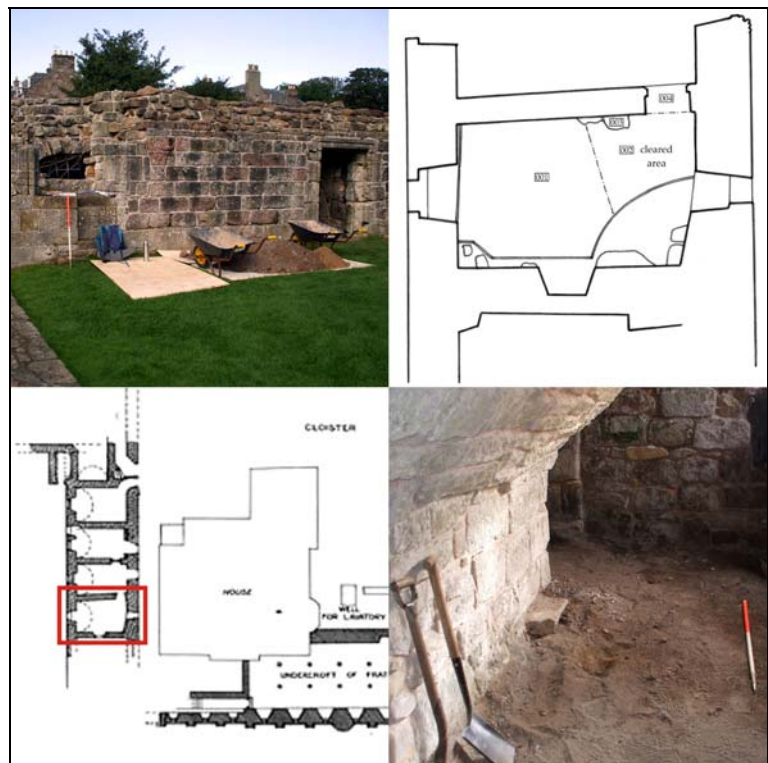


Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2008

St Andrews Cathedral: Archaeological Monitoring, September 2008

HS PIC Index number: 90260
Project code: HSCO-90260-2008-01



15 December 2008
Kirkdale Archaeology

<u>Site</u>	St Andrews Cathedral
<u>N.G.R</u>	NO 5135 1662
<u>Project Description</u>	Archaeological monitoring
<u>Project code</u>	HSCO-90260-2008-01

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SUMMARY: September 2008: A watching brief was maintained during works in Vault 3 (the southernmost Vault in the West Range, at the west side of the Cloister, St Andrews Priory) to allow the insertion of a concrete floor. A ramp was also to be inserted at the door in the NE angle. Large flat slabs could be seen against the N and S walls and in the SE and SW angles of the room, suggesting that the vault at one time had a flagged floor. The area to be reduced was less than 2 m x 2 m in the NE quadrant of the vault. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology was asked to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St Andrews Cathedral. An area of the ground surface in Vault 3 (the Southernmost Vault) of the West Range was to be reduced to allow the insertion of a hardcore upfill to carry a concrete floor. A ramp would also be inserted at the door in the NE angle. Wooden shuttering had already been emplaced to hold the concrete; the area behind the shuttering would be filled with gravel. Large flat slabs could be seen against the N and S walls and in the SE and SW angles of the room, suggesting that the vault at one time had a flagged floor. Gravel had already been removed from the floor prior to the archaeological watching brief and the material to be shifted looked like a crude base for this gravel. The area to be reduced was less than 2 m square in the NE portion of the Vault. The Vault is part of the Priory Cloister's West Range. A consistory court was located here at one time as was a manse demolished in the 1960s.

All deposits were removed manually by HS MCU personnel under archaeological supervision. 'Terram' was then laid and a hardcore bottoming was vibrated in to create a base for the concrete floor.

The work was carried out on 8 September 2008.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

The area to be reduced was in the NE angle of the vault. Gravel had already been

removed and beneath it was **001**, a raft of broken sandstone, ash and pointing material with broken modern bottle glass within. This was a bottoming layer for the removed gravel and the presence of the modern bottle glass suggests that the two were contemporary. The exact date of the insertion of the gravel floor was not known by the squad but would be no earlier than 20th-century in date. This layer was 80-120 mm thick and was lying on a compact layer of yellow sand with no inclusions, **002**. The depth of this layer was not determined but it ran under and provided bedding for the slab **003** in the NW portion of the trench. This sandstone slab was 500 mm x 250 mm x 150 mm thick. In addition, sand layer **002** carried the threshold slab **004** separating Vault 3 from Vault 2 to the N. The sand layer was cleaned back and no indication could be seen that the vault walls were cut through it. This suggests that the vault was constructed and the sand was used to level up the internal surfaces and provide bedding for a slabbed floor. The Cathedral guidebook suggests that the remains of the West Range in its present form dates to the 16th century – this may provide the date for the internal levelling material.

No worked stones or artefacts were located during this work.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The scale of the work precluded any detailed examination of the vault floor but still provided enough evidence to suggest a sequence for its deposits. Any further groundbreaking works within the vaults should be similarly monitored with an archaeological watching brief.

A1.0 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS

#	Description
001	Crude Levelling Layer
002	Sand Levelling Layer below 001
003	Large Floor Slab bedded on 002
004	Threshold Slab between Vaults 2 and 3

A2.0 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DRAWINGS

#	Type	Description	Scale
1	Plan	Plan of vault floor	1:50

A3.0 APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

#	Description	From	Date
1	Pre Ex shot of Vault Floor Looking E	W	8/9/08
2	Pre Ex shot of Vault Floor Looking SE at Shuttering	NW	8/9/08
3	Pre Ex shot of Vault Floor Looking E	W	8/9/08
4	Post Ex shot of Vault Floor looking E (002 and 003)	W	8/9/08
5	Post Ex shot of Vault Floor looking N(002, 003 and 004)	S	8/9/08
6	Detail of levelling sand 002 and Threshold Slab 004	S	8/9/08
7	Detail of Floor Slab 003	SE	8/9/08
8	Deposit 001 in the NW of the Vault	SE	8/9/08
9	Shot of Exterior E wall of Vault 3	E	8/9/08
10	Shot showing Exterior of Vault 3	E	8/9/08

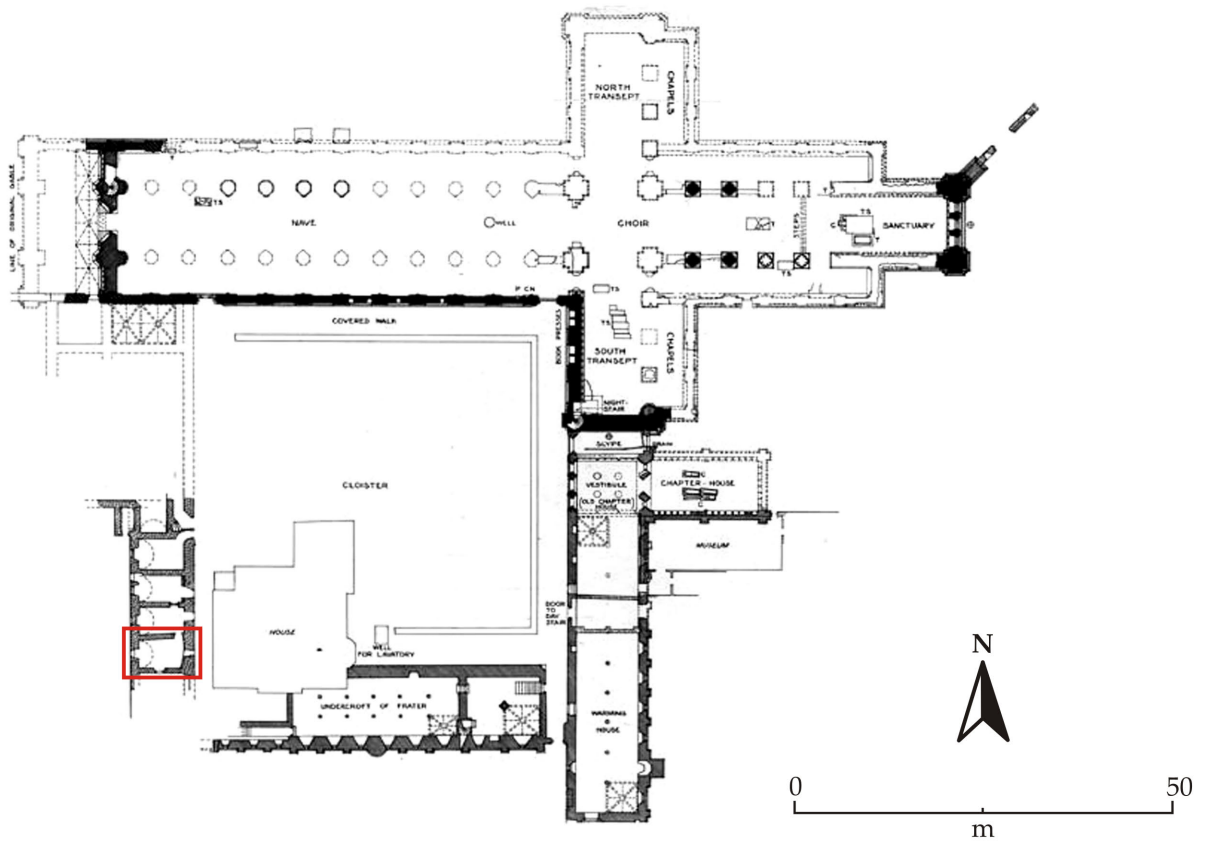


Fig. 1 : Plan showing location of works



Fig. 2 : Plan (1:50) showing excavated area