

Zdeněk Dragoun

A newly discovered cellar in the house no. 604/1 at The Old Town square in Prague

ANNOTATION

A building history survey of a basement in the Týnská school in The Old Town Square proved that it was a development from early medieval rooms built in two phases. Their characteristics, position relative to the public places and entrance situations expanded our knowledge of vernacular architecture around the mid and the 2nd half of the 13th century in the centre of Prague Old Town.

SUMMARY

The final phase of modifications to the cellars of house no. 604/I on the east side of Old Town Square – also known as the „Tyn school“ – was commenced at the end of 2008. The preserved building was originally two separate burgher homes, the first written mention of which dates to 1359 and 1363; the homes were joined after the year 1407. A cellar 7.40 x 5.30 m in size, from the third quarter of the 13th century, was discovered to the east of the cellars of the southern-most original home. The preserved wall pockets for beams indicate the former presence of a beamed ceiling: the beams installed in the north-south direction were supported by a joist anchored in the west and east walls. The walls were not very segmented: only a small window just below the ceiling, probably for ventilation purposes, and two pointed, shelter-like niches surrounded by unworked masonry of quarry stone nature were located in the east wall. The southeast corner of the cellar featured a portal with a semicircular end, a space that was accessible from the entrance hallway from the east, i.e. from the rear part of the parcel. The original continuation of the cellar toward the west was replaced as early as during the 13th century by the barrel vaulted cellar found at the site today. The newly uncovered cellar is a substantial contribution to our knowledge of Early Gothic secular architecture in the centre of Prague's Old Town.

English by David J. Gaul