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STAMFORD SCHOOL LINCOLNSHIRE Archaeological Recording at New Carpark Stamford School, Stamford Site of Brazenose College Stamford, SAM 256 (SMC ref. HSD9/2/2631)

> NGR: **TF 0334**<del>7029</del> Site Code: **SSW 95** Museum Accn. No. **117. 95**

## REPORT

for

# **ENGLISH HERITAGE**

December 1995

Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section 12 Friars Lane LINCOLN LN2 5AL 5/12/95 TEL. 0522 575292 FAX: 0522 530724

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## Archaeological Recording at New Carpark Stamford School , Stamford Site of Brazenose College Stamford, SAM 256 (SMC ref. HSD9/2/2631)

NGR: **TF 0334 7029** Site Code: **SSW 95** Museum Accn. No. **117. 95** 

#### Summary

A stone-lined well shaft, discovered during construction of a carpark, was recorded prior to sealing off with a concrete slab. Two phases of capping dated from the early 19th century onwards but no direct evidence was found for the date of the well construction.

### Introduction

In July 1995 a previously unrecorded well was revealed during landscaping of ground in conjunction with the construction of car parking facilities at Stamford School. The site lies within an area designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Lincolnshire number 256) (Fig.1). Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by English Heritage in August 1995 to record the well in accordance with the Brief set by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council dated July 1995.

The purpose of the Recording Brief was to record the well and its archaeological context, without entering it, because of safety considerations.

## General Archaeological Background

The town lies east of the Roman Ermine Street. To date there is no evidence that Stamford itself was Roman in origin, the major Roman site being on the Ermine Street at Great Casterton, although a few stray finds have been made on the west side of the modern town.

The earliest settlement evidence dates from the late ninth century by which time there was a major pottery industry, iron working and quarrying. Stamford had acquired such importance that a century later it became one of the Five Boroughs of the Danelaw with a market and a mint. The Danish Borough lay east of the Market Place and Saxon settlement, extending as far as St Georges St. In 978 Edward the Elder ordered a fortification to be built on the south side of the river and regained control of the town. The medieval town of Stamford extended along both banks of the River Welland but the nucleus of the settlement remained on the north bank (Mahany et al.1982). At the time of the Norman Conquest Stamford was second in importance in the county only to Lincoln and continued to flourish into the 15th century. It was a centre for industry and French and Spanish pottery from excavations are indicators of the continental trade which was an important part of the town's wealth. At the height of Stamford's prosperity there were 14 parish churches and numerous religious houses.

#### Brazenose College Site

The site of Brazenose College is assumed to lie just within the eastern limits of the medieval town walls, built in the 13th century, close to St Paul's Gate. The only medieval reference to Brazenose was made in 1335 when mention was made of 'Phillip le manciple atte Brasenose'. To this Wood, in 1674, added the words 'in Stanford' but it has not been satisfactorily proved. It was a semi-collegiate hall until its suppression by Edward III in 1334, at the request of Oxford University. The first reference to a property in Stamford called Brazenose occurs in 1559 when a tenement which belonged to the Corporation went by this title. The lease is alleged to indicate that the house stood in St Paul's parish and a barn and garden in the adjoining Holy Trinity parish, whose boundary ran just inside the town walls (Hartley and Rogers 1974, 76).

In 1674 Wood described the college, quoting Twyne's visit to Stamford in 1617. Brasenose had 'still remaining a larger gate and in that a wicket or lesser door, to which is attached a brasen head...This place was also furnished with a fair refectory or a hall and at this time in all writings and receipts preserved its old name of Brazen-nose College'. Speed's map of 1600 (Fig. 2) shows standing buildings of two or three ranges, which were demolished in 1688 when the Corporation decided to mortgage Brazenose to pay for its rebuilding (Hartley and Rogers ibid.). Before 1704 a new building had been erected on the site using many materials from the old college. This new building, often called the College, was converted into a spinning school in 1704 and became the town workhouse in 1739 (Hartley and Rogers 1974, 77). The Workhouse is labelled on Harrod's map of 1785, which is a copy of Speed's survey with later street and place names although the workhouse buildings are identical to those of the College shown by Speed (Fig. 3).

In about 1806 the property was sold by the Corporation and it again changed hands before 1822 when it was pulled down. Since this date the site has been part of the garden to the adjacent property (see Knipe's map of 1833, Fig. 4) and the name was transferred to the present Brazenose House (Hartley and Rogers 1974 ibid.).

The only known depictions of the college buildings are on Speed's survey of 1600 and another map of the 17th century, cartographer unknown, assumed to be taken from Speed. The buildings appear to be set back from the street frontage and may even be adjoining the town wall.

Fig. 5 is a sketch map which combines details from the maps of 1600 (Speed) and 1833 (Knipe) showing the position of the well in relation to the possible location of the college buildings and the town wall. The lengths and angles of town wall between St Georges Gate and St Pauls Gate and the side of the original college buildings are estimated from Speed's plan. An alternative town wall route is shown, based on boundaries existing on Knipe's plan of 1833, but retaining Speed's depiction of the northern part which is clearly shown as diverging south-west from the line of the road now called Brazenose Lane. The description given by the 1559 lease apparently

defining the 'house as being in St Paul's parish' and the 'barn and garden as being in Holy Trinity parish' would leave very little room for the 'houses, barns, stables and other buildings' also listed; particularly as the Holy Trinity parish boundary ran 'just inside the town walls'. The westward deviation of the town wall reduces the potential garden area to the west and south.

From these accounts it appears that there was an extensive range of buildings which would have to be positioned mainly to the west if the location of the garden is accurately described. Based on the description alone, the wall seems to be positioned within an area which, in the 16th century at least, was described as barns and garden. It is also (based on Speed's plan) approximately ten metres inside the line of the town wall. The exact location of the college has never been established, but it is reasonably certain that the existing well is within its precincts.

#### Previous Archaeological Work

Archaeological evaluation had been carried out on the site by the Heritage Trust for Lincolnshire in April 1992 (Dymond 1992) to determine the effect of construction work on any archaeological deposits which might exist, to assist English Heritage in advising on an application for Scheduled Monument Consent for the work on the new carpark.

This report notes that the evaluation area had been landscaped to form one of a series of terraces, running south towards the river. The southern limit of this terrace is marked by a post-medieval stone-rubble coursed wall, thought in the report to possibly mark the position of the town wall and ditch.

The evaluation comprised a resistivity survey 40 x 40m (Fig. 6), which was interpreted as showing nothing of archaeological interest, and 10 evaluation trenches (Fig. 7). A spread of limestone rubble and roof tile in Trench 5 was interpreted as a demolished wall. Trench 6 revealed limestone blocks in the base of the trench, possibly redeposited building materials.

Unfortunately the evaluation report did not give the position or orientation of the resistivity survey within the evaluation area but it is possible that the white zone, indicating an area of high resistance, which diagonally crosses the survey area may mark the line of the medieval town wall. The evaluation trenches were randomly spaced being only four to five metres in length and therefore not deployed specifically to locate the town wall which, given the deviation depicted by Speed in 1600, could easily have remained undetected. The rubble found in Trenches 5 and 6 may represent demolition rubble from the town wall, but could be derived from the 'stables and barns' of earlier descriptions, particularly if accompanied by roof tile.

### RESULTS (Fig. 8)

The kerbs and paving for the carpark had already been laid, leaving a small area containing the well, two mature beech trees and heaps of soil and rubble (Fig. 7; Pl.1). A narrow trench for reinstatement of a new well cover had been partially excavated along the SE side of the well. This was to be continued at a width of 300mm along each side.

As time and room on the site was limited, excavation was confined to the small area allotted for trenching. The SE and part of the NE side were excavated to the top of the surviving course of the well shaft lining. The NW and SW sides were selectively excavated to various depths where time and the proximity of the existing spoil heaps allowed. No dismantling of the structure was undertaken.

The Brief for the work specified that archaeological staff should not enter the well. As a safety precaution the shaft was kept covered by a pallet for the duration of work except for occasional examination and photography.

Archaeological features were assigned numbers for recording purposes, which are referred to in the text and on the illustrations (see Appendix 1 for the full context list ).

The topsoil was arbitrarily divided into two layers: (1) upper and (2) lower; the total depth being 0.50m. (1), a brown-black humic, silty soil with occasional stones of 10-40mm, contained modern debris, including plastic bags together with pottery sherds of 19th-20th century date, and the only medieval pottery sherd found during the excavation (see Appendix 2). (2), was more disturbed by root action and contained a glazed floor tile fragment and potsherds of 17th - 18th century date. As no specific lower horizon could be found to this layer it is assumed that any construction trench for the vault installation was beyond the limits of the present excavation.

The existing concrete slab (26), capping the well, had been removed. No dating evidence for this was found but it is assumed to be early to middle 20th century and may have been contemporary with the repair (23) to the NE closing wall in distinctive kiln-striped bricks (Pls. 2 & 3). The highest undisturbed layers below the level of the capping were (7) to the NW and (8) to the SW. (7) was a brown-grey sandy silt with yellow ?mortar fragments and small limestone and sandstone lumps. This was obvious as a later layer, since it overlapped the exposed brick faces of the broken vaulting.

(24) was a pit, whose NE extent was partly obscured by the new concrete bedding for the kerbstones and whose NW and SE extent were approximately the same width as the repaired area (23). It had been backfilled with a large quantity of miscellaneous types of brick, (sample dimensions 220 x 110 x 75mm) mostly intact and of possible late 19th century date. There were no repair bricks (23) among them. The lowermost bricks (3) (PIs. 4 & 5) were roughly aligned to the closing wall (22/30) and occasionally mortared to it although not actually bonded as part of the wall.

The closing-wall itself was built of bricks to the NW (22), and to the SE (30), all of mixed brick types similar to the backfill (3) (Pls 5 & 6).

(23) therefore, is a repair to a breach of the wall which displaced the earlier bricks (3) which were used as a backfill behind it before the mortar had set. The date of the repair and backfill is indicated by a beer bottle of c.1910-1920. Wall (22/30) bricks were apparently of a later type than those in the opposite wall (21) and vaulting (11/12) and it is logical to conjecture that (22/30) was itself an even earlier replacement of late 19th century date. There was, however, no distinct difference of colour or texture in the mortar to support this. The only anomaly was the re-use of a limestone block in (22), this being the only block surviving assumed to have belonged to a course higher than the level of truncated well-head (PI. 3). This could be taken as an indication either that (a) the well-head courses (or their remains) were removed and partly re-used when closing-wall (22/30) and the main vault were built or (b) wall (22/30) was a later replacement of a wall constructed entirely of re-used blocks, one of which was used in the replacement wall.

#### Backfills (8) and (10)

The uppermost layer butting the SW closing-wall (21) was very mixed having occasional large stones, and like the other upper layers had been disturbed by removal of the concrete capping. Removal of loose debris revealed an overall grey-brown layer (8) containing small stones, chalk-like fragments and scattered ?lime deposits (PIs 6 & 7). This was further excavated only to the NW, where it sealed a dark-brown silty soil (10) with frequent small stones and a high degree of root disturbance. Both (8) and (10) seemed to constitute a single backfill containing similar finds; (10) containing a nail, a lump of slag, and a clay pipe stem of mid 17th-18th century; (8) also a nail and a lump of slag and sherds of late post medieval pottery of 19th-20th century date.

### Backfill / abutment (9) to Vault (PIs 8, 9 & 10)

(9) survived only at the NW vault springing (the SE side having been already excavated by the contractors) and consisted of limestone with natural edges either rough mortared or having been rammed in with the remains of a mix, evidenced at the joints by a white ?salts eruption similar to that in the adjacent vault brickwork internally and externally. The SW vertical face of (9) showed that it had been installed either (a) behind shuttering to the open vault or (b) after the construction of closing-wall (21) (Pl. 10). The former is more likely since (21) did not extend far enough to the NW to enclose (9) and showed no sign of being disturbed. It is probable in any case that the closing-walls were a separate stage of construction after the vault mortar had set and any arch template removed. There was no trace of timbers on the truncated well ledge to suggest that a crude template had been left in situ, neither were there any impressions in the mortar to show that one had been used.

(9) was the only context other than the brickwork which might constitute a structure and it was certainly intended as an abutment to the vault springing to counter any outward spread. Its extent to the NW is unknown.

### Closing-wall (21) (Pls. 2 & 10)

This was a brick wall c.230mm thick (sample brick dimensions 235 x 110 x 72mm) of five surviving courses which closed the SW side of the vault. In common with wall (22/30) its SE extremity terminated somewhat abruptly with no apparent stepped courses as found at the NW end. Overall coursing was of no particular bond but simply a convenient mix of headers and stretchers. The highest surviving course in both walls (including repaired area (23)) was mainly stretchers. No frogs were found. The exposed stepped courses at the NW end showed a thin coat of yellowish mortar adhering and appeared to have been previously cleaned for re-use.

## Brick Vaulting (11/12) (PI. 11)

This was a simple open segmental arch vault springing from the truncated well-lining, having a width between openings of 1.20m and an internal span between springers of c.1.38m. It comprised two courses of voussoirs: the intrados (12), of which eight courses survived at the NW and four at the SE; and extrados (11), of which approximately five courses survived at the NW and four courses at the SE.

Sample brick dimensions were 230 x 112 x 73mm and 230 x 105 x 75mm perhaps of mid to late 19th century, other bricks observed were of less thickness, e.g. 230x114x65mm, perhaps of early to mid 19th century. At the highest surviving part of the arch the exposed brick cores were of an even, orange-red colour the mortar being of a cream-white colour. Internally, the mortar colour of (12) varied from white through buff to grey-brown. The base springer-bonding mortar which had been liberally spread over the wide joints of the shaft lining was partly obscured (and discoloured?) by dust and debris, giving an overall grey colour.

Both closing-walls simply butted the arch faces, leaving a single continuous joint internally, the exuded mortar being indistinguishable from that of the vault bedding.

## The Well-head (conjectural only)

Only a single stone block (25) remains as part of wall (22). As there were no blocks missing from the shaft below the truncation level, it is assumed that (25) (of similar appearance) was part of the upper well-head. Large lumps of limestone (from other blocks?) (13), pre-dating backfill (3), seemed to be associated with the vault construction and may have been removed from a fragmentary well-head.

At the SE side, below (10) was an abrupt change to a compact but powdery yellowish surface (6) (sampled) which extended beyond the excavation limits. This was the first indication of a natural layer, but it may have been (at least

in part) a thick spread of mortar material associated with the well-head construction. A darker coloured fill (4), concentric to the well perimeter, contained a fragment of brick or tile (specialist dated to 19th century) although this was assumed to be embedded after the removal of the well-head and during the vault construction (PI. 12). The fill also contained a sherd from an earthenware jar of 18-19th century date. The shallow depression (5) was probably the mortar matrix or seat for the well-head blocks.

#### Shaft Lining (15) and cut (16)

Probing below the extrados springing (11) (SE side) showed the upper shaft cut (16) was immediately behind stone lining blocks (15) which were seated on a ledge (17) about five courses below. The rough-hewn blocks varied from c. 200x150mm to 500x400mm (and up to 320mm thick) averaging nine blocks to a course, with no evidence of any bonding material (Pl. 15). It is assumed that the natural material occurring between the truncation level and ledge (17) was perhaps inadequate for a natural lining or to support a wellhead and that the constructed ledge (17) marks the level at which a more solid rock horizon occurred.

### Lower Shaft cut (18)

The lower main shaft (18) was cut through natural rock (19), and became more irregular with depth; increasing in places to more than a metre wider than the shaft lining and having jagged overhangs and large cavities (range of vision was limited to about twenty five feet).

The depth, measured by the contractors, was c.52ft from the top of the concrete slab. This was approximately 16.35mm below the temporary bench mark (TBM) on the kerb corner immediately west of the well.

#### Conclusion

Recording on the site was confined to a small area surrounding the well and confirmed that a shaft had been dug into the solid rock. A ledge was presumably created above the bedrock which was lined with stone blocks to improve stability at the well-head. The mixed finds from surrounding ground were of a late date and no direct dating for the well construction was found. The brick vaulting repairs appear to date from the early 19th century onwards, the last phase of capping being c.1920. The only certainty is that the well predates the earliest capping. In fact no evidence was obtained to suggest that the well had existed when the College flourished on the site although it lies within its precincts. There was no substantial building in this area of the site after the demolition of the College buildings which might have warranted the construction of a new well.

Michael Clark November 1995

#### Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank Mr Delaney of W. J. Hemmings and Partners for his assistance and copies the carpark plans; the contractors for their cooperation and assistance on site; Steve Catney, Ian George and Mark Bennet (Archaeology Section Lincolnshire County Council). Mick McDaid assisted with the recording and photography on site. Jane Young, Rick Kemp and Jen Mann (CLAU) kindly identified the pottery, tile and other finds respectively. The report was collated and produced by Jane Frost.

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# Stamford School Well (SSW 95) Context List

# No. Type Description

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1	layer	disturbed topsoil
2	layer	subsoil
3	fill	fill of pit 24, contains 19th century bricks
4	fill	fill of 5
5	cut	shallow foundation for well-head course 20
6	natural	weathered limestone, compact. = 14
7	layer	mortar bed for 26
8	fill	upper fill of trench 29
9	fill	limestone packing for vault 11/12
10	fill	mixed soil backfill to wall 21
11	structure	brick vault voussoirs extrados
12	structure	brick vault voussoirs intrados
13	fill	limestone rubble backfill around vault
14	natural	yellowish-brown stone
15	structure	shaft lining, limestone blocks
16	cut	well shaft cut into weathered limestone 6
17	cut	ledge supporting blocks 15
18	cut	rough well shaft cut through bedrock 19
19	natural	limestone bedrock, below 6
20	structure	conjectural outer well-wall blocks seated on cut 5
21	structure	SW brick closing wall to vault 11/12
22	structure	NE brick closing wall to vault 11/12
23	structure	brick repair of 22
24	cut	contains 23
25	structure	stone block reused in 22, part of 22
26	structure	concrete capping slab
27	layer	loose stone/sandy surface
28	structure	conjectural well-head above 20, based on extent of 5
29	cut	construction trench for 11/12 (not found)
30	structure	NE brick closing wall, SE end. Part of 22

# Stamford School Well (SSW 95) Pottery archive JaneYoung

3, LPM, 2, 0, -, -, CHINA 1, LPM, 4, 0, -, -, CHINA 1, LERTH, 3, 0, FLOWERPOT, -1, LSTON, 1, 0, -, 19/20TH 1, MEDX, 1, 0, -, JUG?, FABRIC INCLUDES QUARTZ + FE; GLZE 2, LERTH, 1, 0, -, FLOWERPOT, -2, BS, 1, 0, -, CHAMBERPOT, -2, BL, 1, 0, -, BUTTERPOT/JAR, 17/18TH 2, GFLOOR, 1, 0, -, -, 2.1CM THICK; DARK OLIVE GREEN GLZE; REDUCED FABRIC;

4, LERTH, 1, 0, -, JAR?, OR BL; 18/19TH 10, LPM, 2, 0, -, -, CHINA 8, LSTON, 1, 0, -, TINY JAR, 19/20TH 8, LPM, 1, 0, -, -, TAN & BLUE BANDED 8, LPM, 1, 0, -, -, EARLY BLACK TRANSFER 8, LPM, 2, 0, -, -, PEARLWARE?

BL	Blackware	PMED
BS	Brown stoneware	PMED
LERTH	Late earthenwares	EMOD
LPM	Early modern or modern	EMOD
LPM	early modern or modern	EMOD
STON	late stonewares	EMOD
MEDX	medieval non local ware	MED

## Appendix 3

# Tile archive Rick Kemp

#### SSW95: TILE TYPES BY CONTEXT AND WEIGHT

Context	Form	Sherds	Weight	Subform	Fabric	Comments
2 4	GPANT BRK	1 1	55 35	-	-	17/18THC. MORTAR OVER BREAK; 19/20THC.

BRK

MEDIEVAL/POST-MEDIEVAL BRICK

GPANT GLAZED PANTILE

# Stamford School Well (SSW 95) Bulk finds archive Jen Mann

#### **Bulk Materials**

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Context	Туре	Count	Comments
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1	CTPS	3	PMED;L17-19;PROB 18C DIS
2	CTPS	1	PMED;L17-18;DIS
3	BOTT	1	MOD;E20;1910-1920;MARTIN COVENTRY BEER WHOLE
8	NAIL	1	-
8	SLAG	1	43GMS TAP
10	CTPS	1	PMED;M17-18;DIS
10	NAIL	1	-
10	SLAG	2	74GMS TAP;65GMS SSL

# Stamford School Well (SSW 95) Contents of site archive

Context sheets 30 Drawn plans Drawn sections Site matrix

Colour Photographs Film no. 95/30 negs. 15A-32A

Black and white Film no. M95/7 negs. 0-15

Architect's plan

Pottery archive list Tile archive list Brick measurements and graph Bulk finds list Bulk finds archive sheets Bulk finds card

Correspondence

Stamford School. Site location showing scheduled area and Fig. 1 position of well. Based upon the 1974 OS 1:2500 map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright. Licence no. AL50424A.

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Fig. 2 Reproduction of John Speed's map of Stamford, surveyed c. 1600. Brazenose College is identified (letter L).



Fig. 3 John Speed's map of Stamford, enlarged, with the modern names of streets and buildings, identifying the work house on the Brazenose site, but . By William Harrod of Stamford, published 1785.



Fig. 4 Survey of the Borough of Stamford by James A. Knipe, 1833. The Brazenose site is shown without buildings.



Fig. 5 Sketch map combining details from the maps of 1600 (Speed) and 1833 (Knipe) showing position of the well in relation to possible location of the college buildings and the town wall (M. Clark).



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Fig. 7 Location of the well in relation to evaluation trenches and the new carpark. Based on the survey by W.J. Hemmings and Partners.



Fig. 8 a and b sections; c plan d reconstructed section through well shaft



- PI. 1. Well location in new carpark; from SW.
- PI. 2. NE repair 23; general view from SW.

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- PI. 3. NE infill repair 23 to wall 22/30 (block 25 in 22 to left); from SW.
- PI. 4. Re-used bricks in end-wall 22/30 (right), backfill bricks 3 to right. From SE.





Pl. 5. Backfill bricks 3 (lower right) behind end-wall 22/30. From E.

Pl. 6. End wall 30/23/22 (lower centre). Backfill 8 (far left). From NE.





Pl. 7. Backfill 8 (upper right). Layer 7 (lower left). From NE.

PI. 8. Layer 7 (upper right); abutment 9 (centre). From SE.





PI. 9. Layer 7 (left); abutment 9 (centre); end-wall 21 (right). From NW.PI. 10. Abutment 9 over extrados; backfill 10 to wall 21. From SW.





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- PI. 11. Broken vaulting intrados 12; mortared springing from truncated stone lining. From SE.
- Pl. 12. Fill 4 to cut/matrix 5. Blue brick in wall 30 (lower right). From NE.





PI. 13. Shaft lining 15 (upper). From E.