

MR LIDSTONE'S GIFT

ON p. 12 of Vol. LXIV of the *Journal* there is a description of the Council Table and Chairs given to the Institute in 1932 by William Peyton Phelps. Set in the Old Hall, they became one with it and they shared the ruin that came in 1944.

Odd fragments of the Table and pieces of a few of the Chairs were recovered from the heap; two of the Chairs may be reconstituted, to be preserved as the poor relics of a noble gift. The picture opposite the title-page of Vol. LXIV shows something of what it was. Now, thanks to Mr Lidstone, failing memory will be refreshed and awakening interest will be stimulated by the Institute's possession of a Council Table and Chairs made of old material by the man who fashioned the Phelps gift and essentially a reproduction of it. This wonderful present was proposed by Mr Lidstone even before the fate of the originals was known. When, unhappily, the loss had become definite, Mr Lidstone confirmed his offer and requested that the restoration should be put in hand. The Council accepted the gift with great gratitude and much work has been done, despite the difficulties of the time. Mr Lidstone expressed a strong desire that the President's Chair should be in use at the Annual General Meeting of the Institute in 1946. His wish was accomplished and the retiring President, the last to sit in the Phelps Chair, conducted the business of the Meeting from the new Chair and installed in it his successor.

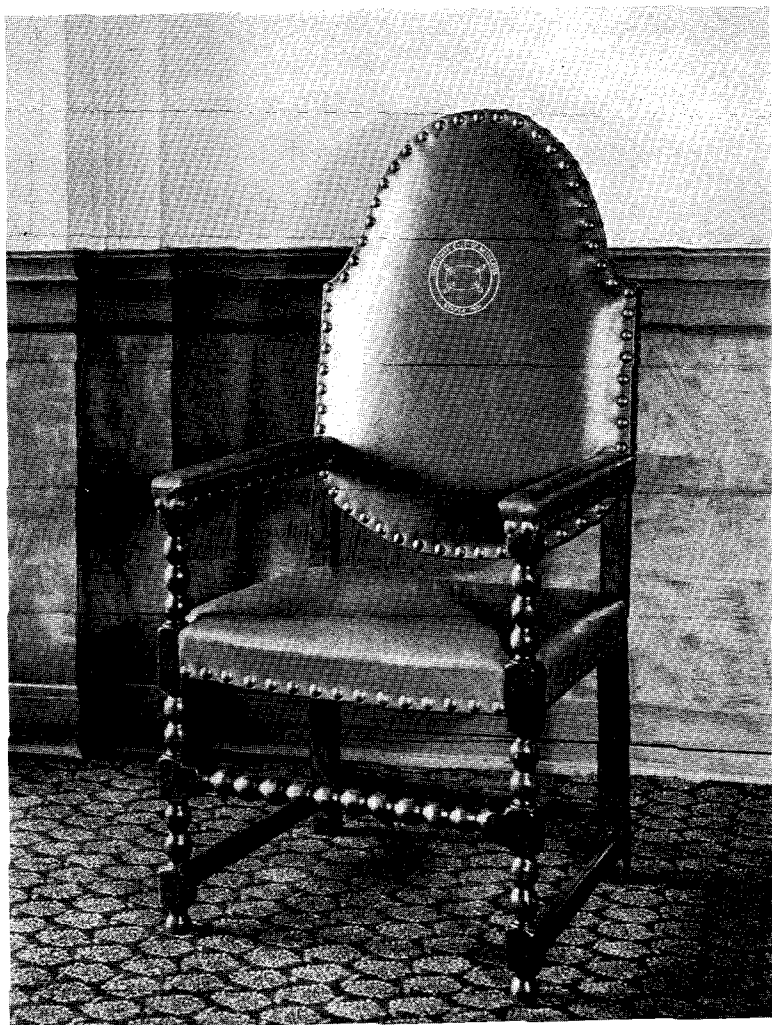
A photograph of the President's Chair is included in this issue of the *Journal*.

The Council Table will bear a plate with the following inscription:

This Table and the Council Chairs are replicas of those presented in 1932 by William Peyton Phelps, M.A., F.I.A., and destroyed by enemy action on 24th August 1944. The replicas are presented by G. J. Lidstone, LL.D., F.I.A., as a mark of his affection for the Institute and in memory of his old friend Phelps.

January 1946.

The Annual Report of the Council, presented and approved at the General Meeting, intimated that a special Committee had been appointed to consider (in response to a tentative enquiry made by the Directors of the Prudential Assurance Company and welcomed by the Council) the possibility of arranging a new home for the Institute in a rebuilt Staple Inn. That is still a question of the future, and probably not of the near future, but, at least, there is hope that Mr Lidstone's gift will be seen and used in a place instinct with memory of the Hall in which the Phelps Council Table and Chairs had so fit a setting and met so sad a fate. And, as the President announced at the Annual Meeting, the Council has resolved that, in association with the Institute's new home, there shall be—its form yet undetermined but its purpose clear—a feature commemorative of the great work and influence of Mr Lidstone.



The President's Chair