



AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
EXCAVATION AT THE SITE OF THE
FORMER 23 QUAY STREET,
SCARBOROUGH



Frontispiece – a 19th century photograph of the timber framed house which occupied the site

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By

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SITE OF THE FORMER 23 QUAY, SCARBOROUGH

NATIONAL GRID REF	TA 04935 88835
SITE CODE	PL05
MUSEUM ACCESSION No.	SCAR.2006.51

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society was sponsored by James Corrigan to carry out an archaeological evaluation excavation on this site which is located at the junction of Quay Street and Parkins Lane. The latter is a foot passage which runs between Quay Street and Sandside. The work was carried out over the period November 2006 to January 2006 with some recording work done in March 2006.
- 1.2 The site was last occupied by a single storey garage of brick under an asbestos cement roof. This became unsafe and had to be demolished in 2005 leaving a concrete floor slab. Prior to the erection of the garage in about 1930 the site was occupied by a timber framed building (23 Quay Street) which is thought, on stylistic grounds, to be late 14th or early 15th century in date. A sketch drawn in the late 19th century and photographs of the building exist (one of which forms the frontispiece) which show that the building was 'blind' fronted on the Quay Street elevation where it was also jettied out over the street.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The overall objective of the archaeological evaluation was to establish whether there are any remains (particularly of a timber framed building which is known to have existed on the site) that will be affected by any future development of the site. This aim was achieved through the following:
 - a regressive map analysis of building development on the site, and examination of associated documents
 - a desk top study of previous archaeological data on or in immediate proximity to the site
 - trial trenching and monitoring to determine the nature, depth, extent and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits on the site.

3.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 The site is situated on what was probably originally the seashore at the foot of the South Bay Cliff. Although claims have been made for Roman and Viking settlements around the South Bay, the documented

development of the area begins with the emergence of Scarborough as a town and port during the second half of the 12th century when a Borough was created by Henry II and a grid of streets laid out. Quay Street developed as part of the medieval harbour but its layout was more 'organic' than that of the grid of streets higher up the town. A deep water port developed between circa 1250 and circa 1350 and by the mid 14th century the quay alignment is thought to be in a position just south of the current site.¹

3.2 Figure 1 shows the location of previous archaeological investigations in the area, the numbers shown referring to those in square brackets that follow in the précis of previous excavations described below.

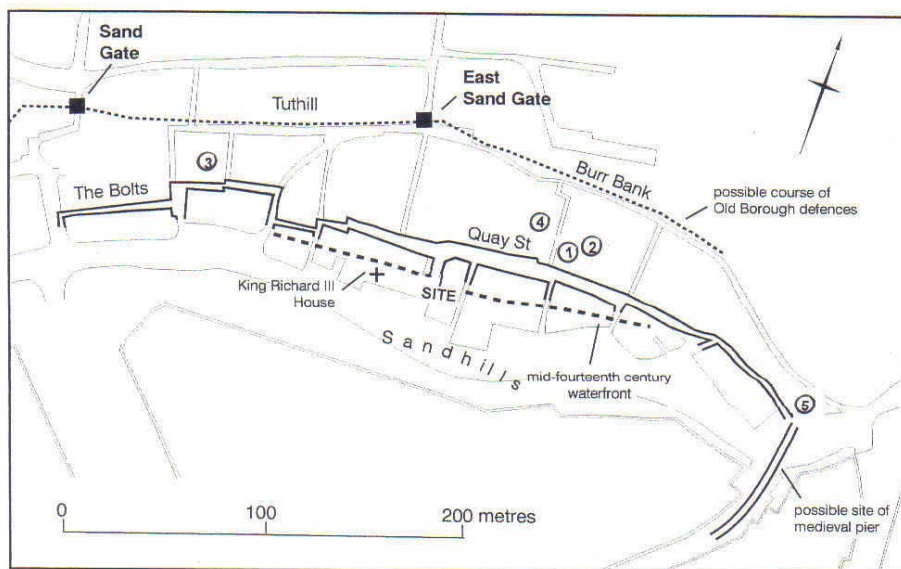


Figure 1 The location of the site relative to the harbour, Quay St and other recent excavations

3.3 An excavation in 1978 at 30 Quay Street² [1] uncovered an area of stone paving on the natural clay surface and a second area of paving was reportedly found at the junction of Bakehouse Steps and Quay Street in 1971. Both may have been rudimentary slipways constructed on the natural shoreline before the construction of the first harbour wall in this part of the South Bay.

3.4 Quay Street could mark the line of the first waterfront which may have consisted of a stone and timber harbour wall. Subsequent reclamation meant that the harbour front moved progressively further south and by the middle of the 14th century it appears to have been mid-way between present Quay Street and Sandside ie just south of the current site. Reclamation also involved raising the ground level behind the harbour front to provide some protection from flooding during high tides

¹ Pearson, T 2006 The Archaeology of Medieval Scarborough – Excavation and Research pp 59-64

² Pearson, T 2006 The Archaeology of Medieval Scarborough – Excavation and Research p 79

and heavy seas. The 1978 excavation at 30 Quay Street found that clay had been dumped to raise the ground level, partially burying the earlier slipway, whilst excavations on the north side of The Bolts in 1990³ [2] and on the north side of Quay Street (at number 22A)⁴[3] in 1996 revealed that domestic refuse had been dumped at the base of the cliff probably for the same purpose. However in 2003 an excavation at 58 Quay Street⁵[4] found re-deposited clay and sand resting on the natural shoreline and also evidence that the base of the cliff forming the northern boundary of the site had been cut back to increase the area available for development, ie a form of 'cut and fill' had taken place to reclaim land.

- 3.5 The area around the harbour was the most densely settled part of the medieval town as is indicated by the high rents paid for land here in the 14th century. Several houses along Quay Street still preserve possible medieval timberwork in their structures, most notably the former Three Mariners Inn, the former Dog & Duck Inn, both on the south side of the street, and No 2 Quay Street on the north. In 1996 excavations below the cellar floor of the Three Mariners⁶ [5] showed it rested on beach sand containing a small quantity of water-worn medieval pottery. The north wall of the cellar is constructed with stone and may represent an early alignment of the medieval waterfront along the edge of Quay Street. It is possible that the cellar was constructed forward of this line as part of the process of reclaiming land from the sea for building
- 3.6 Quay Street is shown on 18th century maps of the town, such as Cossins' of 1725 and Vincent's of 1745, as being fully developed, but it is not possible to determine the exact nature of the buildings on the current site from such maps. It is possible that modern Parkin's Lane is the street shown as Smithy Lane on Cossin's map, in which case the old street name may be of some significance.
- 3.7 The first accurate map of the area is John Wood's survey of 1828. This shows the site occupied by two properties, separated from outbuildings at the rear of what is now The Golden Ball Public House by a narrow passage, as does the earliest Ordnance Survey map, published in 1852 at the scale of 1:1056. Comparison with a 19th century sketch drawing (see paragraph 3.9 below and Figure 2) appears to show that this was originally one large building.

³ Pearson T 2006 op.cit. p 73

Pearson T 1990 An Archaeological Evaluation at 24-26 The Bolts, Scarborough. SAHS Interim Report 10

⁴ Pearson T 2006 op.cit. p 79

Pearson T 1996 An Archaeological Assessment of Land Adjacent to 22A Quay Street. SAHS Interim Report 23

⁵ Pearson T 2006 op.cit. p 79

Hall C 2003 An Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief at 58 Quay Street, Scarborough. SAHS Interim Report 35

⁶ Pearson T 2006 op.cit. p 79

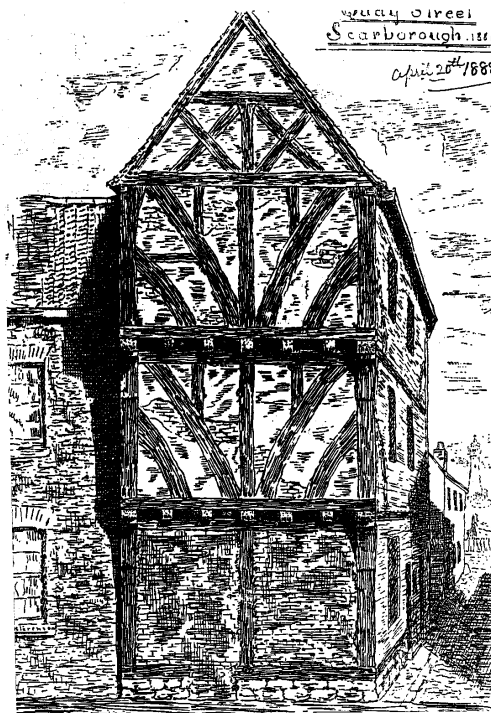


Figure 2 – A 19th century sketch of the timber framed building which occupied the site. See also frontispiece photograph

- 3.8 The large scale Ordnance Survey map at the scale of 1:500 published in 1892 shows the same building configuration as in 1852, as do the 1:2500 scale maps of 1912 and 1929.
- 3.9 By the time of the publication of the 1:2500 in 1939 the timber framed building had gone and been replaced by brick garage. Quay Street had widened which meant that the northern end of the timber framed building is under the present street and was not available for archaeological investigation. The alignment of the front of the original building is shown on Figure 3.
- 3.10 Quite a lot of information is available about the house which stood on the site before the building of the garage in the 1920s. For example it is illustrated in 'Old and New Scarborough'⁷ and also in 19th century photographs. This building is almost certainly the one referred to in an article of 1888,⁸ which claims it may be 13th or 14th century and which contains the illustration of the gable end reproduced in Figure 2. The building was of three storeys with a two-bay gable end-on to Quay Street. The gable was of jettied construction, down braced, and cross braced at gable level. Stevenson's sketch implies that the infilling was plastered brick and that the building was set on a two-course stone plinth - these features are not apparent in the photograph. Clearly to be seen in both sketch and photograph however is that the ground floor

⁷ Cox W J J 1907 Old and New Scarborough Illustrated, unpaginated

⁸ Stevenson W, cutting from an unknown journal in a scrapbook in the possession of Trevor Pearson. A hand written note gives the date 20 April 1888.

framework was not braced and that the void was infilled by brick, probably of a later date, again indicating that the ground floor was originally open on the street side.

- 3.11 The gable end of this building when photographed had no windows and indeed the disposition of the framing was such that windows could never have existed here. Recent recording work has shown that there are similarities in timber-frame construction between buildings in Scarborough and York, particularly in Goodramgate, York.⁹ The former 23 Quay Street has affinities with 41-45 Goodramgate, although the latter do not have windowless gable ends. It is suggested that the same carpenters were operating in both York and Scarborough, and that they may have been Flemish. Given the trade links between Scarborough and northern Europe and the Low Countries, this would not be surprising.

4.0 Methodology of the trenching

- 4.2 All archaeological deposits were recorded according to correct principles of stratigraphic excavation on SAHS's pro forma context sheets.
- 4.3 Sections - The excavations were drawn at a scale of 1:20 on drawing film.
- 4.4 Photographic record - The photographic record comprises colour prints to record all archaeological features encountered.
- 4.5 All small finds which provided dating and archaeological evidence such as pottery, bone and other finds were collected, recorded contextually, marked and subject to preliminary analysis by SAHS's own team and entered on a database in the site archive. The database is set out at Annex 3.

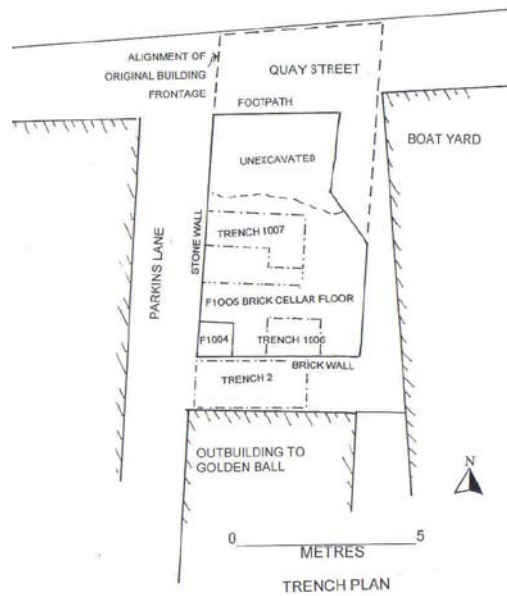
All finds will be deposited with the Scarborough Museums and Gallery Service along with the archaeological site archive in accordance with the Society's formal practice established over 60 years – Accession number SCAR.2006.51.

- 4.6 Environmental Sampling – because of the nature of the deposits, no environmental samples were taken. There were no significant finds of bone.
- 4.7 Context numbers. The Society's system of context numbering consists of two letters representing the site name (in this case PL representing Parkins Lane), followed by two digits representing the date followed by a four digit number (preceded by F for a feature). For simplicity in this report PL06 is omitted The cellar was treated as one trench, Trench 1

⁹ Yorkshire Buildings 2004 The Journal of the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group, No 32, p 17

with context numbers beginning at 1000. Within the cellar two further trenches were excavated and given the context numbers 1006 and 1007 followed by a further digit

Figure 3
Trench Plan showing
The position of the trenches relative to
the cellar
The original frontage of the building is
also shown



4.8 The location of the trenches is shown in Figure 3. The removal of the concrete floor slab was carried out under archaeological supervision. Following this it was apparent that the greater part of the site was occupied by a cellar filled by relatively modern demolition rubble. The southern part of the site, where the passage referred to in paragraph 3.6 existed, did not appear to be affected by a cellar. The whole of the cellar area was designated Trench 1 and the cellar fill was subsequently removed by machine under archaeological supervision down to the brick cellar floor. Two trial trenches were put down in the exposed cellar – 1006 and 1007.

4.9 Trench 2 was hand excavated in the upper passage area.

5.0 Results Trench 1

5.1 Excavation in both trenches 1006 and 1007 ceased at about 0.8m AOD when the ingress of salt (ie sea) water made further work impossible.

5.2 Phase 2 - infilling by sand etc.
 1007.6 (Figure 4) was a dirty orange brown sand containing water worn pottery such as Scarborough ware whilst 1006.8 and 9 (Figure 5) at the same level was cleaner but also containing water worn medieval pottery. These two layers were interpreted as natural sand, 1007.6 being dirtier because it was in the wash and backwash zone on the beach edge. It was thought that the pottery and other detritus such as bone had been washed here. Above these in layers 1007.4, .5 and .6 and 1006.4, .5, .6 and .7 the sand was interleaved by layers of loam,

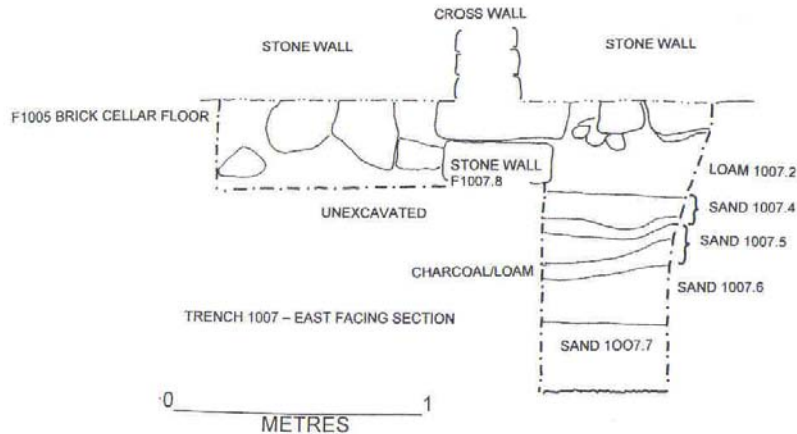


Figure 4 The east facing section of Trench 1007

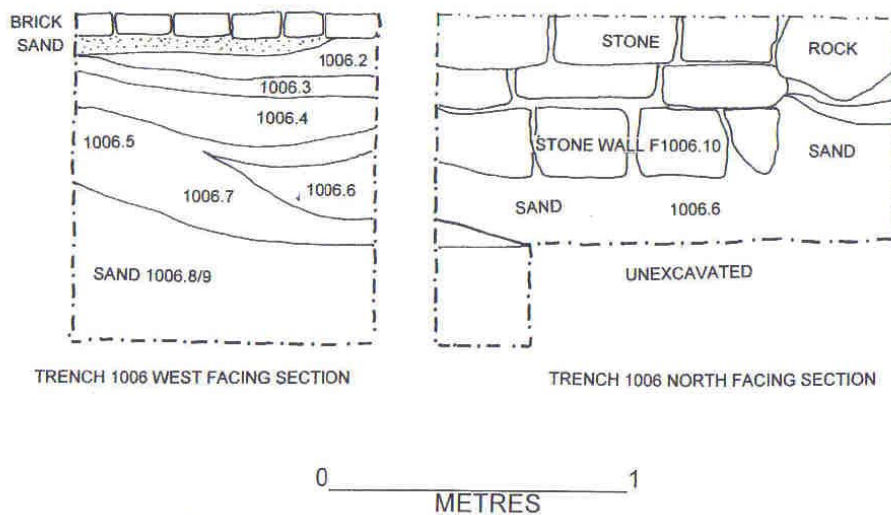


Figure 5 The west and north facing sections of Trench 1006

charcoal and iron panning which was interpreted as a natural result of the high iron content in the sand. These layers were interpreted as the deliberate dumping of material but whether this was due to a planned action to create land in front of a previous quay alignment or whether it was random tipping is open to question. However F1007.8 was a stone feature crossing the site (Figure 6) lying on top of the sand. This may have been a causeway similar to that found at 30 Quay Street formed to facilitate tipping for reclamation – the fact that 1006.3 appeared to have been trampled may support this supposition. The last activity in this phase was the dumping of loam 1007.7 (not found in trench 1006) again containing exclusively medieval pottery

5.3 Phase 3 – erection of building

F1002 (Figure 7) is a substantial stone wall of large squared courses forming the western boundary of the cellar and retaining Parkins Lane and is thought to be the cellar wall to the house. Its relationship with



Figure 6 Looking South showing F1007.8 – scales 2metre & 500mm



**Figure 7 Looking West showing wall F1002 and Cellar Floor F1005
Scales 2metre & 500mm**

1007.2 would be consistent with the 14th or 15th date for the building given on stylistic grounds. No evidence of the timber frame was found. The northern cellar wall lies under the present road and in any event some cellar fill had to be kept in place to support the road so it was not possible to examine this and thus to ascertain whether it is an old quay alignment as was postulated at The Three Mariners. At the south only three courses of the stone wall remained (F1006.10) underneath a later brick wall and later alterations had taken place at the east also.

5.4 Phase 3 – alterations to the building

The cellar was re-floored using bricks (F1005, Figure 8) and judging by their size and form this was done in the 18th century. At this period the

south wall above F1006.10 was also substantially altered and re-built in brick.



Figure 8 Looking South showing feature F1004 (to the right) brick cellar floor F1005, the brick wall with blocked openings - Scales 2m, 1m & 500mm

There were three openings in the wall (subsequently blocked in possibly when the cellar was filled) consisting of a door opening above where trench 1006 was positioned, a small opening to its east probably for a coal chute and a larger opening to the west probably a window. At this time therefore the passage to the south must have been much lower than at present with steps up to Parkins Lane. Trench 2 – had it been proceeded with - may have revealed these steps or a void. Contemporaneously, a cross wall running on the approximate alignment of F1007.8 was built representing the phase at which the house was subdivided into two (as shown on the maps) This represents a change in status of the building from a single house to two much smaller lower class houses.

5.5 Industrial use

F1004 is a rectangular brick feature built against the south wall – Figure 8 and with a low arch penetrating the wall. It is of 18th or 19th date. Various theories have been put forward as to its use the most plausible being a small furnace for a blacksmith's shop (which would accord with the name Smithy Lane on Cossin's map of 1725) or a boiler containing a vessels for boiling crabs. More research is needed into this.

5.6 Demolition of timber framed building and erection of brick garage

Cartographic evidence shows that this took place between 1920 and 1939

6.0 Results Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 3m by 1.2. At a depth of 150mm iron service pipes (gas and water) were encountered and excavation temporarily ceased. Following removal of the cellar fill to Trench 1 it became apparent that the passage had previously contained access steps down to the cellar which would have damaged any archaeology in this area – therefore no further work was done in this trench.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The archaeological evaluation has shown that, as at the timber framed building at The Three Mariners, the timber framed former 23 Quay Street was built off very substantial dressed stone cellar walls and (also as at The Three Mariners) it was built off sand very close to sea level – the base of the wall is only 1.8 metres AOD. This adds credence to the theory first expounded at The Three Mariners that as the quay alignment moves south some buildings in this area are simply built forward of the quay with the quay wall forming one of the cellar walls. The ‘void’ in front of the quay thus very easily becomes the cellar of a building. There was, however, no evidence that this was open to the south thus allowing boats to be drawn up the beach into the cellar.
- 7.2 Should the site be re-developed this may be done without the loss of significant archaeology provided the Parkins Lane wall is kept in place.

9.0 Maps & Plans Consulted

1538	View of Scarborough	
1725	A new and exact plan of Scarborough	J Cossins
1747	A plan of Scarborough	W Vincent
1770	A plan of Scarborough	published in
	Jeffries	
1798	A plan of Scarborough	published in
	Hinderwell,	
1811	A plan of Scarborough	published in
	Hinderwell,	
1828	A plan of the Town and Environs of Scarborough	J Wood
1842	A plan of Scarborough from an actual survey	A G Tyson
1850	Plan of Scarborough	J Petch
1852	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:1056	
1892	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:500	
1912	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:2500	
1929	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:2500	
1939	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:2500	
1965	Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:1250	

10.0 Acknowledgements

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The work was directed by the author and carried out by Frank Beeley, Steve Bence, Chris Evans, Linda Kemp, Ron Lewis, Barbara Newby, Ken Newby Sue Ogilvy and Sue Wood. Additional monitoring was carried out by Frank Beeley and Sue Wood.

Gail Falkingham, Senior Archaeologist North Yorkshire County council is thanked for her advice and guidance.

ANNEX 1 - LIST OF CONTEXTS

1006	Concrete slab to cellar
1001	Fill of cellar
F1002	West cellar wall – stone
F1003	south and east cellar walls – brick
F1004	Rectangular feature built into arch
F1005	Brick cellar floor
Trench 1006	
1006.1	Sand
1006.2	Compacted mid brown earth and sand
1006.3	Compacted or iron pan sand surface
1006.4	Orange burnt sand
1006.5	Iron panning
1006.6	Mixed clay, charcoal and shelly deposit
1006.7	Pale sand
1006.8	Silver grey sand possibly natural deposit
1006.9	Grey sandy deposit with stone and shells
F1006.10	Stone wall under F1003
Trench 1007	
1007.1	Sand layer under brick floor
1007.2	Mid brown loam
1007.3	Dark to mid brown loam
1007.4	Orange sand with loamy inclusions
1007.5	2 nd spit into orange sand with loamy inclusions
1007.6	Orange sand
1007.7	2 nd spit into orange sand
F1007.8	stone cross wall
Trench 2	
2000	Concrete yard surface
2001	loose soil and sand
F2002	Channel drain
2003	Mid to dark soil