

98/15

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING BRIEF AND SURVEY
BOSTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

Site Code: BGS98
LCNCC Acc No. 156.98
NGR TF 3301 4374

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Report prepared for Boston Grammar School
by James Snee.
September 1998

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Fig. 1 1:10,000 General site location

Fig. 2 Location of wall and monitored section

Fig. 3 South facing elevation of wall

Fig. 4 West facing section through wall

Fig. 5 West facing section through wall

Summary

- * *An archaeological recording brief took place in advance of, and during, the dismantling and reconstruction of a wall section forming the boundary between Boston Grammar School and Greyfriars Lane.*
- * *The results of the work confirm that the wall structure incorporated a significant quantity of reused stonework and brick; probably deriving from the Franciscan friary and from nearby Hussey Tower*
- * *A large number of pieces of worked stone were recovered from the wall during the dismantling process. All of these were recorded and some pieces have been retained by the Grammar School for long-term preservation*

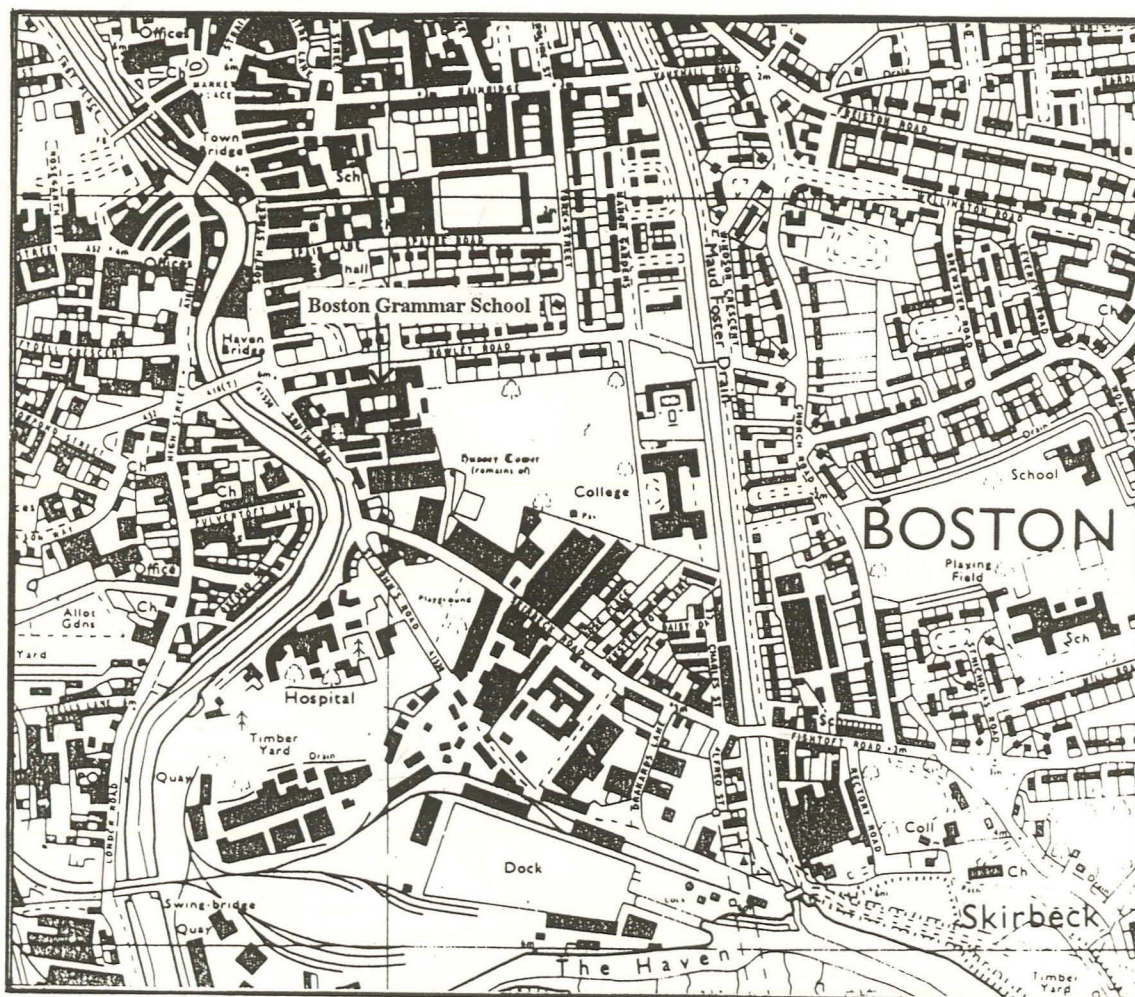
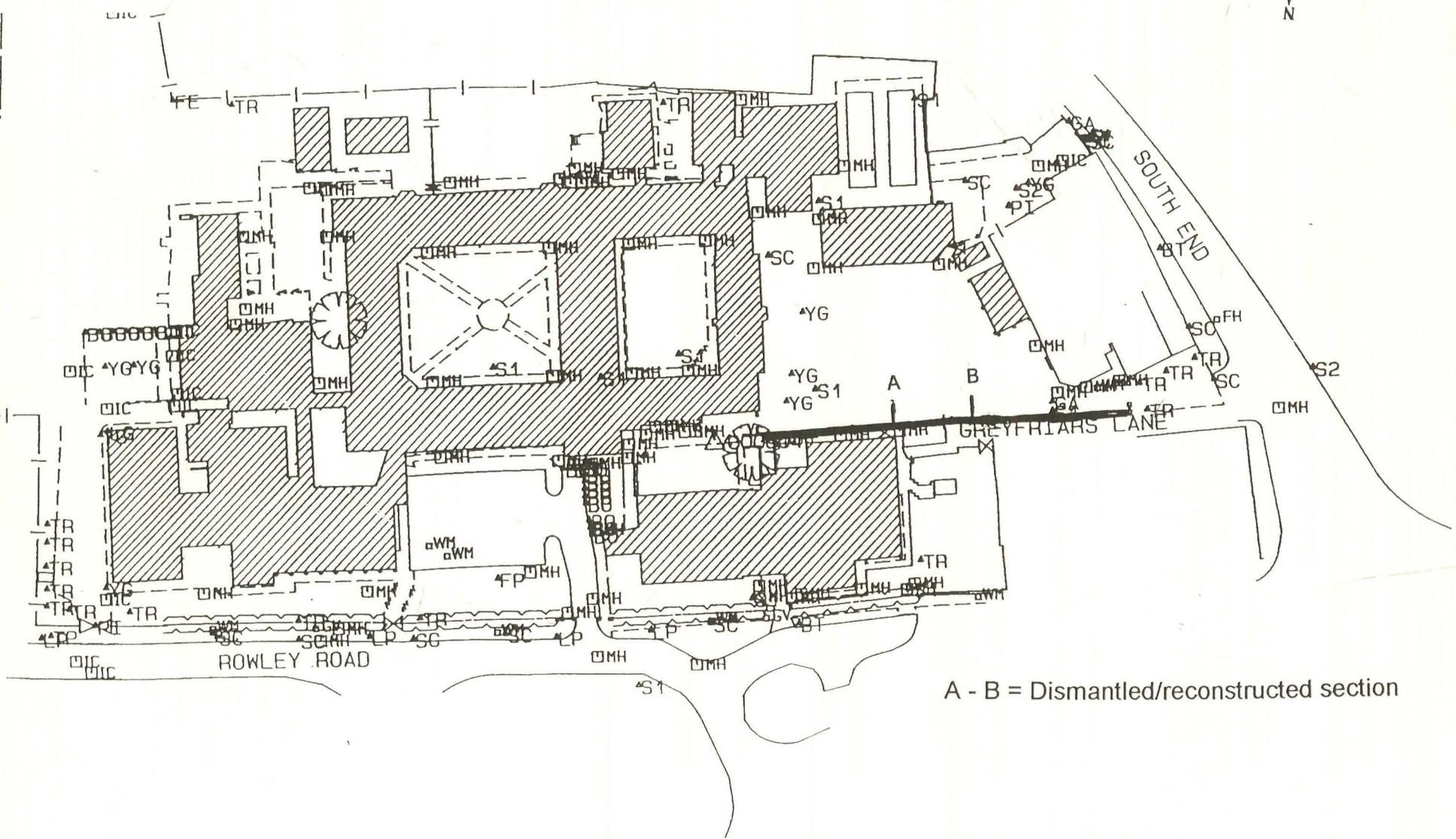


Fig. 1 1: 10,000 general site location

Fig. 2 Location of wall and monitored section



A - B = Dismantled/reconstructed section



1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were asked by Boston Grammar school to undertake a programme of observation and recording during repairs to a wall which separates the Grammar School from Greyfriars Lane. The work was carried out prior to, and during, the reconstruction of a 14.5m length of the wall.

This report documents the dismantling procedure and includes elevation and section drawings that were made in advance of the works. Copies have been/will be deposited with Boston Grammar School, the Boston and District Community Archaeologist, the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record, the Borough Council, and the Lincolnshire Archives Office.

2.0 Location and description

Boston is approximately 45km south-east of Lincoln in the fens of south Lincolnshire. The Grammar School is on the south-east side of the town between the River Witham and the Maud Foster Drain on land approximately 5.0m OD. Access to the school is via South End.

The north-west boundary of the school complex is Greyfriars Lane. This is so-named after the Franciscan friary which occupied the site from the 13th century to the Dissolution under Henry VIII.

The wall forming the subject of this report is of mixed construction and incorporates a blend of re-used (often worked) limestone and reclaimed brick. Whilst the former almost certainly derived from the ruins of the friary, the latter may have been robbed from nearby Hussey Tower.

Prior to the start of this project the wall was in a poor and dangerous state, and in need of urgent repair.

3.0 Archaeological and historical background

Boston Grammar School dates from 1567. The oldest surviving structure (the current library) is of red brick symmetrical build with a middle-bay window. Additions to the north and south took place in 1850 and 1856 and there have been further, less inspiring, alterations in the present century (Pevsner and Harris 1988, 168).

Like all prosperous medieval towns, Boston attracted the settlement of friars: the proximity of the Greyfriars or Franciscans is indicated by Greyfriars Lane itself, which provides access to Boston Grammar School from South End. The date of the foundation of the friary is uncertain, though the house was built before 1268, when one Luke de Batenturt complained that the wine and other goods which he had deposited in the church had been removed (Victoria County History 2, 215).

In 1300 there were approximately thirty friars; 35 in 1328 when Edward III gave a mere 11s 4d to them. In 1322 William and Robert de Masham gave the house a messuage and half an acre of land for the enlargement of their dwelling-place, and additional grants of land were received from John le Pytehede in 1348. The friary was in the custody of the monastery at York.

Following the Dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, the friary site was purchased by the town in 1545: the purchase was subject to the keeping in repair 40 ft of the sea-dyke, and 20 ft on 'le frontage' (*ibid.*). The house appears to have survived little more than one hundred years because in 1652 it was demolished (Boston Corporation Records). It is not entirely surprising therefore to find that the friary is not depicted on the earliest detailed map of Boston; that of 1741 by Robert Hall. Isolated buildings are shown to the north of the Grammar School which may have been the remains of (or outbuildings to) the friary, and it is clear that, prior to 1741, the site of the monument was still known as lands belonging to it were sold to Richard Fydell in 1766 (Boston Corporation Records).

Although the general area of the friary has been identified in the broadest sense, piecemeal observations and rescue-type excavations have thus far failed to attach functional labels to the few structural components which have been sampled. Building works within the school complex and uncontrolled excavations at Rowley Road have shown that an associated cemetery was extensive, and that the Grammar School buildings contain reused stonework.

The enclosure in which the Grammar School is situated was called the Mart Yard, and it was here that the annual fair or mart was formally held. The mart has a long history in the town in general but it was not until 1590 that it moved to the Hall-Garth (now the Mart Yard). At this time, shops were erected and were rented out for the fair. This fair continued in the Mart Yard until 1742, although the gate house was removed in 1726, and in 1727 it was ordered that "the Mart Yard should be enclosed in front with a handsome brick wall, having a handsome pair of gates". The last shops in the Yard were pulled down 1758, and in 1827 the front wall was pulled down and a house for the master of the Grammar School was then built.

The current east - west wall at the north end of the Grammar school playground is of mixed stone and brick construction. Unquantified observations suggest a construction date in the 18th or 19th century.

4.0 Methodology

The archaeological programme was based on a brief issued by the Community Archaeologist and was carried out in three phases:

1. Prior to dismantling, the wall was photographed in sections, maintaining a fixed distance (c. 5m) between each wall face and the lens of the camera.
2. Both wall faces were drawn in detail at a scale of 1:10.

3. During the dismantling process (which was carefully executed using hand tools), an intermittent watching brief took place. Photographs were taken at all stages of the work, and two sections through the wall itself were drawn to scale. A record was made of all worked stone fragments recovered, incorporating photographs and scale drawings. Other related finds were also recorded.

The archaeological work was carried out intermittently by Mr J Albone and the writer between the June 12 and August 15, 1998.

5.0 Results (See Fig.'s 3 - 5 and photographs 1 - 11)

Whilst the 14.5m wall faces were being drawn, it became clear that there had been several phases of rebuilding and patching, using a variety of materials; mainly brick and stone, but also incorporating fragments of tile.

The limestone element, which was predominantly at the base of the wall (extending in places approximately half way up it), was almost certainly derived from an earlier stone building. As the wall was dismantled a large number of worked and unworked fragments were recovered. These comprised a mixture of ashlar blocks, mouldings (mostly chamfer mouldings) with other individual items such as a hood moulding, a screw-back and a possible corbel from a vaulted ceiling. These elements suggested that the stone was from the Franciscan friary.

There was significantly less brick (fragment) inclusion within the mortar at the base of the wall (ie the stonework area) than was noted higher up, suggesting that the stone base was earlier than the brickwork. Within the fabric towards the base of the wall, a piece of bottle glass and a single pot sherd were recovered. These artefacts date the construction of this section to the later 18th century.

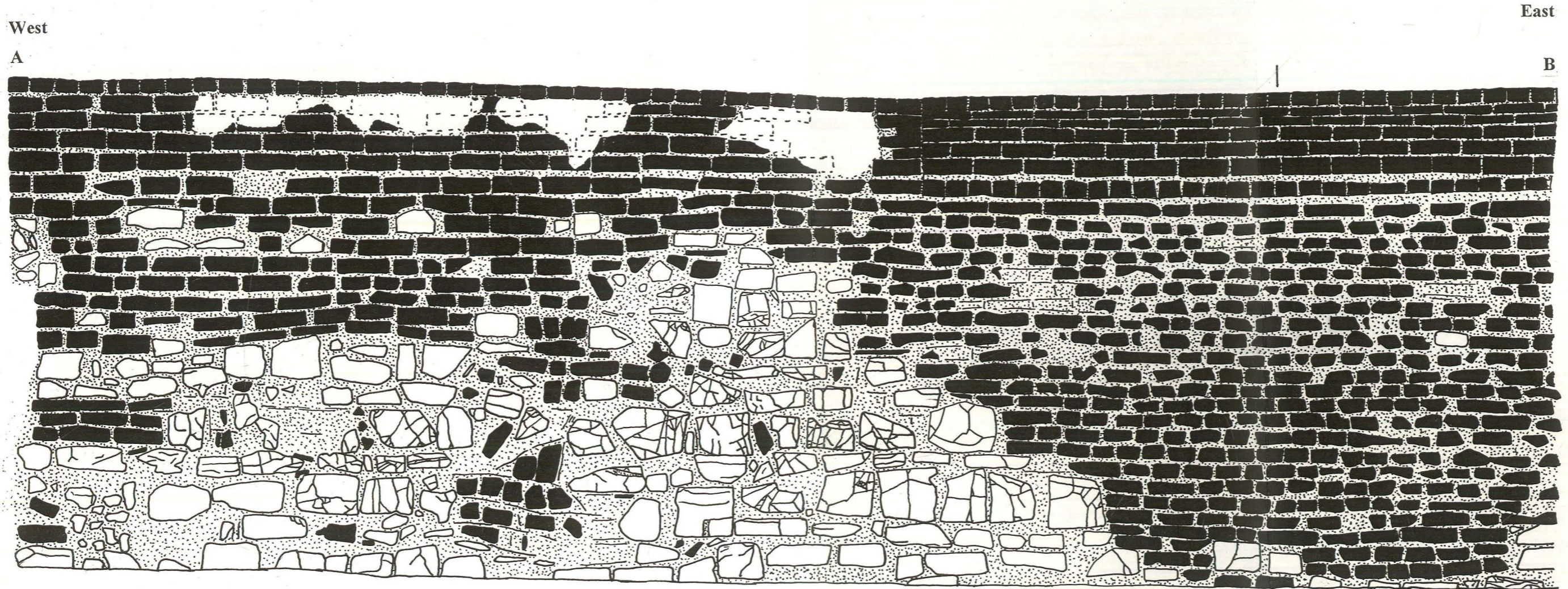
The brickwork element was built in various styles, and with several different brick sizes. Some of these were similar in size, shape and texture to those at nearby Hussey Tower, and it is possible that this also was a source of raw material. One brick incorporated the impression of a paw print.

Occasional fragments of tile were incorporated within the upper wall structure. Some of these appeared to have been of relatively recent origin, although others were deeply embedded and were significantly older (possibly late medieval).

The mortar bonding the wall structure was predominantly a course lime mix with occasional inclusions of charcoal and shell. In some areas, where the wall had been repaired, modern cement was used, particularly on the north face (where an electricity sub-station enclosure had disturbed the wall). In this location some areas were completely smeared with ugly grey cement or were crudely patched with engineering bricks.

To the north of the wall, buried beneath Greyfriars Lane and the electricity sub-station compound, were two discrete pieces of stonework. When the wall was dismantled to the level of the playground to the south, these pieces were exposed in section. Also,

Fig.3 South facing elevation of wall, scale 1:20.



Key:




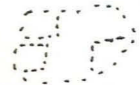
-  Stone
-  Brick
-  Mortar
-  Area obscured by vegetation

Fig.4

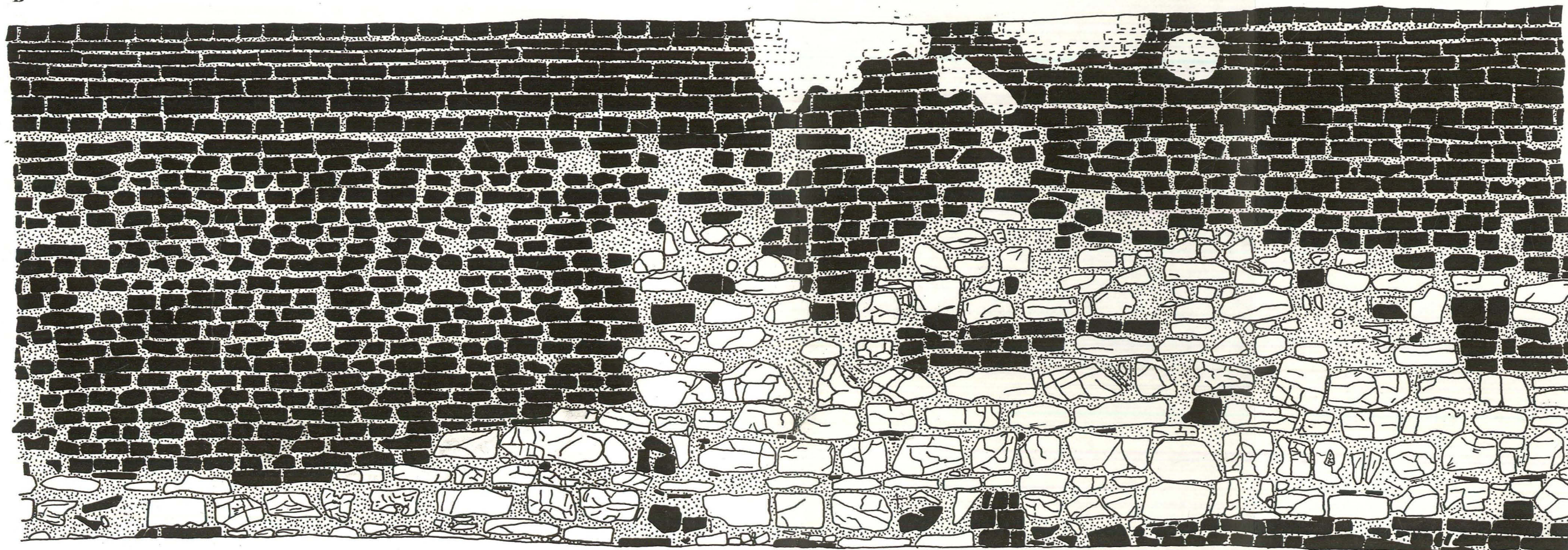
Fig.3 South facing elevation of wall, scale 1:20.

West

East

B

C



Key:



Stone



Brick



Mortar



Area obscured
by vegetation

Fig.5

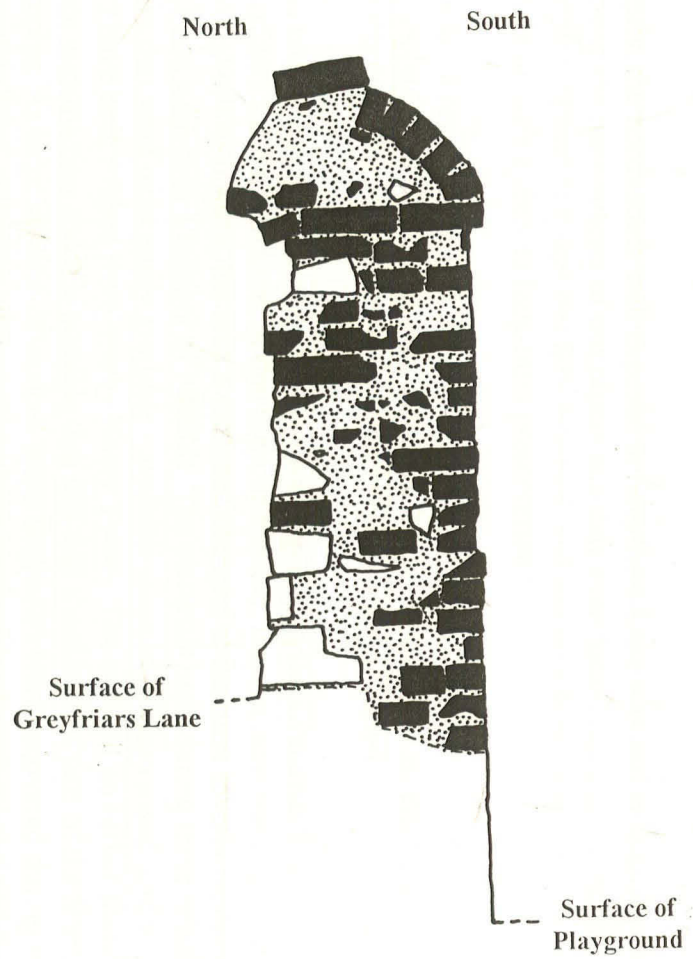


Fig. 4 (scale = 1:20)

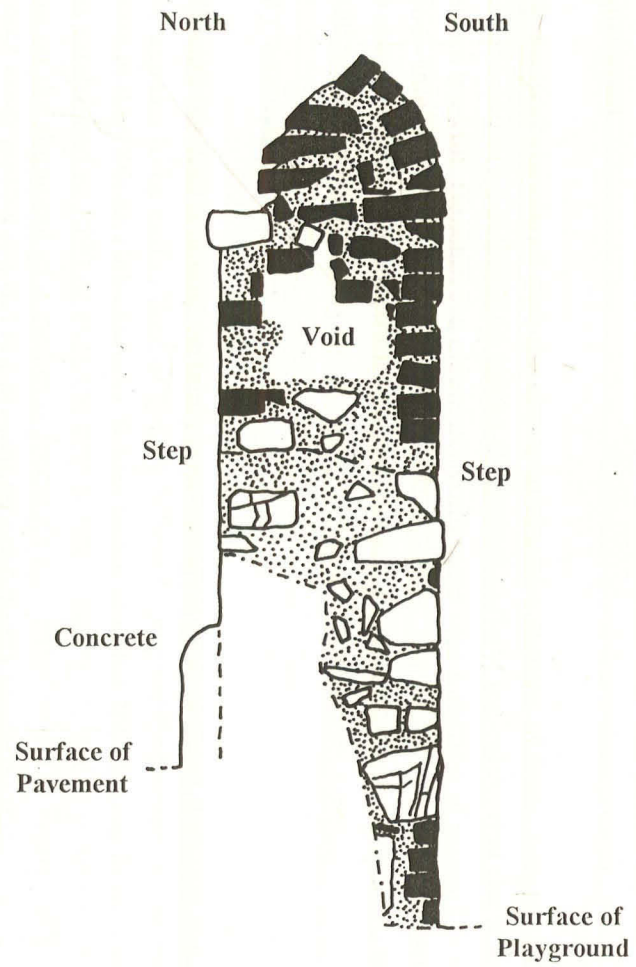


Fig. 5 (scale = 1:20)

beneath Greyfriars Lane was at least two courses of a wall that appeared to be orientated north-south. It was cut by the east-west wall (ie the primary subject of this report), which suggests an earlier date for its construction. When machining was undertaken to reduce the level of Greyfriars Lane, the wall was purposely left undisturbed.

Soil removal associated with the above produced a number of finds, ranging from 19th and 20th century potsherds to pieces of modern cutlery; indicating that the soil was a modern backfill. Beneath the electricity compound was a section of mixed brick and stone - interpreted as a floor surface or foundation. The masonry had been disturbed by the construction of the electricity compound and its relationship with the two walls could not be established.

6.0 Conclusions

Although the wall is almost certainly post-medieval (and of more than one build) it now appears to be earlier than originally believed (unquantified observations suggested a date in the 18th or 19th century). It may relate to either the original Mart Yard which was established in 1590 or even the first School building. It is also possible that it was built on the alignment of a medieval precursor associated with the Friary, although the limited work carried out did not present an opportunity to clarify this.

The amount of worked stone recovered from the wall was more than expected, and the state of preservation was very good. The architectural elements were all re-used and it is assumed that these originated from the medieval friary (it is noteworthy that a number of buildings in Boston incorporate limestone mouldings of a similar style, possibly even from the same source). A small number of architectural elements, such as the hood moulding and the screwbacks, were complete and have the potential to reconstruct aspects of the style and construction of the friary buildings.

Clearly, the north-south wall exposed in Greyfriars Lane was earlier than the wall forming the main subject of this report and may even have been part of the friary complex. However it was not fully exposed, and has now been covered with sand and polythene with a view to long-term preservation.

Structural remains exposed in the electricity compound could not be dated. They were incomplete; possibly having been disturbed by the footings for an electricity transformer. The remaining section was left in situ and reburied.

This project has demonstrated that the wall separating the Grammar School from Greyfriars Lane has existed, in one form or another, from at least the 16th century. Throughout its history, the area it enclosed changed in function several times and the wall was subject to a number of rebuilds. The materials used during these rebuilds were those that were most easily available - available stonework was reused, and brickwork may have been robbed from nearby Hussy Tower. The wall cut an earlier foundation of stone construction and it is possible that this was a remnant of part of the friary complex. As large number of worked stone fragments were recovered during the recording brief, and many of these have been retained by the school and will be available for future study.

7.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to express warm thanks to the commissioning clients, Boston Grammar School; in particular, the School Bursar, Mr L Rich. Thanks are also expressed to the building contractors, Henton & Son for their assistance and co-operation throughout the project

8.0 Site Archive

All of the retained stonework has been stored at the Grammar School and is available for further study. The remaining archive (paper and object) has been transferred to Lincoln City and County Museum. Access may be granted by quoting the site accession number, 156.98.

9.0 References

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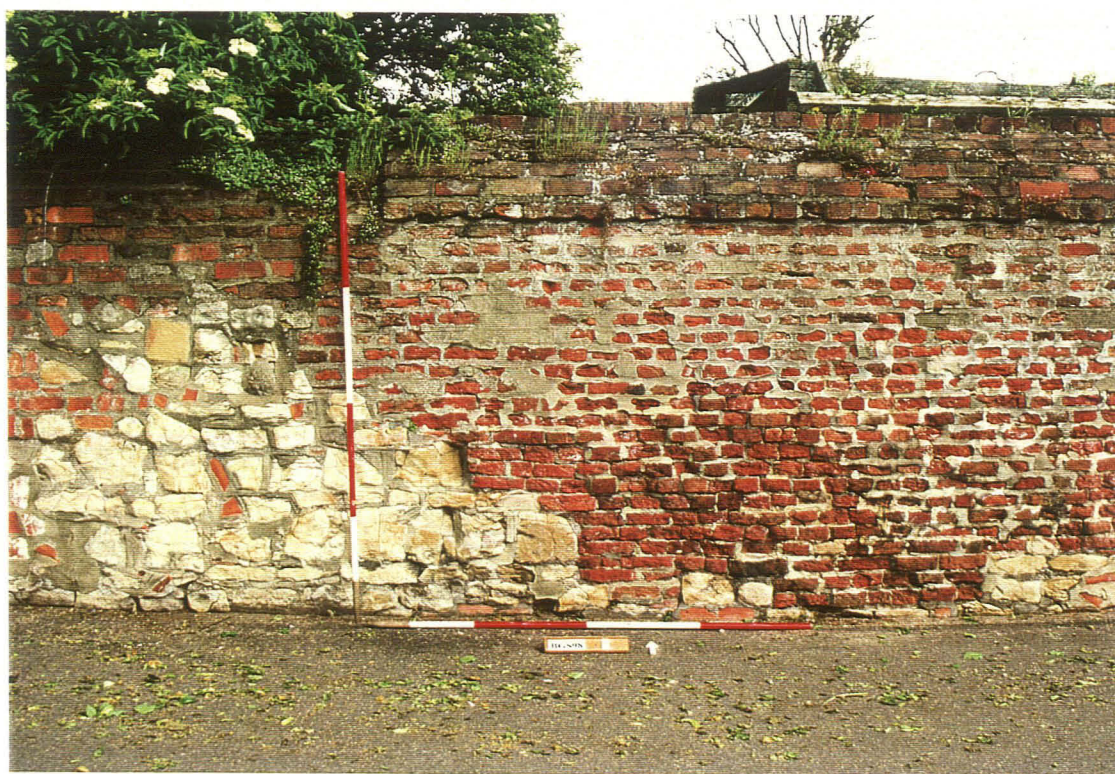
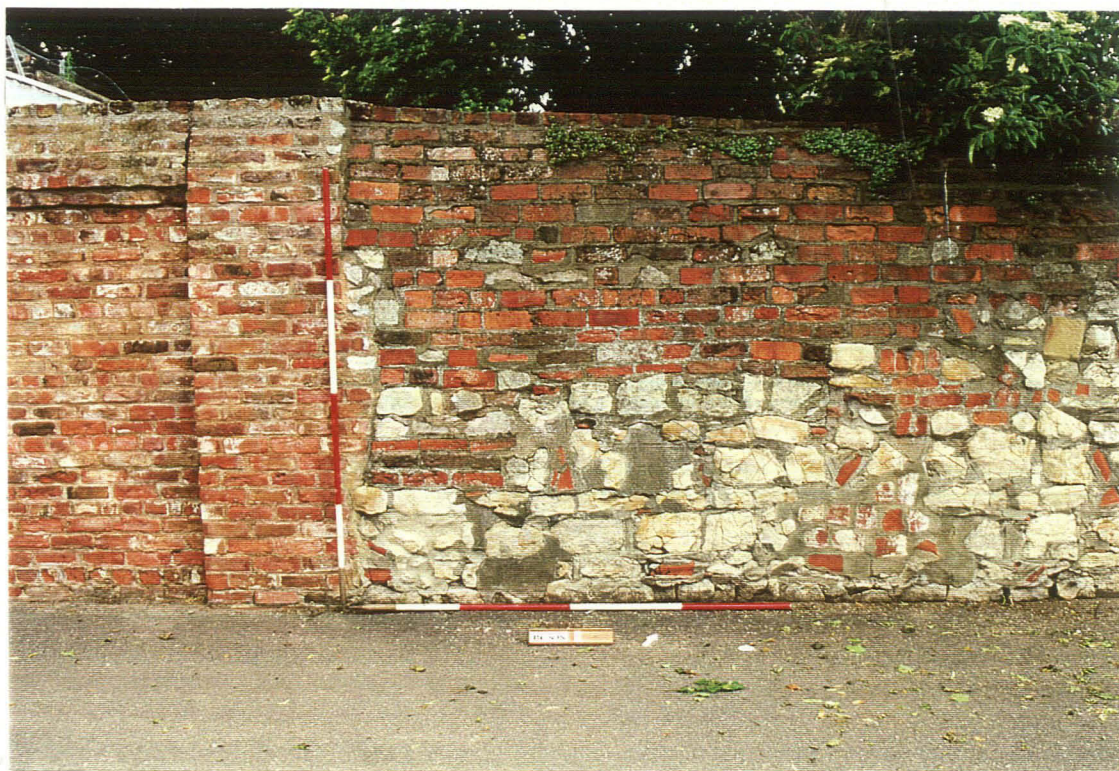
10.1 Appendix 1 - Summary of worked stone (compiled by J Snee)

| Number | Type | Comments |
|--------|-----------------------|----------|
| 1 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 2 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 3 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 4 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 5 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 6 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 7 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 8 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 9 | Hood moulding | |
| 10 | Worked fragment | |
| 11 | Ashlar block | |
| 12 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 13 | Sill/Stringer(?) | |
| 14 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 15 | Screwback | |
| 16 | Worked fragment | |
| 17 | Worked fragment | |
| 18 | Worked fragment | |
| 19 | Worked fragment | |
| 20 | Worked fragment | |
| 21 | Worked fragment | |
| 22 | Worked fragment | |
| 23 | Corbel | |
| 24 | Worked fragment | |
| 25 | Worked fragment | |
| 26 | Worked fragment | |
| 27 | Worked fragment | |
| 28 | Worked fragment | |
| 29 | Worked fragment | |
| 30 | Worked fragment | |
| 31 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 32 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 33 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 34 | Worked fragment | |
| 35 | Worked fragment | |
| 36 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 37 | Sill(?)/Screwback(?) | |
| 38 | Ashlar block | |
| 39 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 40 | Ashlar block | |
| 41 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 42 | Chamfer moulding | |

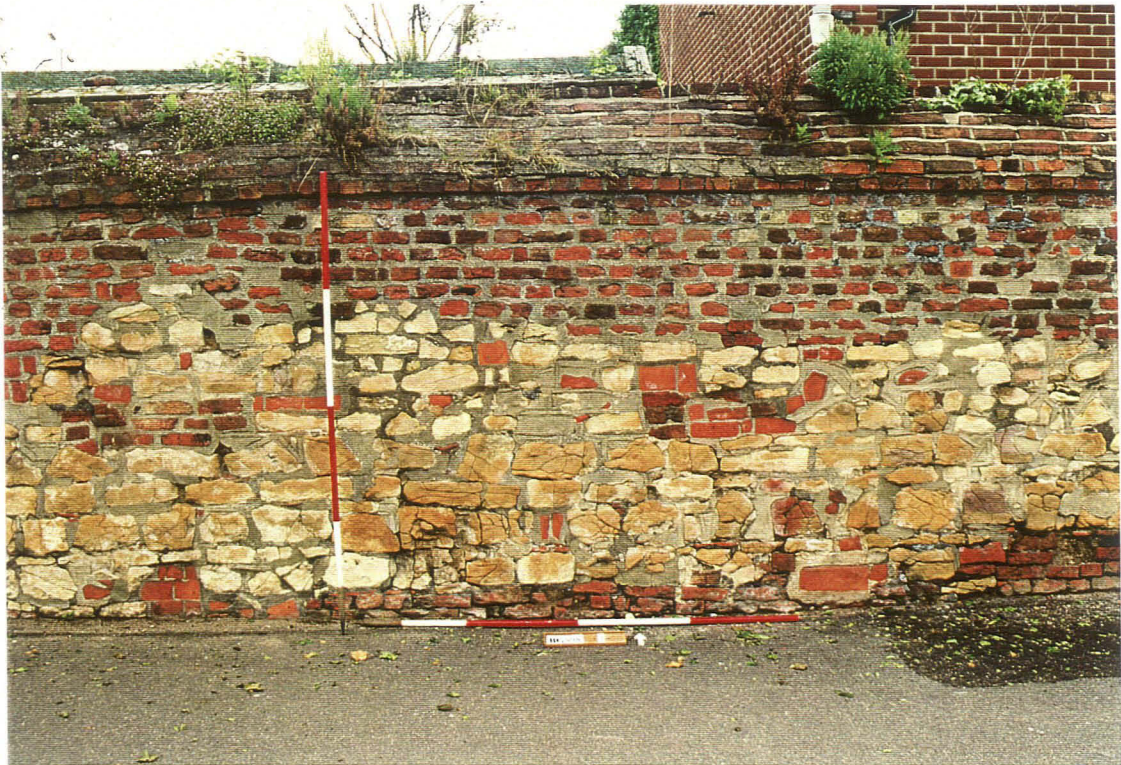
| | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 43 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 44 | Decorative moulding | |
| 45 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 46 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 47 | Fragment | |
| 48 | Fragment | |
| 49 | Fragment | |
| 50 | Fragment | |
| 51 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 52 | Fragment/Screwback(?) | |
| 53 | Fragment | |
| 54 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 55 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 56 | Fragment | |
| 57 | Fragment | |
| 58 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 59 | Ashlar block | |
| 60 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 61 | Fragment | |
| 62 | Ashlar block | |
| 63 | Fragment | |
| 64 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 65 | Ashlar block | |
| 66 | Ashlar block | Incised line on 2 faces |
| 67 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 68 | Fragment | |
| 69 | Ashlar block | |
| 70 | Fragment | |
| 71 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 72 | Ashlar block | |
| 73 | Ashlar block | |
| 74 | Ashlar block | |
| 75 | Fragment/Moulding(?) | |
| 76 | Ashlar block/Quoin(?) | |
| 77 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 78 | Ashlar block | |
| 79 | Ashlar block | |
| 80 | Ashlar block | Curved |
| 81 | Fragment | |
| 82 | Ashlar block | |
| 83 | Ashlar block | |
| 84 | Ashlar block | |
| 85 | Ashlar block | |
| 86 | Ashlar block | |
| 87 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 88 | Ashlar block | |
| 89 | Chamfer moulding | Unfinished(?) |
| 90 | Chamfer moulding | |
| 91 | Ashlar block | |

- 92 Chamfer moulding
- 93 Ashlar block
- 94 Ashlar block
- 95 Chamfer moulding
- 96 Ashlar block
- 97 Shaped Slab
- 98 Window(?) moulding

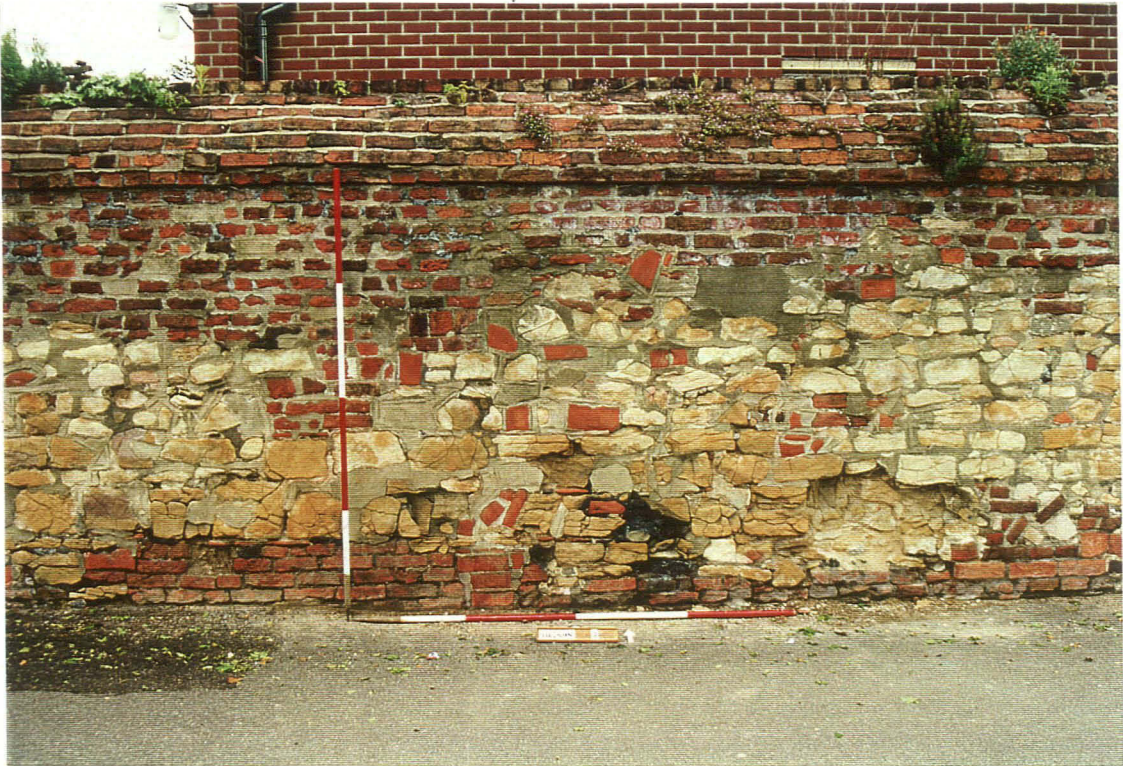
Appendix 2 Colour photographs



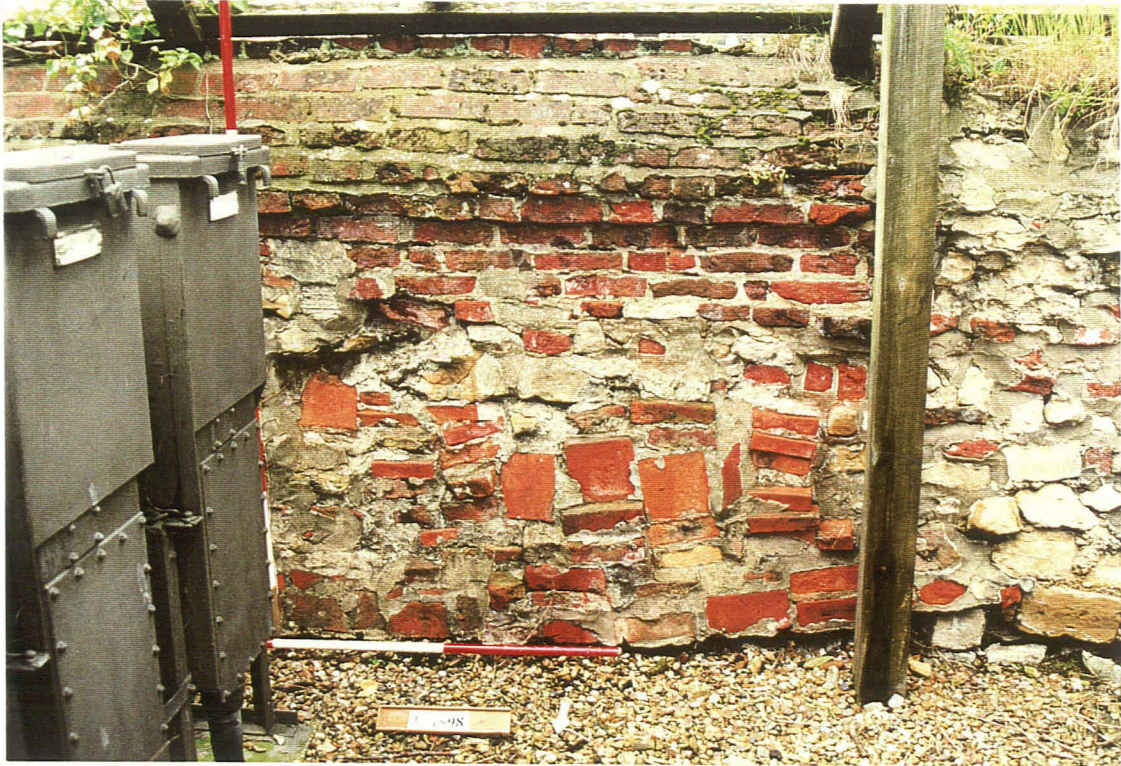
P.1 and P.2 South facing elevation of wall, showing mixed stone and brickwork, looking north.



P.3 and P.4 South facing elevation of wall, showing mixed stone and brickwork, looking north.



P.5 South facing elevation of wall, showing mixed stone and brickwork, looking north.



P.6 Area of north face of wall, showing modern disturbance and repairs, looking south.



P.7 Working shot, showing dismantling of wall, looking east.



P.8 West facing section through wall, looking east.



P.9 Detail of south face of wall, showing brick with paw print, looking north.



P.10 Hood moulding, worked stone number 9.



P.11 Screwback (left) worked stone number 15, Chamfer moulding (right) worked stone number 2.

Appendix 3

Boston Grammar School: Post-Roman pottery and tile

By J Young.

Tile

PNR x1 med./late med.; may have been split as half-tile; retention recommended.

Pottery

x1 fragment in wall fabric; Med.; x1 jug sherd, reduced fired quartz fabric, reduced green glaze; 13th - 15th century.

| Code No. | Type | Description |
|----------|-----------------------|---|
| TGE x2 | ?Albarells BL/W | stripes and wavy decoration; 18th century |
| TGE x1 | Jar/Albarells BL/W | stripes; rim, 18th century |
| LPM x1 | ?? | plain white 19th century |
| BS x1 | ?Jar | 18th/19th century |
| STSL x1 | Dish; press mould rim | combed/feather decorated; 18th century |
| LPM x1 | Cup | painted; under-glazed decoration poss. late 18th century or early - middle 19th century |

Comment

Most of the material appears to date to the 18th century, although two vessels probably date to the first half of the 19th century. One residual medieval sherd from wall fabric probably associated with occupation at the Franciscan friary.

Appendix 4

Boston Grammar School: Identification of glass

By J Mann.

Four unstratified fragments of glass were submitted for identification. The fragments were recovered during a recording brief on a post-medieval wall separating Boston Grammar School from Greyfriars Lane.

x1 bottle fragment (base): late 18th century

x1 clear fragment: probably 19th century

x1 brown fragment: late 19th century or later

x1 unidentified

