

**St. Pauls Church
The Ridgeway
Mill Hill
Barnet
NW7 1QU**

A report on the watching brief

Site code PLC 06

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Russel Hanslip Associates on behalf of the client, the Parish of St Paul, in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at St Pauls Church, Mill Hill.

A burial vault containing two lead coffins was recorded. This was the vault of Ann and Matthias Newmarsh, who died in 1841 and 1837 respectively.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at the Church of St Paul, Mill Hill, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is located in Mill Hill, bounded by the Ridgeway to the southwest and St Paul's CE School to the southeast (see Fig 1). The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 522535 192789. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site lies at c 122.20m OD. The site code is PLC06.

A *Method Statement* for the watching brief was produced by MoLAS (2006).

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Method Statement* which formed the project design for the watching brief (see Section 1.2, MoLAS, 2006)

1.3 Planning background

As an Anglican church in use, St Paul's benefits from *Ecclesiastical Exemption* from the need to apply for Listed Building Consent in relation to minor alterations and temporary works required to the building to enable restoration.

Since the proposed works (clearance of the tomb) are not in pursuance of a *change of use* there will be no requirement for any Planning Consent from the Local Authority.

A Faculty dated the 21 August 2006 was granted authorising the demolition of a plain brick tomb in the crypt and reburial of the occupants in the churchyard.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Russel Hanslip Associates on behalf of the client, the Parish of St Paul, and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of more site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* (MoLas, 2006), and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the excavation against the original research aims, and to suggest what further work, including analysis or publication (if any), should now take place.

1.5 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2):

If possible, the intention was to:

- Confirm the number of individuals present in the tomb.
- Confirm the presence of coffin remains
- Confirm whether it is the Newmarsh family buried within the tomb – this may be possible if coffin plates survive.

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology*, 2002.

2 Historical background

The ground now occupied by the church of St Paul, Mill Hill, was part of the 140 acre estate at Highwood Hill belonging to William Wilberforce, the slavery abolitionist.

The church was designed in 1829 by Samuel Hood Page and built by 1830 as a proprietary chapel by William Wilberforce. The church was cheaply built in the Commissioner's Style and has turrets on the west and east angles. It was cement rendered on the outside and plainly decorated on the inside (plain ashlar lined walls), with the exception of the stained glass east window signed by Charles Muss.

Initially within the parish of St Mary's Church, Hendon, a district was assigned and it became a District Chapel. After some delay, the church was consecrated in 1833. The first minister, the Rev Joseph Brown, was appointed by Wilberforce and succeeded by the Rev Bartholomew Nichols in 1839. During Nichols' ministry, the Registers were commenced and Nichols used the flyleaf of the first burial register to record some details of the early history of the chapel; two entries relate to the interment of members of the Newmarsh Family.

The churchyard was added in 1842 and continues in use today.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2006) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS, 1994).

The brickwork tomb entrance was broken out and cleared by contractors under MoLAS supervision.

The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum via a traverse to the OS benchmark on the Ridgeway.

Where relevant, sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20; numbered contexts were allocated where appropriate.

The coffins and coffin plates were removed from the vault for photographic and recording purposes. They were then reinterred in the churchyard.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code PLC06 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

For vault location see Fig 2.

The vault measured 1.15m from the highest external point of the arch to the floor and 1.29m east-west by 2.52m north-south. The spring point of the vault was 0.92m above floor level. The structure was built from red bricks, measuring 220mm by 70mm by 110mm when complete, with a four-course height of 340mm. The bricks were possibly handmade locally on site, as were the rest of the bricks used for the construction of the church. The coursing was regular with a stretcher bond and the mortar was a white yellow lime mortar. The floor was a packed earth floor, which extended throughout the entire crypt. There was no entrance, although access was gained by removing the south facing section of bricks (Fig 3).

Within the vault were two individual burials side by side, comprised of two adults in lead coffins (Fig 4).

The lead coffins should conform to the standard 18th and 19th century 'triple shell' pattern of a wooden inner coffin sealed in a lead shell, which is then covered with a second wooden outer coffin. This outer coffin is the main decorated coffin visible at

the funeral, with the decorative name plate, lid motifs, escutcheons, grips and grip plates, and would have been covered in fabric held in place with upholstery pins. A second, much plainer name plate would be attached to the lead shell. The lead shells in this case were both decoratively etched in a crosshatch pattern (Fig 5)

However, there were no remains of the main decorated outer coffins recovered from within the vault, aside from only one elaborate external name plate. This was resting on the larger lead coffin in place of the plain lead name plate that would normally be affixed in this location, which was missing. The other smaller coffin had only the plain lead name plate surviving.

The two surviving name plates allowed the identification of both individuals as Matthias Newmarsh and Ann Newmarsh.

The lack of the outer wooden coffins and metal fixings, and the nature of the bricked over vault with no surviving entrance implies that this interment was a reburial. This would mean that the vault was constructed and both coffins interred simultaneously from some other, earlier burial location within the crypt or the church, some time after their original committal.

3.3 The Named Individuals

3.3.1 *Mr Matthias Newmarsh*

Coffin Type: 7
Died: 28 May 1837
Buried: Unknown
Aged: 83
(See Fig 6)

Mr Matthias (or Matthew) Newmarsh was the husband of Ann Newmarsh. He was Butler to William Wilberforce, the slavery abolitionist and reformer, and had been in his service since at least 1825 (the Times, 1825). Newmarsh being a Yorkshire name, it is possible that both Matthias and Ann had a lifetime association with the Wilberforce family and were longstanding and close retainers.

Matthias and Ann had at least one child, Jane Merton (nee Newmarsh).

There is no record of Matthias Newmarsh in the Birth, Marriage and Death registers, no record of a will and no given address.

3.3.2 *Ann Newmarsh*

Coffin Type: 7
Died: 30 September 1841
Buried: Unknown
Aged: 84
(See Fig 7)

Ann Newmarsh was the wife of Matthias and mother of Jane. At the time of her death, Rev. Nichols considered it proper to inter her alongside her husband but did not wish this to be a precedent for intramural burials. This explains his brief flyleaf entry in the burials register for St Paul.

Mrs Newmarsh does not appear on the 1841 census for Hendon, and does not appear in the births or marriages registers. She has left no record of a will or an address.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

The original research aims have been fulfilled by this watching brief. No further work is required.

5 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.

The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2006) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 4) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Sections 4) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

6 Conclusions

Although Rev. Nicols was a conscientious record keeper, there is a paucity of information regarding the Newmarshes and their interment at St Paul, Mill Hill. The absence of the forename and date of burial of Mr Newmarsh in the St Paul register suggests that this burial was actually carried out by his predecessor, Rev Brown, who has left no records.

The burial could have taken place at the church of St Paul because the vicar of Hendon did not consider that Mr Newmarsh had right of burial at Hendon or Rev. Brown was prevailed upon to do so because of the Wilberforce connection.

Based on the disturbed nature of the coffins, the vault was probably built after the death of Ann Newmarsh in order to house both her own coffin and that of Matthias Newmarsh, previously interred in an unknown location in the crypt of St Paul upon his death four years earlier. As longstanding servants to William Wilberforce, it is possible that he may have underwritten the funeral expenses himself; this would explain the expensive lead coffins and vault.

The Newmarshes do not appear in the 1841 census or any births, marriages or deaths register.

7 Acknowledgements

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9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-19202

Project details

Project name St Paul's Church, Mill Hill

Short description of the Watching Brief on tomb removal and re-interrment of remains project

Project dates Start: 25-08-2006 End: 25-08-2006

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes PLC06 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Other 4 - Churchyard

Monument type FAMILY VAULT Post Medieval

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BARNET BARNET St Paul's Church Mill Hill

Postcode NW7

Study area 10.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 22535 92789 51.6200856004 -0.229799499260 51 37 12 N 000 13 47 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation MoLAS

Project brief originator Diocesan Archaeologist

Project design originator MoLAS

Project director/manager Ros Aitken

Project supervisor Victoria Donnelly

Type of sponsor/funding District Council
body

Project archives

Physical Archive LAARC
recipient

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General
Notes','Photograph','Plan','Unpublished Text'

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Fig 1 Site Location

Fig 2 Vault location plan

Fig 3 The Exterior of the Vault

Fig 4 The Interior of the Vault

Fig 5 Lead Coffin Detail

Fig 6 Coffin Plate for Matthias Newmarsh

Fig 7 Coffin Plate for Ann Newmarsh