion of a tower as “a church cannot be made useful without the tower”.¹⁸⁶ The parishioners also installed their own rood screen in 1681.¹⁸⁷

Despite being relatively pleased with the construction of their new church the union between the parishes was not entirely friendly. The vestry and churchwardens of Saint Stephen's parish were remarkably disorganized, as they stopped recording all financial records for the parish around 1685, and often failed to lock up their records.¹⁸⁸ The churchwardens also appear to have been leasing property without the consent of the joint vestry, the minister, or each other, and were even failing to buy bread and wine for church services.¹⁸⁹ It is not entirely surprising then that the resulting unification settlement maintained distinct parish finances – most likely a request by the parishioners of Saint

Architectural History, Volume 37, (1994), pp. 57, 58.

¹⁸⁴Tinniswood, p. 210.

¹⁸⁵ LMA P69/STE2/B/008/MS00593/004, [Saint Stephen Walbrook Churchwardens' Accounts Book], February, 1673.

¹⁸⁶P69/STE2/B/026/MS01056, [*Saint Stephen Walbrook Misc. Repair Bills*], July 10, 1679, p. 85.

¹⁸⁷*Ibid*, 1681.

¹⁸⁸P69/STE2/B/007/ADDMS00274, [*Saint Stephen Walbrook Visitation Orders*] March 9, 1685.

¹⁸⁹*Ibid*.

Benet's.¹⁹⁰ The most alarming instance of Saint Stephen's financial overreach most grievously afflicted the parishioners of Saint Benet's. While Saint Benet's parishioners had lost their church, and nearly all of their church furnishings were destroyed or stolen, their church bells miraculously survived the fire. These bells would have provided the parishioners with a source of wealth or leverage in the parish unification – had the churchwardens of Saint Stephen's not sold their bells without their knowledge or consent, much to the chagrin of Saint Benet's parishioners.¹⁹¹

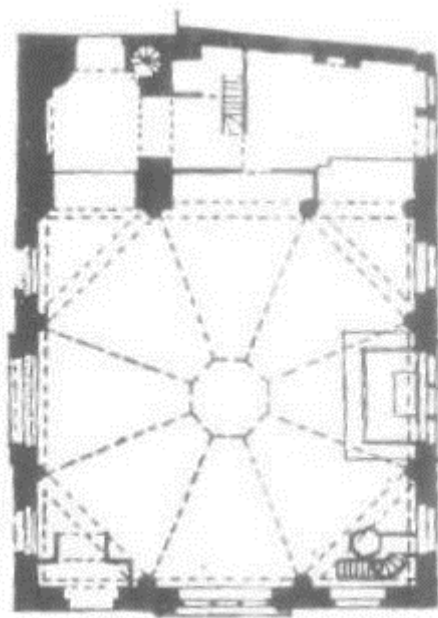


Fig. 54
Plans for Saint Swithin, London Stone.

¹⁹⁰LMA P69/STE2/B/027/MS07628, [*Saint Stephen Walbrook Misc. Receipts*], 1693, p. 4.

¹⁹¹*Ibid*, 1693, p. 8.

23. Saint Swithin, London Stone united with Saint Mary Bothaw:

The parish church of Saint Swithin, London Stone sat on Cannon Street near the Salter's Hall – the parish's patrons. After the Great Fire the Saint Swithin was unified with the parish of Saint Mary Bothaw. Saint Mary was located on Candlewick Street in Walbrook Ward and was a client of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral. After the fire its ruins were dismantled for use in rebuilding Saint Swithin's church, with the church grounds converted into a burial site for the unified parish.

The unified parish church was completed under Wren direction in 1678. The church cost £4,687 to complete and is cased in stone with a lead roof. Its tower rises to one-hundred and fifty feet out of the northwest corner of the church, and it topped with a spire. The rectangular interior is decorated with carved reliefs. Despite being a small church, the interior was relatively free of clutter and provided the parishioners with an open place to worship. The interior ceiling consisted of a shallow octagonal dome decorated with plaster reliefs and windows which resembled the completed roof of Saint Mary Abchurch.¹⁹²

After the fire the parish of Saint Swithin, London Stone appears to have been largely vacated, and the same churchwardens served for many consecutive years as no one else stood for the position.¹⁹³ Despite this inconvenience these churchwardens were energetic in attempting to unify the two parishes as quickly as possible, something Saint Mary Bothaw appears to have had no interest in. The first real clash between the parishes involved the ruins of Saint Mary Bothaw. While the parishioners of Saint Mary were

¹⁹²Bradley, *London: The City Churches*, p. 32.

¹⁹³Reddaway, p. 246.

mourning their parish, the churchwardens of Saint Swithin could only see stone, brick, and lead – all materials which could be salvaged to ensure the speedy reconstruction of their church. The parishioners of Saint Mary's, however, were unwilling to begin dismantling their church, and it required a loan from Saint Swithin for the entire cost of the labor for the church to be dismantled, around £7.¹⁹⁴ After the church was rebuilt, Saint Swithin attempted to form a committee to combine parish assets and debts – debts which amounted to £44 which Saint Mary's parish refused to assume until the churchwardens of Saint Swithin withheld united parish's revenue from them.¹⁹⁵

I. Conclusion:

On October 26, 1708 Wren's son, Christopher Jr. climbed to the top of the then unfinished Saint Paul's Cathedral. Atop the dome, under the watchful eye of his father at the dome's edge, the younger Wren placed the final stone in the Cathedral, completing the reconstruction of its exterior. From atop the dome, the Wrens would have been able to observe the rebuilt city like few others. The spires of Wren's churches, both completed and unfinished, would have towered over the low, level skyline of the city. At three-hundred and sixty-five feet above the city's streets, Wren was at the center of a city cast from his own ambitions for the metropolis. This vision of London had coalesced decades earlier out of evening debates with Robert Hooke and John Evelyn, a brief exchange with Gian

¹⁹⁴LMA P69/SWI/B/001/MS00560/001, [*Saint Swithin London Stone Vestry Minutes Book*], 1669, p. 142; June 28, 1670, p. 146.

¹⁹⁵*Ibid*, December 19, 1670, p. 148; 161 May 4, 1672, p. 161; March 10, 1672, p. 165.

Lorenzo Bernini, and the generosity and enthusiasm of a King, by then long dead.

As the Wren's descend from Saint Paul's great dome they entered a very different city. Gone was the clean, clear open sky. Instead Wren and his son would have been surrounded by smoke, debris, and endless crowds of busy Londoners. From the ground, it was impossible to survey the city in its entirety – at best one could hope to see a single church steeple, peeking out above roofs or down alleyways. This was London for the vast majority of its residents. Their city skyline was a single church, and it formed the center of their religious, as well as their economic, social, and political lives. It is not surprising then that so many Londoners fought to preserve, and improve this vision of a more local London – and why some parish communities simply dissolved after this vision was lost forever. It would be more than a century before the survival of London's parish churches were threatened as universally as they were by the Great Fire, but by then the city parishes, and the city more generally, had taken on very different characters. The decision to eliminate parish churches in the nineteenth century would be far less controversial, and would not be fought by Londoners, but instead was encouraged.

As the rebuilding project progressed the energy and resources that Londoners were expending to save their parish churches shifted to preserving the influence and autonomy of their parish itself. The actual process of unifying London's parish churches was left almost entirely unaddressed by official rebuilding legislation. The vague nature of this process allowed London's parishes to coordinate their settlement in a wide variety of ways. In some cases, especially among those parish unifications that took place in the first fifteen churches to be rebuilt, went relatively smoothly. For those unified parishes outside of the

first class of churches, however, the decades long period of uncertainty about when their church would be rebuilt and how it would be funded exacerbated even the most trivial concerns about parish management, occasionally boiling over into inter-parish conflicts in the no doubt charged environment of a unified parish tabernacle. Many of these unified parishes drafted formal agreements to direct the process of unification. Some of these agreements were designed to facilitate complete unifications of parish property, wealth, debts, and offices, while others were drawn up to protect the autonomy of the parishes – protecting some or all of the rights and privileges enjoyed by each parish independently. Still other parish unification agreements were designed to bring unruly parishes into the thrall of wealthy ones – a process usually lubricated by some form of financial or political coercion.

Conclusion:

In 1710, after many of Wren's churches were completed, Parliament passed an *Act for the Building of Fifty New Churches in the Cities of London and Westminster or the Suburbs*.¹ The Act indicated a dramatic shift in the fortunes of the city after the Great Fire. London, once concerned with eliminating parishes, had now recovered to the point that new churches were needed to serve its ever swelling population. Like in 1670, the commission for rebuilding these fifty new churches was to be headed by Sir Christopher Wren.

This was not the same Christopher Wren, however, that had clashed with Sir Roger Pratt over his ambitions to build a London Cathedral that would rival any in continental Europe. This Wren was nearing eighty and was exhausted from decades of uninterrupted work. His appointment to the committee was a formality, to honor his contributions to the city of London over the previous half-decade. Most of the new churches would be built under the direction of the other commissioners, including Wren's protégé Nicholas Hawksmoor.

These churches were, however, very different from those built after the Great Fire. First, they were to be built primarily in the suburbs surrounding the city of London. While the city was still the beating heart England, its blood increasing flowed out into the environs of the city as people commuted to the suburbs – suburbs they had moved too in the aftermath of the fire. There was also significantly less enthusiasm for the new churches as they lacked the ancient community ties of those in the city of London. In addition, there

¹*The New Churches in London and Westminster Act*, 1710, (Anne St. 9 c. 17).

was little interest in a second fundraising effort to build fifty new, expensive churches. As a result, only twelve of the fifty planned churches were ever built, and the commission closed in 1733.

After the Great Fire, the most well-known threat to London's churches came during World War II. During the Blitz, Nazi air raids destroyed much of the city of London. This included many of Wren's churches – targeted by the German airmen in hopes that the destruction of historical and cultural sites in the city would devastate support for the war. London still bears the scars from these raids, and some of the churches – bombed into ruins – still stand as a testament to the destruction. These churches, however, escaped an even more potent wave of church destruction in the nineteenth century – the signs of which are nearly invisible to the modern observer.

In 1834 the Corporation of the City of London attempted to destroy thirteen of the city's churches. The property would be used to widen streets and generally improve the city. They might have succeed, were it not for the aggressive efforts of the Bishop of London, Charles Blomfield. Blomfield was able to defend these churches from the city's aldermen by promising that he would force them to fund the construction of replacement churches outside of the city.² The threat proved successful, and the churches survived.

By 1860, however, there was no one to defend the city's churches. The residential population of the city had declined considerably, even as greater London swelled into the capital of a global empire. *The Union of the Benefices Act of 1860* eliminated twenty-three

²LMA P538708X, [a satirical print by Thomas McLean from 1834 which depicts city alderman tearing down churches with ropes, while the Bishop of London assaults them from the sky].

parish churches in the city – many of them Wren churches – and unified the effected parishes with surviving ones.³ Many of the parish cemeteries were emptied, and the bodies re-interred at the City of London Cemetery.

While there were some protests against the *Union of Benefices Act* – including a very focused effort which saved the parish church of Saint Stephen Walbrook – the destruction of these parish churches was at least passively accepted.⁴ This was in part due to the dramatic shift in the population of London. Many who daily walked the streets of the city no longer called London home – in 1841 the population had fallen to 123,000, and by 1901 it would fall as low as 27,000.⁵ The acceptance of this wave of church destruction may have also been dependent on the increasingly national identity of the English, who may not have thought of themselves primarily a Londoners, let alone members of a specific parish. Their political identity may have also taken on a more national character, as *The Great Reform Act* of 1832 meant that many more Londoners were distracted with politics far outside of their own parish, or membership in any livery company.

Resistance to the *Union of Benefices Act of 1860* may have also been defeated by the improvements that came to the city in its wake. Many of the church sites were used to improve the city's streets and to erect new or expand old civic building. The centrality of commuters from the suburbs was further established by the act, as many of the church sites were seized to build railway stations or to lay rail lines.

³*Union of Benefices Act*, 1860, (Vic. 24 St. 15 c. 142).

⁴Simon Bradley, *London: The City Churches*, p. 40.

⁵*Ibid.*

The 1670s and 1680s was the last time Londoners would fight en masse to preserve their medieval and early modern city against innovation. These churches were the core of London's most ancient urban communities, and even with the addition of Wren's baroque trappings the churches still served their parishioners much in the same way that had for centuries. The subsequent centuries, however, saw the fading of these communities into broader notions of identity – a dissolution completed with the replacement of the churches themselves with increasingly modern civic institutions and infrastructure.

The churches that were rebuilt after the Great Fire cost over £267,551 to complete over a period of fifty-one years. The rebuilding project mobilized the entire country, with brickyards and quarries outside of London racing to produce the necessary materials for Wren's workshop. The reconstruction also employed some of the most significant artisans and tradesmen in both England and from the continent, as well as countless lesser artisans and laborers simply glad to be employed. The reconstruction itself was funded by massive monetary gifts from some of England's most wealthy notables, as well as the spare pence of more common Londoners collected at church doors.

The churches built by Wren and his collaborators present a remarkable degree of diversity. Some reflect more traditional styles of English church building, while others look to Paris, Rome, or Amsterdam. Some churches resemble imagined structures from the Biblical past, while others are simply experiments in practical engineering – preparation for future projects. The diversity and scale of Wren's rebuilding project dramatically transformed the city of London, and is a feat worthy of celebration.

It would be a mistake to simply celebrate Wren and his colleagues, however.

London's parishioners also played an essential role contributing to the scale and diversity of London's recovery after the Great Fire. Without their tireless efforts lobbying for the survival of their parish church, Wren would only have rebuilt thirty-nine instead of fifty-one churches. These Londoners also played a role in directing the ultimate form of their church interiors – commissioning pews, altar tables, and clocks. They had to balance this desire for a finely ornamented church with their own theological concerns about religious practice. Many parishes struggled to decide if a raised altar table was literally a step too far for their church while some were forced to decide where the line was between accepting Popish gold, and the gift of a Popish Pipe Organ. One parish, Saint Stephen's Walbrook, even incorporated the remarkably popish rood screen in the design of its new church.

Any celebration of the role played by countless Londoners in the recovery of London's parish churches after the Great Fire must be tempered by an awareness of the ultimate cost for many of these communities. Thirty-six parishes lost their parish churches to the fire and never recovered them. The loss of a parish church could cost parishioners in myriad ways. It was often a blow to parish pride to lose a church, but it could also cost a community financially – especially if you were dependent on the parish poor roll. It could also leave them isolated from networks of patronage and political influence in the city. Perhaps most alarmingly, if their interests were marginalized by unification with a wealthier parish, Londoners might find themselves worshipping in a church that was at best entirely foreign to them, and at worse temple to heresy.

This dissertation is more than just an effort re-focus of the period after the Great Fire on the parish community. London's recovery after the Great Fire reveals how essential

the parish was to the city's residents – as well as how influential the parishes could be when interacting with city, royal and ecclesiastical offices. London, with its wealth, independence, and influence, must feature prominently in any study of early modern Britain. It is unfortunate, however, how frequently London appears in scholarship as a homogenous monolithic city – and from outside of the city's walls this is not an entirely surprising representation.

Inside the walls, however, one finds a deeply divided city. These divisions were not the city's political wards marked by the spheres of influence of the Lord Mayor, and the City Aldermen. Instead the city was divided by proximity to church towers, and the relative volume of countless peeling bells. Failure to approach the city of London with these divisions in mind reduces the effectiveness of any study of the early modern city. It also transforms this scholarship into an autopsy – the body of the city having been bled into cold, cadaverous stillness. London must be examined alive if any of its profound dynamism and complexity is to be honestly represented in scholarship.

Additional Figures.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Fig. 55

Steeples of Wren's Churches and Saint Paul's Cathedral.

Charles Knight, *Old England: A Pictorial Museum of Regal, Ecclesiastical, Municipia, Baronial, and Popular Antiquities*, (London: Bracken Books, 1988).

Key: 1 – St. Dunstan in the East; 2 – St. Magnus; 3 – St. Benet Gracechurch; 4 – St. Edmund the King; 5 – St. Margaret Pattens; 6 – All Hallows the Great; 7 – St. Mary Abchurch; 8 – St. Michael, Cornhill; 9 – St. Lawrence, Jewry; 10 – St. Benet Fink; 11 – St. Bartholomew; 12 – St. Michael Qeenhithe; 13 – St. Michael Royal; 14 – St. Antholin; 15 – St. Stephen, Walbrook; 16 – Saint Swithin; 17 – St. Mary-le-Bow; 18 – Christ Church, Newgate Street; 19 – St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey; 20 – St. Mildred, Bread Street; 21 – St. Augustin; 22 – St. Mary Somerset; 23 – St. Martin, Ludgate; 24 – St. Andrew by the Wardrobe; 25 – St. Bride.

| Parish | Construction Cost |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Saint Alban, Wood Street | £3,165 |
| All Hallows Bread Street | £4,881 |
| All Hallows the Great | £5,641 |
| All Hallows Lombard Street | £8,058 |
| Saint Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe | £7,060 |
| Saint Anne and Saint Agnes | £2,448 |
| Saint Antholin, Budge Row | £5,685 |
| Saint Augustine, Watling Street | £2,400 |
| Saint Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange | £5,077 |
| Saint Benet Gracechurch | £4,573 |
| Saint Benet's, Paul's Wharf | £3,328 |
| Saint Benet Fink | £4,129 |
| Saint Bride's Church | £11,430 |
| Christ Church Greyfriars | £11,778 |
| Saint Clement Danes | £8,786 |
| Saint Clement's, Eastcheap | £4,365 |
| Saint Christopher le Stocks | £2,098 |
| Saint Dionis Backchurch | £5,737 |
| Saint Edmund, King and Martyr | £5,207 |
| Saint George Botolph Lane | £4,466 |
| Saint James Garlickhythe | £5,357 |
| Saint Lawrence Jewry | £11,970 |
| Saint Magnus-the-Martyr | £9,579 |
| Saint Margaret Lotbury | £5,430 |
| Saint Margaret Pattens | £4,986 |
| Saint Mary Abchurch | £4,922 |
| Saint Mary Aldermanbury | £5,237 |
| Saint Mary Aldermary | £5,000 |
| Saint Mary-at-Hill | £3,980 |
| Saint Mary-le-Bow | £8,071 |
| Saint Mary Magdalen Old Fish Street | £4,315 |
| Saint Mary Somerset | £6,579 |
| Saint Martin, Ludgate | £5,378 |
| Saint Matthew Friday Street | £2,301 |
| Saint Michael Bassishaw | £5,704 |
| Saint Micheal's Cornhill | £4,686 |
| Saint Michael, Crooked Lane | £4,541 |
| Saint Michael Paternoster Royal | £8,937 |
| Saint Michael Queenhithe | £4,375 |
| Saint Micheal Wood Street | £2,554 |
| Saint Mildred, Bread Street | £3,705 |
| Saint Mildred, Poultry | £4,654 |
| Saint Nicholas Cole Abbey | £5,042 |
| Saint Olave, Old Jewry | £5,580 |
| Saint Peter upon Cornhill | £5,647 |
| Saint Stephen's, Coleman Street | £4,517 |
| Saint Stephen, Walbrook | £7,652 |
| Saint Swithin, London Stone | £4,687 |
| Saint Vedast Foster Lane | £1,853 |
| Total | £267,551 |

Fig. 56
Parish Church Reconstruction Costs.

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