



Northamptonshire Archaeology

The churchyard wall at St Lawrence's Church Long Buckby, Northamptonshire



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Report 10/213

December 2010



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QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LONG BUCKBY

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	The churchyard wall at St Lawrence's Church, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief by Northamptonshire Archaeology monitored repair of the churchyard wall at St Lawrence's Church, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire. A cross-section of the retaining wall was recorded with homogeneous grave earth behind. No buried remains were disturbed during the works. The wall is likely to be of 19th-century construction.	
Project type	Watching brief	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Churchyard	
Future work	No	
Monument / period	Late post-medieval retaining wall	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	St Lawrence's Church, Church Street, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, NN6 7QH	
Study area	5m stretch of retaining wall	
OS location	SP 6272 6772	
Height OD	c133-134m above Ordnance Datum	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	None	
Project Design originator	None	
Director/Supervisor	Iain Soden, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor	J Tomlinson Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	December 2010	
End date	December 2010	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		None
Paper		Attendance record sheet & section drawing
Digital		Final report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report	
Title	The churchyard wall at St Lawrence's Church, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 10/213	
Author(s)	Jim Brown	
Page numbers	8	
Date	December 2010	

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THE CHURCHYARD WALL AT ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, LONG BUCKBY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

December 2010

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief by Northamptonshire Archaeology monitored repair of the churchyard wall at St Lawrence's Church, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire. A cross-section of the retaining wall was recorded with homogeneous grave earth behind. No buried remains were disturbed during the works. The wall is likely to be of 19th-century construction.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief for J Tomlinson Ltd at St Lawrence's Church, Church Street, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire (Fig 1; NGR SP 6272 6772), as requested by Daventry District Council, who commissioned the wall repairs. Fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010), *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008), and the procedural documents of English Heritage (EH 1991; 2002; 2006).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Archaeological background

The retaining wall of the churchyard forms the southern boundary with Church Street (Fig 2). It has an entrance into the churchyard at its east end. The wall is 1.4m high and the ground upon its north side is approximately level with the coping stones. In recent years a section of the wall had become unstable and started to bulge. This section was the subject of the present repairs together with a small portion next to the gateway. The entire length was also being raked out and repointed.

St Lawrence's Church is a Grade II* Listed Building, described below:

Church. Medieval. Restored 1862 by G G Scott and 1883-7 by W Bassett-Smith when aisles of 1774 were gothicised. Coursed ironstone rubble and ashlar. Chancel, nave, aisles extending over first bay of chancel, north and south, south porch, west tower. Chancel has three-light decorated windows to east end and north and south sides with 19th-century tracery. Blocked round-headed door at east end of south aisle. Nave has clerestory with 19th-century circular windows. Stone dated 1774 below second window from west end of north aisle. 18th-century lead rainwater heads and pipes. 19th-century south porch. Leaded roofs behind plain parapets. Three stage battlemented west tower has shallow offset buttresses separated by shafts. Pointed arch top frieze, corner gargoyles. Small lancet window to south side of middle stage; lancet window to west end of ground floor above blocked doorway. Interior: chancel has piscina with cusped arch and three-seat sedilia with 19th-century cusped heads. Double hollow-chamfered arches on north side of west bay of chancel, the inner arch resting on corbels with fleurons, formerly framing tomb, of which cut-off end survives on east side. Blocked window above. Double chamfered arch in corresponding bay on south side, the inner arch resting on polygonal responds, blocked square window above. Double-chamfered chancel arch, inner arch resting on polygonal responds. Nave arcades of four bays with double-chamfered arches on octagonal piers. East window by Evans Brothers of Shrewsbury commemorating Shropshire vicar (died 1858). Parish chest. Monument to

Cilena l'Anson Bradley, died 1726 aged 12 years: bust in square niche with draped round arch head supported on pilasters in north choir vestry, draped apron with inscription and fringed edge, signed John Hunt, Northampton on base of bust. Other late 18th-century and early 19th-century wall monuments.

2.2 Topography and geology

The churchyard is on the north side of Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, and lies within the historic core of the settlement. The retaining wall fronts onto Church Street along its south boundary. To the east of the churchyard is Nuns Lane, which provides access to a row of cottages, to the west are further residences. The north boundary extends 130m behind the church building and backs onto allotments and fields. The road in front of the retaining wall lies at c133-134m above Ordnance Datum and slopes down east to west. Within the churchyard the ground is level. The churchyard is embanked and retained on its west, south and east sides.

The village of Long Buckby is located on the slopes of the Upper Nene Valley, close to the watershed. The underlying geology is Middle Lias Clay (BGS 2001). The soil belongs to the Ashley soil association derived from chalky till over Juassic and Cretaceous clay and comprising fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and light seasonal waterlogging. Some calcareous and non-calcareous slowly permeable clayey soils (LAT 1983).

3 WATCHING BRIEF STRATEGY

3.1 Objectives

It was the overall aim of the watching brief to monitor dismantling of the unstable wall section and record any archaeological remains, including the wall itself, within their cultural and environmental setting. In specific the following objectives were defined:

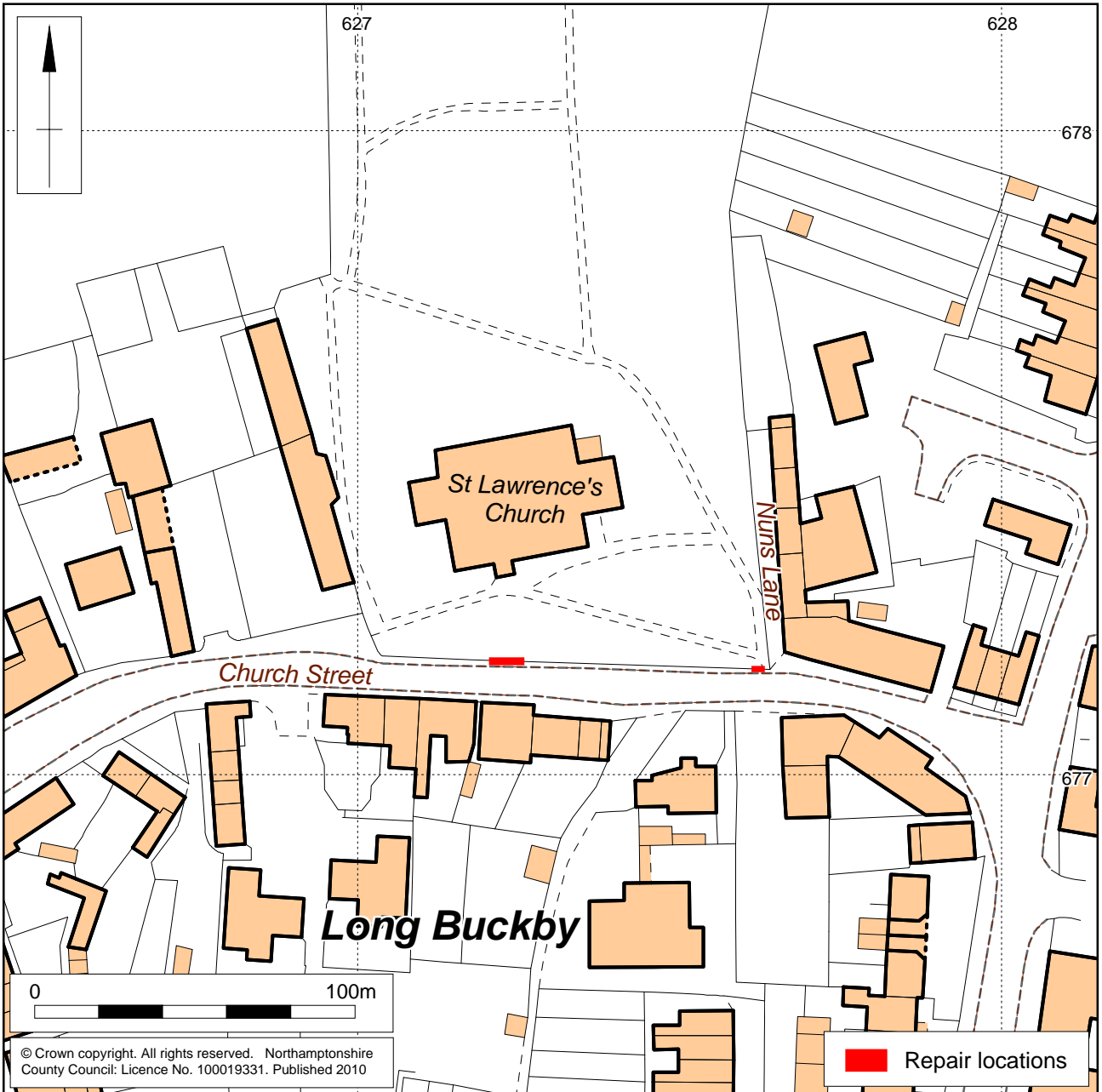
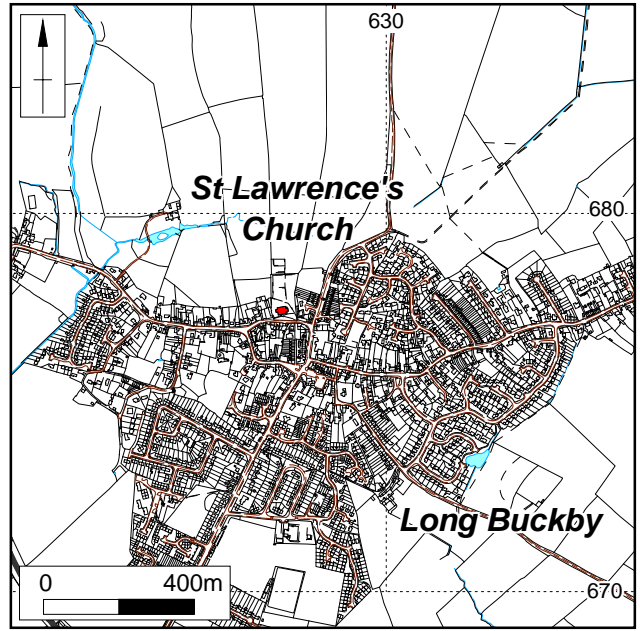
- ◆ determine and record the extent, character and construction of the retaining wall
- ◆ recover any artefacts that may assist in dating the wall construction and any human remains disturbed by the work, with a view to reburial on the premises.

3.2 Methodology

A section of the outer face of the retaining wall that was 5m long was dismantled along the Church Street footpath and a smaller section 1.5m long was dismantled at the east end, next to the churchyard gateway (Figs 2-3). The locations were recorded in relation to the Ordnance Survey using measurements to fixed points along the wall.

The outer face of the wall was dismantled by J Tomlinson Ltd during which the inner face collapsed outwards of its own accord. The cross-section of the stonework was cleaned and examined sufficiently to characterise, record its extent and construction. The cross-section was drawn to scale on permatrace. The frozen retained earth was examined and no artefacts or variations in soil context were present.

Digital photographs were taken, accompanied by a *pro forma* watching brief record sheet that contains the description of the wall and the archaeological deposits encountered. All photographs and paper archive records have been compiled in accordance with recognised museum practise (Walker 1990, IfA 2008) following standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures (NA 2006).



Scale 1:1,000

Site location Fig 1

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Church Street, looking north-west Fig 2



Collapsed retaining wall, looking north Fig 3

4 RESULTS

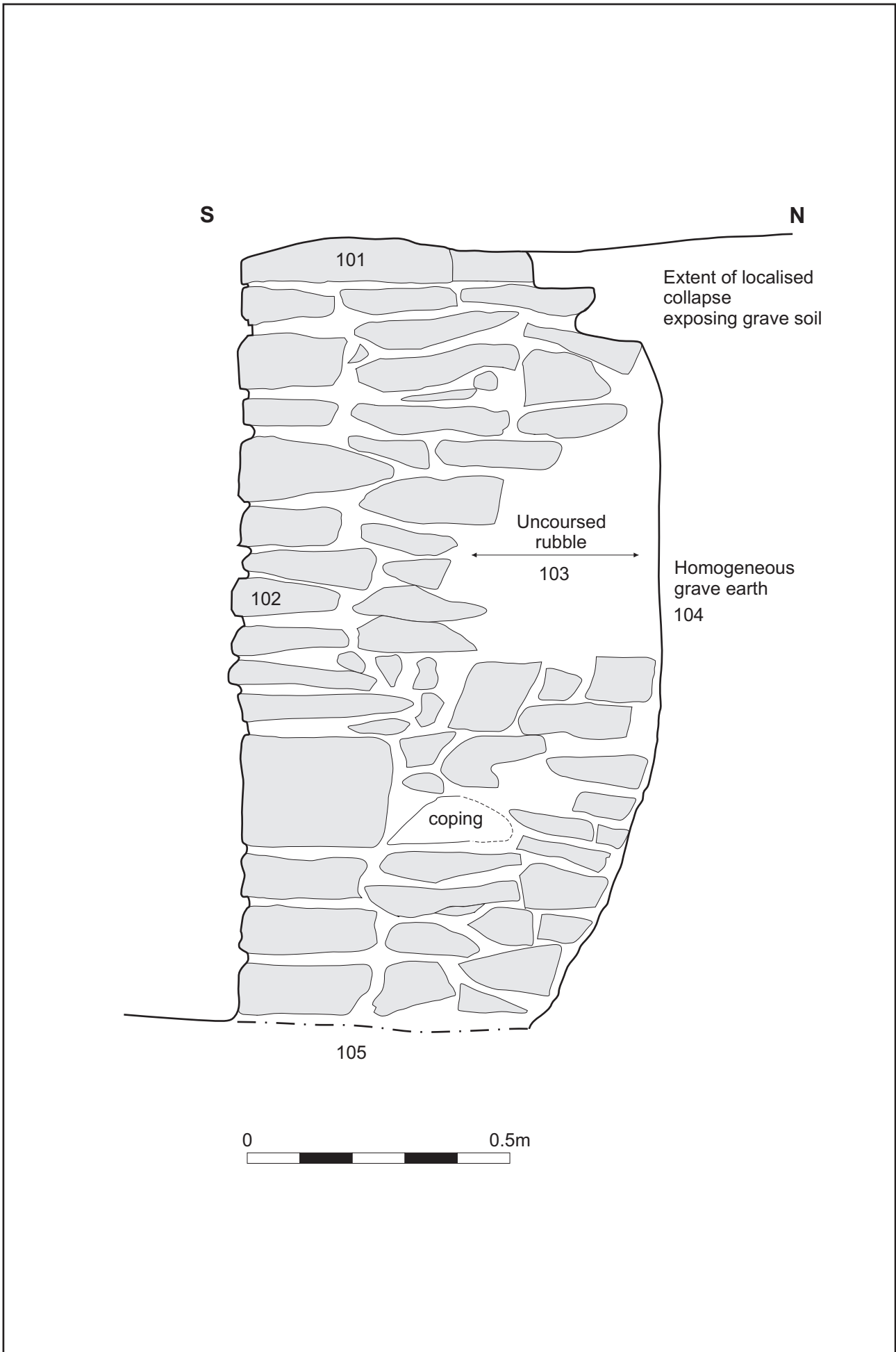
All contexts are listed in Table 1, below (Fig 5).

Table 1: Context index

Context	Type	Description	Depth	Strata
101	coping stones	larger rough cut flat local ironstone slabs, occasionally missing, generally up to 450mm by 400mm by 100mm in size, with a slightly curved upper side and flat base	80-100mm	surface
102	facing stones	poorly coursed mixture of reused ashlar and rubble blocks of local ironstone, pointed, cut and shaped to varying sizes, mainly 250-400mm long by 250-300mm wide by 60-80mm thick, occasionally up to 200mm thick. Larger rough cut stones are towards the base.	1.40-1.45m	below 102 abuts 103
103	rubble fill	uncoursed local ironstone rubble fill, stone is unshaped, smaller fragments up to 140mm in size	1.38-1.40m	abuts 102 to the north
104	homogeneous grave earth	loose dark blackish-brown silty clay loam with infrequent small rounded and sub-angular stones <60mm in size	1.00m exposed	abuts 103 to the north
105	sub-surface	compact mid-brownish-range coarse sandy clay with frequent ironstone fragments up to 80mm in size	surface exposed	below 102 below 103



Former coping stone built into retaining wall Fig 4



Section of churchyard retaining wall, looking west Fig 5

No visible substrate was exposed during the works and no artefacts or human remains were present. Homogeneous grave earth lay behind the retaining wall on its north side. The wall was built in front of it upon a coarse crushed ironstone bedding layer (105) with the larger cut blocks forming the base of the wall face (102) and the uncoursed rubble ironstone (103) filling the area behind (Fig 5). Amongst the construction rubble fill (103), behind the facing stones was a former coping stone, reused from elsewhere (Fig 4). Some coping stones remain in position on top of the wall, but many are missing.



Join of wall to the gate pillar, looking north-east Fig 6

The smaller 1.5m wide section of repair, adjoining the gate pillars, demonstrated how the retaining wall had been tied into the stonework (Fig 6). It did not, however, provide further information concerning the date or construction of the principal wall.

5 SUMMARY

The retaining wall holds back accumulated homogeneous grave earth behind. No buried remains were disturbed during the works. Anecdotal evidence suggests that grave stones were moved in 1953 to more easily mow the churchyard for the coronation of Elizabeth II and were broken up to be used in the nearby Station Garage (Soden pers comm). The wall is likely to be of 19th-century construction.

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