# Fellows' Garden, Peterhouse College, Cambridge

Archaeological Summer School 2019



**Richard Newman** 





## FELLOWS' GARDEN, PETERHOUSE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE:

**Archaeological Summer School 2019** 

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#### SUMMARY

Between the 6th and the 9th of August 2019 five test pits were excavated within the Fellows' Garden of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, as part of an archaeological summer school hosted by the college. Two of the test pits encountered structural remains associated with domestic properties that formerly fronted onto Trumpington Street. Of these remains, one structure in particular consisted of a substantial masonry building of probable late fifteenth-century date. The domestic properties were demolished in the mid-nineteenth century, at which time the Fellows' Garden was also expanded from its original, late medieval walled footprint. Made-ground deposits associated with this latter event were identified in two further test pits, beneath which stratified late medieval deposits were encountered. A fifth test pit targeted a high-resistance anomaly detected during a geophysical survey of the site, which was identified as an infilled tree throw.

## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a program of archaeological test pitting that was undertaken in the Fellows' Garden of Peterhouse College, Cambridge (Figure 1). Between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2019 a total of five test pits covering 9.75 sqm were excavated in this area, centred on TL 4491 5792. The excavation was undertaken as part of the Peterhouse College Archaeology Summer School, which provided places for thirty students who have completed Year 12 and will be entering Year 13 in September 2019, giving them an opportunity to experience both the academic and practical aspects of studying archaeology as an undergraduate at the University of Cambridge. Prior to the commencement of the excavation, a geophysical survey of the site was conducted. One of the five test pits was sited so as to investigate a strong resistivity signal that was encountered during the course of this survey (Test Pit 5). The remainder were positioned along the southern periphery of the area, in order to investigate the rear of the properties that formerly fronted onto Trumpington Street (Test Pits 1 and 2), as well as an open garden area to their southwest (Test Pits 3 and 4).

Methodologically, the test pits were excavated entirely by hand. Where clear contextual changes could be differentiated, the deposits were excavated stratigraphically. In some instances, however, particularly when large homogenised layers were encountered, tencentimetre-thick spits were employed. Where encountered, structural remains were preserved in situ and not disturbed; they were then carefully reburied. All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the CAU-modified version of the MoLA system. Base plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, whilst sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. A digital photographic archive was also compiled. Throughout the following text, context numbers are indicated by square brackets (e.g. [101]). All work was carried out with strict adherence to Health and Safety legislation and within the recommendations of FAME (Allen and Holt 2010). The Cambridge Archaeological Unit site code for the project is PFG19, and the event number is ECB5974.

Topographically, Peterhouse College is situated on the southern periphery of the historic core of Cambridge, outside the medieval town boundary formed by the King's Ditch. This area formerly comprised part of the suburb of Trumpington, an area of high-status medieval settlement. Today it is characterised by a combination of urban settlement and commercial premises, focused primarily along Trumpington Street. There is also a strong institutional presence, in the form of Peterhouse and Pembroke Colleges as well as the University of Cambridge's Judge Business School (formerly Addenbrooke's Hospital). The Fellows' Garden itself is situated close to the centre of the college, a short distance to the south of Peterhouse's Grade I-listed hall and buttery of *c*. 1290. Prior to the commencement of the excavation, the lawn surface of the Fellows' Garden varied between 9.96m and 9.99m AOD. Geologically, the site lies on second terrace sand and gravel overlying Gault Formation mudstone (British Geological Survey, Sheet 188). During the course of the investigation, natural gravels were encountered at *c*. 8.80m AOD via augering.

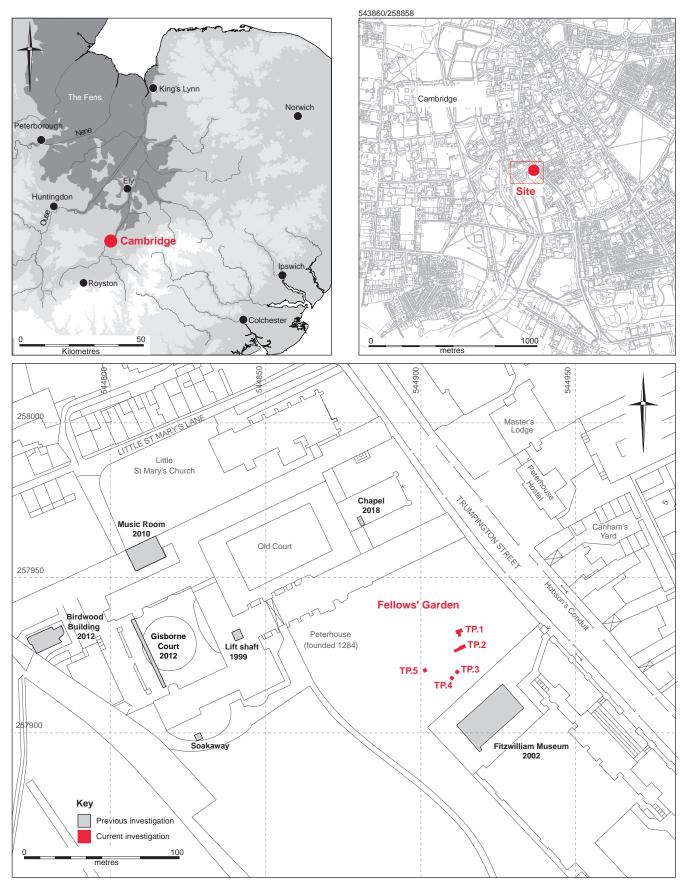


Figure 1: Location of monitoring, also showing nearby Sites of previous investigation



Figure 2: Working shots showing the excavation in progress

#### Historical, archaeological and cartographic background

The documentary background and developmental history of Peterhouse's grounds has been examined in depth in a previous publication (Hall and Lovatt 1990) as well as in an earlier, more general review of the wider area (Stokes 1908), whilst the background of Cambridge itself is discussed in several published sources (*e.g.* Cam 1959; Addyman and Biddle 1965; Lobel 1975; Bryan 1999; Taylor 1999). This information is not therefore reiterated here in full. An outline summary will be presented, however, in order to situate the site securely within its wider context. Additional details directly pertaining to its development are presented in the discussion section, below.

Little is known of the earliest inhabitants of the area. Although there is diffuse evidence of Prehistoric occupation and activity, most notably of Iron Age date, located to the south and west of the town (Evans and Lucas forthcoming) no intensive large-scale settlement has yet been identified. Occupation appears instead to have begun in earnest shortly after the Roman invasion in AD43, with the accepted picture of Cambridge during this period being one of a settlement centred almost exclusively upon the Castle Hill area (e.g. Alexander and Pullinger 1999). Recent fieldwork, however, is demonstrating that this interpretation is somewhat limited, with significant settlement having been detected to the west of the presumed centre (Evans and Lucas forthcoming). Finds from this period have also been made to the southeast, where there is evidence of a contemporary suburb situated alongside the southern approach to the town (Newman 2008; Cessford 2012). It is therefore clear that the extent of Roman settlement on the southern bank of the Cam was greater than has generally been supposed and that the southern hinterland of the town was extensive, although it remains poorly understood. Thus, although the present site is situated at some distance to the south of the main locus of contemporary occupation, it most probably lay within the town's agricultural fringe. Supporting this interpretation, residual Roman pottery has been recovered during nearby excavations conducted at Pembroke College (Robinson and Evans 1995), the Judge Business School (Newman 2013), the Fitzwilliam Museum (Whittaker 2002) and in the Trumpington Street/Mill Lane area (Hughes 1893).

Following the decline of the Roman town, from the fifth century AD the level of occupation in the area appears to have temporarily decreased. Archaeological evidence for Early Saxon (*c*. 410-700) activity in and around Cambridge primarily comprises material recovered during the nineteenth century from cemeteries on the outskirts of the city (Fox 1923; Dodwell *et al.* 2004; Cessford with Dickens 2005). Very little occupational evidence from this period has yet been identified, with the exception of a small sixth to seventh-century settlement located on the western bank of the Cam around a kilometre to the south of the former Roman town (Dodwell *et al.* 2004). Middle to Late Saxon (*c.* 700-900) activity, in contrast, appears to have been primarily refocused upon the Castle Hill area, where a seventh to ninth-century execution cemetery has been investigated (Cessford with Dickens 2005; Cessford *et al.* 2007). By the mid-ninth century it is clear that some form of settlement had been re-established in the area, as this was occupied by the Viking Great Army in 875, and the region was incorporated into

the Danelaw from *c*. 886 until its conquest by Edward the Elder in *c*. 917 (Cam 1934, 39; Lobel 1975, 3). Nevertheless, the town remained only an "economically viable backwater" up until the mid-tenth century (Hines 1999, 136); following this date, however, it emerged as a significant urban centre. By the late tenth century a mint had been established (Lobel 1975, 3) and Cambridge was being linked to a group of important trading centres including Norwich, Thetford and Ipswich (Fairweather 2005), thereby emphasising the central role played by river trade in its rapid economic growth. By the beginning of the thirteenth century Cambridge acted as the leading inland port in the county, through which goods and services were disseminated to many of the surrounding regional towns (Cam 1934, 43).

Around the middle of the twelfth century, the settlement to the south of the river Cam was enclosed within a substantial ditched boundary called the King's Ditch. This feature was most probably established for defensive purposes during a period of civil war known as The Anarchy (see further Cessford and Dickens forthcoming). The King's Ditch lay approximately 200m to the north of the Fellows' Garden, where it followed the line of present-day Downing Street/Mill Lane. Consequently, the area of investigation was situated outside its bounds, within the town's Trumpington suburb. By the time the ditch was created, however, it is likely that occupation in the area was already well established. Excavations conducted at Grand Arcade, for example, within the nearby Barnwell Gate suburb, indicate that settlement activity is most likely to have commenced in these outlying areas during the eleventh or early twelfth century (Cessford and Dickens forthcoming). In 1279, when a detailed census was undertaken, the Trumpington suburb contained 5% of the total population of Cambridge (Illingworth 1818). Contemporary occupation extended along both the east and west sides of Trumpington Street, and medieval remains – including both structural elements and cut features – have previously been encountered beside the Fitzwilliam Museum (Whittaker 2002), at 76 Trumpington Street (Dickens 1995), at the Judge Business School (Newman 2013) and beneath the Hotel du Vin (Webb 2006).

Historically, during the medieval period the Trumpington suburb was predominately occupied by a number of wealthy families, many of whom possessed substantial properties. Two families in particular stand out. Firstly, on the western side of Trumpington Street, in the area of the present-day Fitzwilliam Museum, the Le Rus family possessed a large masonry townhouse along with an associated chapel. These buildings were alienated to the Friars of the Sack in 1258 before their holdings were in turn purchased by Peterhouse in 1308 (Stokes 1908, 14-43; Ellis and Salzman 1948b, 290-1; Haigh 1988, 13). On the eastern side of the street, meanwhile, a similar arrangement was owned by the St. Edmund family; their house and chapel were subsequently alienated to the Gilbertine Order in 1290 (Stokes 1908, 44-63; Ellis and Salzman 1948a, 254-6; Haigh 1988, 14-15). The suburb's parish church – originally known as St Peter without Trumpington Gates, now St Mary the Less – retains in situ twelfthcentury elements in its west tower (RCHM(E) 1959, 280–83). In addition, during the fourteenth century a small hermitage dedicated to St. Anne and a hospital dedicated to St. Anthony and St. Eloy were also established in the suburb (Cam 1959, 133; Ellis and Salzman 1948c).

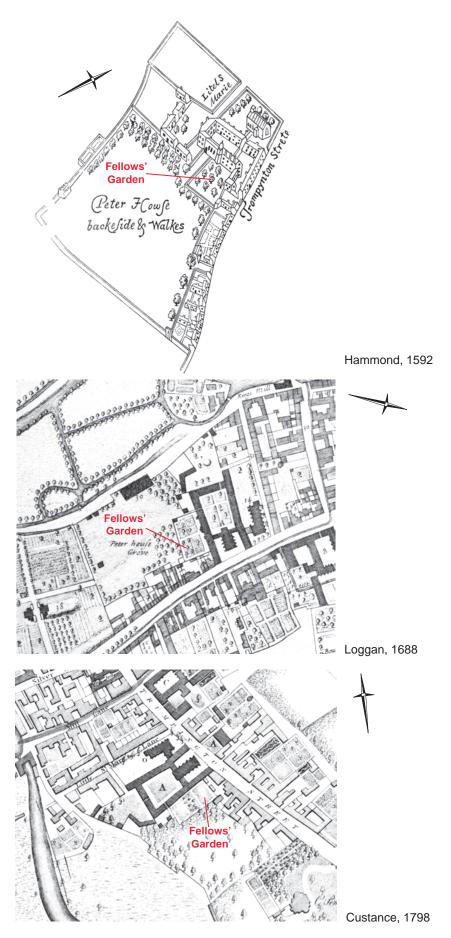


Figure 3: Historic maps, including those of Hammond, 1592 (as redrawn in Willis and Clark 1886 volume I, fig. 3), Loggan, 1688 and Custance, 1798

A final but very significant component of the medieval townscape comprised two colleges. The first, Peterhouse, was originally founded in 1284 by Hugh de Balsham as an addition to the Hospital of St. John (later refounded as St John's College). It was soon moved to its present site, however, where the scholars initially occupied two former hostels (Willis and Clark 1886 Volume I, 1-76). Across the road, Pembroke College was granted a Royal License of foundation by Edward III in 1347, with construction beginning in the late fourteenth century (Willis and Clark 1886 Volume I, 121-56). Both colleges have previously been subject to small-scale archaeological investigation (Hall 1999; Hall 2002; Swaysland 2005; Cessford 2010; Rees 2012; Newman 2018). Overall, therefore, it is apparent that during the later Middle Ages the character of the area shifted from being predominately residential in focus to include an increasingly large institutional component (including friaries, colleges, a hermitage and a hospital). This represents in microcosm a broader trend that was replicated all across Cambridge, precipitated in large part by the growth of the University after *c*. 1209.

Historic maps of Cambridge were produced from the late sixteenth century (Clark and Gray 1921; Baggs and Bryan 2002). The earliest, by Richard Lyne in 1574, George Braun in 1575 and William Smith in 1588, are relatively unreliable depictions, with an oblique as opposed to vertical viewpoint, which are of limited use in relation to the present site. In 1592, however, a much more accurate map was produced by John Hammond (Figure 3). His depiction reveals that the Fellows' Garden then comprised a walled enclosure, smaller in extent than its present layout, which was bordered by domestic houses along the Trumpington Street frontage. An almost identical layout was also recorded by David Loggan in 1688 (Figure 3) and William Custance in 1798 (Figure 3). This consistency attests to the presence of a series of long-lived plot boundaries and probably also a number of long-lived structures along the street front. This pattern continued until the first half of the nineteenth century, when a program of redevelopment commenced. In 1823 a block of land along the frontage was purchased to provide a site for the Fitzwilliam Museum. Construction of this institution commenced in 1837 and it first opened to the public in 1848 (Atkinson and Clark 1897, 492-3). Furthermore, Peterhouse agreed 'to remove certain houses which stood between the College and the proposed Museum, as soon as the latter should be built, and to lay out the ground as a garden' (Willis and Clark 1886 vol. I, 202). These changes probably occurred c. 1850.

## Geophysical survey

Prior to the commencement of the excavation, a geophysical survey of the site was undertaken by David Redhouse of the Department of Archaeology. Due to the presence of numerous physical obstructions, including both trees and planting beds, the full extent of the area was not suitable for investigation. Within the open, accessible portions of the Fellows' Garden, however, a grid was established and two surveying techniques undertaken. The first is earth resistivity, which measures the ground's degree of electrical resistance. The second is magnetic gradiometry, which assess the susceptibility of the soil and any features within it to magnetisation. The interpreted results of both surveys are plotted in Figure 4.

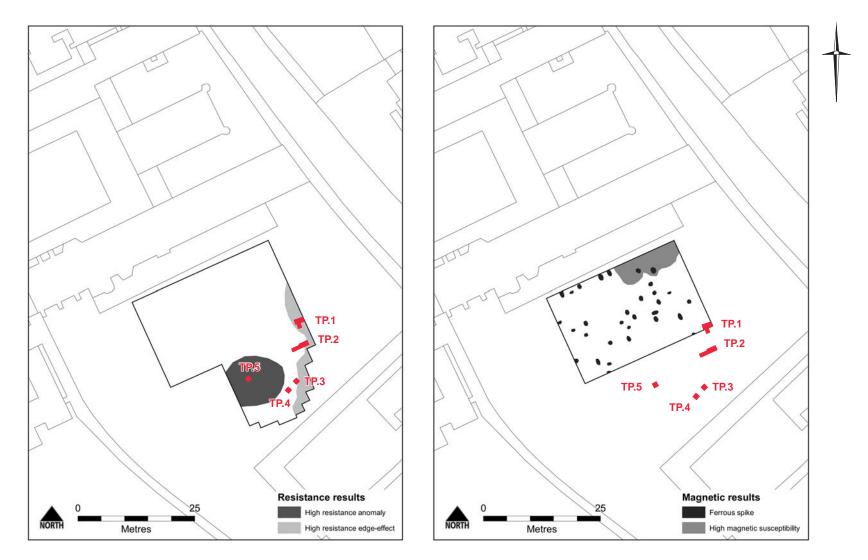


Figure 4: Interpreted plots of the geophysical survey results (courtesy of David Redhouse)

The resistance survey method measures variations in the electrical resistance of the ground using an array of stainless-steel electrodes. The varying pattern of resistance that this reveals indicates differences in the sub-soil due to its moisture retention and/or mineral properties. This patterning can then be interpreted to indicate the presence or absence of sub-surface archaeological features. Areas of high resistance typically have a low moisture content, suggesting solid features such as walls, for example. Within the Fellows' Garden itself, a roughly circular high-resistance anomaly some 10-15m across was detected (Figure 4). Test Pit 5 was positioned so as to investigate this potential feature. The second technique, magnetic gradiometry, is undertaken using a fluxgate gradiometer. This instrument measures the vertical gradient of the local magnetic field, which can be influenced by shallow magnetic sub-surface archaeological features. In the Fellows' Garden survey, a series of magnetic 'spikes' of probable ferrous origin were detected (Figure 4). These are likely to be close to the surface and modern in origin. As this area is used as a croquet lawn, as well as the venue for numerous garden parties, it is highly unlikely that the signals are archaeological in nature; consequently, they were not further investigated. An amorphous magnetic anomaly was also detected in the north-east corner of the area; since it is large and formless, however, it is most likely to comprise an effect caused by the materials employed in the construction of the garden.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

The results of the excavation will be presented on a test pit-by-test pit basis. This approach has been adopted because the spatial distribution of the trenches, which were deliberately sited so as to investigate a wide variety of potential contexts, renders the sequence encountered in one individual test pit distinct from that in most of the others. The succeeding discussion, in contrast, will be organised temporally as opposed to spatially; thereby allowing a more synthetic analysis of the results to be presented.

#### Test Pit 1

Within this test pit, structural remains were encountered lying immediately beneath modern topsoil deposit [100]. Consequently, rather than damaging these remains by continuing to excavate downwards, the footprint of the original 1.0m by 1.0m test pit was instead expanded in order to better determine the extent and alignment of the structure in question. The resultant trench was 'T-shaped' in form, measuring a maximum of 2.0m east-west by 2.1m north-south (2.9 square metres in total; Figure 5). Prior to the commencement of excavation, the ground height lay at 9.98m AOD while the uppermost surviving portion of footing [103] was encountered at 9.87m AOD. Footing [103] itself measured 0.60m wide by 2.10m+ long and was probably less than 0.20m deep. It was trench-poured in nature, meaning that a shallow gully was first dug before being infilled with an assortment of rubble – including brick, tile and clunch fragments – around which off-white sandy lime mortar with frequent mid-brown sandy silt inclusions was then poured. Once set, this provided a firm if somewhat irregular footing upon which a brick wall could then be constructed (in this instance, all trace of the latter had been removed). The nature of the materials that were used in its construction, most particularly yellow Gault brick fragments, indicates a late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century date.



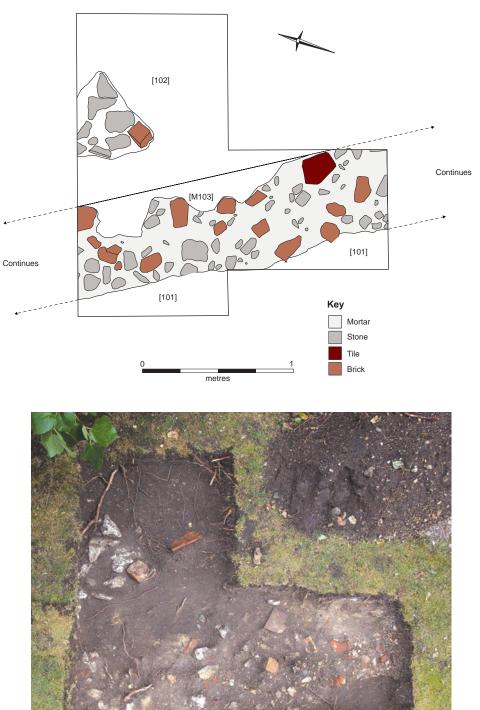


Figure 5: Plan and photograph of structural remains in Test Pit 1

To the east and west of footing [103], ground raising/landscaping deposits [101] and [102] were present. Consisting of poorly sorted dark brown sandy silt, these deposits contained large quantities of mortar, brick, tile and clunch fragment inclusions, as well as a mixed group of ceramics dating from the seventeenth/eighteenth century to the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. Both deposits were excavated to a depth of 0.10m, where excavation was halted. These layers were probably introduced when the domestic properties fronting onto Trumpington Street (of which footing [103] formed part of the rear boundary) were demolished, and the area was incorporated into the expanded footprint of the Fellows' Garden. One further feature was encountered in Test Pit 1. This comprised a posthole, the fill of which, [104], consisted of brick and clunch fragments that had originally been packed around a vertically-set timber. Cut [105] measured 0.60m by 0.51m in extent – it was not excavated. This posthole may have been structural in origin, forming part of a timber-built shed or outbuilding, for example, although this cannot be determined with certainty based upon the limited exposure provided by this trench.

#### Test Pit 2

As in Test Pit 1, structural remains were again encountered in this test pit lying almost immediately below topsoil deposit [200]. For the same reasons, therefore, this trench was also expanded from its original footprint to measure a maximum of 3.85m east-west by 1.0m north-south (3.4 square metres in total; Figure 6). In this instance, however, the structure encountered was much more robust than the footing in Test Pit 1. Wall [202] comprised part of a substantial masonry building, the uppermost surviving portion of which lay at 9.91m AOD (only five centimetres below the present ground surface). Although the full width of the wall was not exposed, the nature of its construction was discernible. Its outer, north-facing face was composed of roughly coursed limestone slabs, which measured a maximum of 0.32m by 0.20m by 0.11m in size. The inner core, in contrast, primarily consisted of unworked clunch fragments (clunch is a type of locally-occurring soft chalk) along with a small quantity of handmade red brick and Collyweston stone tile fragments. All of these materials were bonded with pale yellowish-white lime mortar. Based upon the construction type, a matching limestone face is also likely to be present on the south side of the wall. Consequently, taking this second, unexposed face into account [202]'s width can be estimated to be at least 1.0m (of which 0.75m was visible within the trench). The nature of the materials from which the wall was constructed are of some note, as they give an indication of the likely date of the structure.

The type of limestone used in wall [202] is hard bioclastic ooidal Barnack Stone. During the Middle Ages, Barnack Stone is known to have been quarried from the banks of the river Welland near Stamford (Alexander 1995, 115-6), thus making it the closest source of good quality building stone to Cambridge. This material was first used in the town during the early to mid-twelfth century – at Holy Sepulchre Church and Stourbridge leper chapel – and was then in frequent use from the thirteenth century until the quarries were exhausted around the mid to late fifteenth century (Purcell 1967, 29-34). Roughly coursed Barnack slabs were used in the outer face of Peterhouse's Hall, for example, which was constructed *c*. 1290. Its robusticity made it an excellent, hard-wearing though coarse-grained building material. Notably, blocks of Barnack Stone previously recovered from the bed of Whittlesea Mere have been used to identify the presence of a sunken medieval barge (Hutchinson 1994, 121). Such vessels, with their valuable cargo, would have reached Cambridge via the extensive network of Fenland rivers; thereby underlining the expense of using this material in construction. It is for this reason that masonry buildings were comparatively rare in medieval Cambridge, and usually comprised structures of some status.

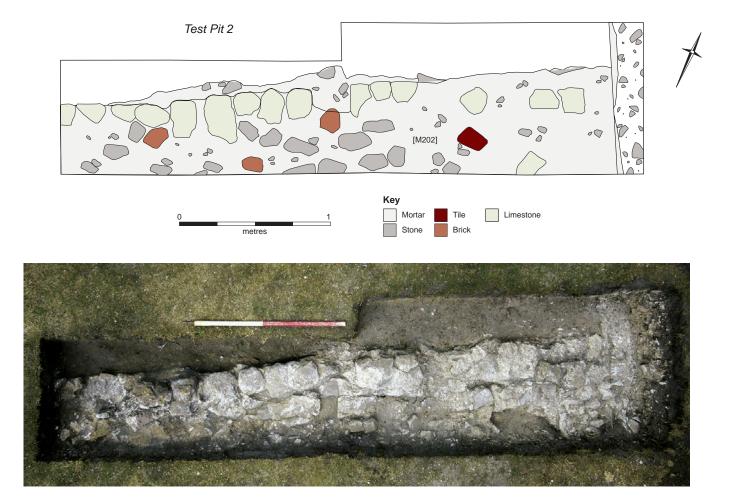


Figure 6: Plan and photograph of structural remains in Test Pit 2

Brick was first used locally at Ely during the fourteenth century and was employed in Cambridge primarily from the mid to late fifteenth century, its adoption coinciding with the decline in an available source of good quality building stone. The use of both materials in this structure, albeit the brick in very small quantities, suggests that a mid to late fifteenth century date is likely. It should be noted, however, that the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the mid-sixteenth century effectively freed up quantities of masonry that had previously formed part of standing monastic buildings. This in turn prompted a second phase of masonry construction in Cambridge utilising these recycled materials. Typically, however, moulded or decorative elements were poorly suited for reuse and thus were often utilised as part of the rubble infill of structures of this date. No such elements were present in this instance, indicating that the building in question was most probably pre-Dissolution in date (while it must be noted that the scale of the exposure was limited, identifiably reused elements usually form a significant proportion of the fabric of post-Dissolution structures). In addition, at least two courses of Barnack Stone were present. Due to its expense, this material was almost exclusively used above ground rather than in foundations, indicating that the building was partially subsumed by a rising ground level over time; further attesting to its likely antiquity.

Whilst few details of the building itself can be determined from the exposed remnant, the wall's size indicates a relatively substantial structure, possibly of two storeys. At the eastern end of the trench, [202] had been truncated by an unusual mortar-lined linear feature that was only partially exposed. Cream-coloured lime mortar lining [203] had straight, flat sides, suggesting that it may bear the impressions of a decayed timber or timbers. It is therefore possible that it represents a timber drain or something similar, although this remains conjectural. Finally, overlying both [202] and [203] was mid to dark brown sandy silt deposit [201]. This layer, which contained mortar, clunch, brick, tile and gravel inclusions, represents a levelling deposit that was introduced after the masonry building was demolished. It contained a mixed group of ceramics dating from the eighteenth to the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. The demolition itself most probably occurred *c*. 1850, following the construction of the adjacent Fitzwilliam Museum, when the Fellows' Garden is known to have been expanded in area.

#### Test Pit 3

This test pit was situated to the southwest of Test Pits 1 and 2 and encountered a very different sequence (Figure 7). Measuring 1.0m by 1.0m in extent, it was excavated to a depth of 0.70m. The present ground level was 9.99m AOD and although augering was attempted, the natural gravels were not reached due to the presence of a dense stone-rich layer that obstructed the auger. The uppermost deposit, modern topsoil [300], was 0.12m thick. Beneath this a relatively loose, homogenous and poorly sorted deposit of dark brown clay silt was present. Layer [306] measured 0.36m thick and contained numerous brick, tile, mortar, chalk and gravel inclusions, all of which were very poorly sorted. Due to its homogeneity the deposit was excavated in a series of 10cm deep spits in order to maximise the potential for any chronological stratification to be identified. However, spits [301], [302] and [303] all contained a highly intermixed assemblage of eighteenth to early twentieth-century ceramics, indicating that this layer was most probably introduced *en masse* as a made-ground deposit; although its loose nature and extensive bioturbation suggests that it was also heavily worked/turned after its initial deposition. Overall, it appears most likely that the principal ground-raising event occurred during the mid-nineteenth century, as this was the date of the majority of the finds. The area subsequently formed part of a well-maintained garden.

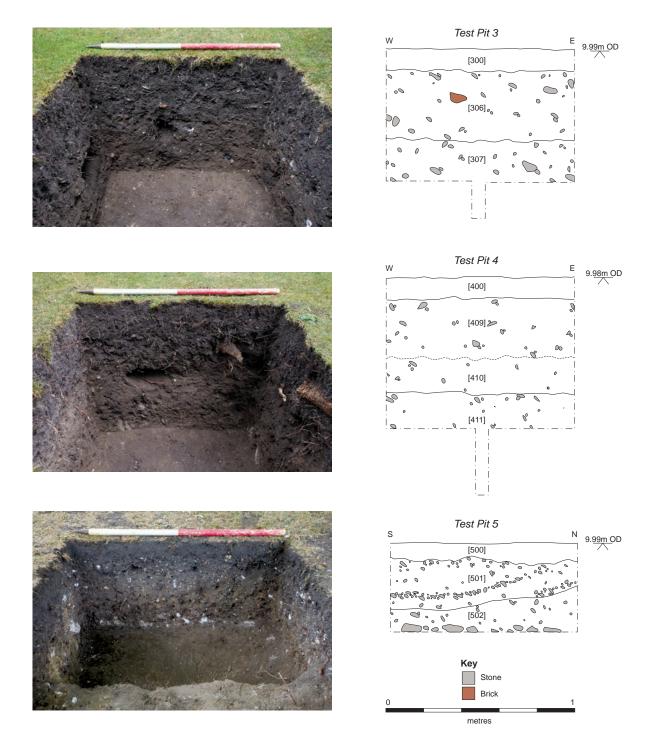


Figure 7: Photographs and sections of Test Pit 3, facing north (top), Test Pit 4, facing north (middle) and Test Pit 5, facing east (bottom)

At 9.50m AOD there was a diffuse interface onto layer [307], a moderately compacted mid to pale brown sandy silt with occasional clay mottles and occasional to frequently moderately sorted gravel inclusions. This deposit was excavated to a depth of 0.22m, but excavation ceased before its base was reached. As before, [307] was dug in a series of 10cm deep spits ([304] and [305]). A small group of ceramics of tenth to twelfth-century and thirteenth to fifteenth-century date were recovered, along with a sherd of glazed red earthenware – indicating a likely fifteenth-century date for the context. A subsequent auger hole revealed that a highly compacted, stone-rich deposit was present beneath this level; possibly a metalled surface. The depth of natural geology was not determined.

#### Test Pit 4

This test pit was situated in relatively close proximity to Test Pit 3 and encountered a similar, although by no means identical, sequence (Figure 7). Measuring 1.0m by 1.0m in extent, it was excavated to a depth of 0.80m. The present ground level was 9.98m AOD and natural gravels were determined to lie at c. 8.80m AOD via augering. This is very similar to the depth of c. 9.00m AOD at which natural was recorded a short distance to the south during a previous investigation conducted within the grounds of the Fitzwilliam Museum (Whittaker 2002). The uppermost deposit in this test pit, modern topsoil [400], was 0.12m thick. Beneath this, deposit [409] formed a continuation of made-ground layer [306] in Test Pit 3; it consisted of a relatively loose, homogenous and poorlysorted deposit of dark brown clay silt with relatively frequent poorly sorted brick, tile, mortar, chalk and gravel inclusions. It measured 0.34m thick and, as in the preceding test pit, was excavated in a series of 10cm deep spits ([401], [402] and [403]). This again produced a highly intermixed assemblage of eighteenth to early twentieth-century ceramics, including a complete coffee cup bearing Peterhouse's crest that dates from the 1930s. At 9.56m AOD there was a diffuse interface onto layer [410], a moderately compacted deposit of mid-brown sandy silt with occasional moderately sorted gravel inclusions. It was 0.20m thick and was excavated in two spits ([404] and [405]), which contained a small number of thirteenth to fifteenth-century ceramics. Below this was [411], a moderately compacted deposit of mid to pale brown sandy clay silt with occasional gravel inclusions. It was excavated to a depth of 0.20m in three spits - [406], [407] and [408] - that contained medieval coarsewares of thirteenth to fifteenth century date. Notably, these latter two deposits were distinct from the equivalent strata encountered in Test Pit 3, indicating that one or more late medieval cut features are likely to be present.

#### Test Pit 5

The final test pit was deliberately sited so as to investigate a high-resistance anomaly detected during the resistivity survey conducted prior to the commencement of the excavation. It measured 1.0m by 1.0m in extent and excavation was halted at a depth of 0.48m. The present ground surface in this location lay at 9.99m AOD. In contrast to the other four test pits, it appears that Test Pit 5 was located entirely within a feature of relatively modern date. Given the circular form of the geophysical anomaly, plus the presence of two standing plane trees in close proximity, it is highly likely that the feature in question represents an infilled tree throw. Beneath modern topsoil deposit [500], upper fill [501] consisted of compacted mid-grey brown clay silt with occasional brick, tile and chalk fragment inclusions. It was 0.26m deep. Beneath this, fill [502] consisted of heavily compacted mid brown clay silt with frequent gravel, chalk brick fragments. Due to the increasingly compacted, rubble-filled nature of this fill, excavation was halted at 9.51m AOD. A mixed assemblage of nineteenth to early twentieth-century ceramics was recovered, along with twentieth-century frogged brick fragments.

## MATERIAL CULTURE

A moderately-sized finds assemblage, totalling 1,828 items weighing 27.99kg, was recovered during the course of the project, of which 1,187 items weighing 5.66kg have been retained in the site archive. When the small footprint of the investigated test pits is taken into consideration, however, the density of finds can instead be considered to be moderate to high; predominately as the result of the numerous artefacts incorporated into mid to late nineteenth-century landscaping deposits. The principal elements of the finds assemblage are broken down by material-type in Table 1, and the most important groups – including metalwork, pottery and clay tobacco pipe – are then assessed in a series of separate reports below.

Material Type	Count	Weight (g)
Pottery	399	2,449
Faunal remains	329	1,220
Metalwork	33	334
Clay tobacco pipe	37	114
Ceramic building materials	561	18,382
Shell	152	336
Glass	224	1,322
Other materials	93	3,833
TOTAL	1,828	27,990

Table 1. Principal elements of the finds assemblage, broken down by material type

Excluded from detailed analysis at this stage are minor categories of material that either produced insufficient numbers to allow proper characterisation or else were predominately recovered from late and/or disturbed contexts. This category includes: faunal remains, which were predominately nineteenth to early twentieth-century in date (329 fragments, weighing 1,220g); shells, which were predominately oyster (152 fragments, weighing 336g); ceramic building materials, which predominately consisted of roof tile (561 fragments, weighing 18,382g); mortar fragments (71 pieces, weighing 2,812g); unworked stone (9 fragments, weighing 1,130g); glass, which predominately consisted of window glass (224 shards, weighing 1,322g); plastic plant tags (three items, weighing 3g) and; a piece of modern costume jewellery in the form of a cut-glass diamond (1 item, weighing <1g).

#### Metalwork assessment (Richard Newman)

A relatively small metalwork assemblage, comprising 33 items weighing 334g, was recovered. Derived from six different contexts, all of nineteenth to early twentieth century date, the artefacts are entirely composed of iron and all but two consisted of nails or unidentifiable lumps. Along with an indeterminate plate fragment from [501], the exception to this pattern comprised a well-preserved padlock from Test Pit 1 (Figure 8).

<97> [104] Test Pit 1. A near-complete early to mid nineteenth-century iron padlock. Heart-shaped in form and of simple construction, the only missing element is the escutcheon plate that originally covered the key hole. It measures 65mm by 65mm by 20mm and weighs 183g.



Figure 8: Selected elements of the finds assemblage, including: an early nineteenth-century iron padlock; two ceramic sherds bearing hand-painted lettering (potentially the names of former college cooks) and; a complete 1930s coffee cup bearing the Peterhouse badge

### Ceramic assessment (Richard Newman and Craig Cessford)

A relatively small assemblage consisting of 399 sherds weighing 2,449g was recovered during the course of the project. The material is broken down by fabric and by period in Table 2. As is typical given the relatively shallow depth of excavation in many of the test pits, the assemblage is dominated by material of modern (eighteenth century to twentieth century) date; this group accounts for 294 sherds (73.7% of the total) weighing 1,410g (57.6% of the total). Post-Medieval material (sixteenth to seventeenth century) accounts for 80 sherds (20.1%) weighing 877g (35.8%), Medieval material (thirteenth to fifteenth century) accounts for 21 sherds (5.2%) weighing 140g (5.7%) and finally Saxo-Norman material (tenth to twelfth century) accounts for only 4 sherds (1%) weighing 22g (0.9%).

Period	Fabric	Count	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
Saxo-Norman	St Neots-type Ware	3	20	6.6
	Stamford Ware	1	2	2
Medieval	Coarse buff	1	3	3
	Coarse grey	15	116	7.7
	Coarse pink	2	10	5
	Ely ware	2	8	4
	Surrey Borders	1	3	3
	Glazed Red Earthenware	57	676	11.8
Post-Medieval	Frechen Stoneware	16	184	11.5
	Tin-glazed Earthenware	7	17	2.4
Modern	Black Basalt	1	1	1
	Chinese Export Porcelain	6	4	0.6
	Coarsware Plantpot	181	640	3.5
	English Utilitarian Stoneware	3	160	53.3
	Lead-glazed Earthenware	21	94	4.5
	Mocha	1	2	2
	Notts/Derby Stoneware	4	8	2
	Refined White Earthenware	56	297	5.3
	Staffordshire-type Slipware	8	125	15.6
	Staffordshire White Salt-glazed Stoneware	8	51	6.3
	Westerwald Stoneware	2	6	3
	Yellow-bodied earthenware	4	22	5.5
		399	2,449	6.1

#### *Table 2.* Pottery assemblage by fabric

The earliest material was predominately, although not exclusively, recovered from towards the base of Test Pits 3 and 4, where it appears likely *in situ* medieval deposits were encountered. The vast majority of the assemblage, however, comprising the Post-Medieval and Modern wares, was highly intermixed with little sign of chronological stratification. This is because it was almost entirely recovered from made-ground deposits, the majority of which were probably first introduced to the area *c*. 1850 when the area of the Fellows' Garden was expanded. As well as the intermixing caused by the transportation and redeposition of this material, most probably from elsewhere within the college grounds, there is also evidence to suggest that the garden was subject to relatively intensive

horticultural activity, particularly during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sherds of plant pot were common, for example, and were distributed throughout the deposits along with some identifiably early twentieth-century ceramics. The degree of bioturbation was also extensive, further demonstrating the decades of work that have been invested in maintaining the Fellows' Garden.

There are a small number of sherds of individual interest within the assemblage. Firstly, two fragments bearing hand-painted blue lettering that dates stylistically to *c*. 1770-1830 were recovered, although in both instances only part of the text is present (Figure 8). The first comes from the base of a late creamware plate and probably reads '[M/H]itch...' Creamware was developed in *c*. 1762 and although it declined in importance after the 1780s it was still produced until *c*. 1830. The second, reading '...ng', was written onto the outside face of a small refined white earthenware bowl of early nineteenth-century date. It is likely that both examples represent the names of college cooks. This is because, from around the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, the cooks at most Cambridge colleges were semi-independent entrepreneurial businesspeople whose responsibilities often included supplying crockery; these vessels remained their own property, which is why they were marked with their name rather than that of the college (Cessford 2016). For the same reasons, however, some commercial establishments – such as inns and coffeehouses – also marked their crockery during this same period, meaning that partial names can be difficult to trace with certainty. In this case, the fragment marked 'ng' is very likely to relate to Ann King, who was the cook at Peterhouse in 1802. The origin of the second fragment is unclear.

From around the 1870s onwards, colleges began to exercise direct control over their kitchens and cook's names were typically replaced with college names and/or badges. An example of the latter type of vessel, bearing the badge of Peterhouse (two keys in saltire), was also recovered in the form of a complete coffee cup (Figure 8). Although Peterhouse's badge should in fact be in gules (red), it was common for colleges to opt for the more common and cheaper blue for their transfer prints. The cup itself is made from hotel ware, a highly durable, densely vitrified ceramic that was first developed in the late nineteenth century and became very popular during the first half of the twentieth century (Meyers 2016). It is marked on the base "Duraline" Super Vitrified and it was manufactured by the Grindley Hotel Ware Co. This business was started in 1908 by William Harry Grindley as an offshoot of W.H Grindley & Co, which was itself founded in 1880. Although sold to new owners in 1920 and again in 1952, it continued to operate under its original name until 1979, when it became The Duraline Hotel Ware Company Ltd. The trade name "Duraline" first began to be used in the early 1930s, and based on its form the coffee cup almost certainly dates to that decade. Other Cambridge colleges, including Clare, are also known to have commissioned services in Grindley Hotel Ware. The cup also bears the mark of Barrett & Son, Ltd. a Cambridge ceramics retailer.

#### Clay tobacco pipe assessment (Richard Newman)

A small assemblage of clay tobacco pipe assemblage comprising 37 fragments weighing 114g was recovered. The material consisted of 29 stem fragments, two heel/spurs and six bowl fragments; representing a minimum of five pipes in total. In general, the presence of clay tobacco pipe in a context indicates a date of *c*. 1580–1910, although fragments of pre-seventeenth-century date are comparatively rare in Cambridge. In this instance, two bowl fragments survived sufficiently well that they can be dated to *c*. 1620–40 based upon Oswald's general typology (Oswald 1975); although both were derived from nineteenth-century contexts in Test Pit 1. There are no decorated pieces or makers' marks present.

## DISCUSSION

Archaeological evidence indicates that occupation is likely to have first been established along the Trumpington Street frontage, on the southern periphery of the burgeoning town, during the eleventh or early twelfth century. It appears that this area rapidly developed into a locus of high-status settlement; the wealthy Le Rus family, for example, are known from documentary evidence to have become established a short distance to the south of the present site by the early thirteenth century at the latest (Stokes 1908, 38-39). A significant change occurred in the mid-twelfth century, however, when the area became separated from Cambridge's urban core via the creation of the King's Ditch. Nevertheless, occupation continued and the newlycreated Trumpington suburb appears to have prospered. A second significant change then took place from the mid to late thirteenth century onwards, when the pattern of domestic occupation that had previously characterised the area began to be incrementally supplanted by a series of newly-founded institutions. Whilst this was a widely occurring pattern, involving the establishment of a variety of institutions of different types across not only Trumpington but also the majority of contemporary Cambridge, two institutions in particular are directly relevant to the developmental history of the present site. The first of these is Peterhouse itself, which was established in its present location in 1284, and the second is the house of the Friars of the Sack, which was established in 1258.

Peterhouse was the first college to be founded in association with the University of Cambridge. In its initial form, however, it was both architecturally and ideologically distinct from the college of today. Medieval colleges were autonomous, self-governing democratic institutions that housed small communities of fellows who were dedicated to teaching. Endowed by seigneurial, monastic, episcopal or royal patrons, they possessed their own statutes, legal privileges and common seals (Cobban 1988, 112). Despite their wealth and importance, however, during the Middle Ages colleges housed only a small proportion of Cambridge's overall academic community (Cobban 1999, 23). Up until the late fifteenth century, almost all undergraduates, as well as many postgraduates, were instead housed in hostels (Cobban 1989, 55-6). These were fee-charging lodging houses, supervised by the university authorities, of which there were usually around twenty to thirty operating at any one time in medieval Cambridge (Stokes 1924). Religious houses, especially friaries, also played an important role in the early history of the university, with members of a particular order often being transferred to houses situated in university towns in order to undertake additional education. Indeed, although they were secular, a number of important similarities can be discerned between academic colleges and contemporary monasteries. In most institutions, for example, including Peterhouse, college fellows were required to be ordained clerics in order to gain admission. Individual college statutes, which varied widely between different foundations, also specified additional rules and codes of behaviour that were to be observed by their members. In the case of Peterhouse, it was stipulated that fellows were to maintain their clerical clothing and tonsures, were to act decently, were denied beards and were not to wear rings (Swanson 2001, 52).

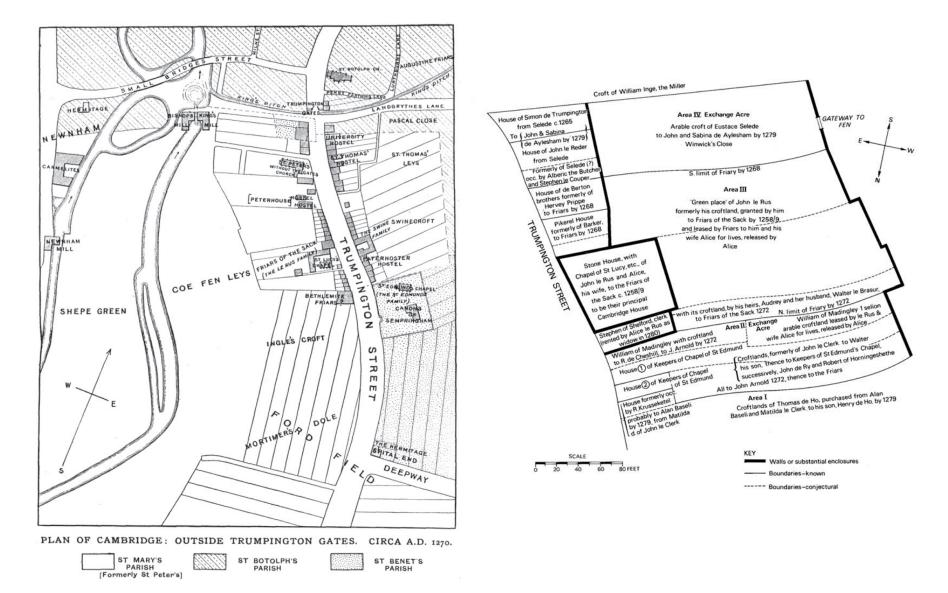


Figure 9: Reconstructions of medieval plot boundaries in the vicinity of the site, based primarily upon documentary sources. Left is Stokes' 1908 interpretation of the Trumpington suburb and right is Hall and Lovatt's 1990 plan of the grounds of Peterhouse, showing in particular the extent of the holdings of the Friars of the Sack

After moving from its original location at the Hospital of St John in the town centre, Peterhouse's new endowment was relatively limited; it principally consisted of two stone-built hostels adjoining St Peter's churchyard. Hemmed in by pre-existing suburban properties, the site was small and constricted. This greatly inhibited the scope for its rapid redevelopment into a purpose-built collegiate space. Instead, a long-lived pattern of piecemeal and accretive construction ensued, as Peterhouse gradually purchased additional land adjoining its original plot. The first and most important purpose-built structure to be erected was the freestanding Hall in *c*. 1286-1300. Halls were of particular importance because communal dining played a central role in the daily life of all members of the college, codifying and reinforcing contemporary notions of social stratification, behaviour and etiquette (Gardiner 2008). Eventually, the preceding hostels were replaced by a new accommodation block in *c*. 1424-25, the west range was appended in 1431-50 and the Combination Room and Master's Lodge were constructed in 1460-64 (Willis and Clark 1886 Volume I, 1-76). The eastern end of the present college precinct remained in domestic occupation until the seventeenth century, however, as the quadrangle forming Old Court was only fully completed in 1633.

The Order of Friars of the Penitence of Jesus Christ, commonly called 'Friars of the Sack', first emerged in Provence during the 1240s (Andrews 2006, 175). In Cambridge, where the order arrived before 1258, the friars first resided in the parish of St Mary in the Market, but later moved to a large stone house given to them by former mayor John Le Rus, held in fee of Barnwell Priory, which gave licence for the transfer in that year. Ten years later Henry III confirmed the grants of the Le Rus family and those from various other donors. The friars replaced an original proprietary chapel dedicated to St Lucy with a church in honour of 'Jesus Christ and his Blessed Mother', but the Le Rus family required that Lucy's feast day continue to be celebrated (Andrews 2006, 205). During the succeeding decades the friars continued to obtain adjoining properties, eventually consolidating a large holding located immediately to the north of the nascent Peterhouse College. The composition of this holding has been reconstructed in some detail by Hall and Lovatt (1990; Figure 9). Little is known of the friary buildings themselves, however. The order's constitution stated that their houses should be 'small and humble', but gave no further instructions as to their layout. When the land and property of the Cambridge house passed to Peterhouse in 1308, the title deeds indicate that the site contained a substantial stone house (most likely the former Le Rus residence), a church and a cemetery along with other buildings and courtyards, plus a large area of accompanying croftland to the rear with fishponds (Hall and Lovatt 1990, 31). This is broadly consistent with what is known of other houses of the order in England; the buildings of Sack Friars in Norwich, for example, comprised a 'carefully planned and compact block' (Chettle 1945, 247).

In 1309, a Royal Licence was granted for Peterhouse to acquire the remainder of the friars' former lands. Subsequently, the college collected rental income from its newly acquired properties along Trumpington Street, whilst the Bursar's Rolls for 1374-5 and 1398-9 record that the croftlands to the rear were cultivated as kitchen gardens and an orchard (Hall and

Lovatt 1990, 45). The rental properties are of particular importance in relation to the present site. Retained by the college until the nineteenth century, archaeological evidence indicates that they were the focus of relatively substantial investment during the later medieval period. In 2002, for example, ground-works conducted in advance of the erection of a temporary building at the Fitzwilliam Museum, situated around 20m to the southeast of the current investigation, encountered a sequence of earlier structural remains (Whittaker 2002; see Figure 10 for location). Activity had commenced here by the early twelfth century, when a number of pits and postholes were created. Then, during the thirteenth century, a timberframed building was established. Represented archaeologically by the presence of a series of compacted mortar floor surfaces and an associated beamslot, this was most probably an ancillary structure as it was located around 28m to the rear of the principal frontage. Its precise form, size and function are unclear due to the extent of later truncation. Given its date, it may have been associated with either the Le Rus family or the succeeding Friars of the Sack, although the former is the most likely. Subsequently, the timber-built structure was demolished and a replacement masonry building constructed. From within one of this building's foundations a silver short cross penny of Edward I was recovered (class 9b2, c. 1300, of uncertain mint); the low degree of wear indicates that it was probably lost or deposited during the first half of the fourteenth century, giving a likely date for the transition.

The new masonry building was relatively substantial in scale, measuring in excess of 10.7m by 5.7m in extent. Consonant with its size, its clunch-built foundations were equally robust, varying between 1.0m and 1.3m in width; indicating that the building is very likely to have been two storeys in height. Although the structure's entire footprint was not revealed, it contained a minimum of three rooms on the ground floor, the centremost of which measured at least 5.0m by 4.5m in extent. Externally, a number of glazed ridge tiles were recovered from fifteenthcentury deposits, indicating that its roof was originally guite ornate. Altogether, therefore, this was clearly a building of some status. The date of its construction, most probably during the first half of the fourteenth century, indicates that it is likely to have been constructed by Peterhouse shortly after the college acquired the Friars' former property. This in turn suggests that at least a portion of the former Friary site may have been reconverted for domestic use at this time. The use of masonry in the new construction is significant, since stone-built buildings were comparatively rare in medieval Cambridge (Cam 1959, 122); a dearth that is primarily attributable to the paucity, and hence expense, of locally available building stone. It thus appears that the Trumpington suburb remained an area of relatively high-status settlement at this date, from which a high rental return could be derived. Unfortunately, the footings themselves had been heavily truncated in the twentieth century and lay directly beneath a layer of modern concrete. Consequently, the date at which the building was demolished is unclear, although deposits containing sixteenth/seventeenth-century pottery did appear to have accrued against its outer face. Similarly, the nature of the materials that were employed in its above-ground construction are also unclear, although an outer facing of Barnack Stone is the most likely possibility due to its widespread usage in Cambridge at this date.

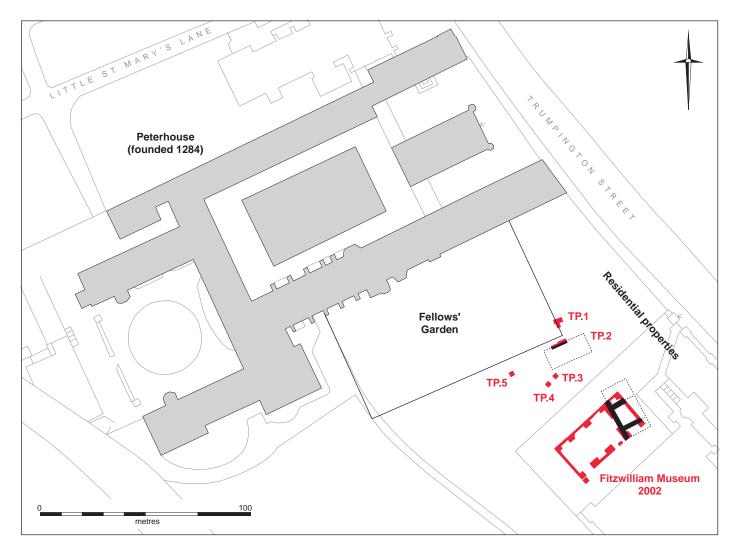


Figure 10: A putative reconstruction of the pre-nineteenth century layout of the site, showing the original walled perimeter of the Fellows' Garden along with two archaeologically-identified medieval masonry buildings

By combining the results of the recent archaeological investigation with the historical, archaeological and cartographic information discussed above, a reconstruction of the pre-1850 layout of the investigated site can be proposed (Figure 10). One of the key elements of this plan is the former walled perimeter of the Fellows' Garden. Visible in historic maps from 1592 onwards (Figure 3), and probably late medieval in origin, the garden's 'east-west wall is particularly important for dividing the site into its component sections, since it represents the original northern boundary of 1272 of the holding of the Friars of the Sack' (Hall and Lovatt 1990, 10). It is notable, however, that no trace of this boundary was detected during the geophysical survey (Figure 4). While it is possible that the wall's footings have been comprehensively robbed, a more likely explanation for its absence is the relatively substantial late nineteenth-century build-up in ground level identified in Test Pits 3 and 4, as this would effectively serve to mask the signal. Indeed, one of the principal results of this investigation is the identification of the extent to which the present, unified appearance of the Fellows' Garden is a comparatively recent addition to the college landscape. Previously, the area of the present garden was divided into three disparate elements; inside the walled garden, outside the walled garden and the residential properties lining the street frontage. Historically, each of these elements had been put to a different use, resulting in a different depositional history and consequent variations in ground level between the three. In the mid to late nineteenth century, however, when the area was unified, a range of landscaping deposits were introduced in order to eradicate these variations. In the lowest lying areas, such as Test Pits 3 and 4, this had the secondary effect of capping, and thus preserving, the preceding archaeological strata.

In Test Pit 1, the rubble footing that was encountered almost certainly represents the final iteration of a wall that demarcated the rear boundary of the residential properties on Trumpington Street. It is notable that it shares a common alignment with both the structure encountered in Test Pit 2 and the building previously identified at the Fitzwilliam Museum site (Figure 10). Furthermore, this alignment also corresponds very closely with the boundary as it was depicted in the historic map sequence (Figure 3). The most significant discovery of the project, however, is undoubtedly the substantial masonry building that was present in Test Pit 2 (Figure 6). Strikingly, this structure appears to have been closely comparable to that at the Fitzwilliam Museum, although the presence of brick fragments within its core indicates that it was built at least a century later, most probably towards the end of the fifteenth century. Nevertheless, the width of their walls suggests that the two were broadly consistent in size, while their external appearance is also likely to have been very similar. It is therefore probable that both originally served the same purpose, as ancillary elements within high-status rental properties owned by the college. Although the limited scale of the new building's exposure precludes a precise archaeological understanding of its date, extent or function – an inevitable consequence of a test pit-based investigation - the degree of preservation that was encountered was significantly higher than that of the building excavated in 2002. This raises the distinct possibility that more ephemeral structural elements, such as floor surfaces, for example, may survive within its interior; thus making it highly suitable for further investigation in the future, now that its location has been established.

Usefully, some additional indication of the building's possible size and orientation can be obtained from cartographic sources. Custance's 1798 map, for instance, shows an east-west aligned building at the southeast of the Fellows' Garden that corresponds very closely with the excavated remains (Figure 3). Loggan also depicted a structure in this location in 1688, although he left it unshaded, indicating that it did not then have a roof over part or all of the building (Figure 3). This situation was not unusual in relation to long-lived masonry structures. as the timber roof is the element most susceptible to decay; particularly when the building is old and/or poorly maintained. Whilst some caution must be exercised, since historic maps are only approximately to scale and it is unclear how detailed the survey of some properties may have been, it nevertheless appears likely that this is the structure that was encountered in Test Pit 2. This would make it a remnant of a lost medieval townscape. Multiple houses were crowded along Trumpington Street before either the Friary or the College were established, and some of these plots persisted – albeit in altered, modified form – until the mid-nineteenth century. As well as providing an opportunity for students to experience first-hand the practical techniques of archaeological excavation, therefore, this project has also succeeded in opening a small window onto the area's rich and multi-layered past.

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## OASIS FORM

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Project details		
Project name	Fellows' Garden, Peterhouse College, Cambridge	
Short description of the project	Between the 6th and the 9th of August 2019 five test pits were excavated within the Fellows' Garden of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, as part of an archaeological summer school hosted by the college. Two of the test pits encountered structural remains associated with domestic properties that formerly fronted onto Trumpington Street. Of these remains, one structure in particular consisted of a substantial masonry building of probable late fifteenth-century date. The domestic properties were demolished in the mid to late nineteenth century, at which time the Fellows' Garden was also expanded from its original walled location. Made-ground deposits associated with this latter event were identified in two further test pits, beneath which stratified late medieval deposits were encountered. A fifth test pit targeted a high-resistance anomaly detected during a geophysical survey of the site, which was identified as an infilled tree throw.	
Project dates	Start: 06-08-2019 End: 09-08-2019	
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known	
Any associated project reference codes	ECB5974 - HER event no.	
Any associated project reference codes	PFG19 - Sitecode	
Type of project	Research project	
Site status	Listed Building	
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden	
Monument type	STRUCTURAL REMAINS Medieval	
Monument type	STRUCTURAL REMAINS Post Medieval	
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval	
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval	
Investigation type	"Test-Pit Survey"	
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest	
Project location		
Country	England	
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE Fellows' Garden, Peterhouse College, Cambridge	
Postcode	CB2 1RD	
Study area	9.75 Square metres	
Site coordinates	TL 4491 5792 52.200010403407 0.120623754527 52 12 00 N 000 07 14 E Point	
Height OD / Depth	Min: 8.8m Max: 9m	

Project creators		
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit	
Project brief originator	Self (i.e. landowner, developer, etc.)	
Project design originator	Christopher Evans	
Project director/manager	Christopher Evans	
Project supervisor	Richard Newman	
Type of sponsor/funding body	Archaeological Summer School	
Name of sponsor/funding body	Peterhouse College, Cambridge	
Project archives		
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store	
Physical Archive ID	PFG19	
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Glass","Metal","other"	
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store	
Digital Archive ID	PFG19	
Digital Contents	"other"	
Digital Media available	"Geophysics","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"	
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Store	
Paper Archive ID	PFG19	
Paper Contents	"other"	
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"	
Project bibliography		
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)	
Title	Fellows' Garden, Peterhouse College, Cambridge: Archaeological Summer School 2019	
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