

## Old Crypt Schoolroom

In 1528, John Cooke, mercer and four times Mayor of the City of Gloucester, made a will in which he directed his wife Joan to 'stablish and ordeyn a continuall frescole of gramer for the erudicion of children and scolers' by a 'scole maister to kepe scole and teche gramer freely'.

The original 'scole house' in Southgate Street was built on land that was until 1529 part of the burial ground of the Church of St Mary de Crypt. This first of four sites to be occupied by the Crypt School would have been a splendid new edifice, with gleaming ashlar (masonry of large blocks wrought to even faces and square edges) of Cotswold stone fronting Southgate Street, and early Tudor brickwork on the churchyard side. The building, now known as The Old Crypt Schoolroom in 1539 would have been a brand new, 'state of the art' school building for those first few 'scolers'. The lower floor was the Schoolroom, with an upper chamber for the Master. The school crest and the pre-Elizabethan city coat of arms adorn the handsome bay window of the Master's chamber.

The schoolroom was purchased by the parish in 1860 for £500, for use as Parish Rooms when the school outgrew the building. But there is still a strong link between the church and the successful Crypt School (now on its fourth site at Podsmead). St Mary de Crypt Church hosts the school's annual carol service and commendation day for the new intake of pupils. Each year the school pays quid pro quo rent on the schoolroom to the Rector in the form of one red rose. In addition, the old Master's Desk is on permanent loan to The Crypt School. Each year at The Crypt School Founders' Day Service at Gloucester Cathedral the head boy presents the Rector of St Mary de Crypt with a red rose as quid pro quo rent for the Schoolroom.

Some material from the Crypt School website  
<http://www.cryptschool.org/schoolhistory>