EXETER CITY WALL: INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES OF EXETER ARCHAEOLOGY REPORTS

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Background

One of the research topics on which the work of Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) focused in the late 1980s and early 1990s was the defences of Exeter. This came about gradually, with the realisation that a body of work was accumulating that could make a real contribution to the study of the defensive complex of bank, stone wall and ditch systems in general and of the standing monument of the city wall in particular. Like so much of Unit's work, this project was conceived by Chris Henderson (director 1976–2000). The examination of documents that was taking place as a part of the Manpower Services Commission programme also came to focus on the defences as one of its main aims, with the medieval period being covered by Paul Staniforth and Jannine Juddery, and the post-medieval period by Jannine Juddery, Paul Thomas, Tony Collings, Mark Stoyle and others. Advances were therefore being made at more or less the same time in three main strands of evidence gathering: archaeological excavation, standing building recording, and transcription of documentary sources. By the end of the 1980s the accumulation of new material was becoming available and a formal project was established under the direction of Chris Henderson and the present author to take the various endeavours forward, in the first instance to prepare the results of the various areas of work as a series of ephemeral 'grey-literature' reports on archaeology (the so-called Green Reports), fabric survey and transcripts of documents with analytical introductions. In 1993–4 English Heritage provided funding to take this project a step further to consolidate the new work on the city wall, including the preparation of outstanding reports on previous work, and some new survey work on areas of the wall identified as of particular interest. This culminated in the preparation of the *Exeter City Wall Survey* published under the imprimateur of Exeter Archaeology/Exeter City Council/English Heritage in 1995 (see below; Blaylock 1995)

Introduction:

The city wall of Exeter was first constructed in the Roman period, on a circuit that survives to this day (apart from some minor variations); the full circuit of the walls measures 2.35km (1.46 miles) in length and encloses an area of 37ha (92 acres). Despite many losses over the last two centuries or so, beginning with the gates which were removed between 1769 and 1815), some fabric survives over a substantial part of the circuit, some 1705m (72.5%) in all, and much of this remains visible from streets and other publicly-accessible spaces.

Exeter is therefore to be counted among the ten or so Romano-British towns to retain a significant percentage of their circuits of stone-built defences (albeit often rebuilt and altered in later centuries); many more, of course, retain more fragmentary remains.

Outline history of the wall

The Roman wall was constructed in stages, with the circuit first laid out with a low earth bank sometime in the later 2nd century A.D., followed by the construction of the wall itself, cutting into the early bank, built of rubble core and facework of squared blocks with a projecting plinth, at or near ground level, on the outer face, and the upper part of the inside face often constructed in a series of stepped, or offset, faces. This all took place within the last quarter of the 2nd century or so (the dating evidence is reviewed by Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 9–11). At the same time the bank was raised to a level near to the top of the wall. Nowhere does the wall top (still less the parapet) of the Roman wall certainly survive, but its height can be estimated at *c.*4.5–5m on the basis of the interrelationship of surviving inside and outside masonry at the rear of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM). At least one stone tower is known, set within the bank with its outside face flush with the wall face (excavated at Paul Street in 1982–4), and there may have been more at intervals around the circuit.

Roman masonry survives at many points around the circuit. The facework was always of squared blocks of grey-purple volcanic lava (locally called 'trap'), with rubble of the same stone used for the mortared core, often set in alternating diagonally-pitched ('herringbone') courses. In the area near the river, many chert blocks appear in the core (and sometimes are re-used from Roman core work in later facework). Typical Roman facework consists of coursed blocks, with a pronounced tendency for a lower section of deeper courses, followed by numerous courses of thinner blocks. A break in build is sometimes observed 2.5–3m above the plinth, represented by a change in colour and/or texture of the stone, and a repetition of two-three courses of deeper blocks at the base of the second build. The significance of this, i.e. whether it represents a hiatus in construction or simply a change in the supply of materials, is unknown. Masonry coursed on a gradient, i.e. following the contour seems to be another salient feature of Roman work, and sometimes enables identification. The 1980s–90s work above all was able to identify a typical survival of decayed or patched facework (termed remnant facework in the fabric survey), where traces of Roman coursing survive within heavily patched later masonry, sometimes with a plinth but also with the plinth trimmed away (good examples are visible in Northernhay Gardens at in sections 6.1 and 7.2–3: Blaylock 1995, 50–51; 54).

Little is known about the history of the wall between the end of the Roman period and the Norman conquest. The walls may well have been repaired under Alfred in the 880s, along with those of many other southern English towns. There is also a strong tradition in Exeter that Athelstan rebuilt the walls, and one of these episodes probably provides the context for the one section of demonstrably pre-conquest repair: a run of crenellated parapet and repair of the Roman wall top at the rear of the castle (visible both sides of the [so-called] Athelstan's Tower [which actually belongs to the castle] in Northernhay Gardens). Identified as a part of the 1990s project (report **94.92**), this feature is deeply buried by heightening of the walls associated with the early Norman castle, and can thus be confidently identified as one of the very few Anglo-Saxon stone defensive works in England (cf. Blaylock and Parker 1994, 7, 9; Hill 2000). This work employs a white (or sometimes pink) Triassic sandstone, which occurs in quantity elsewhere on the circuit (for example around Snayle Tower at the western corner of the city, and near the eastern angle tower at the top of Southernhay) and it may be that some other instances are also of pre-conquest date, albeit without the stratigraphic dating evidence available at Northernhay Gardens.

Post-conquest work is easier to identify; the series of semi-circular towers that punctuate the circuit, especially on the more-vulnerable south and east sides of the city, seem to have been added in the thirteenth century. From the second quarter of the 14th century we can follow the progress of maintenance and rebuilding of the defences though the city archives. 'High' medieval sections appear to have typical masonry of volcanic trap again, in regular courses of neat ashlar blocks, with putlog holes, and a chamfered plinth, often punctuated by buttresses. (The section rebuilt in Cricklepit Street perhaps at the beginning of the fifteenth century is a good example, but there are numerous others). The red Permian breccia ('Heavitree stone') that is so often described as typical of the city was not routinely used until the late medieval period and saw its heyday in the 16th–18th centuries.

There were significant phases of refurbishment and rebuilding of the defences in the later 16th and 17th centuries, some connected with large public works, such as the construction of the Quay, which saw the construction of the Water Gate and associated wall fabric, or significant lengths of wall in Friernhay and Northernhay (the latter among the few on the circuit that can be unequivocally linked to phases of work documented in the city accounts, see reports **94.38** and **93.69** respectively). The Civil War saw several episodes of intensive expenditure on the defences, some linked directly to the major sieges of 1642–3 and 1645–6, some more general expenditure on routine maintenance and repair. While some of this can be related to the walls, much more was directed to the creation and development of

earthwork and ditched outworks, once again concentrating on the south and east sides of the city, where the approaches are flat.

Brief history of previous research

Antiquarian accounts of the city wall go back to John Leland, John Hooker and William Stukely, and many of the early historians of the city describe aspects of the walls that are no longer visible. A notable example would be two Roman inscriptions built into the walls near Southernhay that were described by John Leland in 1542 (Leland Itineraries III.fo. 33; Toulmin Smith 1907, 228), but which had disappeared by the time of later reports. Other early accounts include those of Richard Izacke, and Daniel and Samuel Lysons; and more detailed antiquarian investigations are reported by (*inter alia*) local historians Alexander Jenkins and W.T.P. Shortt. Successive antiquarians failed to realise that the wall was of Roman origin, preferring to ascribe it to Athelstan's refortification of the city (Izacke 1724, 17; Jenkins 1806, 17–18; Lysons and Lysons 1822, 177ff).

Serious archaeological examination of the defences began with the activities of the Exeter Excavation Committee in the 1930s, for which 'The Defences of Roman Exeter' formed one of the principal aims of the exploration of the city's archaeology. From 1933–39 the basic sequence of Roman construction that underpins the understanding of the defences today was established. In 1933–4 sections through the wall and rampart and the fabric of the eastern angle tower were investigated in the context of the clearance of the St John's Hospital site between High Street and the city wall, i.e. the top half of Princesshay in modern topographical terms (Montgomerie Nielson and Montague 1934, 57–60; 78–81; Radford and Morris 1935, 181–8). In 1936 and 1939 attention moved to the Bishop's garden and Trinity Street outside the wall, where a composite section through the wall and one of the few areas of standing earth rampart was constructed, extending out to the lip of the ditch (Radford and Morris 1936, 238–40; Morris *et al.* 1946, 136–9).

Aileen Fox's 1945–50 excavations in 'war-damaged areas' saw excavation and recording of six separate sections through the defences as the area from Bedford Street to High Street and beyond to Bailey Street was cleared for redevelopment (Fox 1952, 52–9; pls 23–5). Further excavations followed in 1961–2 when a section of the wall was demolished for the construction of the inner by-pass, just south-west of the South Gate (*Journal of Roman Studies* **52**, 184; pl. 23), and in 1964–5 with Lady Fox's excavation of the south-west side of the Roman South Gate (Fox 1968).

Two landmark publications of the late 1970s were Ian Burrow's 1977 study of the defences, which forms a notable early attempt to get to grips with the fabric of the wall, including some new recording (see, for example, the comparative profiles of buttresses), and much new observation and insights into given sections of the fabric (Burrow 1977). Paul Bidwell's *Roman Exeter, Fortress and Town* (1980) summarised the state of knowledge of the Roman town at the time, including a chapter on the defences. Although both works antedate much of the fabric survey of the wall that has enabled more informed phasing and dating of the fabric and its many repairs, these two works between them provided the foundations on which later work was to be based.

Early excavations and fabric recording by EMAFU under Mike Griffiths, Chris Henderson and Paul Bidwell took place at various places around the circuit from 1972–75, including some fabric recording at Southernhay/Broadwalk House prior to redevelopment that involved the raising of the ground level; and the excavation of six small trenches at Cricklepit Street in 1973, following the collapse of a section of the wall there (see, on this case, further below). The period from the early 1980s saw more substantial excavation projects on the defences, in particular examination of a run of rampart and interior fabric at Paul Street (1982–86) and exterior ditches at Magdalen Street (1986–7). Full lists of interventions and known repairs are given in Blaylock 1995, 19–30.

Alongside the later phases of this work was the 1980s manpower-services project to transcribe relevant documentation on the city defences (above), which resulted in the amassing of a huge amount of medieval and post-medieval documentation on the defences (reports **88.14–16 incl.**; **89.09–10**; **90.26**; **92.10**).

From 1988 a concerted study of the standing fabric commenced in an attempt to draw together various elements of previous work and get to grips with some of the more mundane aspects of the study of the walls: e.g. distribution of different building stones and their dating implications; character of typical masonry at different periods; with a view to establishing some basic rules of interpretation that would aid identification and phasing throughout in the future. This resulted in the gradual evolution of the fabric survey, beginning with a first draft of the survey of the exterior fabric (report **91.56**), followed by an update (report **93.66**) and a draft of the interior fabric survey (report **93.65**). All of these eventually contributed to the description and gazetteer of the standing fabric that forms the core of the 1995 report (Blaylock 1995, chapter 3, 31–104). A numbering system was devised to enable systematic description in the fabric surveys. This consisted of a basic division of the circuit into 29 sections common to the interior and exterior based on topographical divisions, major

property boundaries, ownership, and other reasonably-permanent divisions (*ibid.*, figs 1, 10). Within these sections further subdivision was made on the basis of structural and chronological divisions according to need (and therefore often differing from interior to exterior). Although it aimed to be as simple as possible, experience has shown that this numbering system does not come easily to those unfamiliar with the monument.

Circumstances and scope of the 1993–4 'City Wall Project'

Realising that a good deal of new material was emerging, both archaeologically and in standing-fabric analysis, a project to draw together the various strands of work was planned from 1991 and received funding from English Heritage and Exeter City Council in 1993–4. The main aims of this were: (i) to give an account of the fabric of the wall (and to summarise the present state of knowledge on the defences) in a form that would prove useful to those who are active in the care, maintenance and study of the monument; to complete some of the outstanding analysis of recent fieldwork (mainly fabric recording) on the wall; to carry out a limited amount of new recording work on areas of particular interest; and to compile a standardised coverage of the wall in photographs and outline drawings. (ii) To review the present treatment of the monument; to consider problems connected therewith; and to consider practical suggestions for the future. (iii) To provide the legislative and administrative background to the procedures of maintenance and repair. (iv) To advance the longer-term study and publication of the defences of Exeter.

The documentary research programme of the 1980s had stopped at 1700, but the 1990s project aimed to carry this further by charting the main events of the 18th and 19th centuries from documentary sources as well. Sources of this period are more diverse and less-well-indexed (so less readily accessible) than the earlier material, so this was of necessity summary in nature. This work was summarised in chapter 2 of the 1995 report (Blaylock 1995, esp. 16–19).

Preliminary works had involved drawing together disparate episodes of archaeological work into synthesised accounts and led to the production of three major reports combining excavated and above-ground recorded evidence (reports **88.13**; **93.73**; and **94.65**). These concerned the multiple phases of work in the area of North Gate, Paul Street and Bradninch Place on the north-west side of the city (report **88.13**); the similar concentration of work on the south-west side between the West and Water Gates (i.e. broadly in the area of Cricklepit Street: report no. **93.73**); plus the major episodes of fabric recording and excavation of the wall top on the wall between the Watergate and South Gate, Lower Coombe Street/Quay Hill in the context of the construction of the Lower Coombe Street car park in 1989 and the new

pedestrian bridge over Western Way in the early 1990s (report **94.65**). To these were added the completion of post excavation work and/or analysis of various other minor pieces of recording and observation work carried out in various places around the wall, and the preparation of individually-finished pieces of work of synthesis. These included fabric recording of 1992 of a long section of 16th and 17th century date in Northernhay Street (report **93.69**); various episodes of observation and recording near the western corner of the city, between Friernhay and Snayle Tower (report **94.38**); and observations on the foundations of the wall at the top of Princesshay, also in 1992 (report **94.41**).

Compilation of the 1988 fabric survey led to many new observations (reports **91.56**; **93.65–66**) and a number of areas of particular promise that were likely to repay more detailed examination emerged in the course of compiling the reports: mainly around the castle (below), but also in Southernhay. An agreement was achieved with English Heritage that they would support some new drawn recording of such areas; and these were carried out in 1993–94 as an integral part of the 'Exeter City Wall project'. The main area concerned was the long stretch of wall in Northernhay Gardens between Rougemont Gardens and the rear of the Castle building (report **94.92**, plus an earlier phase of recording of Athelstan's Tower carried out independently of the project, report **93.51**); a smaller area on the eastern side of the castle (report **94.91**); plus a length of wall north-east of the South Gate showing a length of crenellated parapet tentatively dated to the Civil War period, constructed on top of medieval wall fabric (report **93.71**)

It was intended from the first that the main output of the project would be a manual of the city wall for those involved in its management as an ancient monument. This was to include a comprehensive account of the surviving fabric of the wall, with summary accounts of vanished portions, including the gates, ramparts and ditches; plus sections on the history of repairs and previous archaeological interventions, the legal and administrative background, suggestions for policies for the management and maintenance of the wall as a monument, and practical information as to its ownership and subdivision. This was, in all but name, what we would today call a 'Conservation Plan', or 'Conservation Management Plan'. Conservation plans pioneered in Australia in the 1980s by James Semple Kerr, had yet to take off in the UK at this time, and did not really do so until the end of the 1990s (see, for example Clark 1999a; *eadem* 1999b), and in this sense the project of 1993–4 and report of 1995 were ahead of their time: probably the report (Blaylock 1995) would have been called a 'conservation plan' had the main author heard of such a thing at the time!

Other innovative aspects of the work included an attempt at systematic photographic coverage (some of which was used to illustrate key sections of wall in the 1995 report: Blaylock 1995, pls 1–96), but much of which remains in the Exeter Archaeology archive; and the compilation of very basic digitised drawings of the entire circuit. These were based on small-scale outline elevations produced in the 1970s by the city architect's department, but also integrated the considerable number of drawings available from archaeological recording projects, coupled with standardised location maps extracted from digital OS maps (Blaylock 1995, figs 13–43). These represented the first large-scale attempt at AutoCad drawings made by Exeter Archaeology, with Keith Westcott heroically learning on the job and coping with the vagaries of software and printing by temperamental pen plotters, etc. etc. The drawings remain of value as an exercise in synthesis, but judged by present-day standards are wanting in aspects of presentation, and are in need of revision as a result.

Summary of the main results

The most important result of the 1993–94 project and its antecedent preparatory works is the huge advances that emerged in the basic understanding of and ability to date the fabric of the city wall. Previous accounts had approached the dating of masonry and the identification of original Roman work in a mainly subjective way, and the ability to identify undubitable Roman fabric, based primarily on the evidence of modern stratigraphic excavations, and secondly on the comparison of excavated sections with other exposed builds. With the exception of the section between the South Gate and the river, where some chert was used in original Roman core work (above), all of the original fabric of the wall is of grey-purple volcanic trap. By these means some surviving Roman exterior facework was identified in sections 3.4, 3.5, 5.3, 6.1, 7.2, 7.3, 11.4, 16.6, 17.4, 21.3, 21.8, 22.2, 23.4. 24.1, 27.4, 27.7, 28.2 (now obscured), and 28.3 (see Blaylock 1995, chapter 3, and map, fig. 10). The best-preserved of all being sections 5.3, 6.1, 21.8, 23.4 and 24.1. Interior facework was identified in sections 5.3, 7.2, 7.4, 8.3, 21.6, 21.8, 22.2, 27.6, 27.10, with the best examples of stepped rear facework seen in sections 7.2, 21.8, 27.6 and 27.10. Interior core survives in sections 5.3, 6.2, 7.2, 8.3, 8.4, 9.3, 9.6 (now obscured), 21.1, 21.2, 21.6, 27.7, 27.10, with the section south-west of the arch between Rougemont and Northernhay Gardens (section 6.2) still providing one of the best visible examples of herringbone core masonry. Extant rampart to the rear of the wall survives in sections 3–4 (heightened by the Norman castle ramparts), and 23–26 (again possibly heightened, but providing the best extant example of the earth rampart).

Another result of great significance was the identification of pre-conquest masonry repairs and crenellated parapet in Northernhay Gardens, in the section to either side of Athelstan's Tower. This section had already been identified by Ian Burrow (1977, 20–21 and fig. 5) as of considerable interest for its structural sequence, but it was only with the gradual accumulation of structural and stratigraphic information during the fabric survey, and subsequently through the drawings made in 1993–4 that the full significance of this section became clear, when it was possible to show for certain that the buried parapet was 'sealed' by rubble masonry typical of the Early Norman castle, and that the parapet therefore had to antedate the castle. The dating of the parapet to the late Saxon period also enabled the high level block-work beneath it to be recognised as one of the few places in which Roman fabric survived to near wall-top level, with consequent benefits to the understanding of the Roman wall, and of the processes at play in the early construction phases of the castle (a subject that was further developed in the 2000s with more work on the origins and development of the castle: Blaylock *et al*. forthcoming). The sequence of discovery here well exemplifies the incremental nature of the results of such work (from casual observation through detailed description to stone-for-stone recording), and thus the advantages of detailed fabric recording and the increased level of scrutiny that comes with it. The story of the discoveries in this section was used as a case study to illustrate the process of standing fabric recording in the 1995 report (Blaylock 1995, 120–21).

Similar advances have been made in the dating and identification of medieval facework in the fabric of the wall, although here, given the wealth of documentation available the very limited ability to link extant fabric with documented repairs and rebuilding comes as something of a surprise

A major achievement of the 1995 survey was the establishment of a system of maintenance and management, based on an annual inspection by the responsible architect and archaeologist, the prioritisation of works (on something like a quinquennial system), and generally seeking to improve the overall condition of the wall. This aimed to provide a 'little and often' approach to conservation and maintenance, which is, at base, largely a matter of vegetation clearance and control (and which was inspired by the medieval and 16th century practice of paying a man annually to rid the wall of plant growth and make routine repairs). Although one or two areas with long-term maintenance problems remain, the system has endured and the condition of the wall in general can confidently be said to be significantly better now than it was 25 years ago.

Emerging from the recommendations of the 1995 report were two conservation exercises involving the covering up of Roman wall fabric: the first was in Bradninch Place, behind the RAMM, and involved the deposition of earth immediately behind the wall to protect exposed core fabric, i.e. effectively re-creating the rampart. This was done in two stages initially in the late 1990s and then in 2010–11 as a part of the refurbishment of the museum). The second in Maddocks Row, to the rear of Northernhay Street, involved the construction of a new brick retaining wall and *sedum* soft capping to Roman wall core that had been exposed by the lowering of the ground level for a service road for the Paul Street shopping centre in the 1980s. This had? exposed a long length of wall core by reducing the level of the clay bank. The rubble fabric here had suffered from undue weathering over a period of 25 years or so (since it had never been intended for exposure).

One of the aims of the 1995 survey was to improve understanding and dissemination of work on the wall; in this context a guide leaflet was produced and published in the series of *Field Guides* published by the Devon Archaeological Society in 1998 (Blaylock 1998). This leaflet (which is still in print and available from local tourist information outlets) aimed to provide a self-guided walk around the wall, centred on a map indicating surviving fabric and a suggested route. The city council has subsequently erected information panels at various points around the circuit. The further aims of a longer guidebook and full publication of the survey in a more permanent form have to date come to nothing. There was an abortive attempt to prepare the 1995 survey for publication in *c.*2004, which foundered on the complexity of illustration, and the need to upgrade the rather crude Autocad elevation drawings, and the like). As a part of this project however new digital photographs were taken of selected sections of the wall with a view to upgrading the illustrations of the report (photographic coverage in 1994 had been in black and white only; not colour) and a system of parallel presentation of the text and illustrations of interior and exterior was developed. The failure of the present author to achieve a more permanent and durable publication of the main product of the 1995 survey may be regretted; and reviewed now, almost twenty years on, both text and illustrations are really in need of a thorough overhaul; this aim nevertheless remains as a possibility for the future.

The one undoubted publishing success of the project, albeit indirectly, was Mark Stoyle's 2003 book *Circled with Stone: Exeter's City Walls 1485–1660*, published by Exeter University Press (Stoyle 2003), which provides a history of the late medieval and early modern defences comprising selected extracts from the relevant documents from 1485–1660, and narrative text based on (/re-written from) the analytical introductions to the documentary transcripts prepared in the late 1980s (above, and reports **88.14**, **88.15**, **88.16**, **89.10**, **90.26**,

and **92.10**). Stoyle has also made a concerted attempt to reproduce the main historical map and some other illustrative sources for the city wall in this period (see also the consolidated list of cartographic and pictorial sources in Blaylock 1995, 147–53, Appendix 2), and the map reproductions in colour remain an immensely useful aspect of this book.

Later (post-1995) advances in work on the wall

Some mention of subsequent episodes of work on the wall should be made. Most especially in the study of the defences as a whole was the exposure and excavations of ditches in front of the wall between the East Gate and the eastern angle tower in Areas D and E of the Princesshay rescue excavations in 2005–06 (Pearce *et al.* 2007, 12–14). This area of some 1670m^2 provided the largest exposure of an area outside the city wall ever made in excavations in the city, and has enabled the typical ditch systems of the three major periods, namely Roman, Medieval and Civil War, to be understood in a way never before possible, substantially augmenting information from earlier investigations, which had taken place largely around the South Gate. The lines of three extra-mural Roman ditches were traced at 13m, 28m, and 39m out from the wall; all were probably contemporary. The inner ditch was the least understood, as it was largely removed by later ditches; the middle ditch was 3m deep and the outer ditch *c.*4.5m deep. In the medieval period there were again three ditches, the inner following the line of the inner Roman ditch (and largely removing it), the second and third 26m and 33m out from the wall respectively. In this system the inner ditch appears to have been the widest and deepest, with the outer ditches shallower and less sharply defined. The Civil War ditched defences at this point consisted of an inner ditch 7.5m wide and 5m deep and an outer ditch 5m+ wide and 2.5m deep, 36m from the wall. These would have connected with the system of outworks and other earthwork defences excavated outside the East Gate in 1987–8 (Nenk *et al.* 1992, 209; Egan 1989, 29–32).

Chris Henderson's study of the South Gate, developed out of the re-excavation of Lady Fox's trenches in 1989 and some further superficial excavations on the site in 1992–4. This was written up in a posthumous paper published in the *Proceedings* of the Devon Archaeological Society (Henderson 2001), including lengthy re-examination of the history of the gate and its structures, reconstruction plans and drawings, and re-evaluation of the sequence of the defences.

Further episodes of recording work on the standing fabric of the wall that took place after the completion of the project, include a length of wall in Rackclose Lane (to the rear of West Street), recorded in 1994 (section 18.2–3), which was never reported, and survives as an archive record and drawing. This is a late medieval re-build with later parapets, including at

least one gun-loop from the Civil War period (features that tended to be positioned adjacent to the gates). This area also used a repair technique pioneered by M.J. Baldwin, conservation architect for Exeter City Council, who supervised and oversaw many of the repairs carried out during these years, employing thin slips of brown Permo-Triassic sandstone from a quarry at Sowton to the east of Exeter, which provided a good colour match for the volcanic stone predominating in the wall (a suggestion of the 1995 report: Blaylock 1995, 110–11). Another project was some further recording of the Roman wall core adjoining Maddocks Row (section Int. 9.3; described above), before it was concealed again in 2009 (Leverett 2009). Individual observations of wall fabric were made during the Princesshay excavations of 2005–06, including the recording of a section of wall foundation removed for the excavation of an access tunnel in Area D, and several targeted recording exercises elsewhere, one related to the point at which the Blackfriars' aqueduct entered the precinct through the city wall (none of these mentioned in Pearce *et al.* 2007). A small excavation partially over the line of the wall at Timepiece nightclub (formerly a Congretational Chapel) in Little Castle Street in 2006–07, revealed a section of clay rampart and a robber trench where wall fabric had been removed (Blaylock and Passmore 2006).

A potentially on-going problem relates to the hydrology of the area near the southern corner of the city, essentially a matter of dispersal of the water of the Coombe stream, which rises in the grounds of the Bishop's Palace and flowed in a valley now marked in the townscape by the declivity of South Street near Palace Gate, and the line of Lower Coombe Street. There were evidently problems in this area along the river cliff from the beginning, with a section of wall being rebuilt in the mid-4th century (identified in the Cricklepit Street excavations of 1988–89; Simpson 1993, 7 [report **93.73**]), and another major collapse in the late medieval period that resulted in the rebuilding of a section of some 90m of the wall on a new line up to 3m inside that of the original, perhaps at the beginning of the 15th century (Blaylock 1995, 75–7; sections 19.4–6). Substantial measures were taken in the late medieval period and in the 1560s to ensure that water from the Coombe stream did not pound up behind the wall (there are contemporary references to 'wearing' the water at the Watergate, and one of the common latrines, or jakes, was sited at this point in the Middle Ages, making use of this flow). Nevertheless problems have persisted: part of the Cricklepit Street section collapsed again in 1973, and has been left as a consolidated ruin, and a further collapse ultimately deriving from similar problems related to ground-water arose on a site immediately behind the wall in Quay Hill in 2005–08 (adjacent to the site of the Watergate: Blaylock and Collings 2005; Leverett and Blaylock 2006), and remain unresolved.

*Bibliography of EA Reports produced as a part of the Exeter City Wall/Defences Projects (those marked thus * have not been listed previously for digitisation as a part of this 2014 project)*

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