

Area adjacent St. Mary's Church Dover Castle Kent

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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NGR: 632622 141836

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Version	Prepared by	Position	Date	Approved by
01	Keith Parfitt	Field Officer	December 2013	P.Bennett (Director)

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Area adjacent St Mary's Church, Dover Castle –

SITE REPORT SHEET

COUNTY: Kent	TOWN/PARISH: Dover	DATE: 16/12/13
RECORDING BODY: Canterbury Archaeol. Trust		Individual: K. Parfitt
SITE NAME: Area adjacent to St Mary in Castro, Dover Castle, Kent (Frontispiece, Figs 1– 3)		CAT Archive Number: 3325
CAT SITE CODE: SMDC-WB-13		(part of) Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 30281
NGR: 632622 141836 to 632635 141834		ELEVATION: <i>c.</i> 111m. OD
TOPOGRAPHY: Area of level ground, within Horseshoe earthwork, immediately N of St Mary's Church (Frontispiece, Fig. 1)		NATURAL: Upper chalk (presumed; not exposed)
FORMER LAND-USE: Tarmac roadway (Frontispiece)	FUTURE LAND-USE: As previously; section of water main replaced. Tarmac replaced	
LAND-OWNER: English Heritage	TENANT: X	
TYPE OF EXCAVATION: Hand excavation of tarmac roadway and re-excavation of a backfilled service trench (F. 3) to allow replacement of a live water main (Frontispiece, Fig. 2).		
EXTENT OF EXCAVATION (Frontispiece, Fig. 2): Total length of trench dug: 13.50m Width of excavated trench: 0.40m; depth, 0.40–0.65m		
NATURE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION: Close observation of all excavation work		
GENERAL SOIL SEQUENCE: 1 Tarmac, modern roadway surface; 0.08m, <i>over</i> Contexts 2 and 4 2 Light grey clay with frequent small & medium chalk lumps, flints and occasional red brick fragments; contained armoured electric cable; filling of service trench (F. 3) F. 3 Modern service trench, running E–W; live armoured electric cable in base. Up to 0.57m deep. Dug into the top of earlier water pipe trench (?1930s–1950s). 4 Light grey gritty clay loam with moderate numbers of red brick fragments (some with cream lime mortar adhering) and natural flints; base layer for tarmac surface (1); 0.10m thick. Cut by F. 3 , <i>over</i> Context 5		

5 Mixed light grey and brown clay containing frequent small and medium chalk lumps with moderate numbers of natural flint nodules. Probably represents undisturbed tail of adjacent medieval rampart bank; 0.15m (min.) thick. Cut by **F. 3**, *under* Context **4**

FINDS AND NOTES:

No finds of archaeological interest were revealed. The bulk of the trench was cut along the line of an earlier service trench (**F. 3**). The filling of this (Context **2**) may be broadly dated by a discarded potato crisp packet it contained. This was priced at 2½p (therefore post Feb. 1971 decimalisation).

At one point, opposite the NW corner of the church's north transept, a small area of undisturbed deposits was revealed in the south side of the trench (Contexts **4** & **5**). Buried at a depth of about 0.20m, the lower layer (**5**) appeared to represent the first significant stratified archaeological deposit and probably constituted the tail of the adjacent medieval rampart bank (Frontispiece, Fig. 2).

The general absence of any disturbed human bones within the excavations could suggest that few, if any, burials had been made outside this part of the church.

No unauthorised damage to the Scheduled Ancient Monument occurred. No further study of the recorded information is required.

FUTURE POTENTIAL OF AREA:

The St Mary's Church area remains a key location for reaching the origins of Dover Castle. Every opportunity to investigate sub-surface remains in this area should be fully taken-up.

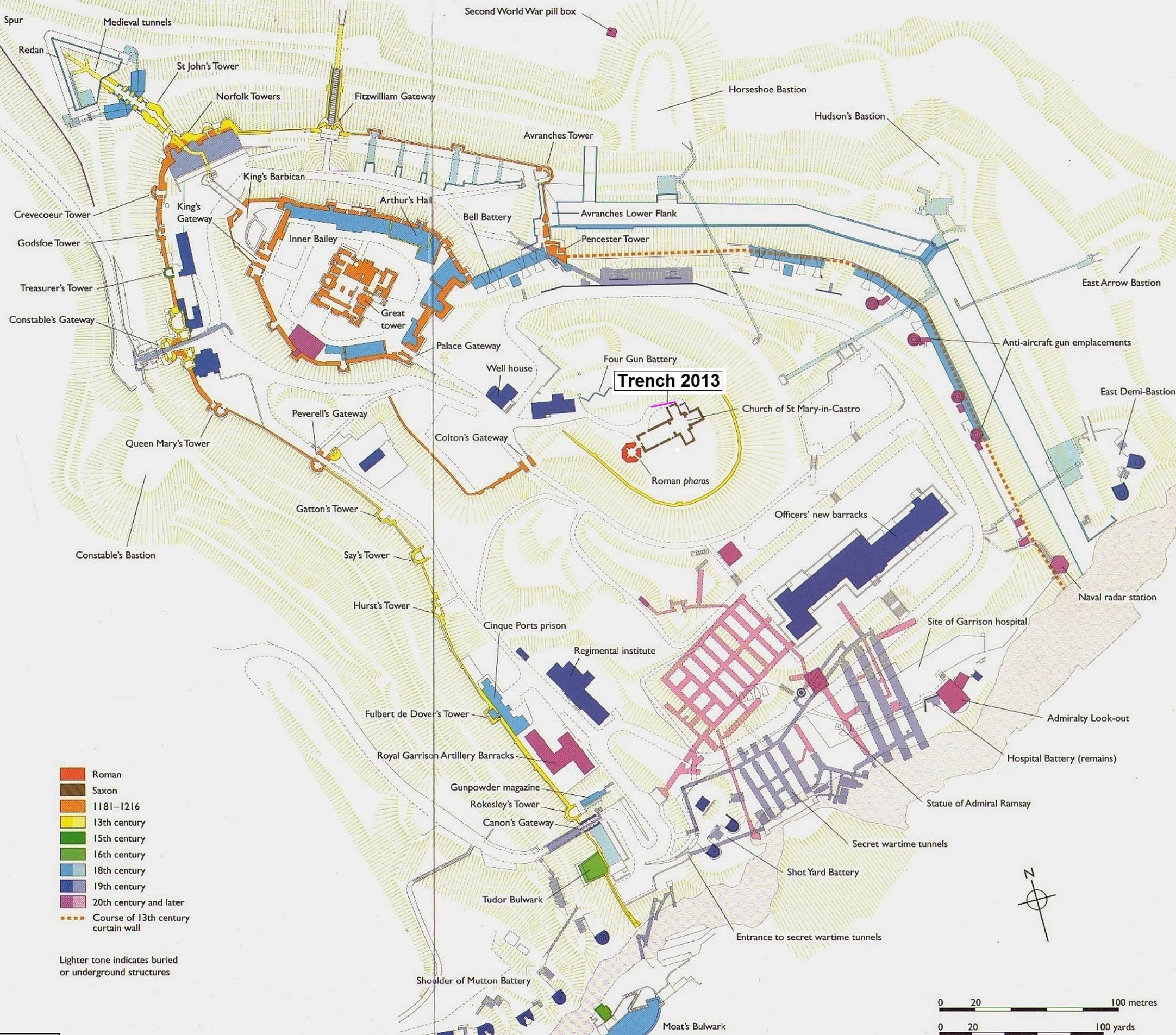


Fig. 1

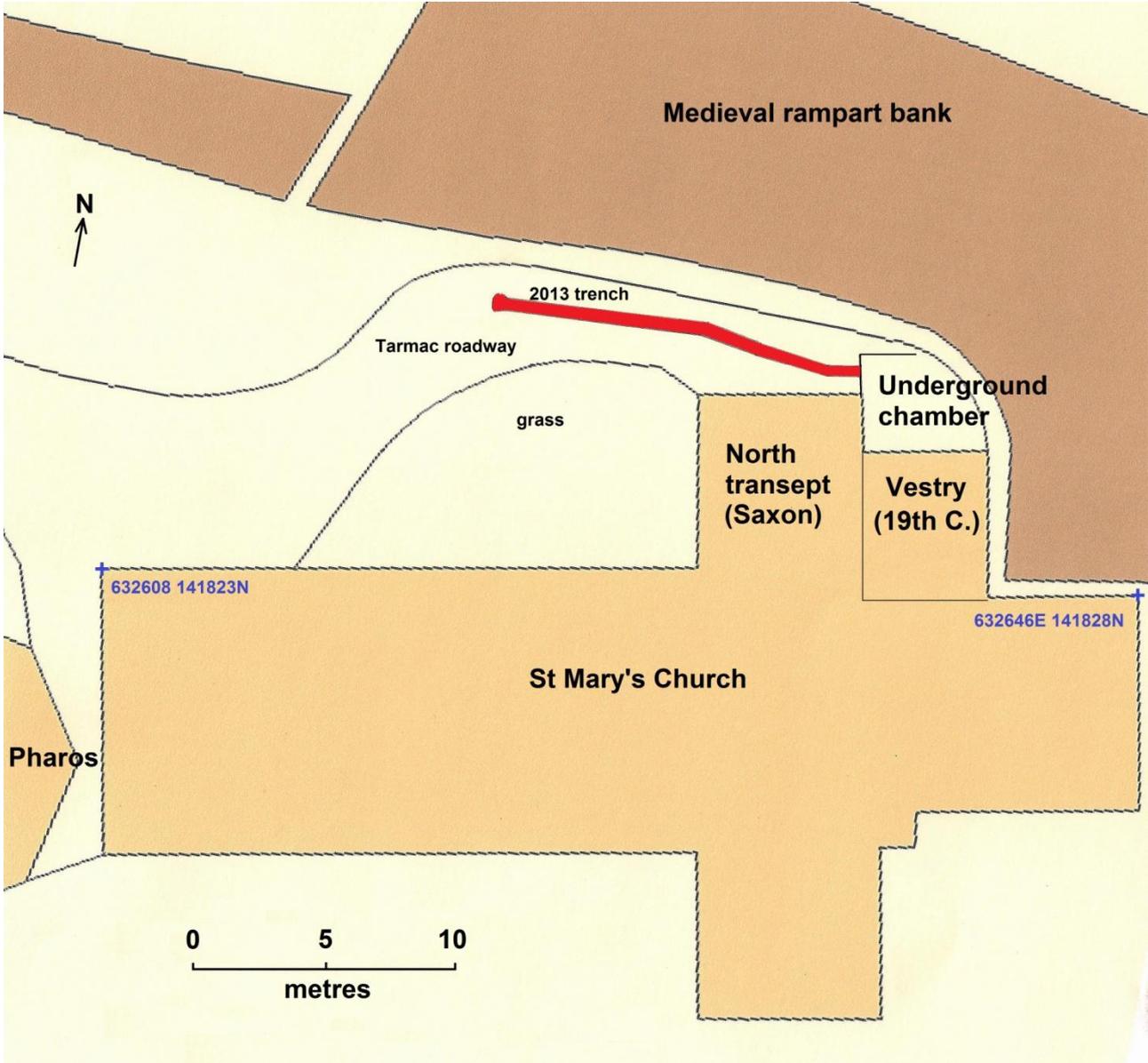


Fig. 2 Plan of St Mary's Church showing location of trench excavated in 2013

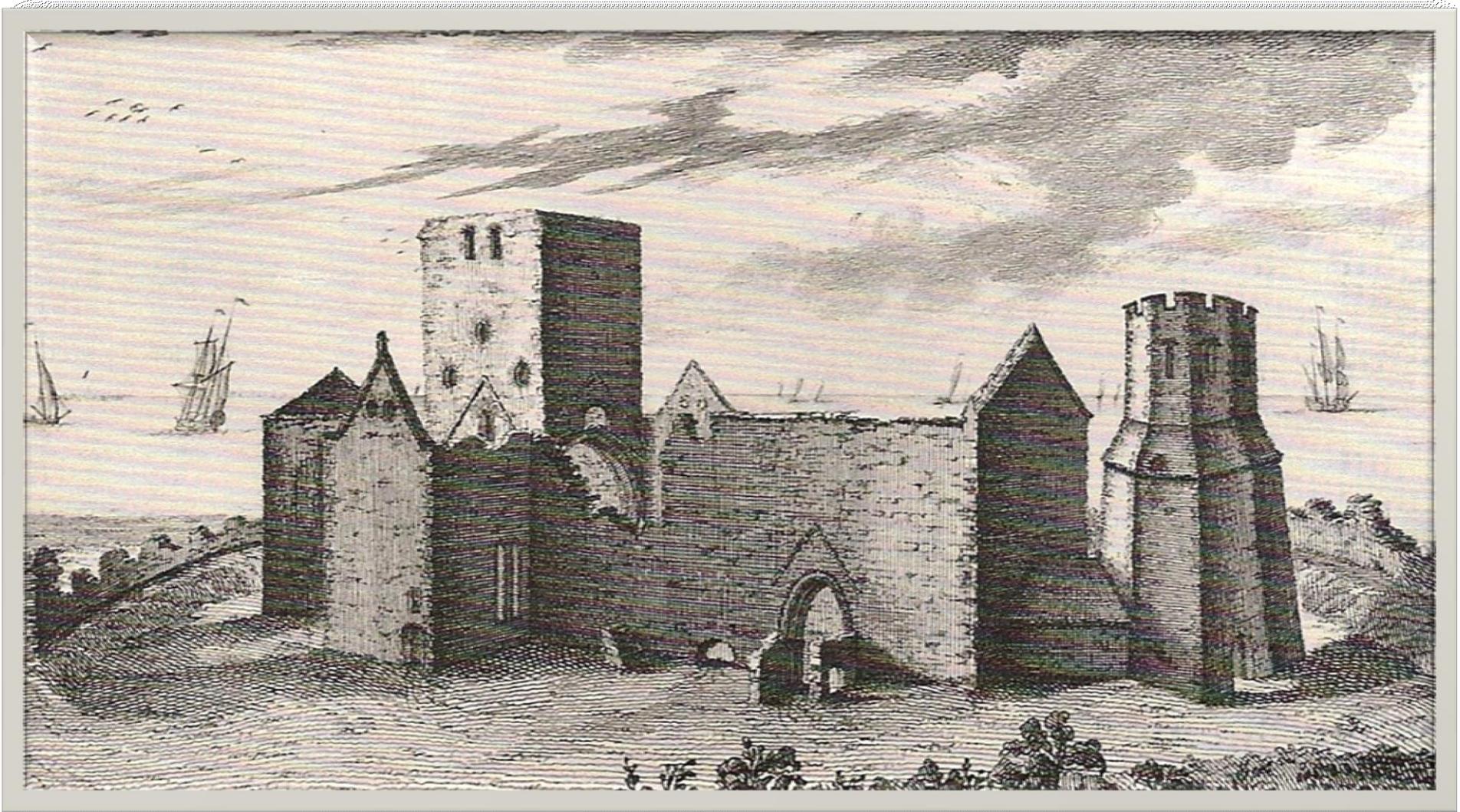


Fig. 3 Engraving of the north side of the ruined church of St Mary, made by the Buck brothers during the early eighteenth century