

**Land Adjacent to 39
Cornmill Lane, Tutbury,
Staffordshire:**

**An Archaeological Desk-Based
Assessment**

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
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**Land Adjacent to 39 Cornmill Lane, Tutbury, Staffordshire:
An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

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1.0 Summary

In January 2003 Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit carried out a desk-based assessment of land adjacent to 39 Cornmill Lane, Tutbury, Staffordshire (NGR SK21382895). The work was commissioned by Peter Diffey and Associates in advance of a small residential development. The assessment suggested that there was a possibility of the Study Area having been created from parts of the High Street medieval property backplots. The Study Area seems to have remained undeveloped until the early 19th century when buildings were erected on the southeast boundary.

2.0 Introduction

In January 2003, Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) undertook a desk-based assessment of land adjacent to 39 Cornmill Lane, Tutbury, Staffordshire, for Peter Diffey and Associates in advance of a small residential development. The work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation prepared by BUFAU (BUFAU 2002), and followed the standard and guidance issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1994).

3.0 Site Location and Present Character

Tutbury is sited on the eastern edge of Staffordshire, on the banks of the River Dove, which forms the boundary with Derbyshire (Fig. 1). The Study Area occupies a position on the west side of Cornmill Street, close to Tutbury town centre at NGR SK21382895 (Fig. 2). This area, which lies to the rear of the High Street, is one in which medieval and post-medieval burgage plots and their associated craft and backplot activities can be expected to be encountered.

The town is sited on the side of a hill that slopes steeply eastwards towards the River Dove. The High Street follows the line of the slope, whereas Cornmill Lane, which lies at the foot of the High Street, follows the contour. Towards the High Street the eastern side of Cornmill Lane is occupied by an accretive row of early to mid-19th-century houses, but on the western side a high wall encloses the High Street property. A three-phase continuation of this wall encloses the Study Area, the earliest portion of which is built of red brick (Flemish stretcher bond) and probably dates from the late 18th or early 19th century (Plate 1). Above this is a mid-to late 19th-century brick phase, and on top of this a late 20th-century extension of breeze blocks.

This wall acts as a retaining wall to the Study Area, which slopes, like the High Street, from east to west (Plate 2). The western portion of the site, towards Cornmill Lane, has been built up and levelled. At the time of the assessment the greater part of the Study Area was covered with 20th-century concrete, and partly occupied by a mid- to late 20th-century garage building. This was aligned northwest-southeast and faced northeast towards Cornmill Lane. Built of red herringbone pattern textured brick, with concrete tile roof, it had a large garage entrance to right of centre and three windows. To the southwest of this building was a garden area.

On the southeast edge of the Study Area is a range of red brick buildings, apparently of early 19th-century date, consisting of a substantial house and attached agricultural buildings. Between these buildings, and an isolated structure of similar character to the northeast, evidently of similar date, is the entrance to a large, late 19th-century house that lies in the adjacent plot to the southeast.

4.0 Objectives

- To define the likely extent, survival and significance of archaeological remains in the area of proposed development.
- To determine the need for further archaeological assessment by field evaluation in advance of consideration of development proposals.
- To determine the need for preservation of archaeological remains, and/or further archaeological work in advance of, or during, development.

5.0 Method

An inspection of the Study Area was carried out in order to assess current conditions, and the likelihood of archaeological survival. Documentary research of primary and secondary sources, including maps, was undertaken at Staffordshire Record Office, the William Salt Library, and at the library of the University of Birmingham. The Staffordshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the primary source of archaeological information for the county, was also consulted.

6.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

The name 'Tutbury' is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and means 'Tutta's burg' or 'Stūt's burg', that is to say, the fortress of Tutta or Stūt (Ekwall 1960). This suggests that the town might have been founded as an Anglo-Saxon burh (Palliser 1972, 65). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the foundation of burhs at Tamworth and Stafford in 914 when Ethelfleda drove out the Danes from this part of Mercia. It is possible that Tutbury was also fortified at this time.

Certainly, Tutbury appears to have been an important local centre from the early Norman period at the latest. In the Domesday book of 1086, Tutbury is recorded, with Tamworth and Stafford, as one of only three boroughs in the county, and as being the only place in the county with a market (Palliser and Pinnock 1971, 51). The market probably dates from 1066-85, being instituted to serve the castle which is recorded in the Domesday Book.

Orderic Vitalis recorded that the castle was established by William the Conqueror, who in 1070 granted it to Henry de Ferrers, it having been held previously by Hugh d'Avranches. The castle was the caput or administrative centre of the Honour of Tutbury. Between 1080 and 1085 Henry de Ferrers founded a priory at Tutbury (Edwards 1949, 26), of which the church survives immediately to the southeast of the castle.

A new borough was founded at Tutbury by Robert de Ferrers I, earl of Derby (d.1139). Burgage tenure was mentioned there in 1141 and *c.* 1150 and a further extension was planned in 1150 and 1159 (Palliser 1972, 69). A survey of 1559 records that when the borough was founded 182 burgages were created (Palliser 1972, 69).

Alabaster was quarried at Tutbury from the late 12th century, when it was used in the west doorway of the priory church. From the 14th century extraction was carried out on a substantial scale in open pits, and the area became one of the main sources of the material which was used extensively in the 15th and 16th centuries for funerary monuments and altar screen panels; John of Gaunt was exploiting deposits on his own land in Castle Hays Park to the west of the town in 1374 (Greenlade and Jenkins 1967), and quarrying continued into the 19th century (Sherlock 1976, 100).

In 1823 a hoard of around 100,000 medieval silver coins is recorded as having been discovered in the River Dove close to the bridge (White 1834). The hoard is thought to have been a portion of the treasure of Thomas earl of Lancaster, and to have been lost when he was driven out of Tutbury Castle in 1322 (Kelly's Directory 1912).

A fulling mill was established in Tutbury in 1314, and a new one built in 1400 (Greenlade and Jenkins 1967, 216). In 1796 the business of the town was mainly wool combing, though cotton work had recently been established 'on an extensive scale' (Jackson 1796, 55) by the construction of a large mill powered by the Dove. The mill was enlarged *c.* 1829 (Sherlock 1976, 59).

Glass making had begun at Tutbury by 1810. Plain and cut-glass manufacture was being produced by the Tutbury Glass Co. by 1851, and by 1868 flint-glass was being made at the Castle Glassworks (Sherlock 1976, 230).

7.0 Development of the Study Area

A map of the town centre thought to be of *c.* 1810 shows that the Study Area, formed part of a plot that lay immediately to the southeast of the High Street backplots. Several of these backplots, in common with others along the High Street, were long narrow burgage-type plots, no doubt part of the medieval borough layout. A larger property appears to represent the merging of several smaller holdings. The property containing the Study Area had an irregular trapezoidal plan, the angled sides being formed by the line of Cornmill Lane to the northeast and by a continuation of the property boundary of one of the backplots to the southwest. This relationship to the High Street properties may suggest that the *c.*1810 holding, within which the Study Area is situated, was created out of the southeastern extremities of the backplots. At this date the site was devoid of buildings.

The tithe map of 1841 was damaged so that a flaw ran through the Study Area largely obliterating it, and all that could be made out was a fragment of a building to the southwest of the site. Although the apportionment property numbers are not visible, a break in the sequence of the surrounding plots suggests that either numbers 111 or 112 is applicable. In the apportionment, Plot 111 was owned by the Crown, leased to Sir Oswald Mosley Bart. and occupied by William Appleby. It contained outbuildings, part of the upper garden, part of the upper foldyard with the lower

garden and lower foldyard, including part of a garden in the occupation of S.H.Strutt. Plot 112 was owned by Sir Oswald Mosley and held by William Appleby. It contained a house, part of an outbuilding and part of some yards. William Appleby was described in 1834 as a butcher with premises on Monk Street (White 1834, 414). It seems likely that the foldyards and some of the buildings were connected with this trade.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows that a long range of buildings had been erected against the southeastern boundary, and that three wings projected from it towards the northwest, a long wing which followed the entire length of the southwest boundary, and shorter ones to the centre and along the northeast boundary. In addition, the plot had been divided from northeast to southwest, and from northwest to southeast.

The remains of these buildings were evidently the structures that survived on the southeastern periphery of the site at the time of the assessment. The same buildings appear on the 1923 map, though by this time there was a gap towards the east end of the range and a new building, to be identified with the late 19th-century house that now stands on the site, had appeared in the adjacent plot towards the southeast. The longitudinal division of the site remained.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The map evidence suggests a possibility of the Study Area having been created out of a number of High Street backplots, which may themselves have been laid out in the 11th or 12th century. The site remained undeveloped until the early 19th century when a range of brick buildings was erected on the southeastern boundary, and mostly until the late 20th century when the site was levelled, concreted, and the existing building raised. The potential for archaeological survival, therefore, is high. Recommendations for further archaeological work are to be made by Staffordshire County Council acting on behalf of the local planning authority.

9.0 Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Dr Malcolm Hislop and edited by Dr Ian Ferris who also managed the project. The illustrations were prepared by Nigel Dodds.

10.0 Sources

10.1 Textual Sources

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10.2 Cartographic Sources

C. 1810 Plan of Tutbury town centre

1841 Tutbury tithe map

1887 Ordnance Survey 6" map

1923 Ordnance Survey 25" map

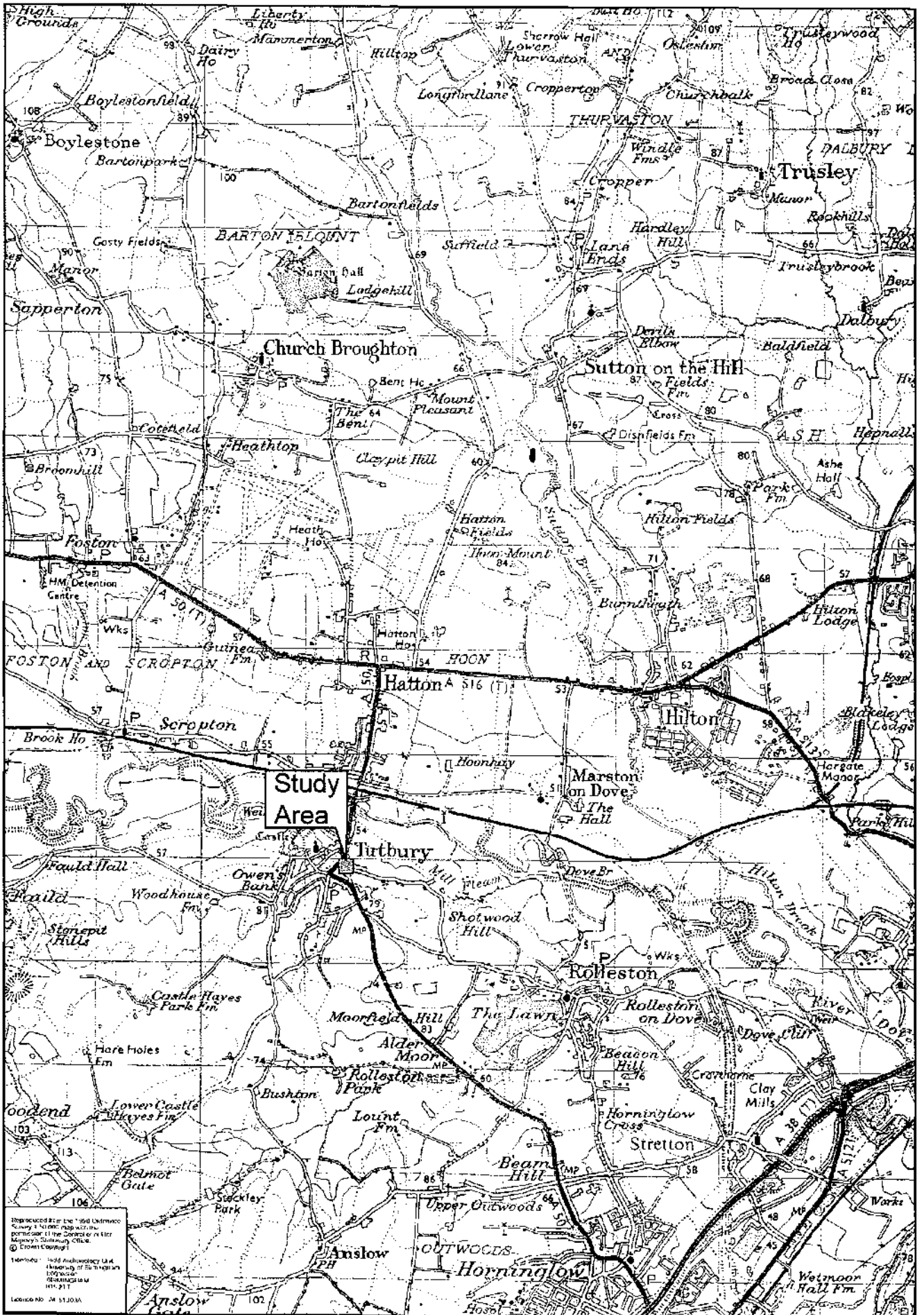


Fig.1

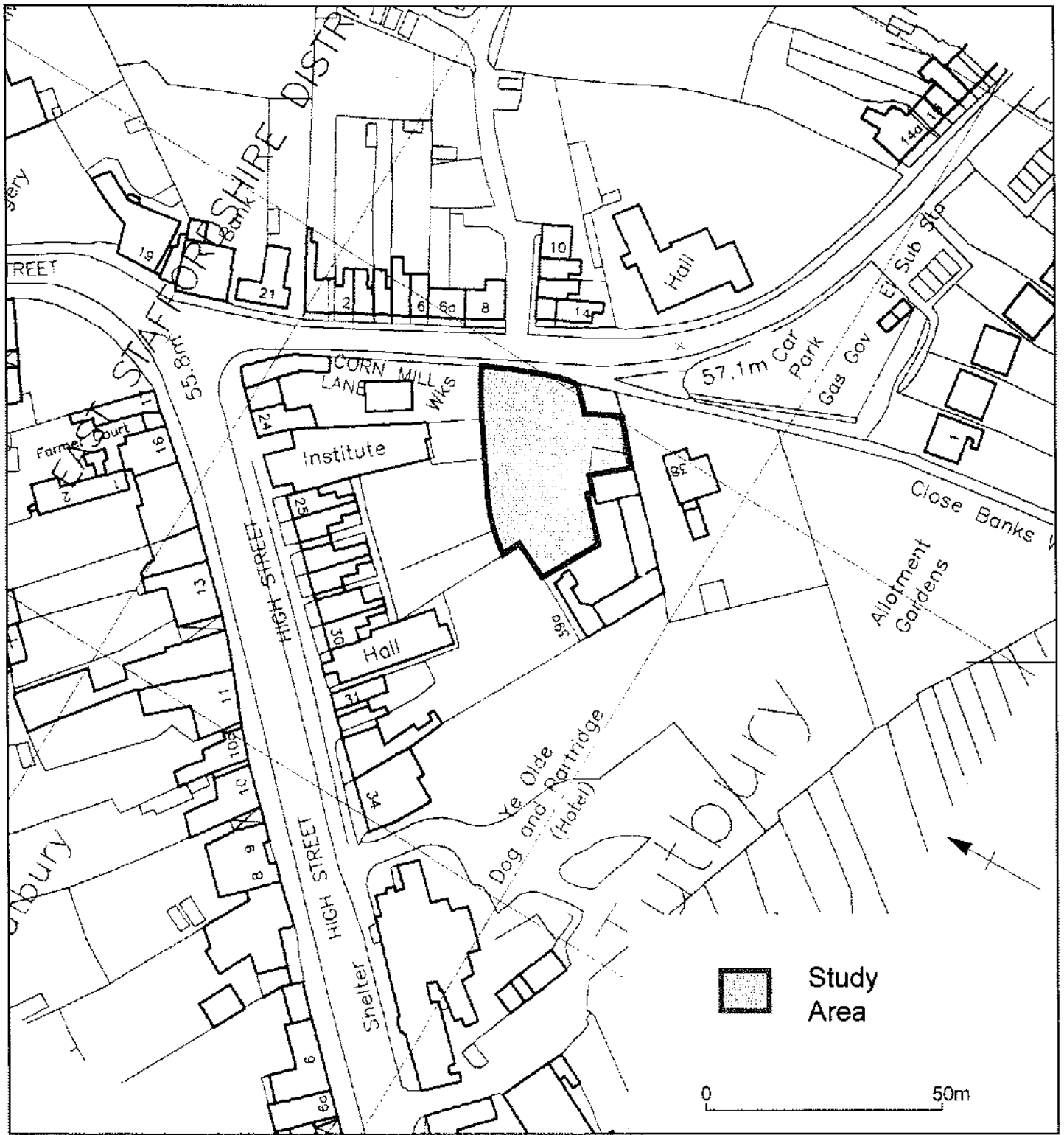


Fig.2

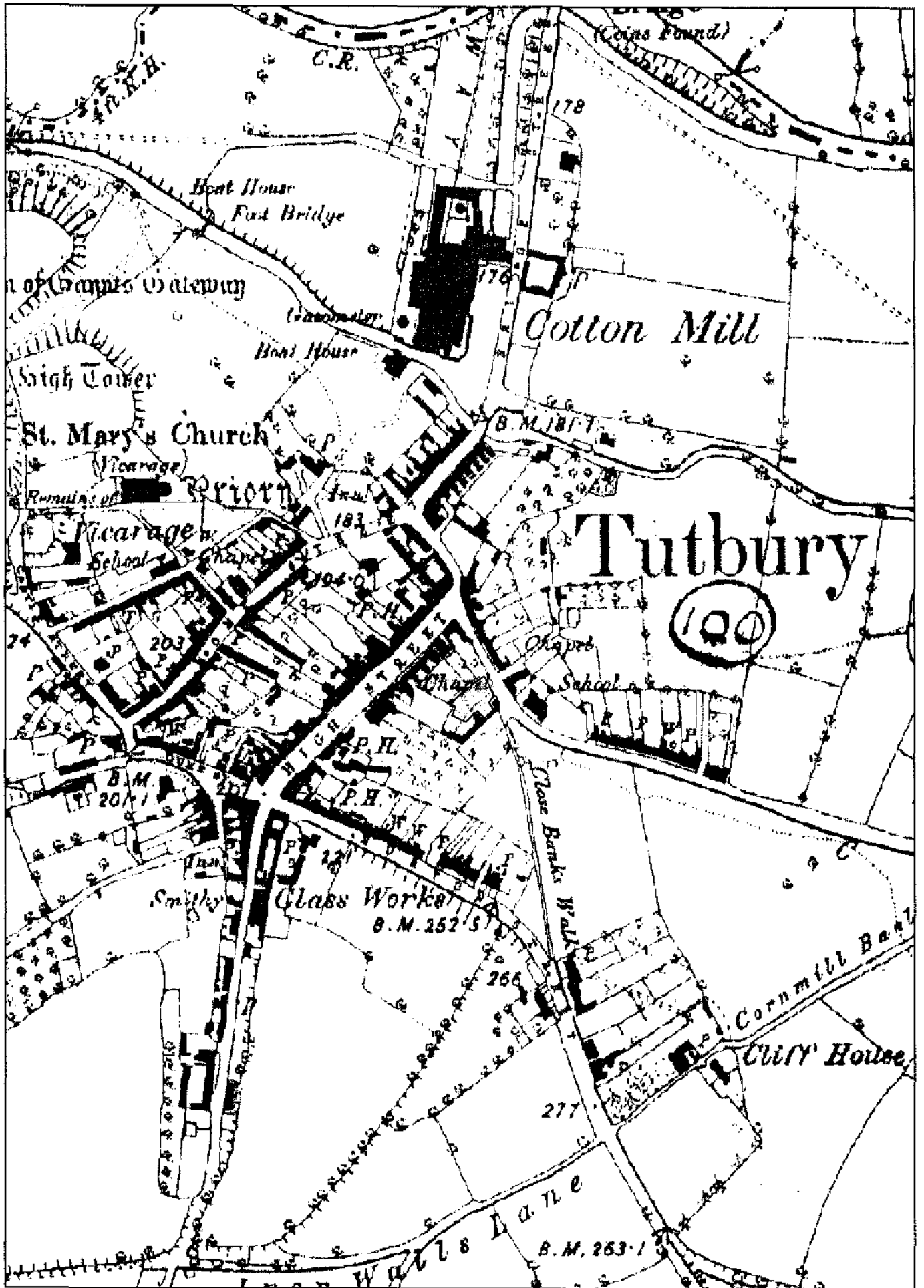


Fig.3 (1887)

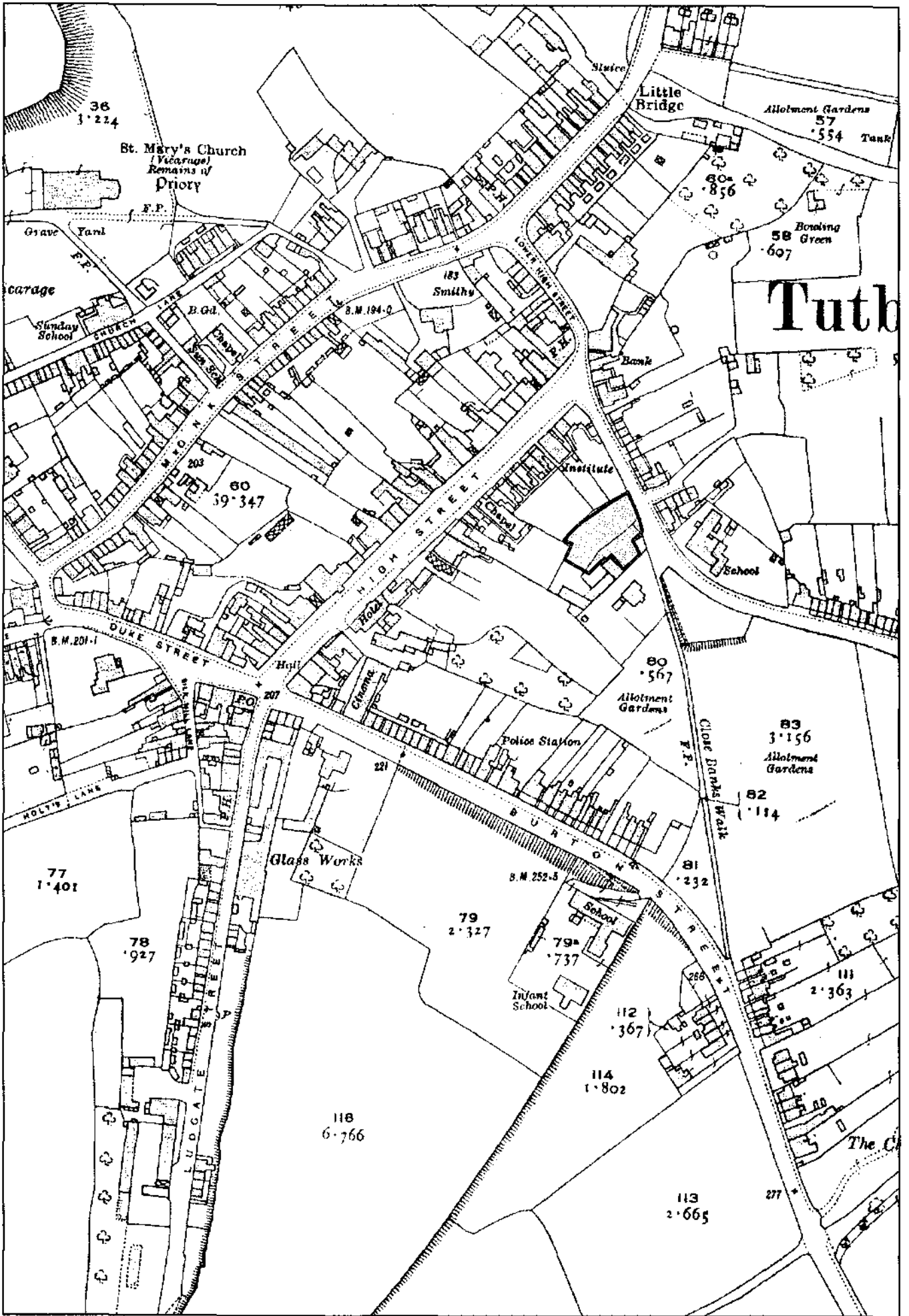


Fig.4 (1938)



Plate 1. Wall on Northeast side of Study Area from northwest



Plate 2 General view of Study Area from the Northeast