

Home Farm
Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park
Stainborough
South Yorkshire
Archaeological Watching Brief

Contents

- List of Figures
- List of Plates
- List of Tables
- List of Appendices
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Archaeological Background
- 3. Method
- 4. Results
- 5. Artefact Record
- 6. Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Acknowledgements
- Figures
- Appendices

Summary

An archaeological watching brief in the mid-late 18th-century 'arched barn' has revealed evidence for earlier structural remains, probably associated with the range of buildings portrayed on the map of 1730. Other areas disturbed by the redevelopment revealed no archaeological features of note.

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List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location
- Fig. 2 Home Farm complex with areas of investigation
- Fig. 3 Plan of trenches within the ‘arched barn’
- Fig. 4 Sections 1 (Trench 1), 2 (Trench 4) and 3 (Trench 5)
- Fig. 5 Sections 4 (Trench 6) and 5 (Trench 5)

List of Plates

- Plate 1 Decorative stone pier from the floor make-up in the arched barn
- Plate 2 Rectangular stone block with mortise hole from the floor make-up in the arched barn
- Plate 3 Section of a carved stone drain from the floor make-up in the arched barn
- Plate 4 Section of a carved stone drain in situ within the south wall of the arched barn

List of Tables

- Table 1 Pottery from Home Farm complex, Wentworth

List of Appendices

- Appendix I Brief for Archaeological Investigation
- Appendix II Inventory of primary archive
- Appendix III Inventory of contexts
- Appendix IV Inventory of artefacts

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) undertook a watching brief on the Home Farm complex at Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park estate, South Yorkshire on behalf of Purcell Miller Tritton (Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The Home Farm complex is part of the 200 hectare Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park estate. The site (NGR SE 320 032), which is presently occupied by the Northern College, has seen a number of significant developments over the last three centuries and is a site of national and regional heritage importance and is consequently listed as a Grade I Park (GD1381) in English Heritage's 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens'. The last 60 years have seen considerable deterioration and neglect which is now addressed by a programme of landscape and architectural restoration, with the aim of presenting the site to the general public.
- 1.3 The geology of the site is mapped as shales and sandstones of the Coal Measures overlying Millstone Grit (British Geological Survey 1979), with soils being of the clayey loams of the Dale Association, interspersed with the better-drained loams of the Rivington 1 Association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).
- 1.4 The watching brief investigation was carried out during June 2006.

2. Archaeological Background

- 2.1 The archaeological background of the Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park estate has been discussed fully in an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment carried out by Archaeological Services WYAS (Roberts 2004).
- 2.2 A prior to this investigation an ASWYAS watching brief was undertaken during the geotechnical test pitting at Wentworth Castle (Major 2006). The investigation included test pitting within the Home Farm complex and revealed no archaeological features.

3. Method

- 3.1 The investigation followed the outlines of a document 'Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief' prepared by South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS).
- 3.2 An archaeologist was present on site during ground works involved with the re-development of the Home Farm complex. A sufficient sample of features was investigated in order to understand the full stratigraphic sequence, down to the naturally occurring deposits and full written, drawn and photographic record was made following ASWYAS standard methods (ASWYAS 2005). Sections of linear and discrete features were drawn at 1:10 scale with plans drawn at 1:50.
- 3.3 Prior to the presence of an ASWYAS archaeologist some ground works had already been undertaken. However, an inspection of these disturbances was carried out and the results of this is detailed (see below 4.18 – 4.21). Ground works during the redevelopment of the 'arched barn', consisting principally of five east-west trenches (Trenches 2-6; Fig. 3) were fully monitored and a

complete record of the findings was made (see below).

- 3.4 The site archive contains all the information gathered during the watching brief as this is indexed in Appendix I. Inventories of contexts and artefacts are listed in Appendices II and III. The archive and finds are currently held by ASWYAS in an appropriate and stable environment. It is anticipated that the archive will be deposited with a recipient museum, at an appropriate time agreed with the museum.

4. Results

Arched Barn

- 4.1 The earliest deposit identified within the 'arched barn' was a subsoil (117). Subsoil 117 was a pale brown silty-clay containing occasional sub-angular sandstone fragments and had an excavated depth of 0.2m. The subsoil (117) was detected within the sections of Trenches 2, 4, 5 and 6 (Sections 2-4 and 5; Figs 4 and 5). No finds were recovered from the subsoil.
- 4.2 Truncating subsoil 117 was a north-north-east to south-south-west aligned wall (114) detected in plan within Trench 5 and in the north-facing section of Trench 6. Wall 114 was set within a shallow U-shaped foundation trench (115), which was 0.07m in depth, and constructed from roughly hewn sandstone blocks with an average size of 0.3m in length, 0.2m in width and 0.2m in depth. The stonework survived to a maximum of two courses high and two courses wide, with no visible bonding material being in evidence (Fig. 3; Fig. 5, Sections 4 and 5). Wall 114 was the earliest structure detected within the barn and probably represents the truncated remains of an external dry-stone wall of unknown date.
- 4.3 Stratigraphically later than Wall 114 was Wall 113, which formed a north-western corner of a rectilinear structure occupying the north-east corner of the barn. Wall 115 was detected partly truncating the construction cut (115) of Wall 114 (Fig. 3; Section 4). Wall 113 was exposed for a length of 3.7m, the stonework of the north to south alignment of the wall also being visible within the south-facing section of Trench 5 (Fig. 5; Section 5). Evidence of Wall 113 was further detected to the south within the north-facing section of Trench 5 and the south-facing section of Trench 4, where it was manifested as a robber trench. In total the wall's course could be plotted for a distance of 4.85m north to south. Wall 113 had maximum height of 0.72m and had survived as three courses of a mortared slab foundation stone, upon which was bedded eight courses of mortared roughly hewn sandstone blocks (approximately 0.5-0.2m in length, 0.2m in width and 0.1m in depth). Recovered from north elevation of Wall 113 was a fragment of roofing tile which had been incorporated into the stonework.
- 4.4 A floor surface sealing the subsoil (117) was detected butting up to the internal side of the Wall 113. This floor (110) was constructed upon a bedding layer (109) which consisted of a dark reddish grey/black clinker and ash 0.04m in depth (Figs 4 and 5; Sections 2 and 3). The floor itself was formed from a course of red bricks (110) 0.05m in depth. Areas of brick flooring (110) appeared to have been robbed with only the remains of the bedding layer (109) surviving in some areas (Figs 4 and 5; Sections 2 and 5). No finds were

recovered from layer 109.

- 4.5 Both the bedding layer (109) and brick floor (110) abutted a mortared red brick wall (111) that was four courses deep (constructed of the same brick that formed the floor). Wall 111 was only partly visible in the north facing section of Trench 5 (Fig. 4; Section 3) and its purpose could not be ascertained.
- 4.6 On the external side of Wall 113 and sealing the subsoil (117) was a layer (116) of mid-reddish-brown clayey-silt 0.4m in depth, containing moderate sandstone fragments ranging between 0.05m and 0.3m in size (Fig. 5; Sections 4 and 5). Layer 116 probably represented the external ground surface at the time when the structure (Wall 113) was in use. It was probably formed by re-deposited soil and debris from the construction of Wall 113. No finds were recovered from Layer 116.
- 4.7 The stratigraphical sequence of the 'arched barn' appears to indicate that the construction of the western pillared entrances followed the deposition of Layer 116. This was highlighted by the truncation of Layer 116 by a construction cut (119) for one of the 'arched barn' pillars (118) (Fig. 5; Sections 5). Subsequently there was deposition of a blackish-grey sandy-silt layer (112) that contained frequent cinder inclusions, which was only detected on the external side of Wall 113 and appeared to represent levelling. No finds were recovered from Layer 112.
- 4.8 Two episodes of demolition were identified. The first episode saw the deposition of Layer 108, a silty-mortar and lime 0.1m in depth, containing frequent charcoal fleck inclusions that was directly above brick floor (110) (Figs 4 and 5; Sections 2, 3 and 5). Layer 108 appeared to represent a former plastered surface which probably derived from the internal walls of the structure represented by Wall 113. The second event saw the deposition of a rubble layer (107) over layer 108. Layer 107 was 0.54m deep and contained frequent roughly hewn sandstone blocks and fragments of red brick (similar to material used to construct Wall 113 and the brick floor (110)). Layer 107 was visible overlying the internal and the external sides of Wall 113 and also Layer 112, which post dated the construction of the stone pillar 118 (Figs 4 and 5; Sections 2-5). Layer 107 was also detected within the sections of Trenches 2 and 3.
- 4.9 Eight sherds of pottery were recovered from Layer 107, ranging in date from the 18th to early 20th century. Also recovered from this deposit were a sandstone roofing tile, two glass bottle sherds, a clay pipe stem and architectural stone work including a pier base (Plate 1) and a block of unknown function with a central rectangular mortise hole (Plate 2). Also found within Layer 107 were fragments of red clay floor tiles and two segments of a stone drain (Plate 3). A sample of the floor tile and a segment of stone drain were retained for identification. A third segment of the stone drain was observed incorporated into the stonework of the south wall of the 'arched barn' (Plate 4).
- 4.10 The final phase of activity identified within the 'arched barn' was a linear trench cut (106) which was excavated along the eastern side of the barn wall (Fig. 3, Sections 2 and 3; Fig. 4). This trench, which was less than 0.5m wide and up to 1.2m deep, was in-filled with loose rubble. This trench cut was

detected within Trenches 2-4, but not Trenches 5 and 6. Trench 106 was at first interpreted to be the foundation trench for the east wall of the 'arched barn'. However, it seems to have terminated between Trenches 4 and 5. Thus its function remains unclear.

Dairy Parlour

- 4.11 A service trench (Trench 1) was excavated between the 'arched barn' and the 'dairy parlour', approximately 2.5m to the west of Trench 5 (Fig. 2). The subsoil identified within Trenches 5 and 6 of the 'arched barn' was the earliest deposit identified within this trench. The subsoil was overlaid by Layer 104, a dark grey clayey-silt containing occasional sandstone fragments and charcoal flecks (Fig. 4; Section 1). Layer 104 appeared to represent a former topsoil horizon and land surface and two fragments of animal bone were recovered from it.
- 4.12 Above Layer 104 was a mid-reddish-brown clayey-silt layer (103) which was 0.57m in depth, and contained moderate sub-angular sandstone fragments and charcoal fleck inclusions. Three pottery sherds of 17th to early 18th century were recovered from Layer 103. This layer appeared to represent construction debris from the surrounding extant buildings and was perhaps laid down as used as levelling. Overlying Layer 103 was a blackish-grey cinder and charcoal layer (102), 0.08m in depth, representing a probable metallated surface. A further layer (101) of a pale pinkish-white sandy-silt 0.18m was detected above Layer 102. This layer (101) probably represented a levelling prior to a second episode of metalling.

West Animal House

- 4.13 A north-facing section was exposed by ground works alongside the southern extent of the 'west animal house' (Fig. 2). The section was cut into a sloping ground down to the level of the adjacent building and was approximately 4m in length and 2m in depth. The section revealed a topsoil 0.3m in depth overlying the natural sandstone bedrock. No archaeological features were identified within this section.

St James Chapel

- 4.14 Visual inspection of an inaccessible 2.5m deep east-facing section exposed by ground work on the northern side of the chapel (Fig. 2) revealed the cross-section of an east to west aligned wall. The wall was constructed of roughly hewn dry sandstone blocks approximately four courses high and seemed to have a foundation cut into the subsoil. These deposits were sealed by modern overburden.

Long Barn Link

- 4.15 Groundwork to the south of the 'long barn link' (Fig. 2) revealed an east-facing section revealed made-up ground approximately 1.8m in depth above the natural sandstone bedrock. Visible throughout the deposit was fragments of red brick and sub-angular sandstones. No archaeological features were identified within this section.

East Animal House and Cottage

- 4.16 Inspection at two locations within a north to south aligned service trench

running along the eastern sides the 'east animal house' and 'cottage' (Fig. 2) revealed natural sandstone at a depth of 0.64m. No archaeological features were identified within this trench at the locations monitored.

5. *Artefact Record*

5.1 Pottery by C.G. Cumberpatch

5.1.1 The assemblage consisted of eleven sherds of pottery weighing 257 grams and represented a maximum of ten vessels. The data are summarised in Table 1.

5.1.2 The pottery assemblage consists of small quantities of material dating to between the 17th and later 19th century. Utilitarian wares and tablewares are both represented with the latter including both 18th century vernacular tablewares and later, more formal, transfer printed Whiteware.

6. *Conclusion*

6.1 The investigations within the 'arched barn' provides evidence of an earlier stone structure. The 'arched barn' itself is believed to have been constructed in c.1760 (Roberts 2004), and it is therefore conceivable that the earlier remains relate to the range of buildings portrayed on the map of 1730 (Sheffield Archives VWM 63).

6.2 The same earlier range may also be represented in the wall exposed in the section to the north of St James Chapel, but this might equally relate to a wall mapped by the 1st edition Ordnance Survey.

Trench	Context	Type	No	Wt	ENV	Part	Form	Decoration	Date range
4	103	Slipware type 1	3	23	3	BS	Dish/plate	White trailed slip decoration int	C17th - EC18th
4	107	Unglazed Red Earthenware	1	6	1	BS	Hollow ware	U/Dec	C19th - EC20th
4	107	Brown Glazed Coarseware	1	49	1	BS	Pancheon	U/Dec	LC18th - C19th
4	107	Unglazed Red Earthenware	1	83	1	Base	Hollow ware	Splayed base	C18th - C19th
2 to 6	107	Brown Salt Glazed Stoneware	1	9	1	BS	Hollow ware	U/Dec	C19th - EC20th
2 to 6	107	Late Blackware	1	8	1	BS	Hollow ware	Shiny metallic glaze int & ext	C18th
2 to 6	107	Transfer Printed Whiteware	2	37	1	Profile	Plate	Willow	M - LC19th
2 to 6	107	URE	1	42	1	Rim	Hollow ware	U/Dec	C18th - C19th
		Total	11	257	10				

Table 1. Pottery from the Home Farm complex, Wentworth Castle

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Acknowledgements

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Appendix I

Inventory of primary archive

File no.	Description	Quantity
1	Context sheets	1
1	Drawing registers	1
1	Photograph record sheets	2
1	Photographic negatives, colour (x1), mono (x1) and mono print (x1)	3
1	Digital photograph record sheets	1
1	Watching brief daily monitoring forms	4
1	Trench record sheets	5
1	Context cards	22
1	Photocopy of level sheet	1

Appendix II

Inventory of contexts

Context	Trenches	Description
100	1	Layer of modern overburden
101	1	Layer of demolition/construction material
102	1	Layer of possible metaling surface
103	1	Layer of construction debris/rubble
104	1	Layer of former land surface
105	2-5	Infilling of trench cut 106
106	2-5	Cut of a linear trench up against east wall
107	2-6	Layer of rubble levelling
108	2-6	Layer of plaster debris
109	2-6	Layer of bedding for 110
110	4-6	Red brick floor
111	5	Red brick wall
112	5-6	Layer of demolition/construction material
113	5-6	North and south facing walls of a rectilinear structure
114	6	North-north-east to south-south-west aligned wall, same as 121
115	6	Construction cut for wall 114
116	5-6	Layer of re-deposited soil
117	5-6	Subsoil
118	5	Column foundation of extant barn
119	5	Construction cut for 118
120	5	North-north-east to south-south-west aligned wall, same as 115
121	5	Construction cut for wall 120

Appendix III**Inventory of artefacts**

Context	Trench	Details	Quantity
103	Dairy Parlour	Pottery sherds (see specialist report)	3
107	3	Sample of stone drain	1
107	5	Floor tile sample	1
107	5	Sandstone roofing slate	1
107	2-6	Pottery sherds (see specialist report)	8
107	4	Architectural sandstone pier base	1
107	4	Architectural sandstone block with mortise hole	1
107	4	Clay pipe stem	1
107	4	Glass bottle sherds	2
110	5	Red brick sample	1
113	6	Red tile fragment	1