

An Archaeological Watching Brief
at the
The Masons' Yard,
Wells Cathedral

WCM 05 and 06

**Carried out for Purcell Miller Tritton and
The Dean and Chapter of Wells Cathedral**

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Report Number 399

Archaeological Excavations at the Chapter House, Wells Cathedral

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the
The Masons' Yard and Palace Green, Wells Cathedral**

SUMMARY

A watching brief in advance of the construction of new buildings in the Masons' Yard, Wells Cathedral, has exposed both archaeological deposits and structural remains. Evidence for a relic watercourse crossing part of the Masons' Yard was documented as well as the dumps of construction spoil used to level up the depression caused by the water flow. Various walls were recorded, including some recorded below the buttresses of the East Cloister wall. These latter shared an alignment with the Saxon walls excavated by Rodwell in 1979-83 (Rodwell, 2001) and appear to present evidence for a significant structure below the East Cloister. Another buttress on the Saxon alignment lies over the Camery wall, indicating an early date for its construction. The medieval culvert carrying the water from St. Andrew's Well into the Market Place was reinforced. The base of the latrine tower against the East Cloister wall was investigated and may be of an earlier date than previously thought.

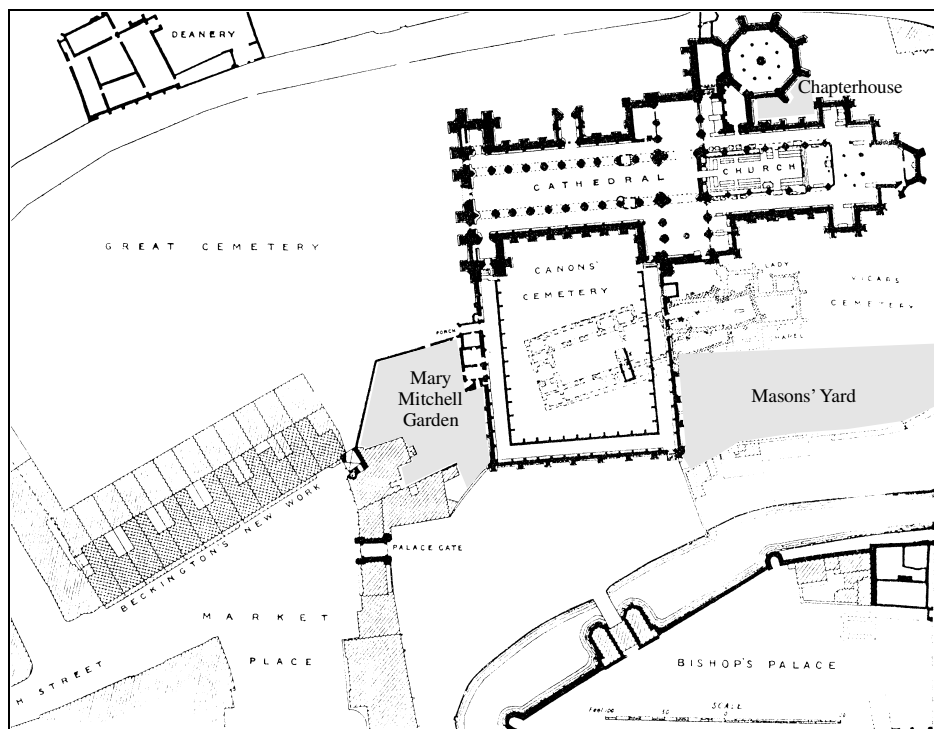


Figure 1. Hope's 1909 plan of the Cathedral precinct from Rodwell, 2001.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 The Dean and Chapter of Wells Cathedral have been granted permission to erect several new buildings at various locations within the Cathedral precinct: in the Masons' Yard, next to the Chapter House and in the Mary Mitchell Garden. Archaeological evaluation trenches were commissioned in 1999 as part of the planning application for the new buildings in the Mary Mitchell Garden and the Mason's Yard (Hollinrake 1999).

1.1.2 Having gained planning permission, the architects Purcell Miller Tritton commissioned CJ Associates to undertake a series of boreholes and window samples to test the soils and geology. To augment these, and to put them in context, a programme of ground radar survey was commissioned from Stratascan. These projects were monitored by archaeological consultants C. & N. Hollinrake, Ltd (Hollinrake 2005).

1.1.3 In 2006, Purcell Miller Tritton commissioned C. & N. Hollinrake Ltd. to excavate evaluation trenches against the foundations of the south wall of the Chapter House in the area of a proposed new building is. Two pits were excavated between the 14th and 25th of November 2005 and the 12th December and 16th January 2006. All archaeological works at the Cathedral were supervised by Dr. Warwick Rodwell.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Previous investigations

The results of the various archaeological investigations at Wells Cathedral were reported in the following reports:

- Hollinrake, C. & N., *An Archaeological Evaluation at Wells Cathedral*, 1999 (Report number 169).
- C. & N. Hollinrake Ltd, *Archaeological Recording of Boreholes at Wells Cathedral* carried out in 2005 (Report number 355). This later report also incorporates data from map analysis undertaken by

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- Dr. Warwick Rodwell (*The Archaeology of Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Structural Studies, 1978-1983, 2001*).
- The borehole report was augmented with data from a ground-penetrating radar survey of the proposed development areas that was undertaken by Strascan.

1.2.2 The Masons' Yard

The Masons' Yard (Figure 1, southeast of Cloister) has been carved out of the Camery, an area to the south of the Cathedral and east of the Cloister Garth. A large part of the Camery was subject to a major programme of excavation from 1979 to 1983 under the direction of Dr. Warwick Rodwell. Among the features recorded was the fifteenth-century Stillington Chapel, the eastern part of the pre-Norman minster and a Romano-British mortuary chapel, making this the one of the few churches in Britain which can demonstrate continuous activity from the Roman period into the early and later Middle Ages. The excavations revealed a great density of archaeological features and deposits from a wide date-range, including several hundred human skeletons. Rodwell produced a plan of the various wall foundations for his publication, reproduced below.

Although excavation to the north of the Mary Mitchell Garden (Figure 1, enclosure west of the Cloister) has established that there was a masons' yard in that location in the thirteenth century, there are also indications of a masons' yard and plumbery at the site of the present Masons' Yard by the mid-fourteenth century. The plumbery would have dealt with the lead works in the Cathedral and associated building, including lead for drain pipes, roofs and stained-glass windows. The masons' yard appears to have occupied this space ever since. (Rodwell, *pers. comm.*)

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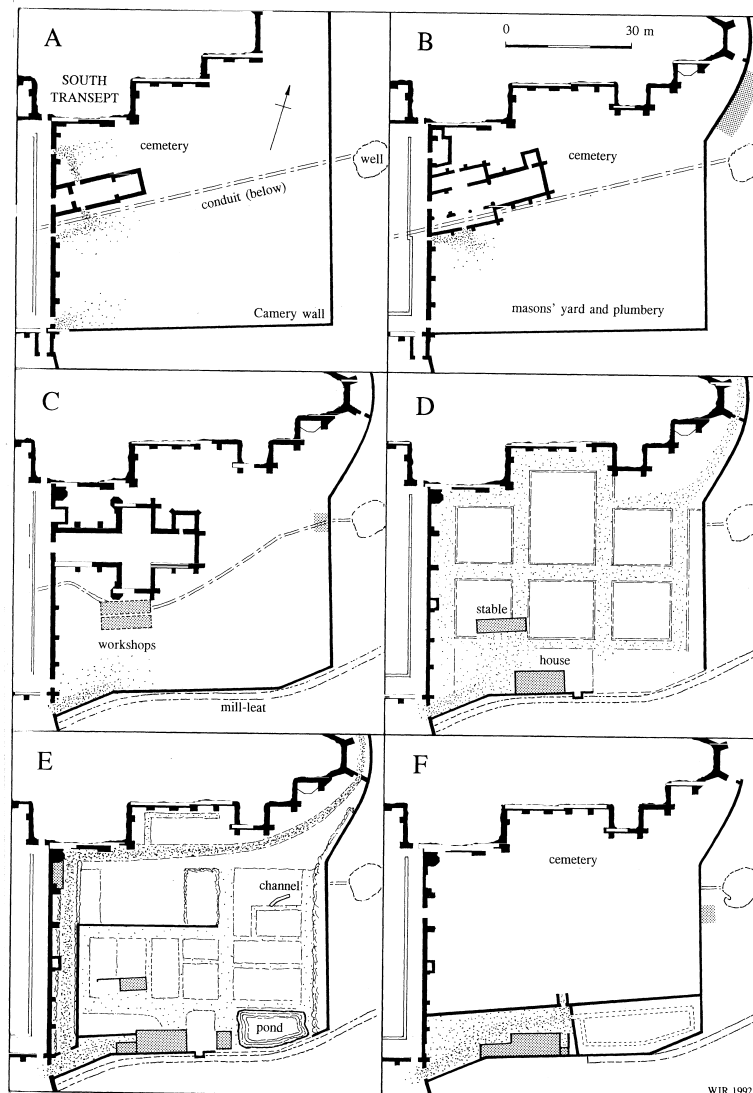


Figure 2. (Figure 383 in Rodwell) Plans to illustrate the suggested historical development of the Camery and the principal buildings in it. A Early thirteenth century; B Mid-fourteenth century; C Late fifteenth century; D Late seventeenth century; E Late eighteenth century; F Late nineteenth century.

Borehole results combined with analysis of historic maps suggest that a substantial **relic watercourse** passes through the area of the Mason's Yard and has been backfilled with a variety of materials, including masons' waste (Hollinrake 2005). According to a 19th century plan by Carter, part of the area of the proposed new Works Department building was occupied by a pond in the late 18th century (Figure 2E; Rodwell, 2001, fig. 383).

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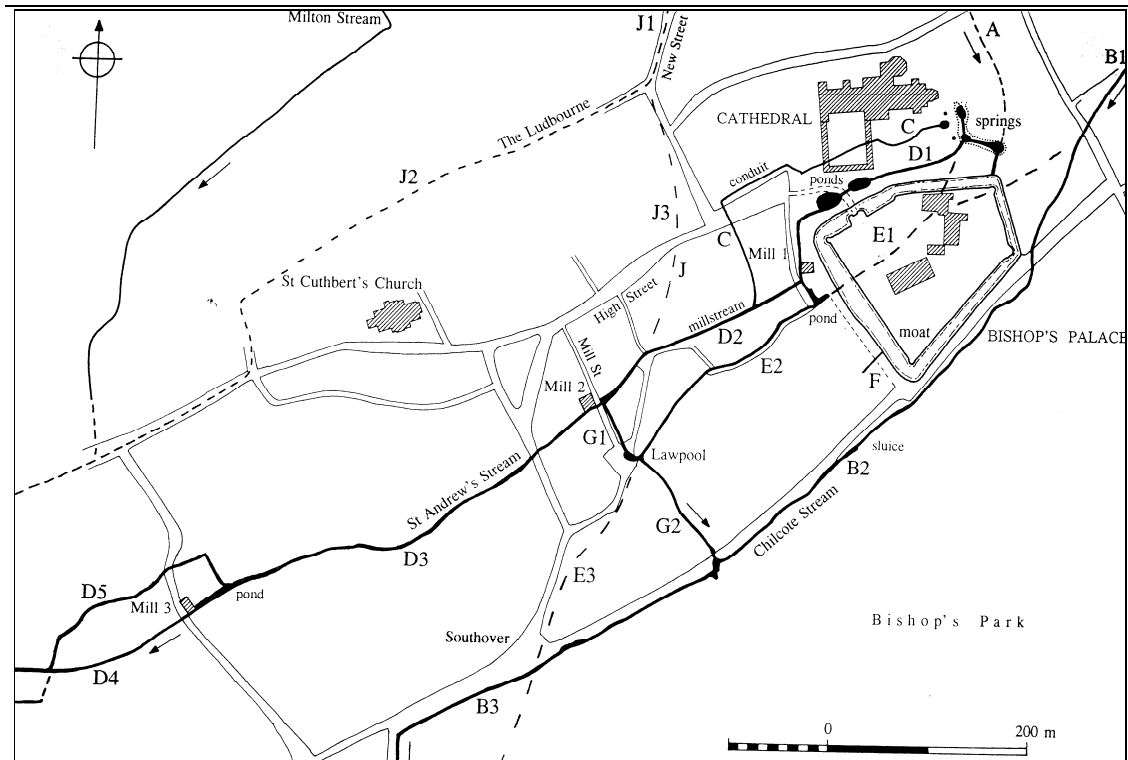


Figure 3. Plan showing the principal watercourses flowing through Wells.

The new build extended north into the Camery, beyond the modern northern boundary wall (now demolished) of the Masons' Yard. A bank covered by shrubs and bushes formerly backed up to the boundary in the Camery and was removed. Analysis of the historic maps demonstrates that the boundary wall was constructed sometime during the 1870s. An evaluation trench indicated that although the bank post-dates the wall it does seal a deep garden soil containing 17th century pottery and below this a deep deposit of **masons' waste** – stone dust and chippings - which on investigation contained a worn and damaged Lias stone pillar base of probable 13th century date (Hollinrake 1999).

The stone **wall** defining the eastern and southern boundary of the Masons' Yard was retained. Elements of this wall may be of some antiquity. That part of the wall running north of the Masons' Yard, the east boundary wall of the Camery has previously been recorded and analysed by Dr. Rodwell (op cit. p.353).

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The new building required **new services**, both incoming and outgoing, contained in trenches running from the Market Place through Palace Green (Figure 1). No boreholes were drilled in this location, but the Green was surveyed by ground-penetrating radar. The service trenches (0.80m deep x 1.0m wide) followed the south edge of the existing tarmac pathway (adjacent to the Cloisters) to the Masons' Yard.

The geophysical survey suggested that the only area showing anomalies or returns along the line of the service trench was located just outside the entrance to the Masons' Yard. However the anomaly lies deeper than 1.5m and as the service trench was only 0.8m deep it did not disturb the feature. It was not anticipated, therefore, that significant archaeological deposits or features would be encountered in the service trenches.

2.0 METHOD STATEMENT AND PROGRAMME OF WORKS

2.1 Fieldwork - Watching brief/ General procedures

An archaeologist was on site whenever the ground was broken and whenever soil, clay or other material was removed. The overburden or topsoil removed by machine was examined for archaeological finds and spoil dumps were also examined for finds. Finds were bagged and the find spots marked onto site plans provided by Purcell Miller Tritton. Archaeological features or deposits exposed by the topsoil or subsoil stripping or by the excavation of drains and service were described and/or planned at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 as appropriate and located on the site plans. Archaeological features were hand-excavated in order to obtain information regarding dating, phasing and function. Sections and profiles were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate and the watching brief was also recorded photographically using colour slides, colour prints and black and white prints.

Excavation of archaeological features and/or trenches followed the principles of single context recording and total finds recovery, as outlined in our report of the test pits against the foundations of the Chapter House (Hollinrake, C. & N., 2006, Report no. 371).

2.2 Works Department Building

The new building will extend northwards beyond the present boundary wall between the Masons' Yard and the Camery, where a bank to the north of the wall will have to be removed (Hollinrake, Report no. 169 drawing 8). The section of the bank in Report no. 169 suggests that the upper levels of the pre-18th century masons' waste are likely to be disturbed by these operations.

2.3 The Camery Wall

The new building stands very close to the **existing stone wall** that marks the eastern and southern boundaries of the Masons' Yard. This wall was carefully protected. Removal of vegetation and a variety of small modern outbuildings allowed the wall to be recorded before it was completely obscured by the new buildings.

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The wall was recorded in the form of a series of scaled colour print photographs, with any visible architectural detail recorded by hand drawing at a scale of 1:20.

2.4 The East Cloister Wall

Part of the western end of the new Camery Building butts up against the western wall of the eastern aisle of the Cloisters. This wall benefited from a photogrammetric survey as part of the archaeological excavation of the Stillington Chapel and the northern parts of the Camery in 1983 (Rodwell, 2001). It was not possible to complete this survey at the time due to outbuildings built up against the wall, leaving blank areas on the inked elevation drawing of the wall. These outbuildings were removed as part of the building works of 2006, allowing the survey to be completed. The recording took the same form as that of the Camery wall. The photographs will be printed at a scale of 1:20 to be traced stone-by-stone onto the drawing produced in 1983.

2.5 The Camery Building

As well as obscuring parts of the East Cloister Wall (see above) and impinging upon the medieval culvert (see below), the raft foundation of this new building was designed with reference to the excavations at the northern part of the Camery (Rodwell, 2001). The foundations were designed to reach the level where no known archaeological deposits would be disturbed. Nevertheless, this base level was investigated by the archaeologists to safeguard the integrity of any features or deposits which might exist.

2.5 The Culvert

A medieval drain, illustrated in Figure 2C above, impinges upon the northern edge of the foundation for the new Camery Building in the western part of the Masons' Yard. This culvert is a fifteenth-century diversion of the thirteenth-century drain closely following the Saxon Cathedral. The culvert required support to prevent it being disturbed by the weight of the new building. This took the form of a curving trench, located c45cm to the south of the culvert and reaching a depth equal to the base of the culvert, filled with foam concrete. This trench was excavated archaeologically following the methods outlined above.

2.6 Palace Green

Service trenches were taken across the Palace Green to the Bishop's Eye gateway, where they joined mains services. These trenching operations were also monitored by archaeologists.

This report integrates all of these operations into a single format, without reference to the order in which they were undertaken. The recordings of the Cloister Wall and the Camery Wall will be subject to a separate report.

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3.2 The Culvert Trench (Tables 1 and 2; Figure 4)

Paragraph 1.2.2 above, discussing the evidence for the existence of a relic stream bed passing through the Masons' Yard, drawn upon data from a variety of different sources. Further data became available during the archaeological works. The trench excavated, by a combination of machine and hand work, for the reinforcement of the culvert provided the best view of the stratigraphy on the site, displaying the following layers:

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation
13100	Layer	Loose yellow stone dust with small - large chunks of Douling stone (off cuts). Covers the entire area of culvert trench (where not disturbed). top at 45.26 m OD.	Levelled off dump of masons waste. Probably derives from the creation of the refurbished cloisters in C15th. = context 69, 1980s
13101	Layer	Soft brick red clay. No significant inclusions. <10cm thick. Covers the full extent of culvert trench except where disturbed..	Dust & soil accumulation on top of building rubble dump 13102 . Thin layer - easily removed by trowel.
13102	Layer	Loose to firmly compacted red sandy clay. Contained abundant - rounded pebbles (up to 5cm diameter), frequent Douling stone chips (up to 8cm diameter) & small lenses of stone dust. Also contained 2 x C13-15th pottery, abundant Medieval ceramic tiles, 1 x ?human bone & rare charcoal flecks..	Mostly redeposited natural. Human bone suggests that this is possibly in an old graveyard. Floor tile suggests renewing a floor. Pot dates to late C14th / early C15th. Stone dust layer 13101 above suggests that 13102 is debris from the refurbishment of the cloisters in C15th. No structures revealed
13103	Layer	Soft red sandy clay with a slight tinge of brown. Contained rare charcoal flecks. Up to c.5cm thick. top at 44.67m OD	Dust & weathering of the natural below. Undisturbed interlude between 13104 & 13102
13104	Layer	Firm red sandy clay with stones. Covers the full extent below culvert trench.	Redeposited natural?

Table 1. Contexts revealed in the culvert trench.

Deposit **13104**, only encountered at the base of the trench, could be seen to carry a thin band of pinkish mortar in places, but only a small amount appeared in the trench and could neither be sampled nor confidently interpreted.

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context	{ pottery }				bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	date	qty		
13102 Culvert Trench	1	grey, some black grit & occasional limestone & small quartz temper. 12g	patchy green glaze on outer surface	13-15th	1	encaustic tile frag, pale grey fabric, Fleur-de-Lis design.	1 x bone ?Human Tibia? 78g
	1	hard grey, occasional small black grit temper. 9g	pale oxidised inner surface, speckled khaki green glaze outer surface	13-15th	1	possible encaustic tile, dark grey upper surface, orange lower surface.	
					1	possible pale pink/ orange fabric. small rectangular encaustic tile.	
					1	glazed tile, green/ brown glaze with mortar adhering all over the tile.	
					1	almost complete small square tile, white slip & clear/ yellow glaze & mortar adhering all over.	
					1	tile - 2 x cut sides - 2 x broken sides, 43mm from cut edge to cut edge. 24mm thick. black/ brown ?slip with clear glaze. pale orange fabric with 1 x reduced strip on upper surface.	
					1	tile, oxidised with reduced strip in the centre of upper surface, traces of mortar adhering, 2 x cut edges - 44mm between them.	
					1	tile frag, dark grey/ black glaze, 2 x cut edges.	
					1	tile frag, dark grey fabric, oxidised outer surfaces, traces of brown glaze.	
					3	tile frag, pale grey with oxidised surfaces, 1 x traces of mortar adhering.	
					1	Blue Lias tile. 104g	

Table 2. Finds from the culvert trench.

The finds from layer **13102** suggest a date-range from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. These thick layers appear to have been dumped in order to level up a natural depression in the Masons' Yard. The approximate extent of the upper layer of masons' waste is shown in Figure 4. This deposit filled the lower parts of the Yard, raising the ground up to a similar level as the higher ground to the west, below the Cloisters.

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This quantity of material is unlikely to have been transported any distance, probably no further than the Cloisters. These were first built in the thirteenth century, and the East Cloister Wall dates to that period. In the fifteenth century, however, the original cloister was dismantled and the cloister walk was widened and refurbished (leaving the original thirteenth century doors off-centre to the East Cloister walk, as it remains today) (Rodwell 2001, 246-7). The spoil from these operations was spread upon the soft, uneven ground of the Masons' Yard: **13102** probably represents the spoil from digging new foundations in an old cemetery (The Palm Court), breaking up the encaustic tile floor and taking down the worked stone architectural features; **13100** represents the stone dust, chips and offcuts created during the making of the new Cloister stonework. This deposit was exposed in the 1980s (context number 69), but was only excavated in two narrow north-south trenches.

In the fifteenth century, the West Front was finally completed and the Masons' Yard was moved from its location between the Mary Mitchell Garden and the West Cloister where it remained until a few years ago, when it was moved to the Brunel Stone Works, Cheddar.

Since the excavations of the 1980s, these deposits have been much disturbed in the area of the culvert by a large rubbish pit and breeze block lined lime pit, greatly restricting the quantity of archaeological deposits in the trench. The 1980s excavation trench, shown in Figure 4, had been backfilled with a hard concrete which has been left in place. An articulated skeleton, aligned west-east, was encountered in the western end of the culvert trench, at the base. This was immediately below, but undisturbed by, the large rubbish pit covering a third of the length of the trench. The skeleton was protected from the concrete with heavy plastic and left *in situ*.

3.3 The Culvert

The culvert was located using the plans from the 1980s excavation. Two capstones were exposed with a machine trench. The condition was similar to that seen previously and there did not appear to be any leakage or impedance to the vigorous flow of water.

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3.4 Reinforcing of East Camery Wall (Photograph 1 and 2; Tables 3 to 7)

Monitoring of the reinforcing of the East Camery Wall and the new Works Building allowed inspection of the soils and deposits in the eastern side of the Masons' Yard. The observations are shown on Figure 4 and reveal further information regarding the earlier layout of this part of the Cathedral precinct. The data on which the features on Figure 4 are based are tabulated below.



Photograph 1. Reinforcing struts for the Camery wall, set into their pits.

Stratigraphy of Pit A

depth	description	interpretation
to 0.15m	concrete	modern yard surface
to 0.40m	scalpings	make-up
to 0.56m	dark brown sandy clay with charcoal, few stones	dumping
to 0.68m	light red-brown clay with mortar	
to 0.88m	medium red clay	
to 0.98m	light red-brown clay with mortar & charcoal	
to 1.12	light brown clay with blue and white lias rubble & charcoal	
to 1.34m	red clay with stones	

Pit A	masonry	14 courses, N-S, of lias, white lias, red sandstone, conglomerate of various sizes, the lowest 3 courses are foundations; faced to west; bonded with greyish mortar (S1) near top, yellowish mortar (S2) in middle and pinkish-white/yellow mortar (S3) at base	East Camery wall in Pit A	?medieval
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Table 3. Contexts from Pit A.

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Pit B

Stone intruding into pit: red sandstone (c50cm l x 15cm h) no sign of lower structure, but setting and location suggest that this is part of culvert **200**. Set within red sandy clay and stones.

Pit B	masonry	3 courses, E-W, of lias and red sandstone rubble and Doultling blocks with roughly tooled face and roughly punched top surface, faced to north with 18cm offset	foundations of South Camery wall	?medieval
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Table 4. Contexts from Pit B.

Stratigraphy of Pit C

Similar to Pit A, with red clay with small Doultling and Lias rubble at the very wet base.

Pit C	masonry	several courses (c 1.85m revealed, offset c8cm) small (c12cm x c6cm) red Sandstone & lias, laid flat, very tight joints with no visible mortar.	foundations of Camery East wall	?medieval
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Table 5. Contexts from Pit C.

Stratigraphy of Pit D

Similar to Pit A, again with red clay with small Doultling and Lias rubble at the base.

Pit D	masonry	2 courses (c15cm h, offset up to c12cm) red sandstone (up to 20cm x 8sm), very tight joints with no mortar	foundations of Camery East wall	?medieval
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Table 6. Contexts from Pit D.

Stratigraphy of Pit E

Similar to Pit A, with medieval tile found in light red-brown clay with mortar & charcoal. Southern half of this pit was occupied by the north side of a well-made east-west wall. It was necessary to place a concrete base to a depth of 1.6m on this wall, which was effected by removing one large Doultling block plus a few stones from the next course, revealing 3 lower courses of masonry to a depth of 28cm. Total depth = 1.45m from top of concrete.

Pit E	masonry	red sandstone and Lias facing stones (up to 30cm l x 17cm w x 5cm h) and rubble infill, with offset; extends at least 1.45m below concrete surface, 1m wide. Doultling vousoir in infill.	north side of east-west wall from Trench 2	
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Table 7. Contexts from Pit E

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Photograph 2. Wall in Pit E.

Pit F

A hole was cut through the wall, c86cm below the level of the concrete yard surface, to allow access for a culvert with an opening of c25cm h x 46cm width, bonded with Portland cement. The culvert passes only a short distance to the east before it stopped short; it appears to have been removed.

Pit G filled with water to 1m below ground surface.

These pits were excavated in order to provide bracing structures to support the East Camery Wall. The wall was protected from the bracing structures and the concrete backfilling of the trenches with a double thickness of heavy plastic. The wall was recorded photographically while it was exposed; apart from the features recorded from the pits, no architectural features were observed. A detailed report on the wall will be included in the forthcoming report on the East Cloister wall.

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Features recorded watching service trench across the Masons' Yard(Figure 4)

101	deposit	dirty brown clay, sand, Douling stone rubble, red sandstone, Lias and modern brick fragments up to 1m deep	backfill, masons' waste in area of new Works Building	modern
102	masonry	very rough (50cm wide x 65cm visible height) Douling, red sandstone & Lias rubble, brick/tile fragments bonded with light grey soft lime mortar with ash/?Portland cement and charcoal lumps; 15cm skin of green lias clay & stone on W side	N-S wall	C18-19th
103	layer	cobbles (up to 15cm long x 5cm wide x 8cm deep) laid lengthwise N-S within dirty brown clay with ash/charcoal & small stones at 70cm below surface	remains of cobbled yard	
103a	deposit	concrete yard - 10cm - above scalpings - 40cm - above sand - 20cm - above dirty brown clay with few oyster shells & cobbles to depth of 70cm	deposits above cobbled yard 103	
104	masonry	NW-SE, 1m below surface, 75cm wide, red sandstone bonded with light brown/pink soft lime mortar; larger facing stonew with angular and square smaller stones forming core, 3 courses exposed.	wall. part of original Camery wall (WR)	medieval

Table 8. Features recorded in service trench

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3.5 Works Building Foundations (Figure 4; Tables 9 to 17)

Works Building				
201	cut & fill	thin (c10-20cm thick) deposit of hard, dark brown/grey clay with frequent charcoal flecks & lumps, small angular Lias & Douling stones, post-medieval pottery and clay pipe stems, no visible cut	thin make-up deposit, originally thought to be a ditch	post-medieval
202	culvert	SW-NE, at depth of c65cm, 50cm high; base (c6cm thick) & cappings (10cm thick) red sandstone slabs, 2 courses of red sandstone & Lias form sides, bonded with greyish/buff lime mortar; internal dimensions = 32cm h x 30cm w, filled with 20cm of soft light brown silt	culvert	?Saxon mortar

Table 9. Contexts below Works Building.

Trench 1 (c50cm wide)

depth	description	interpretation
to 40cm	concrete & scalplings	modern Masons Yard surface
to 60cm	dark brown clay with small Douling rubble, charcoal flecks, few oyster shells	
to 1.40m	reddish brown sandy clay with Douling rubble; large Douling block (c70cm l x 55cm w x 30cm h) tooled on 5 sides	

Table 10. Stratigraphy for Trench 1.

Trench 2 (c60-70 cm wide, c80cm from East Camery wall, c1.3m deep)

Trench 2	masonry	4 courses of Douling and red sandstone facing blocks, 87cm wide; appears to be splayed; c57cm high from base of trench, robbed out above this, large blocks in core	south side of east-west wall from Pit E	
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Table 11. Features in Trench 2.

Trench 3

Trench 3 East (to junction with Trench 5) (c80cm wide x 1.25m deep)

depth	description	interpretation
to 40cm	concrete & scalplings	modern Masons Yard surface
to 1.20m	mixed loose make-up deposits of mid brown to dark brown sandy clay with large & small douling, red sandstone & lias rubble with lumps of hard grey cement, stone dust, lime mortar & slate and fragments of stone roof tiles, few bricks	modern dumping
to 1.25m	red sandy clay with Douling rubble	dumping

Table 12. Stratigraphy of Trench 3 East.

Trench 3 West

depth	description	interpretation
to 1.1m	concrete	modern Masons Yard
to 1.4m	mason's waste, level upper surface, base only seen 1x.	medieval surface made from mason's waste
below 1.4m	red sandy clay with Douling rubble	

Table 13. Stratigraphy of Trench 3 West.

Trench 4 (c80cm wide x c1m d below reduced level)

depth	description	interpretation
to 10-20cm	hard, dark brown/grey clay with frequent charcoal flecks & lumps, small angular Douling & Lias, post-medieval pot & clay pipe stems	fill of possible ditch 201
to 45cm	mixed red & brown sandy clay with frequent small angular Douling, Lias & red sandstone rubble, frequent charcoal flecks & lumps. 2x medieval tile fragments	dumping
to 1m	mixed red & brown sandy clay with frequent small angular Douling & Lias and red sandstone lumps, frequent charcoal lumps and flecks, patches of cream lime mortar. Bottom 10-15cm has lenses of charcoal.	

Table 14. Stratigraphy of Trench 4.

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West side of **201** had c25-30cm of loose Doultong rubble, stone dust & masonry waste, continuing for 3.2m westwards and then becoming c20cm of Doultong rubble, stone dust and masonry waste. All sitting above mixed red and brown sandy clay.

Trench 5 (c1.2m deep from top of concrete x c80-90cm wide)

Culvert **101** should run along the east side of this trench but it would appear to have been removed and infilled with concrete (c45cm thick) probably during the original concrete yard construction. Culvert 202 appeared in the west side of the trench but not the east side; it appears to have collapsed.

north part of trench 5

depth	description	interpretation
to 30cm	concrete & scalplings	modern Masons Yard surface
to 90cm	Doultong rubble, masonry waste, Lias & red sandstone in sticky red/brown clay	dumping
to 1.4m	very soft sticky red/brown silty clay	stream silts?
to 1.6m	dark grey organic silts	pond/stream?

south part of trench 5

depth	description	interpretation
to 40cm	concrete & scalplings	modern Masons Yard surface
to 90cm	mid brown clay with Doultong rubble	dumping
to 1.2m	Doultong rubble in soft red sandy clay	

Table 15. Stratigraphy of Trench 5.

Trench 6 (90cm deep x 70cm wide) Same stratigraphy as Trenches 7, 8 and 9.

Trench 7 (90cm deep x 70cm wide) Same stratigraphy as Trenches 8 and 9.

Trench 8 (95cm deep x 60cm wide)

depth	description	interpretation
to 10cm	subsoil	dumping
to 70cm (south of boundary wall only)	Lias, Doultong & red sandstone rubble in mid brown sandy clay	
to 95cm	masonry deposits & lenses of red sandy clay	

Table 16. Stratigraphy of Trench 8.

Trench 9 (c90cm deep x 60cm wide) Same deposits as Trench 8

Man Hole 1 (1.7m N-S x 2.8m E-W)

depth	description	interpretation
to 1.02	mixed red & brown sandy clay with Doultong, lias & red sandstone rubble	dumping
to 1.42	mixed dark grey, black & buff silts	?pond silts
to 2m	mixed red & very dark brown silts	?pond silts

Table 17. Stratigraphy of Manhole 1

3.6 Discussion

Plotting the above features onto a map of the Masons' Yard (Figure 4) prompts the following observations:

3.6.1 Borehole results combined with analysis of historic maps suggest that a substantial **relic watercourse** passes through the area of the Masons' Yard and has been backfilled with a variety of materials, including masons' waste (Hollinrake 2005; para. 1.2.2 above; Figure 3). The watching brief on the Works Department Building provided information regarding the locations of particularly wet areas; when joined together the resultant curve joined the stream to the south where there is a marked bend. The fact that this curve echoes the line of culvert **101** lends some credibility to the curve. This suggested relic watercourse is marked on the plans as a dashed blue line.

3.6.2 If there were one or more relic watercourses in the Masons' Yard, the Camery Wall would have crossed them unless they were channelled and diverted before the wall was built. This latter appears to be the most likely scenario. In Figure 2A above it is suggested that this had taken place by the thirteenth century.

3.6.3 The wall revealed in Pit E does not appear to extend much further to the west since it was not seen in any of the foundation trenches. If it is confined to the area to the east of the hypothetical relic waterway, it may be earlier than the diversion and channelling of the stream. This wall probably relates to the area surrounding the well-house in the Bishop's Garden, where further information about its dating and nature should be sought.

3.6.4 To the south of the Cathedral, the Cloisters were constructed on the southern edge of an area of slightly elevated, level red clay; the natural landforms slope away to the east and south into the river valley created by the stream issuing from the springs.

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3.6.5 Finds from the foundation trenches and pits matched those of the culvert trench (Finds List, Table 2). This suggests that the deposits recorded during the watching brief in all areas of the Masons' Yard are similar in their character, origins and date of deposition, and reinforces the interpretation that they derive from construction spoil dumped in this location to level up the uneven ground caused by the relic watercourses after they have been diverted and the area drained.

4.0 The Archaeological Features below the Cloisters

The principal archaeological features recorded during the watching brief were concentrated at the western side of the Masons' Yard, where the removal of the concrete yard revealed the higher ground not covered by the masons' waste. Stripping operations also exposed the foundations of the East Cloister Wall buttresses as well as a series of unexpected wall foundations and other features.

These features were cleaned by hand and recorded photographically. Plans and elevations were drawn at a scale of 1:20. A few small sondages were dug in order to understand the foundations of the East Cloister Wall and to answer specific questions, but the bulk of the following features were exposed during the cleaning of the soil level exposed after removal of the concrete.

The recording system was based upon systems previously established. Rodwell's excavations were divided into 12 distinct areas. The watching brief, covering areas which had not been subject to archaeological recording, has been labelled area 13 and all context numbers began with that number (1301, 1302, etc.). The bays of the Cloister have been numbered previously (Rodwell 2001, 246), but not the buttresses. We have retained the numbering of the bays, to avoid confusion, and have numbered the buttresses accordingly (buttress E1, buttress E1/ 2 between bays 1 and 2, buttress E2/ 3 between bays 2 and 3, etc.) These numbers appear on the plan of features in Figure 10 below.

The features will be described from south to north, beginning with those associated with Buttress 1, next to the present gateway into the Masons' Yard.

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4.1 Buttress 1 (Photographs 3 and 4; Figures 5 and 6; Table 18)



Photograph 3. Eastern elevation of Buttress 1.



Photograph 4. Buttress 1, north face.

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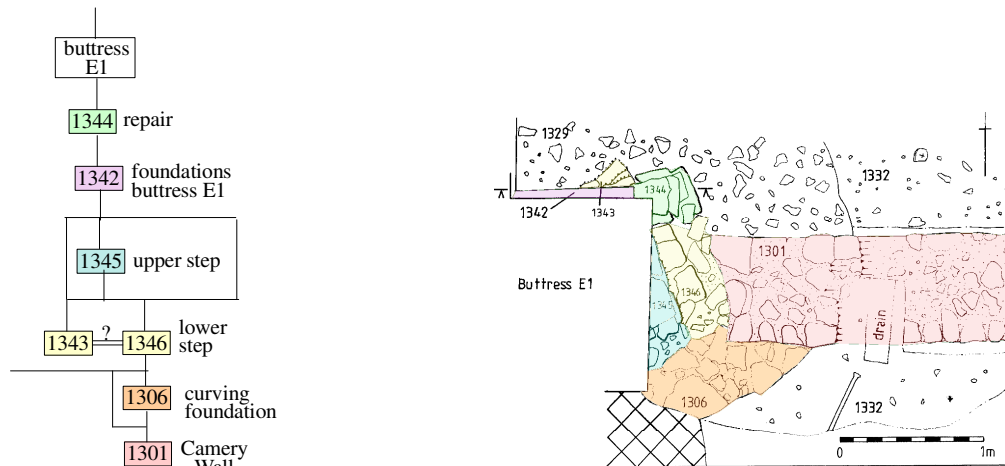


Figure 5. Context matrix, Buttress 1.

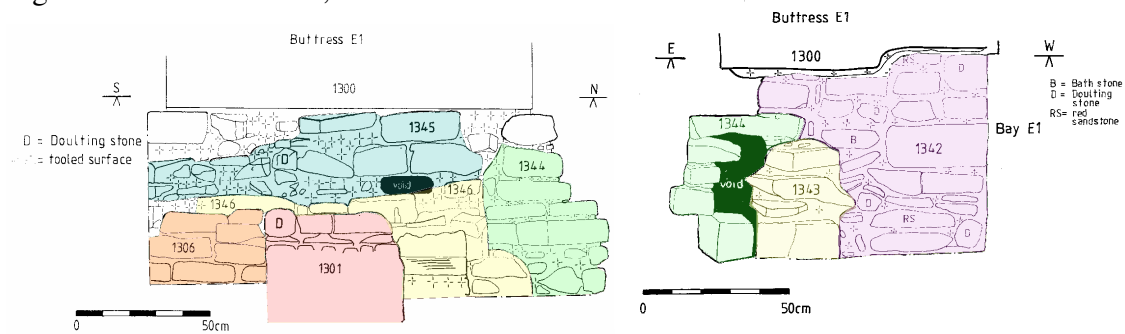


Figure 6. Plan and elevations, Buttress 1

The western end of the Camery Wall (**1301**) and the rounded masonry pad (**1306**) had previously been demolished to the lowest few courses before the first wall/buttress (**1346/1343/1346**) was constructed on top of it on a different alignment. Although it has been suggested that **1306** might have been constructed to prevent stone carts from catching on the sharp corners (W. Rodwell, pers. com.), that would only apply if the Camery Wall came to a corner just beyond the point where it became obscured by later masonry. It has not been possible to determine why this end of the Camery Wall was demolished.

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation
1301	Masonry	Ashlar: Bath Stone, red sandstone, limestone & Douling, various sizes, random coursing, rubble core. No finish on stones. Faces = N & S. Bonded with light pinkish mortar. 0.7m (N-S). 5.2m (E-W).	Remains of Camery wall. Same as 104 . (Aligned E-W, travels E from Buttress E1.. ?Saxon Mortar Sample No. 10
1306	Masonry	Limestone, red sandstone, ?Dolomitic conglomerate, Douling, & quartz, various sizes (Ave. = 22 x 22 x 12cm) some faced? 4 x courses visible, random coursing. Bonded with medium pinkish - red mortar. Extended for c.1m (E-W), then disappeared beneath buttress to the W. 72cm high. 0.5m (N-S).	Semi-circular masonry butting up to the base of the Cloister Wall ? Mortar Sample No. 20
1343	Masonry	Rough lias blocks up to 18 x 14 x 6cm. Random coursing? Aligned SE - NW Only 3 x courses visible = 16cm high. ?Same as 1345 , 1346 .	Buttress on different alignment from E1. Mortar Sample No. 14
1346	Masonry	Lias limestone. Only a few stones visible. (Ave. = 26 x 7 x 6cm). Possibly some faced stones. ?Random coursing.. Faces = NE / SW. Bonded with ?lime mortar. As exposed = 7cm high. 17cm (NE-SW). 60cm (NW-SE). Same as 1345 , ? 1343 .	Buttress on different alignment from E1. At right angles to 1343 . Mortar Sample No. 8
1345	Masonry	Lias limestone (Ave. = 30 x 20 x 8cm, blocks fairly uniform). Possibly some faced stones. Random coursing. Only the NE face visible. Bonded with light pinkish mortar. Up to 20cm high. 75cm (NW-SE). Only up to 20cm (NE-SW) observed - full extent unknown. Below 1300. Same as 1346 ? 1343 .	Buttress on different alignment from E1. At right angles to the SW-NE aligned 1343 - likely to be contemporary stonework. Mortar Sample No. 18
1342	Masonry	Lias & some red sandstone blocks (up to 20 x 16 x 9cm with some small frags wedged between blocks). Rough stone finish - mostly fairly flat. Random coursing. N facing. Total height = 80-90cm. 81cm (E-W). Length N-S unknown - 5 - 8cm exposed offset below Buttress 1. Same as 1300 .	Footing for Buttress E1, for the Cloister Wall. Aligned just off E-W. Mortar Sample No. 12
1344	Masonry	Large blocks of Lias limestone (32 x 15 x 10cm). No finish on stonework. 5 x courses seen. Some mortar survives - whether blocks have been re-used with mortar already adhering or mortaring was contemporary with props is unclear. Up to 50cm high. Up to 35cm (E-W). Up to 1.3m (N-S).	A later wedge / prop for Buttress E1. Probably the latest edition to this series of masonry. Mortar Sample No. 15
1300	Masonry	Same as 1342. Douling, lias limestone & red sandstone, large - medium sized stones (max. 38 x 37 x 12cm). Some random faced stones. Faces = N, E & W. 6 x courses visible. Random coursing. Bonded with pink mortar. 1.3m (N-S). 1.57m (E-W).	Standing Cloister Wall. Mortar Sample from Bay 1 = Sample No.13 & Buttress E1/2 = No.22

Table 18. Contexts from Buttress 1.

The blocks of masonry **1346/1343/1346** share many characteristics, including an orientation at an angle varying from the Camery Wall. As more of the features are described, this orientation will appear again; it is similar to that of the Saxon walls excavated below the Stillington Chapel to the north in the 1980s (Rodwell 2001). In the absence of datable artefacts (none of the masonry features recorded was dismantled) orientation is the only dating evidence available. This feature has suffered considerable damage over the years (see context **1344**, below) making it difficult to determine whether what looks now like the beginning of a spiral stairway is significant or merely an accident

of survival. Other features to the north add weight to an interpretation as a buttress for this feature.

When the East Cloister wall was constructed in the thirteenth century, masonry **1342** was constructed as a foundation for Buttress E1, incorporating the earlier masonry and obscuring much of it. The earlier masonry must pre-date the thirteenth century, but by how much is impossible to say. The orientation of the earlier buttress would appear to be no later than the 1180s, when the Norman Cathedral was begun on a different alignment from the Saxon Cathedral, and the Camery Wall would appear to be somewhat earlier still. Since it would appear that the date of the Camery Wall is shared by the operation diverting and channelling the stream from the Springs (see above), it may well be that hydraulic engineering works at Wells began at an early date. This should come as no surprise in view of the Saxon canal constructed in Glastonbury in the tenth century¹.

The foundation of Bay 1 shows possible evidence in the masonry for the incorporation of earlier masonry. This will be discussed further in the report on the East Cloister Wall (forthcoming).

¹ Hollinrake, C. & N., 1992, "The Abbey Enclosure Ditch and a Late-Saxon Canal: Rescue Excavations at Glastonbury, 1984-1988", *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeology and Natural History Society*, vol. 136, pp. 73-94.

4.2 Bay 1 (Figure 7; Photograph 5 and 6; Table 19 and 20)

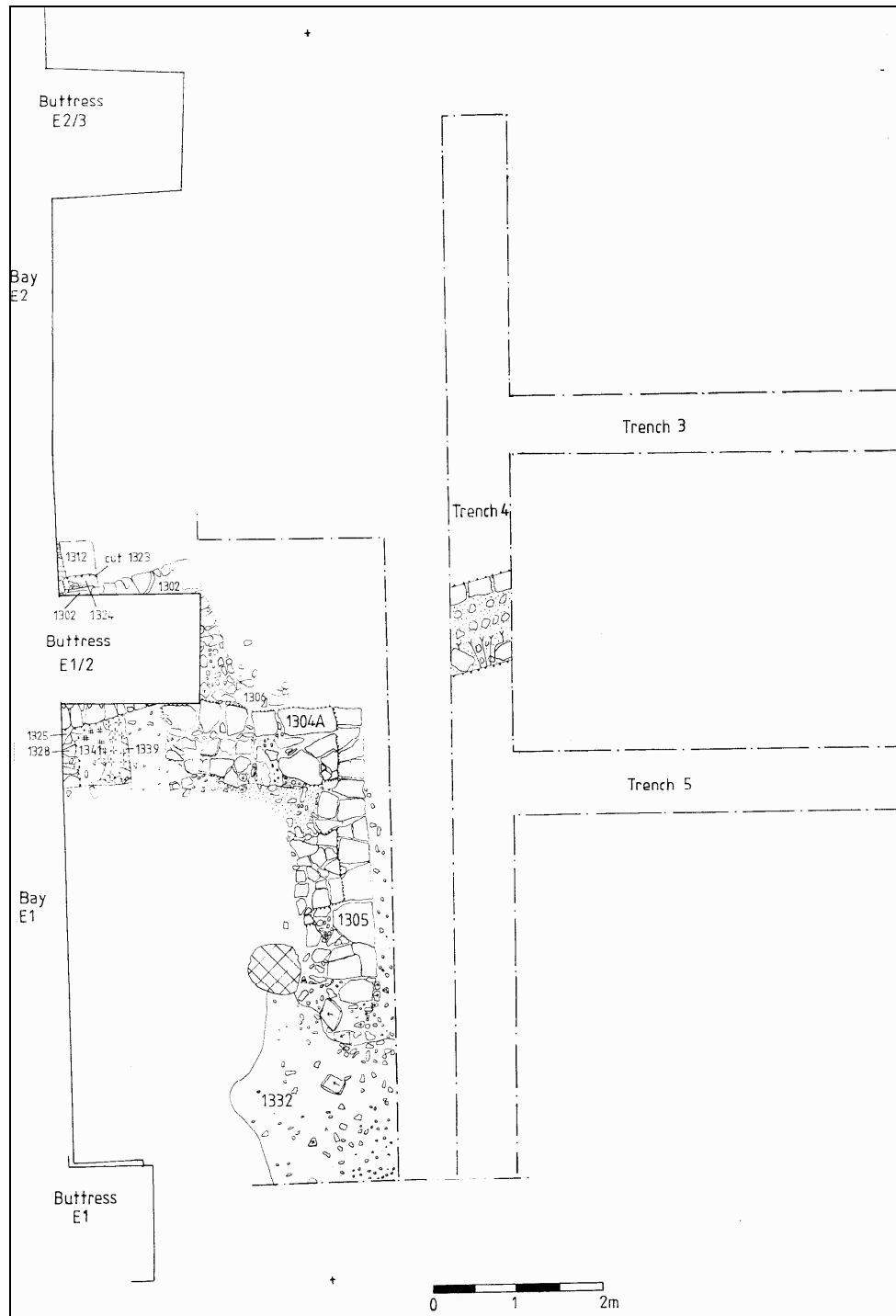


Figure 7. The East Cloister Porch foundations. Sondage E is to the north of Buttress 1/ 2 and Sondage F is to the south. North is to the top of the figure. The wall in Trench 4 was observed during construction of a pipe trench.



Photograph 5. Porch foundations seen from the Cloister roof. North to the left. To the right lie the remains of the demolished Camery wall (1301).

Removal by machine of the nineteenth century layer in Bay 1 revealed the foundations of a hitherto unknown structure best interpreted as a porch (Figure 7, Photograph 5). Cleaning of the exposed surface produced many sherds of pottery dating to the 12th to 16th centuries (Finds List). The porch gave access to the cloisters via a doorway that had been blocked (Photograph 6).



Photograph 6. Cloister porch doorway.

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation
1300	Masonry	6 x courses of Doultling, Lias limestone & red sandstone, large to medium sized stones (max.38 x 37 x 12cm). Some random faced stones. visible. Random coursing. Bonded with pink mortar. 1.3m (N-S) x 1.57m (E-W). offset seen in sondages show lowest courses are Lias	East Cloister Wall and buttresses. Mortar Sample from Bay 1 = No.13 & Buttress E1/2 = No.22 Same as 1342
1304	Masonry	Limestone, red sandstone, ?Dolomitic conglomerate, Doultling, quartz. Various sized stones (up to 65 x 30 x 11cm).	Wall or step associated with Cloister porch entrance. 1304 = one or two courses sat on top of Masonry 1305
		1304A has faces on N & S sides. Large faced blocks on the N side - with the S edge disturbed. c.90cm (N-S) x c.2m (E-W).	1304A sits comfortably on top & within the parameters of the Northern end of the L - shaped 1305 . Mortar Sample No.19
		1304B = faces on the E & W - medium sized faced stones. Random coursing. c.1.4m (N-S). c.60cm (E-W) Above 1305	1304B offset to the W on top of the Southern portion of 1305 . Mortar Sample No. 17
1305	Masonry	Limestone, red sandstone. L - shaped masonry. Various sized stones - average size = 50 x 35 x 8cm. Faced stones on the E facing side - W face in poor state of preservation. 3 x courses visible. Random coursing. Bonded with reddish clay. W side = 340cm (N-S). E side = 90cm (N-S). S end = 80cm (E-W). N end = 195cm (E-W).	Wall or step associated with porch entrance – E of the Cloister wall 1300 . Physically below masonry 1304 . Mortar Sample No. 11 Below 1304A , 1304B

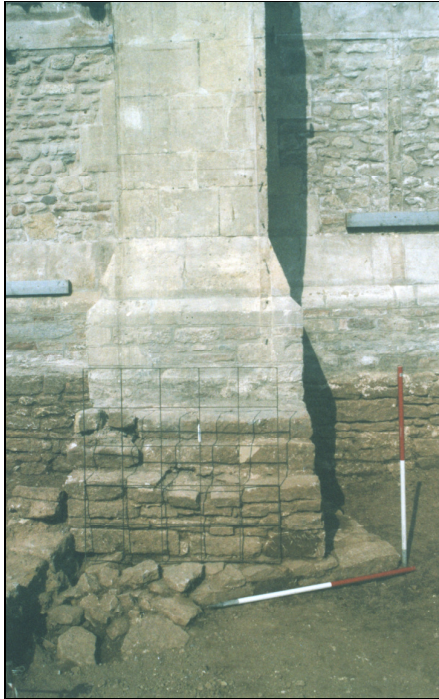
Table 19. Contexts relating to the Cloister porch.

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation
1330	Layer	Fairly compact light reddish brown clayey silt, moderate amounts of small angular stones, Doultling & red sandstone (c.30%). Up to c.2.6m (N-S) x c.1.5m. cut by 1331 . Above 1313 in (Sondage F) only excavated in association with Sondage F	Make up layer in the NW corner of Bay 1. 1330 butts up to the E face of the Cloister wall, Wall 1302 & the W end of 1304A . Probably truncated by ?pit 1331 to the S. 1330 = Same as 1313 Cleaning in Bay 1 – ?Same as Top of 1313 & ? 1314 .
1331	?Fill	Fairly loose medium-dark brown sandy clay, frequent charcoal lumps & flecks, various small - medium sized angular stones, moderate amounts of red clay lumps. Only seen in plan - not excavated. Up to 2.15m (N-S) x 90cm (E-W). Below machining. Above ? 1329 & ? 1330	Possible pit butting up to the E face of the Cloister wall in the centre of Bay 1. Appears to have truncated 1329 to the S & 1330 to the N. Darker in colour with more charcoal inclusions than 1330 & 1329 . Bulk Soil Sample No. 16
1329	Layer	Compact light reddish brown silty clay, mortar (20%), stones (50%) (medium sized angular pieces of Doultling - angular sandstone & limestone, various small chips & rare slate). Thickness unknown (not fully excavated). c.3.9m (N-S) x c.1.4m (E-W). Below ? 1331	Rubble layer. Only seen in plan. Butts up to wall 1304A to the N, & Cloister & Camery walls in the SW corner of Bay 1. Appears to have been truncated by ?pit 1331 to the N. Bulk Soil/ Mortar Sample No.2
1332	Layer	Fairly compact mid brown sandy clay, mortar (20%), occasional small - medium sized various angular stones, Doultling stone, frequent limestone, 1 x large piece of red sandstone & rare red clay inclusions. Up to 2.2m (N-S) x 1.8m (E-W). Not fully excavated - Thickness unknown. Below machining. Above 1301	Dump/ make up layer. Only seen in plan. S of Wall 1305 , E of 1329 , sealed Wall 1301
1334	Layer	Fairly compact light reddish brown silty clay, mortar (30%), small - medium sized Doultling & limestone, occasional slate. Not fully excavated. Thickness unknown. Up to 80cm (E-W) x 1.8m (N-S). Below machining.	Make up layer in Bay 1. Contains less obvious rubble than other layers in Bay 1. Butts up to Wall 1304A to the N & Wall 1305 to the E. N of 1332 . E of 1329 . Bulk Soil Sample No. 21
1333	Masonry	Limestone. Up to 15 x 15 x 4cm. Only 1 x courses observed. Faces = E & W. Bonded with very compacted mortar. 5cm thick. 8cm (E-W) x 47cm (N-S). Below machining	Small patch of masonry in poor state of preservation - c.20cm N of 1304B . Original purpose & associations unclear, but stones are well mortared in. Mortar Sample No. 23

Table 20. Contexts for dump and trample layers in Bay 1 associated with the Cloister porch.

4.3 Buttress 1/2 (Figure 7; Photograph 7, 8, 9 and 10; Table 21; Sondage E and F)

The relationship between the porch and **Buttress 1/2** indicates that the porch is a secondary feature , as demonstrated in Photograph 9 .



Photograph 7. Buttress 1/2.



Photograph 8. The foundations of Buttress 1/2, north face.



Photograph 9. The foundations of Buttress 1/2, south face.

This buttress has much simpler foundations than those of Buttress 1 and is set squarely below the buttress. The foundations, incorporating three offsets, extend up to 0.6 metres

beyond the buttress itself. The foundations of the cloister porch butt up against these foundations and are clearly of a later date.

The buttress foundations rest entirely upon a foundation pad (**1302**) lying at an angle to the Cloister walls.



Photograph 10. Wall **1302** below Buttress 1/ 2.

Context No.	Type	Description of Context	Interpretation
1302	Masonry	Limestone, red sandstone & Douling. Various sized stones (up to 35 x 18 x 9cm). Faced stone on one side. Faces = N, E & S. Random coursing. Pinkish mortar. 1.3m (N-S) x 1.57m (E-W). On a different alignment to 1300 (towards the SW-NE). SE corner disturbed - possibly by the construction of Cloister porch 1304 Below 1300 . Same as 1316	earlier buttress, below buttress E 1/ 2 Mortar Sample No. 27

Table 21. Masonry **1302** below Buttress 1/ 2.

Sondage F (Figure 7; Photograph 11; Table 23)

In order to discover more about the nature of the anomalous foundation **1302**, a small sondage was excavated in Bay 1 in the corner between Buttress 1/ 2 and Cloister foundations **1300**, revealing the stratigraphy detailed in Table 23.



Photograph 11. Sondage F. Cloister wall it to the left.



Photograph 12. Sondage E. Cloister wall is to the right.

The sondage revealed that the medieval make-up (**1313**, **1326**, **1340**) and construction (**1325**, **1339**) layers lie immediately below the nineteenth-century trample layer to which had been removed by machine. The foundations for the Cloister wall has an offset (**1328**) which embraced the offset for the earlier buttress **1302**.

The lowest layer in Sondage F (**1341**) produced no datable finds. The sondage revealed that buttress foundation **1302** consists of at least seven courses of masonry and extends to a depth of c80cm. No foundation trench was recognized in Sondage E and the medieval layers in the sondage appeared to butt up against the foundation.

context	{	pottery		}	bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	century	qty	type	
1313	1	coarseware, grey, frequent limestone temper. 13g	brown 'skin' surfaces with frequent small surface voids, partly reduced outer surface	11-13th	1	slate roof tile with peg hole = c.10mm. c.165 x 135 x 8mm. 415g	10 x bone & 2 x teeth. 100g
	1	grey, small black grit temper with occasional quartz inclusions, pale margins. 11g	oxidised sandy surface, patchy outer gritty green glaze over horizontal incised decoration	12-14th			1 x burnt stone. 8g
	1	coarseware, small black grit & small quartz temper, micaceous. 8g	pale oxidised inner surface, reduced outer surface	12-14th			2 x cortical FLINT flakes/ ad. hoc tools, re-touched edges - dark grey. 11g, 5g
	1	coarseware, smooth grey, small black grit & small quartz temper. 5g	micaceous surfaces, pale oxidised inner surface, reduced outer surface	12-14th			
	1	grey, black grit & fine quartz temper. 4g	pale reduced inner surface	12-14th			
	1	coarseware, grey, small quartz temper. 2g	brown surfaces	12-14th			
	2	joining sherds, oxidised sandy, pale inner margin. 18g	outer mottled green & brown glaze with brown spots	13-14th			
	1	hard oxidised & reduced, occasional small quartz & rare limestone temper. 8g	pale grey inner surface, outer speckled green glaze over white slip	13-15th			

Table 22. Finds from **1313**.**Sondage E** (Figure 7; Photograph 12; Table 24)

A further sondage was investigated in a position corresponding to Sondage F, but on the northern side of Buttress 1/ 2 and not to the same depth. The stratigraphy of the two sondages was not as similar as might be expected. This may be due to the porch entirely filling Bay 1, preventing the build-up of the layers which fill the other bays. The Cloister wall offset (**1328**) continued in Sondage E.

Despite being shallower, the lowest layer in Sondage E appeared to be the undisturbed natural head deposit, which was not seen in Sondage F, where the lowest context uncovered was **1341**, a make-up layer similar to **1319** in Sondage E.

The construction trench for buttress foundation **1302** was recorded in this sondage.

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
1313	Layer	Fairly compact light reddish brown clayey silt. Contained small - medium sized red sandstone & Douling stone (c.30%), frequent C11-14th pottery, moderate bone, 1 x slate tile with peg, 2 x flint flake/ ad. hoc tools. 52cm thick. 82cm N-S. 82cm E-W. Below 1330 . Above 1325 , 1327 . Same as ?1314 & 1330	Medieval make up layer. Upper most layer in Sondage F - immediately S of Buttress 1/2. ?Should be the Equivalent to 1314 in Sondage E. Below make up layer 1330 which equates to 1313 Cleaning
1325	Layer	Loose yellowish brown sandy mortar. Contained possible stone dust. 3cm thick. 25cm N-S (limited by the edge of Sondage E). 20cm E-W. Below 1313 . Above 1328	Stone dust mortar associated with 1328 . Mortar Sample Nos. 1 & 26
1328	Masonry	Douling, red limestone & lias limestone, medium sized stone (average size = 19 x 10 x 5cm). No finish on the stonework. 1 x faces = the East face. Random coursing. 4 x stone courses observed. Bonded with pinkish - red sandy mortar. c.60cm (N-S) exposed in sondage. Butts up to 1302 in the N. Up to 20cm (E-W). Below 1325	Offset foundations for the Cloister wall. Mortar Sample No. 25
1327	Fill	Fairly compact reddish brown clayey silt. Contained large pieces of stone up to 30 x 18 x 5cm, dolomitic conglomerate & lias limestone (stone = c.60-70% of fill) & moderate quantities of C12-14th pottery. Only seen in Sondage F - up to 50cm thick, 30cm (N-S) - limited at the S by sondage edge, 60cm (E-W) - limited at the E by sondage edge. Below 1313 . Above 1338	Rubble fill of Cut 1338 . Contained compacted large rubble blocks. Appears to have had no other purpose other than to dispose of waste construction materials. Fill butts up to the Cloister wall - sitting on the offset. Sealed by layer 1313
1338	Cut	Shape in plan unknown. Alignment unknown - only seen in a small sondage - N side of cut = c.NE-SW. Full dimensions unknown - as exposed = up to 50cm deep. 40cm (N-S) x 80cm (E-W). Fairly sharp break of slope - top. Fairly steep sides. Gradual break of slope - base. Flat base. Below 1327 . Above 1326	Cut filled by 1327 which contained large tightly compacted rubble - c.40cm S of 1302 . Purpose, shape, alignment & dimensions unknown as the cut was only seen in Sondage F & could not be perceived in plan at the cleaning layer - sealed by 1313/ 1330 . The cut & fill butted up against the Cloister wall - above the offset
1326	Layer	Loose mid reddish brown clayey silt. Contained charcoal (30%), occasional C12-14th pottery & bone (inc. 1 x pierced bone). 5cm thick. 25cm (N-S). 50cm (E-W) to the edge. Below 1338 . Above 1340	Dump Layer
1340	Layer	Moderately compact mid brown silty clay. Contained frequent C12-14th pottery, charcoal lumps & flecks, 1 x human bone & 1 x Fe slag with C12-14th pottery adhering. Up to 35cm deep. Full extent unknown - As seen in sondage = Up to 60cm (E-W). Up to 80cm (N-S). Below 1326 . Above 1339	Medieval Dump layer
1339	Layer	Loose to moderately compact cream coloured mortar & stone dust. 20-30cm thick. Full dimensions unknown - as seen in sondage = 80cm (N-S) x 35cm (E-W). Below 1340 . Above 1341	Construction layer. ?= 1317 & 18 in Sondage E. Bulk Soil Sample No. 7
1341	Layer	Fairly soft reddish brown silty clay. Contained some large patches of charcoal & evidence of burning. Not fully excavated - Thickness unknown. As seen in sondage = 80cm (N-S) x 25cm (E-W). Below 1339 . Above ?1300, ?1302	Lowest layer seen in Sondage F. No datable finds. interpretation unclear. = 1319 , Sondage E Bulk Soil Sample No.6

Table 23. Contexts seen in Sondage F.

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
1303	Layer	Re-deposited natural red clay & stones. Abundant Late Medieval encaustic floor tiles. Unexcavated except in relevant sondages. Extends over the full extent of the Masons' Yard except in Bay 1. E of 1305 , 1316 , 1332 . N of Wall 1301 . Below Modern concrete. Above Natural	Re-deposited natural, spoil from Medieval/ post-Medieval excavation works = 1309 & 13102
1314	Layer	Fairly compact light reddish brown clayey silt. Contained moderate amounts of small angular stones, Douling & red sandstone (c.30%), Medieval pottery & bone. Only partly excavated, except in Sondage E where 1314 = c.38mm from the machined level. Sondage E = Up to 50cm (E-W). Up to 80cm (N-S). Below machining. Above 1317	Medieval make layer. Upper most layer in Sondage E = 1313 in Sondage F & therefore 1330
1317	Layer	Compact cream coloured mortar which also contained medium sized rounded pebbles & angular pieces of limestone, red sandstone & conglomerate (20%). Only a small portion of layer seen in Sondage E - 1317 = 22cm N-S, 13cm E-W, 8cm thick. Above 1318	Possible Medieval construction layer for the Cloister wall 1300 =? 1339 , Sondage F
1318	Layer	Compact light yellow stone with occasional small pebbles & angular limestone inclusions (5%). Seen in Sondage E. Sondage E = Up to 50cm (E-W). Up to 80cm (N-S). 1318 = 6cm thick. Below 1317 . Above 1319	?Medieval construction layer for the Cloister wall 1300 . ?masons' waste = 1339 Bulk Soil/ Mortar Sample No. 3
1319	Layer	Moderately compacted mid - reddish brown clayey silt. Contained small angular pieces of conglomerate limestone & sandstone. Seen in Sondage E. Sondage E = Up to 50cm (E-W). Up to 80cm (N-S). 1319 = 10cm thick. Below 1318 . Above 1322	Medieval make up layer = 1341 , Sondage F
1322	Layer	Compact reddish brown sandy clay. Contained frequent round pebbles of conglomerate, sandstone & limestone (small). In Sondage E - c.5cm thick as excavated (not bottomed). Sondage E = Up to 50cm (E-W). Up to 80cm (N-S). Below 1319 . Above 1323	Possible natural Head deposit
?1323	Cut	Linear cut. Aligned with 1302 . c.5cm deep as exposed (not fully excavated). 16cm (N-S). Fairly sharp break of slope - top. Fairly steep sides. Unclear what depth 1323 starts due to the small size of Sondage - W facing section = c.50cm from the Cloister wall Filled by 1324 . Above 1302 . Below 1322 & 1319	Construction cut for Wall 1302 . Small section seen in Sondage E. Not fully excavated.
1324	Fill	Moderately loose reddish brown silty clay. Contained small rounded pebbles (10%), patches of mortar/ stone dust (5%). c.5cm thick. 16cm (N-S). 42cm (E-W) - as exposed (not fully excavated). Above 1302	Fill of construction cut for buttress 1302

Table 24. Contexts in Sondage E.

context	{	pottery		}	bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	century	qty	type	
Above 1320	1	same pot - coarseware, black, abundant quartz & limestone temper. 9g, 5g	oxidised 7 reduced surfaces	12-13th			
	1	rim, coarseware, grey, black grit temper, slightly micacious. 16g	dark & light reduced surfaces	12-14th			
1321 Above	1	dark grey, grit temper ?with some grog. 12g	black outer surface, slightly micacious	12-13th			
	1	base frag, coarseware, dark grey, quartz & grit temper. 12g	brown inner surface	12-14th			
	2	coarseware, reduced, quartz & grit temper. 3g, 2g		12-14th			
	1	pink/ orange sandy. 9g	pale oxidised inner surface, outer clear glaze with green glaze mottles	12-14th			
1327	1	rim frag, reduced. 26g	oxidised & reduced surfaces Drawing 10/ 2	12-13th			
	14	coarseware, reduced, various types. 65g		12-14th			
1340	4	coarseware, reduced, gritty, various types. 29g		12-13th			1 x Human bone frags. 105g
	2	joining base frags, coarseware, reduced, quartz & grit temper with some fine limestone. 20g, 15g	oxidised & reduced surfaces	12-14th			1 x Fe slag with small stones, mortar frags & pottery sherds adhering. 16g. Pottery = C13th.
	1	base frag, coarseware, dark grey. 32g	oxidised & reduced surfaces	12-14th			
	1	grey, black grit temper. 17g	pale oxidised & reduced surfaces with splashes of dull green glaze on outer surface	12-14th			
	3	off - white, sandy, gritty. 8g	patchy outer olive green glaze	13-14th			

Table 25. Finds from Sondage E.

4.4 Bay 2

Analysis and interpretation of the foundations of the East Cloister wall will be discussed in a forthcoming report. Since there were no features observed which required further information, no sondages were excavated in Bay 2.

4.5 Buttress 2/3 (Figure 8; Photographs 13, 14 and 15; Sondage A)



Photograph 13. Buttress 2/ 3, east face.



Photograph 14. Buttress 2/ 3, south face.

The construction of Buttress 2/ 3 is similar to that of Buttress 1/ 2, with its eastern stepped offset, in this case disturbed in the recent past, probably in connection with the construction of the sheds for the Masons' Yard. The void in the lower right eastern face is not an original feature (Photograph 13). The south face of the buttress appears to show the eastern offset of the foundation as a secondary feature (Photograph 14), which may have been a response to the difficult ground in which the Cloister was constructed. Whatever the truth of the matter, the similar offset in Buttress 1/ 2 is integral to the foundations.



Photograph 15. Buttrass 2/ 3 north face.



Photograph 16. Sondage A, Buttrass 2/ 3 to left.

Sondage A was located on the northern face of the Buttrass, in Bay 3. It revealed that Buttrass 2/ 3 has an offset which butts up against, and is later than, the offset for the Cloister wall foundation (**1328**).

4.6 Bay 3 (Figure 8; Table 26 and 27)

A series of shallow sondages (numbered A-D) were excavated along the East Cloister wall in Bay 3 (Figure 8). Several notable features of the foundations of the wall and the buttresses were recovered; these are detailed in the relevant discussions below.

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
1312	Deposit	Firm mixed reddish - brown silty sandy clay with small yellow & black flecks; frequent med-small sized sub-angular stones (up to c.15 x 12 x 7cm), small grits, rare charcoal lumps, occasional bone. Below machining. Above 1300	Medieval make up layer. Same as 1303 , 1309
Sondages		1312A = sits above 1328 , (offset for Cloister wall 1300); 34cm thick; C11-13th pottery	
		1312B = dug to investigate a pos. E-W wall (not found); 30cm thick bone & 1 x ?boar tusk	
		1312C = base of buttress E3/4, butts up to 1328 ; 29cm thick	
		1312D = bone frags. 35cm thick	

Table 26. Contexts removed in Sondages A to D.

The finds from **1312** suggest that the deposit was laid down in the medieval period, but the small quantities of finds make it impossible to determine whether they represent the date of deposition or whether they are all residual.

context	{	pottery		}	bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	century	qty	type	
1312 A	1	rim, black, gritty temper. 9g	skin' surfaces Drawing 10/ 1	?11-12th			
	3	same pot - 2 x joining - grey gritty, quartz & grit temper. 3g, <1g, <1g	smooth oxidised inner surface, dark grey outer surface	12-13th			
1312B							1 x tusk - ?Boar. 13g
							1 x bone with cut marks. 8g
							2 x bone. 7g
1312 D							3 x bone frags (inc. 1 x calcined bone frag). 18g

Table 27. Finds from Sondages A to D.

Features observed in the East Cloister wall foundation are detailed in the forthcoming report.

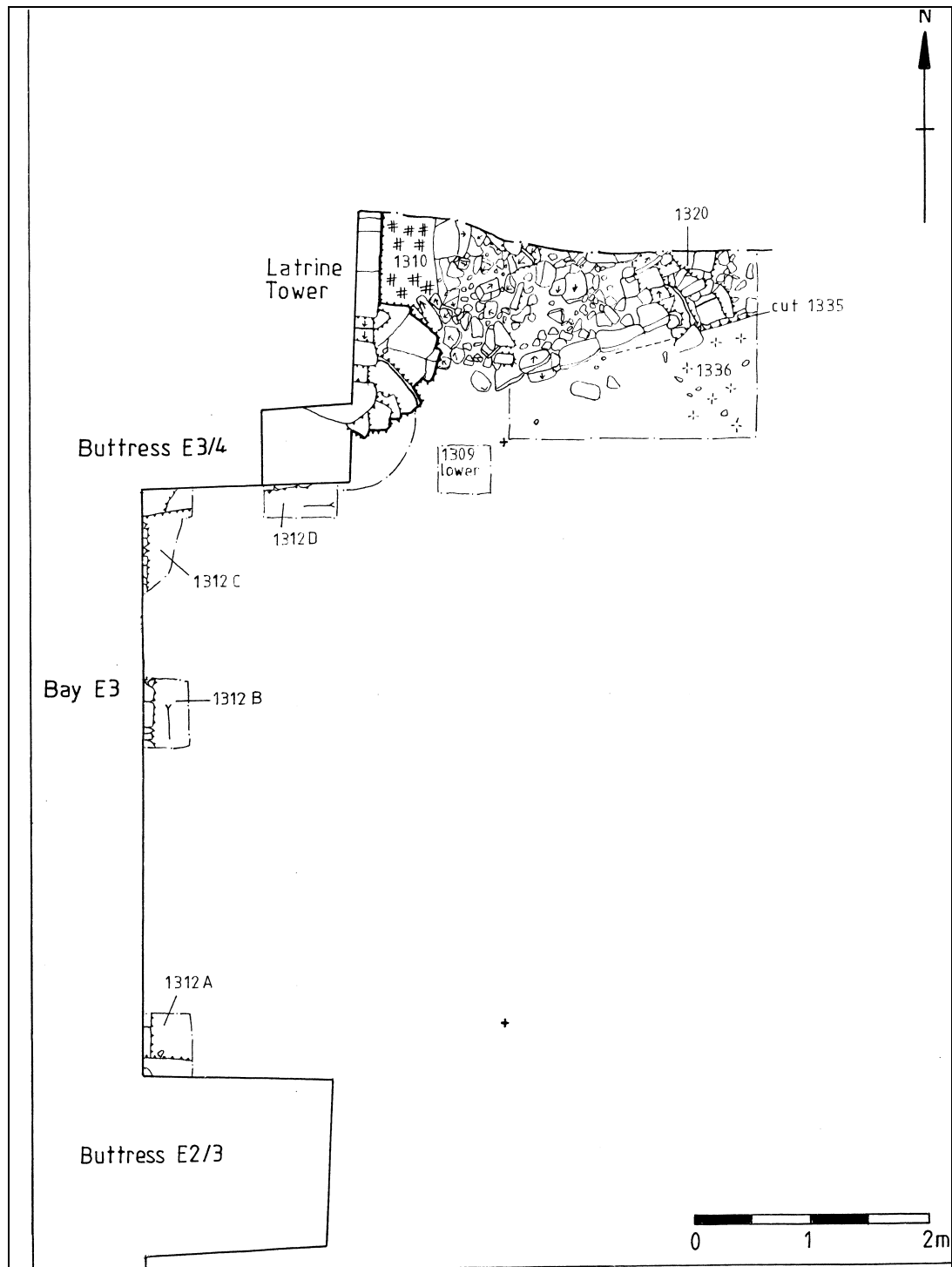


Figure 8. Bay 3 and the Latrine Tower

4.7 Buttress 3/ 4 and Latrine Tower (Figure 8 and 9; Photograph 17, 18, 19, 20; Table 28, 29, 30 and 31)

In common with Buttresses 1/ 2, Buttress 3/ 4 foundation rests upon an earlier wall lying on a skewed alignment (wall **1320**).



Photograph 17. Latrine tower and wall **1320** from roof.

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
1321	Fill	Fairly loose mid reddish brown slightly silty clay; frequent small sub-angular stones, charcoal flecks, moderate amounts of bone, occasional C12-14th pottery & slate. 42cm thick. Dug in sondage against the S facing baulk. Full width unknown = >70cm. Below 1309 . Above 1320	Backfill from robbing out stone wall 1320 . Appears to respect foundation 1335 .
1320	Masonry	Lias stone wall. Mostly stone rubble, various shapes & sizes (5 x 4 x 1cm up to 42 x 18 x 10cm). aligned SW-NE (angle = c.60° - 240°) 1 course survives above foundation. Fairly flat faces have been used for visible edge of wall, no stones worked. 4x courses in foundation, bonded with mid brown clay. Visible face facing SE. Observed length = 2.2m. full width unknown = >70cm. Height = 53cm. Below 1309 & 1321 . Fills cut 1335	Rubble constructed wall. Continuation of the Saxon wall F640 from W.R's 1979 excavation. Robbed out at the NE end (see 1321). Truncated at the SW end by the construction of 1311
1335	Cut	Linear cut aligned SW-NE (from the N = 60° x 240°). 42cm deep. Full length & width unknown - c.50cm (SW-NE) exposed. Sharp break of slope - top. Near vertical sides. Sharp break of slope - base. Fairly flat base. Truncated by 1308 . Filled by 1320 . Below 1321 . cuts 1337 .	Foundation cut for Saxon wall 1320 .
1336	Layer	Firm mid reddish brown slightly silty clay with yellow mortar flecks, frequent small rounded & sub-angular stones & 1 x large green stone, masonry & occasional bone. Lenses of gritty mortar & large pieces of masonry & architectural frags recovered. Unexcavated - 4cm thick (observed above cut 1335). Full extent unknown (up to c.1.1m exposed N-S x up to c.70cm E-W). Below 1309 in sondage. Above 1337	Construction pad for a Saxon building pre-dating Wall 1320 . (W. Rodwell). Originally perceived to be a potential floor layer. The N edge appears to respect the Southern edge of Cut 1335 .
1337	Deposit	Firm dark brown/ red slightly silty clay with grits; moderate amounts of small angular stones, occasional charcoal flecks & 1 x human skull. Visible in the side of Cut 1335 . A human skull could be seen in section, which may indicate a burial. Unexcavated - dimensions unknown. Below 1336 . Truncated by 1335	?burial

Table 28. Contexts associated with Saxon wall **1320**.

context	{	pottery		}	bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	century	qty	type	
Above 1320	1	same pot - coarseware, black, abundant quartz & limestone temper. 9g, 5g	oxidised 7 reduced surfaces	12-13th			
	1	rim, coarseware, grey, black grit temper, slightly micacious. 16g	dark & light reduced surfaces Drawing 10/3	12-14th			
1321 Above	1	dark grey, grit temper ?with some grog. 12g	black outer surface, slightly micacious	12-13th			
	1	base frag, coarseware, dark grey, quartz & grit temper. 12g	brown inner surface	12-14th			
	2	coarseware, reduced, quartz & grit temper. 3g, 2g		12-14th			
	1	pink/ orange sandy. 9g	pale oxidised inner surface, outer clear glaze with green glaze mottles	12-14th			

Table 29. Finds associated with the latrine contexts.

The edge of the 1979-81 excavations in the Camery (Rodwell, 2001) happened to be close to the edge of the excavations for the new buildings, with a slight overlap of the two excavations; this allowed for the positive identification of wall 1320 as being the same as **F640**, a Saxon wall excavated by Rodwell.

Buttress 3/ 4 was used as a support for a sixteenth century latrine tower. Matching the other buttresses described above, it carries a stepped foundation pad similar to that of Buttress 2/ 3. Sondage C revealed that the offset of the buttress butts up against the offset for wall **1300**, the Cloister wall foundations.



Photograph 18. General view of the Latrine Tower from the south-east. Machining caused slight damage to the left side of the access opening, subsequently repaired.



Photograph 19. Buttress 3/4 foundations, south face with sondages.



Photograph 20. Latrine opening.

In the area before the latrine opening, the foundations of wall **1320/F640** had been reinforced with pitched stones to form a hard standing (**1308**) in order to aid clearance of the cess from the latrine (Photograph 20). The tower has been pressed into modern

service by housing a sewer pipe from the toilet on the top floor of the structure to exit through the arched opening.

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
1307	Fill	Fairly loose red/ brown silty clay, frequent rubble inclusions - large blocks (up to 20 x 18 x 12cm), 1x glazed tile sherd. Thickness below machined surface = 58cm. Above 1310	Backfill from 1979 excavation trench. recorded in the S facing section. Dug out within the retaining walls of <i>rere dorter</i> 1311
1311	Masonry	Red sandstone base for latrine tower with arched service access at base. Sits on top of rectangular stone coursed walls (3 x courses = 42cm high) with regularly coursed stone work above (2 x courses = 17cm high). 1311 is proud of the latrine tower by 18cm. Possibly associated with / on top of 1308 . Walls protrude 25cm proud of the archway. Below Latrine Tower. Above 1347 & 1308	Red sandstone latrine chamber upon which the latrine tower is built & includes the archway. ?Part of the Camery. Above rubble deposit 1347 . Mortar Sample No. 9
1308	Wall	Lias & red sandstone stones pitched to the W, especially in the centre of the exposed wall. Stones towards the S end lay flat. A. Various sized stones (very small stones up to 28 x 28 x 8cm). 3x courses survive in section. c86cm wide (E-W). Extends 1.4m S from the S facing section. Below 1311 . Above 1320	Pitched rubble wall/ rough stone footing or platform. There is a likelihood that 1308 is associated with or below structure 1311 . ?Above Saxon Wall 1320 - possible that stone from 1320 was re-used for 1308
1309	Layer	Firm dark brown gritty clay, frequent small stones (up to 12 x 12 x 4cm), occasional C11-14th pottery, ?human bone, 1x Medieval tile, rare charcoal flecks & lenses of ?mortar. S of 1311 , 1308 , 1320 . Sondage S of 1308 dug to investigate depth = 20cm. Below machine. Above 1320 , 1321 , 1336	Compacted rubble & clay surface - extending E & S of Wall 1308 & likely to be compacted waste. Equates to a hard clean of 1303 . Same as 1303 , 1312 .
1310	Deposit	Firm black / brown silty clay with 20% charcoal inc. lumps. Contained occasional small rubble frags. 76cm wide (N-S). Below 1307	Deposit retained by the walls of 1311 below latrine archway. Charcoal - Sample No. 4
1347	Deposit	Very tightly compacted red sandstone rubble with gritty red clay silt. Mostly large stones with occasional small stones - up to 44 x 26 x 12cm. Stones below the latrine archway = less compacted & probably placed in situ through the archway. Beyond archway, below the present floor level of the latrine tower, stones = very tightly compacted & must have been placed in situ from above before the floor level was built. Due to the tightness of access & constant collapse - the stone was only removed 30cm beyond the archway / tunnel. Archway / tunnel = 70cm deep. Above 1311	Rubble infill within the tunnel at the base of the latrine tower

Table 30. Contexts relating to the Buttress and latrine tower.

The relationship between the contexts may be expressed as a diagram:

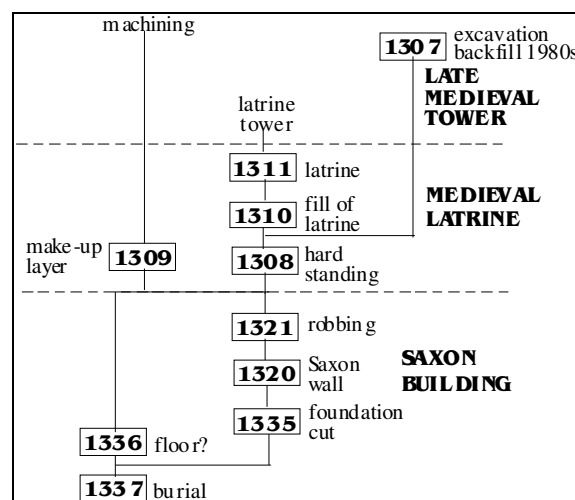


Figure 9. Matrix for the contexts relating to the latrine tower.

context	{__	____pottery____	_____	_____}	bldg materials		miscellaneous
	qty	fabric & weight	surface	century	qty	type	
1309	1	coarseware, grey, quartz & grit temper. 6g	oxidised outer surface	11-13th	1	ceramic floor tile, oxidised fabric with grey core, white slip below clear glaze. 80g. Medieval	4 x bone frags. 77g
	1	base frag, coarseware, dark grey, grit & quartz temper. 5g	oxidised outer surface	12-14th			

Table 31. Finds from layer **1309**.

The present works show that the latrine chamber **1311** uses the stone from the Saxon wall **1320** as both foundation pad and as hard standing in front of the latrine opening.

5.0 FINDS

5.1 Pottery

Only small amounts of pottery were recovered during the watching brief, chiefly because the intention of the development was to avoid excavation or disturbance of archaeological deposits wherever possible. Most of the sherds recovered were small and abraded with the result that only four rims were worthy of illustration (Figure 10).

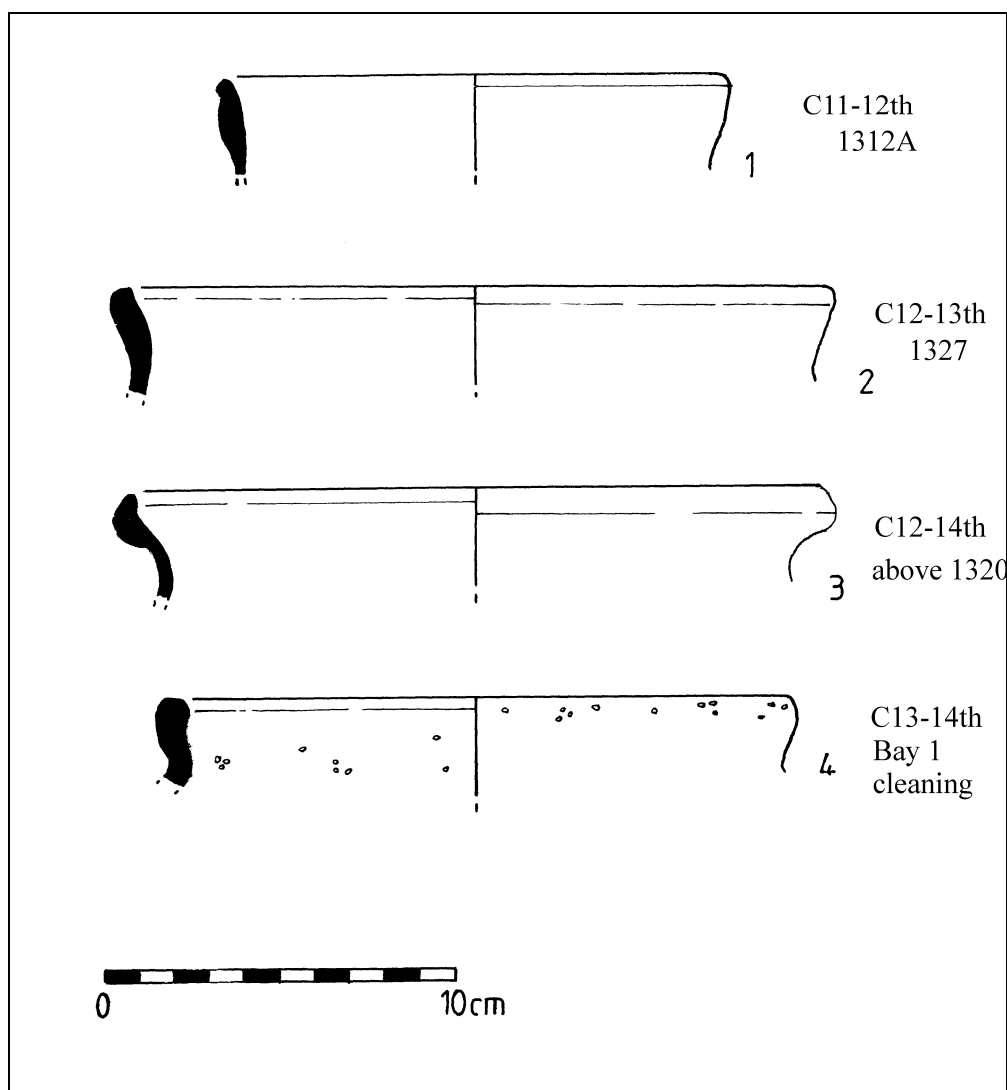


Figure 10. Pottery drawings.

5.2 Floor tiles

Numerous decorated encaustic floor tiles were recovered from the Masons' Yard, giving rise to the interpretation that a medieval floor had been removed and dumped into the area. The best preserved of these have been drawn (Figure 11) and these and others in the finds list have been identified using the system outlined in *Decorated Medieval Floor Tiles of Somerset*, Barbara J. Lowe, 2003, published by the Somerset Archaeology and Natural History Society.

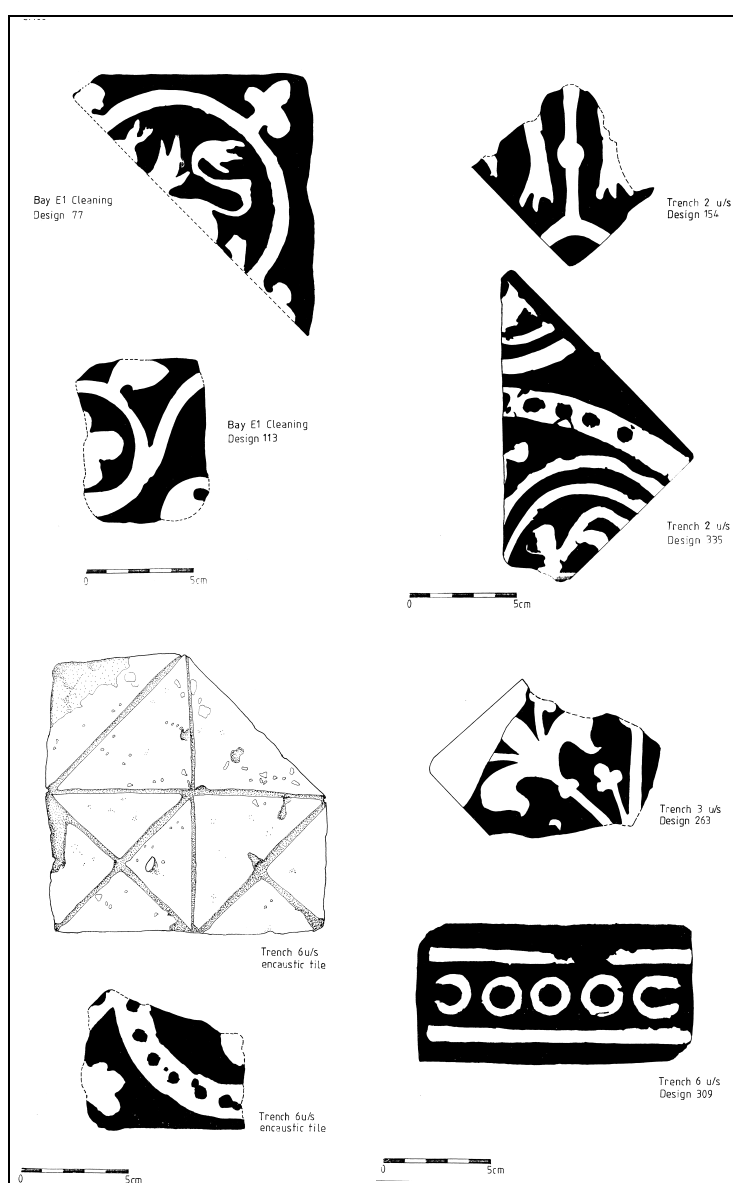
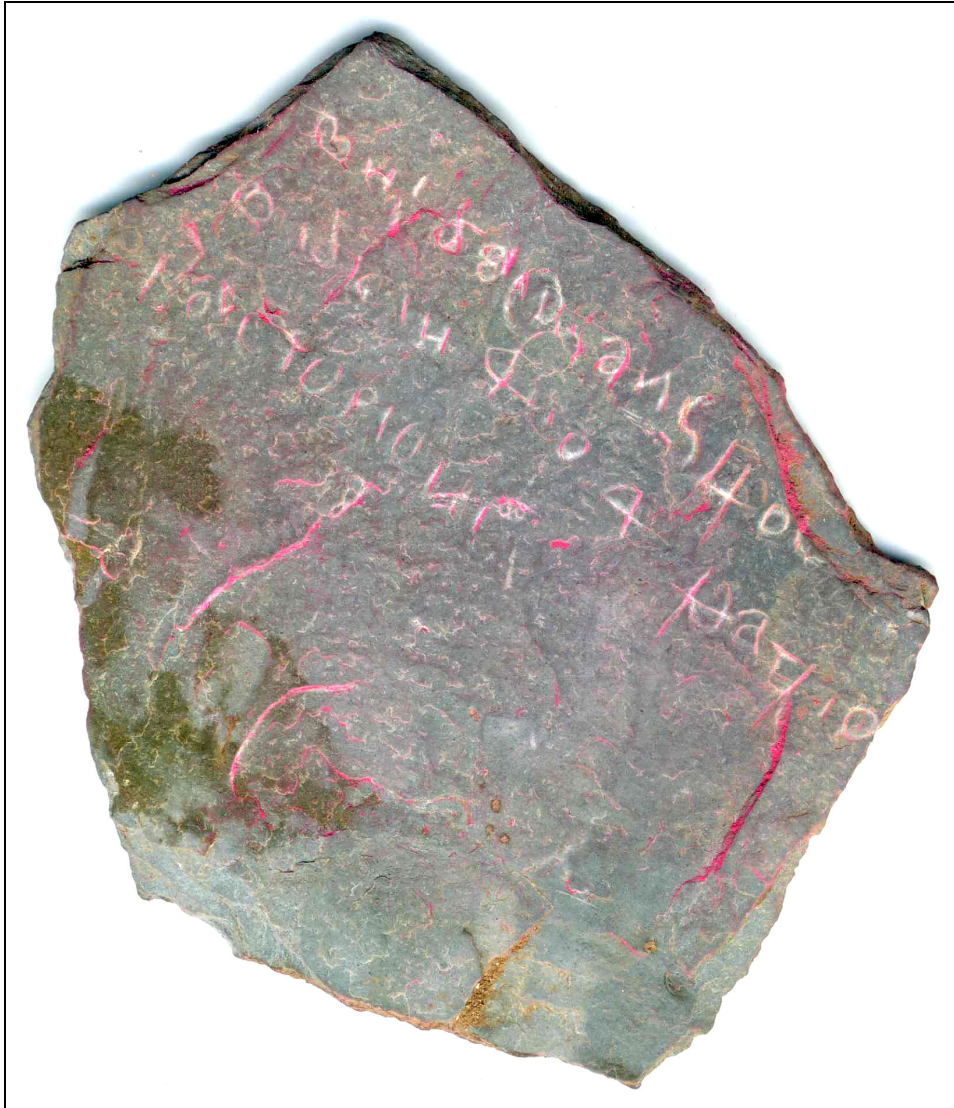


Figure 11. Decorated medieval floor tiles.

5.3 Inscribed slate



Photograph 21. Inscribed slate, digitally enhanced to highlight the inscription.

It has not been possible to decipher the inscription on this slate, but it is thought to be in Greek. It is likely to be a trial piece from the Cathedral School. It was recovered during construction by Nick King, of Biggs Construction Ltd.

5.4 Archive

The archive for the watching brief at the Masons' Yard consists of field notes, day books, field drawings, photographs in colour and black-and-white prints and colour slides, finds and mortar samples. Some of the material requires further work; for example, the Somerset Record Office and the British Library will be consulted to provide information about the inscribed slate, and the mortar samples will be analyzed by Jerry Sampson.

The archive will be prepared for deposition with the archive of the Camery excavation in the Triforium of Wells Cathedral.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 The watching brief at the Masons' Yard identified a possible early watercourse (Figure 4) which must have been culverted and re-routed before the Camery wall could have been built. The masonry found below the foundations of the Camery wall in Pit E (Photograph 2; Figure 4) would most likely relate to structures in the vicinity of the Wellhouse in the Bishop's Garden, rather than to the Camery. The Camery wall will be discussed in detail in the forthcoming report discussing the Cloister wall.

6.2 The boreholes brought up sediments from made ground to a significant depth and these deposits are best interpreted as construction spoil and masons' waste dumped into the channel formed by the relic watercourse (Hollinrake, 2005). Areas of the Camery continued to be levelled up with dumped material for some time, culminating with the large deposit of stone dust and masons' waste outlined in Figure 4. The discussion of the culvert trench, above, presents the argument that the upper layers of this dumped material derive from the destruction, in the fifteenth century, of the thirteenth century Cloister and its subsequent rebuilding (**3.2** above). Both the Lady Chapel by the Cloister and the East Cloister have been built on the higher ground above the slopes of the relic watercourse.

6.3 Several of the buttresses of the East Cloister wall were constructed upon the foundations of Saxon walls (dated during the excavations of the 1980s (Rodwell 2001) or upon walls or buttresses of a similar orientation which are probably of a similar date. Figure 12 illustrates these relationships in plan. There has been insufficient evidence to allow speculation upon the nature of these structures or even whether they are buildings or boundary walls. It is likely, however, that the wall shown as a dashed red line below the East Cloister² made a return to the southeast, since there was no indication of a wall in the correct position in Bay 1.

The close correlation of the East Cloister buttresses with the earlier walls is unlikely to be coincidental. The walls outlined in red on Figure 12 were probably standing when the East Cloister was constructed.

² This wall has been copied from a wall excavated in the 1980s, reversed and turned by 90 degrees. NH

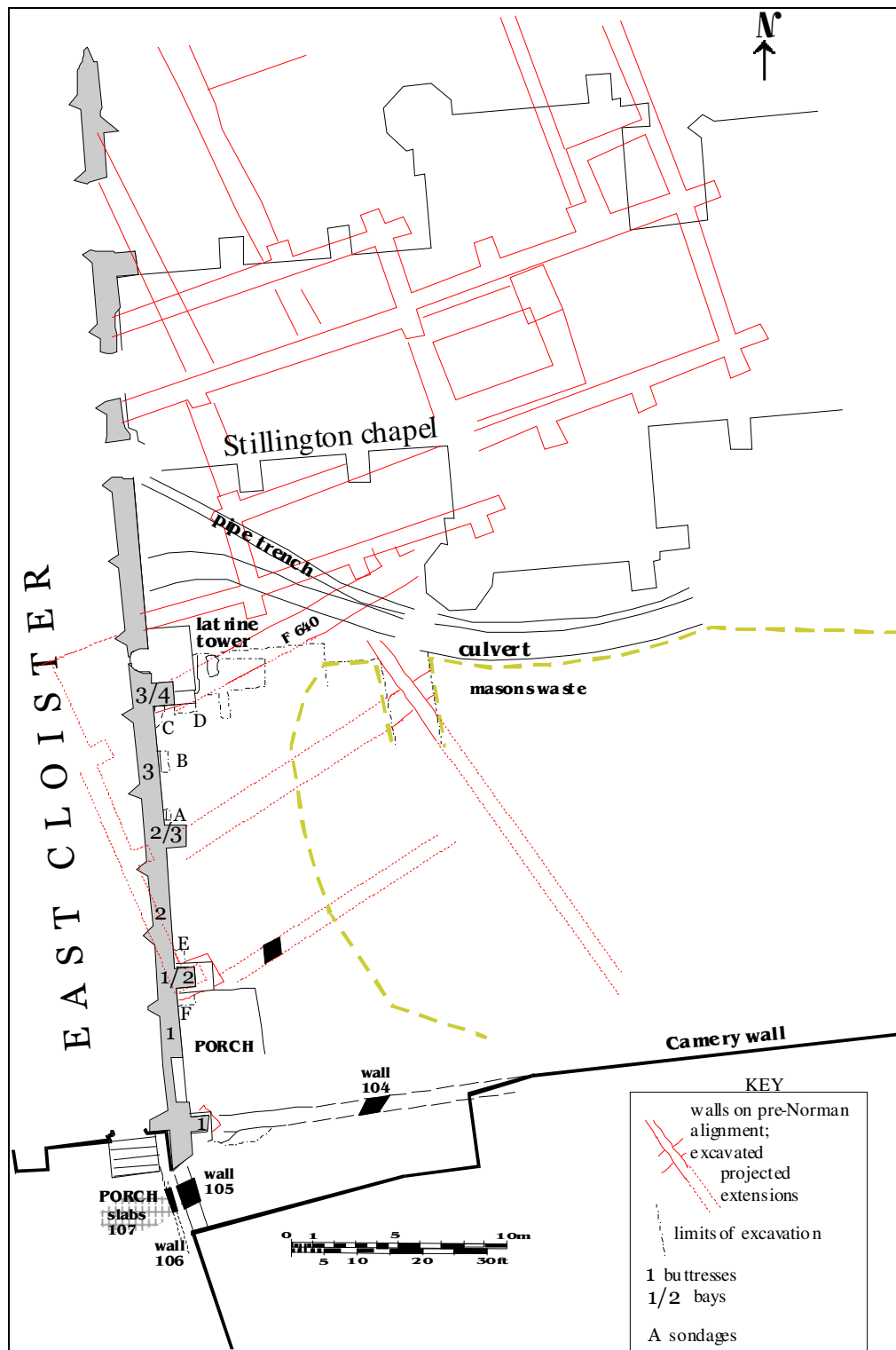


Figure 12. Features on the Saxon alignment found in the Masons' Yard (2006), and the Camery (1980s). The buttresses below the Cloister buttresses have been joined to illustrate the possible structure they were supporting.

6.4 Whatever the nature of the structure indicated by the walls revealed in the watching brief, the features associated with Buttress 1 would appear to lie some way apart from it. There is insufficient evidence to determine the nature of the structure or structures to which various phases of masonry belong (although it is tempting to speculate that it had some connection with wall **105** or wall **106** detected in the pipe trench through the Palace Green, shown in Figure 12), but it is possible to state that a stepped buttress on the Saxon alignment lies below Cloister buttress E1 (Figure 6). This in turn rests upon the lower courses of the Camery wall, suggesting that the Camery enclosure was defined by a stone wall at a date early in the Saxon period and that the Camery enclosure was laid out without reference to the alignment of the Saxon churches.

6.5 Only a few courses of the Camery wall remained in Buttress 1, showing that this stretch of the wall must have been at least partially demolished before the structure below Buttress 1 was constructed. Nevertheless, this location at the southwest corner of the Camery wall seems to have been one of the focal points of the layout of the Cathedral precinct from the time that the Camery wall was laid out and it may be that the significance of this point attracted structures. No other feature on the Saxon alignment was recorded in the service trench through the Palace Green; it is likely that the surviving floor slabs of the Bishop's Porch to the Cloister protect them.

6.6 The porch exposed in Bay 1 was not unexpected, given the blocked doorway in the East Cloister wall. This porch probably formed a pair with the porch observed in the service pipe trench from the Masons' Yard gate to the Bishop's Eye (Figure 12) and predicted by Rodwell (2001, 277-80); both may have been important in a variety of processional practices and may have been partly used to emphasize the different jurisdictions of the Bishop and the Dean and Chapter.

C. and N. Hollinrake

2 August 2007

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Many thanks are due to the C. and N. Hollinrake excavation team: Faith Cairns, Richard Cox, Bruce Eaton, Keith Faxon and Arthur Hollinrake and the students Emma Smith and Owen Watts. We are very grateful to the builders from Biggs Construction Ltd., especially to the site manager Graham Kelly and to Nick King and Steve Parfitt for their unfailing support for our work.

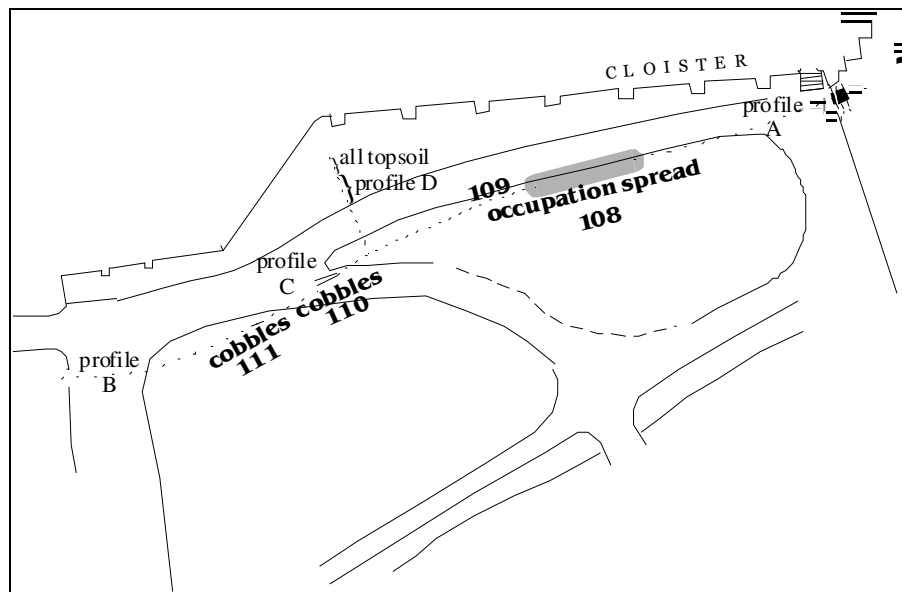
APPENDIX: Palace Green

Figure 13. Observations along the pipe trench through Palace Green.

This narrow (c60cm) pipe trench was intentionally kept shallow to ensure minimal disturbance of any archaeological horizons which might be disturbed. The result is that so little of the archaeological horizon was exposed that it is impossible to say much about the deposits revealed. The entire length of the pipe trench is summarized here, but it may be that the features on the western half of the trench become more meaningful in relation to the findings in the Mary Mitchell Garden (report forthcoming) in a similar way as the porch in the eastern section became more meaningful in relation to the porch revealed in Bay E1 in the Masons' Yard.

Stratigraphy in Palace Green (profile A)

depth	description	interpretation
to 0.2m	topsoil	
to 0.3m	stone dust & Doultong rubble	modern landscaping
to 0.45m	red sandy clay with gravels	modern landscaping
to 0.55m	stone dust & Doultong rubble	modern landscaping
to 0.65m	dark brown clay with small angular & rounded stones	
below 0.65m	silts containing medieval pottery	

Stratigraphy near the Bishop's Eye (profile B)

depth	description	interpretation
to 0.4m	tarmac & hard, compact gravels & scalplings	modern road
to 0.55m	hard, compact black dust, small limestone, frequent oyster shell	?earlier road surface
to 0.90m	light brown/red sandy clay with small stones & occasional charcoal flecks	

Stratigraphy in the road crossing near Bishop's Eye (profile C)

depth	description	interpretation
at 0.30m	intermittent 10cm thick deposit of soft dark brown/black silty clay with lumps of coal/charcoal, ash & lime mortar flecks	
to 0.40m	tarmac & hardcore	modern road
to 0.70m	angular limestone rubble in red clay on top of soft red silty clay with small stones	

Stratigraphy in the grass east of Harris & Harris car park

depth	description	interpretation
to 0.30m	topsoil	
to 0.60	rounded limestone in red sandy clay	

For more detail of the Bishop's Porch and the occupation spread **108** and cobbles **110** and **111**, see Finds List and Context List.