

Historic Building Survey

Of

OUTBUILDINGS AT OLD MATFORD, WONFORD ROAD, EXETER

By R.W. Parker

For Tony Orchard and Deborah Clark



**RICHARD PARKER
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING & INTERPRETATION**

11 Toronto Road, St James, Exeter, EX4 6LE.

E-Mail: rw Parker@btopenworld.com

Tel: 07763 248241

01392 423233

REPORT No. 2013.05

© Richard Parker. October 2013

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	<i>Page:</i> 1
1.1	Historic background	1
1.2	Recent archaeological interventions	3
1.3	The current project	4
1.4	Map research	4
2.	BUILDINGS SURVEY	7
2.1	The garage	7
2.2	The verandah	11
3.	DISCUSSION	12
3.1	Suggestions for further works to enable the proposed development	13
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	14
	SOURCES CONSULTED	14
	CONDITIONS	15

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1	The front elevation of Old Matford, from a 19th-century drawing by F.W.L. Stockdale, showing the modest scale of the surviving house.	<i>Page:</i> 1
Fig. 2	General view of Old Matford from Wonford Road showing the outbuilding and the forecourt walls on the perimeter of the site.	2
Fig. 3	General view of Widhayes, Uplowman, showing the gatehouse range of a Devon mansion of the late 16th or early 17th century (inset: a detail of the architectural frontispiece to the gateway).	2
Fig. 4	Extract from a map of 1813 depicting the ‘Tything of East Wonford’, showing a large ‘L’-shaped building to the east of the mansion.	5
Fig. 5	Extract from the Heavitree Tithe Map of 1843 showing a rectangular building to the east of the mansion.	5
Fig. 6	Detail of an 1888 OS map of the area, sheet LXXX.10, showing a variety of buildings to the north and east of the house.	5
Fig. 7	A later edition of the OS map dated 1932, showing a rectangular building and glasshouses to the east of the house.	5
Fig. 8	General view of the garage building, looking east, showing its relationship with the site boundary wall to the north.	6
Fig. 9	Detail of the western gable wall above first-floor level showing the tall joist sockets and the evidence of insertion of the large Gothic gable window.	6
Fig. 10	Scars in the external render of the southern wall, showing the position of the original entrance (right) and a window alongside it.	9
Fig. 11	Interior of the ground floor, looking south, showing the blocked openings in the south-western wall of the building and, just visible, the pegholes for mortices in the lintel of the window.	9
Fig. 12	View of the apparent wall scar and brick and stone intrusions above first-floor level.	10
Fig. 13	View of the apparent wall scar and brick and stone intrusions below first-floor level, showing the stone patching interrupted at a height of 1.8m above floor level.	10
Fig. 14	The 19th- or 20th-century verandah on the south-east side of the house.	13



Fig. 1 The front elevation of Old Matford, from a 19th-century drawing by F.W.L. Stockdale, showing the modest scale of the surviving house.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a rapid building survey of outbuildings associated with Old Matford, Wonford Road, Exeter (SX 93293 91838). Old Matford (Fig. 1) is an Elizabethan mansion standing in the parish of Heavitree, Exeter, on the south-western side of Wonford Road. It is a Grade II* Listed Building which lies within the St Leonard's Conservation Area. The high walls and gates of the forecourt in front of the house are also Listed (Grade II) and the outbuilding discussed in this report, which adjoins the forecourt wall thus enjoys statutory protection. The report was commissioned by the current owners of the property to inform proposals for an extension to the house and alterations to the existing outbuildings.

1.1 Historic background

The documentary history of the site has been outlined by A.G. Collings in a report produced by Exeter Archaeology in 2009 (Parker 2009, 1-4) and will be only briefly summarised here: The present site belonged during the medieval period to St John's Hospital, an Augustinian foundation lying just within the East Gate of Exeter. Early 14th century records refer to 'a large field called Maddaworthi', but there is no reference to a manor house on the site, and it is uncertain whether or not the site was occupied by buildings pre-dating the present structures. Evidence of early occupation may yet survive in the form of below-ground archaeological deposits, but there is no known survival of medieval fabric in the present buildings. At the dispersal of Monastic lands at the Reformation the site passed through the hands of a number of secular owners before being purchased by George Smyth, one of the richest merchants in late 16th-century Exeter. Smyth is believed to have constructed the existing house at Matford in around 1596-1604 (*ibid.*, 2). The surviving house, comprising a central hall and screens passage with a chamber over, flanked by two gabled wings projecting backwards from the frontage and with an off-centre, single storey porch (Fig. 1) is largely of cob construction, with stone chimney stacks and moulded mullioned timber window frames.



Fig. 2 General view of Old Matford from Wonford Road showing the outbuilding and the forecourt walls on the perimeter of the site.



Fig. 3 General view of Widhayes, Uplowman, showing the gatehouse range of a Devon mansion of the late 16th or early 17th century (inset: a detail of the architectural frontispiece to the gateway). This may give an impression of the possible appearance of the mansion at Old Matford in its original state.

The house is very modest in size and appearance by comparison with other suburban mansions of the period, such as Cowick Barton in St Thomas' and the demolished Elizabethan house at Mount Radford in St Leonard's parish, which utilised flanking wings, stone dressings and possibly also porch towers to make a grand architectural display. Smyth's large town house at No. 229 High Street in Exeter (demolished c.1930) is known to have been one of the most sumptuously-furnished merchants' houses in the city, and surviving traces of plasterwork and decorative fixtures within Old Matford suggest a high degree of lavishness in the interior of this house too. Following recent archaeological interventions, it is now known that the mansion at Old Matford was formerly more extensive and of greater architectural ambition than its present appearance would suggest.

1.2 Recent archaeological interventions

An archaeological survey of the house made by Exeter Archaeology during alterations to the building in 2008-9, revealed that the existing house is probably only a fragment of a much larger structure. Openings were discovered in the south eastern and north western walls of the wings which must relate to adjoining buildings, now demolished, which extended beyond the footprint of the existing building. The form of these buildings is not known, but it is most likely that they took the form of additional flanking wings extending forward towards Wonford Road to frame the main façade and create a formal entrance court in front of the house. A second, service court has also been postulated at the rear of the house, where blocked doorways and other openings may have given onto pentices linking the core of the house with a kitchen and service buildings; essential facilities for a house of this size which are noticeably absent from the present building (Parker 2009, 16-18).

Further archaeological observations were made by Richard Parker Historic Buildings Survey and Interpretation during further alterations in in 2012 (Parker, forthcoming). These revealed that the present cob and stone forecourt walls lying on the frontage of the site and incorporating the outbuilding under consideration in this report (Fig. 2) survive from the 16th-century house. These walls formerly incorporated a large gateway offset to the north-west of the present, 18th-century gateway in the wall. The form of the remaining jamb of this early gateway appears to have provision for an archway with radiating voussoirs, possibly a rere-arch. Fragments of Beer stone sculpture built into the blocking of the gate suggest that the gateway may have had a classical-style frontispiece with freestanding columns and a square-headed opening, surmounted by an entablature or cornice or perhaps some form of decorative niche or aedicule. The form of the gateway is not known for certain; it might have taken the form of a simple arched gate in a boundary wall or, potentially, a more complex structure incorporating either a free-standing gatehouse or a long gatehouse range running along the roadside. A good impression of this kind of building may be gained at Widhayes in Uplowman, East Devon, where the gatehouse of a mansion of the period, complete with its architectural frontispiece, survives. This has a diminutive moat and bridge along the roadside, and a magnificent gate and studded doorway (Fig. 3). This building has not been studied archaeologically, but it seems likely that this mansion was also a symmetrical composition of which the greater part has been demolished and of which one of the flanking wings and the gatehouse range alone remain.

The evidence for wings and a gateway or gatehouse range at Matford support the conjecture that the house was intended as an ambitious one both in scale and architectural expression. The present building represents only the core of a much larger structure which, owing to a decline in status, damage or periods of decay, has been reduced in scale so that only the central portion remains. The implications of this are that the areas of garden immediately surrounding the house on all sides have the potential to contain buried features

relating both to the medieval occupation of the site and also to the 16th-century mansion and its outbuildings. The extent and state of preservation of these remains is uncertain.

1.3 The current project

The current phase of work was undertaken by Richard Parker Historic Buildings Survey and Interpretation at the request of Anthony Orchard and Deborah Clark, the owners of the house, who hope to enlarge the building to provide additional accommodation. The proposals have not yet been formalised, but it is suggested that the new extension might lie to the south east of the existing house, extending towards and probably incorporating the current outbuilding at the eastern corner of the site, which is currently in use as a garage. This building is in poor condition and it is considered that extensive alterations and rebuilding would be necessary to bring it into viable use. A small verandah on the south eastern wall of the existing house, currently in use as a fuel store or shelter, would also be affected by the development and it is anticipated that this structure would have to be entirely removed. The current report was therefore commissioned both to establish the likely date and significance of the garage and the verandah and also to suggest possible further works which might clarify the nature and extent of buried remains in the area affected by the extension.

The works were undertaken in October 2013, and consisted of a rapid visual and photographic survey of the garage and the verandah. Manuscript notes and a digital photographic record of the buildings were made together with a sketch elevation of the boundary wall where it has been revealed by the removal of, or collapse of, plaster. Some limited opening up in the form of the removal of areas of modern plaster was undertaken but, apart from this the work was non-invasive and no archaeological fabric of significance was removed. The results of the work will be added to the existing site archive, currently held by Mr Parker, pending possible future archaeological works on the site.

1.4 Map research

The maps included in the earlier report show considerable change to the layout of the outbuildings during the 19th and 20th centuries and it will be useful to review these changes here. The earliest map known to show the site in any detail is an 1813 copy of a map of East Wonford tything (DRO Z17/2/5: Fig. 4). This is somewhat crudely drawn, but is of great interest in showing both a large 'L'-shaped building to the south east of the house and a further building to the south west, which may perhaps be interpreted as the remains of the putative service courtyard to the rear of the house. The relationship of the large, 'L'-shaped range with the present garage is not clear; it seems likely that the present garage stands to the north west of the earlier building and that the site of the latter building is under the forecourt of the church to the east of the present site.

A later depiction of the site, from the Heavitree tithe map of 1843 (Fig. 5), shows either that the 'L' shaped building had been truncated, or that it had been rebuilt. Only a long rectangular range remained along the roadside. The building to the south west of the house had been removed and the configuration of the site boundary walls considerably altered. No building is shown occupying the position of the present garage.

The 1888 OS map of the site shows a range of buildings of irregular width standing to the north-east of the mansion and extending as far as the present gateway to the forecourt (Fig 6). The eastern end of this range has a somewhat wider footprint and might well represent the present garage. South east of these buildings is a small enclosure and then a large structure which might be taken to represent the remains of the rectangular range against the roadside,



Fig. 4 Extract from a map of 1813 depicting the 'Tything of East Wonford' showing a large 'L'-shaped building to the east of the mansion.

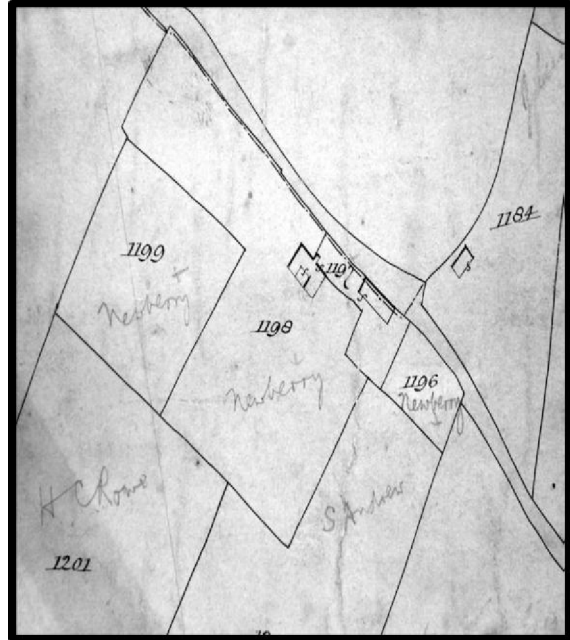


Fig. 5 Extract from the Heavitree tithe map of 1843 showing a rectangular building to the east of the mansion, but at some distance from it.

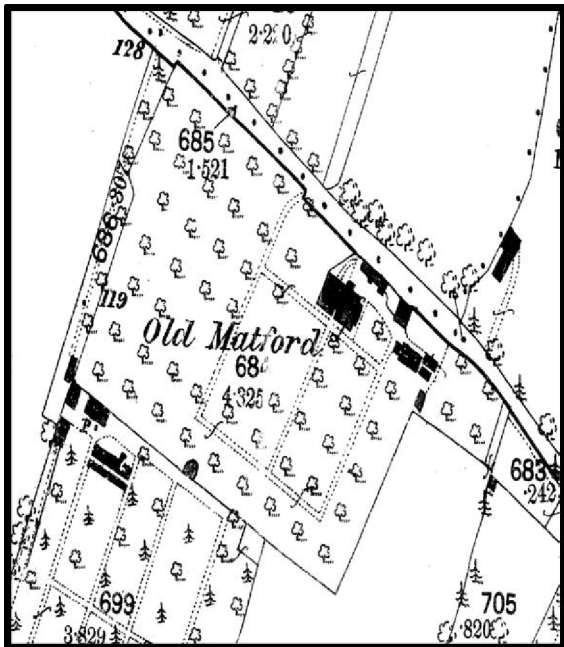


Fig. 6 Detail of an 1888 OS map of the area, sheet LXXX.10, showing a variety of buildings to the north and east of the house.

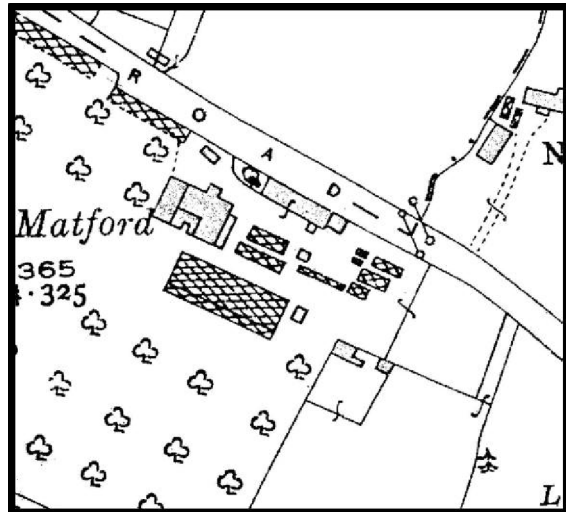


Fig. 7 A later edition of the OS map dated 1932 showing a rectangular building and glasshouses east of the mansion.



Fig. 8 General view of the garage building, looking east, showing its relationship with the site boundary wall to the north.



Fig. 9 Detail of the western gable wall above first-floor level showing the tall joist sockets and the evidence of insertion of the large Gothic gable window.

which perhaps had been partially demolished. A large, solid line shown on the map against the roadside, running the length of the site and featuring many curious offsets, may represent a continuation of the site boundary wall along the edge of what must formerly have been a very substantial estate.

The last map to show the site and outbuildings prior to the post-war development of the site is the 1932 revision of the OS 1:2500 map (Fig. 7). This shows that, once again, a long rectangular range stands against the site boundary wall; however, this stands nearer to the house than the earlier building and may be presumed to incorporate the existing garage. Traces of blocked openings in the south-western wall (Fig. 10) show that, throughout its existence, the garage was approached from the south west, rather than the south east or north west and this may explain the absence of any early windows in its gable walls. It must be presumed either that the buildings which stood against these walls had low rooflines which did not obscure the tall windows in the upper parts of the gables, unless these windows are later insertions in these positions.

2. BUILDINGS SURVEY

2.1 The garage

The outbuilding standing at the eastern corner of the site (Fig. 8) is now in use as a garage, with a loft over. This structure is largely of brick construction, rendered externally, and covered with a gabled corrugated-iron roof lying parallel to Wonford Road. This building butts against and is in part supported by the cob boundary wall fronting the roadway. The building extends beyond the modern south-eastern boundary of the gardens, which is a low modern wall constructed after the subdivision of the original, larger plot at the establishment of the adjacent church in the 1970s.

The north-western elevation of the building has been cut through at a low level to create a garage door, but it is evident that there cannot originally have been a doorway in this position since there is provision in the internal floor structure for a staircase rising against this wall. The gable above contains a tall, two-light window with a four-centred arched head and 'Y'-tracery dividing at the window head (Fig. 8). The mullioned frame is of timber, hollow chamfered externally and plain chamfered internally. The window is glazed with leaded lights and has a 19th-century window catch and casement stays.

The lower part of this north-western wall is constructed of dark red bricks laid two bricks thick in a sandy lime mortar. The wall narrows above the internal floor level to the thickness of a single brick, above which, stretcher bond is employed (Fig. 9). The wall is stiffened by thicker brick pilasters on either side of the tall, arched window, but this arrangement seems to be an alteration as the bricks around the window are stained with mortar, as though reused. It is probable that the window, and its corresponding window in the opposite wall, were reset in the gable after the demolition of the adjacent buildings.

The floor joists are seated within the brickwork, housed in tall sockets which extend above floor level and initially seem to suggest a higher floor level than that now existing (Fig. 9; bottom left). The reason for this is uncertain. There are no corresponding sockets at this level in the opposite, south-eastern wall, for example, though this is almost certainly of the same period, having the same types of brick and mortar, and therefore the floor levels do not appear to have been altered. There are also no visible sockets in the area of the void of the stairwell; however, it is possible that sockets are concealed by render and their absence is also explained by termination of the joists at the trimmer forming the side of the stairwell, well short of the wall.

The south-western wall of the building is also constructed of red brick, though this is much obscured by internal and external render. This materials employed suggest that the wall is contemporary with the south-eastern and north-western gable walls. There were formerly two openings in the lower part of the wall; a blocked window and a blocked doorway, which are visible externally as scars in the render (Fig. 10) and remain clearly visible internally (Fig. 11). Both have been blocked in modern bricks bedded in cement mortar, though this blocking may have been done in two separate phases, since the bricks blocking the window are textured and those of the doorway are not. It seems likely that the doorway was blocked first, after the subdivision of the property in the 1970s, and that the blocking of the doorway followed later, probably when the present wide garage door was made. The original door frame remains in place, but this is without mouldings and cannot easily be dated. Pintles at both the bottom and top of the doorframe survive, showing that the door was hung on strap hinges and was not divided into upper and lower sections in the manner of a stable door.

The window frame has apparently been removed, unless it is concealed within the brick blocking, but the lintel of the window opening remains. This is clearly a reused timber; it seems to represent part of an earlier timber framed partition of substantial timbers, and features the remains of four sockets for large, vertical, timber studs. The sockets vary in size and spacing, but are around 15-16cms long and only 3 cms wide, spaced at intervals of between 31 cms and 23 cms. Two of the sockets housed tenons secured by a single small peg; the others by two pegs each. The timber is clean, unpainted and unstained by soot and appears to be of oak. It has never been obscured by plaster or whitewash. Unfortunately its provenance cannot be known.

The lower part of the south-eastern wall of the building is completely obscured by render but appears to contain no openings. Above first-floor level it features a tall, Gothic timber window frame, very like that in the north-western wall and probably contemporary with it. This may well have been inserted after the adjoining buildings were demolished.

The north-eastern wall of the building is much earlier and appears to represent the original site boundary wall. The 19th-century OS maps suggest that this boundary wall formerly extended in both directions considerably further than it does today, so that the house front and gateway may have appeared as an incident in a long wall bounding the roadside for some distance. The wall is constructed of dark red cob, overlying a stone footing of Heavitree breccia rising approximately 1m above the present concrete floor. The wall is pierced by two small, oblong windows which do not immediately appear to be cut into the cob. Their jambs are rendered with relatively modern plaster and it is likely that both have been altered in recent years, perhaps when their window frames were renewed. One of the openings has a large timber lintel, part of which has been revealed by the removal of plaster. This appears to be an ancient oak timber, reused in this position, since it contains a redundant socket with a small 'V'-shaped profile, of the type employed for sprung studwork in closed trusses or timber-framed partitions in local medieval and early post-medieval buildings. The cob appears to have been built around this lintel, though it has perhaps shrunk away from it slightly and the resulting gap is filled with modern material. The lintel is covered with wire mesh designed to give a good purchase for render. This treatment must be of late 20th- or early 21st-century date and is perhaps contemporary with the renewal of the window frames.

In the pier between the two windows appears an enigmatic feature; an intrusion of brick and stone blocking which appears to have been added in two phases. The brick blocking extends in a vertical strip from the eaves line of the building to a position near the sills of the windows on the ground floor (Figs 12, 13). It may extend further but this was not investigated as it would involve the removal of too much wall plaster. The central beam supporting the first floor joists appears to be seated in this brick blocking, but as it continues both below and above the beam end it is considered that the blocking must be infilling an earlier feature,



Fig. 10 Scars in the external render of the southern wall, showing the position of the original entrance (right) and a window alongside it.

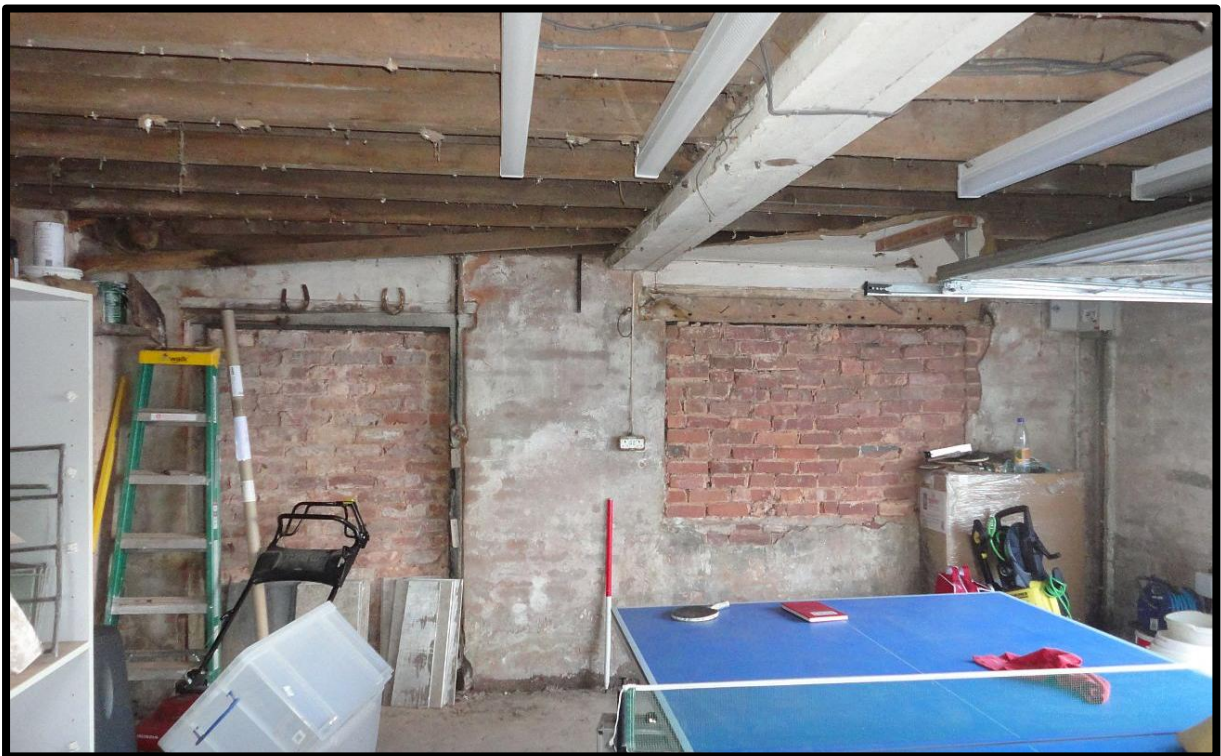


Fig. 11 Interior of the ground floor, looking south, showing the blocked openings in the south-western wall of the building and, just visible, the pegholes for mortices in the lintel of the window.



Fig. 12 View of the apparent wall scar and brick and stone intrusions above first-floor level.



Fig. 13 View of the apparent wall scar and brick and stone intrusions below first-floor level, showing the stone patching interrupted at a height of 1.8m above floor level.

perhaps the scar of a wall extending at right angles to the boundary wall. Alternatively it might represent brick infilling of a chase in the wall which might formerly have housed a timber such as a cruck post or a stall post.

Adjoining the brick intrusion is an area of infilling in stone (Figs 12, 13). This seems to represent the patching of an older wall scar or feature, which begins 1.8m above modern ground level and continues to the height of the wall. This feature, if it includes the brick patching too, may be as much as 0.67 thick, which more-or less corresponds to the thickness of the cob boundary wall along the roadside. This may support the conjecture that this represents the scar of a wall meeting the north-eastern boundary wall at right angles. The reason why this feature does not continue to the ground is not certain, but might be explained if there was a doorway or window opening close to the junction of the two walls fitted with a wooden frame which has been removed, leaving no trace. A second possibility is that the stone patching represents a beam socket, though, in a cob wall like this, one would expect some kind of stone or timber pad built into the wall to spread the weight of the beam.

The feature is infilled with fragments of Beer stone bonded with a red clay mortar with white lime flecks. The blocks bear no obvious signs of mouldings, but it is possible that more architectural fragments from the gateway are built into the wall here. The red mortar is similar to that employed in the building of the brick gate piers, and the earlier gateway is the most likely local source of Beer stone fragments.

To the south east of the wall scar are a series of blocked features in the wall which appear to represent beam or joist sockets. These are at a higher level than the existing floor and were not investigated by the removal of the blocking, so the scantling the original timbers is not known. The sockets are large and, unless the cob walling was damaged when the timbers were withdrawn, giving a false impression of scale, they might relate to a substantial floor structure. These sockets do not continue to the north-west of the wall scar, which suggest that the wall scar represents either the north-western limit of a building standing slightly to the south-east of the present garage, or of a substantial cob division between storeyed and unstoreyed sections of the same building.

The present first-floor structure of the garage appears all of a piece, though it does contain some anomalies which are difficult to explain. The curious sockets in the north-western wall have been discussed above. The deep plank joists measuring 0.07 x 0.15m in scantling are in fact composite timbers formed of two layers of shallower joists. These predominate in the eastern bay and the southern part of the western bay, but do not appear in the area of the stair well. They are supported on timbers applied to the sides of the principal beam, resting upon a square batten nailed to the lower part of the beam and being cut to fit the profile of a triangular batten nailed to the upper part of the beam. The reason for this curious construction is not known, but it does not seem conducive to strength.

The roof is supported on a single 'A'-frame truss, the principals of which do not really fit; the north-eastern rafter is a composite of two timbers bolted together and rests rather insecurely on a short post and brick pad added on the cob wall top. The south-western principal is set into the upper part of the brick south-western wall but is also propped off the main floor beam by a short post. The collars are applied and secured to the sides of the principals by spikes or bolts. There are three levels of purlins on both sides of the roof and a diagonally set square ridge tree. The roof has no common rafters, being covered with sheets of corrugated iron secured directly to the purlins.

2.2 The verandah

The verandah (Fig. 14) is a very simple timber-framed structure running along the base of the south-eastern wall of the house. It is supported on five timber posts and on the walls of a

small area, probably a former lavatory at the southern corner of the house. The other end of the verandah is supported on a screen wall featuring a small square window of coloured glass. The roof is covered with pan tiles. There are no obviously datable features and it is uncertain when the verandah was added. It does not appear on early views of the house; either Stockdale's 19th century view (Fig. 1) or James Crocker's view of 1879; however, a projection of a sort in this position is shown on the later 19th-century maps, though not extending the full width of the house. It is thus considered probable that the verandah is a 20th-century rebuilding replacing a late 19th-century addition to the house, of lesser extent and which does not survive.

3. DISCUSSION

The recent archaeological works in 2012-13 were limited in scope, but have added something to our understanding of the mansion. The full extent of the early buildings as yet remains uncertain, but the impression of a large house significantly reduced in scale is reinforced by the recent observations. The architectural fragments recovered during the works to the boundary wall in 2012 imply the presence of a grand Renaissance feature such as an architectural frontispiece or gateway for the mansion. The most likely position for this is at the centre of the forecourt wall close to where the fragments were recovered, and slightly to the north-west of the present forecourt gate. Such a feature, decorated with classical mouldings and constructed in Beer stone would be an architectural statement of wealth and learning comparable with large late 16th or early 17th-century tombs in the Cathedral and other local churches, or the classical archway under the portico at the entrance to the Guildhall, which was commissioned by a group of Exeter dignitaries, including George Smyth, in 1592 (Blaylock 1990, 139).

The wall scar or chase and the sockets observed in 2013 within the garage, patched with Beer stone fragments in a matrix very similar to that employed in building the presumed 18th-century gateway suggest that other elements of the original mansion were removed at the same time as the gateway, including a relatively substantial, storeyed structure built into or butting against the boundary wall. The most likely context for this would be an 18th-century phase of demolition or reduction of redundant or decayed parts of the house.

The form and function of these demolished buildings is not certain. The wall scar could conceivably relate to a modest building, unrelated to the main composition of the house, lying against the garden wall. Alternatively, in the context of the 2009 evidence for wings projecting either sideways or forward from both sides of the existing house, we might postulate a symmetrical plan of some grandeur, either with projecting wings extending as far as the boundary wall, or maybe shorter wings with offset corner pavilions. The wall scar recently observed may well have formed part of some such structure, and is in a position which would make either reconstruction feasible. The further possibility remains of a long gatehouse range with storeyed and unstoreyed volumes enclosing the entrance court. A comparable example at Widhayes, in Uplowman has previously been mentioned and another, earlier range at North Wyke in South Tawton Parish might well be cited. A similar range with an architectural frontispiece (now re-erected at Lewtrenchard) is known from Pridhamsleigh in Staverton, South Devon, but does not otherwise survive. These enclosed courts may well have been common in rural and suburban houses as they allowed a measure of extra security in times which were perhaps still unsettled.

The existing garage is probably a late 19th century building, constructed on the site of earlier structures which had long been removed and utilising the cob boundary wall as a support. The brickwork work in the south, east and west walls appears no earlier than the mid



Fig. 14 The 19th- or 20th-century verandah on the south-east side of the house.

19th century. A. G. Collings noted in his documentary history of the site that the property was auctioned in 1888 (Parker 2009, 4) and it is considered that this provides the most likely context for the construction of the garage building. The building may have functioned as a workshop or stable, with lofts over, and was well lit by a large window in its south-western wall. It originally formed part of a longer range, extending to the north west, much of which appears to have been demolished in the early 20th century. After this the building was incorporated into a new and longer range extending to the south east. In the 20th century the building was again reduced and it is likely that, at this point, the two arched windows in the gables may have been inserted. Both are probably reused; their provenance is unknown but it is not unlikely that they were part of another building on the site and were reset here because of their considerable architectural charm.

3.1 Suggestions for further works to enable the proposed development

One of the main issues with the construction of an extension to the house is its likely impact on the below-ground remains of the wings and other buildings which it is considered highly likely extended on both sides of the house and also to its front and rear. Proximity of the new building to the existing house would be desirable, and these are precisely the areas considered most sensitive to disturbance. The extent and layout of the demolished buildings is not known, which precludes siting the new buildings in an area which would be certain not to affect their buried remains. The depth, preservation and nature of any buried deposits is not known, but the level of the openings discovered in 2008-9, which linked the main house with the demolished wings, suggests that both of the wings had a lower first-floor level than the

core of the main house. These wings may well therefore have been wholly or partially cellared. If this is the case it is not unlikely that the cellars or semi-basements may have been infilled with demolition debris from the walls and roofs of the demolished parts of the house. In such cases there is a strong possibility of the recovery of decorative or painted plasterwork and other fragile ornamental features characteristic of the decorations of large houses of the period. Although the rebuilding or reconstruction of the garage to form part of the new building might be relatively uncontroversial, since the garage and the verandah are probably of 19th- or 20th-century date, both overlie parts of the demolished house and the recent works have shown how even relatively minor repairs to the site boundary walls may reveal significant historic fabric.

Although shallow foundations and drainage runs, or a raised floor platform for the new extension might help avoid disturbance of any buried remains, the best strategy for mitigating damage and avoiding future expense and damage is surely to understand the nature of the deposits and then design the new extension accordingly. Topsoil stripping, test pitting, or limited trial trenching, sited to maximise the possible information to be gained and minimise unnecessary disturbance of the archaeology might well help to inform the design of the development. Such works, if limited in extent, need not be overly expensive. Ground sensitive radar or some other non-invasive technology might be employed to establish areas of disturbance or buried remains in parts of the site which are not to be excavated. These are specialist skills and it suggested that the advice of an archaeological contractor specialising in buried remains and the Conservation Officer of the Local Planning Authority is sought.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is very grateful to Tony Orchard and Deborah Clark for their help and assistance on site, also to his former colleagues at Exeter Archaeology and to Richard Feltham for help and advice during the composition of this report.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Unpublished sources

DRO Devon Record Office (now The Devon Heritage Centre)
1813 copy of 'Map of the Tything of East Wonford' (Z17/2/5).

RAMM Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

Stockdale. F.W. (n.d; 19th century) 'Matford, Heavitree, Exeter' watercolour painting. Ref. 488/1977/2.

Published sources

Blaylock, S.R. 1990 'Exeter Guildhall' Proc. Devon Archaeol. Soc. 48, 123–178

OS 1st edition 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10, surveyed 1888, published 1890.

OS revised edition 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10, 1932.

Parker R.W. 2009 . Archaeological Recording During Alterations at Old matfod, Wonford Road, Exeter. Exeter Archaeology report No.09.125

CONDITIONS

This report has been prepared for the use of Anthony Orchard, Deborah Clark and their professional advisors and should not be used or relied upon for any other project or purpose without the prior written authority of the author. Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of the use of this document for any other persons or purpose other than that for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. No copies, in whole or in part, may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without the prior written authorisation of Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation. © Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation October 2013.