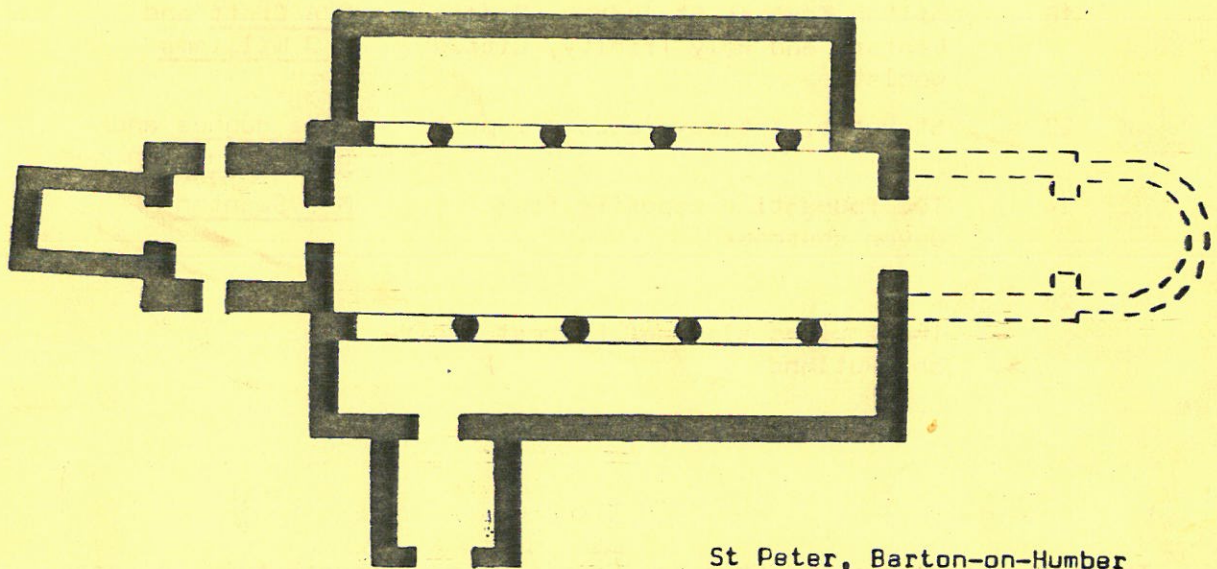


BULLETIN

of the CBA Churches Committee



St Peter, Barton-on-Humber

Number 13 December 1980

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The Bulletin of the CBA Churches Committee now appears twice a year. It is sent free of charge to Diocesan Archaeologists and is available to others for the sum of 60p per copy, or an annual subscription of £1.00. All subscriptions should be sent to the CBA.

Contributions should be sent to the Editor, Mrs R Taylor, 19 Ravenscroft Road, Solihull B92 8AH.

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publishers.

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NOTES

Changes

- Durham: Dr J Lang succeeds Mr C Morris as archaeological consultant. Dr Lang has been appointed as a full member of the DAC.
- Carlisle: Mr Paul Austen succeeds Miss Claire Fell as archaeological consultant. Mr Austen has been appointed as a full member of the DAC.
- Portsmouth: Mr John Johnston, Keeper of Archaeology, City of Portsmouth Museums and Art Gallery, has been nominated as archaeological consultant to the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Mr Alan Hannan (Northamptonshire County Archaeologist), Mr Richard Halsey (DoE Churches Section), and Mr John Bowles (Secretary to the Redundant Churches Fund) have been invited to join the CBA Churches Committee.

Cathedrals

The General Synod has now given approval for the transformation of the old Cathedrals Advisory Committee into the Cathedrals Advisory Commission for England. The metamorphosis will take place in the spring of 1981. As before, there will be no statutory obligation for a Chapter to consult the Commission. However, Chapters will be invited to pledge that they will seek the advice of the Commission on all proposed works to:

'.... alter or add to the building which affect the architectural, artistic, historical or archaeological significance of the cathedral or its surroundings.'

The Cathedrals Advisory Committee is giving close attention to the need for consultant archaeologists to cathedrals. A paper setting out suggested points for consideration and adoption by Cathedral Chapters is in preparation.

Faculty jurisdiction

The Faculty Jurisdiction Commission is now in session. Its terms of reference are as follows:

'To review the operation of the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure 1964 and, more generally, to consider how and in what ways the Church of England should monitor and, where appropriate, control in the interests both of the Church and of the wider community, the process of maintaining, altering and adapting churches in use for worship, taking account inter alia of the operation of the Inspection of Churches Measure 1955, the Pastoral Measure 1968 (and the proposed Amendment Measure), the ecclesiastical exemption and the making available of State Aid towards the cost of repair and maintenance of churches of historical and architectural interest.'

(The expression 'churches in use for worship' includes Cathedral Churches, even though these are not within the scope of either the Faculty Jurisdiction itself or the Inspection of Churches Measure, and are not in receipt of State Aid.)

Detailed written evidence was submitted to the Commission by the CBA Churches Committee during the summer of 1980. Copies of this submission may be obtained from the CBA, 112 Kennington Road, London SE11 6RE, for the sum of 75p (to cover costs of duplication and postage).

Nonconformist places of worship

The Working Party on Nonconformist Places of Worship met in the autumn to consider proposals arising from last year's conference (cf Bulletin 11). A further meeting will be held early in 1981. Ideas at present include the institution of an annual lecture, perhaps as the centre-piece of a yearly weekend gathering.

Rescue archaeology

A number of consultants have reported difficulties they are experiencing in actually initiating rescue recording at churches which undergo repairs or alterations. In some areas the case load is being increased by the availability of State Aid. State Aid cannot be used to subsidize the recording of evidence which may nevertheless be destroyed in the course of repairs subsidized by the DoE.

Most problematic of all are the so-called 'minor works', which sometimes deserve attention as part of the long-term assembly of a mosaic of facts about a church and its site, but may not attract funds from the rescue archaeology budget. Irrespective of whether funds are available or not, shortages of archaeological manpower and relevant expertise are the source of further difficulties.

A temporary working group (Peter Addyman, Daryl Fowler, and Richard Morris) has been set up by the CBA Churches Committee to consider these issues and to produce recommendations which can then be presented to DoE. Any consultants who have suggestions to make, or examples to give, are invited to address these to Richard Morris (Department of Archaeology, University of Leeds, LS2 9JT) before 28 February 1981. It is hoped that details of the proposals, and any reaction from DoE, will be published in the next issue of the Bulletin.

Consultants' conference

Several years have passed since a series of regional meetings was organized to enable consultants to meet, compare experiences, and to discuss topics in both academic and ecclesio-political fields. The Churches Committee intends to organize a seminar which will provide an opportunity for consultants to consider recent developments in church archaeology. This will be held in 1981. Invitations and details will be circulated shortly.

CURVILINEAR CHURCHYARDS IN CUMBRIA

Deirdre O'Sullivan

The form of a churchyard is often taken as significant in any discussion of its origin, and the belief that curvilinear churchyards especially are early burial grounds is widespread. There is no longer much doubt about the fact that most of the earliest Christian cemeteries, if they were physically enclosed at all, were normally surrounded by a circular or at any rate curvilinear boundary (Thomas 1971, 50; Laing 1975, 377-80). Most of the published work on excavated cemeteries concerns abandoned sites in Scotland and Ireland, but it seems reasonable to expect that the same pattern might hold true for cemeteries in other areas, and that Early Christian burial grounds elsewhere in Britain might also have been surrounded by a circular or oval enclosure. One might, optimistically, expect to find traces of these early enclosures around cemeteries which remained in use as parish churchyards into modern times. Modern Christian cemeteries offer few opportunities for dating and the origin of many is often deemed to be beyond our powers of discovery. If it is really possible to date these cemeteries on morphological grounds then we have a valuable additional aid.

What follows is a summary of work carried out in connection with a study of Early Christian Cumbria (see Fig 1)⁽¹⁾. One of the aims of this study was to test the view that curvilinear churchyards may be generally considered to have an Early Christian origin.

The most useful source of information was early maps. The earliest comprehensive mapping of the county on a scale adequate for the purpose is the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" maps of 1865-6. All the churchyards of both parish churches and parochial chapelries in Cumbria were examined on these. All sites have been followed up on more recent maps and where possible checked in the field, but a large percentage have in fact lost their curvilinear boundaries since the mid-19th century. Sites could be divided into three categories: those (category A) where the curvilinear boundary was more or less complete (total 13); those (category B) where there was definite evidence of an originally curved boundary, which had been partly altered or extended (total 19); and those (category C) which may possibly incorporate traces of a curvilinear form (total 7). The third category could admittedly probably have been extended almost indefinitely; few churchyards are entirely confined within straight walls, and it would be stretching the point much too far if all but these were included. The sites which constitute this group have at least some definite indication of an originally curvilinear enclosure, but it has proved impossible to decide if this was dictated by purely topographic reasons, or by some other arbitrary factor, such as a road intersection. In other cases, such as Waberthwaite, the churchyard itself is not markedly curvilinear, but the shape of the area which includes the churchyard and the vicarage garden hints at an original oval enclosure surrounding the church, although the actual area in use for burial comprises only half of this.

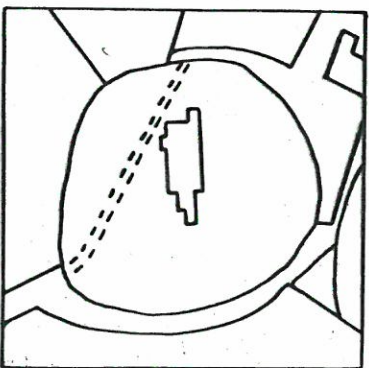
Thus curvilinear churchyards may be considered reasonably abundant in Cumbria; about 12% of all churches with burial rights would appear to have had some form of curvilinear boundary surviving to the middle of the 19th century. We must now consider the question of early origin. Of the total of 39 sites involved, 3 have remains of pre-Conquest, or at any rate late Saxon architecture - Ormside (A), Appleby Bongate (B), and Crosby Garrett (C). None of this is necessarily pre-11th century, but there is other evidence - a Viking burial and the Ormside Bowl at Ormside,

CUMBRIA

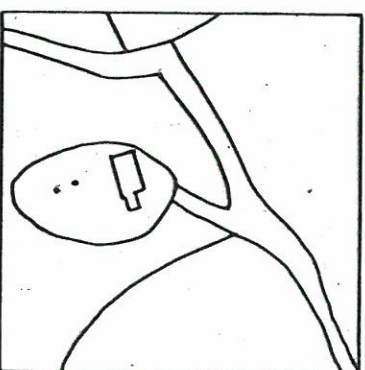
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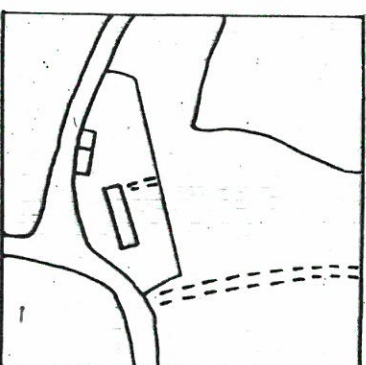
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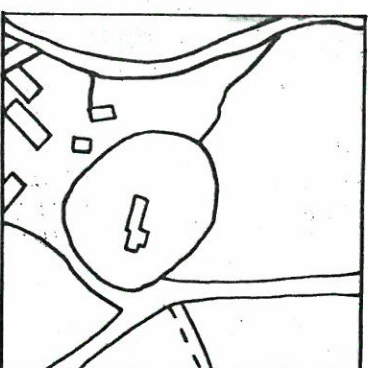
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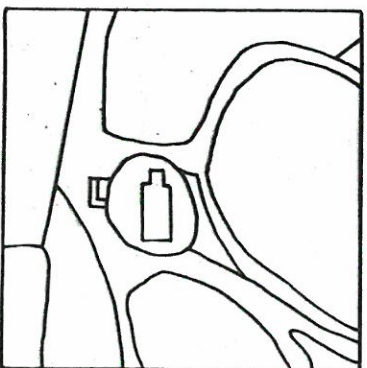
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St Bridget



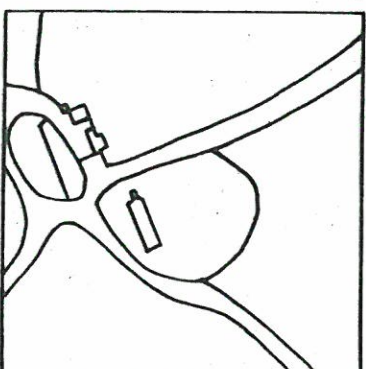
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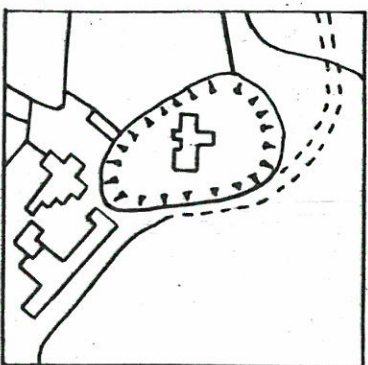
Ireby Old Church



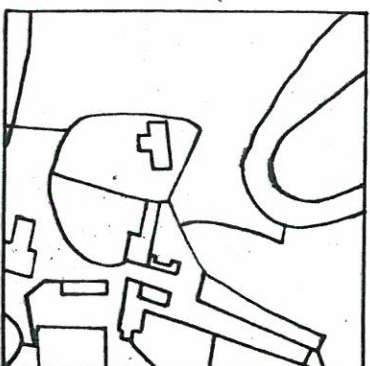
Kentmere



Loweswater



Ormside



Waberthwaite

Fig 1

110 0 110 330 yards

and a hogback tombstone at Appleby Bongate - which indicates that one is here dealing with pre-Conquest burial grounds. Pre-Conquest sculpture is known from a further 6 sites: Beckermest St Bridget (A), Dacre (B), Distington (A), Harrington (B), Heversham (C), and Waberthwaite (C). There is nothing else in the way of early evidence, unless one includes the fact that three more sites - Cliburn (B), Embleton (B), and Lorton (B) - are included on Prior Wessington of Durham's list of churches erected in honour of St Cuthbert at places along the route taken by the monks who carried his relics when the community left Lindisfarne in AD 875 (Raine 1828, 44). This list was compiled at some stage in the first half of the 15th century. Its validity is doubtful, but there is no doubt that the community did keep early records, and it is conceivable that Wessington made use of some such material.

If one includes these sites, about 30% of our curvilinear churchyards have some claim to a pre-Conquest origin, quite apart from the morphology of the churchyard itself. It must be remembered moreover that Cumbria is totally lacking in the sort of pre-Conquest documentation (writs, charters, etc) which might permit the identification of early church sites from the written record alone. We are relying principally on the chance survival of physical evidence. We may say that a pre-Conquest origin is suggested, while allowing that the concurrence of cemetery and other evidence is hardly large enough to prove the point irrefutably.

We have no supportive evidence for the more specific claim that curvilinear churchyards may indicate very early Christian communities, established before Cumbria came within the orbit of the Northumbrian Church in the 7th century. Indeed, if we consider the evidence of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, it would appear that we may be dealing with sites which are Northumbrian in origin. Of course it is not possible to discount the notion that these cemeteries pre-date the English settlement in the north-west, and were simply incorporated into the Northumbrian system, but there is specific evidence that one site at least is a new English foundation.

The churchyard at Dacre can be identified with the site of a monastery mentioned in Bede's Historia Ecclesiastica (IV:32). Bede describes a miracle caused by a relic of St Cuthbert, and states that the monastery was in the course of construction in his own day. We thus have a clear indication that a circular boundary was appropriate to a Northumbrian monastic establishment of the 8th century.

One other factor worthy of some notice is the area of the churchyard. This can only be studied meaningfully in cases where the boundary is virtually intact, but certain things are immediately apparent, even from this small group. First, although overall there is a considerable range in size, from 0.716ha at Barton to 0.103ha at Kentmere, most of the sites fall within the range 0.150-0.350ha. Those sites which are only partially curvilinear fall more or less within the same range, although they average out at being slightly larger, which is no more than one would expect. This range, from 0.150-0.350ha must represent some kind of norm for these churchyards in the north-west. It is clear that they do not approach in area the much larger curvilinear or occasionally rectilinear enclosures surrounding Early Irish monastic sites, with which comparison is sometimes made (2), although comparison is valid with other sites, such as the enclosure on Church Island, Valencia, for instance, and with other small enclosed cemeteries. There is no indication at any Cumbrian site for a large enclosure surrounding the smaller one, at least on the ground. These might be detectable from the air but the necessary flying has not yet been done.

Is this an important distinction? We cannot rule out a monastic function for these sites on these grounds alone and in any event we have already observed that there is definite evidence that at least one of our certain sites is monastic. Our cemeteries may not equate with the large enclosures associated with monasteries in Ireland, but it is possible that in other areas the normal size for a monastic enclosure was much smaller. It would seem wise to suspend judgement and keep both secular and monastic contexts as possible interpretations. It is important to establish, however, that within the range of Early Christian ecclesiastical enclosures, curvilinear form is not the only significant morphological factor, and area should also be taken into account.

This is not the place for detailed discussion of individual sites and it would seem best now to consider future work. An obvious desideratum is air photography, particularly of sites now removed from settlement such as Ireby Old Church and Watermillock. Study of the vegetational history of individual sites might also provide supplementary evidence of antiquity, although work of this kind has not met with marked success in northern England. Ideally, one would like to initiate small-scale sampling excavations at selected sites. Given the right conditions, one might hope for the preservation, within the boundary itself, of environmental material which would give some indication of land use in the vicinity of the churchyard, and might even provide the material for radiocarbon dating. In areas of dispersed settlement, such as Cumbria, the use of the same ground for burial of successive generations may often prove to be the only easily identifiable and continuing factor which connects centuries of shifting settlement patterns. The study of churchyards could thus prove to have considerable bearing on our view of early settlement history as a whole.

Notes

- 1 A full account of curvilinear churchyards in Cumbria, with details of all sites identified, will be found in the writer's MPhil thesis, A Reassessment of the Early Christian Archaeology of Cumbria, unpublished, Durham 1980
- 2 See sites illustrated in Norman and St Joseph 1969

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Department of Archaeology
University of Leicester
1980

C A S E S

St Peter, Barton-on-Humber

Warwick Rodwell & Kirsty Rodwell

The full-scale excavation and recording of this redundant church for the DoE continues, and is now in its third year (see Bulletin 10, 5-7). Internal excavation is nearing completion and a start has been made on excavation outside the building (see Fig 2).

Pre-church features

In 1979 it was discovered that the 10th century church was erected upon a low earthwork platform, which in turn sealed an old soil horizon and a gravel floor of a late Roman or early Saxon building. Areas of this gravel metalling have now appeared all over the church, and it seems that they belong to several timber-framed buildings: unfortunately, the plans of these are unlikely to be recovered in detail owing to their very fragmentary nature. Further finds have been collected from one area of this floor, and these comprise sherds of pottery of the pagan Saxon period.

An unexpected discovery, also sealed beneath the earthwork, was the base of a kiln built of fired clay. The chamber had a diameter of 1.5m and had been rebuilt once: to the east was a large area of ash and charcoal derived from the raking out of the kiln. The degree of firing of the floor of the kiln shows that very high temperatures were reached and sustained, but we nevertheless have no idea at present of the function of the structure. Had it been a pottery kiln or a furnace for melting metal or glass, one would have expected to find appropriate waste materials, but of these there is no trace.

Next came the earthwork, some time in the Middle Saxon period. Upwards of 0.5m of fine, silty clay was deposited over the entire site to raise the ground level and fill up hollows. Presumably the purpose of the levelling operation was to prepare the site for building and other works, but not, however, preparatory to the erection of the 10th century church. That did not appear until the next phase. It was found in 1979 that under the earliest known church there were at least 16 graves which pierced the earthwork, but in all cases the skeletons had been subsequently removed, presumably in a ritual 'cleansing' operation. It is reasonable to suppose that exhumation immediately preceded the construction of the 10th century church. One grave was, however, overlooked by the builders and the foundation trench of the east wall of the earliest chancel cut away the head and shoulders. On the other hand it is curious that at least 4 graves which were completely clear of the site required for the erection of the church were also exhumed (these were east of the chancel).

Inside the 10th century chancel the foundations of the altar were examined in 1978, and excavation continued below these in 1980. Beneath the northern foundation (badly disturbed) lay a circular relic pit containing a collection of bones, surmounted by a skull. This pit was in turn cut into the filling of a grave which had apparently been sited precisely under the northern foundation. A second, similarly situated, grave was also found (essentially undisturbed) beneath the southern foundation of the altar. These are the only burials which have been found inside the Anglo-Saxon church: their placing is of the utmost significance.

To the north, south, and east of the earliest chancel further burials belonging to the 10th and early 11th centuries have been found. Some of these seal or overlies one or two phases of earlier (ie pre-church) burial. A few of these primary interments are distinguished by having stones placed under the skulls ('pillows'), or to either side ('ear-muffs'). Such burials are generally attributable at other sites to the mid-to-late Saxon period, and the use of stones to prop the skull in position has usually been taken to imply that no coffin was employed in these instances. At Barton, however, where damp conditions prevail in the deeper levels, clear evidence for coffin stains has been recorded, and in one instance the timber itself has been preserved. It has been shown that the stone props were placed inside the coffin. Some of the Anglo-Saxon coffins were peg-jointed, while others were nailed. In two instances (one disturbed) double-headed iron 'rivets' (ie roved and clinched nails) had been used to make the lid. This is the technique of construction used in clinker-built boats. Does this mean that the Barton coffin lids were not flat boards, but ridged like some early shrines and hogback tombstones?

During the excavation of the eastern end of the medieval nave of St Peter's (ie outside and well to the east of the earliest church) a cluster of very interesting features has been found but not yet fully explored. First, there is the corner of a mortared stone foundation belonging to a hitherto unsuspected structure. Whether this is the corner of a building (such as a pre-10th century church) or a base for a great cross or other monument remains to be elucidated next year. Beside this foundation is a well-shaft with an adjoining timber-lined trough, where the wood has actually been preserved through water-logging. There are several other features in this complex which require further excavation, including a second well-shaft which is stratigraphically later than the foundation. The foundation and well-shafts are respected by the Anglo-Saxon graves, and clearly the whole complex is liturgical rather than domestic: one might speculate on the possibility of there being an outdoor baptistry here. It is not, however, possible to demonstrate at present to what extent these features are earlier than, rather than contemporary with, the 10th century church; they were certainly all obliterated before the end of the 11th century at the latest.

The Anglo-Saxon stone church

This was apparently built as a three-celled unit, comprising a western annexe, a tower-nave, and a chancel. The marked misalignment between the annexe and the tower previously suggested that they were not of one build. It now appears, however, that the annexe takes its alignment from the early graves, whereas the tower and chancel pay no regard to these. This is curious and surely implies that something above ground, and on the same alignment as the graves, influenced the laying out of the west end of the church. There must be a strong possibility that an earlier church or other buildings await discovery in the vicinity of the annexe.

The earliest floor in the Anglo-Saxon church was of cream mortar, the surface of which gave some indication of patterns of human movement within the building. The south doorway was evidently the principal entrance. There is little evidence for the internal furnishings of the church, apart from the two fundamental liturgical features - the position of the altar and screen were established in 1978 - and now we

are able to see the first position occupied by the font. It was sited in the SW corner of the annexe, using a piece of a Roman door-step or stylobate block of gritstone as its base. A soakaway of limestone and chalk was formed below and alongside this base. Since the earliest floor in the annexe overlay the soakaway it is clear that the font position is primary, and thus the western part of the church would appear to have been built as a baptistry.

Preliminary study of the fabric of the early church indicates that there was originally a first-floor gallery around the tower (where the floor of the ringing chamber now is) and that this provided access to rooms above the chancel and baptistry. Some of the original floor timbers over the western annexe are extant, and a radiocarbon date for one of them centres on AD 960.

In the early 13th century there was a severe fire in the tower, which destroyed all the timberwork there: after the fire the gallery was replaced by a solid floor set at a lower level, and a chapel was probably created here. Radiocarbon dates for timbers associated with this phase centre on AD 1170 and 1230. A timber-framed spire and a new belfry window were added in the later 14th century (radiocarbon date centred on 1380).

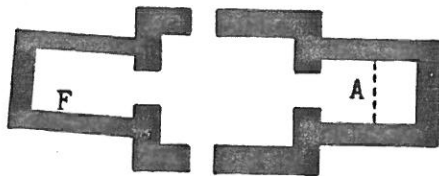
The later medieval church

A continual process of replacement has destroyed the whole of the Norman church. First, in the later 13th century, the south aisle was rebuilt on a larger scale. Secondly, the north aisle received similar treatment in the mid 14th century. Thirdly, the clerestory was added and the present church built in the later 15th century.

Burials

Some 625 articulated skeletons have now been examined, two-thirds of which were inside the present church, while the remainder came from the external excavation. Of the 'indoor' burials about one-third were originally external to one of the earlier churches: many more in this category remain to be examined in 1981. Fortunately, there are so many intact floors, construction, and make-up levels inside the present church that it has been possible to determine the horizons from which many of the graves were originally cut, and thus to be reasonably precise on the matter of dating. The burials span a period of about one thousand years, or perhaps a little longer, and will form one of the most important groups in England for pathological and demographic studies. Although it is extremely difficult to detect grave-cuts associated with external burials, it is nevertheless possible, on the basis of inter-cutting and layering, to divide the cemetery into phases. Artefacts can be used to date some of the phases, while others can be related to structural phases of the church. Burial postures have been found to vary a good deal, although it is too early to say whether they have any chronological significance. One 13th century flexed grave in the south aisle had interesting pathological conditions and was remarkable for the fact that many fragments of hardened arteries were still adhering to the bones; curiously, the bones themselves were in a poor state of preservation.

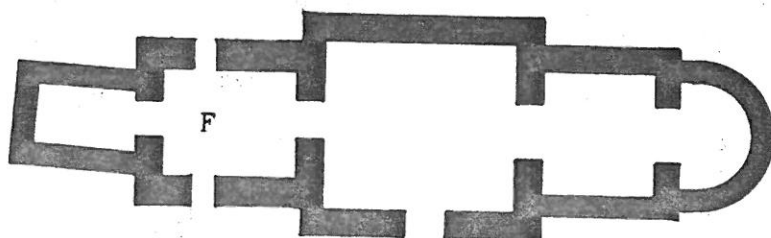
The burial of a priest in the south doorway was distinguished by having a pewter chalice and paten placed on the chest. The priest's legs were also crossed, presumably indicating that he had been a



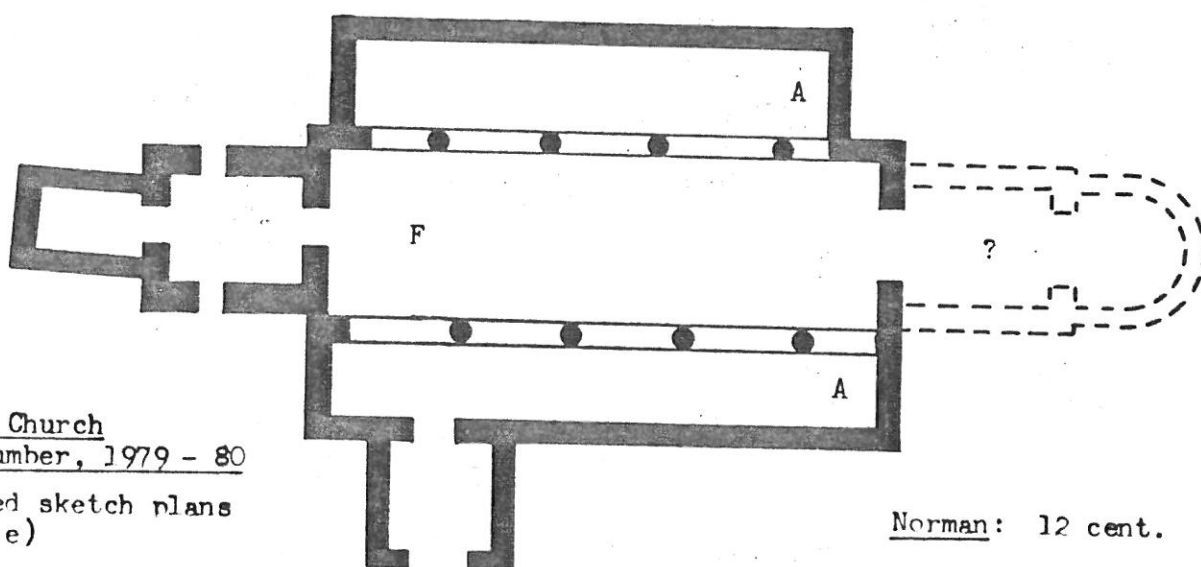
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Anglo-Saxon: 10 cent.

A - Altar
F - Font
W - Well



Saxo-Norman: 11 cent.



St. Peter's Church
Barton-on-Humber, 1979 - 80
Reconstructed sketch plans
(not to scale)

Norman: 12 cent.

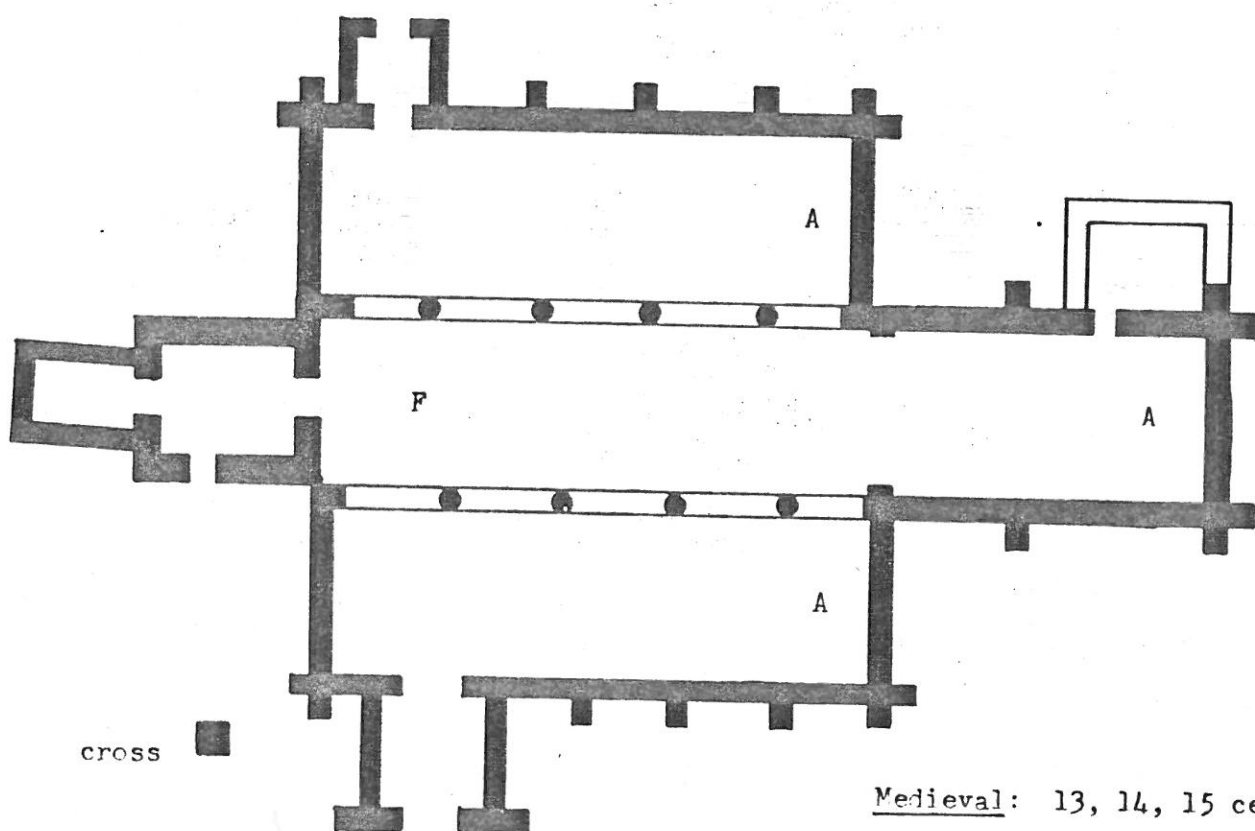


Fig 2

cross

Medieval: 13, 14, 15 cent.

crusader or had at some time belonged to a military order. An adjoining burial had the head and shoulders encased in gypsum, which had been poured as a liquid into the coffin.

A remarkable array of objects was found in graves - none of them, save a 14th century crucifix, being of specifically Christian association. One medieval burial contained a bone dice, another a coin, and another a felt hat with gold braid. Coins were included in several post-medieval graves; in one instance the feet rested on a dinner plate, and in another a damaged Delft-ware sugar bowl was placed beside the head. One of the most interesting burials was that of an 18th century male who had been subjected to a drastic post-mortem investigation.

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St Mary, Deerhurst

Philip Rahtz, Lorna Watts,
Lawrence Butler, and Harold Taylor

A final season of twelve days was spent at Deerhurst from 4-15 September 1980. Students from the Universities of York and Leeds worked with Dr L A S Butler and Professor P A Rahtz on drawing elevations and excavating a trench, while Dr H M Taylor completed some outstanding detail of drawings. The purpose of the work was to clear up some loose ends left by the work of earlier seasons, before work is resumed on the final report of the Deerhurst Research Project.

The elevations drawn were of the north and south sides of the tower, including all herringbone work, and also the junctions of this with the later work above.

The principal task accomplished was the cutting of a trench 11x2m from east to west in the field to the west of the churchyard, extending westwards from the present churchyard boundary wall.

Edges of one or more ditches preceding the existing boundary wall had been located in earlier test holes in the churchyard and in this field. Few excavations have been done through the boundaries of monastic or church precincts, and it was hoped especially to see a section through a Saxon monastic vallum, the boundary of the Civitas Dei on this side.

In the event, the trench cut not one but several ditches; indeed, very little of the stratification in the trench was other than ditch fill, though no ditches were visible on the surface.

The earliest levels at the east end of the trench, in the lee of the present brick churchyard boundary, were natural strata, probably of periglacial origin - sands, clays, and gravels. They did, however, include a stratum of preserved wood fragments, nor were they as hard as the natural stratum of tough red sandy clay on which the foundations of the Saxon church were laid. A steep western edge was, however, defined to these strata, and it was against this that a layer of undisturbed brown mottled sandy silt was deposited. This is interpreted as a primary alluvium of the Severn, filling its most easterly point of meander, hard up against the Deerhurst 'island'. A surviving peak of this between later ditches gives some evidence of minimum former flood-plain levels at several meters from the churchyard wall.

Into this alluvium were cut a series of ditches. Ditch 1, the most westerly, was only defined in its easterly end, the west edge being beyond the trench end. Layers of organic mud and mottled grey silt included much Lias rubble and a few pieces of oolitic limestone. The water table prevented exploration of these layers below 2m. Apart from the rubble, humanly derived debris included much animal bone, mostly cattle, Roman tile, slag and mortar (including opus signinum and flue-tile), and a few Roman sherds. It cannot be concluded,

however, that Ditch 1 is of Roman date. Such amounts of Roman material are found at Deerhurst in most Saxon levels. While Ditch 1 does have an eastern 'edge', it is possible, or perhaps even probable, that it is in fact the edge of a former bank of the river. A machine probe 2m further west showed that the lowest stratum reached, a stiff blue-grey clayey silt, extended downwards to 2.25m from the surface, and did not appear to contain any humanly-derived finds.

Cutting Ditch 1 silt, and slightly further east, was a small ditch (2) with no dating evidence, extended barely to the present water table.

Nearer to the wall, but stratigraphically separated from 1 and 2, were ditches 3, 4, 5: 4 was a recutting of 3, and 5 a shallow recut in the top of both. In the silt of these were a few shards of 11th or 12th century date, with some residual Roman material, here including stone roof tile.

This complex of ditches was cut partly in the alluvium and partly in the periglacial material mentioned above.

A layer of compact gravel capping the natural to the east of ditches 3, 4, and 5 is interpreted as the compacted, degraded and washed-out residua of the upcast of these ditches. It is assumed that this was originally a bank, which, with successive ditches, is assumed to have been the pre-Conquest monastic vallum.

Spreading beyond these ditches to the west, and deeply capping the by now totally silted level tops of ditches 1 and 2, was a thick layer of orange-brown mixed sand and silt interpreted as the washed-out material from the bank mentioned above. This also contained a sherd of 11th or 12th century date.

On the surface of this, and extending over an area of $2m^2$ within the trench, was a 50mm thick layer of calcined bone, apparently human. The whole deposit was retrieved for close examination. Preliminary examination located a few small, probably medieval, sherds; but also two pieces of clear window glass, which look more like late medieval (16th century or even later) than earlier. Its stratigraphical position rules out any possibility that this is derived from Roman or pagan Saxon cremations, except in the unlikely event of its being derived from such deposits in later centuries. The most plausible explanation is that it is in fact burnt charnel cleared from some area in the church or churchyard and scattered outside the churchyard. There was, perhaps significantly, a disturbance below the deposit which looked like a tree-hole. This is perhaps the first recorded archaeological occurrence of burnt charnel.

It is also perhaps significant that this deposit was immediately overlaid by the lowest part of a massive layer of orange-brown clayey soil up to 0.7m thick, a dramatic transition from the predominantly sandy

layers below. It is as though a phase of church clearance was immediately followed by a change in conditions. The layer extends up to and merges with the present topsoil, and is clearly the result of Severn flooding. A test-hole 40m further west located identical material in the flood-plain in the next field, adjacent to the river. The finds in this layer therefore (13th-14th century), and those in the layer of burnt bone below, provide a terminus post quem for the inception of Severn flooding in this area, which has continued, with sometimes disastrous results, down to the present day. The flooding may have begun because of increased precipitation, altering of land/sea levels, the inhibition of drainage caused by man (eg bridge-building at Gloucester), or the deforestation of the catchment areas up-stream.

This clayey layer merges nearer the wall with a layer of Lias rubble. This is interpreted as the destruction layer of the first stone wall delineating the churchyard and later than the remains of the earlier bank. Also under it and cutting the 'bank' was the west end of a cut, probably a grave, lying immediately beneath the west face of the present brick wall. Another possibility is that this was not the end of a grave but a very large post-pit for a boundary fence. This should mark the west edge of the cemetery whose graves have caused a build up of soil of c1.5m within the cemetery east of the wall.

The Lias wall of later medieval date exists further north as the lower part of the brick wall, but here the whole wall is now of brick, on a foundation of Lias blocks. It was probably built by Butterworth in 1862. It continues to the south and turns east to become the revetment of the present lane leading to Odda's Chapel and the river. In doing this Butterworth blocked the path which formerly passed inside the wall to the north church door, also blocked in 1862; this blocked path has vanished but its former existence is witnessed by many gravestones facing west, and given a terminus ante quem by the latest dated stone of 1854.

The trench has thus been very informative in demonstrating the nature of the complex boundary zone on the west side of the Deerhurst complex, possibly from Roman times, and certainly from Saxon times to the present day.

We are once again indebted to the parochial church council and the new incumbent, the Reverend N C Field, for permission to work within the church area; to the Morris family for permission to dig in their field, and for their usual hospitality; and to the students, led by Richard Kemp, who worked so well in tough clay and in the Sisiphean task of baling a water table.

September 1980

St Oswald, Fulford, York

Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts

St Oswald's church, Fulford, is a redundant church, currently being converted into a dwelling house. In June 1980 the preliminary work of service trenching was watched and small excavations were made in areas which were to be disturbed by building work. Roman finds included a sherd of bottle glass and a coffin lid. Evidence was found of a structure earlier than the present Norman church, which was possibly a pre-Conquest predecessor. The limits of the medieval and later cemetery were located to the south and the foundations of the pre-1870 'Well Cottage' were recorded.

Topography

The settlement history of Fulford, on a terrace south of the Ouse, is complex. There are three nuclei - Gate Fulford, Water Fulford, and the area around St Oswald's church. The most documented settlement, of manor and village together with the ford which gives the settlement its name, is around the first two. St Oswald's church, has, until recently, been isolated from its settlement, though may not have been so in medieval or earlier times. There was, until recently, a ferry here, approached by a deep hollow way west of the church. This ferry is one possible reason for the location of a church here, which otherwise is a matter for speculation only. References to Roman lead coffins having been found here are erroneous (see, eg, the local guide-book to the village); they were, in fact, from a site on the other side of the Ouse, opposite St Oswald's church (information H Ramm). There are, nevertheless, many recorded Roman finds in the area, including burials (see VCH and Fulford guide-book).

The church

The church is situated close to the river, where there is a steep bank. The ground on which it is built is a metre or so above the highest recent flooding (local information). The dedication to St Oswald might suggest a pre-Norman date but little is known of the church before its recorded licensing for burial at the time of the Black Death. Before this, it is uncertain whether there was burial there. The core of the present structure is of the later 11th or 12th centuries. It has never been fully recorded (eg by the RCHM) as it lies just outside the city boundary. The unity of the nave and chancel is shown by a continuous chamfered string course at eaves level. The chancel is narrower and lower than the nave and there are internal single-splay windows of Norman date on the north side of the chancel. Other windows are of 14th century and later dates and there is a western tower of the late 17th century. No chancel arch survives but there are stubs which probably indicate its former position, incorporating a cushion capital and fragments of a column-drum.

The church flourished in the medieval and later centuries. The churchyard was extended to the south in 1870 over the site of a cottage with a wall. In recent years, however, it has been supplanted by a new church 500m to the south. The old church and its graveyard have been neglected and, to some extent, vandalised. In 1979 it was acquired by Mr Roy Grant for conversion to a dwelling house. This will involve little structural change and the church will, in major respects, remain unaltered, and indeed, preserved for posterity. York is indebted to Mr Grant for shouldering the onerous responsibility of consolidating the structure and saving it from inevitable deterioration.

With the full collaboration of Mr Grant, Mr Lorimer (the architect) and the contractors (Messrs Kilvington and Young), preliminary works were observed and limited excavation was done by the Department of Archaeology in consort with the York Archaeological Trust, whose report on the structure will follow. We would also like to thank Elizabeth Hardcastle, John Bateman, Ken Dark, and Richard Cross for their help in the work.

The graveyard

The graveyard was largely cleared in the spring of 1980, the stones being set around the perimeter. A record exists in the Borthwick Institute of their plan and a list of the inscriptions also exists, which enables the stones to be related to the plan. Although this merely epigraphic recording falls short of modern standards, it will still be possible to record the stones properly and to reconstruct their former position theoretically, allowing location analysis of date, lineage, iconography etc to be done. Some were broken in the process of being moved but it is hoped to preserve all fragments on the site.

The southern exterior (see Fig 3)

A JCB trench was dug for water, gas, and telephone along the line of the churchyard path from the lychgate to the south door. It was shallow (c 0.5m) and caused minimal damage to underlying archaeology. In the southern part, the brick footings of Well Cottage and some floor levels were recorded but the soil beneath them appeared sterile.

None of the post-1870 graves in this area extended into the trench but in the area of the older churchyard the trench encountered continuous 'grave earth'. Some skeletons were skimmed at the very base of the trench and bones disturbed from earlier graves were present in all levels.

About 2m south of the south doorway, the keeled lid of a Roman coffin was hit by the JCB and partly displaced. It had been lying (upside down) across the trench on an E-W orientation. It probably marks the position of a medieval or later grave. Its origin is a matter of speculation but its size and weight may suggest that the coffin to which it belonged is not far distant from the church, if not on its site, and was perhaps discovered during foundation or grave digging. A Roman burial ground here provides one model for the location of the church.

The south doorway

The bases of the jambs were uncovered. They end in a chamfered string course similar to that at eaves level. Between the ends of these the medieval threshold foundation (= a sleeper wall across the doorway) remains intact. The medieval threshold itself has been replaced by later blocks. It is evident that the medieval exterior ground level was c. 0.5m lower than it is now; the rise is due to burial. The external rise is doubtless the reason why the interior floor was heightened. The medieval or later stone floor exists still but above this was a wooden floor. Joist holes at a lower level than those of this latest wooden floor show that there have been other earlier wooden floors above the stone one.

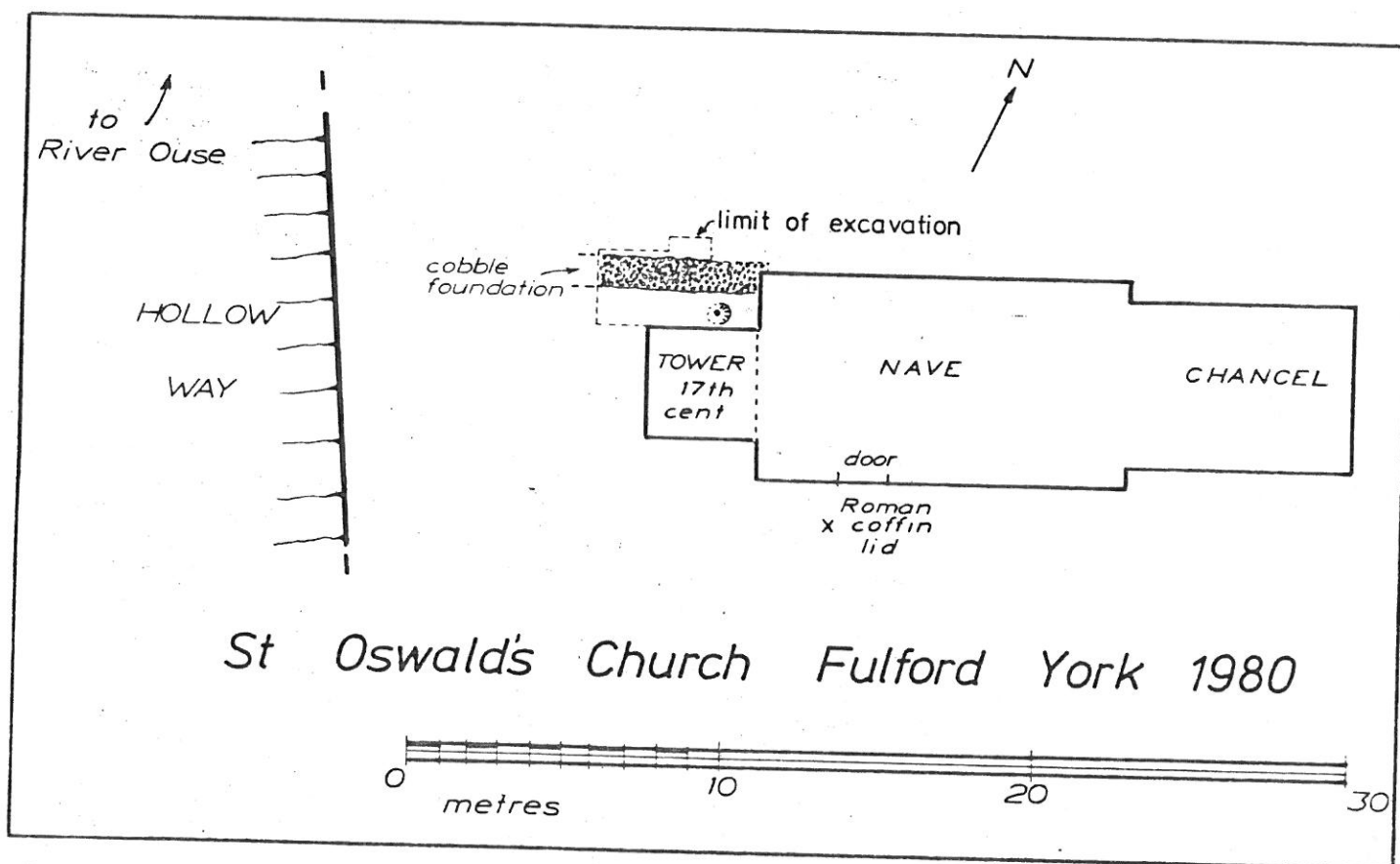


Fig 3

Church interior

Three grave marker plates were set in the wooden floor. They were formerly marking graves in the stone floor but had been removed from this and set in the new floor. They are at present at The King's Manor. They should be cleaned of corrosion before re-setting.

The tower was cleared of guano, nests, eggs, and dead birds. The latter two were collected by the Environmental Archaeology Laboratory for comparative specimens. The bell and its frame were also removed and taken to the YAT laboratory for professional conservation.

Further work in the church includes the discovery of a fragment of an Anglo-Scandinavian cross, exposure of the medieval roof trusses and a rose-decorated wooden boss, and painted plaster. The YAT will report on these in association with their structural survey. The interior wall memorials were removed and will be re-set in the modern Fulford church.

The NW exterior

An area in the angle of the north face of the present post-medieval tower and the NW corner of the Norman nave is to be the site of a newel stair turret. This will give access to bedrooms in the tower. A small excavation was done here in advance of the contractors' work; an area of about 2m^2 was excavated to the level of the natural orange-brown sandy clay at about 1.5m below the present north exterior surface, and a further $2\text{--}3\text{m}^2$ to the west of this was excavated to a depth of c 0.5m.

The earliest finds here were a struck flint flake and a sherd of Roman bottle glass, conceivably from a square cremation bottle. There was also a sherd of pottery with very small rosette stamps, and for this pagan Anglo-Saxon parallels can be adduced, though not in York.

The earliest features were a massive cobble-filled trench, a foundation over 1m wide. This was encountered below the Norman foundation of the NW nave corner and turned from this NW corner westwards. In this direction it was traced for several metres, well beyond the west face of the tower. There was no evidence of a return southwards in this stretch, which appears to preclude the identification of this as part of an earlier tower. It seems possible that this is, in fact, the NE corner of an earlier church lying to the west of the present church, partly under the tower and extending beyond this for an uncertain distance. If this interpretation is correct this earlier (?pre-Conquest) church lay close to the hollow way. Instability of the ground, it is suggested, necessitated its replacement by the Norman church further east; the west wall of the latter being built on the east wall of the former. The instability of the western area continued, however, even with the new church and gave trouble down to the present day.

Another feature which may be associated with this cobble footing is a large (0.5m diameter) post-pit. This lay just south of the E-W cobble footing. A post in this had been set in a padstone of half-burnt coarse limestone and was later dug out. While this might be only a scaffold-post of early date, it could just be an arcade post. In the absence of any other stone evidence here, the cobble footing is interpreted as the foundation for a sill-beam for a wooden

superstructure. This might be associated with the pre-Conquest cross fragment mentioned above.

The foundations of a tower, possibly earlier than the present one, were also found under its north wall. Five courses survived, the lowest set 0.2m into the natural clay. The upper two courses were butted onto the Norman nave but the lower courses were extended underneath for at least 0.3m. There was buff mortar and tile in the tower courses, neither of which are present in the Norman work. The secondary date (?13th-14th century) was also shown by the incorporation in the tower of a fragment of Norman chamfered string course. There were also two stones retaining some very hard and fine brick-tempered cement, almost certainly of Roman date. This reinforces any suggestion of Roman structures in the vicinity.

The tower courses deviated from horizontal, down to the west, for about the same number of degrees (?3-5), as the present west wall of the Norman nave is out of true vertical. It seems likely that this tower became unstable because of the same instability which had caused the abandonment of the putative earlier church. It was probably this instability (or even collapse) that led to the building of the present brick tower, which now effectively buttresses the Norman church.

The only other features in this area were a scaffold post-hole associated with the medieval tower and the east end of a grave of uncertain date; in this were exposed the feet, legs, and lower pelvis of an immature skeleton (?adolescent or younger).

It may be possible to follow up these interesting results on a later occasion in a more leisurely, scientific, and less rescue-orientated atmosphere. Meanwhile, these preliminary observations will serve to inform interested parties in advance of a full illustrated report.

Department of Archaeology
University of York
July 1980

St Mary de Lode, Gloucester

R M Bryant

Historical introduction

St Mary de Lode church, Gloucester, stands in the western suburb of the medieval town, outside the west gate of St Peter's Cathedral. Near St Mary's there once flowed a branch of the river Severn, now silted up, from which the church has obtained the Anglo-Saxon name of Lode, meaning a river-crossing (Smith 1964, 125).

St Peter's Cathedral derives from the abbey founded 679 x 81 by Osric, a sub-king of the Hwicce (Finberg 1972, 153-66). St Mary's church was a possession of the abbey from the 12th century at least (Hart, i, lxxvii). St Mary's parish was very large and was closely entangled with the parish of the royal minster of St Oswald; the size of the parish of St Mary's, and the church's Anglo-Saxon name, led some

historians, with good reason, to consider it an ancient church (Fosbrook 1819, 172). The foundation date of St Mary's has important implications for the topography of the Saxon town: Fullbrook-Leggatt, for instance, considered that St Mary's and St Oswald's, being late Saxon churches, marked the area of the Saxon burh (Fullbrook-Leggatt 1952, 4). There is now known to have been 9th century occupation further east, within the walled area of the Roman town (Heighway et al 1979), but there is every likelihood that the area around St Mary's church was a Saxon suburb, even a quayside area.

It has been argued elsewhere (Heighway 1978; 1980) that the parish of St Mary is the remainder of the parish of the old minster of St Peter. If this is the case, then it is likely that St Mary's was the parish church of the old minster. However, St Mary's is not, as such establishments usually are, within the precinct of its mother church. The excavation has provided a possible explanation of this; St Mary's was not founded as the parish church, but appropriated as such on account of its already-existing importance as an ancient religious centre.

The present church of St Mary has a Norman tower and a 13th century chancel, much restored; the nave was entirely reconstructed in 1826, when Roman mosaics were found. When the pews and floor were removed from the southern half of the nave in 1978, a preliminary investigation was made. This showed that a complete and complex sequence of medieval floors remained intact under the pew cavities, and also that most of the area not accessible to excavation, for example under central and side aisles, were completely destroyed by Victorian cysts. The area excavated, although small, thus represents a considerable portion of the surviving archaeological evidence.

Three weeks work uncovered the south wall of the pre-Norman church. Beneath was a Roman building, standing several feet high and on the same alignment as the Saxon and later churches. This information was so intriguing that, with the permission and encouragement of the vicar and congregation of St Mary's, a further excavation took place in 1979, directed by Richard Bryant. It was funded by Gloucester City Lottery, who later also made further funds available for post-excavation work.

The excavation (see Fig 4)

The first period of the Roman building was evidenced by finds of fine painted wall-plaster in the building levels of the next period. In Period 2 there was a large room A surrounded by a range of smaller rooms B, C, D, E, F. There were mosaics on the floors of the surrounding ranges, and all the rooms were richly decorated. When this building was destroyed, two of its walls F135 and F17 were left standing for a time above the destruction debris.

The destruction rubble was deliberately levelled over in the 5th to 6th centuries, and a timber building was constructed (Period 3). Its west wall was directly above and on the same alignment as one of the Roman walls. This building contained E-W grave slots and an E-W headless burial, sealed below a rough mortar floor. The shoulders of the burial were to the west. This building may have been a Christian mausoleum or a church. Some possibly contemporary burials (Period 4) lay outside the building.

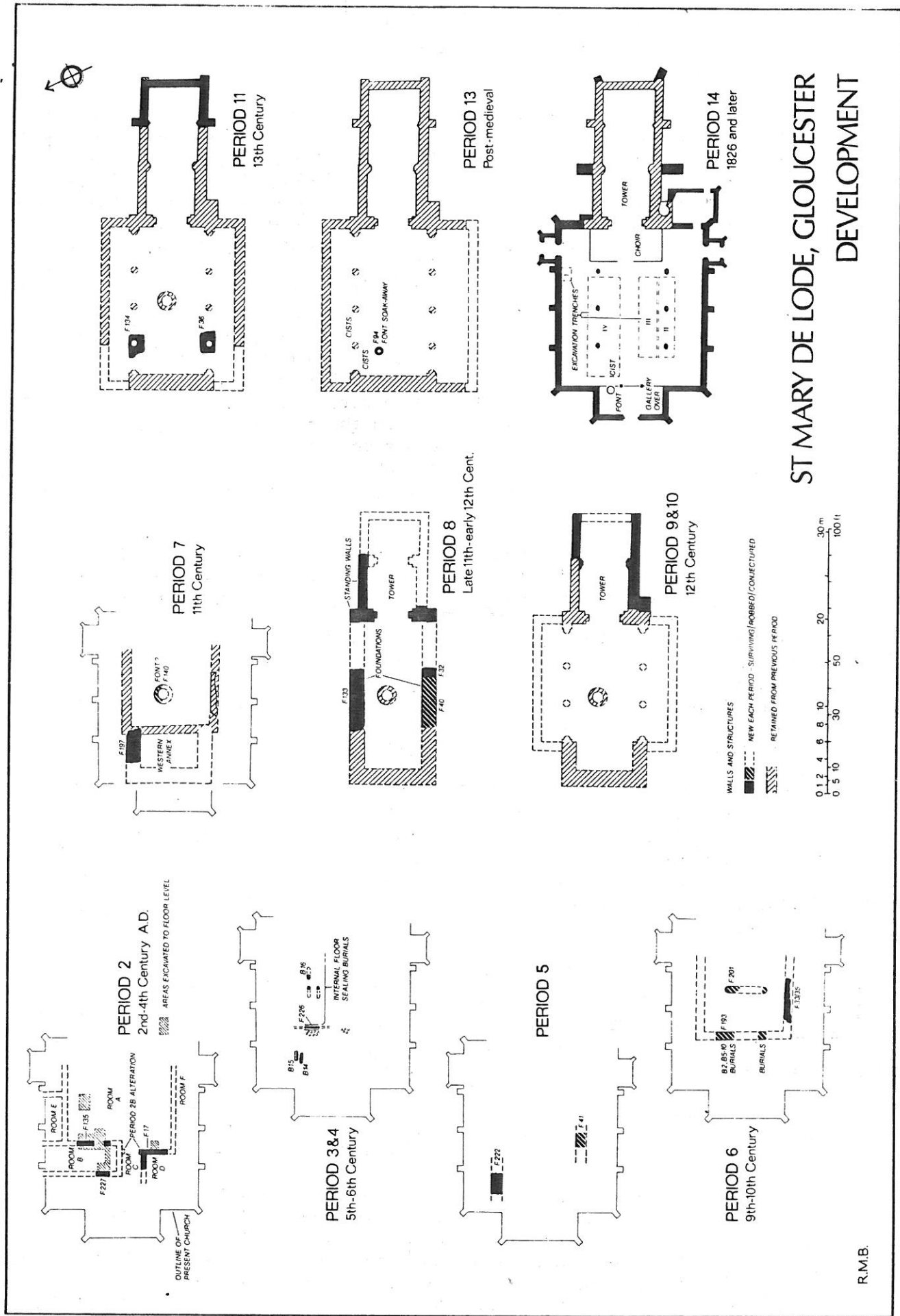


Fig 4

The fragmentary remains of the next phase (Period 5) survived where not destroyed by later features. Above this lay the floors and some of the walls of the 9th or 10th century Saxon nave (Period 6). The very shallow foundations indicate that this church was of timber, although it was large for a parish church, and is to be compared in width with the Old Minster at Winchester. There was a slot, F201, near the west end which could have supported a west gallery. Just outside the west end of this church was a cemetery which was in use for at least 250 years before a stone-built western annex was added to the nave in the mid-11th century, or earlier (Period 7). The annex had substantial foundations, perhaps to support a large western gallery. A mortared circle of stones, with an internal diameter of 1.3m, was set centrally in the nave 4m from the west wall. This structure, although very large, can only have been a font.

In the late 11th or early 12th century the Saxon nave was demolished but the walls of the western annex were incorporated into the first, aisleless Norman nave (Period 8). The Norman church also had a central tower and a short chancel. A decorated doorway was set into the west wall of the retained annex.

In the mid 12th century, north and south aisles were added, and the walls of the nave were pierced for an arcade (Period 9). Towards the end of the century the tower fell, destroying the chancel. Both tower and chancel were rebuilt in a style markedly different to that of the first Norman building (Period 10).

In the 13th century the chancel was extended to the east and the aisles to the west whilst the north and south walls of the old western annex were cut back to allow another bay to be added to the nave arcade (Period 11).

During the post-medieval period the large Saxon font was replaced by a smaller one nearer the west end, and the south aisle was widened (Periods 12 and 13).

Late 18th century illustrations and descriptions make it clear that the church was at least partly of Norman build. The excavations have shown that, although pierced by later doors, windows, and arcades, parts of the mid-11th century western annex were still standing at the beginning of the 19th century, when the nave was demolished and rebuilt (Period 14).

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Milton Keynes

(1) St Andrew, Great Linford

R J Williams

The church of St Andrew at Great Linford (SP 85064232) stands in the north-west corner of the landscaped early 18th century grounds of Great Linford Manor within the new city of Milton Keynes.

The church was last restored in 1884-85 and had remained almost totally unaltered since. It was recently decided that, for reasons of an expanding congregation and the delapidated condition of the interior and its fittings, a major restoration and redecoration was necessary. Work began in December 1979 and the major structural work had finished by June 1980.

Very little machinery could be usefully employed on site by the contractors (Robert Marriott Ltd, Special Projects Division) owing to spatial restrictions and limited access, and most of the work was consequently undertaken by a small team of builders. The type and circumstances of the work precluded any large-scale planned excavation. Permission was, however, obtained from the church authorities and the rector, the Rev Christopher Drummond, for a watching brief to be kept by the writer and for limited archaeological excavation to take place where necessary for clarificatory purposes, avoiding delays to the contractors.

As work progressed, unavoidable delays did, however, allow more detailed examination of parts of the nave.

Most of the work was carried out by the writer for Milton Keynes Development Corporation Archaeology Unit intermittently over a period of six months as areas became available for excavation. Brian Giggins (architectural historian) spent some time recording the standing fabric and architectural finds and some of his work on the timbers is reproduced here.

Work on the correlation of the architectural and excavated evidence is still in its preliminary stages and for this reason it is too early to attempt a detailed dating and phasing of the evidence.

The following is a general description of the discoveries (Fig 5).

Graveyard

The introduction of toilet and washing facilities to the new vestry required excavation of service trenches on the north side of the graveyard. As was expected, numerous unmarked burials were uncovered, although it was unfortunately not possible to count them. A number of the burials were very shallow owing to the natural limestone bedrock.

Just outside the north porch door the builders uncovered a large tapered block of limestone 1.65m long, about 0.40m below the present ground level. Butted up against the west end of this stone was a complete carved headstone, again completely buried by centuries of churchyard build-up of soil. The headstone has a well preserved floriate cross, 0.32m in diameter, carved on its west face and shows signs of setting out marks and compass points. The tapered stone is almost certainly a gravemarker and all faces had been well finished with the exception of the top, which may have been defaced in antiquity. This headstone and gravemarker are probably of 12th or 13th century date and are certainly the earliest memorials yet found in situ in the area.

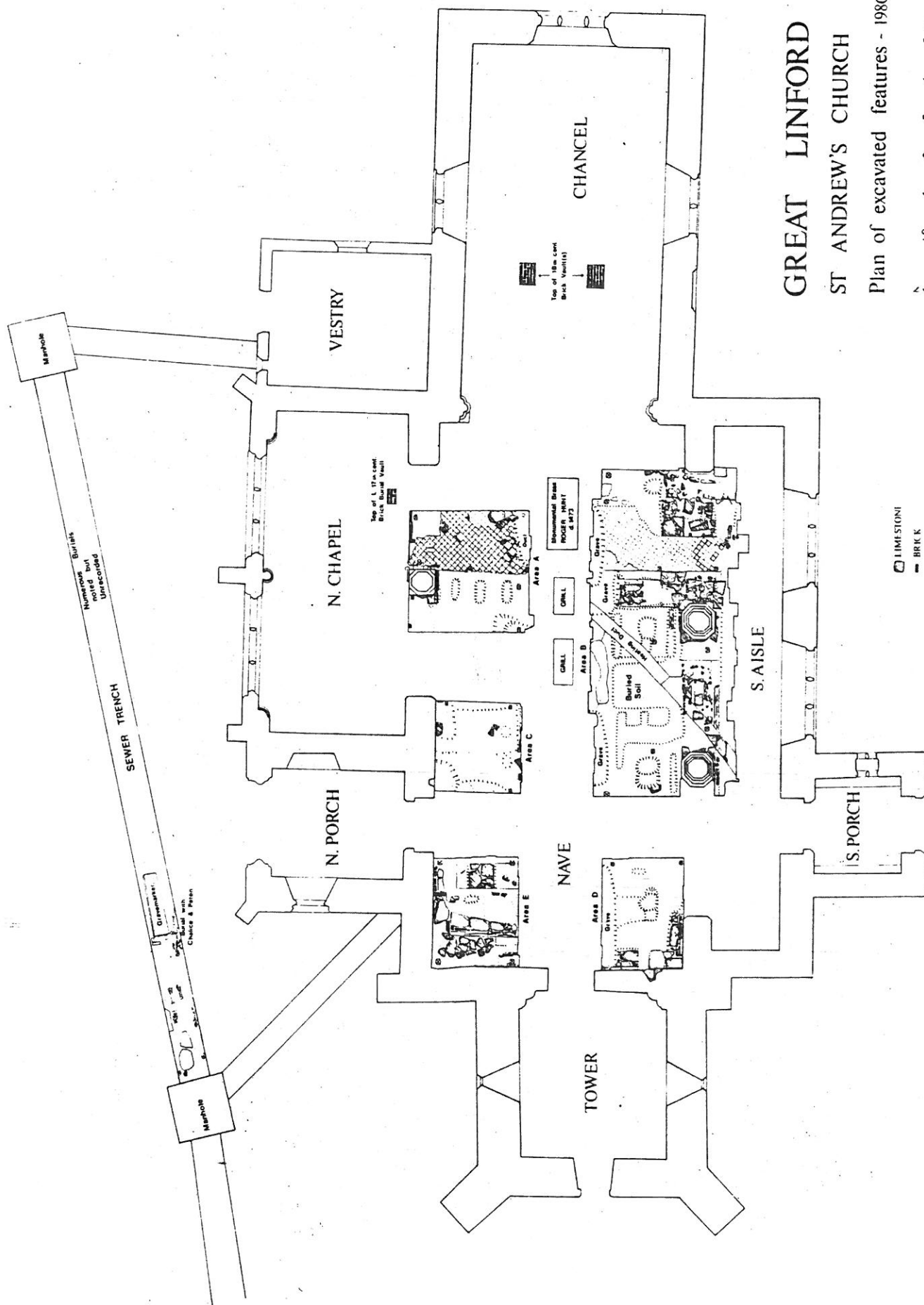
Just to the west of the headstone, the workmen uncovered a fragment of lead/pewter which, when carefully excavated, was recognized as a chalice and paten. These were found lying just below the left rib cage of a skeleton, identified as a slightly built young man in his early twenties. Evidence was also found for a wooden coffin. The chalice and paten, although well preserved, will still require careful conservation before being available for specialist examination. Dating is difficult although the burial is unlikely to have been any later than the 14th century. The practice of burying a copy of the communion vessels was a common practice in the medieval period, although its location outside the north door is a little more unusual.

The sections of the service trenches revealed a buried soil 0.55m below the present level which correlated well with the decorated level of the headstone. Although no stratified sherds were found, a number of hand made Saxon and medieval sherds were found in the builders spoil.

The interior restoration mainly took the form of the removal of all the existing seating, including the pews and choirstalls and the oak board and joist floor. The loose material beneath the timber floor had to be removed to a depth of 0.35-0.40m until a solid base was encountered on which to lay a new flagstone floor. The early 18th century wall panelling was also removed, allowing detailed examination of the fabric of the walls. Complete rewiring of the church necessitated making an entrance through a blocked window into the nave roof from the tower.

Nave and south aisle

On removing the oak floorboards particularly in the north part of the nave, it was found that a number of the joists were reused timbers with mouldings, rebates, and mortices. These have been identified by Brian Giggins as parts of the late medieval pews and a screen. Even a number of the timber piles used to support the joists were reused. The piles were mainly the bases of carved ornamental stiles and muntins of the 15th century benches, rebated to take panels. The floor joists were mainly moulded handrails of the medieval benches and the top rail of a screen with evidence of paint adhering to its surface. One particular pile was found to have been part of the side framing of the chancel screen with vivid red and white paint surviving on the mouldings. From the recording of the surviving medieval timbers, it has been possible to build up a fairly detailed picture of the interior fittings at the period.



GREAT LINFORD
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH
Plan of excavated features - 1980



- LIMESTONE
- BRICK
- ▨ LITTLE BRICKHILL TILE PAVEMENT
- ▤ TILE IMPRESSIONS
- ▥ MORTAR
- ▧ ROTTED TIMBER

Fig 5

Documentary work has shown that the medieval benches and screen survived until 1705 when the present timber floor and pews were constructed.

Other evidence for a major church restoration in 1705 was found in the form of four large scaffold pits down the south side of the nave. The loose rubble found beneath the timber floor had also been laid down in the very early 18th century in a conscious attempt to raise the floor level. The origin of the material is unknown, although much of it must have derived from restoration work and demolition of the chancel as it contained fragments of stone window mullions, quantities of broken decorated medieval and plain post-medieval window glass, and broken medieval floor tiles as well as a halfpenny dated 1700.

Beneath the loose rubble in all parts of the nave was found a mortar floor with timber sill impressions. It is thought likely that these slots represent the supports either for the late medieval benches themselves or for a simple timber floor. In places the mortar floor showed considerable signs of wear, perhaps representing use as an earlier floor before the insertion of the benches in the late 15th century. However, in the north-west corner of the nave (Area E, Fig 5) the remains of a rough stone and brick floor was found laid on the mortar floor. The bricks compare favourably with those used in a late 17th century vault in the north chapel and one possible explanation is that the area of the nave did not contain provision for seating and was refloored in the 17th century.

At the east end of the nave (Areas A and B, Fig 5) a decorated Little Brickhill tile pavement was found. The level of the pavement corresponded with that of the mortar floor and a silver halfpenny of Edward IV (1470-83) was found lying on the mortar floor adjacent to the tiles.

It was only possible to uncover part of the tile floor although it was found that most of the tiles on the south side of the nave had been removed in the 1705 restoration, leaving only the fresh mortar impressions. This accords well with a Bishop's Visitation of 1637 that states: 'pavement in decay on the south side'.

The most important aspect of the discovery of what is only the second surviving Little Brickhill tile pavement in position, is its relationship to a nearby monumental brass.

The brass of Roger Hunt (d.1473) records that he left a bequest for the laying of a new floor in the church. This clearly dates the tile pavement to within a few years of 1473 and is indeed the earliest and only firm date yet recorded for the production of tiles at Little Brickhill, which had always been thought to have been predominantly early 16th century.

The mortar and tile floor was found to seal only a thin layer of dusty mortar levels of as yet undetermined medieval date. These levels did however seal a truncated buried Saxon soil 0.40m thick containing quantities of hand-made Saxon sherds and bone. This evidence combined with finding of Saxon sherds from the graveyard suggests the location of an unknown Early Middle Saxon settlement at Great Linford around the area of the church.

Evidence for earlier structural phases of the church was found in the form of surviving and robbed-out foundations within the body of the nave. Work is currently in progress on the dating of the structures and the following observations are only of a very interim nature.

The footings of apse-1100 nave 6.40x10.30m, and chancel 4.80x?m were found within the present nave. The original north wall was located beneath the mortar floors in the north-west corner (Area E, Fig 5). The south wall was found surviving as a foundation between the present south arcade. The east wall had been demolished and overlain by the tower which on architectural evidence is dated as c 1100. The chancel was only located in the south-east part of the nave, although its length and arch width could not be determined.

The nave was lengthened to the east and widened to the north in the 13th century. The eastward extension was found butted up against the external face of the earlier chancel south wall. The existing south arcade was inserted in the mid 14th century, although evidence for earlier bases in the form of offset masonry blocks was found.

Wall paintings and architectural discoveries

The removal of the early 18th century stained deal wall panelling revealed two small areas of painted wall plaster on the north wall of the nave. Just to the east of the north door was found at least three superimposed periods of decoration. The earliest level has a red border and the curled end of an inscribed scroll clearly associated with a large subject. A similar decorated fragment was located in the north-east corner of the nave.

The roof space had until restoration been sealed beneath a fine Georgian coved plaster ceiling. This was found to have concealed and indeed partially destroyed a very large and fine representation of the Royal Arms of Charles II painted on the east wall of the nave above the chancel arch. Where the painting has been damaged traces of an earlier medieval painting is evident. Mr E Clive Rouse, MBE MA FSA, has identified the painting as the largest and finest royal arms painted on plaster in Buckinghamshire.

The 18th century ceiling was also found to have concealed an unrecorded fine late 15th century low-pitch king post roof with ridge braces and finely carved bosses. Some of the moulded timbers and bosses still retain traces of colour and two of the bosses were still gilded.

A small damaged stone holy water stoup was found behind the panelling just to the east of the north door within the nave, and the removal of the pulpit and panelling in the north-east and south-east corners of the nave revealed the jamb and blocking of an earlier window/rood stair entrance and evidence for an earlier chancel arch.

The building work has now been completed and redecoration is currently in progress. Access has been left to the nave roof through the opening in the tower. The Little Brickhill tile pavement in the north-east part of the nave has been consolidated and a moveable oak floor, suspended on brick retaining walls, has been constructed above it.

A great deal of documentary work still remains to be done on the church although the excavation's significance, allowing for its obvious limitations, lies in its relationship to and association with extensive archaeological evidence from excavations elsewhere in the village.

December 1980

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(2) Holy Trinity, Little Woolstone (SP 875393)

R A Croft

The church of the Holy Trinity is in the process of being converted into a local community centre. In advance of the restoration work the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit decided to examine and record all areas of the church which were to be disturbed. A detailed architectural description of the church is being prepared by Brian Giggins for Milton Keynes Development Corporation Buildings Conservation section.

The standing remains of the church are of three main periods, an early 13th century chancel arch, a 14th century nave, and a Victorian chancel.

Of the total area within the nave and chancel of 122.1m², 75.2m² were available for archaeological excavation. The Victorian floor level of the nave and chancel were to remain undisturbed and after examination all non-tiled areas were to be sealed with a 0.1m thick layer of concrete.

The excavations revealed quite a complex history of development (see Fig 6) particularly in the pre-14th century phase of the nave. Below the existing Victorian pews in the nave was evidence of three phases of pewing, the earliest of which is thought to have been late 15th or early 16th century. The mortar impressions of a medieval tiled floor were discovered at the west end of the nave. A number of Little Brickhill type tiles were re-used within the church and the floor may be compared with the much more complete one found at Great Linford church. Phases 5, 6, and 7 show little change in the plan of the church, with the exception of a vestry added in 1866.

The chapel on the north side of the church probably dates from the 13th or 14th century and may have been blocked in the 16th century. At the Suppression of the Chantries 1545-47, 12d was payable for the maintenance of the sepulchre light.

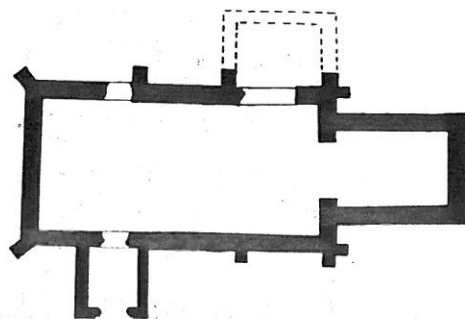
The pre-13th and 14th century phases of the church were difficult to date but their relative phasing could be ascertained by examining the different construction materials.

On the south side of the nave a medieval stone coffin, probably of 13th century date, was discovered cutting into the foundation trench of the Norman church. The lid of the coffin was incised with a number of graffiti gaming boards, chiefly variations of nine and three men's morris. It would appear that the coffin had originally been visible within the church and buried at a later date. A latex mould of the coffin lid was made by David Parish of Bucks County Museum.

LITTLE WOOLSTONE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH



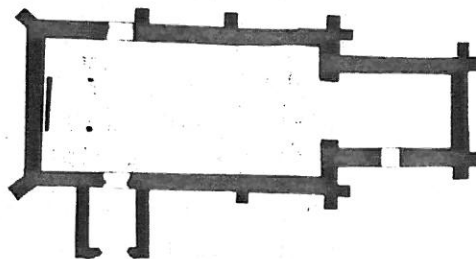
1 Pre Norman?



5 16th C



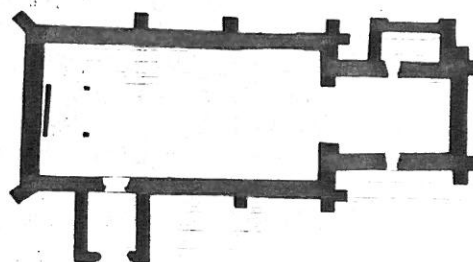
2 Norman 1?



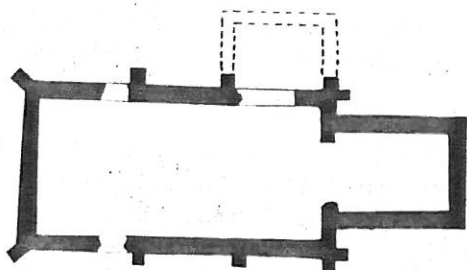
6 18th C



3 Norman 2?



7 Post 1861



4 13th-14th C

INTERIM PHASE PLANS

Conjectural
Robbed Foundations
Solid Foundations



Fig 6



A limited examination of the contents of the coffin confirmed the existence of two individuals, a female aged 25+ years and a male aged 45+ years. Examination of the contents was carried out with the approval of the Oxford Diocesan Pastoral Committee and we would like to thank them for their help and support. No skeletal remains were removed from the church.

Remains of a probable bell casting pit were discovered at the western end of the nave. Archaeomagnetic dating carried out by the DoE of the fired clay at the base of the pit confirmed the dating of the feature to the middle of the 13th century.

Three main phases of the development were interpreted from the construction of the pre-13th century phases of the church. These can be seen on Fig 6 as phases 1, 2, and 3.

The churchyard is comparatively small for the existing church but if the churchyard boundary was laid out at the same time as the original smaller Norman or pre-Norman church, the churchyard area is commensurate with the size of the church.

The excavation of this small rural parish church illustrates the complex history of a comparatively 'ordinary' parish church. The results of the excavation contrast well with the evidence from Great Linford church. The size and significance of the two settlements in medieval times is reflected in the wealth of the archaeological evidence recovered from excavation.

December 1980

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St Peter, Yateley: second report

Mike Hughes and David A
Hinton

In June 1980, David Hinton and students from the Department of Archaeology at Southampton University undertook a small excavation on behalf of the County Council, in the interior of the burnt-out church of St Peter, Yateley (see Bulletin 12, 21-23).

This was achieved, however, not without some misgivings on behalf of the PCC and although the 'gradualistic' approach had more or less worked, the Faculty for the excavation was not approved until the day before work was due to start on the excavation!

Unfortunately, the chancel of the earlier church was not uncovered during the excavation and, owing to the short-sightedness of the architect, the demolition of the existing chancel floor in November 1980 had almost been completed before David Hinton or Mike Hughes were told. Thus we lost the chance of recording any surviving evidence. David Hinton's report on the excavations is given below.

The results were disappointing as they did no more than establish the fact that an earlier, but undated, church did exist, a fact we had already surmised from the surviving structural evidence.

The excavations

David A Hinton

The standing fabric of this church, which was largely destroyed by arson in 1979, includes an Anglo-Saxon north wall in the nave. Investigations by the University of Southampton in June 1980 for the Hampshire County Council and DoE revealed the inner face of this wall by removing plaster. A double-splayed window and a blocked doorway near the west end are early features: the lowest 1.40m of the wall's face are of uncoursed flint, the upper part of roughly dressed sarsen blocks. The mortar shows that this is not a chronological break, however, and it is salutary to note that a change in the walling material may not signify an interruption in a building sequence.

Part of the interior of the nave was excavated, to reveal the footings of the south and west walls. These had been disturbed by graves and vaults and there were no surviving floor levels of the Anglo-Saxon church. Internally the nave had measured c 5.2m in width by 8.3m in length. There were no porticuses. (An apsidal east end was observed during restoration work in the 1950s; it is not known if this was an addition to an already-standing nave.) The footings were of flint and mortar on the inner side with an external course of large sarsen blocks.

The nave was extended in the 12th century, a new door being built in the new length of the north wall. Poor quality local heathstone (an iron conglomerate) was used in this and subsequent alterations.

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Two foundation deposits from Devon churches

M J Swanton

During the course of 1980 work on two Devonshire churches revealed the existence of foundation deposits of widely differing date and character.

(1) St Mary Magdalene, Barnstaple (SS 561334)

The church of St Mary Magdalene was built de novo to serve the needs of early Victorian new-town development in the Bear Street area of Barnstaple. The architect employed was the prolific London-based practitioner Benjamin Ferrey. Parish records indicate that the foundation stone was laid with due ceremony in the presence of a host of local dignitaries on 23 October 1844. But no foundation stone was evident on the exterior of the building and the interior was plastered over in the customary Ferrey manner. And indeed, identifiable foundation stones of the conventional inscribed kind, which seem not to have become fashionable before later Victorian times, were rarely used by Ferrey in either ecclesiastical or secular contexts, and then only belatedly in his career (eg St Michael, Otterton, SY 080853, in 1870).

During the course of demolition, however, an alert workman, Mr K W Dixon, recovered a collective foundation deposit from beneath his bulldozer. The circumstances of this find, reported verbally some months later, were thus: At the north-east corner of the building, apparently incorporated into the east wall, at or near ground level, on the interior face and originally plastered over, was an unmarked piece of ashlar, approximately 0.40x0.60x0.90m. This was perhaps literally a corner-stone of the building, although quite hidden. Into a hole drilled vertically in the centre of this block had been inserted a cylindrical clear-glass jar with a ground-glass lid, overall height 130mm, diameter 70mm, sealed with resin and containing a folded piece of parchment, 200x180mm, bearing the following inscription written in black ink in a fine mixture of gothic and italic script:

This Foundation Stone / of / The Church of Saint Mary
Magdalene / in Barnstaple / erected by the charitable
benevolence / of private individuals / and public societies /
was laid / with prayers of the Clergy and People. / In the
Name of / The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. / on the
23rd day of October / 1844. / The Glorious Majesty of the
Lord our / God be upon us; prosper thou the work of / our
hands upon us; O prosper thou our / handywork. Ps 90/ Amen.

This parchment enfolded four silver coins, three of 1844: sixpence, shilling, and half-crown, in absolutely mint condition, since exactly contemporary with the foundation; and in addition, not the crown issued that year but, looking rather out of place in this mint-condition assemblage, a circulated and very worn George III crown of 1819 - presumably a last-minute afterthought.

Placed flat on the upper surface of the stone covering the hole, mortared over and subsequently hidden by the next course of masonry, had been laid a piece of 15mm copper plate, cut roughly rectangular, 180x140mm, engraved with the following inscription in italic script, giving details of the ceremony and emphasizing the metaphorical significance of the corner-stone of the church:

Gloria in altissimis Deo at in terra pax / hominibus bene
placitum / Hujus Ecclesiae / nomine / Sanctae Mariae
Magdalensis / nuncupandae / primum lapidem posuit / GEORGIUS
BARNES, S.T.P. Archidiaconus / Parochiae Vicario /
caeteroque Clero cum Populo / precibus opus adjuvantibus /
Praetore Concilioque Municipali faventibus / Die XXIII^o.
Octobris / Anno Salutis MDCCCXLIV^o. / VICTORIAE REGINAE
VIII^o. / Aedificemus et nos et posteri / fundamento
Apostolorum et Prophetarum / cujus lapis summus angularis /
est / Ipse Christus / Amen.

In view of the concluding words of this inscription, and quite in accordance with what we know of early Victorian sentiment, it is scarcely surprising that the foundation stone, albeit unlabelled, should have been found where it was. The possibility of similar foundation deposits, otherwise unremarked, should not be neglected during restoration or demolition of any further Ferrey buildings.

(2) St Silvester, Chivelstone (SX 783388)

Close examination of the 15th century timber chancel screen by the firm of Herbert Read Ltd during its removal to facilitate restoration of the sadly decayed ground-sill, suggested that it had not been dismantled previously. The ground-sill rested on a 254mm thick slate bed topping the shallow chancel step. A rubble-and-earth mix revealed beneath the paving of the chancel contained a number of fragmentary bones, apparently human. But two small bones lying between the ground-sill and its slate bedding, one either side of the doorway through the screen, have all the appearance of being deliberately placed rather than casually present. Both came from the extremities of quite different animals: on the southern side the toe-bone of a pig (Sus metacarpal), and on the northern side the wing-tip of a swan (Cygnus phalange). Their presence here is curious. Possibly they may have been introduced as ad hoc wedges or packing at loose points, although they are not obviously bruised in any way. Alternatively, perhaps they represent merely the remains of a meal, casually lodged in rough hollows on the underside of the beam, although in this case their solitary and highly diverse nature is puzzling. Speculation as to any 'intent', although tempting, is unlikely to prove profitable at this stage. But again, possible parallels should not be overlooked.

(Dr Swanton is Reader in Medieval English Studies at the University of Exeter and Archaeological Consultant to the Exeter DAC)

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BOOK

F A Greenhill MA FSA FSA(Scot), The Incised Slabs of Leicestershire and Rutland, 250x175mm, 256pp + 42 plates. Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, 1958. Price £6.00 + £1.00 p&p. Obtainable from the Leicester Archaeological and Historical Society, The Guildhall, Guildhall Lane, Leicester LE1 5FQ

Greenhill's lavishly produced work is the standard work on the incised slabs of Leicestershire and Rutland. Apart from the 180 page gazetteer with its detailed descriptions of nearly 200 slabs in the area, there is a scholarly essay on the subject in general and a list of slabs in other counties. The book is well bound in hard covers and contains an excellent series of plates.

This is an indispensable work for anyone interested in monuments and brasses. A limited number of copies is still available.

G K Brandwood.

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