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**Floodgate Street/Milk Street, Digbeth, Birmingham City Centre:
An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

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Summary

A desk-based assessment was carried out in January 2001 by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in advance of proposed redevelopment by Nicol Thomas Limited of a site at Floodgate Street in Digbeth, Birmingham City Centre (NGR SP 407800/286380). The proposed development site covers the southern half of the street block formed by Floodgate Street, Milk Street, Digbeth and Moore's Row but, to ensure the assessment is archaeologically valid, the whole street block has been studied; this is referred to in the report as the Study Area. Documents and maps were examined in order to assess the survival of archaeological deposits within the Study Area. The potential of the Study Area to contribute to an understanding of the historic development of this part of Birmingham was also assessed. The Study Area contains two Grade II Statutory Listed Buildings, one of which lies outside the proposed development site. Maps of the early 18th century show that part of the Study Area was used as a tannery or tanneries, and there is a likelihood that remains of this and other industries which may have taken place on the site could survive due to the possible existence of waterlogged deposits from the seasonal flooding of the adjacent River Rea. Waterlogging may also have preserved remains of the causeway which was created along Digbeth. The assessment found that the potential survival of 'islands' of archaeological deposits was likely to be good in many parts of the Study Area providing no cellaring exists. A staged approach was recommended for further archaeological mitigation for two of the standing buildings, and an evaluation programme of sampling by trial-trenching was recommended for other areas of the site which may provide evidence for other below-ground building remains and evidence for the tanning industry. This programme of evaluation would be undertaken in order to establish the nature and extent of below-ground archaeological survival within the Study Area. The results of this evaluation may indicate the necessity for further archaeological work to be carried out ahead of redevelopment.

1.0 Introduction (Figs. 1-2)

This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) ahead of a planning application by Nicol Thomas Limited for a site on the north-east side of Digbeth in Birmingham City Centre (Fig. 1). The location of the site, hereafter referred to as the Study Area, is shown on Fig. 2. The aim of the report is to provide a summary of known and potential archaeological information for the Study Area, based on existing data, in order to enable appropriate archaeological mitigation strategies to be devised. The assessment adheres to the guidelines set down in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1999) and is written in accordance with

Birmingham City Council's Guidance on Sources for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments.

2.0 Location of Study Area (Fig. 2)

The proposed development site is bounded by Floodgate Street on the south-east, Milk Street on the north-west, and Digbeth Digbeth on the south-west (Fig. 2). The north-east boundary follows the north-eastern and north-western edges of a large warehouse building and then north-westwards from there to Milk Street. However, for this study to be archaeologically valid, the whole street block, with Moore's Row as the north-east boundary, has been studied in order to determine the extent of any archaeology integral to the street block itself. The street block is referred to as the Study Area. The Study Area lies to the west of the River Rea and Deritend Bridge, and currently comprises a mix of 19th and 20th-century buildings, two of which are statutorily listed, and car-parking areas.

3.0 Objectives

The objectives of this assessment were to determine the likely survival and significance of archaeological remains within the Study Area, to identify the need for any further archaeological work in advance of the planning application, and to identify potential requirements for any *in situ* preservation of archaeological remains, or for their recording in advance of, or during, development. The Brief supplied by Dr Mike Hodder, Planning Archaeologist for Birmingham City Council, identified four specific requirements for the desk-based assessment. These were to address the following:

- The likely survival of remains of leather tanning from the 18th century and earlier.
- The likely survival of remains of past environmental conditions.
- The likely survival of a possible artificial causeway.
- The potential of the site to contribute to an understanding of the historic development of this part of Birmingham.

4.0 Method

A site inspection of the Study Area was carried out and documentary research of primary and secondary records and maps held at BUFAU, the University of Birmingham Library, and Birmingham Reference Library was undertaken. Birmingham City Council Sites and Monuments Record, the primary source of known archaeological information for the city, was consulted. All sources consulted are listed in Section 13.0 below.

5.0 Geology and Topography

Central Birmingham is situated on a narrow Keuper Sandstone ridge. The edge of the Rea Valley slopes down from the Bull Ring, to the north-west of the Study Area, towards the River Rea, a tributary of the Tame which, at the bottom of Digbeth, flows across a fault where water draining from the sandstone accumulates and issues as springs in the valley (VCH Warwicks, vii, 4-5). The drift geology mainly consists of scattered patches of sand and gravel, while deposits of alluvium have built up on the Rea valley floor (Ordnance Survey Drift Geology Sheet 168).

6.0 Site Inspection (*Fig. 3, Plates 1-8*)

A site visit was made in order to determine current land-use and conditions, and to identify any buildings or features of historical or archaeological interest. For convenience of description, the Study Area has been divided into three Zones, A, B and C, and the buildings have been numbered 1-6. These divisions can be seen on Fig. 3. Due to limited access it was not possible to see exactly how many individual buildings, partial buildings or yard areas existed in Zone A behind the Digbeth and Milk Street frontages. Where this is the case, these buildings have not been numbered or described.

Zone A

This zone comprises the corner of Milk Street and Digbeth. A Grade II Statutory Listed Building, 224/225 Digbeth (SMR 02110-B1387; Building 1) stands on the frontages. The building dates to 1869 and is a polychromatic brick warehouse of five storeys. The building is currently covered by scaffolding, most of the windows are boarded up, and the front ground-floor is covered over (Plate 1).

On the Milk Street side of the building is a smaller brick-built warehouse (Building 2, Plates 2 and 3), which has a set of access doors, placed one above the other, to each of its four storeys. The brickwork at the front is painted over with advertising, and punched through with air holes.

Zone B

This zone contains a modern building, 221/223 Digbeth (Building 4, Plate 5), which stands on the site of the former 'Old Leather Bottle' and 'Old Three Crowns' inns. It is currently occupied by Marplant. To its east, at the corner between Digbeth and Floodgate Street, is a tarmac yard area, which was cleared of buildings in the 1990s. To the north of the yard area is a modern brick warehouse building (Building 5). A high brick possible boundary wall exists along the northern edge of Building 3 and may have been reused in Building 4. Access was not possible at the time of the site inspection and this could not be confirmed (Plates 6 and 7).

Zone C

The Hall Green Technical College and Digbeth Centre, (Building 6, Plate 8), fronts onto Moore's Row, a former Board School designed by Martin and Chamberlain, and opened in 1891. This is a Grade II Statutory Listed Building (SMR 03603 BI1239). To the south of it is a tarmac car-parking area, at the end of which, abutting Building 2, is a three storey brick building (Building 3, Plate 4), probably built at the same time as the school and used as a caretaker's house.

7.0 Cartographic Information

An extensive range of historical maps was examined in order to focus on the changing morphology of the Study Area with regard to street layout and the properties contained within it.

Birmingham is fortunate in having a large series of historic maps which begin in the early 18th century with Westley's map and prospects of Birmingham of 1731 and 1732, and continue through the 18th and 19th centuries. A map of 1750/1, surveyed by Samuel Bradford, has been shown to be particularly accurate by the standards of its time (Baker 1995). Westley's maps cannot always be taken at face value because of their probable use in encouraging people to move to the town by way of depicting ladies and gentlemen taking the air in the pretty rural fields around the town. The borough surveyor, Pigott-Smith, produced a series of large-scale plans of Birmingham between 1850 and 1861, which depict individual properties and building plans in detail. These maps were used as a base for ratings maps produced between 1869 and c.1890, although these were not available for the Study Area. Ordnance Survey maps, beginning with the First Edition 1:500 of 1889, and continuing through the 20th century, illustrate the development of the Study Area up to the present day.

8.0 Archaeological and Historical Background (*Figs. 4-16, Plates 9-14*)

8.1 Previous Archaeological Work

Previous archaeological work in this area of Birmingham was scarce and relatively uncoordinated until the mid-1990s, and usually took place in an interventionist manner during demolition or construction work. The sites mentioned in this section are those which are of particular relevance to the Study Area.

In the 1950s Sherlock carried out salvage recording during the widening of Deritend High Street near St John's Chapel. He observed sandstone foundations probably belonging to the medieval chapel and evidence suggesting pottery production in Deritend during the 13th and 14th centuries. Supporting evidence for this was found during archaeological excavation of the back-plot of the 15th-century Old Crown Inn (Litherland

et al. 1994). The Hereford and Worcester Archaeology Service carried out an excavation of 137 to 145, High Street, Bordesley, in 1995, and discovered evidence for 17th-century industrial activity.

In 1995, BUFAU carried out an Assessment of the Digbeth Economic Regeneration Area and Cheapside Industrial Area (Litherland *et al.* 1995), which evaluated a large area comprising nearly a third of the medieval town, including the Grade II* listed Old Crown Inn, the site of St John's Chapel, two watermill sites and several important 19th and early 20th-century buildings. The results of this assessment indicated the high archaeological potential of a number of areas to address significant questions of historical development from the town's origins to its industrial peak in the Victorian period; these areas of crucial importance included the north side of upper Digbeth, most of lower Digbeth, and the north side of Deritend. The assessment also concluded that the preservation of the above and below-ground archaeological resource was likely to be higher than previously thought in the Digbeth and Deritend area, as widening of the main street had not greatly affected the north side of these areas. Post-war redevelopment was also not considered to have been as widespread in these areas as in other parts of Birmingham included within the scope of the assessment.

A waterlogged deposit containing leather was found in 1996 during an archaeological evaluation at the Hartwell Smithfield Garage in Digbeth, to the north-west of the Study Area (Litherland and Moscrop 1996). This would indicate the likelihood of waterlogged deposits existing within the Study Area, given its close proximity to the River Rea. Further work on this site (Burrows *et al.* 2000) demonstrated that despite dense 18th- and 19th-century cellar activity, significant archaeological deposits survived as 'islands' amidst the disturbance.

An assessment of the Digbeth Millennium Quarter was undertaken in 1999 (Mould 1999). The assessment demonstrated that the area contained numerous zones of potential below-ground archaeological survival and a large number of standing 19th-century industrial buildings. These remains 'have the potential to further our understanding of Birmingham's evolution from a medieval market town to an industrial and commercial city' (Mould 1999).

Also in 1999, BUFAU carried out an excavation at the Custard Factory in Digbeth (Mould forthcoming) in close proximity to the putative medieval market-place at Deritend. Clay quarry pits were found, suggesting a brick-making industry corresponding with Birmingham's expansion in the early post-medieval period. It was thought that these pits had been backfilled prior to the site's use as a tannery in the 17th century. Tanning pits, wells, and a large amount of discarded horn cores were found, belonging to a documented tannery and associated bark mill, as well as medieval deposits and Deritend Ware pottery like that found at the Old Crown Inn site (Litherland *et al.* 1994). Evidence for a medieval and post-medieval tanning industry was also discovered at Edgbaston Street (Mould forthcoming) at the location of a former watercourse which linked two medieval moats.

It is apparent from the archaeological evidence that tanning was an important industry in Birmingham during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

8.2 Historical Profile of Study Area

Digbeth and Deritend, and the Edgbaston Street area of Birmingham were probably the districts most associated with early industrial development within the historic town of Birmingham. In the 16th century, the antiquarian and travel writer John Leland described a street called 'Dyrtey...in which dwelle smithes and cuttelers.'

Birmingham was granted its market charter in 1166 and this marked its emergence as the principal market town of its immediate region (Holt 1985). One of the factors associated with its early growth was the convergence of local routes on the town. Deritend owed its early development to the importance of the road that ran between London and the North, a stretch of which runs between St Martin's Church and Bordesley, passing through Digbeth and Deritend and crossing the Rea at Deritend Bridge. Deritend came under the lordship of Birmingham but lay within the parish of Aston. Curiously, although the Study Area lies on the Digbeth side of Deritend Bridge, for the most part it is contained within Aston parish, the parish boundary being represented by the line of a former filled-in watercourse, and not by the River Rea itself. However, the backplots attached to the buildings that lie in Aston parish are contained within Birmingham parish. This can clearly be seen on both Bradford's and Hanson's maps (Figs. 6 and 7).

Holt (1995) has argued that Deritend may have developed before Digbeth rather than being a later extension of medieval Birmingham. To support this theory, he cites its 'discrete, coherent plan' and the fact that in the 14th century it was described as though it was a lordship or manor in its own right, yet still owned by the lordship of Birmingham. He suggests that Deritend may have been launched as a market street around 1200 by a lord who may have wanted to capture some of Birmingham's trade.

The River Rea lies just outside the eastern edge of the Study Area, making the vicinity extremely prone to flooding. Despite this, the Study Area would have represented a prime site for commercial opportunities. The present Milk Street was once an old course of the Rea, which had become silted up by the early-mid 18th century. To combat continual flooding, Digbeth was built up above flood level into a causeway to cross an island created by the two river channels. John Leland observed this island and noted the presence of only one bridge (Toulmin Smith 1964, 96). In 1482-3 John Lenche of Deritend 'leased unto Willmo Wyot, of Byrmyngehm aforesaid, tanner, for 99 years, this particular land, which is described as "one parcel of land lying jux le cawsy," which refers to the existence of such a causeway. (Birmingham Weekly Post 1883). On the 'island,' and within the Study Area on the Digbeth frontage, stood two inns, the 'Old Leather Bottle' and the 'Old Three Crowns.' These were built in the early 17th century and demolished between 1905 and 1918. Photographs and a sketch of these inns (Plates 9-12) show that they were entered down a flight of steps from the street, providing an

indication of the raised street level and the continuation of this activity after the construction of the buildings (Litherland 1995). These buildings stood in Zone B and their remains are now beneath Building 4 (see Section 6.0 above). In 1684, Thomas Billingsley of Deritend sold the inns, possibly originally two private houses, to widow Sybill Brierley, John Brenand, a whitesmith, and Thomas Addyes, gentleman (Birmingham Weekly Post 1883).

Westley's East Prospect of 1732 (Fig. 4) shows the Study Area quite clearly, although the plan is quite stylised and cannot be taken completely at face value; for instance, the layout of the buildings within the Study Area do not exactly correspond between the prospect and Westley's map of 1731 (Fig. 5). Both the map and prospect show a large squarish building set back from the Digbeth frontage against Floodgate Street in Zone B of the Study Area, with what appear to be two wings/boundaries curving towards each other from the north-west and south-east corners of the building. The rest of Zone B, and Zone A, consists of a row of buildings on the Digbeth frontage, and two or three other buildings behind them. The prospect shows this row turning and continuing to the north, unlike the map, which shows a vacant lot here. It is possible that the building in question was constructed between 1731 and 1732, but the individual buildings may not anyway be accurately represented. In Zone C is an area of plots within yard areas. These contain rows of pits, and are shown clearly on the prospect to be tanning pits and drying racks. The presence of the River Rea, and other watercourses, adjacent to the Study Area would have made it an ideal site for the tanning industry, which requires a large amount of water. Evidence of tanning was found during excavations at the Custard Factory site to the east (Mould 2000).

Bradford's map of 1751 (Fig. 6) shows the present Floodgate Street as Water Street and the present Milk Street as Rope Walk, probably after a rope manufactory situated there (Litherland 1995). Milk Street did not, at this time, extend all the way down to Digbeth, but terminated at the present-day Moore's Row. In the area of the present Milk Street is a yard enclosed by buildings on all sides. The 17th-century Flood Gates to which the street name refers were part of the Heath Mill and are shown to the north-east of the Study Area. Two dotted lines are shown to extend from a watercourse coming from the north-west and running behind the backplots of the Digbeth frontage. The lines represent a former extension of the watercourse which had become almost fully silted-up, and was apparently known as John A'Dean's Hole where the two watercourses joined. Records show that in the late 17th century, several loads of gravel were laid at John A'Dean's Hole (Birmingham Weekly Post 1883). It also represents the parish boundary between Birmingham and Aston, causing the Study Area (Zone A and part of Zone B) to be in Aston parish, and the area of Zone C to be in Birmingham parish. This is a curious fact as, although there seems to be no physical barrier as such, it separates many of the buildings from their backplots and the tanning pits within them. The tanning pits in Zone C, and possibly Zone B, were still in use in the mid-18th century, and the large building set back from the Digbeth frontage still existed. A block of buildings still stood along the frontage to the west of it. However, there are by this time many more smaller buildings behind. By the time Hanson produced his 1778 map (Fig. 7), the streets had been given their present-day names and some development had taken place to the north of Moors

Row, as it was called then, consisting of houses along the street frontages, and back plots with possible gardens or tanning pits. The parish boundary is still shown as a dotted line.

The Gooch Estate Plans from the late 18th century (Fig. 8) show the line of the watercourse cutting diagonally across the Study Area; the land to the west of it is owned by R. Geast Esq and the large building corresponding to that set back from the Digbeth frontage in the earlier maps, and labelled as Cox's Manufactory on a plan from the early 1820s, lies to the east, in Birmingham parish. The land in Zone B of the Study Area was owned by a Mr. Cox. A photograph of the map was seen but the map was not easily accessible given the time constraints. Trade Directories from 1823 and 1825 list four Coxes in Deritend; there appear to have been two William Coxes at Deritend Bridge, an umbrella maker and one who owned a sawing mill. A John Cox, plane maker, is also listed as being in Deritend, plus Sarah and Ann Cox, confectioners.

By 1828, the tanning pits had gone, to be replaced by buildings. The land to the north-east of the Study Area had become much more developed since 1778. Ackerman's Panoramic View of 1847 (Fig. 9) is quite accurate in its depiction of streets and which buildings and companies were located there, although less accurate in its depiction of the appearance of the buildings themselves. It shows that the large building set back from Digbeth no longer existed. Instead, two extremely narrow buildings of three storeys and only one bay each stood on the frontage, appearing effectively to cut off the entrance into Floodgate Street from Digbeth. Again, this may not necessarily be taken at face value. One of the buildings along the frontage may represent the 17th-century inns mentioned above, possibly the building which appears to have a shop front. A large, grand-looking building also stands here. This may represent a Presbyterian Meeting House associated with Lower Meeting House Yard, which was demolished when Milk Street was cut through here in 1881. The Meeting House is believed to have been established by Samuel Willis in the later 17th century. It was abandoned in 1732 due to continual problems with flooding, and was converted into a three-storied workshop (Hutton 1781). The workshop was pulled down c. 1880. In 1698, John Ruston, a tanner, owned Meeting House Yard. A copy of his will, dated 1718, is held in Birmingham Library Archives. His neighbour was Cox, who was a shortcutler (Demidowicz *pers. comm.*). Two industrial chimneys are shown behind in the area of Zone B, suggesting that the tanning industry had given way to industry of a newer kind. Forges were certainly in existence in the Study Area by the late 19th century.

Large-scale plans produced by the borough surveyor, Pigott-Smith, around 1855 (Fig. 10), show the Study Area in detail with regard to building layout, although no house numbers or details of usage are given. At this time, the Digbeth frontage contained a row of buildings of varying sizes. Milk Street had still not been cut through at this time. There is a row of small buildings slightly offset from the Floodgate Street frontage in Zone B and, running up through the centre of the Study Area, from Zone B to C, is a row of small, regular buildings with a possible court arrangement to their west, although it is unclear whether these buildings saw domestic or industrial usage, or a mix of the two. Other buildings on the west side of the yard area appear to be of an industrial rather than domestic nature. In Zone C are several large buildings, presumably part of an industrial

complex. A rectangular hatched-in area lies against Floodgate Street, other instances of which are distributed around the area in varying sizes; these represent open-sided 'buildings'.

In c.1869, No.224/225 Digbeth was constructed (Building 1), now a Grade II Statutory Listed building, a polychromatic brick warehouse of five storeys. Between 1890 and 1900, No.224 was occupied by a branch of the Birmingham Coffee House Company. No.225 was occupied by a mill furnisher in 1910, and a corn and forage merchant's by 1925. The SMR entry describes the building as 'Polychromatic brick with stone dressings; slate roof. Five storeys; 7 bays plus the corner and another 7 bays on the left-hand return in Milk Street. Ground floor with apparently original shop fronts.' It is shown on the 1889 1:500 Ordnance Survey (Fig. 11) with two cart entrances, one on Digbeth and another smaller one between it and the smaller warehouse/stable next door on Milk Street. A yard area is shown at the back. By now, Milk Street had been cut through to Digbeth. The 'Old Leather Bottle' and 'Old Three Crowns' are marked, and they seem to have undergone some extension at the back. The Floodgate Street frontage comprises 'Commercial Buildings,' including the 'Midland Auction Rooms.' Zone C has been cleared of buildings, presumably to make way for the construction of the board school building, opened two years later, in 1891.

A puzzle associated with No.224/225 Digbeth and the punching-through of Milk Street exists. Research undertaken by Toni Demidowicz of the Conservation Department, Birmingham County Council (*pers. comm.*) has found that the property was originally built for Thomas Fawdry, a corn and flour dealer. It was then No. 223 and 223½ High Street, Deritend. No.223 was a retail shop, house, bakehouse, warehouse and premises, and No.223½ was a retail shop, house and premises. The warehouse area of the building was in the upper floors, as the area was susceptible to flooding from the Rea. In 1879 Nos.224, Meeting House Yard (then consisting of 23 houses, warehouses and shops), 225 and 226 High Street were acquired by the Corporation in order to extend Milk Street to the High Street, and these properties were pulled down. The road was laid out and, in 1881-2, No.223½ was empty. In 1883, Fawdry was in occupation of No.223 and the Birmingham Coffee House Co. Ltd was at No.224, these being the present-day No.224/225. In 1893 Fawdry moved his business to the rear of his premises, and by 1894 he was also in occupation of No.1 Milk Street, which was used as an office, shopping and a stable. Hewitson sacking-makers were in No.223. Demidowicz suggests that No.223½, as it was at the time, would have had its west party wall exposed by the demolition of the former No.224, explaining its not being occupied in 1881. Thus, then called No.224/225, it was probably partly refronted at the Corporation's expense in 1881/2 to 'round the corner' into Milk Street (Plate 14). From inspection of the interior, Officers from the Conservation Group of Birmingham City Council noted the building's complexity and the possible existence of some type of shoring, perhaps employed at the time of Milk Street's construction to support the property in the absence of support against its west wall. Also noted was the fact that none of the Ordnance Survey editions show the property correctly.

Plans drawn up in 1890 by Martin Chamberlain for the Birmingham Board School show the site of the proposed school to be built on Moore's Row in Zone C of the Study Area.

Land in Zone B was leased to Richard Wall and Joseph Adams. In Zone A, in the area of No. 224/225 Digbeth, the land is shown to belong to Walter T. Fawdry and adjacent, to the east, George Hemming. In Zone C, a short 'Right of Way' is shown leading from Milk Street, along the northern edge of Building 3 to the land owned by Adams. A more detailed plan of the same year (Fig. 12) shows a proposed Caretaker's House on the site of Building 3 in Zone C; this is likely to be the same building as the present one. A pencilled-in 'Bath' is shown in Zone B. A further plan, dated 1902, shows Nos. 1-5 Floodgate Street, 'Commercial Buildings,' with 'Shopping' still leased to Joseph Adams (Fig. 13). A plan of 1903 shows land in Zone B occupied by Forges, shops, a cottage, and yard areas (Fig. 14).

The 1918 Ordnance Survey (Fig. 15) shows the five terraced houses along Floodgate Street, a row of buildings along Digbeth, including No. 224/225, the warehouse next to it on Milk Street, and the Caretaker's House, plus two large buildings behind them. A detailed 1940 Insurance Plan (Fig. 16) provides house numbers and building function, showing No.224/225 Digbeth in use as 'Mill Furne & Engraver,' meaning a Mill Furnisher, and a Tailor in No.224. Building 2, 624 Milk Street, is in use as a Seed Warehouse. Zone B saw mixed domestic and industrial usage, containing stores, houses, a photographer's, a garage and a car showroom on the Digbeth frontage, which stood on the site of the Old Leather Bottle. The garage in Zone A/B is shown to possess a 'Belfast Truss Roof.' The School (Building 6) is shown in Zone C.

9.0 Geotechnical Information

No boreholes have been sunk within about 500m of the Study Area (Birmingham City Laboratories *pers. comm.*).

10.0 Conclusions

10.1 Below-Ground Archaeology

- In the early 18th century and probably earlier, the area represented by Zone C and possibly part of Zone B was used by tanners, and is clearly shown on the maps from this time to have contained a series of tanning pits and drying racks. It has been demonstrated by previous archaeological work in Birmingham that the tanning industry was concentrated by the River Rea and other watercourses, such as at Edgbaston Street (Mould forthcoming) and, closer to the Study Area, at the Custard Factory (Mould 2000).
- The frequency of seasonal flooding from the River Rea throughout history would indicate the likely good preservation of waterlogged remains within the Study Area, such as those associated with the tanning industry.

- Waterlogging may also raise the potential for preservation of the medieval causeway built to raise Digbeth above the flood-level. Remains of this may exist at the southern edge of the Study Area.
- Remains of demolished buildings such as the Meeting House in Zone A, Cox's Manufactory in Zone B, late 19th/early 20th-century forges in Zones A/B, and other 18th-and 19th-century buildings in all three Zones may survive.

The Study Area has not seen many successive episodes of intensive development, so there may be some survival of archaeological features and deposits, probably conforming to the usual urban model of survival as 'islands' between disturbances by cellars and services. It is not known how many, or indeed if any, of the earlier buildings within the Study Area possessed cellars. It may be the case that repeated flooding precluded the construction of cellars, as they would not have been much use for storing goods if conditions were often wet. This same flooding however, may well have preserved archaeological deposits related to the tanning industry likely to have existed in Zone C and possibly Zone B. Probable raising of the ground level to create a causeway along Digbeth may also have preserved earlier archaeological deposits from any later disturbance.

Zone A

This zone contained a block of buildings along the Digbeth frontage in the early 18th century. By the mid-18th century more buildings stood behind the frontage, around what would become Meeting House Yard, lying against the parish boundary and former confluence of watercourses known as John A'Dean's Hole. These buildings were replaced by others, some of which remain standing, in the 19th century. If some of these buildings were not cellared due to the frequent episodes of flooding, archaeological deposits may exist between the buildings' foundations.

Zone B

This zone contained the early 18th century (if not earlier), large building set back from the Digbeth frontage, which was occupied by Cox's Manufactory in the early 19th century and demolished by 1847. The buildings along the Digbeth frontage would have contained the early 17th-century building later incorporating the 'Old Leather Bottle' and 'Old Three Crowns' inns, now overlain by Building 4. A few other 18th-century, or earlier, buildings stood behind this frontage, and later 19th-century development replaced and/or added to these. This was followed by demolition in the 20th century. As in Zone A, if cellaring was not built, archaeological deposits may survive as 'islands' between later disturbance. It is possible that remains relating to the tanning industry may exist in this zone, particularly towards its northern edge, in the area of Building 5.

Zone C

This zone contained many tanning pits and drying racks in the early 18th century and probably earlier. This industry probably remained here until the early 19th century, when the zone was built over. In the mid-19th century the zone saw probable industrial use before it was cleared in the late 19th century in order to build a board school, which still

stands. Again, the survival of archaeological deposits may depend on the existence or otherwise of cellaring.

10.2 Above-Ground Archaeology

- The survival of the Grade II Statutory Listed Building, No.224/225 Digbeth, and its immediate neighbour on Milk Street gives them industrial importance as a group. There are few, if any, remaining buildings of this type and date in Birmingham. It is likely to provide information about the mixed usage of such buildings, such as domestic, retail and storage, and about the development of industry in this part of Digbeth/Deritend during the buildings' lifetime.
- Zone C also contains the Caretaker's House, probably built at the same time as the school in Zone C, around 1890/1. As such, it retains some group value with the school.

The 19th-century standing buildings have the potential to illustrate the social and industrial history of the street block containing the Study Area.

Zone A

At the time of the site inspection, the area at the back of the buildings on the Digbeth and Milk Street frontages was inaccessible, and it was not possible to determine whether any other buildings or remains of buildings exist in this area. If such buildings or remains of buildings exist, they should be subject to the same appraisal strategy as those identified by this assessment (see Section 11.0).

Zone B

The only standing buildings in this zone are modern 20th-century structures.

Zone C

This zone contains the former Board School, a Grade II Statutory Listed Building (Building 6), opened in 1891. As this part of the Study Area is not part of the proposed development site, it should not be necessary, at this stage, to make any recommendations for further archaeological mitigation in this Zone.

11.0 Provisional Recommendations

The following provisional recommendations are intended to provide a framework for further archaeological mitigation which may be required. The recommendations are dependent upon the design of the proposed redevelopment and are subject to approval or revision by the Department of Planning and Architecture of Birmingham City Council. It should be noted that under government advice outlined in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 there is a presumption in favour of preservation of significant features of

archaeological or historical interest or, if this is not feasible, full recording in advance of development.

In terms of below-ground archaeology, areas affected by redevelopment which may contain evidence for tanning, particularly in the northern area of Zone B, should be initially sampled by trial-trenching. This sampling should also enable the collection of environmental data where such evidence exists. The frontage of Digbeth in Zone B and the area behind it and to the east where Cox's Manufactory stood may also contain remains of this building and of the 17th century inns that were demolished in the early 20th century. Buildings along this frontage and just behind may have also played a role in the tanning industry and these areas should be sampled for evidence of such, providing there is no disturbance from cellarage. The trial-trenching would represent the evaluation stage of the archaeological work, and would be carried out in order to establish the nature and extent of below-ground archaeological survival. The results of the evaluation stage would identify any requirement for further more extensive archaeological excavation to be carried out ahead of redevelopment.

In terms of the standing buildings, Buildings 1 and 2 should be subject to a staged assessment, again dependent on the design of the proposed redevelopment. This staged approach should include appraisal, assessment and evaluation. The first appraisal stage should consist of a rapid inspection of the buildings in order to identify whether further information is required to clarify the impact of proposed redevelopment. If this stage of appraisal then identifies the need for more documentation for one or more of the buildings, a detailed assessment should be made, involving the collation and review of all readily available documentary and illustrative sources. This stage should also involve a photographic survey and production of floor-plans. If any further documentary or archaeological work is deemed necessary after this second stage is completed, a third stage of evaluation should involve full building analysis and recording. As Building 3 lies outside the actual area of proposed development, no further recording is recommended at this stage.

12.0 Acknowledgements

This report was written by Sarah Watt and edited by Catharine Mould, who also managed the project. The figures were prepared by Nigel Dodds. Thanks are due to Dr. Mike Hodder for his assistance, and to Toni Demidowicz of the City Council's Conservation Group, and George Demidowicz, for making their research available, as well as the staff of the Birmingham City Library Local Studies and Archives Departments.

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1808 Kempson

1828 Pigott Smith

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1839 Map produced by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge

1847 Ackerman's Panoramic View of Birmingham

1849 Map printed by Masture, MacDonald and MacGregor

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- 1890 Birmingham School Board Revised Block Plan Floodgate Street Schools
- 1902 Birmingham School Board Floodgate St. School Proposed Additional Playground
- 1903 Birmingham Education Committee Survey of Property Adjoining Schools,
Floodgate Street
- 1918 Ordnance Survey 1:1250
- 1927 Ordnance Survey 1:1250
- 1940 Insurance Map Sheet 219
- 1941 Ordnance Survey 1:1250

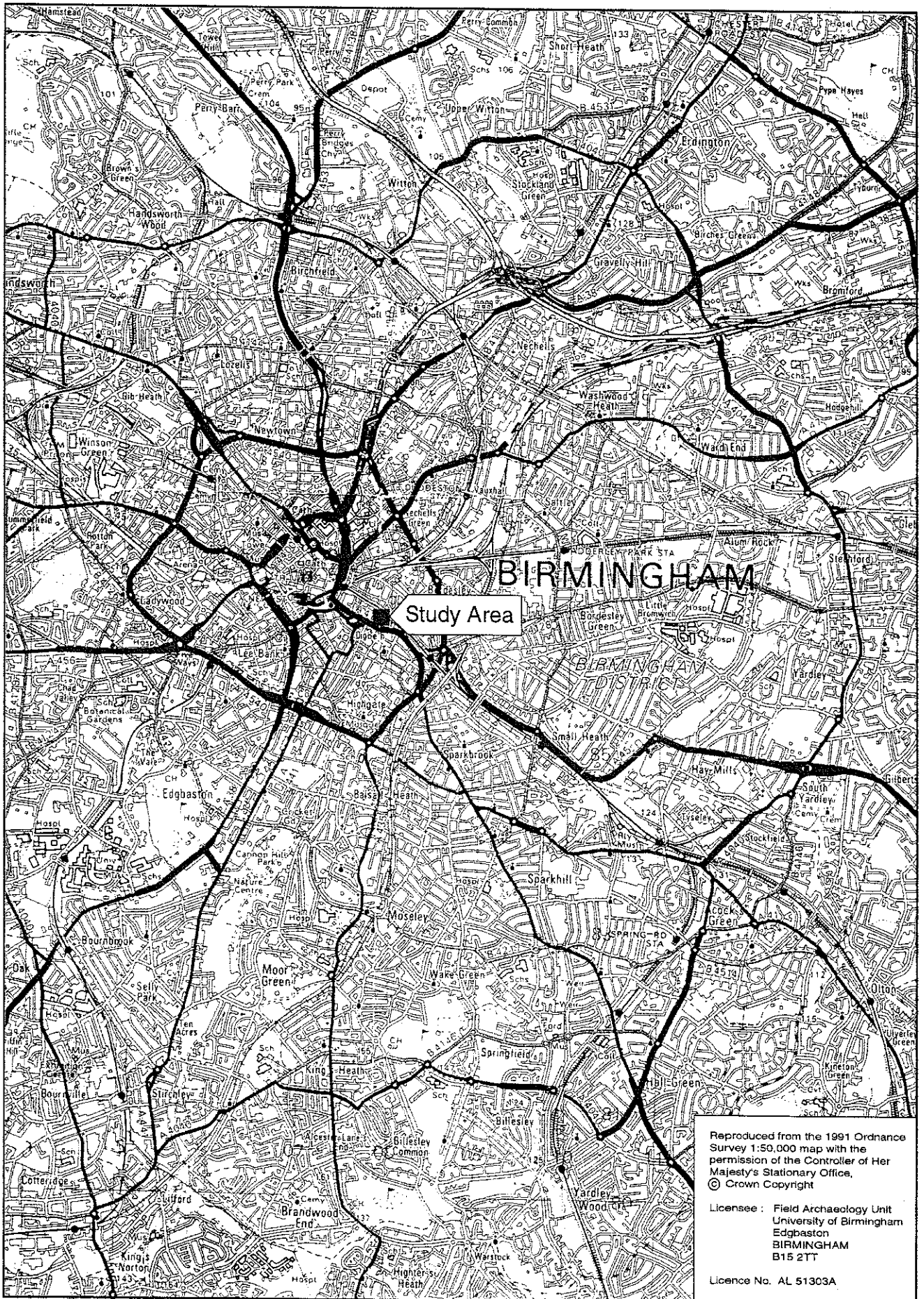


Fig.1

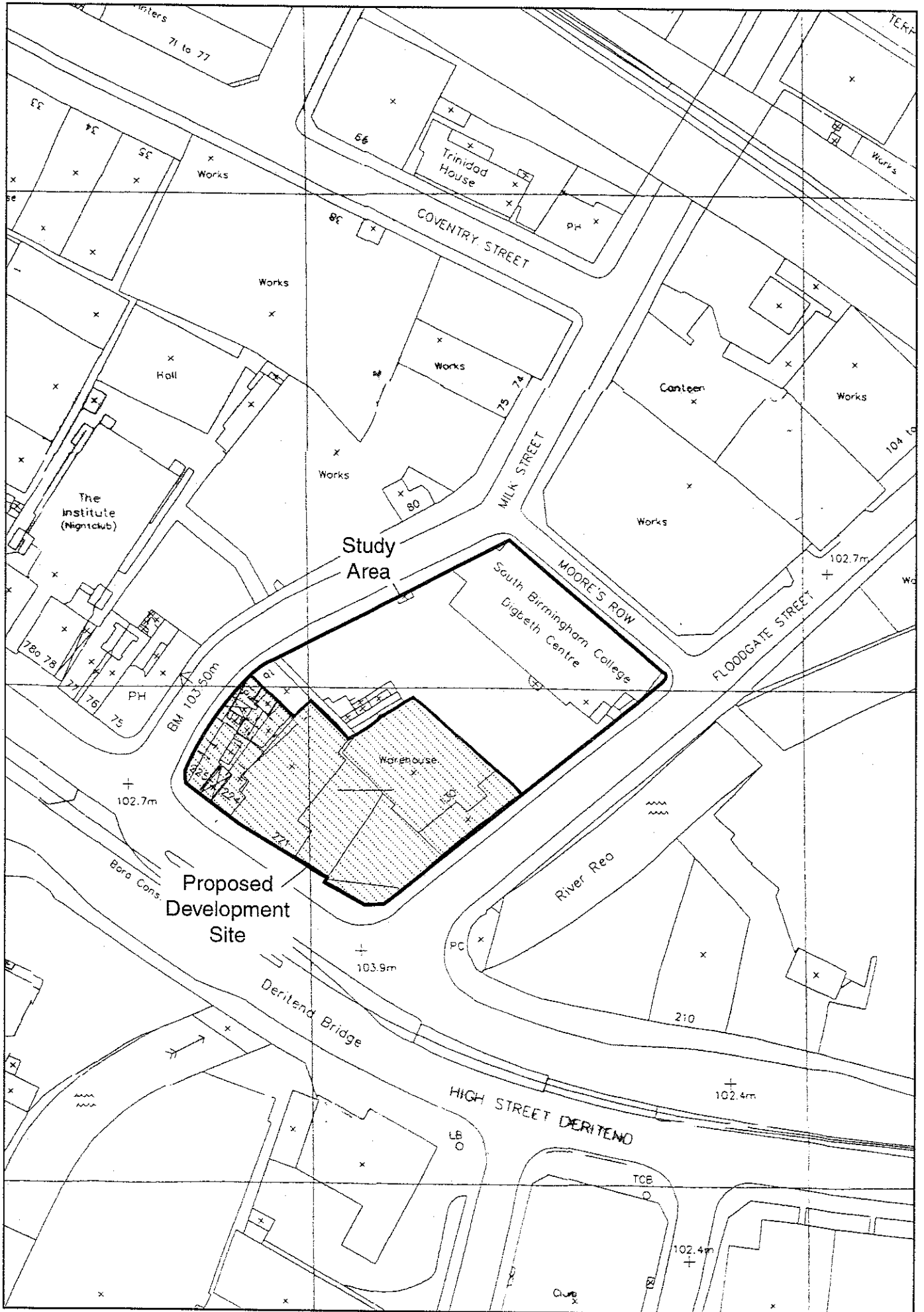


Fig.2

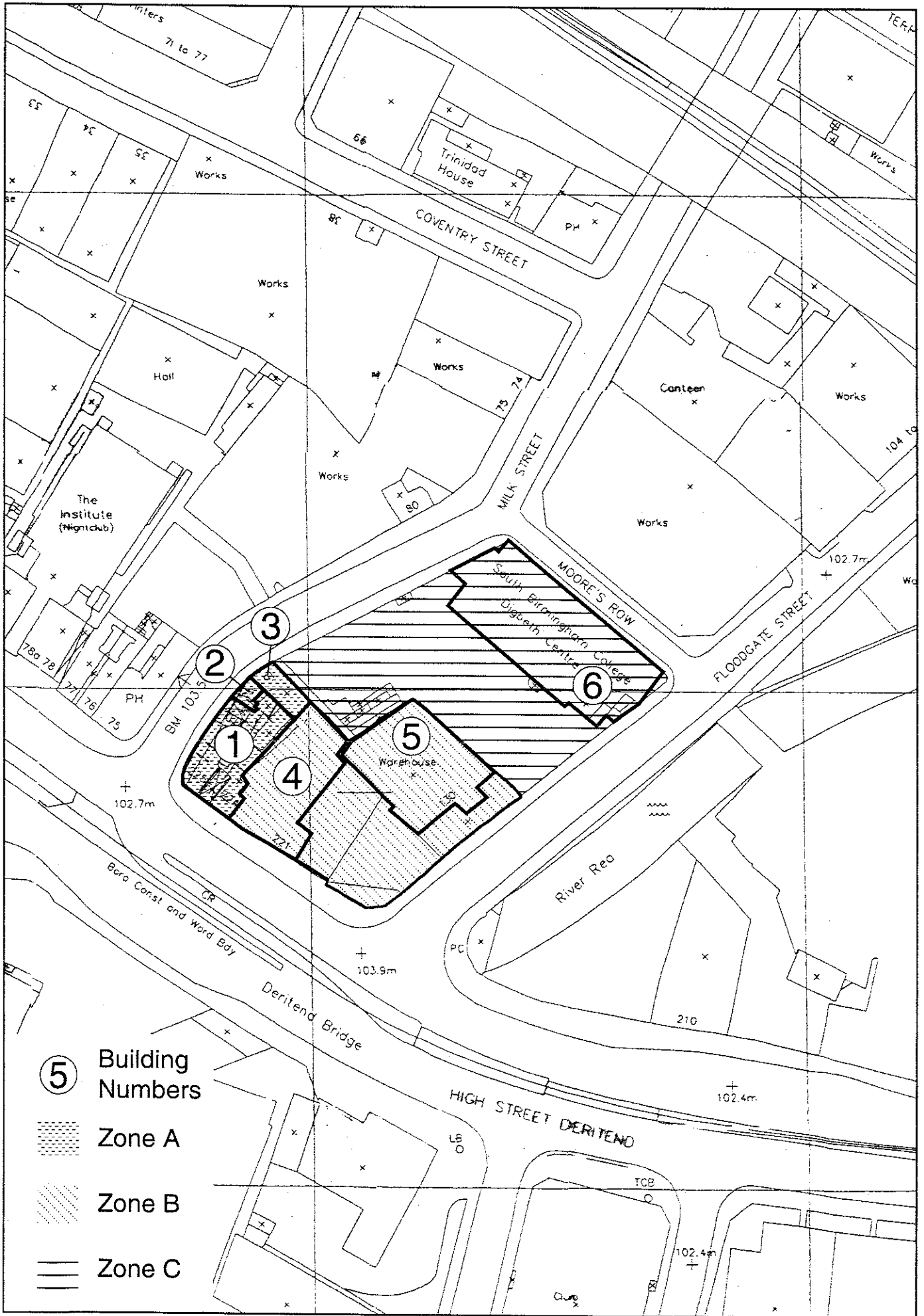


Fig.3

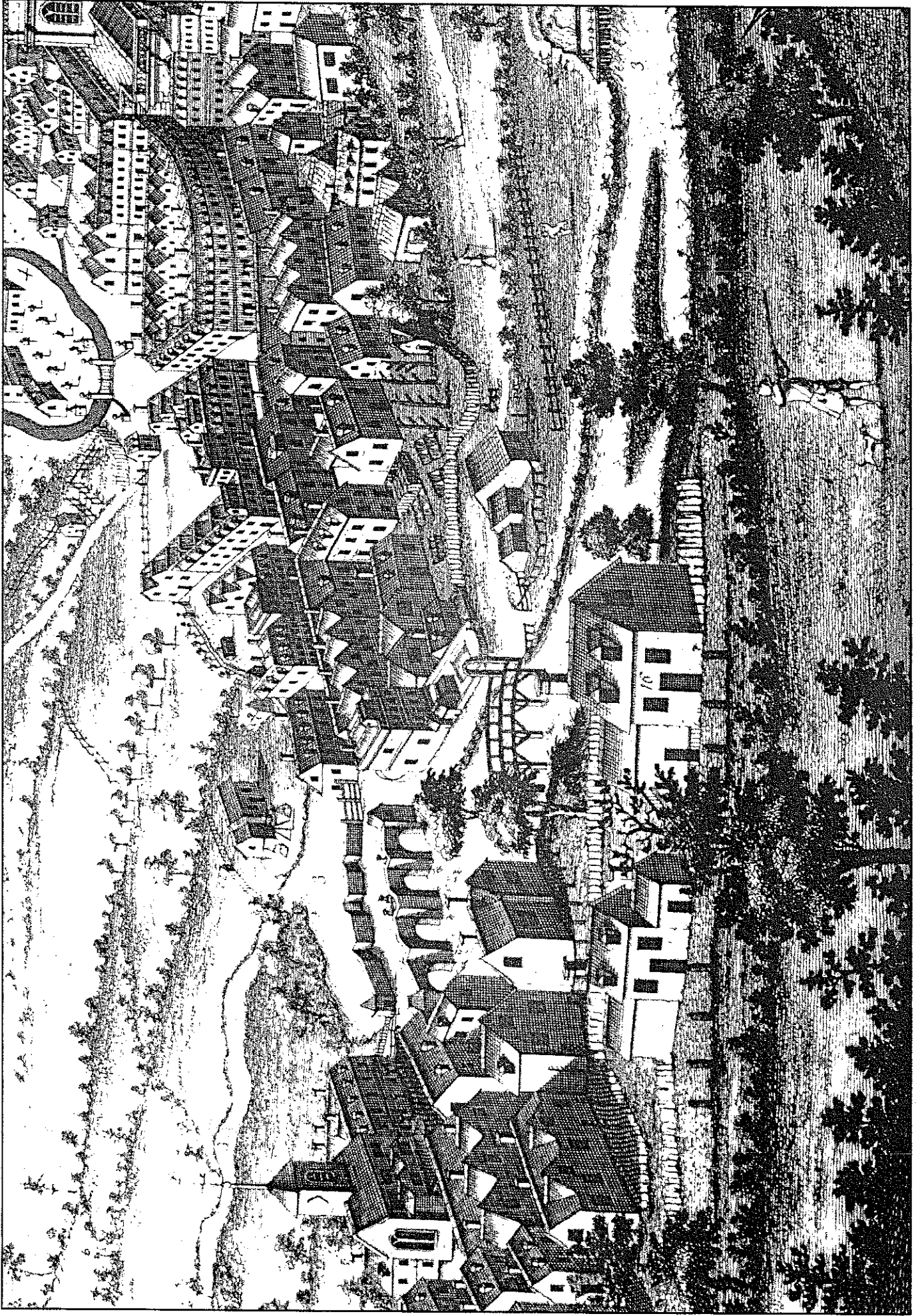
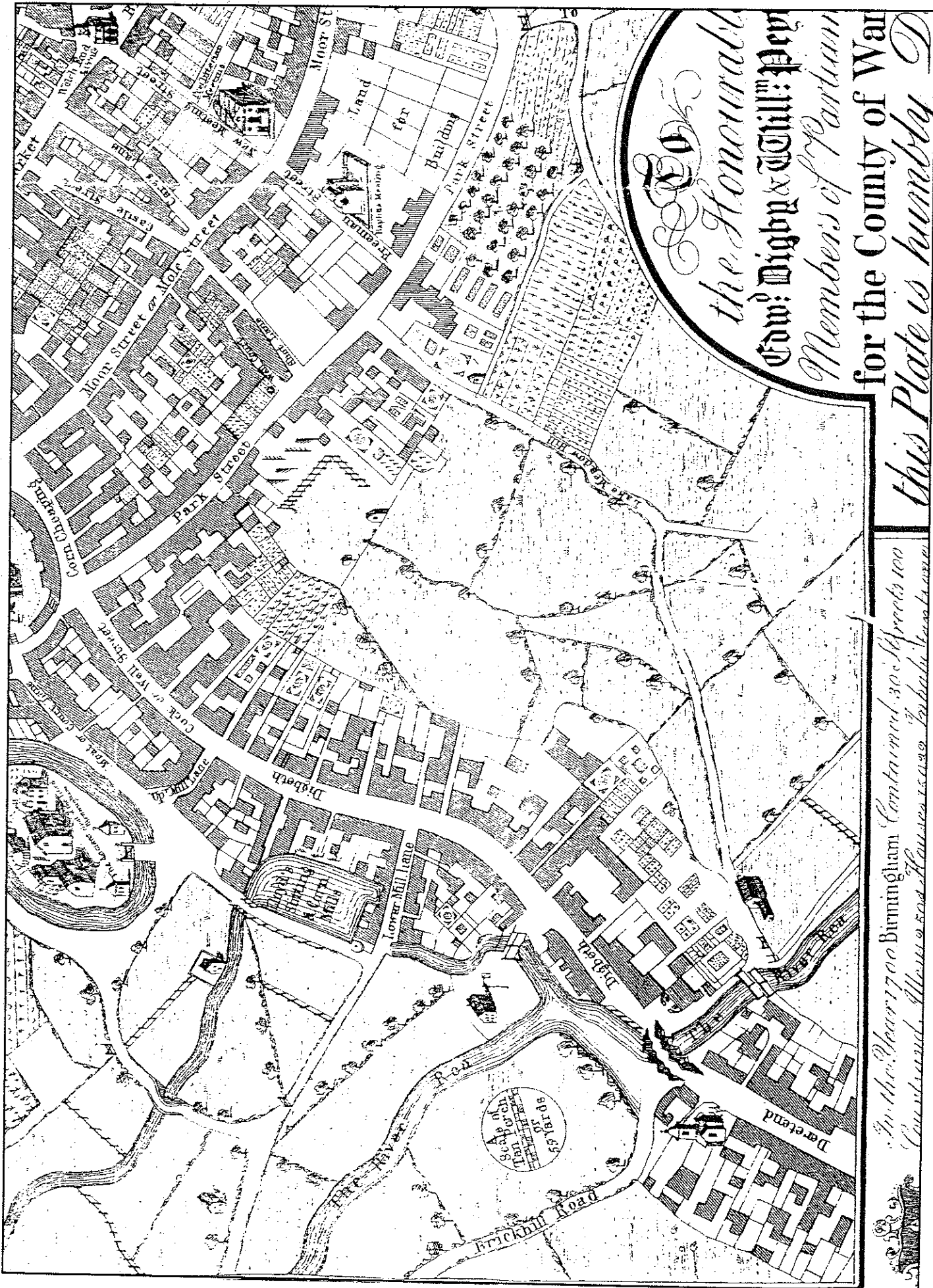


Fig.4 (1732)



To
the Honorable
Edw: Digby & Willm: Pitt
Members of Parliament
for the County of Warwick
this Plate is humbly

In the Year 1700 Birmingham Contained 3000 Souls & 100
Counties. About 1750 it had 5000 Souls & 1000 Houses.

Fig. 5 (1731)

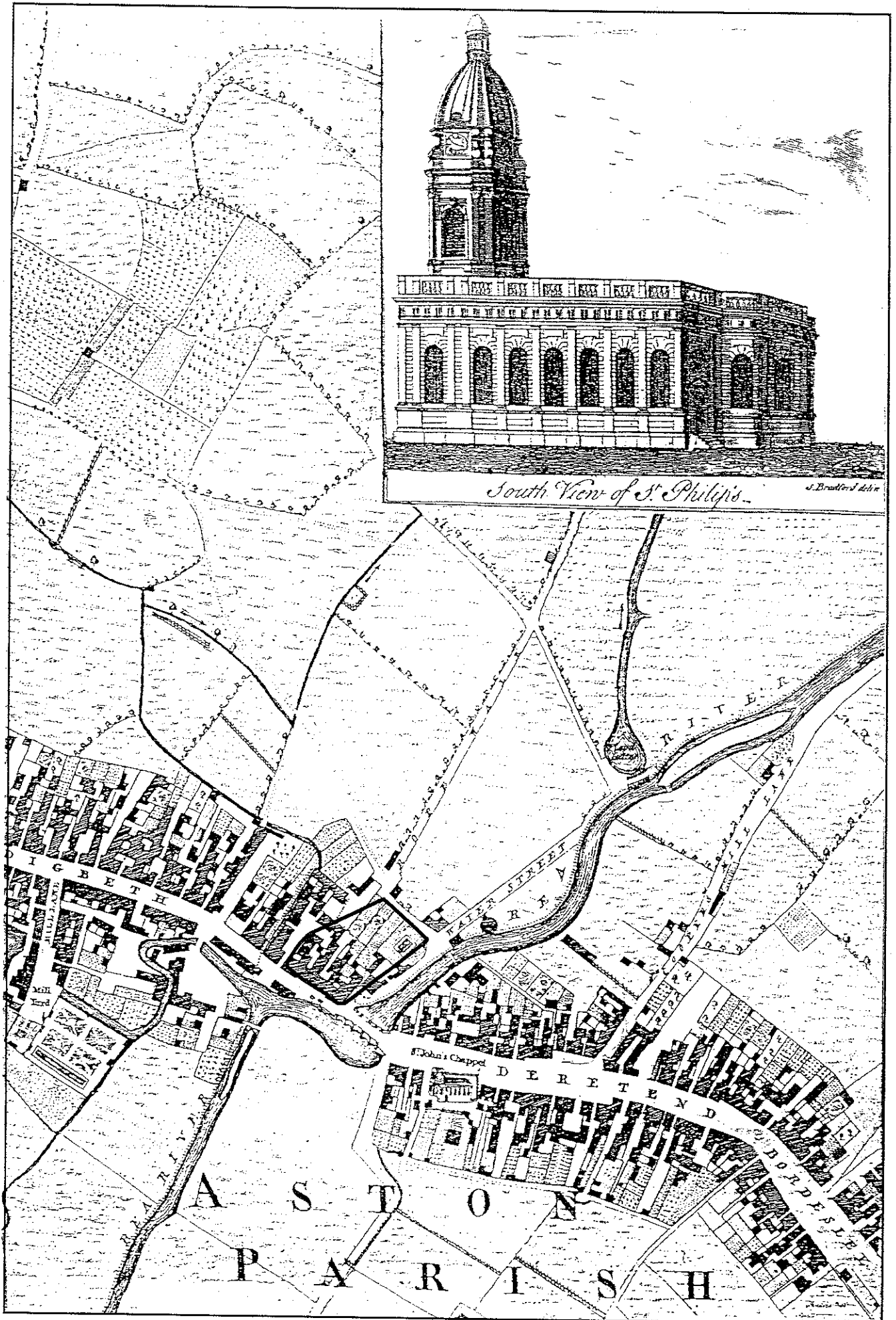


Fig.6 (1751)

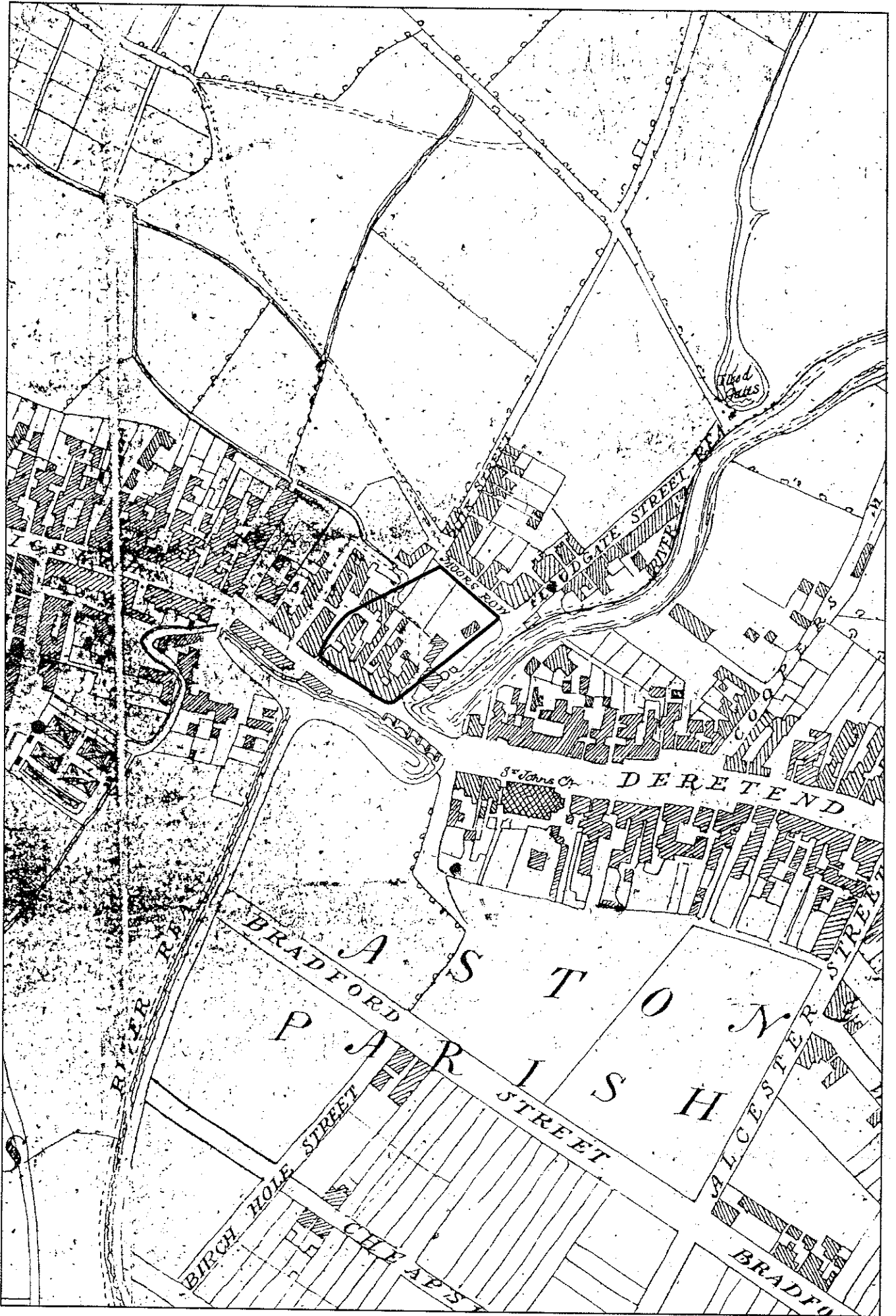


Fig.7 (1778)

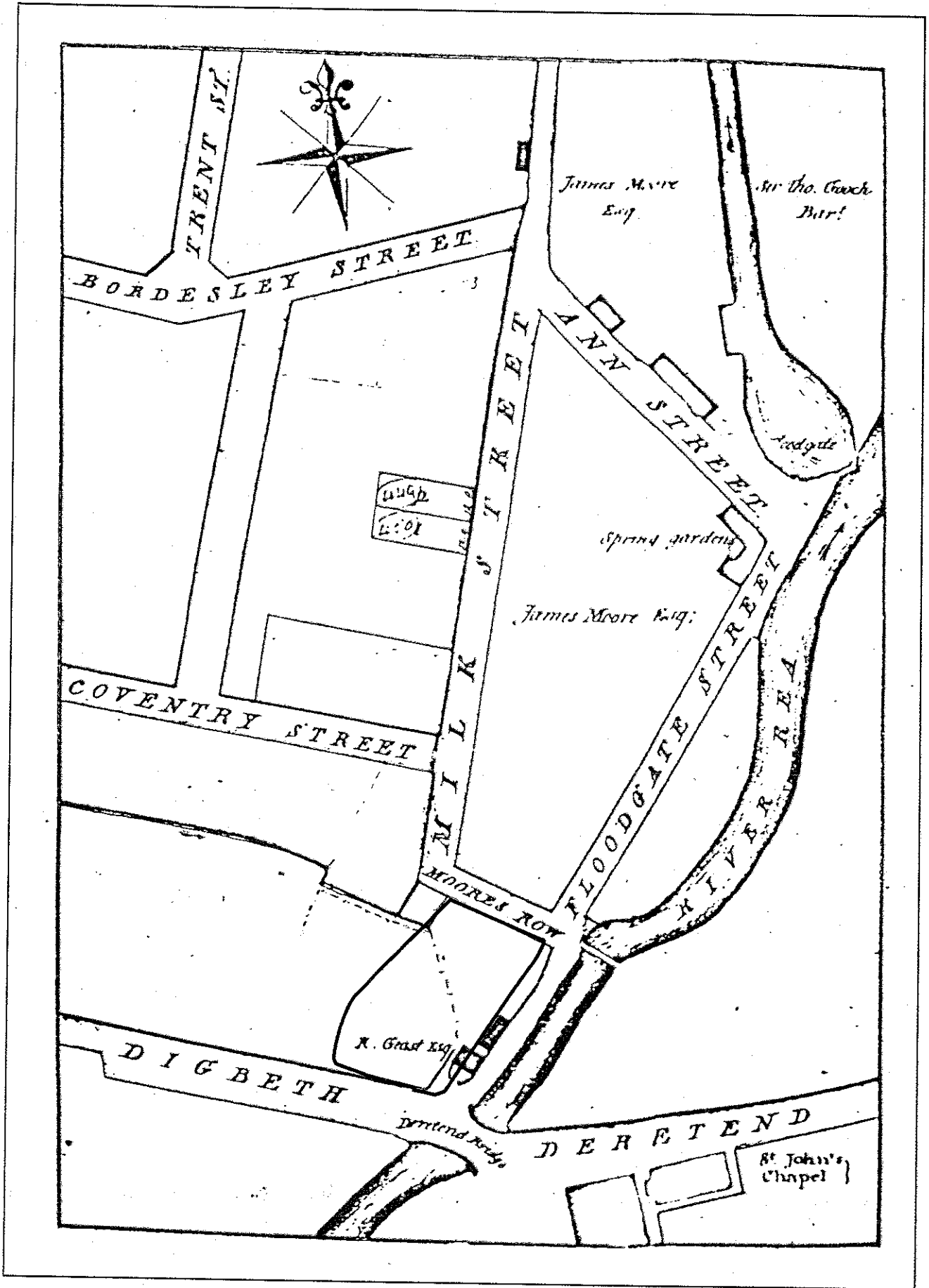


Fig.8 (1796)

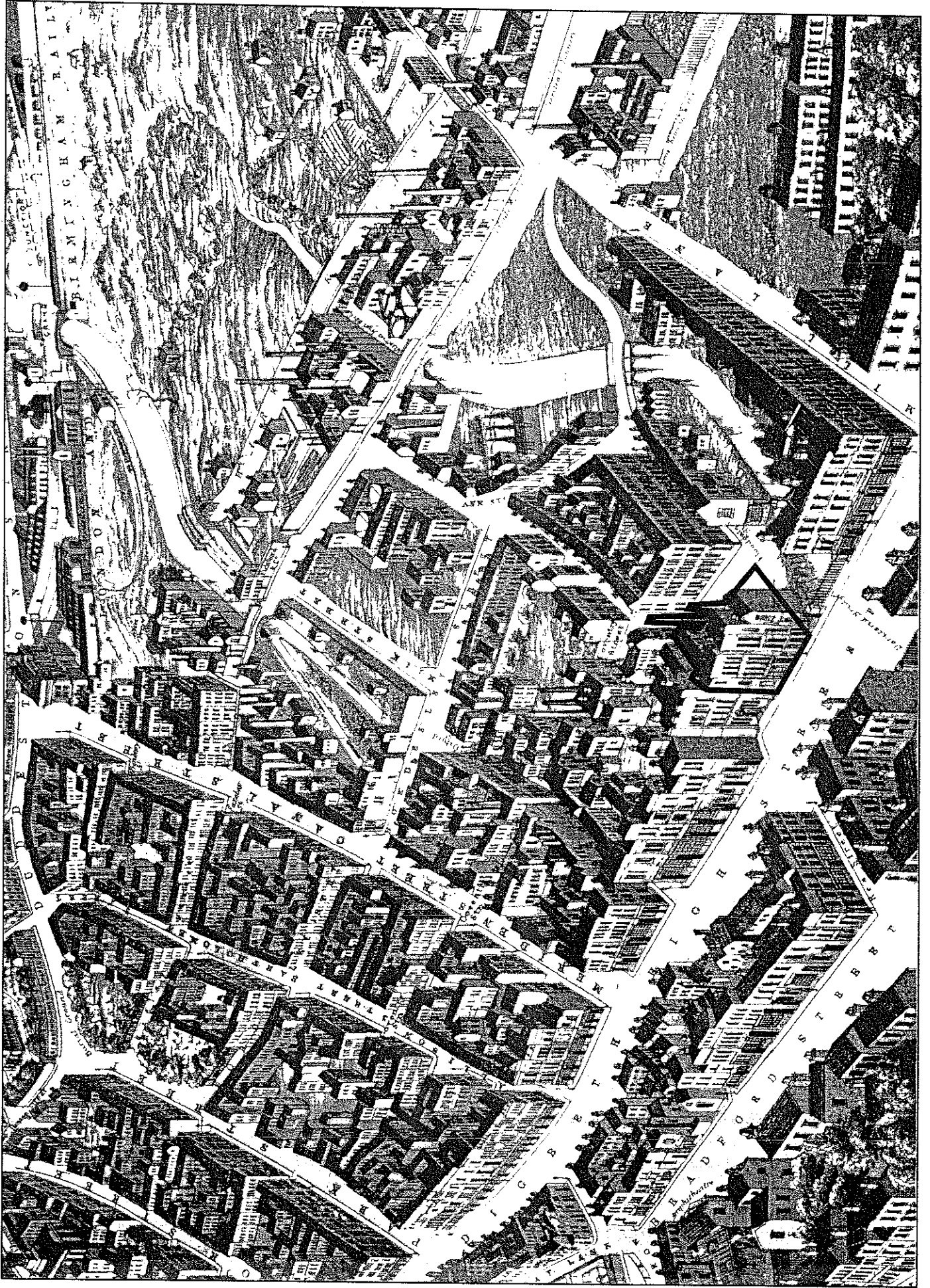


Fig.9 (1847)

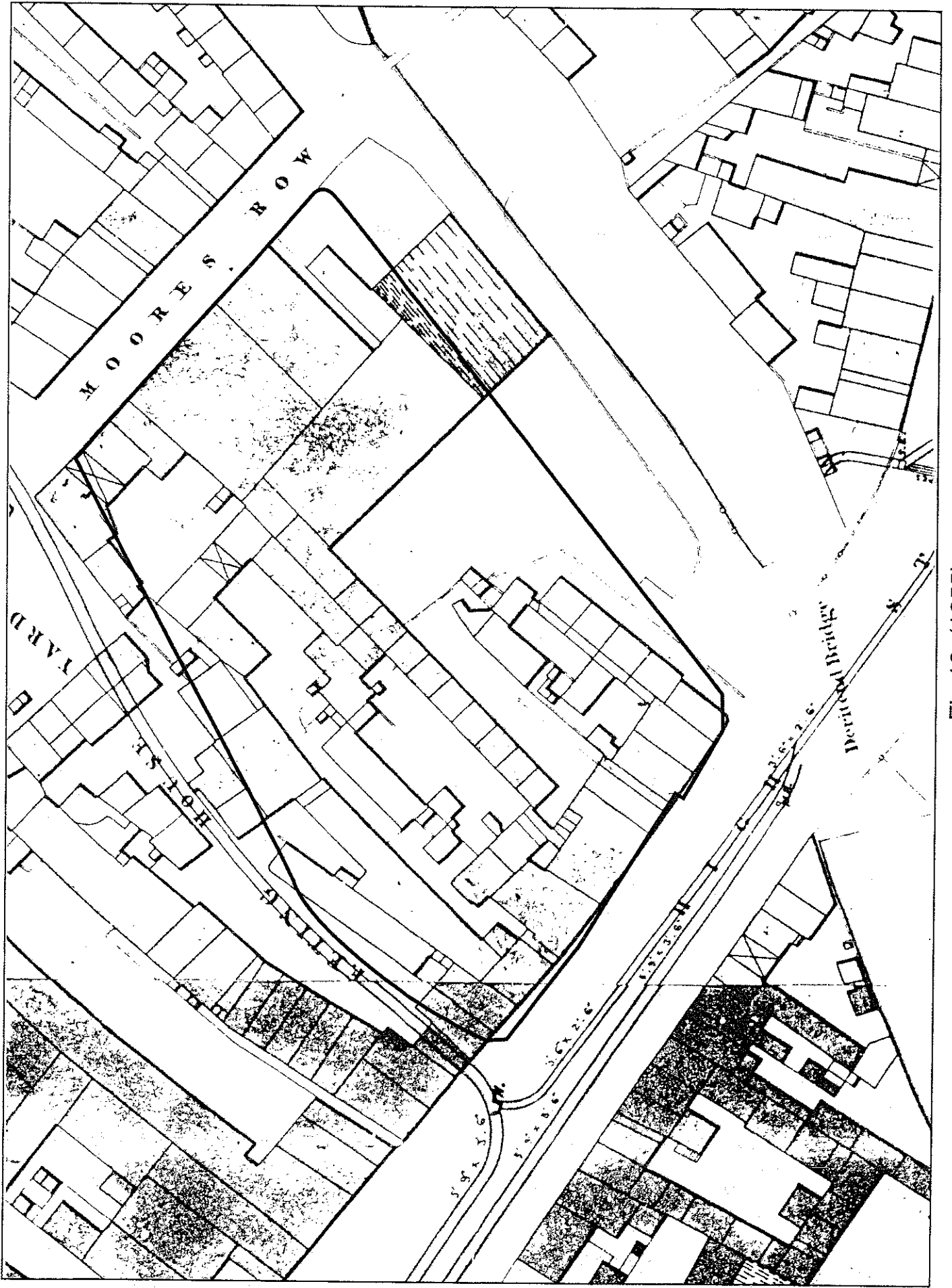


Fig.10 (1855)

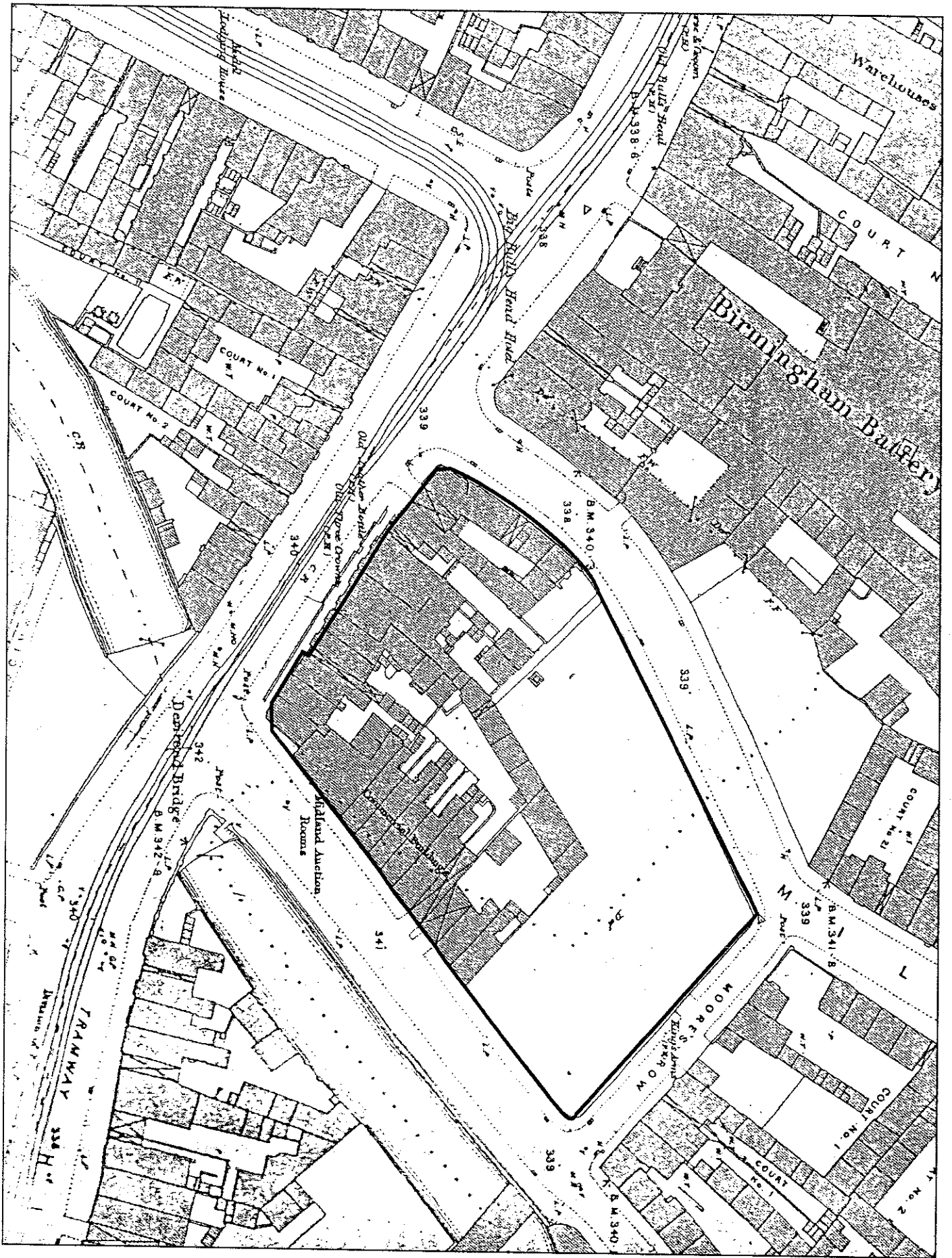


Fig.11 (1889)

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL BOARD

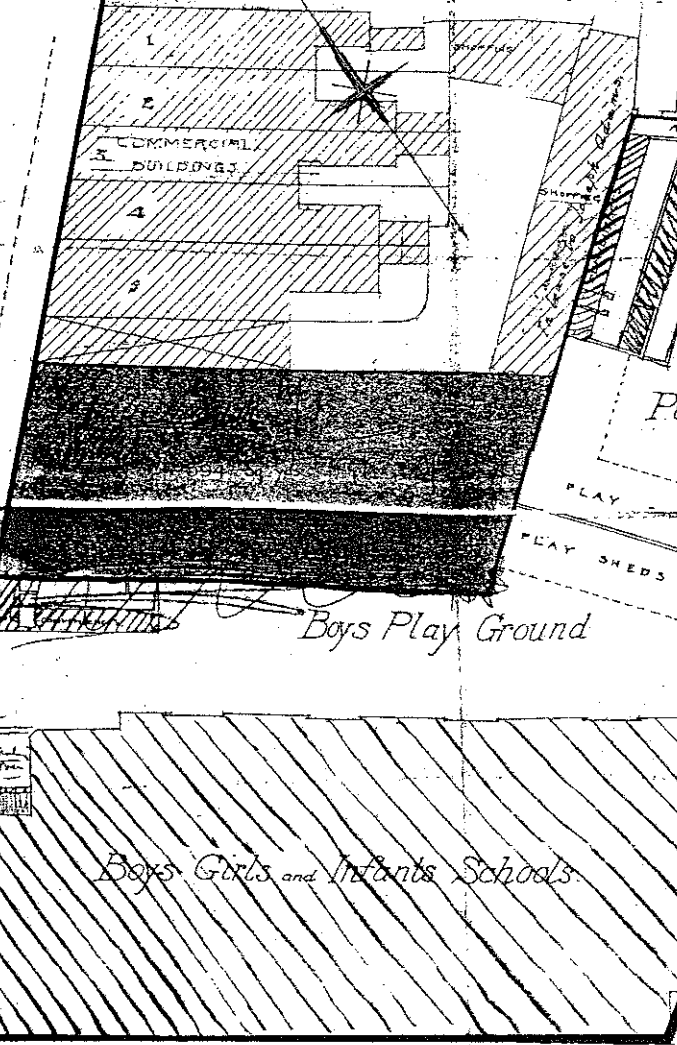
FLOODGATE ST. SCHOOL

Proposed Additional Playground



FLOODGATE STREET

MILK STREET



MOORES ROW

Architects Department
School Board Office
Birmingham 16th 1902.

Scale of feet.

Fig.13 (1902)

B'ham Education Committee.
Survey of property adjoining schools,
Floodgate St. Scale 8 ft to 1 inch

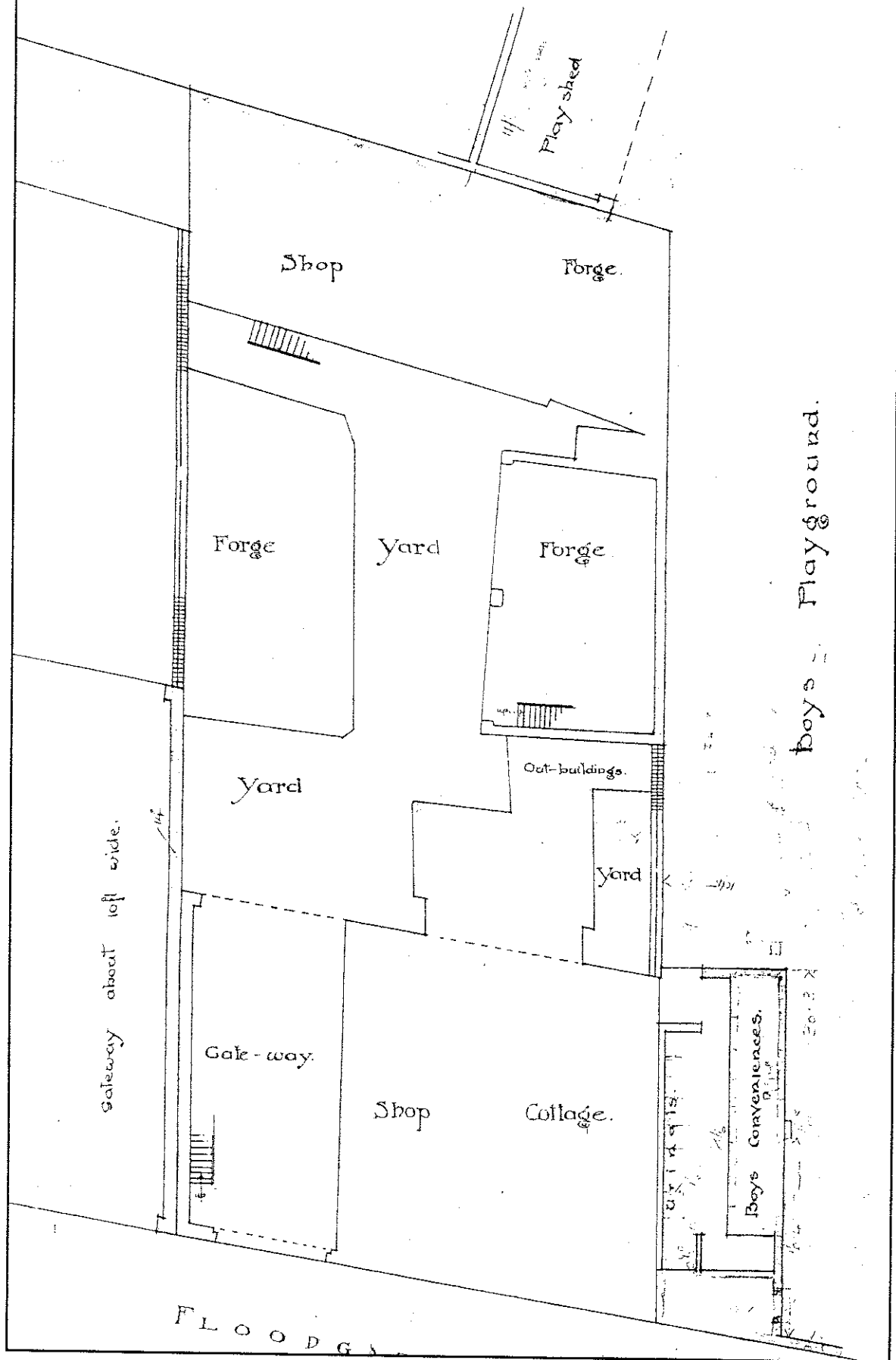


Fig.14 (1903)

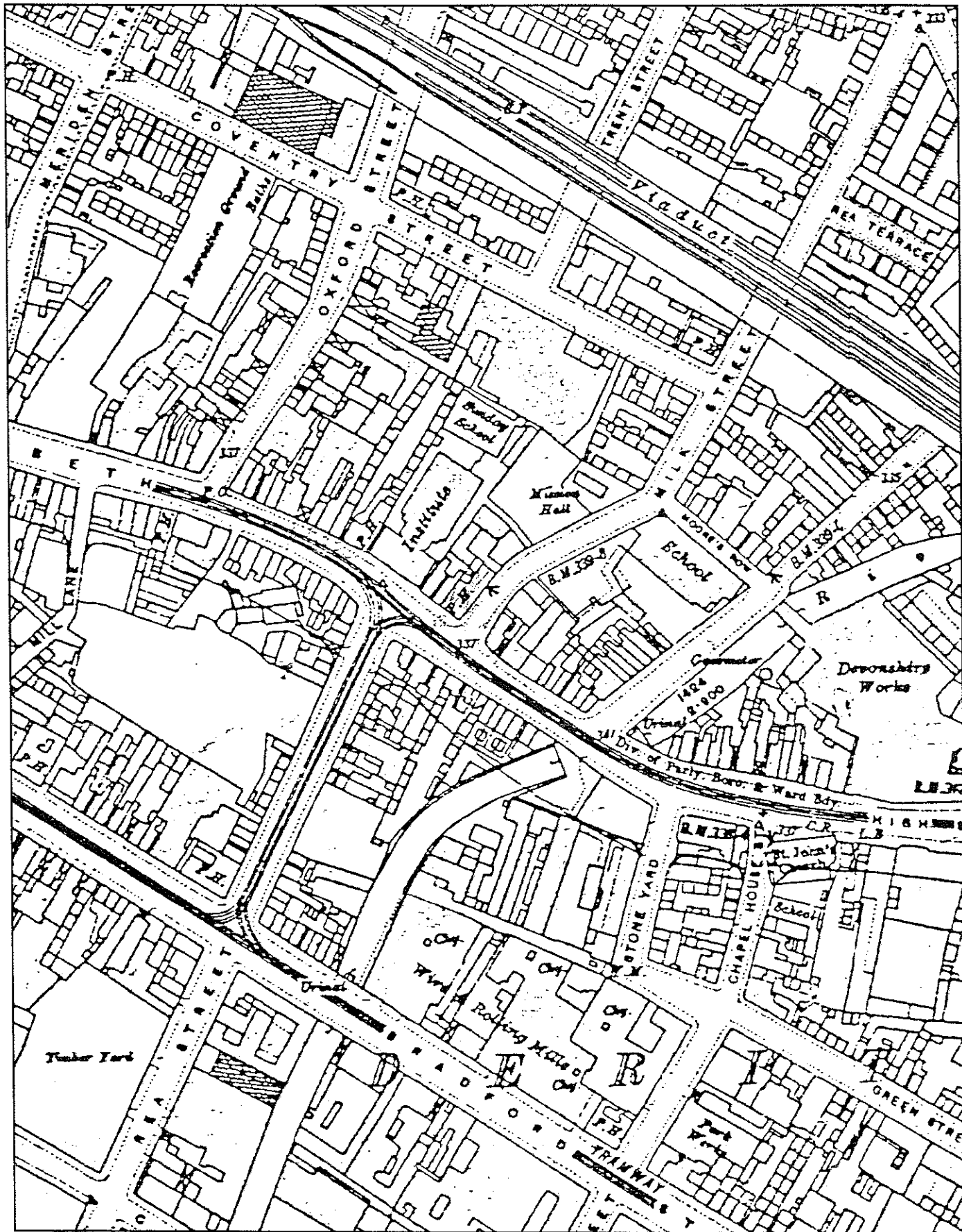


Fig.15 (1918)

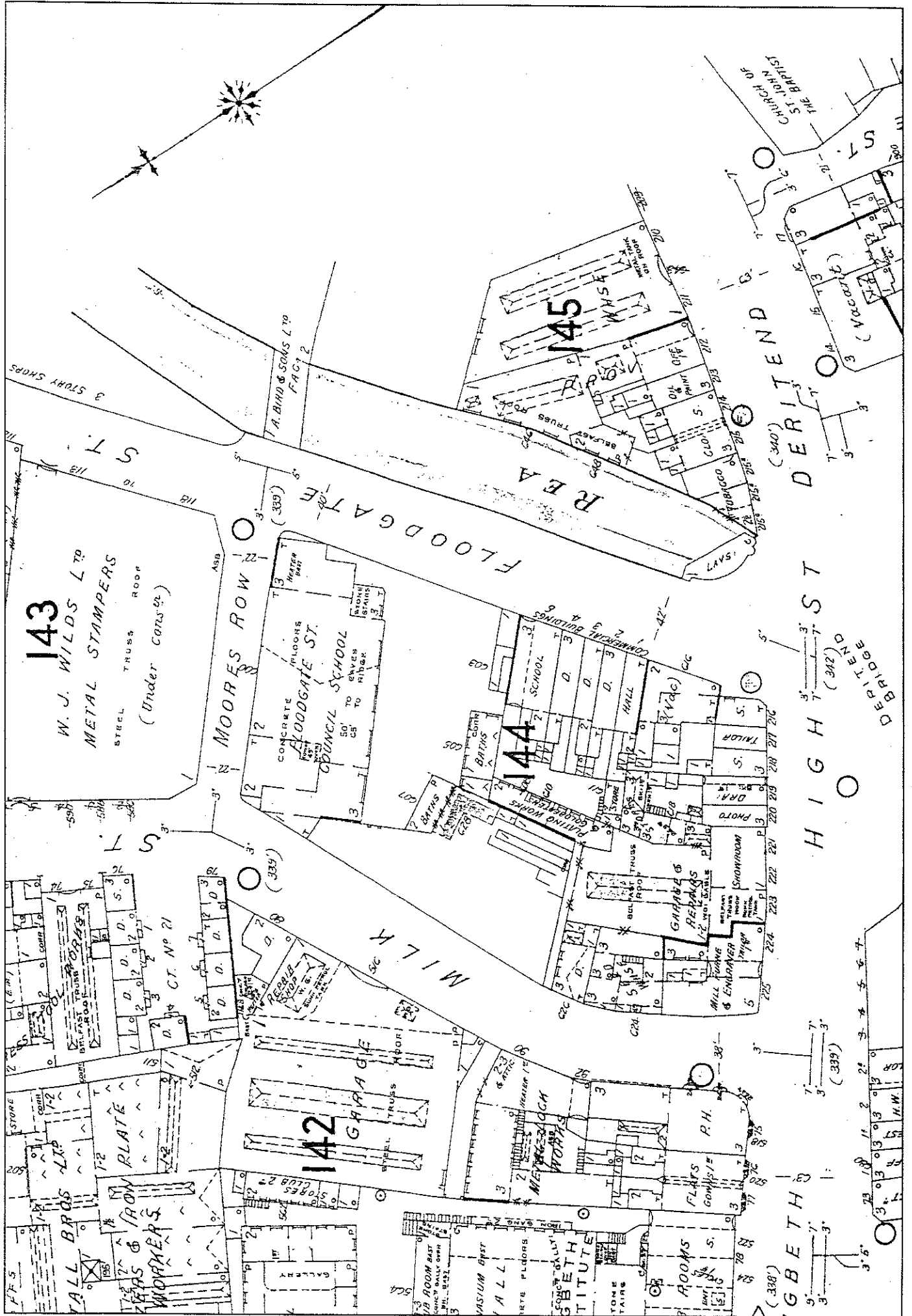


Fig.16 (1940)

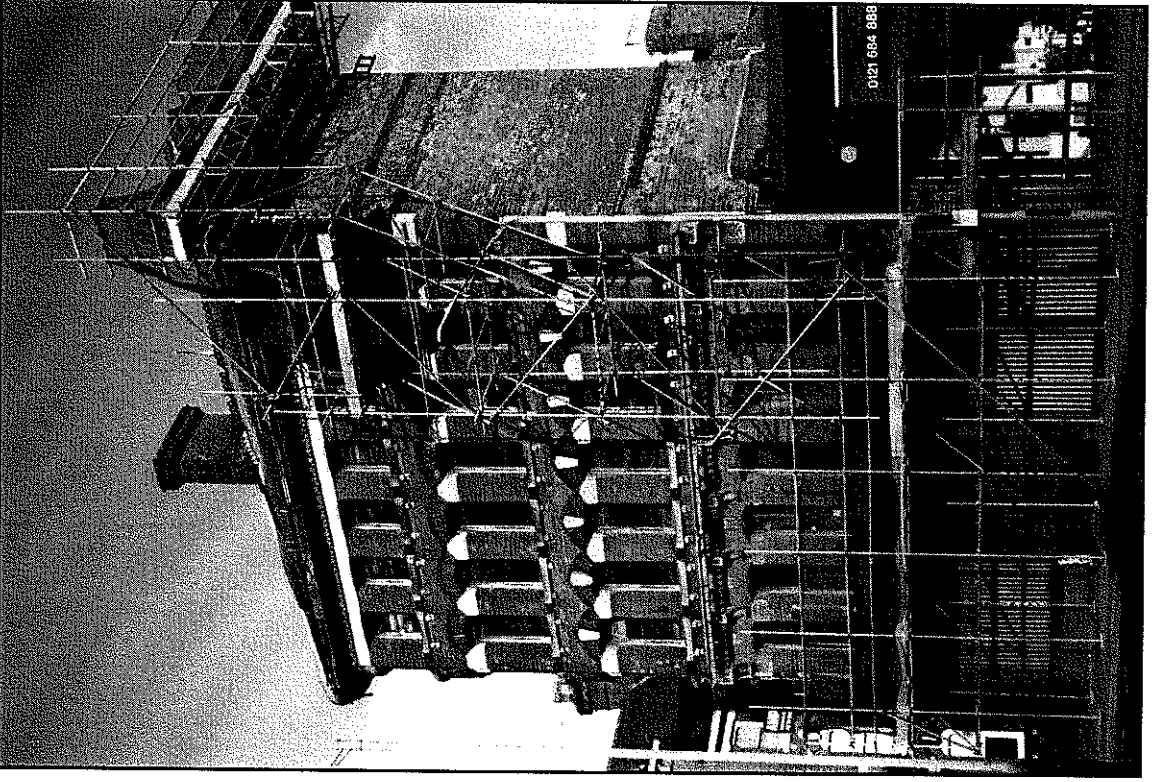


Plate 1

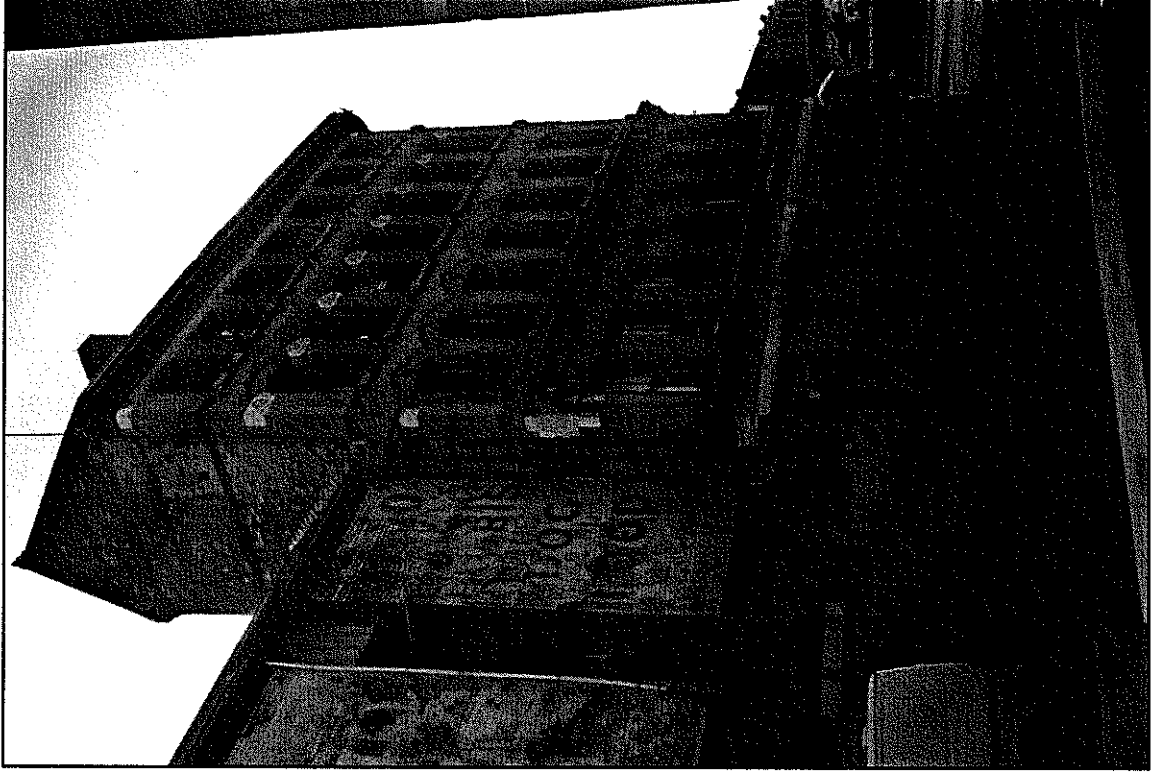


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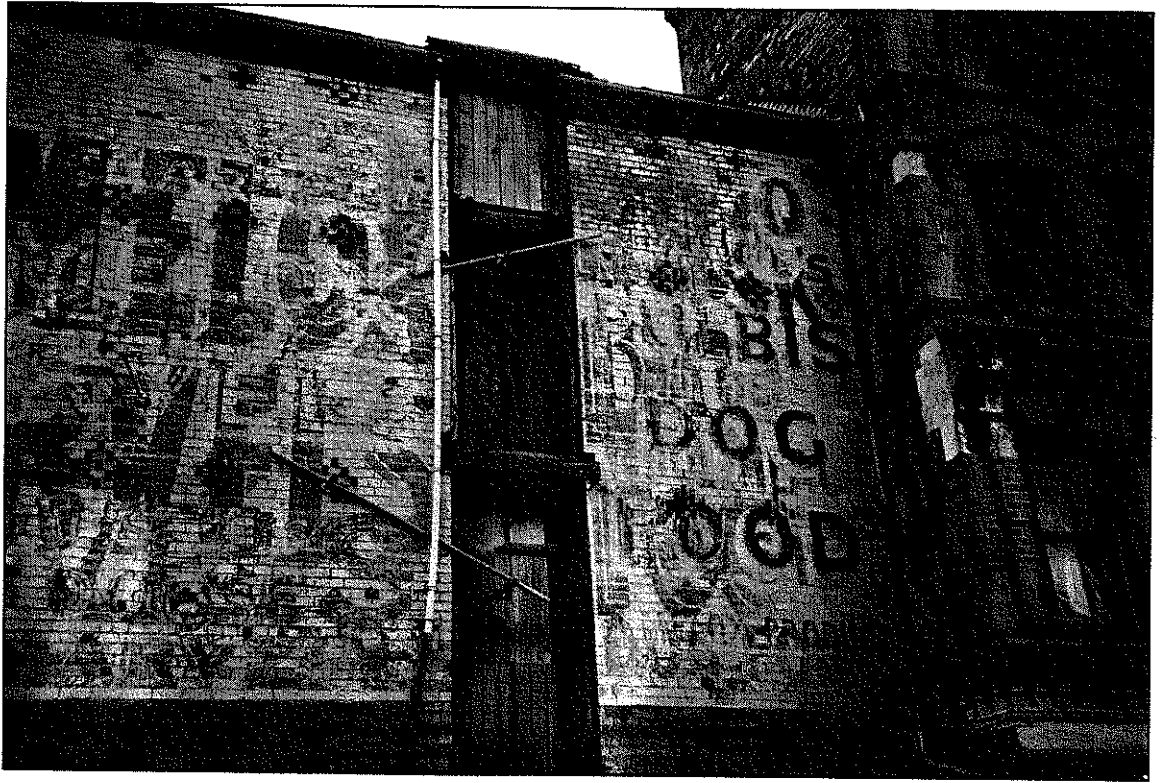


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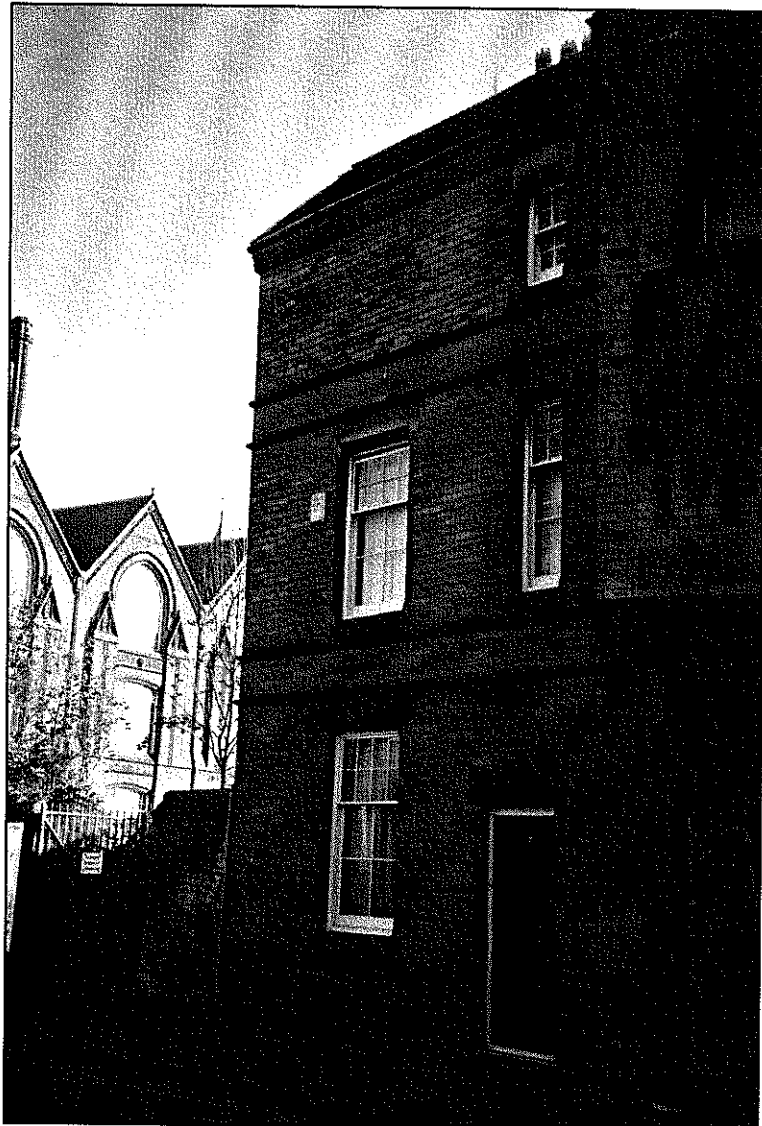


Plate 4



Plate 5

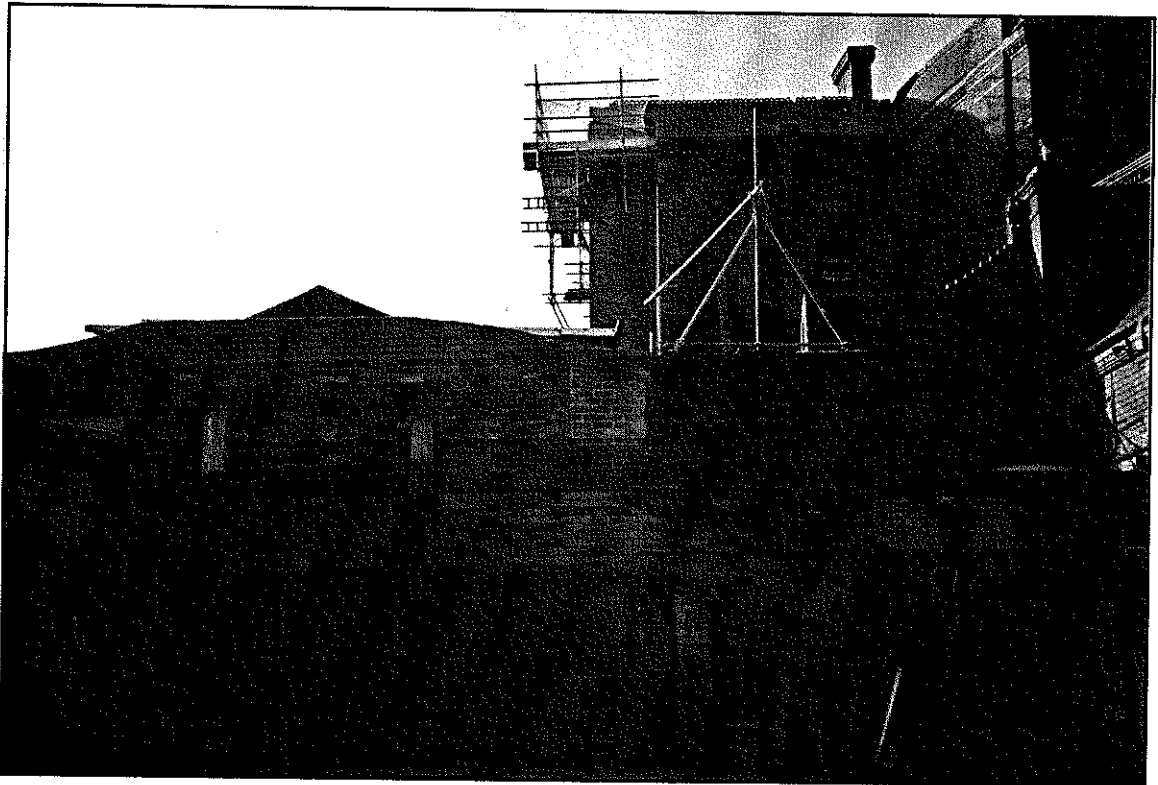


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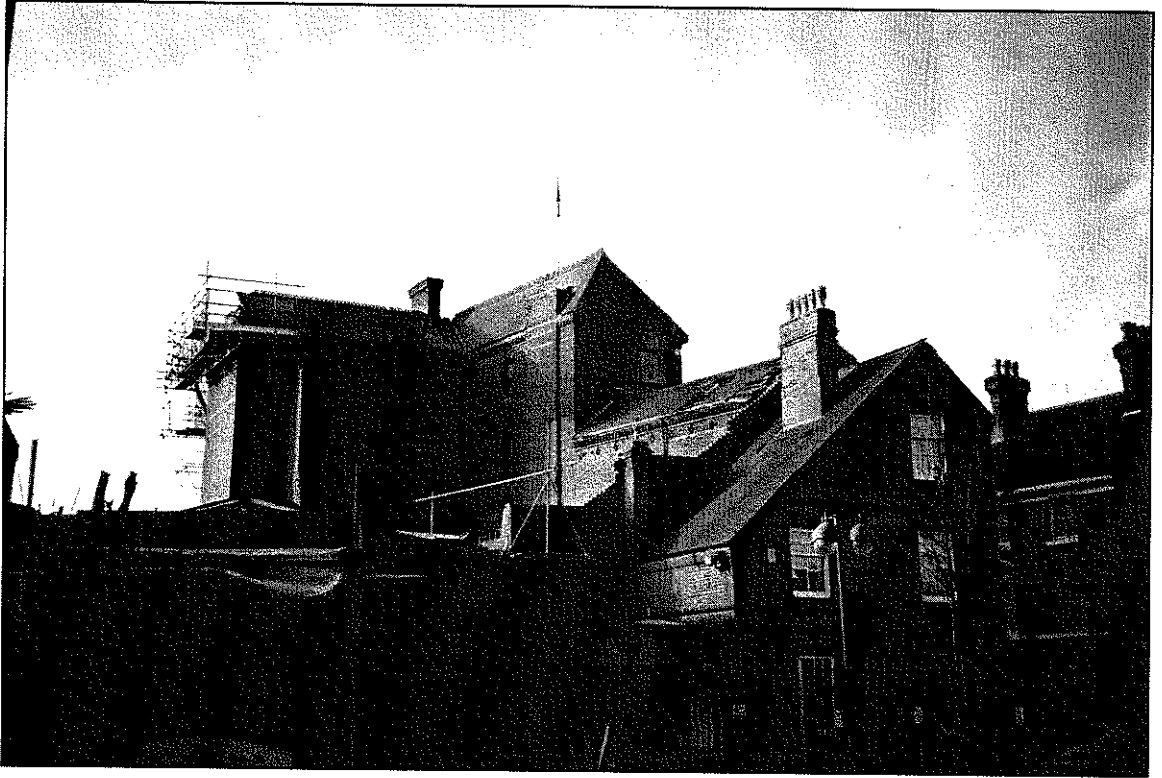
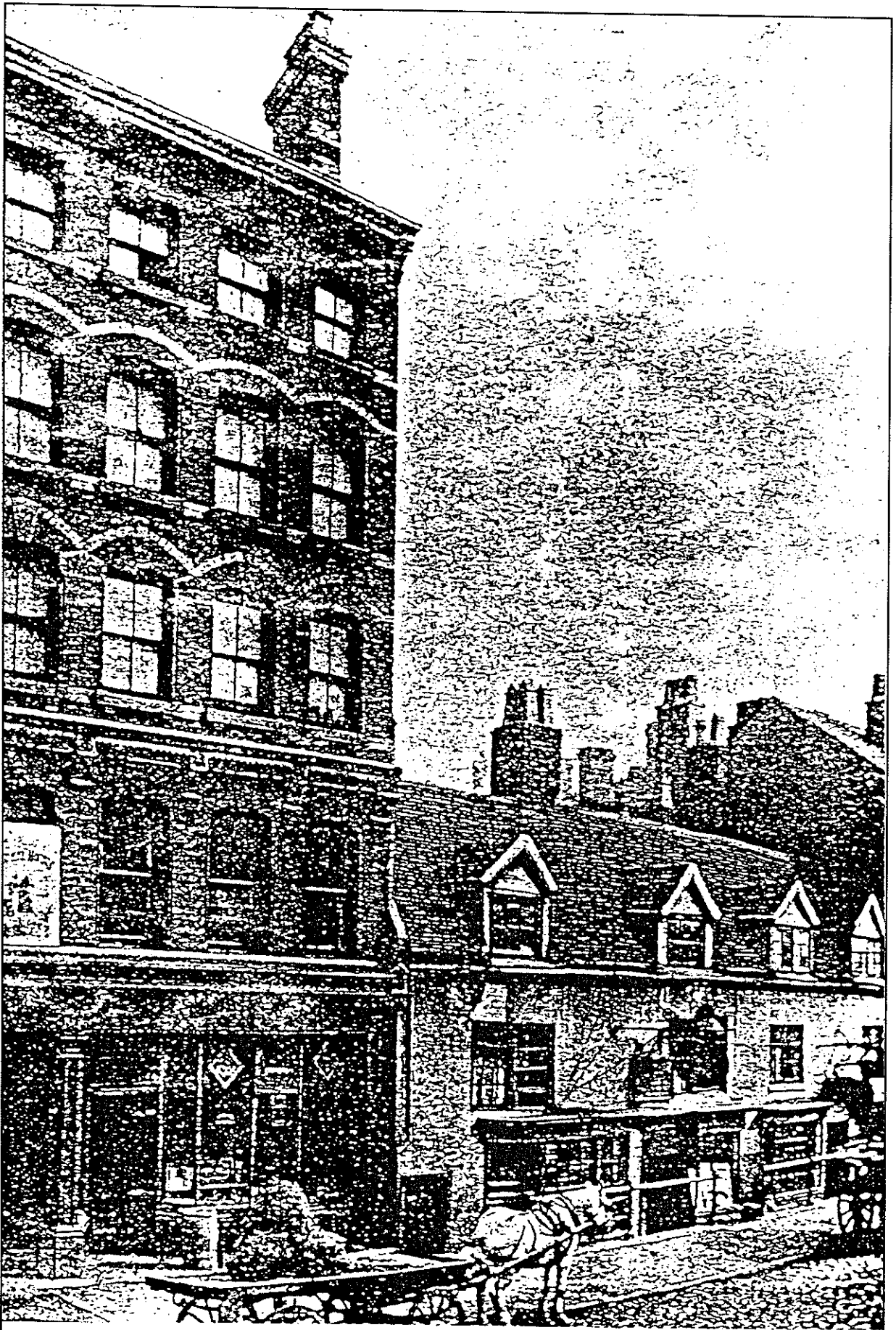


Plate 7



Plate 8



Photograph by Thomas Lewis

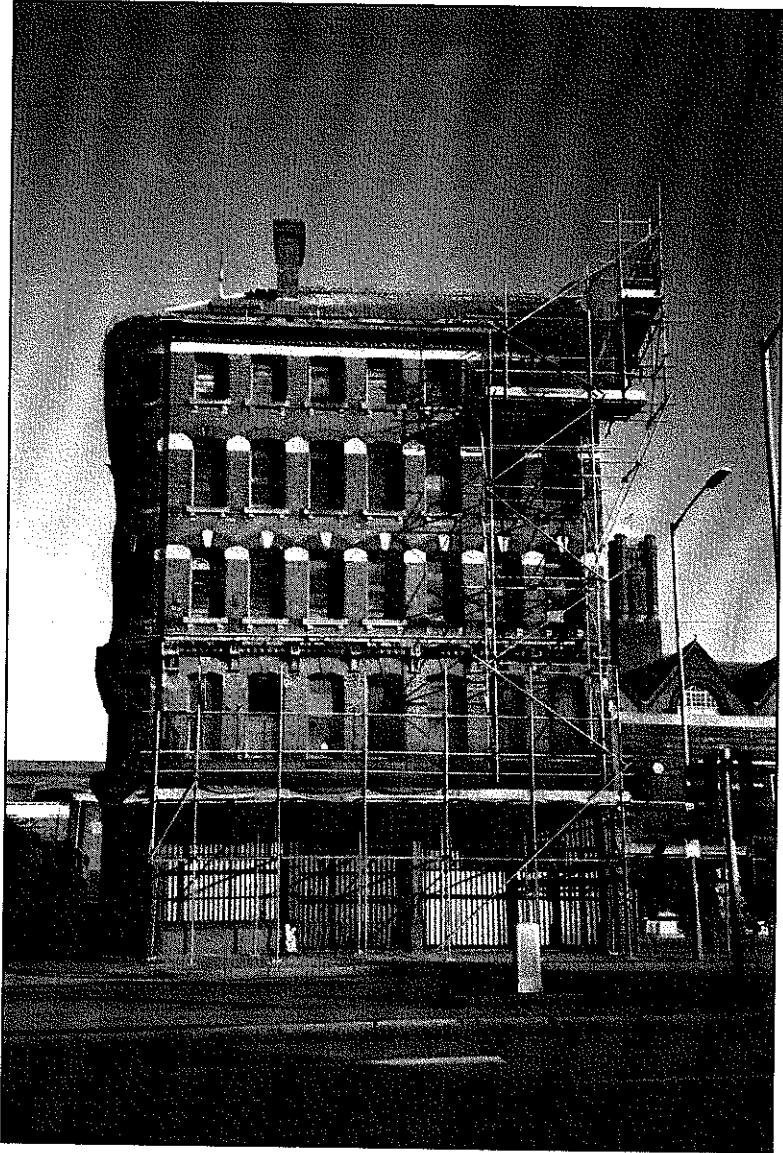


Plate 14