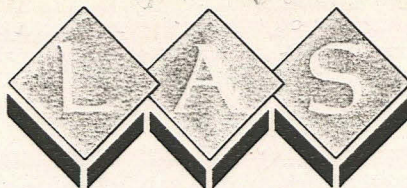


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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

FRANCIS HOUSE SILVER BIRCH PARK GREAT NORTHERN TERRACE LINCOLN LN5 8LG

Boston, Nos. 11 and 11a Union Street

Archaeological Watching Brief

(NGR: TF 3258 4444)

Site Code BUS 95

LCNCC Museum Accn. No. 68.95

Report prepared for Meldrum, Lee and Gillatt

September 1995

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Boston, Nos. 11 and 11a Union Street
Archaeological Watching Brief
(NGR: TF 3258 4444)

Planning Application No. **BO5/ 0479/ 94TT**
Site Code: **BUS 95**
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Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by Meldrum, Lee and Gillatt to monitor groundworks on a plot on Union Street, Boston (Figs. 1 and 2). The plot had been the premises of 11 and 11a Union Street until these were demolished. After a series of planning applications and consents, the land was sold to The St. Matthew Society who submitted a further application to construct a single unit comprised of flats. The scheme consisted of driven pile foundations with a reinforced concrete ground beam.

An archaeological condition was placed on the Planning Consent, requiring a watching brief during groundworks. The brief for that work was prepared by the Boston Community Archaeologist in April 1995 for the Planning Authority (Boston Borough Council). Arrangements were made for monitoring of the ground beam trenches to begin after the piles had been installed, and fieldwork was conducted by the author on May 10th and 11th 1995.

Archaeological Background

There have been no finds of prehistoric material recorded from this part of Boston, and Romano-British finds (coins) are only poorly provenanced to the north of the town. The archaeological significance of this site is its position within the medieval town; the Union Street plot lies within the area of Boston enclosed by the medieval Barditch which formed the town boundary (Fig. 1). Boston was an important medieval port but little information has been gathered about this part of the settlement in the past. A previous archaeological evaluation in Union Place (about 50m SW of the site) found no significant archaeological remains.

Large scale Ordnance Survey plans of Boston are available from the late 19th century, when the plot was partly occupied by a walled area of open ground next to a smithy to the north (Fig. 3). By 1905 the development of the plot is evident (Fig. 4).

The Watching Brief

The installation of pile foundations produces very mixed material from all deposits through which the hole is bored. Any finds become contaminated by contact with late horizons and cannot be placed in any context. It was therefore agreed that the piling would be completed without an archaeologist present.

1. When the construction site was first visited on May 10th, much of the plot was found to be badly disturbed by irregular holes machined around the cap of each pile location in order that steel could be attached to the pile (Pls. 1 and 2). Various of these excavated holes had been backfilled to allow machine access to other parts of the site and the resulting surface was uneven and contaminated. The site had become dissected into numerous small islands of undisturbed stratigraphy and it proved impossible to link observations in the various holes and trenches reliably. Short lengths of brick wall footings and cellar walls were identified in several places and these have been marked on Fig. 5. It seemed probable that most, if not all, of these foundations were from the buildings most recently demolished on the site (Pl. 3). A collection was made of visible but unstratified pottery, all of which was post-medieval or modern (Appendix 1).

2. The upcast from the pile holes consisted of

- green clay with charcoal flecks, over
- light brown silty clay, over
- 0.01m grey clay
- 0.02m light brown sand
- grey clay with flints and stones (perhaps boulder-clay)

The mechanical excavation of the ground beam trenches was complicated by the open holes or by loose material where they had been backfilled. Ground conditions for archaeological recording over most of the area were poor, amidst minor collapses of trench faces and standing water.

3. At the rear of the plot, close to Pile 3, a concentration of ash was noted apparently associated with two brick walls (Fig. 5). The brick dimensions were 230mm x 105mm x 65mm. The concentration was interpreted as a 19th century brick-lined cesspit.

4. The recently demolished brick boundary wall at the western edge of the construction site had a foundation extending to 0.3m above the trench base (c. 0.95m below existing ground level). The 19th century foundation had cut into a deposit of dark brown clay loam containing medieval pottery together with mortar and brick fragments (Figs. 5 and 6; Pls. 4 and 5). The finds were made from a distinct layer which was traceable for at least 3m along the NW-SE trench; it was not from a rubbish pit and may represent a late-medieval ground surface. The pottery identification has suggested a date between the mid 12th and late 13th centuries (Appendix 1).

5. A post-medieval ash pit had removed layer 4 close to Pile 6 and no further trace could be found.

Conclusion

Although the conditions for identifying medieval remains were poor, the small quantity of pottery recovered from the site (9 sherds) does not indicate dense activity here. No stone structural remains were exposed and this may have been undeveloped land at the periphery of the town. Even in the late 19th century part of the plot was open ground (Fig. 3). Refuse dumping or deliberate land reclamation beside Union Street is a possibility but the watching brief was not able to prove this aspect.

More recent development during the 18-19th centuries had caused widespread disturbance to a depth of almost 1m in places where cellars had been constructed or refuse pits dug. This may have had little destructive impact on earlier occupation remains if the postulated reclamation has indeed raised levels by about 0.75m.

The full potential of an archaeological watching brief on this construction site was not realised because of misunderstandings about the destructive nature of the works done after piling and in advance of the trenching for ground beams. Even a plot of this small size could have supplied information about the medieval and later development of Boston if the various instructive soil deposits had been less disturbed.

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank David Quincey (Meldrum, Lee and Gillatt), Colin Mountain and the contractors on site for their co-operation. Curatorial advice and access to records was given by Jim Bonnor (Community Archaeologist, Boston Borough Council); Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy (County Sites and Monuments Record) supplied access to additional records.

The pottery was identified by Jane Young and Judy Wilkinson (City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit); other finds were examined by Jenny Mann (CLAU).

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
19th September 1995

Appendix 1

Pottery Identification

by Jane Young and Judy Wilkinson (City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit)

Glossary of Abbreviations

Berth	Brown earthenwares :mid 16th/early 19th centuries
Gre	glazed red earthenwares :mid 16th/late 18th centuries
Lerth	late earthenwares :mid 18th/20th centuries
Lpm	early modern :late 18th/20th centuries
Lston	late stonewares :late 18th/20th centuries
Misc	undated wares
Rgre	reduced glazed red earthenwares :mid 16th/late 18th centuries
Slip	slipwares :early 17th/20th centuries
TB	Toynton All Saints/ Bolingbroke kilns :mid 15th/mid 18th centuries
Tge	tin-glazed earthenwares :early 17th/early 19th centuries
Cist	Cistercian-type wares :mid 15th/late 17th centuries
Medloc	medieval, local origin :early 13th/late 15th centuries
EMH	modern : late 18th/20th centuries
MH3	mid 12th/early 13th centuries
MH5	early 13th/late 13th centuries

Appendix 1

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by Jane Young and Judy Wilkinson (City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit)

BUS95 POST-ROMAN POTTERY ARCHIVE

Context	Ware	Sherds	Form	Comments
1	BERTH	1	-	16TH
1	BERTH	1	-	16TH?
1	GRE	1	-	-
1	GRE	1	-	-
1	GRE	1	-	BASE
1	GRE	1	OPEN	-
1	LERTH	1	-	NO OUTER SURFS
1	LPM	1	-	BL/W
1	LPM	1	-	VERY ODD;MARKED FGW 1357;BUFF EARTHENWARE BROWN SLIP
1	LSTON	4	BOTTLES	DIFF VESS
1	MISC	1	-	NO OUTER SURFS;FABRIC INCLUDES QUARTZ + FE + OCC CA
1	RGRE	1	-	-
1	RGRE	3	BOWL	-
1	SLIP	1	-	RED FABRIC;18/19TH; ? HALIFAX/NEWCASTLE
1	TB	1	-	-
1	TGE	1	BOWL?	BL/W DEC;CHINOISE DEC;
4	CIST	1	CUP	BROWN FABRIC
4	CIST	1	CUP	RIM;REVRS DEC;BROWN FABRIC
4	MEDLOC	1	JUG	-
4	RGRE	1	-	-
4	RGRE	1	JAR?	-
4	RGRE	4	BOWL	-

BUS95 POST-ROMAN POTTERY DATING ARCHIVE

Context	Earliest horizon	Latest horizon	Probable horizon
1	EMH	EMH	-
4	MH3	MH5	-

BUS95: BULK FINDS

Context	Type	Count	Comments
1	CTPS	1	PMED-MOD;18-19
1	CTPB	1	MOD;M19
1	FIRE	1	25GMS

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Archive Summary

Archaeological Finds

Field Observation Sheets 4

Developer's Plans and Sections

Annotated Developer's Plans

Correspondence

Specialist's Reports : Post-Roman pottery

: Clay Tobacco Pipes

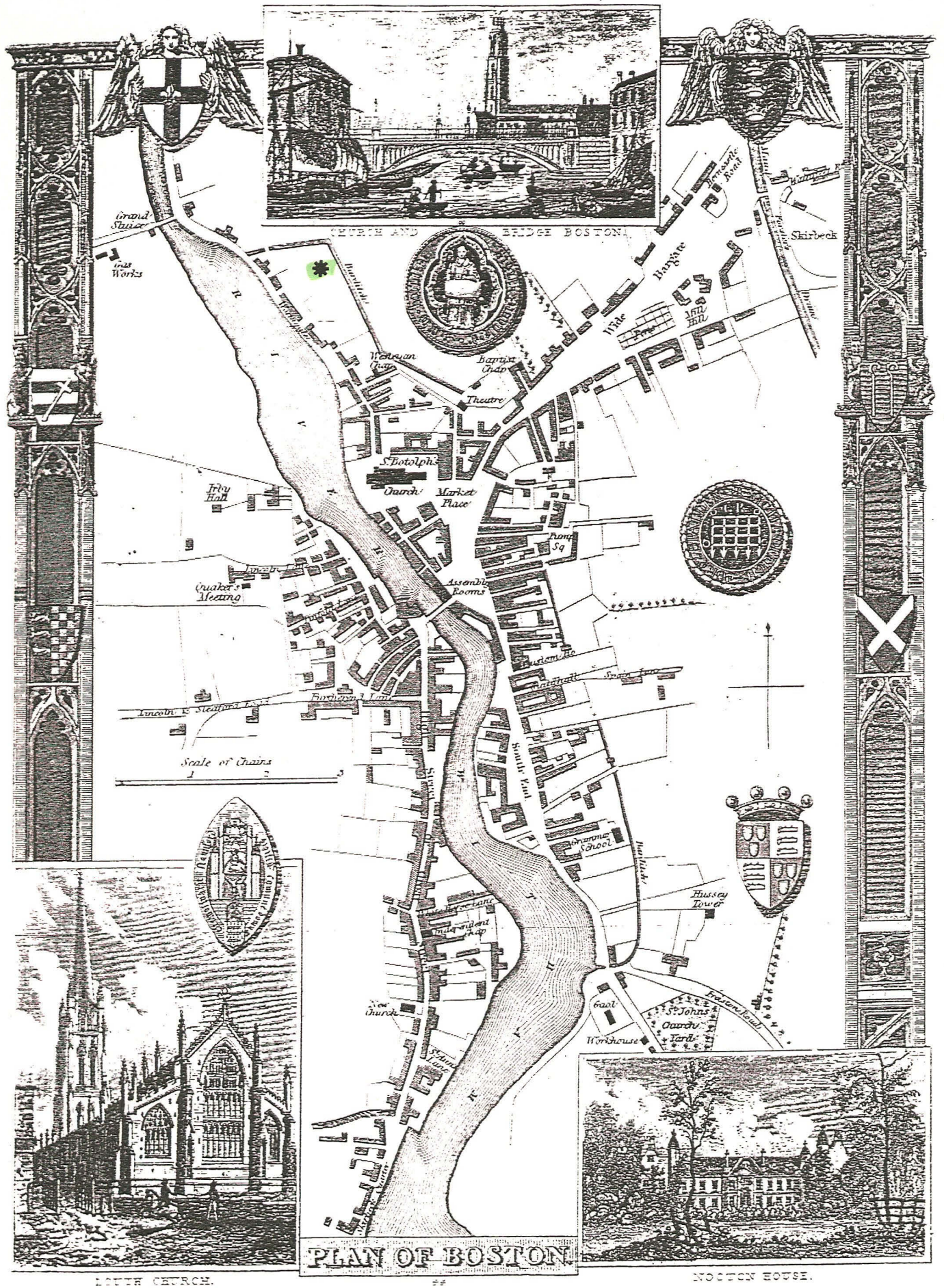


Fig. 1 Location of Union Street, within the Bar Ditch, Boston (based on a printed 1839 plan by Moule)

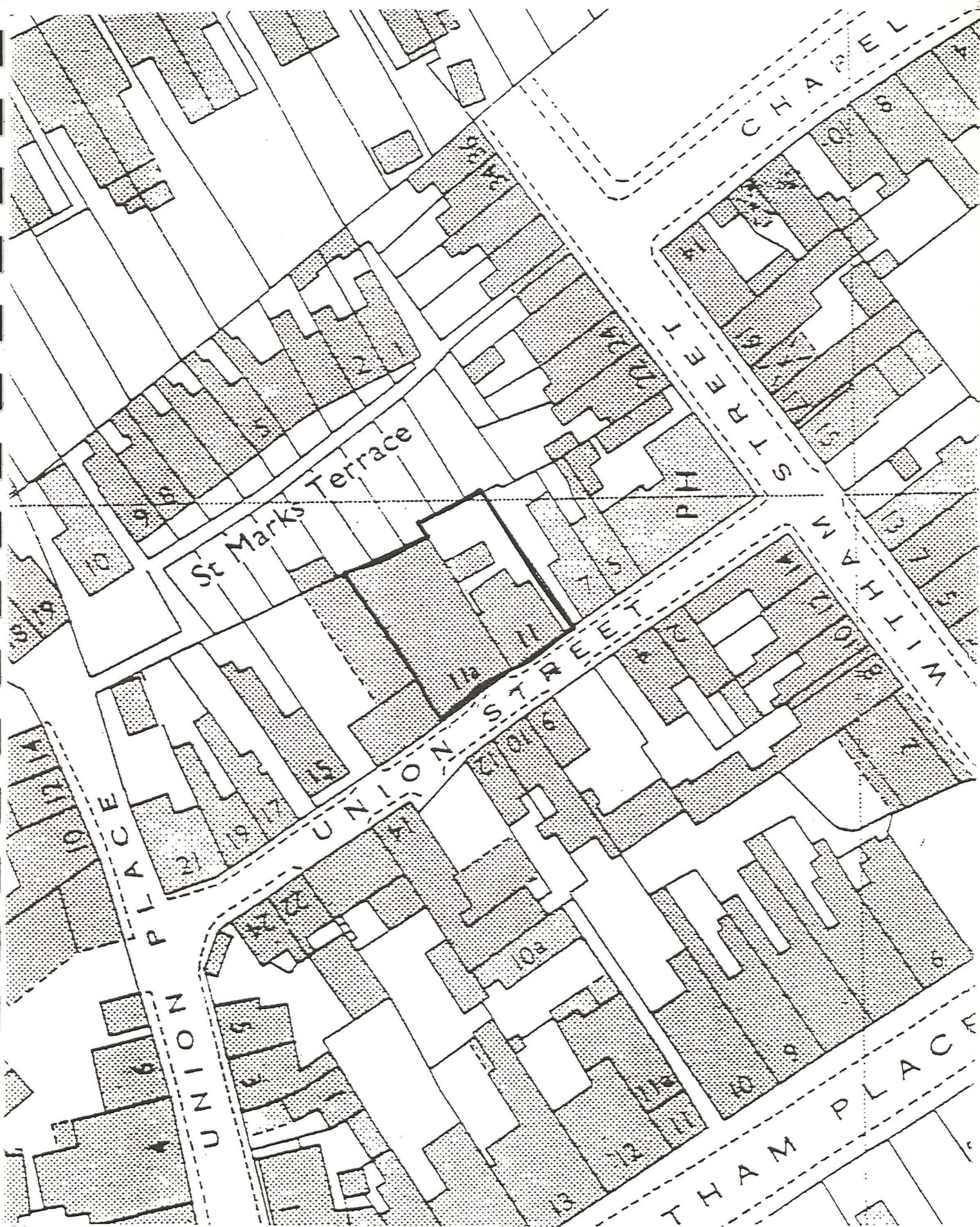


Fig. 2 Position of Plots 11 and 11a Union Street (based on part of the Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan; Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Licence No. AL 50424A)

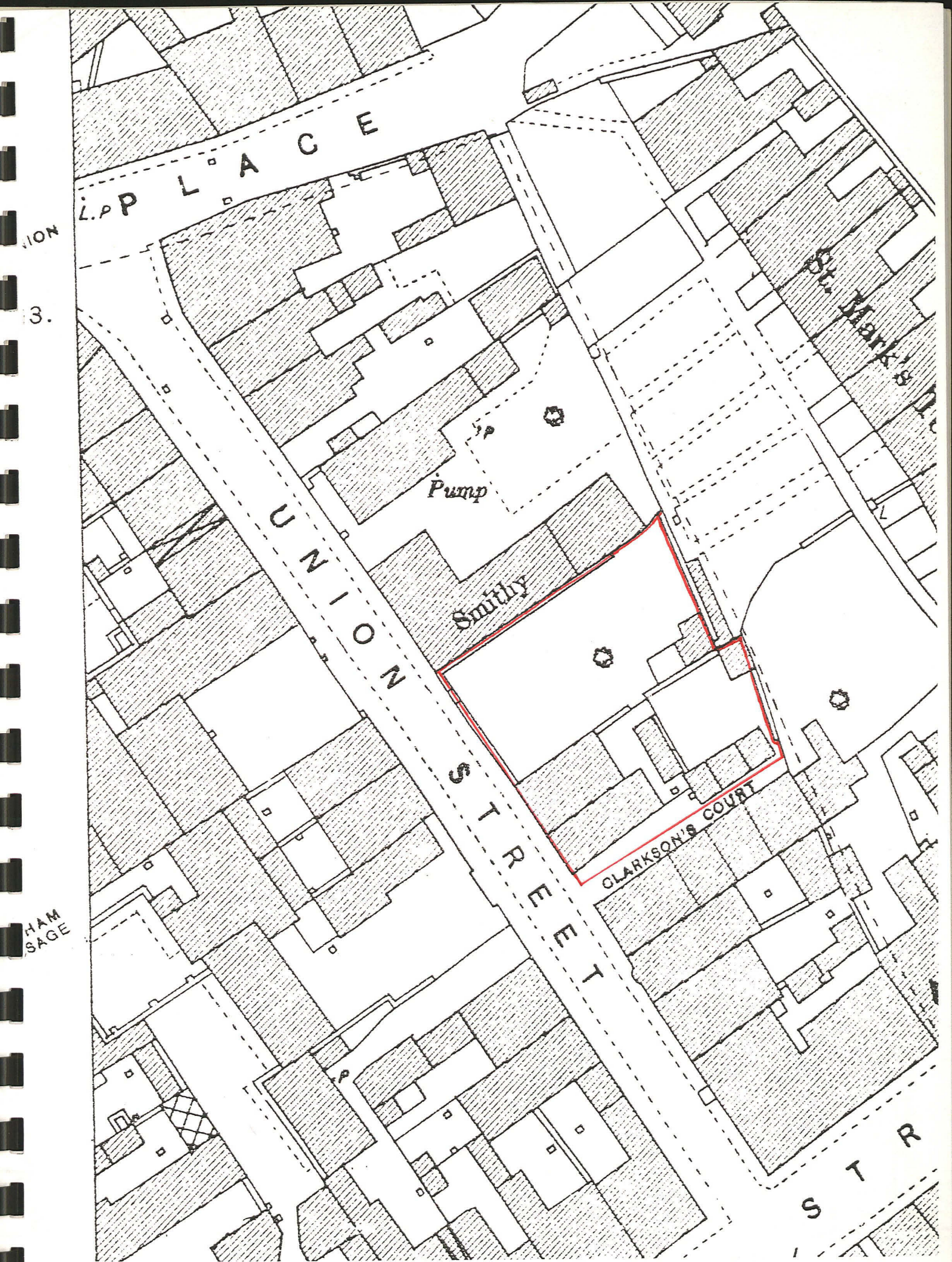


Fig. 3 Union Street in 1889 (reproduced at enlarged scale from the 1889 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1: 1250 map, Sheet 109/9/14).

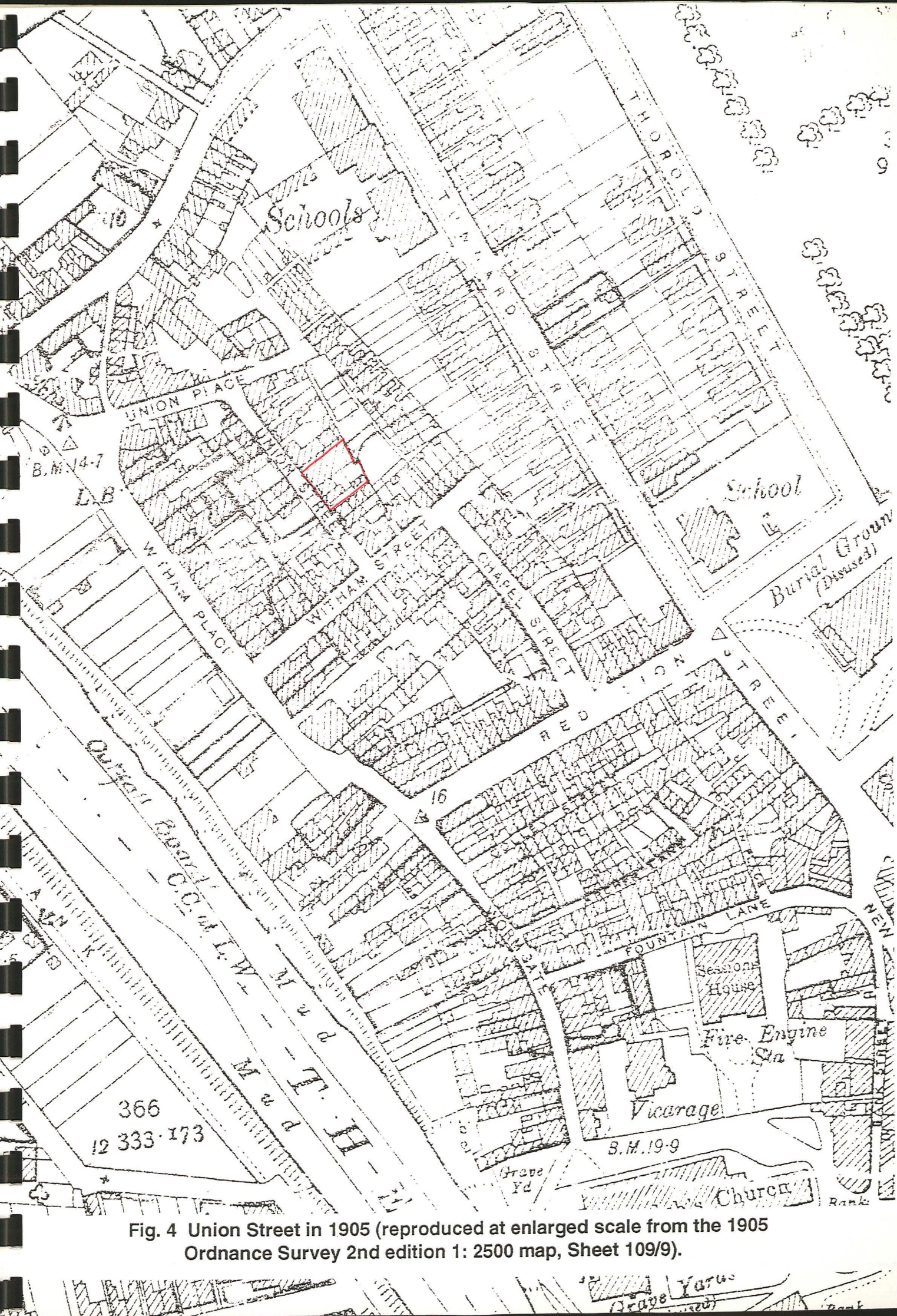


Fig. 4 Union Street in 1905 (reproduced at enlarged scale from the 1905 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 1: 2500 map, Sheet 109/9).

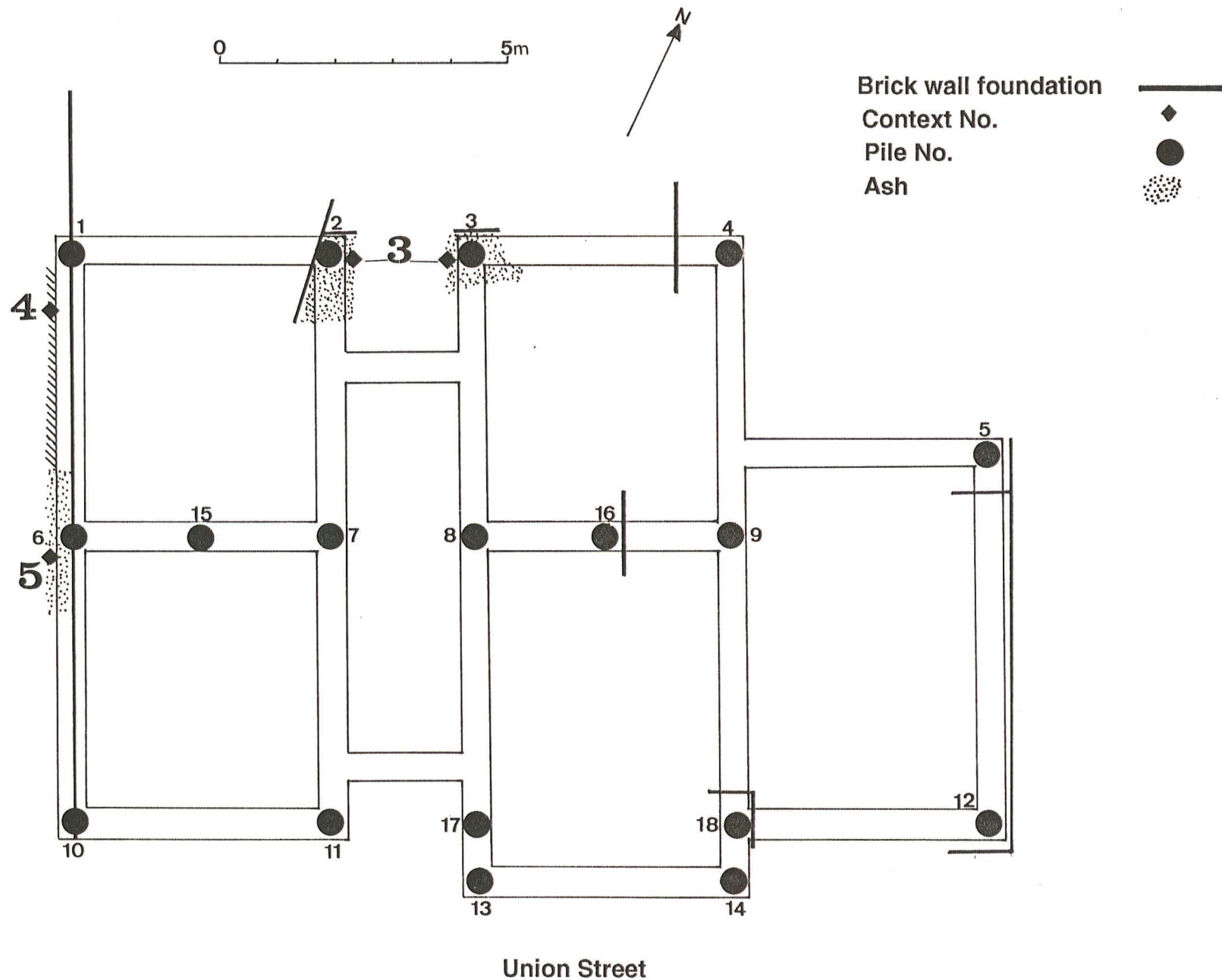


Fig. 5 Plan of Pile positions and Ground Beam trenches, showing archaeological observations (based on a plan supplied by the developer)

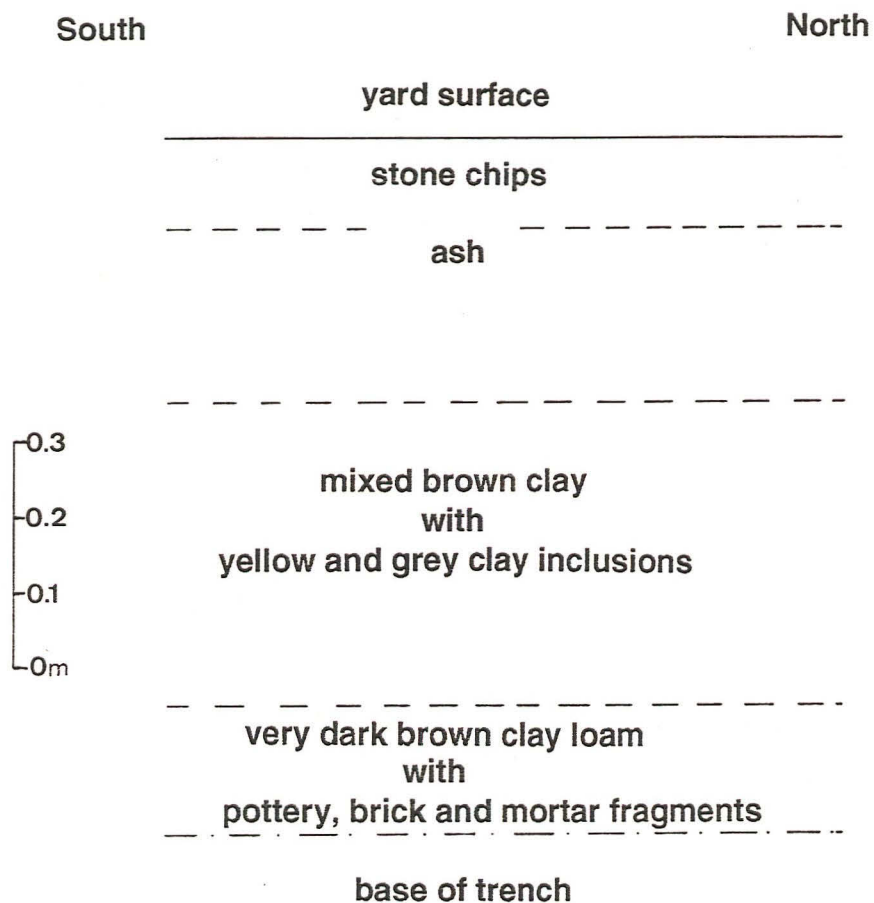


Fig. 6 Section of the western trench face, showing stratigraphy at Context 4



Pl. 1 Site conditions on 11 Union Street at the start of the watching brief (looking NW to rear of 13)

Pl. 2 Holes dug around Piles 14 and 18, revealing brick walls of cess pit or cellar





Pl. 3 Hole beside Pile 12, showing brick wall foundation and level of standing water (looking east onto Union Street)

Pl. 4 Stratigraphy to south of Pile 1, with pottery sherds visible in a dark layer (Context 4) close to the trench base. The thick overlying layer may be post-medieval reclamation. (Looking west; scale divisions 0.2m)





Pl. 5 Location of Context 4 on the western edge of the plot. (Looking SW to Union Street)