

Frewin Hall, Oxford: A Norman Mansion and a Monastic College

By JOHN BLAIR

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SUMMARY

The vaulted cellar of Frewin Hall is the undercroft of an important stone house, probably built between 1090 and 1150. In the late 12th and early 13th centuries, this exceptionally large property belonged to the wealthy burgesses Geoffrey fitz Durand and his son Peter. Topographical evidence suggests that Geoffrey obtained it from his father-in-law Henry de Oxford, an important mid 12th-century citizen, and that it had possibly belonged previously to Henry I's chamberlain Geoffrey de Clinton. The property and its dependent holdings seem to represent a large 'urban estate' in Norman west Oxford.

From 1435 to 1540 St. Mary's College for Austin Canons occupied the site. Attempts to complete the college buildings dragged on with little progress for over eighty years; much of the work seems to have taken place after 1518 under Cardinal Wolsey's patronage. After the Dissolution the buildings were almost wholly destroyed; the foundations of the large college chapel were found by excavation in 1977, while fragments of the gatehouse and a subsidiary range still stand. The structural and written evidence suggests that the main buildings comprised a cloistered quadrangle, with the chapel projecting from its north-east corner and the gate at its south-west. This plan is comparable with Corpus Christi and Christ Church, and it is suggested that the whole college was rebuilt under Wolsey's direction by Humfrey Coke and other royal craftsmen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Frewin Hall property, a half-hectare site between Cornmarket and New Inn Hall Street (SP 51200627), is a rare instance of a large private house set in its own grounds within the medieval walls of Oxford (Fig. 3). First the home of wealthy burgesses, then a college of Austin Canons in the later Middle Ages, it was acquired by Brasenose College in 1580. After more than two centuries as a private house once again, it has now reverted to a kind of collegiate use as a hall of residence for Brasenose undergraduates.

The College's current programme of redevelopment and conversion provided an opportunity to investigate the history of the site through excavation and the study of standing buildings, supported by documentary research. Firstly, it was discovered that the vaulted cellar of Frewin Hall is the undercroft of a large and important Norman town house, known to have belonged to a series of major 12th- and 13th-century citizens. Secondly, enough new information was recovered about the buildings of St. Mary's College to give a general idea of their layout and appearance at the time of the Dissolution. These two separate phases in the development of the property will be discussed in turn, from both the physical and the written evidence.

Note on references : The topographical section of this article refers to many individual smallholdings in Oxford. To avoid breaking up the text, relevant facts about these have been summarized in Appendix A in the order of H. E. Salter's *Survey of Oxford* and following his four numerical series for the four wards. Footnotes in the form of a 'Salter number' (e.g. SE 159, NW 43) refer to evidence set out in the appropriate section of Appendix A, where a list of abbreviations is given.

THE SUBVAULT (Figs. 1 and 2 ; Pl. I, A-D)

The subvault underlies the west-east range of Frewin Hall, which is basically a timber-framed house of c. 1600 doubled in width northwards in the 18th century. This stands directly over the basement, and it seems certain that no original features survive higher than the level of the vaulting.

The date of the subvault has been a matter of some doubt, though it has long been recognized that it contains Norman features. The presence of a 12th-century

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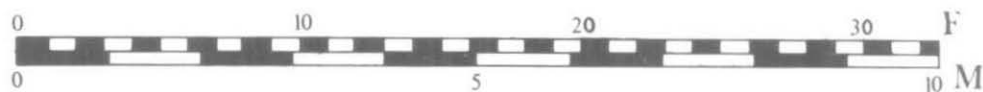
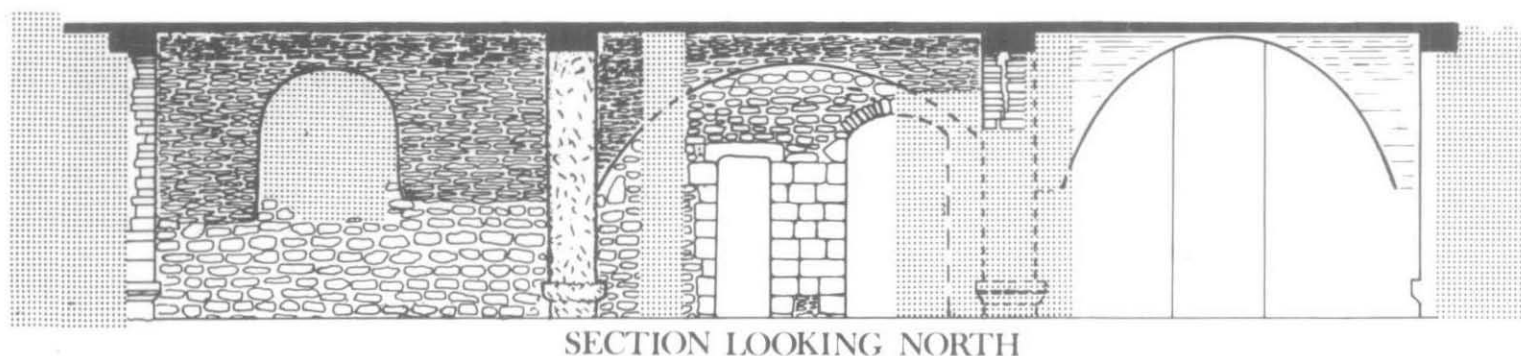
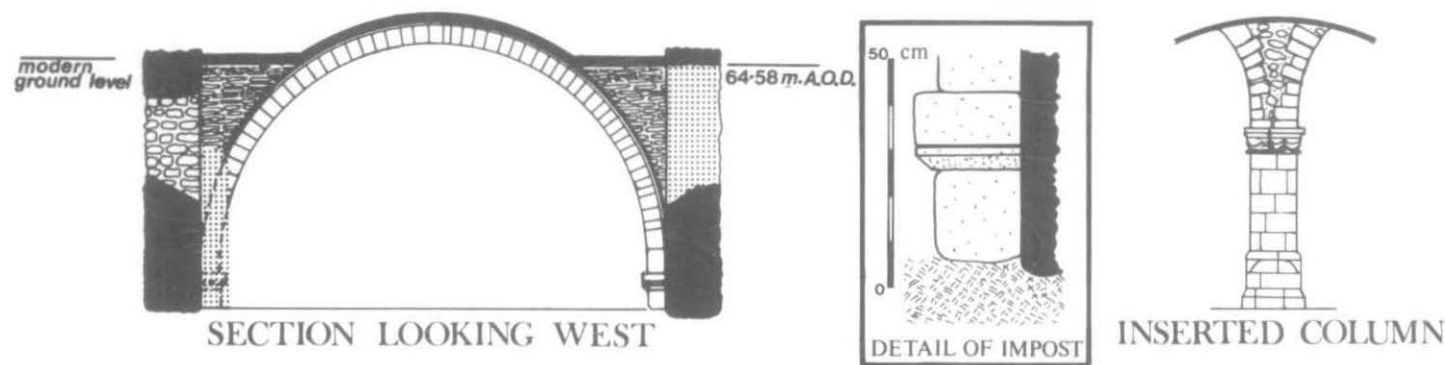


Fig. 1

Norman subvault under Frewin Hall, Oxford. On the sections, only original features are shown, obscured areas being indicated by stipple. On the plan, original fabric is indicated by solid black, later fabric by stipple: the slightly denser stipple indicates secondary features incorporating 12th-century architectural details.

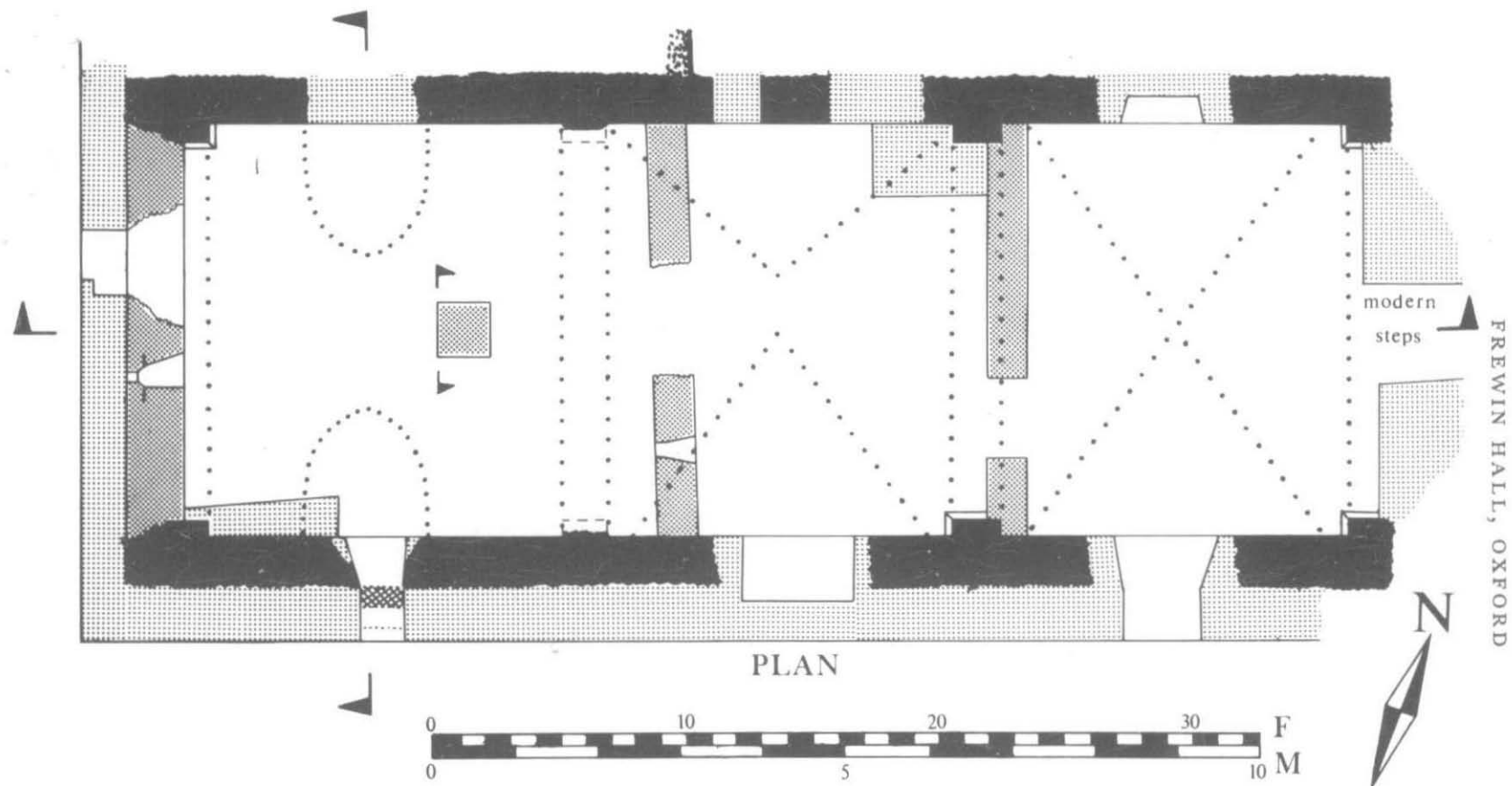


Fig. 2
Norman subvault. See Fig. 1 caption for key.

pillar which is obviously not original has led some to conclude that the whole structure is post-medieval, incorporating earlier fragments. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments stated that it is 'presumably of medieval date' but is otherwise non-committal. The recent investigation placed its Norman origin beyond doubt, and with several parallels now available an urban domestic basement of this date may seem less surprising than it did in 1939.¹

The original structure

The Norman structure, measuring 14.5 by 5 m. internally, comprises three vaulted bays of equal size. Four transverse arches of plain square section, almost semi-circular in elevation and built of numerous very small voussoirs, define the bays (Pl. I, B-C). The arches spring from plain imposts, each chamfered on the lower edge and decorated with a single incised line. The second arch from the west has been completely hacked away, and all except two of the imposts are obscured or severely damaged. The 'responds' are plain squared blocks without bases and seem absurdly short, but it is certain that they do not, and never did, continue further down. A few centimetres lower the side walls end on a bed of natural gravel which extends over the whole floor area, though earlier features are apparently cut into it.

In the north wall of the middle bay are two blocked doorways, the larger having a segmental head (replacing a lintel) and the smaller a flat lintel (Pl. I, A). The upper courses of blocking have fallen out of the smaller doorway, and a wall meeting the outer face of the cellar at right-angles immediately to the north can be glimpsed through the gap.² A segmental rere-arch for a window in the south wall of the westernmost bay may be basically original, but it is practically featureless and the present quoins include a reused fragment of late medieval mullion (Fig. 14, E). The other openings in the side walls are either renewed or blocked and rendered over. Both end walls are rebuilt.

The plain groined vaulting, built of thin stones set on edge in the usual way, is regular only in the eastern bay; in the centre the northern half is flattened out slightly, presumably to allow more room for the doorways, and the west bay has in effect a barrel-vault met by much smaller cross-vaults on either side. A thin mortar skin on the underside of the vault still bears the impression of rough longitudinal planking from the centring employed in its erection (Pl. I, C). The planks rested on the edges of the cross-arches, leaving a slight gap when withdrawn.

A coarse-grained oolitic limestone, varying in colour from cream to pale orange, was apparently used throughout. The masonry varies greatly in appearance and quality. The voussoirs of the cross-arches are very finely shaped and laid, and the door-jambs are built of regular ashlar blocks, though rather less well finished. By contrast, the walling is of rubble, badly laid with wide joints. All these features seem to be of one build; originally the walls and vaulting were probably rendered, leaving only the finer masonry visible.

The outer faces of the side walls are wholly inaccessible except by touch (with difficulty) through the openings, and it is only by this means that the present wall-thicknesses can be established. The roughness of the external walling probably indicates that facing-blocks on the upper, visible courses have been robbed away. The thickness of the vault is likewise impossible to determine, and the fabric of the eastern bay is obscured by plaster and modern impedimenta.

The original relationship of the cellar to the external ground-surface is unknown. Recent excavations a little to the north encountered natural gravel at O.D. 62.5 m., a

¹ R.C.H.M., *Oxford* (1939), 171. It should, however, be placed on record that the late W. A. Pantin apparently recognized the true nature of the basement just before his death (information from Mr. T. G. Hassall). The discovery of the Norman features was reported in the *Oxford Times*, 28 March 1908.

² Mr. Charles Oman, who lived in Frewin Hall as a child, writes (letter of 16 April 1978) that between 1908 and 1914 his father had the smaller doorway unblocked; the workmen 'pulled out the rubble for about six feet and then reported a broken arch', after which the blocking was replaced.

height of 0.55 m. above the level of the basement floor.³ The 12th-century building must therefore have been sunk a little way at least into the gravel, and to this should be added a certain depth of soil. We may estimate that the cellar was originally buried to between a third and a half of its internal height, the window openings being left clear of the ground.

Later alterations

Towards the east end of the western bay, centrally placed on the long axis, stands a column with a high plinth moulded in a single quarter-round, the capital being scalloped with simple reeding (Pl. I, D). It is continued upwards to the vault by a double springer of plain rectangular section, built of plain blocks well shaped and laid with small rubble infilling. The column is clearly not an original feature; it may be plunder from the same lavish 12th-century building that provided material for the cross-walls, though it seems more likely that it was inserted when new in c. 1180.

The first major alteration was apparently the insertion of three rubble-built cross-walls, two as internal partitions and the third forming the west end of the basement. All incorporate fragments of voussoirs with fine chevron decoration, and two are pierced by small, plain windows with chamfered jambs which may also be re-used.

Apart from two stone abutments of unknown date, all other alterations are of the 18th and 19th centuries. At the east end the basement is entered by modern stone steps which pass under a chamfered segmental arch, of nondescript appearance but possibly medieval. The 18th-century external facing of the range to south and west was carried down to cellar level, vents being provided to admit light; one of these at the west involved a rough breach in the phase II end wall, whose little window was blocked off by the new facing. Two Victorian brick piers support the great Elizabethan chimney-stack of the house above.

Discussion

Simple though the detail is, there can be no doubt that the basement is a Norman building. The round arches with their plain, small voussoirs and simple chamfered imposts are characteristically early work, and there is no reason to think that they are re-used. From its general form, the structure is easily recognizable as a 'semi-basement' of the kind standard in great 12th-century stone houses, the long, three-bay plan reflecting the division of the floor above into a hall and solar chamber. The two doorways suggest a small fore-building, with staircases giving direct communication between hall and basement and access to both from outside.

The type is best exemplified by the remarkably complete manor-house of c. 1200 at Boothby Pagnell (Lincs.),⁴ but several more or less fragmentary urban parallels are known. Excavations in Winchester have produced plans of three examples, one almost as large as Frewin Hall, and others are known at Southampton.⁵ Most of these date from the half-century on either side of 1200, but the Frewin vault is unusual for its early features. The constable's house at Portchester Castle (c. 1120-40) has similar low springing,⁶ and a particularly interesting parallel

³ See pp. 74, 76, and Figs. 5, 7, below; the basement was half-buried by c. 1520, since when the ground-level has risen appreciably.

⁴ M. Wood, *Norman domestic architecture*, Royal Archaeological Institute (1974), 44-6.

⁵ *Winton Domesday*, 346-7; P. Faulkner in C. Platt and R. Coleman-Smith, *Excavations in medieval Southampton*, I (1975), 78-94.

⁶ Information from Mr. S. E. Rigold, to whom I am very grateful for other comments on this section.

is the smaller vaulted basement whose remains were found on the west side of Cornmarket only a few yards from Frewin Hall (55 on Fig. 3), though here the imposts were slightly more elaborate and had full-height responds.⁷ Other domestic comparisons are hard to find, but the simple, rather crude imposts are reminiscent of 11th- and early 12th-century chancel arches, while the vaulting and transverse bands are matched by ecclesiastical crypts of similar date.

The Frewin Hall subvault stands out as an archaic example of its kind. The possibility of conservative design must of course be remembered, especially in a structure which was scarcely intended for show, but the 12th-century owners of the property were wealthy and important men who would scarcely have built in an obviously old-fashioned style. A date after *c.* 1180 seems very unlikely, and the comparisons suggest that the basement was constructed between *c.* 1090 and *c.* 1150. It must count as one of the oldest domestic buildings remaining in England.

THE HISTORY AND TOPOGRAPHY OF THE HOLDING BEFORE 1435

Frewin Hall and its owners, c. 1170 to 1435

Although no medieval deeds for Frewin Hall are known, its history can be traced with certainty from the third quarter of the 12th century (Table 1). It was the capital messuage of an urban estate comprising many tenanted smallholdings in the city, and the home of great citizens who appear frequently in Oxford records.

The key to its descent in the 12th and 13th centuries is given, firstly, by a group of Oseney deeds relating to tenements on the west side of Cornmarket. In *c.* 1184–98 a shop near what is now Frewin Court (the lane giving access from Frewin Hall to Cornmarket) was leased as *seldam illam que est propinquior vie que tendit a magno vico versus curiam Gaufridi filii Durandi*, while parts of a larger property immediately north of the same lane were respectively described as land *que iacet versus murum Petri filii Galfridi* in *c.* 1190–8 and land *in profundo de terra Petri filii Galfridi* in *c.* 1205–21.⁸ The word *curia* implies a large enclosure which must have been the Frewin Hall tenement. Secondly, this evidence is supplemented by an entry in the Hundred Roll survey of 1279, stating that Master Guy the Armourer, an important property-owner, *tenet unum magnum tenementum per Agnetem uxorem eius, et ipsa de Henrico patre suo, et ipse de Petro filio Galfridi*, paying 2s. rent to Eynsham.⁹ The order of entries in the survey places this in the Cornmarket/New Inn Hall Street block, and as a 'large tenement' which had once belonged to Peter fitz Geoffrey it can only have been Frewin Hall. The succession of occupants is thus conveniently outlined for us: Geoffrey fitz Durand, Peter fitz Geoffrey, Henry, his daughter Agnes, and her husband Master Guy.

Geoffrey fitz Durand and his son Peter were important burgesses who married into still more important families, but their own origins are obscure. Geoffrey's father may be mentioned in King Stephen's confirmation to St. Frideswide's, in 1139–40, of properties including *4d. de terra quam Durand tenuit*,¹⁰ but a mere reference to so common a name proves nothing. Geoffrey fitz Durand first appears in Oxford in 1165, when he and Ralph Brito were pardoned a debt of 40s. to the crown, and next year the same pair oversaw the transportation of squared stones to royal works at Windsor.¹¹ During

⁷ Jope & Pantin, 20–2.

⁸ NW 54, 56, 61–2.

⁹ H.R. 796a (R.G. 399); NW 83, but misplaced on Salter's map.

¹⁰ C.S.F., I, 18–20; *Regesta*, III, 237–8.

¹¹ *Pipe Roll 11 Henry II*, P.R.S. 8 (1887), 71; *Pipe Roll 12 Henry II*, P.R.S. 9 (1888), 116.

1165-8 the Oxfordshire section of the Pipe Roll records annually £26 13s. 4d. owed by Geoffrey in amercement, ending in 1168 with a royal writ of pardon,¹² and in 1177 the sheriff accounted 2d. from a purpresture made by him in Oxford.¹³

Our information about Geoffrey fitz Durand's subsidiary holdings derives mainly from a series of grants to local religious houses, evidently made on his deathbed (or perhaps when about to enter Oseney as a canon) in 1185-7. To Oseney he gave (*quando me ipsum dedi eidem ecclesie*) a bakehouse and five messuages opposite St. Peter le Bailey church,¹⁴ held of the lord of Deddington, and a meadow next to the Bulstake rendering service to the king as lord of Headington.¹⁵ Probably at the same time, Eynsham received rents of 4s.¹⁶ and 3s. from two of Geoffrey's properties in the city.¹⁷ Both these charters can be dated on internal evidence and have witnesses in common. A grant to Godstow Nunnery of 13s. 4d. rent from land in Oxford which Geoffrey held of his wife Maud's inheritance¹⁸ must also date from his last illness or retirement from the world, for it accompanied Maud's dedication as a nun there.¹⁹ A lease by St. Frideswide's of *terram illam quam Grifid filius Durand dedit ecclesie nostre, que est iuxta ecclesiam Sancti Petri iuxta Castrum* probably indicates a fourth endowment in the series, though the charter itself is lost.²⁰ Rather later, Oseney received from another benefactor further meadow by the Bulstake, and at Goseham in Botley Mead nearby, which had formerly belonged to Geoffrey, owing service once again to the lord of Headington.²¹

However else his prosperity was acquired, Geoffrey can hardly have failed to profit from his excellent marriage: his father-in-law was one of Oxford's greatest citizens, and his brother-in-law a man of national importance. In 1187 John de Oxford, bishop of Norwich (who witnessed Geoffrey's deathbed grants) recognized Peter fitz Geoffrey as his heir, and a charter of John's brother William de Ibstone includes *Petro filio Galfridi nepote* among the witnesses.²² This shows that Geoffrey's wife Maud was sister to John de Oxford, the staunch supporter of Henry II who accompanied Becket home in 1170 and was rewarded for his loyalty five years later with the see of Norwich.²³

Henry de Oxford, father of John and Maud, was another loyal supporter of the Angevin monarchy.²⁴ In 1150-1 he held Wallingford for the Empress,²⁵ and in 1156 several properties in Oxford, Wallingford and elsewhere were confirmed to him by Henry II.²⁶ In 1153-5 he served as sheriff for Oxfordshire and Berkshire,²⁷ and the Pipe Rolls contain frequent references to him over the next ten years. In 1163 he superintended royal building works at Oxford, but in that or the following year he apparently died and his place was taken by his son John.²⁸

Geoffrey fitz Durand is known to have had two sons. William, who attested two charters with his father in the early 1170s,²⁹ seems to have taken the surname of de Brug'

¹² Pipe Roll 14 Henry II, P.R.S. 12 (1890), 206.

¹³ Pipe Roll 23 Henry II, P.R.S. 26 (1905), 16.

¹⁴ SW 150, 164 (24-6 Queen Street).

¹⁵ C.O.A., II, 80-2; Oxford Charters No. 92 and note (facsimile of original charter, bearing Geoffrey's seal of a flying eagle).

¹⁶ NW 68 (44 Cornmarket).

¹⁷ C.E.A., I, 105.

¹⁸ Probably NW 64 (part of 47 Cornmarket).

¹⁹ G.E.C., 383-4.

²⁰ SW 152 (3 Castle Street).

²¹ C.O.A., IV, 66-7.

²² F. Blomefield, *Topographical history of Norfolk*, VIII (London, 1808), 530-1; A. M. Leys (ed.), *The Sandford Cartulary*, I, Oxfordshire Record Society, 19 (1938), 101.

²³ A. B. Emden, *A biographical register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (1958), 1414.

²⁴ The Sandford charter cited in note 22 proves that John de Oxford and William de Ibstone were sons of Henry and his wife Estrilda.

²⁵ *Regesta*, III, 34.

²⁶ L. Landon (ed.), *Cartae Antiquae Rolls 1-10*, P.R.S. n.s. 17 (1939), 75.

²⁷ *Regesta*, III, xxiv-v.

²⁸ Pipe Roll 9 Henry II, P.R.S. 6 (1886), 48; Pipe Roll 10 Henry II, P.R.S. 7 (1886), 7; cf. *Oxford Charters*, No. 42 note.

²⁹ C.O.A., II, 551; VI, 32.

(i.e. 'of the bridge'), for the witnesses to a confirmation by Bishop John's brother in c. 1195 begin with *Willelmo de Brug' et Petro filio Gaufridi nepotibus meis*.³⁰ The order of the names here and in other deeds attested by William and Peter together³¹ suggests that William was the elder or the more important, but it was Peter who inherited the paternal estate and confirmed his father's deathbed grants. Peter fitz Geoffrey was a notable figure in the Oxford of his day, appearing among the witnesses to the first charter of the burgesses in 1191³² and apparently holding the office of bailiff in c. 1200.³³ Like his father, Peter married well: his wife Alice was a daughter of John Kepeharm, one of the wealthiest citizens of medieval Oxford.³⁴ Her marriage-gift from her husband was a holding in Garsington acquired in c. 1170 by Geoffrey, which Peter and Alice later gave to Godstow together with two tenements beside St. Peter le Bailey church.³⁵ Peter frequently witnessed deeds up to c. 1225,³⁶ but probably died soon afterwards to be succeeded in his Oxford properties by his son Henry.³⁷

At this point the descent in the Hundred Roll entry may omit a generation. A grant made to the Blackfriars in c. 1230 of land and a mill purchased from Henry fitz Peter was confirmed first by Henry his son³⁸ (reserving a house on the opposite bank), and later, in 1269, by Ranulf the Tailor and his wife Agnes.³⁹ The elder Henry had died by 1241, leaving his son a minor;⁴⁰ Agnes is almost certainly to be identified with the wife of Master Guy the Armourer who held Frewin Hall in 1279. Whether her father was the first Henry or the second has not been established. It is, incidentally, somewhat surprising that so wealthy a family should have failed by the mid 13th century to adopt a hereditary surname.

At all events, the male line seems to have failed with Henry fitz Henry, and the marriage of the heiress Agnes brought Frewin Hall with its dependent properties to Master Guy. In the Hundred Rolls he is usually named as 'Master Guy the Armourer', but he also occurs here and in other sources as 'Master Guy the Tailor';⁴¹ at a time when much armour was textile-based it is easy to see why the two trades were combined.⁴² The curious circumstances under which he acquired property in Oxford are related by a royal writ of 1265. Henry fitz Peter had given 10 marks rent in the city to his half-brother Philip (called his brother, but apparently the child of a second marriage of Alice Kepeharm with the wealthy burgess Adam Feteplace), which Philip had enjoyed for six years and more. In July 1265 Simon de Montfort had reached Oxford with his army and imprisoned Philip's father Adam, refusing to release him until Philip had granted the rent, against his will, to Simon's own tailor and favourite Master Guy.⁴³ Guy nonetheless obtained, probably by 1269, the marriage of Philip's niece or great-niece Agnes.⁴⁴

³⁰ *C.O.A.*, II, 23.

³¹ *C.O.A.*, I, 83; II, 21; *C.S.F.*, II, 69.

³² R. H. C. Davis, 'An Oxford charter of 1191 and the beginnings of municipal freedom', *Oxoniensia*, XXXIII (1968), 53-65. Peter is the first witness not appearing in an official capacity.

³³ Wood, *City*, III, 4 (though Salter, *C.O.A.*, III, x-xi, does not include Peter among the bailiffs of Oxford).

³⁴ H. E. Salter, *Medieval Oxford*, O.H.S., 100 (1936), 38.

³⁵ NW 99; *G.E.C.*, 334-5, 526-7.

³⁶ The latest traced is in *C.H.S.J.*, I, 23.

³⁷ According to *Survey*, II, 167, Peter had a second son named Peter; I have been unable to verify this.

³⁸ Usually impossible to distinguish in the records from Henry son of Henry fitz Simeon.

³⁹ *V.C.H. Oxon.*, II, 109; *Cal. Pat. R.* 1334-8, 236; H. E. Salter, *Oxfordshire feet of fines*, Oxfordshire Record Society, 12 (1930), 198; *Survey*, II, 19-20; for the identity of Agnes see note 44. See also SW 15 and Friars' Mill.

⁴⁰ *Survey*, II, 19.

⁴¹ *H.R.*, 798b, 802a (R.G. 731, 864). Cf. SW 51, which returned a rent of 2s. to Master Guy in 1279, to the heirs of Guy in 1317, and to his successor John de Northampton in c. 1380; and litigation cited in *H.R.*, 47a.

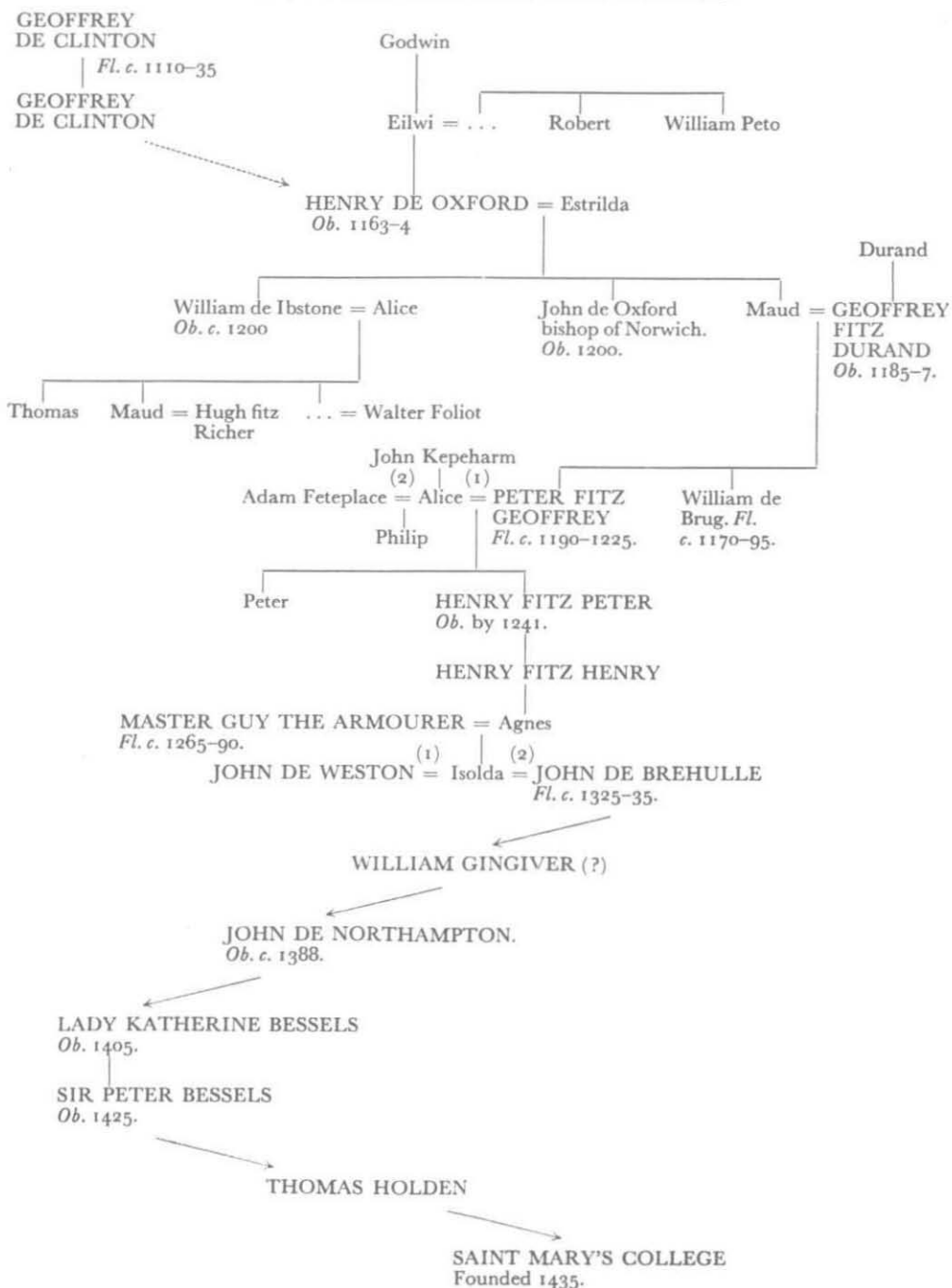
⁴² Cf. the early 14th-century ordinances of the tailors and linen-armourers of London in *Cal. City of London Letter-Book F* (London, 1904), 52, and S. Lysons in *Archaeologia*, 17 (1814), 299.

⁴³ H. E. Salter (ed.), *Snape's Formulary*, O.H.S. 80 (1924), 284-5.

⁴⁴ Henry fitz Peter's land held by the Blackfriars was confirmed in 1269 by Agnes wife of Ranulf the Tailor (see note 39), but elsewhere she is explicitly named as 'sometimes the wife of Guy' (Wood, *City*, II, 352, 357-8, 395). There seems to be no other evidence for Ranulf's existence and the name may be a scribal error.

TABLE I

The descent of the Frewin Hall property up to 1435 (not certainly proved before Geoffrey fitz Durand).
Arrows indicate non-hereditary transfer of ownership.



During Guy's occupancy, the survey of 1279 first allows us to view the estate as a whole. As Fig. 3 shows, he held not only the main tenement with its great house, but also many scattered smallholdings and quitrents in the city. Yet he is rather a shadowy figure, leaving surprisingly little trace in local records for a man of his evident wealth and importance.

The later medieval history of the estate can be covered very briefly. In the 1290s some of Master Guy's properties belonged to John de Weston and Isolda his wife, who later married John de Brehulle.⁴⁵ Many more reappear in a list of properties and rents held in 1326 by John and Isolda de Brehull in Isolda's right,⁴⁶ and Salter's suggestion that she was Master Guy's daughter is probably correct.⁴⁷ This list is of some help in locating Master Guy's 1279 properties, but since many of the holdings are of manifestly different origin it is not in itself evidence for the earlier pattern of the estate.

The main tenement passed to Brehull too, for the western abutment of one of the Cornmarket properties in 1337 was *usque ad tenementum Johannis de Brehulle*.⁴⁸ In 1361–5, abutments of a plot adjoining the garden name William Gingiver as the owner,⁴⁹ and later in the century the property was acquired by John de Northampton, town clerk from 1351 to 1388, whose career has been fully discussed elsewhere.⁵⁰ From him it apparently passed to Lady Katherine Bessels, heiress of John Legh, lord of Bessels Legh in Berkshire, and wife of Thomas Bessels his successor.⁵¹ On Katherine's death in 1405, her second son Peter inherited a messuage in Oxford once of John Northampton, worth 23s. 4d. p.a. beyond outgoings and held of the king in free burgage.⁵²

Sir Peter Bessels planned a collegiate use for the Frewin Hall site. His will of 1424 directs that *toutz lez terres, tenementz, rentes et reversions ove lez appartenantz en Oxenford soient donez et ordeinez pour une college ent faire pour moignes blankes ou chanons illeques a demurrer perpetuellement pour prier et faire selonc lentent ordinance et volente le dit monsieur Piers come appiert per son escript ent fait*.⁵³ However, his death was followed by disputes which evidently led to the sale of his Oxford property;⁵⁴ it was the purchaser Thomas Holden who eventually realized Sir Peter's wishes by the foundation of St. Mary's College for Austin Canons, receiving royal licence in 1435 to grant for that purpose a messuage with gardens, worth 40s. p.a. and held of the king in free burgage, in the parishes of St. Peter le Bailey and St. Michael at the Northgate.⁵⁵ As late as 1556, however, the name 'Besills Place' preserved the memory of the would-be founder.⁵⁶

⁴⁵ *Survey*, II, 164–5. In 1289 John and Isolda de Weston confirm Peter fitz Geoffrey's grant to Godstow, SE 26 (*G.E.C.*, 482–3).

⁴⁶ Nicholas Byssshop's collection, Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. d 72, 313–21.

⁴⁷ *Survey*, II, 167.

⁴⁸ NW 48.

⁴⁹ NW 43a.

⁵⁰ G. Pollard, 'The medieval town clerks of Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xxxi (1966), 68–9.

⁵¹ *V.C.H. Berks.*, IV, 395.

⁵² *Inquisition post mortem*, P.R.O. C 137/54 (33).

⁵³ E. F. Jacob (ed.), *The register of Henry Chichele*, II, Canterbury and York Society, 42 (Oxford, 1937), 343.

⁵⁴ *V.C.H. Berks.*, IV, 396.

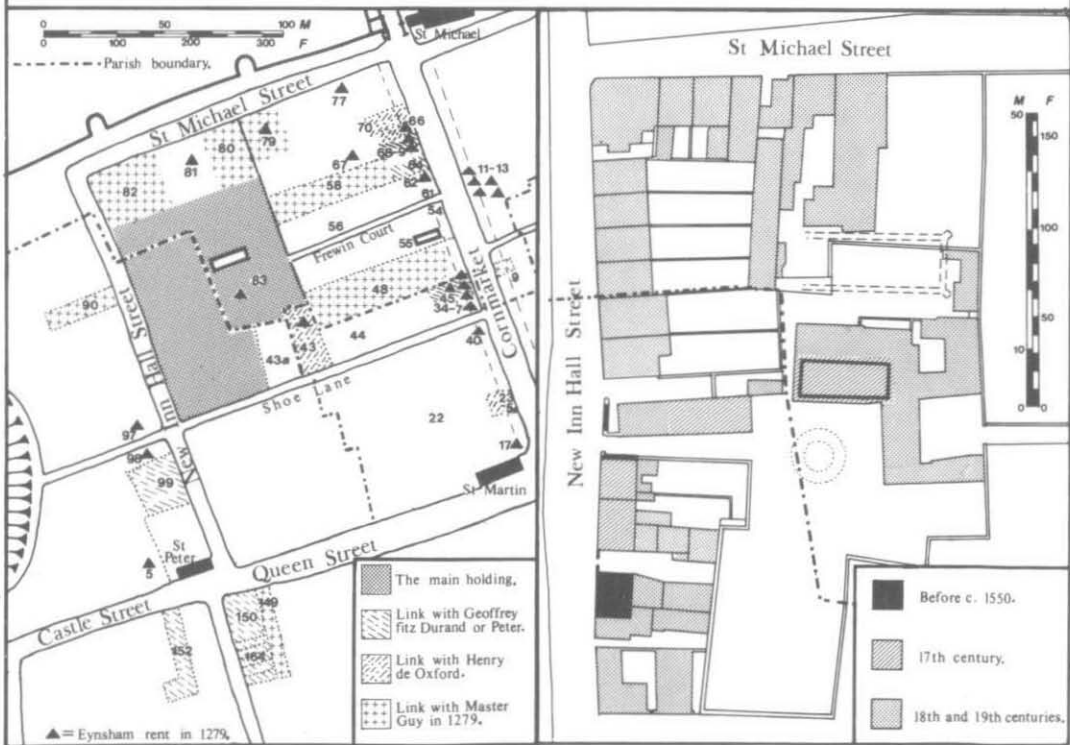
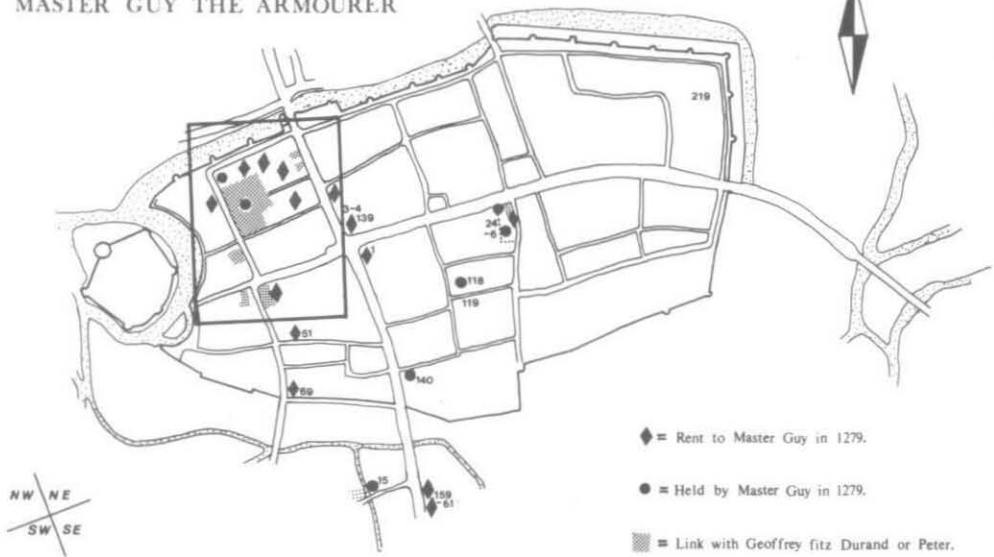
⁵⁵ *Cal. Pat. R.* 1429–36, 590.

⁵⁶ Wood, City, II, 245.

Fig. 3 (right)

Top: The Oxford estate of Master Guy the Armourer in relation to that of Geoffrey fitz Durand's family. Numbers not accompanied by symbols indicate other properties mentioned in the topographical discussion. Bottom Left: Frewin Hall and its environs in the middle ages, showing known properties of the families of Henry de Oxford, Geoffrey fitz Durand and Master Guy; triangles represent rents payable to Eynsham Abbey in 1279. The larger rectangular outline indicates the Frewin Hall subvault, the smaller the subvault of Richard Brito's Cornmarket property. In this and the map above, the numbers are those of Salter's *Survey* (in four series for the four wards), and refer to Appendix A. Bottom Right: The Frewin Hall property in 1880 (based on 1:500 city plan).

THE OXFORD ESTATE OF
MASTER GUY THE ARMOURER



The topography of the estate in the 12th and 13th centuries : a link with Henry de Oxford and Geoffrey de Clinton

There is no direct evidence for the ownership of the property before Geoffrey fitz Durand. We must therefore consider the indirect evidence of landholding and topography, which, if seldom conclusive, can often produce results unobtainable by any other method. In long-established towns there is a strong chance that residual traces of ancient patterns of ownership may survive into the period of abundant documents. This has been demonstrated convincingly in the case of Winchester,⁵⁷ and although fewer early sources are available for Oxford, much can be learnt from the survey of 1279 and the plentiful medieval charters. The Hundred Rolls are a particularly rich source for the complex series of rents of varying origins and dates to which most smallholdings were subject. To elucidate these comprehensively would be impossible, but the analysis of specific rent-groups can throw light on much earlier arrangements. In the present case, it also provides a strong indication of the identity of Geoffrey's predecessor as owner of the property.

The topography of the main tenement seems to have remained more or less unchanged since the end of the middle ages (Fig. 3, btm. l. ; stippled area). The eastern boundary is a stone wall on the alignment of Cornmarket and New Inn Hall Street and exactly halfway between them, dividing the *insula* into two equal blocks. This certainly bounded the St. Mary's College precinct,⁵⁸ for the east end of the chapel extended to within 5 m. of it,⁵⁹ while tenements fronting Cornmarket abutted on the garden both before and after this.⁶⁰ This wall presumably therefore represents the *murum Petri filii Galfridi* of the late 12th century. On the New Inn Hall Street frontage fragments of college buildings still stand, and the total absence of earlier references to private smallholdings here suggests that the Frewin property stretched westwards to the street by at least the 13th century. Southwards, we have Wood's statement that the college grounds extended to Shoe Lane,⁶¹ and in 1450 a small parcel at the south-east corner of the site had a garden of the college to north and west.⁶² Northwards, the north wall of the chapel apparently represented the college boundary, leaving room for a series of tenements along St. Michael's Street known from the 13th century onwards,⁶³ and in c. 1420 a smallholding at the corner of St. Michael's Street and New Inn Hall Street adjoined land of Sir Peter Bessels.⁶⁴

In the 15th century, therefore, the property comprised the whole western half of the *insula* with the exception of tenements fronting St. Michael's Street and two small plots cut from the south-east corner of the otherwise rectangular site. For earlier periods we can be less certain, but since the 12th-century *curia* was certainly large, it evidently comprised most of this area. The division of the site between two parishes, St. Peter le Bailey and St. Michael at the Northgate, suggests an amalgamation of properties at some date before it is first recorded in 1435, but the parish boundary seems unlikely to reflect an exact property boundary since it appears to follow the line of the college quadrangle.⁶⁵ In 1279 Master Guy held a highly-valued property adjoining the main tenement, and he may have amalgamated the two.⁶⁶

Master Guy's quitrents and smallholdings of 1279 are the obvious starting-point for an examination of dependent properties. Luckily, all but six⁶⁷ of his twenty-seven listed

⁵⁷ See p. 63.

⁵⁸ Despite Salter's map, which shows a separate north-south tenement to the west of this line.

⁵⁹ Cf. Fig. 5.

⁶⁰ See p. 54 ; and *C.O.A.*, I, 48, a lease of 1624 of property abutting a garden of Brasenose College (*i.e.*, formerly St. Mary's).

⁶¹ Wood, *City*, I, 231.

⁶² NW 43a.

⁶³ *Survey*, II, 176-7.

⁶⁴ NW 82.

⁶⁵ See pp. 92-3.

⁶⁶ NW 82.

⁶⁷ *H.R.*, 798b, 801b, 802a (*bis*), 802b (R.G. 731, 855, 864, 866, 891), and a holding of Geoffrey le Sauser paying Master Guy 8s. (not in either printed text : on a membrane of the Hundred Rolls recently discovered, photostat Bodl. MS. Facs. b 72, f. 85.)

tenements can be identified and their distribution plotted (Fig. 3, top). Although the scatter is fairly wide, a concentration in north-west Oxford around the *curia* stands out immediately. Apart from one de Weston family property probably held by Guy as his son-in-law's guardian,⁶⁸ and others which he owned in the right of his wife, the Hundred Rolls give no indication of how these holdings were acquired.

Some can be linked with Geoffrey fitz Durand's family on topographical grounds. Guy's tenement opposite the Friars' Mill is almost certainly the house reserved by Henry fitz Henry when he confirmed the mill to the Dominicans,⁶⁹ while another in Queen Street⁷⁰ adjoins, and probably once formed part of, the land granted by Geoffrey to Oseney Abbey.⁷¹ The process of fragmentation is demonstrated most clearly by three adjoining plots on the south side of High Street opposite St. Mary's church, whose layout suggests that they had once formed part of a single property. Master Guy held two in 1279, and from the third he received the 20s. yearly rent reserved by Peter fitz Geoffrey when he granted it to Robert Southam.⁷² This proves that some at least of Master Guy's rents and properties were already held by the owner of Frewin Hall nearly a century earlier.

A quarter of all Guy's located minor properties lay between the *curia* and the Cornmarket and St. Michael's Street frontages,⁷³ and it is perhaps significant that all known holdings of Geoffrey and Peter except the High Street tenement and the three others centering on St. Peter le Bailey church were situated in the same small area (Fig. 3, bottom left). A seld fronting one of the large tenements between Shoe Lane and Frewin Court is known from the Hundred Rolls to have belonged to Peter,⁷⁴ a messuage and seld at 47 Cornmarket almost certainly represent Geoffrey's deathbed grant to Godstow,⁷⁵ and an adjoining property rendered the 4s. rent which he had granted to Eynsham.⁷⁶ If, in addition to this, Guy's holdings broadly represent a residue of Geoffrey's estate, the number of small properties held by this family in the block of land between Cornmarket and New Inn Hall Street becomes rather striking.

Furthermore, this distribution also applies to known holdings of Henry de Oxford, all of which, apart from his large estate in east Oxford and three isolated plots,⁷⁷ lay in the same area. A property on the Cornmarket frontage north of Frewin Court owed a 4s. rent to Eynsham Abbey *de terra Henrici de Oxonia* in c. 1270,⁷⁸ and Bishop John is named as chief lord of the adjoining seld in c. 1195.⁷⁹ Most significantly, Geoffrey's gift to Godstow had been held of the marriage of his wife, Henry's daughter,⁸⁰ and a plot of land which, by the lie of the boundaries, has evidently been cut out of the south-east corner of the rectangular *curia*, is known to have been given to Eynsham by Henry de Oxford.⁸¹ It may be relevant here that in the block under discussion fifteen rents owing to Eynsham are recorded, an abnormally thick concentration for a landlord that was by no means one of the wealthiest in the city. Two were 13th-century acquisitions,⁸² but four derived from property known to have belonged to Henry, Geoffrey or Peter,⁸³ one lay upon the *curia* itself,⁸⁴ and

⁶⁸ SE 140.

⁶⁹ SW 15; see note 39.

⁷⁰ SW 149.

⁷¹ SW 150, 164.

⁷² SE 24-6.

⁷³ NW 48, 58, 79, 80, 82.

⁷⁴ NW 37.

⁷⁵ NW 64.

⁷⁶ NW 68.

⁷⁷ See notes 88-90.

⁷⁸ NW 66.

⁷⁹ NW 70.

⁸⁰ NW 64.

⁸¹ NW 43. The relationship of SE 118-19 may also suggest a direct tenurial link between Henry and Master Guy.

⁸² NW 45, 62.

⁸³ NW 37, 43, 66, 68.

⁸⁴ NW 83.

the sources of the rest are unknown. Henry de Oxford was among the great benefactors for whom the Abbey prayed regularly,⁸⁵ and it is tempting to suggest that the piety of Henry and his heirs took the form of rents imposed on Frewin Hall and the dependent tenements adjoining. If so, several other holdings in the block should be added to the list of family property.

All this may be summed up as follows: links between the *curia* and smaller plots extend back at least to the late 12th century; the concentration of these plots in one adjacent block on the Cornmarket frontage seems on the whole to have been stronger in the late 12th century than after the developments of the 13th; some of Henry de Oxford's holdings were grouped in the same block; and of these, one formed part of the dowry of Henry's daughter Maud while another was apparently split off from the *curia* itself.

These facts, it is suggested, are best explained by the hypothesis that Geoffrey fitz Durand, Henry's son-in-law, acquired Frewin Hall with its appurtenant revenues as his wife's dowry. Henry's son William inherited both Ibstone, from which he took his name,⁸⁶ and the large estate in Wallingford.⁸⁷ John de Oxford apparently inherited the church of St. Peter in the East with the manor of Holywell⁸⁸ (his house by the church later descending to his niece's husband Walter Foliot),⁸⁹ together with a few scattered small-holdings in the city.⁹⁰ Both sons were thus well provided for, and both might have found the mansion in west Oxford superfluous. If Geoffrey acquired it after his father-in-law's death it could well have been Henry's own house.

Can we take its history still further back? The 1156 confirmation⁹¹ is our only evidence for the origins of Henry's Oxford estate, and this lists four groups of properties within the city: the land of his grandfather Godwin and Eilwi his son; the land of Robert and William Peto his uncles; the land of Roger fitz Wiger his kinsman; and *terram Gaufridi de Clintona camerarii cum una hida terre que ad eam pertinet que est apud Waltonam extra civitatem Oxeneford, quam Gaufridus filius predicti Gaufridi camerarii ei dedit . . . pro vadio suo de Gyftelai et Couelai*. Even if this list includes Maud's dowry, we have no certain means of picking it out. It seems just possible, however, that the Frewin holding should be identified with the Oxford estate of Geoffrey de Clinton.

The confirmation unambiguously lists the *terra Gaufridi* among the property *infra civitatem*, as distinct from the appurtenant hide outside the walls. This last was clearly the hide at Walton 'which was the chamberlain's' which Henry de Oxford granted soon afterwards to Godstow nunnery,⁹² but we have no further specific mention of the city property. Luckily, something of its nature can be guessed from a slightly earlier charter of the younger Geoffrey de Clinton, dating from between 1146 and 1153. This confirms to Oseney Abbey a grant of land in *magno vico Oxenefordie* made by one of Clinton's tenants, *sicut recognitum fuit in curia mea in Oxenefordia coram ballivo meo Willelmo de Rampenna et coram hominibus Oxenefordie*.⁹³ Nothing else is known of the smallholding, but since *magnum vicum* is equally applicable to High Street and Cornmarket it might have been one of the Oseney properties between Shoe Lane and Frewin Court.⁹⁴

At all events, the younger Geoffrey had an establishment in Oxford before 1153 where courts could be held, and it seems quite likely that this was identical with his father's land there which he exchanged with Henry for Iffley and Cowley (and which was therefore presumably very valuable) before 1156. If so, the description is consistent

⁸⁵ Bodl. MS. Bodley 435, f. 38^v.

⁸⁶ *Oxford Charters*, Nos. 42-3.

⁸⁷ *Book of Fees*, I, 114-15 (giving the descent of the Wallingford property to William's sons-in-law Walter Foliot and Hugh fitz Richer).

⁸⁸ Cf. *Oxford Charters*, No. 73 and note.

⁸⁹ NE 219.

⁹⁰ SE 119, NE 3-4, NW 23-5, NW 70.

⁹¹ See note 26.

⁹² *G.E.C.*, 382-3.

⁹³ *Oxford Charters*, No. 71; *C.O.A.*, I, 425.

⁹⁴ For the ownership of these strips and their subdivision, see *C.O.A.*, I, 34-81; *Survey*, II, 163-73; Jope & Pantin 22, 86-8.

with Geoffrey fitz Durand's *curia* of some thirty years later, and it is to be expected that Henry, probably rising in wealth and influence in the early 1150s, should have wished to acquire a large establishment in a prosperous quarter of the town, set in its own grounds but adjoining the commercial focus of Cornmarket. If Henry's family holdings descended to his sons, the Clinton land, which alone among his city properties of 1156 had been acquired by purchase rather than inheritance, seems an eminently suitable dowry for the wife of a rising burgess.

The elder Geoffrey de Clinton was one of the greatest of the royal servants raised from humble station by Henry I. There is no sign that his family was of much account before 1100; yet by 1130, when the Pipe Roll gives us a glimpse of his property as a whole, Geoffrey had exemption from geld in fourteen counties, and estates whose yearly value Sir Richard Southern has estimated at some £500 or more.⁹⁵ Most of his property lay in a compact group of counties centered on Oxford, and a remission of £7 os. 9d. in terra *Gaufredi de Clint* occurs in the Oxfordshire section of the 1130 Pipe Roll.⁹⁶ His rise to wealth seems to have occurred during the first quarter of the century,⁹⁷ when old connections between properties in Oxford and rural estates were probably still fairly strong. At this time he is more than likely to have acquired a large town house there as an administrative base, and it is not surprising that his son, like other rural landowners, should have disposed of it later in the 12th century when such links were declining.⁹⁸

The Frewin Hall property was exceptionally large, and the subvauld is evidently the remains of a wealthy and important citizen's dwelling. Such men were Geoffrey de Clinton and Henry de Oxford, either of whom might easily have erected a stone house on acquiring the site. In either case, it seems likely that we still possess here part of the actual home of one of Oxford's most notable medieval inhabitants.

It is worth considering briefly the origins of the marked tenurial grouping. As we have seen, the concentration of dependent holdings around the *curia* appears to extend well back into the 12th century, and it seems at least possible that it reflects a homogeneous origin. 11th-century Oxford undoubtedly contained holdings many times larger than the average late medieval tenement, and despite the fragmentation of these over the next two centuries the rent-patterns in the Hundred Rolls seem sometimes to indicate a former unity. Mr. David Sturdy has shown that large early *curiae* whose existence is known from independent sources can be reconstructed in this way, notably the very extensive urban properties of Eynsham Abbey, Abingdon Abbey and St. Frideswide's.⁹⁹ Such *curiae* were often linked to rural manors,¹⁰⁰ and although the ties were clearly starting to break down by 1086, Domesday Book records several Oxford holdings still associated with estates in the Oxfordshire and Berkshire countryside.¹⁰¹ At Winchester, richer evidence indicates the presence in the late Saxon town of comparable large properties, in this case with small urban tenements adjacent and dependent on them.¹⁰² Ties between 'demesnes' and smallholdings were progressively loosened in the 11th and 12th centuries, and traces of the earlier structure could not have lasted much beyond 1200 unless hinted at by groups of residual rents.¹⁰³

There is no good evidence that the Frewin group originated in this way, and the parish boundary may tell against such an interpretation. In the 12th century some landlords, such as Oseney Abbey, were building up their property from small components, and either Geoffrey de Clinton or Henry de Oxford may have participated in this process

⁹⁵ R. W. Southern, *Medieval humanism* (1970), 214-18.

⁹⁶ Joseph Hunter (ed.), *Magnum Rotulum Scaccarii . . . Henrici Primi*, Record Commission (1833), 6.

⁹⁷ Cf. *Regesta*, II, 95, 193.

⁹⁸ See below.

⁹⁹ Sturdy, I, 42, 80-1; II, 42-3, 51-2; C.E.A., I, vii-viii; J. Stevenson (ed.), *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, Rolls Series, I (London, 1858), 439-42.

¹⁰⁰ Sturdy, I, 86-7; II, 46.

¹⁰¹ Salter, *op. cit.* note 34, 23-4; Cf. *Winton Domesday*, 454.

¹⁰² *Winton Domesday*, 340-1, 453.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 341-4.

by acquiring tenements around his home. Excavations on the Cornmarket frontage have failed to indicate continuity of boundaries from before the 12th century.¹⁰⁴ The most that we can claim for Frewin Hall and its dependent properties is that the tenurial arrangement which they represent is consistent with what is known of Oxford and other towns in the late Saxon period. We still know too little about early medieval landholding to assert that such an arrangement might not have been just as attractive economically to a wealthy citizen of the 12th century.

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE, 1435 TO 1540

In 1424, as we have seen, Sir Peter Bessels intended a monastic college to be founded on his Oxford tenement, and although his wishes were frustrated in the first instance, it was indeed used for this purpose eleven years later. This was perhaps predictable: as one of the largest private properties within the city walls, the site was bound to attract the covetous eyes of anyone wishing to lay out a collegiate ground-plan. In the event, it answered a long-felt need of the Augustinian canons. The history of the college which they founded has been discussed in detail elsewhere,¹⁰⁵ and the present account is primarily concerned with the progress of its buildings.

The five monastic colleges occupied a distinctive position in medieval Oxford. Created by religious orders which habitually sent students to the university, they existed in the interests of convenience, discipline and prestige. Here scholars from houses throughout the country could follow a corporate life together, observing their rule under the eye of a *prior studentium*. The three colleges which existed by the late 14th century all belonged to the Benedictines, but in the 1430s two more were founded almost simultaneously for the Austin Canons and the Cistercians.¹⁰⁶

Augustinian canons had studied in Oxford long before they acquired a college of their own. This is clearly the meaning of a chapter act in 1325 *quod scolares in ordine nostro ad scholas mittantur*,¹⁰⁷ and the obligation on each large house to send a student to one of the universities was reiterated at successive chapters. As early as 1356 it was ordered that the scholars should, so far as possible, live together and wear a uniform habit. The *prior studentium* at Oxford, who was to enforce this provision, was ordered in 1371 to hold his chapters at St. Frideswide's rather than in a private room.¹⁰⁸ Both acts reflect a concern for rule and discipline, presumably prompted by misgivings about the behaviour of young canons released from their monasteries to the freer atmosphere of Oxford. Thus a decree of 1374 complains that the students were adopting fashionable footwear against the rule of the Order, and would walk around public places lifting their clothes above their knees to display their shapely legs, glorying in their own flesh rather than in the cross of Christ.¹⁰⁹

By the beginning of the 15th century the inconveniences of the old system of lodgings must have been obvious, and the Augustinians were doubtless spurred on

¹⁰⁴ T. G. Hassall, 'Excavations at 44-46 Cornmarket Street, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvi (1971), 15-33.

¹⁰⁵ E. Evans, 'St. Mary's College in Oxford for Austin Canons', *Oxfordshire Archaeol. Soc. Report*, lxxvi (1931), 367-91.

¹⁰⁶ The Benedictine colleges were Gloucester (c. 1280), Durham (c. 1286) and Canterbury (1363). See W. A. Pantin, 'Gloucester College', *Oxoniensia*, xi-xii (1946-7), 65-74; *Idem*, *Canterbury College, Oxford*, I-III (O.H.S., n.s. 6-8, 1941-4); *V.C.H., Oxford*, II, 68-71; III, 301-7, 238-42.

¹⁰⁷ *Chapters*, 13.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 62, 69.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 70-1.

by a desire to emulate the fine new buildings of the Benedictine colleges.¹¹⁰ The need for a common residence was increased by pressure from the university, and in 1419-21 proposals were in hand to establish a college on a plot just outside the city walls.¹¹¹ This project proved abortive, but it is clear that by 1434, when the Order planned to apply certain fines to the buildings of their new college in Oxford,¹¹² Thomas Holden had come forward with his gift of Frewin Hall. The descendant of minor Lancashire gentry, he was both moderately wealthy and without a son. The bulk of his property was devoted to pious and charitable ends, and it was most of all by his college of Austin Canons in Oxford that he and his wife Elizabeth hoped to be remembered.¹¹³

With the completion of the grant in 1435,¹¹⁴ the Canons had acquired what was still very likely a large two-storey stone house, standing in grounds which gave ample scope for expansion from this existing core. In the first few years, however, progress seems to have been slow, and Holden's will of 1441 still speaks of the college as a thing of the future. He asks to be buried in *quadam capella facienda et dedicanda infra quoddam collegium de novo inceptum ad edificandum et faciendum pro canonicis regularibus infra muros ville et universitatis Oxoniensis studentibus*. If he dies before the chapel is finished, his body is to be buried temporarily in the church of St. Peter or St. Michael. He leaves enough money to finish building the chapel and the library above it, together with £103 6s. 8d. The college is to receive vestments, and £20 to buy books and ornaments for the chapel. He and his wife are to be buried under a marble slab, with their images and an inscription exhorting the canons there to pray for them as their founders.¹¹⁵ This monument survived sufficiently late to be recorded by Wood, who describes it as 'a faire marble stone with their images curiously cut on brasse, and an inscription underneath'.¹¹⁶

By 1443, work had advanced sufficiently to warrant a solemn celebration. On the third day of the chapter held in Oxford in that year, the whole company proceeded from Oseney to the recently dedicated chapel of the college. There requiem mass was celebrated for the soul of the founder, whose widow Elizabeth Holden formally delivered seisin to the Order in the presence of the city bailiffs.¹¹⁷ It seems likely, however, that the college's early buildings were of a temporary nature, perhaps merely of timber. Later evidence suggests that they needed rebuilding by 1506, and the original chapel was superseded before the Dissolution.¹¹⁸ It is clear that in 1443 the main work of construction was still to come.

In the same year, a list of the monasteries obliged to send students to the university provides an opportunity of estimating the compliment of Austin canons in Oxford. Of the 44 houses liable, 19 had defaulted for three years, seven for periods of between one and two years, and six had sent their scholars to Cambridge.¹¹⁹ This leaves St. Mary's with a student population of only 12 regulars, even assuming that all obeyed the injunction to live together, though it is likely that a certain proportion of secular students swelled the number.¹²⁰ Nonetheless, a full-scale college building was evidently planned and steps

¹¹⁰ See R.C.H.M., *Oxford* under the relevant colleges. For reconstructed ground-plans of all the monastic colleges except Canterbury, see J. Blair, 'Monastic colleges in Oxford', in *Proceedings of Royal Archaeological Institute* summer meeting 1978, *Archaeol. J.* cxxxv forthcoming. See also note 106.

¹¹¹ Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 369-70.

¹¹² *Chapters*, 83.

¹¹³ Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 371-2.

¹¹⁴ See note 55.

¹¹⁵ *The register of Henry Chichele*, ed. E. F. Jacob, II (Canterbury and York Society, XLII, 1937), 580.

¹¹⁶ Wood, *City*, II, 233.

¹¹⁷ *Chapters*, 97.

¹¹⁸ See note 132 and p. 82.

¹¹⁹ *Chapters*, 99-100; Salter's estimate, *Ibid.* xxxvii, seems to contain errors of calculation.

¹²⁰ See note 133.

taken to finance it. The large fines imposed on the defaulting houses in 1443 were assigned to continuing the works, as was most of a new levy of 2d. in the pound on all abbots and priors.¹²¹

It may be doubted how completely the fines were paid: in 1443 they were assessed at £685, but such a sum can hardly have been collected every year, and it seems that in 1446 only about £25 was in fact received.¹²² At all events, the work languished during these years, and the delays reached the attention of the King. A long letter from Henry VI was read out at the 1446 chapter, reminding the Canons that he had allowed them to receive the property so that they might be, like all other religious persons studying in Oxford, 'in multitude unite and congregat in one plas as honestie and perfeccion requireth of religion'. The King urges them to make such provisions, before dissolving the chapter, 'for the bilyng of the seyd college, that yt goo forth in hast effectually; and moreover ye that [are] bownden to fynde your scolers there, sendythe hem thedur in to the seyd place and college named of owre blessyd lady, that yowre studentez for more ences of science tary not so shamefully as yt is seyd hyt doth, notwythstondyng ye have grete helpe of seculer benefactours unto the same by reportaunce, and also devocion in religious lyvyng to be conversaunte togedur, and the multes taxed and limited for absence of scolers, also subvencions graunted beforetyme in your chaptour and now of thys your present chaptour'. Unless the money collected for the project is properly used, the King will take it for the building of his own colleges. He demands a written answer, having received no reply to an oral message sent to the previous chapter. Already the college had become something of an embarrassment to the Order, and the Presidents debated on how to answer the King, *quia res ardua vertebatur*. The chapter requested time for further thought before putting anything in writing on this delicate subject, and we do not know what reply they eventually returned.¹²³

The college statutes were completed in 1448,¹²⁴ and a new series of contributions was apparently raised the following year.¹²⁵ Thereafter, chapter records are lacking until 1506, though the accounts of Bicester Priory include a payment of 6s. 8d. in 1452 towards the building of the new college of canons in Oxford.¹²⁶ From the later evidence, however, it seems unlikely that much progress was made during the second half of the 15th century, and it is interesting how closely the delays which attended the building of St. Mary's are paralleled by those at the Cistercian college of St. Bernard, founded in 1437 by Archbishop Chichele. Here too it appears that temporary accommodation was quickly erected, but the construction of the permanent buildings dragged on very slowly into the next century, to the embarrassment and shame of the Order. In both cases, considerable sums received for the building works over the years were probably squandered through corruption or incompetence: the abbot of Fountains wrote of St. Bernard's in 1489 that if the annual contributions collected over so long a period had been well and faithfully applied they would have sufficed to build not a college but a great castle, and this comment may have been equally applicable to St. Mary's.¹²⁷ In both cases, it was only the years after 1500 which saw real progress.

At the beginning of the 16th century the obligation for large Austin houses to send students to the university was observed only slightly better than it had been sixty years before. In 1509, 15 houses had defaulted for one year or more, leaving about 32 student canons distributed between Oxford and Cambridge.¹²⁸ At a purely financial level, an abbot or prior had little incentive to maintain a student in Oxford. The fines of 1509 were apparently assessed at the rate of £1 for each year of default, and even if they were

¹²¹ *Chapters*, 104.

¹²² *Ibid.*, xxxvii-viii, 115.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 116-17.

¹²⁴ Bodl. MS. Rawl. Statutes 34; Cf. Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 376-9.

¹²⁵ *Chapters*, 122.

¹²⁶ J. C. Blomfield, *History of the present deanery of Bicester, Oxon* (Oxford and London, 1882), 187.

¹²⁷ H. M. Colvin, 'The building of St. Bernard's College', *Oxoniensia*, xxiv (1959), 39-41.

¹²⁸ *Chapters*, 129-30, xxxvii-viii.

fully collected this amounted to considerably less than the support of a scholar. Oseney Abbey paid over £3 10s. yearly to the manciple of St. Mary's in 1507/8 and 1508/9 for the maintenance of John Hynton, their student there, as against a mere 2s. in 1504/5 for the rent of a chamber in the college without board and fees.¹²⁹ Even the students who did attend may often have followed the old habit of living in separate lodgings; the fact that the 1506 chapter needed to reiterate *quod omnes studentes . . . in alma Universitate Oxoniensi in collegio beate Marie sint commorantes simul* suggests that this was still not invariable practice.¹³⁰

The new century seems, however, to have begun with a renewed attempt to complete the buildings. We know from later evidence that in 1502 a synod of the province of Canterbury charged the Order with the work and appointed collectors for the taxes imposed to finance it.¹³¹ In 1506 a yearly tax of 2d. in the pound on all houses *pro reedificatione collegii beate Marie in Oxonia et libertatibus defendendis*¹³² may merely represent a ratification of the 1502 levy, and the phrase implies that building or rebuilding on some scale was projected. The activity of these years may reflect an attempt to refound the college under royal patronage or control; it is otherwise hard to explain a mortmain licence of 1517 which requires Merton Priory to support a canon and a secular scholar in the College of St. Mary of Richmond in the University of Oxford founded by Henry VII.¹³³

In 1509 the tax was still being levied, but problems were arising once more. The prior of Merton, William Salyngge, one of the collectors since 1502,¹³⁴ was an unsatisfactory character who incurred episcopal anger for laziness and immorality.¹³⁵ Although a former member of St. Mary's, and a learned man who in 1509 still kept up the habit (to his bishop's annoyance) of going frequently to Oxford,¹³⁶ he did not fulfil his duties to the college. The chapter of that year forbade heads of houses to pay their 2d. to Salyngge until he had rendered full account for the money already received,¹³⁷ and this extreme action may indicate a noticeable lack of activity on the site.

By long-established custom the Austin Canons held a chapter every three years, and the collection of contributions towards St. Mary's was ordered in preparation for that due to fall in 1512.¹³⁸ It seems almost certain, however, that no chapter was held either then or in 1515, and this was evidently a period of stagnation not merely for the building works but for the Order in general. When the chapter did at last meet again, at Leicester in 1518, its acts displayed throughout, in H. E. Salter's words, 'a querulous and despairing tone', and one member spoke of the 'lamentable ruin of all monasticism that is imminent'.¹³⁹

Not least among the worries of those assembled was the knowledge of more than eighty years' frustrated endeavour to build a college in Oxford. The funds raised since 1502 were partly or wholly unspent, and while the number of canons at the university may not have fallen greatly over the past ten years, it had certainly failed to rise.¹⁴⁰ The text taken for an English sermon on the Sunday, *Sapientia edificavit sibi domum*, can scarcely have been an accidental irony.¹⁴¹ Yet new hope was at hand for both the Order and the college, through the reforming interests of Cardinal Wolsey.

At this time Wolsey, in his capacity as legate, was apparently contemplating a major reformation of the religious orders, and his interest in the Austin Canons is indicated by the

¹²⁹ Oseney Abbey accounts: Bodl. MS. DD Ch. Ch., O.R. 79, 81, 78.

¹³⁰ *Chapters*, 125; Cf. Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 378.

¹³¹ *Chapters*, 135, 138; for the date of this synod see *Ibid.*, 138 n. 14.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 125.

¹³³ *Cal. Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, II (ii), No. 3151.

¹³⁴ *Chapters*, 138.

¹³⁵ A. Heales, *The records of Merton Priory* (London, 1898), 318–21; Cf. Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 387.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 315, 318.

¹³⁷ *Chapters*, 128.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, xxxv–vi. (University History Project files suggest many fewer College entries in 1510–18 than before or afterwards).

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 138, 141, xxxviii.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 133 (Proverbs, ix. 1).

reformed statutes which he issued for them in 1520.¹⁴² A letter from him, dated 12 June 1518, was read out in the chapter on the Monday. He declares his affection for the Austin Canons, but rebukes them for their failure to promote learning and warns them that they are in serious danger. He urges them to proceed swiftly with the task of building a college decreed by the synod of Canterbury, and offers to join with them in completing the work.¹⁴³

In its present despairing mood, the chapter found compliance with a great man's will the best hope of salvation. Auditors were quickly appointed for the old collectors' accounts from 1502 onwards, and the prior of Merton declared his readiness to make good any deficit which could be proved against him. Four other auditors were to examine the accounts of the cardinal's collectors, who had apparently already been appointed.¹⁴⁴ In a suitably deferential reply the chapter committed to Wolsey *omnia et edificium et statuta collegii nostri in Oxonia plene sue ordinacioni et reformationi*, begging him to preserve and defend the whole Order. They offered to hand over to him the taxes raised under the 1502 scheme, and asked him to become a founder to the college by raising the money for its completion and assuring its future. The chapter ended appropriately with prayers for the souls of Thomas and Elizabeth Holden.¹⁴⁵

One original receipt for some of the money collected fortunately survives, dated November 1518. This shows that the new fund-raising activities were well under way by the end of the year, and that large houses were contributing substantial sums:¹⁴⁶

This indentyre made the xxvijth day of Novemb' in the yere of owre lorde m^lcccc & xvij and in the xth yere of kyng Henry viijth wittnessith thatt I Jhon' prior of Ellsyngspittell in London have receyved of Richard prior of the priorie of Tonbryge one of the collectors named in the cedula sent to the fathers of our religion fro my lorde Cardinall for the collection of the money Cessyd to the Edifyeng and byldyng of our Colege callyd seynct Marie colege in Oxonforde xvijth in partie of payment of xlvijth xiijs iiij^d in which xlvijth xiijs iiij^d the sayd Richard prior was charged in his Cedule. Also be itt knowyn by these presentes indentyd thatt I the sayd Richard prior of Tonbryge have receyved the sayd daye and yere of William prior of Merton by the hondys of the sayd Jhon' prior of Ellsyngspittell xth parcell of the sayd xvijth above written. Also be itt knowyn by these presentes indentyd thatt I the sayd Richard prior of Tonbryge have receyved the sayd daye and yere of the sayd Jhon' Prior of Ellsyngspittell xvijth allowyed to me of the sayd Somm of xvijth for Costs had in the collection. In wittnes wherof to these byllis indentyd the sayd Richard prior and the sayd Jhon' prior to these byllis indentyd interchaungeable have putt ther Seelys and subscribed them with ther owne handis the daye and yere abovesayd.
Per me Johannem priorem de Ellsyngspittell.

After this, the records fail at the point when they might have been most informative. The chapter acts of 1518 show that the work had been moribund for several years, but it is impossible to assess how far it had progressed; it is at least clear that a great deal still remained to be done. Both the collection and the building may have proceeded quickly under the efficient hand of Wolsey, and his own involvement need not have extended beyond 1524, when Cardinal College began to absorb his attention. The contemporary buildings at Brasenose and Corpus Christi demonstrate that these six years would have sufficed to erect a whole college from the ground upwards. We can only say that by 1541, after St. Mary's College had died a natural death with the dissolution of the houses that maintained it, a full set of buildings seems to have existed.¹⁴⁷ Ironically, the canons who had waited for nearly a century to see their completed college enjoyed it for less than twenty years.

¹⁴² Evans, *op. cit.* note 105, 384-5; *Chapters*, xxxvi.

¹⁴³ *Chapters*, 134-5.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 138-9.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 141-3.

¹⁴⁶ Bodl. MS. Charters Kent a 2 No. 138 (original, seal lost, indentations trimmed off).

¹⁴⁷ See p. 90.

THE BUILDINGS OF SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE AFTER THE DISSOLUTION

A detailed account of the post-medieval history of the site has already appeared in print.¹⁴⁸ The intention here is merely to summarize the written and cartographical evidence for the fate of the college buildings after 1540, and thus provide a context for the surviving fragments.

St. Mary's was never formally dissolved, and for a few years it lingered on as a secular hall. After a brief period in the hands of the university, it was granted to the city by the Earl of Huntingdon in 1562 for use as a charity school or Bridewell, the name by which it was often subsequently known. Wood says that initially it 'did not much suffer destruction of its walls', but a resolution of 1556 in the Council Book that 'the bargayne of tymber and slatte bought by Mr Wayte in Saynt Mary Colledge shalbe no bargayne allowed for the body of the Citie' suggests that some at least of the buildings were unroofed before the site came into the city's possession.¹⁴⁹ Fourteen feoffees were appointed to 'convert and occupy the said house and hole crypt of the late Colledge commonly called S. Marie's Colledge, for the use and educacon of tenne or moe poore children to be contynually nourished lodged and taught within the said Colledg or house and alsoe to and for the setting to work of tenne or more poore people having not otherwaies wherwth howe to gett their livynge'.¹⁵⁰ The school rapidly proved a failure, mainly through the activities of the unprincipled John Wayte, a former mayor, whom the children there still remembered with hatred in their old age. In 1576 the council resolved 'that theire shall not be any more putt into Brydewell to be theire founde from hensforth but by the specyall consent of thys howse', and at the same time portions of the property were leased off.¹⁵¹ This apparently marked the end of the school: a former inmate recalled long afterwards that Wayte, one of the 1576 lessees, 'upon the goeing away of the poore theare did keepe tame coneyes in the chappell parcell of the landes in question'.¹⁵² In February 1580 Huntingdon repossessed himself of the property, which he had granted to the city 'to certaine uses and intents which be not performed of the parte of the said feffees', and sold it a few days later to Brasenose College.¹⁵³

Ralph Agas's map of Oxford, surveyed in 1578 and published ten years later, provides our first pictorial evidence for the site. It is crude in detail and often out of proportion, and on the one surviving copy the part showing the Frewin site is badly damaged. The version reproduced here (Fig. 4, A) is a tracing of the original, with the lost area (between dotted lines) sketched in from an 18th-century copy. The interpretation plan (Fig. 4, B) attempts to plot the information given by Agas to an exact scale, using the other available evidence. Agas only shows three buildings on the site. The most prominent, in the foreground near the northern boundary, is clearly the large college chapel which survived until 1656 and has been

¹⁴⁸ R. W. Jeffrey, 'A forgotten college of Oxford', *The Brazen Nose*, IV, 6 (May 1927), 260-88. See also Wood, *City*, II, 228-45.

¹⁴⁹ Wood, *City*, II, 234; Turner, *Records*, 261.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted H. Paintin, *Historic Oxford houses: No. 1—Frewin Hall* (pamphlet, n.d., c. 1920?), I have been unable to trace the source of this quotation.

¹⁵¹ Turner, *Records*, 378; and see p. 90.

¹⁵² B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 28.

¹⁵³ B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 2-3.

traced archaeologically in this position. A wall, apparently meeting the south-west corner of the chapel, extends westwards to the New Inn Hall Street frontage; this presumably represents the boundary of the parish and of the college property, marked by a wall until recent times (*Cf.* Fig. 3, bottom right, Fig. 5).¹⁵⁴ A much smaller building, on a north-south axis, must have been very near the Norman basement; nothing else is known of this, and nothing seems to remain of it in the present Frewin Hall.

On the western boundary of the site Agas shows a single north-south range, of some importance since it is only here that remains of the college still stand today. The surviving south wall of the pre-Dissolution gatehouse¹⁵⁵ clearly marks the northern end of this range, but its extent southwards is uncertain due to Agas's gross elongation of the plot (compare Fig. 4, A and B); whether or not it includes 22-24 New Inn Hall Street, with its existing timber-framed structure, is simply impossible to say on the evidence of the map alone.¹⁵⁶

Agas must have ignored a number of unroofed and ruinous buildings on the site. He does not indicate the Norman basement, which was obviously there (with or without a superstructure). When Brasenose leased the property in 1584, the lessee had the right to dig up all foundations and pull down the 'inne walles' which belong to the premises and have no roof at present, 'and also the vaute or seller theire and the little thatched house neare the back gate'.¹⁵⁷ It is quite possible that substantial remains of St. Mary's College had survived forty years of neglect and piecemeal destruction.

If so, they did not last for much longer. In *c.* 1600 the college's tenant built the fine house which still stands above the basement, and this was probably accompanied by a landscaping of the grounds. Apart from the chapel, it was apparently only on the western boundary that pre-Dissolution structures survived. From the early 17th century, a series of small tenements fronting on New Inn Hall Street were leased off from the main property. In 1625, when the city laid claim to the site once more and made a false lease to dispute the title, the whole property comprised the main house, the garden, two stables, a fuel-house, and eleven tenements in separate occupation with their own gardens.¹⁵⁸ Three years later, Brasenose estimated that '4 little tenements adjoining to the backgate' and 4 tenements of J. Jones and executors had been built since they had acquired the property.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ See p. 77.

¹⁵⁵ See pp. 84-6.

¹⁵⁶ The interpretation (Fig. 4, B) is based solely on the assumption that the range *did* in fact include Nos. 22-4.

¹⁵⁷ B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 6.

¹⁵⁸ City Archives D.8.1(c) (in a bundle of deeds relating to the site).

¹⁵⁹ B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 26.

Fig. 4 (*right*)

Cartographical evidence for the post-Dissolution development of the site. A-B: Ralph Agas's map of Oxford (1578): original and interpretation; the area on the original between dotted lines, damaged on the one surviving copy, is sketched in from Whittlesey's re-engraving. C-D: David Loggan's map of Oxford (1675): original and interpretation. On both interpretation plans, probable pre-Dissolution buildings are shown in solid black. It should be noted that south is at the top, and that the northern end of the site as represented here was not part of the Brasenose property.

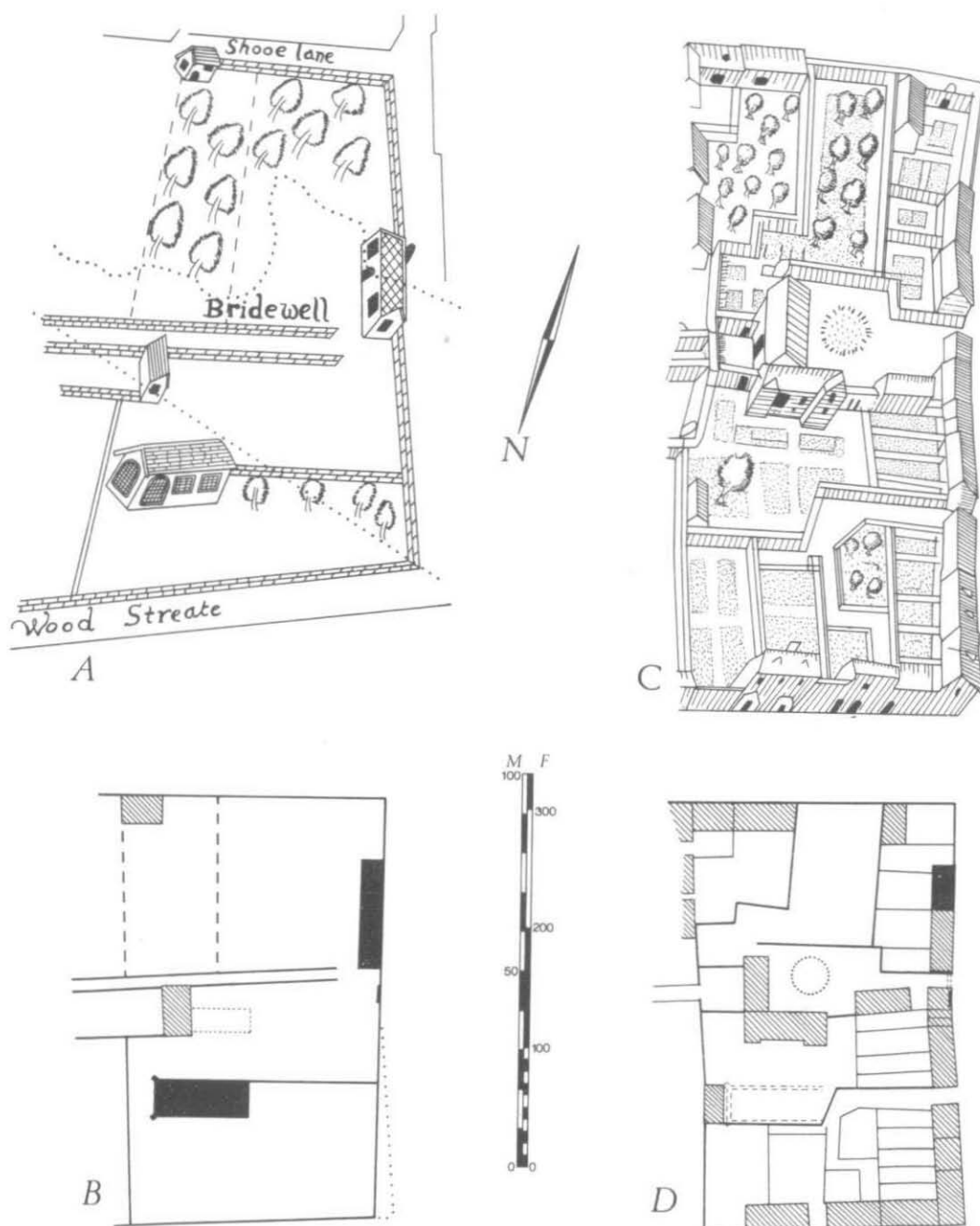


Fig. 4

It seems clear, however, that the range of tenements also included the earlier building shown by Agas. Anthony Wood wrote in 1661 that the canons of St. Mary's enlarged the college 'with buildings both at the entry into the little lane or alley leading from the high street therunto, as also on the other side almost opposite to New In Hall, which building is yet standing and was employed not long since as a conventicle house for the Quakers'.¹⁶⁰ In 1675, David Loggan's map of Oxford (Fig. 4, C-D) shows the whole western boundary of the site built up except at its southern end.¹⁶¹ It is impossible to estimate from this the number of tenements, but a lease of only six years earlier states that there were thirteen.¹⁶² The tenements north of the gateway were presumably the eight built during the possession of Brasenose, and it seems reasonable to equate those to the south, in part at least, with the range shown by Agas and the pre-Dissolution building referred to by Wood. Loggan shows here two adjoining buildings, one slightly lower than the other; the implications of this will be discussed later in relation to the structural evidence.

Loggan's map also shows us the condition of the main property. The chapel had, of course, disappeared, but its site is betrayed by the northern boundary wall. The western part of this clearly corresponds with the later parish boundary and with the wall shown by Agas, but its eastern stretch lies some 10 m. further to the north, with a sharp kink in the middle. This arrangement was still evident in 1880, and clearly shows where the north wall-line of the chapel survived as a property-boundary (compare Fig. 4, D with Fig. 3, bottom right and Fig. 5).

With these exceptions, there is no indication that any remains of the college were still standing in 1675. Our physical evidence for St. Mary's is confined to its chapel and some fragmentary buildings on its western frontage.

THE COLLEGE CHAPEL

The chapel was considered by Anthony Wood 'a very faire fabrick built with free stone, and very good workmanship to be seen about it'.¹⁶³ During the civil war it was used for casting cannon,¹⁶⁴ and by 1649 Brasenose College had decided its fate. A lease of the property in that year reserves to the college the right to pull down the old chapel and take away the materials for a new chapel to be built in Brasenose.¹⁶⁵ In fact this did not take place till the mid 1650s, when the surviving accounts for the building of the new chapel throw a certain amount of light on the old.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ Wood, *City*, II, 230. This was evidently the 'old stone-house, almost opposite to the common gate of New Inne (in which house Richard Beatrice, chirurgian and Quaker, then lived)' (*Wood's Life and Times*, ed. A. Clark, I (O.H.S. 19 (1891), 190.) A pamphlet of 1654 (Bodl. Wood 515 (13)) contains a virulent diatribe against members of the university who attacked Quakers meeting in this house.

¹⁶¹ This may have resulted in some encroachment on New Inn Hall Street towards the northern end of the site; *Cf.* Figs. 4, B, 12.

¹⁶² B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 31.

¹⁶³ Wood, *City*, II, 233.

¹⁶⁴ *Wood's Life and Times*, I, 84.

¹⁶⁵ B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 27.

¹⁶⁶ Bursar Houghton's 'Booke of Accounts for the new Buildings in Brasenose College in Oxford, Begun Anno Domini 1656', B.N.C. Archives A.3.20. For the new chapel see *Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs*, I (O.H.S. 52 (1909)), iii. 14-36.

At the end of March 1656 the old chapel was scaffolded, and the slates and laths taken off and carried across to Brasenose. Workmen were paid on 5 April for 'pulling downe the Gable Ends', and the next two weeks were mainly occupied in dismantling the roof timbers, a dangerous task for which extra payments are recorded. 'This week the Roofe all taken downe' is noted under 19 April, and a few days later masons were paid for 'takeing of the top stones'. On 30 April carters brought 'the Roofe of the old chapple to the college', and temporary sheds to store the roof-timbers had been built by 6 May.¹⁶⁷

It is uncertain how long the demolition of the walls proceeded. 'Planking, stone and dust' were brought across on 7 June, and a good deal of the rubble probably went into the huge footings of the new chapel, 20 ft. deep and 'fully brought up and finisht' on 1 August. During the next five weeks repairs to 'Captain Smiths privy by the old chapple' are recorded, and more loads of stonedust were taken off the site.¹⁶⁸ On 6 September a payment occurs for three loads of clay 'to make up the wall at the old chapple', and William Clark was given £1 on 17 October 'for the use of his garden and spoyleing of his fruit Trees under the old chapple wall when the Roof and Walls were taken downe'.¹⁶⁹ These entries suggest that the area was being made tidy following demolition, but some of the materials were evidently stored on site. On 25 October William Redhead was paid for 'one days work with his Teame in bringing the window James from the old chapel',¹⁷⁰ and it seems possible that these jambs were to be incorporated in the new windows.¹⁷¹ In June 1657 four loads of stone were brought to Brasenose from the site, and as late as April 1658 freestone was carried from the old chapel for use in the library walls then being built.¹⁷²

Very fortunately, it was decided to re-erect the old roof more or less intact, with the result that this important feature still survives today. The stonework seems to have been treated merely as rubble, and only one architectural fragment can be identified in the walls of Brasenose chapel.¹⁷³ The old footings were lost to sight until their rediscovery in 1977.

The excavations on the chapel site (Fig. 5). By KEVIN FLUDE and JOHN BLAIR

In 1976-7 excavations were carried out by the Oxford University Archaeological Society, under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Excavation Committee, to establish the site of the chapel. Agas's inaccurate map was the only guide to the position of the footings, and work had to be confined to small-scale trenching. Four trenches were dug archaeologically, and a fifth some months later by machine. Full records of the site will be lodged with Oxfordshire County Council Department of Museum Services at Woodstock.

¹⁶⁷ Bursar Houghton's Book, 1-2.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3, 7, 8, 11.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11, 13.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁷¹ See p. 99.

¹⁷² Bursar Houghton's Book (*op. cit.* note 166), 28, 50.

¹⁷³ See p. 99.

Trench I, 4.0 by 1.5 m., was dug to locate the north wall of the chapel, on the hypothesis that this lay rather further north than later proved to be the case. L50-L51, at a depth of 2.55 to 3.30 m., produced 15th- and early 16th-century pottery and were probably pre-Dissolution deposits; the trench was not taken deeper than this for reasons of safety. L47, at a depth of 2.15-2.55 m., contained 16th-century material. From 0.80 to 2.15 m. below the surface was a homogeneous mass of dark earth (L37-L46) in which layers were hard to distinguish; this produced numerous 17th-century sherds throughout, with residual earlier pottery and 18th-century material in the upper levels. No structures were found other than Victorian and later features in the top 1.0 m. Any medieval stratigraphy must have been completely destroyed by repeated pit-digging, dumping and gardening.

Attention was then turned to the small lawn between Frewin Hall and the Oxford Union Society. *Trench II*, aimed at finding the south wall of the chapel, was abandoned when it was realized that a Victorian sump and its construction-pit filled almost the whole area.

Trench III, immediately east of *Trench II*, proved to be sited by good luck over the south-east angle buttress of the chapel. An irregular area of about 2.8 by 2.0 m. was excavated to a depth of 3.5 m. at the north-east corner and north side, and 1.2 m. over the rest of the site. The earliest feature (F24) was a small amorphous area of orange-brown soil which cut the natural gravel, containing sherds of Fabrics *R* and *AC* (St. Neot's-type Ware and Oxford Early Medieval Ware) previously dated to the late 11th century.¹⁷⁴ Overlying this was a thick layer of similar orange-brown soil (L22) which produced three sherds of the early 12th century or earlier. Both F24 and L22 were cut by F23, the deep construction-trench on the eastern (outer) side of the footing for the wall and buttress. The footing (F16) is of mortared rubble throughout, but shows a constructional break on a level with the top of the construction-trench: the lower part is very rough whereas the upper conforms rather more closely to the lines of the buttress, producing a small 'shelf' or offset in the north-east angle. The construction-trench was filled with dark-brown soil, divided into three parts (L23/1-3) by two trample-layers containing sand and small stones. It produced ten sherds with a preponderance of Fabric *AM* (Oxford Late Medieval Ware) and some residual material, suggesting a late 13th- or early 14th-century date.¹⁷⁵ The top of the construction-trench was sealed by L21, a hard-packed layer of small stones level with the offset on the footing; over this was a thin skin of dark earth and carbon (L20) containing one sherd of Fabric *AM*.

L20 was overlain by two thick layers, L19 (brown soil with patches of gravel and mortar) and above it L18 (a lighter brown soil), abutting the upper part of the footing with no sign of a construction-trench. L19 produced 50 sherds, 30% Fabric *T* (Oxford Medieval Ware) and 20% Fabric *AM*. This assemblage showed considerable signs of disturbance, with residual sherds in Fabric *R* and post-medieval wares including a rim of a lobed dish (Fabric *BX*) and two rims of red earthenware; the latter are comparable with forms buried after 1648 at Banbury Castle.¹⁷⁶ L18 only produced four sherds, all Fabric *AM*. Above L18 was a layer of grey-brown soil with gravelly traces (L13/2), containing two sherds of buff earthenware, one of stoneware, and some glass and clay pipe stem fragments. The small areas south-west and south-east of the buttress footing were not excavated below L19, and the footing itself was not removed. From immediately above L13/2, the footing of the east wall adjoining the buttress was robbed down to the level of the offset; the robber-trench (F17) slightly undercut L18 and L19, and its fill (dark-grey soil with many patches of yellow mortar) produced no pottery. An area of mortar (F15) partly covered the unrobbed footing at the same level. A thin charcoal

¹⁷⁴ T. G. Hassall, 'Excavations at Oxford Castle 1965-1973', *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976), 263.

¹⁷⁵ By analogy with 79-80 St. Aldates Phase 9; B. G. Durham, 'Archaeological investigations in St. Aldates, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xlii (1977), 134.

¹⁷⁶ K. A. Rodwell, 'Excavations on the site of Banbury Castle, 1973-4', *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976), Fig. 13, No. 58, 128; Fig. 14, No. 64, 128.

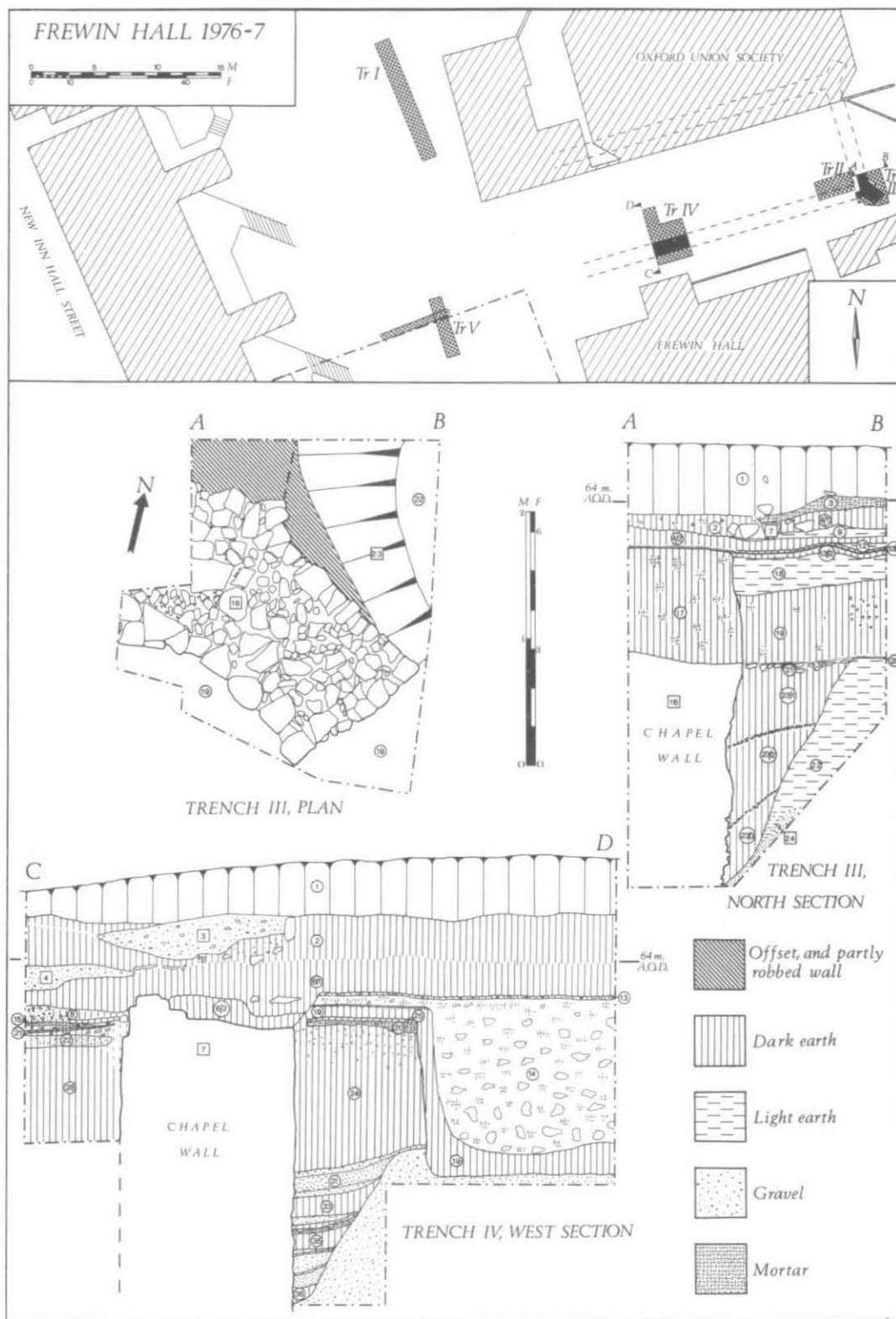


Fig. 5

spread sealed L13/2, F17 and F15. A thin layer of grey-brown soil with mortar and gravel patches (L13/1) partly covered this, and was overlain by a patch of yellow clayey earth (F12) containing late 18th-century material. L4/2 and the layers above it were evidently the product of gardening in the last two centuries.

Trench IV was dug to expose a length of the south wall footing of the chapel. Initially it measured 4.65 by 2.90 m., but the north-east corner was soon abandoned with the discovery of another Victorian sump. The whole area was excavated to a depth of 1.3 m.; a strip along the western edge was then taken down to 2.5 m., and a small area to 3.5 m. The earliest feature identified, on the northern (inner) side of the chapel foundation, was the chapel construction-trench, once again very large and cutting deep into the natural gravel. The footing (F7) was 1.4 m. wide, of mortared rubble as in Trench III and once again slightly rougher below the top of the construction-trench; at the highest point a small fragment of faced stone remained *in situ*, stepped in slightly from the outer face of the footing. The fill of the construction-trench (L30-L36) comprised fourteen layers of alternating red and yellow gravel, dark earth and (L34) small stones; these produced pottery dating from the first half of the 13th century.¹⁷⁷ The construction-trench was overlain by a deep deposit of brown soil (L24), abutting the upper part of the footing, which produced 25 sherds; this assemblage included 32% Fabric *T* and 32% Fabric *AM*, and was dated to the late 13th or early 14th century despite one sherd of buff earthenware. Immediately above this was a thick mortar layer (L20) with small fragments of faced stone pressed into it, itself overlain by an uneven spread of red clay (L25); both these layers were separated from the footing by a 12 cm. gap, and neither produced any pottery. Over L25 was a layer of dark purplish soil (L19), which slumped vertically at a distance of 1.0 m. north of the footing and levelled out again in the bottom of a large straight-sided pit, 1.2 m. deep, which cut L25, L20, L24, L30 and the natural gravel; overlying and apparently cutting L19 was a large deposit of loose stones (L14). Both L19 and L14 produced 19th-century pottery; they probably represent a large cesspit which was allowed to fill up over a long period and then partly dug out again and filled with rubble. On top of L14 was a thin mortar layer (L13).

On the south (outer) side of the footing was a deep layer of dark orange-brown soil (L28); it abutted the footing with no sign of a construction-trench, and the lowest point of the excavation on this side (2.0 m. below the surface) failed to reach its bottom. It produced 77 sherds, with a wide range of late 12th- to mid 13th-century fabrics;¹⁷⁸ decorated sherds in Fabric *T*, probably from pitchers, were comparable with wares from the late 12th-century well at St. John's College and Well 2 at the Bodleian Extension.¹⁷⁹ Above L28 was a layer of similar orange-brown soil (L22) containing eleven sherds of the late 13th to 14th centuries. This was overlain by a layer of dark soil mixed with mortar patches and small rubble (L21), above which was a rather thicker layer of similar mixed appearance (L15); neither produced any pottery. The cutting back of the western section defined L15 as two thin mortar layers superimposed and with a layer of dark earth between. L15, L21 and L22 were all separated from the footing by a 12-15 cm. gap. Cut from the top of L15, at a distance 0.8 m. south of the footing, was a pit (1.0 m. in diameter and 0.36 m. deep) filled with hard-packed white mortar (F23). Above L15 was a layer of orange-brown soil with stones and mortar (L8), abutting the top of the footing; this produced 17th- and 18th-century pottery, and various later features were cut through it to the layers below. At this level was a shallow circular depression (L6/2) above and partly cut into the footing, probably an abortive pit, filled with dark soil containing 17th- and 18th-century material; this included an interesting tinglaze base (Fig. 14, C) and the remains of a glass bottle containing gooseberries.¹⁸⁰ Above L8,

¹⁷⁷ Durham, *op. cit.* note 175, Phase 8.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Phase 8.

¹⁷⁹ E. M. Jope, *et al.*, 'Pottery from a late twelfth-century well . . . from St John's College, Oxford, 1947', *Oxoniensia*, xv (1950), 58-9; R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'Archaeology of the Bodleian Extension', *Oxoniensia*, iv (1939), 101.

¹⁸⁰ We are grateful to Mr. Mark Robinson for this identification.

L6/2 and L13 was a thick deposit of garden soil (L6/1) covering the whole site ; this and the layers above were rich in 19th-century material.

Trench V was dug mechanically to a depth of about 3.0 m., in the hope of picking up a westwards continuation of the south chapel wall. This cut the shallow footing of a thin rubble-built wall, near the surface and evidently the parish boundary marked on the 1880 plan (Fig. 3, bottom right) ;¹⁸¹ the same footing was also noticed in a contractors' trench 5 m. to the west (where it overlay late 17th-century clay pipe bowls), and its alignment plotted. Apart from a post-medieval well, no other structures were encountered ; for its whole depth the trench cut through dark, homogeneous soil with no layers visible in section. This merely supported the conclusion, already drawn from Trench I and the contractors' works on the western edge of the site, that the medieval archaeology of the main open area had been entirely destroyed by repeated pit-digging from the 17th to the 19th centuries ; the late wall must have replaced the one shown by Agas and Loggan on the same alignment, but no sign of any earlier footing was visible. The failure of this trench to reveal a pre-Dissolution wall is therefore no evidence that such a wall did not exist.

Interpretation of Trenches III and IV : It seems clear that the footings found in the excavations are those of the chapel demolished in 1656. Its position agrees exactly with the cartographical evidence,¹⁸² and the stratigraphy indicates that the footings were not covered over until well into the 17th century ; we know that no other great building still stood on the site as late as this. As a well-documented structure, therefore, the evidence for building methods is of some interest.

The construction-trench was observed on the outer side of the footing in Trench III and the inner side in Trench IV. If together these represent a complete section, it must have been nearly 3 m. wide at the top, with sides sloping inwards. In each case the footing (the base of which was never reached) appeared to extend deeper than the point at which the construction-trench bottomed out ; the lowest courses may have completely filled a narrower vertical-sided trench. The 'hard layers' in the construction-trench presumably represent the levels at which the builders stood on the backfill to raise the footing by another stage. The numerous small layers observed in Trench IV were probably produced by shifts of workmen barrowing from different dumps. The uncontaminated 13th- to 14th-century pottery groups which the construction-trench produced in each case are presumably due to immediate backfilling with the deposits that had just been dug out.

In both trenches the footing survived to 1.0 m. above the mouth of the visible construction-trench. It is not obvious that this higher stage represents foundation rather than standing wall, especially as two of the layers abutting it (Trench III L19, Trench IV L24) contained post-medieval material. Although this higher stage is neater than the footing below it, it seems too rough for a building of this date and quality ; it cannot have been faced, since the footing below is not expanded, and the small fragment of worked stone which survived as the top course in Trench IV is more plausible as standing wall. In Trench IV, the layers on the outer side of the upper part of the footing (L22, L28) produced uncontaminated assemblages similar to those from the construction-trench, as did that on the inner

¹⁸¹ See p. 70.

¹⁸² See pp. 69-70, 72

side (L24) except for one 17th-century sherd. If these deposits represent a post-medieval raising of the ground-level, they must result not from gradual accumulation but from deliberate dumping both inside and outside the chapel. It seems more likely that the contamination in L19 in Trench III was merely the product of minor disturbance outside the east end (as L18 must therefore have been too).

The evidence therefore suggests that the ground-level in and around the chapel remained the same between its construction and demolition; this level (63.6 m. O.D.) is represented by L13/2 in Trench III, L15–L20 in Trench IV, and the top of the surviving footing in both trenches. The ground was, however, somewhat disturbed up to the mid 17th century, though it seems possible that L15 in Trench IV was a pre-Dissolution surface. In 1656 the walls were only demolished to ground level; in Trench III the robbing of the east wall probably occurred later in the 17th century, since it cuts L13/2. The absence of a construction-trench for the upper part of the footing suggests that, at the building of the chapel, a large area around the line of the walls was stripped down to the firm subsoil before the construction-trench proper was dug within it, presumably for the convenience and safety of the men laying this exceptionally deep footing. The more regular construction of the upper courses may merely indicate that the masons could work in a less cramped position.

The chapel roof (Figs. 6 and 7)

Certainly the most impressive relic of St. Mary's is the splendid hammer-beam roof of the old chapel. As we have seen, the timbers were carried across to Brasenose College and stored in sheds immediately after dismantlement.¹⁸³ By the autumn of 1657 the new walls were ready to receive them, and on 24 December a payment was made for the use of a 'brasse pullye to wind upp the great Tymber of the chapple'.¹⁸⁴ Here the chapel was apparently left for the time being while work proceeded on the adjoining library.

At the end of 1658, however, '4 spykes and one holdfast us'd in the chapple in the Hammer beame' were purchased, and a payment for a large quantity of timber for the chapel roof appears under 4 June 1659.¹⁸⁵ By this time the remarkable plaster fan-vault which conceals the roof-timbers from below had been decided upon, and on 14 June the workmen 'begun to playster the chapple Roofe'. Three weeks later Goodman Drew was paid 'for turning of Eleven Pendants for the Roofe of the chapple', and the 'whitening' of the roof on 24 January 1661/2 apparently marked the conclusion of the works.¹⁸⁶ The hammer-beams and moulded wallplate are visible from the chapel, projecting below the later vaulting. The roofspace, floored at collar level, is entered through an external trap-door.¹⁸⁷

The roof trusses are identical in elevation (Fig. 7). Each comprises a pair of principals to which struts rise from hammer-beams braced to wall-posts; a collar, braced from the struts, supports a second pair of struts which rise to a second braced

¹⁸³ See p. 73.

¹⁸⁴ Bursar Houghton's Book, *op. cit.* note 166, 50.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 77, 82.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 83, 84, 88.

¹⁸⁷ The roof is described and illustrated R.C.H.M., *Oxford*, 27–8, Pl. 77.

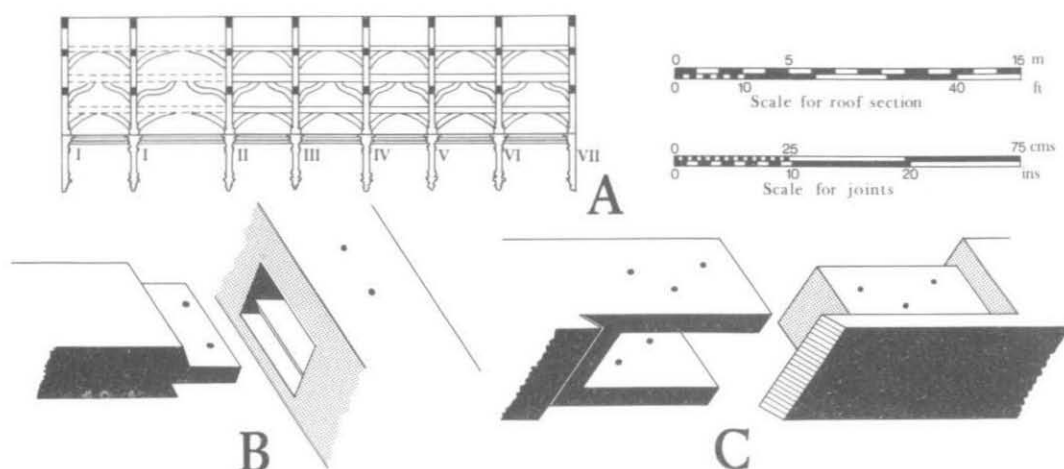


Fig. 6

The chapel roof. A : Outline section looking north, to show numbering and spacing of trusses ; non-original purlins are represented by broken lines, and the false truss is omitted. B : mortice and tenon joint of original purlins into principal rafters. C : Scarf joint used in four principal rafters.

collar. On each tier the angles formed by the struts with the hammer-beams and lower collar have sinuous braces, and all the members are moulded or chamfered. The two gable trusses are moulded on the exposed face only, the side against the wall being completely flat. Four of the principals are scarfed near the apex with a curious secret-bridled joint (Fig. 6, C) for which no exact parallel has been noticed.

In long section (Fig. 6, A) the roof consists of eight trusses, framed together by three tiers of butt-purlins with alternate curved and sinuous braces. The trusses are more or less equally spaced, except in the second bay from the west which is abnormally long ; this bay extends over the junction of chapel and ante-chapel, which is marked by a pair of false hammer-beams (not shown on the section) inserted with the vaulting. All the common rafters are modern replacements ; the originals were in two lengths, morticed into the central purlin by standard joints with soffit tenons and diminished haunches.

The trusses are numbered, from west to east, in small, neat Roman numerals punched on most members of each truss with a flat-ended object. A strange feature is that the first two trusses each bear the number I, though they resemble the others so closely that neither can be a later copy ; the remaining six are numbered consecutively from II to VII. The explanation may be that the end truss was numbered independently since there was no danger of its members, moulded on one face only, being confused with parts of the free-standing trusses during assembly. If so, we might infer that one truss and one bay at the other end, between the present trusses VI and VII, were omitted when the roof was re-erected.

The purlins have chamfers ending in conventional cyma stops, and their joints into the principals are slightly housed, with central tenons, diminished haunches and spur bearings (Fig. 6, B). A variant of this joint occurs in work of 1510-12 in King's College, Cambridge, though there the spur bearing fits over an edge

chamfer instead of being housed as in the present example.¹⁸⁸ The joints of the purlins into both end trusses are simpler, being deeply housed with thick soffit tenons. This appears to be an original feature, but in the two westernmost bays the carpentry was evidently modified during re-erection. Here the chamfers on the purlins are rougher, and merely taper out. The joints into the principals are housed, usually with diminished haunches, some having central and some soffit tenons; in one case the tenon is completely absent though a mortice has been cut into the principal. The spur bearing never occurs, though in two cases there are possible signs that the corresponding element has been cut out of the mortice.

The jointing and chamfer-stops seem to prove that whereas most of the purlins are original, those in the two westernmost bays are replacements of the 1650s. The fact that the carpenter went to the trouble of chamfering them shows that they were meant to be seen, and it may be that the roof was initially re-erected with the intention of leaving it exposed; the decision to add the plaster vaulting was perhaps taken during 1658 while work on the chapel was temporarily halted. It thus seems that the long bay over the antechapel results merely from an adaptation of 1657. There is admittedly no evidence that the slightly larger windbraces in this bay are not original, but these are so simple that a carpenter could easily have produced copies indistinguishable from the rest; in August 1657, shortly before the rebuilding of the roof, the accounts include a payment of 6*d.* 'for a piece of Tymber to make Braces'.¹⁸⁹ The renewal of the purlins in the westernmost bay is harder to explain; it can only be suggested that enough were broken during demolition to make a full set of six replacements necessary.

The original appearance and date of the chapel

The excavated footings provide the lines of the south and east walls of the chapel, and its internal width of 7.9 m. (26 ft.) is indicated by that of the roof. On the evidence described above we can attempt to estimate its length. In the five bays with original purlins the trusses are spaced at an average of 3 m. (10 ft.) centres. It seems unlikely that any bay could be smaller than this, and the fact that the carpenters of 1657 needed to cut a new set of purlins to create a long bay is perhaps an indication that none was larger. Whether an eighth bay has indeed been removed entirely is more debatable, but if the architect of the new Brasenose buildings wanted a roof that was only slightly shorter than the existing length, the omission of one bay and enlargement of another may have been the most satisfactory solution. The numbering on the end trusses rules out an original length of more than eight bays. The likely alternatives are therefore a seven-bay roof, giving an internal length for the chapel of 21 m., or an eight-bay roof giving 24 m.

Agas's view (Fig. 4, A) is too crude to be helpful for reconstructing the elevation, and we can only be certain that buttresses existed at the eastern angles. Trench IV proves that the south wall was not buttressed against every roof-truss, but buttresses on alternate trusses (forming a symmetrical arrangement with two

¹⁸⁸ C. Hewett, *English cathedral carpentry* (1974), 45.

¹⁸⁹ Bursar Houghton's Book, *op. cit.* note 166, 38.

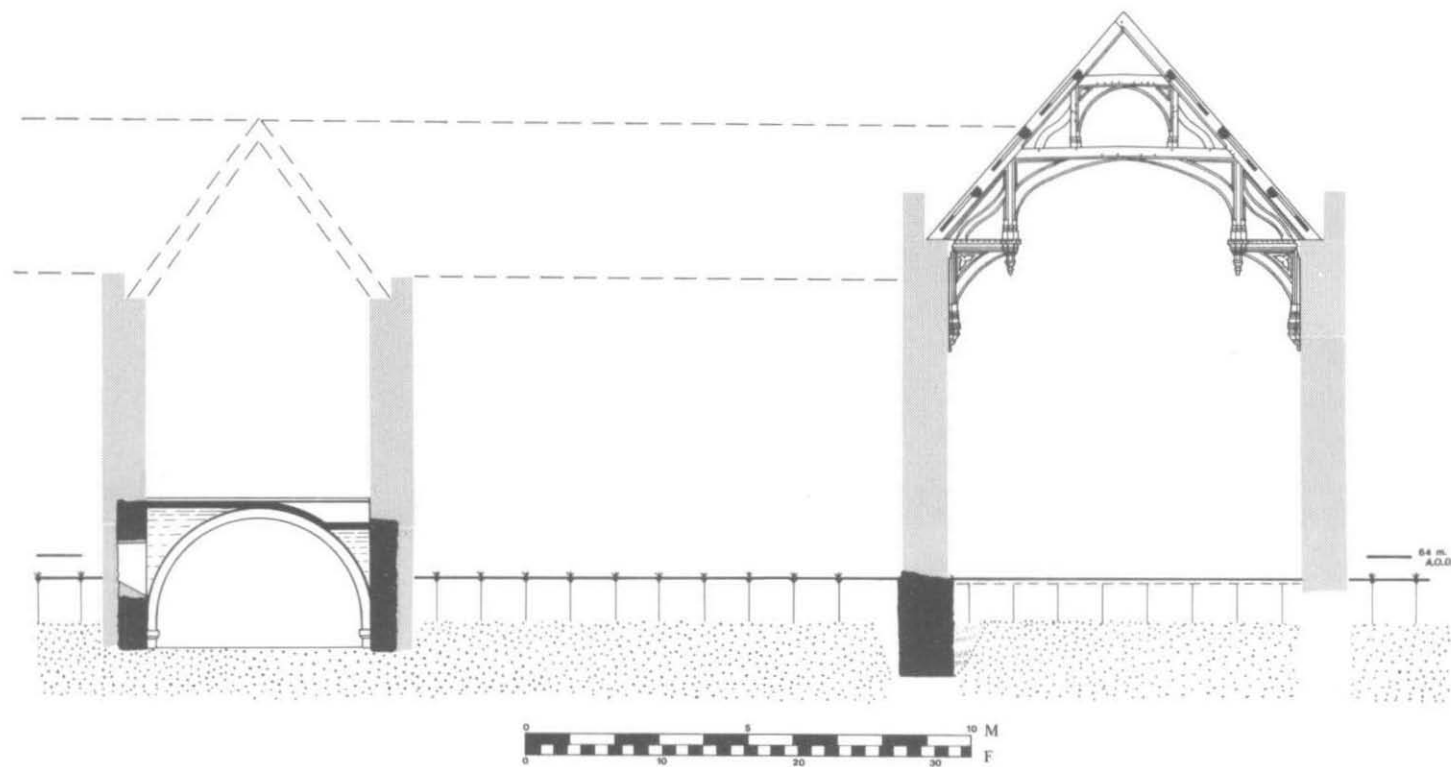


Fig. 7

Reconstructed section looking west through the basement range and chapel (equivalent to section A-A1 on Fig. 12), showing the extant roof and footings. (The drawing of the roof is based on R.C.H.M., *Oxford* (1939), 28 ; *Crown copyright reserved.*)

windows between each pair) remain a possibility.¹⁹⁰ Fig. 7 is a conjectural section through the chapel and Norman basement before the Dissolution. The 16th-century ground-level¹⁹¹ shows that, at the time of the building of the chapel, the basement projected above ground for half its height and was presumably therefore surmounted by a range on the same alignment.

The authorship and date of the roof is indicated by a comparison with that in the hall of Corpus Christi College. This roof is known to have been built in 1516–18 by the important Oxford carpenter Robert Carow, probably from designs made by Henry VIII's master-carpenter Humphrey Coke. The two roofs are so strikingly similar as to leave no doubt that the one from St. Mary's was also made by Coke or Carow, using the same patterns with very small modifications of detail and proportion. The grander hammer-beam roof of Christ Church hall is another product of the same designer, and the three stand out as the most lavish roofs of their kind in Oxford.¹⁹²

We can thus be confident that the chapel roof was built in or very near *c.* 1515–25. Did this apply to the walls too? A college chapel was dedicated in 1443, but this was a two-storey structure with a library over.¹⁹³ Neither Wood's description nor the demolition accounts mention an upper floor, and a grand open roof on this scale would be more suited to an open chapel or hall than to a first-floor library. The conversion of a two-storey chapel to an open one would have necessitated changes so drastic as to amount to a virtual rebuilding. If the old chapel and library block was a solid stone structure, it would have been more logical to convert the ground floor to another use and build a new chapel on a different site; if they were insubstantial and temporary, they would have been demolished and rebuilt from the ground. Thus the massive footings also should probably be assigned to a date of *c.* 1520 rather than *c.* 1440.

THE BUILDINGS ON NEW INN HALL STREET (Fig. 8, Pls. II and III)

Nos. 20–36 New Inn Hall Street, a small group of old buildings on the western boundary of the site, contain the only fragments of St. Mary's College still standing above ground.¹⁹⁴ Apart from the obvious remains of the college gatehouse, it has not hitherto been realized that any pre-Dissolution structures remain.

Behind the gatehouse fragments is a long rubble-built west-east range (No. 36, formerly Frewin Gate) extending towards Frewin Hall. The easternmost two-thirds (Figs. 3, *btm. rt.*; 4, C–D) are apparently of one build, with one flat-topped mullioned window and the outlines of others visible in the south wall on two storeys; the building appears on Loggan's map and is probably mid 17th century. This was later extended towards the street, and the whole provided with a standard rough clasped-purlin roof.

¹⁹⁰ This is consistent with the layout of the east range suggested on Fig. 12.

¹⁹¹ See p. 78.

¹⁹² E. A. Gee, 'Oxford carpenters 1370–1530', *Oxoniensia*, xvii/xviii (1952/3), 131–3. Compare the photograph of the Corpus roof in R.C.H.M., *Oxford*, Pl. 110, with *Ibid.*, 28, and the present Figs. 6–7; the Christ Church roof is illustrated *Ibid.*, Pl. 85.

¹⁹³ See p. 65.

¹⁹⁴ The group is discussed briefly in R.C.H.M., *Oxford*, 172.

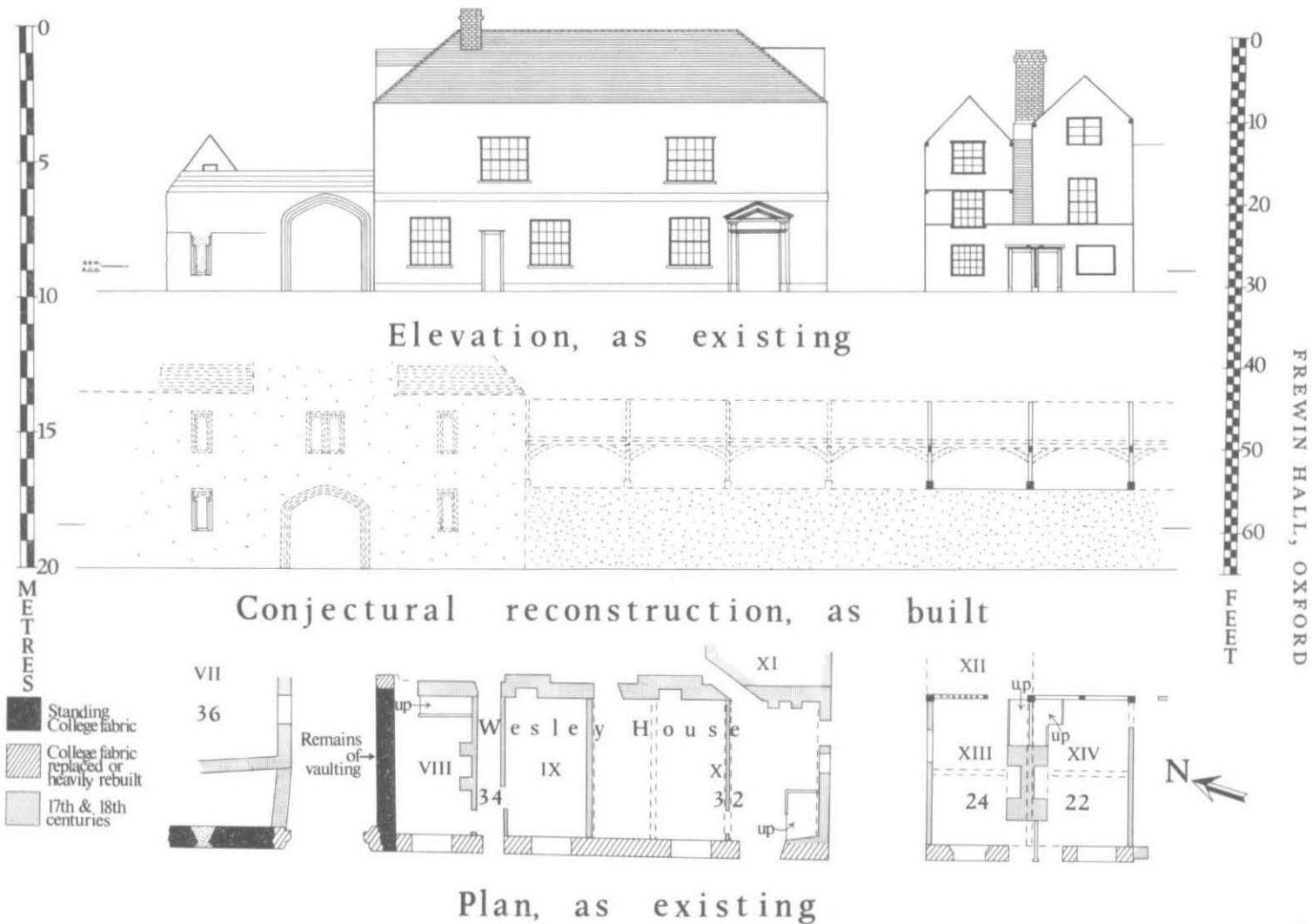


Fig. 8

22-36 New Inn Hall Street, showing the relationship between the standing pre-Dissolution fragments. The modern street numbers are given in Arabic numerals ; the Roman numerals are an attempt (partly conjectural) to reconstruct the numbering scheme of the 1729 Brasenose leases.

Extending southwards from the gatehouse is a large rubble-built block of two-and-a-half storeys (Wesley House, Nos. 32-34). In 1776 it had dormers on the street and a straight end gable through which purlins projected.¹⁹⁵ The alterations of the roofline had occurred by 1821, when the handsome pedimented door-case already existed.¹⁹⁶ Careful examination during plaster-stripping in 1978 failed to reveal any features earlier than the 18th century.

Southwards from Wesley House, separated from it by an open entry giving access to a courtyard, is a small three-storey building with an 18th-century facade (Nos. 22-4). Recent investigations here have revealed that the basic structure is much older and may well be a relic of St. Mary's College.

The gatehouse (Figs. 9 and 10 ; Pl. II)

In its present form the gatehouse consists of a street-front wall pierced by a blocked window and a gateway, and a side wall meeting this at right-angles and forming the north end of the later Wesley House. It appears that a large vaulted gatehouse was demolished except for two fragments which were incorporated in a simpler entrance to the property.

The street wall (Pl. II, A) consists of two phases, the earlier being a length 0.8 m. thick, 3.7 m. long and 2.1 m. high, of coursed rubble including large, irregular stones. This contains the window, almost invisible until a fortunate collapse of the blocking in 1976. The external jamb-stones, moulded in a double hollow-chamfer, are well squared and set, and one bears a mason's mark (Fig. 10, A). The window head (now removed) fitted between the top jamb-stones which are cut back slightly on either side ; the inner moulding presumably continued around an arched top.¹⁹⁷ There are sockets for four horizontal bars, but no glazing-grooves. The remaining blocking hides the junction between the outer and inner jambs, and makes it very difficult to see the bottom of the window on the inner side ; this appears to step down to a flat shelf or step, partly robbed away (Fig. 9, street elevation and section).¹⁹⁸

This fragment was presumably cut down to its present height and left standing as a boundary wall when the building of which it had formed part was demolished. Subsequently, it was heightened to 3.7 m. with thinner rubble walling (flush on the outer face but stepped back on the inner) and linked to the Wesley House block by a large archway, the whole being topped with coping. The arch has a depressed pointed head and simple chamfered jambs, but it must be post-Dissolution, for its apex is higher than the remains of the gatehouse vaulting. It probably dates from c. 1600 : Brasenose College claimed in 1628 that they built the walls compassing the land since they had it in possession.¹⁹⁹ A painting of 1776²⁰⁰ shows the frontage very much as it appears today, with the addition of a studded wooden gate in the archway which no longer exists.

¹⁹⁵ Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. c 299, f. 214.

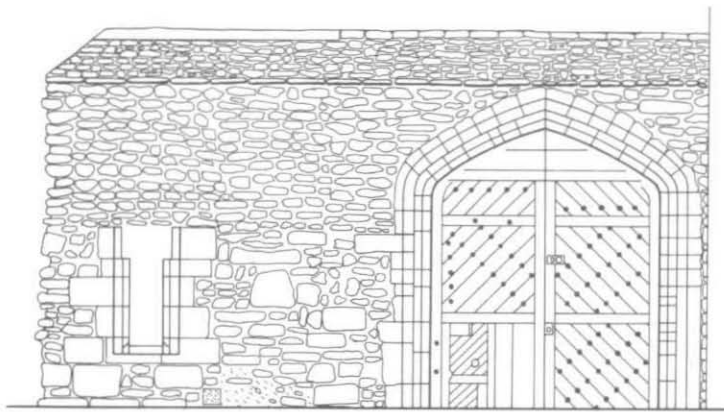
¹⁹⁶ Bodl. MS. Don. a 3.II.91.

¹⁹⁷ A flat head has recently been added to the window, probably incorrectly.

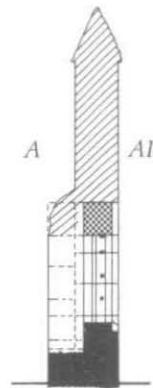
¹⁹⁸ Compare the windows in a late medieval fragment of the Austin Friary, Oxford, *Oxoniensia*, xli (1976), 164-5.

¹⁹⁹ B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 26.

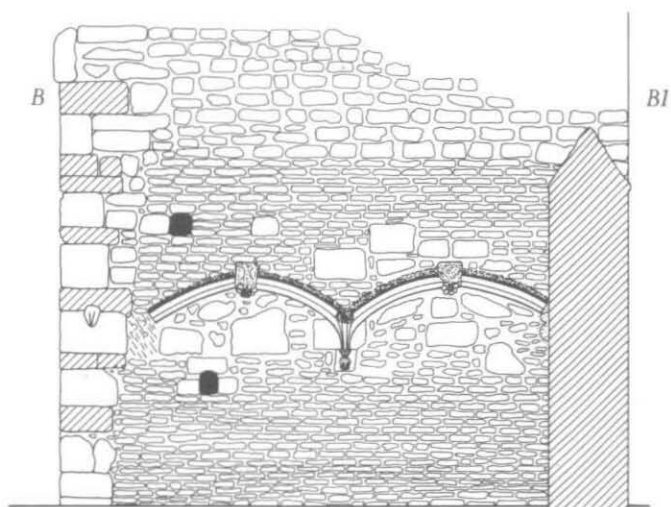
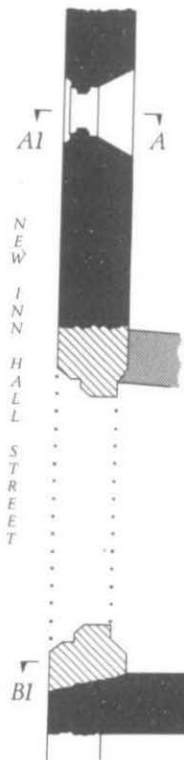
²⁰⁰ See note 195.



STREET FRONT



WINDOW SECTION



SIDE WALL

PLAN

Fig. 9

The remains of the college gatehouse in New Inn Hall Street. In plan and section, pre-Dissolution features are represented by solid black and 17th-century additions by hatching. The wooden gate, no longer extant, is sketched in from a watercolour of 1776 (Bodleian MS. Top. Oxon. c. 299 f. 214) and is not to scale. Only a general impression is given of the areas of plain rubble walling, which are too dirty for accurate drawing.

The side wall bears on its north face the hollow-chamfered wall-ribs of two bays of vaulting (Fig. 9, elevation ; Pl. II, B). The form of the central springer suggests a conventional quadripartite vault. It rests on a corbel in the form of a male head with large flowing moustaches (Fig. 10, B) ; this presumably represents a layman, and may have been one of a pair for the two Holdens, facing each other across the gate-hall. The westernmost wall-rib springs from the shapeless remains of another corbel. Each bay of vaulting retains its wall-boss, both carved to simple floral motifs (Fig. 10, C-D). The walling is of thin coursed rubble, though including several large blocks immediately above and below the ribs. The eastern end of the wall is finished with a row of large quoin-stones, with alternate courses projecting inwards as though to provide keying for a cross-wall ; the appearance of the masonry suggests that these are a post-medieval addition, which is confirmed by internal plaster-stripping. The wall has been heightened in larger, more irregular rubble.

The original form was evidently that of a conventional college main gate : a vaulted hall with an archway at either end, probably surmounted by a tower of two or more storeys. The window presumably lit a chamber adjoining the gate-hall northwards. On structural evidence, it seems impossible to date the fragments more precisely than to within the short life of the college.

22-24 *New Inn Hall Street* (Fig. 11 ; Pl. III)

Superficially, this is a pleasant but unexceptional building of *c.* 1720. Above the ground floor are a pair of very large two-storey cocklofts, adding a total of four rooms to the building, with the main roof carried down to first-floor level between them. A tall central chimney rises from this length of roof. The windows have simple moulded frames, and over the pair of central doorways in the street face is a plain wooden lintel, on which the numbers XIII and XIV are deeply incised.

Internal plaster-stripping in December 1975 revealed the presence of an earlier core, comprising two bays (each 3.75 by 6.15 m.) of a single-storey range running on the street axis. The street-front wall is of rubble, but the rear wall is timber-framed and still largely intact. The original roof-pitch is represented by the small section of low roofing visible between the two cocklofts. All the common rafters were removed at the 18th-century heightening, but the three principal roof-trusses survive embedded in partitions.

The south face of truss A was stripped completely, and enough seen of the other two to show that they are more or less identical, each having a tie, a collar, two queen-struts, and slots for clasped purlins and windbraces. Each tie has a curved brace from the corresponding post in the rear wall ; on the street side no such braces ever existed, and the wallplate (which partly survives, though cut by the first-floor windows) shows no mortices or pegholes for framing. This shows that the west (street-front) wall was rubble-built from the outset, though the large windows and doorway were presumably pierced later ; the wallplate runs along the inner edge of the wall, the top of which is battered to follow the roof-slope. A fragment of the eastern purlin, surviving where truss B clasps it, has the remains of a scarf-joint, secret-bridled with squinted butts.

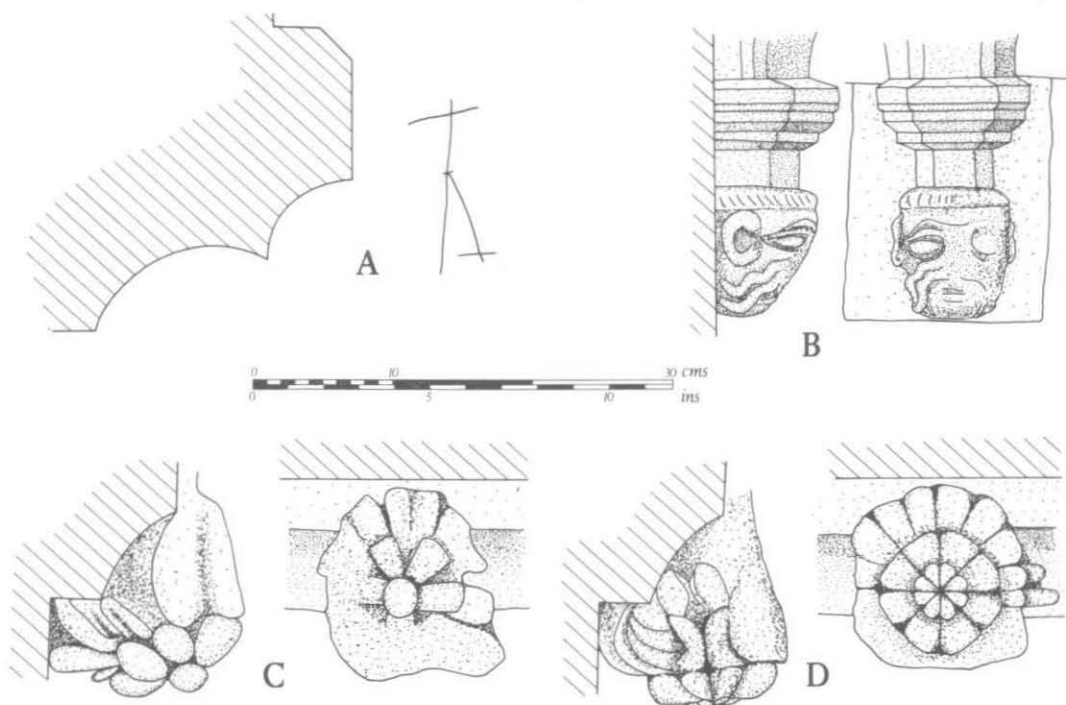


Fig. 10

Gatehouse details. A : Window-jamb : section and mason's mark. B : Corbel : side and front views. C : East boss : side and under views. D : West boss : side and under views.

The rear wall is divided into four half-bays, respectively containing (from north to south) : a large seven-barred window, five of the bars surviving ; a solid panel of walling (there are mortices for an intermediate rail) ; two braces ; and a fourth half-bay completely hidden. The window-bars are slender, of normal diamond section, and held by small unpegged ténons at top and bottom. The carpentry of both truss and wall is plain but competent, and none of the timbers shows any sign of smoke-blackening.

On each of the three trusses, a row of light vertical studs are morticed into the soffit of the tie, now invisible below present first-floor level. These are probably (though not certainly) original, and presumably supported light partitions. They are certainly not external wall-framing, and it is clear that the building originally continued for at least one bay in either direction. Northwards, the gap between truss A and Wesley House equals exactly one bay, suggesting that the two buildings adjoined before a connecting bay was demolished.

The development of the structure after 1675 is clear enough. Loggan shows a building running southwards from the gatehouse, continued by a slightly lower building abutting it (Fig. 4, C-D) ; these must respectively represent Wesley House and No. 22-24 in its original state.²⁰¹ The smaller building was transformed by

²⁰¹ See p. 72.

the addition of cocklofts to two of the bays and the demolition of the third to give access to a newly-created yard. This probably occurred shortly before 1729, when Brasenose leased all the properties on the frontage as fourteen numbered tenements (Fig. 8, plan).²⁰² Those numbered 13 and 14, the former with a gateway on the north, were leased to Eleanor Morwent and James Dodwell in 1729; the numerals still cut in the lintel identify these with the modern 24 and 22.

It is unclear from the evidence discussed earlier whether 22-24 New Inn Hall Street was standing when the site passed to Brasenose. We must therefore rely on structural evidence, and so simple a building is hard to date.²⁰³ The clasped purlin and windbrace roof-structure was standard for simple buildings in the Oxford area from the early 16th to the late 17th centuries. The scarf-joint is a common Elizabethan type, but an example at East Hendred probably dates from *c.* 1530.²⁰⁴ The short, straight braces in the rear wall-frame are paralleled by work of *c.* 1480-90 at the Golden Cross,²⁰⁵ but could be much later. The large barred window is late medieval in appearance, but smaller versions occur in Oxfordshire houses as late as the 17th century.

It is therefore impossible to establish on stylistic grounds whether 22/24 New Inn Hall Street dates from before or after the dissolution of St. Mary's. The nature of the building is more helpful. A low single-storey range of identical bays divided by light partitions seems a most unlikely form to adopt for a domestic development, however humble, in the early 17th century; it would have been far less convenient than a row of conventional small tenements. The window shows that the building was meant to be occupied, yet there is no sign of the smoke-blackening which a domestic open hearth would have produced. The one origin to which the building seems appropriate is an institutional one, as part of a long row of simple chambers. In a building that is otherwise timber-framed, the rubble front wall appears less surprising if we interpret the structure as a range facing inwards rather than as a series of tenements opening onto the street.

While it is impossible to prove that this building was associated with St. Mary's rather than with the Bridewell charity-school, it would be entirely consistent with a late expansion of the college buildings. An interesting parallel (on a larger scale) is the Long Gallery at Abingdon Abbey, another building that cannot much pre-date the Dissolution. The upper storey is stone-walled on one side and timber-framed on the other; the trusses bear mortices for light stud partitions which originally divided the range into cubicles entered from an open corridor. 22-24 New Inn Hall Street may represent a similar row of small chambers extending up to the gatehouse, shown as a single range on Agas's map. The replacement of the northernmost four or five bays in the early 17th century by a larger stone structure

²⁰² B.N.C. Archives, Oxford U. 41-52.

²⁰³ The tree-rings in a section of the west wallplate, kindly examined by Dr. J. M. Fletcher, probably span the years 1302-1418, but since the structure must be at least a century later than the last ring this is little help for dating.

²⁰⁴ C. J. Currie, 'Scarf-joints in the north Berkshire and Oxford area', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvii (1972), 183, 185 and Fig. 3.

²⁰⁵ W. A. Pantin and E. Clive Rouse, 'The Golden Cross, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xx (1955), 51, Fig. 12.

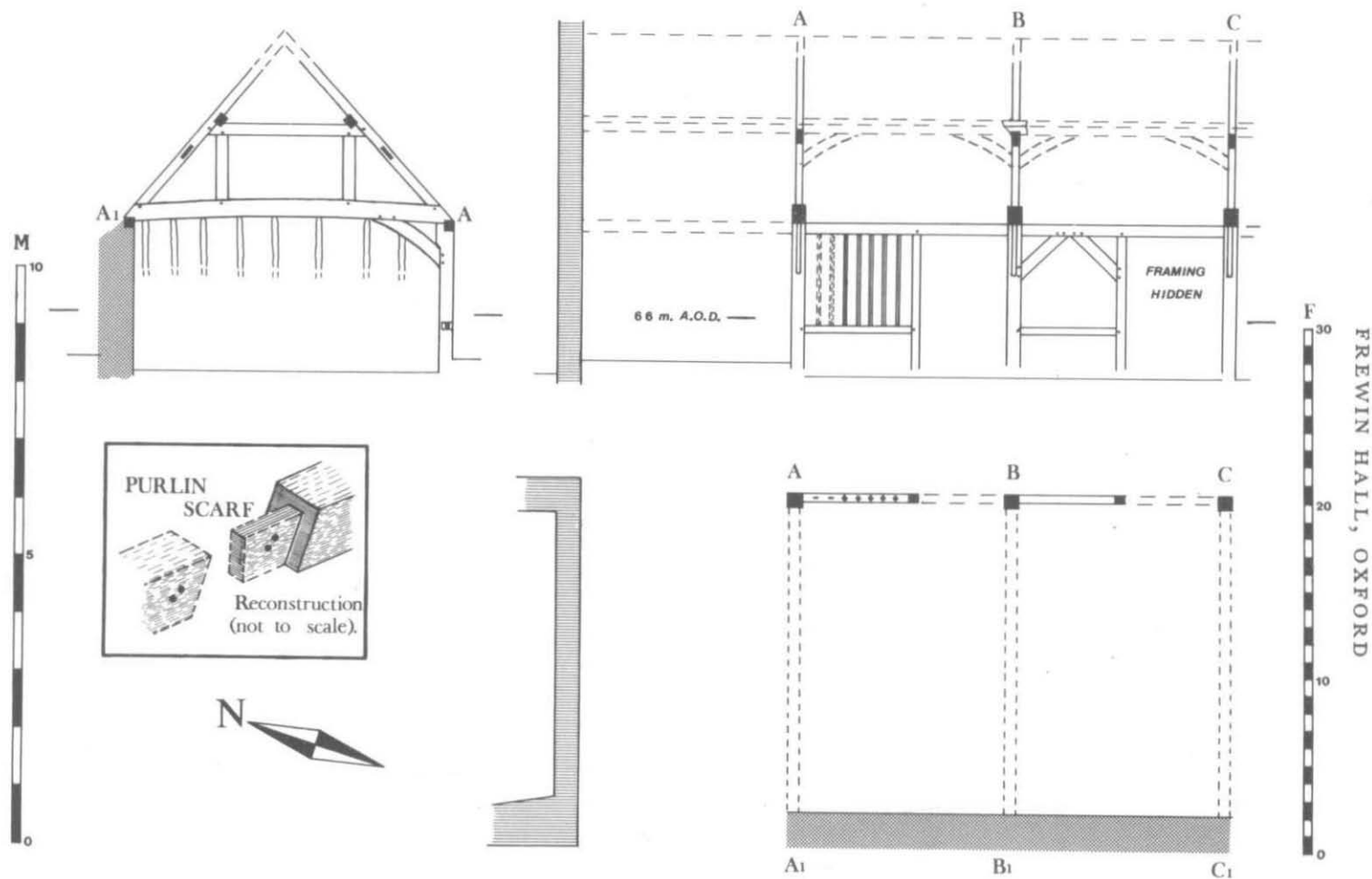


Fig. 11
22-4 New Inn Hall Street : the original structure.

(presumably the core of modern Wesley House) brings us to the stage of development recorded by Loggan. If this interpretation is correct, the range must have been a very subsidiary structure, tacked onto the main buildings to provide ancillary accommodation during the last twenty years of the college's life.

THE GROUND-PLAN OF SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE (Fig. 12)

The buildings of St. Mary's are perhaps the least known of all the Oxford colleges, yet there is no reason to think that they were undistinguished. The successive abortive attempts to erect the buildings suggest that something fairly ambitious was planned, and the work came under Wolsey's charge in the middle of his career as a great architectural patron. Among the larger English buildings of the end of the Gothic period it constitutes a small but significant gap which would be well worth filling. As we have seen, the physical evidence is very incomplete: we can only plot the chapel, the main gate, an ancillary range, and an earlier building which must have been incorporated. However, some scraps of written evidence are sufficient, when taken in conjunction with this, to indicate the layout of the main buildings.

Firstly, an inventory exists of the contents of the college, made in 1541 when its decay had already commenced.²⁰⁶ This is obviously very incomplete, and many empty chambers must have been left unmentioned. The parts of the college listed are: the hall; the chapel chambers; the kitchen chamber; the under chamber by the well; the nether chamber next the entry; the chamber over the entry; the chamber of the west side of the court; the south chamber above next New Inn; the west chamber; the under chamber next the kitchen garden; the servant's chamber; the baker's chamber; Mr. Varnam's chamber; the kitchen; the buttery. Most rooms merely contained miscellaneous furniture, though the 'chamber over the entry' and the 'chamber of the west side of the court' had timber studies of the kind recorded in other medieval colleges.²⁰⁷ 'Timber windows', 'boards in the windows' and windows with glass and lattice are frequently mentioned. The information about the plan of the college is slight. The 'nether chamber next the entry' contained nine boards nailed on the wall next the entry and four next the garden, showing that the main gate (presumably that on New Inn Hall Street) was near the garden, and the 'chamber over the entry' had a chimney. The 'chamber of the west side of the court' probably implies an enclosed courtyard or quadrangle. The 'south chamber . . . next New Inn' must have been in the extreme south-west corner of the site.

Secondly, the city council book notes in February 1576/7 the leasing off of parts of the property. John Wayte was to hold 'the church of Brydwell and hys garden there', presumably the chapel itself. The other leases concerned a 'pece of the cloyster of Brydwell', 'the great garden behynde the Brydewell church', and a 'garden grounde and a pece of the cloyster . . . in Brydwell'.²⁰⁸ Anthony

²⁰⁶ Printed Wood, *City*, II, 531-2.

²⁰⁷ Colvin, *op. cit.* note 127, 37-8.

²⁰⁸ Printed Turner, *Records*, 378. I am grateful to Mr. Malcolm Graham of the City Library for confirming that the counterparts of these leases are not still to be found in the city archives. The relevant page in the council book is torn, but Twyne's transcript (note 209) provides nothing that is not now legible.

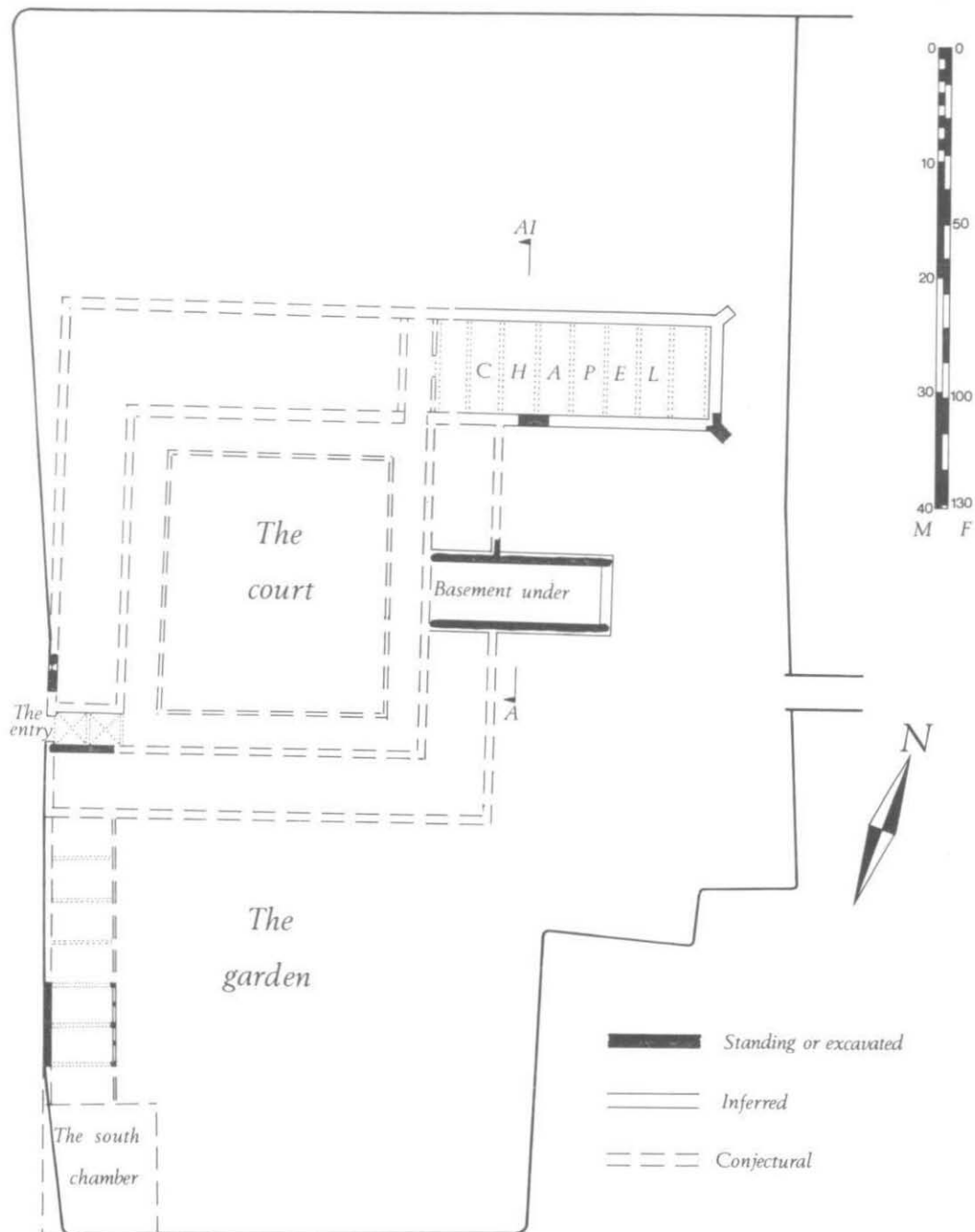


Fig. 12

Suggested reconstruction of St. Mary's College at the time of the Dissolution, based on structural and documentary evidence. For section A-A1 see Fig. 7.

Wood noted these leases from Twyne's transcript of the city book, adding a comment that through the usage of the tenants 'especially the cloister (which led from the chappell towards the great gate almost opposite to New Inn Hall) was much ruined and demolished'.²⁰⁹ Unfortunately, Wood does not give his source for the crucial phrase in brackets.²¹⁰ He can hardly have invented so precise a statement, and we have no choice but to trust that it was based either on a document or on traces visible within living memory.

How a 'pece of the cloyster' in the leases is to be interpreted is unclear, but it seems unlikely that either a cloister walk or a cloister garth would by itself be worth letting off in sections. The most natural interpretation is probably that the phrase refers to ranges of buildings incorporating a cloister walk. If the cloister led from the chapel to the gate on New Inn Hall Street, it presumably did not run diagonally: it must have defined two sides of a rectangle. Taking this evidence in conjunction with the *prima facie* likelihood of a quadrangle and the reference in the inventory to 'the chamber of the west side of the court', it seems evident that the former buildings of St. Mary's College included a cloistered quadrangle. The cloister must have run southwards from the west end of the chapel across the west end of the Norman basement, turning a right-angle towards the gate some 10 m. south of Frewin Hall. The quadrangle thus had the gate in its south-west corner, with the chapel and basement projecting off its eastern side; these were probably incorporated in an east range, to which the fragment of walling extending northwards from the basement (p. 52 above) may have belonged. This leaves 22/24 New Inn Hall Street as part of an additional and subsidiary range, as the structural evidence suggests.

In the light of this, it seems possible that the compiler of the inventory listed the rooms in a logical sequence. He walked in a clockwise direction around the quadrangle: southwards from the 'chapel chambers' to the south-east corner, westwards to the 'nether chamber next the entry' (which backed onto the garden), then to the 'chamber over the entry' itself, and northwards again to the 'chamber of the west side of the court'. He then left the quadrangle, went to the 'south chamber above next New Inn', and finally walked northwards past 'the servant's chamber', 'the baker's chamber' and so forth in the ancillary range. If this admittedly conjectural interpretation is correct, it would place the hall in the north range in series with the chapel, and the kitchen (less convincingly) in the east range.

A further piece of evidence is provided by the parish boundary which traverses the site. We have seen that a west-east wall roughly in line with the south wall of the chapel marked the northern extent both of St. Peter's parish and of the Brasenose property, and that this wall is shown by Agas and Loggan. Near the south-west corner of the chapel the parish boundary turns a sharp angle and runs southwards immediately to the west of Frewin Hall (Fig. 3, bottom right).²¹¹ This follows very closely the presumed line of the cloister, and the parish boundary may have become fixed in accordance with this prominent landmark. A parallel is the boundary

²⁰⁹ Wood, *City*, II, 233 (quoting the leases from Bodl. MS. Twyne 26 f. 595).

²¹⁰ It is absent from the first draft of his account of St. Mary's (Bodl. MS. Wood F 29a, f. 256b) but appears in the second draft (*Ibid.*, f. 249).

²¹¹ Cf. pp. 70, 77.

between the parishes of All Saints and St. Mary the Virgin, still marked by the internal line of Brasenose old quadrangle. The northern boundary-line of the property may indicate that whereas the chapel remained part of the holding, the north range, in series with it, had been alienated before the site came into the hands of Brasenose.

The reconstruction (Fig. 12) is not, of course, definitive in detail, but in general seems the only likely interpretation of all the evidence. It is noticeable that the chapel and the gate are both laid out on an almost exact alignment with the basement. A main south range extending to the street front beside the gate would leave room for four bays of the ancillary range between it and the surviving fragment (*Cf.* Fig. 8, middle row).²¹² It is impossible to tell if any other minor buildings existed on the site, but the southernmost third, adjoining Shoe Lane, was probably occupied by gardens. Both Agas and Loggan show trees in this area, and an orchard on the site is mentioned in 1546.²¹³

It remains to consider the architectural context of the plan thus recovered. A quadrangle was, of course, universal among fully-developed Oxford colleges, and although the main gate was usually central or near-central, the corner position occurs sporadically (as at Durham College in 1397). The distinctive features of the St. Mary's plan are the cloister around the quadrangle and the projecting chapel and basement ranges.

The cloistered main quadrangle was never generally adopted in Oxford, even for the monastic colleges. The only extant examples are William Orchard's Great Quadrangle at Magdalen, of the 1470s, and the grandiose design for Cardinal College (now Tom Quad in Christ Church) which has remained uncompleted since Wolsey's fall. We now have a third at St. Mary's, and it is scarcely coincidence that Cardinal Wolsey patronized the college and Humphrey Coke designed its roof. The brilliant circle of royal craftsmen whose names are associated with Wolsey's great buildings produced both the fan-vaulted cloister at Westminster Palace in *c.* 1526-8, and Tom Quad itself during the same period. Humphrey Coke seems to have been responsible for most of the timberwork in the major works from 1517 onwards, in close association with the architects William Vertue and Henry Redman.²¹⁴ It seems likely that at St. Mary's the same team produced a third cloistered quadrangle, earlier than the other two and perhaps derived direct from the prototype of Magdalen.

This likelihood is greatly increased by a comparison of the plan with Bishop Fox's foundation of Corpus Christi College, built during 1512-17 and apparently designed by Vertue.²¹⁵ The chapel here projects from the south-east corner of the quadrangle, and parallel to it, abutting the middle of the east range, is a 15th-century building employed as a kitchen. Apart from the absence of a great cloister

²¹² The suggestion that the simple range extended along the whole frontage and was punctuated centrally by the gate-house, adopted for reconstruction drawings published in C.B.A. Group 9, *Newsletter*, 6 (1977), Fig. 19, and *The Brazen Nose* (1976) no longer seems tenable.

²¹³ *Cal. Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, XXI (i), No. 718(4); and Particulars of Grants, P.R.O. E.318/919.

²¹⁴ See J. H. Harvey, 'The building works and architects of Cardinal Wolsey', *J. British Archaeol. Assoc.*, 3rd ser. VIII (1943), 50-9; J. G. Milne and J. H. Harvey, 'The building of Cardinal College, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943-4), 137-53.

²¹⁵ R.C.H.M., *Oxford*, 48-54.

and the different siting of the gate-tower, this is almost an exact mirror-image of the St. Mary's plan, very close in proportion and even incorporating an older building in the same position. Furthermore, it is Corpus Christi College that has the almost identical pair to the St. Mary's roof.

The available evidence thus suggests that Wolsey laid out the ground-plan of St. Mary's *de novo* after he assumed control of the work in 1518, and that William Vertue was the architect. Perhaps this is not surprising: the premises had apparently needed rebuilding in 1502, and little or nothing was done between then and 1518. Nor is it surprising that he should have given the work to his usual team of first-rank craftsmen. What must occasion some astonishment is the disappearance into total obscurity of a major work by the greatest architectural patron of the age.

APPENDIX A : EVIDENCE FOR THE OWNERSHIP OF SMALLHOLDINGS

C.E.A.	H. E. Salter, <i>Cartulary of Eynsham Abbey</i> , O.H.S., I, 49 (1906-7); II, 51 (1908).
C.H.S.J.	H. E. Salter, <i>Cartulary of the Hospital of St John</i> , O.H.S., I, 66 (1914); II, 68 (1915); and III, 69 (1916).
Chapters	H. E. Salter, <i>Chapters of the Augustinian Canons</i> , O.H.S., 74 (1922).
C.O.A.	H. E. Salter, <i>Cartulary of Osney Abbey</i> , O.H.S., I-III, 89-91 (1929-31); IV-V, 97-8 (1934-5); and VI, 101 (1936).
C.S.F.	S. R. Wigram, <i>Cartulary of the monastery of St Frideswide</i> , O.H.S., I, 28 (1894); and II, 31 (1896).
Evans	E. Evans, 'St. Mary's College in Oxford for Austin Canons', <i>Oxfordshire Archaeological Society Report</i> , LXXVI (1931), 367-91.
G.E.C.	A. Clark, <i>English register of Gadstow Nunnery</i> , I-III, E.E.T.S., o.s. 129-30, 142 (1905-6, 1911).
H.R.	<i>Rotuli Hundredorum</i> , II, Record Commission (1818).
Joep & Pantin	E. M. Joep and W. A. Pantin, 'The Clarendon Hotel, Oxford', <i>Oxoniensia</i> , XXIII (1958), 1-129.
NE	North-east ward.
NW	North-west ward.
Oxford Charters	H. E. Salter, <i>Facsimiles of early charters in Oxford muniment rooms</i> (Oxford, 1929).
R.C.H.M., Oxford	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, <i>An inventory of the historical monuments in the city of Oxford</i> (1939).
Regesta	<i>Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum</i> , II, ed. C. Johnson and H. A. Cronne (1956); III, ed. H. A. Cronne and R. H. C. Davis (1968).
R.G.	R. Graham, 'Description of Oxford from the Hundred Rolls', <i>Collectanea</i> , IV, O.H.S., 47 (1905), 1-98 (references to tenement numbers).
SE	South-east ward.
Sturdy	D. Sturdy, <i>The topography of medieval Oxford</i> , unpublished Oxon. B. Litt. thesis (1965), Bodl. MS. B. Litt. d. 1059-60*.
Survey	H. E. Salter, ed. W. A. Pantin, <i>Survey of Oxford</i> , O.H.S., I, n.s. 14 (1960); and II, n.s. 20 (1969).
SW	South-west ward.
Turner, Records	W. H. Turner, <i>Selections from the records of the city of Oxford</i> (Oxford, 1880).
Winton Domesday	M. Biddle (ed.), <i>Winchester in the early middle ages: an edition and discussion of the Winton Domesday</i> (1976).
Wood, City	A. Clark (ed.), <i>Wood's City of Oxford</i> , O.H.S. I, 15 (1889), II, 17 (1890), III, 37 (1899).

This is a tedious but necessary adjunct to the main text. Relevant properties are listed in the numerical order of Salter's *Survey*, in conjunction with which these notes should be used. Only facts with a direct bearing on the present argument are given here. Evidence for the location of smallholdings is only given where the identifications on Salter's map have been rejected.

NE 3-4 Inherited from Henry de Oxford by Bishop John (C.O.A., II, 20-4).

NE 9(vi) 7s. 6d. rent to Master Guy in 1279 (unpublished membrane of Hundred Rolls; see note 67).

NE 11-13 Eynsham acquired rents from these properties in the 12th century, none apparently connected with Henry de Oxford (C.E.A., I, 94, 197-8, 247, 272-4; II, 222-36).

NE 139 3s. 3d. rent to Master Guy in 1279 (H.R., 798a (R.G. 495); Cf. *Survey* I, 100).

NE 219 Bishop John's Oxford house, by St. Peter in the East (C.O.A., I, 276-9).

SE 1 Held of Master Guy in chief for 40s. rent in 1279 (H.R., 798b (R.G. 724)).

SE 24-6 The east half of 24 is probably the tenement held by courtesy by Master Guy in demesne in the parish of St. Mary, and 25 a tenement he held in chief of St. Frideswide's, in 1279 (*H.R.*, 803a (R.G. 908, 901)); 26, the corner tenement, was granted by Peter fitz Geoffrey to Robert Southam, retaining 20s. rent to himself (*G.E.C.*, 481-2); this clearly corresponds to the 20s. received by Master Guy from the property in 1279 (*H.R.*, 799a (R.G. 745)).

SE 118 Probably a tenement held by Master Guy of St. Frideswide's in 1279 (*H.R.*, 803a (R.G. 907)); Cf. *Survey* I, 221).

SE 119 Inherited from Henry de Oxford by Bishop John (*G.E.C.*, 680).

SE 140 Probably Master Guy's tenement held of St. Frideswide's at 8s. rent in 1279 (*H.R.*, 803a (R.G. 905)). St. Frideswide's had granted it to John de Weston at 8s. in c. 1215-25, and it passed via the Weston descent to Isolda de Brehull (*Survey* I, 231). This suggests that Guy held it as his son-in-law's guardian.

SE 159 Rent of 10s. and 2 capons to Master Guy in 1279 (*H.R.*, 802b (R.G. 890)); Cf. *Survey* I, 238).

SE 161 4s. 2d. rent to Master Guy in 1279 (*H.R.*, 802b (R.G. 889)); Cf. *Survey* I, 238). This and SE 159 have consecutive entries in the Hundred Rolls, and *pace* Salter it seems likely that they were adjoining properties.

SW 15 and Friars' Mill Henry fitz Henry granted the mill to the Friars. Master Guy held 15 (a vacant plot) in 1279 of his wife's inheritance (*H.R.*, 789b (R.G. 159)). Probably it represents the house reserved by Henry fitz Henry in his grant (see p. 000 and notes 39, 44).

SW 51 2s. rent to Master Guy as chief lord in 1279 (*H.R.*, 790b (R.G. 195)), to the heirs of Guy in 1317 (*C.O.A.*, III, 147), and to John de Northampton in c. 1380 (*C.O.A.*, III, 293).

SW 69 5s. rent to Master Guy *ut capitali sine medio* in 1279 (*H.R.*, 791a (R.G. 218)).

SW 149-50, 164 Master Guy has 6s. 6d. rent from 149 as chief lord in 1279 (*H.R.*, 792b (R.G. 279)); 150 (a bakehouse), and five appurtenant messuages probably represented by the tenements of 164 (though Cf. *Survey* II, 128), were granted to Oseney by Geoffrey fitz Durand in 1185-7 and confirmed to Peter fitz Geoffrey by the chief lord Ralph Murdac (*C.O.A.*, II, 80-1).

SW 152 By elimination, this must almost certainly be the land next to St. Peter le Bailey, granted by Geoffrey fitz Durand, which St. Frideswide's demised in c. 1180-90 (*C.S.F.*, I, 270); later leased back to Henry fitz Peter at 2s. p.a. (*C.S.F.*, I, 273).

NW 5 1s. 4d. rent to Eynsham in 1279 (*H.R.*, 793b (R.G. 323)).

NW 17 8s. rent to Eynsham in 1279 (*H.R.*, 794a (R.G. 335)).

NW 23-5 In 1279 these three selds owed rents to the Templars totalling 25s. 6d. (*H.R.*, 794a (R.G. 340-2)). This was evidently part of the 32s. rent which William de Ibstone granted to the Templars in c. 1200 from all his fee which Richard Brito held of him in St. Martin's, to hold as his father Henry, his brother Bishop John and himself had held it (Leys, *op. cit.* note 22, 101; Cf. *Survey* II, 151, where Salter seems to ascribe this grant to NW 22). The large property behind (NW 22) belonged to Abingdon Abbey, of whom it was held in the late 12th century by Ralph Brito (*Survey* II, 151).

NW 34-7 Four selds owing rents of 8s., 14s., 2s. and 16d. respectively to Eynsham in 1279 (*H.R.*, 794b (R.G. 351-4)); 37 had belonged to Peter fitz Geoffrey (*H.R.*, 794b (R.G. 354-5)). They are not marked on Salter's map, but their later history is linked with Piry Hall or the 'King's Head' (NW 44; *Survey* II, 157) and they almost certainly formed part of its street frontage (Cf. Jope & Pantin, 84).

NW 40 Apparently the corner seld, owing 7s. to Eynsham in 1279 (*H.R.*, 794b (R.G. 358)).

NW 43 In 1279 Robert Bodin held a seld of Eynsham for 20s., *et Abbas habuit de Henrico de Oxonia* (*H.R.*, 794b (R.G. 359)). In 1280 the Abbey granted a 22s. (*sic*) rent owing *de selda quam Robertus Bodin tenet iuxta venellam Sewy ex parte boreali* (*C.E.A.*, I, 294); thereafter it was held together with the 'King's Head' (NW 44; *Survey* II, 160; Jope & Pantin, 89-91, Pl. XVII); Cf. eastern abutment of NW 43a. It is thus clearly the plot on the north side of Shoe Lane and west of the 'King's Head', though Salter's map oddly marks it as a Cornmarket frontage property.

NW 43a Salter ignores this plot, which is numbered thus for purposes of reference. The plan of the 'King's Head' in c. 1832 marks it as 'held under lease from the University College' (Jope & Pantin, Pl. XVII). In 1450 University College leased to Robert Attewode a garden in St. Peter le Bailey parish, between the said Robert's garden to east, a garden of the College of the Blessed Mary to north and west, and abutting on 'Westwychenlane' [Shoe Lane] to south; it measured 84 ft. long on the west, [illegible] on the east with an angle extending for 15 ft., 44 ft. wide on the south and 43½ ft. wide on the north (Salter's transcript, Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. c. 445 f. 151). The bounds and dimensions prove the identification, and a tenement in Shoe Lane between William Gingiver and Alice his wife on one side and a vacant plot of William Bergaveny on the other, which University College leased in 1365 (*Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*) is evidently the same: in 1367 Bergaveny held the 'King's Head' (*Survey* II, 161) and therefore also NW 43 which lies between the main property and NW 43a. In 1361 Laurence de Radeford granted to University College a messuage *in vico vocatur Sewestwyche* between a tenement of William Gyngywe to west and a vacant plot [*i.e.*, presumably, NW 43] which Joseph le Sherman holds to east (Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. c. 445 f. 81).

NW 44-6 See *Survey* II, 160-2. In 1279 45 was a seld which *Ricardus Pache tenet . . . de Abbate [de] Eynesham et ipse de dono Willelmi Kepharm* at 12s. rent to the Abbot (*H.R.*, 795a (R.G. 361)). Other Eynsham selds fronting the 'King's Head' had been listed above (NW 34-7).

NW 48 and shops fronting 5s. 6d. to Master Guy among rents in 1279 (*H.R.*, 795a (R.G. 364)). Two selds in front had belonged to Oseney in the late 12th century (*C.O.A.*, I, 35). The main tenement was granted to Oseney in 1337, when it was stated to be in St. Michael's parish and *extendit se usque ad tenementum Johannis de Brehulle ex parte occidentali*; it was held of the Hospitallers (*C.O.A.*, I, 43).

NW 55, 54 and other shops fronting In 1138-41 Robert Foliot granted to Oseney *terram illam de meo feodo que iacet in magno vico in burgo Oxenefordie quam de me tenuit Augustinus sacerdos*; Roger Foliot his brother confirms

this (C.O.A., I, 50-2). Oseney built selds along the frontage up to Frewin Court; these are leased in 1184-98 as two *seldarum nostrarum quas edificavimus super terram quam Ricardus Brito de nobis tenuit in magno vico Oxen*, and *seldam illam que est propinquior vie que tendit a magno vico versus curiam Gaufridi filii Durandi* (C.O.A., I, 52-3, 59). The main property behind is leased at about the same date as *totam terram quam Ricardus Brito de nobis tenuit in magno vico Oxen*, cum omnibus edificiis . . . *preter duas seldas . . . et preterea totam terram quam Hun[] tenuit*, the buildings including *duo cellaria, unum ad votam et aliud plancheatum* (C.O.A., I, 60-1). The cellar *ad votam* must be the vaulted basement found in 1954, presumably the remains of Richard Brito's house of the mid 12th century (see pp. 53-4 and note 7).

NW 56, 61-2 Oseney property from the 12th century (C.O.A., I, 61-4). The rear part was leased in c. 1190-8 as *terram que iacet . . . versus murum Petri filii Galfridi* (C.O.A., I, 62); in 1205-21 the front part was in *profundo de terra Petri filii Galfridi*, and in 1246-7 next to *venellam que se extendit versus terram Roberti Dewy* [presumably one of the small properties leading off the lane] in *parochia sancti Michaelis* (C.O.A., I, 66-7). A 3s. rent owed from 62 to Eynsham in 1279 had been granted to the Abbey by Philip le Miller in c. 1240 (H.R., 795b (R.G. 378); C.E.A., I, 187-8).

NW 58 13s. 4d. rent to Master Guy in 1279 (H.R., 795a (R.G. 374); Survey II, 168).

NW 64 A message and seld owing 13s. 4d. rent to Godstow in 1279 (H.R., 795b (R.G. 380)), but none of the Godstow charters relating to St. Michael at the Northgate parish accounts for this (G.E.C., 502-12). It should probably be identified with the 13s. 4d. rent in Oxford granted to Godstow by Geoffrey fitz Durand from the land of Roger Sorus and Eweyn, which was of the marriage of Geoffrey's wife Maud (G.E.C., 383-4).

NW 66-9 Owed rents to Eynsham of 4s., 13s. 4d., 4s. and 5s. respectively in 1279 (H.R., 795b (R.G. 382-5)). The rent from 66 (held in 1279 by John de Bedeford) is explained by a payment of 4s. *de terra Henrici de Oxonia in magno vico iuxta terram Hospitalariorum . . . per Johannem Bedeford* in a list of Eynsham rents from St. Michael at the Northgate in c. 1270; that from 68 by a payment of 4s. *de terra Galfridi filii Durandi per Paganum Colesbourne* in the same list (C.E.A., II, 238-9).

NW 70 A Hospitaller's property. The front part, a seld in *magno vico*, owed a rent of 20d. *p.a. versus capitalem dominum Johannem episcopum Norwicensem* in c. 1195; the land behind was held of the lord of Stanton Harcourt (C.H.S.J., II, 270-1).

NW 77 In 1279 Eynsham had a cellar and solar worth 6s. 8d. (H.R., 795b (R.G. 393)).

NW 79 Owed rents of 2s. 4d. to Master Guy and 2s. to Eynsham in 1279 (H.R., 795b-796a (R.G. 395)).

NW 80 6s. rent to Master Guy in 1279 (H.R., 796a (R.G. 396)).

NW 81 2s. 8d. rent to Eynsham in 1279 (H.R., 796a (R.G. 397)).

NW 82 Master Guy held a tenement, part built on and part vacant, worth 53s. 4d. in 1279 (H.R., 796a (R.G. 398)). Part of this may have been the corner property referred to in an early 15th century note by Nicholas Bysshop: *Illa domus modo est quoddam gardinum iacens inter gardinum quod Johannes de Milecot yremonger habet, et terram de [sic] domino Petri Besylis militis iuxta murum ville Oxonie versus Elme Hall [i.e. NW 87] ex opposito muri ville Oxonie, modo in manibus canonicorum ibidem commorancium* (Nicholas Bysshop's collection, Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. d 72, 215-16). However, the valuation suggests a large holding, and Guy may have amalgamated this property partly or wholly with the main tenement (see p. 60).

NW 83 The main tenement; misplaced on Salter's map (see p. 54 and note 9).

NW 90 Held of Master Guy in 1279; 2s. 2d. to the farm of the town (H.R., 796a (R.G. 406)).

NW 97-8 Rents of 1s. 4d. and 2s. 8d. respectively to Eynsham in 1279 (H.R., 796a (R.G. 413-14)).

NW 99 In 1279 Godstow had a message given by Peter fitz Geoffrey; Peter's grant reserves rent to Walter Foliot and William Harcourt (H.R., 796b (R.G. 415); G.E.C., 526-7).

APPENDIX B : ARTIFACTS FROM THE SITE

THE SMALL FINDS FROM THE EXCAVATIONS (Fig. 13, 1-8)

Objects of Copper Alloy

1. Ring with stirrup-shaped hoop. The cavity of the bezel is filled with white clay, perhaps the remains of an imitation stone. Remains of gilding. The back of the hoop is broken off. D. 2.1 cm.; Orig. Ht. (including bezel) c. 2.6 cm.; W. of hoop c. 0.3 cm.; D. of setting 0.3 cm. 13th century. Cf. gold and sapphire example from Oxford Blackfriars in *Oxonienisia*, xli (1976), 214-15, and other examples cited there. (Tr. I, L37, c. 18th century; SF9)

2. Individual letter I from the inscription of a monumental brass, Blair Main Group size III. Ht. 3.8 cm.; Th. 0.2 cm. Early 14th century. An inexplicable find on a site which was secular before the 15th century. (Tr. IV, L6/2, c. 18th century; SF60)

3. Rectangular plate, each corner pierced with a small hole (one retaining a rivet). Fold-crack down centre. L. 4.3 cm.; W. 2.9 cm. Perhaps a belt fitting. (Tr. III, F23, c. 1520; SF57)

Not illustrated: Pin with round head, traces of silvering. L. 3.1 cm.; D. of head 0.18 cm. (Tr. III, L12, c. late 18th century; SF58)

Not illustrated: Strip, plain except for two lines incised across the end. L. 6.4 cm.; W. 7 cm.; Th. 0.1 cm. (Tr. IV, L24, c. 16th century)

Not illustrated: Five small lumps of heavy bronze slag were found in post-medieval levels (one from Tr. III, four from Tr. IV). Possibly relics of the gunfounding which took place in the chapel in the 1640s (see p. 72).

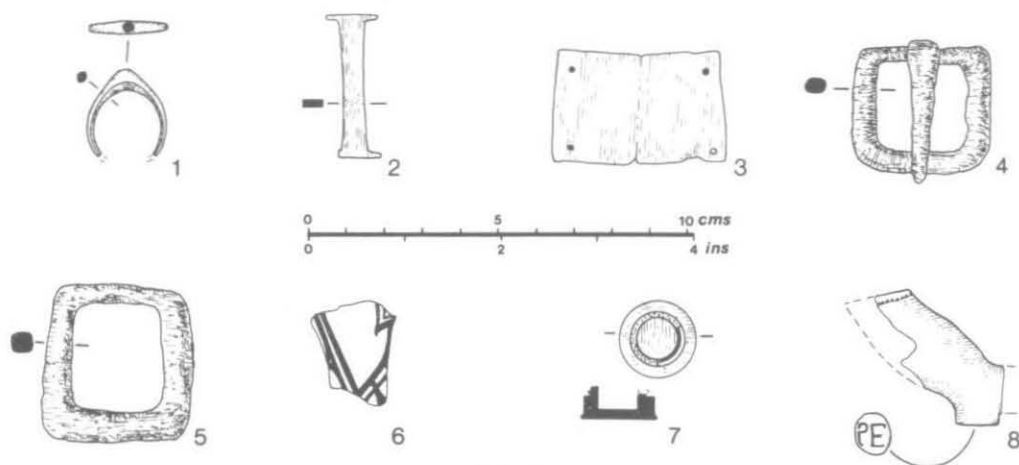


Fig. 13
The small finds. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.

Objects of Iron

4. Buckle of flattened D shape. L. 3.5 cm.; W. 3.4 cm. (Tr. I, L35, c. 19th century; SF55)
 5. Similar buckle, pin lost. L. 4.2 cm.; W. 4.0 cm. (Tr. I, L38, c. 18th century; SF32)
Not illustrated: Object, now almost shapeless but tapering to a point and possibly the tip of a blade. L. 5.0 cm.; W. (at widest point) 3.0 cm.; Th. 0.9 cm. (Tr. I, L47, c. 16th century; SF56)

Objects of Other Materials

6. Stained glass fragment, clear glass with dark pigment. L. 2.9 cm.; Th. 0.28 cm. (Tr. IV, unstratified; SF61)
Not illustrated: Two small fragments of yellow window glass. Th. 0.18 cm. (Tr. IV, L8, c. 18th century)
 7. Circular object of bone or ivory, hollowed-out and with the remains of a screw thread; apparently the lower half of a tiny box. D. 2.0 cm.; H. (surviving) 0.8 cm. (Tr. I, L38, c. 18th century; SF42)
 8. Clay pipe bowl. Maker's mark PE incuse on heel, milling around lip. Front broken away. Similar to Oswald Type 7a L18, and Bristol types; perhaps one of the Bristol makers Philip Edwards I (1649-80) or Philip Edwards II (1680-96).¹¹⁶ H. (from heel to lip) 3.8 cm.; stem bore $\frac{7}{16}$ in. c. 1660-80. (Tr. IV, F11, c. 18th century; SF59)
Not illustrated: Fragment of schist, probably from a hone. (Tr. III, F23, c. 1520)

Coin and Jetton

- Not illustrated*: James I copper farthing. North Type 2135, initial mark lion passant. 1614-25. (Tr. I, L38, c. 18th century; SF40)
Not illustrated: Nuremberg jetton. Reichsapfel in trilobe / three crowns and three lys. RECHEN PFENNIG / KILIANVS KOC ... VRENBURG. D. 2.2 cm. Late 16th century. (Tr. I, L37, c. 18th century; SF23)

THE POTTERY (Fig. 14, A-C). By MAUREEN MELLOR

The recent conversion of the Victorian houses on the western boundary of the site (38-48 New Inn Hall Street) involved deep contractors' excavations below and around them. These cut several large medieval and post-medieval pits, and two complete vessels were recovered by the builders.

The earlier is a baggy pitcher (Fig. 14, A) with convex base and basal angle heavily pinched out 21 times, and thin green glaze extending to within four centimetres of the base. This is believed to be the first complete pitcher of its kind in Oxford Medieval Ware (Fabric T). Two lower parts of baggy pitchers with similar bases in this fabric are known

¹¹⁶ A. Oswald, *Clay pipes for the archaeologist* (B.A.R. 14, 1975), Fig. 3G No. 7; Fig. 9 No. 8; 152.

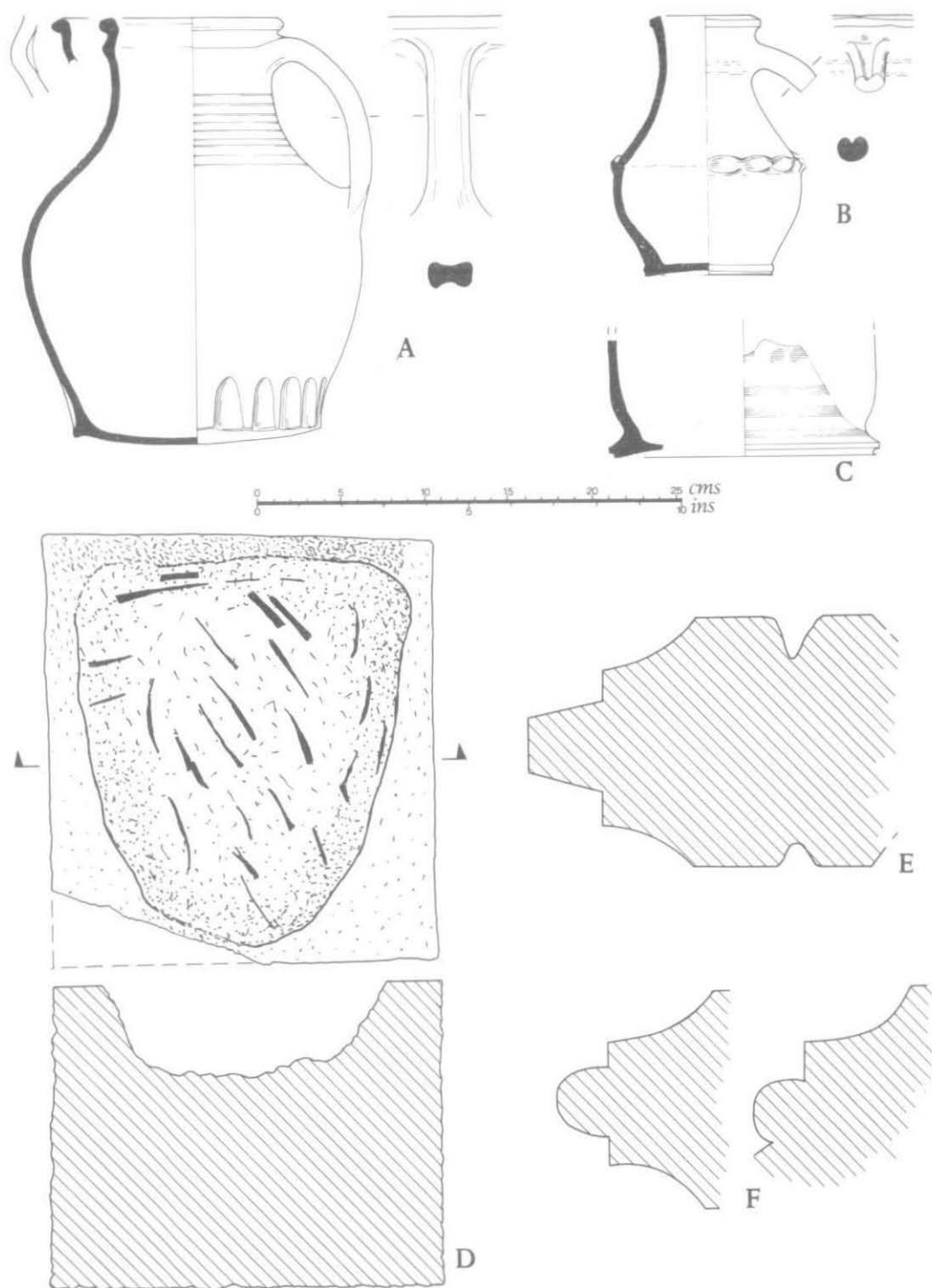


Fig. 14
The pottery and worked stone. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

from the Bodleian Extension,²¹⁷ together with probably similar pitchers in different fabrics.²¹⁸ These were dated to the early 13th century.

A small jug (Fig. 14, B), with an applied thumb-pressed strip around the belly, was recovered from another context. The upper part is thickly glazed with mottled green. It was fired to a high temperature, and this imparted a sheen to the lower part and gave it a near 'metallic' ring. Smaller jugs of this type in Oxford Late Medieval Ware (Fabric AM) are not uncommon during the 14th and 15th centuries,²¹⁹ but no parallel is known for this larger jug, which is thought to date from the 15th century.

The pottery from the trenches dug archaeologically was of little interest beyond the interpretation of the site, and is described where relevant in the excavation report (pp. 100 above); only a small amount of stratified pottery was recovered from Trenches III and IV, making the dating of the layers on this evidence rather tenuous. One notable sherd (Fig. 14, C) was from the base of a tinglaze drug-jar, probably 17th-century (Tr. IV, L6/2).

THE WORKED STONE (Fig. 14, D-F)

None of the items listed here was found during the excavations, though all are associated with the site. Earlier this century, the grounds immediately south of the house contained 'a collection of fragments that represent almost every phase of pointed architecture. Among these is a section of zig-zag moulding that probably formed part of the original structure. Portions of shafts and window-heads also remain'.²²⁰ None of these fragments can now be found.

A squared block of stone with a roughly cut heart-shaped depression in its upper surface (Fig. 14, D) was found during the building works, incorporated in a post-medieval boundary wall. The upper surface is smoothed, the sides and underside are rough-tooled, and the interior of the cavity has been left very rough with broad tool-marks. This curious object is probably best interpreted as the lower half of a monument containing a heart-burial, perhaps originally built into the chapel wall. The practice of immuring the heart in a small container of stone or lead is well-attested in medieval England.

A fragment of simple late medieval window mullion (Fig. 4, E) was used to repair an internal jamb of one of the windows in the Norman subvault. It presumably derives from a building of St. Mary's College.

On the demolition of St. Mary's College chapel some of the window-jambs were carried across to Brasenose,²²¹ and may therefore have been re-used in the windows of the new chapel there. When these windows were renewed in the 1840s, some of the old tracery was taken to the garden of Denton House, Cuddesdon,²²² where several of the library windows and the east window of the chapel were seen in April 1978. The jambs and mullions of the chapel window have sockets for at least two different sets of horizontal bars, which suggests that these members had been dismantled and re-erected previous to the last time that they contained glazing. On the other hand, these members were no different in appearance from the obviously 17th-century tracery. Fig. 14, F shows details of the mullion and jamb sections, since it seems at least possible that they represent the window-mouldings of the earlier chapel. This is perhaps reinforced by a fragment of a similar mullion built into the west gable-end of the present chapel and visible from the roofspace.

The Society thanks Brasenose College and the Department of the Environment for grants towards the cost of this paper.

²¹⁷ Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* note 179, Fig. 23, D and E, 99.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Fig. 22, F; Fig. 23, G and H.

²¹⁹ D. A. Hinton, *Medieval pottery of the Oxford region* (1973), 16; and Ashmolean Museum, 1915-35, 1965.63.

²²⁰ Paintin, *op. cit.* note 150.

²²¹ See p. 73.

²²² *Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs*, *loc. cit.* note 166.

PLATE I



A. Frewin Hall subvault : doorways in north wall.



B. Frewin Hall subvault : part of westernmost arch, showing impost.

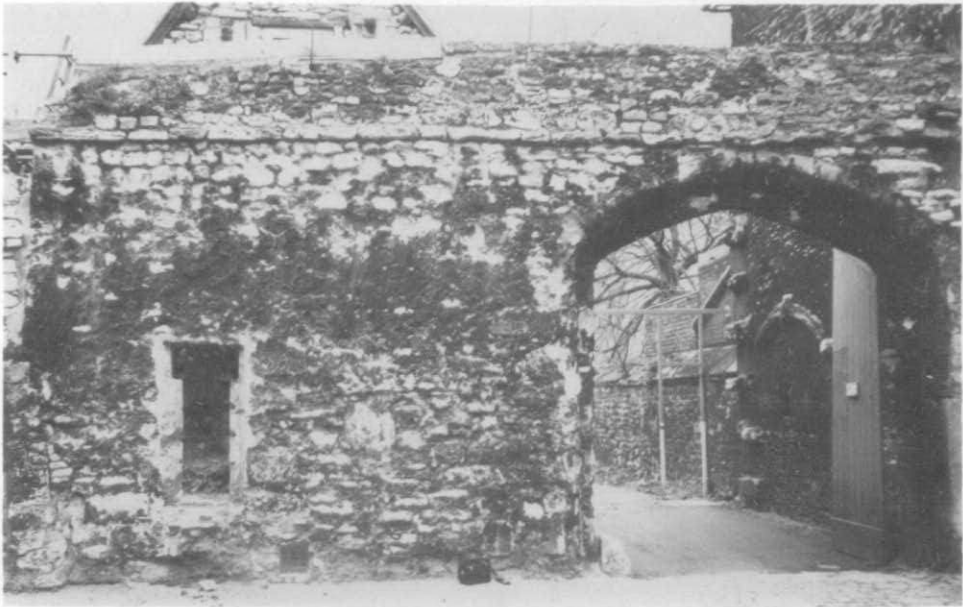


C. Frewin Hall subvault : part of westernmost arch, showing impressions of centring for vaulting.



D. Frewin Hall subvault : capital of inserted column.

PLATE II



A. The college gatehouse : street front showing original window and post-medieval gateway.

Ph. : Philip Riden



B. The college gatehouse : side wall with remains of vaulting.

PLATE III



A. 22-4 New Inn Hall Street : exterior from the north-west.



B. 24 New Inn Hall Street : first-floor room after plaster-stripping in 1975, showing the south face of truss A of the original building, and the top of the seven-barred window in the rear wall.