



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 4 MARCH 1977

### REPORT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

#### 1. EXCAVATIONS

##### Polsloe Priory

The JCP scheme finished at the end of December. Excavation of the church, cloisters and the east and south ranges has been completed; a little more work will be required on the detached kitchen block before the final landscaping takes place in May. This will only take a few days and it is hoped to finish the excavation at Easter with the help of local volunteers.

Although the stone foundations of the majority of walls were well preserved, the wall tops were generally too far below ground level to permit consolidation and display. Two lengths of wall at the west end of the church will be displayed. It was originally intended to mark out at least some walls as part of the scheme. The combination, however, of heavy autumn rainfall and unexpectedly complex stratigraphy did not allow sufficient time. The marking out could be done at fairly low cost as part of any future improvements to the site.

The publication plans and finds drawings are being prepared as part of the JCP publication project. John Allan has made a start on the first draft of the final report and has offered to complete it later in the year in his own time.

##### The church

- (1) The earliest occupation of the area excavated is of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date. This is represented by three small pits and a scatter of flints at the west end of the church. No structural features were present, and there is no other sign of occupation preceding the construction of the priory.
- (2) Under the nave of the church are the robbed wall trenches of an oriented rectangular building whose east end is removed by burials. This can be interpreted as a temporary chapel.
- (3) The major priory buildings were from the first of stone. The internal plan of the church was a long simple rectangle. The side walls show no sign of buttressing; however, the exterior of the robbed south wall trench adjacent to the chapter house range steps out and deepens markedly, then returns to its normal width beside the cloister. The most plausible explanation of this feature is the presence of a central tower over the choir. Professor Youngs has found documents of the Court of Augmentation relating to the disposal of the Crown's possessions after the Dissolution. These include a mention of bells weighing 1,000 lb at Polsloe. It seems likely that these came from the axial tower.

The plan of the church remained unchanged throughout the life of the priory. There is, however, some evidence of changes in its internal arrangements. Although the floor levels in the nave and choir are lost, there remain shallow features cut into the natural clay. The choir is separated from the nave by a narrow wall which presumably supported the rood screen. This was added after the construction of the church wall, and a peak of natural deposits

separates their construction trenches. Within the choir lie broad (c. 80 cm) shallow (c. 6-8 cm) trenches adjacent to and later than the north and south church walls. These end at the "rood screen" wall and can be interpreted as the robbed bases of the choir stalls. On the north side three periods of construction are represented, the third being a shallow trench added beside the "stalls"; this remains uninterpreted. If the interpretation of these trenches as stall bases is accepted, it can be seen that the layout of the stalls is a simplification of a common plan. Commonly stalls backed onto the side walls of the choir and returned at right angles at their west end where they backed onto the rood screen. This is now their usual arrangement in cathedrals. The constrictions of the unaisled plan excluded the stalls running across the church. There were no burials in the choir.

A small (2 x 4 m) rectangular structure with shallow wall trenches stood on the north side of the nave. This must surely be a chapel, and perhaps a chantry chapel. More difficult to interpret are a series of small rectangular features, some with smooth plaster surfaces, cut into the east end of the nave. Several were open when the priory was dissolved. In the nave were eight burials, two in stone lined graves and six in coffins. All their fills contained decorated floor tile fragments, so it is virtually certain that burial within the church is here a late medieval custom. The burials must have been covered with slabs or monuments, since their fills had subsided and the top few centimetres contained much window glass and plaster debris from the dissolution.

#### The cemetery

Beyond the east end of the church a 3 x 2 m area of the cemetery was excavated. All the burials were in coffins and without grave goods. The relationships of the graves were complicated and their layout seems very disorganized. Reconstructions of several coffins can be made from the surviving positions of coffin nails. They are very narrow and constructed of planks. Under the graveyard lay fragments of a structure with broad clay-bonded foundations. In the small area excavated this is uninterpretable.

#### The West (Cellarer's) range

Under the standing west range there survive the foundations of an earlier building. An upstanding fragment of this bonds with the west end of the church wall, so perhaps work was progressing on the west range whilst the church was being completed. The building was of five bays, with the outer parlour in its north bay, and this layout was retained in the standing building. The divisions between the bays were marked by massive pilaster buttresses which projected into the cloister. Certainly this range had been demolished by c. 1280-1300, when the present building was finished. There is some doubt concerning the date of some parts of the standing structure. At its south end the build replacing the first (buttressed) west range has lancet windows, one of which was replaced in turn by a door and window with shouldered arches. It is possible that the lancets could belong to the first half of the thirteenth century and the shouldered arches to c. 1300. However, the style of the masonry around the lancets is close to that at the north end,



where the corbels, apparently integral with the wall, must date to c. 1300. It is perhaps more likely that the lancets are rather archaic features, and therefore that the standing range belongs almost entirely to the period 1280-1300 and later. A full, unobstructed fabric survey is needed to resolve this problem.

### The South (Rector)<sup>fe</sup> Range

A wall bonding with the buttressed cellarer's range marked the south side of the cloister. The first refectory was added to this wall. It was a modest building, only 6 m wide and without buttresses, and did not occupy the full length of the south range. The area south of the refectory contained (a) a square detached kitchen; (b) an aisled building lying between the kitchen and the west range - this has massive timber aisle posts set in large square post-pits; (c) a range of rooms with a corridor joining the kitchen to the refectory.

At the rear of the refectory a layer of clayey loam, very probably a cultivation soil, contained pottery dating from the mid-thirteenth century. This is confined to an area between the kitchen range to the west and the projecting dormer range to the east. From the later thirteenth century this area was occupied by a number of timber buildings. A row of oval post-pits appear to mark the side of a building leaning against the rear of the refectory. Further south a small building of post-hole construction and a fragment of another timber structure are perhaps contemporary. These were replaced by a large timber building founded on dwarf footings which also cut through the corridor formerly connecting the kitchen to the refectory. It was 11 m wide and would probably have required some form of internal support for the roof. No pits were found for aisle posts, so possibly there were post-pads which have not survived. The floor levels inside the building were almost completely removed by later truncation.

The timber-framed building was replaced in the early fourteenth century by the two storey stone refectory which once bonded with the standing west range. This was still narrow, though broader than the first refectory. Its plan includes the base of the reading stair projecting southwards from the north wall.

### The Cloister

There is no evidence of a cloister walk belonging to the first priory layout. The new refectory of the early fourteenth century was built in a position c. 3 m south of its predecessor, making the cloister larger. The foundations of the walks contemporary with the new refectory would be appropriate for masonry walls. Within the garth enclosed by these walks was a building with narrow dwarf footings which must have been timber-framed. There are burials in the east and north walks and in the centre of the garth. A deep trench runs north-south across the cloister, terminating in the centre of the north and south walks. It is cut by a feature containing large quantities of tile and some early sixteenth century pottery, and is apparently part of the priory plan. There are difficulties in the interpretation of this feature, but it does seem possible that the cloister walks were removed before the dissolution.



## The East (Chapter House) Range

The basic outlines of the east range were revealed by Mr Everitt in the 1930s. He also excavated graves in the chapter house. The late-medieval layout consisted of (a) a narrow room between the church and the chapter house; although such rooms are commonly called sacristies there is evidence elsewhere of their use for a variety of functions, and this example may have been a chapel, since there are burials within it; (b) a rectangular chapter house which does not project beyond the range; (c) to the south of the chapter house, a room which may be identified as the warming room; (d) a long room projecting south beyond the south range. This is almost certainly an undercroft with the dormer on the first floor. Parts of the east range are now badly disturbed. There are, however, fragments of an earlier layout surviving under this range. This has a narrower "chapel" and the breadth of the range is narrower. There is no dating evidence for the periods of construction or removal of the first east range.

## Dissolution

All the priory buildings except the west range were demolished with remarkable thoroughness. The church was demolished in the mid-sixteenth century and it is almost certain that the claustral ranges were also removed then. In the church the fittings were first stripped, then the windows, and then the main walls. Some of the window glass, datable to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, is of very high quality with delicate floral designs. It is a significant addition to the scant remains of medieval window glass in the South-West.

## General

The excavations have produced the fullest plan of a monastic building in the South-West. The elements which are unusual are (a) the building within the cloister; (b) the aisled building and the large timber framed building at the rear of the south range; and (c) the probability that the first cloister was unenclosed by walks. Like several recent excavations, Polsloe has shown a more varied structural history than one might have expected from earlier studies.

## Mermaid Yard/Preston Street

### Roman

A strip of gravel which overlies natural on the north side of Mermaid Yard may be the fortress via sagularis. In the presumed intervallum area a group of post-holes are sealed by a dump of mixed clay containing pre-Flavian pottery. The surface of this layer is cut by a small oven. To the north of the "via sagularis" are two phases of military timber buildings of post-trench construction.

### Saxo-Norman

Three pits contain Bedford Street ware in association with a few sherds of a ware which occurs at Hamwih (Southampton) in late-ninth or early-tenth century contexts. This class of pottery is believed to be imported from northern France.

### Later-medieval

Running east to west beneath the rear parts of the Preston Street properties is a medieval road which is directly on line with modern Rack Street. Thus, when it was first laid out, Rack Street evidently extended further east up the hill towards South Street. The road occupies a c. 0.5 m deep hollow way with fairly steep sides and a flat bottom. The metalling material is a uniform 5-8 cm. Thick layer of coarse gravel which appears not to have been resurfaced before the hollow way became infilled in the thirteenth century.

### Post-medieval

By the sixteenth century the site of the road was occupied by a long, narrow stone building whose west wall gave onto the east end of Rack Street. Finally, in the seventeenth century the Preston Street tenements were extended back to take in this building plot, together with a further section of Rack Street. This may have taken place when the row of shops was erected on the Preston Street frontage, of which 15 Preston Street is the sole surviving remnant. This interpretation of the standing structure seems to be confirmed by the fact that the positions of the post-medieval property boundaries apparently bear no relation to those of the underlying medieval tenements. In Mermaid Yard, large quantities of bell-mould fragments were dumped on open ground in the sixteenth century. A bell-foundry is known to have existed nearby in late-medieval times.

## 2. BUILDINGS RECORDED

### Great Moor Farm, Sowton

The farmhouse was first surveyed by Nat Alcock and published by him in Transactions of the Devonshire Association, 1962 and Medieval Archaeology (1973). Unfortunately it was not included in the DoE List of Historic Buildings compiled after the war, though it probably rates Grade II star. Early in January the AFU were informed by the DCC Estates Surveyor that the building was to be demolished almost immediately. It was therefore decided to strip certain walls in the hope of revealing fresh structural evidence. The following observations were made:

- a) The wall between the passage and the kitchen is formed by a stud and panel screen with, on the passage side only, chamfered studs and diagonal-cut stops. In the middle of the screen is a shoulder-headed doorway whose door opened into the kitchen. A cranked-headed doorway at the north end has a rebate on its passage side, showing that the door opened into the passage. The sequence of studs and carpenter's marks indicates that both doorways are original features. It seems possible that the northern doorway gave access, perhaps via a stair or ladder, to the upper room which projects over the open kitchen.
- b) A close examination of the panelled screen in the hall reveals that the studs originally had diagonal-cut stops about 30 cm above the present ones. This was presumably to allow for a low bench at the upper end of the hall in the phase before the screen was raised. In the second phase the chamfers were extended and given roll stops. The parlour side is plain.



- c) The hall fireplace is partially exposed and appears to have stone jambs and a timber lintel.
- d) The parlour fireplace has ogee moulded volcanic stone jambs and a timber lintel.
- e) The principle rafters of the closed (middle) roof-truss are supported on a tie-beam which rests in turn on jowled uprights in the walls. The truss was formerly thought to possess continuous elbowed principles.

Demolition has been postponed following the serving of a Building Preservation Notice by East Devon District.

### Cathedral

A complete record has been made over the last two years of all the mason's marks in the nave. In February this year the two easternmost bays were examined. In the western bay about 250 marks were found, some individual stones bearing as many as five different symbols. The eastern bay was erected some thirty years earlier; here there were no incised marks. The ribs of this bay were of Caen stone rather than Beer, as in the rest of the nave, and Salcombe stone was used for the springing of the vault.

## PUBLICATION

### Volume I

Copies of the first Cathedral Close draft will be sent to Dr Maxfield and Mr Griffiths in early March. The Guildhall draft, which has yet to be typed, will follow a few weeks later.

### Publication Policy : Volumes I - III

Publication work over the past two years has proceeded on the assumption that three volumes would be produced to describe the excavations of Roman sites since 1971: the first volume to be devoted to the Cathedral Close and Guildhall sites, the second to the finds from all sites, and the third to the results of the smaller excavations, notably in the South Gate area and the West Quarter. As work on Volume I nears completion certain disadvantages in this scheme have become apparent. These relate mainly to the treatment of the finds.

The intention was to publish with the site reports (a) structural materials - examples of architectural ornament, wall plaster, tiles and mosaics etc - which play an indispensable part in the reconstruction and interpretation of excavated buildings; and (b) the coins and samian, necessary as essential dating evidence. It is now seen, however, that much of the dating, particularly for deposits of the later Roman period, will depend upon the evidence of coarse pottery. Since the main dating evidence ought to be presented in the site report, at least some of the coarse pottery must be published at this stage, and this will increase the size of the report considerably. We now estimate that the Cathedral Close report alone will amount to about 300 pages, and the Guildhall report may be even longer.

There are a number of obvious disadvantages in publishing the finds in a separate volume. Much of the material in the volume would depend for its dating upon evidence which would not appear in print until the third volume. In addition, a cumbersome system of cross reference would have to be employed to relate finds from the second volume to the first and third volumes. Particularly difficult would be the problem of relating finds in the second volume to sites and dating evidence in the third. Further, some of the best groups of pottery would be omitted from the finds volume since they would be necessary to provide dating evidence in the site reports.

The finds volume as originally conceived was to contain a full survey and discussion of the main types of pottery current in Roman Exeter. Some of the analysis necessary for the production of this survey has already been carried out, but the full survey would probably take about eighteen months to prepare, as much of the relevant comparative material is housed in collections elsewhere in the region.

### Proposed Alternative Scheme

Most of the difficulties outlined above could be eliminated if the finds from excavations are published with the excavation reports rather than in a separate volume. Selected groups of pottery, important for their dating evidence or as groups in themselves, small finds, glass etc, would be appended to the report. The revised series of volumes (with publication dates) would comprise the following :

Volume I	:	Cathedral Close Excavations and Finds (April 1978)
Volume II	:	Guildhall Excavations and Finds (October 1978)
Volume III	:	Other Sites and Finds (April 1979)

Wide ranging discussion of individual wares would be kept to a minimum in the excavation reports. Articles of a more general nature would be published through established channels (such as B.A.R. or D.A.S.) in line with the recommendations of the Frere report. Indeed a paper by Paul Bidwell on the early black-burnished wares from Exeter will be published in B.A.R. later this year.

The finds from the Cathedral Close have been drawn and a draft for the finds section will be ready by May.



REPORT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Excavations

Preston Street : work has continued on a small scale inside the standing buildings, but excavation of the frontage will not be possible until after demolition. A 1.20 m deep sequence of road levels, containing twelve successive surfaces, accumulated c.1250 to c.1650 in a cul-de-sac at the head of Rack Street. The cul-de-sac presumably gave access to a tenement on the south side of Rack Street and to the early sixteenth century building mentioned in the last report. Little Rack Street, linking Rack Street and Preston Street, seems to have been in existence since the thirteenth century. From c.1500 the Preston Street frontage between Grendon's Almshouses and Little Rack Street was occupied by a block of five stables mentioned in several sixteenth century deeds. The cul-de-sac and part of Little Rack Street were amalgamated with the Preston Street properties in the seventeenth century when a row of shops was built on the site of the stables.

Mermaid Yard : documentary research by Susan Keeley has established that the land at the rear of the Preston Street stables was held by John Sharke, bellfounder, from 1552 until his death sometime after 1564. Rev. J.G.M. Scott will report on the bell mould fragments. A preliminary examination shows that moulds from several bells are represented. The second half of this site will be excavated shortly and may contain the bell founding pit.

Future sites : sites to be excavated this summer are Broadgate, Southernhay Gardens and the Central School playing ground at Rack Street.

2. Publication

Copies of the Volume I first draft were sent in March to Prof. Barlow, Dr. Maxfield and Mr. Griffiths. Work on the second draft will start as soon as their comments are received. In the meantime, Mr Bidwell has made good progress with the finds section.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 7 OCTOBER 1977

Report to Committee

1. Excavations

Polsloe Priory

The excavation was completed in May.

The late medieval ground plan of the DORTER RANGE consisted of a block 8 m wide internally, with the E end of the refectory block projecting 4.2 m into this range at its N end. Four successive floors, the latest of the early 16th century, survived in one part of the range. A stone-lined drain cut one, and stakes had been driven into another. The lowest floor sealed the robbing of the E wall of an earlier dorter 5 m wide. Finds from the dorter included a useful sequence of late medieval pottery and an unexploded hand-grenade (post-med)

The first building in the KITCHEN AREA was a rectangular room measuring 10 x 6 m internally. The building was free-standing and was not orientated with the main claustral buildings. It has thick clay floors, some areas of which were heavily burnt. A massive foundation at the inside of the E wall may have supported a large chimney stack. A number of post-holes and a gully underlying later buildings south of the refectory may be contemporary with this first building.

It was succeeded in the mid 13th century by a range of rooms added to the rear of the first refectory. The floors of these rooms were well preserved. Small stakes ran down the side of one room; in another were more substantial posts cutting the lowest floor level. A row of flat stones on one floor presumably carried a timber frame. At least three phases of reconstruction are visible in this range. The plan first comprised a pair of rooms. To these was added a room lying almost entirely outside the excavation. A corridor, arguably contemporary with this addition, lay to the east. The position of one of the end walls was later changed, and additions were made on the W side of the range.

This range was replaced in the period c 1270 - 1350 by a square kitchen with a room attached to its S side. To this an additional room was added to the W, before the W wall was removed. Subsequently the new refectory block was built and a new drainage system laid out.

There were thus three superimposed kitchen plans. The two later kitchens were frequently altered. Further excavation would certainly show the later kitchens to be more extensive.

Broadgate

Excavations in the basement of the National Westminster Bank and on the site of properties adjoining the Bank at Broadgate were completed in August. The



construction of cellars had removed most of the stratification, but a number of features were found cut into the clay sub-soil. A system of three wooden water-pipes was probably associated with the water-supply of the legionary fortress. Evidence was also recovered of a late 1st century road 7 m wide, which may have originated as the fortress via praetoria. Two walls recorded in 1912 were once again traced; they had been incorrectly plotted and can now be seen to have formed the northern corner of the basilica and forum complex. Medieval occupation was represented by late eleventh or early twelfth century pits and a stone-lined seventeenth century garderobe, the file of which contained the greater part of a fine Montelupo (Italian maiolica) plate. The excavation was made possible by a generous grant of £700 from the National Westminster Bank. An account of the Roman features has been incorporated in the draft report on the Cathedral Close excavations.

### Mermaid Yard Job Creation Scheme

The Manpower Services Commission have made a grant of £9900 to enable the Unit to employ 10 people for a period of six months on the Mermaid Yard site. The team recently started an excavation in the Rack Street School lower playing ground.

## 2. FUTURE EXCAVATIONS: HOLLOWAY ST. /FRIARS AREA

Over the next few years a number of sites in the vicinity of Holloway Street are to be redeveloped and it therefore seems an appropriate time to assess the archaeological importance of the area. Previous excavations in 1973 and 1974 have revealed traces of Roman civil occupation in the form of pits, wells, gullies etc., dating from the late first to the mid fourth century or later. The earliest evidence of medieval occupation consisted of a few late eleventh or early twelfth century pits; in 1292 the south-west side of Holloway Street became the site of a friary while the north-east side remained in domestic occupation. By the end of the seventeenth century the whole area was densely built up.

The best preserved and perhaps the most important archaeological deposits are those of the Roman military period; because of their complexity and uncertain character they require more extensive discussion.

In 1964 the discovery of a substantial Roman ditch provided for the first time some evidence of a military presence at Exeter. The ditch was found below the rampart of the Roman town next to the South Gate, running on a line at right angles to the later defences. Some far from decisive evidence suggested to the excavator, Aileen Fox, that a rampart was situated on the north-east side of the ditch and that together they formed part of the south-west defences of a six-acre fort.

Recent excavations on both sides of the projected line of the ditch have revealed a more complex state of affairs. A site south-west of the line of the ditch (i. e. outside the conjectural fort) revealed several phases of early occupation. The north-eastern part of the site was deeply truncated but still preserved evidence for a wooden fence with a gate, running parallel to the line of the ditch. The south-west part of the site was reduced by later disturbance to a narrow strip of stratigraphy which ran across the site of one or more timber buildings; these showed at least three major building phases. The floor-levels were covered with charcoal and slag, and metal-working had obviously taken place in the area.

No more than 25 m north-east of this site on the other side of the projected line of the ditch a better preserved group of buildings was excavated. This consisted of three rectangular buildings each about 10 m in length which were ranged around three sides of a courtyard measuring 13.5 by 9 m; the fourth side was partly closed off by a fence. These buildings showed only one major constructional phase.

Two smaller sites to the south-east have also produced very slight evidence for early timber buildings together with a series of pits back-filled at the end of the military period.

The buildings north-east of the ditch were erected after c. A.D. 65, since they covered two cremations of this date, while those to the south-west could well have been earlier. Both sets of buildings were demolished in the early Flavian period; the dating evidence for this includes a scattered hoard of ten coins.

Any interpretation of the function of these buildings needs to take their setting into account. Those to the north-east must have been built on the site of a cemetery; the two cremations so far recovered were presumably outliers of a larger group near the road leading to the porta principalis dextra some 50 m to the north-east. The buildings to the south-east were built on the edge of an easily defensible spur overlooking the River Exe.

The main problem is whether the occupation was military or civil in character. The presence of a ditch certainly suggests military activity in the area at some stage, but the ditch itself cannot be firmly associated with any of the excavated buildings, and may have preceded them. However, several points go against the interpretation of the buildings as part of a civil settlement.

- 1) As far as can be seen, the buildings consist of rectangular structures grouped around courtyards and enclosed by fenced compounds. Although few legionary canabae have been explored in detail, it seems reasonable to expect more evidence of purely domestic occupation such as strip-houses, rubbish-pits, wells etc.,.

2. The buildings north-east of the ditch were erected on the site of a cremation cemetery only recently in use. The two excavated cremations were richly furnished; finds included decorated samian and large glass vessels, a lamp and a figurine of Victory, both of bronze; a small bronze model of a dog found in the make-up of a floor-level in the buildings which superseded the cemetery may have been displaced from another cremation nearby. Both the quality of its



grave-goods and its situation near the porta principalis dextra of the fortress suggest that this cemetery was dedicated to military rather than civil use. It seems unlikely that civil occupation would be permitted to encroach upon the site of such a cemetery.

3. There is some evidence for the location of the canabae c. 0.5 km to the north.

4. A cuirass-hinge was found in a floor-level of the building south-west of the projected line of the ditch.

If it is accepted that the buildings were military in character, the following account of activity in the Holloway Street area can be proposed. The buildings south-west of the projected line of the ditch were earlier than those to the north-east; they showed three rather than just one constructional phase, and only pre-Flavian material was recovered from their earliest levels. They were enclosed by the ditch located in 1964. A cremation cemetery developed in the zone between this establishment and the road leading to the porta principalis dextra some 75 m to the north-east. In the late Neronian or early Flavian period the establishment was enlarged; the buildings north-east of the ditch date to this period. Demolition took place in the early Flavian period, certainly no earlier than A.D. 72-3, the terminal date of the scattered hoard referred to above.

Little can be said at present about the specific military functions of these buildings. The topography of the area makes it unlikely that the establishment was an annexe of the fortress in either its original or enlarged state, as at Colchester and York. However, the fortress at Exeter was of exceptionally small size (38 acres/15.4 ha according to our present state of knowledge), and it is possible that this establishment was functionally an annexe of the fortress, if not so in physical terms.

Clearly a firm conclusion about the nature and functions of these buildings cannot yet be arrived at; the discussion above is an attempt at an economical interpretation of the present evidence.

### 3. POST-EXCAVATION

#### The Medieval Floor Tiles

Preliminary examination of the tiles has now been completed. John Allen will write the report on them in conjunction with Laurence Keen, who will discuss their relation to tiles elsewhere.

About 2000 tiles have come from excavations in Exeter; over 50% of these are plain. The decorated examples come mainly from ecclesiastical sites - three monastic, one parish church, and from Cathedral Close, where the most likely origin is the Cathedral. About 100 designs are known, and it has proved possible in many instances to complete fragments of designs from complete examples in Exeter Cathedral and elsewhere. The decorated tiles

form a surprisingly homogeneous group of uniform size and fabric and it seems very probable that they have a common kiln source. Decorated tiles identical to those from the excavations are known from at least 10 other sites in Devon. Most are in South Devon, with two sites very near Exeter, two in the Torbay area and one at Plymouth. The most distant sites are Launceston Priory, Frithelstock Priory in North Devon, and Newenham Abbey near Axminster. This distribution, with so many finds in the Exeter area and a scatter of finds up to 50 miles around it, must favour a kiln source in or near Exeter. It is a striking parallel to the distribution of Exeter jugs. The marketing situation on the eastern border of Devon is interesting: here the contemporary Somerset and Dorset industries were in competition with the South Devon kiln and had some success. The Dunkerswell tiles, for example, are not of South Devon manufacture. The decoration of the South Devon tiles often imitates Wessex forms. Armorial bearings, birds and mythical beasts of types known there appear in cruder form here. The series also seems to start later: several sites in South Devon are known to date after 1300 and it may well be that the development of tile-making here is connected with the demand created by Exeter Cathedral in the rebuilding programme after c. 1280. Here there was a great demand for tiles, not only in the church but in the Bishop's Palace, the Chapter House and various ancillary chambers around the Cathedral. There is some sparse evidence from the Fabric Rolls that tiling proceeded with the completion of each part of the building.

### Site Reports

The following sites are currently being worked on: Guildhall (Roman and medieval), Broadgate, Cathedral Close (Roman finds and final draft), Holloway Street sites (Roman), Magdalen Street (vernacular buildings). The stratigraphic analysis for the Exe Bridge sites is almost finished and some of the publication plans have been drawn.

### Post-Roman Finds

Two people are employed full-time on this work, the second being funded by the Job Creation Programme until March 1978.

There are an estimated 100,000 sherds of pottery, most of which are in stratified groups. 2000 drawings have been made so far; not all of these will be published. For example, there are many early medieval groups of cooking pot whose drawings really provide little extra information, and these will be lodged in an archive in the museum. It is estimated that 70% of the drawings are now done.

About 60 - 70% of the pottery has been tabulated, and counts of numbers of sherds, minimum numbers of vessels and fabric weights made. Final tabulation of results has been made for a smaller percentage of groups, and in a few cases the changing proportions of the ceramics occupied by different types of imports and local wares have been illustrated diagrammatically.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the most efficient way to publish the material is the construction of type series of forms and decoration in each of the known fabrics. With the types and fabrics numbered, reports on excavated groups containing previously encountered types of pottery can be presented in a very compact form in the site reports.



The problems with this approach are as follows: (1) However carefully fabrics are examined, it will not always be possible to define series which correspond to specific production areas. This is an acute problem when no local kilns are known and when it can be assumed from documentary evidence that the material has many different sources. (2) Often the material is very fragmentary and it is unknown, for example, which handles go with a particular type of base or rim. In spite of these difficulties it seems worth attempting to construct a type series of those forms which can with any confidence be shown to be of the same fabric. In time alterations can be made in the light of new knowledge.

It is proposed that the post-Roman finds should be published in a separate volume to the site reports. In the first part of the volume will be presented those groups which contribute to a knowledge of the date and form of ceramics in Exeter. This usually means the best groups with imported material. The imports will be discussed by J. G. Hurst (post-medieval) R. Hodges (early medieval) and L. Lipski (delft wares). The second part will contain the type series, together with a synthesis including a brief description of local wares and a discussion of their likely origins, based on documentary work. It will also include a discussion of the imports based on Port Books and local contemporary sources.

The publication of a separate finds volume for the post-Roman material requires justification, since for the Roman material this approach has been rejected. The problems are rather different in the two cases. The main objection to a separate volume is that the dating evidence for each phase of a site should be accessible in the site report. This information will be provided in the site reports in a very condensed form (giving the percentages of major local wares, imports etc., and an estimate of date) at the end of each section. There is no possibility of discussing the dating of each type of pottery at each period it occurs since this involves a synthesis of evidence from various sites and would be very repetitive.

The advantages of a separate volume are: (1) The synthesis can be presented beside the important individual groups from various sites. (2) Any history of ceramic development can only be put together by combining information from several sites, for example, the chronology of the 11 - 12th century wares relies on High Street, the 13 - 14th century largely on the Guildhall, and the late 14th and 15th century on Rack Street and Exe Bridge.

Similar arguments apply to the reports<sup>?</sup> on leather (D. Friendship-Taylor), ironwork and small finds (I. Goodall), coins (M. Dolley), clay pipes (A. Oswald), and glass (R. Charleston). The contributions of these specialists deal with the material in the various categories from all the Exeter sites in integrated reports which would be very difficult to split up.

### Documentary Research

Susan Keeley (who is a post-graduate student in the History Department, Exeter University) has undertaken to produce documentary reports on post-Roman sites excavated by the Unit.

#### 4. PUBLICATION

##### Volume 1: Progress Report

The draft of this volume, describing the legionary baths, the forum and the basilica is nearly completed; the results of the recent excavation under the National Westminster Bank, Broadgate have been included. The section dealing with the excavations of 1971 - 6, together with all plans, sections and a catalogue of architectural material, has been read and commented on by Professor Barlow, Dr. Maxfield and Mr Griffiths. Completion of the finds section has been delayed by outstanding specialist reports. The complete report should be ready by early November.

##### Printer's Estimate

A revised estimate was obtained from James Townsend in late August, specifications as follows:

Text and Index	: 125,000 words (235 pages)
Half-tones	: 16 pages
Illustrations	: 90 full page : 15 fold-outs
Materials	: Text and illustrations - 100 gm <sup>2</sup> Blade cartridge : Half-tones - 115 gm <sup>2</sup> coated
Binding	: Art buckram
Quantity	: 1250 copies
Price	: £9865.00

This gives a unit cost from the printers of £7.90. Allowing for inflation, advertising and postage the final unit cost will probably be in the region of £9.50. The purchase price through bookshops would thus be about £15 - more if we wish to make a profit from the book. However, a well advertised pre-publication price of, say, £12 (for orders placed direct with the Museum and University) would enable many purchasers to obtain a copy at a very reasonable price which would also allow some profit to the publishers.

##### Report on the animal bones

Mark Maltby has prepared a long and detailed report on the bones of all periods from Exeter sites 1971 - 4 (some small sites are not included). The report was written as his M.A. thesis and will therefore need some re-arrangement before it can be published. Dr. Collis has suggested that the report could be published at low cost by Sheffield University Department of Archaeology, if it were produced by the University printing Unit. The views of Committee members are requested.



## 5. STANDING BUILDINGS

### 44 - 46 Magdalen Street

This building is probably the most important house recorded by the Unit since 38 North Street in 1972. It was demolished in July this year when it became clear that the building had become too dilapidated and structurally unsound to retain.

Originally the three houses were one large mid 17th century building of L- shaped plan and three storeys throughout. Although much altered subsequently, it proved possible to reconstruct the full plan of the 17th century house and to obtain a wealth of detailed information concerning its original decor and the techniques used in its construction. By great good fortune the deeds of the house have survived, so that we are able to say, with some confidence, when and by whom it was built.

The external walls were of English bond, 55 cm thick on the ground floor and 37 cm thick above. Heavitree stone was used in the cellar. The internal partitions and stair block (the latter set in the angle of the L) were of oak timber framing infilled with cob. The partitions generally rested directly on the floor boards; thus each storey seems to have been floored throughout before the insertion of partitions. This technique has been observed in two other Exeter houses but Magdalen Street is the first dated example. The roof trusses were set on tie beams and had lap-jointed collars and three pairs of through purlins. Both frames and trusses were secured with wooden pegs and large nails. The door frames had ogee mouldings, but the two surviving fireplace lintels both display ovolo mouldings.

The building contained sixteen rooms, eleven of which were heated; there was a through passage on the ground floor. The kitchen occupied the rear arm of the L on the ground floor. Into the oak lintel of the large kitchen fireplace were carved the date 1659 and the initials I.M. The house is thus the earliest dated brick building in Exeter, being 22 years earlier than the Custom House.

Eight of the eleven fireplaces bore traces of sgraffito decoration, but only in two cases was it possible to make out the design. The figure of a woman was preserved on the jamb of the fireplace in the principle ground floor room. The other recognisable designs were simple geometric patterns. The walls were plastered and white-washed. In one room on the upper floor a section of moulded cornice was preserved.

Various alterations were made in about 1700, the main one being the insertion of a new staircase in the kitchen wing. The house was divided into three units c 1781, when nos. 42 - 43 Magdalen Street were added to one side. All five properties were re-fronted in the early 19th century.

Professor Youngs has kindly contributed the following note:-

The discovery of the initials and date 'I.M. 1659' suggests a link with a JOHN MATHEW who was a man of substance in the parish of Holy Trinity at this time. He was rated third highest in the poll tax of 1660 and eighth highest, with 8 hearths, in the hearth tax of 1671. The connection is confirmed by references to him and his descendants in the 18th and 19th century title deeds of the property.

John Mathew had a wife called Sarah, who predeceased him, and his death is recorded in the parish registers for 1683. His eldest son and heir, WILLIAM, appears in the poor rate of 1699, like his father the eighth highest payer in the parish. The family had clearly been established for some time in the parish, John himself in 1677 adding £4 to the parish 'stock' established by his grandfather, William Mathew, for binding out poor apprentices. He also purchased, for the benefit of the parish, the Lamb and Flag public house in Southgate Street, but, falling on hard times towards the end of his life, he had to ask the parish to buy the property from him! He is designated 'gentleman' in the parish register but, apart from issuing a token in 1662, he is a mysterious figure.

In 1699 William Mathew 'late of the city of Exeter esquire' and his wife Catherine, were forced to convey their Magdalen Street property, now described as 'five several messuages' lately in the occupation of themselves and others unnamed, to trustees for the repayment of their debts. With Sir Joseph Tilley, William owed over £12000. The trustees were Charles Cox and John Essington, but there was apparently some suspicion that Catherine had a claim to the property as part of her dowry and it was necessary to obtain an act of parliament in 1702 to establish the absolute title of the trustees before anyone would buy the property. As late as 1771 Anna and Sarah Mathew, described as coheirs of William, were still claiming an interest and were made to release their claim to the then owner, Francis Schutz (d. 1779).

In 1780 - 81 Francis's son and heir, John Bacon Schutz of Gillingham, Norfolk, esquire, sold 'all that large messuage, dwelling house and garden', etc., i.e. the property had once again become one house, to ROBERT STRIBLING, who was already in occupation, following Samuel Coade, merchant. Stribling, according to the title deeds, pulled down the house and erected on the site five dwelling houses. When Robert Stribling died in 1789 he left the property to his son John, it being described as 'all those five dwelling houses ... now in the tenure of Miss Weston, Rev. Mr Kitson, Mr Lewis, Mr George Hirtzel and Mr Thiuller', but John was already dead, having been lost at sea while voyaging from Gibraltar to Iceland, and his brother Thomas died without heirs in 1795. The property went to Robert's daughter, Elizabeth, wife of Mr Carpenter of Mount Tavy (?), Devon, and by the 1820's was owned by a Rev. J. P. Carpenter. By 1871 the houses belonged to a Mr Samuel Taylor Coldridge (sic) who, dying that year, left them to his son, Rev. Samuel Powning Coldridge of Highweek and later of Ide. At that time the five dwellings were said to be worth between £320 and £400 each.

#### 42 - 43 Magdalen Street

Built by Robert Stribbling in c 1781 on open ground which originally belonged to 44 - 46. Modest three - storied Georgian town houses.



41 Magdalen Street

This house was demolished in 1973. No record was made, but it was observed that the internal partitions were cob-filled and the building is therefore likely to have been 17th century in date. An earlier date is unlikely since this whole area is known to have been cleared of houses during the Civil War.

39 - 40 Magdalen Street

Not recorded. Originally a three storeyed single house with its main axis parallel to the street. The fine stuccoed front and richly carved wooden frieze date to the early 18th century. A massive carved oak column and a jointed cruck roof truss were retrieved from the demolition rubble. A detailed plan of the building, made in the 19th century, shows a rear block linked to the main house by two galleries supported on columns.

61 Fore Street, Topsham

A previously unrecorded 15th century arch-braced roof with windbraces was recently discovered in this building.

Bowhill

This fine medieval house has been purchased by the DOE who will renovate the building before it is eventually opened to the public. Stephen Dunmore excavated in the hall and courtyard during ~~December~~ *September*.