

NYCC HER 30	
SNY	819 24
ENY	544
CNY	19144
Parish	4035
Rec'd	1999

**LAND OFF GREEN LANE,
WHITBY, NORTH YORKSHIRE**

**REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
DESK-TOP STUDY**

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY
3. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS
4. ASSESSMENT
5. LIST OF SOURCES
6. LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

List of Figures

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Figure 1. | Site location map |
| Figure 2. | Reconstructed 1540 map by Atkinson (1894) |
| Figure 3. | 1737 map of the Ropery |
| Figure 4. | 1828 map by Wood |
| Figure 5. | 1853 Ordnance Survey map |
| Figure 6. | Map in Young 1817 |
| Figure 7. | View across site from north east |
| Figure 8. | Retaining wall along Green Lane |
| Figure 9. | Sketch plan showing walls and dressed masonry |
| Figure 10. | Stone pier and railings on west boundary |
| Figure 11. | Profile of earlier retaining wall |
| Figure 12. | Coping stones |
| Figure 13. | Flat slab on grassed area |
| Figure 14. | Masonry with 17 th century style tooling |
| Figure 15. | Deeply tooled stones |
| Figure 16. | Tooled masonry at Abbey House |
| Figure 17. | Re-used stones in adjacent garden |
| Figure 18. | Re-used stones in adjacent garden |
| Figure 19. | Re-used stones in adjacent garden |

© York Archaeological Trust: a registered charity
Cromwell House, 13 Ogleforth, York YO1 7FG
Tel. (01904) 663000 Fax. (01904) 663024

by DR. BERYL LOTT.

1. Introduction

In January 1999 an archaeological desk-top study was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on the site of a prospective development at land off Green Lane, Whitby, North Yorkshire (NGR NZ 9025 1050) (Fig. 1). The work was undertaken on behalf of the prospective developers, Harrison Developments of Malton, to a specification provided by the Heritage Unit of North Yorkshire County Council.

The site is located on the middle levels of the rising east cliff which runs along the east side of the Esk river and which separates the flatter cliff top farmland from the harbour and older development along the Esk. It lies at the junction of two valleys, where Spital Beck cuts down through the east cliff to join the Esk; at this point the contours change direction forming an irregular area, Green Lane which bounds the south east of the plot is actually cut through the Spital valley slope to form a route to the higher ground above. The plot lies to the south west of St Hilda's Business Centre situated on The Ropery, and is bounded on the north by a modern car park and development, on the west by a sharp cliff drop behind nineteenth century housing fronting towards Church Street and on the south east by Green Lane. The northern half of the area is a modern car park whilst the southern part rises steeply into an irregular hummock of land which is held by high retaining boundary walls along Green Lane and behind the Victorian terracing to the west.

These retaining walls are necessitated by the underlying geology; to both sides of the Esk are layers comprising the Saltwick Formation where beds of Aislaby sandstone overlie shales. Slippage along a fault on the line of the river has caused a steep cliff along the east side of the River Esk. Thus the cliff and surface behind it is formed of sandstone whilst the estuary level at the base is shale. The houses to the west of the proposed development plot are built along terraces caused by the sandstone slippage and lie behind others at estuary level which lie on shale. These terraces have been protected by retaining walls at each 'step', one of which is that forming the west boundary of the plot. Green Lane itself seems to have been cut through the sandstone to form a passable route.

2. Aims and Methodology

The aims of the desk-based study were to determine the land-use history and ownership of the site in order to assess the potential of the site for survival of significant archaeological remains.

Documentary and cartographic research was carried out at Northallerton County Record Office, Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society Library, Whitby Town Local Library, York Minster Library, City of York Central Reference Library, the Borthwick Institute for Historical Research and in published national government archives.

Site inspection on 19th January 1999 included examination of stones found on the site and in existing boundary walls in order to assess age and possible origin. A discussion with local historians Daniel Diehl, Mark Donnelly, David Pybus and Roma Hodgson on the historical and archaeological associations of the site took place on the same day.

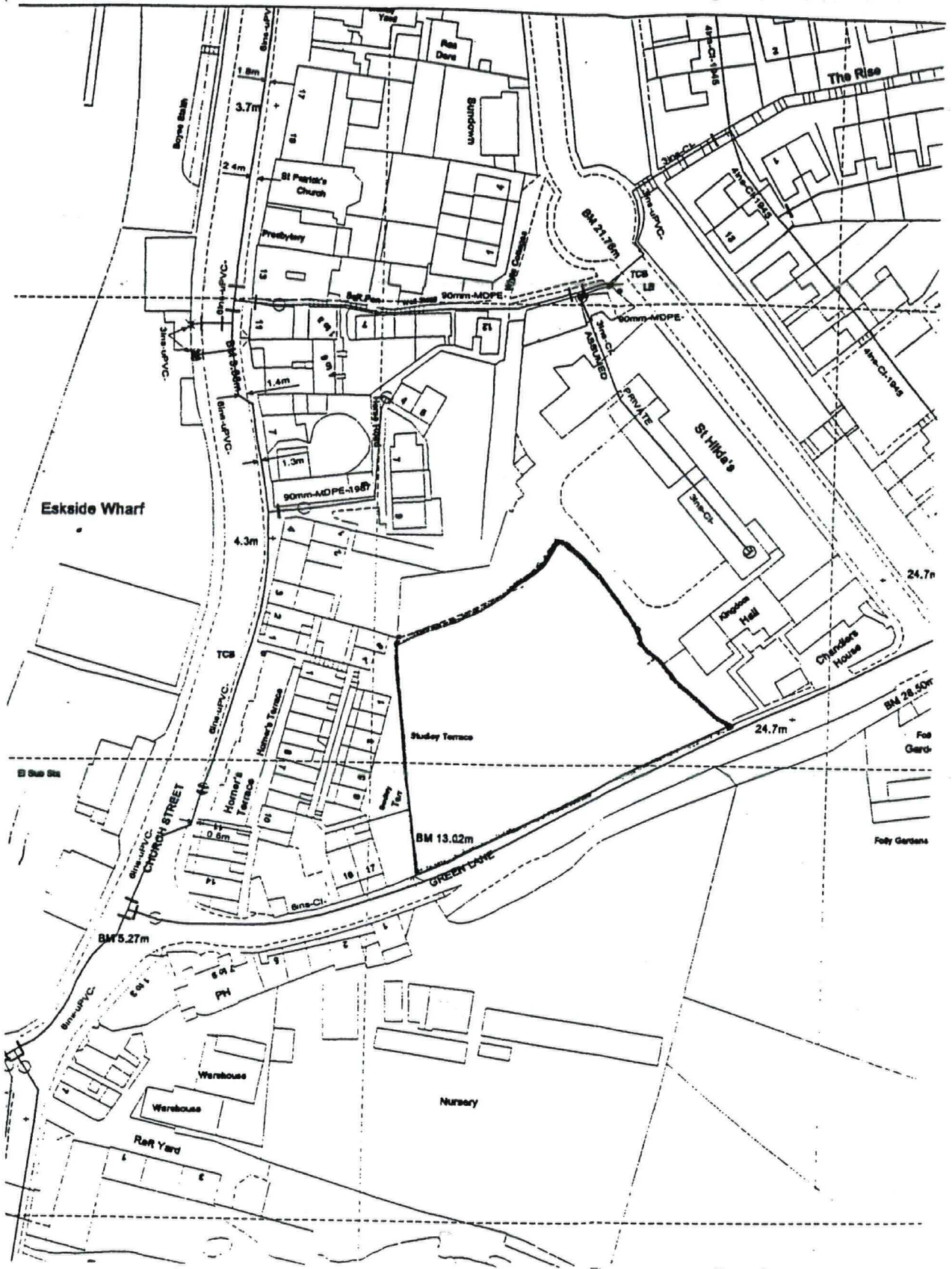


Fig. 1 Site location map

Scale 1:1250

3. Description and Analysis

3.1 Historical research

3.1.1 Whitby Abbey

The early history of Whitby is well attested although interpretations of the details may differ. The earliest mention of the area is as the site of the monastery of Streoneshalh, founded in AD657 by St Hilda, as a mixed monastery on the headland near the present abbey. This was reputedly destroyed in 867 by a Danish raid and seems to have been abandoned although there is ample evidence in the placenames found nearby that there was a large degree of Scandinavian settlement in the area which probably included the harbour of Whitby (*Witebi* in Domesday). However, it seems that originally the name only referred to a settlement on the west bank of the Esk, that on the east being known as Presteby (*Prestebi* - 'settlement of priests', in Domesday). Presteby is used in tandem with Whitby until the early fourteenth century after which only the name Whitby is used.

The abbey was refounded c.1074 by William de Percy on land he held as sub-tenant from the Earl of Chester to whom it had been given by William the Conqueror. The original foundation charter included only 2 carucates of land which was increased sometime 1084-1102 by a larger grant whose bounds show that it extended from Sandsend in the north to Hackness in the south and Grosmont in the west, bounded to the east by the sea. This grant was for rents and rights and was not a freehold ownership of land; there were freeholders who held estates and plots within the bounds and many of these were granted to the abbey at various times in the next four hundred years (for discussions of lands see Young, 1817 and Atkinson, 1894).

The town of Whitby is always mentioned separately in abbey charters but was not owned by the abbey even though they held many rights over it. It is not clear at this early period whether the land on Green Lane fell into Whitby town or was part of the abbey lands (which later formed the manors of 'Whitby Lathes', Stainsacre and Hawkser) although it was certainly covered in the area circumscribed by the twelfth century bounds.

3.1.2 Leper Hospital

In 1109 a leper hospital was founded somewhere in the vicinity of Spital Bridge which lies 130m to the south west of the site. At its foundation the hospital was dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel and was located in 'Helredale'. It also served other needy people who were not leprous (Whitby Cartulary Vol. II, 514). In 1145 -53 it was still known by this name, but after this, the valley, watercourse and bridge became known by the hospital itself as Spital Vale, Spital Beck and Spital Bridge. The adjoining 'Hospital croft' which was given as dense wood and thorny ground was cultivated and dug by the late twelfth century according to an abbey memorial of this date.

The next mention of a hospital at Whitby is a hundred years later in the Hundred Rolls of 1274/5 when a 'hospital of the Blessed Thomas' in the Liberty of Whitby was then said to be of the king's gift and that the burgesses held the land and holding belonging to it, although by whose warrant was unknown (YAJRS Vol CLI, 116). A charter of 1307 mentions a land grant from Rievaulx to Whitby abbey for the benefit of the hospital of paupers of Whitby,

but gives no dedication or location (Whitby Cartulary Vol. II, 517). In 1320, 1397 and 1399 the custody of the hospital of St John the Baptist, Whitby was in the grant of the king and is recorded in the relevant Patent Rolls. This hospital may have been fairly extensive, in 1406 it was the subject of an enquiry into wastes, dilapidations and destructions in the church and chancel, lands, houses, buildings, woods, walls, enclosures, gardens, stews, stanks and mills within its site and belonging to it. After this it is heard of no more and it must be assumed that it was abandoned before the dissolution; in the ministers accounts of Whitby Abbey 1540-47 there is no mention of it, only in the returns for Whitby Lathes is there mention of a close near Spital Bridge rented out with part of the manor of Whitby.

Eighteenth century writers were confused by the multiplicity of dedications and supposed all these must be different hospitals, but Young and Atkinson were both of the opinion that they referred to the same place. Although the location is not mentioned after 1274 there was an oral tradition that the hospital of St John the Baptist was on the foreshore by Spital Bridge, putting it at the same location as the original hospital to St. Michael. If so there was obviously some period in the badly recorded thirteenth century when the crown took over the patronage, it was at this time when relations between town and abbey were not good, the abbot attempting to assert rights and claims in the town. It may have been settled in the case of the hospital by making the crown patron, but giving the administration to the abbey, causing re-dedication.

The exact location of the hospital is unknown. The earlier references call it 'at the hospital bridge' but later references just call it 'at Whitby', perhaps the 'Spital' names were by then self explanatory. Although reconstructed c.1540 plans were given by Charlton, Young and Atkinson (Fig.2) they are based on late eighteenth century evidence of ruined stone walls on the quay owned by William Skinner (Young, Vol.2, 365 and see 1828 map, Fig. 4). No detailed description was made which would date these remains and the exact location was not given. The area is now much altered and cleared, and if there are any remains of the walls mentioned they may be beneath the eighteenth century building now derelict which lies immediately adjacent to the older extant bridge. When the reconstructed map is compared to the 1737 map (Fig. 3) it can be seen in the Southgate area to portray the main road as it was in the late eighteenth century, by which time the route had altered.

Green Lane linked the hospital to the abbey, but it was also the route to the original crossing point of the river Esk before Whitby Bridge was built (first mentioned 1351). The route along Green Lane may have been in use from the time of the seventh century monastery.

Leper hospitals are commonly located at the extremities of parishes and it may be relevant that Spital bridge is outside the Whitby town parish boundary and within an extreme corner of the land considered together as Whitby Lathes, Hawkser and Stainsacre in 1540. In fact the parish boundary can be seen on the 1853 map to follow the ford to the bottom of Green Lane and then wind around the bounds of the original plot from which the proposed modern development area is being taken before following the top of the cliff separating abbey from town (Fig.5). The fact that it winds round the plot rather than crossing directly to Green Lane suggests that this land was traditionally part of that with the area of the hospital. The 1406 reference suggests a large site which may have extended across the stream and encompassed this area; although the bank would have provided a deterrent to usage, the proximity of the lane might moderate that.

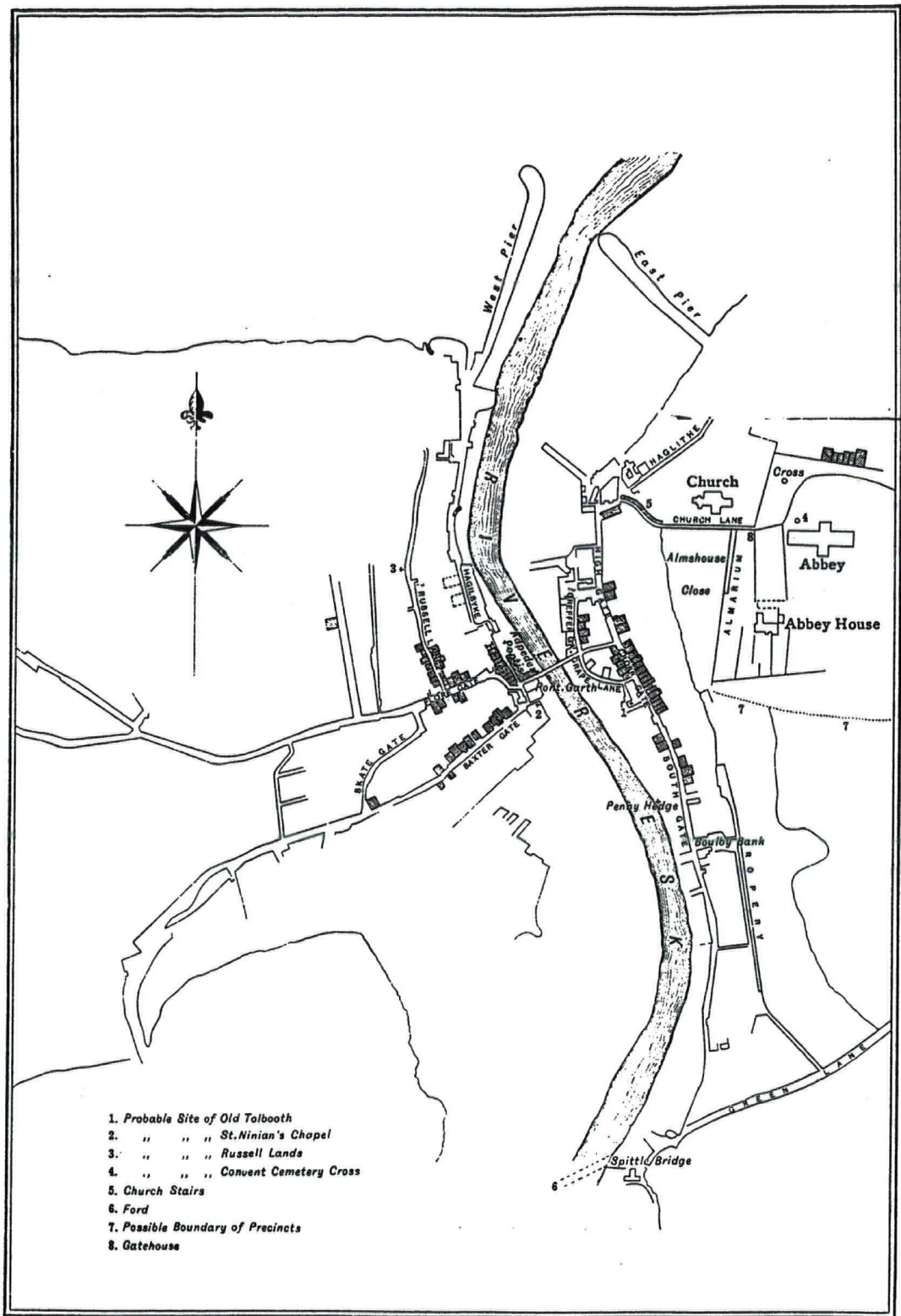


Fig. 2 Reconstructed 1540 map by Atkinson (1894)

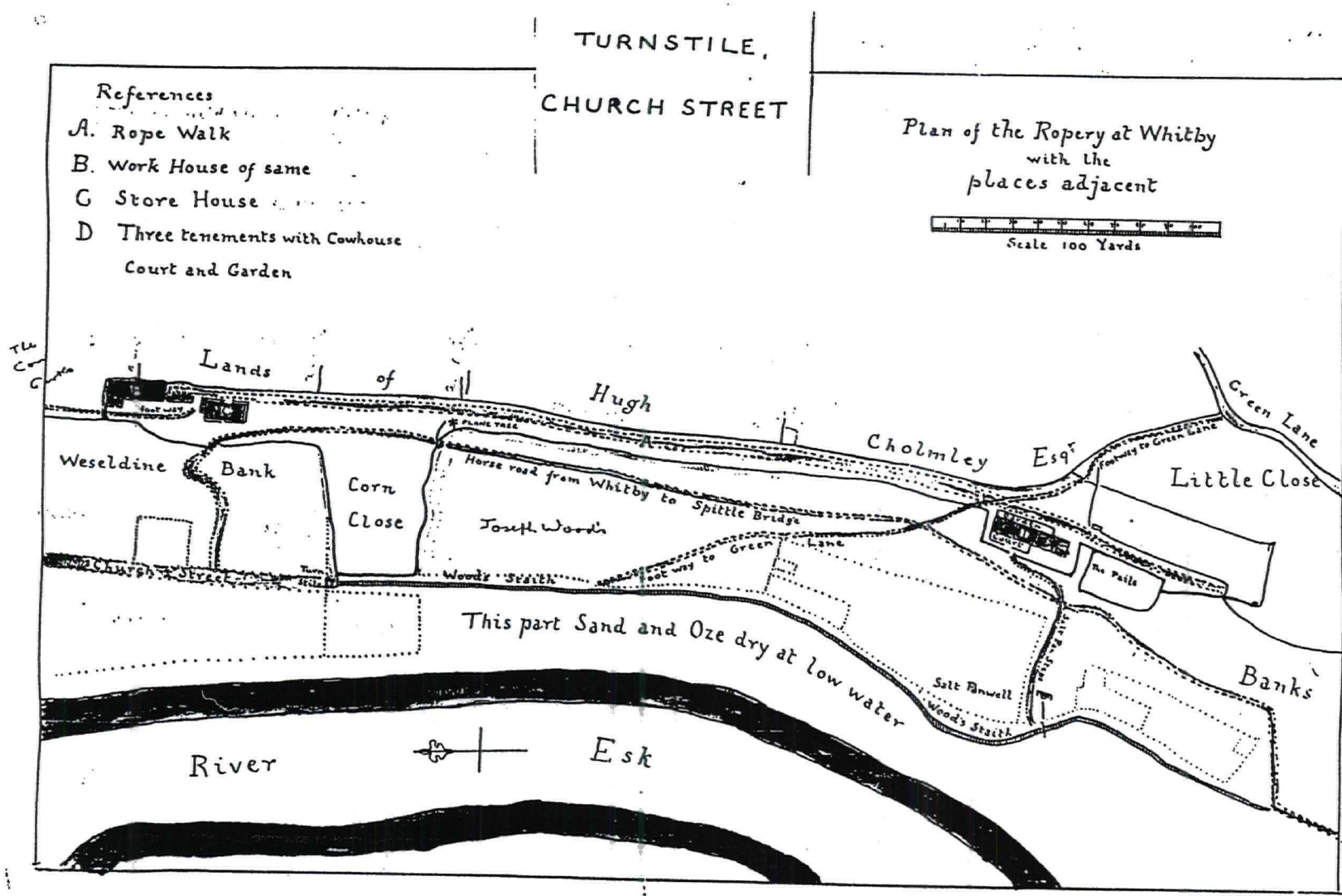
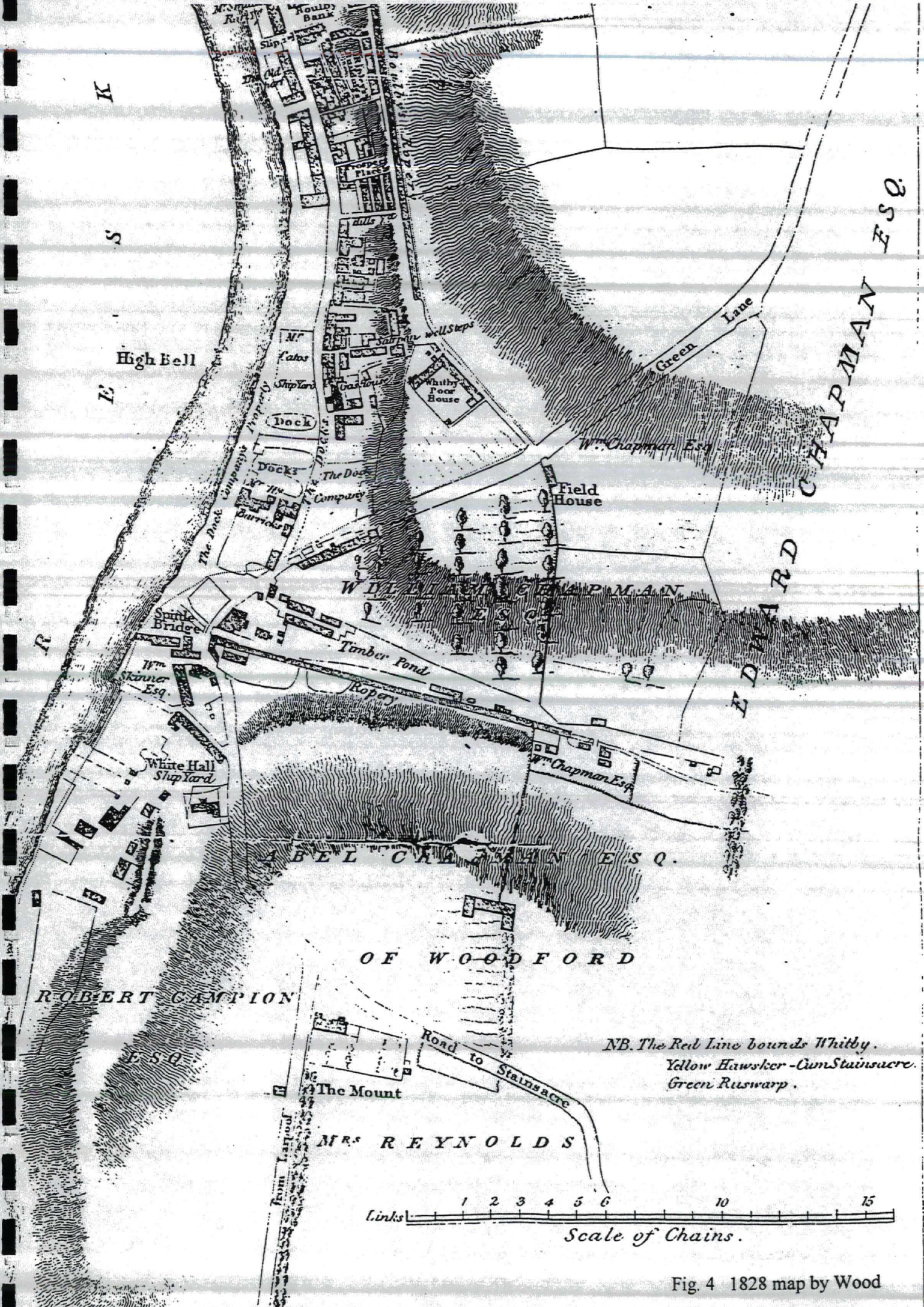


Fig.3 1737 map of the Ropery



K

S

E

High Bell

R

Spindle Bridge

Wm Skinner Esq

White Hall Slipyard

ROBERT CAMPION

E S Q

The Mount

MRS REYNOLDS

OF WOODFORD

ABEL CHAPMAN ESQ.

WILLIAM CHAPMAN

Wm Chapman Esq

Field House

Wm Chapman Esq

Whitby Poor House

Green Lane

EDWARD CHAPMAN ESQ.

NB. The Red Line bounds Whitby.
Yellow Hawsker - Cum Stainsacre.
Green Ruswarp.

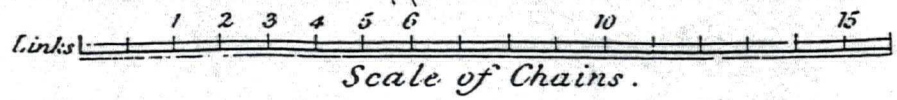
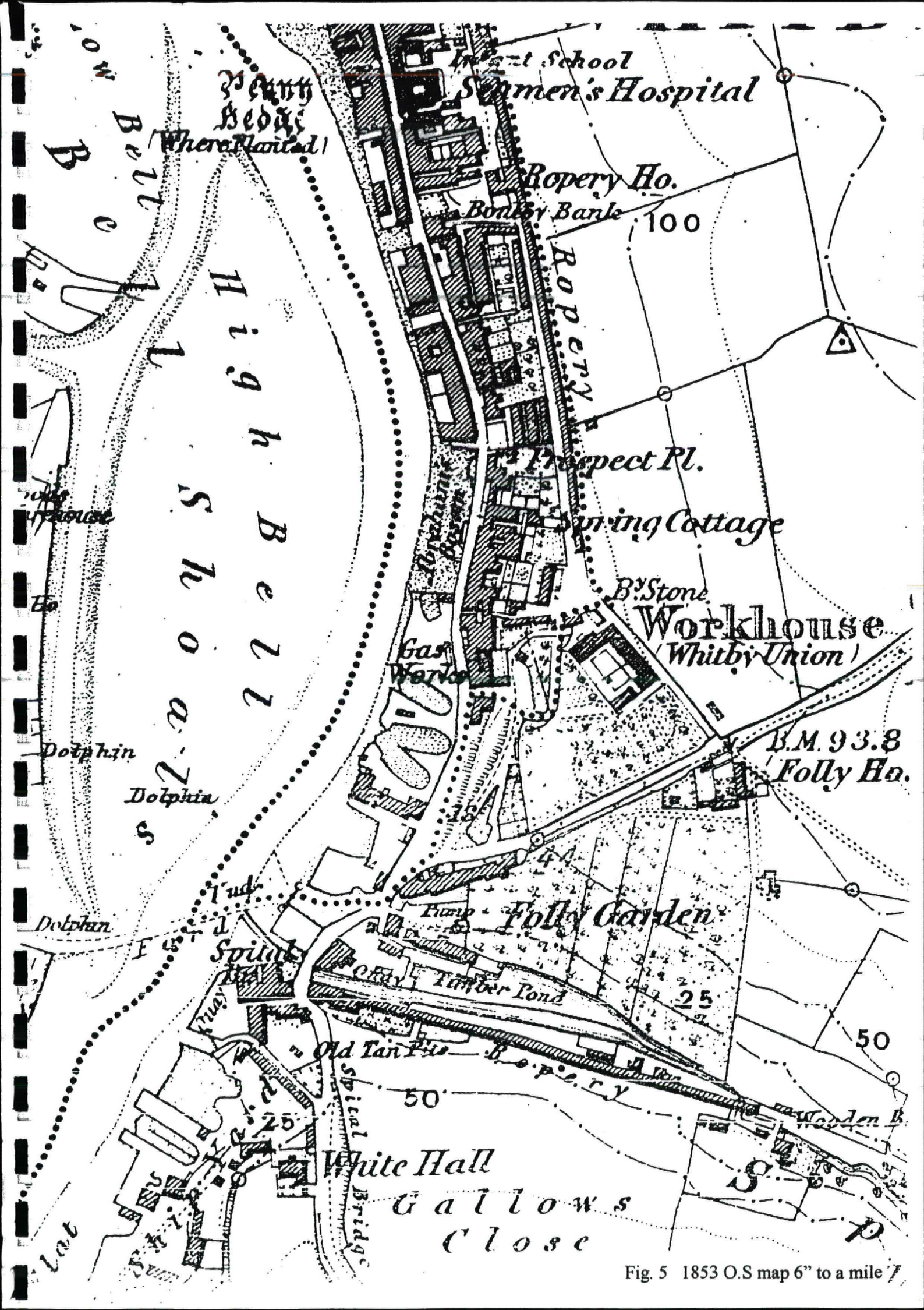


Fig 4 1828 map by Wood



High Bell Shoals
Where the boats
were moored!

Elementary School
Seamen's Hospital

Ropery Ho.
Bobby Bank

100

Prospect Pl.
Spring Cottage

B. Stone
Workhouse
(Whitby Union)

B.M. 93.8
Folly Ho.

Folly Garden

Timber Pond

Old Tar Pit

White Hall

Gallows
Close

Fig. 5 1853 O.S. map 6" to a mile

3.1.3 Workhouse

No references have been found to the hospital, or the specific plot of land on Green Lane, between the Dissolution and 1737, when it partly appears on the edge of a plan of the ropery belonging to Mr Boulby which followed the flatter land along the cliff edge above the town (Fig. 3). Here it was called 'Little Close' and seems to have been agricultural land. The next known reference is 1793/4 when the town workhouse of 1726 on the west side of Church Street further north became too small for the number of inmates and a new workhouse or Poor house was built by public subscription in the north corner of Little Close. To date it has not been possible to trace the ownership of the land before this, there is no Tithe Award or Enclosure Act for Whitby and an inspection of the Registry of deeds reveals no change in ownership recorded to Trustees of the workhouse, there may be relevant rentals or leases in the extensive Cholmley papers which are not immediately identifiable, but time precluded an extended search. On the other hand, it may have been rented by the Guardians, or, if the land belonged to the burgesses as was suggested for the hospital in 1274, it may have been available without purchase or rent. There are no known papers relating to the workhouse until the 1830's when it was Whitby Union workhouse.

The 1817 map of Young (Fig. 6) is the first to show the workhouse. It portrays it as an 'L' shaped block on an irregular plot of land south east of the recent harbour development; the plot is divided into two closes, the west of which lies over a wide junction of Green Lane and Church Street which has been extended along the staith road shown in 1737.

There are better details on the 1828 map (Fig. 4) which also shows the cliff areas. This shows the reasons for the irregular shape seen on the earlier two maps; the western boundary then followed the top of the cliff edge except at the south west corner where it extended to the base of the slope; the wide junction area nearby is now shown as belonging to 'The Dock Company'. The workhouse, 'Whitby Poor House', can be seen to occupy only part of the plot, occupying its own enclosure in the northern apex. The 'L' shape is the opposite way to 1817, this may indicate rebuilding, but may equally be poor draughtsmanship, as the earlier map is at a much smaller scale and is less detailed, Young himself describes it as the 1794 building.

In 1853, the workhouse layout is very similar except the land around is shown to be laid out in paths and orchard areas and a sweeping contour indicates that it was divided into the higher and lower land which are still there, this may suggest that there had been some form of landscaping carried out between the two dates. The development along Church Street is more intense although Spital Bridge seems little changed. The line of the 'horse road' winding up the cliff in 1737 can no longer be made out. The western boundary appears to have been cut back into the steep cliff which forms it, and, although the houses below are not built, the land has been terraced along the line of Horner's Terrace and divided into small garden plots. Building here must have taken place later in the nineteenth century linking Whitby and Spital Bridge.

Green Lane has probably been in use from the seventh century although its present widened form may date from the end of the eighteenth/beginning of the nineteenth century, Atkinson describes it as a '*venella*' up until then (Atkinson p178), latin '*venella*' means a small lane. It may have been passable by carts as it was the only road linking the abbey and town apart



Fig. 6 Map in Young 1817

from the Church steps and the steep packhorse route alongside it. The original town lay between these routes alongside the present inner harbour. The road also linked the abbey with its grange at Larpool.

3.2 Site inspection

Inspection of the site revealed that the northern half of the plot had been levelled to form a modern tarmac car parking area to the west of the former brick built workhouse, now St Hilda's Business Centre (Fig. 7). This rose sharply to the south where the southern half of the site is a high uneven, grassed hummocky area which has the remains of recent fires towards its west end. To the south this falls about 6-7m to Green Lane where a modern rebuilt retaining wall holds back the lower part (Fig. 8).

3.2.1 Stone walling and loose stones

On the west boundary, partly hidden by shrubbery, are the remains of a low stone wall topped with iron railings terminating in simple stone piers (Figs. 9 and 10). This walling lies directly behind Studley Terrace, nineteenth century terrace housing facing out over the Esk. This walling is continued southwards to Green Lane by a modern breeze block wall which forms the boundary to houses facing Green Lane. However, below this is an older wall which can be seen in profile from Green Lane where the walls to either side can be seen to be later and to abut it (Fig. 11). Northwards there is no wall above the steep drop of the retaining wall. The surface of most of this walling is obscured by shrubbery but where it can be seen it appears to have dressing of rough horizontal tooling.

There are also the remains of a retaining wall running approximately north-south to the rear of the former south wing of the workhouse. This is not readily visible in its lower part as it retains the higher land to the west and earth has been piled against it from the east. The southern part of the visible section now forms stone steps to the higher southern part, these steps appear to be adaptations of the former wall. Close to the modern steps nearby are the remains of coping stone which has supported iron railings similar to that seen on the west boundary (Fig. 12).

On one of the few level areas of rough grass is a flat irregular stone slab lying directly on the earth, it is abutted by irregular sections of concrete paving suggesting a recent re-use of material (Fig. 13).

The top of the high southern section is irregular and there is a small number of embedded stones scattered across the surface (Fig. 14). These are dressed rectangular masonry stones with distinctive deep diagonal herringbone tooling. Similar stones can be seen in the rebuilt upper courses of the Green Lane retaining wall (Fig. 15) and in gardens nearby where a number are known to have been removed from the hill and utilised in garden walling. However, among these stones there are also other stones of varying sizes with very different vertical tooling (Figs 16-19).



Fig. 7 View across the site from the north east

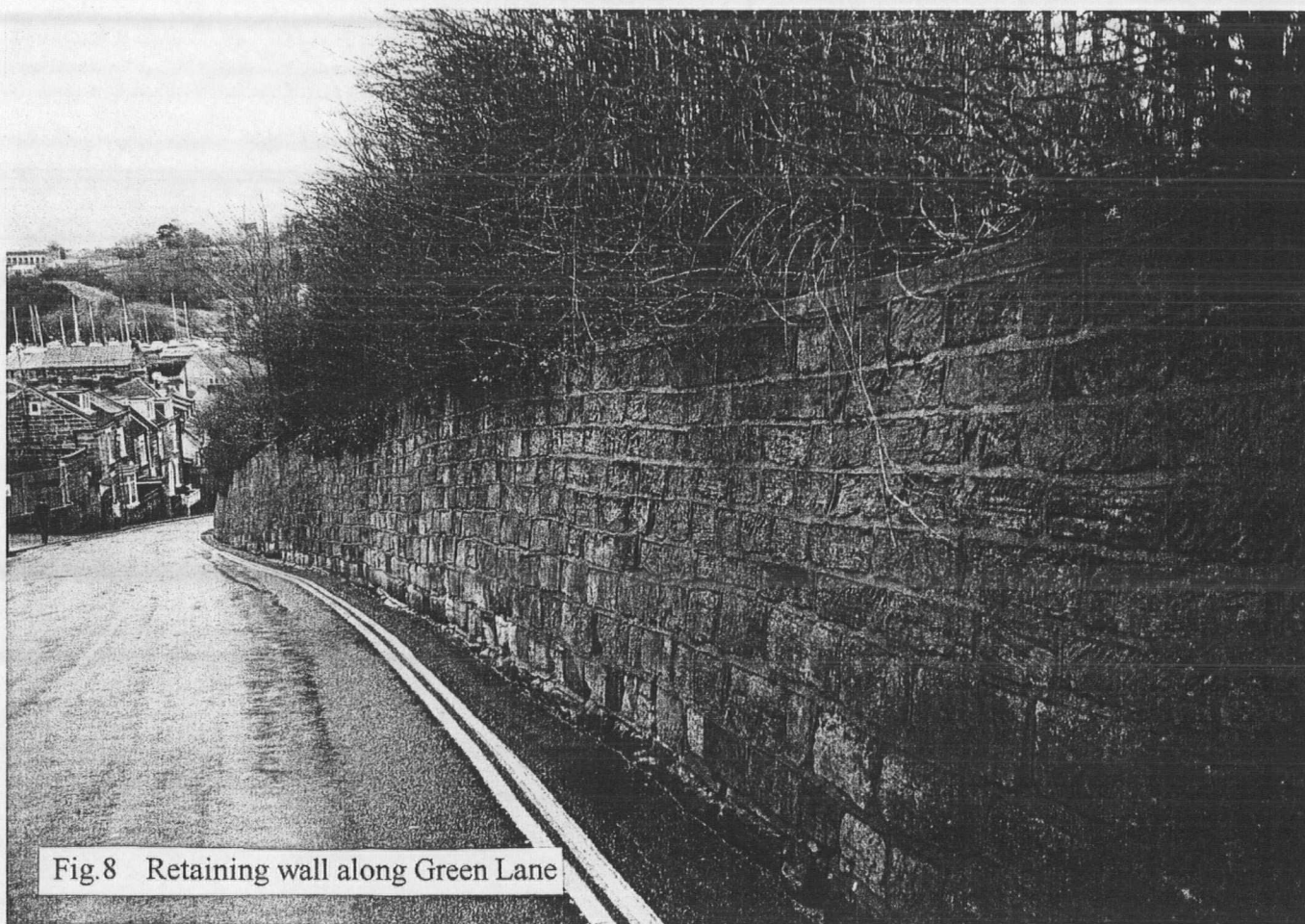


Fig. 8 Retaining wall along Green Lane

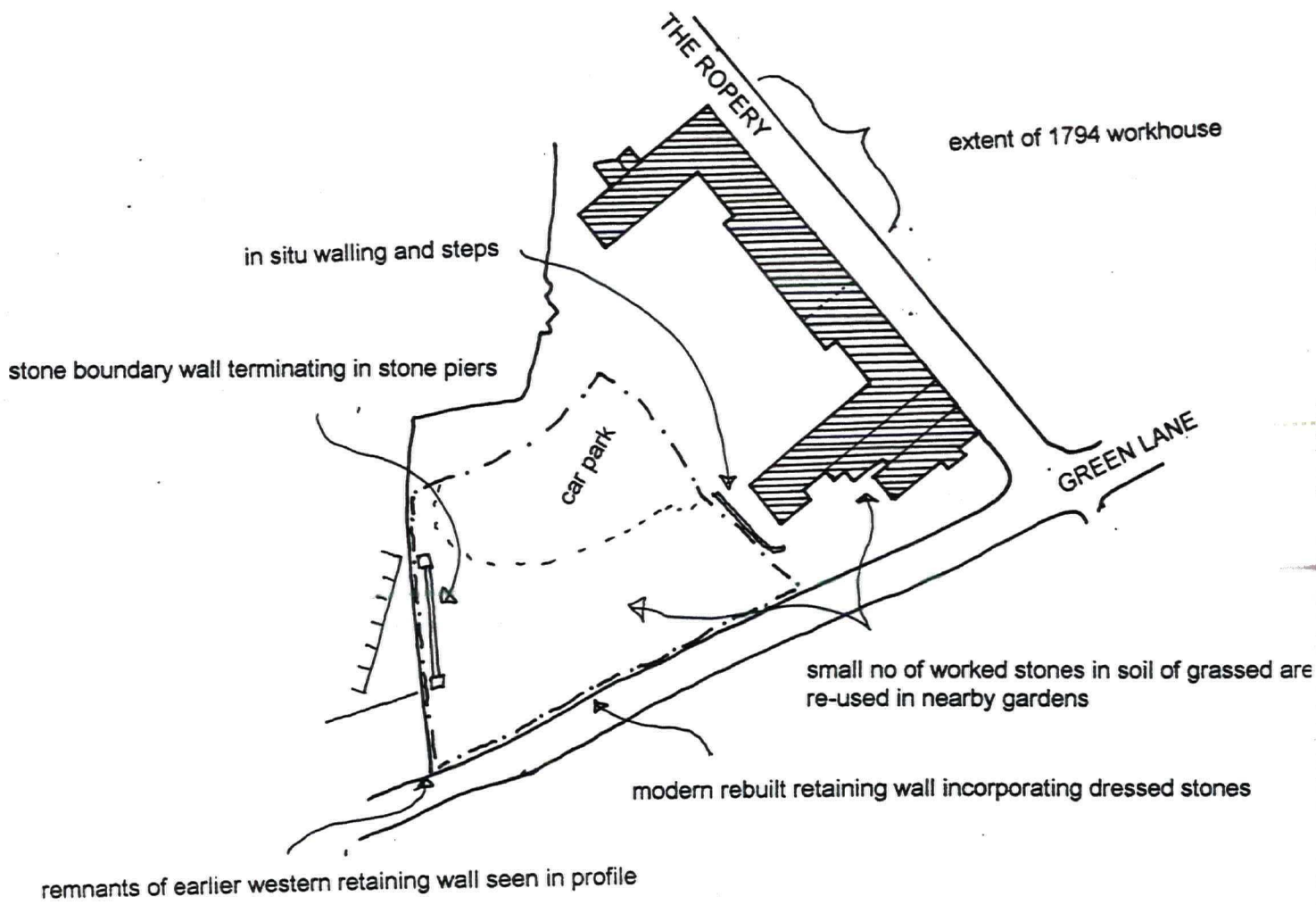


Fig.9 Sketch plan to show walls and dressed masonry

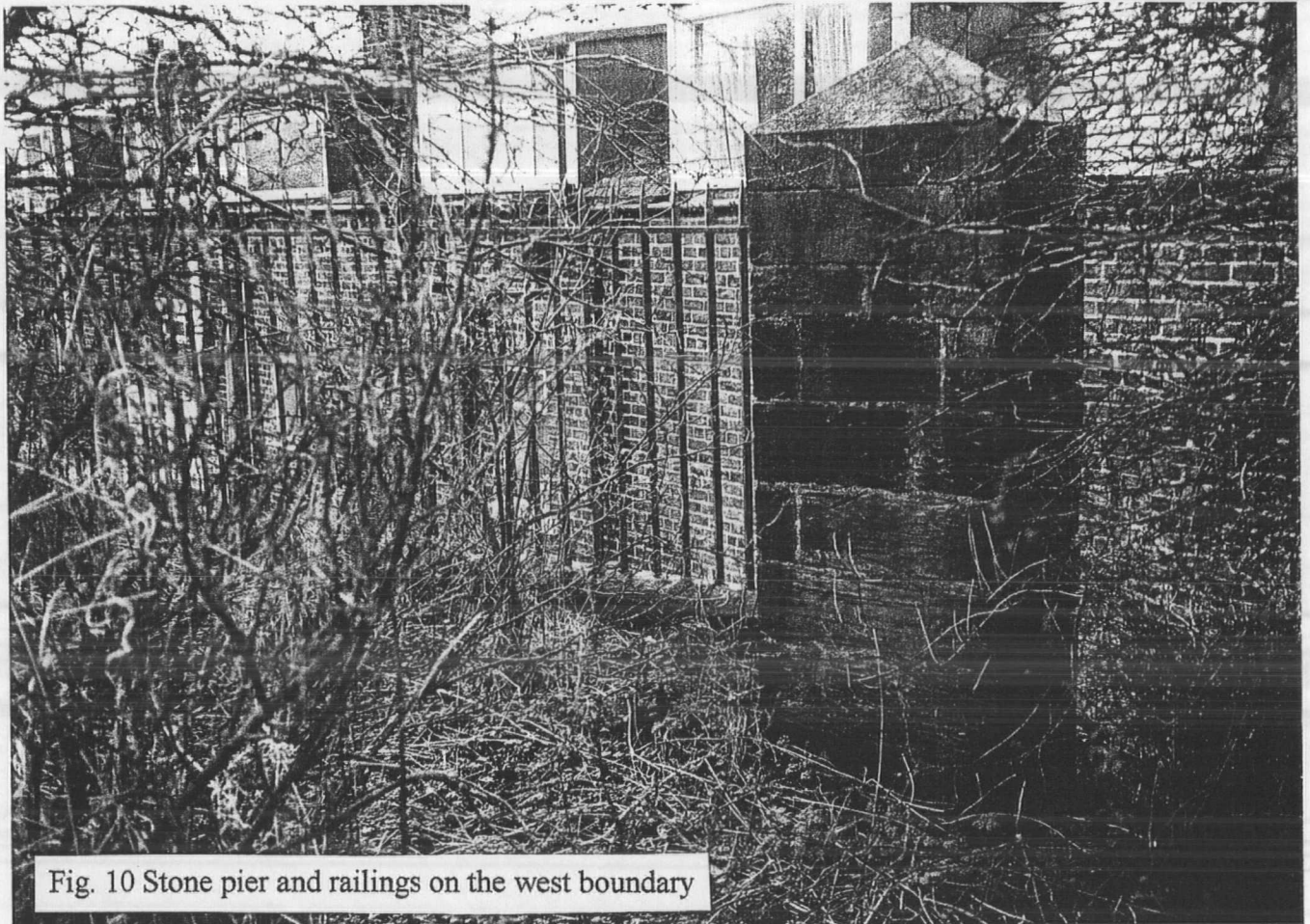


Fig. 10 Stone pier and railings on the west boundary

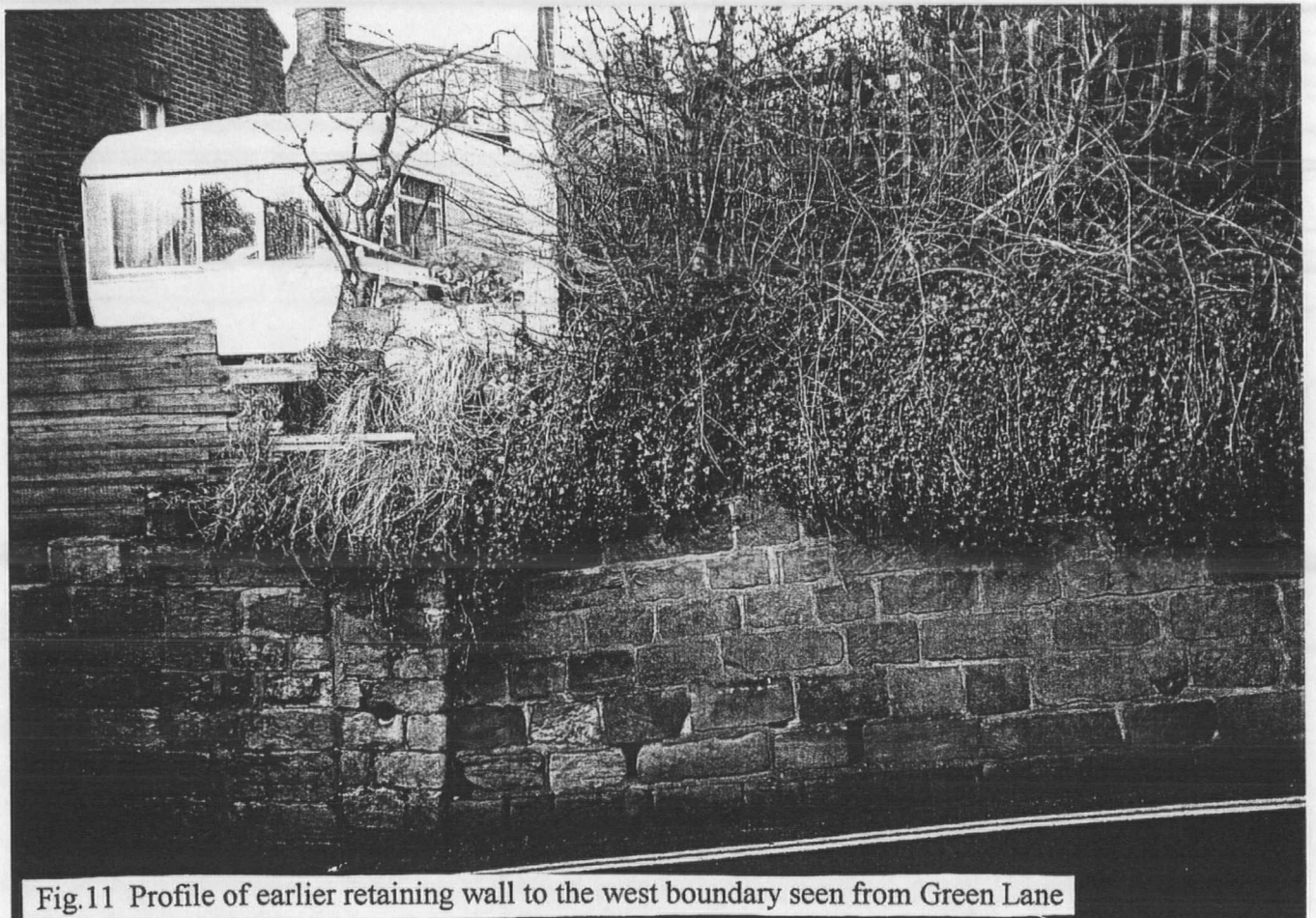


Fig. 11 Profile of earlier retaining wall to the west boundary seen from Green Lane



Fig. 12 Coping stones to the eastern end of the southern area



Fig. 13 Flat slab on grassed area

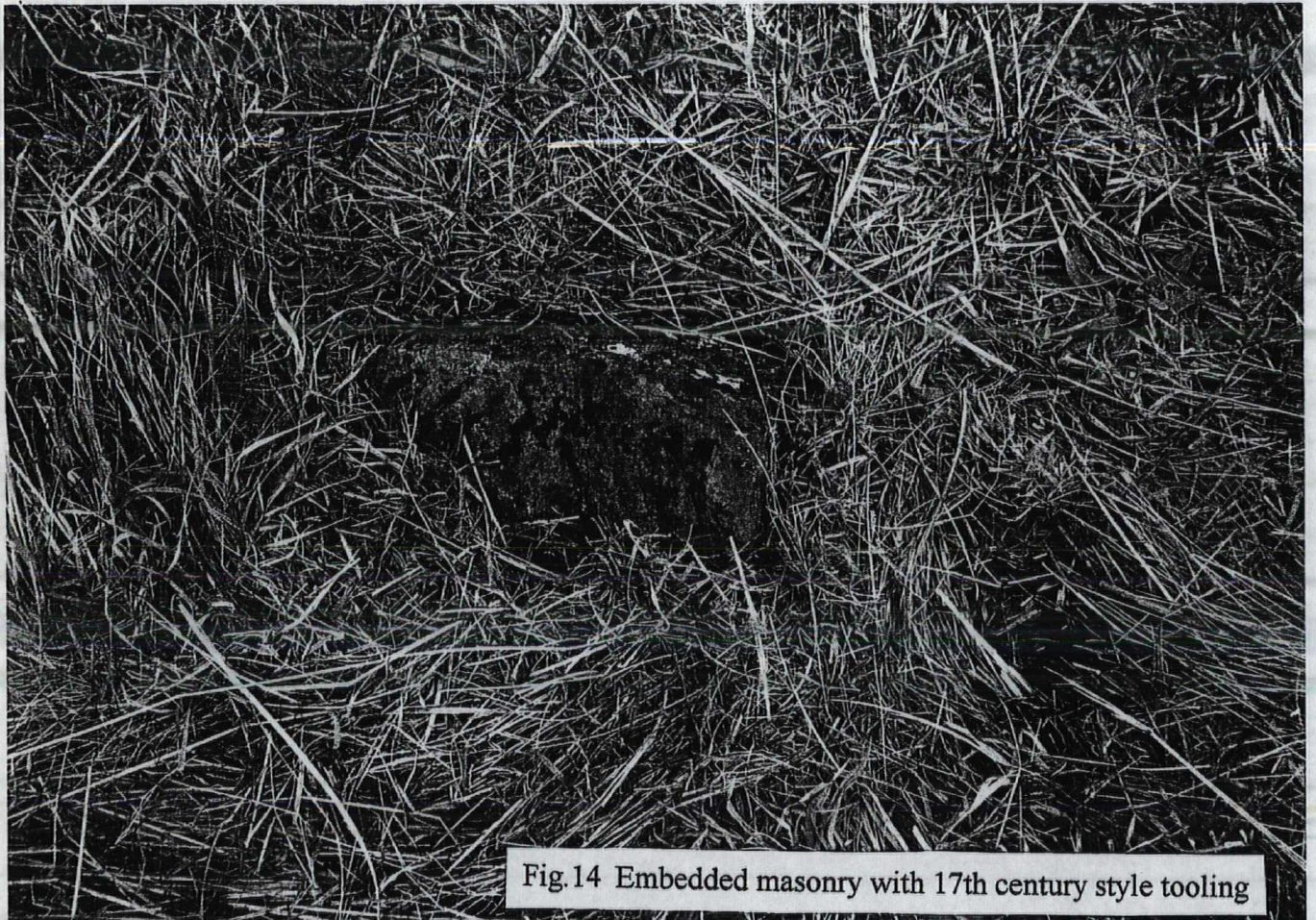


Fig.14 Embedded masonry with 17th century style tooling

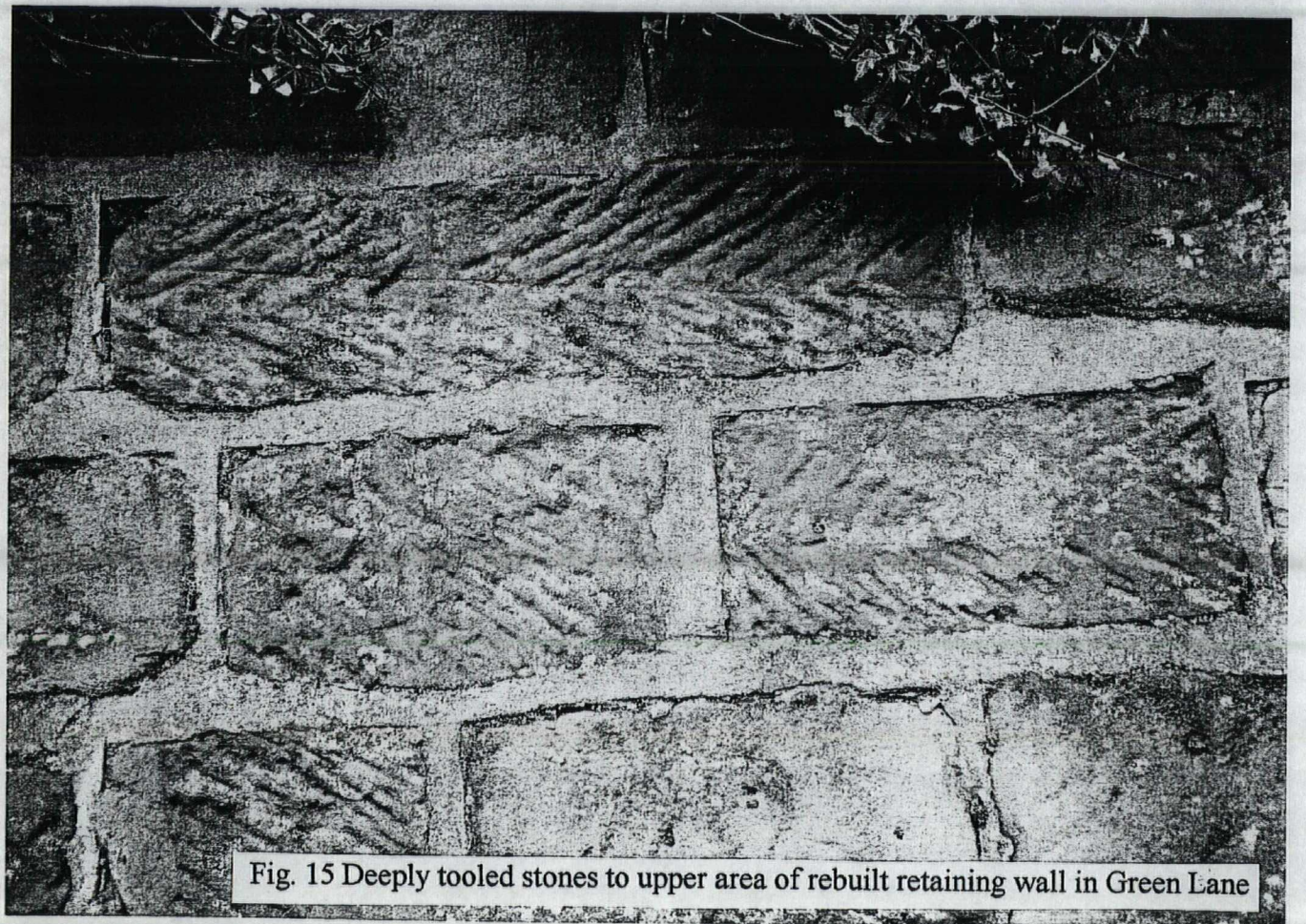


Fig. 15 Deeply tooled stones to upper area of rebuilt retaining wall in Green Lane

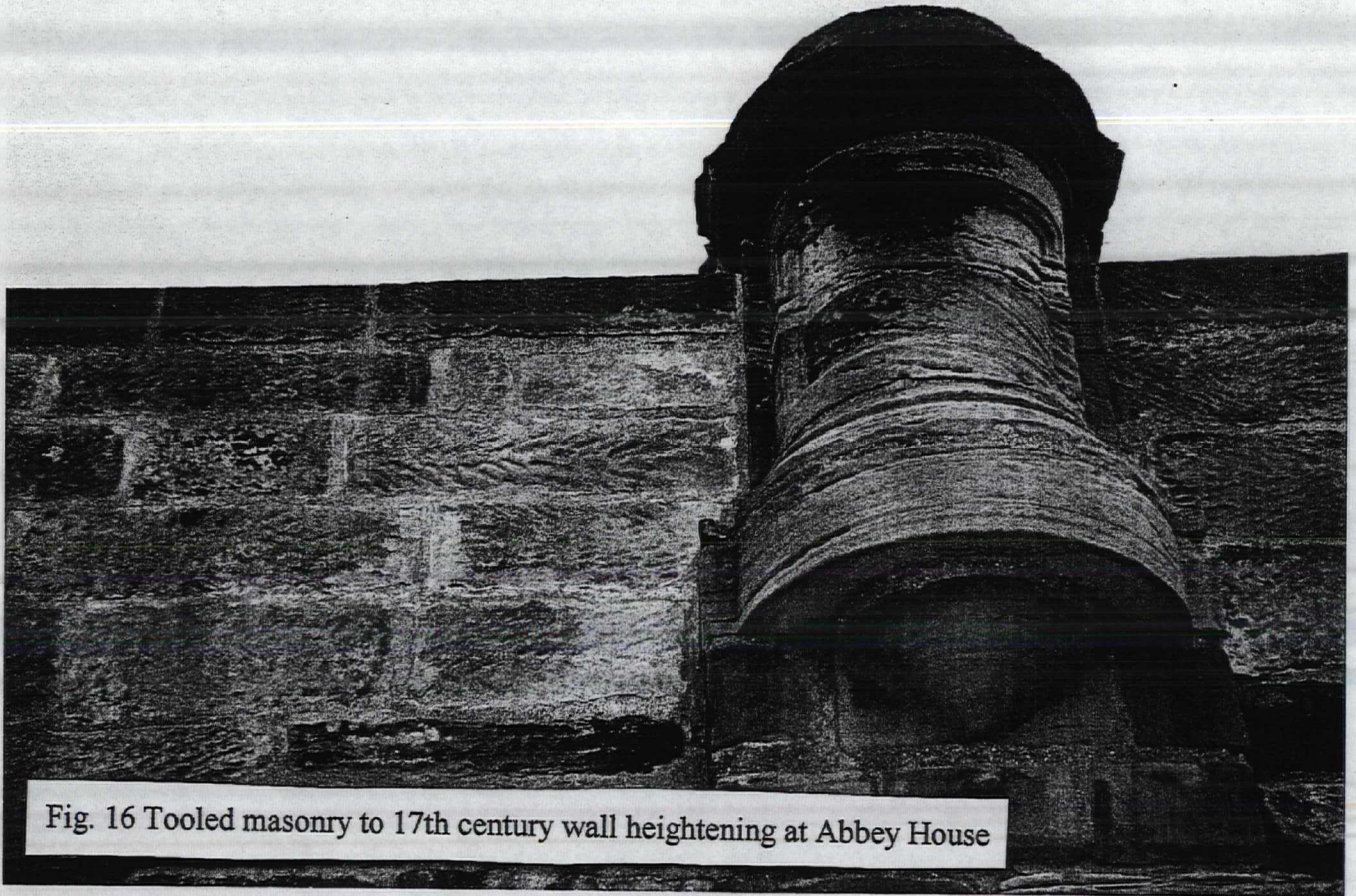


Fig. 16 Tooled masonry to 17th century wall heightening at Abbey House



Fig. 17 Reused stones in adjacent garden



Fig.18 Reused stones in adjacent garden

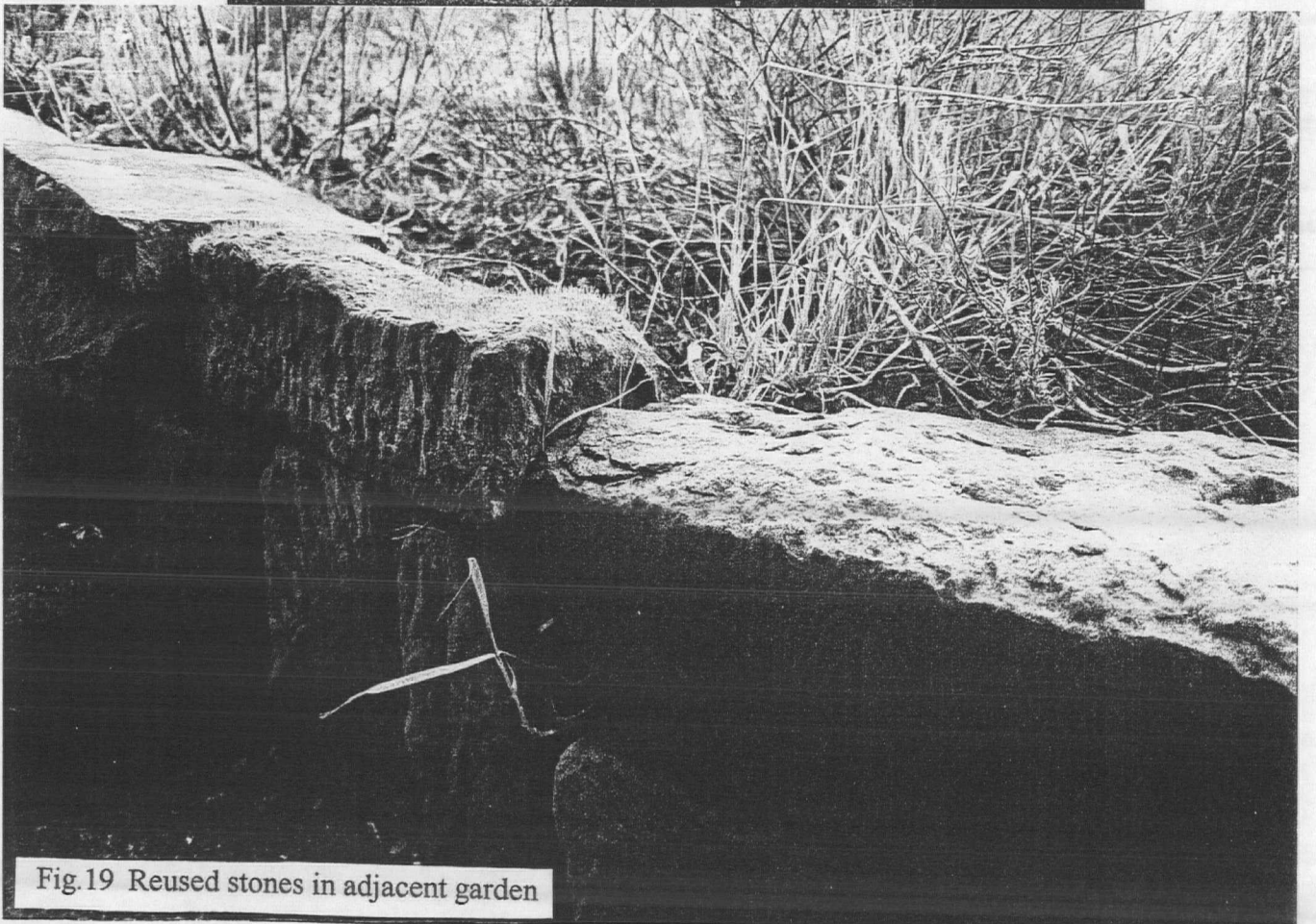


Fig.19 Reused stones in adjacent garden

3.2.2 Tooling

The deep herringbone tooling is of a type commonly seen in the seventeenth century (RCHM 1987, 206); indeed, a look at other building stones in the vicinity reveals some stones with this type of tooling among others with horizontal tooling in the 1633-6 heightening of the precinct wall around Abbey House (Fig. 16; date for wall -VCH p.510). The deep vertical tooling is from tools of a similar type and may relate to the same period or earlier, the stones on which the tooling is visible are not regularly shaped, suggesting an earlier rather than later date.

The eighteenth and nineteenth century stone buildings in the vicinity have a similar but finer, more regular tooling which is more like that found on the west boundary, suggesting that the remnants of boundary walls date to this period. The correspondence of the west walling and iron railing with the length of the Victorian terrace which was erected after 1853 suggests that this wall may relate to the later nineteenth century; similarly the walling seen further east crosses the area marked as orchard on the 1853 map and probably relates to the period when the south wing and Chandlers House were built some time shortly after. The masonry of the walls is too carefully dressed to have formed common field walls.

3.2.3 Landscape alterations

It seems probable that preparations for the modern car park may have involved clearance of part of the eastern wall causing the scattering of some stones. It also seems probable that nineteenth century alterations may have caused previous landscaping changes in addition to any changes caused by the erection of the original 1794 workhouse. Changes between 1737 and 1817 and again between 1828 and 1853 to the landscape south of Boulby Bank have already been outlined above with reference to old maps. These show a change from rough pasture agricultural use in 'Little Close' which was formed in a triangle of cliff top land between Green Lane, Boulby's ropery, and a footpath which linked Wood's Staith (now part of Church St), to one which was landscaped into gardens and bounded by the former footpath (now The Ropery), Green Lane, and housing formed on newly terraced land.

The present building is brick built and of late eighteenth century style, it forms a long central symmetrical block fronting The Ropery with wings running south west at either extremity. The original 1794 building was shorter and 'L' shaped, corresponding with the northern part of the present building, and as shown on the 1828 and 1853 maps. A break in the brick coursing to the south of the present south gable on the Ropery frontage shows the extent of the original building. Chandler's House, which formed a detached master's house, and the south wing do not appear, and it seems probable that the building was extended in a matching style with modifications to the original building not long after the date of the map, possibly as a result of the Poor Law Reform Act after which the workhouse was Unionised and national workhouse guidelines were set down, or as a result of an increase in inmates (it may be relevant that there was some disquiet about the accountability and management of the workhouse in letters to the Whitby Repository in 1827 and 1828 - just before the Reform Act was passed). These changes could each have resulted in some landscape modification and dispersal of masonry.

4. Assessment

The present formation of the land may be due to landscaping changes associated with the erection of the workhouse in 1794 and its later modifications. However, because its history is unknown before 1737, and it was in close proximity to an area associated with a medieval hospital, as well as forming a high point above a previous fording point of the river, it is possible that there may have been some earlier use of the site.

Green Lane was probably in use from the seventh century when it led to the lowest bridging point of the Esk which enabled communication with the monasteries and lands further north.

The lack of previous archaeological evidence in the Sites and Monuments record suggests that the land was not well used, but the scattering of stones with seventeenth century type tooling suggests that there may have been some use in the undocumented period, although it may just relate to field enclosure by the Cholmely family who owned most of the Whitby Abbey estate at that time and who were in the process of building and rebuilding their manor house adjacent to the abbey.

It is notable that this land was not utilised by the original 1794 workhouse even though it seems to have formed part of the same plot. This may purely have been because it was unsuitable geologically, but it is possible that if there had been earlier use of the site, it may have been exacerbated by dispersal of building material.

Without boreholes or some exploratory excavation it is impossible to determine whether the higher portion of land is a completely geological formation or whether it has been partly formed from works associated with the workhouse or relates to some other previous land use. A small number of exploratory trenches is advised in order to determine this.

5. List of Sources

5.1 Printed Sources

- Anon. 1794. Rules for the better management of the Poor in the New Workhouse at Whitby (printed T. Webster April 1794)
- Atkinson J.C. 1894. Memorials of Old Whitby.
- Binns J. 1990. Sir High Cholmley of Whitby 1600-1657. Unpub PhD thesis Leeds.
- Burton G. 1817. A History of Whitby and Streoneshalh Abbey.
- Charlton L. 1779. A History of Whitby and Whitby Abbey.
- Daysh G.H.J. 1958. A Survey of Whitby and the surrounding area.
- Dugdale W. 1846 (new edition of C17 original). Monasticon Anglicanum.
- Gaskin R.T. 1909. The Old Seaport of Whitby.
- Hayes R.H. 1988. Old Roads and Pannierways in North East Yorkshire.
- Page W. 1923. Victoria County History, North Riding of Yorkshire Vol. 2.
- Rawson P.(ed) 1996. The Geological Association Guide to the North Yorkshire Coast.
- RCHM 1987. Houses of the North York Moors.
- Robinson F.K. 1860. Whitby.

- Waites B. 1997. *Monasteries and Landscape in North East England.*
Walker D.H. 1978. *Relief of the Poor in Nineteenth Century Whitby.* Unpub MA.
Young G. 1817. *A History of Whitby.* 2 vols.
Young G. 1840. *A picture of Whitby and its Environs.*
Cholmeley H 1870. *Memoirs of Sir Hugh Cholmley*

Journals

Yorkshire Archaeological Journal Record Series

- Vol. XLVIII. 1912. 'Suppression Papers'
Vol. XVII. 1895. 'Monastic Notes' Ed W.P. Baildon
Vol CLI. 1996. 'Hundred and Quo Warranto Rolls'. Ed. B. English

English Place Name Society

- Vol V. 1928 *Placenames of the North Riding of Yorkshire.* Ed. Mawer A.
and Stenton F.M.

Surtees Society

- Vol. 69. 1878. *Whitby Cartulary Vol. I.*
Vol. 72. 1879. *Whitby Cartulary Vol. 2.*

- Whitby Repository* Vols. for 1825-8
Whitby Magazine Vols. for 1827-9

Northallerton Record Office

- Register of Deeds*
Cholmley Papers (Ref. ZCG in NYCC RO)
Index of Maps and Plans (see below)
Parish Index

Maps

- 1737 'The limits of the Grounds, houses and other offices purchased by Mr Thomas Boulby' NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M) 1/89
1791 NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M) 1/115
1828 Wood. NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M) 1/117.
1841 Pinckernel. NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M)1/92
1852 Ordnance Survey. NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M)1/0594
1853 Ordnance Survey 6" Series (with geological notes from Geological Survey)
nd Plan of properties sold at Whitby (post 1832) NYCC RO Ref. ZW(M) 1/112
nd 'Whitby lands' NYCC RO Ref ZW(M) 1/116

Printed National Government Records

- Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1216 to 1582
Calendar of Close Rolls 1247 to 1509
Calendar of Fine Rolls 1272 to 1509
Catalogue of Ancient Deeds
Letters and Papers Domestic 1530 to 1547