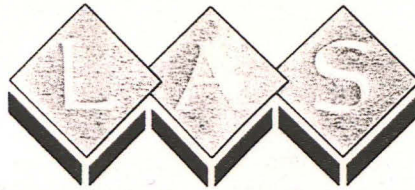


EVENT L13446 96/10  
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# LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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

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**Residential Development  
10a Ugate, Louth**

**NGR : TF 326873  
Site Code : LUG 95  
LCNCC Museum Accn. No. 207.95**

**Archaeological Salvage Recording  
Report**

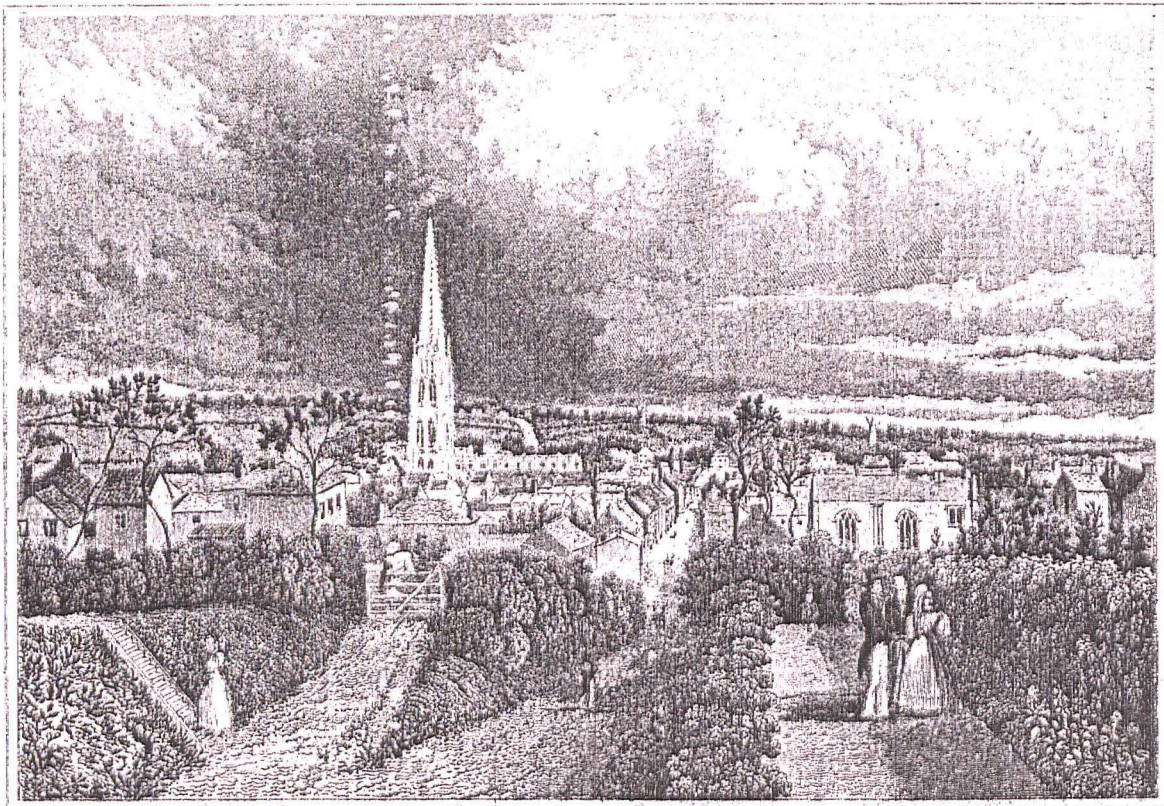
**for**

**Edwin Sharpe Builders**

**July 1996**

**Lincolnshire County Council**  
**Archaeology Section**  
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Frontispiece : Engraving of Louth with St. James Church. Published 1834 by John Saunders of London and Lincoln.

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Fig 2 : Location of extension footings. (Inset A based on O.S 1:2500, Crown Copyright 1976. Reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A). (Inset B based on 1889 O.S. 1:500 for Louth, sheet XLVIII.13.25).

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**Residential Development  
10a Uppgate, Louth  
Archaeological Salvage Recording  
NGR : TF 326873  
Site Code : LUG 95  
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**Summary**

*Salvage excavation and recording was carried out within the footings of a building extension in order to recover human remains discovered during the foundation work. Sealed below a series of medieval to post-medieval yard surfaces, and cut by recent soakaways, was a mixed soil horizon containing a number of human skeletal fragments. These represented at least five individuals, and probably dated to the medieval period. In addition, retrieved from a possible pit were numerous sherds belonging to a 13th century ceramic jug.*

*The discovery of the human remains appears to indicate that a former graveyard of St. James Church (which lies 20m to the north) exists in this part of the town. There is clearly the potential for further developments to disturb burials along the whole block of land south of the church.*

**Introduction**

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned in December 1995 by Edwin Sharpe Builders to carry-out archaeological salvage excavation and recording on a plot of land lying to the north of 10a Uppgate, in the west part of Louth town centre (Figs.1-2). The development comprised the construction of a kitchen extension measuring just under 5m<sup>2</sup>, utilising the north and east elevations of two existing buildings (Figs.2B;3). During the digging of the two main foundation trenches, human remains were encountered. LAS was consequently employed to excavate the lowermost remaining portion of the footings, to record the deposits exposed, and to recover any additional human remains. This work was carried out over a single day in December 1995 by Naomi Field and Mick Clark.

Copies of this report have been sent to Edwin Sharpe Builders, Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and the City and County Museum, Lincoln. The paper archive will be lodged with the museum when the project is completed.

**Physical setting**

Louth is situated at around 30m O.D in the vale of the River Lud, about 25 miles north-east of Lincoln, and just east of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominating geological drift deposits in this area are glacial Boulder Clay.

**Historical Background**

Present evidence suggests the modern market town has Anglo-Saxon origins, and though little has been found of this earlier period, it seems likely that much of it lies



sealed beneath the medieval town, the street layout of which remains virtually intact (Field, 1978).

In terms of its religious buildings, Louth has a complex and somewhat unclear history. It is believed to have possessed an 8th century monastery, as well as an early chapel (St. John's), both of which are unlocated. The earliest parish church appears to have been St. Mary's, which went out of use in the 16th century and was demolished in 1749 (*ibid.*). The site of this church, and its burial ground, lie in the north-west part of the town (Fig.2A). In its place was built St. James', the present parish church. It is suggested that the decay of St. Mary's, and its increasing distance from the town centre, led to the erection of St. James' in the 13th or 14th century. References also exist for a St. Herefrid's church, which may or may not have been on the site of what is now St. James'. The most recent church was St. Trinity, built in 1834.

Today, St. James' Church is bounded on all sides by roads, with only a small area of green land to its north (Fig.2B). At one time, there must presumably have been an associated graveyard. When this became redundant is unclear, though by the early 19th century it certainly did not exist, as recorded on a map of Louth produced in 1808 by John Jackson Bookseller (*ibid.*). Skeletons found in Upgate south of the church hint at where a former graveyard may be situated.

## Results

When LAS arrived at the development site, the extension footings had been largely dug to the necessary width of 0.6-0.7m and depth of 0.70m. The human remains already found by the workmen had been retained in black plastic bin-liners; these included four skulls, so represented at least four individuals. The remainder of the east-west trench was excavated by LAS to the required foundation level (Pl.1), and the trench floors and sections cleaned and recorded. Any additional human remains were retained with those already recovered.

The trench sections exposed the following sequence (Pl.2): hexagonal concrete paving slabs (1) bedded on 0.04m of yellow sand (2), sealing a 0.05m-thick cobbled surface (3), itself bedded on 0.05m of grey-black loam (4). This in turn overlay a 0.06m-thick compact mortar surface (5) bedded on 0.06m of a greyish brown loam with crushed brick rubble (6), whilst below this was second, 0.03m-thick mortar surface (7). All of the above are presumed to represent former yard surfaces, the hexagonal slabs being the present ground level. Though no dating evidence was recovered from any of the deposits, they probably date from the medieval period onwards.

Cut into the above was a modern service trench (8) filled with a silty loam and brick rubble (9), as well as what appears to have been two phases of soakaways (Fig.3; Pl.3). Cuts 12 and 17 probably represented two parts of a single linear soakaway pit, truncated in the centre by a later, more substantially-built brick-lined drain (14). East of the latter, 17 was filled with 13, a greyish silty clay containing brick rubble, whilst to the west of the drain, the pit fill (18) was greenish in colour and contained lumps of chalk and (redeposited) human skeletal remains. The fills of both the



earlier soakaway pit (**13,18**) and the later brick-lined drain (**15,16,22**) produced post-medieval pottery.

Truncated by the modern service trench and soakaways, and sealed by the earliest of the yard surfaces, was an orange-brown silty clay loam containing various human skeletal remains (**10,11**). The majority of the latter were clearly re-deposited, suggesting that the soil had been mixed considerably. However, in four places the bones appeared to be *in situ*. The most convincing of these was in the northern part of the north-south trench, where the ribs, vertebrae and left arm of an individual indicated a probable inhumation (Fig.3A; Pl.6). In addition, exposed in the south part of this trench were a pair of femurs, whilst the east-west trench revealed an articulated femur and tibia, as well as a single tibia. The latter was part hidden under the north-facing baulk so was not removed (Pl.7).

All of the possible *in situ* remains had been covered by no more than a 0.35m depth of the orange brown silty clay loam in which they sat. The latter itself may have been thicker than this, as over much of the trench floor it was not completely removed. Where it was fully excavated, in the north-west corner of the east-west trench, it revealed two further deposits. Though only part-exposed, possible pit **19** appeared to be linear in form, and was filled with a dark grey-brown silty clay (**20**). Recovered from it were numerous fragments belonging to a single 13th century jug (Pls.4-5), whilst discovered adjacent was a fifth human skull (within **10/11**).

Pit **19** was cut into a fairly clean, reddish-orange sandy clay (**21**). This may well represent a natural, geological deposit; it might be glacial till.

Following recording, all recovered human remains were given to Rev. S. Holdaway for re-burial.

### Discussion

A total of five skulls were recovered from the foundation trenches, indicating the presence of at least five individuals. It is not certain, however, which, if any of these, belonged to the possible *in-situ* human remains recorded in the trench. All of the latter were aligned east-west, suggesting they represented christian burials, and though the soil in which they were found produced no artefacts, the fact that it sealed a 13th century pit indicates a date no earlier than the 13th century for the burials.

The proximity of the human remains to St. James' Church (they lie only 20m to its south) suggests that they may well represent a former graveyard for the church. The discovery of the jug in pit **19** indicates that such a graveyard would probably not have existed until the 13th century, and so would suggest that the church itself had not been built prior to this time.

The material which contained the graves probably represents former graveyard soil, with the scattered human bones within it perhaps in part reflecting the periodic disturbance of old burials by the digging of new graves. The relative shallowness of the human remains discovered here might mean that a substantial depth of soil was

removed some time after the graveyard ceased to be used. When this occurred is not certain: the overlying yard surfaces exposed were not closely datable, whilst the map of Louth produced by John Jackson in 1808 (see earlier) tells us only that the graveyard was gone by the early 19th century.

A final point again concerns the above map. It shows no buildings existing in 1808, on, or in, the immediate vicinity of the development site. During the salvage recording, however, a name plate was noticed on the north-east facing elevation of the wall situated immediately north and west of the extension footings (Pls.8-9). The plate reads : "GRAY'S Wall 1820". This tradition of recording the name of the person responsible for the upkeep of a stretch of boundary wall, though noted elsewhere in Louth, does not seem to be a particularly common occurrence. More importantly, however, its presence indicates that whilst in 1808 no buildings existed here, by 1820, construction work in this area had probably begun.

### **Conclusion**

The discovery of the burials suggests that a former medieval graveyard of St. James' Church may well have existed in this part of the town, dating no earlier than to the 13th century. It clearly indicates the potential for additional graves to be exposed should further ground disturbance take place along any part of that block of land which lies south of the church. Such a possibility should be taken into account whenever new developments are proposed in this area.

### **Acknowledgements**

Lindsey Archaeological Services gratefully acknowledge both Edwin Sharpe builders and Mrs Cutting of 10a Ugate for their help and cooperation during the work.

C. Taylor

July 1996

### **References**

Field, N., 1978. *Louth : The Hidden Town*. North Lincs Archaeological Unit, Lincoln.



## APPENDIX 1 : LUG 95 : SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS

CONT	TYPE	RELATIONSHIPS	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PLATES
1	layer	above 2	modern paving slabs	?19/20 C	1-3
2	layer	above 3, 13,15,16,18	sand bedding for 1	?19/20 C	1-3
3	layer	above 4; cut by 8,12,17	cobbled surface	?post-med	2
4	layer	above 5; cut by 8,12,17	soil bedding for 3	?post-med	2
5	layer	above 6; cut by 8,12,17	mortary surface	?post-med	2
6	layer	above 7; cut by 8,12,17	rubbly soil bedding for 5	?post-med	2
7	layer	above 10,11; cut by 8,12,17	mortary surface	?post-med	2
8	cut	contains 9; cuts 3-7;10-11	modern service trench	?20 C	
9	fill	within 8	fill of service trench 8	?20 C	
10	layer	below 7; cut by 8	?former graveyard soil	?medieval	
11	layer	below 7; above 21; cut by 12,14,17	as 11	?medieval	2-5; 6-7
12	cut	contains 13; cuts 3-7,11; cut by 14	recent soakaway; as 17	?post-med	3
13	fill	within 12; below 2	fill of recent soakaway 12	?post-med	3
14	cut	contains 15-16,21; cuts 13,18; below 2	modern soakaway	?post-med	3-4;7
15	fill	within 14; abutts 16	fill of soakaway 14	?post-med	3-4;7
16	fill	within 14; butted by 16	bricks of soakaway 14	?post-med	3-4;7
17	cut	contains 18; cuts 3-7,11,20	recent soakaway; as 12	?post-med	3-4;7
18	fill	within 17; below 2	fill of recent soakaway 17	?post-med	3-4;7
19	cut	contains 20	?pit/gully	13 C	3-4;7
20	fill	within 19; cut by 17	fill of ?pit/gully	13 C	3-4;7
21	layer	below 11; cut by 19	?natural sandy clay	?	3-4;7
22	fill	within 14	fill of soakaway 14	?post-med	3-4;7



## Appendix 2 : Contents of Site Archive

1. Report

2. Context summary list (x22)

3. Photographs (and list, with colour negatives):

LAS film numbers 95/50, 96/6

4. Site Notes

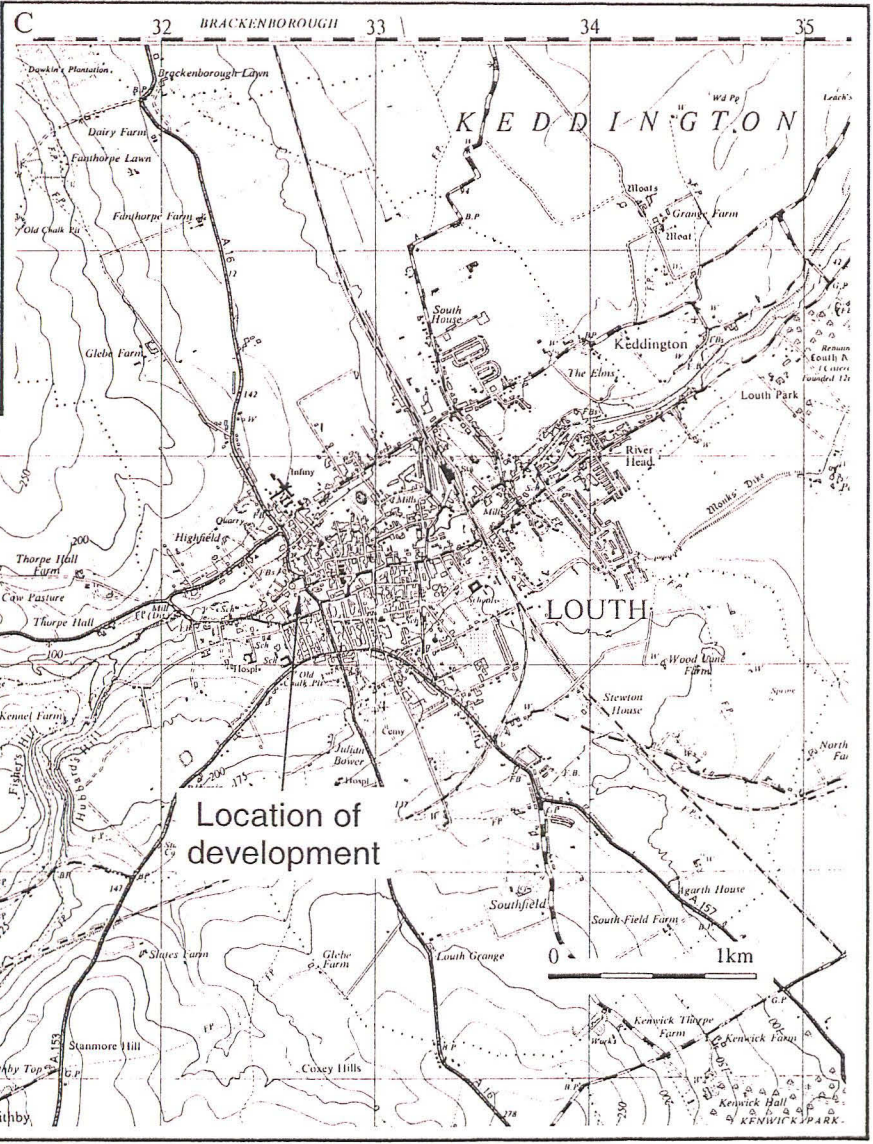
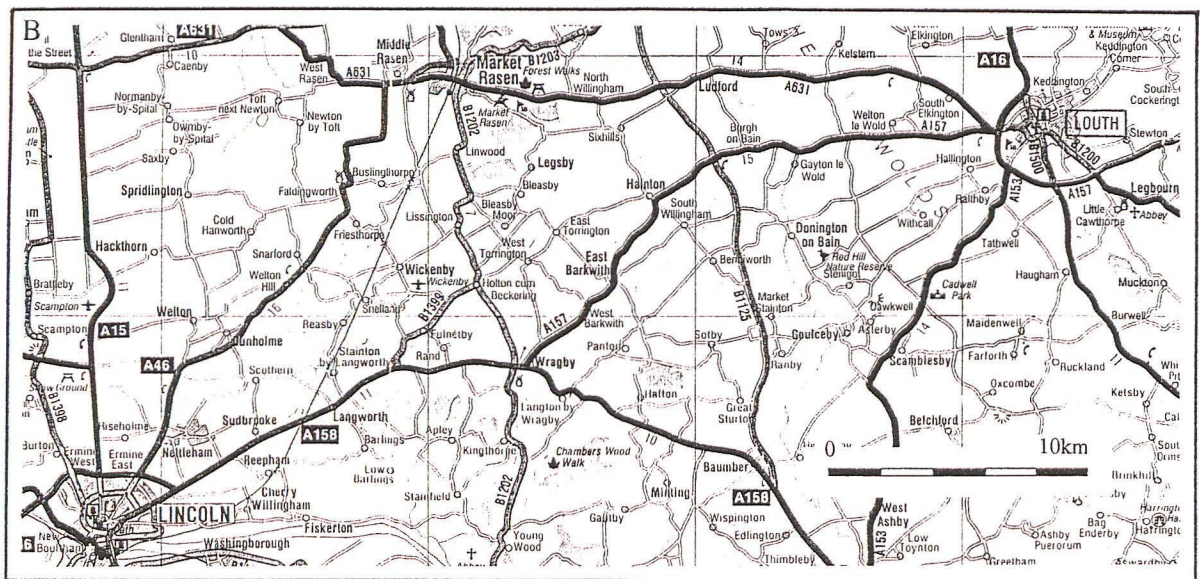


Fig 1 : Site location. (Inset C based on O.S. 1:25,000, TF 38. Crown Copyright 1953. Reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).



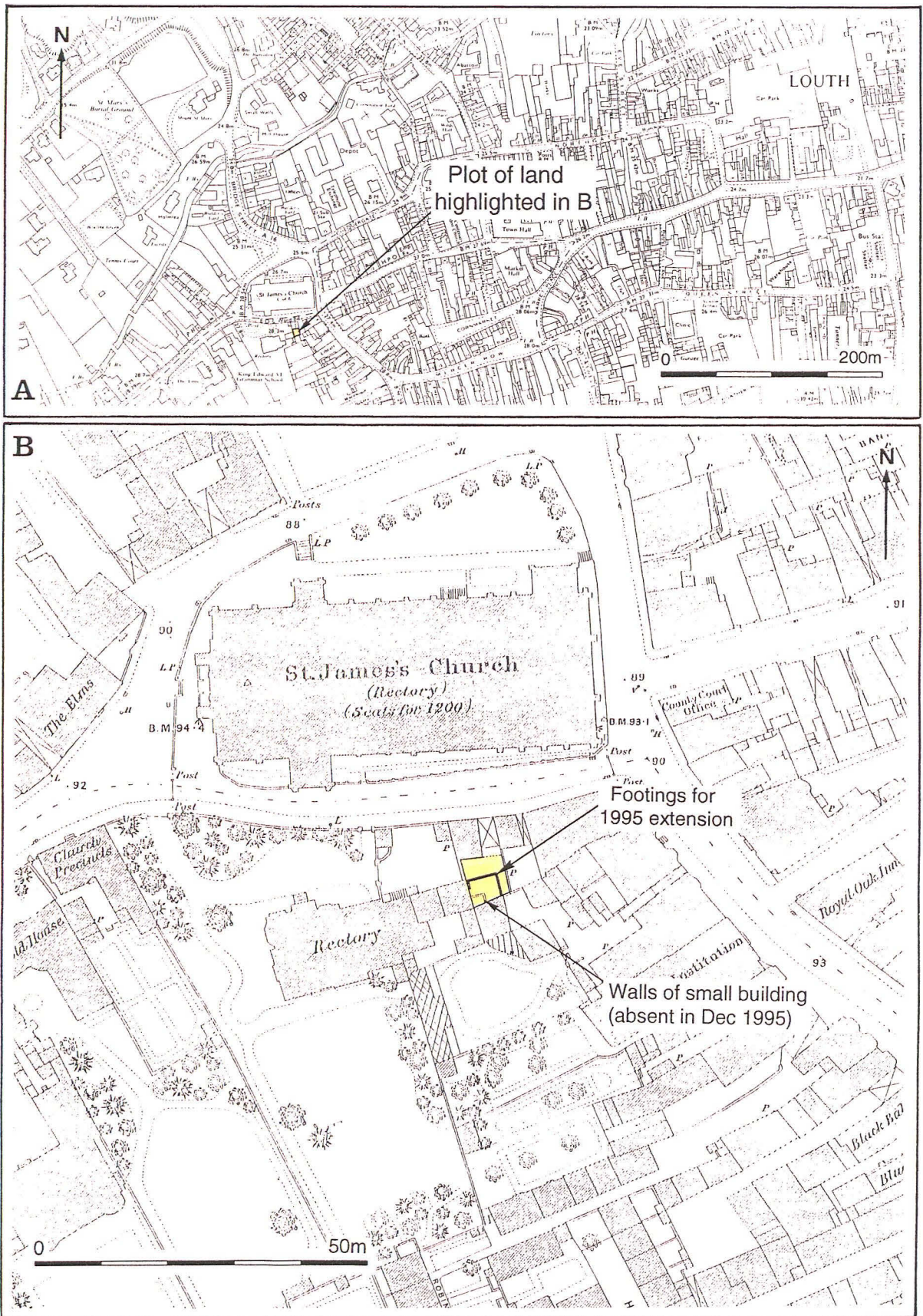


Fig 2 : Location of extension footings. (Inset A based on O.S 1:2500, Crown Copyright 1976. Reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A). (Inset B based on 1889 O.S. 1:500 for Louth, sheet XLVIII.13.25).



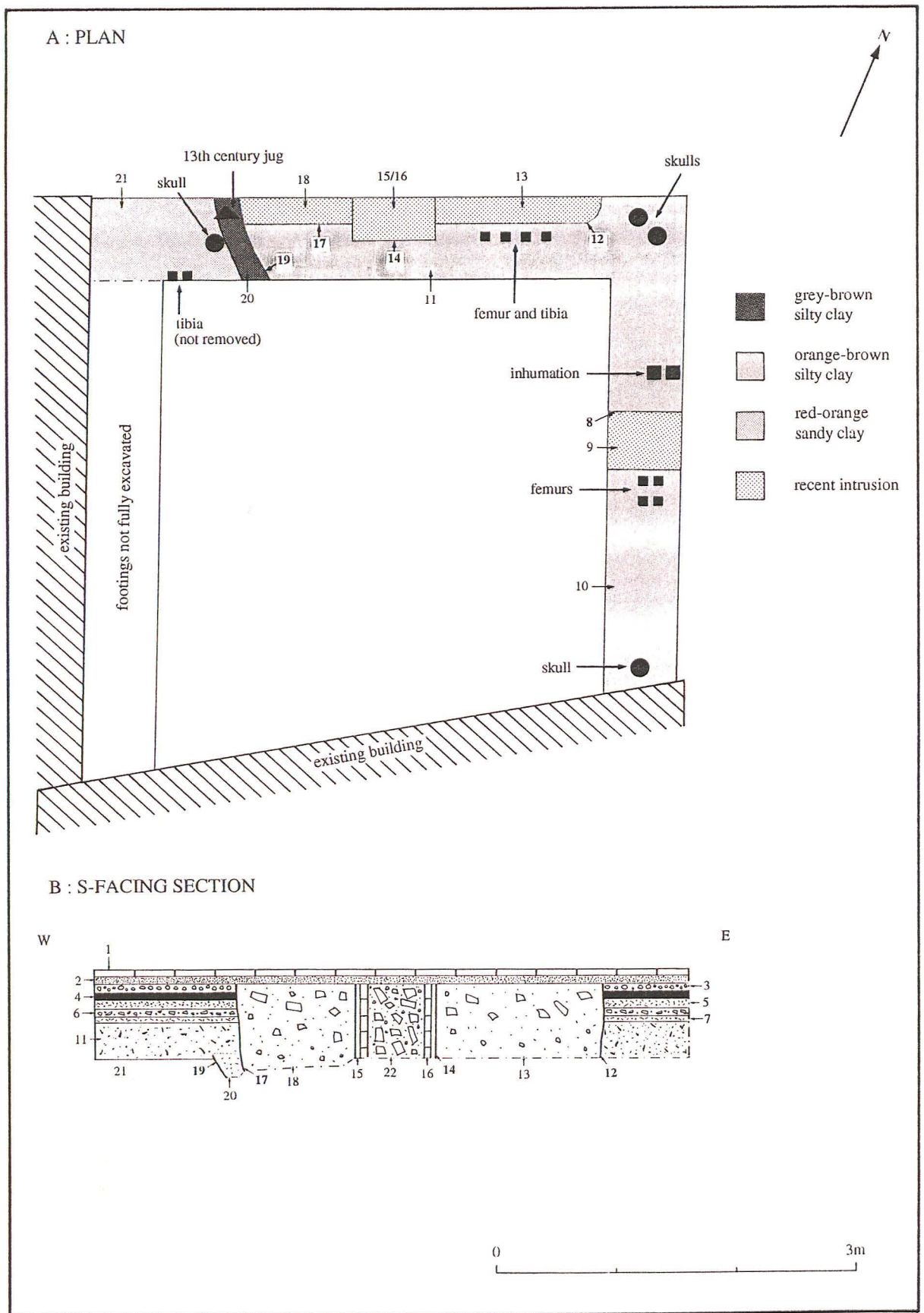


Fig 3 : Plan and section of extension footings with archaeological features exposed.





PI.1 General view of site, excavating remainder of footings, looking SE.

PI.2 Detail of W-facing section of N-S foundation trench, looking NE.







Pl.3 Recent soakaways 12/17 and 14, looking NW. Scales 2m.





PI.4 Location of 13th century jug within feature 19. Looking NE. Scale 2m.



PI.5 Detail of reconstructed 13th century jug from feature 19.





PI.6 Detail of inhumation exposed in N half of N-S foundation trench, looking SE. Scale 2m.

PI.7 Detail of feature 19, and of tibia exposed under N-facing baulk of E-W foundation trench. Scale 2m.







PI.8 General view of existing NE-facing wall elevation with 19th century name plate, looking SW.

PI.9 Detail of 19th century name plate reading "GRAY'S Wall 1820", looking SW.

