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Working throughout England and Wales

Archaeological Excavation

Clifford Castle
Clifford
Herefordshire

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Report Specification:

Compilation:

Katherine Crooks BA

Artwork:

William Logan BA PgDip

Editing:

George Children MA MIFA

Final Edit & Approval:

Neil Shurety Dip.M G M Inst M

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Border Archaeology Regional Offices

Midlands & North (Head Office)

Chapel Walk, Burgess Street, Leominster,
Herefordshire, HR6 8DE

T: 01568 610101

E: midlandsandnorth@borderarchaeology.com

West & South West

Park House, 10 Park Street, Bristol, BS1 5HX

T: 0117 907 4735

E: westandsouthwest@borderarchaeology.com

East

Luminous House, 300 South Row, Milton Keynes, MK9 2FR

T: 01908 933765

E: east@borderarchaeology.com

South & South East

Basepoint Business Centre, Winnal Valley Road
Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 0LD

T: 01962 832777

E: southandsoutheast@borderarchaeology.com

Midlands & North

01568 610101

West & South West

0117 907 4735

East

01908 933765

South & South East

01962 832777

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1 Executive Summary

Border Archaeology undertook a programme of limited archaeological excavation prior to the implementation of structural alterations affecting the dwelling known as 'Clifford Castle'. The site lies within the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM HE36, HA 1001774) area of Clifford Castle and the excavation was undertaken to fulfil the conditions of the Scheduled Monument Consent (S00059598).

The excavation comprised foundations for an extension on the southern and western sides of the existing building and a circular excavation for a wine cellar. All excavation was by hand or by machine under archaeological supervision.

A number of pits and surfaces were revealed apparently dating to the later 12th or early 13th centuries. The foundation of a possible structure was also identified which may be interpreted either as the continuation of a wall discovered during previous excavations carried out in 2007 or as a wall running parallel to it. This feature also ran parallel to the projected line of the curtain wall.

Four of the five pits excavated contained little evidence for refuse disposal and it is possible that they represented quarrying activity for the extraction of building material: it is thought the castle was rebuilt in stone at some point prior to the middle of the 13th century. Late 12th -or early 13th -century pottery recovered from layers sealing these pits may provide corroborative evidence for the construction date.

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) was commissioned by Alex Whibley of Hook Mason Architects to undertake a limited programme of excavation in advance of alterations to the dwelling known as 'Clifford Castle' (*fig. 1*). The site lies within the area of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM HE36, HA 1001774) on the N side of the bailey of the Castle. Work was undertaken to fulfil the conditions of the Scheduled Monument Consent (S00059598) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Bill Klemperer of English Heritage.

The archaeological work comprised manual excavation of foundations for an extension on the S and W side of the existing building and the excavation of a circular pit for the insertion of a wine cellar (*figs. 2 & 3*). Lowering of the ground surface within the new foundations took place under archaeological observation. The programme of archaeological work took place between January 13th and 31st 2014.

2.1 Soils & geology

The soils on the site consist of typical argillic brown earths of the Newnham series (571w), composed of well-drained reddish coarse and fine loamy soils over gravels with some similar soils being affected by groundwater. The underlying geology consists of Old Red Sandstone, including Downtonian.

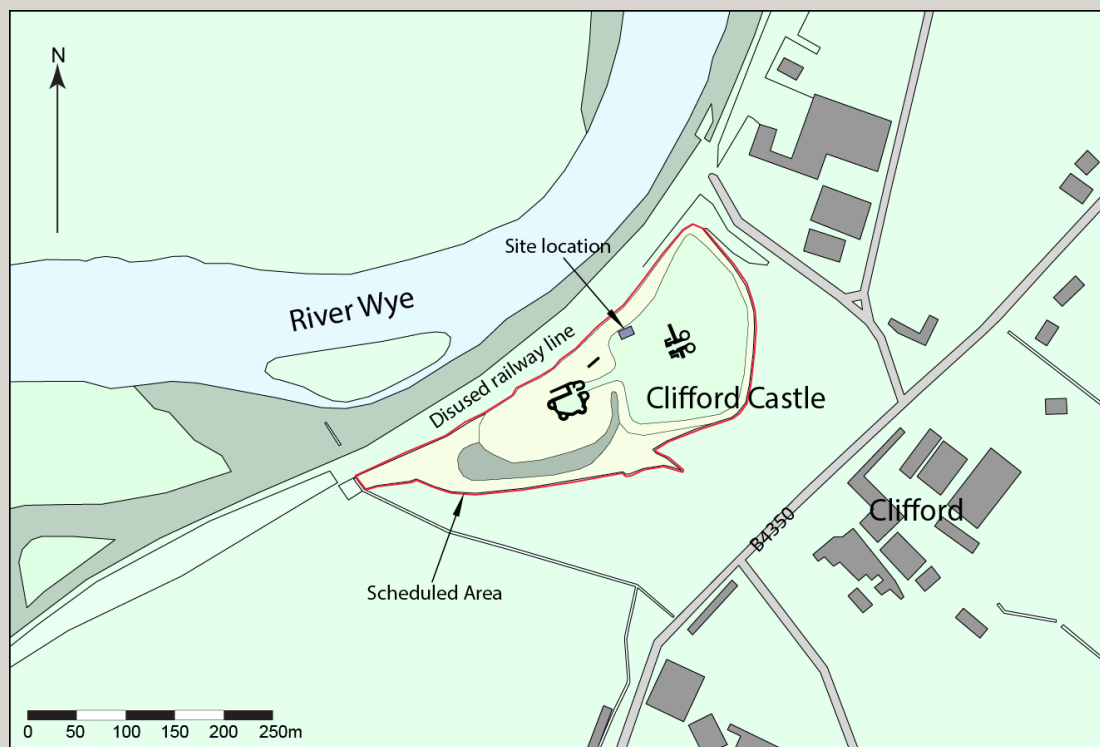


Fig. 1: Site location

3 Historical & archaeological background

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the place-name Clifford refers to 'a ford by a cliff' (Coplestone-Crow 2009, 65). The castle stands on the bank of the River Wye at a strategically important crossing point and is one of five Herefordshire castles mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. Originally constructed by William FitzOsbern as protection for a planned Norman settlement, the site also served him in his campaign as Earl of Hereford to secure the Welsh border, with its strategically-placed castle sites at included Ewyas Harold, Hereford, Richard's Castle, Wigmore and Clifford (Shoesmith 1996, 9).

Although a motte and bailey castle survives at Old Castleton, some 4km to the E of the village, and it has been postulated that this was FitzOsbern's original construction, Shoesmith (*ibid*, 25) considered this site to be less easily defensible than Clifford, which he regards as being similar in siting and construction to the other castles built at the time of the Conquest. It has been suggested that Old Castleton may have been built by Ralph de Tosny, a follower of FitzOsbern, at the time when FitzOsbern was constructing Clifford.

Following the rebellion of FitzOsbern's heir, Roger de Breteuil, in 1075, the Castle was granted to de Tosny to hold direct from the king and Domesday records it is as such. It passed through marriage to the de Ponz family, who later changed their name to de Clifford; it was the daughter of Walter de Clifford, Rosamund, who became the mistress of Henry II.

The Castle comprises a large motte of some 30m diameter rising 26m above the Wye (Shoesmith 1996, 88), which is topped by the substantial masonry remains of a shell keep, including D-shaped towers and a great hall. The larger of two baileys was excavated in the 1950s and found to contain the base of a substantial gatehouse and barbican (Shoesmith 2009, 89-90). Most of the stonework is considered to be 13th century, although it has been argued that construction might date to the 12th century, based on similarities with de Tosny's castle at Conches (Remfry 2009). The castle passed to the Mortimers in 1311 and, having become defensively obsolete since the conquest of Wales by Edward I in the 13th century, it was allowed to deteriorate. Repairs were carried out in 1377-8 and the structure was temporarily refortified against Owain Glyndŵr in the 15th century but the castle saw no action during the Civil War.

The precise location of the borough is not certain, although it may have lain to the N of the castle (Dalwood 1995). Sixteen burgesses are recorded in the Domesday survey and the borough's value is set at £8 3s compared with £7 paid by Ralph Mortimer's borough at Wigmore. Although the borough ultimately failed, it clearly remained in existence for some time, as one of the few later documentary references records that the men of Hay burnt 200 houses there in 1368 (Dalwood 1995, 2).

Apparently 'vast collections' of wolves' bones were recovered at the foot of the cliff during the construction of the Hereford, Hay & Brecon Railway line in the 1860s and human skeletons found near to the house have been associated with the chapel known to have stood in the bailey (Dalwood 1995, 3-4).

Several archaeological excavations have been carried out in Clifford. Tower bases flanking the entrance were revealed between 1925 and 1928, with evidence of a portcullis, guardroom, S tower and part of the curtain wall also identified. Further work in 1950 also revealed the foundations of a tower on the motte whilst limited excavation in 2007 prior to an extension of the house revealed a worked sandstone wall or structure aligned NW/SE and a 'fire pit'. Pottery recovered during the 2007 excavation was of 12th -17th -century date (Archenfield Archaeology 2008, 19).

4 Methodology

The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006) and with *Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation* (IfA 2008-updated Nov 22nd 2013), *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008-updated Nov 22nd 2013) and *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008-updated Nov 22nd 2013). Border Archaeology adheres to the IfA *Code of conduct* (2013 - updated Mar 20th 2014) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in archaeology* (2008 – updated Mar 20th 2014) and to Herefordshire Archaeology's *Standards for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire (Issue 1)* (Herefordshire Council 2004).

The work comprised a programme of limited excavation in compliance with the terms of the Scheduled Monument Consent. Excavation was by hand and proceeded in a manner consistent with maximising the recovery of information and with achieving a full characterisation of all revealed structures, features and deposits, with each context encountered being defined by trowelling prior to excavation.

4.1 Recording

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2014). Records include:

- A *pro-forma* context record for each stratigraphic unit
- Plans of excavated areas showing the extent of the area (tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and located on a 1:2500 plan), the extent of all stratigraphic units, and appropriate detail within stratigraphic units.
- A photographic record of all stratigraphic units, in addition to a representative photographic record of the progress of the archaeological work. The record was made using a high-resolution digital camera and comprised photographs of archaeological features and appropriate groups of features and structures. Included in each photograph was an appropriate scale and all photographic records were indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

5 Results

5.1 Phase 1

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	(103)	1	Deposit	Surface	Firm mid brown clay silt; frequent angular sandstone, occasional black flecks, and flecks of burnt clay	-	-	-	-	-	Worked natural-archaeological horizon
2	(104)	1	Deposit	Burnt natural	Firm reddish brown silt; occasional charcoal flecks. 0.3m thick.	-	-	-	-	-	Occasional charcoal flecks. Probably truncated from above; sterile
3	(105)	1	Layer	Natural	Hard pinkish-brown silt clay; rounded pebbles & degraded ORS	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	(109)	1	Layer	Surface	Firm yellowish-brown silt clay; moderate charcoal and occasional rounded pebbles	-	y	-	-	3	Worked natural-archaeological horizon
5	[111]	1	Cut	Pit	(?)Sub-rectangular; extending beyond trenching	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	[112]	1	Cut	Pit - function unknown	(?)Sub-rectangular; dimensions 1.60m E/W × >0.60m × 0.58m deep	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	(113)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [112]	Firm dark brown silt clay: frequent angular sandstone & rounded cobbles, occasional charcoal.						Very variable and patchy

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
8	(114)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [111]	Compact soft yellowish-brown silt clay; moderate charcoal, occasional burnt clay flecks; 0.20m deep. Seals pit fill (115).	-	-	-	-	-	Alternatively may be trample above the pit
9	(115)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [111]	Compact soft dark greyish-brown silt clay; frequent charcoal; occasional angular stone; 0.10m deep	-	y	-	-	4	-
10	(116)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [111]	Firm yellowish-brown silt clay; rounded cobbles & occasional charcoal flecks; 0.40m thick	-	-	-	-	-	Very sterile
11	(117)	1	Deposit	Primary or basal fill of pit [111]	Firm greyish-black silt clay; frequent charcoal flecks	-	y	-	-	-	More apparent on N side of feature
12	(209)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [210]	Firm greyish-brown sandy silt; >50% rounded cobbles, moderate black flecks	-	y	-	-	-	Fill darker and more anthropogenic than others in group
13	[210]	1	Cut	Pit	Circular/sub-circular; sides steeply sloping, base rounded; dimensions 0.70m N/S × 1.0m E/W × 0.70m	-	-	-	-	-	Cuts (214)
14	(212)	1	Deposit	Layer	Firm pinkish-brown silt clay; patches of pea-grit & charcoal.	-	-	-	-	9	Possible disturbed natural horizon
5	[213]	1	Cut	Pit	Oval; sides steeply sloping, base flat with slope to N; dimensions 1.0m × 0.80m × 0.80m	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	(214)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [213]	Firm dark brown silt clay; some sand, frequent rounded cobbles & gravel, moderate charcoal flecks	-	y	-	-	6	-
17	[215]	1	Cut	Pit	Circular; sides steep, base flat	-	-	-	-	-	-

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
18	(216)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [215]	Hard mid brown silt clay; frequent river cobbles, occasional large stones & burnt clay flecks, moderate charcoal; dimensions 0.50m deep	-	-	y	-	-	-
19	(217)	1	Deposit	Basal fill of [215]	Firm mid/dark brown silt; fairly clean	-	-	y	-	7	Some possible ash. Very different from (216) above
20	(218)	1	Deposit	(?)Natural	Firm mid/pale brown silt; fairly clean. Similar to (109)	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	[219]	1	Cut	Pit	Sub circular/oval; dimensions 1.0m E/W × 0.80m N/S × 0.30m	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	(220)	1	Deposit	Fill of pit [219]	Hard pink brown clay/ gravel; >30% large river cobbles	-	-	-	-	-	Very sterile

5.2 Phase 2

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	[106]	2	Cut	Posthole	Circular; dimensions 0.37m (diameter) × 0.60m (depth); sides vertical, base flat.	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	(107)	2	Deposit	Fill – (?)post pipe in [106]	Soft fairly loose dark greyish-brown silt clay; occasional charcoal flecks; dimensions 0.20m (diameter) × 0.30m (depth)	-	y	-	-	1	-
3	(108)	2	Deposit	Fill of [106]	Firm (soft and damp) greyish-brown silt clay; occasional charcoal flecks & gravel, rare white flecks	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	(110)	2	Deposit	Fill of [118]	Firm (soft and damp) dark brown silt clay; frequent rounded cobbles & angular sandstone fragments, moderate large flecks of charcoal	-	y	y	-	2	-
5	[118]	2	Cut	Pit or robber trench - also possible that this could be a slump line in the top of pit [111]	Sub-rectangular; dimensions 2.0m (N/S) × 0.60m (E/W) × 0.30m (extending beyond trench); sides steeply sloping, base flat.	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	[202]	2	Cut	Foundation trench for wall (203)	Linear (S side only visible-extends beyond trench); aligned NE/SW; sides sloping (45°), base flat; measures >0.90m (NE/SW) × >0.70m (NW/SE) × 0.28m	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	(203)	2	Structure	Footing, consisting of small pitched stones lining S side of cut [202]	Masonry; aligned NE-SW; sandstone & water-rolled cobbles; (size of materials: variable, e.g. 0.75m × 0.37m × 0.08m); not bonded; dimensions >0.95m (NE/SW) × 0.60m (NW/SE) × 0.36m	-	y	-	-	-	May continue to E of (206) as (207)

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
8	(204)	2	Structure	Area of stone, possibly relating to (209)	Stones; roughly square as seen but cut on W side by modern footing (206); dimensions 0.50m × 0.43m × 50mm. Do not seem to form a return to (203).	-	-	-	-	-	In top of fill (209) and may relate to it
9	(205)	2	Deposit	Layer	Firm (soft) greyish-brown silt clay; frequent charcoal flecks & mortar, occasional gravel; extends across trench	-	y	y	y	5	One of a sequence of dumping deposits
10	(207)	2	Structure	Footing - possible continuation of structure (203) to the W	. Masonry; water-rolled cobbles & sandstone in greyish-brown silt clay; dimensions 0.60m × 0.25m × 0.15m deep. No cut for this feature, unlike (203) to the S	-	-	-	-	-	
11	(208)	2	Deposit	Layer - no clear occupation horizons so more likely dumps of material	Firm mid brownish-grey sandy silt; rounded cobbles, gravel (up to 50%), moderate charcoal; deposit consists of a number of dumps of different material.	-	y	-	-	-	Above (205) to E and S only
12	(211)	2	Deposit	Layer	Firm mid brown sandy silt; charcoal flecks & white flecks. Across Area 2; dimensions 80mm deep	-	y	y	y	-	-

5.3 Phase 3

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	(101)	3	Deposit	Topsoil and turf	Firm mid/dark greyish-brown silt clay; occasional sand & small gravels; dimensions 0.25m deep in Area 1.	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	(102)	3	Deposit	Levelling dump	Firm mid/dark greyish-brown silt clay; frequent sub-rounded stones, mortar, occasional modern brick rubble and plastic; dimensions 0.30m–0.40m deep in Area 1.	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	(201)	3	Layer	Construction horizon for existing building	Loose (powdery) mid yellowish-brown silt clay; moderate organic fragments, brick rubble & black flecks.	-	-	-	-	-	Contained medieval pottery suggesting disturbance to underlying deposits
4	(206)	3	Structure	Concrete beam	Concrete, brick; crosses Area 2 on N/S alignment; cuts construction horizon (201)	-	-	-	-	-	-



Fig 2: Trench location plan

6 Discussion

6.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 deposits lay immediately above or were cut into the natural silt clays. This natural horizon - contexts (103), (105) and (109) in Area 1 and (212) in Area 2 - showed evidence of occupation, particularly patches of charcoal in the surface of (212) and pottery from the surface of (109). Similar deposits were present across the two areas, with the earliest sherds of pottery from (109) being of 11th or 12th -century date. In Area 2, pottery thought to date to the 10th to 11th centuries was recovered from context (203), where it was probably residual, and from (214), the fill of pit [213] (*Plate 3, fig 4*).

The surfaces were cut by five pits, which appeared to have been dug for a specific purpose. Although their fills contained little dating evidence, they were sealed by layers containing pottery of the 12th to 13th centuries.

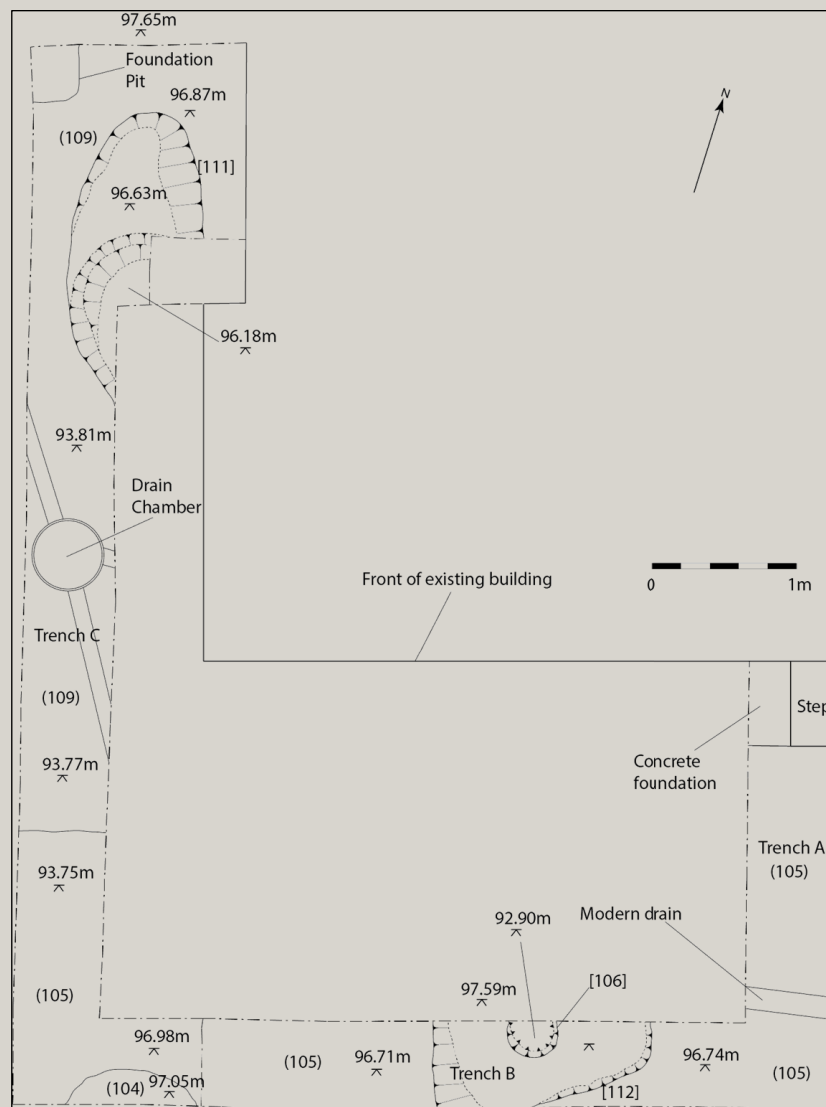


Fig 3: Deposits and features in Area 1

The site remained one of strategic importance with respect to the Welsh border but this was also a period of unrest caused by the civil wars of King Stephen's reign. The pits may have been dug for the extraction of stone or clay and then hastily backfilled with whatever material was to hand. The paucity of rubbish within the fills, with most being aceramic, or virtually so, would certainly suggest they were not dug for refuse disposal. It may also be that they were situated in an area where little domestic activity was taking place at the time when they were filled.

Phase 1 pit [111] contained four fills, two of which contained pottery, with the remaining two being extremely clean (*Plate 1, fig. 3*). The pottery was generally of similar date to the material recovered from surface (109). It is possible that, as in the case of pit [112], where discrete lumps of anthropogenic material were present in an otherwise clean fill, clean material may have been deliberately deposited above layers of unpleasant or noxious waste (*Plate 2, fig. 3*). The discovery of a large amount of bone at the foot of the cliff during construction of the

railway (Dalwood 1995,3) might suggest the means of disposal for the majority of waste material from the castle, rather than this being in pits.



Plate 1: View SE of pit [111]



Plate 2: View NNW of Pit [112] in Area 1

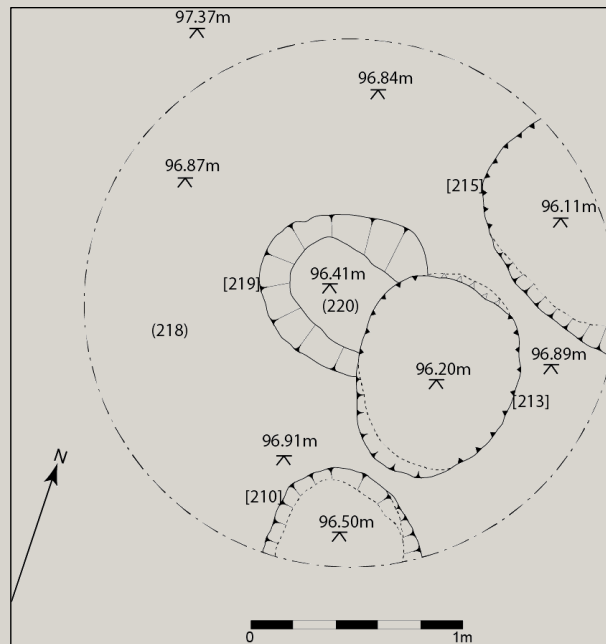


Fig 4: Phase 1 pits in Area 2

In contrast to domestic waste, the fills of all pits incorporated large quantities of water-rolled cobbles – which are naturally present across the site, together with large gravels with occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional discrete patches of ‘dirtier’, more anthropogenic material, which might have been incorporated during the process of deliberate backfilling with readily available material. The lack of evidence for silting strongly suggests the pits were backfilled almost immediately, possibly using material considered unsuitable for construction. Whilst considerably more rubbish was present in the upper fills of pit [111], the secondary fill (116) was also very clean and contained a large number of cobbles. All the pits in Area 2 were of similar form and size and were sealed by deposits containing medieval pottery. A sherd of pottery from fill (115) joined with one from (110) suggesting that, although linear [118] appeared during excavation to cut the upper fill of [111] and their forms suggested that they were separate features, the two may have been contemporary.

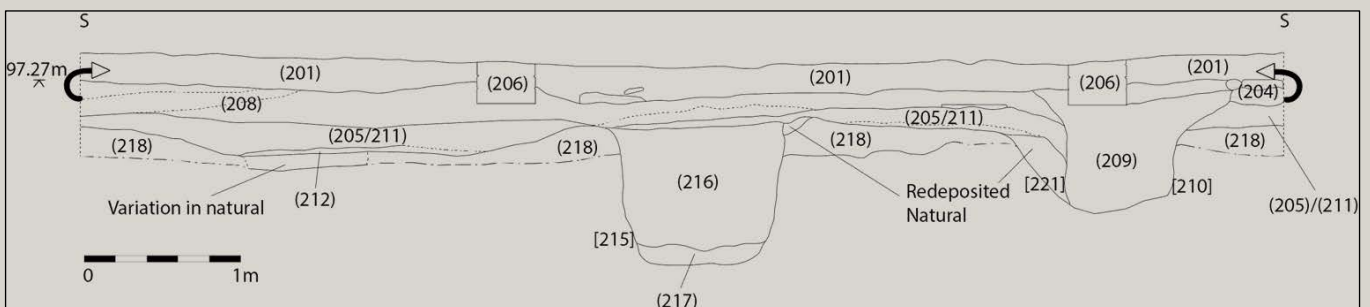


Fig 5: Section showing pits and dumping layers in Area 2

Poor indoor light meant that it was not possible conclusively to rule out a specific function for pit [215] (Plate 3, fig. 4). The primary fill (217) was ashy and very soft in contrast to the stony secondary fill (216), although there was no obvious evidence for burning *in-situ*. It is possible that (217) derived from a process elsewhere and was dumped into a convenient open pit, which was then backfilled with stony rubble, as with the other pits in Area 2.



Plate 3: View ESE showing pits [210], [213] and [215]

6.2 Phase 2

A number of layers containing pottery of 12th -to 13th -century date sealed the upper fills of the pits. Although these were at first thought to be surfaces, there was no evidence for occupation and they were more likely to have resulted from dumping or overflow of the pits.

Unfortunately, both wall or robber trench (203/207) and possible wall or post-pad (204) were damaged when a concrete beam (206) was inserted during construction of the existing building (*Plate 4, fig. 6*). Although (203) and (207) appeared to be part of the same feature, there was no sign of a construction cut for the E part of the structure, as there was for (203) to the W of the modern truncation. The alignment of the two structures certainly implied a relationship, although it was also possible that the large stone in (203) (*Plate 6*) may have strengthened a corner.

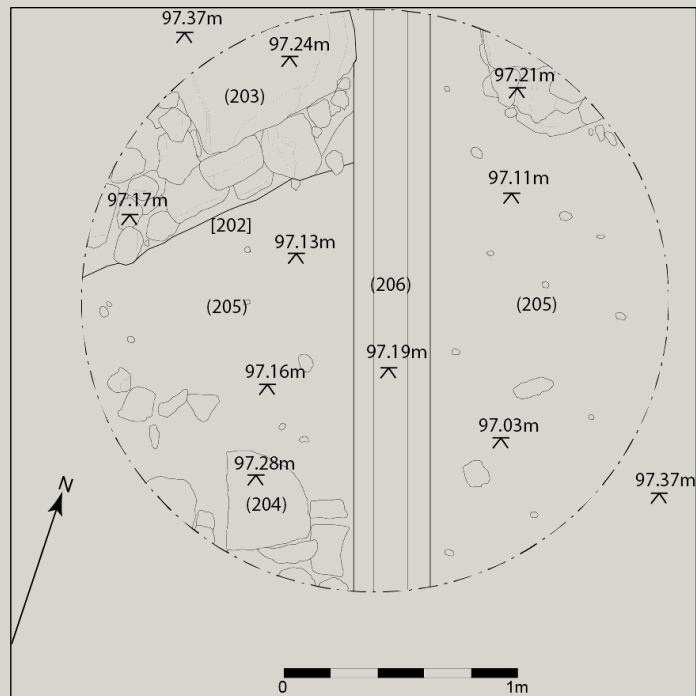


Fig 6: Phase 2 wall (203) and Phase 3 concrete beam in Area 2



Plate 4: View N of (203) with concrete beam (206) to right of picture

The same modern beam (206) had also damaged possible stonework (204) to the S, located approximately 1m from the S edge of (203) (fig. 6). It is not known whether the apparently square form of (204) resulted from this

truncation or whether it was, in fact, a post-pad or even a wall. The deposit (205) beneath the possible structures appeared to derive from dumping rather than use as a surface, with no 'trample' or other evidence for a surface seen and finds distributed within the layer. The only definite surface to be identified in Area 2, deposit (212), predated the possible structures (*Plate 5, fig. 5*).



Plate 5: View W of (212)



Plate 6: Large roughly-shaped stone from wall (203)

Possible foundation (203) lay approximately 1m to the S of the projected line of the 2007 excavation wall (15) and was of completely different construction. Wall (15) was 0.60m wide and coursed, while structure (203) showed no evidence for coursing and was of mixed materials, bonded with earth. While the closeness of the alignment suggests that (203) may be associated with or be a continuation of, wall (15) it may also be part of an unrelated minor structure such as a lean-to.

Alternatively, this part of the wall may have been robbed out and backfilled with material including fragments of shaped stone as well as water-rolled cobbles. The presence of a large stone with evidence for tooling (*Plate 6*) could indicate the corner of a building. If this was the case, stones (207) could be demolition debris, rather than a continuation of the wall, explaining the lack of a foundation cut. A number of stones on the S edge of and sloping into cut (202) were apparently deliberately pitched, suggested that more careful construction had certainly taken place to the W. Unfortunately, pottery from the earth bonding material was non-diagnostic and with an extended date range of between the 12th and 14th centuries, although it also included a residual sherd thought to date to the 10th to 11th centuries.

Stones (204), some 1m to the S of (203), may also have served a structural purpose but it is also possible that they were merely the upper part of the fill of pit [210] and unrelated to any structure, as similar fragments of stone were present throughout the fill of the pit (*fig. 6*).

On the site as a whole, considerably more pottery was recovered than was found during the 2007 excavation and, in contrast to the earlier work, most dated to the period of most intense activity at the castle, during the later 12th or early part of the 13th centuries. It included pottery from Herefordshire, Worcestershire and the Malverns, together with a sherd of Ham Green ware from Bristol. A single sherd dated to the later 14th to 15th centuries, when the castle was refortified against the threat from the Glyndŵr uprising; this was in contrast to material recovered during the 2007 excavation, where nine sherds out of 31 dated to this period or later. The few sherds of earlier material found in the excavation dated to the period of the original construction of the motte, with two possible sherds of Stafford-type ware of 10th -to 11th -century date and two heavily abraded sherds dating to the 11th to 12th centuries.

With the exception of a single sherd of Ham Green ware and two sherds from context (102), the vast majority of the pottery from the site consisted of unglazed jars or cooking pots. It is possible that the predominance of cooking-pot sherds resulted from the early date of the features identified during the excavation (See Appendix 1: The Pottery), with an increase in the glazed wares present in assemblages marking a later 13th -century date (Bryant, 2004, 336).

Although major structures were not encountered, the work may have revealed features associated with the construction of the castle, confirming the date for this work with the discovery of a fairly substantial pottery assemblage of later 12th -or early 13th -century date.

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9 Appendix 1: Pottery Assessment

K. H. Crooks
Border Archaeology

9.1 Introduction

A total of 159 sherds of pottery weighing 1934.4g and ranging in date from the 11th to the 15th centuries were recovered from 12 contexts out of a total of 38 excavated on the site at Clifford Castle. Modern pottery of 20th - century date was also present but was not retained. The majority of the sherds were of jars or cooking pots dating to between the late 12th and early 13th centuries and thus probably related to the period of most intense activity at the castle. Pottery was mainly sourced in the Worcester and Malvern area and there was little evidence for local manufacture, with the possible exception of an unsourced siltstone tempered ware, possibly related to fabrics recovered from Hay-on-Wye (BA 2004). The importing of pottery from outside the immediate area, rather than use of pottery from local kilns, probably suggests a pre mid-13th -century date.

Also present was a small quantity of earlier material (10th to 11th century and 11th to 12th century), presumably associated with the foundation of the castle in the 11th century. This material was likely to have been residual in the contexts in which it was found.

9.2 Method

Sherds were sorted by form and fabric following Vince (1985, 2002) and Bryant (2004). Sorting took place by eye and under magnification (×10) and the results were entered onto an Excel spreadsheet. The report uses the classification established by Vince (1985).

9.3 The pottery

The earliest pottery to be recovered from the site (Fabric G1) was almost certainly residual in the contexts in which it was found: the earth bonding of wall foundation (203) and (214) the fill of a pit. In both deposits, pottery of Malvernian fabric B1 dating to the early 12th century onwards was also present. Fabric G1 is dated in Hereford to the 10th to 11th centuries and is not usually found in 12th -century contexts (Vince 1985, 63). Dating to the 11th to 12th centuries in Hereford, Cotswold fabric D2 was found in surface (109) and surface (205). In both cases, it was much abraded and accompanied by pottery of later date (fabric B1). In both sherds, the calcareous inclusions had been leached away, probably as a result of the storage of acidic liquid.

Worcester C1 comprised the second most numerous fabric found on the site (52 sherds out of 159, a total of 32.7%). According to Vince, it is dated in Hereford to the 11th to 12th centuries, where it forms about 12% of the assemblages. It rapidly declines into the 13th century but continued in use over a longer period in Worcester. None of the club-rimmed cooking pots, Bryant's Type 1, considered to date to the 11th to 12th centuries, was present, with all rims recovered of Type 3, dating in Worcester to the mid-12th century onwards (Bryant 2004). Pit [118] and [111] beneath it contained cross-joining sherds of a rim of this type.

The most numerous fabric on the site was Malvernian fabric B1 (92 sherds or 57%). This total differs from that for the slightly later assemblage found at nearby Hay-on-Wye, where fabric B1 comprised 17% of the total (BA 2004). In Hereford, B1 formed up to 20% of assemblages in the 12th century, rising to 77% by the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th century.

Of note was a large (122.0g) sherd of a jug in Ham Green ware (fabric E2a) recovered from dumping layer (211) in Area 2 (*Plate 7*). This pottery has been found in early 13th -century contexts in Hereford and dated to the 13th century in Worcester (Bryant 2004, 310). It was decorated with incised grooves at the neck and with anthropomorphic decoration at the rim. Whilst it was superficially ornate, it is not certain that the sherd should be considered 'high status', as, according to Bryant (2004), pottery was generally not considered to be an elite product during the medieval period in England. However, decorated pottery was apparently used on 'high-status' sites when it was readily available and transport along the Wye may have made this material easy to source.



Plate 7: Anthropomorphic decoration at rim of a sherd of a Ham Green jug

A single sherd of Malvernian fabric B4 was from a jar with a thumbled cordon at the rim, a form dating to the later 14th to the 15th century, and could suggest deposition at a period when the castle was refortified for use during the Glyndŵr rebellion. The paucity of material from this period contrasts with the pottery from work carried out in 2007, where nine sherds out of 31 were dated to this period. No pottery of Vince's A6 fabric was found; dating to the 13th to 14th centuries, its absence could again suggest an earlier date for the part of the site excavated.

Jervis (2006) suggests that the supply of pottery to castles may have been different from that from domestic sites, with more cooking vessels as opposed to jugs, possibly as a result of the larger numbers catered for compared to the majority of domestic assemblages.

The comparatively large quantity of Worcester fabric C1 might suggest a date early in the 13th century, as this material becomes less common in Hereford from this date onwards. It is interesting that 'Worcester type' pottery was also found at the motte at Old Castleton, which would seem to indicate that the two sites were in use at the same time.

9.4 Further work

Further comparison with sites at Hay on Wye and Hereford together with further analysis of the rims of vessels recovered from the site may refine the dating. Comparison of sourcing of pottery with material from other castles on the Welsh border, and with material recovered from earlier excavations at Clifford, would be particularly worthwhile to attempt to establish any similarities or patterns of supply.

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Report written by	Kath Crooks BA		
Reported edited by	George Children MA MIfA		
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Border Archaeology Regional Offices

Midlands & North (Head Office)

Chapel Walk, Burgess Street,
Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8DE

T: 01568 610101

E: midlandsandnorth@borderarchaeology.com

Midlands & North

01568 610101

West & South West

Park House, 10 Park Street, Bristol, BS1 5HX

T: 0117 907 4735

E: westandsouthwest@borderarchaeology.com

West & South West

0117 907 4735

East

Luminous House, 300 South Row,
Milton Keynes, MK9 2FR

T: 01908 933765

E: east@borderarchaeology.com

East

01908 933765

South & South East

Basepoint Business Centre, Winnal Valley Road
Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 0LD

T: 01962 832777

E: southandsoutheast@borderarchaeology.com

South & South East

01962 832777