

SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS
& EXCAVATIONS AT THE FORMER
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH
EASTBOROUGH, SCARBOROUGH

BY
CHRISTOPHER HALL
&
TREVOR PEARSON



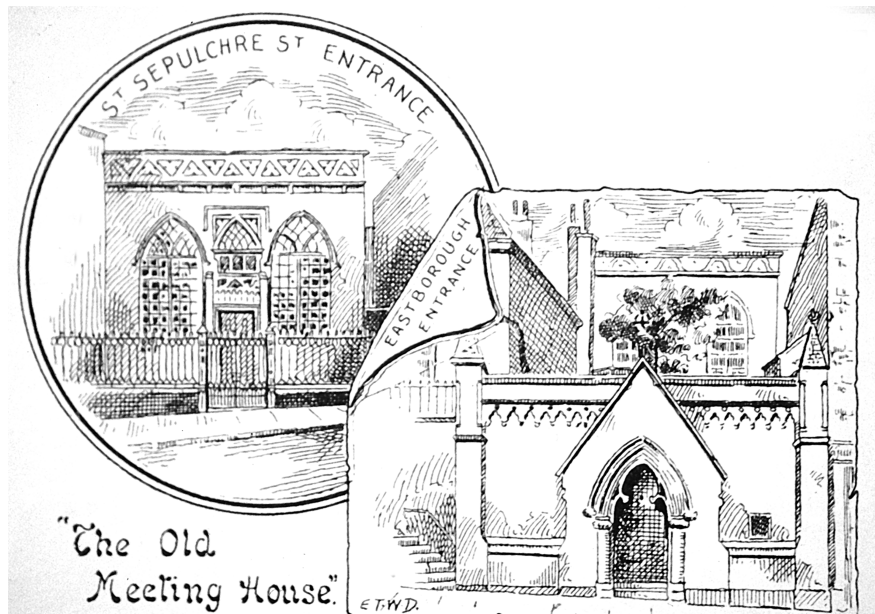
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Report 36 2022

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FRONTISPIECE

The Old Meeting House

From an illuminated address given to Rev Llewellyn on his retirement from
Eastborough Congregational Church dated 1896

This image is © St Andrews United Reformed Church, South Cliff Scarborough and Patricia McNaughton

Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society
Report 36: 2022

First published October 2022 by the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society
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1.0 Introduction

Site codes PC/03 and PC/05
National Grid Reference TA 04655 8880
National Grid co-ordinates 404655 48880

Scarborough Museums Service accession number 2003.516

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of two periods of archaeological evaluation, excavation and monitoring carried out by Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society (SAHS) in 2003 and 2005 at the former Pentecostal Church, Eastborough/St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough.
- 1.2 The 2003 work was carried out on a strip of land alongside the east wall of the nave in advance of the possible erection of three buttresses designed to support that wall. This work was carried out on behalf of Messrs Dudding & Gallaher to satisfy an archaeological condition (No 2) attached to a planning permission for building the buttresses - decision 03/00491.
- 1.3 Further work was carried out in 2005 mainly in the nave in advance of the conversion of the building to residential use. This work was carried out on behalf of Healey Properties to satisfy an archaeological condition (No 8) attached to the planning permission for the conversion - decision 05/00275. The partial demolition of the east wall was also monitored as part of this phase.
- 1.4 Note on context numbers. The Society's system of site coding and context numbering consists of two letters representing the site name, followed by two digits representing the year followed by a four-digit context number (preceded by F for a feature). Thus, work carried out in 2003 is referenced PC03 followed by the four-digit number and work carried out in 2005, PC05 followed by the four digit number. In this report for simplicity, the context numbers quoted omit the two initial letters but have the prefix either 03/ or 05/ so that it is clear in which year the work was carried out

2.0 Site Description

- 2.2 The former Pentecostal Church is a substantial building fronting both Eastborough and St Sepulchre Street. The east wall of the nave contained three or four courses of squared rubble and cobble walling, although until its recent collapse this wall stood much higher. This wall may be associated with some former outbuildings referred to below. The church appeared to be built off this wall in both an early and mid 19th century brick.
- 2.1 The 2003 site is a strip of land 2.5 metres wide, used as garden, running along the eastern side wall of the former church. Until their demolition in September 1961 in advance of the building of the nearby

council flats, the site was occupied by a range of outbuildings, which were partly stone built. (Figures 1A and 1B). The age and original use of these buildings are unknown, but they are present on the 1852 Ordnance Survey map.

- 2.2 The work carried out in 2005 was mostly in the nave and aisle of the former church with one additional trench in the former Sunday school. Further monitoring work was also carried out on the east wall referred to above following demolition of the later brickwork above it.



Fig 1A & 1B The outbuildings abutting the east wall 1961

3.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1.0 NATURAL TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE

3.1.1 The area has undergone substantial change since the medieval period, to such an extent that it is difficult to interpret the pre-existing topography. Eastborough is a relatively modern street, dating from the mid- 19th century. The creation of this interrupted the medieval street pattern. It is likely that the natural cliff slope was in the area now occupied by buildings between Eastborough and Staithe Bolt. Buildings to the seaward side of Staithe Bolt are on reclaimed land.

3.1.2 From the site, the land falls slightly in a north-easterly direction to a low point near the junction of St Sepulchre Street and Princess Square. This low point reflects the course of a stream running from the site of modern Albemarle Crescent to the harbour area. In the medieval period this was known as the Damgeth. The site therefore occupies an interesting position between the cliff edge and the Damgeth valley.

3.2.0 MEDIEVAL TOPOGRAPHY

3.2.1 Figure 2 shows the location of the site in relation to the known medieval layout of the town. Scarborough was one of only two Yorkshire towns to acquire stone defences in the 12th century. However, little is now to be seen of those defences and their course and nature have been the subject of much speculation. The south wall most likely surmounted or was terraced into the boulder clay slope around the South Bay already referred to. The only medieval references to it are around West Sandgate¹.

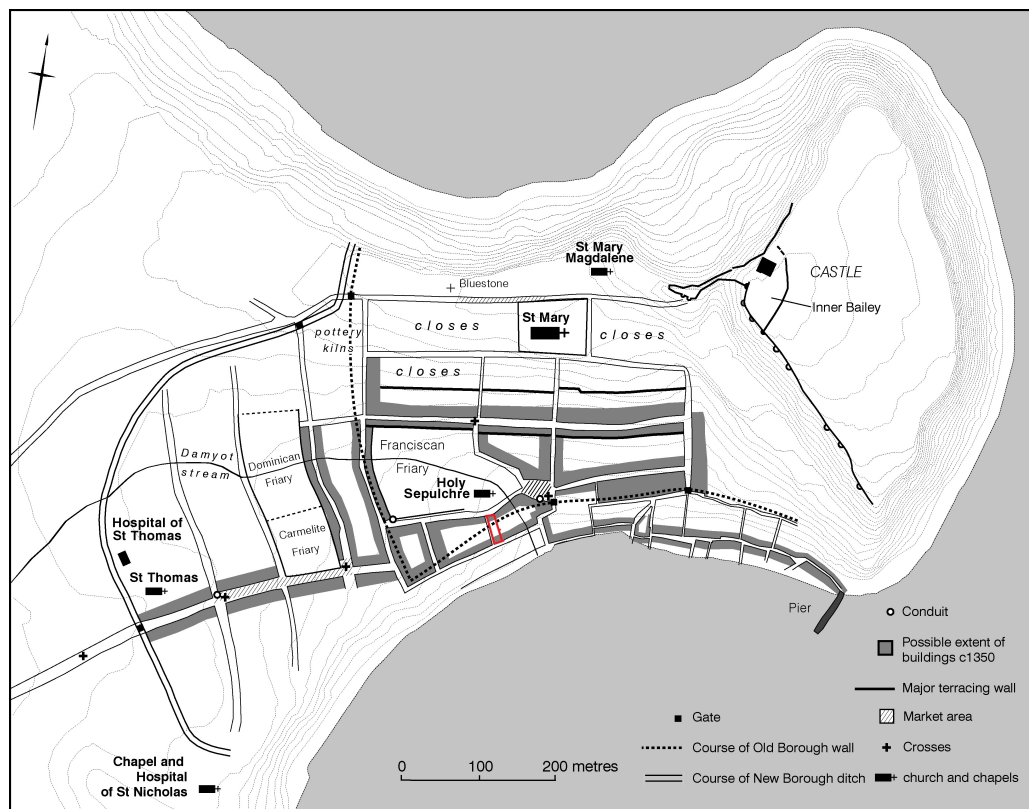


Fig 2 – the site, marked red, in relation to the known layout of the medieval town

3.2.2 The course of the defences near the site and Palace Hill is not precisely known. A high retaining wall, containing three courses of stone, at the rear of 54 Eastborough may be a relict of the defensive circuit. More recently the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group² have suggested, on the basis of building evidence, an alignment closer to the frontage of Palace Hill.

3.2.3 The nearby name West Sandgate suggests a link between the medieval borough with its defences and the harbour area, though any

¹ Jeayes, 1914 Description of documents contained in the White Vellum book of Scarborough Corporation, p23.

² Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group 2003, reports 1652 and 1653

entrance through the wall need not be contemporary with its first building. A possible gatehouse was discovered here in 1976³.

3.2.4 The 1852 Ordnance Survey⁴ map shows the area of the 2003 excavation to be the site of the Court of Pleas and the Abbot's Palace (Cistercian), whilst the 1892⁵ map refers to the Court of Pleas (site of) AD 1250, although there is no archaeological or historical basis for these designations.

3.3.0 LATER HISTORY

3.3.1 The first reference to a church on this site dates its construction to 1703⁶ and this is shown on Cossins' map of 1725⁷ as a small building fronting St Sepulchre Street labelled 'Presbtr meeting'. The remainder of the area currently occupied by the church is shown as developed, but the uses are unknown. The church was enlarged in 1774⁸ and again in 1801. In the maps accompanying Hinderwell's History it is shown as an Independent Chapel.

3.3.2 The first accurate depictions of the building are in Wood's map of 1828⁹ and the 1:1056 scale Ordnance Survey map of 1852. Both these maps still show the principal frontage to St Sepulchre Street with a garden on the Eastborough frontage accessed by a flight of steps. The illustration which forms the frontispiece to this report shows the building at this time from which this arrangement is clearly seen. Up until this time the building was known as the Independent Chapel.

3.3.3 The Scarborough Gazette reported in 1868¹⁰ the 'laying of the memorial stone of a new place of worship now in the course of erection, on the site of the Independent Chapel'. The old building was said to have been the oldest dissenting chapel in the town, but had had an inconvenient internal arrangement and was in a dilapidated condition. The Scarborough Gazette reported that the building is almost an entire reconstruction. Very little of the old walls or even the foundations were said to exist. However, the plans prepared by Paull & Robinson of Manchester, now at the County Record Office, imply that the eastern wall, adjacent to the excavation site, was built on the line of retained earlier fabric. It is clear from a description in The Congregational Yearbook of 1870¹¹ that there were interment vaults in the pre-existing church which had to be avoided in the rebuilding of the church in 1868. Annex 1 is an extract from the year book describing the church.

³ Pearson, 1987 An Archaeological Survey of Scarborough, p15.

⁴ Ordnance Survey, 1852

⁵ Ordnance Survey 1892

⁶ Hinderwell, T, 1832 The History and Antiquities of Scarborough, 3rd Edition, p160

⁷ Cossins, 1725 A New and Exact Plan of Scarborough

⁸ Hinderwell, op. cit. p161

⁹ Wood, J, 1828 A Plan of the Town and Environs of Scarborough

¹⁰ Scarborough Gazette Thurs 24 September 1868 p3

¹¹ The Congregational Yearbook, 1870. Hodder & Stoughton (London). p375

3.3.4 The building was enlarged again, to the west, in 1871 when the school room was added. This was designed by John Petch, architect, of Scarborough and replaced an earlier building thought to be a house.

3.3.5 At the time of the Society's work the history of the building could be read in the east wall of the former church as it contains:

- A pre-existing coursed rubble wall, possibly late medieval, standing now to an average height of 600 mm.
- Wall of 60 mm red to purple brick standing to a height of at least 2.5 metres, possibly from the rebuilding of 1801 and possibly built off an inner leaf of the stone wall
- Orange 'Scarborough' brick from the work of 1868 standing to eaves height.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1 The aim of both phases of evaluation, excavation and monitoring was to record any archaeological remains affected by the development, and to provide an historical understanding of the site before either:-

- foundation works for the new buttresses commenced.
- ground works for the new internal walls to the residential units and any drainage runs were carried out.
- foundation works for a new replacement east wall were commenced.

5.0 Methodology

5.1 The locations of the trenches excavated in both 2003 and 2005 is shown on Figure 3. The three buttresses proposed in 2003 would have required substantial pad foundations, so the decision was taken to hand excavate these bases (Trenches 1,2 and 3). A small trial trench (4) was placed at right angles to these between trenches 1 and 3. During the course of the excavation it was decided to enlarge trench 4 so that it linked trenches 1 to 3 – this was designated Trench 5. For this report the excavation is treated as being one trench – Figures 3 and 4 show the features in these trenches. It should be noted that these buttresses were never built and in 2005 a new proposal came forward to take down the east wall and re-build it completely. That methodology was itself subject to later modification.

5.2 In 2005 new proposals came forward for the redundant church involving its conversion to residential use with the associated erection of loadbearing internal walls and other groundworks. Before this work commenced, hand excavated evaluation trenches numbered 1 to 6 near to the east wall of the nave were excavated in March 2005 (Figures 3 and 4)

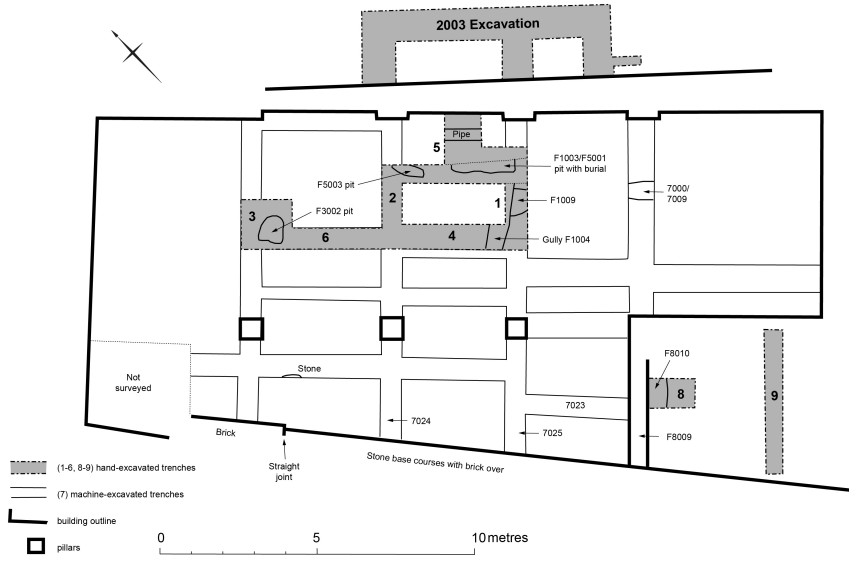


Fig 3 – the locations of the various 2003 and 2005 trenches



Fig 4 – the hand excavated trenches within the church in progress showing the difficult working conditions within the nave of the former church

The results of this excavation, carried out under difficult conditions in a derelict building, were used to inform the methodology for further works as follows:-

- Monitoring and recording of the machine excavation of 78.2 linear metres of foundation trenches within the building for new cross wall etc. Note due to the height of the suspended floors above oversite it was not necessary for drainage runs to be excavated.
- Following the removal of the upper courses of 19th century brickwork to the east wall, the recording of the in-situ stone followed by monitoring and recording of the hand removal of the stone lower courses.
- Following the removal of the east wall the archaeological impact of the formation of the new foundations was proposed to be mitigated in consultation with the structural engineer. In the event, during the course of the works it was decided to leave the stone wall in-situ and a different engineering solution formulated to founding the re-built east wall which consisted of a strip foundation along the inner face of the stone wall - this was monitored and no excavation was carried out.

5.3 Recording - all archaeological deposits were recorded according to correct principles of stratigraphic excavation on SAHS's pro forma context sheets.

5.4 Plans and Sections - the sections of the excavation, and plans and elevations of structures were drawn at a scale of 1:20 on drawing film.

5.5 Photographic record - the photographic record comprises colour prints, colour transparencies and some digital images to duplicate these to record all archaeological features encountered.

5.6 Post-excavation - analysis of organic matter from contexts 03/5 and 03/6 (pits) has been carried out by Palaeoecology Research Services Ltd. Analysis of the pottery from the same contexts has been carried out by Northern Counties Archaeological Services.

5.7 Finds and site archive. All artefacts and the site record have been deposited with the Scarborough Museums Service in accordance with usual SAHS practice, Accession Number 2003.516.

6.0 The Excavations and monitoring

6.1.0 NATURAL.

6.1.1 Natural clay was encountered in 2003 Trench 1 and was found to consist of plastic orange/brown clay of glacial origin. In 2005 it was found that in hand excavated evaluation trenches 1 to 6 similar natural clay lay beneath the oversite concrete and rubble surface formed during the 1868 rebuilding of the church and this was also largely the case in the monitored foundation trenches.

6.2.0 PHASE ONE - PIT DIGGING.

- 6.2.1 The earliest activity on the site was the digging of a series of pits. 03/F5018 was the remains of a pit exposed in the south-west side of Phase Two pit 03/ F5017. It was filled with 03/5019, a green/brown clayey soil with charcoal flecks and stone fragments (Figures 5 and 6)
- 6.2.2 03/F2008 was the base of a pit. The lowest deposit in the pit (layer 03/2009) was a mixed clayey soil which was not excavated because of health and safety considerations. It was overlain by medieval brown friable soil (layer 03/2007) which was in turn overlain by a black ashy deposit with stone inclusions (layers 03/2002 and 03/2003).
- 6.2.3 03/F5024 was the southernmost pit, only the edge of which was defined as it lay under later features, most notably drain 03/F3003, which were not removed. The fill of the pit was not clearly exposed because of the overlying features and therefore was not excavated.
- 6.2.4 03/F5017/F5023 formed the west side of a circular steep sided pit, the east side of which is outside the excavation trench. The feature is bisected by wall 03/F2004 (Figure 7) and hence the cut edge of the pit on either side of the wall was given a separate number, though there is no doubt that they are one and the same feature. The south-west quarter of the pit (03/F5017) was slightly undercut 0.5m from the top of the feature. The lowest excavated fill in the south-west quarter of the pit consisted of a dark brown organic deposit (layer 03/5016) which became increasingly organic with depth. A 20 litre sample of this deposit was taken for analysis for environmental remains. The results of this analysis are set out in Annex 1. Below this the fill was clayey. Due to safety considerations this deposit was not excavated but may be close to the base of the pit due to its clayey composition. The pit was overlain by layer 03/5014 - a mixed brown clay with extensive charcoal inclusions. In the north-west quarter of the pit (03/F5023) the deposit went from a clayey organic deposit, the equivalent to layer 03/5014, to a more organic deposit equivalent to layer 03/5016. Both these fills were given a single number of 03/2006. Excavation of the north-west quadrant ceased at a higher level than the south-west quadrant.

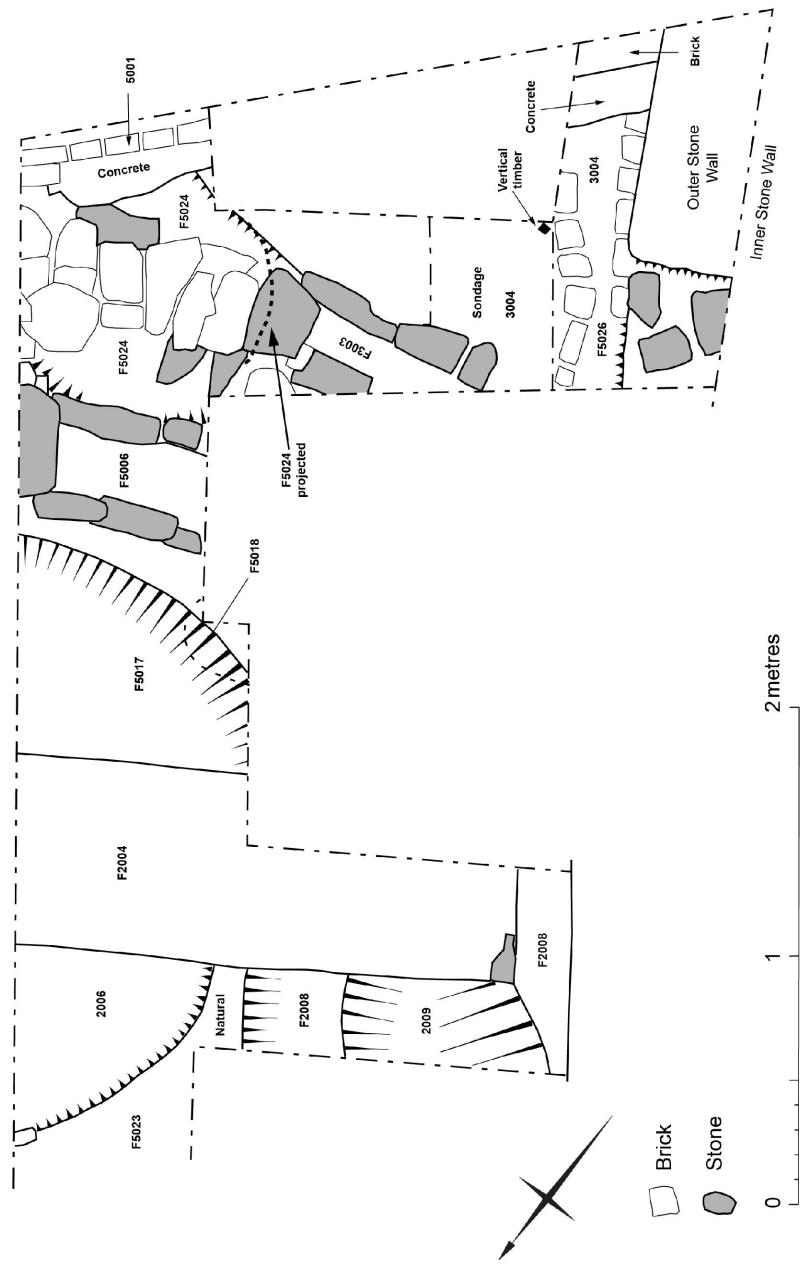


Fig 5 – plan of 2003 trenches 1 to 5

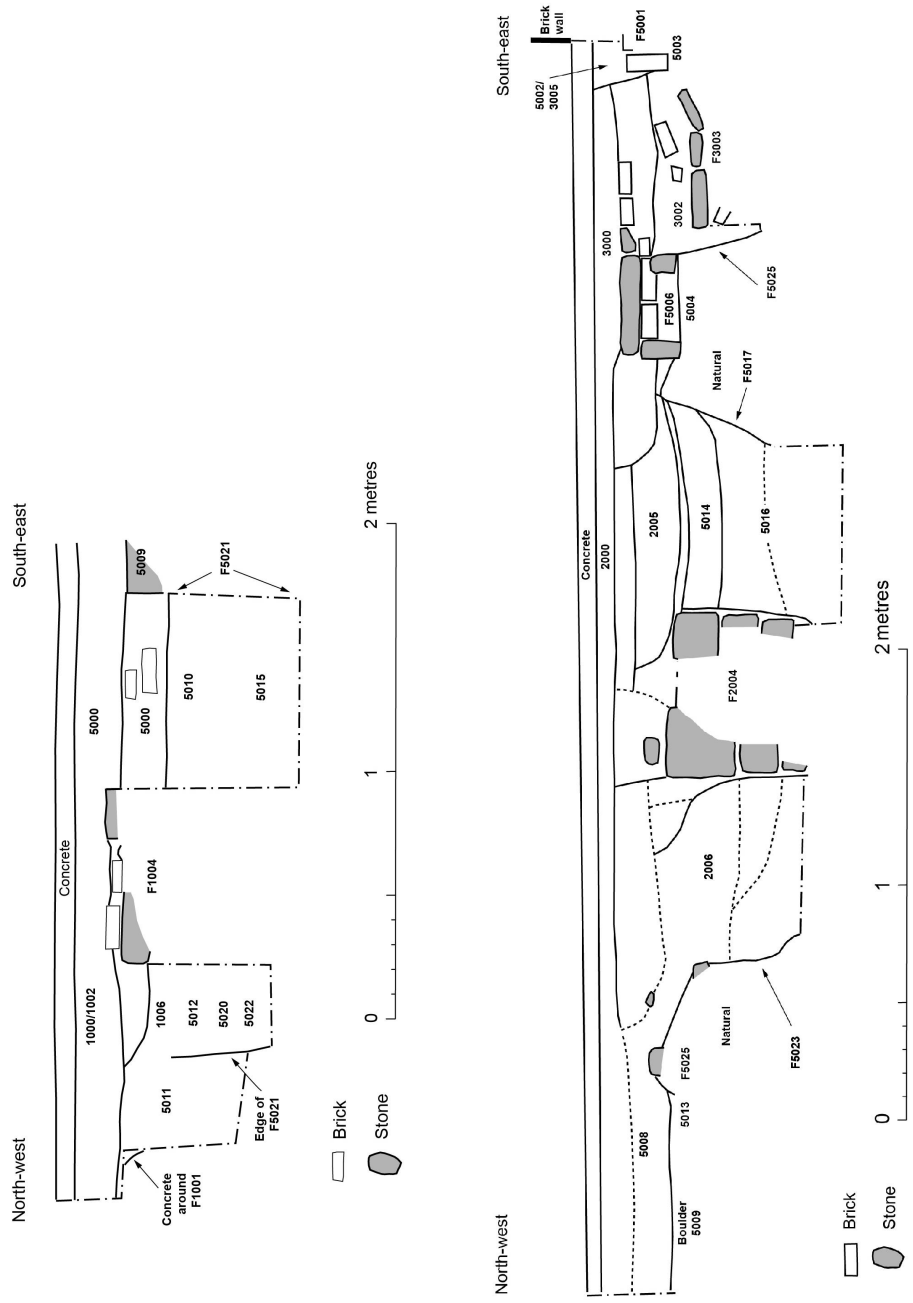


Fig 6 – the south-west facing sections of Trench 3



Fig 7 – looking along the south-east edge of 2003 trench showing pit 5017 bisected by wall 2004

6.2.5 03/F5025\F5021 were two cut features which may represent respectively the south and north sides of a single very large pit possibly 3.5m in diameter, although this could not be established for certain because of the presence of overlying features which were not removed due to health and safety concerns. For present purposes the two pit sides are considered as one feature. The south edge of the pit (03/F5025) was excavated to a depth of 0.2m, which was sufficient to define the edge. At this depth the fill consisted of a mid-greenish brown organic deposit with flecks of charcoal and some shell (layer 03/5013) overlain by a dark, silty soil containing charcoal, clay and ash (layer 03/5008). Further north from the edge of the pit, the top of the pit seems to have been filled with a jumble of large, rounded stones (layer 03/5009) and a more-regularly laid kerb of flat stone slabs in a mid-brown loose soil (layer 03/5007). A greater depth of deposit was excavated from the fill of the pit to the north of the stone layer (03/5009). The lowest fill excavated (layer 03/5015) consisted of a very dark organic layer in leafed deposits with some ashy horizons and some orange in colour, the latter possibly representing clayey laminations or iron pan. A 20 litre sample of this deposit was taken for analysis for environmental remains. The results of this analysis are set out in Annex 5. The pottery from these two contexts has also been examined in more detail – see Annex 6. Layer 03/5015 was overlain by

a similarly dark organic deposit, but with more clay inclusions. Deposits adjacent to the north edge of the pit (03/F5021) were separated from the deposits just described by a baulk left below a setting of stones 03/F1004. This edge of the pit 03/(F5021) was also not clearly defined but seems to have cut through similar organic deposits which may represent the fill of an earlier pit adjacent to the north (layer 03/5011). The lowest deposit excavated consisted of a dark, damp organic deposit similar to layer 03/5015 described above, to the south of the baulk, and excavated in two successive spits (layers 03/5022 with layer 03/5020 above). This fill was in turn overlain by layer 03/5012 which was a dark organic deposit containing stone inclusions and by 03/1006 representing the probable upper fill of the pit. This deposit was very dark in colour and contained substantial inclusions.

- 6.2.6 In 2005 within the south-west corner of the building further evidence of pit digging was found in the form of three large areas of dark black organic material (Figures 3 and 8).



Fig 8 – the black organic material revealed following the machine excavation of the foundation trenches 7023 and 7025

These organic deposits contained pottery, bone, fragments of leather (Figure 9), timber and textile. Feature 05/7023 was sample excavated and it was found that the organic material at this point was 2 metres deep, sitting directly upon and within natural clay. 05/7024 and 05/7025 were not excavated to their full depths. One significant piece of worked wood (Figure 10) was possibly a peg, a tool handle or a small finial.



Fig 9 – example of the leather found in 05/7023



Fig 10 – the wooden object found in context 05/7023

Initial analysis of some of the pottery from the trench indicates that the pit contains some of the earliest medieval pottery found in Scarborough, ie from the 12th century, which confirms the 2003 findings that these midden pits are some of the earliest medieval features in this part of Scarborough. In order to ensure the in-situ preservation of this material (which coincided with the need for structural stability), the foundation design at this point was modified to consist of a small number of 60mm bored piles with the foundation bridging between them. A permeable barrier of sand/permeable membrane/sand was provided between the concrete and the organic material.

6.2.7 A small evaluation trench, 8, (Figures 3 and 11) was put down immediately south-east of a substantial stone cross wall 05/F8009

which forms the south end of the aisle to the nave. The purpose was to provide further interpretation on the organic finds in 05/7023. The excavation of the evaluation trench was curtailed due to ingress of water but it did reveal a slightly curvilinear cut 05/F8010 into the clay filled by organic deposit excavated in pits 05/8003 to 05/8008 showing that the material was part of a large midden pit similar to that found in 2003.



Fig 11 – Trench 8

6.2.8 COMMENTS. Phase One clearly represents an intense episode of pit digging with five individual pits recognised within the area of the excavation, although the limitations of the excavation meant that none of the pits was totally excavated. The only intercutting relationship observed was that between 03/F5017 and 03/F5018 establishing that the latter is the earlier pit. In addition, the shallow depth of pit 03/F2008 strongly suggests that it was truncated by the cutting of the adjacent pit 03/F5017 and is therefore also likely to be earlier. This evidence of chronology suggests the episode of pit digging could have been fairly prolonged. The quantities of bone and pottery debris recovered from the latter pit suggest it may have been for the disposal of rubbish.

6.3.0 PHASE TWO - CONSTRUCTION OF A BUILDING

6.3.1 An east-west aligned wall of fair-faced squared stones (03/F2004) and with a rubble core set in mortar was constructed across the infilled pit 03/F5017/F5023 (Figures 5, and 6). The fair face on the north and south sides of the wall was two courses deep and rested on rubble foundations. The soft pit deposits into which the wall had been cut had reformed around the stones and as a result there was no clearly

defined cut for the wall. It is likely that the wall is part of a substantial building but the loss of any associated features such as floor surfaces, due to subsequent levelling of the sites, makes it impossible to be certain if 03/F2004 is an internal or an external wall.

- 6.3.2 At right angles to 03/F2004, is a substantial north-south aligned wall forming the west side of the excavation. The northern 5m of this wall is overlain by the footings for the north-east wall of the Pentecostal Church. At the south edge of the site this stone wall is a free-standing structure in excess of 3m high. Within the curtilage of the site however, the wall has been reduced to 0.5-0.7m in height. It is 0.6m wide and constructed mostly of squared stones set in mortar with fair inner and outer faces. Around 1m from the south boundary of the site the outer (eastern) face ends as an upstanding wall though a number of squared stones within the excavation indicate that the face originally continued northwards but has been removed down to its foundation course. The inner (western) face continues without interruption along the length of the excavation. Some 3.5m from the south boundary of the site the inner face is progressively overlain by the footings of the Pentecostal church until at the north end of the excavation the two walls are flush. The northernmost 2.7m of the inner face has been rebuilt as it is much more roughly coursed and poorly constructed than the rest of the wall.
- 6.3.4 Whilst walls 03/F6000 and 03/F2004 are similar in appearance and are at right angles to each other there is no physical link between them which would conclusively establish that they belong to the same building. However, it is notable that a straight joint in the inner (western) face of 03/F6000 occurs exactly opposite the north face of 03/F2004 suggesting that the section of 03/F6000 to the south of the straight joint may have originally been physically linked.
- 6.3.5 In Trench, 8, hand excavated in 2005 a substantial stone cross wall 05/F8009 which forms the south-west end of the aisle to the nave was found to pre-date the current 1868 church and is possibly the south-east and south-west re-entrant walls of the earlier Independent Chapel, though it may incorporate medieval fabric. The evaluation trench showed that this stone wall 'bridges' the organic deposit, and was therefore later than it, and indeed the poor ground conditions had resulted in the necessity of a relieving arch being incorporated in the masonry.
- 6.3.6 COMMENTS. The evidence for a change of use from pit digging to the construction of a building is clear, with wall 03/F2004 overlying the pits. In all probability 03/F6000 is part of the same building, but there is no clear evidence for either the date or the purpose of the structure, since all contemporary levels have been lost due to later levelling of the site. The group of stones 03/5009 forming the top fill of 03/F5025 may have been dumped prior to the start of construction work in order to consolidate the soft pit fill underlying this particular part of the building.

6.4.0 PHASE THREE - PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF BUILDING FOLLOWED BY AN OPEN YARD

6.4.1 Evidence for the partial robbing of wall 03/F2004 is indicated by a cut filled with stony soil visible in the east section of the excavation trench above the top surviving course of the wall and by a layer of decayed mortar and stone fragments immediately to its south (layers 03/5005 and 03/2005 respectively). What followed this demolition episode is not at all clear, but one element may be the drain 03/F5006 consisting of flat slabs laid on edge with a stone slab capping and with natural clay at its base. It was filled with a mid-brown loose clay with charcoal flecks and fragments of brick. In the east section of the trench several bricks were observed below the capstone of the drain. A second drain on the same alignment survived immediately to the south of 03/F5006. This second drain (03/F3003) also had a base of natural clay and was constructed of stone slabs set on edge and capped by flat stone slabs, most of which were clearly reused roof tiles. Several bricks were noted in the construction of this drain. It was filled with a dark brown loose soil (layer 03/3002) overlain by a deposit which was slightly more ashy (layer 03/3001). There was also a thin layer of orange-brown clay overlying the capping stones to act as a seal. It seems unlikely given their proximity that both drains functioned together but it is possible that they are broadly contemporary. The use of bricks in the construction of both drains suggest they do not date much before the 18th century whilst they probably indicate the area of the excavation had become an open yard since both drains seem too crudely constructed to have been within a building. One feature, which may be broadly contemporary with the drain because it too suggests the existence of a yard, is an area of possible stone paving towards the north end of the trench (03/F1004). This feature comprises a single course of flat, squared stones resting on several bricks and seems likely to be paving rather than the foundations of a wall. Immediately adjacent to the north were two more stone slabs (03/F1005) which may be associated.

6.4.2 COMMENTS. There is insufficient evidence surviving to be certain of the sequence of activity in this or subsequent phases. Whilst there is fairly strong stratigraphic evidence for the partial demolition of the structure represented by 03/F2004 (wall 03/F6000 remained standing), the subsequent use of the area as a yard admittedly rests on rather minimal evidence.

6.5.0 PHASE FOUR - CONSTRUCTION OF PAIR OF BUILDINGS

6.5.1 The 1852 1:1056 scale Ordnance Survey map depicts a pair of single-roomed structures occupying most of the excavation area against what is now the east side of the Pentecostal Church. The only archaeological evidence for these structures was a fragmentary area of brick flooring (03/F2001) abutting the stone wall forming the west side of the excavation (03/F6000) and a shallow brick edged feature aligned north-south in the south-west corner of the excavation (03/F5026). The

latter may have been a shallow soakaway, possibly within one of the buildings shown on the 1852 map.

6.5.2 Since the east wall of the Pentecostal Church is partly built off the levelled remains of stone wall 03/F6000, this establishes that the stone wall must have been reduced to its present height of 500mm –700mm before the construction of the church. This may have occurred in order to accommodate the construction of the Independent Chapel which was begun in 1703 and subsequently enlarged in 1774 and 1801. In its final phase as depicted on the 1852 1:1056 Ordnance Survey map, the chapel clearly occupied the same shaped plot as the later Pentecostal Church.

6.5.3 In 2005 following removal of the upper courses of brickwork in the east wall of the former church, the stone wall was recorded, revealing that it had completely separate inner and outer leaves, the outer possibly being older. Monitoring of the adjacent foundation trenches showed that the stone wall was built off clay, though exclusively medieval pottery was found in the vicinity of the wall and this confirms the findings set out in paragraph 6.5.2.



Illustration – the stone masonry revealed following the removal of the brick east wall

6.5.4 COMMENTS. The fragmentary remains of what were the last buildings to occupy the area of the excavation indicate the extent to which the upper deposits have been destroyed by later levelling. The walls of the pair of buildings have not survived. The possibility that the stone wall 03/F2004 continued in use as the foundations for the wall between the pair of buildings can be ruled out on the map evidence, since the

division (shown at the larger scale of 1:500 on the 1890 Ordnance Survey map) falls over 1m to the south of 03/F2004.

6.6.0 PHASE FIVE – CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHAPELS AND BURIALS

6.6.1 The hand excavation of evaluation trenches 1 to 6 (Figures 13 and 14) in the main body of the nave near to the east wall and the monitoring of the machine trenches showed that the carrying out of building works during 1868 resulted in the natural clay being very largely levelled and overlain by the oversite concrete and rubble surface

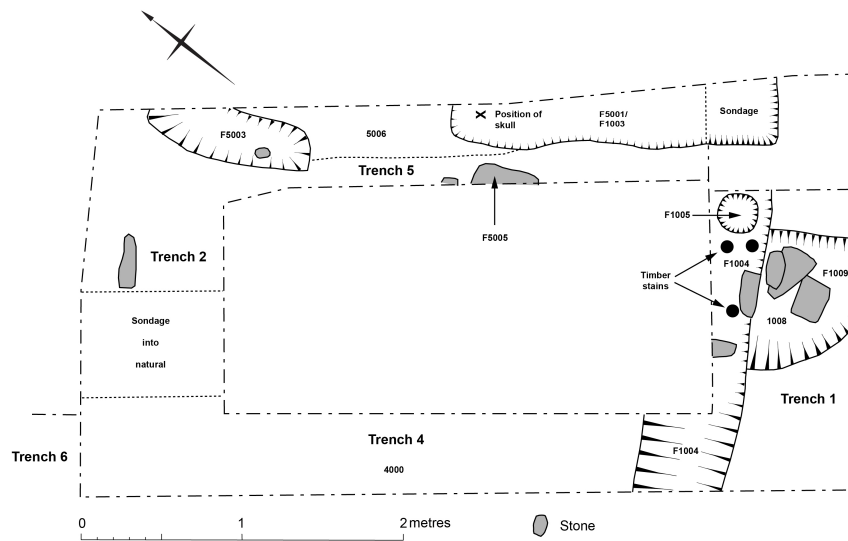


Fig 13 – plan of 2005 trenches 1, 3, 4 and 5

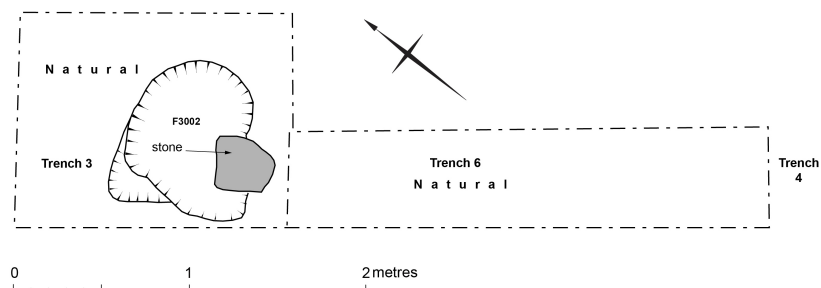


Fig 14 -plan of 2005 trenches 3 and 6

6.6.2 The natural clay did contain a sub-circular feature 05/3002 about 0.8 metres in diameter and 0.2 m deep was interpreted as either a pre-existing garden feature or a small pit created during the erection of the church. Also, within the natural clay there was evidence of the nature of the underfloor hot air heating system built in 1868 which consisted of parallel single brick walls (05/7009 and 05/7011) 0.7m apart with a stone slab floor

6.6.3. A cut close to the north-east wall into the natural clay 05/5001 and 05/5007 consisted of a rectangular feature containing one burial close to the side wall (Figure 15). This skeleton was not intact and had clearly been disturbed but re-buried, the remnants of the skeleton being carefully placed. This was interpreted as the disturbance of a pre-existing burial from an earlier phase of the church during the 1868 rebuilding. Analysis of the internal layout of the earlier church which is shown on the large-scale OS map published in 1852 indicates that the pulpit may have been near here and we can speculate that this may have been a burial of 1746. The natural clay was also cut by two brick cists with stone flagged tops which contained 19th century burials, though it was unclear whether these pre or post-dated the 1868 church. All these burials were left undisturbed and the foundation design made to bridge over them. Appendix details the known burials

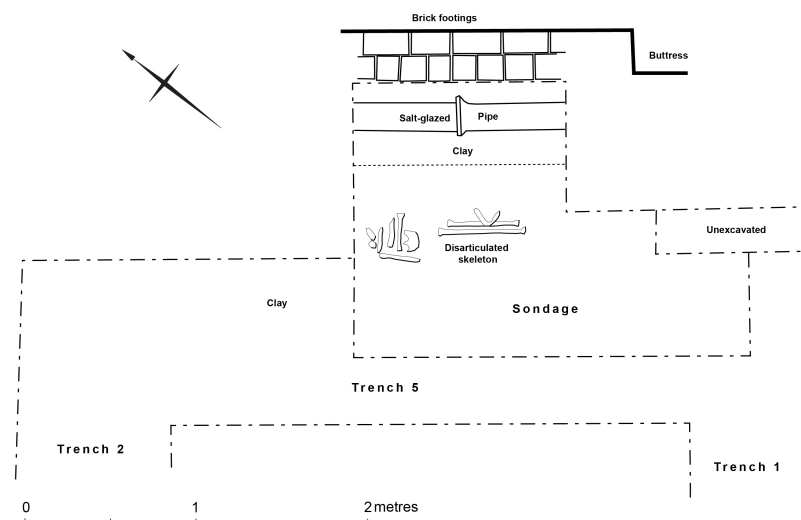


Fig 15 – detailed plan of 2005 trench 5

6.6.4 COMMENTS. The levelling carried out during the construction of the church seems to have removed pre-existing archaeological deposits since there is very little post-medieval archaeology surviving.

6.7.0 PHASE SIX - MODERN

6.7.1 The most recent activity within the excavation area involved the construction of the present boundary wall on the south of the site. The brick footings of the wall (03/F5001) rest on a concrete base. The cut for the wall was not clearly defined but was filled with sandy soil containing brick fragments. In total, three horizons were noted within the probable extent of the cut, but are essentially the same deposit (layers 03/5002, 03/5003 and 03/3005). At the north end of the excavation a modern surface-water drain 03/(F1001) encased in concrete ran east-west across the excavation.

-

6.7.2 The present concrete yard surface rests on a mixed deposit of dark brown gritty soil of varying depth which presumably dates to the levelling of the area in the 1960s. The deposit was given several different numbers reflecting the fact that the excavation began as a series of four trenches, later amalgamated into one, but there is no difference between these various contexts (layers 03/1000, 03/1002, 03/2000, 03/3000, 03/4000 and 03/5000).

6.7.3 COMMENTS. The levelling to make the present yard surface seems to have removed a considerable depth of archaeological deposits since there is very little post-medieval archaeology surviving on the site. As a result, the tops of the Phase One pits are within 0.4m of the present surface.

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 Without doubt the most important, and quite unexpected, discoveries on the site both in 2003 and 2005 are the series of medieval midden pits. It is likely that they were for the disposal of household rubbish and are only the second group of pits to have been recorded in Scarborough. The other pit group was reportedly discovered in 1962 in an excavation at 4-9 St Mary's Street, some 70m to the north-east of the present excavation¹². One possible explanation of why so few pit groups have been found in Scarborough is that in the medieval period rubbish was more commonly disposed of in the harbour to assist with the reclamation of land rather than in individually dug pits. This group of pits may be early in the development of the waterfront, before it became established practice to dispose of rubbish in the harbour. The pits were presumably dug in the back yard of a house fronting on to St Sepulchre Street.

7.2 The stone wall 03/F2004 revealed in the excavation, the standing wall 03/F6000 on the north-east wall of the building and possibly 05/F8009 indicate that the site was occupied by a fairly important building, probably dating from the later middle-ages, although no definite dating evidence was found. The tradition of an important building on this site

¹² Transactions Scarborough and District Archaeological Society, 1962, No5, p22

was current in the mid 19th century with the 1852 1:1056 Ordnance Survey map indicating the medieval Court of Pleas and the palace of the Cistercian abbot on this site. Another source suggests the Knights Hospitallers had their residence here¹³. Wood's map of Scarborough from 1828 indicates the palace and chapel of the Greyfriars on this site. Although none of these traditions stands up to close historical scrutiny (there is certainly no evidence of a Cistercian abbot residing in the medieval town), the fact remains that there is some sort of folk memory of an important building in this area.

- 7.3 The site must rank as one of the most important areas of archaeology so far discovered in the town on account of the good archaeological preservation of the earliest medieval deposits and features and the fact that the area preserves organic remains. This is probably due to the fact that the site is close to the shallow valley of a natural stream called the Damyet which was one of the main sources of water for the medieval town but which is now piped underground. Waterlogged remains have been found on other excavation sites along the former course of the stream. Consequently, it is likely that medieval remains including organic deposits extend eastwards from the excavation below the remainder of the concrete yard making this entire area one of prime archaeological importance.

8.0 Acknowledgements

- 8.1 The 2003 excavation was undertaken at the request of Messrs Dudding & Gallaher in consultation with their architects Wright Associates and the 2005 work at the request of Healey Properties. The archaeological investigations were directed by the authors and carried out by the following members of Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society: Frank Beeley, Steve Bence, Martin Bland, Chris Evans, Lynne Gray, Jen Marshall, Vanessa Milner, Barbara Newby, Ken Newby, Sue Ogilvy, Allison Sharpe, Wendy Skelton, Ian Walker, Gary Watling, Geoff Wood, Sue Wood who also carried out much of the monitoring during works.
- 8.2 Patricia McNaughton provided invaluable information on the history of the Independent Chapel/Congregational Church.
- 8.3 Gail Falkingham of the then County Heritage Unit and Ian Panter at the time of English Heritage advised on the environmental archaeology.
- 8.4 The frontispiece is used by permission of St Andrews United Reformed Church, South Cliff, Scarborough and Patricia McNaughton; Figures 1A and 1B by permission of Scarborough Borough Council (Planning Services).
- 8.5 Palaeoecology Research Services carried out the environmental analysis of samples from contexts 03/5015 and 03/5016, and Jenny

¹³ Theakston S W 1841 Guide to Scarborough, p49

Vaughan of Northern Counties Archaeological Services examined the pottery from the same contexts.

8.5 The text drawings were prepared by Trevor Pearson and the report was typed by Frances Hall.

9.0 **Maps Consulted**

1725	'A new and exact plan of Scarborough'	J Cossins
1747	A plan of Scarborough	W Vincent
1770	A plan of Scarborough	published in Jefferys
1782	A Plan of the Town of Scarborough	J Foord
1798	A plan of Scarborough	published in Hinderwell,
1828	A plan of the Town and Environs of Scarborough	J Wood
1842	'A new and accurate plan of Scarborough'	A G Tyson
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	

ANNEX 1

Extract from The Congregational Yearbook, 1870

EASTBOROUGH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SCARBOROUGH

Irregularities of shape, contiguity of adjoining old buildings, and the great difference between the levels of the streets at either end of the premises, rendered the site very difficult; added to which, ancient lights had to be respected, and interment vaults to be preserved. All attempts at securing additional space having failed, the architects were instructed to meet the case, and the result is a unique but thoroughly successful building, well adapted in all respects to the purposes required.

The total length of the site is 105 feet.

The plan may be best understood as a nave and a side aisle, separated by wood pillars supporting timber framework above. The aisles and the entrance end of the nave have galleries. The pulpit is placed in an angle, so as to command the whole of the interior. Behind it is an organ gallery, with vestry, etc. underneath.

From the Causeway in Eastborough to the ground-floor of the church is eighteen feet, the ascent being accomplished by easy and wide flights of stone steps. These are covered by a building above, which is used as a lecture-room, etc., 24ft. by 16ft. This is a distinct erection, on account of windows in the adjoining properties to each side, and is separated from the church by a space of ten feet; communication being effected by a low covered and enclosed passage. The front towards Eastborough has three open arches, supported by handsome stone pillars with carved capitals; the central opening having wrought-iron gates, and the other two being partially filled in with a pierced stone balustrade. Above the arches is a stone band, containing an inscription in sunk letters: "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving." Over this are the windows of the lecture-room in couplets, separated by stone pillars with carved capitals, and the whole elevation is crowned by a handsome cornice. All the facings seen from Eastborough are of stone. The front to St. Sepulchre-street is more simple, and is faced with red brick, having stone dressings.

Two entrances are here provided, one in the centre for the ground-floor of the church, and the other to the gallery staircase.

The style of the building is English Gothic of the geometrical period, adapted to meet the requirements. The roofs are partially open, and all the timbers are stained and varnished. Accommodation is provided for 300 adult sittings on the ground-floor, and 200 in the side and end galleries.

The cost, including gas and heating, etc, £2,500.

Architects, Messrs. Paull and Robinson, Manchester.

ANNEX 2

Palaeoecology Research Services

**Evaluation of biological remains from two pit
fill samples recovered during excavations at
the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St
Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North
Yorkshire
(site code: PC03 – 2003.516)**

PRS 2004/35

Evaluation of biological remains from two pit fill samples recovered during excavations at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (site code: PC03 – 2003.516)

by

John Carrott, Deborah Jaques, Allan Hall, Harry Kenward and Kathryn Johnson

Summary

Two sediment samples recovered from medieval pit fills during an excavation at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, were submitted for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential.

Well-preserved plant and invertebrate material was present in the sample from Context 5015, with rather less well preserved remains (but essentially rather similar) in that from 5016. There was evidence for a mixture of different kinds of litter from heathland/moorland and probably also seaweed. A variety of taxa, including remains from food plants, likely to have been useful to the occupants of the site was present, although numbers were often small.

The very well preserved shellfish remains from Context 5015 were mostly of limpet; often dismissed as 'famine food' or fish bait but likely to have had a far more important role as a staple foodstuff of coastal communities in the past.

Most of the vertebrate remains recovered were of fish (only a few large-sized mammal bones, some burnt, were present) and all were from the sample from Context 5015. The fish remains were extremely well preserved. Few well dated and systematically recovered fish assemblages have been published from sites in the North East of England outside of the major urban centres. Our understanding of the exploitation of past fish stocks, and the trade/supply relationships between coastal fisheries and urban settlements, would certainly benefit from the recording of further assemblages.

Given the scarcity of data for Scarborough, and assuming that adequate archaeological context and dating information is available, the current material deserves further analysis. Any further excavation at this site should certainly be accompanied by systematic sampling for the recovery of floral and faunal assemblages.

KEYWORDS: FORMER PENTECOSTAL CHURCH, ST SEPULCHRE STREET; SCARBOROUGH; NORTH YORKSHIRE; EVALUATION; MEDIEVAL; PLANT REMAINS; CHARRED PLANT REMAINS; INVERTEBRATE REMAINS; SHELLFISH; VERTEBRATE REMAINS; WOOD WORKING

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c/o Chris Hall (Secretary)**

13 May 2004

Introduction

An archaeological excavation was carried out by Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (NGR TA 04788 88862), in 2003.

The excavation took place on the west side of the church in advance of repairs to the external wall. A series of medieval rubbish pits cut down into the natural clay were located showing good organic preservation. Additionally, a substantial stone wall was revealed that was probably the foundations of a medieval or later house which had been built over the infilled pits.

Two bulk sediment samples ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992) were submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Limited (PRS), County Durham, for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential.

Methods

The lithologies of the samples were recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, and subsamples were processed, broadly following the procedures of Kenward *et al.* (1980), for the recovery of biological remains.

Plant remains and the general nature of the flots, the washover and the wet residue were recorded briefly by 'scanning', identifiable taxa and other components being listed directly to a PC using *Paradox* software. The residue, of mineral material and the heavier organic fraction, from the sample from Context 5015 was dried and its components recorded.

Insects in the flots were recorded using 'assessment recording' *sensu* Kenward (1992), creating a list of the taxa observed during rapid inspection of the flot, with a semi-quantitative estimate of abundance, and a subjective record of the main ecological (e.g. aquatics, grain pests) or indicator/activity (e.g. for stable manure, Kenward and Hall 1997) groups present. A record of the preservational condition of the remains was made using scales given by Kenward and Large (1998). This scheme provides scales for chemical erosion and fragmentation (0.5-5.5, the higher figure representing the greatest degree of damage), and colour change (0-4), in each case giving a range and a value for the position and strength of the mode (Kenward and Large 1998, tables 2, 3 and 5-7).

Results

The results are presented in context number order. Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is given in square brackets. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample numbers. Sample numbers were derived from the context numbers for PRS internal recording keeping purposes.

Context 5015 [medieval pit fill]

Sample 501501/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with paraffin flotation and washover; approximately 13 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid to dark grey-brown, brittle to crumbly (working soft), slightly sandy silt, with some fine herbaceous detritus and small lumps (to 25 mm) of light grey-brown slightly silty clay. Stones (20 to 60 mm), twigs and bone were present.

The large flot and moderate-sized washover of about 600 ml between them yielded an abundance of well preserved fruits and seeds. Much of the matrix material seen in the washover consisted of woody and herbaceous detritus with a 'twiggy' and 'strawy' character, though fragments in neither category was very large (usually less than 10 mm). There was a considerable quantity of peat fragments and a number of remains likely to have arrived with peat or from peatland vegetation, notably traces of heather (*Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull) flowers, twigs and shoots, leaves and seeds of bell heather (*Erica cinerea* L.), and a single fruit of bog myrtle (*Myrica gale* L.). These are all likely to have been growing on moorland inland of Scarborough. Other 'litter' in the assemblage included bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum* (L.) Kuhn), of which both fronds and stalk fragments were rather frequent, cereal straw (evidenced by seeds of cornfield weeds such as corncockle, *Agrostemma githago* L. and corn marigold, *Chrysanthemum segetum* L.) as well as grass/cereal straw debris, and probably also hay or other cut grassland vegetation (represented for example by *Leontodon* and some other taxa). Domestic waste may be reflected in the presence of traces of hazel (*Corylus avellana* L.) nutshell and fragments of linseed (*Linum usitatissimum* L.) and 'plum' (*Prunus domestica* ssp. *domestica* (L.) C. K. Schneider and in traces of charred cereals—wheat (*Triticum*) and perhaps also barley (*Hordeum*), though the grains were poorly preserved. Some of the pale, firm, and very well preserved wood fragments were certainly chips from working.

The flot was substantial, consisting primarily of wood fragments. Although the concentration of invertebrate remains was rather low, a useful assemblage of insects was recorded, with some notable features. Preservation was good, but some remains were quite strongly fragmented (E 1.5-2.5, mode 1.5 weak; F 1.5-3.5, mode 2.5 weak). The insect assemblage was ecologically mixed, with the only species represented by more than a single individual perhaps suggesting a building: fairly dry decaying matter, such as thatch, hay or litter on a floor (*Lathridius minutus* group), and dead wood (*Anobium punctatum* (Degeer)). Many of the rarer species may have co-existed with the first of these in rotting matter of variable water content. There were traces of species from fouler organic matter or dung, others from herbaceous vegetation, some from waterside or emergent vegetation, one (*Ulopa reticulata* (Fabricius)) from moor or heath (consistent with the evidence from plant remains), and one from salt-soaked rotting matter such as stranded wrack (*Cercyon depressus* Stephens or *littoralis* (Gyllenhal)), perhaps not too surprising from a site so near the shore. Finally, there were body segments from a flea, and remains which were probably of the honey bee, *Apis mellifera* Linnaeus. This material has potential for archaeological interpretation given appropriate dating and context data; a larger or additional subsample would be needed.

The rather small residue (dry weight 0.45 kg) was mostly of fine charred and uncharred plant material (largely charcoal and small wood fragments), sand and stones (to 70 mm). A range of organic remains was present including wood (10 g to 50 mm, including wood 'chips'), fragments of twig/root, larger pieces of charcoal (3g, to 12 mm), further hazel nutshell (2 g), a charred grain (unidentified), several fly puparia, limpets (25 g, all common limpet – *Patella vulgata* L.), winkle (*Littorina littorea* (L.)) and bone.

Over 200 fragments of bone (90 g) were recovered from this sample, all of which were extremely well preserved. Most were fish bone and included the remains of gadid, some more closely identified as cod (*Gadus morhua* L.), ling (*Molva molva* (L.)), and haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus* (L.)). Some of the gadid vertebrae had been chopped. Mostly these represented large individuals, probably greater than one metre in overall length. Additionally, thornback ray (*Raja clavata* (L.)), herring (*Clupea harengus* L.) and eel (*Anguilla anguilla* (L.)) were also present within the assemblage. Mammal remains were scarce; some were burnt and most were from large-sized mammals (assumed to be cow, horse or large deer).

Three small pot fragments (10 g, to 45 mm) were also recovered.

Context 5016 [medieval pit fill]

Sample 501601/T (3 kg sieved to 300 microns with paraffin flotation; approximately 15 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid to dark grey-brown, brittle to crumbly (working soft), humic silt, with small patches of light yellow-grey-brown to light grey silty clay (to 30 mm) and occasional lumps of indurated pale grey clay (to 8 mm).

Something of the same range of plant material as in Context 5015 was observed in the moderate-sized flot and residue, the latter of about 500 ml of which about 50 ml comprised sand, grit and gravel, the rest being granular organic detritus including wood and peat. Preservation was rather less good with most material showing some erosion and/or oxidation. This was, if anything, a similar deposit to that represented by Context 5015 but with stronger decay prior to the remains being sealed in the ground.

The flot, of modest size, was mainly wood fragments. Insect remains were fairly abundant, though ecologically mixed. Mites were quite abundant. Preservation was fair (E 2.0-3.0, mode 2.5 weak; F 2.5-3.0, mode 2.5 weak). There was evidence of water from remains such as a resting body of the bryozoan *Lophopus crystallinus* (Pallas), a fragment of caddis fly larval case, and the beetles *Chaetarthria seminulum* (Herbst), *Helophorus* sp. and *Ochthebius* sp. Local decomposing matter was indicated by a range of species, though only *Micropeplus fulvus* Erichson, *Anotylus nitidulus* (Gravenhorst) and *Lathridius minutus* group were represented by more than single individuals. Plant-feeders were present in modest numbers, though with mixed origins, some perhaps from local weeds (e.g. *Ceutorhynchus ?contractus* (Marsham)), and others (e.g. *Strophosomus ?sus* Stephens) from moorland or heath. Analysis of remains from a larger or additional subsample would probably be informative.

Discussion and statement of potential

Well-preserved plant and invertebrate material was present in the sample from Context 5015, with rather less well preserved remains (but essentially rather similar) in that from 5016. There was evidence for a mixture of different kinds of litter from heathland/moorland (including peat) and probably also seaweed (presumably from the shore nearby). A variety of taxa, including remains from food plants, likely to have been useful to the occupants of the site—or at least those people whose rubbish these deposits represent—was present, although numbers were often small.

The very well preserved shellfish remains from Context 5015 were mostly of limpet. These have often been dismissed as ‘famine food’ or fish bait, but Wickham-Jones (2003) has quoted several sources indicating that in the past (certainly from the late 17th century to modern times) they have had a far more important role as a staple foodstuff of coastal communities.

The fish remains from this site are extremely well preserved, and although the assemblage is not large it does show the potential of certain deposits at this site for the recovery of bone, fish in particular. Few well dated and systematically recovered fish assemblages have been published from sites in the North East of England outside of the major urban centres. Neither the exploitation of past fish stocks, nor the trade/supply relationships between coastal fisheries and urban settlements, are well understood and we would certainly benefit from the recording of further assemblages.

Recommendations

Given the scarcity of data for Scarborough, and assuming that adequate archaeological context and dating information is available, this material deserves further analysis for insect remains, both to enhance site reconstruction and to provide data for future synthesis. A proper record of the plant and vertebrate remains from a larger subsample from 5015 would also be worthwhile to provide complementary information and to explore further the nature of resource utilisation.

Any further excavation at this site should certainly be accompanied by systematic sampling for the recovery of floral and faunal assemblages.

Retention and disposal

All of the current material should be retained for the present.

Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society for providing the material and the archaeological information.

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ANNEX 3

ANALYSIS OF POTTERY FROM CONTEXTS 03/5015 AND 03/5016

03/5015

Fragments of a cooking vessel – skillet – in sandy whiteware. Quartz inclusions seem larger and more frequent than Scarborough ware.

Rim fragments of ?jar in buff fabric – more like Scarborough Phase 2. Form is similar to Rutter T.50, particularly 50/4 which was also in buff fabric similar to that from Castle Road kiln.

Fragments of Staxton – T.39 rim

Other fragments of whiteware present seem more of the Brandsby type, i.e. not as fine, as Scarborough ware.

Dating can only be broad but possibly late 13th/early 14th, though this is partly based on Rutter's comments.

03/5016

One fragment of later reduced greenware and two other possible Humber type wares.

Several whiteware sherds again seem more general Yorkshire whiteware than Scarborough. Two or three Scarborough sherds.

Later 14th century unless the Humberware is dismissed as intrusive.

Local factors may account for the apparent rarity of 'classic' Scarborough ware, though some of the little fragments are difficult to be sure about and the group is small.

Jenny Vaughan
Northern Counties Archaeological Services

ANNEX 4

Palaeoecology Research Services

Evaluation of biological remains from a single sediment sample recovered during further excavations at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (site code: PC05)

PRS 2008/09

Evaluation of biological remains from a single sediment sample recovered during further excavations at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (site code: PC05)

by

Alexandra Schmidl, John Carrott and Alex Beacock

Summary

A single sediment sample recovered during further excavations at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, was submitted for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential. The sample was recovered from an organic deposit within an internal foundation trench located towards the south-west corner of the west aisle of the former Pentecostal Church at a depth of two metres below the floor level of the church. All of the pottery recovered from the deposit was medieval (some being early medieval, 12th century).

The bulk of the organic content of the sample was formed of rotted wood fragments, but there were also well preserved (by waterlogging) remains of wild plant taxa representing wet places (such as ponds and water-filled ditches, and their margins) and waste ground. Insect and microfossil remains were less informative but included taxa which would have exploited rotting plant material within a damp or wet environment. In contrast to biological remains recorded from previous excavations at St Sepulchre Street, the deposit contained no evidence of domestic waste or food remains. It seems unlikely that this feature was associated with a series of nearby medieval 'rubbish' pits and, overall, the remains from this deposit represented predominantly 'natural' habitats.

Further study of the plant and invertebrate macrofossils from this deposit has the potential to provide additional information regarding aspects of the local environment in the ?early medieval period. Any further excavation at this site should certainly be accompanied by systematic sampling for the recovery of biological remains.

KEYWORDS: FORMER PENTECOSTAL CHURCH; ST SEPULCHRE STREET; SCARBOROUGH; NORTH YORKSHIRE; EVALUATION; MEDIEVAL (?EARLY MEDIEVAL – 12TH CENTURY); PLANT REMAINS; CHARRED PLANT REMAINS; INVERTEBRATE REMAINS; INSECTS; MICROFOSSILS; FUNGAL SPORES

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21 February 2008

Evaluation of biological remains from a single sediment sample recovered during further excavations at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (site code: PC05)

Introduction

Further archaeological excavation was carried out by Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society at the site of the former Pentecostal Church, St Sepulchre Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (NGR TA 04646 88791), in 2005.

A single bulk sediment sample ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992) was submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Limited (PRS), County Durham, for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential. The sample was recovered from an organic deposit within an internal foundation trench located towards the south-west corner of the west aisle of the former Pentecostal Church at a depth of two metres below the floor level of the church. This location is approximately 11 metres south of one of the trenches excavated previously from which samples were recovered and the biological remains evaluated in an earlier PRS report (Carrott *et al.* 2004). All of the pottery recovered from the deposit was medieval (some being early medieval, 12th century).

Methods

The lithology of the sample was recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, and a subsample was processed, broadly following the procedures of Kenward *et al.* (1980; 1986), for the recovery of biological remains. Before processing the subsample was disaggregated in water and its volume recorded in a waterlogged state.

Plant and invertebrate remains in the processed subsample fractions (flot and residue) were recorded briefly by 'scanning' using a low-power microscope, identifiable taxa and other biological and artefactual components being listed on paper. Both fractions were primarily of waterlogged organic material and were examined wet; the flot was stored in alcohol.

A small subsample of the deposit was examined using the 'squash' technique of Dainton (1992). This was undertaken to assess the content of eggs of intestinal parasitic nematodes but routinely reveals other microfossils, such as pollen and diatoms, and these were noted where present. The evaluation slide was scanned at 150x magnification with 600x used where necessary.

Nomenclature for plant species follows Stace (1997) and the identifications of fungal spores reference van Geel *et al.* (2003).

Results

Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is given in square brackets. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample number.

Context 7023 [organic deposit within an internal foundation trench and two metres below the 'floor level' of the former church; medieval]

Sample 11/T (1 kg/1 litre sieved to 300 microns with paraffin flotation; approximately 10 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Wet, dark brown to black (with a pinkish cast and patches of pinkish-light brown), soft (working sticky), very humic, silty amorphous organic sediment, with abundant coarse/woody inclusions, including wood fragments, charcoal and twigs, and some moss.

The flot (20 ml) was mostly of organic material, including degraded pieces of wood and twigs and culm fragments, with some mosses (Bryophyta), and also quite large numbers of somewhat fragmented insect sclerites. The identifiable component of the plant assemblage was dominated by waterlogged remains of species of waste ground, including buttercup (*Ranunculus* subg. *Ranunculus*), charlock (*Sinapsis arvensis* L.), chickweed (*Stellaria media* (L.) Vill.), common nettle (*Urtica dioica* L.), corncockle (*Agrostemma githago* L.), corn marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum* L.), dandelion (*Taraxacum*), dock (*Rumex*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare* L.), knotweed (*Persicaria*), nipplewort (*Lapsana communis* L.), orache/goosefoot (*Atriplex/Chenopodium*), shepherd's-needle (*Scandix pecten-veneris* L.), small nettle (*Urtica urens* L.), stinking chamomile (*Anthemis cotula* L.) and white/red dead-nettle (*Lamium album* L./*L. purpureum* L.). Other wild taxa represented were aquatic species and some of wet ground (e.g. found at the edges of ponds and water-filled ditches), including bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata* L.), bristle club-rush (*Isolepis setacea* (L.) R. Br.), crowfoot (*Ranunculus* subg. *Batrachium*), lesser spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula* L.), marsh pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris* L.), muskgrass (*Chara*), sedge (*Carex*) and water-plantain (*Alisma*). In addition, there were small numbers of seeds and fruits of hawkweed oxtongue (*Picris hieracioides* L.), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella* L.) and violet (*Viola*), which suggest grassland habitats.

Invertebrate remains were fairly numerous in the flot and fairly well preserved (although larger beetle sclerites were often broken). By far the most commonly recorded remains were of mites (Acarina), but there also some fly puparia (of and least two species) and a small assemblage of beetles. The last included *Cercyon analis* (Paykull), *?Megasternum obscurum* (Marsham) and possibly another larger Hydrophilidae species, remains representing at least three species of staphylinid (rove beetles), a few fragments of unidentified ground beetle (Carabidae sp?) and *?Monotoma* sp.

The large wet residue (500 ml) contained lumps of organic material/concretions, rootlets and decayed wood fragments, with a few 'stems' and 'leaves' of mosses and a little charcoal. Again, a wide range of well preserved waterlogged seeds and fruits was recovered, including plant species representing waste ground, wet places and areas of open ground, and there were a few leaf fragments of bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum* (L.) Kuhn).

A microfossil 'squash' subsample was taken from the organic lumps in the residue and found to be largely inorganic, but with some organic detritus. The most abundant microfossils seen were plant silica (phytoliths), charcoal and fungal spores from various taxa, including *Chaetomium*-type and *Cercophora/Sordaria*-type, but there were also some pollen grains (of at least three different species), diatoms (at least two forms) and a few monolete and trilete spores.

Discussion and statement of potential

The bulk of the organic content of the sample was formed of rotted wood fragments, but there were also well preserved (by waterlogging) remains of wild plant taxa representing wet places (such as ponds and water-filled ditches, and their margins) and waste ground. There were no significant indications of human impact on the vegetation at the time of the formation of this deposit; though the very small quantities of charcoal may have originated with human activity in the vicinity. Invertebrate macrofossils were mostly of unidentified mites but included remains of species which would have exploited decaying plant material within a damp or wet environment (e.g. *Cercyon analis*) as would the saprophytic, cellulose-decomposer fungus *Chaetomium*, spores of which were observed in the 'squash' subsample (see van Geel *et al.* 2003).

In contrast to biological remains recorded from previous excavations at St Sepulchre Street (Carrott *et al.* 2004), the deposit contained no evidence of domestic waste or food remains. It seems unlikely that this deposit was associated with a series of medieval 'rubbish' pits excavated approximately 11 metres to the north, as here a significant proportion of the taxa indicated damp or wet (standing water) conditions. Overall, the remains represented predominantly 'natural' habitats.

Recommendations

Further study of the plant and invertebrate macrofossils from this deposit has the potential to provide additional information regarding aspects of the local environment in the early medieval period at Scarborough. It would be desirable to process a larger subsample for any further investigation to increase the material available for analysis.

Any further excavation at this site should certainly be accompanied by systematic sampling for the recovery of biological remains.

Retention and disposal

All of the current material should be retained for the present.

Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Trevor Pearson of Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society for providing the material and the archaeological information.

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