
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT
ST MARGARET'S CHURCH,
SIBSEY,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SISM 11)**

**Work Undertaken For
Sibsey Parish Council**

April 2012

Report Compiled by
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APS Report No. 30/12

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



Quality Control
 St Margaret's Church
 Sibsey
 SISM 11

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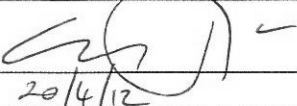
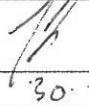
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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks at St Margaret's church, Sibsey, Lincolnshire. The investigations monitored the stripping of overburden for a new pathway.

The church is of the medieval period (AD 1066-1540) with the earliest portion being the nave arcades and north door dating to the 12th century and the remainder constructed during the 13th – 14th centuries and a 17th century south porch. The medieval church may have replaced an earlier, possibly Late Saxon (AD 850-1066), church which is referred to in the Domesday Survey.

The investigations revealed an extensive graveyard soil and the remnants of former paths that served the cemetery. No other archaeological deposits were encountered and no finds retrieved from the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Sibsey Parish Council to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the insertion of a new pathway at St Margaret's Church, Sibsey, Lincolnshire. The investigations were carried out on the 11th and 12th April 2012.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Sibsey is located 7km north of Boston and 21km southeast of Horncastle in the administrative district of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

St Margaret's church is located towards the east side of the village at National Grid

Reference TF 3552 5075 (Fig. 2). Situated on the east side of Main Road, the church lies at a height of c. 5m OD on land that slopes gently down to the south, east and west.

Local soils are of the Salop Association, typically fine loamy over clayey soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 214). These soils are developed upon a drift geology of glacial till which in turn seals a solid geology of Jurassic Kimmeridge Clay Formation (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Sibsey is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Sibolci*, the name derives from the Old English and means 'the island (*ēg*) belonging to *Sigebald*' (Cameron 1998, 109).

The Domesday Survey records Sibsey as being held by Ivo Taillebois and containing 6 carucates of arable land, 120 acres of meadow and a church (Foster and Longley 1976, 14/76).

St Margaret's church has elements dating to the Norman period (AD 1066-1200) including the arcades and a north doorway with most of the remainder of the church dating to the later medieval period. There is also a late 17th century south porch and the church was restored in 1840. Within the churchyard is a cross, comprising the base, socket stone and shaft, which probably dates to the 15th century.

Previous archaeological interventions at St Margaret's church have recovered bone from within the tower and the foundations relating to the southern porch, either a medieval precursor to, or the foundations of the existing 17th century porch.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any

archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The route of the new pathway was stripped of overburden to a depth of 0.17m below the current ground level (Plate 1). Following excavation the stripped area was examined for archaeological features and deposits. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:200 and sections at 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Following excavation the records were checked. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered across the stripped area was a layer of greyish brown silty clay (001). Identified as a graveyard soil it measured in excess of 0.17m thick (Fig. 5, Section 1; Plate 2). Disarticulated human bone was observed, but not collected, within this deposit.

Along the north-south aligned parts of the stripped area (Fig. 4) were deposits of reddish brown silty clay with pebbles (002) and black coal fragments (003).

These were identified as former paths serving the cemetery (Plate 3).

6. DISCUSSION

Deposits encountered during the excavations mainly comprise a layer of graveyard soil, evident along the route of the new path. In addition, remnants of former paths serving the cemetery were also encountered. No natural deposits were recorded during the work and it is possible, therefore, that earlier remains may lie at depth. No archaeological features were encountered and no artefacts retrieved during the work.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at St Margaret's church, Sibsey, as remains relating to the development of the church may be affected by the groundworks.

However, only modern graveyard soil and the remnants of previous pathways were encountered during the investigation. No archaeological features were identified and no artefacts were retrieved.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mrs E Spikings of Sibsey Parish Council for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly provided access to the library and parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor

Site Supervisor: Andrew Failes
Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner, Andrew Failes
Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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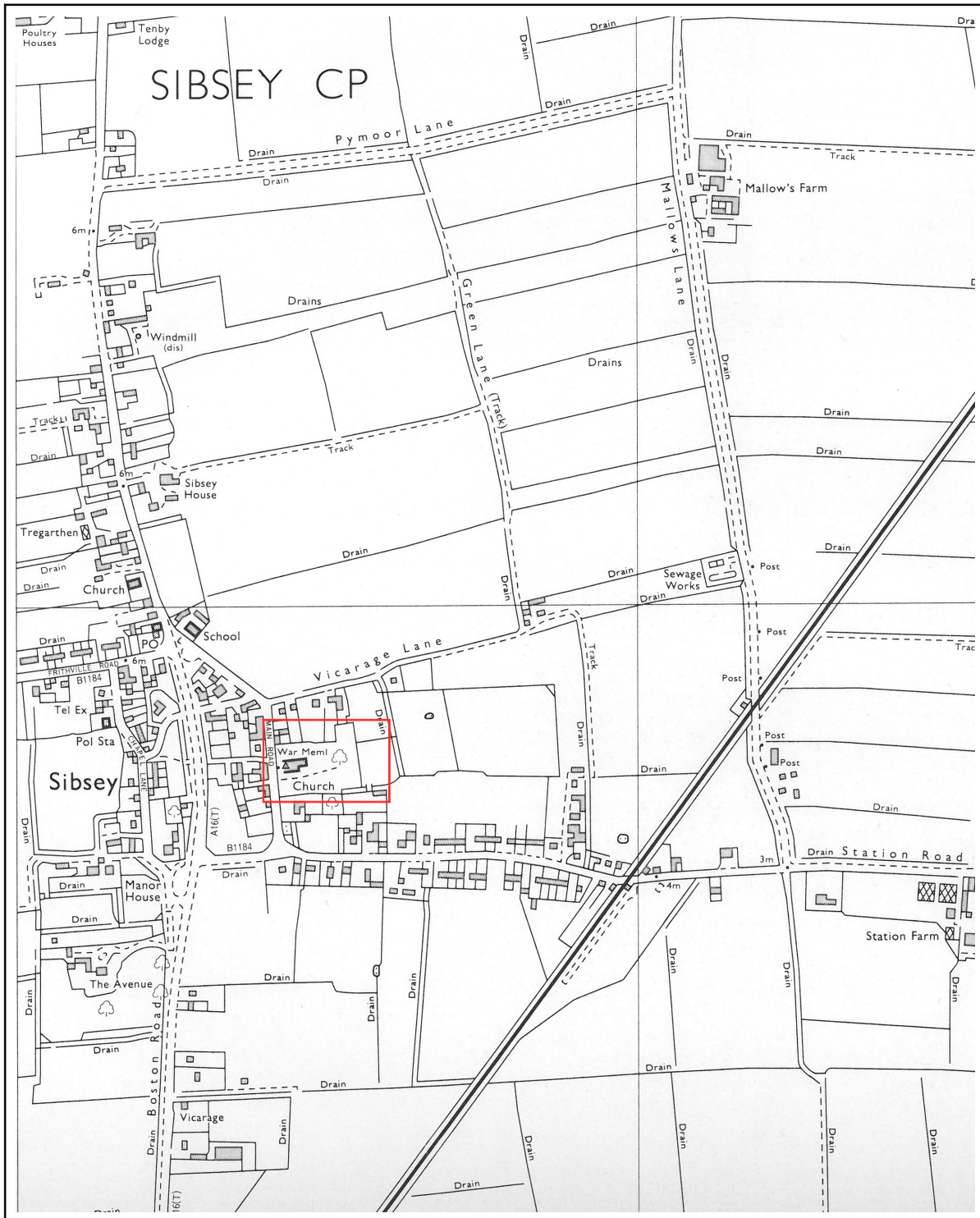
11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey



Figure 1 - General location plan




51

35

36



 Area detailed in Figure 3

0  500m

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Figure 2 - Site location plan



Figure 3 - Plan showing the relationship of the new pathway with the church

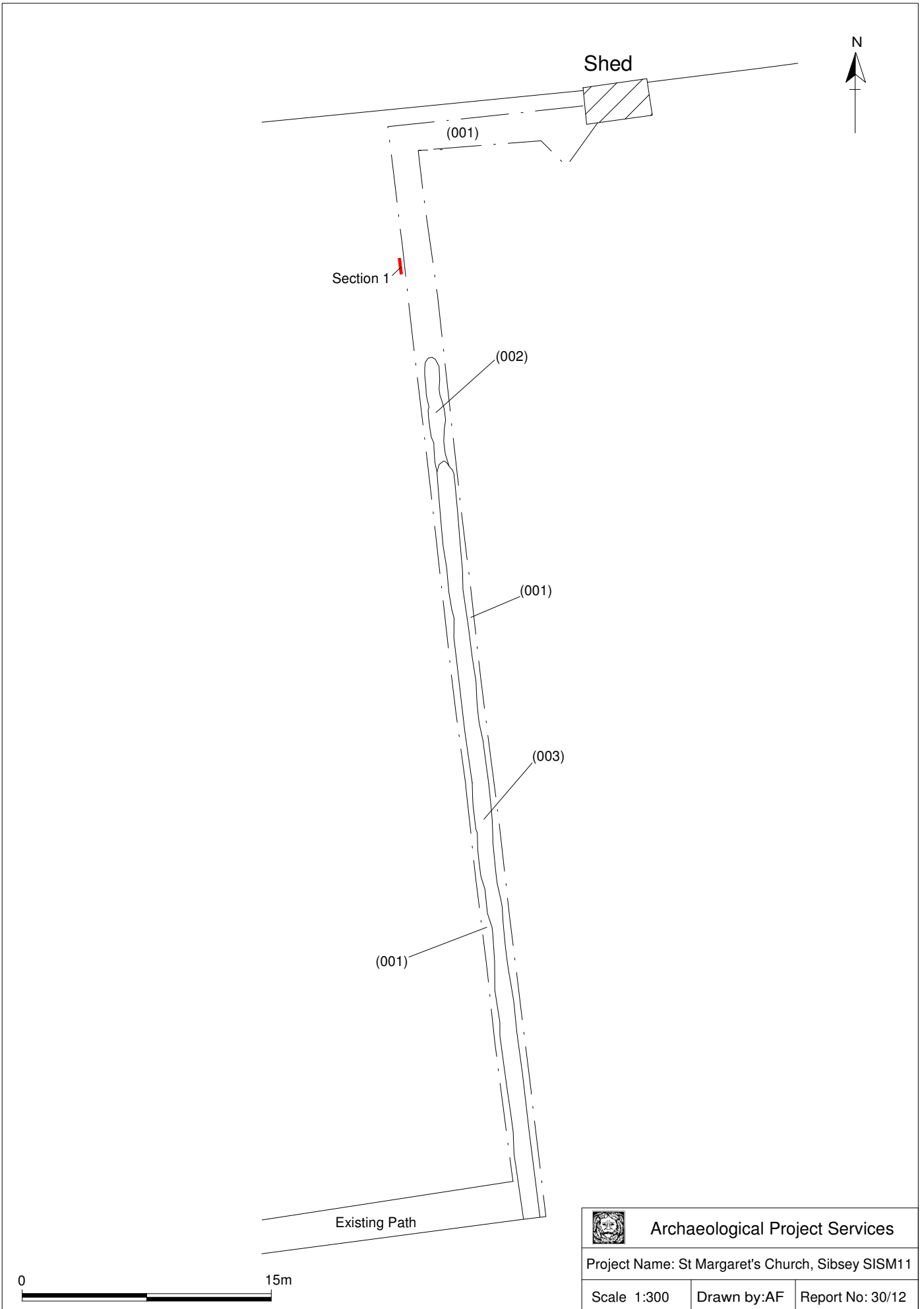
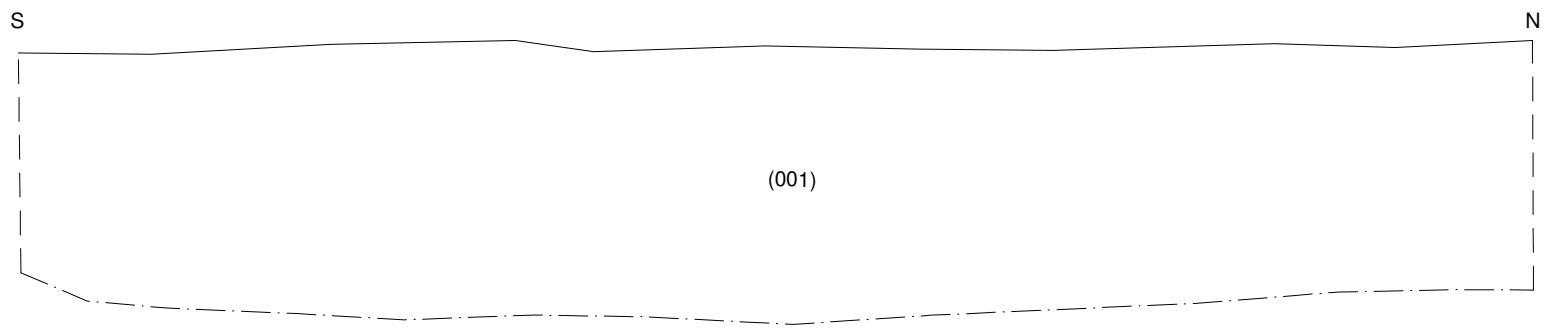


Figure 4 - Plan of new church path



Section 1



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Scale 1:5

Drawn by: AF

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Figure 5 - Section 1



Plate 1 – View of the stripped area for the new pathway, looking south



Plate 2 – section 1, looking west



Plate 3 – Detail of former path formed from coal fragments (003), looking south

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm to slightly friable dark greyish brown silty clay	Graveyard soil
002	Friable dark reddish brown silty clay and pebbles	Made up ground, part of path
003	Friable black coal	Made up ground, former path

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.
Till	A deposit formed after the retreat of a glacier. Also known as boulder clay, this material is generally unsorted and can comprise of rock flour to boulders to rocks of quite substantial size.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

3	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
2	Sheets of scale drawings
2	Daily record sheets

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

The Collection
Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

Accession Number: LCNCC: 2011.467

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SISM 11

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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