

# Miroslav Kovář – Zdeněk Dragoun

## Contribution to the knowledge of the Knights Templars' commandry in Prague Old Town

### ANNOTATION

The aim of this study is to classify the remains of the early Gothic buildings in front of the east wing of the former Dominican cloister No. 211/1 in Prague Old Town. These remains are traditionally related to the Templars commandry built in the reign of Wenceslaus I. A survey of the cellars (2009, 2011) recognised more of the extent and character of the medieval structures associated with this commandry.

### SUMMARY

The commandry of St. Lawrence was built in the reign of King Wenceslaus I (1230–1253). The Early Gothic structure is formed by an approximately square room with a cross vault without ribs and an adjacent oblong entrance room with a rising barrel vault with a rising top longitudinal axis. If one can judge from the preserved walls, the Early Gothic structure formed a single wing, which continued into the upper storey, probably being connected at the north end to a square room with a cross vault without ribs (at the north end of the east wing of No. 211/I). Since the orientation of the Early Gothic remains corresponds with the orientation of the east enlargement of St. Lawrence's rotunda, which is connected with the Templars presence here in the beginning of 1230s, they can presumably be associated with the Templars commandry. However, since the Early Gothic walling is built of undressed quarry stone in contrast to the ashlar of the Templars' "extension" of St. Lawrence, one cannot exclude slightly later (ca mid 13th century) origins of the buildings in front of the east wing No. 211 rather than their construction immediately after the arrival of the Templars.

**Fig. 1.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister which contains Early Gothic remains.

**Fig. 2A.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. The groundplan of a cellar with building history phases. **1** – Early Gothic, **2** – Early Gothic (hypothetical), **3** – blocking of the entrance portal, **4** – addition of the Post Medieval vault probably from the 17th century, **5** – recent walling.

**Fig. 2B.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. **1** – Early Gothic section within the east wing of No. 211, **2** – hypothetically later enlargement of the Early Gothic section towards the north.

**Fig. 3.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Early Gothic room with a cross vault without ribs by the north end of the wing.

**Fig. 4.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Photogrammetry of the north wall of the room 0.1. **11** – a niche with precisely worked lintel and side mouldings (built from marlstone and significant lime mortar), **12** – the base of the barrel vault with a clear technological joint (see Fig. 6), **13** – the entrance room - part of the barrel vault rising (!) towards the east with imprints of the plank boarding, **14** – vertical technological joint (the joints behind this spot to the west are not horizontal but angled down), **15** – inconsistent undressed marlstone walling with river pebbles in the joints, **16** – a later brick ? x 135 x 55 mm infill to the left from the west edge of the niche, **17** – stratigraphically later yellow lime mortar as the surface finish on the marlstone walling (this mortar covers the barrel vault and fragments of daubed mortar on the Early Gothic walling), **18** – original surface finish of the marlstone walling with daubed mortar, **19** – more precisely faced marlstone walling than in the west adjacent section, **20** – fragments of the original surface finish of the marlstone walling with coarse daubed mortar, **21** – original surface finish of the marlstone walling with drawn tight mortar of yellow grey shade, later covered by grey lime mortar, **22** – inconsistent marlstone walling with river pebbles in the joints, **23** – current flight of a staircase with stone banisters, **24** – a brick (J. Hlavatý, M. Kovář, 2009, 2011).

**Fig. 5.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Photogrammetry of the east wall in room 0.1. **1** – uprights of the armature in the doorway niche infill, **2** – boundary of a slightly widened wall and a characteristic hollow below the foot of the uprights, **3** – vertical technological joints in the walling corresponding with the building process (a 65 mm thick brick in the joint), **4** – vertical technological joints in the walling corresponding with the building process, **5** – later brick infill ? x 45 x 65 mm with significant grey mortar, **6** – later infill of the portal niche built of undressed stone with charred marlstone fragments, **7** – foundation of the armature of the portal niche built to the longitudinal sides of the room, **8** – later infill with characteristic grey mortar, **9** – stone infill, **10** – barrel vault of the entrance built to the wall with the portal niche.

**Fig. 6.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. The foot of the barrel vault of the entrance room 01. **1** – technological joint between the vault and the outside wall top of the room 0.1. covered with daubed mortar, **2** – technological joint between the vault and the wall top of the room 0.1. covered with daubed mortar, **3** – surface of the vault of the entrance room with imprints of plank boarding, **4** – precisely drawn tight lime mortar secondarily covering the surface of the vault. **5** – undressed stone.

**Fig. 7.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. The south-east tipped projection of the cross vault without ribs in room 0.2. **1** – tipped projection of the Early Gothic vault, **2** – imprints of the plank boarding on the vault, **3** – anchoring slot after the plank boarding, **4** – later drawn tight mortar, **5** – undressed stone outside walls of the room 0.2.

**Fig. 8.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Photogrammetry of the east part of the north wall in room 0.2. **1** – niche in the undressed marlstone wall, **2** – precisely worked marlstone ashlar in the sides of the niche, **3** – armature of the sides of the portal niche in the entrance room, **4** – daubed coarse lime mortar of the original surface cover (see Fig. 9).

**Fig. 9.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Room 0.2. – detail of a fragment of the original surface finish of the Early Gothic undressed stone wall around the moulding of the niche in the north wall. **1** – ashlar of the western side of the niche in the north wall, **2** – daubed mortar – part of the original Early Gothic surface finish of the room, **3** – north undressed stone wall, **4** – partly knocked off precisely drawn tight lime mortar, which secondarily covered the Early Gothic constructions of the room 0.2.

**Fig. 10.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. The east side of the portal between the rooms 0.1. and 0.2. **1** – removed moulding of the portal side, **2** – armature component of the portal, **3** – a scar after the removed portal at the walling of the portal niche, **4** – corner armature of the portal niche made of carefully dressed stone.

**Fig. 11.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Detail of the stone moulding of the shooting window in the east wall of the room 0.2. **1** – quarry marlstone walling, **2, 3** – corner armature of the “shooting” window, **4** – the north side of the “shooting” window with plaster.

**Fig. 12.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Room 0.2. – photogrammetric survey of the west wall. **1** – a niche, **2** – precisely worked marlstone ashlar in the niche sides, **3** – monolithic marlstone lintel of the niche, **4** – south side of a blocked window formed by precisely worked marlstone ashlar (measurable width of the side is 0,80 m), **5** – north side of the blocked window with lime mortar below the blockage (originally continued onto the wall surface - currently knocked off), **6** – the base of the window 1,58 m above current floor, **7** – south moulding of the window subsequently damaged by the north side of a current opening, **8** – steeply rising base of the current ventilating opening in the west wall of the room built from 50 mm thick bricks, **9** – later blockage in the marlstone wall with a 60 mm thick brick, **10** – later blockage in the marlstone wall, **11** – significant mortar bed of the side moulding of the niche, **12** – vertical technological joint caused by the building process.

**Fig. 13.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Detail of the subsequently broken south outside wall of the room 0.2. **1** – subsequently broken core of the south wall, **2** – north face of the south wall, **3** – the joint between the core of the south wall and the west wall of the passage 0.3., **4** – grey lime mortar.

**Fig. 14.** Prague 1, The Old Town, Liliová 9, No. 211/I, the east wing of the former Dominican cloister. Detail of a probably Early Gothic arch fragment in a secondary position in the west wall of room 0.3. **1** – segmental surface of an architectonic fragment, possibly reused from the constructions of Early Gothic cellars (portal moulding?), **2** – segmental surface of an architectonic fragment, chopped during its repositioning in the west wall of the passage 0.3.

**Fig. 15.** Prague 1, The Old Town, the church of St. Ann. View on the north wall fragments of the east enlargement of St. Lawrence's rotunda built from marlstone ashlar. A Gothic and Renaissance opening subsequently broken into

the wall and a massive lining straightening the difference between the Romanesque wall and the north wall face of the presbytery.

**Fig. 16.** Prague 1, The Old Town, the church of St. Ann. Detail of a second, unpublished Romanesque fragment (a cornice head?) from the interior of St. Ann's church.

*English by Linda and Patrick Foster*