

Marches Archaeology

Detached kitchen at The Parsonage Kyre Worcestershire

**A report on an archaeological
watching brief**

May 2005

Marches Archaeology Series 380

Archaeological Consultants and Contractors

This report is produced by

Marches Archaeology

**Marches House
6 High Street
Clun
Shropshire
SY7 8JB**

Tel:- 01588 640976

Fax:- 01588 640796

e-mail:- archaeology@marches.plus.com

For:-

Mrs and Mrs Beavan
The Parsonage
Kyre
Worcestershire
c/o HH Heritage

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**Detached Kitchen
The Parsonage
Kyre
Worcestershire**

NGR: SO 9230 3600

A report on an archaeological watching brief

Report by
Jo Wainwright
and
Richard Stone

Summary

A brick hearth with a sandstone base was revealed close to the south-east corner of the kitchen. This is of early nineteenth century date. A drain of similar date running north-north-east from the north-west corner of the kitchen pre-dated the now demolished lean-to. No deposits or features contemporary with or earlier than the kitchen were identified.

Introduction

Marches Archaeology was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Beavan of The Parsonage, Kyre to carry out the below ground watching brief on groundworks carried out in association with the conversion of the kitchen annex at The Parsonage. This work was required as one element of 'A Programme of Historic Building Recording and Interpretation' as specified by the Worcestershire Archaeological Service as a requirement of planning permission (ref.: MH/03/0543). The above ground recording and interpretation is being carried out by HH Heritage (The Vicarage, Much Marcle, Herefordshire HR8 2NL). This report is intended to be included within the main report, which will include the historical and archaeological background, illustrations and over-arching discussion which would normally form part of a self-standing report.

The site work was carried out on 25th April and the report issued on 5 May 2005..

Scope of the works

A brick lean-to at the north of the kitchen had been removed prior to the watching brief, along with much of the west, north and east walls of the kitchen (Plates 1 and 2). New footings were excavated to a depth of 600mm along the east and west sides of the existing building and extended northwards to form footings of similar depth for a new extension on the footprint of the lean-to. The internal ground surface of the kitchen was also reduced by up to 250mm using a mini digger.

Results of the watching brief

Outside the kitchen the ground is 200mm higher at the west than at the east. Internally the ground was the same level as at the east (i.e. 200mm lower than at the west). At the west the natural red clays [103] were encountered 300mm down, elsewhere very close to the surface.

A series of mixed dumps of dark brown silty clay [107] with frequent mortar, plaster, brick, tile and charcoal covered the eastern part of the building (Fig. 1). These were excavated by machine and were treated as a single deposit though it was recognised that there were many dumps within the material.

Close to the south-east corner of the kitchen was an internal hearth [110] consisting of a stone base, with brick sides, dug into the natural subsoil and probably cutting through [107] (Plate 3). Only the bottom three courses survive, sufficient to indicate a construction date in the early 19th century. Within the hearth was fire debris [109].

At the east was a sandstone slab [108] which may be structural but its purpose is unclear (Plate 4). Adjacent to it were two concrete slabs. Slightly further east a path was dug by Mr Beavan and further slabs were apparently found so this may be part of a path running east-west.

At the north-west of the area observed was a brick-lined drain [105], oriented north-north-east, cutting through the natural clays (Plate 5). The soil below this was a silty clay [106] which was presumably trample derived from the construction of the drain and formed bedding for it. The drain was cut through by the brick footings [104] of the north wall of the lean-to.

Overlying [107] were patches of a beaten earth floor surface [102] of 20th century date, with a modern concrete floor above. Outside the building the site was covered with topsoil [101].

Finds

Context	Category	Date (century)	Quantity	Comments
101	Pottery	19 th	2	
101	Bottle glass	19 th -20 th	1	
106	Pottery	Late 18 th + mid 19 th	4	
107	Pottery	Late 18 th	16	Some 17 th century
107	Bottle glass	18 th	6	1 'onion' bottle
107	Bone	-	2	Cow
107	Copper alloy coin	-	1	Illegible penny
107	Copper alloy	-	1	Token? with later central hole to form button?
109	Clay pipe	17 th -19 th	1	Stem
109	Copper alloy	-	1	Button with four holes in domed centre

Discussion

No deposits demonstrably earlier than the late 18th century were encountered. This suggests that during the 19th century works were carried out which removed any earlier remains, such as former floor levels. The sandstone slab [108] could be earlier, but there is certainly no reason to suspect that it pre-dated the kitchen.

The hearth [110] is an unexpected discovery. It lies within two metres of the fireplace which represents the principal purpose of the kitchen. The standing building provides no clear evidence to identify where the flue for this hearth was. The possibility that it had some industrial function (e.g. forge) cannot be ruled out but nor was any evidence present to support such an interpretation. The bricks are of typical early 19th century size and form which indicates the date of this hearth.

It is possible that around the period when the lean-to was constructed the internal floor of the kitchen was removed to the level of natural in the western area, and down to [107] in the eastern area, after which a new floor surface [102] was laid.

The archive

The archive consists of:

- 3 trench recording sheets
- 1 sheet of field drawings
- 2 sheets of site notes
- 2 photographic index sheets
- 1 film of black and white negative photographs
- 1 film of colour transparency photographs
- 4 finds recording sheets
- 1 box of finds

The archive is to be passed to HH Heritage for eventual deposition with an approved repository.

4 May 2005

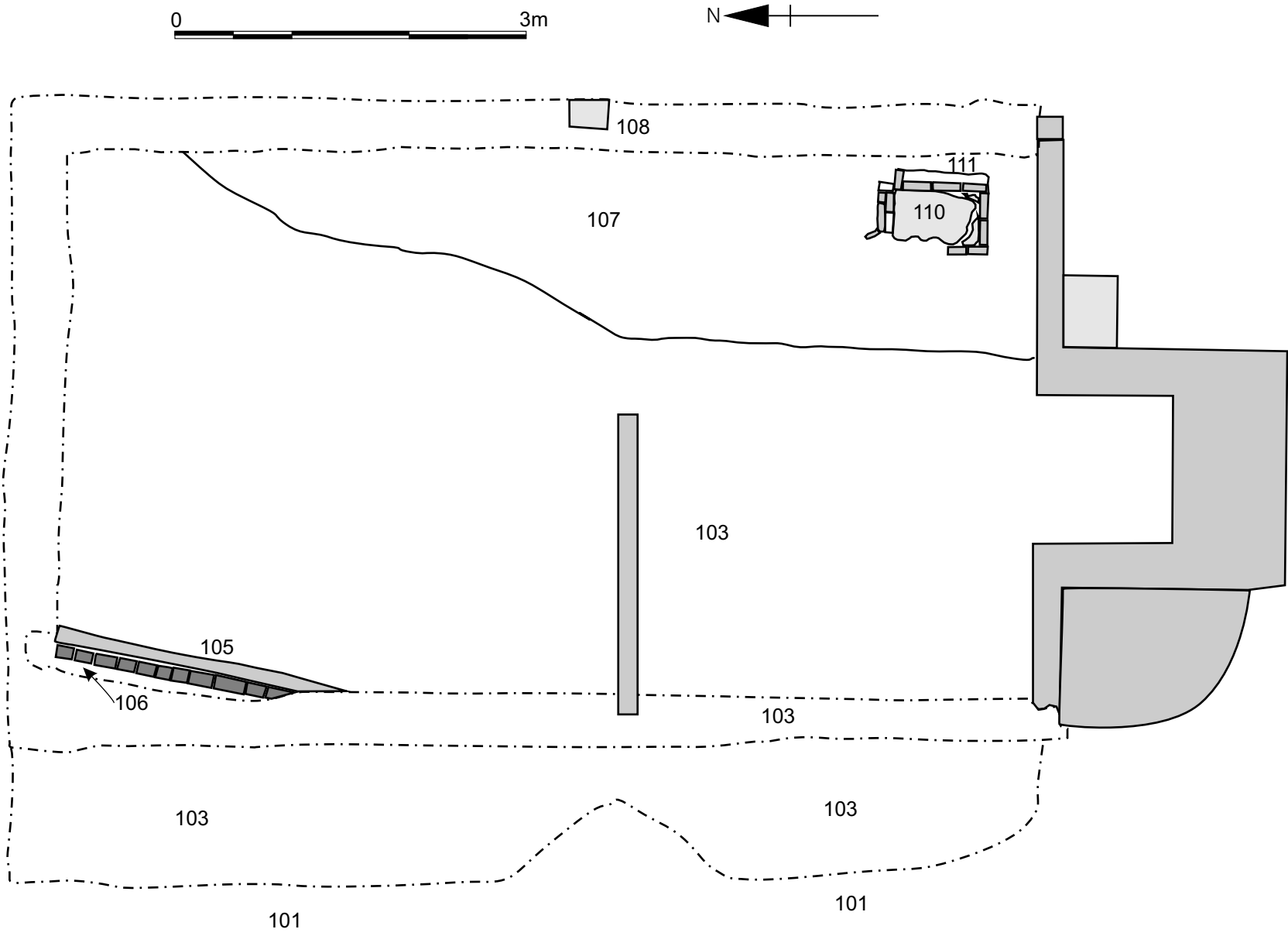


Fig. 1 Plan of the area of the watching brief



Plate 1 Kitchen looking west



Plate 1 Kitchen looking east



Plate 3 **Hearth 110**



Plate 4 **Sandstone slab108**

Plate 5 **Drain 105**

