



**Report on a Programme of Archaeological Works at St. Mary's Church,
Broadwater, West Sussex**

September 2009

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This document sets out the results from a programme of archaeological works carried out by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. at St. Mary's Church, Broadwater, West Sussex. These works involved the recording of all features revealed by the removal of the existing Victorian floor and the excavation of two trenches for concrete beams. The work revealed evidence relating to earlier floor surfaces and phases of the church building, and the discovery of a line of 19th century brick vaults and the 16th century burial vault of Lord De La Warr.

BACKGROUND

Topographical Background

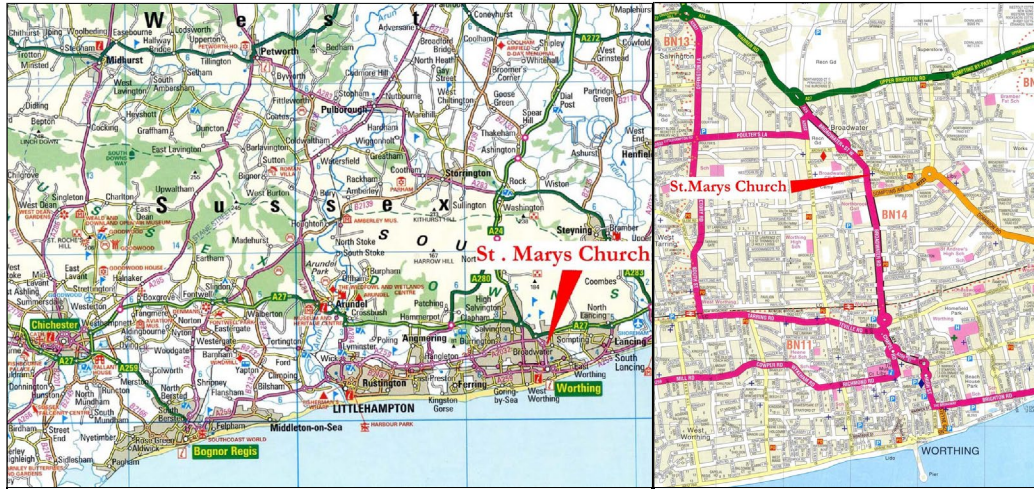


Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. The church of St. Mary's lies at the centre of the historic village of Broadwater, on the corner of Broadwater Road and Broadwater Street East. Broadwater has, since the late 19th century, been subsumed within the spreading town of Worthing. The church itself lies at NGR TQ 1465 0440 and c. 7.5m aOD. The geology in the area of the site is Brickearth.

Project Background

1. Broadwater PCC applied to Chichester Diocese for permission to carry out a refurbishment of the interior of the church by: removal of pews and pew platforms, floor tiles and heating pipes in nave, and replacement with level limestone floor with under-floor heating and chairs; removal of inner oak doors and replacement with glazed doors; improvements of lighting and audio-visual provision in nave and chancel; refurbishment of north porch; plaster repair and redecoration.
2. Permission was given for the works by the DAC of Chichester Diocese on November 14th 2008. One of the provisos attached to the faculty permitting these works was that "the DAC's archaeological advisor [Vivienne Coad] needs to agree the written scheme of investigation for the watching brief before the commencement of work".
3. Broadwater PCC appointed West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. to draw up such a WSI and carry out any resulting archaeological works. The WSI (West Sussex Archaeology 2009) was approved by the DAC's archaeological advisor on 25th January 2009.

4. Two aspects of the works were to be archaeologically monitored: first the reduction in ground level within the church necessary for the installation of the under-floor heating and second the removal of the existing plaster from the interior of the church walls.
5. This report documents the results from this archaeological work, which was carried out on 26th – 30th January 2009 and 24th February 2009 by George Anelay of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd.
6. The destination of the archive will be agreed with the PCC. If it is agreed to deposit the archive with a museum, this shall be Worthing Museum. The accession number given to this project will be obtained at this stage.

Historical Background

1. The name Broadwater is assumed to originate from the tidal inlets which used to extend inland in the medieval period. Broadwater village stood on higher ground overlooking these inlets, one of which, the Teville stream, separated the settlement from the smaller hamlet of Worthing to the south. The size of the church at Broadwater indicates the relative importance of the village during the medieval period over its immediate neighbours, but the rise of Worthing, once subservient to it, has now led to its being eclipsed and engulfed as a result of the latter's expansion.
2. The present church of St. Mary was begun in the mid-12th century, but it must have replaced an earlier structure recorded as existing in AD1086. The 12th century church consisted of a tower, nave and chancel, which was enlarged and had two transepts added in the late 12th century. By the mid 13th century the church had reached its present size, with subsequent works being minor in nature.
3. Previous archaeological work carried out by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. in 2005 within the nave and north transept of St. Mary's Church, Broadwater, revealed the presence of six brick vaults, two floor slabs and one cross slab. It also indicated that numerous other burials exist under the floor of the transept, but these were left unexcavated. Other features uncovered included traces of at least three post-medieval tiled floor surfaces, and structures relating to the 19th century use of the transept.

RESULTS

1. The removal of the extant pews and tiled floor, together with their supporting sleeper walls, was largely carried out in advance of any archaeological work, following the agreed methodology. The depth to which ground excavation had to be carried out was equal to that of the surviving surface thus revealed. Archaeological work therefore consisted of cleaning this surface and recording any features visible at this level.
2. A few remnants of brick sleeper walls had been left in situ following the initial clearance, together with parts of the modern heating ducts in the central aisle (see fig. 2). These sections of duct had been a recent repair of the original Victorian system, probably installed in the 1860's, which was powered by gas, the pipes and storage tank for which remained in place (see fig. 2).

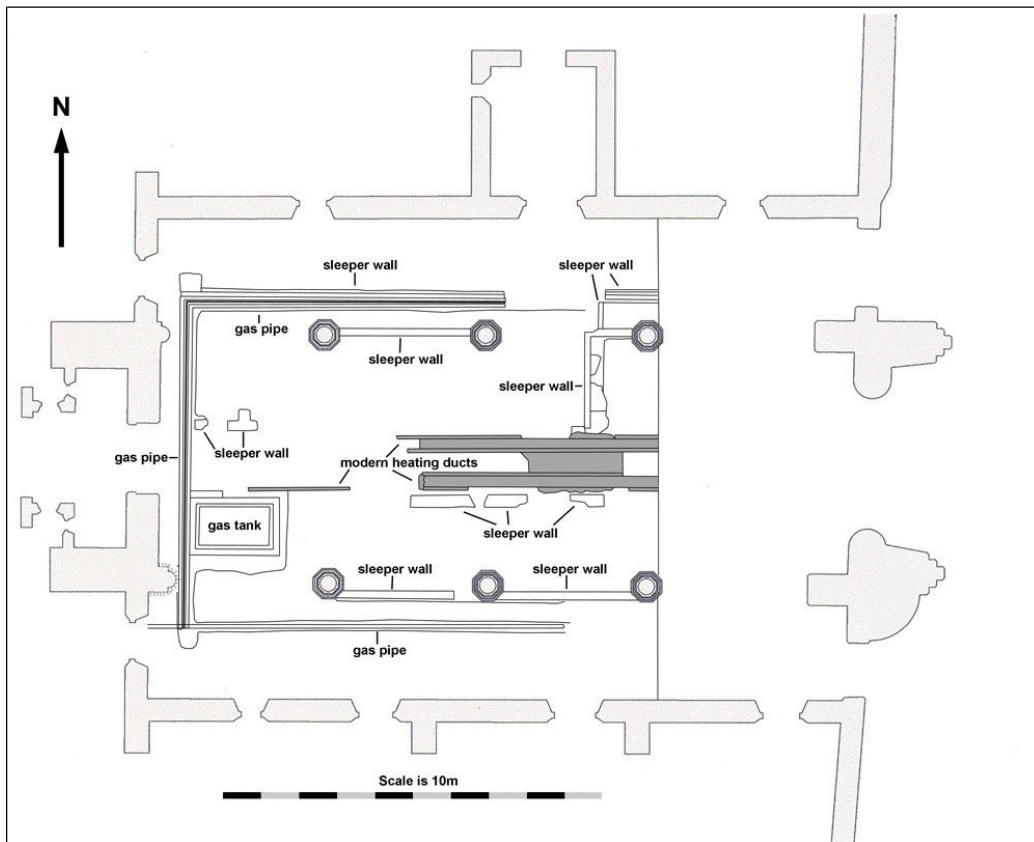


Figure 2 Plan indicating the position of late 19th century or modern features.

3. Of particular importance to the construction of the new floor was the locating of significant voids within the nave. The most extensive of these being a series of brick vaults running from the west door up the centre of the nave (see fig. 4). Five were recorded in total in a line end-to-end. Vault 1 was 2.8m long and 1.7m wide. Vault 2 was 2.8m long,

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2.2m wide. A void in the top of this vault permitted a view of the interior, which revealed the presence of two lead coffins, one adult and one juvenile. The coffins had originally been cased in wood, which had subsequently decayed and fallen away. The roof of the vault exhibits some signs of having been re-made, presumably on the occasion of the second burial. Vault 3 was 2.6m long and probably 1.7m wide (estimated since both sides not visible). Vault 4 was 2.3m long and 1.7m wide. A void noted during the works in 2005 (WSA 2005) allowed for a view inside, which revealed a single lead coffin with the name plate of an Elias Kirke aged 18 and dated 1827 (due to the poor light this reading is not certain). Vault 5 was only partially revealed, with 1.15m lying within the recorded area, the remainder being under the retained concrete surface to the east.

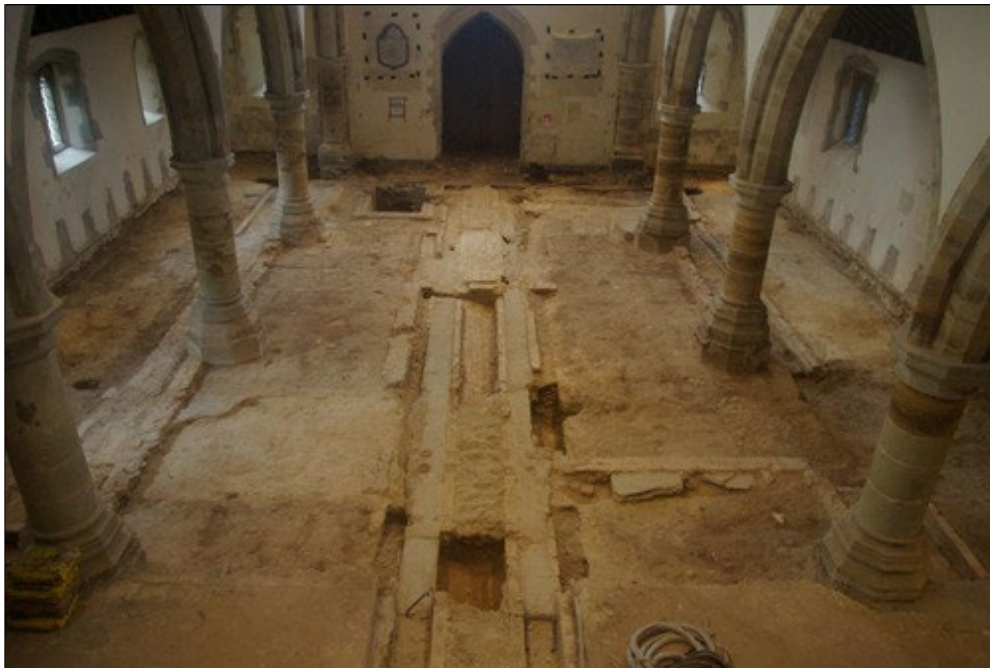


Figure 3 The interior of the church after the cleaning of the floor. The brick vaults are clearly seen running up the centre of the image.

4. The appearance and construction of the vaults suggested that they were all broadly contemporary and of a comparatively late date. Burial within churches tended to die out in the middle decades of the 19th century and it is therefore likely that all the vaults date to a period of approximately 1800 – 1850. They must certainly have been in place before the 1860's renovations, since the heating ducts run along the tops of the vaults.
5. In addition to these vaults, two graves were recorded which had been dug through the exposed floor surface (see fig. 4). That in the south aisle, grave 1, was 1.7m long and 0.65m side and that under the north arcade, grave 2, 1.45m long and 0.75m wide. It was not clear whether grave 2 ended before the remains of the sleeper wall at its east end or

extended under it, if the latter then it would obviously be longer. It is not possible to date either of these graves, although they both are earlier than the 1860's floor. Both were left unexcavated.

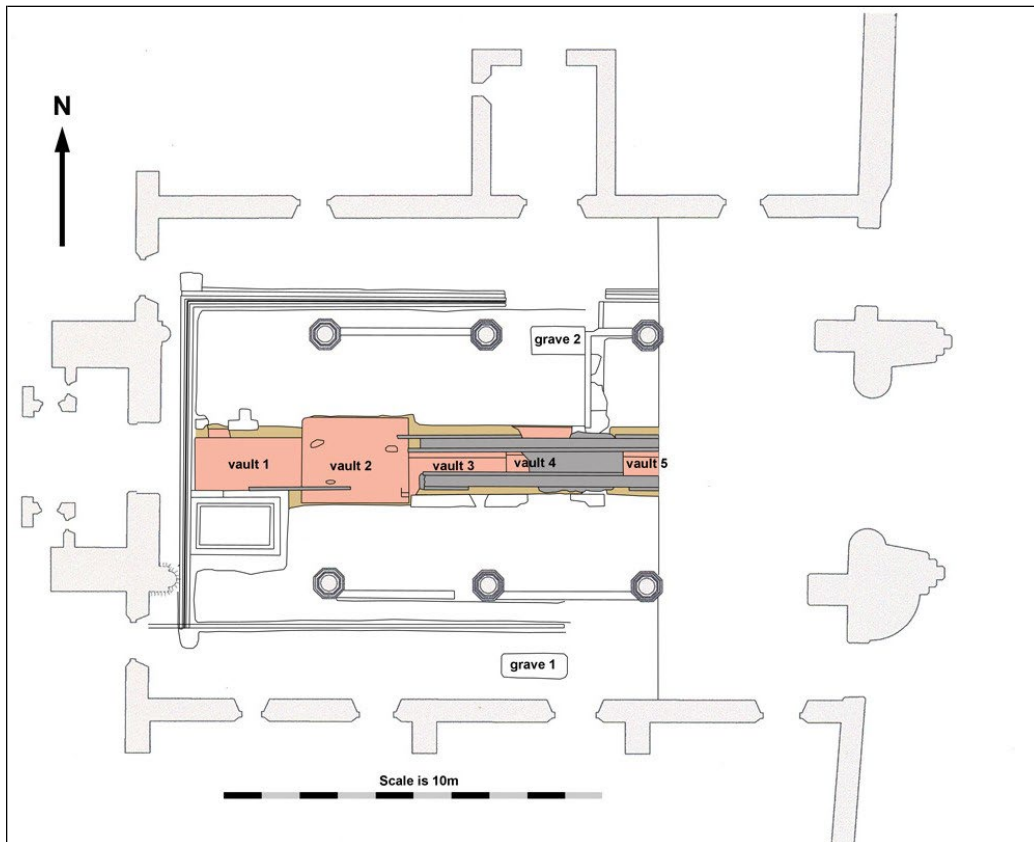


Figure 4 Plan showing the position of the vaults and graves.

6. The surface visible below the removed Victorian floor was composed of a trodden clay soil with traces of overlying white mortar surviving in patches. It was possible in places to see underlying layers, where they had been cut into by later features: there appeared to be at least one more layer of mortar sitting upon trodden earth, which in turn formed the surface of disturbed soil of an undetermined depth. In a few locations in the nave floor tiles were preserved in situ sitting upon the mortar (see fig. 5), although these survivals were less frequent than had been found in the north transept (WSA 2005). As had been noted in the transept the tiles were not all uniform, suggesting that isolated patching was the norm, rather than the wholesale relaying of the floor at any one time. The sizes and types of tile found fit in with the types recovered in 2005, with three sizes then being recorded (4 ½ inch or 11.5cm, 7 inch or 18cm & 9 ¼ inch or 23.5cm), some examples being glazed in yellow or green. The 4 ½ inch included some with a fleur-de-lis in yellow or white painted upon them, although none of these were found in the nave. To the east of the recorded area, under the retained concrete at the end of the south aisle, an area of in situ tiles was

revealed extending c.1.5m west of the entrance into the south transept and projecting 1m from the south wall. These were all unglazed 7 inch tiles. Without taking up more of the concrete it is not possible to state why these had survived in this location.

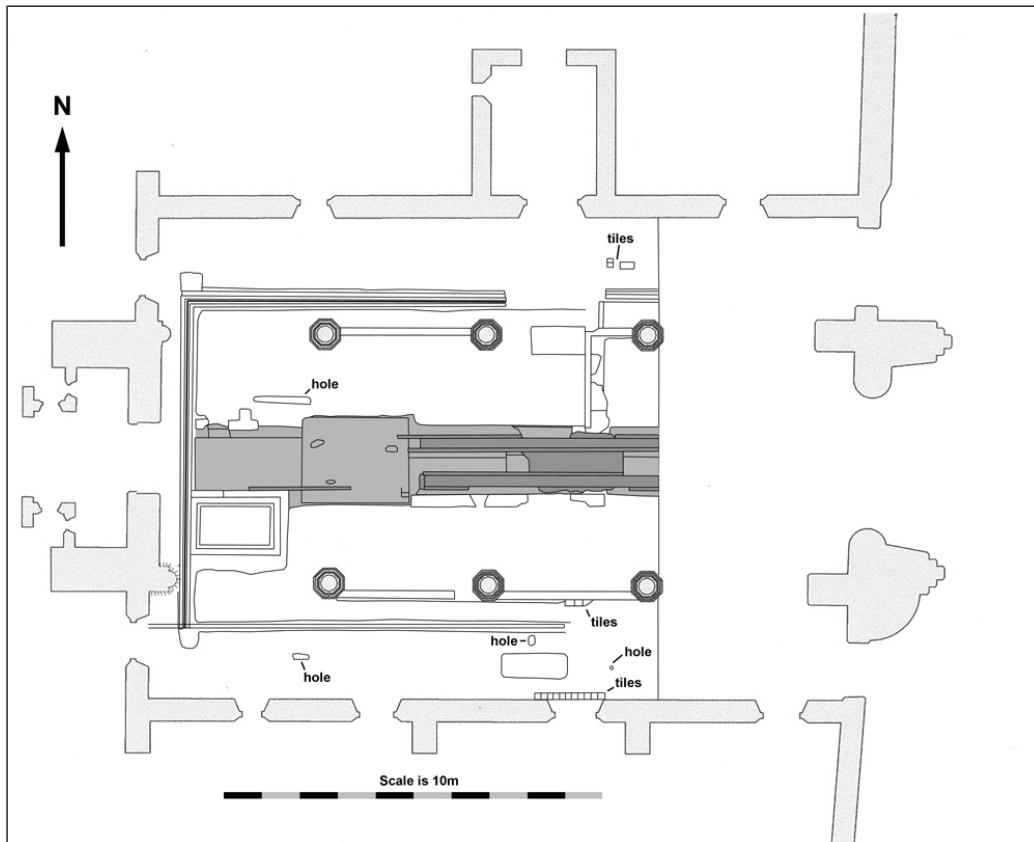


Figure 5 Plan showing the surviving tiles and holes associated with earlier floors.

7. The presence of the brick vaults in the nave required that they be bridged with reinforced concrete supported on two beams running parallel. The trenches for these beams were excavated under archaeological supervision and were 0.5m wide and 0.3m deep (see fig.8). After the removal of the surviving floor layers, as described above, the remaining 0.15 – 0.2m consisted of disturbed soil, presumably created by burials. In only two places were articulated human remains encountered, both in the southern trench. The western of these consisted of a skull (in the trench edge) with its right arm; the eastern consisted of just the right arm. Both burials were left in situ. At the western end of the northern trench the edges of two rubble-filled pits were revealed. These were clearly earlier than the surviving floor deposits, but little more can be determined about them.
8. The most significant feature found within the two trenches was a wide foundation composed of flints in a loose white mortar (see fig.8). Again it was clearly earlier than the floor surfaces above, but no other dating evidence was apparent. Its width varies across the two trenches, with it being 1.15m wide in the northern and 1.65 in the southern. It is

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possible that such a substantial foundation relates to either the pre-Norman church or to the early phase of the current building, before the extension of the nave in the late 12th century (Mayo 1995). Possible evidence of a later alteration was also revealed at the bases of five of the six pillars separating the nave from the aisles. In each case stone bases were partially revealed during the cleaning of the surviving floor surface, a number of which appear to be off-set from the pillars they support (see fig.8). This may be a result of alterations recorded as taking place in the 15th century when the pillars and their bases were re-made (Mayo 1995).



Figure 6 Wall foundation in the southern beam trench, looking south. The scale is 2m.



Figure 7 Base of the north-west column within the nave, showing the earlier stonework, looking east. The scale is 1m.

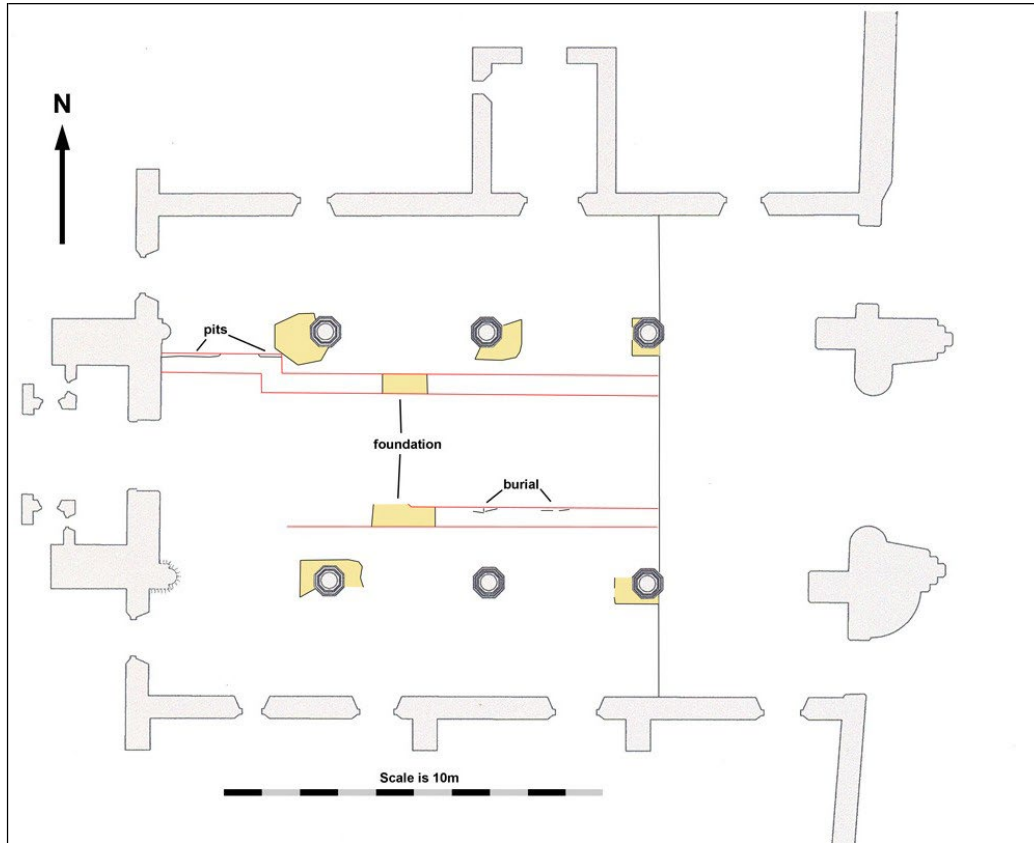


Figure 8 Plan showing the two beam slot trenches (in red) and the possible medieval features.

9. At the eastern end of the south aisle a void filled with loose rubble was discovered. Upon excavation it was found that the rubble covered a flight of steps, 0.95m wide, running east under the retained concrete. Along the south side of these steps and then turning north at the base of the fourth step was a brick wall of obviously later date. An opening was made in this wall so that a camera could be inserted to view what lay beyond. Behind the blocking was a burial vault approximately 1.75m north-south and 2.25m east-west (see fig 11). At the far side the earlier bricks survived only as column a single brick wide in the centre of the vault rising from floor to ceiling. Either side of this the wall was composed of more recent brickwork. Otherwise the vault's walls were composed of the same bricks as the steps. The roof of the vault, however, was again of the later bricks. Lying upon the floor of the vault, amidst much rubble, were two skeletons with their heads to the west. Despite the disorder of the interior, these appear to have been little disturbed, although the later wall at the east end seems to have been built partially on where their feet should lie. Attached to the south wall was a semi-circular shelf of approximately 0.25m diameter, it is probable that this once carried a statue of a saint or of the Virgin Mary.

10. The identity of the occupants and the date of the vault are almost certainly given by the memorial that now resides in the south transept.

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This originally stood facing west in front of the blocked doorway into the transept and records the burial place of Thomas, Lord de la Warr and his wife, who died without issue in 1554. The date for all the later walling and re-roofing may be associated with the moving of the memorial in 1826, or could be later and linked to the renovations of the 1860's. This later date could be indicated by the fact that the blocking wall seems to support the east end of a sleeper wall.



Figure 9 The steps leading down to the De La Warr vault.



Figure 10 The interior of the De La Warr vault.

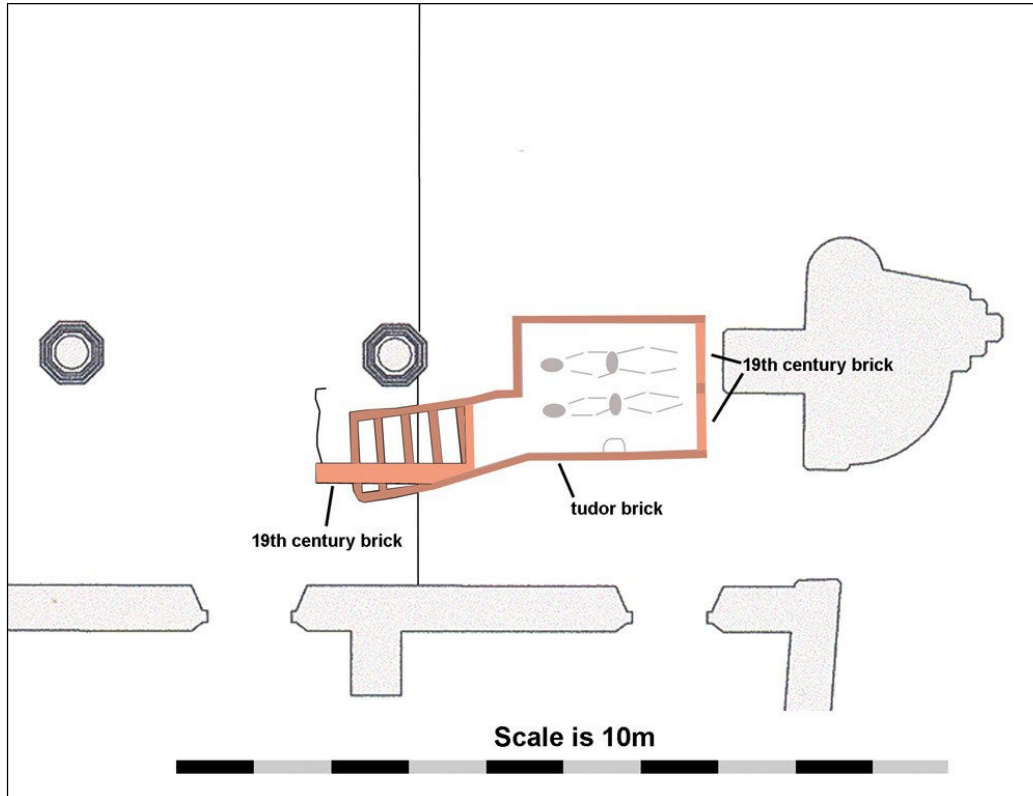


Figure 11 Plan showing the De La Warr vault in the south-east corner of the nave.

11. The proposed monitoring of the wall plaster stripping was not pursued once it became clear that what was to be removed was all of a comparatively recent date, without any decoration.

SURVIVAL OF DEPOSITS

1. Beneath the Victorian floor of Broadwater church lay little trace of the floor that must have existed before. It is assumed from the evidence of the north transept and the few remains surviving within the nave that at least some of the floor must have been composed of a mixture of plain and glazed tiles. Other areas were doubtless covered by wooden pews. It appears however that when the floor was re-laid the vast majority of the earlier tiles were removed; leaving it impossible to re-construct what went before.
2. The central aisle of the nave was placed above a row of brick vaults, probably dating to the first half of the 19th century, but other burials clearly existed, such as the two visible graves and the De La Warr vault. It is highly likely that numerous inhumations within the nave have taken place over the years, by analogy with other churches, as suggested by the disturbed nature of the soil beneath the floor layers and by the discovery of the two skeletons found in the beam trenches.

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3. Evidence for structural changes to the building was found in the form of the wall foundation and pillar bases. The tracing of the line of this earlier wall foundation would be of particular significance in any later archaeological work to be undertaken within the nave. It would also be of interest to discover what the function was of the two flint-rubble filled pits, the edges of which were found in the northern beam trench.
4. The most spectacular discovery of this project was certainly the De La Warr vault, the location of which had been forgotten since the re-location of the accompanying memorial. There had clearly been some disturbance of it in the 19th century, with the loss of the statue which almost certainly once sat on the semi-circular shelf. A number of questions remain concerning this vault, such as what lies behind the blocking at its east end, why it is positioned at such a curious angle to its steps and why it was placed under the foundations of the south wall of the original nave. It is hoped that at some future date it may be possible to answer these questions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1 County Council HER summary form

Site Name: St. Mary's Church, Broadwater, West Sussex	
Site Address: St. Mary's Church, Broadwater, West Sussex	
Summary: A watching brief during the lowering of internal ground surfaces within the nave of the church revealed the presence of a number of 19th century brick vaults and one 16th century example (occupied by members of the De La Warr family) and the footings for what is possibly a wall relating to an earlier church building.	
District/Unitary: Worthing Borough	Parish: Broadwater
Period(s): Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern	
NGR (centre of site : 8 figures): NGR SU 1465 0440 (NB if large or linear site give multiple NGRs)	
Type of archaeological work (delete)	
Watching Brief	
Date of Recording: 12/1/09 – 24/2/09	
Unit undertaking recording: West Sussex Archaeology Ltd.	
Geology: Brickearth	
Title and author of accompanying report: Report on a Programme of Archaeological Works at St. Mary's Church, Broadwater, West Sussex. George Anelay.	
Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) See Above	
(cont on attached sheet)	
Location of archive/finds: Broadwater PCC	
Contact at Unit: George Anelay	Date: 7/9/09