



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT

BASTION 11/MONK'S PASSAGE,

CITY WALL, NEW COLLEGE,

OXFORD

SP 51765 06455

On behalf of

New College

OCTOBER 2008

REPORT FOR New College
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Summary

A watching brief was carried out by John Moore Heritage Services on works carried out between Bastion 11 of the city wall and Monk's Passage, New College. The intervention revealed traces of the Saxon rampart, a blocked postern which dates to the 13th century or later, a later undated rebuild of the city wall, a post-medieval privy and a small room of uncertain purpose. A part of a gravestone was also recovered during the intervention.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site was located on the inside of the extant City Wall adjacent to Bastion 11 (Fig. 1) in Monk's Passage within New College, Oxford (NGR SP 51765 06455).

1.2 Planning Background

The site is adjacent to part of Scheduled Monument OX 26, the City Wall, with Bastion 11 being Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record number PRN 3449, and the wall east of the bastion being PRN MOX 15458. As a consequence permission was sought from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for works to replace the extant tarmac surface and to repave the area with new York stone. Scheduled Monument Consent (ref. HSD 9/2/10160) was granted for the works subject to a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State, advised by English Heritage.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The line of the wall around the NE corner of the City has been the subject of archaeological investigation and recording on a number of occasions since the 1920s.

Moreover, they have shown that the surviving city wall is probably that known from documentary sources to have been under construction from 1226 (Hunter & Jope 1951), and that there was an outer wall perhaps of late 13th century date that mirrored the line of the inner one (Palmer 1976).

The existence of bastions on the outer wall was confirmed in the early 1980s and at the same time the overall sequence of the city's defences was reviewed (Durham *et al* 1983). The historical development of the defences has been discussed most fully by Hassall (1979). The above has been taken from Booth (1995).

Recent work on the walls to either side of the development area was conducted in 1993 when four small trenches were excavated against the inner city wall in positions corresponding to the proposed location of access points for examination and servicing of ducts through the wall (*ibid*; Dodd *et al.* 2003).

John Moore Heritage Services recorded two trial pits in the area of the development. Within one trial pit was a wall constructed across the neck of the bastion (JMHS 2008 and see below).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To identify and record any archaeological remains exposed during the groundworks

In particular

- To record any remains relating to the city defences.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

A scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with English Heritage and Oxford City Archaeologist. The work was carried out by JMHS and was to involve the recording of all exposed archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed repaving (Fig. 1). This was to include monitoring of ground reduction within the proposal area and the excavation of a new drainage channel.

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

The tarmac was broken out and removed, along with the underlying hardcore, by the main contractors under archaeological supervision. The resulting surface was hand cleaned.

The footprint of the new paving was excavated to a depth of c. 0.3m below present ground level. The area was excavated stratigraphically with the deposits removed from the latest to the earliest. Full excavation of all archaeologically significant deposits to the agreed depth was carried out, with the College also agreeing to limited further investigation in order to better understand certain sequences and structures.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers

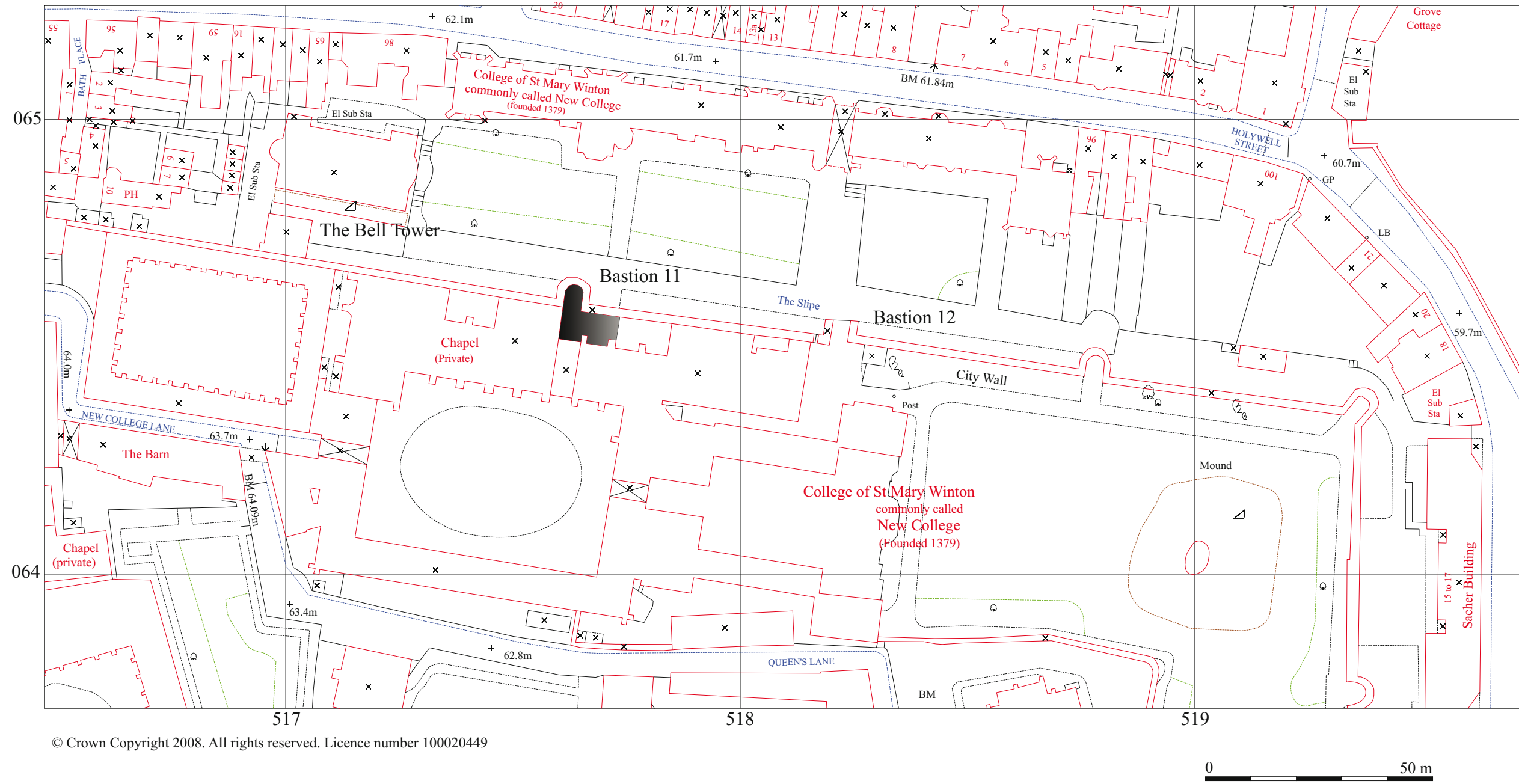


Figure 1. Site location

in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The limits of excavation were defined by the city wall and bastion on the north side of the investigation area, by the Song Room on the west, by the Long Room of New College on the south, and the kitchens on the east side. As a result the investigation area was an L-shape, measuring 12.4m (max. north/south) by 12.5m (max. east/west). The north/south arm of the investigation was 4.4m wide by 5.9m long within Bastion 11; the east/west was 6.4m wide by 12.5 long within the area of Monk's Passage.

4.1 Bastion 11 (Figs. 2 & 4)

The area within Bastion 11 was the first part of the investigation to be opened up; here, a dump of overlying rubble (27) – identified during the monitoring of trial-pits as (03) and (10) – was stripped off to reveal the earliest deposit observed (47). The deposit (47) located between (28) to the north and (48) to the south was a very compact purple brown clay with c. 1% fine gravel.

Underlying (47), and observed in the base of the posthole [60] – see below – was deposit (61), a sticky, pale pinkish brown sandy silt with mixed gravel, 2-8mm in size, and charcoal. Pottery recovered from it yielded a 13th century or later date. It may well overlie (20) or be part of it. It is at the correct height, 63.64m OD, to be part of the postulated Saxon bank, recently identified during trial pit monitoring at New College (JMHS 2008). The pottery, coming from the cleaning of the sides of the post-hole [60] may well be intrusive, dragged from the top of (47), or indeed (48), which also yielded a 13th century date.

Also revealed during the strip was deposit (28), a dump of soft orange brown sandy silty clay with c. 15% fine gravel, which overlay (47), as well as a stone structure [36]. The deposit (28) was not excavated, only cleaned up and photographed. It yielded a single sherd of Brill/Boarstall which dates it from after the 13th century. Deposit (35), again underlying rubble (27) and comprising grey brown sandy silt with moderate charcoal flecking, overlay the top of [36], into which [29] – three walls of a privy – had been keyed.

The deposit (35) sealed the stone feature [36] and the cut [34] for it, which cut (28). Pottery recovered from it indicates a date from the latter part of the 17th century onwards. The observed part of the structure [36] measured 0.8m wide by 1.6m long. It was incorporated into the later privy [29] and ran under the line of the bastion wall. The structure consisted of pieces of rough-hewn limestone, lying horizontally, measuring between 700x350x160mm and 250x250x100mm. The feature is composed of more than a single course of stone, as further stone was visible in voids in the stonework and backfill.

The structure [36] may well be the vault of a privy, but the limited access afforded by the recording action cannot confirm this; it predates the observed privy [29] and abuts the bastion wall and the footing [23]. The cut for the city wall [22], which was observed during the test-pit monitoring, was not seen to extend as far north as (28) within the bastion. The city wall footings [23] and rebuilt wall [58] bridge the structure [36], and do not appear to have impacted negatively upon the underlying structure. The footings [23] are described in detail below.

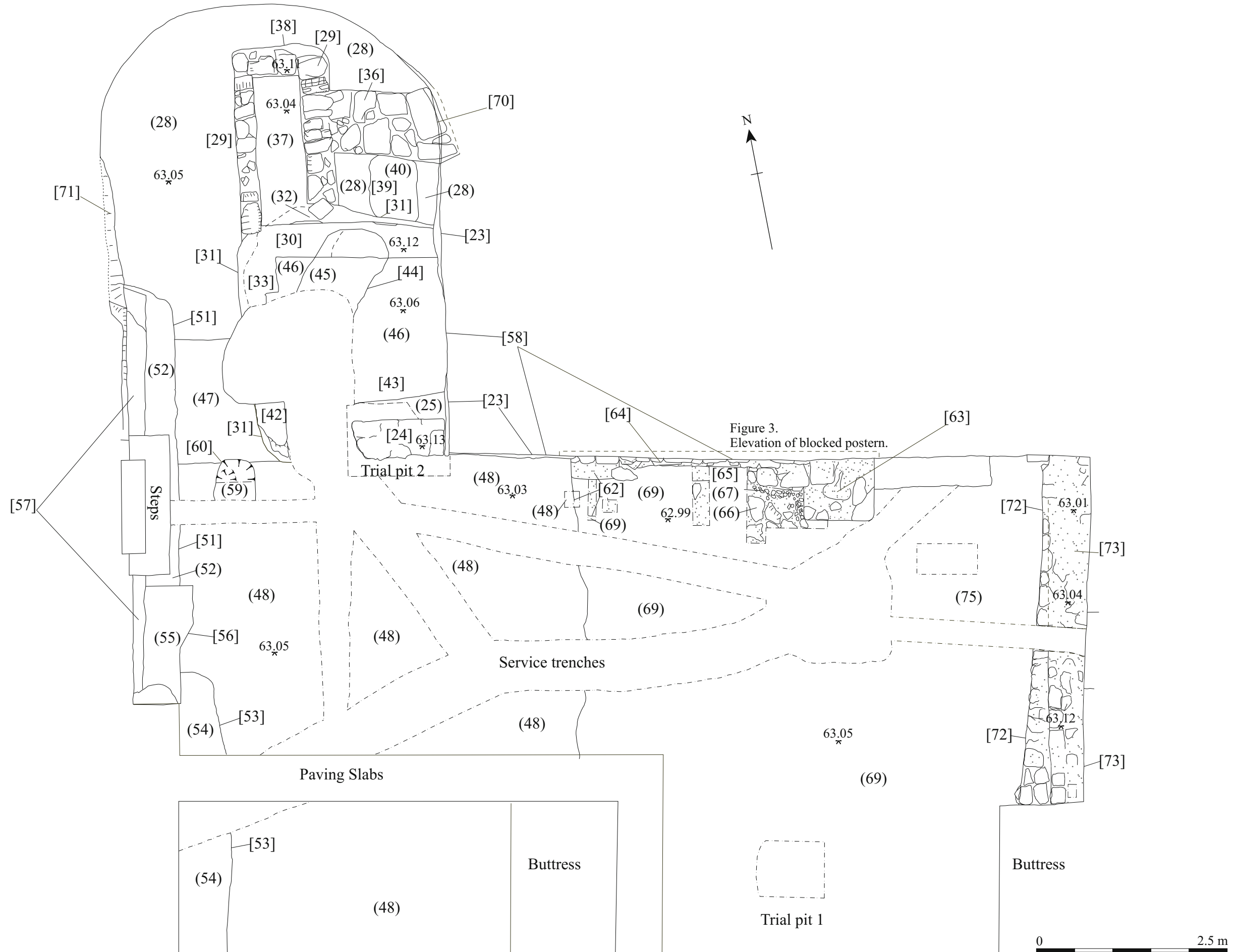


Figure 2. Plan of intervention area

The privy walls [29] were set into cut [38], which cut (28). The walls [29] were sealed by (41), a grey brown clay silt with 5-10% gravel. The walls [29] comprised a mix of pieces of limestone, including architectural fragments in addition to rough-hewn stone; these measured between 340x260x60mm and 190x160x30mm (Fig. 4).

The walls measured 2.3m (north/south) and 1.3m (east/west) externally; it measured 2.05m by 0.62m internally. No mortar was apparent. The structure was a privy. The upper fill (37) of the privy, a mid grey brown silty clay with 10% fine gravel, yielded a date from the mid-18th century.

Also postdating the structure [36] and cut by [31], the foundation cut for wall [30], was a sub-rectangular pit [39] measuring c. 1.0x0.6m, filled with (40) fairly compact dark grey clay silt with 15% gravel and some charcoal flecking. No dating was recovered from the feature.

The south end of the privy was cut by [31]. This foundation cut was filled with the north wall [30], the west wall [33] and [42] and the south wall [24] of a structure postdating the privy. The east wall was [23], the city wall. The walls of the small room – comprising [30], [33], [42] and [24] – were in cut [31], which was backfilled with a mixed clay silt deposit (32). The walls measured 420-460mm wide.

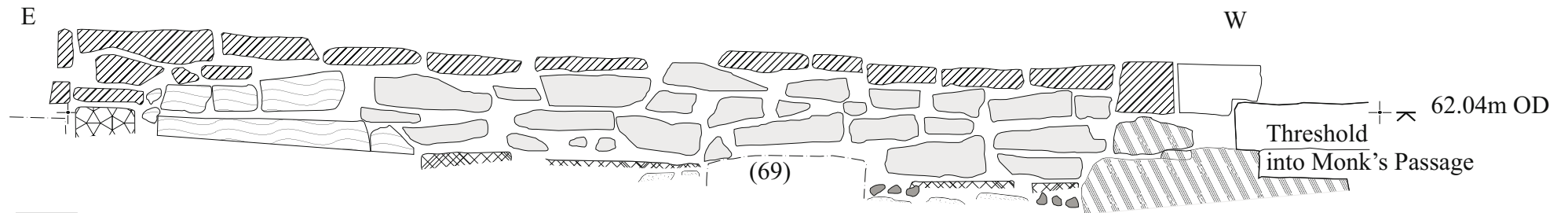
The wall remains were not exposed to any great depth – c. 0.16m – and the southwest side of the structure – [42] – was heavily disturbed by later services. Wall 24 was seen to be at least 490mm deep in Trial pit 2. The internal dimensions of the room were 2.1x2.1m. The external lengths of the walls were 2.6m (east/west) by 3.14m (north/south). Within the room was a deposit (46) of compact brown grey sandy clay silt with 2-5% fine gravel through it. Rhenish stoneware dating from the 16th–18th centuries was recovered from the deposit.









Similar pottery was recovered during the monitoring of test-pits from the fill (17) of cut [16] (JMHS 2008). The southern part of material (46) within the room was cut by [43] the east/west aligned cut for wall [24] filled with (26) and (25) which was observed during the test-pit monitoring. The cut [16], which yielded pottery from the 16th–18th century-period, was observed to the south of the wall [24]. The report on the monitoring of the test-pits states that the relationship between [16] and [24] is unknown (*ibid*).

The deposit (46) and the wall [30] were cut by [44] a slightly rounded linear cut measuring 0.8m wide and c. 1m long. It was filled with (45) pale grey yellow soft silty clay and 15% gravel.

4.2 Monk's Passage (Figs 2, 3 & 4)

Within the area of Monk's Passage, stripping was carried out to the level of (48) and (69). The deposit (48) was moderately compact grey brown silty clay with 1% small gravel, occasional limestone pieces and charcoal flecking. Pottery recovered from the deposit yielded a post-13th century date. This corresponds with the post-13th century date for the deposit (15), seen in the monitoring of the test-pits, which yielded three sherds of Brill/Boarstall ware. The deposit abutted the pier base [62] and the deposit (69). It was not possible to ascertain, within the confines of the investigation, the precise stratigraphic relationship between (48) and (69).



-  [23]
-  [58]
-  [62]
-  [63]
-  (64)
-  [65]
-  (66)
-  (67)



Blocked postern



Detail of pierbase [62]

Figure 3 Elevation and Photograph of Blocked Postern

There were two pier bases revealed during the investigation, which materially were similar and extended as far south as one another. The pier base [62] on the west side measured 0.57m (east/west) by 0.62m (north/south), as revealed; the pier [63] on the east measured 0.91m by 0.83m, as revealed (Fig. 3). The roughly hewn stone in the constructions measured between 350x200x110mm and 160x110x60mm. The structure was bonded with a white lime mortar.

The piers had previously been razed to a level c. 300m below the modern ground level. Between the two pier bases [62] and [63] was a course of limestone [65]. The threshold [65] was not fully exposed, but it was seen to be bonded, with soft cream-coloured mortar, to the east side of the pier base [62] all the while abutting the west side of the pier base [63]. To the west of the pier [62] was the wall [23], which was originally seen in the monitoring of Trial Pit 2. This wall too had been razed prior to the raising of the wall [58].

Abutting pier base [63] and threshold [65] was a deposit of limestone pieces set in soft cream-coloured mortar with peagrit gravel (66); the pieces of limestone measured between 280x190x30mm and 160x100x30mm. Although it was observed in the slot to the west it did not appear to be present south of [62]. Overlying (66) were the remains of cobbling (67), comprising tightly packed, rounded, limestone pieces measuring between 30x30x20mm and 60x40x30mm. This layer also abutted the pier base [63] and infill [64].

The infill [64] appeared to be the internal remains of a small entrance or postern, which was subsequently blocked. Layer (69), a mixed deposit of red brown and pale yellow sandy clay silt and gravel (15%) sealed (68), as well the pier bases [62] and [63]. The layer (68) was only observed on the eastern side of the blocked area. It comprised a moderately compact dark grey brown sandy silt with 10% gravel overlying the cobbling (67). The context (74) was a piece of clay pipe which came from between [63] and [64], just below [58]. It may well be intrusive, as the gap was unmortared.

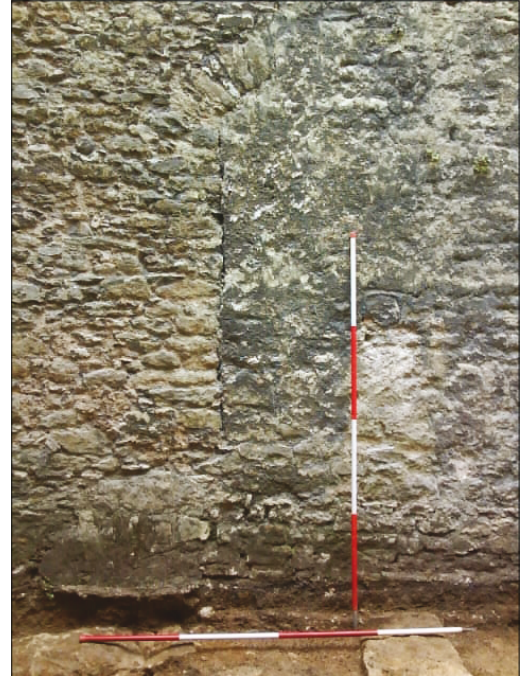
The relationship between deposits (48) and (69) was not clear; in the sondage excavated to investigate their relationship the two contexts abutted one another. It is clear that as the sondage was only 0.1m deep, it is possible that a clear stratigraphic relationship may well exist lower down.

Sealing piers [62] and [63] and threshold [65] were two to three courses of infill [64] between the pier bases; the infill was limestone pieces 120-320x60-80mm, bonded with hard white mortar. It survived to the top of [62] and to one course above the surviving top of [63], sealing [65]. It was subsequently razed and replaced by a rebuild of wall [58].

The origin of the rebuilt stretch of wall [58] following the blocking with [64] is enigmatic. There is no indication of the length of time that the postern was blocked up; however, it is clear examining the external north side of the city wall that a scar exists c. 3m east of the entrance to Monk's Passage. The west side of the bastion, where it meets the city wall and the northern end of the east wall of the Song Room, is also an apparent 'new-build' where the Song Room has been keyed into the city wall.



Feature 36; privy and later room



Blocked embrasures in east wall of Bastion 11 (internal)



Corner of city wall and east wall of Bastion 11



Walls [72] & [73]; looking south

Sealing the blocking [64] was the city wall [58]. The wall [58] was offset between 20mm and 130mm over the earlier phases of the wall. At the southeast corner of the bastion the footing [23] is flush with the wall [58]. Within the bastion the footing [23] and wall [58] are not regular, occasionally being flush with one another, at other points not. This new build was observed on the external north side of the city wall to extend 3.05m to the east of the door into Monk's Passage, where a building scar can be seen to extend from the top of the wall to the base. East of this scar the wall flares at the base; within the 'new-build' section the wall is nearly perpendicular to the ground.

In places later episodes of rendering such as [70] and [71] conceal what is clearly a complex sequence of events. These renderings have been applied to stabilise the wall and possibly with the intention of preventing damp from getting under the new build [58] to the set back original footings [23]. The concrete [71] is located at the base of the scar where Bastion 11, the Song Room and the City Wall meet. The concrete comes to ground level, shrouding the north end of the wall of the Song Room, to a height of c. 1.2m above ground level.

At the east end of Monk's Passage were two sets of wall footings, [72] and [73]. The earlier of these [72] comprised roughly-hewn limestone pieces measuring between 200x120x40mm and 250x230x70mm, bonded with a hard yellow mortar. Only a single course of this wall footing was exposed, which was built against the buttress of the Long Hall to the south.

This wall was used as a footing by [73] which extended as far north as the city wall. This wall was similar to the earlier [72], which undoubtedly also extended as far; it was, however, overlain by [73] to the north. The wall make-up comprised limestone pieces, which were 260x200x80mm to 180x150x120mm with occasional smaller fragments c. 130x100x30mm in the core of the wall. The wall was bonded with hard white mortar containing small gravel and charcoal flecking.

Wall [73] was parallel with the east wall of Monk's Passage, which is part of the kitchens, and abutted both the buttress of the Long Hall and the City Wall. It was sealed by (03), which was observed during the test-pit monitoring, and was the same as (27) and (10).

A small posthole [60] to the east of the steps into the Song Room on the west side of Monk's Passage, and south of Bastion 11 was investigated. The posthole was 0.5m in diameter at the surface, with the postpipe on the western side measuring 0.25m across; it was 0.43m deep. The fill (59) was loose pinkish brown sandy slightly clay silt, with bone, glass, brick and pot, which yielded a date after the 17th century.

Also on the west side of the intervention area the footings for the Song Room were observed. These comprised the cuts [51] and [53] for the building, the stone footings [57], backfills (52) and (54) and later, although probably associated cut [56] and fill (55), which is more than likely part of the concrete underpinning.

The cut [51], which was c. 0.6m wide, extended north/south, parallel with the east wall of the Song Room for c. 4m. It was filled with the footings [57] of limestone roughly-hewn and measuring 170x210x50mm to 210x210x10mm, bonded with a

beige, hard, lime mortar. These footings were observed to be keyed into the west wall of Bastion 11. The cut [51] was backfilled with pale yellow grey sandy silt, 30% medium gravel and 20% limestone pieces.

To the south was the cut [53], c. 0.6m wide and 3.5m long, filled with (54), which comprised unworked limestone pieces 120x70x70mm to 70x50x50mm in a mortar-rich sandy silt. It was not excavated. This cut and {51} for the song Room foundations were truncated by the later cut [56]. This sub-rectangular cut measuring 1m by 0.6m was filled with loose bright yellow sandy mortar, occasional limestone fragments and charcoal. It seemed to be associated with an overlying deposit of concrete underpinning.

Disturbed ground at the entrance to Monk's Passage was also observed. These two contexts (75) and (76) attest to the extent of disturbance associated with services in the northeast corner of Monk's Passage.

All the deposits were sealed by (27), the same as (03) in Trial Pit 1 and (10) in Trial Pit 2; a sherd of 19th century stoneware was recovered from both (03) and (27), which is entirely in keeping with the location of the deposit.

4.2 Reliability of Results & Methodologies

The intervention was carried out in reasonably good climatic conditions with the firm co-operation of the contractors removing the upper layers of rubble.

JMHS are grateful to Mr. Derek Finlay, Clerk of Works, New College, for his assistance in taking photographs, and his support of the project. JMHS also extend thanks to Jennifer Thorp, Archivist, New College for research carried out on the college archives to attempt contextualisation of the results of the watching brief.

The work was monitored by Brian Durham for the City Council, and Chris Welch for English Heritage.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 22 sherds with a total weight of 442g. It comprised a mixture of Romano-British, late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval wares, although all the pottery dating to before the 13th century was redeposited in later contexts. The material was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

OXR: St. Neots Ware type T1(1), AD850-1100. 1 sherd, 28g.

OXAC: Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 1 sherd, 14g.

OXY: Medieval Oxford ware, AD1075 – 1350. 1 sherd, 17g.

OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200 – 1600. 8 sherds, 82g.

OXCL: Cistercian ware, AD1475-1700. 1 sherd, 1g.

OXST: Rhenish Stoneware, AD1480 – 1700. 1 sherd, 14g.

OXDR: Red Earthenwares, AD1550+. 2 sherds, 57g.

OXCE: Tin-glazed Earthenware, AD1613 – 1800. 2 sherds, 8g.

OXBEW: Staffordshire manganese wares. c. AD1700-1800. 2 sherds, 5g.

OXEST: English stoneware. c. AD1680 plus. 3 sherds, 216g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. In addition, two sherds of Romano-British material (4g) occurred in context (48). The range of ware- and vessel types is typical of sites in the city of Oxford, and suggest that, along with Roman pottery, there has been more or less unbroken activity at the site from the late Saxon period, perhaps the 10th century, onwards.

Certainly, the sherd of residual St. Neots ware is a rimsherd from a small inturned-rim bowl, a very typical vessel of that date. The earliest stratified pottery is OXAM, and probably dates to the 13th century, although potentially 11th and 12th century wares, such as OXAC and OXY, are also present.

Cntxt	OXR		OXAC		OXY		OXAM		OXCL		OXST		OXDR		OXCE		OXBW		OXEST		Date	
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt		
3																				1	53	19thC
15							3	43														14thC
27																				1	155	19thC
28							1	8														13thC
35	1	28					1	14					1	40			1	4				L17thC
37													1	17	1	4	1	1	1	1	8	M18thC
46											1	14										16thC
48			1	14	1	17	1	3														13thC
59							1	8	1	1					1	4						17thC
61							1	6														13thC
Total	1	28	1	14	1	17	8	82	1	1	1	14	2	57	2	8	2	5	3	216		

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

5.2 Other Finds

In addition to pottery, glass was recovered from two contexts (28) and (35); bone from (35), (37), (48) and (59); shell and brick were also recovered from (59). The clay pipe from contexts (10), (35), (37) and (59) could only be dated 16th century onwards.

Context	Type	No. of items	Weight
10	Clay pipe	1	1g
28	Glass	1	1g
35	Clay pipe	2	1g
35	Bone	6	20g
35	Glass	7	30g
37	Clay pipe	2	5g
37	Bone	1	1g
48	Bone	1	10g
59	Clay pipe	1	1g
59	Bone	6	10g
59	Shell	3	20g
59	Brick	4	260
74	Clay pipe	1	1g

A quarter gravestone with floreate edging culminating in scrollwork in the top left-hand quarter and marked 'In Me.../THO: H.../who die.../1717[?] aged 4...' was recovered during the watching brief. It was retained by New College.

6 DISCUSSION (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5)

The sequence comprises an undated deposit, which may be associated with the Saxon defences, although dating was not forthcoming; this activity was overlain by dumps of material from the 13th century onwards; a blocked postern gate; and following the rebuilding of Bastion 11 and a short section of the City Wall, a privy was dug into the medieval deposits of the bastion, and subsequently a small room, and a posthole (Fig. 2).

The earliest deposit observed during the monitoring of the Trial Pits was (20), at a height of 62.64m OD. This deposit was identified with the bank of the Saxon defences. A similar deposit (61) was observed to the west in the base of a later posthole. This may well indicate the survival in Bastion 11 of the Saxon bank to the same height observed elsewhere in Oxford (Booth, 1995: 216-8). During the watching brief intervention, this bank material was seen to be overlain by a dirtier although not dissimilar deposit (47). The overlying material was observed along the line of the City Wall, within the opening of Bastion 11. Although the pottery associated with (61) was a sherd of 13th century or later Brill/Boarstall ware, given the context of its recovery – from the cleaning of a 17th-century posthole [60] – it is equally possible that the potsherd is intrusive. Certainly, the deposit (47) had a slope to the south, where it was truncated by the posthole [60].

The probable 10th century pottery from the site indicates Saxon occupation of the area prior to it being enclosed by the defensive wall. This is generally accepted as occurring in the early 11th century (Dodd 2003, 22). Similarly dated features were found under the Codrington Library, All Souls College (JMHS 2004).

The postulated Saxon bank and the possibly associated dump of material (47) were overlain by two dumps: (28) was to the north within Bastion 11 and (48) was to the south within Monk's Passage. Both contexts yielded pottery from the 13th century onwards, which corresponds with the date for the construction of the City Wall – from 1226 for that part of the wall where the intervention was carried out, although later in the 13th century for the outer wall, observed by Palmer (1976).

Although no dating was recovered for dating the postulated postern gate, it is clear that it is from an early phase in the history of the wall, predating the current visible section (Figure 3). Cleaning revealed the presence of two piers [62] and [63] below the deposit (69), which is undated although it is undoubtedly a post-13th century as it seals part of the wall. The postern gate may be original to the construction of the City Wall in the mid 13th century or was inserted when the outer wall was constructed later in that century. Within the opening defined by the piers was a cobbled surface (67); to the north of the cobbles was a threshold [65]. This was overlain by several courses of stone [64] interpreted as the blocking of the postern gate.

The blocking was itself subsequently razed and sealed by [58], the present wall. There were a number of postern gates – Hassell suggests up to a dozen – these he notes would have been “comparatively easily made or blocked up” (Hassell, 1979: 303), and not all in use at the same time. The postern revealed at Monk's Passage gave access to the Slype; to the north of the town-maintained wall was the city ditch, which by the 14th and 15th century had been converted to fishponds (Hassall, 1979: 301).

Whether the postern revealed was for access to fishponds, which might have been located here, can only be surmised. The City Wall became the responsibility of New College from 1388, when William of Wykeham leased land from the Crown, for the foundation of the college; Edward III had made the maintenance of the city wall a condition of such leases of land (Palmer, 1976: 150; Hibbert 1988: 91).

Although Pevsner (1974) and the schedule for Bastion 11 (Figure 4) describe it as largely intact, archaeological investigation has revealed it to be a structure with a number of demolition and rebuilding sequences. The bastion is abutted by the Song Room; the impact of the construction of the Song Room upon the fabric of the bastion is unknown but it has been keyed into the wall. Clearly, the majority of the west and north sides of the bastion are earlier than the rest of the standing fabric within Monk's Passage. The bastion – on its northeast side – appears to be sat upon [36], and must consequently postdate that stone structure, the function of which remains unknown.

Three embrasures are open, although the ghost of a fourth is visible on the east side of the bastion, into which the rebuilt southeast corner of the bastion has been keyed (Fig. 4). Nonetheless, the fabric comprising the west and north parts of the bastion does not match up with the footing [23], and indeed is offset from that stage of works. This is shown on Figure 2, where the wall of the bastion can be seen to the east of [36], which abuts the bastion wall.

Moreover, the blocking of the embrasure may well incorporate the upper part of the bastion wall, but the lower part of the southeast corner of the bastion seems to be made of stone onto which the spring of the arch for the embrasure is sat (Fig. 4). This is clearly shown under the spring of the arch, where the stonework can be seen to extend north and south of the north arch of the blocked opening. This poses problems regarding the stratigraphic relationships of the rebuilds of the city wall at New College. It is very probable that parts of the earlier walls may have been wholesale incorporated into the later phases of rebuilding.

Clearly the blocking of the embrasure in the bastion is related to the rebuilding of the corner of the bastion. However, the relationship of the blocking of the embrasure and the north and west parts of the bastion is unclear. It is clear that at least three phases of wall construction were identified during the watching brief.

West of Bastion 11, on the external face of the city wall (Fig. 5), the batter starts at the junction of the bastion and wall, where it is 0.37m high rising to 0.7m north of the chapel and ending 3m from the Bell Tower, where it is c. 0.4m high. The extent of razing and rebuilding which this undulating line might indicate is unclear, as it may equally reflect underlying ground conditions as well. Without a fuller record of the wall fabric it is only possible to speculate.



Detail of batter on city wall
west of Bastion 11



Detail of batter on city wall
between Bastions 11 & 12



Detail of west wall Bastion 12



Detail of east wall Bastion 12

Figure 5. Photographs of the city wall

The scar visible 3m east of the entrance into Monk's Passage on the north face evidences the rebuilding that has been carried out in the past. The most immediate aspect of the rebuilding is the absence of a batter west of the scar; indeed the face of the City Wall in the environs of Monk's Passage and Bastion 11 is almost vertical, whereas to the east of the scar and toward Bastion 12 – the entrance to the kitchens – the wall has a batter c. 1.2m high. This batter increases as it approaches Bastion 12, where it is 1.7m high.

To the east, Bastion 12 has also undergone rebuilding (Fig. 5). Paul Booth's work (1995, 212-6) indicates a rebuild of the city wall 1.5m west of Bastion 12; JMHS observed the batter above ground 3.5m west of the bastion. Within the Kitchen Yard the batter is visible internally; the southwest corner of Bastion 12 shows a batter on both the south and east faces of the west side of the gate.

The batter is not replicated on the eastern side of the gate, which is offset on the internal side by 1.9m to the north. Building scars of the wall are visible on the internal bastion faces; that on the east face measures 1.35m wide, whereas that on the western face measures 3.03m.

Whether these differences are a consequence of collapse which was a factor in the 14th century requirements to maintain the wall fabric (Salter & Lobel, 1954: 144; Palmer, 1976: 150; Hibbert 1988: 91) or indeed Civil War defence (Hibbert 1988: 91) is not possible to ascertain. Only a stone-by-stone analysis of the city wall would clarify the sequence of works and the appropriate chronology.

The rebuilding at Bastion 12 would appear to have occurred at some point in the 18th century (Booth 1995: 224; Brian Durham pers. comm.). Brian Durham's observations on works at the Kitchen Yard concur with Paul Booth's that the wall was founded directly onto the gravel natural. Dave Barney of Ashlar Construction who carried out the works at both the intervention carried out by Paul Booth (1995) and the observations made by Brian Durham at Kitchen Yard, in 2005, reported solid mortar through the wall (Brian Durham, pers. comm.).

The wall [58], observed by JMHS, may well have been rebuilt at this point, in the 17th or 8th century as well. The presence of clay pipe lodged in the crack where [64] overlies [65] and [63] is probably associated with the razing of a medieval phase of walling prior to the post-medieval reconstruction of the wall.

Clearly, the extent of rebuilding at Bastion 12 matches that at Bastion 11 as well as indicating that the rebuilding process was not a single event, but the result of – as yet – innumerable small interventions in the wall fabric. Jennifer Thorp (pers. comm.) has made the point that she has examined “the account rolls from the 1590s to 1660s but without any success. There are numerous references to work on the walls (some of it quite extensive, judging by the number of days labour and the costs of materials involved), but they rarely say which bit of the wall was being done.”

After the east corner of Bastion 11 and the wall facing Monk's Passage had been rebuilt, a square room was added to the structure. It is not clear whether the 17th century privy predates the rebuilding of the corner and the wall; nonetheless, a squared room with walls abutting the rebuilt corner and city wall was erected. This

structure was demolished and sealed with rubble, which dated from the 19th century onwards.

Although not probably contemporary, a posthole also from the 18th century was located between the west end of the south wall of the room and the west wall of the bastion. Again, it is not possible to say whether this is contemporary with the rebuilding of the southeast corner of the bastion, or if it postdates the razing of the room.

The rendering [70] and [71] are indicative of later works and have concealed the stonework, in addition to both pollution and mosses also contributing to the concealment of the stonework. Without a full study of the city wall observations made during the watching brief are contingent.

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