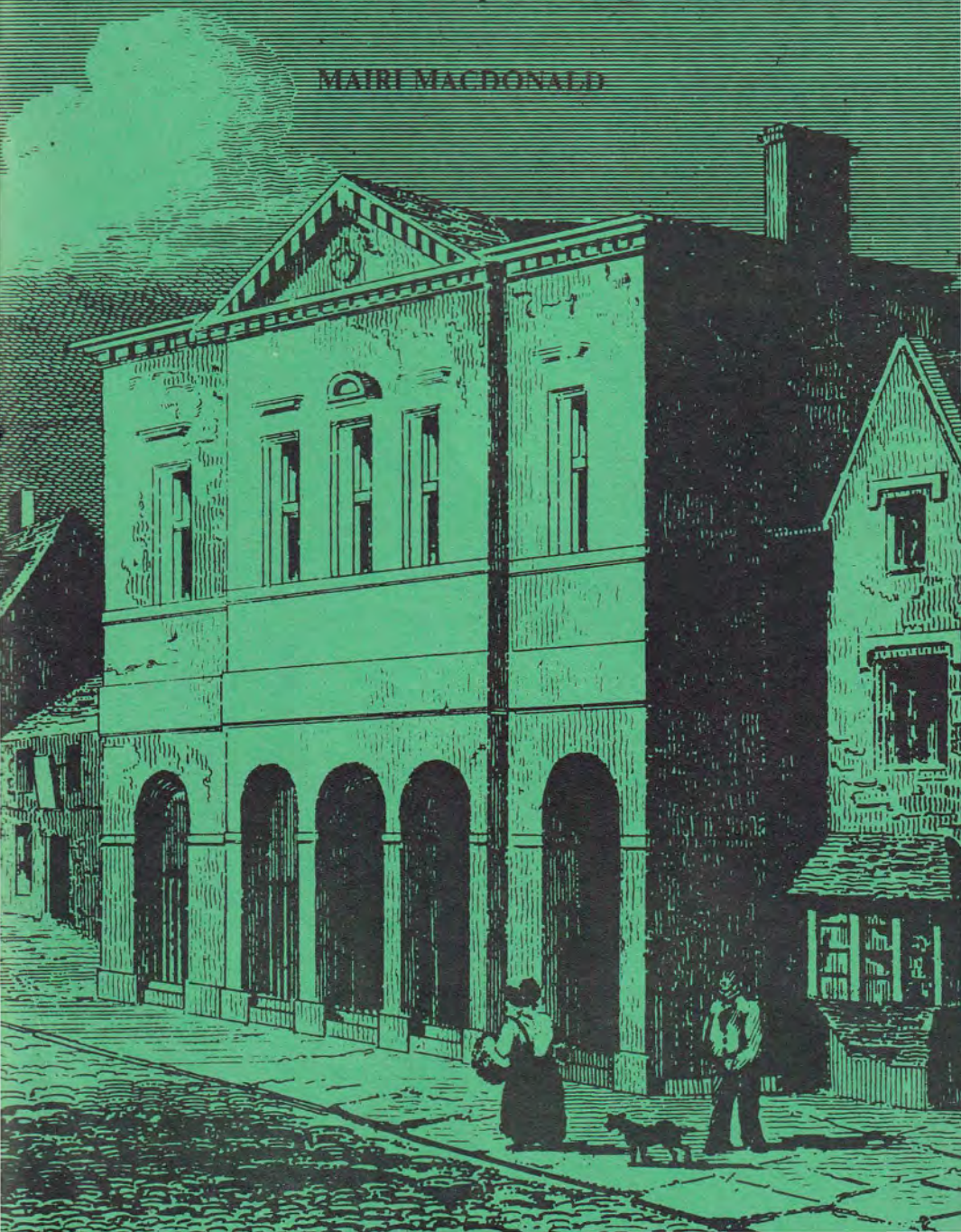


# The Town Hall

## Stratford-upon-Avon

MAIRI MACDONALD



## **Stratford-upon-Avon Papers**

This is the first of a number of authoritative monographs which the Stratford-upon-Avon Society intend to publish in the coming years on important Stratford buildings and monuments. We see this project as important not only in contributing to our knowledge of the town's history, but also in raising general awareness of the town's architectural heritage. Both these aims are incorporated in our constitutional Aims and Objectives:

1. To stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the area of the Town and its surroundings.
2. To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.
3. To pursue these ends by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, other forms of instruction and publicity, and promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.

## **Acknowledgements**

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**THE STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SOCIETY**

**THE TOWN HALL**

**Stratford-upon-Avon**

**Mairi Macdonald**

**1986**

**Stratford-upon-Avon Papers  
No. 1**



*James Saunders' drawing of the old Town Hall which was replaced in 1767 with the present building (ER1/27, f.77b)*

## THE TOWN HALL, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

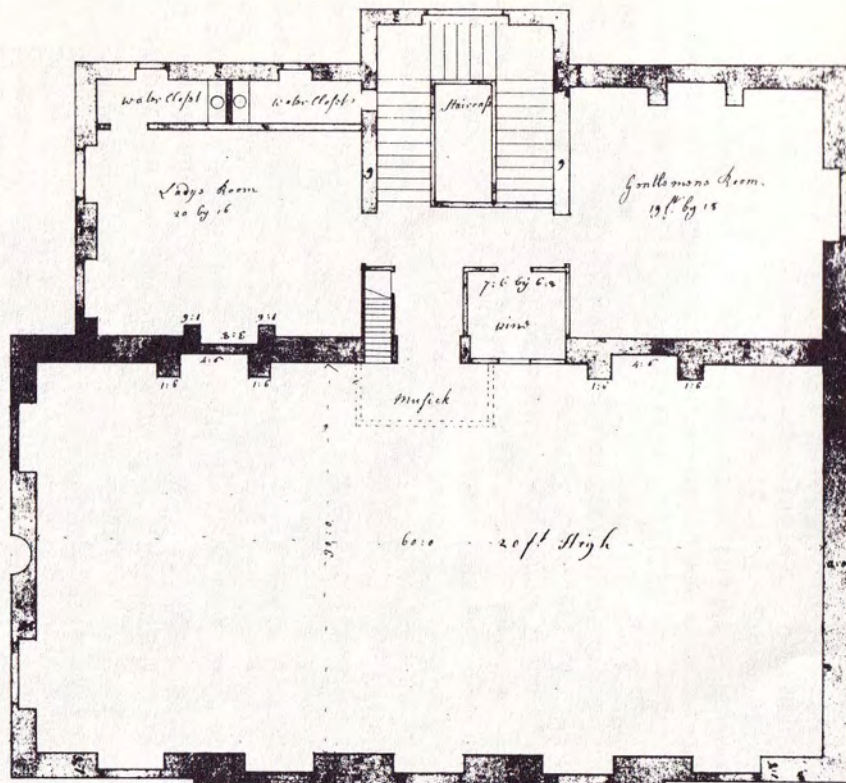
### I

'It is agreed at this Hall that the Town Hall being in a dangerous and Ruinous State shall and may be taken down and rebuilt in a good and substantial manner with other useful & necessary Rooms and Conveniences to be there unto adjoining, and it is farther agreed that Six of the Body Corporate together with Six other Gentlemen in or near the Town of Stratford may if they please contract for the same, but that the sum to be paid by the Corporation shall be no more than Two Hundred Pounds for any of the above purposes, which Money we agreed at a former Hall to Subscribe.'<sup>1</sup>

Despite the implication of an earlier decision, this record in the Council Minutes for Stratford of 6 April 1767 is in fact the first reference to any decision to rebuild the Market Hall of the town. This hall, begun in 1634 by John Page, mason of Chipping Campden and owner of the Westington quarries, was wrecked in 1643 by the explosion of gunpowder when being used as a magazine by the Parliamentary forces then garrisoning the town. It had been repaired by subscription by 1661 but became neglected in the eighteenth century despite its use being granted in 1713 to the mayor 'for the time being'.<sup>2</sup> A sketch made in the early nineteenth century by Captain James Saunders, the Stratford antiquary, from an unknown source, shows this earlier hall as a two storied building, colonnaded with five round arches facing Chapel Street, three facing Sheep Street and a cupola on the roof.<sup>3</sup> The sixth bay on Chapel Street is shown as a lock up, 'ye room under ye Market House Stayres', which was converted into a jail in 1704.<sup>4</sup>

Further alterations took place in July 1727 when the Chamber ordered that a cellar, kitchen and two rooms over were to be built 'with all Convenient Speed In The Place where The Markit Howse staires now stand & a paire staires To Be set up In The Corner of The Markit Howse Next The Chimney'.<sup>5</sup> Whatever the reason for haste, workmen were presenting bills to the Chamberlain for work done by the end of July and August.<sup>6</sup> After this flurry of activity, however, there is no further structural reference to the Market Hall until 1767, when the great rebuilding was mooted.

The Corporation, while seeing the advantages in completely rebuilding the semi-derelict Market Hall, were nevertheless not prepared to bear the whole cost of the proceedings, nor indeed the burden of the organisation. This passed instead into the hands of the syndicate of twelve authorised to contract for the work. Unfortunately

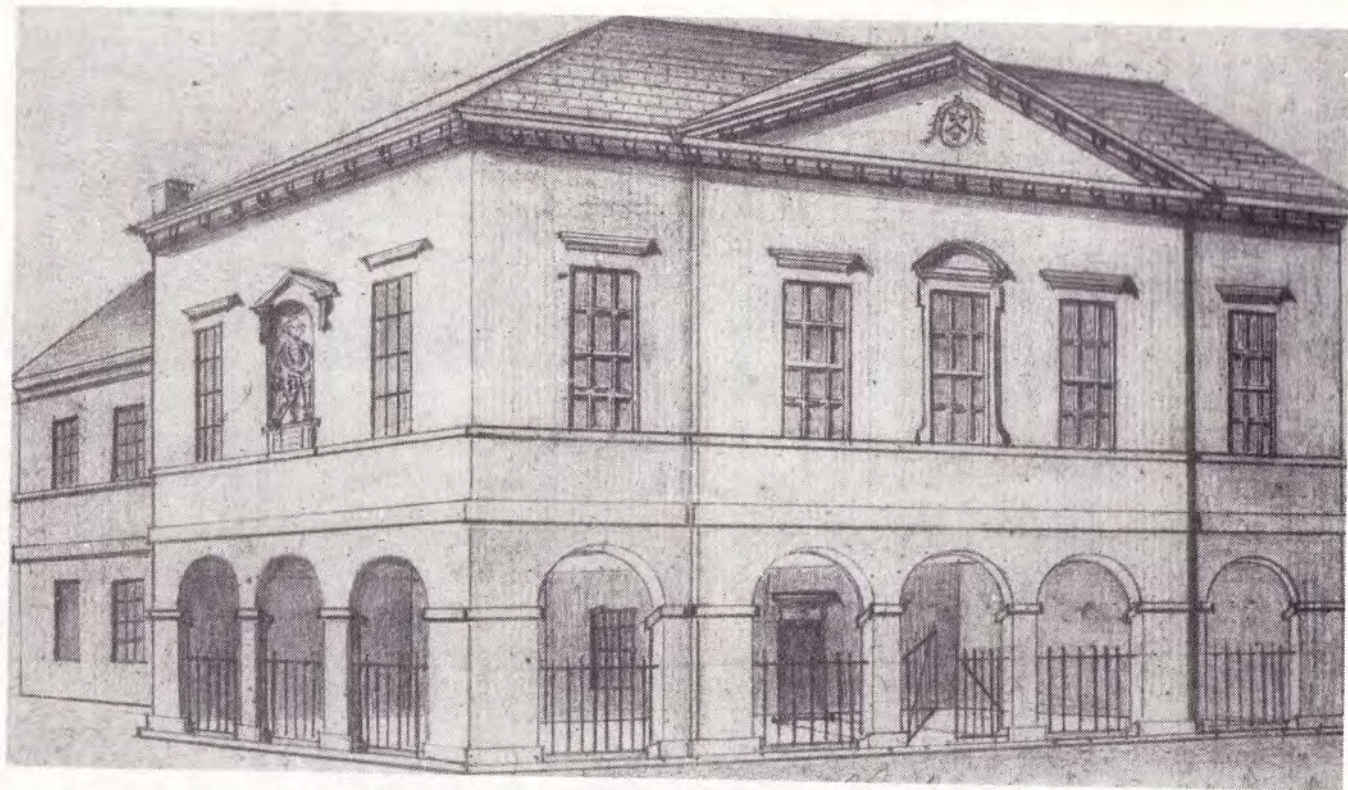


Floor plan of the upper storey of the new building, attached to the Articles of Agreement, 5 April 1767 (BRU 21/10)

the records of the Corporation are silent as to the method by which the six council members were chosen and as to how the other six were approached to join in the enterprise. We have only their names appearing as parties to the contract entered into for the building. The first six are those of the 'other Gentlemen in or near the Town'; Thomas Mortiboys, the Reverend Stephen Nason, Vicar of Stratford, William Hunt, Town Clerk, John Payton, innkeeper, who was to be a leading instigator of the Jubilee, Goodwin Zouch, tanner, and Thomas Wells, meal merchant. The remaining six were the Corporation half of the syndicate; John Halford, ironmonger, John Baylis, surgeon, John Hitchcocks, grocer, William Evetts, baker, William Eaves, saddler, and Richard Lord, cordwainer. Of these six all but Eaves were alderman and therefore of standing in the Corporation, if only by length of service, and this would no doubt reassure those subsequently approached to subscribe to the building fund that Stratford Corporation would lend their full support to the venture. It is not perhaps quite so apparent why the non-Corporate syndicators became parties to the arrangement, but it may not be far fetched to see them as representing the various classes of the population to which appeals for money were to be made: minor gentry (the nobility would expect such appeals), clergy, lawyers (and, as Town Clerk, other bodies corporate), innkeepers and victuallers, tradesmen and country tradesmen.

The date of the Corporation's resolution to rebuild (6 April) is, at first sight, puzzling, as the articles of agreement, with detailed specifications for the building, entered into between the contractors and syndicate, are dated 5 April, the day before the official minute. In other words, the plans had obviously been in hand for some time, even though there had been no official mention of it. Indeed it is clear, from any study of the Minute Books of the Corporation in the eighteenth century, and indeed into the nineteenth, that much official business was transacted outwith the Council Chamber on an *ad hoc* and informal basis. No doubt the Council in this instance was playing safe and making no official commitment to the building until plans were well in hand and they could be assured, presumably by preliminary subscription lists, that they would not be left to bear the whole burden of construction costs.

The Articles of Agreement<sup>7</sup> (given in full in the Appendix) are very detailed and make it clear that the new Town Hall was not to be a complete re-build but would retain much of the form of the old building and re-use materials wherever possible.<sup>8</sup> James Saunders, writing some 50 years after the building of the new hall, describes both the old



*Pencil drawing of the Town Hall, attributed to John Jordan, showing the palisades erected in 1781 (ER 1/19 f.9)*

and the new:

The Town Hall ... was first erected in 1633 and a lofty edifice, consisting of a Basement story containing the great stair case etc. with a prison at the S and a pillory at the E end - without which was a piazza of round pillars with 5 semi-circular arches on the W & 3 on the N, as a Corn Exchange or Mans Market - Above which was a large and handsome room extending the whole length of the building surmounted by an open ornamental parapet of stone and high ridge roof ... crowned by a small cupola turret wherein was suspended the market bell ... it continued till the year 1767, when the greatest part of it was taken down, and in the following year the present Town Hall, a fine structure in the Tuscan order was built.

This is very similar in plan to the original edifice, but in elevation is greatly improved - the front is of Campden free stone, the basement consisting of 5 arches springing from square pillars; above the Great room with as many windows to the front - and over that an architrave & pediment in which the Borough Arms are sculptured with the date of its being rebuilt - The interior of the base story now contains the great staircase - on the right a large kitchen and on the left a reception room - and prison with an external entrance outside which are the stocks. The Great Room above extends the whole length of the building, being 60 feet long and 30 wide, and is furnished with a Music Gallery and handsome Chandeliers ...<sup>9</sup>

The main contractor for the new building was Robert Newman of Whittington in Gloucestershire, 'builder and mason' but the rest of the work was entrusted to local men: Thomas Taylor and Thomas Morse, carpenters and joiners, and Richard Stevens, plumber and glazier, who was himself a member of the Corporation. Little is known about Newman and what, if any, were the other buildings with which he was concerned during his career. He may have been the younger brother of Richard Newman, who is known to have worked on the Shire Hall, Warwick, and at Farnborough Hall near Banbury, as sons of these names were born at Adlestrop in 1717 and 1727 to John and Elizabeth Newman. There is no direct evidence that Newman drew up the designs for the building but one of the elevational drawings is signed by him and, as the handwriting on the other plans is the same, we may assume that he had in fact drawn them up to some specification now lost.<sup>10</sup>

In a memorandum dated the same day as the main contract, the contractors agreed with each other to carry out their respective areas of work according to estimates agreed between them. These were: stone work and carving £149 12s 0d; plumbing, glazing and painting £38; carpenters' and joiners' work £165; slating and plastering,

brickwork, new ceilings and alterations, £337 8s 0d. This totalled £690 from which £12 was deducted for re-used iron and lead. The syndicate had accepted this estimate but laid down clear stages in the building at which payment would be made: £100 when the structure was plinth high; £100 at chamber floor height; £150 when the wall plates were put on; £100 when the roof was on; £100 before the last day of February 1768 and the residue of £128 within one month after the completion of the building. The first payment of £100 was made on 26 June 1767 but thereafter the receipted payments bear little relation to the scheme laid down but seem rather to represent *ad hoc* payments to the individual contractors as and when they completed an area within their specification. Between August and October there were three payments to Newman and Stevens, presumably for the main structure, then a gap until February when £200 was paid to all the contractors. A long interval followed until October when a further £100 was paid to Taylor and Morse who were presumably finishing the interior. They received a further £30 in May 1769, but the final £48 was not handed over until 22 September, after the Garrick Jubilee.<sup>11</sup>

A list of contractors appearing on accounts for the Town Hall dated 31 May 1768 makes it clear that Newman, Morse, Taylor and Stevens sub-contracted or employed quite substantially, and almost entirely within Stratford. There are payments for lime, carriage, bricks, brickwork, ironwork and slating, the slates for which were brought from Birmingham.<sup>12</sup>

The Corporation's concern about the finance for the new building had been based no doubt on an earlier experience in Stratford; for in 1764 there had been considerable trouble raising the £50 needed, in addition to a special rate, to renew the steeple on Holy Trinity Church.<sup>13</sup> The Council may well have felt less than optimistic that the syndicate would obtain the necessary promises of nearly £500, in addition to the Town contribution, to complete the building. The path was long and hard but, due largely to the exertions of William Hunt, the Treasurer, who was indefatigable in drafting and sending out begging letters and tactful reminders, the total sum eventually collected was £727 17s 3d.<sup>14</sup> The main subscribers were of course the local nobility and gentry, chief amongst whom in terms of contribution were the Duke of Dorset, Lord of the Manor and High Steward of the Borough, and the Earl of Hertford of nearby Ragley Hall. These two headed the list with promises of thirty guineas each; a third peer, the Earl of Plymouth, had subsequently to be reminded to pay, writing to Hunt in October 1769 '... As you did not mention to me at Stratford [Jubilee] anything concerning the payment of my subscription to the Town Hall, I

imagin'd it had been done long since. I have order'd my Steward to settle that matter with you the 1st time he comes to Stratford ...'<sup>15</sup>

The preliminary letter sent out by Hunt, presumably before any plans were drawn up, is a nice blend of optimism and moral blackmail.<sup>16</sup>

The Town Hall in Stratford upon Avon is a very antient edifice greatly decayed, & in some Danger of falling, the Corporation and Inhabitants ... in order to accommodate the Ladies and Gentlemen of the County, who shall honour them with their Company at ye Races & on other publick Occasions, are very desirous that a proper Room shall be erected for their Reception. [Estimates put the cost at more than £500] ... The Design therefore must totally have failed had not sev[era]l Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood been kind enough to offer their assistance to the Town upon the occasion. This very generous encouragement has induced a Subscription to be opened, and we humbly hope that you will honour us with your Name in the List of Subscribers ... We therefore beg the favour of your Lordship to inform our Town Clerk of the sum you will be pleased to contribute ... and the favour will be always esteemed as a very singular obligation ...

Promises were forthcoming, but the actual cash was slower of appearance. Draft letters from Hunt to the major subscribers seem to indicate that the syndicate were experiencing 'cash-flow' problems. The letters imply that the addressee is the only one who has not as yet paid: 'the Building is in great forwardness, & ... most of the Gentlemen have paid in their subscriptions ...' but the list of names on the back of each draft make it clear that it was to be written out many times.<sup>17</sup>

It has been suggested<sup>18</sup> that it was this slow incoming of funds, while the actual building proceeded apace, which gave rise to the idea, credited to Francis Wheler, a lawyer and Steward of the Court of Record, that some notable personage should be persuaded to make a grand gesture towards the new building before the supply of money dried up completely. The public figure who seemed to Wheler the most amenable to an approach of this sort was David Garrick, the leading actor of his day, with a noted passion for all things Shakespearean. A generous financial donation would not suffice; what was needed was a tangible object with which Garrick's name could be permanently linked (he was notoriously vain). Wheler wrote to Hunt, the Town Clerk, at the end of November 1767

It would be an Ornament to our New Town Hall at Stratford if we cou'd get from Mr. Garrick some very handsom bust, statue or picture of Shakespear ... And in order to flatter Mr. Garrick into some such Hansom present ... it wou'd not be at all amiss if



*Cheere's statue of Shakespeare, presented by David Garrick in 1769*

the Corporation were to propose to make Mr. Garrick an Honorary Burgess of Stratford ...<sup>19</sup>

The Corporation thought the idea a splendid one and within a week Wheler was writing formally to Garrick on behalf of the Corporation, offering the Freedom (in a mulberry wood box) but making it clear that there was a price to pay

... the Corporation would be happy in receiving from your hands some Statue Bust or picture of him [Shakespeare] to be placed within this Building...

As an added incentive, Garrick was asked for a picture of himself to place beside that of Shakespeare (which it was hoped he would give) 'That the Memory of both may be perpetuated together in that place wch gave him birth...'<sup>20</sup>

## II

Garrick entered into the sentiments of the Corporation wholeheartedly, but his enthusiasm was, in the end, to be somewhat of a mixed blessing for the town; for it resulted, some twenty months later in the great Shakespeare Jubilee of September 1769, an occasion compounded of pageant and farce, which was in itself to be the seed of the tourist industry in Stratford. However, while these events moved towards their conclusion, their original cause, the completion and embellishment of the new town hall continued steadily, the Corporation accounts recording payments in 1768 and 1769 for work both inside and outside the building.<sup>21</sup> By October 1768, £600 of the estimated cost had been paid to the contractors, but it would seem that the building was not used before the Jubilee, which, under Garrick's auspices, had turned from a simple gift-giving ceremony into a three-day event based, as the Ode he composed in honour of the occasion proclaimed, 'upon dedicating a building and erecting a statue to Shakespeare ...' The Shakespearean association lasted well into the next century, for the building was frequently known as the Shakespeare Hall, at least until the regular meetings of the Town Council were moved there in 1869.

The obvious location for any statue to be presented by Garrick was the, as yet, empty niche on the Sheep Street front of the new building and in February 1768 Wheler wrote to Hunt asking for specifications of the niche so that something appropriate could be commissioned by Garrick.<sup>22</sup> He knew the cost of a work by a master, for he had paid £315



*Gainsborough's portrait of David Garrick, which was destroyed in the fire of 1946. The elaborate frame, by Wilson, cost £74 4s 0d, £1 4s 0d more than the picture itself.*

to Roubilliac for a statue of Shakespeare; instead he commissioned from John Cheere, a pupil of Peter Scheemaker, a lead copy of the statue which the latter had carved for Lord Pembroke at Wilton. This was itself a revision of his earlier work for Westminster Abbey. Garrick's gift to the town did not end with the statue, however, for he also commissioned portraits of Shakespeare and himself, to be hung inside the new building. After a dispute with Gainsborough as to the form the Shakespeare portrait should take, it was eventually painted by Benjamin Wilson. Garrick apparently glibbed at paying for his own portrait, but after the Corporation had been persuaded to purchase it themselves, he resolved his differences with Gainsborough who produced a masterpiece. The cost to the Corporation was 60 guineas which was more than doubled after they rather rashly accepted Wilson's offer to supply a suitable frame.<sup>22</sup> The total cost to the Town Council of Garrick's 'gift', including mulberry wood box for the Freedom, portrait and frame came to just over £192, all to boost the fund-raising for a new building the total cost of which was £750.

By early September 1769 the town had been taken over by Jubilee fever. Few outsiders seem to have realised what was the original object of the occasion, and the weather was to deprive the building of its moment of public dedication when Garrick's gift was to be hoisted into position to the public declamation of the Ode. Nevertheless the Town Hall did have its part to play in the celebrations and it seems likely that the first event of the Jubilee was the Hall's first 'public appearance'. The town was roused early by singing in the streets; at eight the Corporation assembled in the Guild Hall and 'at 9 the Company repaired to the Town Hall which was neatly and magnificently decorated with Festoons and Ornaments in Stucco, with the Harp string etc. very curiously expressed in Basso-Relievo. At one End of the Room a very fine whole-length picture of Shakespeare, with the Pen in his Hand, and his Eyes glancing from Earth to Heaven, etc., done by Wilson, and set in a rich and superb carved and gilt frame: At the opposite End was placed Garrick's Picture, in whole length, by Gainsborough, leaning with one Hand on a Stick, and with the other clasping the Bust of Shakespeare'. There was a Public Breakfast 'to which every purchaser of a guinea ticket for the various entertainments ... was admitted upon the payment of a shilling, and regaled with tea, coffee and chocolate'.<sup>24</sup>

This breakfast was repeated, with less ceremony, and indeed success, on the two following mornings of the Jubilee. These public assemblies were, in the main, the sole contribution of the new building in the festivities, supposedly in its honour. On the evening of the first

day, while the important visitors were enjoying the masquerade ball in the Rotunda on the Bancroft, the crowds of locals and sightseers who were strolling the streets were entertained by five painted transparencies over the upper windows, illuminated from within by a hundred lamps. The scenes, painted by John French, the scene-painter at Drury Lane, showed Shakespeare and Pegasus over the legend 'Oh! for a muse of fire' while on either side were Falstaff and Pistol, Lear and his daughters, Caliban and Trinculo.

On the second day, the weather was too wet for the intended Shakespearean pageant through the streets, which was to culminate in the raising of the statue to its niche. Instead, the assembly adjourned to the Rotunda where Garrick, standing below the figure of his god, declaimed his rather indifferent Ode, in what was possibly the finest performance of his career. There is no record of when or how the statue was put in place, probably after the end of the Jubilee and without ceremony, but the Chamberlain's accounts do at least record a payment 'To two men to sit up to Watch the Statue of Shakespeare one night ... 4s 6d'.<sup>26</sup>

Fittingly the building also saw the last event of the Jubilee, which by the end of the third day had shattered Garrick's hopes, when it played host to a ball at which a small but determined company danced until 4 a.m., inspired by the brilliant dancing of Eva-Marie Garrick.<sup>27</sup>

### III

A brief moment of somewhat obscured glory had heralded the entry of the Town Hall onto the social scene of Stratford, but after the last reverberations and repercussions of the Jubilee had died away, the building seems to have taken on a role of less prominence in Town affairs than its originators had perhaps foreseen. There was an attempt to revive the jubilee celebrations annually, which involved a procession of the various trades in allegorical costume: thus the jersey combers, preceded by music and banners, portrayed the search of Jason and his companions for the Golden Fleece. 'In the evening a concert and Ball took place at Shakespeare's Hall in order to allow the Ladies to share in the days festivity.'<sup>28</sup> The decline of trade in the 1770s, however, led to the abandonment of the proceedings after some six years. In June/July 1770 the two windows overlooking Sheep Street were blocked up, <sup>29</sup> although the reason is not known: they were opened up again in 1803 when it was 'decreed that the Town Hall shall be beautified, and that the two windows at the end of the Hall shall be

opened again.'<sup>30</sup>

The lower storey, open to the street, was used as a place of promenade, for the siting of the stocks and, as originally intended, as a market hall and it may be for the security of this latter function that the arches were closed with lockable iron palisades in 1781.<sup>31</sup>

It is clear from accounts in the local papers of social events in Stratford during the late years of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth centuries, that the Town Hall had not secured a monopoly of the major social events: large dinners did take place there, but also at the various local inns, notably the Falcon, the Golden Lion and the White Lion, which latter was described as possessing a ball room. In 1793 the 'Masonic Jubilee' for the inauguration of the Shakespeare Lodge exemplified this unclear division of function: the main ceremonies took place at the White Lion and in Holy Trinity Church, but on the following evening a ball for the ladies was held at the Town Hall.<sup>32</sup> It would seem that within a few years the building became the accepted, although not exclusive, location for the Warwickshire Hunt Ball, and indeed the demands of this event were to be the prime movers in the alterations which took place in the building during the nineteenth century.

During the early nineteenth century, the Town Hall gradually became the venue for events of public interest or concern. It was here that meetings were held to consider the merits of railways, the Public Dispensary, parliamentary reform and aspects of the social revolution: temperance, benefit societies and, more practically, the opening of a soup kitchen in the severe winter of 1855 when, on the first day, 200 gallons of soup were distributed with bread, at a charge of 1d per quart.<sup>33</sup> At the other extreme, 'The Assembly Room was very handsomely and brilliantly lighted up, and tastefully decorated with laurel and festoons of flowers' for the ball held there in July 1814 to celebrate 'the Happy Restoration of Peace'.<sup>34</sup>

By the 1820s it was usual for the dinner in honour of Shakespeare's Birthday to be held in the Town Hall, and according to James Palmer the beadle, 227 gentlemen sat down to a meal in 1826 at a cost of 4s 6d per head.<sup>35</sup> During this period minor decorative alterations took place within the building: new pictures were given, chandeliers were acquired from Lord Middleton and additional furniture was purchased to accommodate the increasing numbers using the upper room. Probably the most important innovation was the installation of gas to light the building on the inauguration of the gas works on 13 September 1835. '... An illuminated transparency of the immortal Bard was fixed in front of Shakespeares Hall, with the following citation



*Engraving from the Illustrated London News of April 1864 showing the archway, orchestra gallery and barrel vaulted roof.*

from the lovely and loving Juliet

“All the world will be in love with night,  
And pay no worship to the gaudy sun”

At the north end of the Hall was a Crown and the Royal initials W.R. ...<sup>36</sup>

By the 1860s, however, it was clear that the Town Hall was no longer adequate for the various purposes for which it was required: the growth of the local police force and the increase of work for the local magistracy meant there was no suitable meeting place for the Court.<sup>37</sup> The Guild Hall, the ancient meeting place of the Town Council, was increasingly in need of repair, and for a few months in 1843 the Council had transferred their meetings to the Town Hall, which they had no doubt found more congenial. Moreover, the building of a new Market House at the top of Bridge Street had made largely redundant the open piazza below the Assembly Room, and the patrons of the Hunt and other balls were demanding increased accommodation both for the reception of ladies and gentlemen and for dancing.

Civic pride, too, was at its height: the railway had come to Stratford, new town improvements and growth had been implemented under the provisions of the Public Health Acts of the 1850s, and the prospect of another glittering celebration, this time for the Tercentenary of the Birth of Shakespeare in 1864, resulted in plans being drawn up and implemented for major alterations to the Town Hall. An advertisement was inserted in local newspapers in February 1863 inviting plans for the improvement of the Town Hall along certain specified lines, including the enclosing of the lower storey, and the creation of a new entrance and staircase. In March the General Purposes Committee recommended acceptance of those submitted under the motto 'Veritas', the authors of which were Messrs. Hawkes of Ann Street, Birmingham, but final consideration was delayed by negotiations for the acquisition of the premises adjoining the Town Hall, which were needed for the expansion, both for ground space and to provide accommodation for the Borough Police, whose facilities had been severely criticised in 1860. By February 1864 details had been finalised and the tender of William Bennett of Birmingham for the undertaking of the work at a cost of £1140, had been accepted, the job to be finished by 31 March.<sup>38</sup> The outline of the alterations was described in the *Herald* report of a Council meeting on 2 January 1863.

It was not intended to alter the banquetting room which was said to be the finest in Warwickshire: the staircase would be altered and the ante room and landing thrown into one so that another large room would be formed ... a supper room and

other rooms would be made below ...

Some £300 was raised by public subscription towards the cost, the Corporation finding the rest.

The details of the work undertaken were fully described in a town guide of 1878:

The banquetting room remains intact. The staircase was altered and the anti-rooms [sic] and landing thrown into one so that another large room has been added which was found very convenient for the exhibition of paintings of Shakespearian interest at the great Festival [1864]. Underneath the great room was an open space often used on market and fair days for mercantile purposes, and through which the principal entrance to the hall was approached. This has been inclosed, and makes an excellent room for public meetings, penny readings, benefit societies meetings, etc. A movable partition divides this room, the north portion of which is fitted up for the transaction of the business of the County Court, and the Borough Petty Sessions are held there. The principal entrance to the Hall is now in Sheep Street.<sup>39</sup>

An engraving in the *Illustrated London News* of April 1864 (p.16) shows the interior of the ballroom and anteroom during the exhibition of Shakespearean paintings: the new archway joining the main room and anteroom is divided into three by slim columns on a plinth and the ceiling of the middle section of the anteroom (where the original staircase stood) is barrel-vaulted to accommodate the wrought iron orchestra balcony which was over the landing entrance. The specifications for decoration show that the ceiling and mouldings were white, the walls were to be fawn grey or salmon colour and the pillars painted to resemble Aberdeen granite. The ceiling of the Magistrate's room was supported by a row of elegant iron columns decorated with relief foliage.

The increase in downstairs accommodation, with the addition of cloakroom facilities off the stair landing, led to a great increase in the use of the building, both for social and civic events. The Town Council had met for several months in the Ballroom while repairs were being undertaken to the Guildhall, its traditional meeting place, in 1843, but in 1868 the decision was taken that in future meetings of the Council would be held at the Town Hall,<sup>40</sup> and it was at this time that boards were put up with the names of mayors, town clerks and High Stewards of the Borough.

The 1864 work may have been done in too much of a hurry for by the end of 1875, the *Herald* reported that the Town Hall was in a state of

delapidation and that repairs were urgently needed, especially to the roof, while the decoration was in need of attention and the walls needed re-plastering.<sup>41</sup> Nothing was done immediately, however, and when, in September 1876, estimates were submitted, all were higher than had been anticipated. The scale of the projected work was therefore limited to the restoration and reslating of the roof, the removal of the orchestra to a position between the ballroom and the anteroom, and necessary cleaning, painting and redecoration. This was all completed by February 1877. Apart from the reroofing and the decoration, in which the Victorian passion for wood, painted and artificially grained, seems to have run riot, the major alteration was the removal of the orchestra.

The band can now be accommodated in a light, elegant and spacious orchestra capable of holding at least twenty performers. It is placed in an archway between the two rooms ... The front and rear of the orchestra are of elegantly designed ironwork, painted French grey picked out with rose colour and gold ... The orchestra is approached from the smaller room ... by a light iron spiral staircase ...<sup>42</sup>

In 1886 the *Herald* reported a claim that the orchestra gallery was unsafe and that the custodian would not allow twenty schoolboys to go up there to hear a lecture. The Mayor, however, said that he had forbidden the boys because of unruly behaviour.

There was a wide difference between the stamping and unruly behaviour of twenty boys in a gallery like that - and six or seven bandsmen quietly sitting playing their instruments.<sup>43</sup>

The orchestra remained until after the fire of 1946 when a decision was taken not to replace it.

Victorian decorative tastes changed, and by 1893 the building was described as 'the despair of dance caterers' and 'more dingy ... than is usual in public buildings'. Accordingly, the walls were covered in heavy anaglypta and lincrusta Walton 'reputed to wear for many years if not for ever'. An oak dado was put up in the ballroom and the walls above painted sage green. The *Herald* rather ominously remarked 'Any visitor who sees this room by daylight must remember that the colour has been chosen to show up by gaslight'. The main colours of the decor were sage green, white, chocolate and gold, while those of the reception room were salmon and deeper pink.<sup>44</sup>

At this date the Mayor's Parlour was the smaller of the two downstairs rooms, now the Committee Room, but within a few years the portion of the anteroom facing Sheep Street had been appropriated to this use as well, giving access as it does to the balcony



*Patients and staff of the V.A.D. Hospital at the Town Hall, 1914.  
The superintendent, Mrs. Hodgson, is seated between the beds.*

suitable for public pronouncements such as royal accessions and election results.

#### IV

The regular social highlights of the calendar were the Hunt Ball, whose members had contributed to the 1877 alterations, and the Infirmary, later Hospital Ball, also more familiarly known as the 'Bread and Butter'. On these occasions the building was lavishly decorated and lit, with the lower rooms serving as supper and 'sitting out' rooms and the upper for dancing. Most of the year, however, the uses were more prosaic: Council meetings, magistrates' sessions, dramatic entertainments (both amateur and professional), choral society concerts, religious and temperance meetings, and, in times of severe weather and economic hardship, soup kitchens for the poor, many of whom lived in courts off Sheep Street.

When war broke out in August 1914, the whole country was caught up in preparations for receiving casualties and in October of that year a Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital, with fifty beds, was opened at the Town Hall under the superintendence of the Hon. Mrs. Odeyne Hodgson of Clopton and staffed by local volunteers. It was soon clear that these facilities would not be sufficient to cope with the numbers returning from the front, and a War Hospital was built in the grounds of Clopton House, the VAD Hospital transferring to 'Whytegates' in St. Gregory's Road. The war effort of the Town Hall thereafter was confined to acting as a recruiting centre and providing the venue for various entertainments for the convalescent troops.

In the 1920s and 1930s new forms of entertainment took their place in the activities of the Town Hall, chief amongst these being Saturday dances and the increasingly popular whist drive. It was during one of these latter, on 15 February 1934, at which 600 were present in the upper rooms, that one of the beams in the floor of the anteroom cracked, causing the floor to sag. Fortunately everyone was evacuated safely.<sup>45</sup> An inspection of the floor was undertaken by William T. Benslyn who ascribed the cause to death-watch beetle and made some very interesting observations.

The present building undoubtedly incorporated the main beams of an earlier building, and these earlier timbers might easily have been cut between the years 1500 and 1600 [These earlier timbers were much harder than the later ones and also



*Repairs being undertaken after the floor collapse in 1934.  
At this date the cast iron pillars in the Council Chamber were removed.*

free from infection]. The principal trouble in the main room appears to have occurred in the floor joists and secondary beams, many of which in my opinion date from 1767. The timbers used at this period are of distinctly inferior quality to the earlier beams.<sup>46</sup>

Benslyn also drew attention to the need for additional exits from the building and suggested the construction of an emergency staircase to the yard of the Shakespeare Hotel. The floor was replaced and the ceiling of the Council Chamber renewed, but the provision of further exits was not implemented until 1940.

The crisis with the floor in 1934 led to a demand for a new, bigger and better civic centre. The *Shakespeare Pictorial* said of the building

The present building is nondescript in character and rooms are used successively for supper parties, Council meetings, whist drives, Police Courts, coroner's inquests, tea parties, public meetings and many other purposes. Prisoners have had to be put on trial in an ante-room or amongst tables laid out with cups and saucers.<sup>47</sup>

While repairs were being undertaken the opportunity was taken to remove the attractive but restricting iron pillars in the Council room, and put in a new ceiling, which was to prove its worth twelve years later.

On 4th December 1946 the South Warwickshire Young Farmers held a dance in the Town Hall which ended at 1.00 a.m. At 4.30 a.m. flames were spotted in the building and the alarm raised. People quickly gathered and organised themselves to save as many of the contents as they could. The smoke and flames in the upstairs ante-room were too fierce to permit of any action there but the downstairs rooms were stripped of antique furniture, borough charters, antique china, mayoral robes and paintings, which were stacked in the bar of the Garrick, while less valuable furniture was piled on the pavement. The upper storey was rapidly an inferno and flames burst to the sky when the roof collapsed in a shower of lead; but the 1934 floor contained the blaze and the lower storey was relatively undamaged.<sup>48</sup>

Daylight showed the ballroom gutted and, what was regarded by many as a greater loss, only remnants of the charred frame of the Gainsborough - the painting itself had been destroyed, together with Benjamin Wilson's painting of Shakespeare, presented by Garrick, Thomas Murray's 1713 portrait of Queen Anne and a contemporary copy of a Reynolds portrait of the Duke of Dorset. Ironically the Gainsborough had only been back in the ballroom for a year, having been removed to Ilmington Manor for safety during the war. Another



*5 December 1946. Daylight revealed the full extent of the damage.  
The roof stairs can be seen collapsed into the ballroom.*

treasure destroyed was the pair of chandeliers given in 1818 by Lord Middleton.<sup>49</sup>

The town was stunned by the fire but, in spite of restrictions on the use of labour, basic holding work was quickly put in hand. At the Council meeting on 13 December, W.T. Benslyn was again appointed consulting architect, to work with the Borough Engineer, P.C. Smart, who reported 'Apart from the roof, the structure is sound but the dance floor is ruined. It will be years before it can be replaced: birds eye maple is unobtainable, and will be for a long time'. According to the fire officer the cause of the fire was unknown but appeared to have started in the second window seat in the north-west corner of the ballroom. Popular rumour blamed a burning cigarette.<sup>50</sup>

One hundred and fifty lorry loads of debris were removed from the scene with the help of the Ministry of Works, and tarpaulins stretched over the roof to take away the rain. By 3 January the Borough Engineer could report that it was hoped that the roof, which was to be of steel but identical in form to the old one, would be on in six weeks, and that the lower rooms, which had mainly suffered from water damage, should be stripped, re-plastered and decorated; he hoped also that the Hall would be ready for the next Council meeting on 14 January.<sup>51</sup> Preliminary decisions had been taken about repairs and the only noticeable alterations would be to the annexe where the ceiling would be of lighter form, the barrel vault not being replaced.<sup>52</sup>

In February the Council bought a portrait by Nathaniel Dance of 'Garrick as Richard III' for £55 at Sothebys (the destroyed Gainsborough had been insured for £2500). When this was reported in the press, Miss Parker of Liverpool, a descendant of Garrick, offered to present the picture to the town and it was first displayed at the Birthday celebrations in 1947. Earlier, the Council had accepted offers by Mrs. Arbuthnot, widow of a former vicar, and by Cllr. and Mrs. Baker, to replace the chandeliers; for, in spite of one hundred-weight of glass having been salvaged from the debris, they could not be re-constructed.<sup>54</sup>

By June Mr. Smart had submitted preliminary plans<sup>55</sup> for the restoration and had applied to the Ministry for a licence and priority order to carry out the work which it was claimed, being specialised, would not take men from the housing programme. By November it was possible to use the annexe on Mayor's Day, and in January 1948, a sub-committee of the Land & Buildings Committee was appointed to consider the re-furnishing. The material chosen for the curtains in the ballroom was French damask which was specially imported at a total cost of £1127.<sup>56</sup>



*5 December 1946. Rubble and debris lie among the ruins of vaulted roof of the anteroom.*

By October 1948 the *Herald* could publish under the headline 'Renovation of Town Hall nearly complete', a detailed account of the work. By this date the roof had been replaced by reinforced concrete with asbestos lining, new electrical circuits had been installed, the chandeliers were in process of construction, the entrance hall had been re-floored with terrazzo tiles, Hollington fire surrounds had been brought from Staffordshire and the plaster sconces on the walls, based on the originals, were 'even more attractive than before'.<sup>57</sup>

Whilst these practical works were proceeding, great debate was taking place within the town council as to the future use of the building, and the scale of charges to be levied '... the Town Hall was not an ordinary business concern. It was provided by the ratepayers ... Do not let us close the doors ... to that section of its rightful inhabitants, the local organisations ...'<sup>58</sup> Equally vexed was the smoking question. When it was proposed to ban smoking in the ballroom and annexe, Councillor R. Baker fulminated: 'The Committee were treating the building as a new toy. To ban smoking ... was ridiculous. The interior of the building was far too white and a little nicotine poisoning would tone it down ... when the band stopped at dances there would be a "Cavalry charge" downstairs ...' The question was referred back.<sup>59</sup>

Plans were also in hand for the conversion of what had been the custodian's room downstairs into a new mayor's parlour, suitable for the reception of the increasing number of distinguished visitors. To further this object the mayor, Fordham Flower, and his father Sir Archie Flower, offered to give suitable period furniture to commemorate the eighteen months during which father and son were respectively High Steward and Mayor of the Borough.<sup>60</sup>

The re-opening of the ballroom was celebrated on 10 December 1948 by an official ball preceded by a short ceremony at which Councillor Baildham who, as Mayor in 1946, had been instrumental in the salvage of much of the contents, cut a ribbon. Full details of the occasion were given in the *Herald* which again described the features of the decor, chief among which were the new sconces, cast from the only original to be salvaged. One is an exact replica but on the other seven the faces at the bottom have been changed and over each is an appropriate symbol: Lady Macbeth (daggers); Prince Hal (crown); Hamlet (skull); Falstaff (goblet); Garrick (masks); Shakespeare (coat of arms); and Sir Hugh Clopton (coat of arms). Little visible innovation had been undertaken, although improved heating and ventilation and a service lift were installed.

The new room is a faithful reproduction of its predecessor, the slight alterations [flat ceiling in anteroom and wider arch into

ballroom] constituting an improvement. Walls, windows, plasterwork, wall decorations are all reproductions...<sup>61</sup>

The furnishing was not yet complete, but gradually items were acquired, most of the carpets, settees, tables and mirrors being supplied by Messrs. Newsteads of Sheep Street at a total cost of £1520. Lord Gainsborough offered on permanent loan his portrait of Mrs. Siddons by Hamilton, which hangs in the anteroom with Garrick,<sup>62</sup> and at the end of May 1949 the Flowers presented their gift to the new Parlour which had been panelled in limed oak in which was inset a Hogarth painting, and which included washing facilities and a robing chamber.<sup>62</sup>

A traumatic chapter in the long history of the building came to an end with the final settlement of the insurance claim in June, and a new era in civic life was ushered in the previous month when for the first time, in spite of an earlier lady mayor and councillors, ladies were invited to the Civic Dinner.

## APPENDIX

### **Contract for the building of the Town Hall, 5 April 1767**

Articles of Agreement indented had [sic] made Concluded and agreed upon this Fifth day of April in the seventh Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and so forth and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand seven Hundred and sixty seven. BETWEEN Robert Newman of the Parish of Whittington in the County of Gloucester Builder and Mason Thomas Taylor and Thomas Morse Carpenters and Joiners both of Stratford upon Avon in the County of Warwick and Richard Stevens of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid Plumber and Glazier of the one part and Thomas Mortiboys Esquire The Reverend Stephen Nason Clerk William Hunt Gentleman and John Payton Innholder all of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid Goodwin Zouch Tanner and Thomas Wells Meal Merchant both of the Parish of Old Stratford in the said County of Warwick John Halford Ironmonger John Baylis Surgeon John Hitchcocks Grocer William Evetts Baker William Eaves Sadler and Richard Lord Cordwainer all of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid of the other part.

FIRST the said Robert Newman Thomas Taylor Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens for and in Consideration of the Sum of Six Hundred and seventy eight Pounds of Lawfull Money of Great Britain to be to them or one of them paid at the several times hereinafter particularly mentioned for that purpose Do for themselves jointly and severally and for their joint and several Heirs Executors and Administrators Covenant Promise and agree to and with the said Thomas Mortiboys Stephen Nason William Hunt John Payton Goodwin Zouch Thomas Wells John Halford John Baylis John Hitchcocks William Evetts William Eaves and Richard Lord their Executors Administrators and Assigns in manner following that is to say that they the said Robert Newman (etc.) ... shall and will erect and Build or cause and procure to be Erected and Built a good and Substantial Town Hall together with such other Erections Rooms and Conveniencies to be thereunto adjoining and belonging as are particularly described in the Plans and Elevations thereof hereunto annex which Buildings shall be erected and Completed in a Workmanlike Manner upon or near the Ground where the Old Town Hall now Stands in Stratford upon Avon aforesaid according to the said Plans and Elevations thereof and the Particulars hereinafter mentioned and expressed that is to say To take down the Old Town Hall except the End that adjoins to the House in the Occupation of [Thomas] Ashwin one side and one end of the Present

Kitchin with the two Chimneys of the said Kitchin and the Timber floor of the Present Hall and except such other good and Substantial parts of the Buildings as can be saved and kept up according to the said Plans and Elevations and the true Meaning of these presents, To Dig out the Foundations and to lay the same with Stone or Brick To Build the two fronts of the new Town Hall with Stone, The Back Rooms to be Built with sound Brick well Burnt and the foundations of them to be laid with Stone, The Inside of the Ball Room to be Lined with Brick and to be backed with Brick or Stone, The Ball Room to be Sixty foot long thirty foot wide and twenty foot High, To be plastered with a good handsome plastering of a light Yellow Colour, The Ceiling of the said Ball Room to be white and plain with a plain Cornice, To make three small flowers in the Ceiling for Chandaliers, The two Card Rooms and Stair Case to be plastered in the same manner as the Ball Room, The two Chimney Pieces in the Ball Room to be of Blue Stone with plain faces, the Chimney Pieces in the Card Rooms and the Chimney Piece in the Parlour Below to be of free stone and of plain neat work, The Front Wall to be two foot two Inches Thick in the Middle Part, The two side Breaks to be one foot Eight Inches Thick, The End Walls to be two foot Thick, The Back Wall of the Ball Room to be one foot ten inches and an half thick, The Walls to the Card Rooms to be one foot two inches Thick from the Bottom to the Top, The Stair Case the same, The Partition Walls to be Nine Inches Thick from the Bottom to the Top, The Front Windows to be Eight foot Eight Inches high and four foot six inches Wide in the Clear of the Stone Work, The Windows at the End front to be the same, The Ball Room to be Covered with Welsh Blue Slate, The Roofs of the Card Rooms and Stair Case to be Covered with the old Slate or Tiles, a Ceiling to be under the Ball Room on the Joice, a New Chimney to be built in the Kitchin and a Passage to be made to the Old Celler from the Stair Case, To Build the several Rooms Stair Cases and Conveniencies according to the said Plans and Elevations and to make a Proper Addition to the Kitchin, The Servants Room and the Addition to the Kitchin to be plastered, To put a good Truss Roof upon the Ball Room, To put good Roofs upon the other Rooms and Stair Case, The Beams over the Ball Room to be of good sound Oak or firr Timber, The Door at the Entrance of the Hall to be a Six Pannell Door made of Deal two inches Thick, The Door of the Ball Room to be a double six Pannell Door of the same thickness, Two Six Pannell Doors for the Card Rooms made of Deal and one Inch and three Quarters Thick, Good Doors for the two Water Closets to be made out of the old Doors. The Kitchin Door to be used again, The Sash Door that is now in the Hall to be used for the Parlour, To set good Locks and Hinges on

the Doors and to provide all other Necessaries for Compleating the said Buildings, To Build a Musick Gallery and Bar according to the Plans, To lay a good Oak Nailed floor in the Ball Room and in the Card Room on the Right Hand Side from the Stair Case, The Floor in the other Card Room to be repaired and finished in a Workmanlike Manner, The Sashes to be made with Yellow Deal with a Moulding on the Inside, to put Wash board Round the Ball Room and Card Rooms, the four Hips of the Ball Room and the Ridge to be Covered with Lead two lead Basons for the two water Closets and two sets of Brass Work for the same and a Lead Cistern fixed in a Convenient Place for the use of the Water Closets all the New Sashes to be Glazed with Bristol Crown Glass, The Kitchin Window next the house of the said [Thomas] Ashwin to be Glazed with Crown Glass set in Lead, To find Pullies Lines and Lead Weights, One Sash to Draw in each Window, All the Sashes and Frames both Old and New outside and Inside and all the Doors Door Cases Washboards and Wainscott and other parts of the said Work that are necessary to be well painted three Coats in Oil, The Plastering and Ceiling to be three Coats to be floated on half and half Sap Lath, The floor in the Servants Room to be Brick and the Addition in the Kitchen to be laid with the same sort of Paving as it is now paved with, and the Chimneys to be Carried one foot above the Ridge of the Hall, All which said Works are to be done and performed with the best Materials of every kind to be found and provided by the said Robert Ne(wman) Thomas Taylor Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens at their own proper Costs and Charges, And the said Town Hall Erections Buildings and Conveniencies with the Appurtenances are all to be erected and compleated in every respect in a good Substantial and Workmanlike Manner according to the said Plans and Elevations thereof hereunto annexed and the true Meaning of these Presents (notwithstanding any Particulars may happen to be herein Omitted) and to the Satisfaction and Approbation of the said Thomas Mortiboys Stephen Nason William Hunt John Payton Goodwin Zouch Thomas Wells John Halford John Baylis John Hitchcocks William Evetts William Eaves and Richard Lord or the Major part of them or the Surveyor to be by them or the Major part of them Appointed for that Purpose, and all the Roofs are to be Covered in, in the Month of November next and the whole Erections and Buildings to be Absolutely finished and made fit for use on or before the last Day of May One Thousand seven Hundred and Sixty Eight they the said Robert Newman Thomas Taylor Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens their Executors and Administrators taking and Converting to their own proper use and Behoof All the old Materials now upon the said

Premises whereon the said Buildings are intended to be erected without Allowing anything for the same AND the said Thomas Mortiboys Stephen Nason William Hunt John Payton Goodwin Zouch Thomas Wells John Halford John Baylis John Hitchcocks William Evetts William Eaves and Richard Lord do hereby for themselves jointly and severally and for their joint and several Heirs Executors and Administrators Covenant Promise and Agree to and with the said Robert Newman Thomas Taylor Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens their Executors Administrators and Assigns in manner following (that is to say) that they the said Thomas Mortiboys ... (etc) or one of them their or one of their Executors and Administrators shall and will well and truly Pay or cause to be paid unto the said Robert Newman ... (etc.) some or one of them the full sum of Six Hundred and seventy eight Pounds in manner and form following that is to say the sum of One Hundred Pounds part thereof when and as soon as the Erections and Buildings are raised up Plinth High, One Hundred Pounds other part thereof as soon as the said Erections and Buildings are raised up to the Chamber floors. One Hundred and Fifty Pounds other part thereof as soon as the Wall Plates are put on, One Hundred Pounds other part thereof as soon as all the said Buildings are Covered in One Hundred Pounds other part thereof on or before the last Day of February next and One Hundred and twenty eight Pounds Residue of the said Sum of Six Hundred and seventy eight Pounds within one Month next after all the said Erections Buildings and Conveniencies are Compleatly finished and made fit for use in the Manner abovementioned and according to the true Meaning of these Presents. AND LASTLY it is Covenanted declared and Agreed by and between All the said Parties to these Presents for themselves respectively and for their respective Heirs Executors and Administrators that the said Robert Newman Thomas Taylor Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens shall not be Obligated to take and Carry away the Rubbish when the said Buildings are Completed and finished but that they the said Robert Newman ... (etc) their Executors Administrators and Assigns shall and will deduct and Allow out of the said Six Hundred and Seventy Eight Pounds so much money as the Carriage of the Materials to and from the said Buildings shall amount unto, which Carriage shall be done and performed by the said Thomas Mortiboys ... (etc.) their Executors Administrators or Assigns. IN WITNESS whereof the parties above-named have to these Presents Interchangeably set their hands andSeals the Day and Year first above written.

## NOTES

Manuscript material referred to in these notes is deposited at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office.

1. BRU 2/6, p.491
2. BRU 2/5, p.250. 9 Jan 1712/13 'At this Hall the Market House is voted for the use of the present Mayor ... payinge to the Chamberlayne twenty shill(ings) yearly towards the repar(ac)yons'.
3. ER 1/27, f.77v
4. BRU 2/5, p.121
5. **ibid.**, p.454
6. BRU 5/5, pp.120-1
7. BRU 21/10
8. The wisdom of this was proved in 1934 when an inspection was made after the partial collapse of the floor in the ante-room. The timbers were found to be of three dates: those from the alterations in 1863-4, those new in 1767 and earlier ones, believed to be 16th century. Only these latter were free of infestation by death watch beetle. (See p. 21)
9. ER 1/117, f.40. There is a drawing by Saunders, a noted antiquary, of the old town hall at ER 1/27, f.77, based on a drawing by John Jordan, ER 1/109, f.37.
10. BRU 21/10. Although a payment of £10 was recorded to Mr. Lightoler, surveyor [Timothy Lightholer was a carver by trade but also an architect. He had designed the new steeple in 1763].
11. BRU 21/10. Endorsed on the Articles of Agreement.
12. BRU 15/18, f.8
13. **Correspondence of the Rev. Joseph Greene**, ed. L. Fox (Dugdale Society, vol. XXIII), pp. 94-5. Letter to James West of Alscot, 14 Jan 1764, '... we are fearful this noble design will be frustrated for want of the remaining thirty four pounds ...'
14. ER 1/8, pp. 427-8. Annotated copy of subscription list compiled by Robert Bell Wheler.
15. ER 1/9, f.22
16. ER 1/37, f.48r. This volume contains drafts in Hunt's hand of initial and reminder letters to the various 'classes' approached - peers, large landowners, smaller gentry, together with rough lists of those to be approached and various subscription lists annotated as to whether amount promised has been paid. Unfortunately they are all undated.
17. ER 1/37, f.8v.
18. C. Deelman, **The Great Shakespeare Jubilee** (Michael Joseph, 1964).
19. ER 1/38, ff. 3-4
20. Deelman, **op.cit.**, p.61
21. BRU 4/7  
BRU 5/9  
Payments include carriage of stone and brick, paving inside and out, pitching the roof, for chimney grates, candlesticks, painting and material for curtains.
22. ER 1/83, f.4r.
23. BRU 4/7. Chamberlains' Accounts 1769.
24. ER 1/14. Article in **Lloyds Evening Post**.
25. **ibid.**
26. BRU 4/7. Chamberlains' Accounts, 1769.

- 27 Deelman, **op.cit.**, p.257
28. ER 1/82, f.97v. **et seq.** James Saunders account of the Jubilee and its aftermath.
29. BRU 5/9, p.121-2. Accounts rendered by Thomas Morse and Richard Stevens to the Chamberlain Isaac Gardener.
30. BRU 2/7, f.535r.
31. **Warwick Advertiser**, 27 March 1824: advertisement for Charity Ball in aid of School of Industry to be held at White Lion.  
**ibid.**, 30 Jan 1813. Account of S/A Assembly at White Lion: floor 'so well calculated to exhibit the graceful movements of female elegance'.  
**ibid.**, 1 Feb 1823. Hunt Ball held at White Lion, with reference to 'the Ball Room was again resorted to'.
32. ER 1/82, f.97v. **et seq.**
33. **Warwick Advertiser**, 3 Feb 1855.
34. **ibid.**, 23 July 1814.
35. ER 82. Richard Savage Collection; transcript of Palmer's diary.
36. **Warwick Advertiser**, 13 September 1835.
37. The small gaol had been earlier condemned as unsuitable and increased cell accommodation together with a police office had been constructed in a building adjoining the Town Hall in Sheep Street.
38. BRR 1/2  
BRR 27/9  
BRR 50/134
39. **Handbook for Visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon**, p.19, (printed and published by S. Adams, 29 High Street, 1878).  
The Board of Health had granted special dispensation for the portico to project beyond the building line.
40. BRR 1/3, p.142. The first meeting held in the Town Hall was on 3 February 1869.
41. **Stratford Herald**, 3 November 1875.
42. **ibid.**, 23 February 1877
43. **ibid.**, 12 November 1876
44. **ibid.**, 11 August 1893
45. **Shakespeare Pictorial**, March 1934, p.40
46. BRR 1/11, pp. 2-6. Letter from W.T. Benslyn to the Council  
BRR 2/7/8, **passim**.
47. **Shakespeare Pictorial**, March 1934. The September issue had a drawing of the elevation of a suggested extension down Sheep Street.
48. **Stratford Herald**, 6 December 1946.
49. Diary of James Palmer, '9 Feb 1818 Lord Middleton gave 3 glass lustres for the Hall'.
50. **Stratford Herald**, 6 December and 13 December 1946.
51. **Stratford Herald**, 3 January 1947
52. BRR 2/7/8, 18 December 1946, **et seq.**
53. BRR 1/13, p.118
54. BRR 50/1100
55. BRR 2/39/9
56. **Stratford Herald**, 8 October 1948
57. **ibid.**, 12 November 1948
58. **ibid.**, 26 November 1948
59. **ibid.**, 26 November 1948
60. **ibid.**, 17 December 1948
61. BRR 1/13, p.313
62. **Stratford Herald**, 27 May 1949.