

**ON A BASTION OF LONDON  
WALL, OR, EXCAVATIONS  
IN CAMOMILE STREET,  
BISHOPSGATE**

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On a Bastion of London Wall, or, Excavations in Camomile Street, Bishopsgate by John Edward Price

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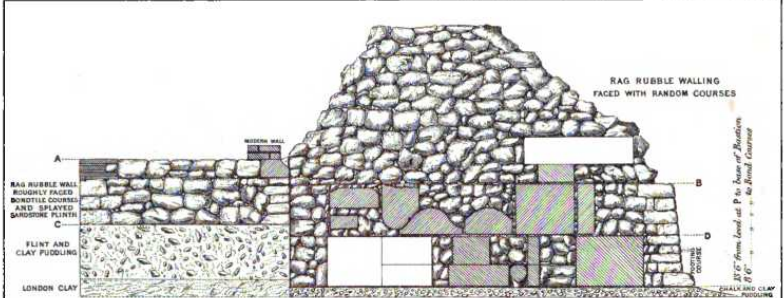
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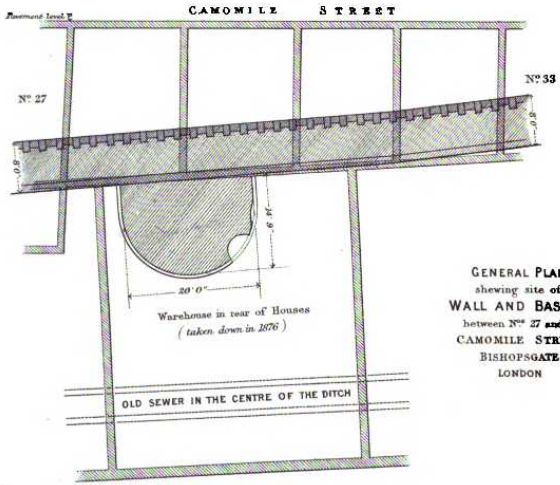
SECTION OF BASTION AND WALL ON LINE E.F. SHOWING MASONRY

Scale of Section 0 5 10 15 20 Feet



ELEVATION OF WALL AND BASTION

Scale of Elevation and Plan 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100 Feet



GENERAL PLAN showing site of WALL AND BASTION between Nos 27 and 33 CAMOMILE STREET BISHOPSGATE LONDON

ON A  
BASTION OF LONDON WALL,  
OR,  
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IN  
CAMOMILE STREET, BISHOPSGATE.

BY  
JOHN EDWARD PRICE, F.S.A. M.B.S.L.



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## PREFACE.

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After an interval of nearly four years I am enabled to lay before the Corporation of the City of London, and the Members of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society, an illustrated description of the Roman Antiquities found in Camomile Street, Bishopsgate, and recently arranged for inspection in the Museum at Guildhall.

That so long a period should have elapsed since the discovery of these relics and the issue of the present publication requires, I think, a word of explanation. The demands of other avocations on time and leisure have in a measure delayed the work, but the chief hindrance to its completion has been created by the objects themselves. They are all of a novel character, in many cases unique, and incapable of proper illustration by a simple reference to kindred remains preserved in any of the public or private collections of Great Britain. The statue of the Signifer and the group of the Lion and its victim are (so far as a lengthened search has enabled me to ascertain) both novel accessions to City discoveries. In each case points for inquiry have been suggested which rendered a prolonged investigation necessary, and reference not only to the Antiquarian treasures of this country, but to the more varied and extensive collections preserved in the museums of the Continent.

It is matter for congratulation that objects of such interest should have been found under conditions so favourable for their preservation as those which have been provided by the liberality of the Corporation.



The facility so generously afforded by the Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the repetition of Dr. Bruce's illustrations connected with the worship of Mithras, has enabled me to institute comparison between our isolated City example and the numerous figures of Lions preserved in the North of England. It is for future discoverers to determine whether such groups are to be associated with this Eastern myth; if so decided, London now supplies an illustration of its presence in the later days of the Roman occupation. I have however endeavoured to avoid distinct expressions of opinion upon this and other doubtful subjects, thinking it better to collect as far as possible all needful evidence, and to leave it to those interested in points of detail to assist in future investigation, and correct or substantiate as opportunity permits.

An agreeable duty remains, viz., to record my obligations to those who by their co-operation have assisted me in the work. To my friends Mr. H. C. Coote, F.S.A., Mr. C. Roach Smith, F.S.A., and Mr. Alfred White, F.S.A., I am much indebted for ever ready help; to the Rev. J. C. Bruce, M.A., to Dr. Hübner of Berlin, R. S. Ferguson, F.S.A., the Rev. H. M. Scarth, M.A., W. T. Watkin, Esq., the Rev. J. Raine, M.A., the Rev. W. Greenwell, M.A., Mr. George Joslin, W. H. Overall, F.S.A.; to Mr. Henry Hodge, and the Council of the Kent Archaeological Society, my thanks are also due.

JOHN EDWARD PRICE.

ALBION ROAD,  
STOKE NEWINGTON,  
1 August, 1880.

## ON A BASTION OF LONDON WALL.

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It has been the privilege of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society to be associated with the Corporation of the City of London in the investigation of the more important discoveries of local antiquities that have occurred within the last few years. The Roman tessellated pavement from Bucklersbury, of which it published a description nearly nine years ago, is now carefully preserved at Guildhall. The unique collection of Romano-British relics discovered when erecting the buildings of the National Safe Deposit Company at Walbrook has, thanks to the liberality of the Directors of the Company and the Metropolitan Board of Works, also found a home among the magnificent collections belonging to the Corporation. A third discovery, equal in interest, and of a peculiar character, has since been made in Camomile Street, Bishopsgate. The investigations made have been the result of concerted action undertaken by the Library Committee of the Corporation of London and the Council of our Society, and the valuable objects found have recently been arranged for public inspection in the museum at Guildhall.

In the autumn of 1876 the Rev. J. J. Kenworthy, M.A. of Clapton, called upon Mr. W. H. Overall, F.S.A. Librarian to the Corporation, and informed him that certain architectural fragments had been found in Camomile Street while removing the foundations of what proved to be one of the bastions attached to the City Wall. Subsequently an announcement of the discovery appeared in *The Times* in a letter from Mr. E. T. Loftus Brock, F.S.A. Secretary to the British Archaeological Association. At Mr. Overall's suggestion I took the earliest opportunity of visiting the excavations on behalf of the Society; the fragments were still upon the site—they comprised some massive sculptures, a figure of a lion carved from oolitic stone, and in bold relief, portions of cornices, and other objects. A careful examination at once revealed that, though sufficient had been cleared for the requirements of the buildings about to be erected, there lay buried beneath the surface a considerable portion of the foundation of the ancient bastion. It was therefore suggested to W. C. Banks, Esq. the Architect, that the Council of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society should defray the expenses

necessary for a complete investigation of the site, if he would give the requisite permission for the excavation to be renewed. To this he assented; some two or three men were deputed to the task, under the personal superintendence of his assistant, Mr. Henry Hodge. This gentleman gave every attention to the work, which daily increased in interest, until nearly a month had elapsed ere the whole of this very curious structure could be excavated and removed. The labour undertaken proved to be more formidable than was at first imagined; upwards of fifty massive fragments of sculptured stone had to be extricated before the maiden soil was reached; many of these were of considerable weight, and it was with great difficulty they could be dislodged from the position into which they had been tightly wedged and fitted. All with carvings or mouldings upon them were carefully preserved, but others, being simply squared blocks of stone devoid of ornament, were broken up upon the site, and used for filling up the cavities caused by the removal of the others. The discovery having proved to be of more than ordinary interest, Mr. Overall at once brought it to the notice of Reginald Hanson, Esq. M.A. F.S.A. then Chairman of the Library Committee, and suggested that application should be made to the Architect, W. C. Banks, Esq. for the presentation of the objects to the museum. To this Mr. Banks, on behalf of Mrs. Colley, the freeholder, cordially assented, and received a vote of thanks from the Library Committee.

On completion of the works the Library Committee, through their chairman Mr. Hanson, brought the matter to the notice of the Court of Common Council, on the 7th December, 1876, in an exhaustive Report, from which the following is extracted:—

“ Early in the month of September the Librarian directed my attention and that of the Council of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society to the discovery of one of the bastions of Old London Wall, while excavating for new buildings in Canonile Street, Bishopsgate. He suggested the desirability of an application being made to the Architect, W. C. Banks, Esq. for the presentation to the museum of the Corporation of any antiquities that might be found during the progress of the works. I at once assented on behalf of the Committee, and Mr. Banks most graciously complied with the request. At about twelve feet from the level of the street, and just below the base of the more modern structure of the bastion, the figure of a lion with other fragments of ancient sculpture were discovered. These were all of such interest that the Council of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society applied for permission to continue the excavations to the London clay; the permission was given, and every assistance and facility afforded by Mr. Banks. The works proceeded under the personal direction and superintendence of John E. Price, Esq. F.S.A. Honorary Secretary to the Society, and the result has been the discovery, for the first time, of a large number of most interesting fragments relating to the buildings of Roman London. The remains most likely formed parts of an ancient building or buildings of considerable size which may have stood in the line of the highway, which leading from this—one of the entrances to Roman London—proceeded to the great cemetery at Norton Folgate: these structures having probably fallen into ruins served at a later date