

# Recent Work in Medieval Northampton Archaeological excavations on St Giles' Street, 1990, and at St Edmund's End, 1988

by

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with contributions by Varian Denham, Mary Harman, Tora Hylton, Iain Soden,  
Sean Steadman, Anne Thompson, Alan Williams and Elizabeth Williams

## SUMMARY

*Archaeological excavations at St Giles' Street in the heart of the medieval town and in the eastern suburb of St Edmund's End indicate the nature of occupation in Northampton away from the area of the late Saxon town. Occupation commenced at St Giles' Street in the 11th century at which time it may have formed part of an extra mural market area outside the late Saxon town. Timber buildings are attested from the mid-12th century and a stone building from the late 13th century. The latter was associated with a series of ovens in a yard area to its east. This stone building was abandoned early in the 16th century but after a short hiatus there was subsequently continuous occupation to the present day. The suburban site presents an interesting contrast. Despite its peripheral location occupation began in the 12th century, reflecting Northampton's importance and prosperity at this period. A stone structure was constructed in the mid 13th century but the narrowness of the foundations suggest that this was a dwarf stone wall for a timber superstructure. This building went out of use around the end of the 14th century and thereafter there was no occupation until the 19th century. Accordingly the value of looking at a sample of sites from different areas within a town and the importance of marginal sites in defining periods of growth and decline is emphasised.*

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Archaeological excavations in Northampton have tended to be focused upon the area of the late Saxon town around St Peter's church and accordingly our knowledge of the archaeology of the post-conquest town has been largely based on findings from the same area. This concentration of the longest settled area has masked our understanding of the development of the town and of periods of growth and decline. Since the late 1980s there has been an attempt to correct this imbalance and look at a wider area of the post-conquest town. This has not been an easy task, the core area of the medieval town lies to the east of the earlier centre in an area which has continued as a commercial centre to the present day. Accordingly many of the sites were re-developed at an earlier period before there was adequate archaeological provision or, where sites have been available, they have proved to have been considerably damaged by Victorian and more recent activity. Nevertheless there have been a number of opportunities. One site at Swan Street in the south-east corner of the medieval town, excavated in 1989, was published in *Northamptonshire Archaeology* 25 (Shaw and Steadman 1993-4). Two further sites excavated around the same time, one on St Giles' Street and the other at St Edmund's End are reported upon here. They make an interesting contrast, the one in the heart of the commercial centre and the other on the edge of the town in the eastern suburbs, and the discussion examines their differing settlement histories.

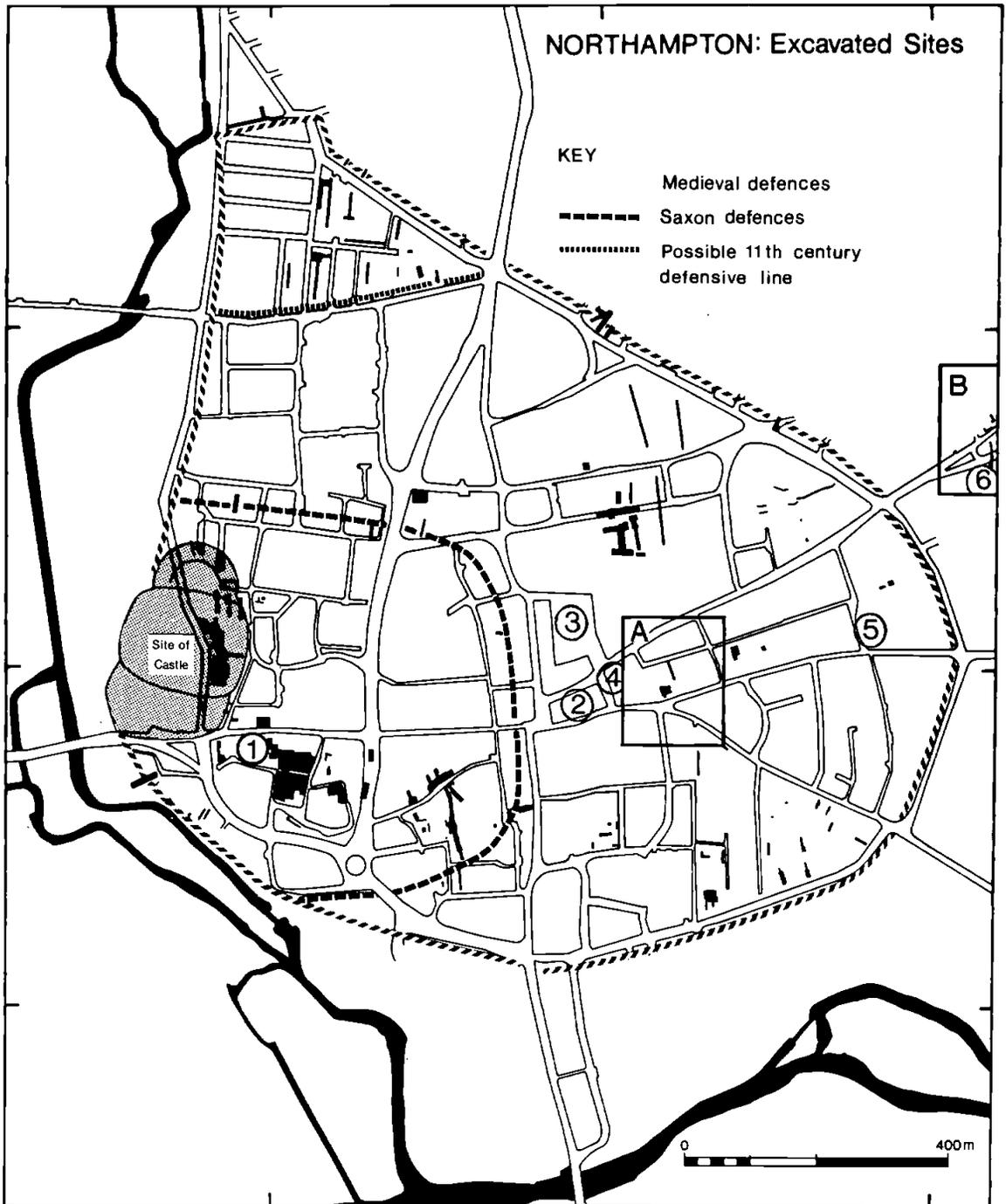


Fig 1 Northampton, showing area of excavation sites (A and B) and features mentioned in text: 1 St Peter's church; 2 All Saints church; 3 Market Square; 4 site of medieval Guildhall; 5 St Giles' church; 6 site of St Edmund's church.

Both excavations were carried out by the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit, now Northamptonshire Archaeology, under the direction of Michael Shaw. Sean Steadman acted as Supervisor for the St Giles' site and Alan Williams for the St Edmund's excavation. The excavation work and the production of a site narrative were financed by the developers. Further analysis to produce a published report was financed by Northamptonshire Archaeology. Finances were limited; accordingly analysis has been concentrated on those aspects essential for the interpretation of the site. The published report also concentrates on these elements. Further details, catalogues and original records can be found in the site archives.

### THE RECORDING SYSTEM

For both sites a separate series of context numbers, prefixed by a trench letter, was used (St Giles' Street A1-150; B1-38; C1-296; St Edmund's End A1-76; B1-15; C1-20). Separate numbers were assigned to features and fills but in the present report the feature numbers only are used. In the text the feature numbers are prefixed by their trench letter but on the site plans and sections the feature numbers only are given.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the developers Northampton Borough Council and Monarch Cars Ltd for funding the excavation and initial post-excavation work and to Northamptonshire Archaeology who supported the production of the final report. My thanks to the contributors and to Sean Steadman and Alan Williams who supervised the Guildhall Extension and Kettering Road sites respectively. The illustrations were prepared by Melanie Connell, Alex Thorne and Alan Williams. I am grateful to Rachel Watson and the staff of the Northamptonshire Record Office for access to the documentary records and to Jacky Minchinton for her tuition on medieval palaeography. Figs 10 and 25 are reproduced by kind permission of Wilson Browne Solicitors.

## THE GUILDHALL EXTENSION SITE, St GILES' STREET

### INTRODUCTION

The site lies at NGR SP 7560 6048 to the north of St Giles' Street and immediately east of the Victorian Guildhall (Figs 1, 2) and was excavated ahead of the building of the Guildhall Extension. The work was funded by the developers, Northampton Borough Council. Initially an evaluation, comprising the excavation of two trial trenches, one (Trench A) to examine the St Giles' Street frontage and the other (Trench B) to examine the Dychurch Lane frontage was carried out over a period of 4 weeks in February to March 1990. The immediate St Giles' Street frontage was found to have been removed by cellarage but deposits of potential importance were uncovered behind it. Accordingly a third trench (Trench C) was excavated immediately to the east of Trench A over a period of 6 weeks in May to June 1990, completing the examination of an area of around 200m<sup>2</sup> of the St Giles' Street frontage. Within Trench B the medieval levels were found to have been heavily disturbed by later intrusions and no further work was undertaken. A watching brief was maintained during development but no medieval or earlier features were observed.

The overall intention of the excavation on the St Giles' Street frontage was to attempt to fully excavate at least one medieval tenement. Subsidiary priorities were: to provide detailed information on the layout, character and dating of boundary features, contributing to the understanding of the original laying out of tenements; to date and characterise the earliest phase of occupation on the site; and to characterise the phases of occupation on the site during the medieval period, including questions of status, nature of structures, and industrial activity.

The results from the adjoining trenches, A and C, are detailed together as a single site. The site has been divided into broad phases using stratigraphic and finds dating evidence. The limited results from Trench B are briefly summarised at the end of this section. They have not been linked with the phasing established for Trenches A and C as insufficient material was uncovered for the results to be valid and in any case since Trench B fronted on to a different street, Dychurch Lane rather than St Giles' Street, its settlement history may have differed significantly.

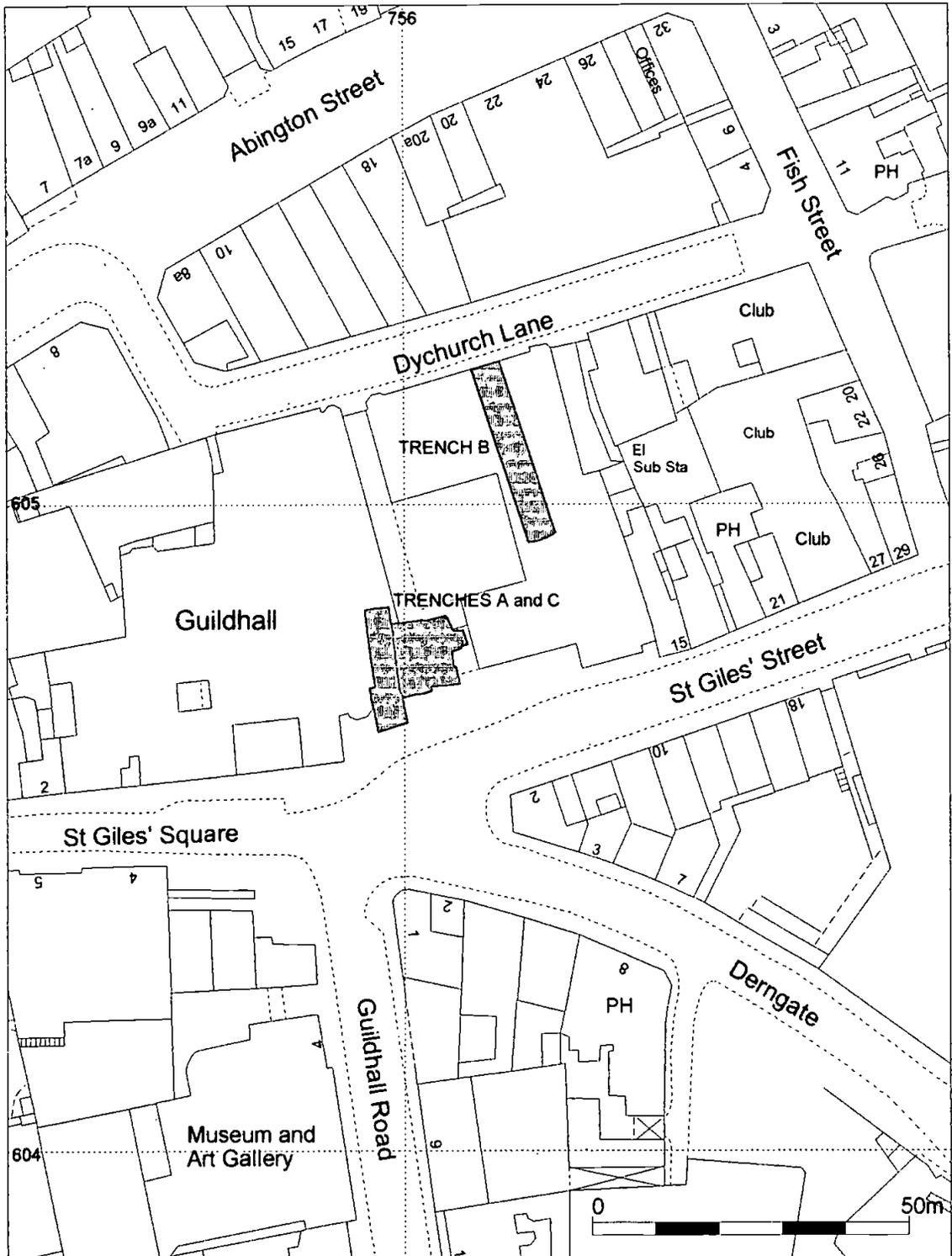


Fig 2 St Giles' Street, showing position of excavation and evaluation trenches.

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**THE EXCAVATIONS**  
by Michael Shaw and Sean Steadman

TRENCHES A AND C

In Trench A the archaeological levels immediately by the St Giles' Street frontage proved to have been destroyed by recent (18th to 19th century) cellars. Accordingly this area was not excavated and Trench C was moved to the north to avoid the

cellarage. Hence the results of the excavation must be tempered by the knowledge that the immediate street frontage was not available for investigation.

The contexts uncovered have been divided into six broad phases, relying on the stratigraphic evidence and on dating evidence provided by the pottery. The dating of the phases relies entirely on the pottery, although the limited dating evidence from the other finds has been checked against the pottery dating to ensure that the two do not conflict. The justification for the phase dating is given in the pottery section (see below).

The underlying geology was the variable beds of the

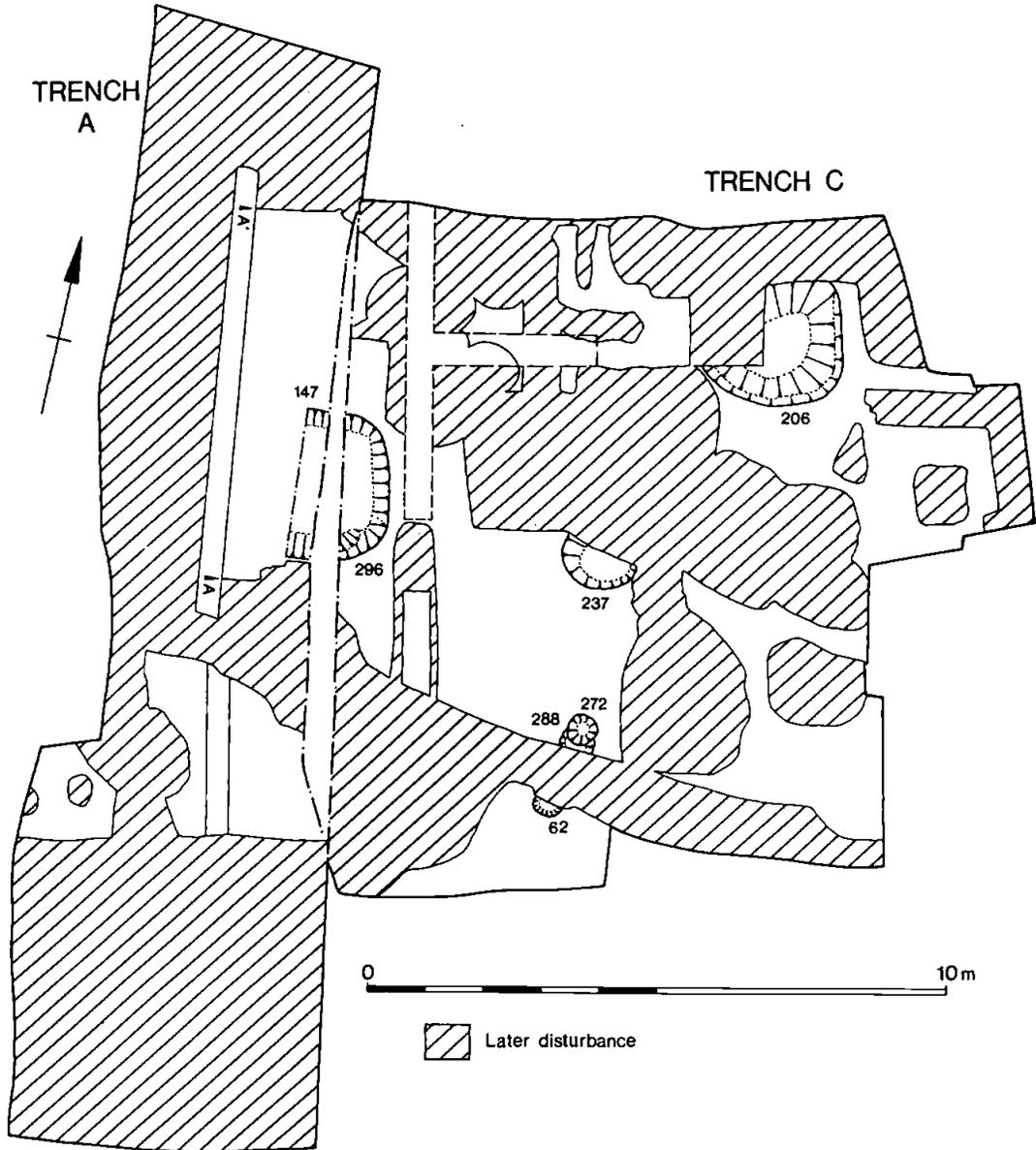


Fig 3 St Giles' Street, site plan, Phase I.

Northampton Sands. It comprised chiefly a fragmented ironstone but with extensive patches of yellow to brown sand. It was encountered at a depth of around 75.5m above OD across the centre of the site, 1.5m below the modern ground surface, falling to around 75.4m above OD at the southern end of the site and rising to 75.6m above OD at its eastern end. The medieval deposits were around 0.5m thick and were excavated by hand. They were overlaid by layers of loamy material and, above these, recent rubble and make-up. These levels, around 1m thick, were removed by machine.

*PHASE 1 c 1000 - 1150 (Figs 3, 7)*

At the south-west corner of Trench C a layer of dark yellowish brown loam (C58), up to 0.1m thick, was encountered immediately above the natural subsoil. It resembled the reddish 'developed soil' horizon found elsewhere on Northampton sites immediately above the ironstone. A layer of reddish-brown sandy loam in Trench A (A150) may be related. This layer can be expected to have been more widespread but to have been removed by subsequent activity. Three postholes, C62, 0.29m

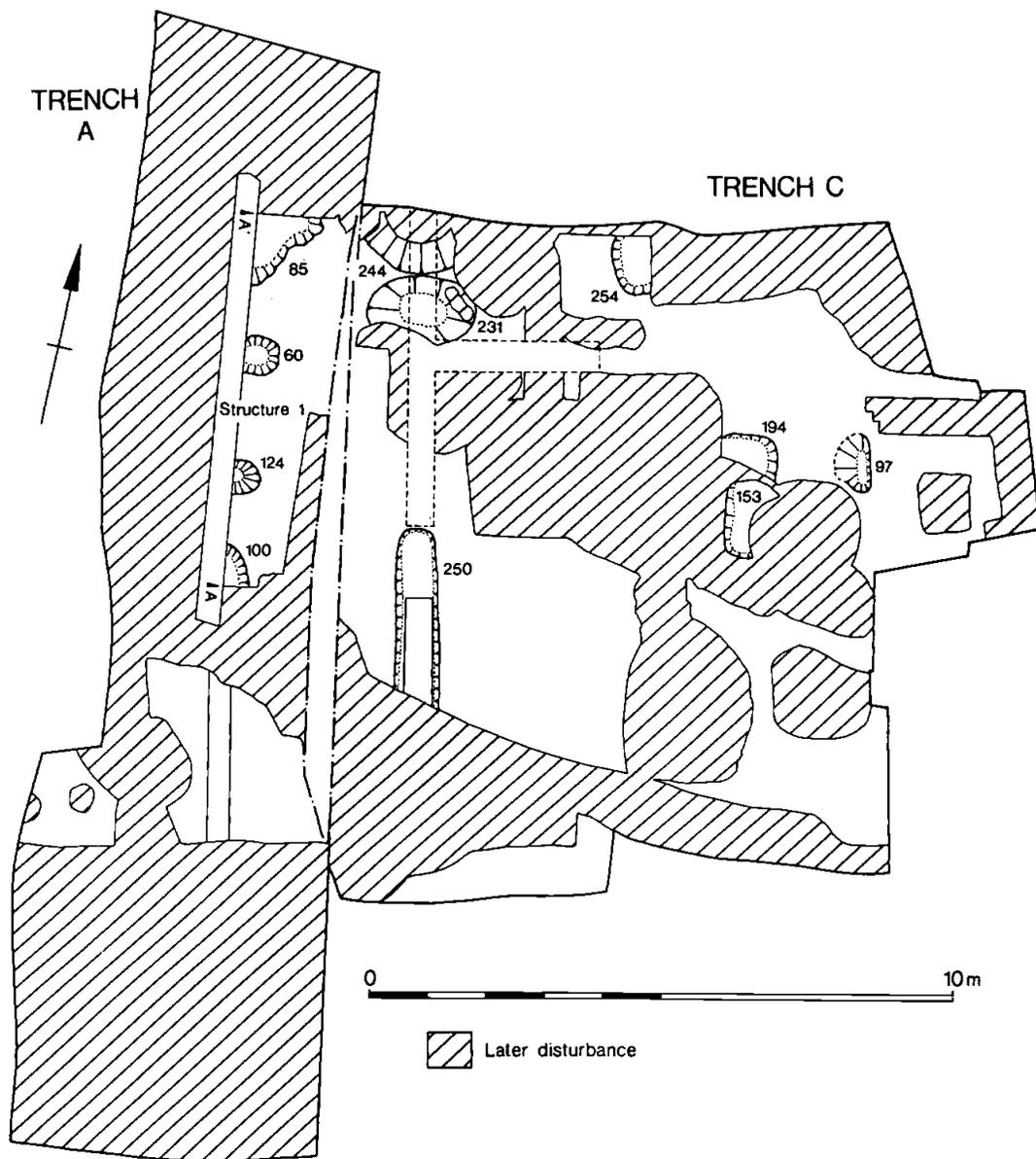


Fig 4 St Giles' Street, site plan, Phase 2.

deep, C272, 0.09m deep and C288, 0.39m deep, cut layer C58. C272 is also partially cut into C288 and presumably represents a replacement of it. The purpose of these postholes is, however, uncertain.

The remaining features of this phase comprise two large pits, A147/C296, over 1m in depth, and C206, over 0.75m in depth, and a smaller pit, C237, c 0.5m in depth. The larger pits were filled with loamy material and may have been rubbish pits. The fills of the smaller pit contained greater proportions of clay and charcoal but its purpose is uncertain.

Interpretation of this phase is hampered by the amount of later disturbance. Less than half of the ground surface was available for investigation, the remainder having been removed by later activity but some form of settlement is indicated.

PHASE 2 c.1150 - 1225 (Figs 4, 7)

Subsequent to the backfilling of pit A147/C296 charcoal rich layers (A120, 121) and a sandy layer (A144) accumulated over the central portion of Trench A. A line of three postholes (A60,

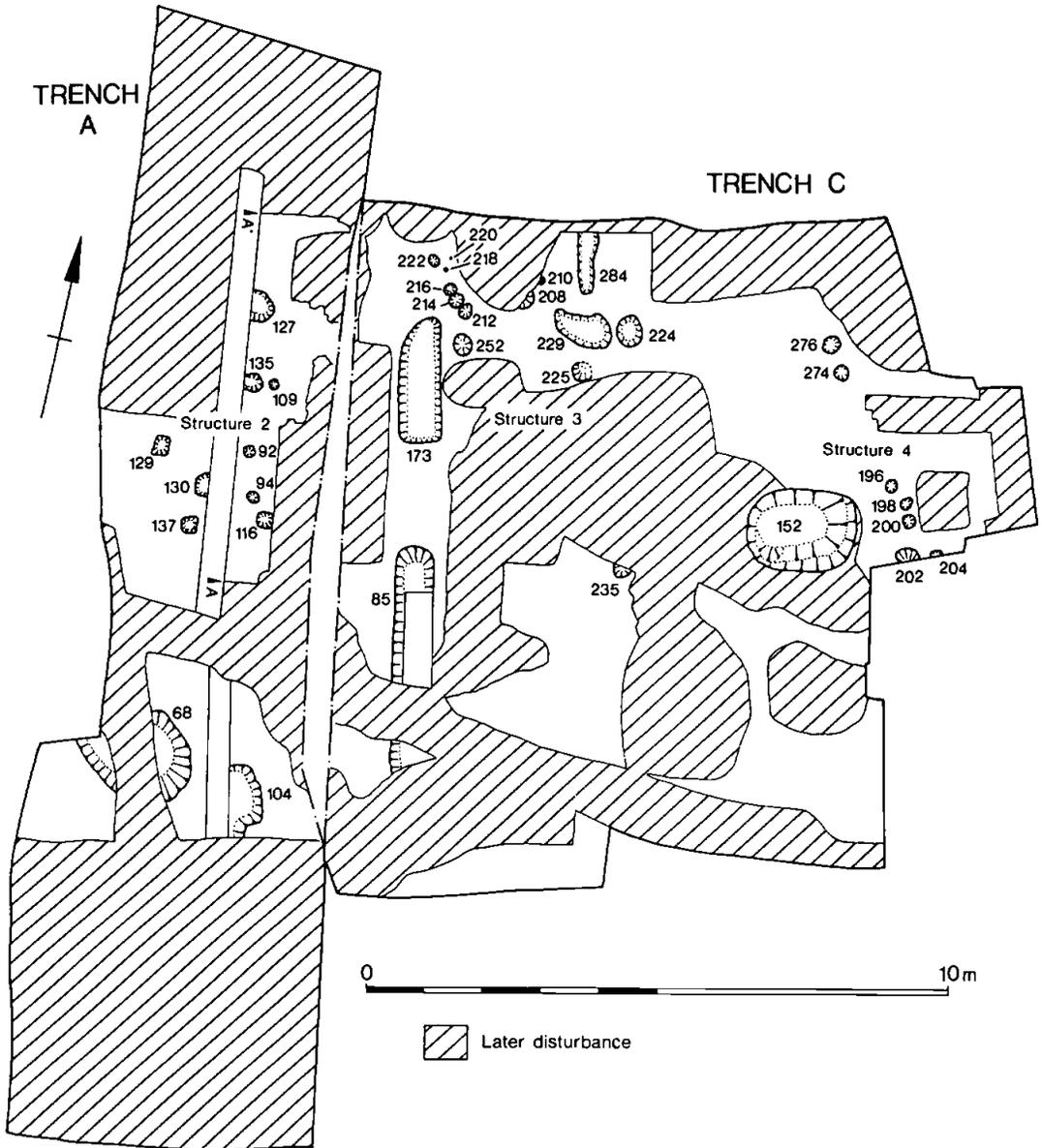


Fig 5 St Giles' Street, site plan, Phase 3.

A124, A100) set on a north - south alignment and spaced at two metre intervals cut through the charcoal-rich layers. The postholes ranged from 0.6m to 0.9m in diameter and from 0.3 to 0.6m in depth, with evidence of post-pipes and stone-packing in their fills. They are likely to have formed part of a substantial structure (denoted Structure 1) but the surrounding area is too heavily disturbed to recover a convincing building plan. The area to the south did survive, however, and was carefully examined for a continuation of the line of postholes. No evidence was found and hence whatever structure is represented would appear to lie behind, rather than fronting onto, St Giles' Street.

A pit (A85) was cut through the area where the next posthole to the north would have been expected to lie and hence the evidence for its continuation to the north has been removed.

To the east of Structure 1 a ditch (C250), 0.75m wide and 0.1m deep, of U-shaped section with steep sides and a flattened bottom was uncovered running north-south for a length of 3m. It may represent a boundary ditch, especially as it was replaced in the succeeding phase by a further ditch running on the same line (C85 - see below).

The remaining features of this phase comprised a number of pits (A85, C 97, C153, C194, C231, C244, C254). Pit C254

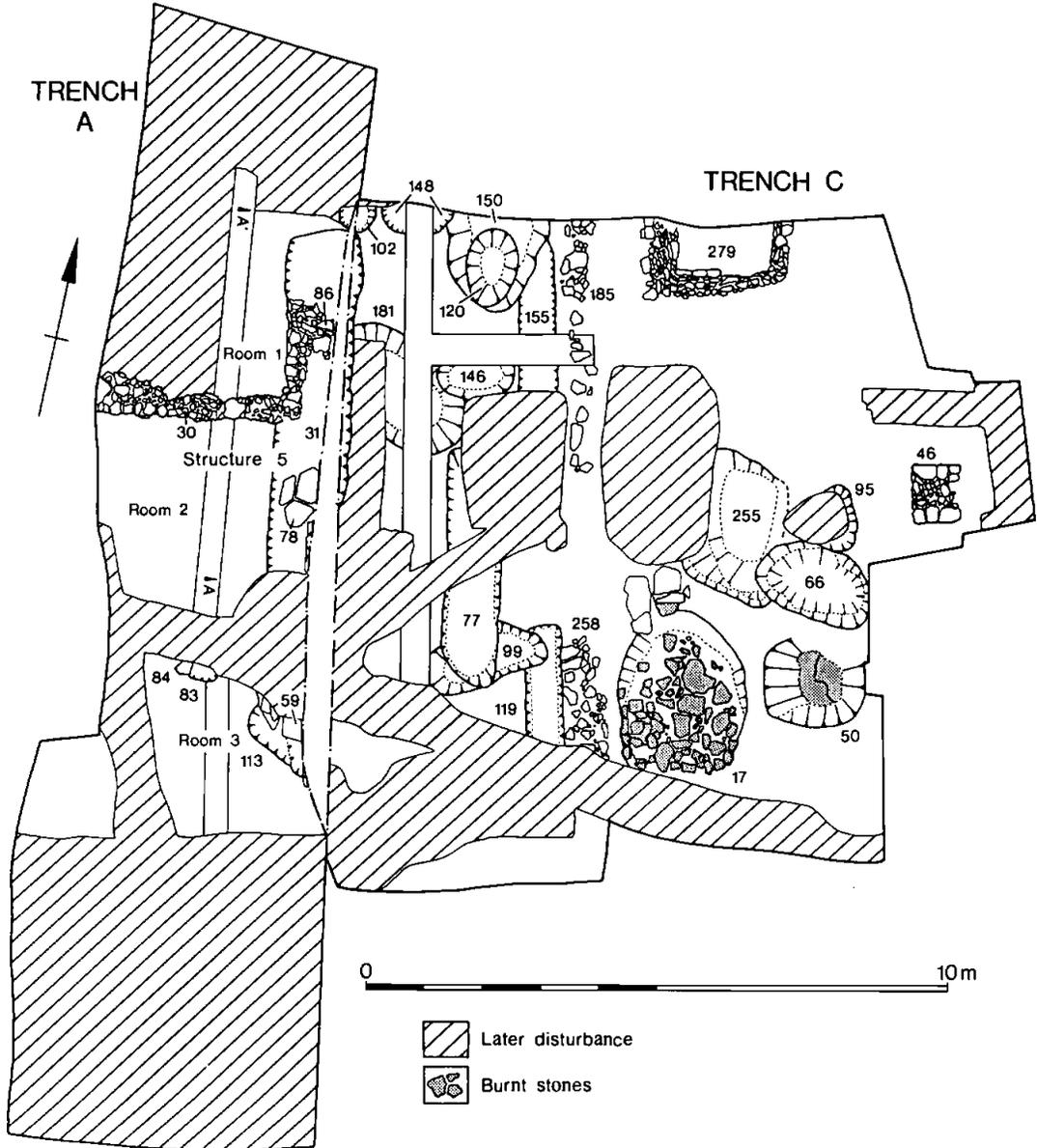


Fig 6 St Giles' Street, site plan, Phases 4 and 5

contained a quantity of burnt stone but otherwise the pit fills were undistinguished. Use of the area to the east of C250 as a yard rather than for buildings is perhaps indicated. Certainly the features contrast with the well-formed postholes to the west of C250.

*PHASE 3 c.1225 - 1275 (Figs 5, 7)*

At this phase a series of layers of dark loamy material accumulated (A67, A73, A115, 118, 119, 138, 148, 149; C73, 178, 179, 227, 263, 292-5)). A large number of postholes were discovered cutting into these layers.

A north-western complex comprised A92, 94, 109, 116, 127, 129, 130, 135 and 137. Most had straight sides and retained evidence of packing in the form of vertically pitched limestone blocks. They lie in the same area as the Structure 1 and trend in the same north-south direction, although they are noticeably smaller and less deep than the postholes of the former. Nevertheless they are likely to represent a structure of some form (denoted as Structure 2), possibly a replacement of Structure 1.

To the south a number of features of uncertain purpose were uncovered, comprising a large oval pit (A68), two smaller pits (A75, 104) and a posthole (A65).

To the east two sections of a shallow ditch (C85, C173), 0.15m deep and 0.75m wide, with steep sides and a flat U-shaped bottom were uncovered. Ditch C85 succeeds Phase 2 ditch C250, perhaps indicating the continuity of a boundary line. A

gap between ditches C85 and C173, however, presumably provides access between the area to the west and that to the east, perhaps suggesting that the ditches demarcate different areas within a single tenement rather than separate properties.

To the north-east of the boundary ditch? was a further complex of features suggesting the presence of one or more structures (denoted as Structure 3). It comprised postholes (C208, C210, C212, C214, C216, C224, C225, C252, a double posthole? (C229), stakeholes (C218, C220, C222) and a short length of a shallow ditch (C284), possibly a foundation trench.

At the eastern edge of the site was a further series of postholes (C196, C198, C200, C202, C274, C276). None was more than 0.1m deep but they may nevertheless have formed a light structure of some form and have been designated as Structure 4. Interestingly Structures 3 and 4 are not aligned strictly at right angles to St Giles' Street but appear to run in a slightly north-north-west to south-south-east direction.

The only other features were an isolated posthole (C235) and a large oval pit (C152), 1.5m deep with steep sides and a flat bottom, to the west of Structure 4. Its regularity perhaps suggests a cess pit.

*PHASE 4 c.1275 - 1525 (Figs 6, 7)*

At this phase a stone-founded building (Structure 5) was constructed on the west side of the site on top of a series of layers of loamy material (A58, 64, 67, 74) which had accumulated on



Plate 1 St Giles' Street, Trench C, late medieval phase. In the foreground the boundary wall between the stone building and the ovens can be seen with a gap for access. The ovens are top right and the drying oven centre left, in front of the figure who is standing in a post-medieval cess pit. From the west

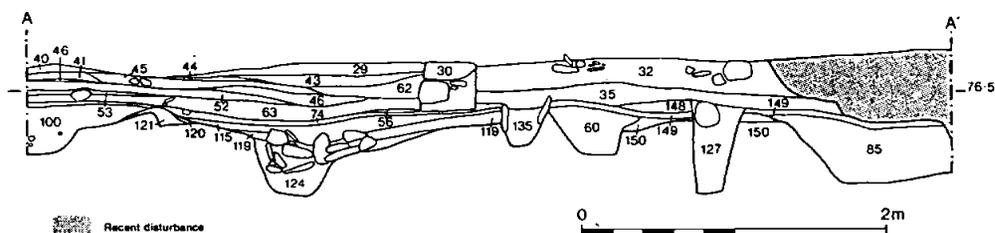


Fig 7 St Giles' Street, section across Trench A

top of, or been laid down over, the backfilled features of the preceding phase. This is a long phase and both the buildings and the boundaries on the site obviously went through a series of changes and modifications. There is, however, insufficient evidence to break this phase down further into overall sub-phases although 'mini-sequences' can be established for particular areas. These are indicated below.

The east wall of the building survived to a maximum height of 0.35m and was c. 0.8m in width. It had been constructed of rough-hewn ironstone blocks which had been extensively robbed in the post-medieval period. Its line could be traced for a length of over 9m. At its southern end it was marked by a short length of wall (A59), partially robbed out (A113); towards the north a length of 2m of wall survived (A86) and its remaining length was marked by a robber trench (A31). At the southern end of A31 investigation of its base revealed three large ironstone slabs (A78) which had been laid over the backfill of Phase 1 pit A147/C296 in an attempt to provide a firm foundation for the wall.

The west wall of the building lay outside the trench, while its northern wall had been removed by later intrusions (pit? A102 may, however, mark a short length of robber trench), and its southern wall lay in the cellared area by the modern street. Evidence of internal partition walls had, however, survived. Towards the north a length of unrobbed wall (A30), c. 0.5m wide, was uncovered. A distance of 4m to the south a single ironstone block (A84) and a short length of robber trench (A83) appear to mark a further internal wall. Hence three rooms could be defined: Room 1 to the north of wall A30, Room 2 between wall A30 and wall A84, and Room 3 to the south of wall A84.

No floor levels survived in Room 1. Within Room 2, however, a series of clay and sand floor levels (A41, 44, 51, 52, 55, 56, 63) were interspersed with layers of dirty loam which may represent occupation deposits (A29, 36, 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 53, 62, 69, 70, 72). Within Room 3 the only layer to survive was A48, a dark loam, which had subsided into Phase 3 pit A68.

A further length of probable robber trench (C77) was discovered running parallel to, and c. 2m to the east of, the east wall, suggesting that a further wall had been constructed to the east of Structure 5. Perhaps it represents the widening of the building by the addition of a passageway. Certainly a number of layers suggestive of surfaces were located in the area between the two walls, especially where they had subsided into the backfill of a pit (C181) which belonged to an early part of this phase. The earliest surfaces (C125, 126, 131) were sandy or clayey loams. These were overlaid by layers of ironstone and limestone pieces (C122, 123, 124) and mortar (C130), some burnt. The robber trench does not, however, run the entire length of the structure.

Possibly the remainder of the wall was not thought to need deeply-set foundations or possibly the robber trench represents some sort of lean-to structure which ran only a short length along the building. Alternatively if the layers of stone pieces and loams do not represent floor surfaces the wall may have formed the base for a stair up to the first floor of the building. The robber trench was cut into a pit (C99) which belonged to an earlier part of this phase. A large number of fragments of roof tile were recovered from the pit, presumably they come from the roof of the stone-founded building and perhaps testify to a period of clearance and refurbishing immediately prior to the construction of the ?passageway.

Farther east again a series of series of ditches and walls, aligned north-south, were located. Presumably they represent the continuation of a division between the western and eastern halves of the site but they lie to the east of the previous boundary ditches and therefore represent some re-arrangement of settlement, presumably at the time of the construction of the stone-founded building. The earliest boundary was a ditch C119/C155, 0.6m wide with a maximum surviving depth of 0.16m, which could be traced for a distance of 9m across the site. It lay 2m to the east of the Phase 3 boundary ditch C85/C173. A gap between the two lengths of ditch mirrored the gap in the Phase 3 boundary ditch and again suggested that access between the two areas was maintained. This boundary dates from early within Phase 4 for it is cut by pit C99 which itself pre-dates the ?passageway wall.

The boundary ditch was replaced after the deposition of layers of C257 and C259 by a stone-founded wall (C185/C258) which lay immediately to the east. The wall, of clay-bonded ironstone blocks, was 0.5m wide and survived to a maximum height of 0.4m. A gap in the wall mirrored that in the earlier boundary ditch C119/155, supporting the suggestion that there was a deliberate access between the two sides of the site. Layers of loam with ironstone (C183) and loam with mortar lumps (C184) subsequently built up against the eastern side of the wall. To the north a pit (C150), subsequently cut by further pits (C120, C148), cut the backfill of ditch C155. A pit (C146) immediately to the south which cuts pit C181 presumably also dates to the later part of this phase. Pits C150 and C146 were both filled with large ironstone blocks. Layers of make-up (C108, C100, C186, C245, 247, 248) occupy the areas between these pits.

There was no sign of any buildings to the east of the wall and this area seems to have been an open yard. There were, however, signs of specialised activity. At the southern end of the site, towards the St Giles' Street frontage, an oven (C17) was discovered. It comprised ironstone slabs laid at the bottom of a

## TRENCH B

shallow oval pit, with ironstone blocks lining the sides to the west. The upper surface and inner face of the blocks had been extensively scorched and they were covered by a deposit of charcoal (C16). A series of layers of burnt clay and charcoal (C157-164) overlaid by C17 possibly indicate that the oven had replaced an earlier oven or hearth of some form. The base of a pit immediately to the east (C50) had been similarly scorched and this feature may therefore be part of the same complex. No slag or other metalworking residue was found in the area and oven was perhaps for baking. By the northern edge of the site, some 5m distant, was the remains of a stone-built drying oven with sides sloping gently outwards (C279), suggesting that the eastern area at this phase may have been occupied by a bakehouse/brewhouse complex.

The area between the baking? oven and the drying oven was occupied by three pits (C66, C95, C255), to the east of which was a rectangular stone foundation (C46). No function could be assigned to any of these features.

*PHASE 5 c 1525 - c 1550 (Figs 6, 7)*

This phase sees the abandonment of Structure 5 and its associated features. The walls of the building were extensively robbed for their stone (east wall robber trenches A31, A113; southern partition wall robber trench A83; eastern 'passageway' wall robber trench C77. The eastern 'passageway' wall was not robbed until a layer of loam (C75) had accumulated over the layers of the passageway. Its robber trench contained large amounts of roof tile, presumably from the demolition of the building. Layer C75 was also cut by C102 which may be a short length of robber trench, robbing the northern end of the eastern wall of Structure 5. At the same time layers of loamy material accumulated within the rooms in Structure 5: A35 in Room 1 and A48 and A57 in Room 3.

*PHASE 6 c 1550 to present*

This phase comprises the post-medieval use of the site. It was not intended that this phase should be examined in detail. Hence the upper levels of the site were removed by machine and the only deposits of this date actually investigated were features cut down into earlier levels or layers which were not immediately recognisable as post-medieval in date. Hence there is no point in offering an interpretation of the deposits excavated at this phase. A summary of the deposits of this date is, however, included below:

Stone-lined pits: C19, C25, probably cess pits, both backfilled after 1850

Brick-lined pit: C13, backfilled after 1850

Stone-lined drains: C28, C36, C44

Stone-filled drain: C9

Construction trench: C60

Robber trench: C38, cut by C13

Small pits: C68, 18th cen in date; C70 and C72 undated but cut by C19; C106 possibly 17th cen in date

Wells: A34, C7; only the top fill of these was removed and hence their period of use may date to an earlier period

Cobbled area: C11

Layers of make-up: A32-3, 47, 49-50, 54, 89: C4, C5, C11, C15, C20, C31, C74, C137

Recent services and related layers: A5, A12, A20, A22, A24, A26, A87, A114; C26, C33, C53

Levelling layers for present car park: A1-3, 6; C1-3

A trench was excavated at right angles to the Dychurch Lane frontage in order to test the preservation of deposits in this area (Fig 2). The modern ground surface was located at c. 77.65m above OD by the Dychurch Lane frontage. Once a depth of c. 1m was reached the trench was stepped in a metre either side, giving a width of 2m, in order to allow work to be carried out in safety. The area proved to have been heavily disturbed in recent times. A Victorian wall (B21) running north-south down the centre of the trench was located at c. 1.2m below the modern ground surface, overlaid by a series of make-up layers and recent features (B1-B19). A layer of loamy material (B22) was located butting against the east side of the wall. It proved to be cellar fill and once it was established that it was cut down to sufficient depth as to have removed any earlier features excavation of this area was discontinued.

By the Dychurch Lane frontage, however, a small area of undisturbed ground, 2m square, was uncovered and excavated down to the natural subsoil which was located at 75.6m, 2.15m below the modern ground surface. Above the natural subsoil was a layer of dark silty loam (B38), only 0.05m thick, from which 13th century pottery was recovered. Set on this was an ironstone wall (B36). It ran north-south from the Dychurch Lane frontage for a distance of 2m before being cut away at its southern end by a recent service trench. Its full width could not be ascertained as it partially underlay the western site baulk. It was abutted by layers of dark loam (B37, B27), 450mm thick. Medieval pottery was recovered from B37. Two insubstantial postholes (B32, B34) were cut into layer B27 but no dating evidence was recovered from them. Also on top of layer B27 was a further short length of north-south ironstone wall (B29) set this time by the eastern site baulk. Its date could not be established but pottery from a short length of robber trench (B30) and from overlying layers (B24, B28) demonstrated that it had gone out of use by the 17th-18th centuries. Above these layers was wall B21 which appears in this area to have been preceded by a trench (B26) on the same line which perhaps represents the robber trench of a wall which was replaced by B21.

## THE POTTERY

by Varian Denham and Michael Shaw

Separate catalogues of the pottery from the evaluation (Trenches A and B) and from the full excavation (Trench C) were produced by Varian Denham. Following the methods previously established for Northampton pottery reports, the pottery was divided into fabric types using the Northampton Pottery Type Series established by Mike McCarthy (McCarthy 1979). A count of the number of sherds of each fabric type by context was made and comments on pieces or groups of particular significance were included. Copies of these catalogues have been retained in the site archive.

The further work necessary to produce a pottery report has been carried out by Michael Shaw but

TABLE 1: Key to fabrics

Main Fabric Groups	
P	Prehistoric
IA	Iron Age
RB	Romano-British
S	Saxon (AD 400-900)
U	Unidentifiable
T	Late Saxon/Medieval: calcareous
V	Late Saxon/Medieval: calcareous - sandy
W	Late Saxon/Medieval: sandy
X	Late Saxon - Post-Medieval: very fine sandy
Y	Imported
Z	Post-medieval

References to previously published fabric definitions are cited in the third column. The prefix (M) to a page number indicates microfiche.

## Report codes

M115	St Peter's street report (McCarthy 1979)
M115X	St Peter's Gardens/ Saxon Palaces report (Denham 1985a)
M139	Chalk Lane report (Gryspeerd 1981)
M178	Marefair report (Gryspeerd 1979)
M282	Gregory Street report (Humble and Denham in archive)
M285	College Street report (Gryspeerd 1982)
M351	Demgate report (Shaw and Denham 1984)
M403	The Riding report (Denham 1984)
M443	Black Lion Hill report (Denham 1985b)

incorporating comments made by Varian Denham in the original catalogues. We are grateful to Paul Blinkhorn who identified the sherds of Rhenish blue-grey Paffrath-type ladle and provided comments upon them which have been incorporated into the text.

Table 1 summarises the fabrics recovered from the site and gives references to detailed publications, while Table 2 gives a count of the number of sherds of each fabric type by phase. The deposits from Trench B were not phased and hence the pottery from this trench is not sub-divided.

A total of 1763 sherds were recovered from the excavations. Of these 1679 were from Trenches A and C and 84 from Trench B. Of the sherds from Trenches A and C 1571 were from stratified contexts while the remaining 108 were unstratified.

## FABRICS

The range of fabrics recovered can be seen in Table 2. Only five sherds of pre-Saxon pottery were recovered, one of Iron Age date and four of the Romano-British period. A single sherd of S3/T1 and two possible sherds of W1, one possibly a crucible, may date to the 10th century or earlier. Otherwise the 'Late Saxon' pottery is composed entirely of St Neots type ware (T1). It comprises 14% of the total assemblage, a large amount given the location of the site outside the walled area of the late Saxon town. A comparable assemblage from Swan Street which also lies outside the late Saxon town contained only 29 sherds - 2% of the total

assemblage (Denham and Shaw 1993/4). Most of the Guildhall St Neots-type ware is, however, the brickish-red variety (T1(2)), similar to later Bedford types, which it is now believed continued into production into the 12th century. Nevertheless the quantity of it recovered from the present site suggests that some of it at least is of 11th century date.

Of intrinsic interest is the recovery of four sherds of Rhenish blue-grey Paffrath-type ladles (two vessels are perhaps represented) which may have been used as crucibles. These vessels are not uncommon finds in the castles, ports and large towns of the south of England and are generally assigned a during the medieval period but are rare in the South Midlands. The only other examples known from Northamptonshire are a fragment from Castle Lane, Brackley and two tiny sherds from Marefair (Gryspeerd 1979, 56-63) and Greyfriars (Gryspeerd 1978, 143 - the sherd was thought at the time to be related to the products of the Pingsdorf industry).

Otherwise the pottery assemblage is similar to that recovered from other, larger, excavations in Northampton. Pottery from Northampton has been intensively studied and this small assemblage is not considered worthy of further analysis at this time, although aspects of it, notably the 11th-12th century St Neots type ware and the Rhenish blue-grey Paffrath-type ladle may be worthy of further work as part of an updating of the Northampton-type series in the future.

## TRENCHES A/C PHASE DATING

*PHASE 1 - 135 sherds*

This phase spans the changeover from St Neots-type ware (T1) to Medieval shelly wares (T2), and Northampton Ware (W1), generally thought to be indicative of a 10th century date is absent. Accordingly a date of c. 1000 - c. 1150 is suggested.

RECENT WORK IN MEDIEVAL NORTHAMPTON

Table 1: Fabrics

Code	Familiar Name	References	Origin	Date
S3/T1		M115X:(M)2/27-28	?Local+Regional	650-1100
T1	St Neots-type ware	M115X:(M)2/28-30	Local+Regional	850-1100
T1/2	Transitional late Saxon/ early Medieval shelly ware	M115X:(M)2/30-31	?Local	1000-1200
T2	Medieval shelly ware	M115X:(M)2/31	Local+Regional	1100-1400
T2(2)	Lyveden/Stanion-type ware	M351:(M)32-33	Lyveden/Stanion, Northants	1200-1400
T11		M115X:(M)2/32		900-1300
V1		M115:157	?Midlands	1100-1400
V3		M115:157	?Bedfordshire	1200-1400
V4	Olney Hyde-type ware(Fabric B)	M178:(M)87	Olney Hyde, Bucks	1200-1400
V7		M115:158	?Local	1100-1400
W1	Northampton Ware	M115X:(M)2/33-35	Northampton	850-1100
W3	Thetford-type Ware	M115X:(M)2/36-37	East Anglia	850-1200
W4		M115X:(M)2/37	?Leics/Lincs	1050-1250
W7		M115:159-160	Oxon and Beds	1100-1400
W11		M115:160	Midlands	1200-1500
W13		M115:161	N. Midlands?	1200-1500
W14	Brill-type Ware	M115:161	Oxon	1200-1500
W15	East Anglian Red Ware	M115:161	East Anglia	1200-1500
W17	Midlands Yellow Wares	M115:162	Midlands	1525-1700
W18	Potterspurty Ware	M115:162	Potterspurty/Yardley Gobion, Bucks	1250-1600
W20	East Midlands Late Medieval Reduced Ware	M115:162	?Bucks/Beds	1350-1600
W21	Surrey white wares (Tudor Green)	M115:163	Surrey/Hants	400-1600
W22		M285:68	East Midlands	1100-1400
W29	East Midlands Late Medieval Oxidised ware	M115:163	?Local	1350-1600
W47		M115X:(M)2/39-40	?Local	900-1300
W48		M139:(M)64	?Local	900-1300
W49		M178:(M)88		1100-1400
W50			?Local	1250-1600
X1(1)	Stamford Ware	M115X:(M)2/41-42	Stamford, Lincs	850-1250
X1(2)	Developed Stamford Ware	M115:164 M139:118, (M)65-6	Stamford, Lincs	1150-1250
X2a	Cistercian Ware	M115:164	?Local	1470-1550
X2b	Midland Black wares	M115:164-5	?Potterspurty, and East Anglia	1550-1700
Y4	Blue-grey Paffrath-type ladle	M178:56-63	Rhineland	1100-1300
Y8	Raeren Stoneware	M403:(M)34	?Raeren, Germany	late 15th-early 17th
Y9	Frechen Stoneware	M403:(M)34	Frechen, Germany	16th - mid 17th
Z1	Staffordshire Slip and Manganese ware	M403:(M)40	Staffs	1680-1750
Z2	English Stoneware		?Staffs/?Local/ ?Nottingham	late 17th-18th
Z3	Local slipped and marbled coarse wares	M403:(M)42	?Potterspurty and ?Oxon	17th - early 18th
Z5	Iron-glazed coarse wares	M403:(M)42	?Local ?Potterspurty	17th and 18th
Z7	Miscellaneous glazed coarse wares	M403:(M)42	?Local ?Potterspurty	17th and 18th
Z9	English tin-glazed wares	M178:(M)90, M403:(M)43	?Lambeth ?London	late 16th -18th
Z11	Iron-glazed fine wares	M403:(M)43	Local	17th-18th
Z13	Salt-glazed stoneware(white)	M403:(M)44	Staffs	18th
Z15	Nottingham salt-glazed Stoneware	M403:(M)44	Nottingham	18th
Z17	Creamware	M403:(M)45	Staffs	18th-19th
Z23	Transfer-printed pearlware	M403:(M)45-46	Staffs	late 18th-19th
Z25	Mocha Ware	M403:(M)46	Staffs	19th
Z50	Modern Wares	M403:(M)47	Staffs	post-1850

MICHAEL SHAW

Table 2: Fabric quantities by phase

Period	Code	Date	Trench /Phase								Total	
			A/C							B		
			1	2	3	4	5	6	U			
Pre-Saxon	IA	Iron Age						?1				?1
	RB					4						4
Saxon	S3/T1	650 - 1100	1									1
Late Saxon	W1	850 - 1100							?1	?1		22
	T1	850 - 1150	65	24	11	50	22	41	20	12		245
Late Saxon	W3	850 - 1200	1	1		1	2		4			9
/Medieval	X1(1)	850 - 1250	2	1	2				1	2	1	9
	T11	900 - 1300				2			1			3
	W47	900 - 1300							1			1
	W48	900 - 1300		2								2
	T1/2	1000 - 1200	12	17	5	2		21	2	9		68
Medieval	W4	1050 - 1250			1							1
Post-1050	Y4	1100 - 1300	1		1			1	1			4
	X1(2)	1150 - 1250				5		3				8
	T2	1100 - 1400	51	57	48	193	24	47	29	18		467
	V1	1100 - 1400		1		11		3		1		16
	V7	1100 - 1400			1	1	3	3		1		9
	W7	1100 - 1400			2	9		2	1			14
	W22	1100 - 1400		1		8	2	3				14
	W49	1100 - 1400		1	3	10		1				15
Medieval	T2(2)	1200 - 1400		3	13	42	7	4	21	4		94
Post-1200	V3	1200 - 1400				4	9	4	1			18
	V4	1200 - 1400			2	28	5	4	1	2		42
	W11	1200 - 1500			7	8	2	2				19
	W13	1200 - 1500						1				1
	W14	1200 - 1500		2	15	51	3	2	5	1		79
	W15	1200 - 1500			3	4		2				9
Late	W18	1250 - 1600			6	167	21	12	17	3		226
Medieval/	W50	1250 - 1600					3					3
Early Post-	W20	1350 - 1600				25	4	5	2	2		38
Medieval	W29	1400 - 1600				32	1	5	1			39
	W21	1400 - 1600				4		3		2		9
Post-	X2a	1470 - 1550				55	15	6	3	3		82
Medieval	Y8	1475 - 1625						1				1
	Y8/9	1475 - 1650				1		1				2
	Y9	1500 - 1650				2		2		2		6
	W17	1525 - 1700				1	1	1				3
	X2b	1550 - 1700				3	1	150	1	24		175
Recent	Z	Post-1700										
Unidentifiable (U)					6	4	2	10				22
Total			133	110	126	724	128	345	112	85		1763

*PHASE 2 - 107 sherds*

Medieval shelly wares predominate (53% of the assemblage) with only a few sherds of fabrics with a post-1200 start date present. Accordingly a date of c. 1150 - c. 1225 is suggested.

*PHASE 3 - 127 sherds*

Medieval shelly wares still predominate (38% of the assemblage) but sherds from fabrics with a post-1200 start date are common and a small number of sherds of Potterspury-ware, which appears in Northampton from 1250 onwards, is also present. Accordingly a date of c. 1225 - 1275 is suggested.

*PHASE 4 - 695 sherds*

Medieval shelly wares are still the most common fabric type (27% of the assemblage) but are almost matched in number by Potterspury Ware (24% of the assemblage). Sherds of late medieval/early post-medieval wares (especially W20, W29, X2a) are also common. Accordingly a long date range of c. 1275 - 1525 is suggested. The pottery from the floor and occupation levels within the stone-founded building (Structure 5) would suggest that it spanned the phase. Three sherds of Z fabrics (17th century or later in date) are regarded as contaminants.

*PHASE 5 - 156 sherds*

This phase covers the destruction and robbing of Structure 5. Not surprisingly the majority of it (at least 53%) is residual from earlier contexts. Of the remainder the majority (46%) is Cistercian Ware which is thought to have been in use in the town between 1470 and 1550. Accordingly this phase of robbing is considered to date to c. 1525 - c. 1550.

*PHASE 6 - 351 sherds*

This phase covers the post-medieval use of the site. Although it is possible that the area to the east continued in use while the stone-founded building was being robbed few Cistercian Ware sherds were recovered from this phase and it is perhaps more likely that there was a hiatus in occupation over the site as a whole and that this phase dates from c. 1550 onwards.

THE OTHER FINDS

by Tora Hylton

In general the finds assemblages are small and the only item of intrinsic interest is a fragment of window glass decorated with an oak leaf motif (see below). The roof tile is a sufficiently large assemblage to be of value if a general survey of roof tile from the town were undertaken at a later date but otherwise further analysis of the finds is not warranted. The following categories of finds were recovered:

- Coins (2) and jettons (2)
- Copper alloy objects (41)
- Lead alloy objects (2)
- Iron objects (72)
- Glass (86: 22 window glass, 55 vessel, 1 bead, 8 miscellaneous)
- Clay pipe (72)
- Tile and brick (405)
- Stone roof tile (11)
- Worked flint (8)
- Worked bone (1)
- Animal bone (4 standard archive boxes)



Fig 8 St Giles' Street, decorated widow glass fragment

The painted window glass fragment (Fig 8) was recovered from a medieval occupation level (A42 - Phase 4) within the stone-founded building. It measures 45mm by 30mm by 3mm thick. Traces of an oak leaf motif in a reddish brown iron oxide pigment is still visible on the decaying surface. One edge is grozed. A detailed catalogue of the remaining finds is held in the archive.

TOPOGRAPHY AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The site lies at the heart of the medieval walled town around 150m east of the market area, which was centred around All Saints church and the Market Square to the north. The medieval Guildhall was located in the same area, on the corner of Wood Hill and Abington Street, from at least the 14th century (RCHM 1985, 337). St Giles' Street leads from the south side of the market area to St Giles' Church, from where a postern gate led out into the town fields. Derngate, formerly Swinewell Street, leads off from the west end of St Giles' Street to a gate in the town wall (the Derngate) and the Bedford Road beyond.

The excavation area lies outside the late Saxon town, some 200m east of the presumed site of the east gate at the top end of Gold Street. It can be suggested, however, by analogy with other Saxon centres (eg Winchester, Biddle 1976, 265, 285), that there would have been a market place outside the east gate in the area of All Saints church and that the church itself originated as an extra-mural church in the market place. Keene (1975, 71, 73) has gone further in suggesting that the entire area between the east gate of the late Saxon town and St Giles' Church, 500m to the east, flanked by Abington Street to the north and St Giles' Street to the south may have formed a suburban market area, comparable to St Giles in Oxford. Certainly the shape and size of the area covered at the two towns is strikingly similar and at both towns churches are

located immediately outside the gates and also at the far end of the market area, in the latter case both churches sharing a common dedication to St Giles.

The excavation area would have been incorporated into the walled town when the medieval defences were constructed, generally believed to be around the 12th century (RCHM 1985, 327-8).

#### HISTORIC MAPS

Historic maps can give important topographical information although with the earlier maps their purpose and scale of survey need to be borne in mind. Two maps pre-date the Great Fire of Northampton of 1675 which destroyed large areas of the town (VCH 3, 31).

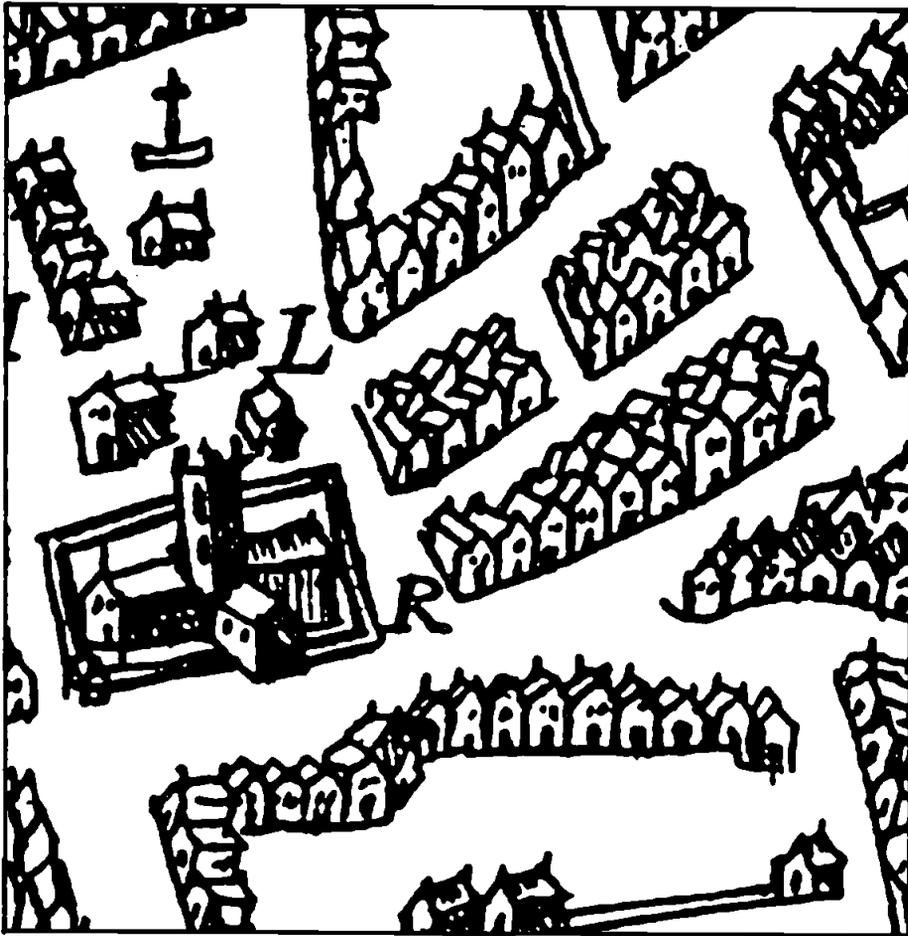


Fig 9 St Giles' Street, detail of Speed's map of 1610

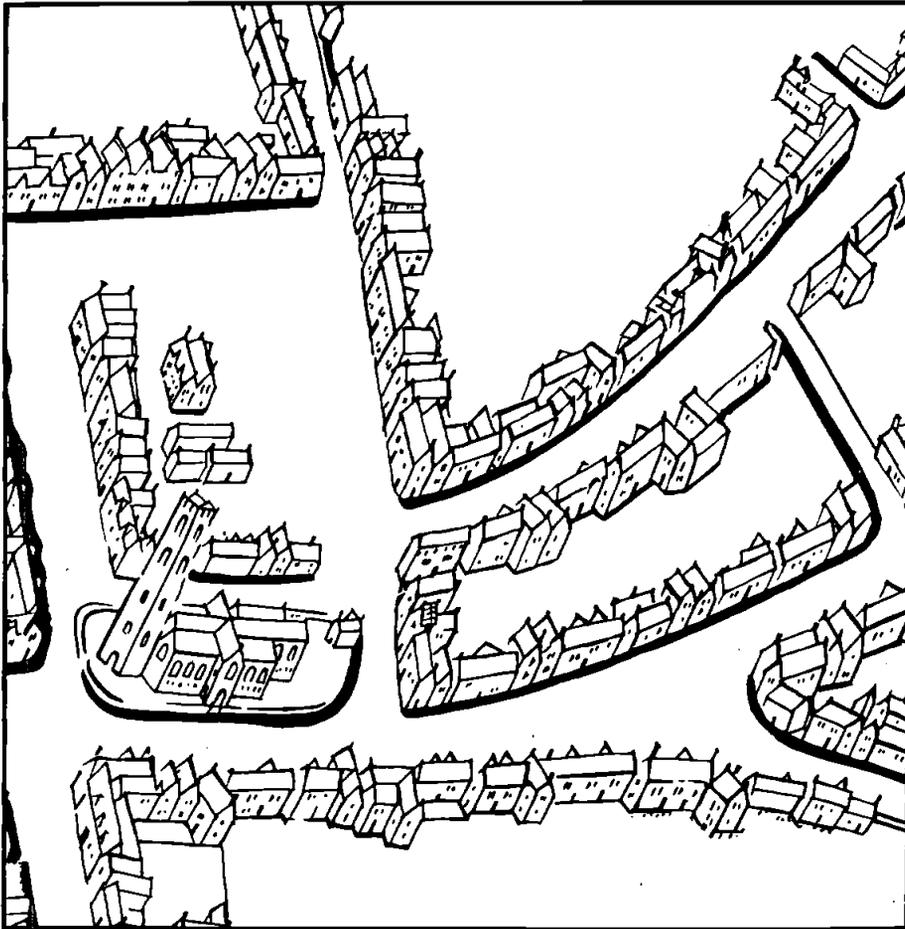


Fig 10 St Giles' Street, detail of Marcus Pierce map of 1632 (redrawn from NRO Map 4671)

*SPEED'S MAP (1610) Fig 9*

Given its early date and the small scale of its original survey Speed's map, where it can be checked, has proved to be surprisingly accurate. Hence the street pattern shown on Speed's map is largely that of the later town before the large-scale redevelopment of the 1970s. All Saints church is shown to the west of the site in its pre-1675 fire form with a central tower. St Giles' Street, Fish Street, Dychurch Lane and Wood Hill are all shown, the only major difference in the street pattern being that Dychurch Lane ran directly through to the market area. A lane running from Dychurch Lane to Abington Street may correspond to the present-day turn of Dychurch Lane to the north. Tenements are shown fronting onto both St Giles' Street and the east end of Dychurch Lane although given the early date and small scale of the survey caution should be exercised in reading too much into the evidence.

*MARCUS PIERCE (1632) Fig 10*

This map was compiled primarily to show the extent of the former St Andrews' Priory holdings in the town fields and its depiction of the town itself can be demonstrated to be inaccurate. Hence both All Saints and St Giles churches are shown with towers at their western ends rather than placed centrally as was in fact the case, while Dychurch Lane, like a number of other minor streets, is not shown at all. Nevertheless as on Speed's map the northern side of St Giles' Street is shown completely built-up between All Saints church and Fish Street. Tenements are shown both parallel to and gable-end onto the street but this may be no more than a sketch.

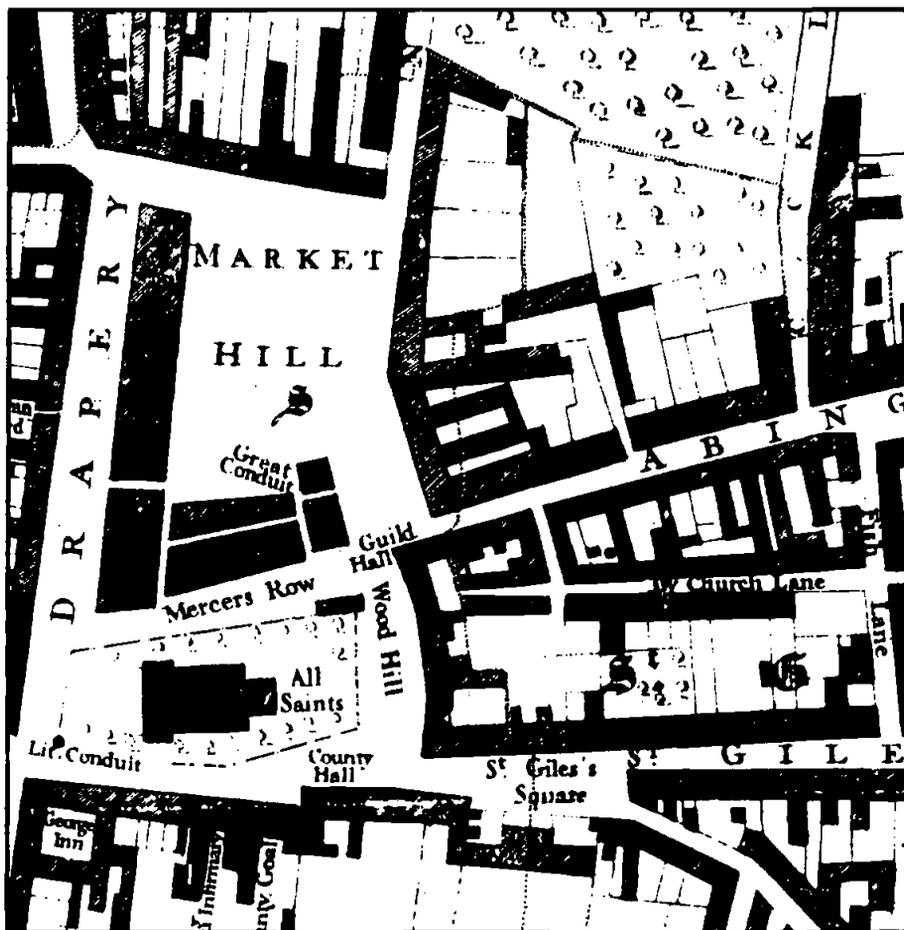


Fig 11 St Giles' Street, detail of Noble and Butlin map of 1746

*NOBLE AND BUTLIN (1746) Fig 11*

This is the earliest map post-dating the 1675 fire. All Saints church was almost completely destroyed in the Great Fire and rebuilt with the tower, the lower parts of which survived the fire, now at its eastern end. The street pattern around the excavation site remains the same and streets are now identified. Hence St Giles' Street, Fish Lane (sic), Dychurch Lane, Abingdon (sic) Street and Wood Hill are all named. The major difference is that the west end of Dychurch Lane has been blocked so that it no

longer runs into the market area but 'dog legs' to the north to run into Abington Street. St Giles' Square was perhaps created after the fire in association with the building of the County Hall. The medieval Guildhall is shown and named at the north-east corner of Wood Hill.

*ROPER AND COLE (1807)*

This map is largely based on that of Noble and Butlin. It shows no additional detail for the Guildhall area.



Fig 12 St Giles' Street, detail of Wood and Law's map of 1847

*WOOD AND LAW (1847) Fig 12*

Again the area is densely settled and the buildings and properties differ little in detail from those of 1746, although there has been some infill in the area between St Giles Street and Dychurch Lane.

*ORDNANCE SURVEY 1st EDITION (1885) Fig 13*

This is the earliest map to show fine detail of the town. The present town hall, constructed 1861-4, is shown immediately west of the site and Guildhall Road has been inserted opposite. The excavation trenches are overlaid onto this map and Trench C can be seen to be bisected by a minor property boundary which may correspond to the division between Structure 5 and the yard area to its east in the medieval period.



Fig 13 St Giles' Street, detail of Ordnance Survey 1st edn of 1885 with trench locations overlaid

#### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The earliest reference to St Giles' Street appears to be in a town rental dated to the time of Edward I (PRO SC 12/13/38). The rental starts at the west end of the street and proceeds eastward to the church and the town wall. It is difficult to locate properties precisely but judging from the number of capital tenements the area was a wealthy one. The third entry refers to a property named as 'Bello Fronte'. Properties on 'Abyndon Street' are also included but there is no mention of Fish Street or Dychurch Lane. Any houses on these streets are presumably more minor properties carved out of or taxed under the capital tenements. A rental of 1504 (NRO) is a revised version of the Edward I rental.

Here the third entry reads 'for Bello Fronte with oven late of William Nuncourte now of John Lole gent and now in the tenure of Bayly sherman, by the year 16d. The reference to an oven and the position of the entry towards the start of the entries for the street, pointing to a location at its western end, might indicate that the excavation area was located within the property known as 'Bello Fronte'.

The indices at the Northamptonshire Record Office were searched for references to St Giles' Street. Property deeds dating from 1547 onwards are held. Again they are difficult to locate precisely. One of 1698, however, is of interest in that it records a brewhouse towards the western end of St Giles' Street (NRO: NPL71).

## THE KETTERING ROAD SITE, ST EDMUND'S END

### INTRODUCTION

The site lies at NGR SP7608 6086 to the north of Kettering Road in the medieval suburb of St Edmund's End (Figs 1, 14). Medieval tenements were anticipated and it was considered important to establish the date range of the occupation and its nature. The work was funded by the developer, Monarch Cars Ltd in advance of the construction of a car showrooms. The work was carried out over a period of 5 weeks in June and July 1988.

### THE EXCAVATIONS by Michael Shaw and Alan Williams

Initially three trenches were excavated: one (Trench A) by the Kettering Road frontage, the others behind the frontage to the north-west (Trench B) and north (Trench C) respectively. Subsequently a further trench, Trench A extension, was excavated, joining Trenches A and B and taking the excavation as close as possible to the street frontage. Nevertheless it became obvious that Kettering Road had been widened and that the medieval frontage lay further to the south under the present-day road.

#### TRENCHES A, A EXTENSION AND B

A total area of c. 80m<sup>2</sup> was investigated. The modern ground surface was at around 87.00m above OD; the recent levels and a layer of garden soil below these were removed by machine, down to around 86.2m above OD. Thereafter there was around 500mm of archaeological deposits which were excavated by hand. They overlay a natural subsoil of reddish-yellow clay, part of the Upper Estuarine Series deposits.

- Phase 1 (c. 1100 - 1250) contexts pre-dating a stone building
  - Phase 2 (c. 1250 - 1400) contexts connected with the use of the stone building
  - Phase 3 (c. 1400 - 1500) medieval contexts post-dating the stone building
  - Phase 4 (1500 onwards) post-medieval and recent levels.
- The justification for the phase dating is given in the pottery report (Section 0.00 below)

#### PHASE 1 c 1100 - 1250 (Figs 15, 18)

Contexts of this phase comprised a number of postholes (A24, 25, 45, 49, 60, 62, 64, 70, 73; B7, 9), two narrow slots (A57, 66) and a shallow pit (B13). No building plan could be recognised but given that the immediate street frontage was not available

and the amount of later disturbance to the area that was excavated it is likely that some form of wooden structure (or structures) was present at this stage.

#### PHASE 2 c 1250 - 1400 (Figs 16 - 18)

At this phase a stone structure was constructed aligned parallel to Kettering Road. Only the back wall of this structure and a little of its interior could be investigated as most of it lay under the present day road and pavement. It was a complicated structure which underwent a number of periods of refurbishment and given the small proportion the building actually excavated our understanding of it must remain imprecise. Nevertheless three sub-phases of use can be recognised.

##### Sub-phase A.

An 8m length of ironstone wall A33, c. 0.75m wide, set in a foundation trench 0.35m deep, running parallel to Kettering Road was perhaps the earliest stone feature on the site; at its south west end it ran under the site baulk, while its north east end was removed by a 19th century trench (A68).

The interior of the stone structure appears to have undergone a number of re-arrangements, even at this sub-phase. Floor levels inside the building seem generally to have been cut down into the subsoil and subsequently to have been filled with layers of sandy loam which may represent deliberately-laid earth floors or may be the results of trample (possibly the cutting down of the floor levels was the result of repeated scouring rather than being a deliberate policy). Initially there would appear to have been a room division represented by wall, A37, c. 0.5m wide. The room to the west of this divide contained a clay layer burnt towards the top (A58), possibly the base of a hearth. A narrow ironstone wall adjoining it (A69) may represent a surround for the hearth. Subsequently the clay layer was overlaid by a layer of greyish brown sandy loam (A59), probably an occupation layer which built up against walls A37 and A69.

A further wall, A38, lay c. 1m to the east of, and parallel to wall A37. The two walls may demarcate a passageway, although there is no sign of an exit into the yard area at the point where they meet wall A33. The area between the two walls was cut down into the subsoil to a depth of around 5mm. Subsequently a layer of yellowish brown sandy loam (A39), up to 13mm thick accumulated. To the east of wall A38 the floor level was cut down to a depth of around 15mm before a layer of greyish brown sandy loam (A20) accumulated.

The west end of wall A33 was removed by a 19th century trench, A68. It can be assumed this trench had removed the eastern wall of a structure (Structure 1) whose north wall was A33 and which contained internal walls A37 and A38 for although a further length of wall, A6, continued the line of wall A33 to the east it was of a markedly different character, being only c. 0.4m wide and set on the ground surface rather than in a foundation trench. It presumably represents an extension or addition to Structure 1 and has been named Structure 2, although it cannot be demonstrated to be later as the relationship between the two structures was removed by the post-medieval trench. A6 turned a right angle at its north east end and ran under the site baulk, a probable drain, A14 ran off from it to the north-east. Once again the interior floor level was cut down (cut A34), this time to a depth of 15mm. Subsequently stone footings, A22, were set down into the cut against the inner face of A6. Possibly they represent the foundations for a bench. Layers of yellowish brown sandy loam (A27) and greyish brown sandy loam (A28)



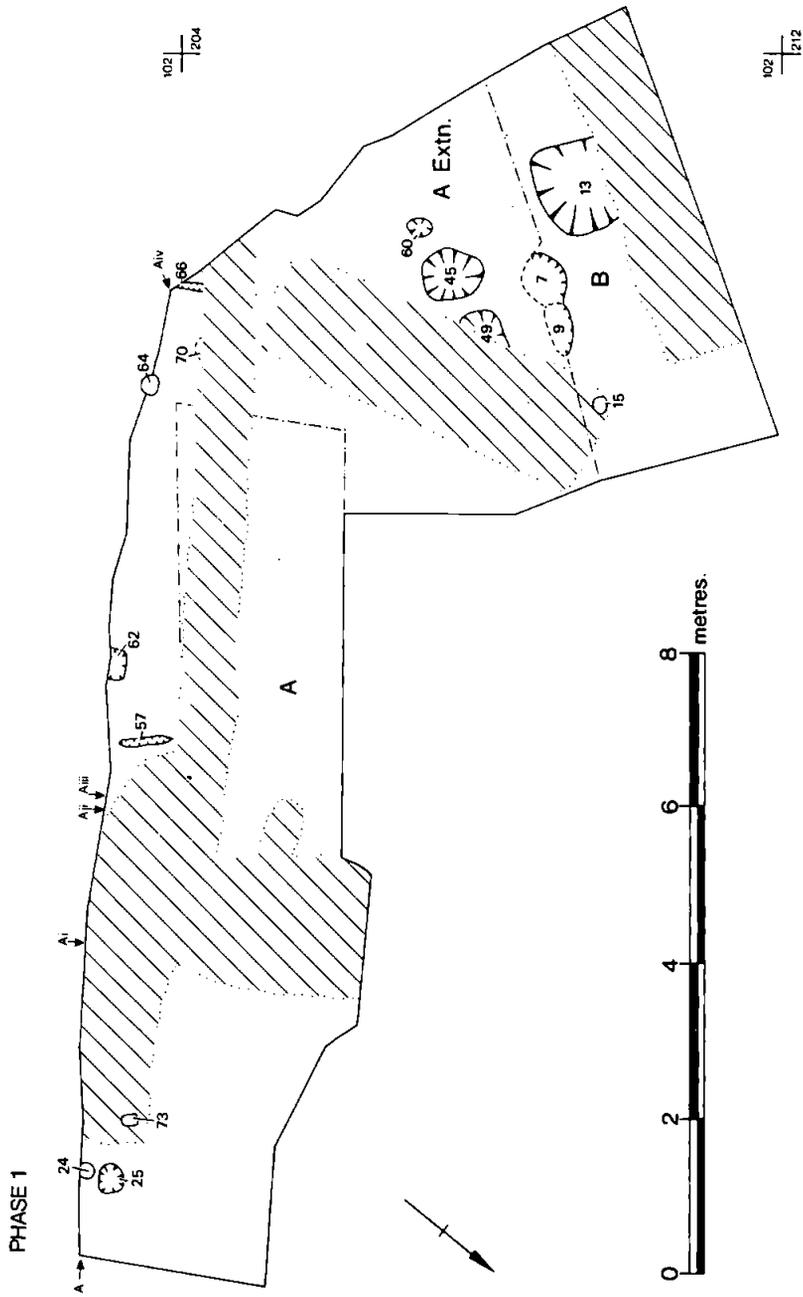


Fig 15 St Edmund's End, Trenches A and B, site plan, Phase I.

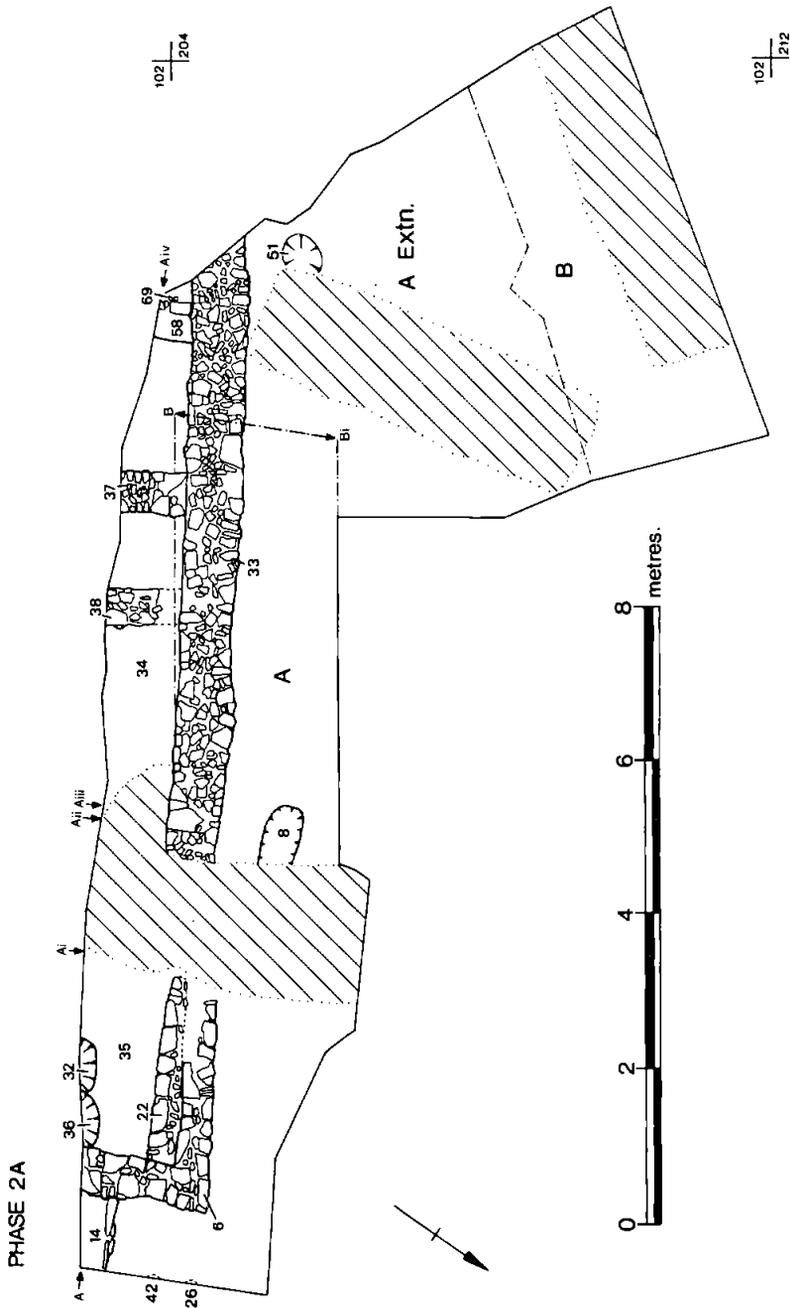


Fig 16 St Edmund's End, Trenches A and B, site plan, Phase 2A

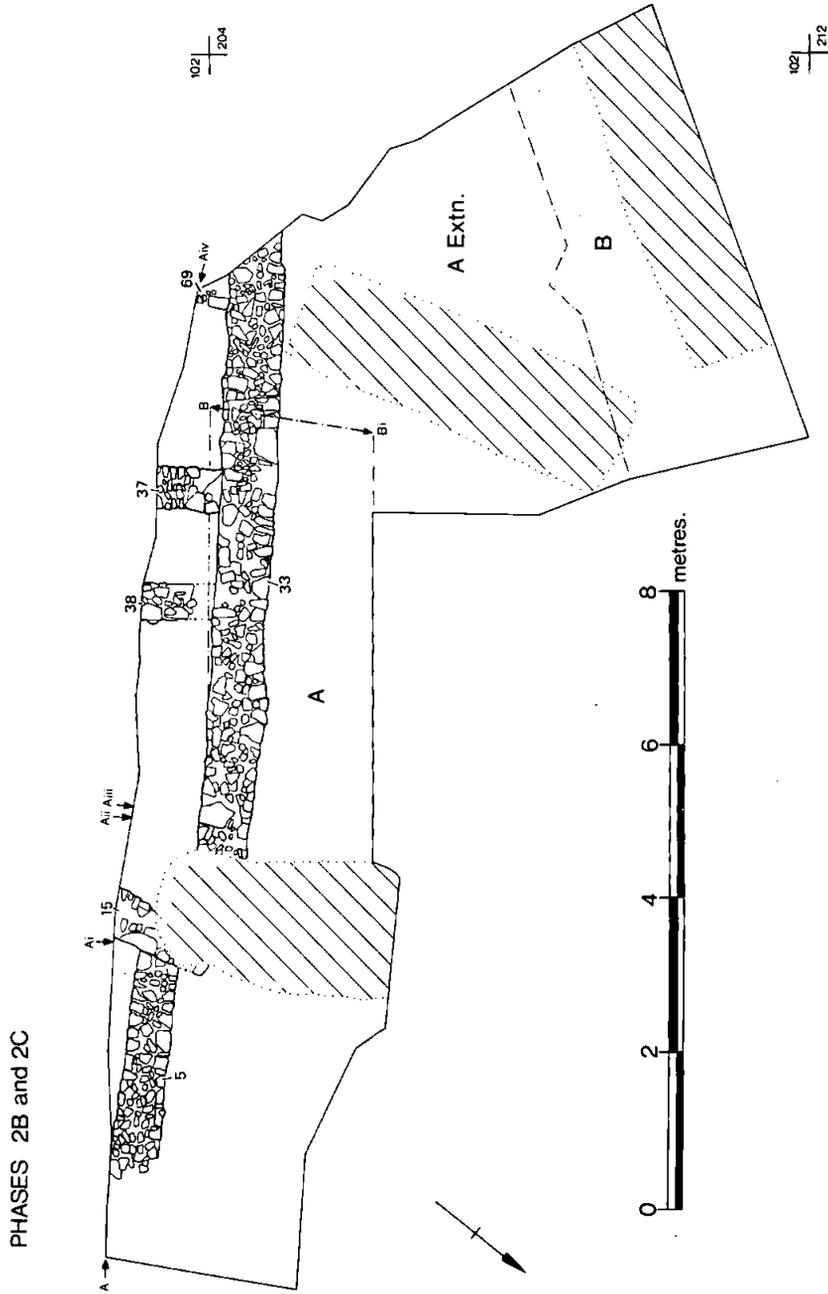


Fig 17 St Edmund's End, Trenches A and B, site plan, Phases 2B and 2C



then accumulated against A22; A27 and 28 apparently represent occupation levels which accumulated during this phase of the life of Structure 2. A shallow pit, A32, by the south-east baulk would appear to belong to this phase also.

#### *Sub-phase 2B*

At some point the north west portion of wall A6 went out of use and was replaced by another wall A5 running on the same line but 1m to its south-east. It was at 0.65m wide, considerably wider than A6, and may represent a re-building of the back wall of Structure 2. A layer of brown sandy clay loam (A19) then accumulated against the inner, south-east, side of A5, over the shallow pit A32; it would appear to represent an occupation layer connected with this phase of the life of Structure 2. A layer of reddish brown sandy loam, A21, accumulated on the outer north-west side of A5, over A22 and A27 and against A6; presumably this represents a deliberate infill of this area.

Again the junction between walls A5 and A33 had been removed by trench A68; however, A5 did not continue to the south-west into the area of A33 and it can therefore be assumed

that Structure 1 continued in use into this phase (indeed some of the re-arrangements of the walls in its interior may belong to this sub-phase) and that A5 butted on to Structure 1.

#### *Sub-phase 2C.*

At this sub-phase a wall (A15) running north-west to south-east into the baulk was constructed, cutting the south-west end of A5 and suggesting that Structure 2 went out of use at this phase. Again its relationship with wall A33 had been removed by A68; it is not strictly at right angles to the back wall of Structure 1 but it is nevertheless suggested that it represents a rebuilding of the end wall of this building as there is no sign of a major phase of dereliction until the next sub-phase. Probably also of this phase is a pit, A36, by the south-east baulk which cuts through the occupation layer A19 of sub-phase 2B of Structure 2.

#### *PHASE 3 c 1400 - 1500*

At this phase a 'destruction layer', comprising a yellowish brown sandy loam with ironstone fragments 0.5m thick (A1) covered the whole area, the ironstone fragments being particularly thick in the area of Structure 1. There can be little doubt that this represents the destruction of the building and subsequent dereliction of the site.

#### *PHASE 4 c 1500 onwards*

This phase represents the post-medieval use of the site; the post-medieval levels were removed by machine and a detailed description of the post-medieval use of the site cannot therefore be attempted, nor was it the original intention to do so. Nevertheless a broad interpretation of the post-medieval use of the site can be attempted using the evidence of the material preserved in the site sections and cut features.

A layer of 'garden soil', a greyish brown loam (A2), up to 0.45m thick, was allowed to accumulate on the site on top of the destruction debris, A1. Material of up to mid 19th century date was recovered from this layer. Few cut features were present; a shallow pit at the back of the site contained 17th - 18th century material; while two rectangular trenches (A47, A68) contained 19th century material. Hence the archaeological evidence would suggest a long period of dereliction.

#### *TRENCH C*

The intention was to open up a trench 2m wide at right angles to Trench A running back from the frontage to examine the archaeological deposits away from the Kettering Road frontage. A number of constraints - the discovery of modern cellars to the south and east, a modern drain to the west and a large concrete stanchion base to the north west - forced the excavation of a rather irregular trench. The modern ground surface lay at around 87.00m above OD and the upper levels of the site were removed by machine. At the north end no features were seen and the trench was taken down to the subsoil, a loose gravel, again presumably part of the Upper Estuarine Series deposits, which was encountered at a depth of around 86.00m above OD. The material removed was recent concrete and hard core at the top and a layer of brown sandy loam (C8) below. Towards the south end of the excavation trench the site was disturbed to a greater depth; also a large trench (C23) had been excavated in the medieval period, and the backfill of this, a layer of brown sandy



Plate 2 St Edmund's End, Trench A, late medieval phase, showing the back wall of the stone-founded building before the extension of the trench to reveal parts of the floor levels. In the background the two phases of walling of sub-phases 2B and 2C can be seen. From the west.

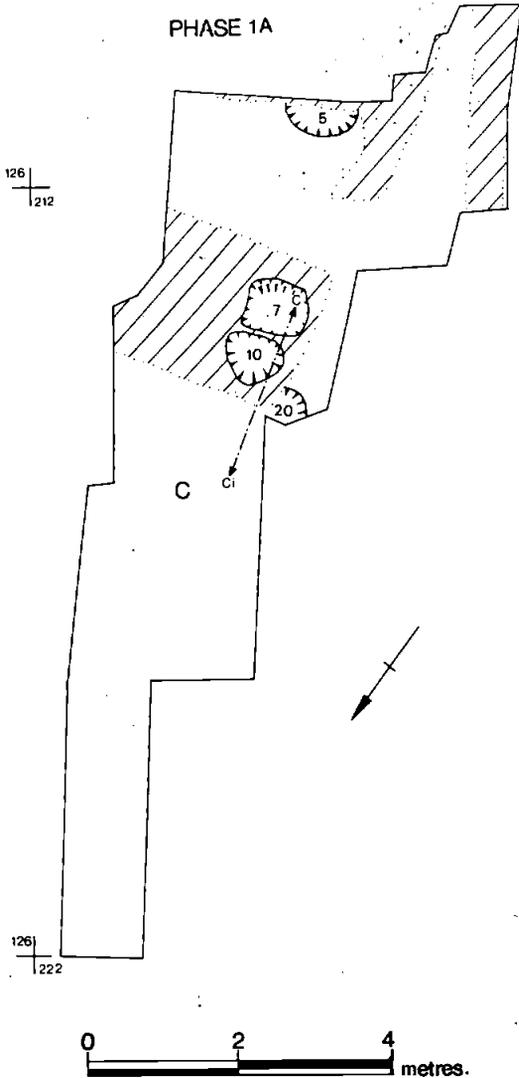


Fig 19 St Edmund's End, Trench C, site plan, Phase 1A

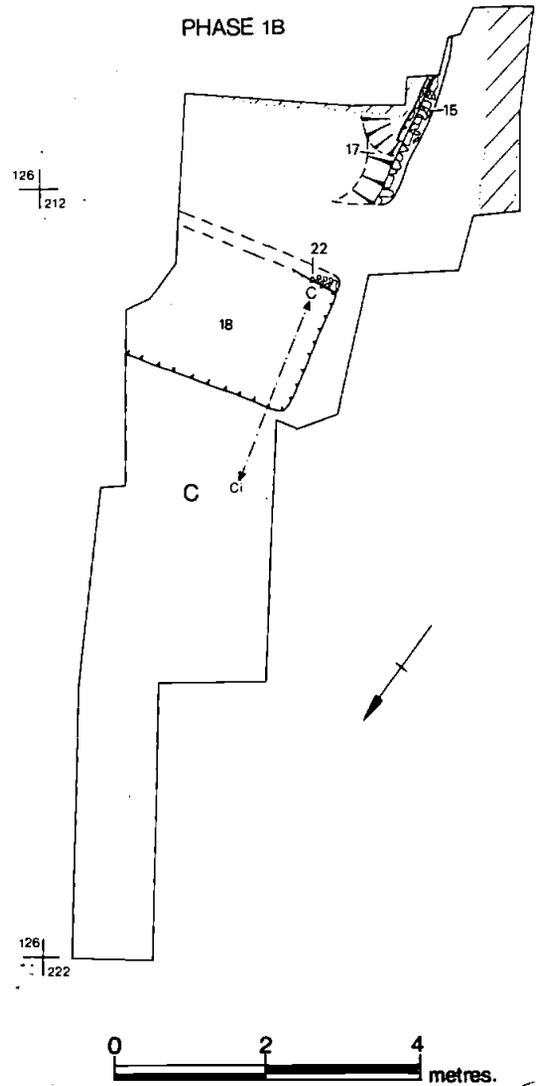


Fig 20 St Edmund's End, Trench C, site plan, Phase 1B

loam with gravel (C1), c. 0.4m deep, which could not be distinguished from C8 at the time was mistakenly removed during the machining; hence the quality of information recovered from this trench was not as good as that from Trenches A and B. Nevertheless archaeological deposits were recovered and can be equated with Phases 1 - 4 in Trenches A and B.

*PHASE 1 c.1100 - 1250 (Figs 19, 20, 22)*

This phase can be further divided into sub-phases 1A and 1B.

*Sub-phase 1A*

This comprised four narrow pits C5, 7, 10 and 20, 0.6m - 1.00m wide. The contemporary ground surface for these had presumably originally been around the bottom of layer C8, at approximately 86.00m, but the tops of all of these features had been removed by the sub-phase 1B features; the bottom of the deepest (C7) was at 84.62m. There was nothing in the form or fills of the pits to suggest that they had been excavated for any specialist purpose; they are, perhaps, most likely to be rubbish pits, although they do seem rather small for this purpose.



Plate 3 St Edmund's End, Trench C, early medieval phase. Pits 7 and 10 of sub-phase 1A within semi-cellar of sub-phase 1B. From east.

#### *Sub-phase 1B*

At this sub-phase two rectangular features, C17 and C18, were excavated down to a depth of 0.9m below C8; their sides were, partially at least, lined with stone; C12 and C14 lining the north and south sides of C18 and C15 lining the west side of C17. C15 had been set down to a greater depth at the south end of C17, a layer of compact sand C16 being packed around it; it is perhaps likely that there had been a further pit in this area and that it had been considered necessary to dig it out and put the foundations for wall C15 down into it, rather than placing the wall over a soft fill. C18 was 2m wide and at least 2.2m long; no measurements for C17 could be obtained but its north side was at least 2.5m long. They would appear to be the remnants of small semi-celled structures, perhaps dwellings or storage areas. Subsequently they were backfilled with layers of brown sandy loam with gravel, C2 filling C17 and C6 filling C18.

#### *PHASE 2 c.1250 - 1400 (Figs 21, 22)*

A large rectangular cut for a trench, C23, appears to belong to this phase; as stated above much of the evidence for this was removed by later disturbance or during the machining. Its

outline could, however, be reconstructed to a certain extent from the sections. Its western side was at least 3m long and it was cut down into the subsoil to a depth of 0.4m; its alignment was similar to that of earlier rectangular features, one of which (C18) lay inside it. Consideration was given to the possibility that C23 belonged to the same phase and formed a cellar within which C17 and C18 lay. The pottery dating, however, would suggest a later date for this feature; it is perhaps most likely to represent the cellar of a building which replaced the rectangular features, although the limited nature of the evidence must be stressed. A posthole, C24, could be recognised in section on the western edge of C23; it was backfilled with the same material as C24, C1 a layer of brown sandy loam with gravel. A single posthole, C21, could be seen in section to cut C1; no dating material was recovered from it, but it is regarded as belonging to Phase 2 as there seems no obvious context for it in the later phase.

#### *PHASE 3 c.1400 - 1500*

This phase is represented by C8, a c. 0.65m thick layer of brown sandy loam; no features were recognised within it or cutting it

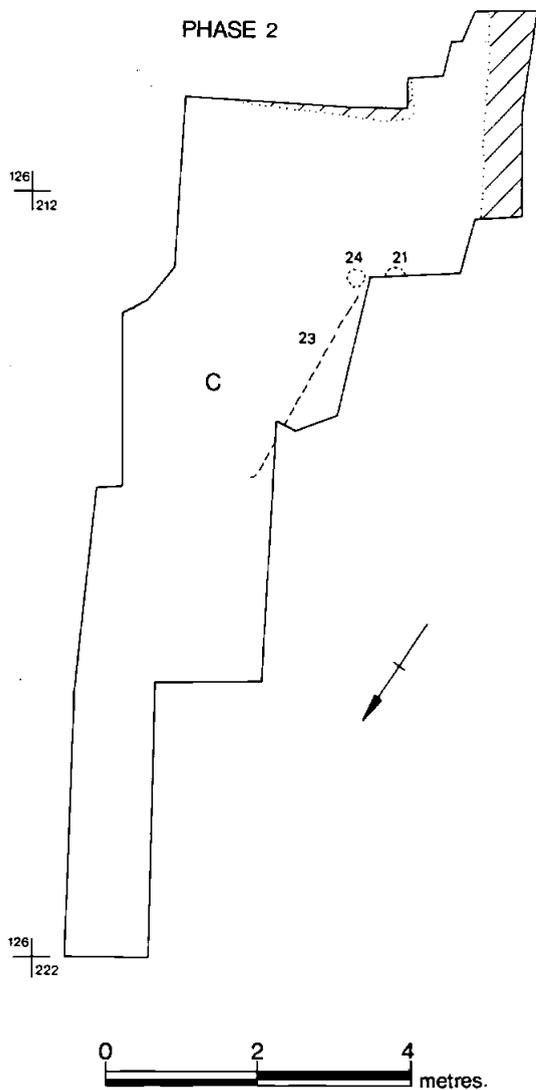


Fig 21 St Edmund's End, Trench C, site plan, Phase 2

and it would appear to represent a period of dereliction or possibly the build up of a garden/agricultural soil.

*PHASE 4 c.1500 onwards*

Layer C8 was overlaid by recent levels, chiefly concrete.

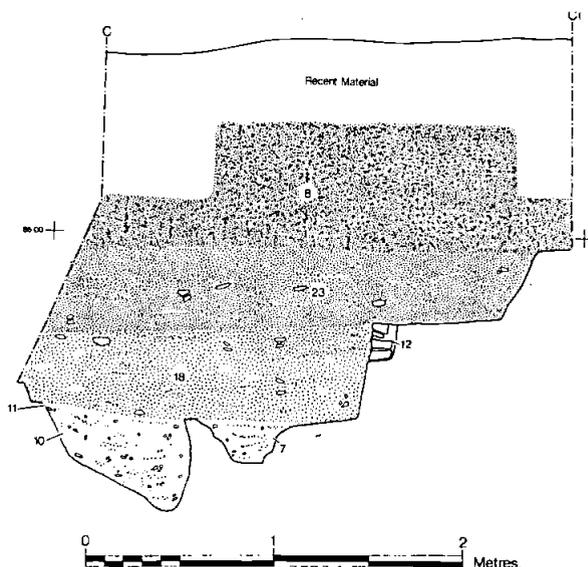


Fig 22 St Edmund's End, Trench C, section

**THE POTTERY**

by Elizabeth Williams and Michael Shaw

The pottery was identified into fabric types in accordance with the Northampton Pottery Type Series established by Mike McCarthy (McCarthy 1979) in 1988 by Elizabeth Williams, then pottery assistant with the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit (NAU). Draft drawings of the more diagnostic sherds were also prepared at this time. Mrs Williams left NAU soon afterwards and this report has been compiled using her data by Michael Shaw. A small number of sherds whose identifications were uncertain were examined by Varian Denham and her comments have been incorporated into the present report. Paul Blinkhorn identified the paffrath ladle (Y4) fragment.

With the exception of a sherd of a face jug the pottery is of little intrinsic interest; the fabrics and forms mirror those found on larger excavation sites in the town. Accordingly this report concentrates on the dating of the pottery. A drawing of the face jug and comments upon it by Iain Soden are, however, included. The original catalogue and draft pottery illustrations are retained in archive.

Table 3 summarises the fabrics recovered from the

RECENT WORK IN MEDIEVAL NORTHAMPTON

Table 3: Key to Fabrics  
Main Fabric Groups

RB	Romano-British
S	Saxon (AD 400-900)
T	Late Saxon/Medieval: calcareous
V	Late Saxon/Medieval: calcareous - sandy
W	Late Saxon/Medieval: sandy
X	Late Saxon - Post-Medieval: very fine sandy
Y	Imported
Z	Post-medieval

References to previously published fabric definitions are cited in the third column. The prefix (M) to a page number indicates microfiche.

Report codes

M100	Greyfriars report (Gryspeerd 1978)
M115	St Peter's Street report (McCarthy 1979)
M115X	St Peter's Gardens/ Saxon Palaces report (Denham 1985a)
M178	Marefair report (Gryspeerd 1979)
M285	College Street report (Gryspeerd 1982)
M351	Derngate report (Shaw and Denham 1984)
M403	The Riding report (Denham 1984)

Code	Familiar Name	References	Origin	Date
S1		M115X:(M)2/19-24	?Local+Regional	1450-850
T1/2	Transitional late Saxon/ early medieval shelly ware	M115X:(M)2/30-31	?Local	1000-1200
T2	Medieval shelly ware	M115X:(M)2/31	Local+Regional	1100-1400
T2(2)	Lyveden/Stanion-type ware	M351:(M)32-3	3Lyveden/Stanion, Northants	1200-1400
T6		M115:157	Local, ?North-east Northants	1200-1400
T11		M115(X):(M)2/32		900-1300
V1		M115:157?	Midlands	1100-1400
V2		M100:135	Potters Marston, Bucks	1200-1400
V3		M115:157	?Bedfordshire	1200-1450
V4	Olney Hyde-type ware (Fabric B)	M178:(M)87	Olney Hyde, Bucks	1200-1500
V6		M351:(M)34S	Northants/Oxon	1100-1400
V7		M115:158	?Local	1100-1400
V10				1350-1600
W3	Thetford-type Ware	M115X:(M)2/36-37	East Anglia	850-1200
W7		M115:159-160	Oxon and Beds	1100-1400
W11		M115:160	Midlands	1200-1500
W13		M115:161	Oxon	1200-1500
W14	Brill-type Ware	M115:161	Oxon	1250-1500
W15	East Anglian Red Ware	M115:161	East Anglia	1200-1500
W16	Midlands Purple Wares	M115:161	Midlands	1350-1600
W18	Potterspurty Ware	M115:162	Potterspurty/Yardley Gobion, Bucks	1250-1600
W20	East Midlands Late Medieval Reduced Ware	M115:162	?Bucks/Beds	1350-1600
W22		M285:68	East Midlands	1100-1400
W29	East Midlands Late Medieval Reduced ware	M115:163	?Local	1350-1600
W34	Northampton	M115X:(M)2/38-39	?Local	850-1100
W45		M178:(M)87	?Bourne, Lincs	1200-1400
W54		M115(X):(M)2/40-41	?East Anglia	850-1200
X2a	Cistercian Ware	M115:164	?Local	1470-1550
Y4	Rhenish greyware	M178:(M)88-9		1100-1300
Y12	Chinese porcelain	M403:(M)34	China	1675-1800

site and gives reference to detailed publications while Table 4 gives a count of the number of sherds of each fabric type represented by trench and phase. A total of 974 sherds were collected; over half (520) were picked up from the spoilheaps during machining, however, and hence only 454 sherds are from stratified contexts. Only five sherds could be definitely assigned a pre-12th century date. They comprised three Romano-British, one early-middle Saxon and one variant of late Saxon Northampton Ware. All were residual in later contexts and hence we can be reasonably confident that occupation commenced on the site no earlier than the 12th century.

*PHASE 1 c.1100 - 1250**Trenches A and B (33 sherds)*

The local medieval shelly wares (T2) predominate (24 sherds). Two sherds are of fabrics with a post-1200 start date suggesting that this phase continued into the 13th century.

*Trench C (27 sherds)*

Although this phase is sub-divided in Trench C into two stratigraphically distinct sub-phases, no differences could be discerned in the pottery assemblage. Again T2 sherds predominate and none of the fabrics have a post-1200 start date. Nevertheless given the small number of sherds it seems best to give Phase 1 in Trench C the same broad date range as Trenches A and B.

Table 4: Fabric quantities by phase

Period	Code	Date	Trench /Phase										Total		
			A				B		C			US			
			1	2	3	4	1	4	1	2	3				
Roman		Romano-British													3
Saxon	S1	450 - 850		1											1
	W34	850 - 1100		1											1
Late	W3	850 - 1200		1				2						2	9
Saxon /	W54	850 - 1200	1	1											2
Medieval	T11	900 - 1300												1	1
	T1/2	1000 - 1200		1	4					2				2	9
Medieval	Y4	1100 - 1300			1										1
Post 1100	T2	1100 - 1400	19	11	28	13	5	8	23	9	3		57	176	
	V1	1100 - 1400	2	3	2			3							10
	V6	1100 - 1400		9											9
	V7	1100 - 1400			2									3	6
	W7	1100 - 1400		1	2	2	4	1	2			1	5	17	
	W22	1100 - 1400			1										1
Medieval	T2(2)	1200 - 1400		4	2			1					3	10	
Post-1200	T6	1200 - 1400			2										2
	V2	1200 - 1400											2		2
	V3	1200 - 1450		1	1										2
	V4	1200 - 1500		1	2	2							7		12
	W11	1200 - 1500			2			1					5		8
	W13	1200 - 1500			3		1						4		8
	W15	1200 - 1500	1		10										11
	W45	1200 - 1500												1	1
	W14	1250 - 1500		35	8	6							32		81
Late	W18	1250 - 1600		26	90	21		5				1	387		530
Medieval/	V10	1350 - 1600			2										2
Early	W16	1350 - 1600											1		1
Post-	W20	1350 - 1600										2	1		3
Medieval.	W29	1350 - 1600										1			1
Post	X2a	1470 - 1550						3							3
Medieval.															
Recent	Y12	1675 - 1800						3							3
	Z	Post-1700			1	34		12					2		4
Unidentifiable (U)					2								3		5
Total			23	96	165	79	10	36	27	12	6		520		974

PHASE 2 c 1250 -1400

*Trenches A and B (96 sherds)*

This phase comprises the use of the stone-founded building. The sub-phases defined stratigraphically within Trench A cannot be recognised on the basis of the pottery and the assemblage is considered as a whole. The presence of Potterspurty Ware even at the earliest sub-phase demonstrates a post-1250 date for this phase. It is present in around the same quantities as the early medieval shelly ware (T2). McCarthy (1979, 162, 189) has demonstrated how W18 replaces T2 as the dominant fabric in Northampton at around the end of the 14th century to the early 15th century. Accordingly this phase is assigned an end date of c. 1400. Certainly it is unlikely to be later as no fabrics with a post-1350 start date were present.

*Trench C (12 sherds)*

The small number of sherds from this phase precludes accurate dating. The majority are of T2 but three are of fabrics with a post-1350 start date. A date range similar to that for Trenches A and B is suggested.

PHASE 3 c 1400 -1500

*Trench A (165 sherds)*

This phase represents the dereliction levels on the site, chiefly build-ups of 'garden' soil. Potterspurty Ware (W18) predominates but there is no Cistercian Ware (X2a), generally regarded as reaching Northampton in the late 15th century. Accordingly a 15th century date is suggested for this phase. This is supported by the unstratified material recovered during the initial machining which was chiefly from the dereliction levels and was again predominantly W18.

*Trench C 6 sherds*

Too few sherds were recovered to give a reliable date but this phase is assumed to correspond to Phase 3 in Trench A.

PHASE 4 1500 onwards

*Trenches A and B (115 sherds)*

This phase was not examined in detail. The presence of

Cistercian Ware gives a *terminus ante quem* of the late 15th century but its paucity and the lack of other 16th and 17th century fabrics suggest that there was little activity on the site at these periods.

THE FACE MASK (Fig 23)

by Iain Soden

A single sherd of a face-mask from a 13th to 14th century face jug of Potterspurty ware (W18) was recovered from A1, the destruction layer above the stone-founded building. Although integral to the rim this mask must either have lain at the side or a separate, body-moulded spout must be assumed as the jug contents would otherwise have escaped through the pierced eyes when poured. Similar forms have been identified at this date from industries across the country (cf McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 245, 367).

THE ANIMAL BONES

by Mary Harman

Disregarding loose teeth, vertebrae and rib fragments only 43 animal bones were recovered from five species, cattle, sheep, pig, fowl and goose. None were remarkable. A short report and the detailed identifications are retained in the archive.

THE OTHER FINDS

by Anne Thompson

The finds assemblage was small and none can be considered to be of intrinsic interest. The following categories of finds were recovered: Copper alloy (2); Iron (16); Whetstone (1); Worked Bone (1) A detailed catalogue is retained in the archive.

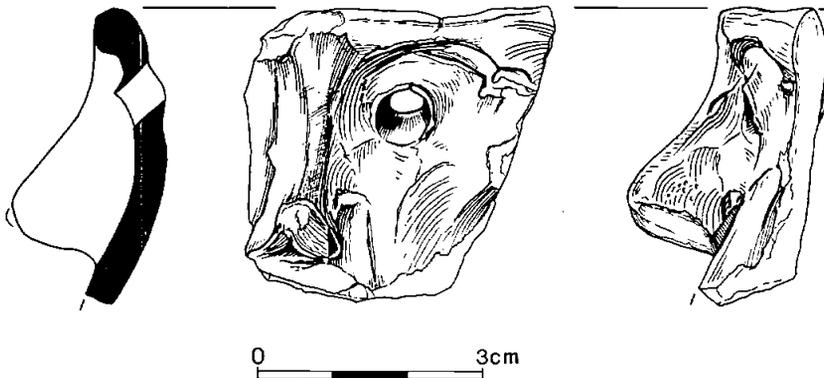


Fig 23: St Edmund's End, fragment of face mask from jug

TOPOGRAPHICAL AND DOCUMENTARY  
EVIDENCE

The site lies immediately in the eastern suburb of the medieval town. The suburb grew up outside the east gate along the roads to Kettering and Wellingborough. The excavation area lies immediately to the north of the Kettering Road shortly after the point at which it separates from the Wellingborough Road. St Edmund's church which served the suburb and gave its name to it lay opposite

the excavation area in the triangular block of land between the two roads. The church is first recorded at the end of the 12th century (Williams 1982a, 74-5). By implication the suburb can be assumed to be in existence by this date.

HISTORIC MAPS

As for St Giles' Street historic maps of the area give important topographical information but need to be

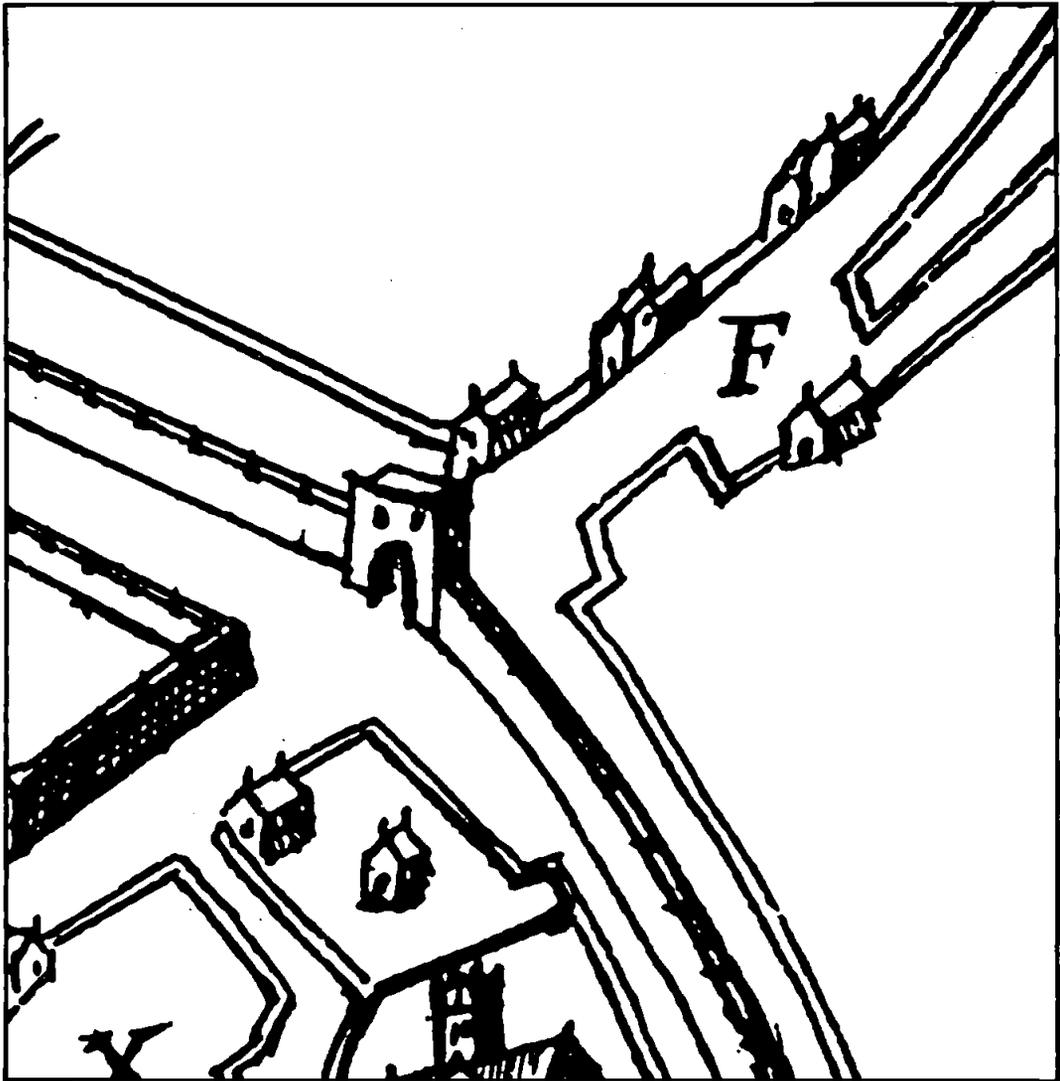


Fig 24: St Edmund's End, detail of Speed's map of 1610



Fig 25: St Edmund's End, detail of Marcus Pierce map of 1632 (redrawn from NRO Map 4671)

critically assessed. For St Edmund's End it should be borne in mind that they record a period when the suburb was in decline from its heyday in the medieval period.

*SPEED'S MAP (1610) Fig 24*

The suburban area is named as St Edmond's End and a small number of houses are shown. St Edmund's church is not shown,

however, and had already gone out of existence at this time. The east gate and defences are delineated.

*PIERCE'S MAP (1632) Fig 25*

No houses are shown in the suburb but given the map's inaccuracies elsewhere caution should be exercised. The suburb area is described either simply as lands or as cherry gardens. The excavation site is within an area recorded as 'ye lands of Mr Crosse'.

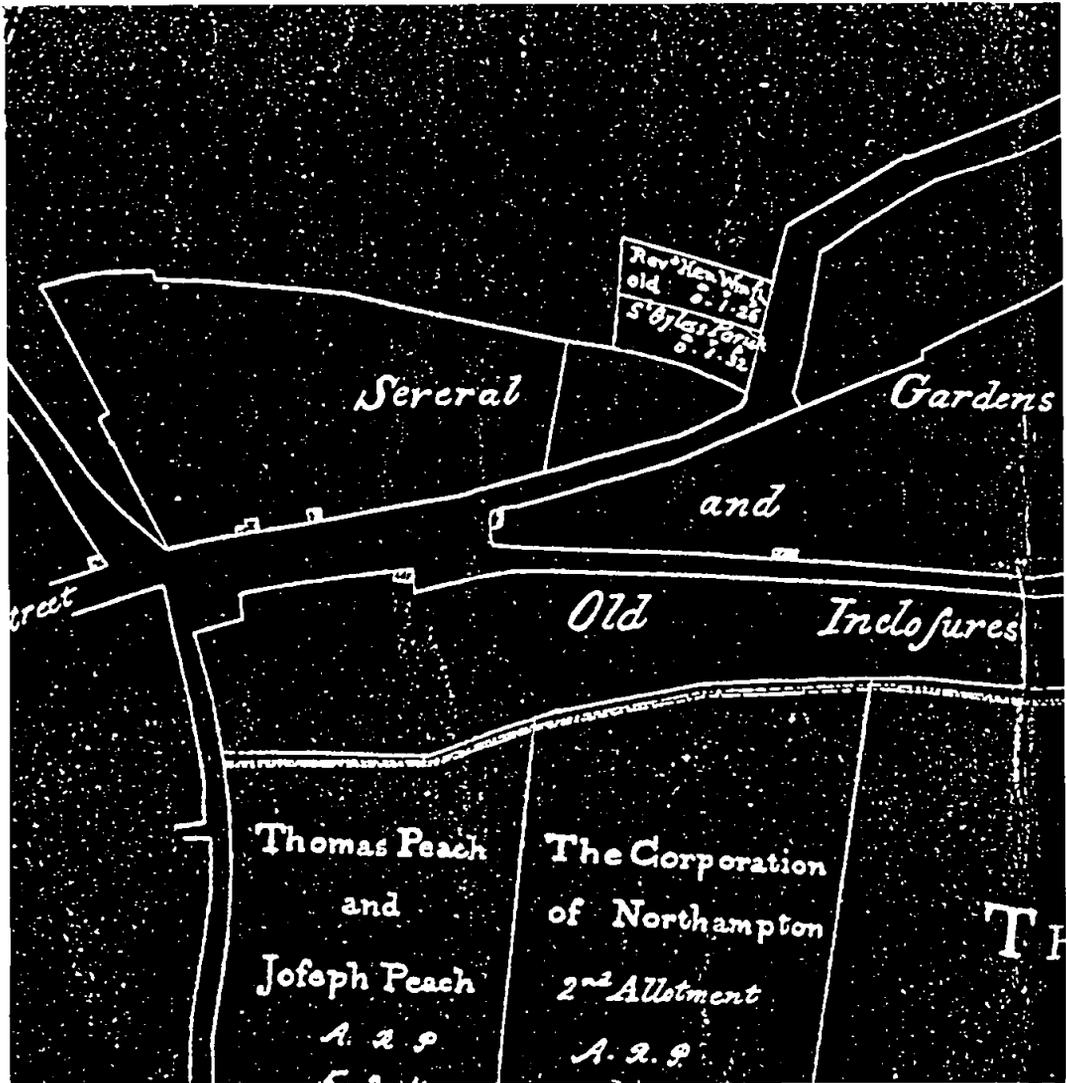


Fig 26: St Edmund's End, detail of Inclosure map of 1779

*INCLOSURE MAP (1779) (Fig 26)*

The suburban area is described as 'several Gardens and Old Inclosures' and a small number of buildings are shown which are perhaps casts doubt on the situation shown on Pierce's map. The town walls do not appear. They were ordered to be demolished at the restoration (Cox 1898, 442-4).

*WOOD AND LAW (1847) (Fig 27)*

By the mid 19th century the suburb is once again being developed with buildings fronting onto Kettering and Wellingborough Roads and the construction of terraced streets, including Kettering Gardens, leading off the main roads, elsewhere the land is still apparently in use as orchards.

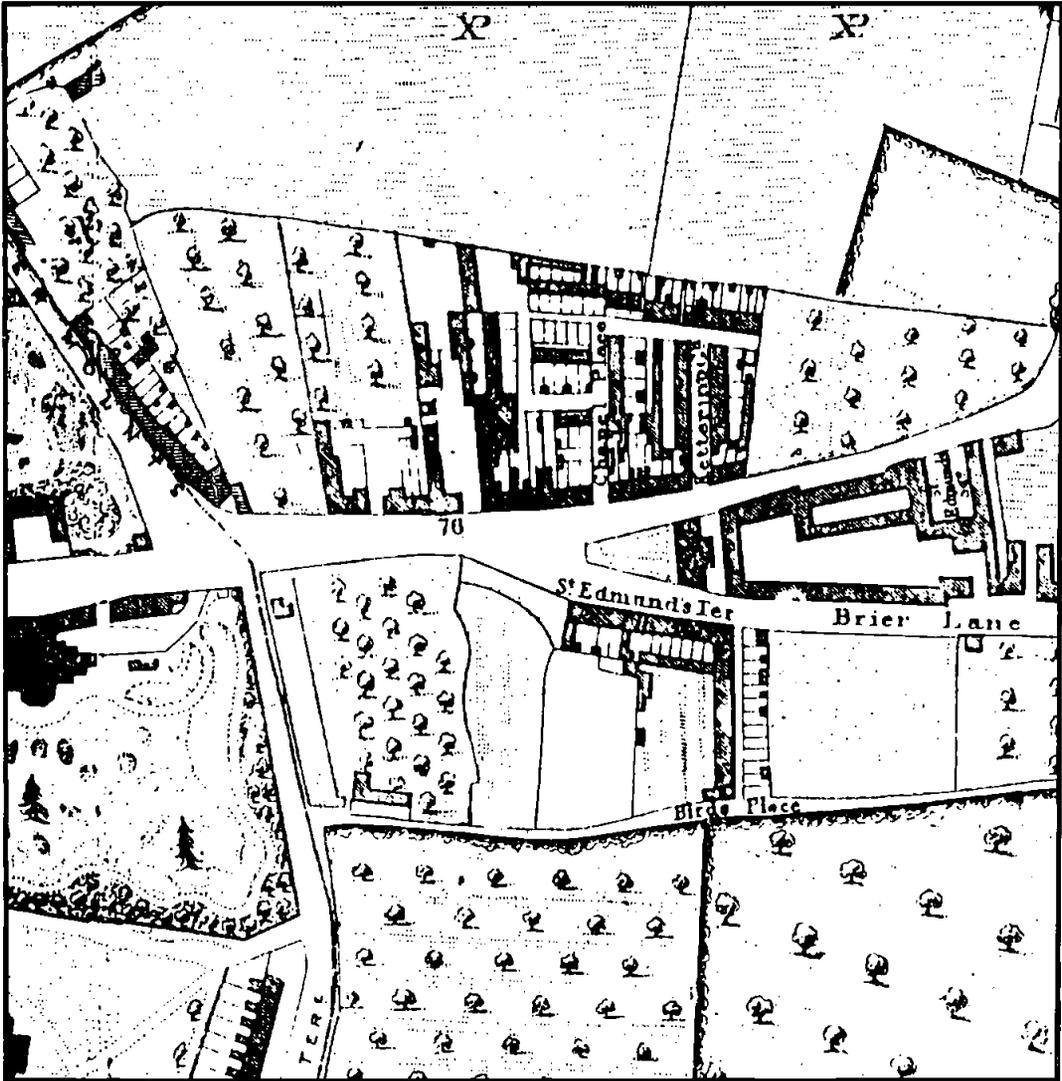


Fig 27: St Edmund's End, detail of Wood and Law's map of 1847

ORDNANCE SURVEY 1ST EDITION (1887) (Fig 28)

By this time the suburb has been almost fully developed. The excavation area is shown and can be seen to lie within a factory area. The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map identifies the factory as a boot and shoe works. This is presumably Richard Taylor and Sons shoe manufactory recorded in Kettering Road in Kelly's directories of Northamptonshire for 1894 and 1906.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The place name indices in the NRO were consulted for references to St Edmund's End. Property deeds of 15th century date onwards are held. A lease of 1423 (YZ3650) records a messuage with a garden adjoining (*messuagium cum giardino adiacente...in*



Fig 28: St Edmund's End, detail of Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1885 with trench locations overlaid

*parochia Sancti Edmundi*) which lies between two tenements to the east and west. A conveyance of 1493 (WC377) refers to a garden (*totum gardenium meum quem habeo in parochia Sancti Edmundi*), again lying between two tenements. Hence we can document the existence of tenements still in occupation in the 15th century and we may suspect that the garden of 1493 which lies between two tenements may have itself been previously the site of a tenement.

A series of deeds of the 17th to 18th centuries held in NRO refer to closes in St Edmund's End (eg NPL 433, 455, 464, 505). These are perhaps former tenements, now abandoned. Certainly few of them refer to buildings until the 19th century when building in the suburb is renewed (eg NPL2657 which also locates the site of St Edmund's Church as lying between Wellingborough and Kettering Roads).

This picture of dereliction can be traced back to the 15th to 16th centuries and perhaps even earlier. The

church of St Edmund was annexed to the rectory of St Michael in the early 15th century and at that time had the same incumbents, although separate incumbents are recorded in 1535; the church seems to have decayed around 1540 and from that time the vicars of St Giles' Street church acquired the tithes (RCHM 1985, 379). In 1550 permission was given to use stone from 'the steeple of St Edmund in Northampton' to repair the town walls and the west bridge (Cox 1898, 428). In 1570 the building of malt kilns within the centre of the town was forbidden because of the fire risk and existing kilns were ordered to be removed. Settlement was sufficiently dispersed in the eastern suburb, however, for it to be lawful 'for any freeman of the towne to place or make malte kylnes in the marholde, saint Andrewes end and St Edmond's ende' (Cox 1898, 241). The 1504 town rental (NRO) refers to a 'waste plot outside the said [East] gate' but then refers to it as 'the tenement outside...now of William Mey, late in the tenure of Simon Rede wever'. This would imply that it is a former tenement now abandoned and at first sight supports the idea of abandonment of properties in the 16th century. However, the rental of Edward I (PRO SC 12/13/38) also refers to a waste plot here.

There is no evidence that the suburb specialised in any particular trade in the medieval period. The lease of 1423 refers to a 'tenement which Thomas Wright teillour held of William Thrapston fysshur'; the garden in the conveyance of 1493 is sold to Thomas Wyrley corviser (shoemaker) and lies between a tenement of Henry Wyllymot freemason and one recently of John Chauncey gentleman, although they would not necessarily have lived in the premises; John Chauncey certainly did not, his main residence was at The Grange, by Derngate (Shaw 1991, 2). Thomas Symson 'of St Edmunde End fuller' who made a will in 1500 (NRO: Northants Early Wills fol 123v, no 440) apparently did live in the suburb and stipulates that he should be buried in the church there, while the 'waste plot' of 1504 was in the tenure of a weaver.

## DISCUSSION

In discussing the sites reported upon here it should be borne in mind that for a time in this period Northampton was one of the leading towns in the country. In a ranking of towns based on the tax (farm) paid to the crown at Domesday, Northampton

lies around 25th, paying £30 10s, an amount comparable to other medium-sized county towns such as Nottingham, Derby and Worcester (Tait 1936, 184). By 1130 its farm had been raised to £100, an unparalleled increase, and in 1184 it was further raised to £120, a sum exceeded by only London, Lincoln, Winchester and Dunwich (Biddle 1976, 500). This dramatic increase in prosperity was matched by a massive increase in size for in the medieval period, probably around the 12th century, the walled area was increased from the c. 30ha enclosed by late Saxon defences to around 30ha; only London, Norwich and York had larger defensive circuits. This prosperity was not to last, however. Already in 1275 the town was complaining of the loss of craftsmen due to high taxation (Rot Hund II, 3a) and by 1334 it had fallen back to 33rd in a ranking of towns based on the lay subsidy of that year (Hoskins 1984, 277-8). The town's relative position was little changed after the Black Death, and in a ranking based on the lay subsidy of 1377 it lies in 27th position, once again ranked alongside Nottingham and Worcester.

How do our sites fit into this background? Although both were small and their interpretation is hampered by the unavailability of their immediate street frontages for investigation, they do both nevertheless provide valuable information. As anticipated the earliest occupation evidence comes from St Giles' Street where features of 11th century date were uncovered and the pottery assemblage with its large amounts of St Neots-type Ware (T1) reflects this. The area may have lain adjacent to, or even within an extra-mural market area. A new borough of 40 burgesses is referred to at Domesday (VCH 1, 301) and the area outside the East Gate of the late Saxon town, from where roads radiate out eastwards towards Kettering, Wellingborough and Bedford and perhaps already by this date northwards towards Leicester, is the most likely candidate, putting the excavation area within the new borough. By the mid 12th century there is evidence of a substantial timber building on the site and of property division, although this may be division within, rather than between, properties. There is no evidence of a stone building on the site until the late 13th century, unless any stone buildings were restricted to the street frontage with timber building behind. This stone building may have been substantial, only small amounts of walling remained but the robber trench indicates walls of around 1m width, suggesting a

two-storey structure, with the ground floor at least of stone. It is tempting given the presence of ovens in the area to the east to equate this building with the 'Bello Fronte' of the Edward I rental which by the time of the 1504 rental is said to include an oven. The gaps in the boundaries between the building to the west and the ovens to the east would certainly imply that the two formed a single substantial property.

At St Edmund's End the earliest occupation can be dated to the 12th century. Given the large area covered by the medieval walled town it is perhaps surprising that there should already be suburbs by this date. This presumably, however, reflects the importance of the town as well as the attraction of the major road frontages. The nature of this occupation is again uncertain. The two small semi-celled structures perhaps represent some form of primitive dwelling or storage area. Similar structures, but of a slightly later (13th century) date, were found at Swan Street, a back street location within the walled town (Shaw and Steadman 1993-4, 134-6, 155). A stone building is attested at the suburban site around the same time as at St Giles' Street, or even slightly earlier. The walls here are considerably narrower, however, around 0.6m wide, and it can be suggested that they formed dwarf walls for a timber superstructure.

The later history of the two sites differs significantly. Although both stone or stone-founded buildings undergo a series of periods of repair and refurbishment the building at St Edmund's End goes out of use around 1400 and thereafter there is a long period of dereliction on the site. The building on St Giles' Street, however, continues in use until around 1525, and after a short period of disuse the map evidence demonstrates that occupation was continuous to the present day. It is tempting to associate the break in occupation with a fire in the town in 1516 recorded by Henry Lee, '...1516 was a very dry summer and upon midsummer day there was a very great fire which burnt and consumed the great part of the town of Northampton' (Lee 1932, 69).

The difference in the later settlement history of the two sites is once again reflected in the pottery assemblages. At both sites the stone building phase was marked by the presence of medieval shelly wares (T2) and Potterspurty ware (W18), the dominant fabrics in medieval Northampton. At St Giles' Street, however, fabrics with a post-1350 start date were also recovered, including a relatively large

amount of Cistercian Ware (X2a), which is generally considered not to be common in the town until after 1470. At St Edmund's End the dereliction levels include large quantities of Potterspurty Ware but no Cistercian Ware, indicating that activity had ceased in this area of the suburbs at least before the occurrence of this fabric.

The evidence from these two excavations indicates the value of looking at a sample of sites spread over different parts of the medieval town. They present an interesting contrast. Once settled the St Giles' Street site was almost continuously occupied, while the St Edmund's End site has a relatively short settlement history being in occupation primarily when Northampton was at its zenith and abandoned as the town declined. The potential of examining marginal sites is thus emphasised for it is at these sites that periods of growth and decline can best be documented, and finds assemblages can be examined without the problems of residuality inherent in the examination of long-occupied sites. For the future it is hoped that further, and preferably larger, sites in different quarters can be examined, to enable more detailed comparison across the town.

## THE ARCHIVE

The site archives have been placed in the Archaeological Archive of Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, Guildhall Road, Northampton.

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