NOTES

3 Accounts of the Office of the Works, PRO, A.O. 1. 356/2487, quoted in Chettle, 98.
4 A brick-built gatehouse from the late fifteenth century may be seen at the Bishop's Palace, Hatfield, Herts.
5 PRO, E., 351/3269. Chettle, 104.
6 The painting of Charles I and Henrietta Maria in Greenwich Park, c 1632, by Adriaen Van Stalbemt and Jan Van Belcamp, shows the Queen's House as it was left, with only one storey completed, between 1618 and 1632-3. Another view of the uncompleted house can be seen in the 'Prospect of London and the Thames from above Greenwich,' by an unknown artist, painted between 1620 and 1630. Both paintings are reproduced in Chettle, as is the central detail of Hollar's long engraved view of Greenwich. See above, p 13.
7 McGee, Note 2, p 7.
9 Nichols, I, 73.
10 The long gallery at Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire, is built over the gate house block, and is sixty-eight feet long by about twelve feet wide. It has a large window at the western end and originally had a matching window at the east end; it is glazed along the sides.
11 Perhaps it was used, for example, as the royal viewing stand during the entertainments for the Danish ambassador in 1586, when 'upon a green, verie spatious and large,' bull and bear baftings were shown. See Nichols, II, 439.
12 In contrast to the decidedly sylvan appearance of the garden in 1632, as shown in Van Stalbemt's and Van Belcamp's picture, the result either of neglect or of a considerable change in horticultural taste.

EILEEN WHITE

The tenements at the Common Hall gates: the mayor's station for the Corpus Christi Play in York

When the Corpus Christi Play and the other major civic plays were performed in York, the Mayor and his fellow councillors were accustomed to gather together and enjoy a feast at the same time. Exactly where they were in the fifteenth century is not possible to show, but the sixteenth century records — and especially those after 1550 — reveal many details relevant both to the chamber where they met and its location.

The place where they met is not described in the existing records until 1538,
when they are said to be at the sixth place at the Common Hall. The Mayor is first included in the list of places in 1516, when he could also have been at the Common Hall, although there are some years, from 1523–1527, when it seems likely that he was in a chamber towards the other end of Coney Street, earlier in the route of the pageant wagons. For the performances of the city's religious plays and of John Grafton's plays, between 1538 and 1585, the chamber he occupied was said to be either at the Common Hall or the Common Hall gates. The following list, based on the entries in *Records of Early English Drama: York*, sets out the known information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>The place</th>
<th>The chamber</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1417</td>
<td>hire of a chamber</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445-1449</td>
<td>Common Hall built</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1478</td>
<td>the lodging of Nicholas Bewyk</td>
<td>the room of Thomas Cokke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1486</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1499</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td></td>
<td>the lodging belonging to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1506</td>
<td></td>
<td>Common Guildhall — 'in hospicio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1508</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communis Guild'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1516</td>
<td>the eighth place</td>
<td>the lodging belonging to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1518</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td>Common Guildhall; Thomas Fleming was paid 6s 8d for his chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1520</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td>hire of the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1521</td>
<td>the ninth place</td>
<td>hire of the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1522</td>
<td>the eighth place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1523</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1524</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td>Thomas Sadler decorated the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1525</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td>hire of the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1526</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1527</td>
<td>the sixth place</td>
<td>Thomas Sadler decorated the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1528</td>
<td>the eighth place</td>
<td>decorating of the Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1535</td>
<td></td>
<td>decorating the Chamber next the Common Hall; Thomas Fleming was paid 6s 8d for his Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1538</td>
<td>the sixth place at the Common Hall</td>
<td>Thomas Fleming was paid 6s 8d for his Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1539</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas Fleming was paid 6s 8d for his Chamber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whilst looking in the York records for further details of, among other people, Richard Aynelay and Thomas Colthirst, and also for information about the St Christopher and St George Guild, I have found several entries that help to identify the Chamber at the Common Hall gates and its position at the end of Coney-street. One extract also specifically relates this Chamber to the performance of plays. The following is a brief summary of some of this information, to show that the clarification of the Common Hall site can help in the interpretation of pageant wagon staging in York.

The city's Guildhall was begun in 1545. I use the term 'Guildhall' throughout to mean the hall itself, called such today, that stands alongside the river. 'Common Hall' is the usual term for both this building alone and the site in general throughout the sixteenth century. When locating the major meetings which took place in the Hall or its adjacent chamber, one finds 'Guildhall' used far less frequently than 'Common Hall,' but the two terms can be used interchangeably. I use 'Common Hall' here to reflect the general use of the word to refer to the site as a whole.

Although the Guildhall was bombed in 1942, the lower part of the walls remained, and the Hall has been reconstructed. A true impression of this part of the site alongside the River Ouse therefore remains, despite a more modern extension on the north side built on the site of a former priory. In front of the Guildhall is a courtyard, sloping up towards Coney-street; and alongside Coney-street is the present Mansion House, built as the residence of the Lord Mayor in 1725. There is an archway through the north side of the Mansion House (the right hand side as one stands in Coney-street facing the Guildhall and the river): on walking through the archway...
to the courtyard, one sees that the Guildhall itself is several feet wider on the right
hand side than is the Mansion House. These extra feet cover a basement passageway
known as the Common Hall Lane, leading under the north side of the Hall, which
comes out at a landing stage on the edge of the river. Entrance to this passage is
now through a door at the upper end of the courtyard; the boundary wall of the
north side of the Mansion House and archway bulges out to contain it. Later
building on the site of the former priory has confused the original plan. The land
called 'Stayngate lendyng' (See Twycross, p 19) ran down the north side of the
site from Coneystreet: it may have continued down the side of the Guildhall to the
river; or it may have continued in a straight line, not broken by the present bulge in
the wall, and be the same Common Hall Lane that runs under that side of the Hall.2

The city was able to build its new Hall with financial assistance from the St
Christopher Guild, and the original agreement for this is preserved in the York
City Archives (document G.4).3 At the west end of the hall, the end nearest the
river, was a council room; at the east end, nearest to Coneystreet, was a cellar, in
which the St Christopher Guild had the right to store wine. Attached to the Hall
were a pantry, a buttery and a room for witnesses to use when courts were being
held in the Hall. The cost of building, repairing and maintaining the hall would be
divided between the city and the Guild of St Christopher. In return for their con-
tribution, the Guild would have the right to use the Hall for ten days at the time of
the feast of St James, and the entry to the Hall would be over joint property.

The second deed of 20 November 1445 (G.16) explains why the Guild of St
Christopher had such a small share in the use of the Guildhall, for they were
granted a piece of land in Coneystreet in front of the Guildhall, but leaving free
entry for the Mayor and Commonalty along a path through the middle. The land
was bounded by the lane called 'Staynegatelendyng' on the north and by tenements
belonging to the widow of Roger Burton, late Common clerk, on the south. On
this land the Guild built their chapel of St Christopher and other unspecified buil-
dings. They may have intended all the buildings, as well as the chapel, to be for
their own use — the Master of the Guild seemed to have an apartment there4 — or
they may have from the first deliberately included a tenement to be rented out for
their profit. Nothing is left to see of their buildings. Thomas Hammond noted in his
diary for the year 1725 that two large houses, one on each side of the Common
Hall Gates, were pulled down that year in order to build the new Mansion House.5
This does suggest that, unlike the present arrangement, the way down to the Guild-
hall was through the centre of the site, as suggested by the 1445 deed. The buildings
on each side could have been independent of each other or joined in an arch over
the entrance, which was called the Common Hall gates.

John Speed's pictorial map of York, published in 1610, gives no indication of
the true lay-out of the site. The first plan to show the streets in any detail is that
made by Captain Archer,6 but it should not be used to prove precise details of the
arrangement of houses in the city. He shows a lane clearly separate running down
the north side of the whole site to the river, and two separate blocks of buildings
each side of a central passage or archway leading to the courtyard in front of the
Guildhall.
This part of the site, alongside Coneystreet, was held by the joint Guild of St Christopher and St George (they had amalgamated by the end of the fifteenth century) until the demise of the Guild in 1549, when the city acquired the property by deed from the king. Where, then, were the Mayor and his fellows in the period before 1550, when they were meeting for the Corpus Christi Play in the rooms of Nicholas Bewyk, Thomas Cokke, Thomas Flemyng, ‘in hospicio Communis Guihald’ or at the Common Hall? Both Nicholas Bewyk and Thomas Flemyng in their times took a place for the Play,7 which appears to be in the area of the Common Hall, at the end of Coneystreet and before Stonegate. In 1535, the Mayor was in a chamber next to the Common Hall which was decorated, and in 1538 he was at the Common Hall; in both instances Thomas Flemyng was paid for the use of his Chamber.8 Nicholas Bewyk, Thomas Cokke or Thomas Flemyng cannot be proved to have held part of the St Christopher and St George Guild’s buildings at the Common Hall, nor should part of the site be assumed to have consisted of an ‘inn’ at the Common Hall freely available when the Mayor needed it. There is no reason why an inn or lodging belonging to the Guildhall had to be on the site known to be occupied by the St Christopher and St George property; on the other hand, there is no reason why the three hosts named could not have rented their chamber from the Guild. Perhaps the phrase ‘Chamber next Comon Hall’ is the best to use until further evidence clarifies the situation. Thomas Flemyng, spurrier, rented a tenement in Coneystreet from the city at a time before they acquired the property at the Common Hall: he is recorded in the Bridgemasters’ Rolls between 1528 and 1529, with a probable entry for 1539 (York City Archives, C 87:3 and 4, 88:1, and a fragment under C 92:1). From the position of his name in the list of leases the property was at the Common Hall end of Coneystreet. If this is the same Thomas Flemyng,9 then he may have rented a tenement from the city near or even next door to the Common Hall (but not actually on the St Christopher and St George Guild’s site), and allowed the Mayor to use it as occasion demanded.

A Grant of 4 August 1549 made over the lands of the St Christopher and St George Guild to the city.10 These lands were situated in York and its suburbs, at Stamford Bridge, Hemingbrough, Whenby and Scarborough, and were identified by the names of the tenants. Although not named individually in the Grant the property included both the chapel of St Christopher on the Common Hall site, and the chapel of St George near the Castle. One of the first actions by the city on acquiring them was to order that the lead was to be removed from both chapels and replaced with stone tiles (York City Archives, House Book 20, f 19: 30 May 1550). They waited until the next year before deciding to view the St Christopher chapel ‘and other the howses of the same at the Comon hall beyng nowe voide’ (House Book 20, f 78: 15 October 1551), and then decided on 21 January 1551/2 to lease ‘a Stone hows called Saynt Georges late Chapell and other the buylidynge therunto adiounyng vnto the Comon hall, and also of the common kychen there’ to George Cooke (House Book 20, f 88). He had to let the Mayor have the use of the kitchen when it was needed. The description ‘St Georges late Chapell’ is an obvious slip by the scribe, perhaps with the two names of the old Guild running through his mind.
as well as the name of the proposed tenant. It is clear from the context that the chapel at the Common Hall is meant, and not the chapel of St George by the Castle, which was let to Thomas Nicholson. George Cook was offered a forty-year lease for 20 shillings a year, but he was allowed five marks off the first four years' rent as he was to make all the repairs and no doubt conversions. Consequently, he does not appear in the Bridgemasters' Rolls of 1552 and 1554; he is first mentioned in the 1558 Roll (c 90:3).

However, Richard Aynelay is present from 1552 (the date of the first Roll after the city acquired the Guild's property), paying a similar amount of 20 shillings for a tenement at the Common Hall gate (c 90:1). It is notable that in 1551, for the first time, the Mayor is precisely described as being at the Common Hall gates for the Play, and that this description is the one most commonly used thereafter. Richard Aynelay is paid for easement of his houses and chambers during the performance of the Play in 1554. There is, however, no specific mention in the House Books that part of the property had been let to him at the same time as the St Christopher Chapel and its adjoining buildings were leased to George Cook.

The answer is probably that he is the Richard Avelley names as an existing tenant of the Guild in the Grant of 1549. This Grant was drawn up in London, and to a scribe who did not know any of the tenants personally, the letter n could easily have been read as u, and so become transcribed as v. He also appears as Richard Avelley in a list of the St Christopher and St George Guild property to be found in York Minster Library.11 'ffirma alterius tenementi in Conistreate in tenura Richardi Avelley per annum sol. xx s.' (York Minster Library, M 2(4)a, f 61v). The St George Chapel was rented to William Mane for the term of his life (f 61v), but the list does not include the St Christopher Chapel. We can therefore suspect that the St Christopher and St George property on the Common Hall site consisted of the St Christopher Chapel with other buildings, including a large kitchen serving the Guildhall, on one side of the central entrance gates; and a house on the other side of the gates which the Guild leased. This house was occupied by Richard Aynelay certainly by 1549, the time of the Grant, and probably by 1545 or 1548, the time of the Chantry and Guild Surveys. He must have held a long-term lease with a rent of 20 s, for he paid this same rent to the new landlords when the city acquired the Guild's property. In the Bridgemasters' Rolls, this house was always precisely described as being at the Common Hall gates, or at the Common Hall.

The two leases, with changes of tenants, can be traced with ease through the Bridgemasters' Rolls (c 90:3 – 1558 to c 97:2 – 1617). George Cook's tenement, with the converted chapel, had passed to Richard Tailor by 1564, to John Addyson by 1573, to John Jaques by 1596, and to John Grene by 1603. On 20 October 1615, after a letter in his favour from the Lord President of the North, a new twenty-one-year lease was granted to John Grene, described as tenant of a tenement at the Common Hall gates belonging to the Corporation (House Book 34, f 77v). An Indenture of the same date, preserved in the York City Archives, includes a description of the property he leased:
... All that ther Messuage or Tenemente kitchinge and stable situate Lyinge and beinge in Conistrete within the said citye of york sometymes in the tenure or occupacion of John Addison Armoror deceased or of his assigneyes, and afterwardes in the tenure or occupacion of John Jaques marchante or of his assigneyes, and nowe in the tenure or occupacion of the said John Grene or of his assigneyes, as the same do Lye ther togethers betwixte the Layne Leadinge from Conistrete aforesaid into the common Hall on the sowthe syde, and the Layne Leadinge from Conistrete aforesaid vnto the River of Owse on the northsyde, and abbuttinge forwardes vpou the said strete of Conistrete, and backwardes vpon the common hall aforesaid, And also all and singler houeses edificyes buildyng, chambers kitchinges dinges stables and groundes nowe vsed and occupied with the said premisses, And also Libertye passage and waye egresse and regresse vnto and from the said Messuage or Tenemente thoroughe the said Layne which Leadeth into the said common hall vnto the overthwarte gate in the same Layne as is nowe vsed,...  
(York City City Archives, Document I. 172)
Colthirst was married to Richard Aynelay’s daughter. The property must have been attractive (apart from being the family home of his wife) for him to agree to the terms, which also demanded he should pay five marks to become a freeman of the city. Something of the plan of the house emerges from these conditions, for we learn that there were 72½ yards of ‘Sealing or waynescot’ in the tenement; 26¾ yards in the Hall and 55¾ yards in the Chamber over the same. The Chamber, therefore, was either larger than the hall, or more elaborately panelled; it may indeed have stretched along the whole length of the tenement fronting Coney-street, with a fine set of windows. In 1585, when John Grafton’s Interlude was performed in a manner similar to that of the Corpus Christi Play, using several pageant wagons which performed at several places including ‘at the common hall,’ 6d was paid for taking down and setting up the glass at Mr Colthirst’s house which the Mayor’s party were using (York City Archives, Chamberlains’ Book 6, 1585, f 71; Reedy York 1, p 420). This sounds as though the glass windows, although now belonging permanently to the tenement, could still be removed, in order to give the Mayor and his fellow councillors a better view of the performance in the street below. Despite being ‘at the common hall’ in the entry, the Mayor can be assumed to be at the tenement at the Common Hall gates, watching a performance of the play going on in Coney-street.

The general picture of the Mayor’s party viewing a play from the windows of this upper chamber on the south side of the Common Hall gates is not purely fanciful, even though the room can only be proved to have been here after 1549. The final condition of Thomas Colthirst’s lease was that he allow the Mayor and councillors to do so, and it is ironic that after such a specific arrangement was recorded, only two occasions, in 1584 and 1585, are known when the Chamber was so used:

... it shalbe lawfull for the L. Mayo[r] Aldermen and xxij° of the privie Counsell of this Cittie and whom elles as they shall apoynte at all tymes during the Terme of the said Lease when anie play Interlude or other Geastes of pleasoure shalbe playd shewed or publisht in the streates of this Cittie to the generall delite of all men or other wise/ to haue all the saide mesuag at commandement even in as large and ample manner as the said Mayor aldermen & xxiiij° or other ther predecessores haue at anie tymc heretofore had or usd without Lett or Interrupcion of anie parson or parsons/ (House Book 26, f 28v)

Even a summary of part of the evidence relating to the Common Hall in York shows that a more precise idea can be built up of one of the places where the Corpus Christi Play was performed. It also serves to strengthen the idea that plays in York did indeed take place in the streets, and that in 1575 the Mayor and his council did not believe that this tradition had come to an end.
NOTES

1 See Meg Twycross, "‘Places to hear the play’: pageant stations at York, 1398-1572," in REEDN, 1978:2, 10-33; and especially 22-3, for information on fixing the locations of the places.

2 Plans of both the Guildhall and Mansion House are given in the new volume from the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments: York: Vol. V: The Central Area (1981), but unfortunately the two are treated as separate entities and the relationship of one to the other is not shown. The Guildhall is described on pp 76-81, and the Mansion House on pp 96-9.

3 Angelo Raine, in Medieval York (London, 1955), 135, wrongly dated this and the following deed as 20 November and 24 November 1446: both deeds are clearly dated 'vicesimo die mensis Nouembris Anno Regis Henrici sexti post conquestum Anglis vicesimo quarto.' The regnal year dates from August 1422.

4 In 1533, the deposed Master Thomas Thornton accused the newly elected Master Miles Newton of breaking into his house called the Common Hall, taking away the Guild’s documents, and breaking the chests, doors, and locks of the house: Yorkshire Star Chamber Proceedings, II, edited by H.B. McCall (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, XLV, 1910), 27.

5 York City Archives, Acc. 104, Ant/3: entries under 1725.

6 The original map is in the York Collection at the North Yorkshire County Library, Central Library, Museum Street, York, and a photograph of it is included in City of York: Vol. II: The Defences, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (HMSO, 1972), opposite p 165 (Plate 60). The related map by Jacob Richards is opposite p 176 (Plate 61). R.M. Butler suggests 1673 as a possible date of Captain Archer’s visit to York, and discusses this map and Jacob Richards’ copy in ‘A Late Seventeenth-Century Plan of York’ in The Antiquaries Journal, LII, Part II (Oxford University Press, 1972), 320-9. See Alan H. Nelson, The Medieval English Stage (University of Chicago Press, 1974) for a faithful rendering of Archer’s depiction of the Common Hall; but as I show, some of his conclusions can now be proved wrong. A diagram based on Archer’s map and showing the relationship of buildings at the Common Hall follows this article. It is not intended to be an accurate representation of the site.

7 Twycross, 29, 31, and 32.

8 REED: YORK I, 259, 264, and 265.

9 There was another Thomas Flemington, a carver, franchised nine years before the spurrier.


11 York Minster Library, M 2(4)a. This manuscript is a compilation of Guild and Chantry property, apparently made at the beginning of Queen Mary’s reign (c 1554); it must however have been based on the surveys made at the time of the dissolution of the chantries and guilds, either for Henry VIII in 1546 or Edward VI in 1548, as most of the property was sold off by 1554. The St Christopher and St George Guild property is listed on ff 60v-62.


13 The evidence quoted here for the Common Hall site and the location of the Mayor’s station does not bear out the theory proposed by Alan H. Nelson in Chapter 3 of The Medieval English Stage: see particularly pp 68-81. The lease to Thomas Colthirst of the tenement at the Common Hall Gates in 1575 suggests that the Mayor’s party used the chamber there because the plays or interludes took place in the street outside, and not in the courtyard before the Guildhall or in the chamber itself as he proposes. The documentary evidence also shows that the former St Christopher Chapel was on the north side of the site, so that Thomas Colthirst’s house was to the south, the reverse of Nelson’s conjecture (p 74). There is no proof that
Thomas Cothirst's house, the former St Christopher and St George Guild property, was the same occupied by Nicholas Bewyk, Thomas Cokke or Thomas Fleming (the spurrier or the carver).

ALEXANDRA F. JOHNSTON

York pageant house: new evidence

While engaged in research for his volume of Coventry records for Records of Early English Drama, Professor R.W. Ingram came across the following entry in the Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellanea of the Public Records Office, London. It is the notice of an inquisition taken in York 14 May, 1388 and it reads, "Men of divers crafts (diverse artis) [held] divers pageants (erunt paginas diversas ludorum suorum) within the hall of the palace, what they pay for the accommodation the jurors do not know, but at Corpus Christi next ... will be known and the said Andrew will answer the king therefor." The palace in question is the palace of the Archbishop of York then within the precincts of the Minster.

Professor Ingram sent the reference to me and, at the next opportunity, I followed it up. The document, PRO C145/240/14, is among a series of depositions taken before Robert de Garton clerk and Richard Filongeley, the king's commissioner. It measures 30.5cm by 33.5cm with a severe water stain on the right hand edge.

The case concerns an enquiry into the way in which the various outbuildings of the palace were being used. One Andrew Monymaker rented space to use as a small mint; John de Feryby and Mariota de Patryngton rent part of the gardens as well as storage space for trestles and forms while one William rents a cellar for an unspecified purpose. The majority of the payments specified in the document are for storage space. The portion concerning the pageants reads,

...Item dicunt quod homines diverse artis (...)erunt3 paginas diversas ludorum suorum infra aulam dicti palacij & quantum dant pro asiamento dicte aule habendi iam ignorant set in festo corporis christi proximo futuro (...) & dictis andreas inde respondebit domino-Regi ...

(Item they say that men of different craft guilds (...) various pageant wagons of their plays within the hall of the said palace and how much they pay for the use of the said hall they do not now know but at the feast of Corpus Christi next following (...) and the said Andrew will respond to the lord king concerning this matter).