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*Bathhouse paper*  
*18 North St A*  
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## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Notes for Committee, 21st March 1997

#### 1. ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWORK PROJECTS

##### 1.1 Athelstan's Tower

An evaluation excavation undertaken by the AFU in December was designed to investigate the ground conditions under the 19th-century stair turret at the rear of the 11th-/12th-century Athelstan's Tower, which stands at the junction of the inner bailey of the Norman earthwork castle with the Roman city wall, and projects north-westwards into Northernhay Gardens. The stair turret has been subsiding over a long period, causing a gap to open up between it and the tower. It is proposed to underpin the rear (south-east) wall of the turret with a short concrete beam supported on piles. The excavation was necessary to investigate the reason for the subsidence and to provide information required by the structural engineer responsible for designing the piling system.

The rear wall of Athelstan's Tower is founded directly upon the top of the Roman city wall, whilst the stair turret behind it possesses fairly shallow foundations which rest mainly on layers of Roman and Norman rampart material that reach over 4 m in total depth. For this reason, subsidence has been significantly greater at the rear of the turret than nearer to its abutment with the Norman tower, where the Roman wall top lies about 0.5 m beneath its base.

This section of the Roman city wall incorporates possible late Saxon crenellations, first identified in a fabric survey undertaken by the AFU in 1994. The city wall at this point is believed to have been covered over and buried beneath the broad rampart of the Norman inner bailey, started in 1068. It was hoped that excavation of the evaluation trench would serve to test this theory, perhaps showing Norman rampart material to overlie the Roman wall top in this area. In the event, the upper part of the inner bailey rampart proved to have been dug away in the early 19th century to form the terrace that carries the path which runs around the outside of the 12th-century curtain wall. No trace of the Norman rampart survived in the excavation trench. The 19th-century landscaping had, however, exposed the Roman wall-top, removing some of the stonework but leaving sufficient undisturbed to allow the width of the Roman wall-walk to be established.

It is proposed to start a post-excavation project in 1998 that will draw together and synthesise the results of the various excavations and fabric surveys carried out in the castle area over the past 15 years. This will lead to the publication of accounts of the castle's history and archaeology in booklet form locally and as a paper in a national archaeological journal.



## 1.2 Former ATS site, Bonhay Road (Martin Watts, Jon Bedford and Tony Collings)

An initial assessment was made of this housing site in accordance with PPG 16 procedures. Evaluation trenching commissioned by A. & H. Gadd Ltd was followed by limited additional excavation and a watching brief on groundworks during the early stages of construction.

The site lies on the corner of Exe Street and Bonhay Road. It was formerly bounded against Exe Street by the Longbrook stream, and towards Bonhay Road (built in the 19th century) by the Higher Leat, which follows the north-eastern edge of the Exe floodplain and was in existence by the 12th century. The site originally formed part of a large field which belonged to the City Council and extended along the south-eastern side of the Longbrook valley and up to the city wall. From at least the 16th century, this land was leased out by the Council for grazing. From the second quarter of the 18th century there is documentary evidence for the presence of cottages and small-scale industrial activity within a tenement adjoining the Higher Leat in the area of the ATS site. This phase of occupation within part of the field may have commenced rather earlier but its initiation would not necessarily be represented in the documentary sources.

The earliest reference to a built structure occurs in 1740, when Thomas Tremayne, a fellmonger, was granted a lease in which 'two little dwelling houses or workhouses' are mentioned. The previous lease, of 1697, mentions no buildings. The following one, granted to Richard Hole in 1749, amends the description to 'two dwelling houses, one work house and one stable'. When Hole sublet part of the holding, a week after the granting of his lease, he retained the right to hang skins on a neighbouring drying rack and for the occupiers of the tenement to dry clothes belonging to others 'which they shall take in to wash in the said field as hath been usual and accustomed within twenty years last past'. This suggests that the cottages had been in existence since at least 1730. The clothes were no doubt washed at the 'Launders platt or washing place', first mentioned in a deed of 1519-20, which was probably situated next to the leat immediately downstream from the ATS site.

Only a relatively small proportion of the site had been sampled by excavation. Three trenches were cut next to the Higher Leat: one at each end of the site and another positioned more centrally. A trench at right angles to the leat at the south-east (downstream) end of the site revealed a large barrel pit containing lime residue. This pit was probably used for cleaning hides, perhaps at the period when the lessee was a fellmonger. A second trench, further to the north-west, located the 18th-century leat wall and the north-west end of the row of early 18th-century cottages or workhouses mentioned in the leases. The northernmost end room seems to have originated as a courtyard or stable. It later became a workshop containing four barrel pits inserted into the primary cobbled floor; the bases of two brick-built emplacements of unknown function were also uncovered.

The third trench was dug at the north-west corner of the site in the angle formed by the confluence of the Longbrook stream with the Higher Leat. John Rocque's map of 1744 shows a small square building on this corner which is also depicted on a



Chamber Map Book plan of 1758 and on Donn's map of 1765. One corner of this building was revealed in the excavation. Most of its foundations had been destroyed by later activity. Between 1768 and 1789 the City Council retained the north-west tenement in hand, building eight slaughter houses for renting by butchers at £4 per year. By 1775, two units were vacant and some tenants were in arrears. The enterprise seems not to have been successful.

In 1789, the north-west tenement was leased to William Spicer Dix who erected the Engine Bridge Brewery, later to become the Phoenix Brewery. The excavation trenches located the end of the brewery at the corner of the Longbrook and the Higher Leat. In 1838 the property comprised 'a malt house, stable, store rooms, granary, gig house, piggery and small tenement'. The premises had ceased to be a brewery or malthouse by 1876 - and probably much earlier. In 1893/4, the former brewery buildings were occupied by the Exeter Art Pottery. Although no structures were found which could be directly related to the pottery, a section of the Higher Leat adjoining the building proved to have been infilled with large quantities of ceramics, some of which may have been made on the site. By 1904 the site was a Council yard.

### 1.3 **46 High Street** (Richard Parker) (Fig. 3)

In January 1997, a major refitting of the ground-floor shop was undertaken by the occupants, Thorntons plc. The building is listed Grade II\* and probably dates from the early 16th century. A detailed record was made of the building by the AFU in 1985-6 when structural refurbishment was carried out. During the recent works modern cladding and suspended ceilings were removed to expose original fabric. This uncovered new evidence for the presence of decorative paintwork on the undersides of the ceiling joists in the rear room. Each joist is ornamented with orange stripes at its edges, with a broad (?blue) stripe running down the centre. No paint was visible on the sides of the joists, though this may possibly have been due to their dirty condition. No works affecting the surviving primary fabric were undertaken, and the cladding and suspended ceilings have now been reinstated.

### 1.4 **Pinbrook Barns** (Richard Parker) (Fig. 4)

Pinbrook House is a large brick-built mansion erected in 1679 by Sir John Elwill, a wealthy Exeter Merchant who became an MP and Sheriff of Devon. A very fine group of six outhouses and farm buildings (A-F) at the rear of the main house were the subject of a brief recording exercise by the AFU in 1979. Since that time most of the buildings have been converted to domestic accommodation. In September 1996, further recording was undertaken in line with PPG15 requirements during the conversion of building B, a Grade II listed structure of late 17th-century date. This is one of the most remarkable buildings on the site. It is terraced into the hillside, and prior to conversion was open-fronted, with walls of brick laid in Flemish bond and seated on Heavitree breccia footings. The open side, facing the farmyard, consists of a seven-bay 'colonnade' of massive pentagonal breccia piers carrying timber lintels



resting on substantial beams supported on the tops of the piers and set in sockets in the rear wall. The form and function of the building are uncertain; it seems to have been a two-storey linhay, perhaps a cartshed with access to an upper floor being gained from the higher ground to the rear.

### 1.5 **18 North Street** (Richard Parker and Martin Watts) (Fig. 5)

Emergency recording funded by Exeter City Council and Devon County Council was carried out by the AFU in this Grade II listed building following a fire in 1995. In the autumn of 1996 an archaeological assessment was commissioned by the City Council under the Conservation Area Partnership Scheme operated and funded in conjunction with English Heritage.

The main aims of the assessment were to provide information on the nature and extent of historical features preserved within the building and to establish a structural and cultural context for decorative paintwork, revealed as a result of the fire, in the panelled rear ground-floor room. The assessment was undertaken jointly by the AFU and Ruth Davis, a conservator. A report was produced comprising an illustrated architectural survey and inventory of the building and a detailed description of the painted panelling, with costed proposals for its conservation and repair.

No. 18 North Street is a merchant's house of c. 1600, refurbished in the late 17th century. The house is of timber-framed construction, including its party wall with No. 17, and the fireplaces and chimney-stacks are accommodated in the stone and brick party wall with No. 19, to the north-west. The plan of the house is typical of local houses of the 16th and 17th centuries. It consists of a large front block formerly linked by a gallery to a kitchen block at the rear. The kitchen was destroyed by enemy action in 1942 but the gallery survives and incorporates part of the front wall of the kitchen. The gallery is, unusually, three storeys high. Between the two buildings was a small courtyard reached by a side passage from North Street. This passage became a public thoroughfare in the 19th century, but it was formerly private, and evidence of a door remains at its west end.

The front block was truncated by road-widening around 1890, when approximately 2.4 metres of the building, together with its late 17th-century facade, were removed. The appearance of this facade is known from 19th-century illustrations and photographs; it was a synthesis of traditional vernacular forms and Renaissance detail. The building had a high, gabled elevation with a central bay window rising through three storeys from first-floor level. The windows had canted sides and small pediments over their central lights. The second-floor window is of particular interest in that it appears to have retained early window sashes, each sash containing a large number of small square panes. The present facade is brick, with a flat front, and the gable is recessed behind a small parapet.

The plan of the front block consists of front and rear rooms on each of five storeys (including the cellar), with those on ground, first and second floors separated by a staircase hall. Joinery from both the early 17th-century and the late 17th-century

phases of construction survives extensively throughout the building. This includes an ovolo-moulded stud and panel screen in the side passage, contemporary moulded door-frames with carved stops in the gallery, and a framed stair in the staircase hall with four elaborate classical door-cases on the landings. There are traces of the original fenestration to the rear of the house, including oriel windows on the first and second floors. Of exceptional interest, however, is the survival of the panelling to the ground-floor rear room. This panelling is largely *in situ* and retains extensive areas of elaborate painted decoration. There is evidence of two consecutive schemes of painting on the panelling, relating to the first phase of construction of the building c. 1600 and to the remodelling in the late 17th century. The house retains fragments of similar panelling in both the front and rear rooms on the first floor, and also much reused material from the earlier structure in the timber framing of the walls and ceilings.

The fire in 1995 caused severe damage to the central stair and roof, together with the party wall to the neighbouring property, No. 17. This fire exposed parts of the structure of the house, charred the door-cases and balusters on the landings, and also exposed (and extensively damaged) the painting on the panelling in the rear room. A second fire, in July 1996, damaged the gallery which formerly linked the house to the kitchen block. This exposed the structure of the gallery and part of the front wall of the kitchen, including a moulded beam, parts of several windows, two early 17th-century moulded doorways, and a half door of early 17th-century date. Thefts and damage to the house, including the loss of fireplaces and grates and the destruction of several internal doors and other fixtures, have occurred since the house became derelict. The house remains vulnerable at the present time, although it is understood that refurbishment and rebuilding works will commence in the fairly near future.

In December 1996, the AFU carried out a small-scale evaluation excavation in the shallow rear cellar in order to establish whether Roman deposits survive beneath the floor. It was found that no early deposits or features are likely to be preserved in the cellars. Further up North Street, some Roman stratigraphy does survive in shallower basements, as was demonstrated in excavations in 1974; lower down the street terracing has evidently reduced the ground-floor levels in the buildings, probably in the late 18th century.

## 1.6 The Cloisters (John Allan) (Figs 1 and 2)

An archaeo-historical assessment and fabric survey of the cathedral cloisters area is currently being carried out by the AFU on behalf of the Dean and Chapter. This has been commissioned as one of the preliminary steps in the development of proposals to place modern buildings on the sites of former medieval ranges which now lack buildings, in order to improve and enlarge the accommodation of the cathedral's archive collection, library, shop, refectory and education service, and to display more publicly the Exeter Book and the Exon Domesday.



The principal purposes of the assessment of the areas likely to be affected by the proposal scheme are (i) to identify and record all visible historic fabric, so that none will be lost in the scheme; (ii) to assemble the documentary and pictorial evidence relating to the area; and (iii) to make an initial assessment of the likely depth and character of buried archaeological deposits.

The site almost certainly preserves deep sequences of archaeological deposits dating from the Roman period and perhaps also the remains of buildings ancillary to the Anglo-Saxon minster. The foundations of medieval cloister walks and of the 17th-century and later houses that replaced them can be expected in the cloisters, as well as medieval and later burials.

## 2. POST-EXCAVATION PROJECTS

### 2.1 **Bowhill House** (Stuart Blaylock) (Fig. 6)

Work continues on the preparation of a monograph report for English Heritage on the excavation and standing-building analysis carried out by DoE in 1977-78 and by the AFU between 1987 and 1995 at this house of c. 1500 in Dunsford Road, St Thomas. It is intended that a draft text will be complete by October. The report is destined for English Heritage's Archaeological Monograph series; but because of a current backlog in this series it will probably be three years or so before it appears.

The surviving building at Bowhill comprises two and a half ranges of an original four surrounding a central courtyard. There was an entrance courtyard to the east (still represented by an open area, but in which few traces of structures survived use as a nursery garden in the 18th and 19th centuries). Further buildings are known to have flanked a third courtyard, to the west. A barn survived here until 1972; presumably indicating an agricultural, or perhaps stabling and storage, function for this area. Although the surviving portion of the building contains extensive accommodation and some fine interiors, most notably its roofs, it is now realised that Bowhill was originally a substantially larger building than is suggested by the surviving structures, and that the vanished range to the south-east of the standing building contained some of the best-appointed rooms in the building.

Architectural fragments found during excavations in the area of the eastern court in 1992, pictorial evidence (the view in the Buck brothers *Prospect of Exeter* of 1736 is the most useful), and the stumps of walls observed in the standing building, combine to inform a reconstruction of the vanished buildings on the south side of the entrance court. The standing south range contains two principal living rooms at its east end: the parlour on the ground floor, and the great chamber on the first floor. These rooms communicated directly with equivalents (ground and first floor) in the south-east range, which were lit by a two-storey bay window facing south (some of whose Beer stone fragments have been found in excavation). The bay window finds a close parallel in the building known as Elyott's house, by the Broadgate (also dating to c. 1500), whose window was salvaged and re-used in the Bishop's Palace by Ewan

Christian in the 1840s. Adjoining the south-east range, with its integral stair turret, was a mysterious structure which appears to be shown in a ruinous condition in the Bucks' view. This was a wall, with a crenellated parapet, and a projecting oriel window at mezzanine level. The structure has little or no depth and it seems to be best interpreted as a remnant of the stone outer wall of a timber gallery along the south side (or even around) the east courtyard. Such galleries are familiar in aristocratic and royal buildings of the reign of Henry VII, but few instances are known in houses of the gentry, such as this. A specific surviving parallel exists at Thornbury Castle, Gloucestershire, where the stone exterior walls of the Privy Garden possess oriel windows, and even fireplaces, for the galleried walks (which functioned both as an elevated walkway around the garden, and as a covered access to the adjacent parish church). Similar galleries are known around the Privy Garden and Privy Orchard at Richmond Palace, built between 1497 and 1501. Although there is no further evidence with which to confirm the interpretation of a gallery at Bowhill, there is no other obvious explanation of this feature. Roger Holland (c. 1450-1506), the probable builder of Bowhill, held various prominent posts in Devon and Cornwall, was MP for Totnes in the 1490s and for Exeter in 1504. He was thus well placed to be aware of architectural trends and innovations at this time.

In combination the various pieces of evidence provide an intriguing glimpse of a vanished aspect of the house. The accompanying isometric drawings, produced by Tony Ives for the Bowhill publication, present a reconstruction of the structural core of Bowhill (the ranges around the central courtyard) as it might originally have appeared. There is some evidence (archaeological, structural or pictorial) for all the elements shown here. The drawings were curtailed to east and west to avoid the addition of purely conjectural elements, so the possible form of a complete eastern courtyard and the western courtyard remain unrepresented here.

Work is also continuing in other areas to publish the results of the work at Bowhill. Ray Harrison, who is compiling an account of the practical conservation work, has just published a paper examining the changes in the philosophy of conservation in the course of the repairs to Bowhill in the years 1977-1995: J.R.Harrison 'Changing Perceptions of Architectural-Historic Value, A Case History: Bowhill, Devon.' *Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings (ASCHB)* 20 (1995), 14-29.

## 2.2 2 Broadgate

Jon Bedford's detailed primary project report on the results of the excavation in the cellars is now finished. Richard Parker's report dealing with the 16th-century building is well advanced but requires a little more work to bring it to completion. Discussion of the basilican changing block of the Roman fortress baths and of the portico lining the *via decumana* has been incorporated in a separate paper on the design of the baths (2.3).



### 2.3 Roman Bath-house paper

The paper entitled 'The design of the Neronian fortress baths at Exeter' has now been fully revised and extended to take account of the evidence from the excavation in No. 2 Broadgate. It is still anticipated the paper will be published in the long-delayed proceedings of the First International Baths Symposium, in the *Journal of Roman Archaeology* monograph series.

### 2.4 Roman fortress monograph

Work continues on the preparation of a detailed project design for the proposed *Exeter Archaeological Reports* monograph on excavations in the Roman fortress.

### 2.5 Historical Atlas

Work on the 'Exeter' section in the forthcoming *Historical Atlas of South West England* should be completed in May.

### 2.6 Exeter bellfoundries

A paper has been produced by Stuart Blaylock entitled 'Bell and cauldron founding in Exeter' for publication in the proceedings of last year's British Museum conference on Urban Metalworking in the Medieval and Later Period, which will appear as a volume of the journal *Historical Metallurgy*.

Further work will take place towards the end of the year on the preparation of a detailed proposal for the full publication of the bellfoundry sites.

### 2.7 Medieval deeds monograph

Jannine Juddery's translation, collation and indexing of the pre-1450 Exeter property deeds is now complete. The monograph will be published later in the year, as the first volume in the *Exeter Historical Documents* series.

### 2.8 City Wall booklet

Stuart Blaylock's A5 booklet guide to the City Wall should appear towards the end of the year.

## **2.9 City Wall pamphlet guide**

A folded A4 guide to the walls by Stuart Blaylock and Valerie Maxfield will be produced in the Devon Archaeological Society field guides series early in 1998.

## **2.10 Exeter Archaeology booklet**

A booklet presenting the results of recent fieldwork and research in Exeter will appear in the summer.

## **2.11 Primary project reports and archives**

Work will continue in 1997 on the preparation of primary reports and archives for sites excavated in Exeter since 1971. A start has been made on digitizing plans from certain excavations. Work will also continue on the compilation of standardized medieval and post-medieval finds inventories for eventual inclusion in a database.

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## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Notes for Committee, 10th October 1997**

#### **1. ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWORK PROJECTS**

##### **1.1 Nelson Close, Topsham**

Evaluation excavation of a 2% sample was undertaken for Devon County Council in late August and early September on a 1.1 ha site (centred on SX 9632 8840) lying on the south-west side of Topsham High Street, overlooking Ferry Road and the Recreation Ground about 55 m to the south-east of Ashford Road. It is proposed to erect a new Combined School on the site. This is the last remaining sizeable area of undeveloped ground between the historic core of medieval and early modern Topsham (south-east of Follett Road) and the extensive zone between Ashford Road and the M5 in which Roman finds have been recovered since the 1930s - where Roman port facilities and settlement were presumably located. The site sits on the edge of a steep scarp marking the north-eastern limit of the Exe floodplain. The underlying natural deposits here comprise terrace gravels overlain by fine Quaternary alluvial sands and silts, which in places reach around 0.75 m in thickness but elsewhere are only a few centimetres deep. This area formed part of the arable fields of medieval Topsham, the fossilized cultivation strips later becoming elongated tenements, as is well depicted on the tithe map of 1841. Beneath the modern topsoil, a layer of alluvium is encountered which contains Roman, medieval and later finds and is thought to represent a medieval and later ploughsoil.

Pre-medieval features were identified cutting into the truncated surface of the natural alluvium in all parts of the site, with the greatest concentration of activity being in the north-western half. Tim Gent reports that the earliest material recovered consists of a collection of 74 struck lithics, 69 of which were excavated from sealed contexts located in the western quarter of the site. The assemblage largely comprises mid-grey mottled flint similar to material coming from the clay-with-flints of south-east Devon. Occasional dark flint resembling that deriving from the Beer region is also present, as are three flakes of Greensand chert and a single round flake of Portland chert, which probably represents a blank. In south-east Devon, Portland chert was used almost exclusively for the production of fine quality items (eg. arrowheads) in the Neolithic period. The bulk of the collection seems to consist of waste material residual from the manufacture of tools in the Mesolithic period, with the remainder being Neolithic or Early Bronze Age. Two small sherds of late prehistoric pottery came from an unstratified context.

The Roman remains consist of at least two ditches, two pits and a possible post-trench for a timber building. The pottery recovered from these features and from unstratified contexts consists of 1st- to 3rd-century material, including South-western black burnished ware, South Devon ware, Terra Nigra, samian, mortarium, amphora, and Oxford ware, totalling 61 sherds in all.



The wall foundations of two late medieval or early post-medieval buildings were found whose footings consisted exclusively of river pebbles and cobbles. Fabric of this type is not visible in standing buildings in Topsham today, although cobble and pebble walls are common in east Devon and have been recorded in the footings of an excavated medieval chapel in Exmouth. One of the buildings at Nelson Close appears to have been an open-fronted linhay, lying at right angles to High Street close to the floodplain scarp. Above ground, its walls would have been formed in cob, all trace of which disappeared long ago. The 40 medieval sherds from the site, mostly from medieval ploughsoil, all date from the later 13th or 14th century apart from a small group of 11th-/12th-century material. The 21 post-medieval sherds retained from the excavation can almost all be assigned to the 18th century.

## 1.2 The Cloisters

The archaeological and historical assessment of the cloisters area prepared for the Exeter Cathedral Dean and Chapter was completed in June. The background to the survey was outlined at the March meeting of the Committee; proposals are being developed for the erection of modern buildings on the sites of the medieval ranges that are now open spaces. This would improve the size and standard of accommodation available for the cathedral's archives, library, shop, refectory and education service, and provide purpose-built display space for the Exeter Book and the Exon Domesday. Richard Parker made an analytical survey of the historic fabric and Tony Collings and Jannine Crocker assembled the documentary and pictorial evidence. Parker's detailed report contains information on many aspects of the development of cloister garth, two of which are highlighted below.

### *The Library*

The fabric rolls for 1412-13 describe in detail the creation of a new home for the cathedral library, including the construction of lecterns or reading desks, and the rebinding and restoration of many of the books. The location of this library is uncertain, but it is known from numerous references to have been in the cloister area. The library was originally kept in the cathedral exchequer; it is possible that this was the 'Holdecheker' at the west end of the Chapter House. A location near the cloisters would have been convenient, if the cloisters were indeed used for study.

There is considerable evidence that the library was in fact re-housed within one of the cloister walks. The fabric rolls for 1412 record 'receipts and expenses about the library' including payments to several carpenters, 'working there about the *lectriniu*' (lecterns or reading desks) in the cloister.' Hamund Jakyl and Henry Attwatt', among other carpenters, were employed for 38 weeks on this job, and may have constructed a great number of reading desks, book chests and other furniture. One of the cloister walks may already have been earmarked for use as a library for some time before, since the fabric rolls for 1408-9 record the purchase of iron bars 'for the windows of the cloister called the *librar*'.

A dispute with the city authorities in 1448, recorded in the Shillingford Papers, provides a description of the cloisters at this period. According to the Dean and Chapter: 'within the cloister, which is well walled and glazed, there is a chapter house



and library, comprehending a quarter of the said cloister'. The Mayor complained that the cloister, which the Dean and Chapter kept locked, was a public area of prayer and devotion for the souls of the dead who lay buried in the cloister garth or 'praiell'. A further description of the cloisters is given in Chope's *Early Tours*, and records the visit to the cathedral of the 'Lieutenant from Norwich' in 1635. The lieutenant described: 'a brave cloister, all the seeling above adorned with curious and artificial works, one quarter whereof is converted into a fayre library'. Both these descriptions strongly suggest that one entire cloister walk had been adapted as a library, and there appears to be little evidence for the Victorian tradition of a library room above the south walk of the cloisters.

The transcription of a lecture given by Dean Cowie at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in 1888 shows that Cowie believed the library to have been contained, at least for a period, in the north walk of the cloisters, until it was removed to protect the books from damp: 'There were, I think, chambers between each pair of buttresses which may have served very well for a library...At a later period the books were transferred to the room over the south cloister'. The north cloister walk is in fact a highly plausible location for the library between the early 15th and the mid 17th centuries, given its structural separation from the rest of the cloisters by the buttresses and the staircases to the doors of the church. A library contained within the north walk would be out of the way of processions, which could use the east, south and west walks without interruption. The north walk could be closed off by doors or screens from the (disputed) public areas of the cloister with very little difficulty. Provision of a library here, in close proximity to the church, may well have been the intention from the 1320s, though almost a century had passed before it was finally achieved. This may go some way to explain the highly unusual architectural form of the north cloister.

#### *The Serge Market (Fig. 1)*

It is clear from the description by the Lieutenant from Norwich that in the early 17th-century the cloisters were still in use and in good condition, having apparently escaped the Reformation with little or no damage. The cloisters were probably still intact after the civil war of 1642-49, despite damage to the cathedral itself during the hostilities. The library was removed to St. Johns Hospital, however, and the cloisters appear to have been used to store material rejected from the church, including the organs, perhaps in the hope that they might soon be returned to their rightful positions in the church. In 1649 the Dean and Chapter were abolished and their lands were confiscated and sold in order to pay the debts of the new Parliament. The cathedral itself remained in use for religious service, though divided into two by a brick wall. The cloisters, however, passed into secular hands, and were probably demolished c. 1655-6.

The demolition of the cloisters appears to have been undertaken by the Surveyor of Cromwell's Office of Works, one John Embury, who may have intended to redevelop the area as housing. The City Chamber, however, were eager to purchase the cloisters as a new site for keeping the serge market, which was held in a congested site in South Street. The Chamber eventually acquired the cloisters in 1656 at a cost of £2,230. The Receivers' accounts include many references to work at the cloisters in 1656-7, which almost certainly relate to the construction of this building. The accounts include payments for a large quantity of timber, for paving, for window



casements and ironwork, and 'for painting the windows and poastes of the cloisters'. The Serge Market was opened on 6 November 1657, and operated for only three years before the Dean and Chapter were reconstituted at the Restoration, and given back the possession of their lands and houses. The Chamber petitioned the Dean and Chapter for continued use of the buildings for a period at least, but their request was refused and the market was returned to South Street.

The existing frontage of the Serge Market presents the appearance of an early 19th-century building, with walls of painted stucco and irregularly spaced sash windows beneath a coved cornice. The upper part of the facade is probably timber-framed, and may well retain evidence of its original casement windows beneath the stucco. The scale of the building is such that these were probably of at least three lights, and may have had transoms. The lower part of the frontage retains a 17th-century timber arcade consisting of four vaguely Tuscan columns of turned oak, standing on high stone plinths.

Despite severe alteration in the early 19th and 20th centuries, the roof of the Serge Market is surprisingly well preserved. Only limited areas can be inspected, but essentially the structure appears to be intact. The roof consisted of approximately 7 widely spaced bays, defined by tie-beam trusses which have been preserved by incorporation into later partitions. The trusses each consist of a pair of principal rafters, tenoned together at the top, and tenoned into the tie beam at their bases. There are two levels of collar beams, which are halved onto the principal rafters. All the joints are pegged with wooden pegs. There were also two levels of trenched purlins with diagonal scarf-joints. The common rafters were pegged into the rear faces of these purlins. Many pegs still remain, though the common rafters have all been removed. The roof was not intended to be visible, and was always ceiled, as now, at the level of the tie-beams.

The original appearance of the building may have been similar to the surviving Old Market House at Tiverton, originally built in 1699, but reconstructed in 1731 after a fire. The Serge Market is however on a much larger scale, and must have been quite an impressive building when complete. It is a rare survival of a 17th-century market building. Several Devon towns retain 'butter walks' or rows of houses with arcaded frontages, which appear to have been connected with markets; however these were usually built piecemeal, and almost invariably contained a residential element. Purpose-built market buildings in Devon towns were often incorporated into other public buildings, as at Exeter Guildhall, which featured an arcaded loggia which may have served as a market house. Buildings constructed solely as markets often took the form of arcaded walks, though a two-storey 'Cheape house' on a grand scale is known to have existed at Kingsbridge before 1586. The old Corn Market at Exeter, which stood between Fore street and Smythen Street, may have been similar in appearance to the Serge Market buildings, though it was probably of much later date. It was described in 1806 as 'a quadrangular building supported by wooden pillars, surrounded by stalls'. The Corn market was demolished in the 1830s for the construction of the Lower Market, and with the exception of the Guildhall portico, the Serge Market is now the earliest surviving purpose-built market building in the city, and possibly in Devon.



The next stage in the development of proposals for the Cloister and Library Project is likely to involve limited evaluation excavation and additional fabric survey and archive research. A draft brief for this work has been prepared which will be submitted for approval by the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England.

### 1.3 **Annuellars' College (Fig. 2)**

An archaeological and historical assessment of the buildings on the north-east side of The Close that formed the core of the early 16th-century Annuellars' College was commissioned by the Church Commissioners and completed in May. The scope and authorship of the survey are similar to those of the cloisters assessment, the initial project brief in each case having been prepared by John Allan in his capacity as Consultant Archaeologist to the Dean and Chapter.

The annuellars were priests appointed and paid by the Dean and Chapter to sing daily masses in the chantries founded and endowed in the cathedral. Unlike the vicars choral, the annuellars never acquired collegiate status. A decision was however taken by the chapter in 1528 to provide them with a communal dwelling, which is recorded as being under construction by 1529. The new premises provided for the annuellars must have been fairly extensive, since by the early 16th century they usually numbered between 18 and 20 individuals.

Surviving lease plans showing the extent of the buildings before truncation in the early 19th century reveal a large complex, much of which may have originated as rows of collegiate dwellings purpose-built for the annuellars. A lease plan drawn by John Tothill in 1764 shows that the rear ranges consisted of a hall and kitchen, and a terrace of small houses extending from the end of the hall towards Catherine Street. Behind the hall, across a small courtyard, stood a further range linked to the hall by a second kitchen. Both these ranges appear to have been derived from rows of small houses, similar in plan to those of the vicars choral. The lease plans show that these dwellings had windows and doorways opening onto the courtyard, and thick rear walls containing fireplaces and newel stairs. The layout of the rooms appears to have been altered, yet the plan of the whole range is clearly derived from a row of lodgings rather than a single dwelling. A similar range of buildings still survives extending south-west of the hall. If these ranges are extrapolated, and two further ranges and a gateway reconstructed on the Close frontage, the college can be seen to have comfortably accommodated up to eighteen or nineteen chantry-priests. The buildings appear to have consisted of two-room houses arranged around a large quadrangle and a smaller courtyard, with a common hall, kitchen and domestic offices. It is likely that the building had considerable architectural presence due to its long frontage on the Close. Unfortunately the Annuellars' College was short-lived; it lasted less than twenty years, and was suppressed with the chantries in 1548.

### 1.4 **Pinhoe Church Rooms (Fig. 3)**

An archaeological evaluation carried out in July at Pinhoe Church Rooms involved the excavation of a trial trench within the building to establish the original floor level in connection with the determination of a planning application for alterations. The building adjoins the north side of the vicarage built in 1701 and clearly predates it (on



structural grounds). It was concluded that the single-storey Church Rooms building represents the remains of the original two-storey vicarage which is recorded as having been partially destroyed in a great storm in 1700. The Heavitree stone east and south walls are late medieval in character. The excavation demonstrated that the primary floor level is covered by a layer of cob 0.4 m in thickness which must have come from the first-floor walls demolished around 1701, after which the refurbished building served as a stable block.

### 1.5 **The Guildhall (Fig. 4)**

During the redecoration of the Guildhall in 1996, which entailed the erection of scaffolding within the full height of the interior, the opportunity was taken to produce drawings and make a detailed photographic and descriptive record of the trusses and decorative corbels and bosses of the medieval roof. It became apparent in the course of the survey that the well known previously existing drawing of the roof, produced by J. Crocker in 1875, depicts an early 19th-century (imprecise) recreation of the medieval detail on two trusses in the area of the gallery, so that in fact few actual medieval details were recorded by him. The roof is thought to have been erected in the building programme of 1467-9, which took place prior to the rebuilding of the front block in 1483-5. As such it is probably the earliest member in the celebrated series of elaborately ornamented late medieval roofs in the Exeter area which include those at the Law Library, the Deanery, the former Archdeacon of Exeter's house, Bowhill and Cadhay.

### 1.6 **Central area watching briefs**

A watching brief was maintained on repaving and landscaping works in Fore Street and South Street, commissioned by Devon County Council. Pre-War building frontages and cellars were exposed in a number of places but the only sighting of early deposits was made at the top of South Street in the south-western pavement, where a small section of Roman gravel metalling was exposed which probably represents part of the open market place in front of the forum discovered by Lady Fox in her post-War excavations.

A watching brief on Mercury cable trenches and junction box pits in the High Street revealed gravel street metalling of probable early post-medieval date adjoining the pre-War building frontage next to Bedford Street.

### 1.7 **110-113 Fore Street and St John's Church (Fig. 5)**

The former Langan's premises were badly damaged by fire in 1995 and are currently being refurbished by Westrock Ltd. The buildings on the site are not listed, although some early fabric has been identified within them. The most interesting and unexpected discovery is that the north-east wall of the property represents the west wall of the medieval St John's parish church. The lowest section of the wall dates from the 13th /14th century or before; the church was heightened in the late medieval period, probably in the 15th century when a tower was added against the street frontage; finally, further heightening took place in 1834 to make space for galleries to



accommodate the former parishioners of St George's church in South Street, which closed in that year.

### **1.8 St Edmunds Farm, Alphington**

An assessment and field evaluation were recently carried out on a group of buildings belonging to the former St Edmund's Farm in Alphington village. The survey was commissioned by EHIS Ltd who are seeking planning consent to convert the premises for business use. The farm lies on the east side of Chudleigh Road and originally formed part of Aldens Farm, which was subdivided in 1921 following purchase of the property by Devon County Council under the provisions of the Land Settlement (Facilities) Act 1919 aimed at providing land for demobilised ex-servicemen. The property had been owned for around 500 years by the Courtenay Earls of Devon as part of their manor of Alphington. The earliest leases relating to Aldens Farm date from the 17th century.

The farm buildings were extensively rebuilt in the later 19th century, and with the exception of Aldens Farmhouse itself little if any fabric earlier than 1800 can now be identified on the site. The extent of the 19th-century alterations can be gauged from a comparison of the 1841-2 tithe map with the 1890 OS map. The earliest structure is a stone and cob barn used for storage and threshing of corn and subsequently for apple storage and crushing. The other buildings comprise a mid to late 19th-century cow shed and a cart shed. Trial trenching failed to uncover deposits or structural remains earlier than 1800.

### **1.9 Exe floodplain sites**

A number of field evaluations and watching briefs have been conducted on sites located on the Exe floodplain in St Thomas, Marsh Barton and Alphington. The main aim in each case has been to locate early river channels and to trace other lost watercourses such as the medieval mill leat excavated at Shooting Marsh Stile in 1984. About 50% of these sites prove to contain lost river channels but in the present state of knowledge their presence or absence cannot be predicted prior to trenching. In most cases the channels can be sampled for waterlogged deposits capable of yielding evidence on environmental conditions in the past as well as material suitable for radiocarbon dating. Sites investigated in this way over the last year or so include four in Water Lane, two in Haven Road, One in Okehampton Street and two at Matford Marshes.

### **1.10 Princesshay/ Bedford Street assessment**

The AFU is currently preparing an archaeological assessment of proposals to redevelop an area centred on Princesshay and Bedford Street prior to the submission of applications for planning consent.

## 2. POST-EXCAVATION AND ARCHIVE PROJECTS

### 2.1 2 Broadgate

Richard Parker's comprehensive report on the historic structures recorded in the former Tinley's premises during their recent conversion to a Pizza Express restaurant has been completed and is currently undergoing final editing prior to reproduction in limited edition.

Since the last meeting of the Committee, further analysis of the Roman baths plan in the Broadgate area has been carried out in order to check and strengthen the basis for the proposed reconstruction. The results of this exercise have been very encouraging, and a revised version of the overall plan is in preparation.

The final stage in digesting the implications of the excavation results from the Broadgate excavation involves the production of a new reconstruction for the Roman Civic centre, which is being worked on at present.

### 2.2 Medieval and post-medieval pottery cataloguing

Compilation by Graham Langman of detailed catalogues of the medieval and post-medieval pottery recovered from excavations in Exeter since 1971 has been in progress for some time and will continue for at least another year. The products of this work consist of hand-lists covering the sites excavated in a particular range of years, with all the data also being tabulated for importation into a comprehensive database.

### 2.3 Excavations database

A database of past excavations in Exeter is being prepared which will contain information on the numbers of field records in various categories (eg. site context sheets and drawings) as well as details of results and the state of publication in each case. In view of the pressure on space in the RAM Museum, consideration is being given to the feasibility of storing certain classes of records digitally and eventually discarding the originals. Once completed, the database can be used to plan future strategies for further dissemination of the results of excavations and to formulate thematic or site-specific publications.

### 2.4 Historical Atlas

Work on the Exeter section of the *Historical Atlas of South West Britain* has continued through the summer and is well advanced.

### 2.5 Project designs

Project outlines are being prepared for submission to English Heritage for possible future funding of publications on the Exeter bellfoundries and on the sites in the Roman legionary fortress. In the former case much work remains to be done on quantifying the large collection of bell and cauldron mould material currently in storage at Marsh Barton.



## **2.6 Booklets and pamphlets**

A booklet presenting the results of recent fieldwork and research in Exeter is in preparation and will appear in the first quarter of 1998. Plans to produce an A5 booklet on the City Walls this year have been deferred due to Stuart Blaylock's non-availability for four months of the current year and other commitments. However, the City Wall pamphlet guide should still be produced this year.

## **2.7 Medieval deeds volume**

Further editing is being carried out on this volume. In its present form, without any maps or an introduction, this publication is over 500 pages in length, in A4 format and 9 pt type. Possible ways of reducing its bulk are under consideration.

## **2.8 Primary project reports and archives**

Work continues on the compilation of primary reports and project archives for a wide range of sites excavated since 1971. Sites currently being worked on include Magdalen Street, the Anglo-Saxon minster and St Mary Major church and cemetery.

C. G. Henderson  
Head, Archaeological Field Unit

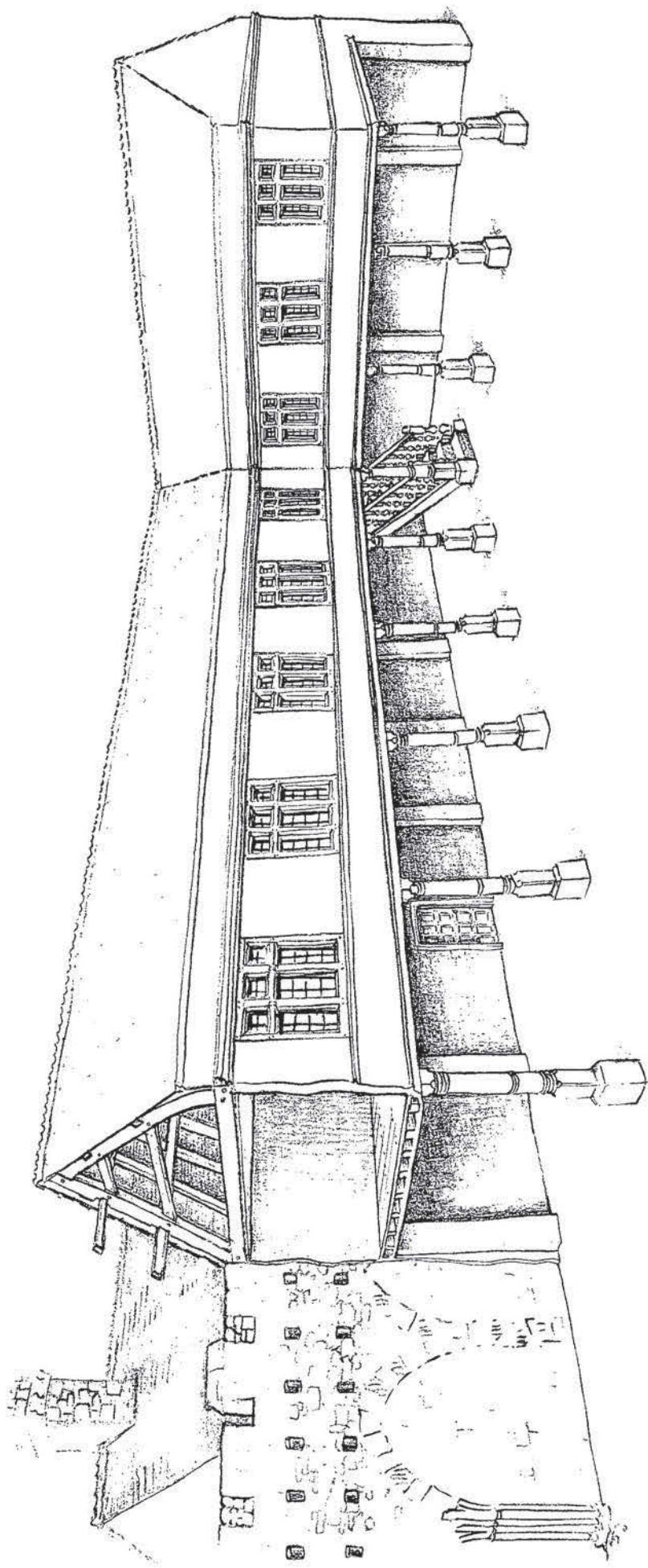


Fig. 1 Conjectural reconstruction of the original form of the Serge Market building of 1656-7 with the eastern bay of the south range omitted to show the roof construction.



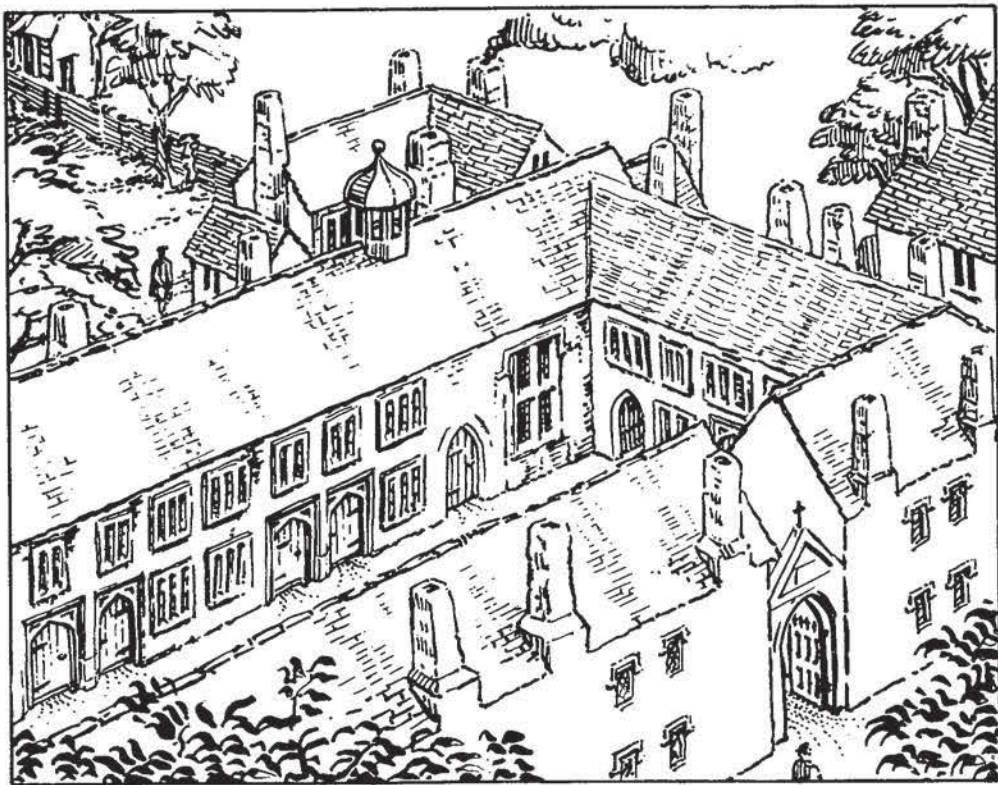


Fig. 2 Reconstruction of the Annuellar's College, c. 1530.

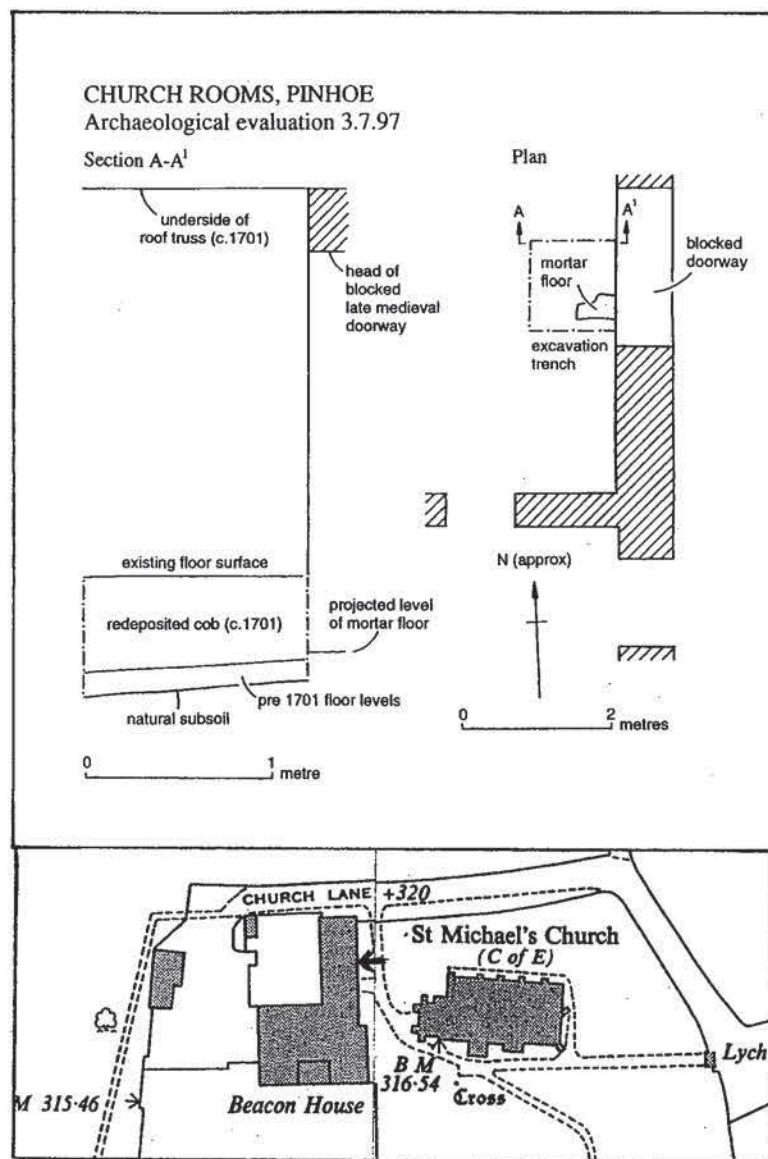
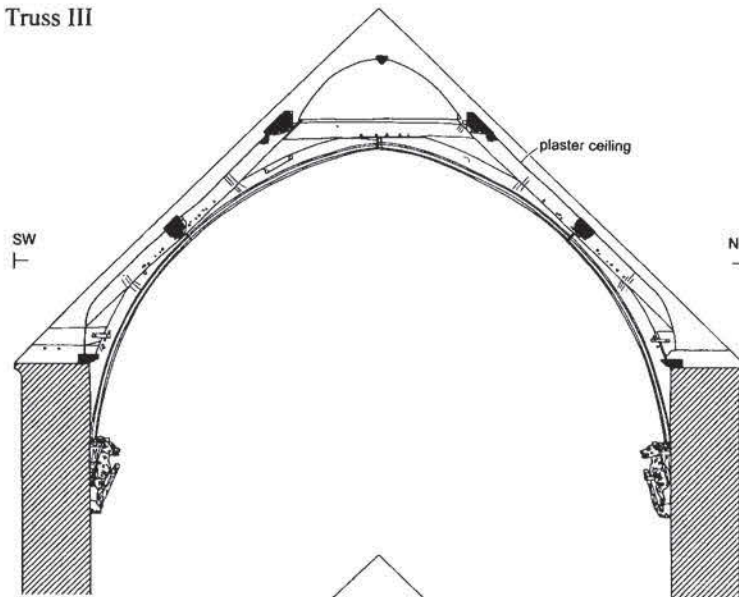


Fig. 3 Evaluation trench at Church Rooms, Pinhoe.



# EXETER: THE GUILDHALL 1996

Truss III



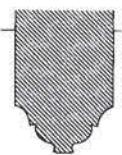
Arch Brace



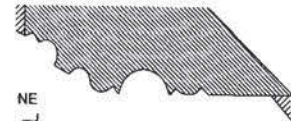
Crown Purlin



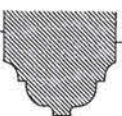
Intermediate Truss



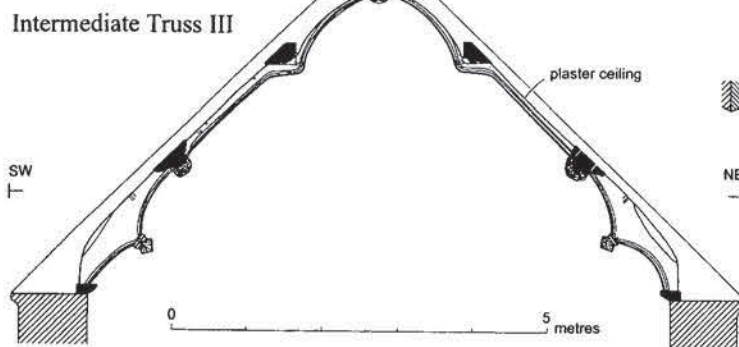
Collar Plate



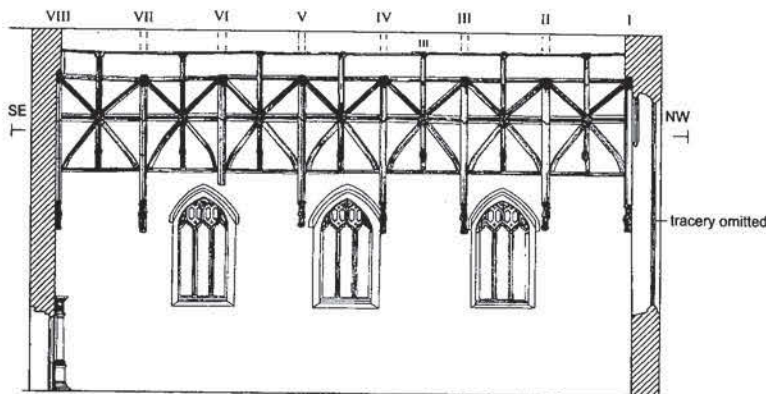
Wind Brace



Intermediate Truss III



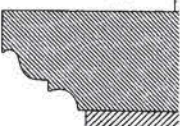
Section Of Hall



Purlin



Wall Plate



50m O.D. throughout

0 5 metres

0 20 cms

Fig. 4 Elevation of Guildhall roof, c. 1467-9.

# EXETER: 110-113 FORE STREET & St JOHNS' CHURCH 1997

West wall of church and section of house

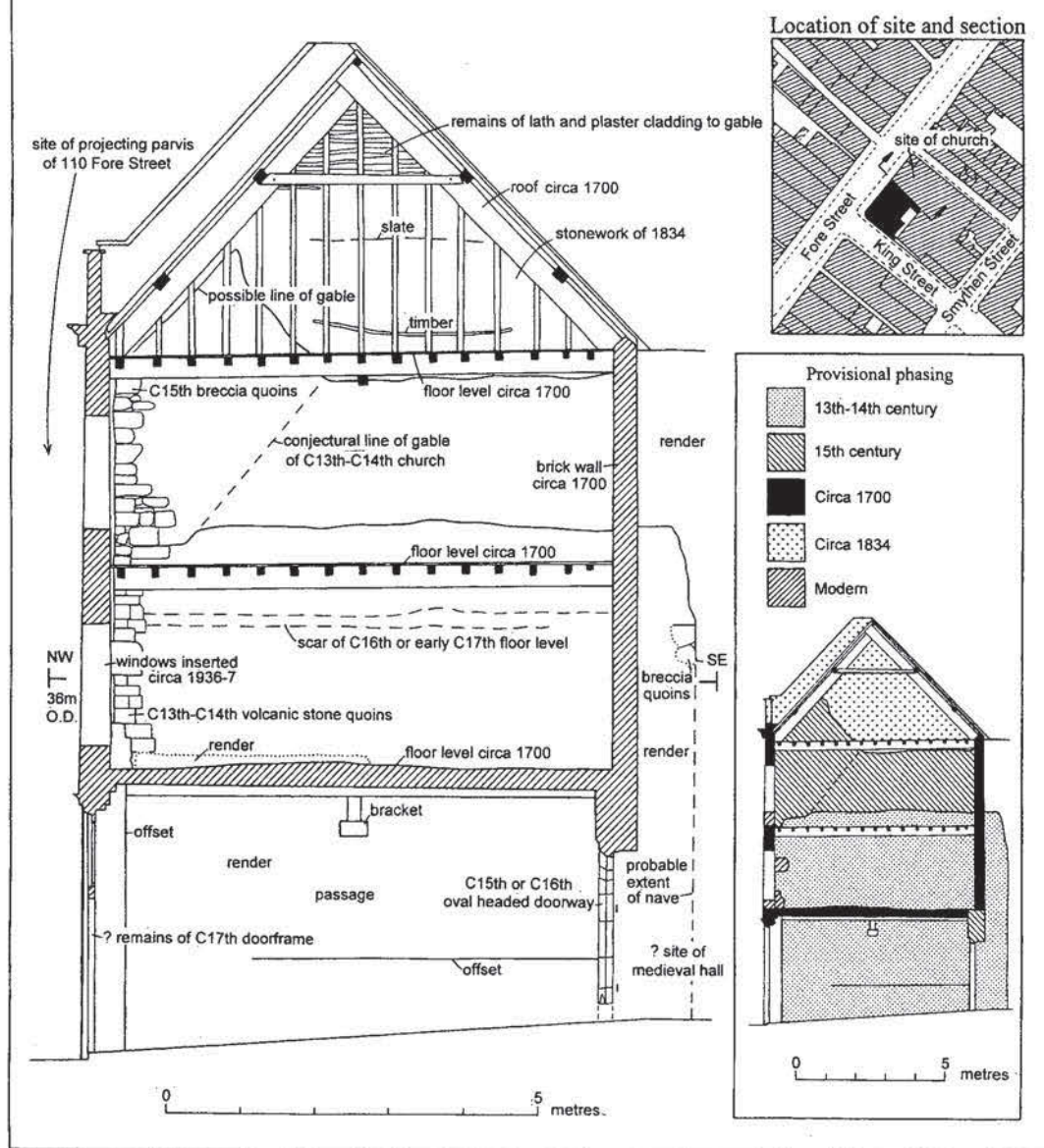


Fig. 5 Elevation of the west wall of St John's Church.



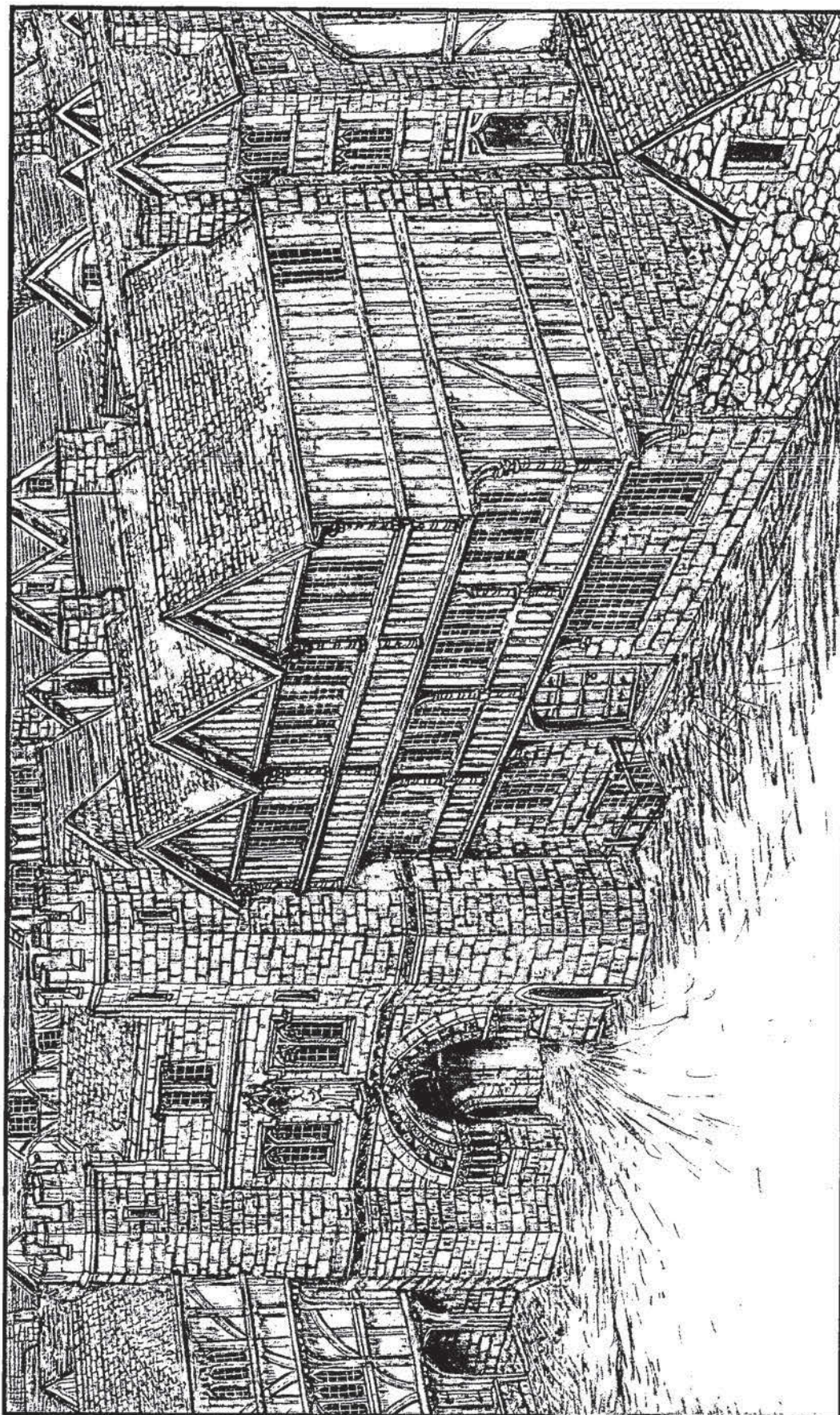


Fig. 6 Reconstruction of the original form of Broadgate and Tinley's/Pizza Express.