

Excavations at the Cluniac Priory in Daventry, Northamptonshire

by

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SUMMARY

The Cluniac Priory of St. Augustine is recorded as being present on the site c1100-1526. Next to Holy Cross churchyard, late Saxon pottery was recovered from several inter-cutting pits and ditches, above which an extensive build up of more recent 18th-20th century deposits formed a raised terrace. On the western side of the site excavations showed extensive medieval quarrying of Northampton Sand Ironstone for building materials contemporary with the priory's occupation. Subsequent deposition of medieval refuse was used to landscape and re-instate the hillside and a series of later structures encroached onto the land, the last of these was a row of post-medieval cottages known to have been demolished in the 1960s.

INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned to conduct archaeological excavations at the Old Abbey Centre, The Market Square, Daventry (NGR: SP 5748 6263; Fig 1).

During recent years a wealth of work has been conducted in Daventry by Northamptonshire Archaeology on and around the former monastic precinct and its immediate environs. The site itself has been the subject of both a desk-based assessment (Soden 1998b) and trial trench evaluation (Chapman 1998), together with the building recording on a former school air raid shelter (Upson-Smith 2004). Other works within the vicinity include the Burton Memorial on the High Street (Atkins 1998a), the Moot Hall (Prentice 1999), the nearby Tesco super-market (Soden 1998a, Jones 2000), Vicar Lane (Soden 1996a, 1996b, Thompson 1997, Atkins 1998b), St. John's Square (Soden & Shaw

1994, Soden 1997a) and the White House (Soden 1997b).

All excavation in Daventry in the past decade has taken into account the seminal work led by A E Brown of Leicester University (Brown 1991). These excavations tested hypotheses concerning the existence of a putative oval enclosure of mid to late Saxon date that might have been re-utilised by the Cluniac monks in the late 11th century. Brown also reconstructed the plot layout of the medieval town. At the northern end of the High Street, the focal point of the town, lay the market place and the Cluniac Priory that dominated it. There is a dearth of information concerning the subdivision of the land, since neither deed sequences for the

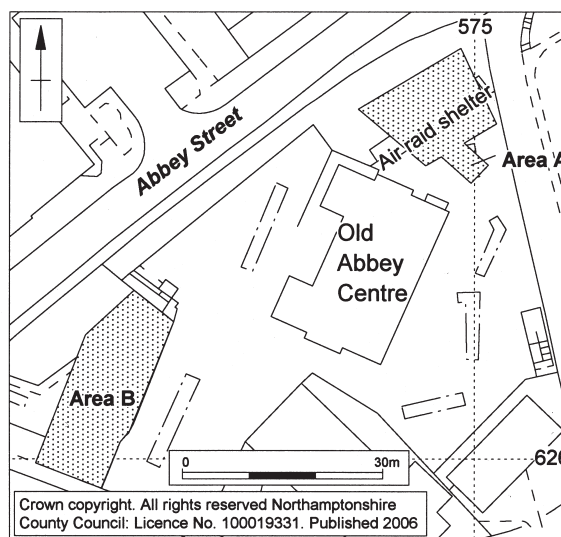


Fig 1 The location of the 2004 excavation areas

former Priory site after 1526 nor the description of its pre-Dissolution layout had survived. The work of Franklin (1988), touched upon aspects of this but only with reference to a proportion of the extant documentation. Thus, at the beginning of this project, firm information on both the medieval market square and the Cluniac Priory Precinct was scarce.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project manager was Iain Soden, and the field-work was supervised by Jim Brown. The project assistants were Nathan Flavell, Lucy Griffin, Christine Hopwood, Ben Pears, Carol Simmonds and Rob Smith. The report has been prepared jointly by Iain Soden, who is responsible for the historical and documentary background, Jim Brown, for the description of the archaeological deposits, and Paul Blinkhorn prepared the pottery report. The illustrations are by Hari Anne Jacklin. Final editing for publication was by Jim Brown, with proof reading by Andy Chapman.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The site lay on a gently rising hillside with Abbey Street running in a cutting around its northern perimeter, concentric to the form of the present hillside (Fig 1). To the north-west of the site was St John's Square, where Saxon occupation began in the 6th century and continued through to the later medieval period (Soden 1997a, 51). On the eastern side of the site lay the Holy Cross churchyard bounded by Abbey Street and Vicar Lane. In this direction the prospect of the medieval priory estate could once have been enjoyed with minimal interruption. To the south of the site the ground steadily flattened out onto a plateau where extensive medieval ironstone quarrying had resulted in the landscaping of the natural topographical contours (Soden 1997b). On the western side was the Market Square, before the priory gates and from which the head of the High Street extended. The ground gently sloped away along its route with the 12th century burgage plots clearly visible along either side of the road. The underlying geology of the site was the Marlstone Rock Bed of the Jurassic Middle Lias series (British Geological Survey sheet 185).

HISTORICAL & DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND

The site lies very close to the historic core of Daventry Cluniac Priory and the record benefits from the existence of a published Cartulary (Franklin 1988). There is precious little documentation to throw light upon the kinds of buildings which may once have stood there and the uses to which any particular part of the precinct might have been put. The situation is much better for the post-medieval period and Daventry has been relatively well researched in recent years (Brown 1991, Greenall 1999, Laughton et al 2002). However, there exist the largely unknown and hitherto untapped archives of Christchurch College, Oxford. A tiny portion has previously been published in calendar form (Denholm-Young 1931).

Very few documents relate something of the layout of the Priory buildings in the 15th-16th centuries. The cartulary made few mentions of precinct buildings, other than to confirm the existence of a list, comprising Church, cloister, guest-hall, gate-house and infirmary, hinting at the presence of an almonry and the pittance office (Franklin 1988). Underneath the monks' dormitory were the Prior's chambers and another chamber described as *le Oryall* or Oriel (Serjeantson & Adkins 1906, 112; Thompson 1914, 39-42). The Oriel appears to have looked inward since the former Prior John Ashby (aka John Daventry) was forbidden to converse with the outside world, in particular, women. There was a horse-mill in the courtyard (Denholm-Young 1931, 55[D10]). Barns and fish ponds were also mentioned as well as a disputed water conduit accessible to the general populace (Denholm-Young 1931, 61 [D32-3]; Bond in Gilchrist and Mytum 1993, 53 [after State Papers]).

Not all seemed to be well by the 15th century, an Episcopal visitation in 1442 by Bishop Alnwick recorded that Daventry Priory was in penury and several of its buildings were ruinous, a state of affairs which was laid firmly at the door of the Prior, Robert Man (Thompson 1918, 63). The Prior had been warned of this before in 1432-3 by Bishop Grey but had seemingly done nothing (Thompson 1914, 42-4). He was succeeded in 1444 and it is not known whether any rebuilding took place as a result of his being disciplined. There seems to have been a general problem with errant monks and many were to be found living off-site. Security was a problem and the house was ordered to close up the church after mass and keep the cloister gate closed. Bishop

Alnwick's visitation noted angrily that lay people were allowed to wander in and out to fill their jugs at the lavatorium taps.

The house seems to have lacked close guidance for some time since the early 13th century when it had been gradually assimilated into the Benedictine Order from its original Cluniac foundation out of La Charité-sur-Loire. This had begun with the appointment of Prior Joybert in 1216 who had been a Cluniac monk at Wenlock Priory, but changed habit to Benedictine and for some time was Prior of both Daventry Priory (1198-c1200) and the very wealthy Coventry Benedictine Cathedral Priory (1198-1216) (Matthew Paris *Hist. Minor* [Rolls Series] II, 67). This double appointment was further complicated by Joybert apparently being Prior of Bermondsey too. Daventry, Bermondsey and Wenlock were all daughter-houses of La Charité, a situation brought about by growing unrest on the borders of Normandy in the 1190s that made La Charité almost inaccessible. The Coventry appointment was with the highest assent since it was archiepiscopal to help the Papal reinstatement of the monks after they had been ejected by the errant Bishop of Coventry, Hugh Nonant, in 1189. They had lived in exile at Bury St Edmunds for almost nine years (Chron. Joscelyn de Brakelonda c1200 f147). This peculiar arrangement across otherwise very distinct orders was largely dismissed by Franklin and is backed by a number of commentators (Franklin 1988, xlii-iii; Serjeantson and Adkins 1906, II, 110-111; Greatrex 1997, 360; Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 41). Such pluralism was not uncommon and later affected Daventry again when Prior Thomas Knight was consecrated Bishop of St Asaph. He held both offices for over a decade (Serjeantson & Adkins 1906, 112 citing Cott. MSS).

The previously close link with the Cluniac order waned rapidly, although the original mother-house La Charité-sur-Loire tried to maintain its claims for a short while, bringing the dispute to a head in 1220 (Franklin 1988, xlv). At the 1432 Episcopal visitation by Bishop Grey an injunction specifically referred to the house as "*ordinis sancti Benedicti*.." or 'of the order of St Benedict' (Thompson 1914, 43). In cementing this, the links with Coventry Benedictine Priory grew (Serjeantson & Adkins 1906, II: 110-111). A friendship rooted in the middle of the 12th century was cemented with mutual confraternity rights and agreements for mutual spiritual support (Baker 1822-30, 314; Franklin 1988, doc 699). Contemporary documents relating to Coventry

continued to record a close friendship with Daventry Priory which was granted the churches of Cold Ashby and West Haddon in 1253 (Dugdale 1656, 159; Hobley 1971, 56; Franklin 1988, doc 697-8).

A Dissolution survey taken in 1526 stated that there was '*nothing standing of the church and chancel, except the walls*' (Calendar of Letters and Papers, foreign and Domestic of the reign of Henry VIII : 18 H8 (1526), 986; PRO E36/165). This made it extremely unlikely that the parish church, on the site of the present church, was ever the principal church of the monastic community since the parish church continued to be used until 1752 (Franklin 1988).

The Crown valuation prepared in 1530-2 following Dissolution in 1526 was more specific (Baker 1822-30, 316):

Daventry

The churche and chancell of the monastere of Daventr' clerelie dekaied & nothing there standing but the wall & little ... & div's windows that be glassed which said wall & glasse were taken down & the stone sowed for the re-edifieing of the tenandries in the town of Daventry & in the country belonging to the said manor & c. Therein aboute the glassed windows in the said late church to be saved & sold & c.

The Manor Place [site of the Priory]

First at the cumyng into the utter court is a gatehouse wel covered with tile and a house adioynnyng to the same su'tyme a ...house now lying in deokay the tymber whereof would be taken & c
Item a dwelling house wherein one William Spencer now dwelleth sufficient in repacion.

Item an howse for beasts there sufficient in repacion. The inner court there is a fayr large court & enpassed around about with building except a certain space lying aft North Wey of old tyme dekaied which building is good & substantial & covered with tile wherein is comprehendyd the Haull with diverse chambers the buttery, the kechyn, the pantre with all other houses of office.

The gatehouse of the inner court conteyneth in length 24 feet & in breadth 16 feet which gatehouse is covered with lead. The cloister there is in compass 24 & 4 yards in length whereof 52 yards is covered with lead and the residue is a chamber builded over the cloister which is tyled.

There is in the same cloister a laver of lead cont' in length 11 feet & more & under the said cloister is glazed.

There is a house adjoining to the cloister called the Frater (Monastic Refectory) which conteyneth in length 60 feet & more which is covered in lead.

The dorter (Monastic Dormitory) and other houses nigh unto the same which were covered with lead have much good tymber of them that would be saved.

Item diverse spouts of lead there.

In the barn yard at the cunyway in from the church is a garrett chamber which is thacked.

Item 4 barns there sufficient in repacion which be thacked.

In the dayhouse yard is a house wherein is 2 stables, an oxhouse and a cow house.

Item a calfhouse adjoining to the same.

Item a kilnhouse with a malthouse which houses be sufficient in repacion.

Final demolition of the Priory seems to have taken some time, partly because the new Oxford College that it was meant to endow was some years in being sufficiently founded. When Christchurch College was indeed founded in 1546 its early acts included a license dated 10th December 1553 for one John Jeffson to take stone from the ruins of the church, with permission for a further 40 loads (Christchurch College Archives (hereafter CCA): MS Estates 56, f18). This appeared to confirm the separateness of the monastic and the parish churches.

A 1588 valuation made no mention of the church, being more concerned with the gardens *'the house, orchard, garden, the parke (detached to the south-east) and the paradise'* (NRO Th 1666).

The survey in 1597 described *'the abbey house being old and ruinous, a barne and stables and divers houses parcel of the same converted in tenements'* (NRO Th 1671). The monastery buildings were by then serving a completely different purpose.

Those buildings that remained, while acquiring secular names, were traced through the 17th and 18th centuries with better results. The end of monastic tenure and the construction of new secular buildings, as suggested in 1597, were not specifically recorded in documents but a shift of focus towards the market place was apparent. It was possible to indicate which property was which and trace the descent of most using valuations, tenancy agreements and other, related documents. Some were recorded as having lessees or sub-lessees rather than tenants whose interest may have been short-lived and therefore appeared only once. Rarely did two documents contain the same set of data to associate a person with a property.

A reference to the market in 1602 identified the market functions that have since been associated with the Market Square as a whole. There was no mention of any shops around the area of the Market Square.

The former core Priory buildings lingered on during this time. In 1658 Christchurch College was in dispute with its tenants over dilapidations and took statements from petitioners (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 22).

Between 1695 and 1709 it was observed that the *'[parish church] chancel roof is out of repair. Abbey House is much in decay and used as a stable and pigsty. If repaired it would make a suitable house for a vicar'* (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 83, f 95). Reverend William Taylor (Curate 1716-50) continued to press

for this conversion as late as 1730. By 1752 concerns over the parish church ended when it was replaced entirely by the present church.

Disputes between the College and its tenants became increasingly frequent as Daventry began to enjoy greater economic success. In 1709 the Reverend Samuel Hartmann (Curate 1707-16) reported that complaints were reaching him of major encroachments onto the churchyard (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 91). In 1730 mention was made of land occupied by John Clark, Thomas Tomlin, Elizabeth Mobbs (Hobbs?) and Elizabeth Tomlin in houses that were said to be in good repair (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 97, f100). A rent roll of 1772 was more explicit, relating to a College lease of property to the Earl of Winchelsea that included details of the building plots (ibid f 104; Fig 2):

- A John Shaw and James Riley, a dwelling house on the east side of ye Market Hill ...and a garden plot
- E, F William Cullingworth, a dwelling house divided into two tenements on the east side of the Market Hill

John Shaw and James Riley were cloth merchants and always appeared together whilst William Cullingworth was a bookseller and surveyor (Hatley 1973, 40; NRO indexes & Trade Directories). An observer of that date stated that *"many of ye cottages, or small tenements are inhabited by handicraft-tradesmen"* (op cit f 122).

A further account was taken in that year which related the following entries (CCA: MS Estates 56 f 111):

- A, B John Shaw and James Riley, a dwelling house the east side of the Market Hill and a garden joining; in tenantable repair £6
- B, C A little tenement in the occupation of Elizabeth Litchfield, in indifferent repair £1
- D A dwelling house late Richard Edwards, tenantable repair £3
- E, F Wm Cullingworth, a dwelling house divided into two tenements on the east side of Market Hill, tenantable repair £5

Richard Edwards was the earliest tenant who could be traced in 1730 but there was no conclusive detail as to the whereabouts of his holding. Later references to tenants appeared from 1772. Recourse to a 1788 map of the High Street, placed the Shaw and Riley tenement perfectly, constituting the first proper reference to the post-monastic buildings (NRO: Map 1701). Richard Edwards was also placed as the adjacent tenant or sub-tenant. The map showed three

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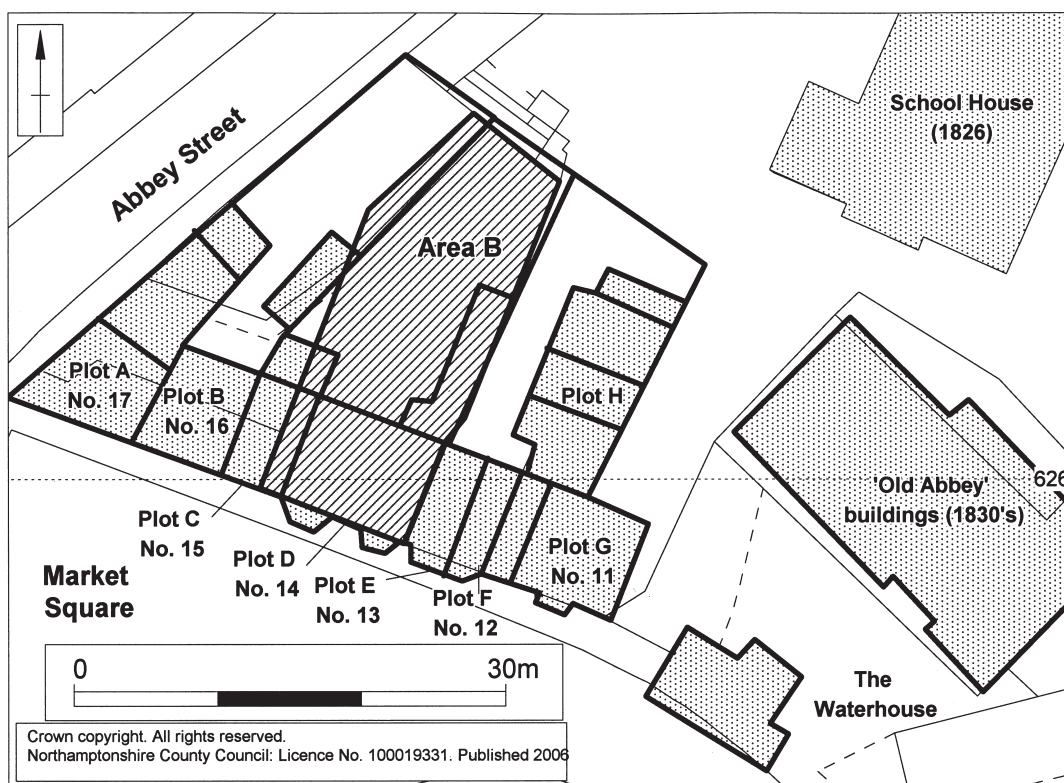


Fig 2 A reconstruction of building plots A-H showing the position of the Area B excavation

properties on the east side of Market Hill, associated with three separate owners or tenants from north to south: Shaw and Riley, Richard Edwards and Henry Line, a bookbinder (Hatley 1973, 38). How old these properties already were is a matter of conjecture. A valuation of 1695 suggested that five tenements existed by that time between the Abbey House and the Plume of Feathers (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 89). The sale of a lease in 1787 provided opportunity for the properties to be valued:

- A, B, C Shaw and Riley, a house, shop, warehouse and garden, two other houses, a cottage house (part of wider holding)
- D Charles Edwards (Probably the son of Richard Edwards), a house
- E, F Wm Cullingworth, a cottage house in the Market Place and a house in the Market Place
- G Jonathan Line (Probably the son of Henry Line), a house

It was stated as part of this valuation that the lease

of the Abbey House had been set to run for 21 years from 1787 and the other properties for 40 years (CCA: MS Estates 56 f 142). Earlier they were all said to have been renewed in 1773, 1765 and 1758, suggesting that all the properties mentioned had been in existence by 1758 (ibid f 136).

In 1800 part of the Christchurch College estate was leased to Reverend William Rose and a list was produced of the sub-lessees (CCA: MS Estates f 150):

- A, B, C Shaw & Riley, a house and mercers' shop, warehouse, two other houses and a cottage £28, all in pretty good repair
- D Charles Edwards, now widow Muddiman £1, 10s in tolerably good repair
- E, F Wm Cullingworth, two houses in the market place... in middling repair
- H Wm Faulkner, now George Faulkner, £1, 15s a little out of repair

In 1816 a valuation was carried out of over sixty

properties in Daventry owned by Christchurch College (CCA: MS Estates 56, f237). On the market Hill were recorded:

- ? Wagstaff
- ? Andrew
- D Linnell
- G Simcock

John Simcock continued to be mentioned after this but there was a William Simcock, tailor, mentioned from 1777 in proximity to Richard Edwards, so the Simcock tenancy probably went back into the third

quarter of the 18th century (Hatley 1973, 39; Trade directory 1791).

In the early 19th century attention turned once more to the former Priory core. In 1823 William Litchfield, a builder, was reported to have 'surveyed the old abbey which is in a ruinous state and the north end cannot stand long. The late storm has opened the fractures in the walls very much. The poor people who live in the cottages adjoining the end wall "will at some very early day be found buried in the ruin'. (CCA: MS Estates 56, f 246, f 255; Plate 1, Fig 3). It confirmed in detail what was inferred

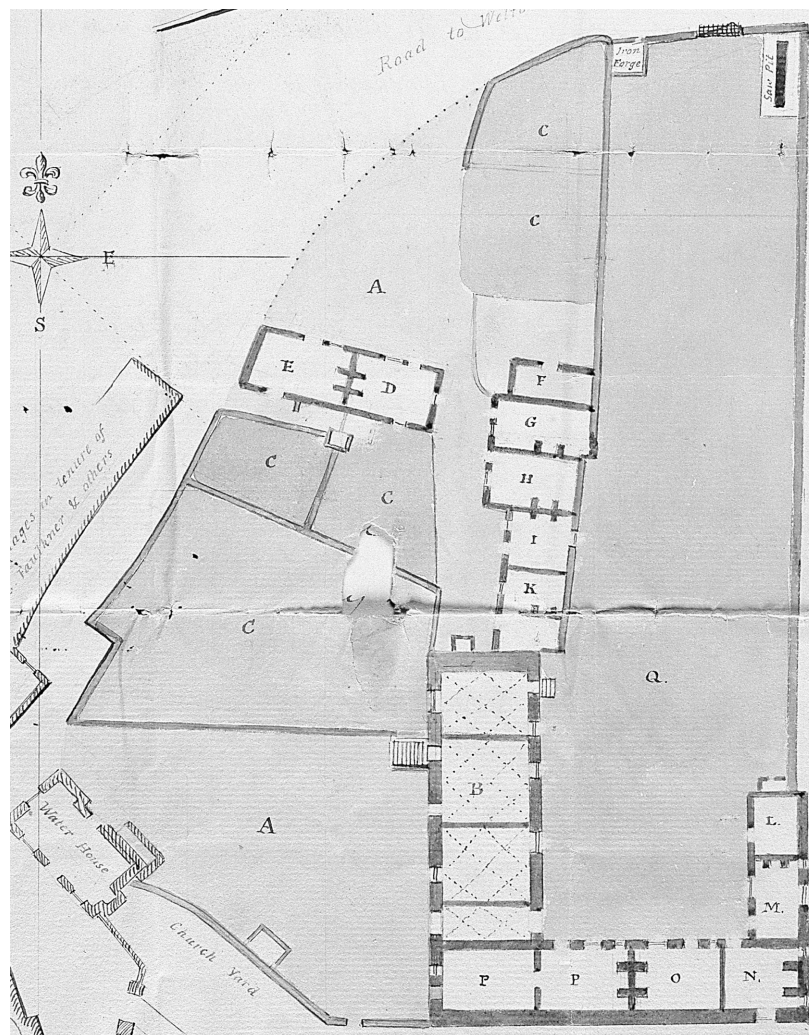


Plate 1 An extract from the 1824 plan of Daventry Priory in the archives of Christchurch College, Oxford, published by kind permission of the archivist (CCA: MS Estates 56 f255)

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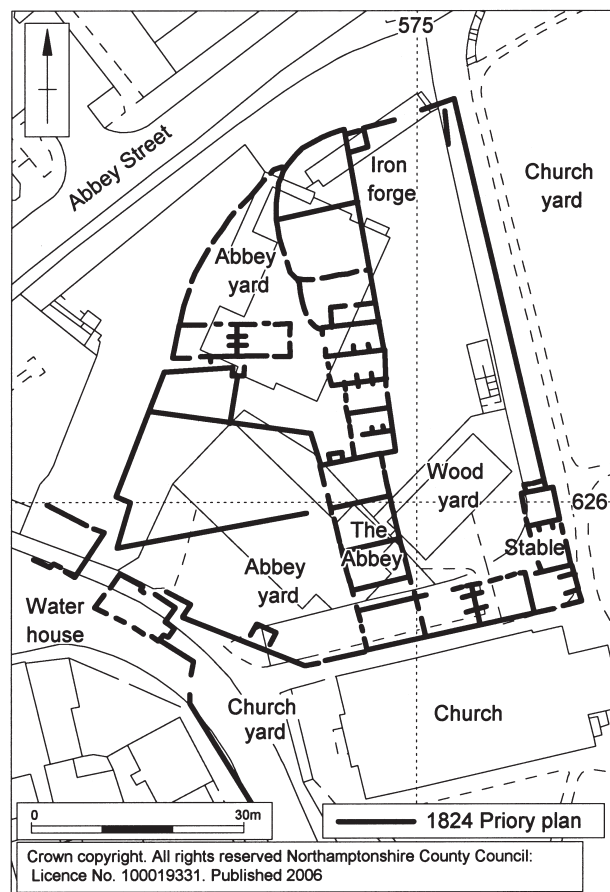


Fig 3 The 1824 (Christchurch College) priory plan superimposed on the modern base map

from the 1803 Inclosure Map of Daventry (NRO Map 3005). It also placed accurately the location of the west and south sides of the Priory cloister.

The 1823 survey placed all the nearby tenants or owners on a map, including the end of the Market Place row. Mr Simcock, tailor, was shown as the owner of the house nearest the water-house, while the rear wing was the Faulkner tenancy, who were silk framework-knitters.

An 1837 rental recorded all the houses above the rank of cottage (CCA: MS Estates 56, 338). Lying on the Market Hill and under the chief tenant William Rose, were:

- D Joseph York (Carpenter)
- E? Mrs Dumbleton (no trade)
- F? Mrs Tipler (no trade – Sarah Tipler, housekeeper, on the 1841 census)
- G John Simcock (Tailor)

In 1844 a valuation was carried out of the Christchurch estates leased to W. Rose (CCA: MS Estates 57, f 27-8). It included two recognisable cottages on the site:

- C Mr Thomas Brown, a house and draper's shop
£25
- B Mr William Collins, a house and hairdresser's shop
£13

A note was attached which summed up the economic state of Daventry at that time... *'the railway having diverted travelling from the roads and the reduced coach establishments of servants and dependents has diminished the trade of the shop'*. It went on to note *'the buildings are all thatched'* and added *'[these] houses have been greatly improved by the sub-lessee Mr York. He has rebuilt them, they are stated good buildings worth the rent set against them.'*

Recourse to the 1851 census corroborated the continuity of trades, and in this case the tenants of the whole row comprised:

- A William Hows (Grocer)
- B William Collins (Hairdresser; actually called Collard here)
- C Thomas Brown (Draper and tailor, with his wife, a dressmaker)
- D Charles Linnell (Plumber and glazier)
- E, F 2 Houses uninhabited
- G John Simcock (Parish clerk and tailor)

These seven properties correlated exactly with the divisions discernible on the 1883 Ordnance Survey map as those lying between Abbey Street and the water-house.

The properties which lay on the excavated Area B were those of Charles Linnell, plumber and glazier and Thomas Brown, draper and tailor. Both were tenants of the sub-lessee, Joseph York.

In 1858 a further valuation was taken of the Christchurch College estate (CCA:MS Estates 57, f88):

- A 61, house & grocer's shop, stone-built and tiled, Wm Howse £20
- B 62, house and hairdresser's shop, stone-built and tiled, Wm Collins £15
- C 63, house etc, brick-built and slated, Brown £15

'Howes Seed Dealer' can be seen in a photograph of 1897 as the very end property adjoining Abbey Street (Greenall 1999, fig 77). Trade Directories confirmed this as 17 Market Place and showed that Howes was based there for over forty years. The concern had changed by 1906 to J W Elliott, hairdresser, but who had subsequently moved on by 1910 which robbed the row of its last commercial concern. An aerial photograph of 1947 indicated the loss of the former Cullingworth, Simcock and Faulkner properties (E-H) in the intervening years (*ibid* frontispiece). The remainder of the row, A-D, was demolished in the early 1960s, in a poor state of repair.

Census records taken each decade 1861-91 showed a stable core to the row, but with a propensity for more sub-letting, so the number of households increased, although the number of properties did not. Howes (A), Collins (B), Brown (C) and Joseph York (D), remained constant through the 1850s, '60s, '70s and '80s.

The Christchurch College archives, together with the census records and trade directories, confirmed

that the single archaeologically excavated plot was that of number 14 Market Place and that it was probably one of the most settled tenancies in the row throughout the late 18th -19th centuries. Its sub-tenants were of largely notable trades while Joseph York was responsible for the refurbishment of much of the row in the second quarter of the 19th century. The excavations extended into plot C, 15 Market Place, equally discernible in documents for much of the time. Since the landlord, Christchurch College, Oxford, kept such good records from c1772, it is conjectured that they were built in the middle of the 18th century.

METHODOLOGY

Two areas were investigated, Area A and Area B (Fig 1). Excavation of the upper levels was carried out using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Wherever possible, the exposed archaeological deposits were sampled by hand to the surface of the natural to establish the sequence. All discrete features were sampled at 50%, sampling of recognisable structures and industrial features was conducted at 100% and approximately 10% of all ditches were examined.

A full record was made of the chronology, character and composition of the archaeological deposits and included plans, drawn sections, levels, photographs, a context register and samples of finds. This data was tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid with levels calculated to Ordnance Survey Datum. The excavations were conducted with the approval of the Northamptonshire Historic Environments Team Leader and ran concurrently with a series of site visits to monitor the work.

THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF CHRONOLOGY

Late Saxon activity (c900-1100) in Area A, dated by the pottery assemblage, was associated with the settlement evident at St. John's Square (Soden & Shaw 1994; Soden 1997a). Subsequent Norman to high medieval activity (c1100-c1250) was associated with the foundation of the Priory precinct and the impact of Norman town planning (Greenall 1999, 14-15). The later medieval activity (c1250-1526) was considered to result from the monastic tenure of the Priory precinct. Post-medieval activity comprised the period after the Dissolution of the Priory from 1526 onwards.

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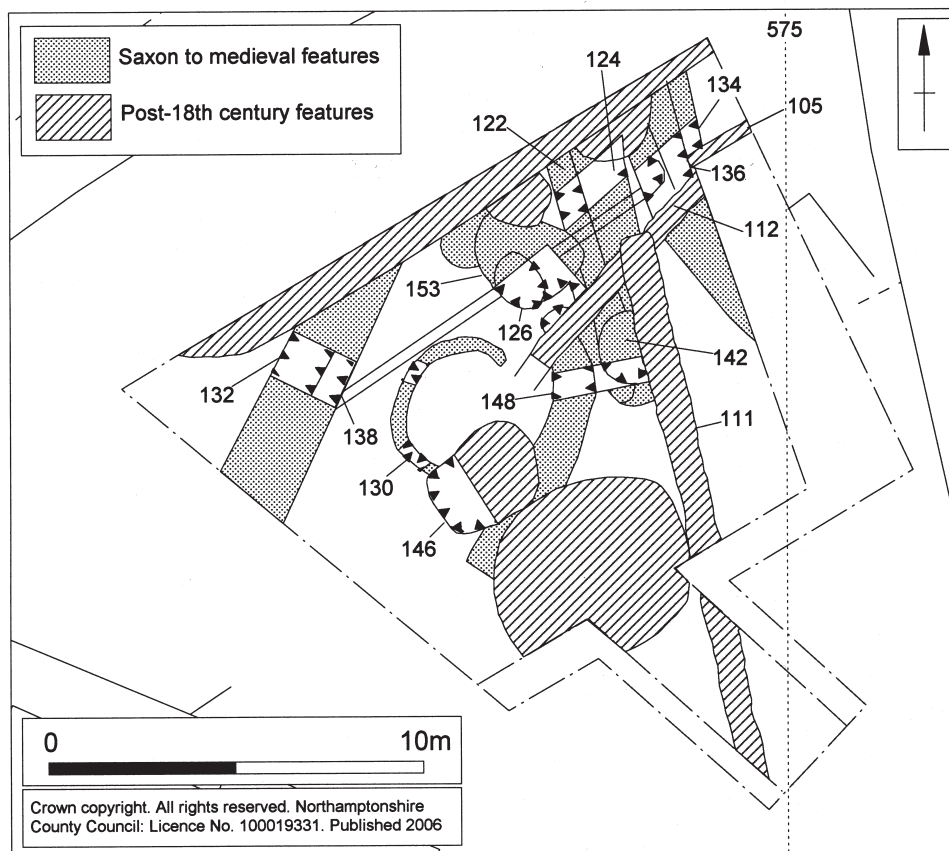


Fig 4 The plan of the Area A features cut into the natural

EXCAVATION AREA A

The area was located immediately to the west of the Holy Cross churchyard and adjacent to Abbey Street on a rising embankment beneath the former air raid shelter (Fig 4). The trench was 17.7m long by 12m wide with a 2.5m wide by 6m extension on the southern side. Northamptonshire Sand with Ironstone was encountered rising up gradually towards the south at Ordnance Survey Datum 144.51m.

Late Saxon

Pits up to 1.5m diameter and ditches up to 1.5m wide were located in the north-east corner of Area A, and contained large quantities of pottery. These extended outside the excavation area north towards Abbey Street.

There were three main ditches [134], [124] & [148] the first two with recuts, and all followed a north to south alignment. They each had steep sides and were filled with similar clayey loams containing ironstone fragments, like that through which they had been cut. Ditch [134] appeared to curve eastward into the adjacent Holy Cross churchyard and was discrete from the other

two; it was recut once [136]. Ditch [124], and its recut [122], terminated within the excavation area. Ditch [148] ran under the Old Abbey School building to the south-west and had a terminal within the excavation area.

Within the same concentration of features were two substantial flat bottomed pits. Pit [126] cut pit [153], and both were dug after ditch [122] had already been filled in.

Norman and High medieval

A narrow curvilinear gully [130] encompassed a semi-circular area 3.5m in diameter. The feature had been truncated at both ends by 19th century activity.

Late medieval

A 1.8m wide well shaft [142] was excavated to a depth of 1.2m. It cut through the late Saxon ditch [124] and produced pottery mixed with earlier residual material.

A ditch [138], with a recut [132], crossing the north-west corner of Area A, contained no datable finds but is thought to be of medieval origin.

Post-medieval

Two rough-coursed, un-mortared ironstone retaining walls, [112] and [105], lay on north-east to north-west alignments but were set at slightly different angles. Wall [112] was less substantial and earlier than wall [105], which was almost 1.7m high when the face was exposed. A 1.0m wide stone-lined drain [111], aligned north-south and capped with ironstone slabs, terminated at the base of the slope with an open-ended aperture built into the foundation of the earlier of the two walls [112].

After demolition of wall [112] a thick deposit of topsoil was dumped over Area A raising the level of the ground. To contain this material the side of the bank was cut back and revetment wall [105] was built. Much of the stone employed was reused and included broken gravestones, with inscribed dates as late as 1802.

EXCAVATION AREA B

This comprised a roughly rectangular piece of land c30m long by 15m wide (Fig 5). The area was adjusted very slightly to take in what was quickly recognised as a whole, relatively intact, post-medieval plot on the Market Place frontage.

Late Saxon

There were no remains which derived from this phase, at least partly as a result of destruction from later quarrying.

Norman and High medieval

The entire excavated area had been quarried for its stone. Only tiny portions of the natural bedrock survived as ridges or pylons (Fig 5). On top of just such a pylon lay a cut stone block (0.7m by 0.3m by 0.3m) with part of a plug/feather hole in it. The pylon beneath had a putlog hole cut into it, possibly connected with a horizontal scaffold for the winding-gear needed to winch the stones out of the quarry. The quarry was tested for depth in three places. The base was positively identified at a depth of 2.4m.

The backfill comprised mainly quarry waste with 13th-14th century domestic refuse making up the missing volume of quarried stone.

Later medieval

It is unclear exactly how long it might take quarry deposits to settle sufficiently to dig stable pits and ditches into it. The features which were cut into this material comprised ditches up to 1.5m wide and the same deep [385, 292 & 332], with concentrations of pits up to 2m wide and 1m deep [330, 288, 284, 222, 338]. One large ditch [292] had also been located further to the south-east in a 1998 evaluation trench (Chapman 1998, F1/8). There was a realignment of ditches [300] and [385], which seemed to have curved and were straightened out to form [332] and [292], both of similar sizes to their predecessors.

Near the western end of the site lay the remains of a substantial ironstone building constructed in coursed rubble with constituent stones of varied sizes up to 0.5m across. Only two walls remained to a height of over 1.0m where they joined [211 & 212]. The east wall was 1m wide while the north wall was 1.3m wide. There were no surviving floors. The building would have measured at least 8.5m by 6m. Outside the junction of the walls lay a 1.3m square area of flat ironstone blocks [296]. These were unworn,

so were unlikely to have been exterior hard standing, but may have played the part of a splash-board, to take away roof-water collected in a gutter-spout above. The absence of wear or water-scouring suggests that it was short-lived.

Following the demise of this building, a flimsy ironstone foundation supporting a timber structure [264] was constructed immediately to its rear, measuring c3.5m by c3.5m, and lay at an angle to the main frontage. A ditch or gully appeared to have partly enclosed the structure [340]. The interior comprised almost exclusively a dark brown clayey loam, redolent of topsoil, but sterile of finds. Some agricultural use seems a possibility.

Post-medieval

There were no finds for any occupation on the site between the Dissolution and the late 17th century. The tenements appeared to mark new occupation on the site in the later 18th century.

The remains comprised a 0.23m brick and ironstone wall [205] connected to ironstone foundations. The wall was carried east to link to the wall of the rear garden. In order to take proper account of the potentially unstable quarry fill the rear wall was carried down to a depth of 1.8m. The tenement used the old medieval building's east wall [211] as its interior dividing wall. Part of the rear wall seemed to have been rebuilt, entirely in brick. Possibly contemporary with this was the ironstone cellar in the rear half of the building, measuring c4m by c2.5m. It survived to a depth of 1.8m and utilised the existing rear wall foundation. The interior was lit by a single, high-level window embrasure in the east wall, which was lined with brick. Access was by a flight of stone stairs which were turned around an ash-pit at the eastern end and built from Regency-type bricks that dated before the Brick Tax repeal of 1851. The interior of the pit contained mainly ash, soil, brick and roof tile from the superstructure, with parts of a former iron grating. The west and south ironstone cellar walls were 0.2m thick, unmortared and simply firmed up earth behind.

Dividing the tenement was a brick wall re-utilising the east wall of the old medieval building [211]. Onto the edge of this was laid a single line of red brick on top of a bed of welsh slate. This appeared to be an anti-damp measure and may have been the base for a brick dry-lining of the wall.

The east half of the tenement appeared to have been one room dominated by an inglenook fireplace on the east wall. There were various foundation pads and a pit [368, 400, 404]. Postholes had been driven into the clay of the room nearby. Except where the cellar lay, the floors comprised red earthenware quarry tiles.

To the rear had been dug a sequence of rubbish pits up to 1.5m in diameter [215, 228, 252]. These were against the boundary wall of the property. Two of these had stone linings to allow them to be emptied repeatedly. The pit sequence was ended by the digging of a stone and brick-lined well [214]. The fill of this well indicated that it went out of use in the 19th century and the last rear garden wall, dated by a stamped commemorative brick to post-1910, was safely carried over it by a relieving arch. Two other wells lay further back in the garden [219, 217], both were last in use in the 19th or early 20th centuries.

SAXON, MEDIEVAL AND EARLY POST-MEDIEVAL
POTTERY
by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 944 sherds with a total

EXCAVATIONS AT THE CLUNIAN PRIORY IN DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

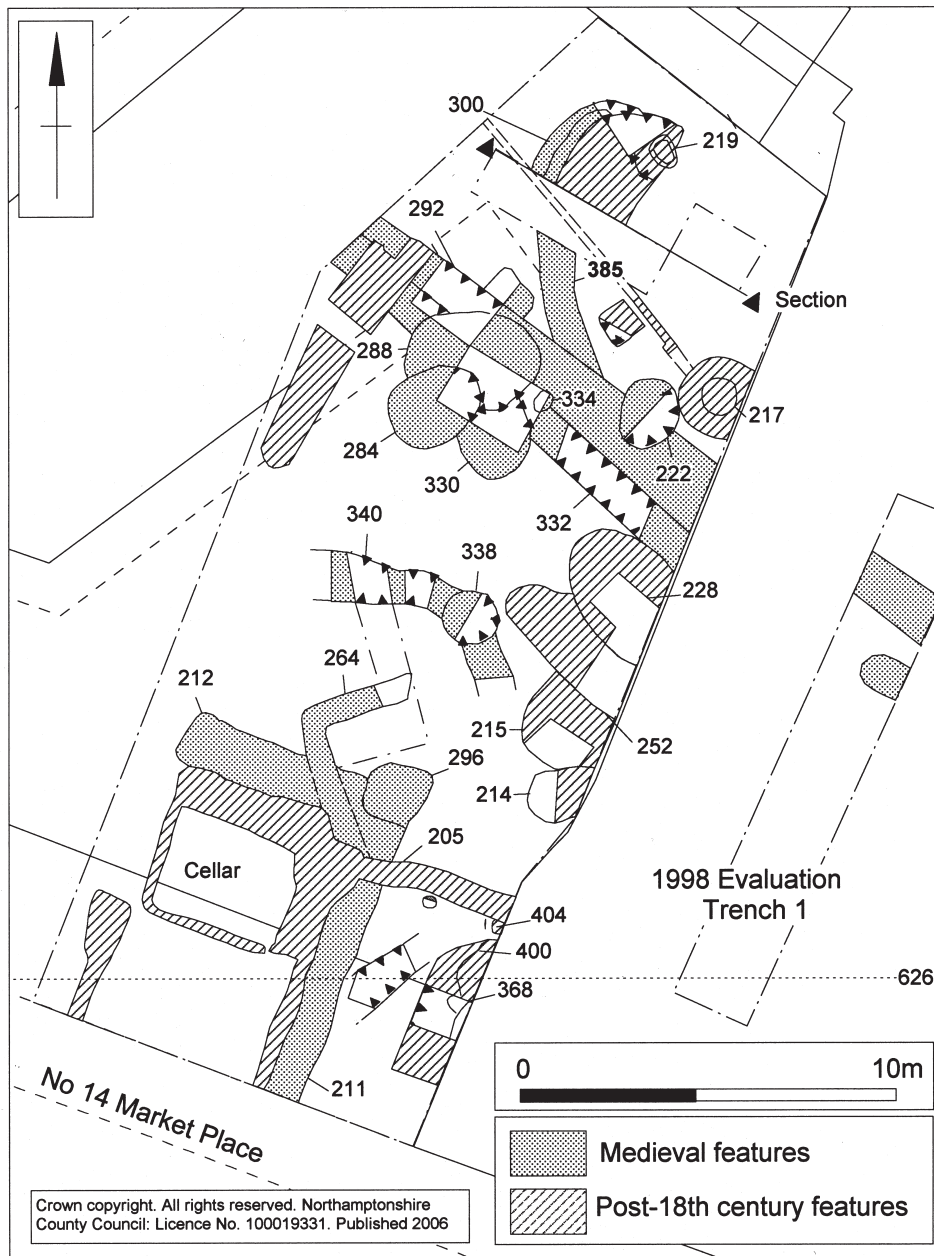


Fig 5 The plan of the Area B features cut into the medieval quarry fill

weight of 14,908g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference was 6.93. Aside from a small group of early to middle Saxon pottery, the entire assemblage was Saxo-Norman or later. Activity continued

throughout the medieval period until around the time of the Dissolution, after which no pottery was deposited at the site until the late 17th century.

EARLY-MIDDLE SAXON POTTERY

A small assemblage of early to middle Saxon hand-built pottery was noted:

FABRIC 1: Chaff. Moderate to dense chaff voids up to 10mm, few other visible inclusions except for rare quartz or sandstone grains up to 1mm. 2 sherds, 16g, EVE = 0.

FABRIC 2: Fine quartz. Moderate to dense sub-angular quartz less than 0.5mm, rare calcareous material and flint up to 2mm. 4 sherds, 22g, EVE = 0.02.

FABRIC 3: Sandstone. Sub-angular limps of sandstone up to 2mm, some with ferrous cement, free quartz grains up to 1mm,

rare to sparse sub-rounded iron ore up to 2mm. 2 sherds, 16g, EVE = 0.

The range of fabrics was typical of contemporary sites in the county. The early to middle Saxon assemblage was comparable with the material from the nearby St John's Square excavation (Blinkhorn 1997, 71-2).

The early to middle Saxon pottery is dated within the period AD450-850, based on the absence of decorated sherds. Decorating hand-built pottery ceased around the beginning of the 7th century, but it cannot be said that an assemblage that produced only plain sherds was after this date. Usually, decorated hand-built pottery comprises around 3-4% of domestic assemblages, as was the case at Mucking in Essex (Hamerow 1993).

MEDIEVAL POTTERY

Fabrics

The late Saxon and medieval pottery was quantified using the chronology and coding system of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS):

F100: St Neots ware,	AD850-1100.	4 sherds, 26g, EVE = 0.13.
F205: Stamford ware,	AD850-1250.	9 sherds, 69g, EVE = 0.
F207: Cotswolds-type Oolitic ware,	AD975-1150.	14 sherds, 193g, EVE = 0.24.
F200: T1 (2) type St. Neots Ware,	AD1000-1200.	145 sherds, 1,114g, EVE = 0.79.
F330: Shelly Coarseware,	AD1100-1400.	480 sherds, 7,520g, EVE = 5.29.
F360: Banbury ware,	12th-14th century.	14 sherds, 314g, EVE = 0.26.
F319: Lyveden/Stanian 'A' ware,	AD1150-1400.	3 sherds, 92g, EVE = 0.
F331: Developed Stamford ware,	L12th-E13th century.	1 sherd, 3g, EVE = 0.
F324: Brill/Boarstall Ware,	AD1200-1600.	9 sherds, 163g, EVE = 0.
F320: Lyveden/Stanian 'B' ware,	AD1225-1400.	5 sherds, 53g, EVE = 0.15.
F329: Potterspury ware,	AD1250-1600.	6 sherds, 125g, EVE = 0.
F403: Midland Purple ware,	AD1450-1600.	10 sherds, 532g, EVE = 0.
F404: Cistercian ware,	AD1470-1550.	2 sherds, 6g, EVE = 0.05.
F409: Staffordshire Slipwares,	AD1680-1750.	5 sherds, 44g.
F410: Tin-glazed Earthenwares,	17th-18th century.	1 sherd, 3g.
F412: Chinese Porcelain,	16th century +.	20 sherds, 130g.
F413: Manganese Mottled Ware,	L17th-18th century.	20 sherds, 130g.
F415: Creamware,	AD1740-19th century	64 sherds, 899g.
F417: Nottingham Stoneware,	AD1750+.	4 sherds, 288g.
F420: Cologne/Westerwald Stoneware,	AD1610+.	1 sherd, 1g.
F426: Iron-glazed Earthenwares,	L17th century +.	16 sherds, 283g.
F429: White salt-glazed stoneware,	AD1720-1800.	15 sherds, 114g.
F438: English Stoneware,	L17th century +.	2 sherds, 18g.
F1000: Mass-produced wares.	19th-20th century.	102 sherds, 2,591g.

Table 1: Chronology of the RSP Ceramic Phasing System

RSP Phase	Defining Wares	Chronology
LS4	St. Neots type T1 (2)	11th century
Ph0	Shelly Coarsewares, Sandy Coarsewares	c1100-1150
Ph1	Lyveden/Stanian 'A' Ware	c1150-early 13thC
Ph2/0	Lyveden/Stanian 'B', Brill/Boarstall ware	early-late 13thC
Ph2/2	Potterspury Ware	late 13thC-1400
Ph4	Lyveden/Stanian 'D' Ware	c1400-1450
Ph5	Late Medieval Oxidized Ware, Cistercian ware, Midland Purple	c1450-1500

EXCAVATIONS AT THE CLUNIAN PRIORY IN DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Chronology

The medieval pottery was dated using the relative seriated phase chronology (RSP) as specified in the County Type-Series. The system attributes to each ceramic group a phase date rather than absolute chronology. The phases were based on the presence and absence of ‘major wares’ within each individual assemblage, with the earliest known date of the chronologically latest ware within each group defining the phase date. The chronology and the defining wares are shown in Table 1.

The presence of Cotswolds wares strongly suggested contact with Oxford, where it was the dominant ware during most of the 11th century (Mellor 1994). Medieval Oxford ware, F345, was entirely absent from the site suggesting that trade declined sharply before the last quarter of the 11th century. Daventry is on the extreme western edge of the distribution of Lyveden and Stanion wares, accounting for their absence.

The lack of Red Earthenwares, F407, and Midland Blackwares, F411, extremely common on contemporary domestic sites elsewhere in the county, suggests that the site was abandoned before the middle of the 16th century, probably due to the Dissolution. The sudden, complete hiatus in pottery deposition at the Dissolution suggested that the Abbey was the source of most of the medieval ceramic from the site. Pottery only began to be deposited again in the later years of the 17th century. Pottery of 18th century date comprised entirely fine tableware such as Creamware and white salt-glazed stoneware, supporting a domestic source, see Soden below.

Table 2: Pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by number, weight and EVE, all fabrics

Phase	No	Wt	EVE	Mean sherd wt
LS4	92	736	0.58	8.0g
Ph0	419	5155	3.35	12.3g
Ph1	5	62	0	12.4g
Ph2/0	94	2194	2.27	23.3g
Ph2/2	58	912	0.48	15.7g
Ph4	0	0	0	0
Ph5	11	475	0.18	43.2g
M16th – L17thC	0	0	0	0
L17th – E18th C	26	218	0	8.4g
E18th E19thC	133	2550	0	19.2g
19thC	104	2600	0	25.0g
Total	942	14914	6.86	

Medieval Pottery Occurrence

The pottery occurrence shows a pattern which is common on sites in the county. The Saxo-Norman assemblages were dominated by late St. Neots ware, along with small quantities of regional imports. At the onset of the medieval period, the former fell rapidly from use in the face of competition from the new shelly ware industries.

As glazed ware industries such as Brill, Lyveden and Potters-pury introduced their products, the shelly wares comprised a smaller but still dominant share of the assemblage. Residuality was generally low in the medieval phases, except for Ph5, where shelly ware comprised nearly 95% of the assemblage, despite the fact that it had fallen from use by that time.

All the pottery was of local types. Medieval religious houses were invariably places of power and wealth and were often able to indulge in trade for luxury items. This was often reflected in the range of pottery types present. At Eynsham Abbey, Oxfordshire, small amounts of French and Spanish pottery were noted in the later medieval deposits, whilst French and Rhenish pottery was present at St. Mary’s Cathedral Priory, Coventry and its nearby Charterhouse (Blinkhorn 2003, 175-6; Clarke and Soden 2003a, 108; Clarke and Soden 2003b, 115; Soden 1995, 94). It may be that such types were also present at Daventry Priory, but the principal areas of monastic dumping have not yet been found.

Medieval Vessel Use

The range of vessels in use at the site was very restricted, being confined wholly to jars, bowls and jugs, apart from a few fragments of late medieval Cistercian ware cups. This was unusual for religious houses of the medieval period, where the demands of mass catering showed in the range of pottery in use. At Eynsham Abbey a wide range of later medieval vessels such as dripping dishes, skillets, bottles, flasks and an aquamanile were noted (Blinkhorn 2003a). St. James Abbey in Northampton produced a similarly restricted range of vessels as at Daventry (Blinkhorn 2003b). The range of vessel forms may therefore be a reflection of the conservatism of the potters of the region rather than the culinary regimes of the religious houses. The practice of delineating the various uses of parts of the monastic complex and precinct often gave rise to specific vessel forms and fabrics in specific places which may be a factor.

Cross Fits

The entire medieval assemblage was examined for cross-fits and none were made. Each dump of pottery was a discrete group, and represented a continual process of domestic refuse disposal.

LATER POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS

by Iain Soden

Three late post-medieval pits that contained ceramics were totally excavated. From the dating of the pottery, each was relatively closely tied to the tenure of a particular family that provided a comparative view of status and trades. It was possible to determine who used the pottery and where it originated from in the home and provides a starting point for comparative studies of household ceramics in this relatively well documented period. The pottery is presented in the manner of a traditional inventory.

Pit [252] (Plot D)

The pottery may be dated to the late 18th century and as such was probably deposited during the Edwards tenure (1772-88). Richard Edwards was a brickmaker.

From the Kitchen/table

- Plain, white salt-glazed stoneware dish
- 2 Plain Nottingham stoneware dishes
- 1 Staffordshire engine-turned red stoneware tea-pot with sprigging (rare on Northamptonshire sites)
- 3 Chinoiserie porcelain dishes
- 2 Chinoiserie tea cups
- 1 Satsuma-type porcelain tea cup
- 1 Creamware tankard
- 3 Creamware bowls
- 1 Creamware plate

From the bedroom

3 Midland blackware chamber-pot

From the larder

1 Midland blackware pancheon

This list contains material deriving from the table, with a leaning towards the major production centres of Staffordshire which were at this time beginning to export widely via the canals. Tea drinking was evidently present. Pancheon forms were used for mixing, steeping or separating functions in the dairy, kitchen or buttery.

Pit [228] (Plot D)

The pottery dated to the second half of the 19th century when the plot was occupied by the York family (1837-94). The principal trader was Joseph York, a builder. He died in 1872, leaving goods valued at under £450 and appeared to have been comfortably-off, but not wealthy.

From the parlour

1 tricorn-hat with cockaigne toby jug lid

From the kitchen/table

2 Midland blackware pancheons
 1 Pearlware marmalade jar
 1 bone china egg-cup
 3 plain earthenware bowls
 2 underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware bowl
 1 underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware tea cup
 3 underglaze blue transfer-printed bone china tea cups
 2 bone china tea cups with sprigged decoration
 2 miniature children's tea cups (not doll's service)
 1 blue and white banded tankard
 2 small underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware children's plates: one bears a scene of children playing soldiers with the legend 'Volunteers', the other the legend '[H]ush my dear lie still and slumber, Holy angels guard thy bed...' above a partial nursery scene.
 4 underglaze blue transfer-printed bone china plates and dishes, one marked in the base 'Staffordshire Warranted Bone China'. All of Willow pattern.

From the larder

1 yellow-glazed stoneware mixing bowl

From the bedroom

1 underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware chamber pot

From the garden

1 plain earthenware flower pot

The diversity of pottery types and forms had a reliance on Staffordshire production. The wares were from the kitchen, the parlour and the bedroom. There was the first evidence that children were present on the premises. Conspicuous consumption was inferred by the entirely ornamental toby jug.

Pit [262] (Plot C)

The pottery dated to the third quarter of the 19th century, when the plot was occupied by the Brown family, drapers, tailors and dressmakers (1823-1906).

From the kitchen/table

1 Mocha tankard

3 Mocha bowls
 3 blue shell-edged pearlware plates
 2 English stoneware bottles
 c5 underglaze blue transfer-printed plates*
 1 underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware saucer
 1 creamware jug
 c5 plain earthenware plates/dishes*

From the larder

3 pancheons
 1 cistern

From the bedroom(s)

4 underglaze blue transfer-printed earthenware chamber pots

From the garden

1 Mocha flower pot
 2 unglazed flower pots

*numbers uncertain due to heavy ground staining making pattern/colour matching near impossible

Material in this pit was split fairly evenly between the kitchen and the other parts of the household. The censuses recorded the Brown family children but there was no obvious archaeological record amongst the ceramics. Like the other pits this one showed a heavy household reliance on Staffordshire products. Much of it may have been locally bought since there was a dealer in earthenwares and kitchenware on the market place during the mid-19th century. Mocha was the defining pottery type in the pit, in greatest circulation in the period c1830-50. Deposition of this pit group was soon after 1850.

DISCUSSION

The area seemed to have always been marginal to any settlement activity. The earliest occupation was of late Saxon date associated with a broader picture of settlement evidence at St. John's Square (Soden & Shaw 1994, Soden 1997a). The further upslope features were found, the later they dated, this suggested that activity through time was edging uphill, perhaps away from what became Abbey Street. Some features extended beyond the limits of excavation towards Abbey Street with one ditch on a north to south alignment, appearing to curve eastward into the Holy Cross churchyard. No evidence emerged to support the existence of the suggested oval enclosure ditch positioned concentric to the hillside.

No evidence for deposits of the monastic tenure between the 12th-16th centuries was evident within Area A. Later medieval deposits which should have existed prior to the foundation of the Abbey School in 1826, appeared to have been eradicated during the alterations of the property boundary and construction of a retaining wall. The earliest possible date for this wall was 1803, after the Inclosure Map of that

year, and was marked by the discovery of a broken gravestone dated 1802 of the family of Benjamin Wymont, Whipmaker. The wall was somewhat later and marked the line of a boundary shown on the mid-19th century survey of the lands of Christchurch College, Oxford (NRO, map 4640). The wall was a realignment of the property boundary marked by an earlier 19th-century wall not visible on the Inclosure Map of 1803 (NRO, map 3005).

A considerable bulk of material was deposited during realignment of the property boundary raising the level of the ground equivalent to the rest of the land to the rear of the Abbey School. This had the effect of expanding the total usable surface area of the property, later utilised for the construction of an Air Raid Shelter in 1939 although not originally intended for the purpose (Upson-Smith 2004).

The absence of a ditch, bank or wall which might have been part of any pre-conquest oval enclosure continues to frustrate arguments for its existence (Brown 1991, 31). In this case the excavated Area B had been extensively quarried for ironstone. Such an enclosure feature could never have survived this destructive process. The pylons left within the quarry showed that the natural bedrock was originally very close to the surface, so any widespread excavation work would leave its mark on the geology.

The idea of an oval enclosure has now been tested archaeologically in a variety of locations in Daventry and on separate occasions. The argument for its existence has yet to bear fruit. If an elliptical planning block, the survival of which is inferred from the Ordnance Survey, is of any age, then it seems just as likely to have been as a result of the monastic tenure at this end of the High Street from c1100-1526 as anything earlier. The monks had the power and influence to plan large portions of the developing town. Surrounding growth may simply have skirted the edge of the monastic precinct laid out around the hilltop contours.

The current terrace of Abbey Street, formerly Abbey End, was no earlier than medieval and the original slope was far more gentle than the current, sharp terraces suggest. The terrace for Abbey Street and a previous one on the north side of this have reduced the ground well into the bedrock (Soden 1997a, 96). It may be argued that the oval plan and the original line of Abbey End were merely sensible lines to adopt around the contours of the slope, regardless of date or purpose.

The quarrying which characterised the early

medieval occupation of Area B was total. This was almost certainly related to the construction of the first permanent church and cloister of the Clunian Priory around the 12th-13th centuries. Perhaps what was surprising was its proximity to the monastic core. Excavations located 75m south-east of Holy Cross Parish Church recovered evidence of medieval quarrying (Soden 1997b). Placing quarries close obviated expensive carriage costs but it must have been an inconvenience to lose large portions of the monastic precinct in the early days of the Priory. It also made the possible early contribution that the Market Square may have had distinctly questionable. Daventry received its market charter in 1203, possibly formalising an existing arrangement and it seems very likely that the monks would be loathed to miss an opportunity to contribute and benefit by it. It may be surmised that every effort would have been made to backfill the quarry by that date.

There was no indication of where the refuse element of the quarry backfill came from. Nothing within it indicated either a monastic or a secular origin and it is possible that everyone who simply lived nearby made an effort to help make good the ground to reconstitute the precinct and help contribute to the success of the new market place.

The large medieval stone building which was laid out on top of the quarry backfill may have had a mercantile function. Although almost certainly monastic in origin, the choice of site, defined for the first time what would become the permanent street frontage. This seemed to betoken a cross-over between market and monastery and a strong element of monastic participation in market functions. The loss to later development of any floors which might have indicated its former use was lamented. The original size was open to question since the substantial thickness of its walls indicated a building of two or more storeys, but could equally have denoted a single-storey structure with a need to offset the effects of construction on top of at least 2m depth of quarry backfill.

The loss of this large building sometime in the medieval period may well have been one of the dilapidated structures which drew condemnation of the Prior, Robert Man, in 1442. The flimsy, insubstantial structure which followed took no account of what went before and was not of relevance when the succeeding cottages were laid out. It may have been little more than a shed.

The ditches to the rear of Area B were medieval.

The biggest ditch was aligned on what later became the water-house. It was therefore tempting to see the ditch as a drain trench for the water-house precursor, a medieval conduit head built by the monks and the subject of dispute with the townsfolk in 1294 (Bond 1993, 53; 2001, 130).

The medieval finds had little value for understanding the economy of the monastery, since they were so fragmentary and comparatively few. One floor tile of a type manufactured at Stoke in Coventry and pottery from Potters Marston, both derived from the preceding evaluation, may betoken a commercial link with Coventry and perhaps provided evidence for the friendship with the Benedictine Cathedral Priory there (Chapman 1998).

The hiatus of occupation in the early post-medieval period fitted well into the years following Dissolution of the Priory in 1526. The land was apparently disused and coincided with a period when the town was economically weak (Brown 1991, 22-3). The archaeological evidence for new encroachments on the land mirrored closely the sudden upsurge in documentation in the 18th century. The town became known as a coaching stop and knowledge of its small-scale industries, such as whip-making, was becoming more widespread. The creation of a row of tenements along the east side of the Market Square represented a deliberate attempt on the part of Christchurch College to better its holding.

The row of tenements conformed closely to standard models of Northamptonshire vernacular housing. The design of the buildings had fireplaces either side of a central chimney and a chimney in each gable end, one of which stood atop a stone inglenook fireplace. Originally the buildings were thatched as indicated by kneelers on the stone gable capping and confirmed by a document of 1844. Although still in reasonable repair in 1800, documentary evidence showed that the buildings were extensively overhauled, probably in the period 1837-44 by the chief sub-lessee, Joseph York. Soon after, none retained thatch but were either tiled or slated. A liberal application of lime render seen in old photographs made the identification of stone or brick beneath impossible for most of the buildings.

Plot D included the house which Joseph York upgraded in the period 1837-44. A metal-detector survey at the end of excavations found dozens of melted globules of lead, possibly the result of the tenure of the plumber and glazier, Mr Linnell. Who originally constructed the house in the 18th

century, is not known. After Joseph York's death his widow, Sarah Frances York, continued to occupy the premises as his will dictated, but no trade was thereafter associated with the plot (2 August 1872: NRO Northampton Wills 7, 771). In the absence of trade-related finds, it was questionable whether Joseph York ever ran his construction business out of the building. It undoubtedly benefited from his building skills.

From being a quarry pit in the Cluniac Priory's precinct and then the location of a substantial medieval building, the site progressed to become one of a landmark 18th century group of tenements, both highly visible in the documentary record and related to identifiable individuals.

THE PRIORY CORE

The reconstruction of the Priory core was based upon the work of Franklin together with arguments put forward by Soden based upon the 1526 and 1532 surveys together with earlier work on an architectural canon and the measurements of 1329 and 1822-30 (Franklin 1988; Soden 1998b).

Original documents held by Christchurch College, Oxford that were scrutinised for the first time during this work (MS Estates 56).

The reconstruction acknowledges that it now seems most unlikely that the parish and monastic churches were ever the same. The descriptions of 1526 and 1532 made this most improbable, since the monastic church was clearly only a shell within months of its dissolution, a fate not shared by the parish church which was documented into the mid-1550s. The size of the monastic church was based upon the architectural canon and the earlier measurements (Fig 6).

The Hall or Abbey House, the site of many functional rooms, continued to be the centre of a leased property although it came within a whisker of destruction in the mid-17th century when many other buildings in the monastic precinct, such as a dovecote and a windmill, were destroyed.

The earlier evaluation which took place in 1998 found evidence for quarrying in the southern two trenches east of the Old Abbey Centre (Fig 1, and Chapman 1998), which seems likely to have been the robbing of building stone from the church structure, a process still going on in 1553.

There remained considerable potential for the survival of Priory structures relating to the west, east and south cloister ranges, including monastic cellars,

EXCAVATIONS AT THE CLUNIAN PRIORY IN DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

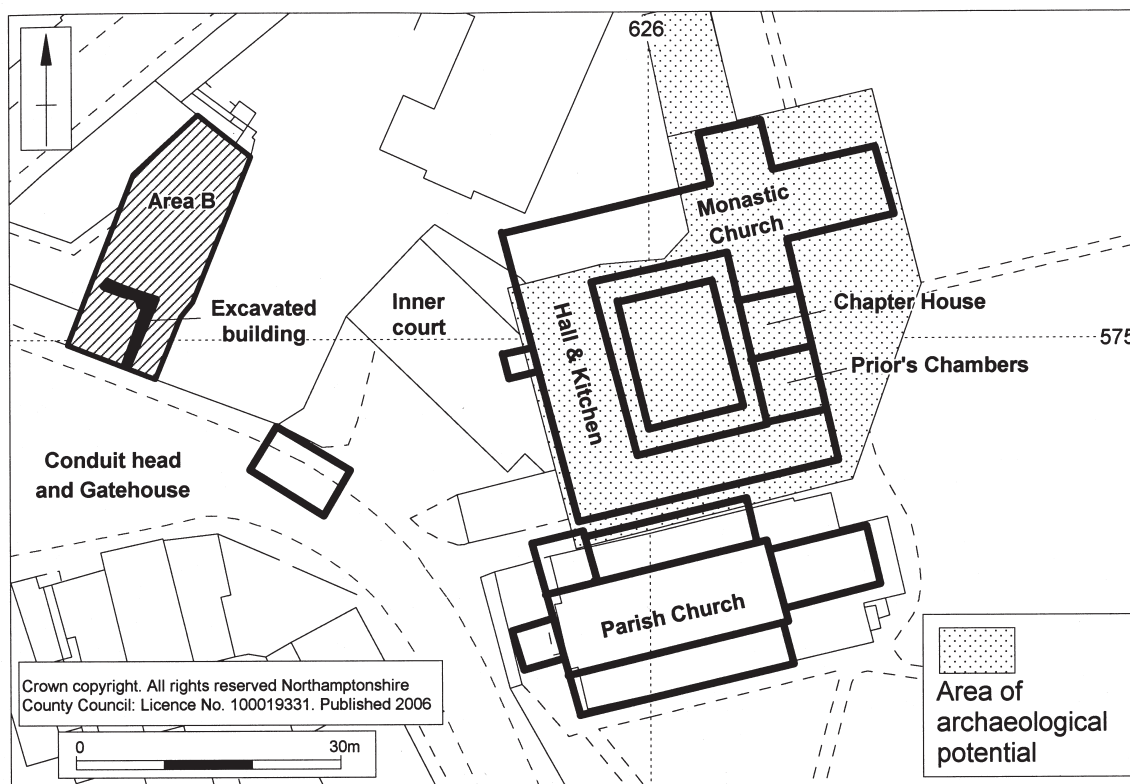


Fig 6 A reconstruction of the priory plan from documents dating from 1526 to 1824

the cloister alleys and garth together with monastic burials. These would be located under the sites of the Daventry ex-Servicemen's Club, the land to the rear and the Holy Cross parish rooms, together with the range of buildings immediately to the south and part of the current churchyard. This area is indicated on Figure 6, all of which has so far lain outside the scope of archaeological investigation.

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