

(1) HISTORICAL SUMMARY

(1:1) The site lies on the southern side of an east-west valley known in the middle ages as the Duple, meaning a hollow with a marshy or flowing stream in the bottom.¹ The stream was known in the same period as the Damyet and flowed from higher ground on the west into the sea near to the present day West Sandgate. Its channelled course is shown on a map of 1852 as the Damgeth gutter.²

(1:2) The Damyet was an important source of water to the medieval town and it may have attracted settlement at an earlier period. Farmer has suggested that St Sepulchre Street, Cooks Row, St Marys Street and West Sandgate preserve the street pattern of an agricultural settlement pre-dating the medieval town and possibly earlier than the establishment of "Skarthi's Burh" in 966.³ He reports discovering "early" timber buildings in an excavation in St Marys Street.⁴

(1:3) The site lies within that part of the medieval town known as the Old Borough contrasting with the western extension to the town made in the 13th century called the New borough.⁵ The Old Borough has its origins in the 12th century and by the end of that century was defended on the west by a wall and ditch which cut across the western end of St Sepulchre Street in its course northwards from Leading Post Street to the Auborough Gate astride the road to the castle.⁶ Although this gate is the only landward entrance into the Old Borough mentioned in documentary sources, it is very inconvenient for access to the southern part of the town. It is not unreasonable to suppose the existence of a second gate, perhaps at the west end of St Sepulchre Street.

The street takes its name from the church of the Holy Sepulchre which Rushton suggests could have been founded in the 12th century? Farmer reports observing in 1973 a circular building beneath the nave of the church consecrated in 1306.⁸

(1:4) There are no documentary references to properties in St Sepulchre Street until the 14th century and none can be confidently identified with the present site. However the grant of land north of St Sepulchre Street to the Franciscans in 1267 indicates that this part of the Old Borough was by then densely developed, with property held by some of the wealthiest families in the town, such as the Uctreds and Rostons.⁹

To speculate, it is possible that St Sepulchre Street was one of the most important thoroughfares in the 12th and 13th century town, connecting in the east with the harbour via West Sandgate and on the west to a possible gate in the town wall.

(1:5) As mentioned above, in 1267 the area to the north of St Sepulchre Street was granted to the Franciscans by Reginald Molindarius, the document mentioning land north and south of the Damyet and west of the Holy Sepulchre cemetery. Further grants during the 13th and 14th centuries expanded the area of the Friary,¹⁰ which in 1298 was at least in part surrounded by an earthen wall.¹¹ The medieval documents are not sufficiently detailed for the course of this boundary to be accurately located, though at the dissolution the friary covered $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres¹² which corresponds in size to the open area of ground north of St Sepulchre Street labelled as "Fryeredge" on the 1725 town plan.¹³ Interpreting from this map, the friary's southern boundary must have run somewhere close to the present northern boundary of properties on the

north of St Sepulchre Street, including the site at present under discussion. Further, some of these properties may have belonged to the friary as it owned 5 houses outside its southern boundary at the dissolution.¹⁴

(1:6) In 1322 the Franciscans succeeded in obtaining royal permission to inclose the lane known as the dumple "for the enlargement of their dwelling place" undertaking to replace it by a lane on their own soil.¹⁵ One possible interpretation of this event is that the present day Globe Street, known in the 14th century as Fleshergate, once continued northwards as the Dumple across St Sepulchre Street to Longwestgate, incidentally crossing the site at present under consideration. Such a lane would have bisected the area shown as Fryeredge on the 1725 plan so its inclosure would have united the Franciscan property, the friars moving the road and its name some 50 metres to the western limit of their land where a street called Dumple, now Friargate, is shown on the same 1725 plan.

(1:7) An entrance into the friary is recorded on the north near the Rede Cross,¹⁶ but from the 14th century the Franciscans shared with the burgesses access to the town's piped water supply,¹⁷ the nearest conduit being at the west end of St Sepulchre Street. It is possible that there was another entrance to the friary on the south near to this conduit, and the 1852 O.S. plan shows several narrow alleyways leading from St Sepulchre Street northwards into the area once occupied by the friary. Two of these in 1852 formed the eastern and western boundaries of the site at present discussion and either could well have originated as an entrance into the friary.

(1:8) There is little evidence to assess the effect the expansion of the friary had on the prosperity of the St Sepulchre Street area. One might imagine that the large area taken by the friars together with the alteration of the street pattern would have had a detrimental effect on the prosperity of this area compared to the rest of the town. However a rent of 2 shillings for a property 41ft x 20ft at the east end of St Sepulchre Street in 1342¹⁸ compares more closely with the rents obtained from land in the wealthy harbour area than poorer parts of the town such as the New Borough. This comparison with the harbour may point to the continuing importance of St Sepulchre Street as the main route into the town from the quayside via West Sandgate.

(1:9) By the 15th century the town was in decline¹⁹ and it was not until the growth of Scarborough as a spa resort in the 18th century that a degree of prosperity returned.²⁰ However, as contemporary guide books observed, by the end of the century the New Borough had become the most fashionable and prosperous part of the town and consequently experienced the most redevelopment.²¹ In contrast, as late as the 1852 map the former site of the Franciscan friary is shown as largely open ground, and during the 19th the chief developments in St Sepulchre Street appear to have been the construction of several religious establishments and the rebuilding of Trinity House Hospital in 1832. The character of St Sepulchre Street as a residential "backwater" persists up to the present day removed as it is from the holiday industry on the forshore and the commercial life of Newborough and Westborough.

(2) TOPOGRAPHICAL OBSERVATIONS

(2:1) Stonework is visible in the western part of the boundary that Friarage school makes with properties on the north of St Sepulchre Street, and in a wall on the east of Springfield. Although not necessarily dating from the medieval period the boundaries are not recent either, appearing on the 1852 O.S. map. The former wall may perpetuate the southern boundary of the Franciscan friary and the later the eastern boundary of the friary with the churchyard of the Holy Sepulchre.

(2:2) The pattern of property boundaries in places along St Sepulchre Street are reminiscent of medieval burgage plots with a narrow street frontage and long rear yard. In particular the roof lines at the rear of 18 and 20 St Sepulchre Street are at right angles to the road which could possibly indicate the survival of medieval gable ended structures within and to the rear of the present late 18th century houses fronting on to the street.

(3) ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

- (3:1) The first recorded archaeological observation in the area was of foundations probably belonging to the Holy Sepulchre church when the Friends Meeting House was built in 1801.²² (Fig 1 Site A)
- (3:2) In 1847 a section across the town ditch was observed at the western end of St Sepulchre street, though the precise location is not known.²³ (Fig 1 Site B)
- (3:3) In 1968 Farmer excavated at 46 St Sepulchre Street discovering the Darnley gutter and fragmentary burials belonging to the Holy Sepulchre Church.²⁴ (Fig 1 Site C)
- (3:4) During building work in 1973 in St Sepulchre Street Farmer observed the nave of the Holy Sepulchre church. The precise location is not recorded.²⁵ (Fig 1 Site D)
- (3:5) Farmer has observed the town defences at the western end of St Sepulchre Street and at the rear of Leading Post Street.²⁶ (Fig 1 Site E)

(4) CONCLUSION

The archaeological importance of the site can be summarised as

- possible existence of pre-12th century settlement
- the site potentially covers 3 entire burgage plots and the rear of a fourth facing what appears to be one of the medieval town's most important thoroughfares.
- Crossing the site may be the pre-1322 alignment of the Duple, an entrance into the Franciscan friary and evidence for the southern wall of the friary precinct.
- Possibility of medieval fabric surviving within Nos. 18 and 20 St Sepulchre Street.

A thorough examination of the existing houses before demolition is clearly a priority but the subsequent archaeological response is harder to assess. It would add immensely to our knowledge of the medieval town to be able to investigate the development of several adjoining properties fronting one of its most important streets. Such a project has hitherto not been attempted in Scarborough but it is probably beyond the resources of the local archaeological society alone to complete it adequately.

The alternative could be to seek the developer's co-operation in minimising damage to the the stratigraphy limiting archaeological investigation to the removal of late disturbances and recording the earlier stratigraphy subsequently exposed. Specific problems, such as the presence of pre-12th century occupation and a pre-14th century street alignment could well be answered by this approach. A small scale excavation before demolition to examine the depth of stratigraphy might be useful in formulating plans to preserve the remainder of the site.

- 1 A. H. Smith, Place Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire (1928) 106
- 2 Ordnance Survey 1852 Scale 1:1056
- 3 P. Farmer, Scarborough Harbour and Borough (1976) 1-2
- 4 P. Farmer in Transactions of the Scarborough and District Archaeological Society No. 11 (1968) 78
- 5 Victoria County History of the North Riding Vol. 2 (1923) 538
- 6 P. Farmer, An Introduction to Scarborough Ware and a Re-assessment of Knight Jugs (1979) 11
- 7 J. Rushton, Scarborough 1166-1266 in Scarborough 966-1966 (1966) 28
- 8 P. Farmer, The Dating of the Scarborough Ware Pottery Industry in Medieval Ceramics Vol. 6 (1982) 71-2
- 9 I. H. Jeayers, A Description of Documents contained in the White Vellum Book of the Scarborough Corporation (1914)34B
- 10 Calendar of Patent Rolls 1313-17, 355
- 11 Yorkshire Inquisitions Vol. 3, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series Vol. 31 (1902) 81
- 12 T. Hinderwell, The History and Antiquities of Scarborough (1832)269-70
- 13 A New and Exact Plan of the Town of Scarborough 1725 reproduced in Scarborough 966-1966 (1966) 57
- 14 T. Hinderwell (1832) 269
- 15 Calendar of Patent Rolls 1321-24
- 16 I. H. Jeayers (1914) 37C
- 17 Ibid 47D
- 18 Ibid 17E
- 19 B. Waites, Scarborough 1366-1566 in Scarborough 966-1966 (1966) 54-5
- 20 G. C. F. Forster, Scarborough 1566-1766 in Scarborough 966-1966 (1966) 65
- 21 J. Schofield, the Scarborough Guide (1796) 38-9

- 22 J. B. Baker, A History of Scarborough (1882) 127
- 23 Ibid 126
- 24 P. Farmer in Transactions of the Scarborough and District
Archaeological Society No. 11 (1968) 79
- 25 P. Farmer, The Dating of Scarborough Ware Pottery in Medieval
Ceramics Vol. 6 (1982) 71?2
- 26 P. Farmer, (Pers. Comm. 1979)