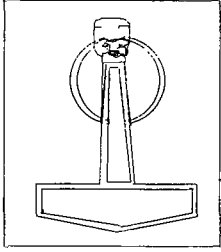


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**YORK COTTAGE, JERVAULX**

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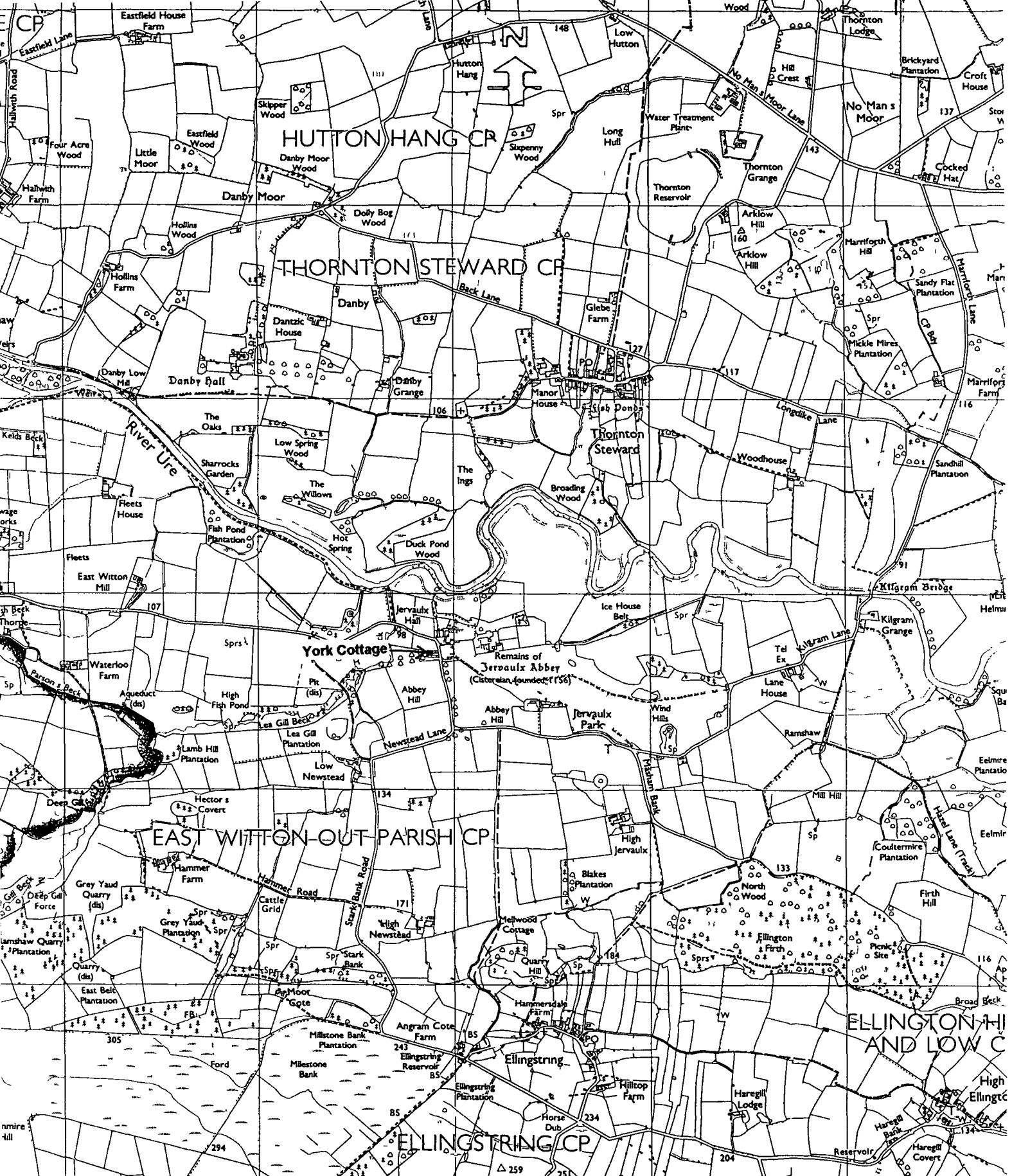
**WATCHING BRIEF**

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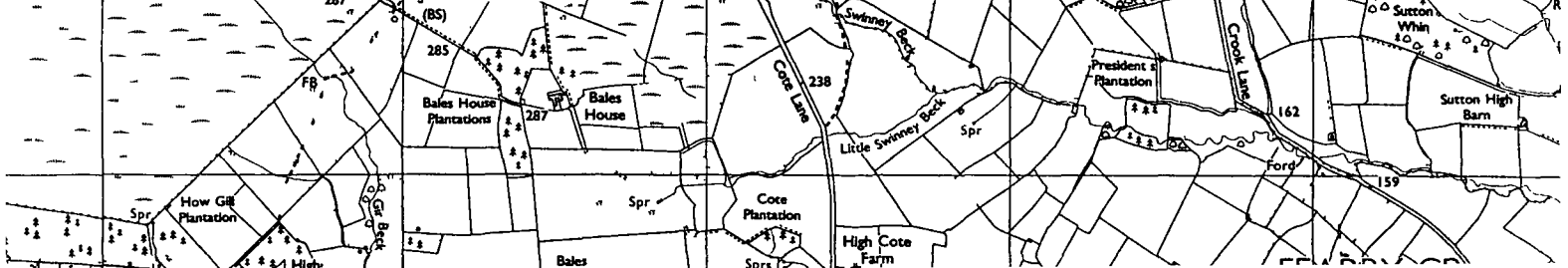
**ALISON CLARKE M A**

**AUGUST 1996**



**PLAN 1 YORK COTTAGE, JERVAULX**

**LOCATION** **Scale 1 25000**



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT YORK COTTAGE, JERVAULX

### INTRODUCTION

York Cottage is a stone two-storey house situated on the western side of the A6108 opposite the remains of the Medieval Abbey of Jervaulx (Plan 1) Building work consisting of two extensions at the south - facing front of the house was carried out in June 1996 (Plan 2) Because of the proximity of the building to the remains of the Abbey, an archaeological condition was placed on planning permission requiring a watching brief during ground disturbance work This was carried out on June 25th 1996

### THE WATCHING BRIEF

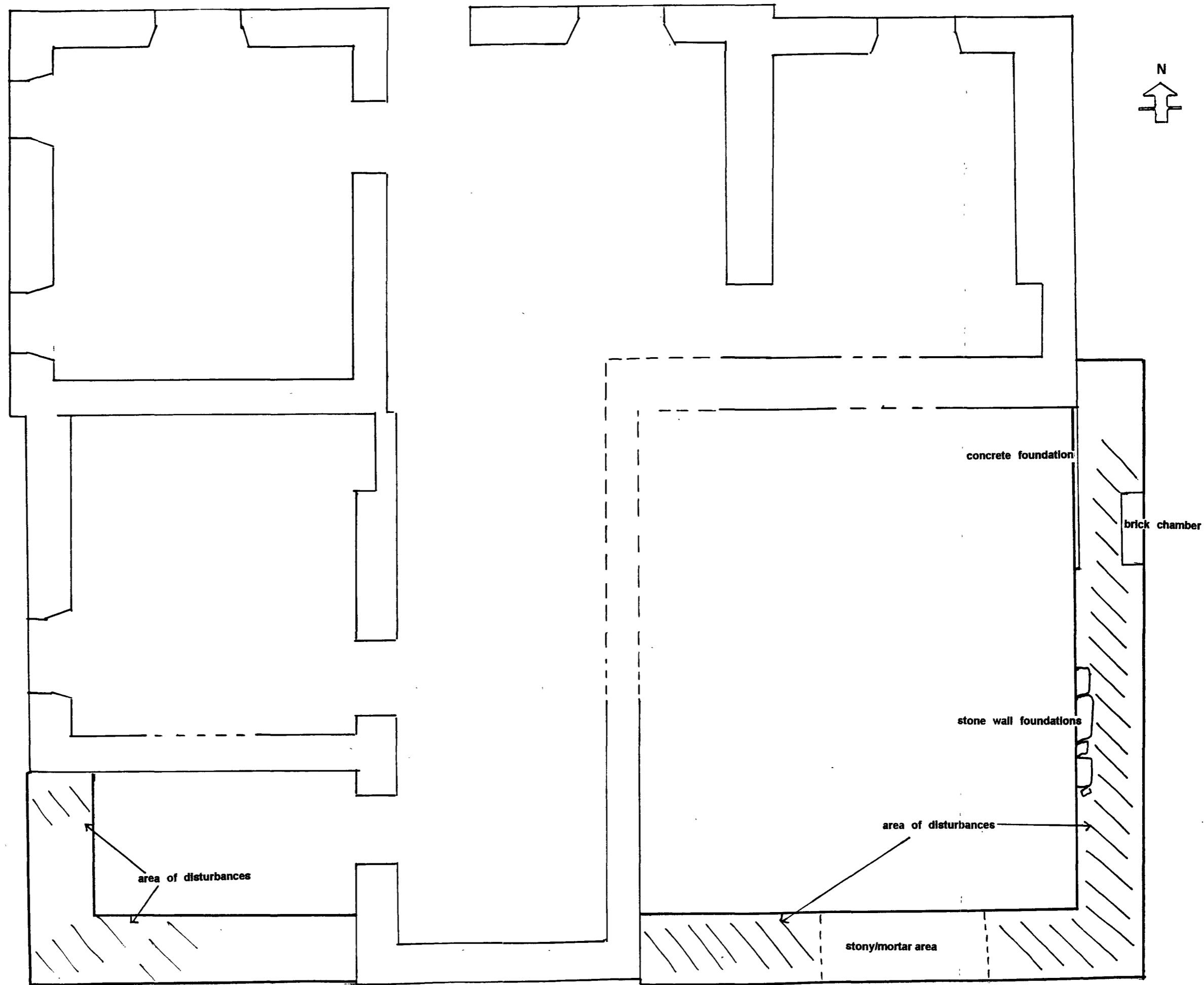
The ground had been previously cleared of rubbish including rubble and a concrete hard-standing It was apparent from marks on the existing walls of the house that a previous extension had formerly occupied part of the area of the new extension, and indeed several phases of construction of the house could be distinguished

The foundations for the extensions were dug with a mini-digger using a toothless bucket The average width of the foundation trench was 90 cm, and the depth varied between 50 and 65 cm below the surface The foundations of the existing house on the eastern side were revealed as one course of dressed stone approximately 23 cm deep, resting on brown loamy clay On the west side of the house the foundations were over 50 cm deep, consisting of a protruding course of large stones at the base with another course flush with the wall line above it

On the eastern side of the house there was a concrete foundation just beneath the surface running north-south alongside the new foundation trench (Plan 2) This was clearly the foundation for the previously demolished extension which extended for just over two metres south from the side of the house and then returned to the central forward section of the house In the same area, on the eastern side of the house, the ground was heavily disturbed by drains, water supplies and a large brick inspection chamber which extended below the level of the foundations (Plan 2)

The soil among these disturbances was a brown clayey loam with stones, becoming more clayey with depth On the western side of the house the upper soils were disturbed sandy clay containing 19th and 20th century rubbish including glass, pottery, bone and oyster shell, and becoming less disturbed clay by the base of the foundation trench

In the north-south foundation trench on the eastern side of the house a number of dressed and mortared stones were encountered 3.37 metres from the house corner, at a depth of 50 cm below the ground surface (Plates 1 - 3) They stretched for 1.5 metres southwards along the western side of the trench, which was disturbed for the remainder of its width by drains and an old water supply A further large stone was removed from this disturbed area (Plate 4) The dressed stones formed the foundations of a thick wall which appeared to have run east-west across the trench, and which had been disturbed by the drains (Plan 2) No trace of this wall appeared on the other side of the house, where it would have run quite close to the existing front wall



**PLAN 2 YORK COTTAGE, JERVAULX**

**PLAN OF HOUSE (SIMPLIFIED) AND FOUNDATION TRENCHES FOR EXTENSIONS**

**Scale 1:50**

A confused area of small stones and a mortar spread appeared in the east-west foundation trench on the eastern side of the house, from 45 cm from the surface to the bottom of the trench at 55 cm, and stretching for about 2 metres along the trench, but this area was heavily disturbed by both plastic and clay drains and no structure was discernible

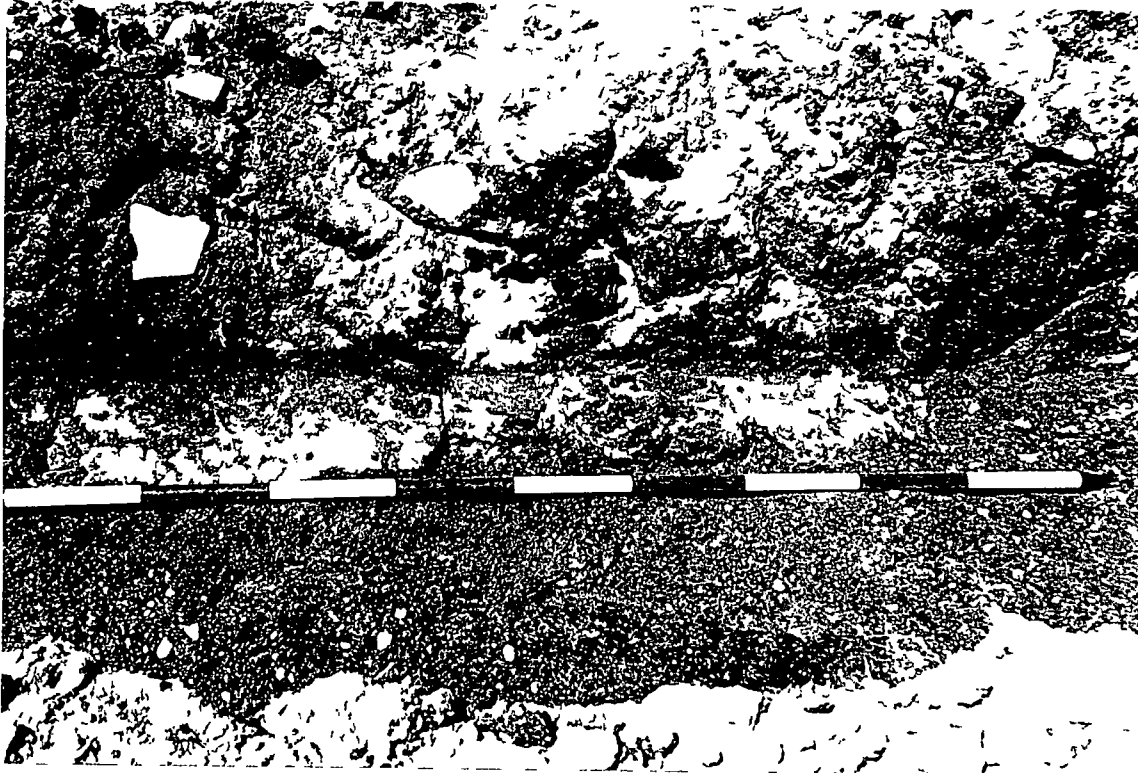
#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The watching brief provided evidence of the foundations of a substantial wall running east-west towards the south-east front of York Cottage, and another possible wall foundation further to the south. Although no dating evidence was recovered, and the remains were heavily disturbed, it seems possible that these foundations predate the existing house. On the other hand, as there has evidently been a number of alterations, extensions and rebuilds of York Cottage, the foundations may relate to an earlier phase of the house. The original date of York Cottage is probably seventeenth or eighteenth century, and it is almost certainly built from materials re-used from the Abbey, so the similarity of building stone is no help in dating the foundations.

It would be of great interest to establish whether the wall foundations do predate the house, especially if they could be related to the Abbey itself, and any further work especially to the east of York Cottage towards the road could establish the relationship of the foundations with the house.

Alison Clarke

July 1996



**PLATE 3 STONE WALL FOUNDATIONS AT BASE OF TRENCH**



**PLATE 4 STONE WALL FOUNDATIONS AND DRESSED STONE REMOVED FROM TRENCH**



**PLATE 1  
STONE WALL  
FOUNDATIONS  
LOOKING NORTH**



**PLATE 2  
STONE WALL  
FOUNDATIONS  
ACROSS TRENCH**