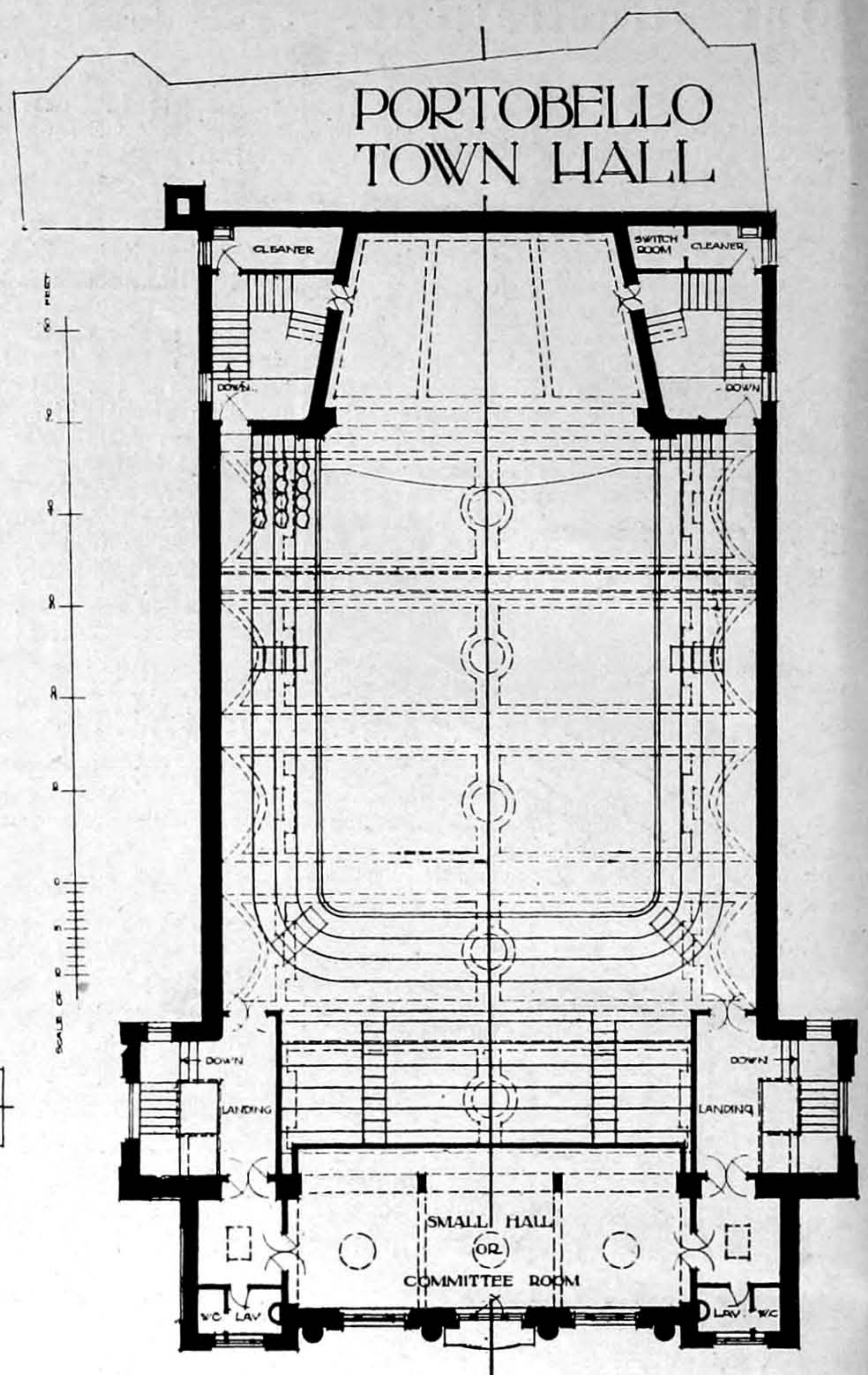


GROUND FLOOR PLAN



PLAN OF GALLERY

Mr. J. A. WILLIAMSON, A.R.I.B.A., City Architect.

have been too much reduced to be understood.

PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL, EDINBURGH.

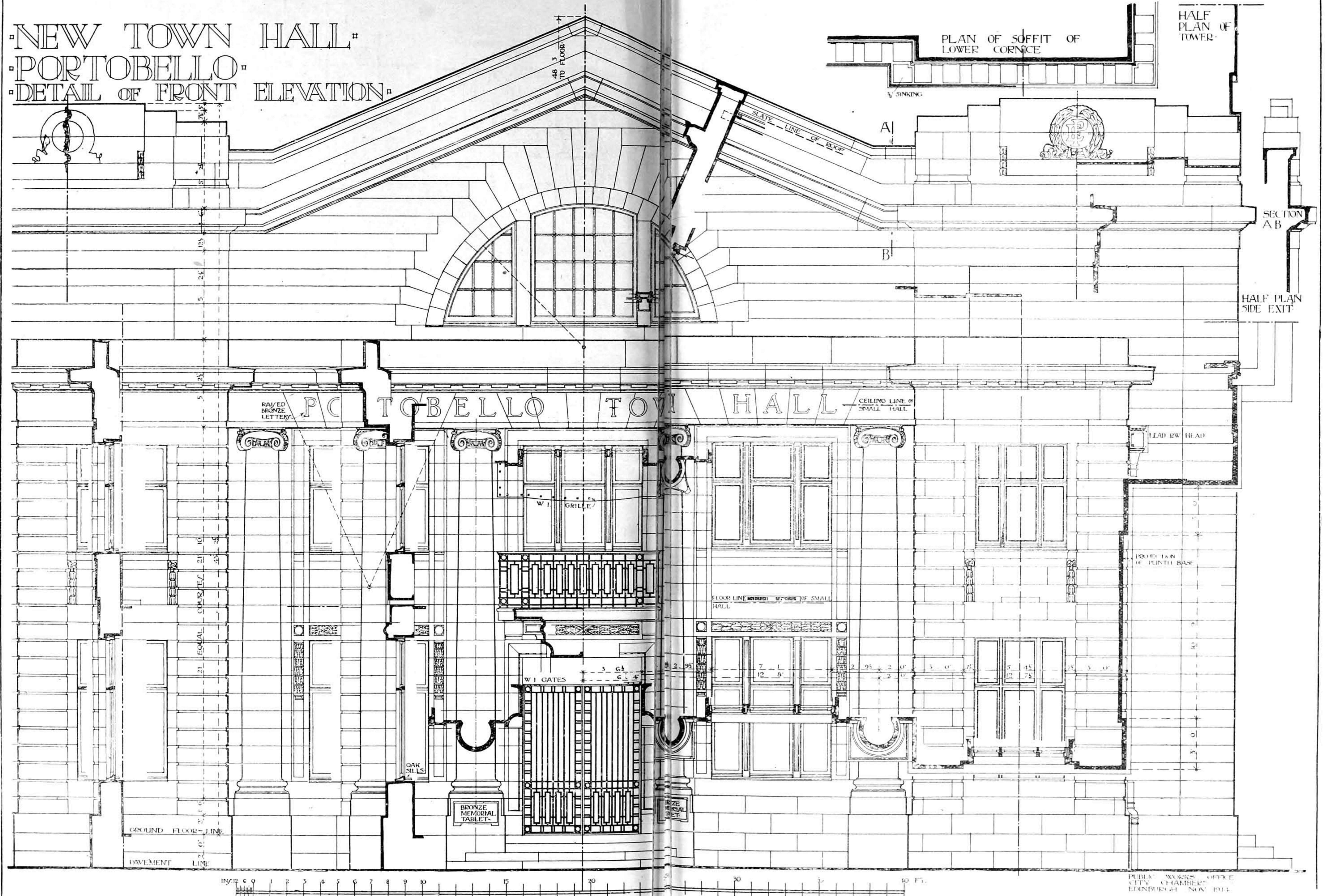
This building was recently opened by the Right Honourable R. K. Inches, Lord Provost of the city. By the Edinburgh Extension Act of 1896, whereby the then outlying burgh of Portobello was annexed to the city, one of the obligations undertaken by the city was, among other things, the provision of a town-hall to accommodate not less than 800 persons. It was resolved to carry out this last of the undertakings under the agreement, and the town-hall has now been completed, having accommodation for 1,000 persons, exclusive of the platform and the small hall. The plans explain themselves. The oblong type was considered the most suitable for a building situated in a district where it has to be adapted to a large variety of public uses. The arrangement on plan is, therefore, simple and direct. The hall is flanked on either side by a corridor 5ft. 6in. wide. This is taken off the width between main walls, thus restricting the overhang of side-balconies, and effectively rendering the hall less liable to draughts. The building is carried out in stone from Darney Quarry, Northumberland. The stone carving has been executed to the architect's drawings by Mr. Birnie Rhind, R.S.A., of Edinburgh. All internal woodwork is of Columbian pine finished in the natural colour by a waxed finish. The interior plasterwork is finished in pale cream Duresco. The approximate cost of the building is £8,500. The architect is Mr. J. A. Williamson, A.R.I.B.A., the City Architect.

LITTLE OFFLEY, HERTS.

This ancient house, after a period of comparative neglect, has been recently thoroughly renovated throughout by its new owner. Not much actual new building was required, the necessary work being really a complete reparation, and provisions of a utilitarian character, consisting of sanitary fittings and drainage for the house, farmhouse, and bailiff's cottage, well-boring and water supply for the buildings on the estate, heating and general repairs. A new loggia and night nursery, illustrated in the accompanying drawing, were, however, added to the south end of the house, while other building works were a water-tower, a pair of cottages, and a new lodge added to an existing one, which was altered in character. The estate lies on high ground about one and a half miles off the road between Hitchin and Luton, and the house, with its subsidiary buildings and cottages, is all that is left of the one-time hamlet of Little Offley. Whether the place is on the site of King Offa's Palace or not, is a matter for the antiquarian; but it is reputed that Great and Little Offley take their names from this king having built his "palace" and resided here. The house is, however, very interesting from the different dates of work it contains, and the evidence it offers of development from a simpler structure. The photograph on the top of the plate gives the main front. It would appear to have been originally a timber building, on the typical plan of roof-high hall, with gabled end wings. The only bit of timberwork that now shows on the exterior can be seen in the accompanying drawing. The hall has been subsequently divided up and converted into

a two-storied building and the entrance brought to the centre. The result is that the ground-floor rooms are rather low, the first-floor corridor just allows headroom, and the bedrooms were continued up into the roof. The chimney-stacks, the brick gabled structure containing the staircase, the brick gables of the front, and the few remaining wood-mullioned, transomed, lead-glazed windows probably belong to this early period of improvement. Subsequently the centre of the building was refronted in thin red brick, a flat towards the front, about half-way up the roof, allowing the ceilings to be continued level towards the exterior wall, and this permitting of the introduction of early sash windows with thick bars. Both the mullioned lead-glazed and the sashed windows have in places been replaced by later ones, while the house has been extended by the addition of small subsidiary wings on the front, one at least to serve the purpose of a powdering room, and a recently added wing to the service portion of the house. The scullery and servants' hall occupy what used to be the brew-house. The house is thus, perhaps, as interesting an example, on a small scale, as could be found of the evolution of domestic work to meet the requirements of succeeding generations. A quaint drawing of the house, published in Sir Henry Chauncy's "History of Hertfordshire" (1700), gives a clue to its then condition, and shows a turret in the centre of the building. Evidence that this once existed is to be found in the sturdy oak cage-framing to support such a feature in the roof over the boxroom. Various fragments of panelling of different date remain in the house, and sufficient old oak panelling was

NEW TOWN HALL PORTOBELLO DETAIL OF FRONT ELEVATION



DETAIL OF FRONT, PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL, EDINBURGH.—Mr. J. A. WILLIAMSON, A.R.I.B.A., City Architect.



PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL, EDINBURGH.
Mr. J. A. WILLIAMSON, A.R.I.B.A., City Architect.