

Hampton Court Palace Works Yard London



Archaeological Excavation Report



October 2008

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Issue No: Final Report (1)

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Historic Royal Palaces

WORKS YARD, HAMPTON COURT PALACE*ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***CONTENTS**

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SUMMARY

In November 2005, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological recording action at Hampton Court Palace Works Yard. The work was undertaken on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces prior to the installation of a new floor in the Works Department offices. The evaluation revealed a possible buried garden soil cut by a number of 19th and 20th century rubbish pits. Evidence for the architectural history of the existing building was also revealed, predominantly dating to the 20th century. It is possible that more detailed study of the finds would produce some information about the grace and favour occupancy in the 19th and 20th centuries, but it must be remembered that the finds are not linked to a particular apartment, and that this period is relatively well-documented.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In November 2005, OA carried out an archaeological recording action at Hampton Court Palace Works Yard. The work was undertaken on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces in advance of the installation of a new floor within the Works Department offices as part of the re-modelling of the building.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on the first Terrace drift geology of the river Thames, which overlies London Clay at 9m above OD.

1.3 Historical background

- 1.3.1 The information given here is taken from Thurley (2003) unless otherwise stated. A walled orchard existed at Hampton Court in the time of Wolsey and was probably on the same site, north of the palace, as the later Privy orchard laid out under Henry VIII. It lay within the north moat, and the site under discussion here lies in the south-east corner of that area..
- 1.3.2 Talman's plan of 1699 shows a garden divided into six compartments, probably a kitchen garden. This is also what seems to appear on the early 18th-century Knyff views. In 1703, Henry Wise planted, for Queen Anne, 770 more fruit trees, some of which were planted in the old Privy Orchard, by then known as the Melon Ground, and shown as such on Bridgeman's survey of 1711.
- 1.3.3 A survey of 1732-42, possibly by Fort, shows a Carpenter's Yard in the south-east corner of the Melon Ground, but this is not shown on Roque's drawing of 1736. This makes sense in that it was the year after Roque made his drawing that new offices began to be built north of Tennis Court Lane. More and more were quickly added, until the area became something of a warren.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

- 2.1.1 The aims of the project were: to investigate and record any archaeological remains surviving on the site, and which were likely to be impacted by the construction work.
- 2.1.2 To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of any artefactual evidence present
- 2.1.3 To provide potential options for minimising or preventing damage to any remains.
- 2.1.4 To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- 2.1.5 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The work was carried out in a room to the rear of the Works Department offices, formerly used as a tea room. The work consisted of the removal of the existing concrete floor surface and underlying deposits to a depth of approximately 0.5 m below current floor level. The concrete was broken out and removed and the underlying deposits hand excavated by OA. The dimensions of the room were 5.3 m north-south x 3.6 m east-west

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

- 3.2.1 Although the maximum impact of the development would be 0.50 m below ground level, hand excavation exceeded this depth in places in order to characterise the deposits encountered. Plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.3 Finds

- 3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 3.4.1 No deposits were encountered which were deemed suitable for environmental sampling.

4 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

4.1 Description of deposits

- 4.1.1 The earliest feature revealed within the excavated area was the existing western wall of the room (109) and the associated foundation (114) which was built of brick and

chalk rubble with concentrations of mortar. The wall itself was of red brick although no bond was discernable behind the existing plaster.

- 4.1.2 The foundation was overlain by a mid orange-brown sandy silt with irregular spreads of mid-dark grey sandy silt throughout (100). It is possible that this soil pre-dates the wall but no obvious construction cut was discernable within deposit 100. It also appeared to butt the lower courses of the wall in addition to overlying the foundation, and it seems likely that it was deposited after the construction of the wall. A number of features were seen to cut this deposit in addition to structural elements associated with the standing building.
- 4.1.3 The north-western corner of a large sub-square pit (101) was observed in the south-east corner of the room. This measured 1.8 m+ by 1.9 m+ and where visible in section the sides appeared to slope at approximately 60°. The pit was filled by a dark grey sandy silt (102), similar to the irregular spreads within deposit 100. A large quantity of flower pot fragments, window lead, glass and tile, together with occasional fragments of animal bone were recovered from the fill and suggested a rubbish pit.
- 4.1.4 Immediately to the west of pit 101, a second pit (107) with a similar fill (108) was revealed. This measured 1.2 m by 0.8 m+ and whilst it did not contain the same quantity of artefacts as pit 101, it seems likely that they were contemporary, given the similarity of the fills and the comparable material recovered. Pit 107 appeared to have been excavated against the existing west wall of the room as a number of voids were noted where the fills butted against foundation 114.
- 4.1.5 Pit 101 was truncated by the south-western corner of a large pit (103) in the north east corner of the room. This measured 2.7 m+ by 1.5 m+ and was filled by a mixed deposit (104) comprising elements of deposit 100 (mid-dark grey and mid orange brown sandy silts) and large quantities of domestic refuse including porcelain cups, plates, earthenware and glass jars and a large number of bottles.
- 4.1.6 Immediately to the west of pit 103 was a second pit (116) containing similar artefactual elements. The fill (117) was also similar to that of pit 103 (104). The upper part of the cut sloped at a shallow angle of approximately 20° and the cut shown in plan on figure 2 shows only the base of the cut once the impact depth had been reached. Despite the fact that they were almost certainly inter-cutting, no definitive relationship could be established between pits 103 and 116 given the similarity of the fills.
- 4.1.7 The northern extent of pits 116 and 103 were truncated by the construction cut (105) for the stepped London brick footing (110) of the existing north wall of the room. The stepped footing butted foundation 114, but was overlain by the concrete foundation and stepped brick footing of the existing eastern wall of the room (111). The lowest course of this stepped footing was overlain by an east-west aligned concrete foundation with a single course of red brick overlain by a layer of mortar (112). It seems likely that this represents the base of an internal dividing wall, probably contemporary with 111, given the similarity of the brick and the concrete

foundations. The foundation (112) butted the rubble foundation 114 and cut the fill of pits 101 and 107.

- 4.1.8 Also cutting these fills was the concrete foundation of the existing southern wall of the room (113), which was butted by a layer of made ground (115), comprising building rubble and re-deposited pit fills. This represented the made ground for the recently removed concrete floor surface.

4.2 Finds

- 4.2.1 At this stage of the investigation the finds have not been studied in detail. In summary, the material recovered consisted of: c. 150 sherds of 19th to 20th century pot, including much late china; 20 sherds of flowerpot; 6 complete stoneware ink bottles; 3 glass mineral water bottles and some fragments; part of an iron bucket and a number of other metal fragments, including some lead window comes.
- 4.2.2 The finds, dumped into rubbish pits, are most likely to have derived from the grace and favour occupation of the palace in the 19th and 20th centuries. Grace and favour apartments were allotted to a wide range of people, including some royal figures such as Princess Federica of Hanover. It is possible that more detailed study of the finds would produce some information about the grace and favour occupancy, but it must be remembered that the finds are not linked to a particular apartment, and that this period is relatively well-documented.

4.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 4.3.1 No deposits were encountered which were deemed suitable for environmental sampling.

5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Overall interpretation

- 5.1.1 The interpretation of the features and deposits encountered within the excavated area is necessarily tentative given the confines of the room. However, six broad phases of activity were identified based on the stratigraphic and artefactual evidence recovered.

Phase I: mid 19th century?

- 5.1.2 The deposit (100) overlying foundation 114 is likely to represent a garden soil. Given the relationship between the lower courses of wall 109, rubble foundation 114 and the garden soil, it seems likely that wall 109 originally formed the eastern exterior wall of the building fronting on to the works yard, and that the mixed nature of deposit 100 may imply an imported soil comprising a mix of topsoil and the subsoil which overlies the terrace gravels.

Phase II: mid-late 19th century

- 5.1.3 The artefactual evidence from the two rubbish pits to the south of the room (101 and 107) suggests that these may have been associated with the use of the rear of this building as a garden.

Phase III: late 19th century?

- 5.1.4 The finds recovered from the two pits to the north of the room (103 and 116) suggested that the area was still being utilised for the dumping of rubbish, although a more domestic assemblage was recovered from these features. It is possible that this is kitchen waste, although relatively little animal bone was retrieved and it seems more likely that these pits were specifically for the dumping of tableware and redundant bottles and jars.

Phase IV: early 20th century?

- 5.1.5 The construction cut (105) cutting the fills of these two pits (104 and 117) suggests that wall 110 represents the southern wall of a north-eastern extension to the building fronting the works yard. Whilst no evidence for the contemporary use of the area occupied by the excavated room was apparent, it would still have been outside the building at this time.

Phase V: mid 20th century?

- 5.1.6 The area seems to have been subsequently enclosed as part of a further eastern extension to the building. Stepped footing 111 forms the eastern wall of this extension. The similarity between the concrete foundations of 111 and 112 suggest that 112 was an internal division contemporary with the construction of 111.

Phase VI: mid-late 20th century?

- 5.1.7 The internal division (112) then appears to have been demolished and the room extended southwards by the construction of a later internal dividing wall (113). It is likely that this is contemporary with the deposition of the made ground (115) and the laying of the recently removed concrete surface.

Finds

- 5.1.8 It is possible that more detailed study of the finds would produce some information about the grace and favour occupancy of the 19th and 20th centuries, but it must be remembered that the finds are not linked to a particular apartment, and that this period is relatively well-documented

6 IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 No further impact on archaeological features or deposits will be made during the development.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Thick. (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>No./ wt</i>	<i>Date</i>
001								
	100	Deposit			Garden Soil			
	101	Cut			Rubbish Pit			
	102	Fill			Fill of Rubbish Pit			mid-late 19 th C?
	103	Cut			Rubbish Pit			
	104	Fill			Fill of Rubbish Pit			late 19 th C
	105	Cut			Construction Cut			
	106	Fill			Fill of Construction Cut			
	107	Cut			Rubbish Pit			
	108	Fill			Fill of Rubbish Pit			mid-late 19 th C?
	109	Structure			Existing West Wall of Room			
	110	Structure			Existing North Wall of Room			
	111	Structure			Existing East Wall of Room			
	112	Structure			Former Internal Wall			
	113	Structure			Existing Southern Wall of Room			
	114	Structure			Rubble Foundation of Wall 109			
	115	Deposit			Made Ground			
	116	Cut			Rubbish Pit			
	117	Fill			Fill of Rubbish Pit			late 19 th C

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Thurley, S, 2003 *Hampton Court Palace, A Social and Architectural History* New Haven and London

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Hampton Court Palace Works Yard

Site code: HCP46

Grid reference: TQ 1560 6850

Type of project: Excavation / watching brief

Date and duration of project: 21st - 23rd November 2005

Area of site: 17.5 sq m

Summary of results: See summary Above

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Historic Royal Palaces at Hampton Court Palace.



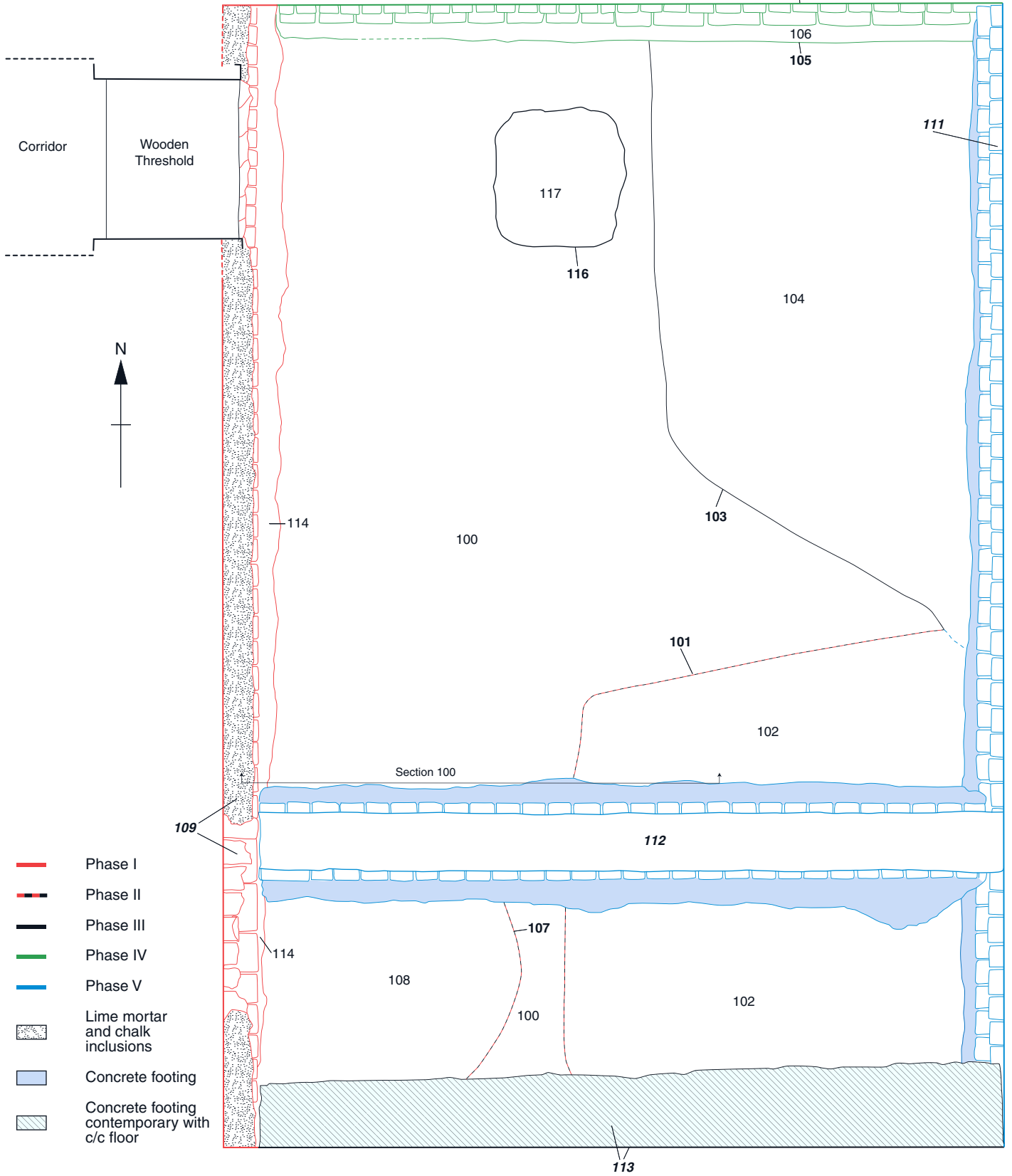
Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

Plan 100 and 101

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- Phase I
- - - Phase II
- Phase III
- Phase IV
- Phase V
- Lime mortar and chalk inclusions
- Concrete footing
- Concrete footing contemporary with c/c floor

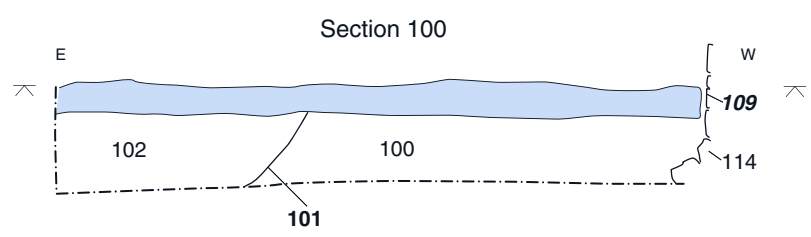


Figure 2: Plan of excavated area and section.



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