Archaeological Excavations at 54–55 St. Thomas's Street, Oxford

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SUMMARY

The excavations revealed evidence dating from the 12th century into the modern period. Environmental analysis showed that the site was open wet pasture during the 12th century, and development began in the early to mid 13th century with the construction of two cob buildings. One of these was soon replaced by a building at least partly of stone, and environmental evidence suggested that there was a medicinal herb garden associated with it. Three successive stone buildings subsequently occupied the site into the modern period, the last having been a public house. The second cob building was demolished in the 14th century and the land was subsequently cleared, remaining undeveloped until the 17th century, when it may have been occupied by a timber-framed house. The medieval development of the area is considered in the context of these results, and those from other excavations in the vicinity.

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological excavations were carried out by Oxford Archaeological Unit in January 1994, at the site of the former Cooper and Boffin Bakery at 54–55 St. Thomas's Street, Oxford (SP 5076 0616). A watching brief took place subsequently, during the contractors' excavation of building footings. The location of the site is shown on Figure 1 of the accompanying report, 'A Tenement of Roger of Cumnor and other archaeological investigations in medieval North Oseney, Oxford'.

The excavations were occasioned by a proposal from Stevco Ltd. to redevelop the site for blocks of flats, and were undertaken in order to mitigate the effects of the development on archaeological deposits. The work was carried out in accordance with a planning agreement made between Stevco Ltd. and Oxford City Council.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Documentary sources by JULIAN MUNBY

Most of the north side of St. Thomas's St. (formerly High Street, St. Thomas's) lay in the manor of North Oseney, that is the part of Oseney which passed to Rewley rather than

Oseney Abbey. Although the Rewley Abbey estates are largely lacking any documentation, it may reasonably be imagined that there were as many occupied tenements as there were on the better-documented south side of the road, from the 12th or early 13th century, and that some part of the detailed perambulation of the parish in the 1279 Hundred Rolls refers to these properties.[1]

While the south side of the road was eventually acquired by Christ Church, the Rewley Abbey holding was first obtained by Edward Powell of Sandford, and then in 1574 by Thomas Dutton of Sherborne in Gloucestershire. The Dutton family maintained an interest until the 19th century, but were owed few or no manorial services, while the tenants claimed the profits of the manorial courts and obtained tenancies of up to 1,000 years' duration.[2]

The development site consists of three distinct properties, 54, 55, and 56 High Street, for which there is a valuable series of title deeds dating from 1606, the longest series being for No. 54 (where Trench A was located), some to No. 55 and a few to No. 56 (where Trench B was located).[3]

54 High Street.[4] In November 1606 William Dutton of Sherborne in Gloucestershire leased to Andrew Hawes a tenement in St. Thomas late of William Bell, baker. In its later history this property, described as a malthouse in 1686, seems consistently to have been connected with baking or brewing. For a long time it belonged to the Rowland family; William Rowland, who acquired it in 1745, was a 'whitebaker' who died in 1767. It was described as a 'messuage and bakehouse' in 1836, and finally passed from the Rowland family to G.H. Cooper in 1901 (still on a 1,000-year lease), to become part of the Cooper and Boffin bakery. The building shown on the street front in early photographs is a pair of Victorian two-storey brick houses with stone dressings, and a large entry to the yard on the west, with an advertisement for Goodwin's Forge on the gate.

55 High Street. In 1606 this was occupied by William Bushell, but the next deed is in 1804, a 1,000-year lease to William Faulkner, and it passed to G.W. Cooper in 1867. On being transferred to G.H. Cooper in 1890 the lease was altered to a fee simple, thus extinguishing whatever remained of the manorial interest; in 1944 it became part of Cooper and Boffin with No. 54. On early photographs[5] it is shown with a building that is probably 17th-century in date: a two-storey building with a large attic dormer above, probably all timber-framed, and rendered. The west part of the property was an entranceway with one room over it, roofed in line with the rest of the building: the gateway has signs for Cooper's Bakery. By 1920 this had all been demolished and replaced by a large three-storey block in brick with stone dressings, and a prominent parapet with 'G.H. COOPER' displayed on it. This alone remained long after the nearby houses had been demolished.

56 High Street. The recorded history is shorter, and straightforward. In 1807 the executors of A. Hughes assigned the leasehold to Messrs. Morrell (referring to the somewhat improbable rent of two eels). This became the Turks Head public house, but was transferred from Morrells

[1] J. Cooper, 'The Hundred Rolls for the Parish of St. Thomas's', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvii (1972), 165–76.

[2] *Victoria History of the County of Oxford*, iv (1979), 279.

[3] Deeds penes Messrs Darbys slctrs, courtesy of Mr Clifton.

[4] The location of these properties has been established with reference to the 1772 Paving Commissioners' Survey, where it is recorded that No. 54 is the property of Mr Rowland, with a frontage of 40 ft., No. 55 is the property of Mr Gilder, with a frontage of 33 ft., and No. 56 is the property of Mr Beechey with a frontage of 17 ft.

[5] Photographs Minn 7/5B: Oxfordshire County Libraries 90/961.

to Cooper and Boffin in 1944. The building is shown in photographs as having a stone or rendered front, three storeys with parapet and horizontal bands, perhaps of *c.* 1800.

Archaeological Background (Fig. 1)

Three sites on St. Thomas's Street have been investigated previously. In 1947, S.E. Rigold identified the remains of a 13th-century house on the north side of the street, during the construction of a warehouse beside the garage of Hall's Brewery.[6] The precise location of this observation is not known, but it must lie between Nos. 54–55 St. Thomas's Street, and the site of Ayer's Yard to the west, which was the subject of Oxford Archaeological Unit's excavations in 1989–90.[7]

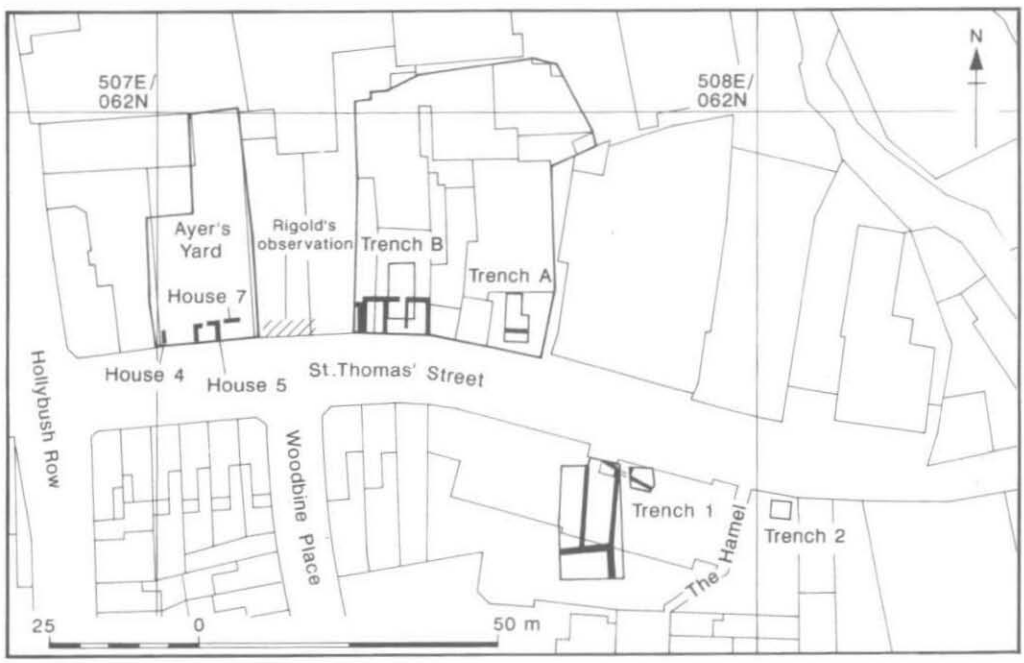

Fig. 1. St. Thomas's Street, showing the excavated site and earlier excavations.

Major excavations were carried out by the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit and the Oxford University Archaeological Society on the south side of the street in 1975 and 1976, when an area of approximately 250 sq. m. on the west corner of the junction between St. Thomas's Street and The Hamel was fully excavated in advance of redevelopment.[8] An unbroken

[6] 'Oxford (Hall's Brewery, St. Thomas's)', *Oxoniensia*, xvi (1951), 83; hereafter Rigold 1951.

[7] See the accompanying report 'A Tenement of Roger of Cumnor and other archaeological investigations in medieval North Oseney, Oxford'; hereafter Roberts, this volume.

[8] N. Palmer, 'A Beaker Burial and Medieval Tenements in The Hamel, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xlv (1980), 124–225; hereafter Palmer, 'The Hamel'.

sequence of medieval and post-medieval tenements were identified, beginning in the early 13th century. A small number of Bronze Age features, including a Late Beaker Burial, were also found.

At the west end of St. Thomas's Street, in 1989–90, Oxford Archaeological Unit excavated the frontages of three medieval houses on the site later known as Ayer's Yard.[9] These houses were dated to the 14th century, and rebuilt in the 15th century.

THE EXCAVATIONS

GEOLOGY

The site lies on the floodplain of the river Thames, about 150 m. from the edge of the Summertown-Radley (2nd) Gravel Terrace on which Oxford is built. The natural subsoil is alluvium, which overlies the gravel at a level of approximately 55.10 m. OD.

METHODOLOGY (Figs. 2 and 3)

Two trenches (A and B) were excavated on the site, each within the footprint of one of the proposed buildings. Both trenches were positioned 2 m. behind the present street frontage, in accordance with safety requirements, and were each originally designed to cover an area of 9 × 5 m. In the event, owing to extensive disturbance by modern piling, Trench A was restricted to a north-south extent of 6.5 m., except for a narrow extension of 3.9 m. on the west side. The trenches were sited between modern property boundaries, which minimised the destruction of medieval deposits within the excavated areas. To obviate the necessity of shoring, an area measuring 11 × 7 m. was machine-excavated under archaeological supervision to a depth of approximately 1 m., at which point the resulting surface was cleaned and recorded. The archaeological trenches were laid out within this area, and all further deposits were excavated by hand.

Heavy rain during the latter stages of the excavation caused an appreciable rise in the water table, making the excavation of deeper features difficult, especially in Trench A, despite constant pumping. Some of the lower deposits in Trench B, in particular the lower fills of features cut down to the natural gravel, were heavily contaminated and discoloured by a diesel fuel spillage, probably from the adjacent yard to the west.

Recording followed standard Oxford Archaeological Unit practice.[10] Trench B context numbers ran from 100 to 271, and Trench A from 500 to 697. After the completion of the main archaeological excavation, a watching brief was maintained during the contractors' excavation of the footing trenches. Context numbers for deposits in the vicinity of Trench B continued that sequence up to 290.

TRENCH A

Later medieval and post-medieval deposits were badly disturbed or rendered inaccessible along the east side of the trench, by modern services (see Fig. 3).

[9] Roberts, this volume.
[10] Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual, ed. D. Wilkinson (1990).

Each building phase was represented by the back (north) wall of a building fronting onto St. Thomas's Street. The 19th-century fronts of the buildings were seen south of the limit of Trench A in the watching brief; no medieval frontages were seen, however, and it must be assumed either that they were on the same line and had been destroyed by later building, or that they were forward of this line, underneath the modern pavement or road edge. Only building A2 showed any evidence for a possible north-south return wall, and therefore the orientation of the buildings could not be established. The area behind the buildings was almost entirely taken up with a sequence of intercutting pits, mostly cut down to the natural gravel. Many of these pits were severely truncated, removing the stratigraphic relationships between them; the ceramic dating of the pits was complicated by the considerable quantity of residual pottery in their fills. Consequently, the association of pits with particular building phases in the following account is presented only as the best interpretation of the evidence; it should not be considered to be definitive.

Description (Figs 4, 5, 6, 9 and 11)

Figure 4 shows the major features in each phase, and Figure 11 shows the sequence of site use in diagrammatic form. Detailed plans of Trench A are given in Figures 5 and 6, and sections in Figure 9.

Pre-Building (PB) activity: 12th century

Natural gravel was located at a depth of 55.15 m. OD. The earliest archaeological activity was a partly-revealed ditch, 689, orientated west-north-west by east-south-east, with shallow, sloping sides and a rounded bottom. The estimated original width of this feature was approximately 4 m. (see Fig. 9). The ditch was cut down to the underlying natural gravel, and may have served as a boundary ditch. On either side were mixed silty gravel deposits (692 overlain by 696 to the north, and 697 to the south), which are thought to represent the infilling of an earlier feature whose edges were not identified. No dating evidence was recovered, but these deposits overlay a deep-dark-grey silt (685), 0.06 m. deep, with a high organic content.

Environmental samples were taken from layer 685, and from layer 686, the bottom fill of ditch 689 (Sample Nos. 29 and 30 respectively). Layer 685 contained a typical stagnant water fauna, while ditch fill 686 contained the remains of grassland flora, including elements of hay-meadow and cereal grain. Pottery from deposits of this phase dated from the late 12th to the early 13th century.

Building A1: early/mid 13th century

The structure was defined by a west-east orientated cob wall, contemporary postholes and floor layers to the south, and associated pits to the north.

The cob wall, 646, survived to a width of 0.80 m. and a height of 0.20 m., and was constructed upon the uppermost fill (662) of ditch 689. Patches of dumped gravelly clay (650) overlying 662 may represent a final make-up layer deposited before the wall was built. The wall extended the full width of the trench, although it was heavily truncated on the east side. The cob was characterised as a brown silty clay with 40% gravel. Within the cob, a small stone-packed posthole 665 was located near the west side of the trench, and may have had a structural function. There was no evidence of render on either side of the wall.

A complete early 13th-century pot (647) was recovered from the south-east corner of the trench; it came from layer 648, which was either part of the ditch infilling, or part of the floor make-up.

Approximately 0.50 m. south of wall 646 were two postholes, 652 and 655, aligned west-east; they were approximately 0.45 m. wide and 0.25 m. deep, and were 0.60 m. apart. Each contained limestone pads and remnants of stone packing, and their upper fills contained concentrations of charcoal, defining post-pipes 0.25 m. square. Samples of the charcoal showed that the postholes had contained square-cut oak timbers, implying a substantial timber structural element to the building.

Abutting the south side of wall 646 were floor layers 651 and 649, comprising silty gravel with patches of burning and areas of ash, particularly in the north-west corner, suggesting either proximity of a hearth, or the presence of a brazier. The relationship of these layers with the postholes 652 and 655 was not clear during the excavation. To the north of wall 646, one probably contemporary pit was identified (669); it was 0.60 m. wide and 0.50 m. deep, and was cut into the contemporary ground surface 602. Early 13th-century pottery was recovered from this layer, which, where not truncated by later features, abutted wall 646. Pottery recovered from the wall fabric and the floor make-up layer suggests an early to mid 13th-century date for the construction of the building.

Fig. 2. Site plan showing the location of the trenches and the area of the watching brief.

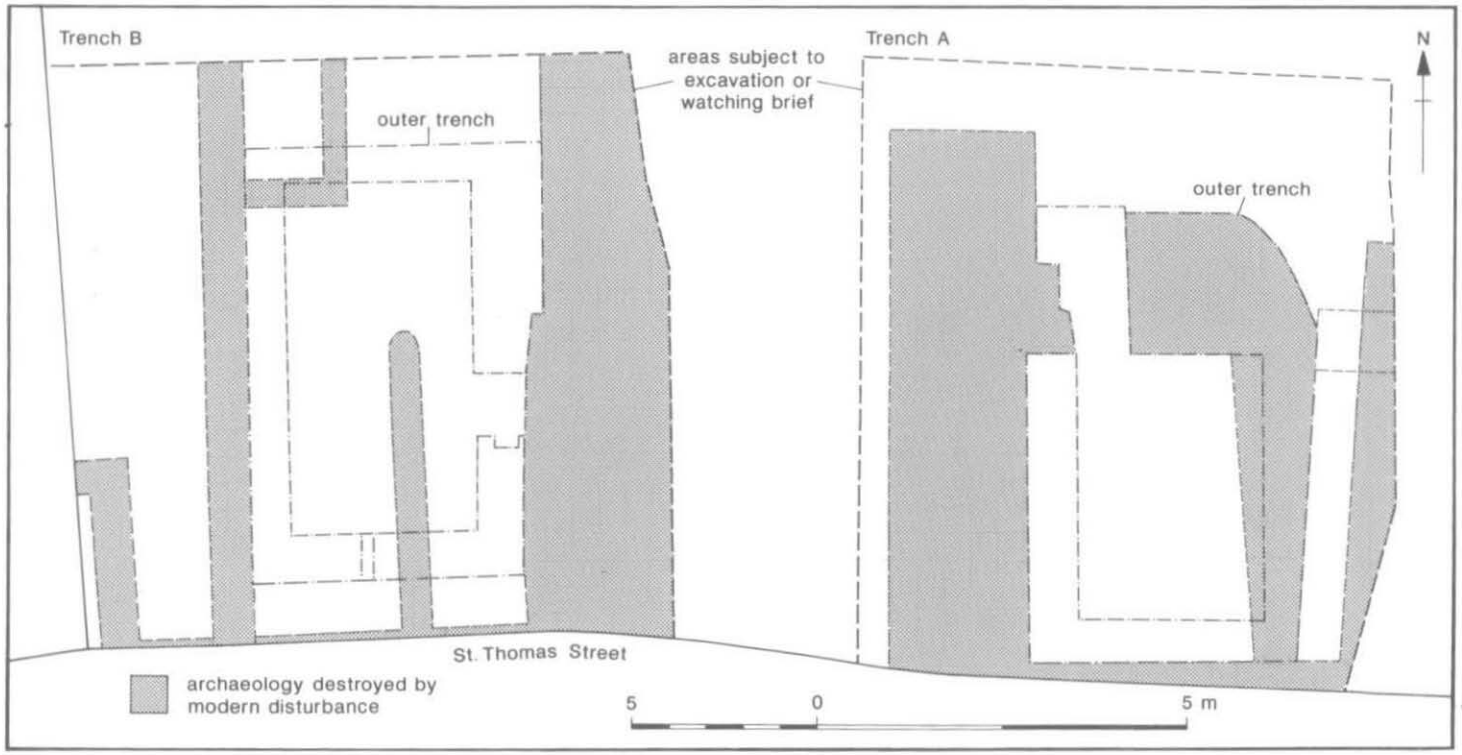

Fig. 3. Site plan showing archaeology destroyed by modern disturbance.

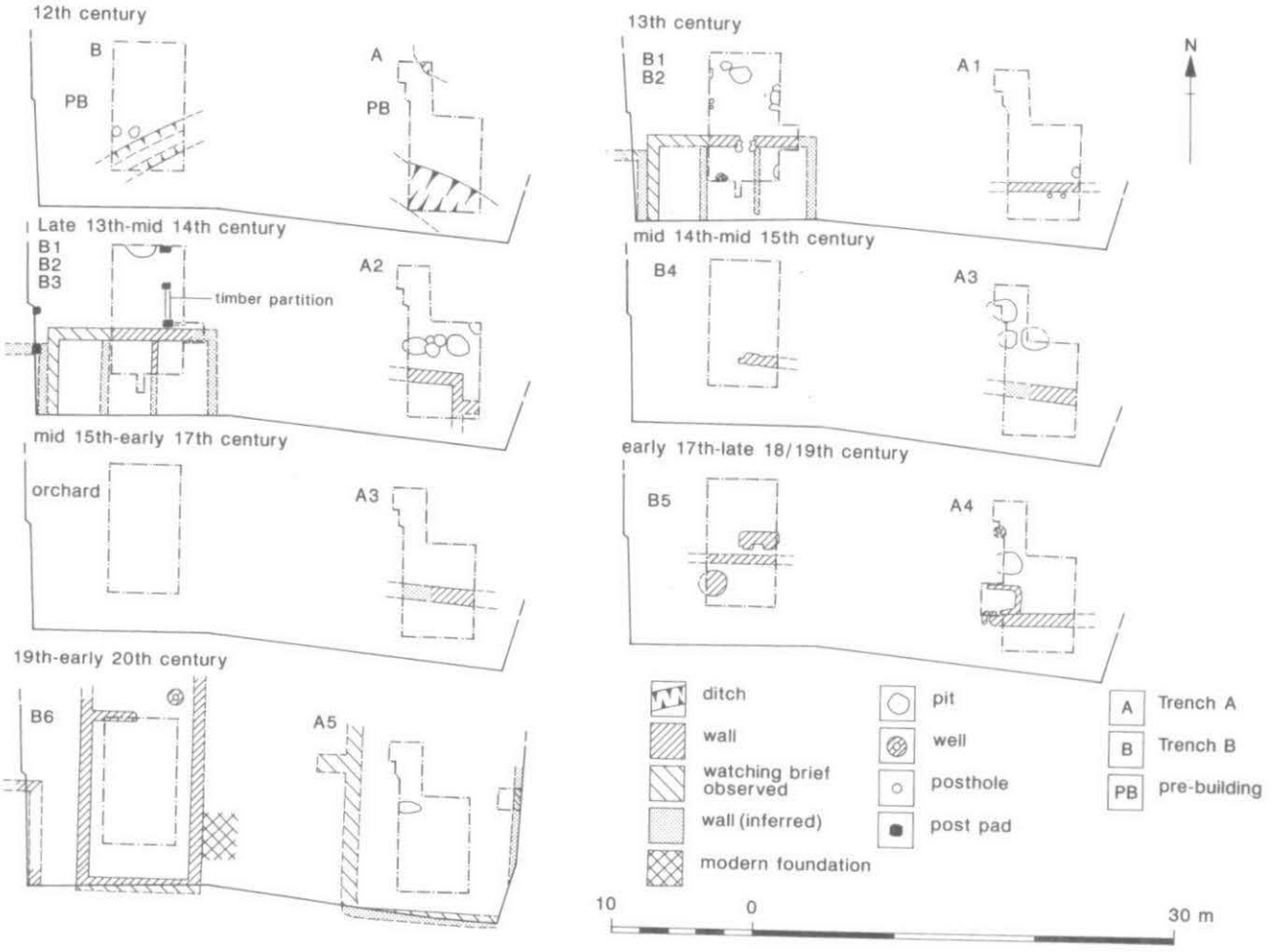

Fig. 4. Phase plans of Trenches A and B showing major features.

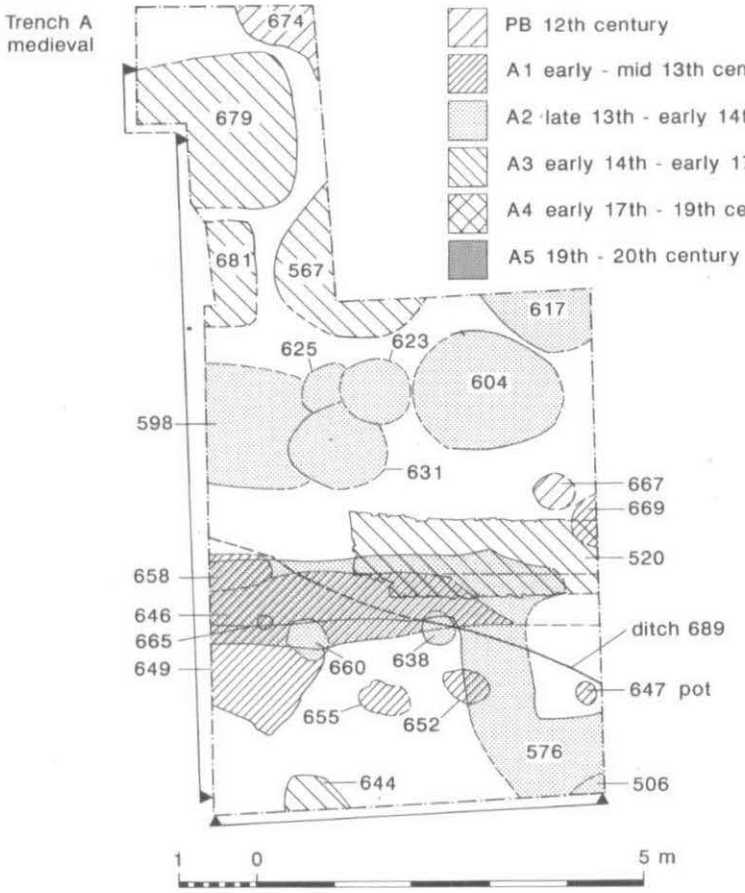

Fig. 5. Detailed plan of Trench A, medieval features.

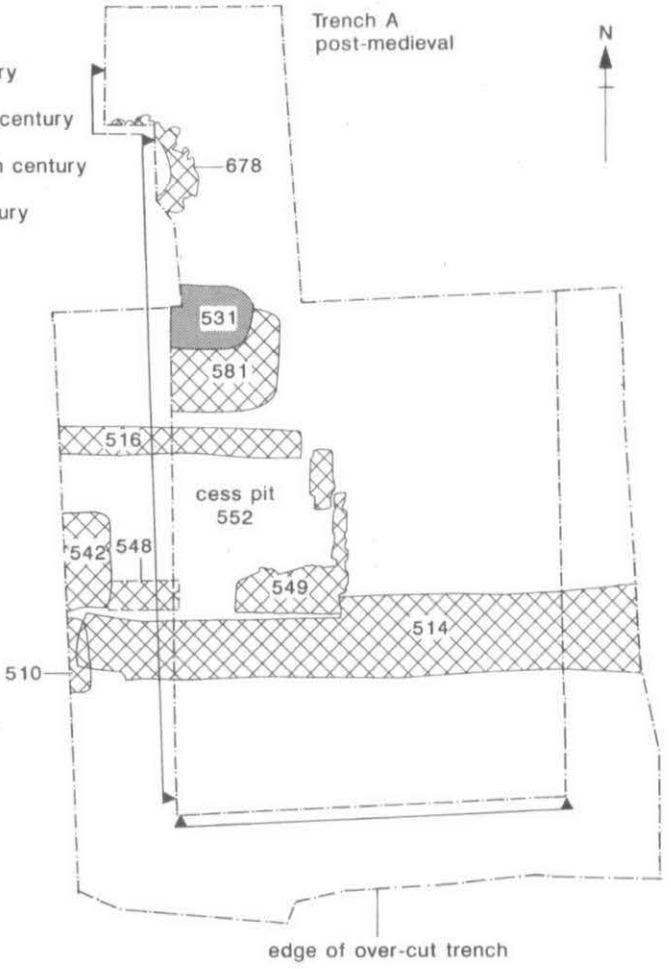

Fig. 6. Detailed plan of Trench A, post-medieval features.

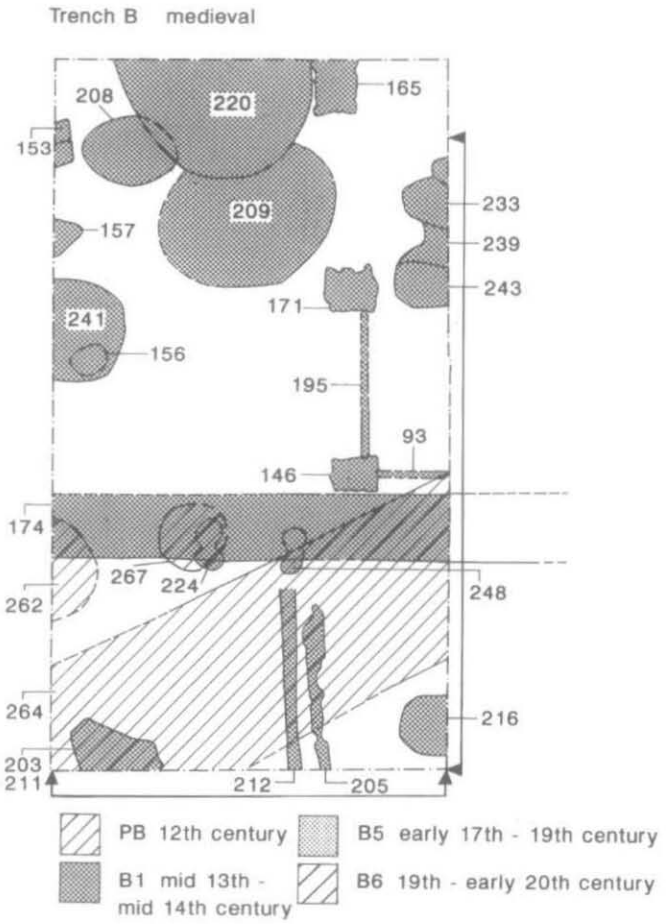

Fig. 7. Detailed plan of Trench B, medieval features.

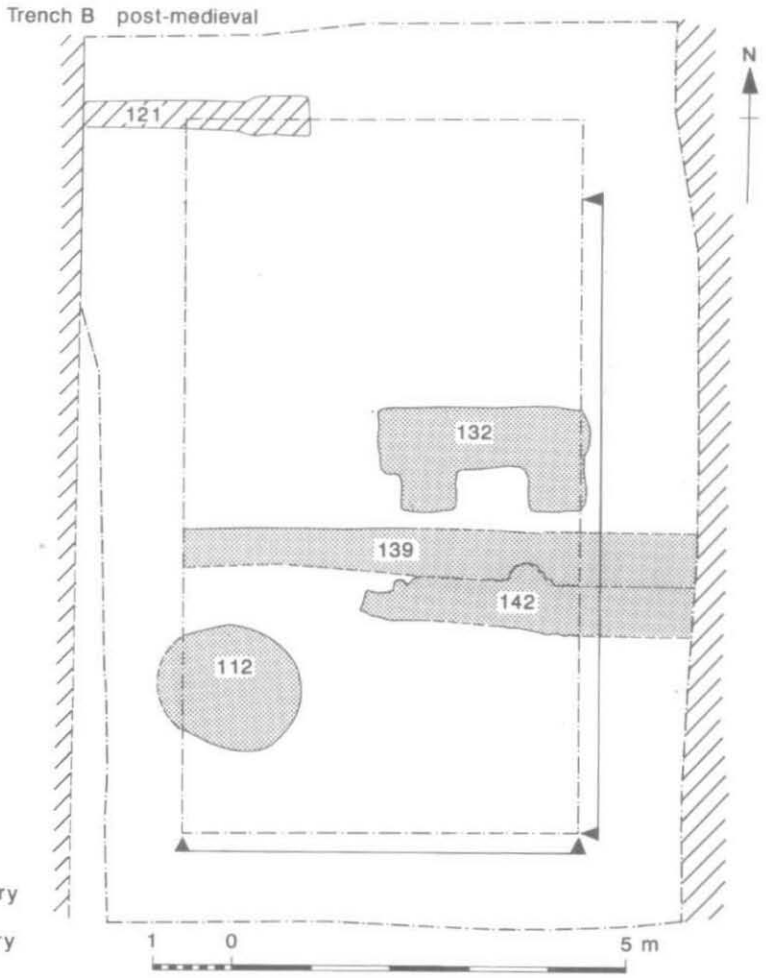

Fig. 8. Detailed plan of Trench B, post-medieval features.

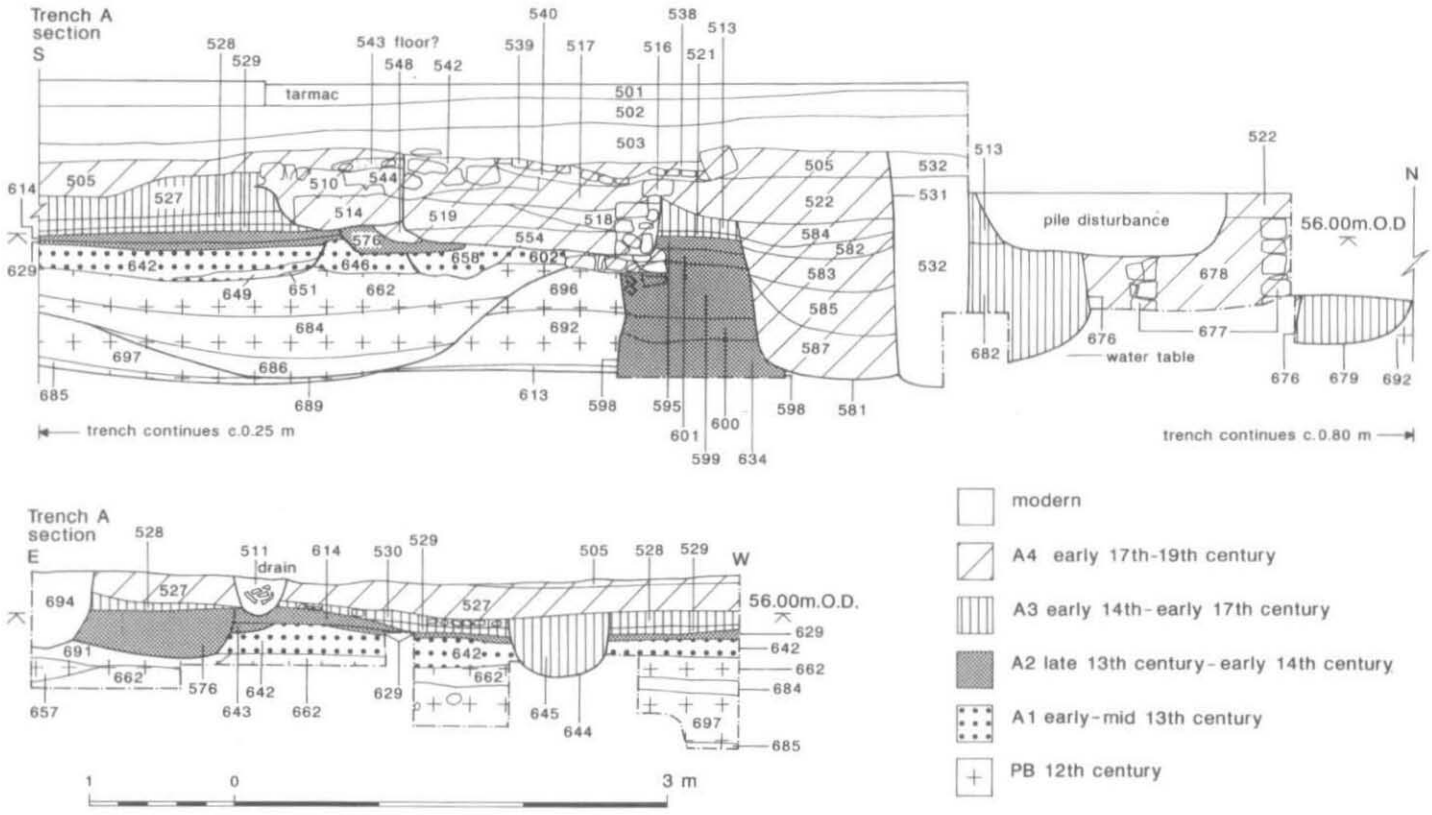

Fig. 9 Sections of Trench A.

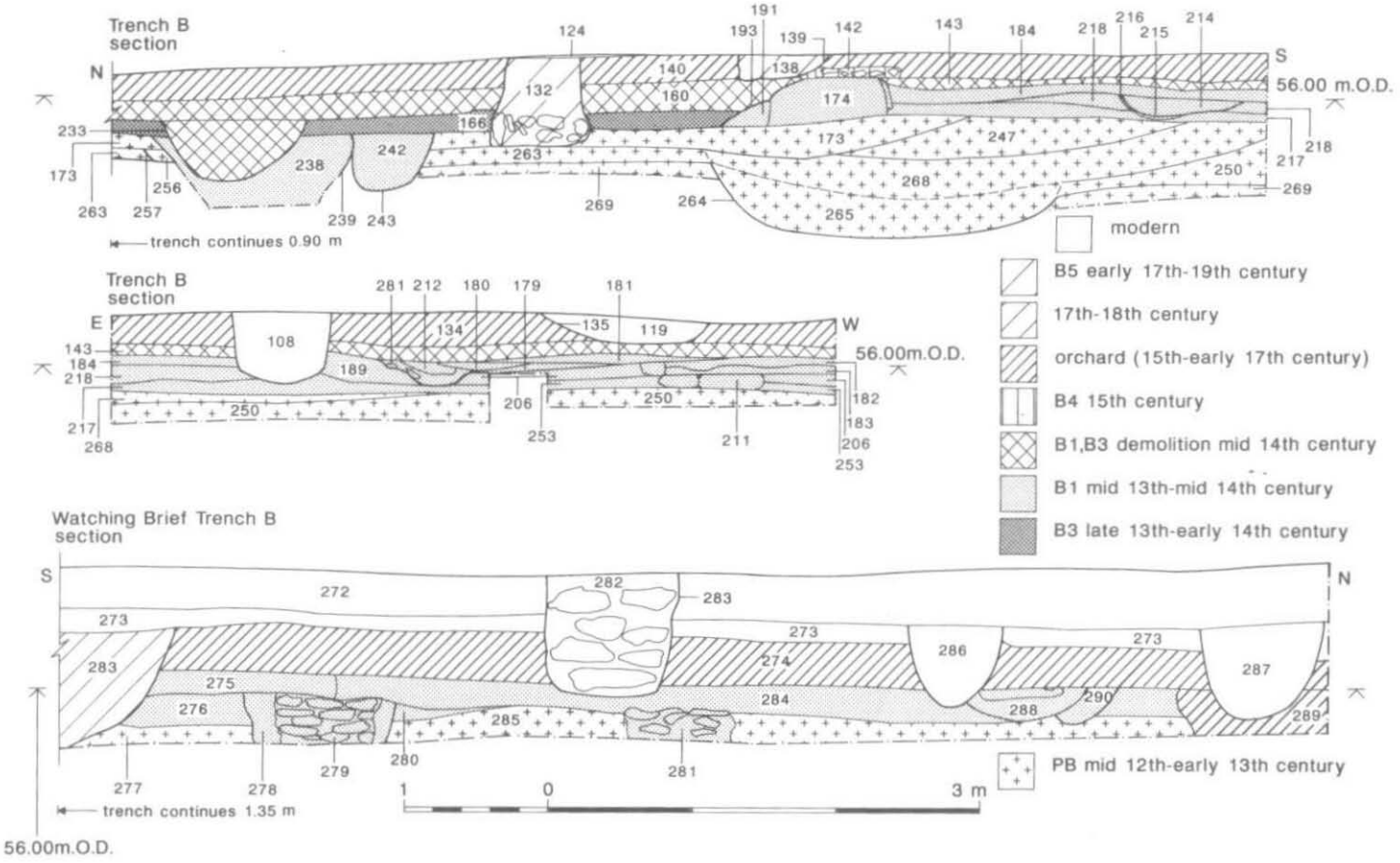

Fig. 10. Sections of Trench B.

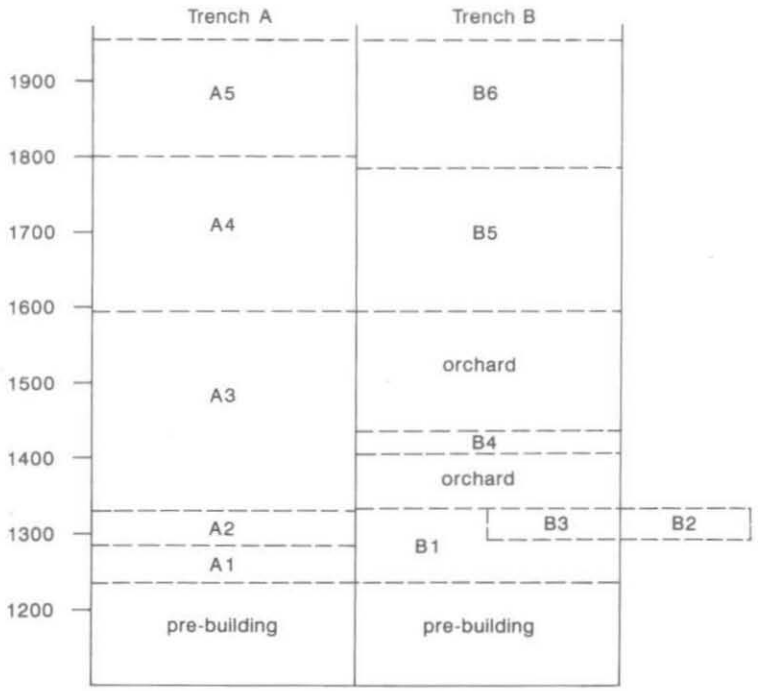

Fig. 11. Site development diagram.

Transitional: Building A1–A2

Sealing floor layer 649 was a substantial levelling layer of silty clay, 642. The interpretation of this layer is difficult. It appeared to seal postholes 652 and 655, and this would suggest that it postdated the demolition of building A1, but it also appeared to respect wall 646 (Fig. 9), and might therefore have been an internal levelling of the floors during the lifetime of building A1. However, a similar profile could have arisen from levelling of the building after the demolition of wall 646. The pottery assemblage contained both material consistent with the early to mid 13th-century dating of building A1, and material of the late 13th century and 14th century, contemporary with the dating of building A2 (see below). In retrospect, it seems likely that 642 was a conflation of at least two separate layers.

Against the north side of wall 646 was an indistinct U-shaped cut (658), 1 m. long and 0.30 m. wide, continuing westwards beyond the trench. The function of this feature is unclear, as it appeared to truncate the north face of the wall (see Fig. 5), and may therefore relate to its demolition, if not the beginning of building A2. Both feature 658 and cob wall 646 were truncated by the footing of wall 630/robber trench 576 (see building A2, below).

Building A2: late 13th to early 14th century

The building was identified from an ill-defined robber trench of a partly-robbed west-east wall. Floor surfaces were identified to the south of the wall line, and a sequence of large pits to the north.

Partly superimposed on the remains of wall 646 was a stone wall, 630, of limestone rubble in a clay matrix. In plan the wall had an apparent dog-leg appearance, extending from the west side of the trench for approximately 4 m.,

turning south for 1 m., and then continuing eastwards into the east side of the trench. The north-south length of wall also continued into the south section of the trench, and presumably represents either a partition wall or the east return wall of the building. The robber trench, 576, of wall 630 averaged 0.80 m. in width and 0.20 m. in depth, and did not extend more than 0.10 m. below the contemporary floors, suggesting that the original wall was of an insubstantial nature. This could indicate that the building was a structure of timber, or conceivably of cob, resting on stone footings. The latest pottery recovered from the fill of the robber trench dated to the late 13th century.

Two postholes, 638 and 660 (fill 661), were identified against the south face of the wall, cut into the south face of the earlier wall 646, and into building A1 floor layers 649 and 651. Both postholes contained stone pads. They also contained pottery of the late 12th and early 13th centuries, but this is probably residual.

Overlying the levelling layer 642 (see above) was a dark silty clay layer 629, which was confined to the area south of wall 630. This layer was heavily impregnated with charcoal and ash, suggesting that it served as a floor surface. Early 14th-century pottery was recovered from this layer. Layer 629 was overlain by 614, a further dumped deposit of silty clay.

The south-east corner of the revealed part of the building contained an area of disturbed burning, ash and burnt limestone 597 and 596, overlying 614 and 629. A charred plant sample from 597 (sample 8) produced evidence of threshed cereal straw suggesting that the east end of the building may have contained a hearth or oven, or at least was the site of a brazier, possibly fuelled by straw. There is also the possibility that the straw represents the remains of a thatched roof.

North of the robber trench 576 was a sequence of mainly large pits cutting a contemporary surface 601, and later 603. Layers 601 and 603 abutted the edge of robber trench 576, where not truncated by later activity, and they therefore probably also respected wall 630. Pottery from layer 603 can be dated from the mid 13th century onwards. Two of the earliest pits in the sequence, 598 and 604 (fill 607), were each approximately 1.2 m. wide and at least 1 m. deep. Owing to flooding, neither was fully excavated, although 604 (fill 607) was sampled for waterlogged material, which suggested that it functioned as a rubbish pit (see below). Later pits 617 and 635 (fill 637) were of a comparable size, and 635 (fill 637) was also sampled for environmental remains. There were also some smaller pits, including 623, 625 and 631. The pottery sequence from the earliest fills of 598 to the latest fills of the latest pits, suggests a date range from the late 13th century to the early 14th century, and the quantities recovered indicate a fairly intense period of occupation and activity.

A layer of silty clay, 595, which was 0.20 m. deep, sealed the area to the north of the wall, and the pits mentioned above. There was no surviving relationship between layer 595 and robber trench 576. Some sherds of 16th-century pottery were recovered from this layer, but the bulk of the pottery is of late 13th- to early 14th-century date. It was recorded during the excavation that this layer appeared to be heavily disturbed by later activity, and it is reasonable to assume that the later pottery is intrusive, and that layer 595 represents the end of phase A2.

Building A3: early 14th century to early 17th? century

This phase comprised an unmortared coursed rubble wall, 520, oriented west-east and built slightly to the north of its predecessor, 630.

Wall 520 was 0.80 m. wide, roughly faced on the north side, and survived to a maximum of three courses. The wall extended across the trench, but the west end was truncated by later activity. South of wall 520 were two related floor layers 529 and 528, both gravelly silts, and a disturbed layer of possible cobbling, 530. At the east end of the trench, these layers sealed the backfilled robber trench of Building A2. Pottery from these floor layers suggests a date range from the mid 14th century to the late 15th century.

To the north of wall 520 was a large sub-rectangular pit 567, 0.5 m. deep with shallow sloping sides, and accumulated fills of a cess character. Only the lowest fill (609) produced any pottery, a sherd datable to the 14th or 15th century. Slumping into the top fills of 567 was a compacted gravel surface 521, overlain by a spread of rubble 575, which could represent a yard surface. 575 and 521 were cut by three postholes 589, 591, and 593. Sixteenth-century dating evidence was recovered from the fill of 591. Their position relative to each other and to the wall 520 did not suggest any clear function; indeed they need not be contemporaneous.

Transitional: Buildings A3–A4 17th century–18th century

Sealing the area north of the wall and overlying the demolished wall itself was a 0.15 m. deep silty clay layer, 513. Where this slumped into the pit fills a spread of rubble, 523, was noted, which could represent the demolished fabric of wall 520. To the south of the wall was a layer of silty clay, 527, which ranged from 0.15 m. to 0.30 m. in depth; it was very similar to layer 513. Pottery evidence from 513 suggests that it accumulated during the late 17th and 18th centuries.

Building A4: early 17th century to ?19th century

This phase was represented by a west–east wall incorporating two phases of a stone-lined feature, possibly a cess pit, and a well to the north.

Immediately south of wall 520 was a mortared limestone block foundation 514, orientated west–east, approximately 1 m. wide and surviving to a maximum height of 0.30 m. Pottery from the wall mortar suggests a construction date in the early 17th century. No evidence of a floor survived to the south of the wall, so it is reasonable to conclude either that the floor had been removed by later activity or, more likely, that the building had a suspended wooden floor. North of the wall, in the north-west corner of the trench, was a large vertically-sided pit 581, which produced 17th- to 18th-century pottery.

Immediately south of 581, and built into the north face of the wall 514, was a rectangular stone-lined pit 552, with an internal dimension of 1 m. north-south, and 2.4 m. west-east. Pottery dating from the fabric of the pit walls suggests a similar construction date to 514. The base of the pit was flat, and filled with a compact layer of greenish grey silty clay 554. This layer contained pottery of a range from the late 12th to the 17th century, which could indicate that it had been dug from the earlier infilled pits in the vicinity and served as a lining to the pit. The most likely interpretation of the function of this pit seems to be as a cess pit. Its apparent lack of depth relative to the supposed floor level of the building it served could have been an advantage, making it easier to empty when the need arose.

At a later point the stone structure was mostly demolished, and most of the fill was removed, leaving a residue of the original fill (554). This was sealed by a 0.08 m. deep layer of clean gravel, 519. Projecting from the west section was a level surface of flat stone slabs 542, set onto the gravel, and a small area of possible mortar floor (543) to the south, abutting a light stone foundation (510). The demolished pit 552 appeared to continue in use as a rubbish pit (553), filling up with layers 518 and 517 until the late 18th or early 19th century. Two coins of George II, dated 1740 and 1746, were recovered from layer 518 (SF Nos 18 and 20).

In the north extension of the trench was a part-revealed stone-lined well 677, with an internal diameter of 0.70 m. Only the friable uppermost fill of silty loam (676) was excavated, with dating evidence linking it to this phase of building. Fill 676 was very loose, more likely the result of deliberate infilling than a gradual silting over a period of time. Sealing the top of the well, and the area north of the wall, was a layer of silty dark grey clay 522, possibly an 18th-century garden soil. This was overlain by a west-east brick surface 539, extending from the west section into the trench, and partially overlying the infilled cess pit 553. 539 was abutted to the north by 505, a dark grey brown silt, probably representing a 19th-century garden soil. This layer also extended over the south part of the trench, and could suggest a period after the demolition of the building, when the site lay undeveloped.

Building A5

No structural evidence for this building was found within the excavated area. The west and east wall location and alignment were derived from observation during the watching brief.

Finally the whole trench was sealed by 19th/20th century levelling layers 503 and 502, and the modern tarmac.

Watching Brief

The watching brief in the area of Trench A indicated that the concentration of pits continued to the north at least as far as the extent of the footing trenches. A test pit against the wall of the Post Office garage to the east of the site (Fig. 2) revealed evidence of 18th-century cobbled floors and stone walls, albeit very disturbed, suggesting that a range of out-buildings extended to the north of the roadside development. The post-medieval north-south plot boundary was also identified, to the west of the trench. This consisted of a 1 m. wide brick wall. No evidence of earlier boundaries was revealed, which probably means that the post-medieval boundaries were superimposed on earlier ones.

TRENCH B

Medieval deposits were generally well preserved owing to the discontinuous development of the site. However, the floor deposits of the medieval building were destroyed by a modern north-south pipe trench (107) at a particularly sensitive point, hampering clear interpretation (Fig. 3). With the exception of the outbuilding B3, each building phase

identified within the trench was represented by the back (north) wall of a building fronting onto St. Thomas's Street, in some cases with associated floors. Building B3 was represented by three postpads and associated beam slots. As with Trench A, the 19th-century street frontage was exposed to the south of the limit of Trench B during the watching brief. Furthermore, the evidence indicated that the buildings lay with their long axes to the street. In contrast to Trench A, the area to the north of the walls was relatively undisturbed by intercutting pits. Hence the stratigraphic sequence is more confidently linked to the ceramic evidence. Severe contamination by a spillage of diesel fuel from a tank to the west of the site affected deposits close to the water table, particularly the lower fills of the earliest features.

Description (Figs 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11)

Figure 4 shows the major features in each phase, and Figure 11 shows the sequence of site use in diagrammatic form. Detailed plans of Trench B are given in Figures 7 and 8, and sections in Figure 10.

Pre-Building (PB) activity: 12th- to early 13th-century

This phase was characterised by one large ditch and two pits, probably dating from the mid to late 12th century. The ceramic and environmental evidence (see below) suggests pastoral land usage, with no evidence for occupation in the immediate vicinity.

The natural gravel was identified at an approximate level of 55.10 m. OD overlain by a mottled yellow-brown alluvial clay 269 to a level of 55.60 m. OD, which was in turn overlain by a mixed alluvium/cultivation soil, 263.

The earliest archaeological features on the site were two pits, 262 and 267, both 0.35 m. deep and 1 m. wide, dug into layer 263. The pits contained pottery of the mid to late 12th century. A north-east/south-west orientated ditch, 264, was partly revealed in the south half of the trench; it was 2.4 m. wide and up to 0.50 m. deep, with a flat bottom and sloping sides. The ditch was cut to the top of the natural gravel, suggesting that it functioned as a field drainage ditch. It was filled with a mottled grey-brown silty clay, 265, which contained pottery ranging from the early to the late 12th century in date.

Overlying the south end of the ditch and extending to the south were silty clay layers 250, and, in the south-east corner, 268 and 247. Layer 250 could represent the upcast from the digging of the ditch, with 268 and 247 being subsequent dumps to raise the general level, presumably prior to the construction of the first building. Pottery dating from these deposits suggests that the process of infilling the ditch took place no earlier than the late 12th century or early 13th century.

To the north of the ditch, layer 263 was overlain by a levelling layer, 173/245. This overlay the dumped layer 247 to the south. Late 12th-century and 13th-century pottery was recovered from layer 245, as well as a copper alloy book-binding fragment (SF100).

Building B1: mid 13th century to mid 14th century

This phase of activity was represented by a west-east cob wall, into which was inserted a doorway. To its south was a series of clay floors and to its north was an open yard and an outbuilding (Building B3).

The west-east cob wall, 174, was built onto the levelling material 173/245; it survived to a maximum height of 0.35 m. and width of 0.80 m., extending across the trench. The cob consisted of compact mid brown silty clay with 30% gravel. On the east side of the trench the south face of the cob was covered with a yellowish clay/gravel render, approximately 0.02 m. thick. Against the north face of the wall was a slumped deposit (191/200) of material very similar to the cob, representing the weathering of the external face of the wall. Pottery from the fabric of wall 174 and the weathering 191 suggests a construction date not earlier than the early 13th century. South of the wall was a floor make-up layer of slightly greenish grey silty clay (217/253). This was laid after the construction of the wall, but before the application of the render (Fig. 10).

Excavation of the wall revealed a blocked doorway, indicated by two double postholes, 224 and 248, approximately 0.65 m. apart. Between the two was an impression left in layers 217/253, possibly by a stone doorstep, infilled with an ashy deposit, 231.

In spite of the destruction of deposits caused by the modern pipe trench 107, there was evidence to suggest a north-south partition immediately east of the doorway. This was indicated by a slight north–south ridge in the make-up layer 217, and the differences in the character of the successive floor deposits to the east and west of this line.

The excavation of the pipe trench partly revealed a north-south alignment of medium-sized unworked limestone slabs, 205, resting on 217, which could represent the remains of a sleeper wall supporting a wooden partition, or possibly the remains of a hearth base. The overlying layer 189 was a loose mix of sandy clay and lumps of limestone, many showing evidence of burning, which supports the view that feature 205 was a hearth. The pottery was of general 13th-century date and included late 13th-century material. Overlying 189 was a very mixed deposit of loose silty clay and charcoal, ash and limestone pieces, (188/231/232).

In the upper levels of this composite layer an indistinct north-south linear feature, 212, was identified, extending from the east doorpost socket to the south trench edge, and containing a higher percentage of charcoal and ash than the surrounding matrix. This possibly represents a beam slot for a partition aligned with the east doorpost.

A primary floor layer 218, consisting of a yellow silty clay gravel mix up to 0.10 m. deep, lay to the east of 212. This incorporated the setting for a circular hearth (215/216) partly revealed in the south-east corner, and was overlain by 184, a yellow-grey clay gravel mix up to 0.08 m. deep. This deposit abutted the render on the south face of wall 174, and produced pottery ranging from the late 12th century to the late 13th century in date. Both these floor layers were considerably cleaner than those to the west of the partition, and showed less signs of being repaired by patches.

To the west of the proposed partition, a make-up layer 253 (identical to 217) was overlain by a primary floor layer 206, up to 0.08 m. deep, consisting of yellowish-brown silty clay. Set into this, and partly revealed in the south-west corner, was a small apparently circular stone-lined hearth or oven base, 211. Layer 206 produced pottery of late 12th- and 13th-century date. Overlying 206 was a series of irregular patches of silty clay floor material and lenses of charcoal and ash. The ashy deposits were particularly predominant against the west side of the trench, suggesting the possible existence of another hearth. These accumulated deposits amounted to a total depth of between 0.08 m. and 0.15 m. One undiagnostic sherd of pottery was recovered from these layers.

Possible evidence was found of the construction process of building B1. To the north of wall 174, the initial levelling layer 245 (equivalent to 173) was cut by pits 209 and 241, both circular, approximately 2 m. in diameter and 0.25 m. deep. These two possibly represent excavation for material for the cob wall. Late 12th- and 13th-century pottery was recovered from the fills of these features. Partly revealed in the west section was a spread of clean yellow-brown silty clay, very similar to floor material 206, and probably representing the remnants of a construction dump of flooring material. This deposit yielded no finds.

A 0.50 m. wide trench was dug into the south baulk to a point approximately 1 m. north of the present north edge of the pavement, but failed to find the frontage to the building. A similar slot, dug down to the cob wall surface on the east side of the trench, found that the cob wall continued at least 1 m. beyond the east extent of the main excavated trench (Fig. 4). No north-south return wall of the building was located in the trench during the excavation, but during the watching brief cob wall 174 was seen to continue approximately 4 m. further west before returning to the south (Fig. 4). Building B1 thus had a west-east length of at least 9 m.

Building B2: contemporary with building B1?

Building B2 lay immediately west of the north-south return wall of building B1 (Fig. 4). The evidence for this building derives entirely from the observed results of the watching brief. The published section (Fig. 10) shows a mid to dark grey-brown silty clay layer, 277, equivalent to 250, which was overlain by a make-up layer 276, very similar to 217/253. This abutted a stone footing, 279, to the north, which consisted of small to medium limestone blocks set into a matrix of brown silty clay. This footing probably represents a post pad, rather than a west-east wall.

Partially overlying 279 from the south was a floor layer of yellow-brown silty clay, 275, and abutting 279 from the north was a grey/brown silty clay layer, 284, equivalent to 161. The interface between 284 and 279 was indistinct, which could suggest that a timber post partition separated the two.

Approximately 1.8 m. to the north of 279 was another, less substantial, stone pad, 281, which could have supported a lean-to structure against the north of the building. Sealing all these features was a homogenous cultivation soil 274 equivalent to 134/140 (Orchard soil, see below). This was cut by a large post-medieval pit (283), and sealed by 19th-century levelling layers.

No dating evidence was recovered from these deposits. The suggested contemporaneity with building B1 is based upon their similar position in the stratigraphic sequence, and their relationship with apparently common later features such as the cultivation layer, watching brief context number 274 (equivalent to Trench B Orchard soil 134), and the stone slab, watching brief context number 288, which is similar to a stone slab observed in Trench B, 153 (see below, Building B3).

Building B3: mid 13th century to 14th-15th century

This phase is represented by evidence of an outbuilding against cob wall 174, partly revealed in the north–east part of the trench.

North of cob wall 174, three stone post pads were revealed, orientated north-south, spaced approximately 1.8 m. apart, and on the same alignment as the interior partition, that is, immediately east of the blocked doorway. The southernmost pad, 146, had been cut into the weathering deposit 191, implying that building B3 was a later construction than building B1, possibly built at the same time as the blocking of the doorway. However, the other two pads (165 and 171) were both cut into layer 173, indicating that this need not have been a long interval. The pads would presumably have supported timber uprights. Beam slots 195 and 193, 0.10 m. wide, which extended northwards and eastwards from pad 146, suggest that the building probably had panel walls. No clear evidence of panel beam slots was found in the bay between pads 171 and 165, which might suggest that this bay was open. No evidence of a floor surface was identified to the east of the line of post pads.

The watching brief did not reveal any evidence of a continuation of the building either to the north or to the east beyond the limits of the trench, and therefore no estimates can be made of the structure's original size.

Pit 209 (see building B1, above) was sealed by a spread of green/grey silty clay with 10% charcoal flecking, 178, up to 0.10 m. deep. This layer had slumped into the pit, and did not extend east of the pads of building B3, which could suggest that the bay between pads 165 and 171 was not open. To the south, layer 178 extended as far as the wall of building B1 (wall 174).

Overlying 178 was a dark grey-brown silty clay, 161, up to 0.15 m. deep. This sloped down and petered out approximately 0.40 m. east of the post pads. Although 161 sealed the pads, it was not necessarily laid down after the demolition of B3, as it might have respected posts standing on the pads; however, no evidence in the form of soil marks was seen in layer 161 during excavation, either for such posts, or for panels between them. The apparent depression in building B3 may have been the result of build-up of material outside, rather than deliberate removal of material inside.

Partially levelling up the depression was layer 166, a dark brown silty clay with inclusions of limestone fragments. This produced pottery of mid to late 13th-century date, and pottery of 14th- to 15th-century date.

Cut into 161 on the west side of the site were three postholes, 157, 163 and 156, which could represent a north-south boundary. These were associated with 14th- to 15th-century pottery. Immediately to the north was a gravel bedding layer supporting a partly-revealed flat stone slab, 153. A similarly bedded slab was observed 5 m. to the west in the watching brief, suggesting that these features might represent a west-east pathway, or a sleeper wall. However, 153 was not seen to extend into the excavation trench.

Sealing the latest floor layers on the east side of B1 was layer 143, a mix of silty clay and decayed mortar. This overlay the top edge of the render on the south face of wall 174, and may have been derived from it; it must represent an accumulation after the demolition of the wall. On the west side of the trench layers 144 and 145 represented the same episode although neither contained the same quantity of mortar, possibly because the interior face of wall 174 was rendered only on the east side of the trench.

To the north of wall 174 the depression east of the line of post pads was filled with dumped layer 160, up to a level horizon with the surviving top of 174 and layer 143 (Fig. 10). Layer 160 overlay the eastern edges of layers 166 and 161. Pottery from these layers indicates that the demolition of B1 and B3 occurred during the 14th century, or possibly as late as the 15th century.

Building B4: 15th century?

Evidence for this phase was restricted to a lightly-founded rubble foundation.

Partly overlying the demolished wall 174 was a rubble foundation 142, one course deep, 0.50 m. wide and 2.6 m. long, orientated slightly north of west, and extending from the east side of the trench. The terminus had a distinct inset on its north side, which may have been part of its construction, or may simply have been due to truncation by later activity. With no evident relating features it is possible that 142 represents merely a short-lived wall of an enclosure.

Orchard

Sealing the entire trench was a homogeneous cultivation soil layer, averaging 0.20 m. deep, 134/140. The pottery from this layer ranged in date from the 12th to the 16th century, strongly suggesting that the material had been imported for cultivation, perhaps for an orchard.

Building B5: 17th to 18th century

Surviving evidence of this building comprised a chimney foundation, a robbed and backfilled well, and a north wall beam slot.

Cut into the cultivation soil (140) against the east section of the trench was a substantial stone foundation 132, comprising a base layer of very large unworked limestone slabs, overlain by smaller limestone rubble to a total depth of 0.40 m. In plan the foundation was 2.50 m. west-east and 0.40 m. north-south, with 0.4 m. square projections at either end to the south. This is interpreted as a chimney foundation.

Some 0.30 m. to the south was a 0.40 m. wide slot, 139, orientated west-east, which extended across the trench. Its fill consisted of brownish-grey silty clay with lumps of limestone, and was distinguishable from the surrounding matrix, but the edges of the feature were difficult to establish with accuracy in plan, or in excavation. Stratigraphically these two features postdate the cultivation layer 134/140, but pottery from slot 139 was largely 13th- to 14th-century in date, with one sherd of 16th- to 17th-century date. Presumably this is the result of the presence of residual material in the backfill. There were no surviving floor layers associated with this building, which probably implies a suspended wooden floor.

Sealing these two features was a thin layer of demolition trample, 106. In the south-west corner of the site was a circular, vertically-sided feature, 112, cut down into the natural gravel, representing a well which had been robbed of its stone lining and backfilled. Pottery from the well backfill included early 18th-century material, along with small quantities of residual medieval material; most of the pottery assemblage from the backfill was of 16th- and 17th-century date.

Building B6: 19th to 20th century

The wall faces of the 19th-century building were exposed along the west and east sides of the upper machined area; on the east side the wall (118) was revealed for the entire length of the trench. At the north end of the trench, a narrow west-east stone wall (121), also structural, extended approximately 3 m. into the trench from the west side. The walls were of mortared, roughly-worked, coursed limestone. As with building B5, no floor deposits were found *in situ*.

Watching brief

The watching brief indicated that to the east of this wall, a substantial north-south brick and stone foundation had destroyed all the archaeology down to the equivalent of the 13th-century levelling layer 217 in the south area of the site.

The extreme west footing trench of the present development almost entirely removed a north-south stone wall of modern date, 282, which extended approximately 7 m. north from the south edge of the site, turning to continue to the west, surviving in section (Figs. 4 and 10). This wall had evidently destroyed any archaeological evidence for the relationship between buildings B1 and B2.

FINDS

THE MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY by CATHERINE UNDERWOOD-KEEVILL (Tables 1–6)

A total of 3,668 sherds of pottery weighing 51.4 kg. was recovered, the majority of it from Trench A. Most of the occupation layers and building walls had been removed by later activity, and therefore much of the pottery was from associated pits. The pottery was analysed in order to provide a dated sequence for structures such as the cob-walled buildings, and to understand the processes of rubbish deposition and possible associations with the other structures. Emphasis was placed on the appearance of the successive major Oxford ceramic traditions in order to understand the proportions of different fabric types present through time, and the possible implications for trade and site status. Comparison was made with other nearby sites[11] in order to examine the predominant ceramic traditions, and whether they reflected site status or the ubiquitousness of certain wares.

[11] M. Mellor, 'Pottery', in Palmer, 'The Hamel'; M. Mellor, 'Pottery' in Roberts, this volume.

Methodology

Analysis and recording followed the Oxford Archaeological Unit medieval pottery fabric series.[12] All material was recorded by fabric within each context, counted and weighed, and Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVEs) calculated. Vessel forms and decoration types were recorded in detail and are a continuation of a series established for other sites in Oxford. All pottery was recorded on Dbase III plus computer database with rims, bases and decoration and handle types cross-correlated to an illustrated corpus. Stratigraphic phasing provides the basis for the quantification of fabric and vessel forms, and the discussion of pottery distribution.

Pre-Building phases, Trenches A and B

In both trenches, this phase consists of contexts that were present before the construction of the cob-walled buildings. The assemblages are dominated by Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, with smaller quantities of Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC, a calcareous gravel-tempered fabric.

TABLE 1. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY FABRIC TYPE TOTALS

Fabric	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by number*
OXAC	328	5669	8.9
OXAG	95	818	2.5
OXAM	834	9091	22.7
OXAQ	169	1851	4.6
OXAH	5	78	0.1
OXAW	370	5010	10.0
OXBB	32	444	0.9
OXBF	57	681	1.5
OXBK	2	15	0.05
OXCG	5	45	0.1
OXCI	2	8	0.05
OXCT	1	18	0.02
OXR	2	16	0.05
OXY	688	6575	18.7
CBW	23	204	0.6
STAM	1	4	0.02
Total	3668	51544	100

Pre-Building phase, Trench A

The vessel types are mainly square-rimmed cooking pots, rolled-rim cooking pots, and thumbed-rim cooking pots with yellow-green and light green glazed pitcher sherds in Oxford Medieval ware, dating from the mid-late 12th century to the early 13th century. A shallow cooking bowl type, dating to the early 13th century, was also present in fabric AC. The transition from Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC, to the sandy Oxford Medieval ware,

[12] R. Haldon with M. Mellor, 'Late Saxon and Medieval Pottery', in B.G. Durham, 'Archaeological Investigations in St. Aldate's, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, xlii (1977).

TABLE 2. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY TOTALS FOR TRENCH A AND B BY PHASE

	Trench A		*Trench B*	
Phase	*Number*	*Weight*	*Number*	*Weight*
Pre-building	77	888	133	1508
Building 1	320	5463	293	4376
Building 2	935	9153	–	–
Building 3	648	9379	–	–
Building 4	484	10562	201	2521
Orchard	–	–	274	3277
Building 5	–	–	129	2226
Total	2464	35445	1030	13908

TABLE 3. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY FROM THE PRE-BUILDING PHASE

Fabric type	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by number*
OXAC	50	631	24
OXAG	6	27	3
OXAQ	3	47	1.4
OXAM	4	145	2
OXAW	2	24	1
OXBF	2	34	1
OXY	136	1426	65
Total	210	2396	

fabric Y, occurred at 79–80 St. Aldate's in phase 7, which was dated to the third quarter of the 12th century.[13] In the mid to late 12th century at The Hamel there was an increase in glazed sherds, with a similar glaze range to the phase 7 St. Aldate's material[14] with mainly light yellow and light green glaze; this was also noted for the present site, in prebuilding contexts 687 and 695.

Building A1

Building A1 contexts have a high proportion of Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC (52.5% by sherd number), and a smaller amount of Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y (41.5%). The building should therefore be dated to before the mid 13th century when fabric AC products were no longer marketed in the area.[15] The cob wall 646 contained a mid 12th-century cooking pot rim with splayed flat top, and a cooking bowl with inturned rim dating to the early to mid 13th century, both in fabric AC, and glazed pitcher sherds and a late 12th-century cooking pot rim in fabric Y. The yard surface 602 can be dated to the first quarter of the 13th century, with a thumbed cooking pot rim and

[13] Ibid.
[14] M. Mellor, 'Pottery', in Palmer, 'The Hamel'.
[15] Ibid. 161.

TABLE 4. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY FROM BUILDING 1 TRENCH A AND TRENCH B

	Trench A			*Trench B*		
Fabric	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by No.*	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by No.*
OXAC	168	3697	52.5	30	292	10.0
OXAG	9	174	3.0	21	200	7.0
OXAM	5	40	1.5	84	2121	28.0
OXAQ	2	14	0.6	17	210	6.0
OXAH	–	–	–	–	–	–
OXAW		–	–	40	466	14.0
OXBB	–	–	–	12	130	4.0
OXCI	–	–	–	2	8	0.6
OXCT	–	–	–	1	18	0.3
OXR	–	–	–	1	14	0.3
OXY	133	1511	41.5	68	736	23.0
CBW				4	25	1.3
Total	320	5463		293	4376	

TABLE 5. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY FROM BUILDING 2 TRENCH A

Fabric	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by Number*
OXAC	58	174	6
OXAG	28	199	3
OXAM	299	2302	32
OXAQ	77	740	8
OXAW	91	1460	10
OXBF	8	90	1
OXR	1	2	–
OXY	249	1977	27
CBW	13	129	1
BRILL	41	679	4
PMR	16	309	2
CSTN	3	7	–
Total	935	9153	

an inturning cooking pot rim in fabric AC, and a bowl rim dated to the early 13th century. Two postholes, 655 and 652, contained two non-diagnostic sherds in Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC, and Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, which could date the postholes to before the mid 13th century.

Transitional: Building A1–A2

Levelling layer 642 contained material contemporary with the assemblages from building A1: fabric Y pitcher sherds, late 12th- to early 13th-century thumbed-rim cooking pots, early to mid 13th-century inturned-rim cooking pots, sagging bases and late 12th-century to 13th-century triangular cooking pot rims in fabric AC, and early to mid 13th-century bowl forms. However, there were also slightly later elements: a late 13th- to 14th-century glazed jug

TABLE 6. ST. THOMAS'S ST. POTTERY FROM BUILDING 3 TRENCH A

Fabric	*Number*	*Weight (g.)*	*% by Number*
OXAC	4	58	–
OXAG	2	3	–
OXAM	145	1450	22
OXAQ	23	226	3
OXAW	58	691	9
OXY	40	299	6
BRILL	67	994	10
Total	648	9379	

sherd in fabric AM, eight sherds of fabric AQ which date from the mid 13th century onwards, a mid 14th-century bottle rim, and partially-glazed jugs in fabric AW; there was also a flat-rimmed bowl in Post-Medieval Brill fabric.

Building A2

The stone foundations of building A2 contained pottery which suggests a date from the mid to late 13th century. The material from the building is dominated by Oxford Late Medieval ware, fabric AM, from the Brill/Boarstall production centre, although Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, is still present in some quantity.

The fill (577) of robber trench 576 contained an angular bowl/dish with inturned rim in fabric BB, a Minety type/Gloucester type 44 dated to the early to mid 13th century, small diameter cooking pots with square rims dating to the mid to late 13th century, and glazed jug sherds (one with a frilled base) dating to the 13th century in Oxford Late Medieval ware, fabric AM. Robber trench fill 576 could be dated to the late 13th century on the basis of a decorated pitcher sherd in Newbury fabric AQ, decorated jug sherds and strap handles in fabric AM, dated to the late 13th century, as well as residual material in fabrics AC and Y. The adjacent postholes, 660 (fill 661) and 638, had late 12th-century and early 13th-century cooking bowl rims in fabric AC and might therefore be earlier than the wall, perhaps connected with the cob wall of building A1.

Ground surface 603 to the north of the building contained two sherds of flint- and limestone-tempered ware, fabric AQ. 604 included fills 605, 606 and 608. The earliest, 608, contained an early 13th-century cooking bowl in Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, a late 12th-century cooking pot rim in fabric AC, and late 13th- to 14th-century decorated jug sherds in fabric AM. Decoration appears limited to dark red/brown slip painted lines and alternate rouletted lines. The assemblage from fill 606 consists mainly of highly-decorated jug sherds in Oxford Late Medieval ware, with applied and rouletted and dark slip painted linear decoration and a variety of glaze colours. Some flint and limestone ware decorated cooking pots are also present. Fill 605 included residual late 12th-century and early 13th-century cooking bowl and cooking pot rims in Oxford Medieval ware, with a small quantity of jug sherds in fabric AM, including three decorated sherds with simple red/brown slip painted line decoration dating from the late 13th century.

Building A3

The contexts representing a rubble-walled building vary from bedding layers for cobbled surfaces, to deposits that may have been yard layers that have subsided into pits. Oxford Late Medieval ware fabric types, fabrics AM and AW, which date from the mid 13th century onwards, comprise 31% of the Building A3 assemblage.

The pottery from floor layer 528 was dominated by fabric AM jug fragments, with one mid 13th-century square rim sherd and a decorated jug sherd with applied curvilinear decoration which dates from the 14th to 15th century. A cooking pot rim, with thick hammer-headed top in fabric AW is consistent with a mid 14th-century date range. Two early Post-Medieval Brill type sherds were also recovered from this context, which date from the 15th century onwards. Layer 609, a layer subsiding into pit 567, is dated by a diagonally-slashed strap handle to the 14th or 15th century. Layers 570 and 574 contained very few sherds and only one slashed strap handle in context 570 can suggest a date from the 14th century onwards.

Posthole 589 (fill 590) contained a bowl sherd in fabric AM which dates from the late 13th to early 14th century, and posthole 591 (fill 592) contained 15th- to 16th-century post-medieval reduced ware, Brill Post-Medieval ware and red earthenware. Posthole 591 would therefore appear to be later than 589 (on this evidence).

Transitional: Buildings A3–A4

The destruction layer 513 can be dated to the late 17th to early 18th century, with 17th-century Surrey White wares, late 16th-century Frechen and Raeren stoneware drinking jugs, and 18th-century red earthenware straight-sided porringers and pancheons with orange and green-orange internal glaze.

Building A4

The most interesting assemblage came from the stone-lined cesspit, 552. Residual medieval pottery was found in the earliest fill, 554, consisting of late 13th- and 14th-century jug sherds in fabric AM, cooking pot sherds in fabrics Y and AC, and a 15th-century Tudor Green lobed cup base. Later material included 16th- to 17th-century Brill Post-Medieval ware, red earthenware and Midlands blackware. Layers 517 and 518, interpreted as the fill of the demolished cess pit re-used as a rubbish pit, indicate use from the early 17th century to the mid to late 18th century, with the appearance of later factory wares such as Staffordshire white salt-glazed ware and creamware.

The cesspit was sealed by a pathway, 539, bedded on sand layer 540 which contained an English stoneware sherd from a blacking bottle dating from the 19th century. Layer 505, a 19th-century garden soil, contained residual late medieval jug sherds in fabrics AM and AW, and one Post-Medieval Brill sherd of the 16th century.

Trench B

A total of 1128 sherds weighing 1.52 kg. was recovered from Trench B. The smaller assemblage from this trench in comparison with Trench A is partially explained by the differential recovery of material from the various building phases, some of which could only be observed in section or only survived in patches.

Pre-Building phase, Trench B

The earliest archaeological activity was represented by two pits, 262 and 267, which contained Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, and Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC. Posthole 262 had a late 12th-century glazed pitcher sherd and 267 had a mid 12th-century cooking pot rim in fabric Y. Earlier pottery types however were recovered from the ditch 264, comprising an early 12th-century thumbed cooking pot rim and a a simple flat-topped bowl rim in fabric AC. A late 12th-century triangular cooking pot rim in fabric AC was also noted from this context. Layers above the ditch (contexts 247 and 250) contained late 12th-century bowl forms in fabric AC, a late 12th-century clubbed everted rim cooking pot rim in fabric Y, and late 12th- to early 13th-century pitcher sherds and thumbed and incised decorated pitcher handles in fabric Y.

Levelling to the north of the ditch (context 173/245) had later material, especially in context 173, with late 12th- to 13th-century pitcher sherds and 13th-century decorated jug sherds in Oxford Late Medieval ware, fabric AM. Layer 245 had early 13th-century bowl rims in fabric AC, and a cooking pot rolled rim in fabric Y dated to the early 13th century, with late 12th- to 13th-century decorated pitcher handles and sherds.

Building B1

Building B1 is represented by a series of walls, floors and pits which appeared to be in use during the 13th century, perhaps into the 14th century. Building B1 was a cob walled structure, like the earliest building in Trench A, but the cob material contained a different range of fabric types and forms, with a much lower proportion of fabric AC, Oxford Early Medieval ware (see Table 4). Building B1 was represented by a low stretch of wall, with adjacent slumped deposits which were weathered material from the wall. Pottery from the wall and the weathering is of mixed date, with late 12th- to 13th-century Oxford Medieval ware glazed pitcher sherds and an early to late 13th-century applied and rouletted decorated jug sherd within the wall itself. A late 12th-century to mid 13th-century White ware sherd with green glaze, fabric AH, possibly from the Nuneaton area, came from the weathering layer (191).

Doorways and internal partitions of the building contained very little material. A posthole from the doorway contained one 13th-century clubbed rim cooking pot, and the partition included a late 12th- to 13th-century bevelled triangular cooking pot rim in fabric Y and a range of fabrics including 10th- to 11th-century St. Neot's-type ware (fabric R) and a 13th-century Gloucester type fabric, BB. Other internal deposits such as burnt layer 189 contained mainly 13th-century cooking pot sherds, an applied and red-painted linear decorated jug sherd and a late 13th-century bowl rim in fabrics AM and AW, with some late 12th- to 13th-century pitcher sherds in fabric AG, a sandy Berkshire fabric. Floor layer 184 displayed a similar range of fabrics dating from the late 12th century to the late 13th century, with one intrusive 15th- to 16th-century Tudor Green ware sherd.

Considerably more pottery was recovered from floor layers to the west of the proposed partition, than from those to the east. Floor layer 206 had mainly glazed pitcher sherds and cooking pot rims in fabric Y and AG dating from the late 12th to 13th century. Only one non-diagnostic sherd of fabric Y was recovered from ashy deposits above it.

Possible construction pits to the north of the cob wall possibly differ in date. Pit 241 contained a late 12th- to 13th-century cooking pot rim in fabric Y, a developed St. Neot's-type ware, fabric CG, dated from the late 12th to the 13th century, and a small Stamford ware sherd datable to the 12th century (fabric Z). Pit 209 contained highly decorated jug sherds in fabric AM and cooking pot sherds in fabric AQ which date from the early to mid 13th century, with a probably intrusive 15th-century Coarse Border ware sherd. Pit 239 contained late 13th-century decorated jug sherds in fabrics AM and AW, and pit 243 contained late 12th-century to 13th-century pitcher and cooking pot rims in fabric Y.

The assemblage from Building B1 differs from the Trench A pottery in both the range and the quality of its material. A higher proportion of glazed and decorated material is apparent in Building B1, which indicates a larger component of table ware than cooking ware. The lower representation of Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC, and Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, suggests a later date-range, but could equally be a sign of different functional areas within the buildings, or differences in status in neighbouring properties. It is notable that Building B1 has more non-local material. Admittedly this is represented only by one or two sherds in some cases, but the contrast is nevertheless marked, at least until the post-medieval period.

Buildings B2 and B3

Building 2 was observed during a watching brief and produced no ceramic finds. Building 3 incorporated three stone post pads; post pad 146 was associated with two sherds of Oxford Medieval ware, fabric Y, one of which was a late 12th- to 13th-century glazed pitcher sherd. Later layers 161, 166 and 160 contained mainly Oxford Late Medieval ware, fabrics AM and AW, with mid to late 13th-century highly decorated jug sherds, and 14th- to 15th-century baluster jug bases and incised strap handles. Some sherds of 15th- to 16th-century Brill Post-Medieval ware were also present, but are likely to derive from the overlying layer of cultivation soil, 140.

Postholes cut into layer 161 yielded only a small assemblage of 14th- to 15th-century partially glazed jug sherds and baluster jug bases in fabrics AM and AW.

Building B4

Building B4, which precedes the cultivation or possible orchard soil, can only be dated on ceramic evidence to before the 16th to 17th century, and was perhaps 15th century.

Cultivation or orchard soil

Building B4 was sealed by layers 134/140 which contained mainly medieval pottery, only 6% of the total sherd numbers being post-medieval in date. The medieval pottery includes material dating from the mid 13th century (a narrow-necked square-topped rim jug sherd) and thick baluster base sherds and angular jug sherds in fabrics AM and AW dating to the 14th and 15th centuries. The post-medieval pottery consists of 15th- to 16th-century Tudor Green lobed cup sherds, a 16th-century Raeren-type German stoneware drinking jug sherd and some 16th- to 17th-century Brill Post-Medieval ware. A mixture of fabric types, including fabrics BR, Y, BF and AG, represent residual pottery dating from the 11th century onwards.

The high degree of residuality and the wide range of types shows a high level of redeposition and probable movement of manuring soils from clearances in backyards and pits, for the establishment of orchards and gardens. It has been observed at Reading that mixing of material appears from the 15th century onwards and it may be as a result of clearances of areas for agricultural production in the town.

Building 5

This was the last surviving building on site and comprised a chimney foundation, a wall beam slot and a well which had been backfilled. The beam slot was the only building feature that contained any material and this consisted of mid 13th-century straight topped jug rims, 13th-century decorated jug sherds and late 13th- to 14th-century Nuneaton type ware, fabric AH, with one sherd of a 16th- to 17th-century Frechen-type jug. Most of the material must be residual and may derive from elsewhere. The well fills also have earlier late 12th- and 13th-century bowls in fabric AC, Oxford Early Medieval ware, and jug sherds in fabric AM, but the majority of the assemblages from the well backfill can be dated from the 16th century onwards, with Tudor Green ware cups and jug handles, 17th-century yellow-glazed Surrey White ware bowls and dishes, tin-glazed ware decorated bowls and albarelli, and early 18th-century Staffordshire Mottled Brown ware, slip ware and local red ware hollow wares, creaming pans and handled porringers.

Discussion

The pottery from 54–55 St. Thomas's Street provides an earlier sequence for the cob-walled buildings in this area than was found with similar structures in the earlier excavations at Ayer's Yard.[16] The earliest building in Trench A can be dated to the early to mid 13th century, and the earliest building in Trench B from the mid to the late 13th century.

The assemblages are characteristic of the conservative nature of pottery use in the 13th century. There is very little imported material, and fabrics AM and AW predominate, comprising 33% of the overall total. The small amount of imported material includes regional types which are only minimally represented such as a Berkshire sandy ware, fabric AG, at 2.5% of the total assemblage, and Newbury flint and limestone type fabric, AQ, at 4.6% of the total assemblage. The same lack of imported material was evident at The Hamel[17] and Ayer's Yard,[18] and is in contrast to sites in the town centre and in St. Aldate's where a wider range of continental and regional imports are seen.[19]

It should be noted, however, that regional imports were found at the recently-excavated site at Tidmarsh Lane, outside the Castle gate at the east end of St. Thomas's Street;[20] these included a semi-complete Stamford ware jug, and slipped decorated jugs in Berkshire fabric AG. Similar evidence comes from other recently-excavated sites at Paradise Square[21] and Paradise Street,[22] which have regional imports such as fabrics AG (26%), AQ, BK and BG. The possibility was suggested above that the lack of regional imports in the assemblages at 54–55 St. Thomas's Street might be a result of chronological factors. However, the assemblage from Paradise Street, in particular, closely parallels that from the present site, having large proportions of contemporary local pottery types, including Oxford Early Medieval ware, fabric AC (20%) and Oxford Medieval Ware (32%), as well as a significant representation of regional imports. This suggests that chronology was not the only factor determining the unusually low representation of regional imports at 54–55 St. Thomas's Street, or indeed possibly also at The Hamel and Ayer's Yard.

The contrast in the numbers of decorated and glazed sherds between Trenches A and B is unlikely to be a result of chronological factors, since Buildings A2 and B1 are contemporary, at least in origin. The size of the assemblages is too limited to allow any firm conclusions, but the contrast is nevertheless notable, and may derive from a difference in the use of the two buildings, or just possibly, the status of their tenants.

[16] M. Mellor, 'Pottery', in Roberts, this volume.

[17] M. Mellor, op. cit. note 14.

[18] M. Mellor, op. cit. note 16.

[19] M. Mellor, 'The Saxon and medieval ceramic finds from the town sites', in 'Oxford before the University', Oxford Archaeological Unit/Oxford Univ. Cttee. for Archaeology Monograph, in prep.

[20] P. Booth, Oxford Archaeological Unit, in prep.

[21] L. Whittingham, 'Pottery', in A. Hardy, 'Archaeological Investigations in Paradise Square, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, forthcoming.

[22] 'Former Canteen Site, Paradise Street, Oxford', OAU unpubl. client report, December 1993.

In summary the assemblage provides an early sequence for cob-built buildings in Oxford, and can usefully be compared with other sites in the vicinity. The lack of regional imports and the low representation of decorated sherds contrasts with assemblages from contemporary sites elsewhere in the city, and may reflect economic and social factors.

SMALL FINDS by LEIGH ALLEN

Introduction

A total of 238 objects (including 115 nails) were recovered, comprising 76 objects of copper alloy, 149 of iron, 4 of lead, 3 of bone and 6 of stone. Of these, 155 (including 74 nails) came from Trench A; the remaining 77 objects (including 41 nails) were from Trench B. The objects have been catalogued by material and artefact type; the catalogue is preceded by a review of the most notable objects from each phase, and a general discussion.

Trench A

Pre-building activity

A simple iron key for a mounted lock (SF4), of a type common from the 9th to the 14th centuries,[23] was recovered from ditch 689 (bottom fill 686).

Building A1 (Early to mid 13th century)

Only one object was certainly associated with Building A1, an irregular fragment of lead waste (SF98) recovered from the cob wall 646. A fragment of iron strip (SF102) and a fragment of a rod whetstone (SF103) were recovered from levelling 642.

Building A2 (Late 13th–early 14th centuries)

Five objects were associated with Building A2. A copper alloy strip (SF91) was recovered from 629, a probable floor layer, a copper alloy staple (SF82), a copper alloy buckle pin (SF81) and a copper alloy pin with an oblate head (SF88) were found in pit fill 599. The pin corresponds to similar examples excavated at Winchester where they were found in contexts ranging from the 12th to the 16th/17th centuries.[24] A further fragment of copper alloy sheet (SF84) was recovered from 606, a fill of pit 604.

Building A3 (Early 14th–early 17th centuries)

Ten objects were recovered from contexts associated with building A3. A copper alloy cast button (SF30) of a type common from the second quarter of the 14th century until the 17th century[25] was recovered from floor layer 529. An iron strip (SF-), a diamond-shaped fragment of copper alloy sheet (SF16) and two copper alloy drawn pins with wire wound heads were recovered from context 513, a layer sealing the area north of wall 520. Drawn pins are known to have been in use in the medieval period but the smaller finer examples such as these are more common in the 16th to 17th centuries.[26]

A copper alloy sexfoil mount (SF76) with a domed centre and lobes was recovered from context 559, a fill of pit 567. These mounts appear in the early 13th century and are prolific in the late 14th and early 15th centuries.[27] A fragment from a plate whetstone and a copper alloy lace tag were also recovered from context 559; the lace tag is

[23] Cf. I.H. Goodall, 'Locks and keys', in M. Biddle (ed.), *Object and economy in medieval Winchester* (Winchester Studies 7, 1990); hereafter Biddle, *Object and Economy*.

[24] Cf. M. Biddle, 'Dress and Hair Pins', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 554–5.

[25] Cf. G. Egan and F. Pritchard, *Medieval finds from excavations in London Volume 3: Dress Accessories c. 1150–1450* (1991) (hereafter Egan and Pritchard), 274–5.

[26] Cf. M. Biddle and D.A. Hinton, 'Points', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 581–9.

[27] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, 186–92.

of a type that was in use in the 14th century but is more common in the 16th to 17th centuries.[28] A fragment of a horseshoe arm (SF-) was recovered from context 564, a fill of pit 563. The web of the shoe is wide with remains of a rectangular nail hole and a slight calkin; this type of horseshoe was introduced in the 14th century and has remained unaltered to the present day.[29]

Building A4 (Early 17th–19th centuries)

There were 49 objects recovered from contexts associated with building A4. The best assemblage was from cess-pit 552. A copper alloy drawn pin with a wire wound head (SF37) was recovered from pit fill 554; drawn pins such as these are common in the 16th–17th centuries.[30] Upper fills 517 and 518 contained 21 objects. The most notable of these were a copper alloy thimble (SF85), a cast copper alloy tap (SF19) with a heart-shaped open-work handle for use with a cistern, dated to the first half of the 17th century,[31] and a small group of iron implements comprising a whittle tang knife (SF78), a whittle tang implement which may be a fork (SF96), and a handle for a whittle tang implement (SF79). All the whittle tang implements have bone or antler pistol grip handles, which are generally post-medieval in date.[32] There was also a post-medieval double-sided bone comb (SF92).[33]

A second rubbish pit, 581, produced numerous objects from fills 582, 583, 585 and 587. These are generally post-medieval in date, including 10 copper alloy drawn pins with wire wound heads, 12 lace tags, a trapezoidal iron buckle with sheet metal roller (SF47) most commonly associated with horse harness,[34] and two copper alloy vessel fragments (SF44 and SF50). SF44 is from the rim of a beaten vessel, probably a large flanged bowl or plate, dated at Winchester not earlier than the 15th century.[35] Well shaft 667 contained 3 post-medieval objects including another iron whittle tang knife with a bone pistol grip handle from fill 678. Context 522, sealing the top of the well shaft, contained a further 3 post-medieval finds including a copper alloy drawn pin (SF53) and a fragment from a copper alloy twisted wire finger ring (SF 54).

A fragment from a Purbeck marble mortar (SF32) was recovered from the initial cleaning layers.

Trench B

Pre-building activity (12th century)

Two objects were recovered from the 12th-century levelling layer 245. The first was an unidentifiable iron object (SF101) and the other was a fragment of a copper alloy mount (SF100: Fig. 12 No. 1). Similar examples were found at Goltho, Lincs., in contexts associated with the 12th-century bailey. Their exact purpose is unknown but they were probably mounted on wood or bone as ornamental binding or decoration.[36]

Building B1 (mid 13th to mid 14th centuries)

A copper alloy strip (SF74) was recovered from the west-east cob wall 174, in association with pottery that suggested a construction date not earlier than the early 13th century.

There were no objects associated with Building B2.

Building B3 (mid 13th–14th centuries)

There were 4 objects recovered from contexts associated with Building B3. An iron spike (SF75) and an iron strip (SF99) were recovered from context 178 along with pottery dating to the mid-late 13th century. A fragment from the arm of a horseshoe (SF-) recovered from context 143 has the remains of a countersunk nail hole and a raised

[28] Cf. op. cit. note 26, 581–9.
[29] Cf. I.H. Goodall, 'Horseshoes', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 1056.
[30] Cf. op. cit. note 26, 560–1.
[31] Cf. S. Moorhouse, 'Finds from Basinghaise, Hampshire (1540–1645), Part Two', *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, 5 (1971), 35–76.
[32] Cf. D.A. Hinton, 'Handles', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 864–8.
[33] Cf. P. Galloway, 'Toilet Equipment: Combs of bone, antler and ivory', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 665–90.
[34] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, fig. 60.
[35] Cf. M. Biddle, 'Copper alloy vessels and cast fragments', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 947–59.
[36] Cf. A. Goodall, 'Objects of copper alloy and lead', in G. Beresford, *Goltho: the development of an early medieval manor c. 850–1150*, English Heritage Archaeological Report No. 4, 173–6.

calkin. This type is in use from the 10th century to the 13th/14th centuries.[37] An iron strip (SF55), possibly a nail shank, was recovered from context 145.

Cultivation soil/Orchard (15th century to 17th century)

There were 9 finds recovered from cultivation soil 140/134. These include a silver Long Cross penny (SF25) dated 1251–1272, and a copper alloy Nuremburg jetton (SF23) dated 1586–1635. A copper alloy oval buckle frame with composite plates and a forked spacer (SF24) appears to be a particularly English form as exact parallels have not been found abroad, and is dated from the mid 14th to the early 15th century.[38] There is also a simple copper alloy bar mount (SF45) and a copper alloy lozenge-shaped pendant decorated with a shield depicting the coat of arms of the Beauchamp family of Alcester (Fig. 12 No. 2). The animals surrounding the shield are either cats or otters typically elongated to fill the remaining space, and there are traces of enamel within the design. The pendant can be dated to the period 1275–1350.[39]

Building B5 (17th–18th centuries)

There were 7 objects associated with Building B5. The arm from a balance (SF15) was recovered from context 106, a layer of demolition trample. The ring for suspending the scale pan is still in place at one end of the arm. The simple design of balances such as these has survived through to the modern day.[40] The remaining six objects were recovered from deposits associated with well 112, of which only one is particularly notable, a copper alloy token (SF15) of Arthur Madel of Oxford dated to 1667.

Discussion

The assemblage reflects the relatively low status of the site and the parish of St. Thomas throughout the medieval and early post-medieval periods. The area was apparently first occupied in the late 12th century and although it was quite densely populated it seems to have been one of the poorer parts of the town.[41] The assemblage includes very few personal ornaments such as jewellery, belt and strap fittings, but many more mundane domestic items such as thimbles, knives, whetstones and structural fittings including hinge pivots, spikes and nails. There are no objects obviously associated with trade or craft and, as at The Hamel, it can only be assumed that these activities were taking place elsewhere.[42] There were two outstanding items recovered from the excavations, the copper alloy pendant with the coat of arms of the Beauchamp family and the silver Long Cross penny. However, both these items were recovered from a general cultivation layer which covered the whole of Trench B, and the excavator has suggested that the finds from this layer may well have been imported with the soil, from elsewhere in the town.

The assemblage compares well with artefacts recovered from excavations on a similar scale at Ayer's Yard,[43] the number and variety of objects recovered there being almost identical to those found at the present site. Larger-scale excavations of medieval and post-medieval tenements at The Hamel,[44] which included tenements on St. Thomas's Street, recovered a greater number and variety of objects, including numerous personal items such as a seal matrix, various finger rings, and strap fittings. However, allowing for the larger scale of those excavations, the general character of the assemblage is not dissimilar to that recovered from the present site.

[37] Cf. I.H. Goodall, 'Iron objects', in T.G. Hassall, C.E. Halpin and M. Mellor, 'Excavations in St. Ebbe's, Oxford, 1967–76: Part I', *Oxoniensia*, liv (1989), 228–30.
[38] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, 55.
[39] I am grateful to Mr N. Griffiths for this identification.
[40] Cf. M. Biddle, 'Weights and Measures', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 917.
[41] Palmer, 'The Hamel', 138–9.
[42] Ibid. 225.
[43] L. Allen, 'Small Finds', in Roberts, this volume.
[44] Palmer, 'The Hamel'.

Catalogue. Comments and identifications are by LEIGH ALLEN unless otherwise attributed.

Coins, tokens and jettons, identified by Dr. N. MAYHEW of the Ashmolean Museum

Token, copper alloy, complete. Farthing token, Arther Madel, Oxford 1667, Leeds No. 70. D:17 mm. Ctx:113, SF:15.

Jetton, copper alloy, complete. Hans Krauwinckel, Nuremburg jetton 1586–1635. D:20.5 mm. Ctx:140, SF:23.

Coin, copper alloy, complete. Farthing, Charles I, period of issue 1625–1644 after which they ceased to be legal tender. D:18 mm. Ctx:100, SF:13.

Coin, silver, complete. Long Cross Penny, Nicole on London, Class V, 1251–72 (not circulating after *c.* 1280). D:17.5 mm. Ctx:134, SF:25.

Modern coins

Modern coin, copper alloy, complete. 1920 penny. D:30 mm. Ctx:500, SF:6.

Modern coin, copper alloy, complete. Coin of George II, 1746. D:28 mm. Ctx:518, SF:20.

Modern coin, copper alloy, complete. Coin of George II, 1740. D:28 mm. Ctx:518, SF:18.

Modern coin, copper alloy, complete. Coin of George III, 1807. D:28 mm. Ctx:512, SF:14.

Copper alloy objects

Personal ornaments

Buckle, copper alloy, incomplete, with pin missing. Oval buckle, lipped, with composite rigid plates. This is a distintive type of buckle which was widespread in the mid 14th to the early 15th centuries in this country.[45] L:39 mm. Ctx:140, SF:24.

Buckle frame, copper alloy, complete. Double oval buckle frame with oblique grooving, the pin is missing.[46] L:30 mm. Ctx:587, SF:58.

Buckle pin, copper alloy, complete. Small buckle pin, plain. L:18 mm. Ctx:599, SF:81.

Sexfoil mount, copper alloy, damaged. Domed centre and lobes, central perforation for a separate rivet (missing). Sheet mounts first appear in the early 13th century and are prolific in the late 14th and early 15th centuries.[47] L:16 mm. Ctx:559, SF:76.

Bar mount, copper alloy, complete. Simple D-section mount with two rivets for attachment.[48] L:16 mm. Ctx:140, SF:45.

Polygonal mount, copper alloy, complete. Irregularly-shaped polygonal mount with two rivets for attachment. L:45 mm. Ctx:583, SF:49.

Button, copper alloy, complete. Solid, spherical cast button, with an embedded copper alloy shank. Common from the second quarter of the 14th century to the 17th century.[49] L:12 mm. Ctx:529, SF:30.

[45] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, 78–82, figs. 48–9 Nos. 322–30.

[46] Cf. ibid. 82–3, fig. 50 No. 342; A.R. Goodall, 'Copper alloy objects', in T.G. Hassall et al, op. cit. note 37, 223–7, fig. 61 No. 16.

[47] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, 186–92.

[48] Cf. ibid. 211–13, fig. 133 No. 1138; A.R. Goodall, 'Copper alloy and lead objects', in Palmer, 'The Hamel', fig. 24 No. 31.

[49] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, 274–5, fig. 178 No. 1386.

Button, copper alloy, complete. Livery or blazer button, large thin, circular disc with integral loop attachment. NFP visible. Post-medieval in date.[50] L:26 mm. Ctx:100, SF:4.

Finger ring, copper alloy, incomplete. One half of a twisted wire finger ring, formed by two strands of wire twisted together. D: *c.*19 mm. Ctx:522, SF:54.

Wire loop fastener, copper alloy, complete, with the ends twisted around each other; possible dress fastening. Examples have been found positioned along the arms of skeletons from St Margaret's church, Norwich.[51] L:12 mm. Ctx:583, SF:62.

Lace Tags

Numerous lace tags were recovered, which were divisible into two types. The first type is cylindrical in form, securing the lace along its length with both edges folding inwards to grip the lace, and is common in late 16th- and 17th-century contexts.[52] Examples were found in contexts 100, 130 and 585. The second type has edges that meet along the length of the tag, with the ends pinched together to form a rounded end. This type was in use from the 14th century, but is more commonly found in 16th- and 17th-century contexts.[53] Examples were found in contexts 585, 583 (× 9) and 559.

Needleworking

Thimble, copper alloy, complete. Straight sided thimble, with flattish top and uneven circular punching covering the sides; the top is plain. Beaten from a piece of metal sheet and then stamped all over. Common from the 14th century. L:17 mm. Ctx:587, SF:57.

Thimble, copper alloy, complete. Straight elongated body with angled, slightly flattened, dome-shaped top. Cast, with tiny circular indentations applied by a roulette, below which there are two clear incised grooves; post-medieval in date.[54] L:17 mm. Ctx:518, SF:85.

Pins

Many pins were found in numerous contexts, and are broadly divisible into three groups. The first consists of pins with a wire wound spherical head. These are known from the medieval period, but are commoner in 16th- to 17th-century contexts.[55] Examples occurred in contexts 100, 518, 585, 583, 513, 522, 554 and 582. The second group consists of pins with cap heads, which are very similar to modern sewing pins. These occurred in contexts 583 and 500. The third group, pins with oblate heads, was represented by a single example from context 599. There were three further copper alloy points, probably from pins or needles.

Horse equipment

Pendant, copper alloy, complete. Lozenge-shaped with looped attachment, the pendant bears a shield depicting the coat of arms of the Beauchamp family, specifically the Beauchamps of Alcester, a branch of the Beauchamp Earls of Warwick. The creatures surrounding the shield are either cats or otters typically elongated to fill the space, and there are traces of enamel within the design. The pendant dates from *c.* 1275–1350 and was identified by N. Griffiths. L:48mm. Ctx:140, SF:45. Illustrated, Figure 12 No. 2.

Vessel fragments

Vessel fragment, copper alloy/pewter?, incomplete. Fragment from the rim of a beaten copper alloy vessel, probably from a large flanged bowl or plate. Dated not earlier than the 15th century.[56] Estimated diameter: 240 mm. Ctx:583, SF:44.

[50] Cf. M. Biddle and L. Cook, 'Buttons', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 573–9, fig. 155 No. 1760.

[51] Cf. S. Margeson, 'Fasteners', in S. Margeson (ed.), *Norwich Households: the medieval and post-medieval finds from Norwich survey excavations 1971–78* (East Anglian Archaeology 58, 1993), 20 Nos. 98–101; A.R. Goodall, op. cit. note 48, fig. 24 No. 69.

[52] G.E. Oakley, 'Lace tags', in J.H. Williams, *St Peter's Street Northampton: Excavations 1973–1976* (Northampton Development Corporation Archaeol. Monograph No. 2, 1979).

[53] As note 28.

[54] Cf. M. Biddle and L. Elmhirst, 'Sewing Equipment', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 804–12.

[55] Cf. M. Biddle and K. Barclay, 'Sewing Pins and Wire', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 560–1.

[56] Cf. op. cit. note 35, 947–59, fig. 294 No. 3405 (Group E).

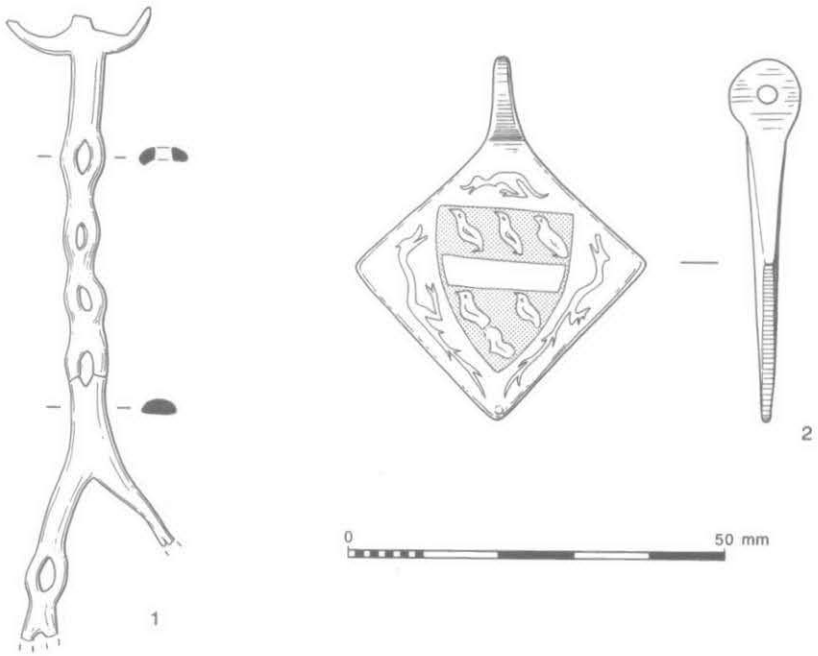

Fig. 12. Small Finds.

Vessel fragment, copper alloy/pewter?, incomplete. Fragment from the rim of a cast copper alloy vessel, the rim has a lip and is probably from a shallow bowl. D: *c.* 132 mm. Ctx:583, SF:50.

Scales

Balance arm, copper alloy, incomplete. Single arm from a balance; the ring for suspending the scale pan is still in place at the end of the arm.[57] L:48 mm. Ctx:106, SF:22.

Casket mounts

Mount from a casket, copper alloy, incomplete. Bifurcated strip, with lozenge-shaped openwork along its length, and traces of gilding remaining.[58] L:83 mm. Ctx:245, SF:100.

Mount from a casket, copper alloy, incomplete. Fragment with lobed edges and a circular central perforation. L:19 mm. Ctx:518, SF:17.

Other

The only other copper alloy object of interest is a complete tap (SF19) from context 518, an upper fill of cess-pit/rubbish pit 552. The tap has a heart-shaped openwork handle, and is of a type used with cisterns in the first half of the 17th century, before T-shaped handles were introduced in the 18th century.[59] The remaining objects are miscellaneous fittings and fragments of copper alloy sheet, which are listed in archive.

[57] Cf. op. cit. note 40, 917–25, fig. 284.

[58] D.A. Hinton, 'Fittings from reliquaries and other fine gold caskets; i, gold, silver, lead or pewter and copper alloy fittings', in Biddle, *Object and Economy*, 762–77.

[59] As note 31.

Iron objects

Personal ornaments

Buckle frame, iron, incomplete. Trapezoidal iron buckle frame with sheet roller; the pin is missing. Larger examples of this buckle form are associated with horse harness.[60] L:42 mm. Ctx:583, SF:47.

Horseshoes

Two incomplete horseshoe arms were recovered from contexts 583 and 143; they each had the remains of a single sub-rectangular countersunk hole and a raised calkin, and are of a type in use from the 10th century to the 13th/14th centuries.[61] A third fragment was recovered from context 564, on which a single sub-rectangular hole was visible.

Lock furniture

Key, iron, incomplete. Circular bow, hollow stem, the bit is missing. Common type, popular from the 9th to the 14th century.[62] L: 81.5 mm. Ctx:686, SF: –.

Tools

Awl, iron, incomplete, with pyramidal tang. L:110 mm. Ctx:504, SF: –.

Tang, iron, incomplete. Pyramidal tang with part of the square sectioned shank. L:82 mm. Ctx:587, SF: –.

Knives and forks

Whittle tang knife, iron, incomplete. Very corroded fragments from the blade and tang. L: *c.* 159 mm. Ctx:518, SF:97.

Whittle tang knife, iron and bone, incomplete. Bone pistol grip type handle, but only the tang and a very short section of the blade remain. This type of bone handled implement is dated to the 16th century at Winchester.[63] L:73.5 mm. Ctx:678, SF:104.

Scale tang knife, iron and antler, incomplete. The antler handle is very badly damaged; X-ray reveals a curved end cap and shoulder plate of non ferrous metal. Only a short section of the blade remains. L:149 mm. Ctx:518, SF:77.

Whittle tang knife, iron and bone, incomplete. Bone pistol grip type handle, large curved blade with the tip missing. L:244 mm. Ctx:518, SF:78.

Whittle tang fork, iron and bone, incomplete. Bone pistol grip type handle, with tang complete but only two fragmentary tines from the fork remaining. L:121 mm. Ctx:518, SF:96.

Miscellaneous iron objects

A hinge pivot (SF61) was recovered from context 583, and two iron spikes (SF75 and SF7) from contexts 178 and 500 respectively. Numerous nails were recovered, and these are listed in archive. The remainder of the assemblage consisted of miscellaneous strips and unidentified objects, which are listed in archive.

Lead objects

Token, lead, complete. The design visible on one side is possibly a crude attempt at a fleur de lys. Probably dates to the 17th century or later. Identified by N. Mayhew of the Ashmolean Museum. D:18 mm. Ctx:140, SF:34.

Chain, lead, incomplete. 9 links from a lead chain. L:40 mm. Ctx:518, SF93.

Strip, lead, complete. Rectangular strip of lead, rolled up; possibly an off-cut or net weight. L:26 mm. Ctx:198, SF: –.

Waste, lead. Irregularly shaped spill of lead from manufacturing process. L:45 mm. Ctx:646, SF:98.

[60] Cf. Egan and Pritchard, fig. 60.
[61] Cf. op. cit. note 37, 228–30, fig. 65 No. 114.
[62] Cf. op. cit. note 23, 1007–26, fig. 326 No. 3761.
[63] Cf. op. cit. note 32, 867, fig. 261 No. 2902.

Bone objects. Species identification by BOB WILSON

Double sided simple comb, bone, incomplete. Flat section tapering towards the edges and at both ends. Rectangular, with rounded corners; the uncut zone is concave. There are both fine and coarse teeth, but many are missing. Such examples are mostly post-medieval.[64] L:86 mm. Ctx:518, SF:92.

Handle, ivory, complete. Whittle tang handle, pistol grip type, generally post-medieval in date.[65] L:75 mm. Ctx:518, SF:79.

Gouge, bone (sheep radius), incomplete. Part of the shaft and rounded tip remain, with the tip and the lower surface of the gouge showing evidence of polish/wear. L:74 mm. Ctx:140, SF:38.

Stone objects by FIONA ROE

Whetstone, Norwegian rag, incomplete. Fragment from a rod whetstone, roughly circular in section, damaged at both ends. L:83 mm. Ctx:500, SF:8.

Whetstone, coal measures sandstone, incomplete. Plate whetstone damaged at one end, wear on either side. L:88 mm.Ctx:559, SF:41.

Whetstone, coal measures sandstone, incomplete. Two fragments from a rod whetstone, damaged at either end, square section. L:70 mm. Ctx:582, SF:43.

Whetstone, Norwegian rag, incomplete. Rod whetstone, damaged at either end, rectangular in section. L:137 mm. Ctx:518, SF:94.

Whetstone and point sharpener, coal measures sandstone, incomplete. Fragment from a rod whetstone damaged at one end, square in section, groove in one face to sharpen points, well worn. L:79 mm. Ctx:642, SF:103.

Mortar, Purbeck marble, incomplete. Two irregular shaped fragments from a mortar, the outside face is smooth. L:80 mm. Ctx:557, SF:32.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

THE ANIMAL BONES by BOB WILSON, with bird and fish bone identifications by ALISON LOCKER (Tables 7 and 8)

Over 1,440 normally-recovered bones and 310 sieved bones of mammal, bird and fish were examined from Trenches A and B. The overall distributions of bone fragments are given in Table 7. To avoid the presentation of too many small groups of bone data, all subgroups of Building phase B1 are amalgamated into one group. Data of one feature of B3/4 and two of Trench B Orchard are included with data from B4. It is unlikely that useful information has been lost by these amalgamations. Results from a few additional modern period bones have been excluded from consideration.

Some 48% of normally-collected bones were identified, and 6% of bones from sieved samples. The mass of unidentified bones among the sieved debris included many burnt fragments and suggested that many others, and a proportion of identifiable bones of medium and small sized species had not been retrieved during normal recovery of bones.

As at the adjacent sites at Ayer's Yard and Hollybush Row,[66] all the usual medieval and post-medieval species were represented except cat, while deer species were minimally represented. Of the less common animals, the record

[64] Cf. op. cit. note 33, 665–90, fig. 185 No. 2178.
[65] As note 63.
[66] Bob Wilson, 'Animal Bones', in Roberts, this volume.

TABLE 7. BONE FRAGMENT FREQUENCIES IN THE MAJOR CONTEXT GROUPS AT ST THOMAS'S ST

	Trench A						*Trench B*							
Phase	*PB*	*A1*	*A2*	*A3*	*A4*	*Subtotal*	*PB*	*B1*	*B3/4*	*B5*	*EM*	*Subtotal*	*Total*	*Sieved*
Century	*12–13*	*13*	*13–14*	*14–17*	*17–19*		*12*	*13*	*13–15*	*16*	*18–19*			
Cattle	9	20	21	71	44	165	9	22	54	21	8	114	279	1
Sheet	12	10	27	107	38	194	8	28	42	25	12	115	309	14
Pig	–	5	9	11	4	29	1	9	19	1	–	30	59	4
Horse	–	1	–	–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–	1	2	–
Dog	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Fallow deer	–	–	–	1?	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Roe deer	–	–	–	–	2A	2A	–	–	–	–	–	–	2A	–
Rabbit	–	–	–	3	2	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	–
Identif. m	22	36	57	193	90	398	18	60	115	47	20	260	658	19
Unident.	40	58	60	182	141	481	8	44	118	72	27	269	750	286
Total	62	94	117	375	229	879	26	104	233	119	47	529	1408	305
Burnt	4	4	2	13	20	33	1	2	2	2	–	7	40	131
Dom. fowl	–	3	–	2	10	15	–	–	1	3	–	4	19	2
Dom. goose	1	1	2	3	2	9	–	–	1	–	–	1	10	–
Other bird	–	1[1]	–	1[2]	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1[4]
Ident. fish	–	–	–	1[3]	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	2[5]

A, antler fragment; 1, Pheasant (F599); 2, Mallard/domestic duck (F583); 3, Ling (F592); 4, Blackbird (F204); 5, Whiting (F189) and Gurnard sp. (F176).

TABLE 8. PERCENTAGES OF SKELETAL ELEMENT GROUPINGS OF CATTLE AND SHEEP

Cattle

Phase	*PB–A2*	*A3*	*A4*	*PB–B1*	*B3/4*	*B5*
n	50	69	44	31	53	21
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Head	16	39	36	13	25	33
Foot	40	26	30	23	36	19
Body	44	35	34	65	40	48

Sheep

Phase	*PB–A2*	*A3*	*A4*	*PB–B1*	*B3/4*	*B5*
n	49	107	38	36	42	25
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Head	31	50	55	42	29	36
Foot	22	14	10	14	36	24
Body	47	36	34	44	36	40

of a late 13th-century or early 14th-century pheasant synsacrum in F599 (A1) is of interest, since the species has not been identified previously from Oxford urban sites. Ling is also of interest as a species that at present is restricted to the north of the North Sea and may have been brought down the coast a considerable distance to reach Oxford, perhaps via London.

Scanning the results generally, percentages of medium-sized debris (sheep and pig bones) among the four commonest species (including cattle and horse) range between 42% and 63%; this is not high for bones closely associated with domestic activity and domestic buildings, although this may be explained by the very low representation of pig bones, at around 9% of the total. Domestic goose bones are nearly as abundant as those of domestic fowl although sample sizes are small.

Analysis of skeletal element groupings tends to rely on small samples of cattle and sheep bones. However, it is worth observing from Table 8 that body elements of sheep and later groups of cattle are not well represented, while foot elements of sheep are quite abundant in B4, along with head debris including horn cores; however, there are not many mandibles of cattle represented in A3 and A4 groups.

Thus domestic refuse as table refuse is not strongly in evidence for the building groups, and trade/industrial debris is quite well represented in some groups thus indicating links with the hide and skin and other animal product manufacture, e.g. hornworking and tallow preparation, but, as at Hollybush Row, this probably occurred adjacent to the trenches rather than within the excavated areas. Better indications of a 13th-century tannery or hornworking occurred at The Hamel nearby.[67]

The indications of trade refuse, the limited evidence for domestic meat consumption, and the limited presence of wild species and pig bones, do not indicate a high status site. Little can be said about the environment of the site except to suppose it might not have been salubrious, with remains from trade activity reaching the area. As a low-lying site, the relative abundance of goose bones, as at The Hamel, may indicate the rearing of geese along with other fowl, another possible indication of squalor.

Sample sizes limited metrical studies of animal bones although a scatter of medieval to 17th-century metapodial measurements of cattle (largely from A3) indicated about equal numbers of females to males and castrated males being represented. A similar representation of the sexes occurred among the 17th-century metapodials from the floor at Hollybush Row, while the large sample of these elements from Church Street indicated an outnumbering of males by females.[68]

Kill-off patterns of animals were not determinable from the few cattle and pig mandibles but a sample of 16 mainly 14th- to 17th-century mandibles of sheep indicated a predominance of older sheep being killed. Probably this reflects the keeping of sheep to older ages for wool at this period. However, the pattern is sufficiently extreme to be comparable with manor kill-off patterns at Middleton Stoney and Hardings Field, Chalgrove, rather than with urban consumer patterns at Church Street where a greater proportion of younger sheep were present among those slaughtered.[69] Thus this small sample may indicate a close link with producer sheep husbandry, possibly at farms on the periphery of Oxford.

MACROSCOPIC PLANT REMAINS by MARK ROBINSON

Introduction

Sample analysis and results

Waterlogged Samples

Five samples were chosen for analysis. Details are given below and in Table 9.

[67] R. Wilson with D. Bramwell, 'Animal Bones and Shell', in Palmer, 'The Hamel', 198 and Fiche E09–E11.

[68] R. Wilson with A. Locker and B.T. Marples, 'Medieval animal bones and marine shells from Church Street and other sites in St. Ebbe's, Oxford', in T.G. Hassall et al, op. cit. note 37, 258–68, Fiche MVD14–MVF1.

[69] Ibid., Fiche MVC1–C4 and MVIA5–B5; R. Wilson, 'Mortality patterns, animal husbandry and marketing in and around medieval and post-medieval Oxford', in A. Hall and H. Kenward (eds.), *Urban and rural connexions: perspectives from environmental archaeology* (Oxbow Monograph No. 47, 1994), 103–15.

Sample 29 100 g. grey slightly organic clay silt from ditch.
Sample 30 100 g. dark grey gravelly organic silt with some charcoal from ditch.
Sample 10 1000 g. dark grey organic gravelly clay loam from pit.
Sample 20 100 g. mixed black organic silt and gravelly loam.
Sample 7 100 g. dark brown laminated sedge peat with some silt.

TABLE 9. ST. THOMAS'S ST. SAMPLES ANALYSED IN DETAIL

Trench and Phase	*Date*	*Waterlogged Sample (Context)*	*Charred Sample (Context)*
A:PB	C12	29 (685); 30 (686)	
A1	C13		28 (653)
A2	C13–14	10 (607); 20 (637)	8 (597)
A3	C14–17	7 (556)	4 (559)
B1	C13–14		17 (212); 22 (231); 15 (204); 12 (189); 13 (189); 16 (210)

The samples were wet-sieved down to 0.2 mm. and sorted for macroscopic plant and mollusc remains under a binocular microscope. Only a one tenth sub-sample was examined of the sieve contents between 0.2 and 0.5 mm. and the number of items was multiplied up accordingly. The results for macroscopic plant remains are given in Tables 10–12.[70] Mollusc shells were only found in two of the samples and the results are given in Table 13.

Charred Plant Remains

Nine flots were analysed in detail (Table 9). Each flot had been derived from a sample of about 10 litres which was floated in water onto a 0.5 mm. mesh and dried. The flots were sorted under a binocular microscope for remains excluding charcoal and the results are given in Table 14.[71] Remains other than charcoal were absent from Sample 12. Macroscopic plant silica remains, which result from phytoliths becoming welded together in a fire under fully oxidising conditions, were found in some of the samples. The results have been given in Table 15.

Charcoal was identified from the six flots which were from hearths (Table 16). The charcoal fragments were examined at low power magnification under a binocular microscope to identify *Quercus* and then fragments of other taxa were identified using a high power incident light microscope.

Site environment and activities

Pre-Building Activity

The only useful evidence for conditions on the site prior to the 13th century buildings was from waterlogged 12th-century ditch 686 in Trench A (Sample 30) and the underlying silt 685 (Sample 29). The molluscs from Sample 29 comprise a typical stagnant water fauna, with *Lymnea peregra* and *Planorbis planorbis* whereas Sample 30 contained a single shell of a flowing water species, *Valvata piscinalis*. The waterlogged seeds from Sample 29 include various plants likely to have been growing in the ditch, such as *Alisma* sp. (water-plantain) and *Sparganium* sp. (bur-reed), and terrestrial species of disturbed ground, such as *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle) and *Sonchus asper* (sow thistle). The most numerous seeds were from *Juncus bufonius* gp. (toad rush), a small annual plant of wet mud.

Sample 30 gave an indication of the activities that were occurring on the site. In addition to waterlogged seeds from plants of similar habitats to those from Sample 29, there were also waterlogged seeds of grassland plants and charred cereal remains. The grassland plants included a distinct hay meadow element, with *Rhinanthus* sp. (yellow rattle), *Leucanthemum vulgare* (ox-eye daisy) and *Centaurea* cf. *nigra* (knapweed). The identifiable cereal remains comprised a little *Avena* sp. (oat) grain and *Secale cereale* (rye) chaff. These remains suggest agricultural processing on the site.

Trench A, Building 1

The evidence from this phase was limited to a very small quantity of weed seeds and unidentified cereal grain from Sample 28, context 653.

[70] Nomenclature after A.R. Clapham, T.G. Tutin and D.M. Moore, *Flora of the British Isles* (3rd edn. 1987).
[71] As note 70.

TABLE 10. ST. THOMAS'S ST. WATERLOGGED SEEDS

Sample		*No. of seeds*				
		29	30	10	20	7
Ranunculus cf. *repens* L.	buttercup	–	11	–	1	1
R. sceleratus L.	celery-leaved crowfoot	–	–	–	1	–
Papaver somniferum L.	opium poppy	–	–	1	–	–
Chelidonium majus L.	greater celandine	–	–	14	–	–
Brassiceae indet.	wild turnip etc.	–	1	–	–	–
Agrostemma githago L.	corn cockle	–	1	1	–	1
Stellaria media gp.	chickweed	1	3	5	–	–
Chenopodium polyspermum L.	all seed	1	–	1	–	–
C. album L.	fat hen	1	–	1	1	3
C. rubrum tp.	red goosefoot	1	–	–	–	–
Atriplex sp.	orache	–	3	7	–	–
Chenopodium or *Atriplex* sp.		1	–	1	–	–
Filipendula ulmaria (L.) Max.	meadow sweet	–	1	–	–	–
Callitriche sp.	starwort	–	2	–	–	–
Conium maculatum L.	hemlock	–	–	1	–	–
Polygonum aviculare agg.	knotgrass	2	–	1	–	–
P. persicaria L.	red shank	–	1	3	–	–
P. hydropiper L.	water-pepper	3	–	–	–	–
Rumex sp.	dock	–	6	1	–	–
Urtica urens L.	small nettle	–	–	1	–	–
U. dioica L.	stinging nettle	5	3	33	5	–
Cannabis sativa L.	hemp	–	–	2	–	–
Hyoscyamus niger L.	henbane	–	–	2	–	–
Solanum sp.	nightshade	–	–	1	–	–
Rhinanthus sp.	yellow rattle	–	2	–	–	–
Mentha cf. *aquatica* L.	water mint	–	2	–	–	–
Mentha sp. (not *aquatica*)	mint	–	–	3	–	–
Lamium album	white dead-nettle	–	–	1	–	1
Lamium sp. (not *album*)	dead-nettle	–	–	1	–	1
Labiatae indet.		–	–	5	–	–
Plantago major L.	great plantain	1	–	8	–	–
Sambucus nigra L.	elder	–	–	8	–	–
Leucanthemum vulgare Lam.	ox-eye daisy	–	1	–	–	–
cf. *Cirsium* sp.	thistle	–	1	–	–	–
Centaurea cf. *nigra* L.	knapweed	–	2	–	–	–
Sonchus oleraceus L.	sow-thistle	–	–	1	–	–
S. asper (L.) Hill	sow-thistle	2	1	–	–	–
Alisma sp.	water-plantain	3	–	–	–	–
Juncus effusus gp.	tussock rush	10	–	–	–	–
J. bufonius gp.	toad rush	90	–	–	–	–
J. articulatus gp.	rush	–	20	–	120	–
Juncus spp.	rush	70	–	–	50	–
Sparganium sp.	bur-reed	5	1	–	–	–
Eleocharis S. Palustres sp.	spike-rush	–	–	–	1	1
Carex spp.	sedge	–	1	2	113	69
Gramineae indet.	grass	1	1	–	1	1
Totals		197	64	105	293	78

TABLE 11. ST. THOMAS'S ST. OTHER WATERLOGGED PLANT REMAINS

Sample		29	30	10	20	7
Cyperaceae	(sed) – stems	–	–	–	–	+
Salix sp.	(willow) – bud	1	–	–	–	–

TABLE 12. CHARRED PLANT REMAINS FROM THE WATERLOGGED SAMPLES

			No. of items				
Sample			29	30	10	20	7
Triticum sp. (free threshing)	(wheat)	– grain	–	–	1	–	–
Secale cereale L.	(rye)	– rachis node	–	1	–	–	–
Avena sp.	(oats)	– grain	–	2	–	–	–
Cereal indet.		– grain	1	5	2	–	3
Medicago lupulina L.	(black medick)	– seed	–	–	–	1	–
Gramineae indet.	(grass)	– seed	1	–	–	–	–
Weed indet.		– seed	–	1	–	–	–
Alnus or *Corylus* sp.	(alder or hazel)	– charcoal	–	+	–	–	–
Quercus sp.	(oak)	– charcoal	–	+	+	–	–

TABLE 13. ST. THOMAS'S ST. MOLLUSCA FROM THE WATERLOGGED SAMPLE

	No. of individuals	
Sample	29	30
Valvata piscinalis (Müll)	–	1
Lymnaea peregra (Müll)	7	–
Planorbis pllanorbis (L.)	4	–
Pisidium sp.	2	–

Trench A, Building 2

There were rich deposits of both waterlogged and charred plant remains from this phase. The most interesting assemblage was Sample 10, from a waterlogged 13th–14th century pit, 604 (fill number 607). In addition to the usual range of seeds from plants of disturbed or waste ground that are commonly found on urban settlements, such as *Urtica dioica* (stinging nettle), *Plantago major* (great plantain) and *Sambucus nigra* (elder), there were also seeds from a group of plants which together suggest a medieval herb garden:

Papaver somniferum	(opium poppy)
Chelidonium majus	(greater celandine)
Conium maculatum	(hemlock)
Cannabis sativa	(hemp)
Hyoscyamus niger	(henbane)
Mentha sp. (not *aquatica*)	(mint)

Unfortunately it was not possible to identify the mint seeds with certainty, and it is a difficult genus, with much hybridisation, but they most closely resemble *M.* cf. *spicata* (spear mint).

TABLE 14. ST. THOMAS'S ST. CHARRED PLANT REMAINS (EXCLUDING CHARCOAL)

			No. of items							
Samples			28	8	4	17	22	15	13	16
CEREALS										
Triticum sp. – free threshing tetraploid	(rivet tp. wheat)	rachis node	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
T. aestivum tp. – free threshing hexaploid	(bread tp. wheat)	rachis node	–	3	–	1	–	–	–	1
Triticum sp. – free threshing short grained	(wheat)	grain	–	–	–	21	1	–	26	–
Triticum sp. – free threshing short grained	(wheat)	rachis node	–	11	3	4	13	2	2	6
Triticum sp.	(wheat)	grain	–	1	–	23	4	–	14	2
Secale cereale L.	(rye)	grain	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Secale cereale L.	(rye)	rachis node	–	9	1	1	2	–	–	5
Hordeum sp.	(barley)	grain	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–
Secale or *Hordeum* sp.	(rye or barley)	rachis node	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	1
Avena sp.	(oats)	grain	–	–	–	1	1	–	3	–
Cereal indet.		grain	3	3	3	59	22	1	31	11
Total cereal grain			3	4	3	104	28	1	77	13
Total chaff items			0	26	6	6	17	2	2	13
CULTIVATED LEGUME SEEDS										
Vicia faba L.	field or broad bean		–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Pisum sativum L.	pea		–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
Indet. large legume	bean or pea etc		–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
WEED SEEDS										
Raphanus raphanistrum L.	wild radish		–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Thlaspi arvense L.	field penny-cress		–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Chenopodium album L.	fat hen		–	5	–	–	1	–	–	–
Atriplex sp.	orache		2	25	–	1	–	–	–	–
Vicia or *Lathyrus* sp.	vetch or tare		–	1	–	14	–	2	4	–
Medicago lupulina L.	black medick		–	11	–	–	1	–	–	20
cf. *M. lupulina* L.	black medick		–	48	1	3	3	–	–	36
Polygonum aviculare agg.	knotgrass		–	62	–	–	–	–	–	–
Rumex sp.	dock		–	16	–	–	6	1	2	9
Solanum cf. *nigrum* L.	black nightshade		–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
Euphrasia or *Odontites* sp.	eyebright or red bartsia		1	2	–	1	–	–	–	8
Plantago lanceolata L.	ribwort plantain		–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Valerianella dentata (L.) Pol.	corn salad		–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4
Anthemis cotula L.	stinking mayweed		–	31	1	1	1	–	–	2
Tripleurospermum inodorum (L.) Sch.	scentless mayweed		–	3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Eleocharis palustris (L.) R. & S.	spike rush		–	–	1	–	1	–	–	–
Carex sp.	sedge		–	–	1	–	1	–	1	–
Gramineae indet.	grass		–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
Indet. weed seeds			–	8	–	2	1	–	3	8
Total weed seeds			3	213	5	25	15	3	11	88
OTHER PLANT REMAINS										
Pteridium aquilinum (L.) Kuhn	(bracken)	pinnule	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–
Cereal-type	(straw)	culm nodes	–	5	–	–	1	–	–	–

TABLE 15. ST. THOMAS'S ST. PLANT SILICA

			Number or presence of items						
Sample			28	8	4	17	22	15	13	16
Triticum sp.	(wheat)	awns and glume beaks	–	23	–	–	1	–	–	1
Secale cereale L.	(rye)	awn	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Fused ash containing chaff			–	+++	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lithospermum arvense L.	(corn gromwell)	seed	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–

+++ very abundant

TABLE 16. ST. THOMAS'S ST. CHARCOAL FROM HEARTH SAMPLES

Sample		17	22	15	12	13	16
Prunus sp.	sloe, plum etc.	–	–	–	–	+	–
Pomoideae	hawthorn, apple etc	+	–	–	–	–	–
Quercus sp.	oak	++	++	+++	+++	+++	+++

+ present; ++ abundant; +++ very abundant

All six of these plants have formerly been used for medicinal purposes. *C. majus*, *C. maculatum* and *H. niger* are poisonous. *P. somniferum* and *M. spicata* are also cultivated for culinary use. With the exception of *H. niger*, the plants can still be found growing in old gardens in Oxford. *C. maculatum* is very much a weed and only survives in the most neglected of gardens. *C. majus* enjoys the status of tolerated weed and is often, for example, allowed to grow at the base of damp shady walls. *P. somniferum* is a thoroughly naturalised escape from cultivation. It is an annual that readily colonises disturbed areas, with the occasional double or pink-flowered form serving as a remainder that it has ornamental varieties in its ancestry. *C. sativa* is now more likely to occur as a result of illicit planting than as a bird-seed casual and does not persist. In contrast, *M. spicata* is all too persistent. It tends to spread vegetatively, a clump being introduced to a garden for culinary purposes and then being found rather invasive. *H. niger* was formerly common on nutrient-rich ground around settlements and there are other records of its seeds from medieval deposits in Oxford.[72]

While it is not possible to establish just which of these plants were being harvested for medicinal or culinary purposes on the site, it is very likely that several were so used. Likewise, it is difficult to make the division between herbs that were deliberately cultivated, useful plants that were tolerated, and weeds, but some of these plants would probably have needed encouragement to thrive on the site. The best interpretation is that there was a small herb garden on the site although it need have been no more than a few plants around the back door of Building A2.

The other waterlogged deposit from this phase was also unusual. Sample 20, from another 13th- to 14th-century pit, 635, fill 637, contained numerous seeds of *Carex* spp. (sedges) and very little else apart from *Juncus* spp. (rush) seeds. (*Juncus* seeds are very small and prolifically produced. There is nothing unusual in their abundance.) It seems unlikely that the site had become overgrown with *Carex* spp., so the most likely explanation is that cut sedge had been brought to the site, perhaps as bedding for animals or as roofing material.

The only charred assemblage, Sample 8, was from burnt area 597 within Building A2. It was dominated by arable weed seeds, particularly *Medicago lupulina* (black medick), *Polygonum aviculare* agg. (knotgrass) and *Anthemis cotula* (stinking mayweed). Charred cereal chaff was also well represented, with rachis nodes of tetraploid and hexaploid free-threshing wheat (probably rivet and bread wheat) as well as *Secale cereale* (rye). There was very little grain. The differential destruction of chaff and grain when they enter a fire usually results in chaff being very much under-represented in comparison to grain amongst the charred remains that survive. In this case there was very much silica ash of fused cereal chaff fragments as evidence of the material which had been fully oxidised. Evidence of straw rarely survives, but the sample contained a few cereal-sized culm nodes.

[72] E.g. M.A. Robinson, 'Waterlogged plant and invertebrate remains', in Palmer, 'The Hamel', Fiche.

The material which was burnt to give rise to the charred and ash remains of Sample 8 seems primarily to have been threshed cereal straw. The weed seeds are likely to have been from plants cut with the straw and indeed *P. aviculare* is a low-growing species only likely to have been harvested if cutting was close to the ground. Such an assemblage could have resulted from the burning of initial threshing waste or the burning of old thatch but neither activity seems plausible inside a building. Assuming the interpretation of the deposit as an internal occupation layer is correct, it is possible that straw was used to fuel a bread oven in Building A2.

Trench A, Building 3

Both charred and waterlogged plant remains were recovered from 14th-century pits belonging to this phase. Sample 7 (context 556) comprised waterlogged stem fragments of Cyperaceae (sedges etc) and seeds of *Carex* spp. It was thus very similar in character to Sample 20 from the previous phase and is likewise interpreted as imported cut sedge. A charred assemblage from Sample 4, context 559, was small but again contained a high proportion of chaff.

Trench B, Building 1

A series of 13th- to 14th-century century charred deposits was investigated from hearths inside Building 1. The main fuel burnt on these hearths seems to have been *Quercus* (oak) as much oak charcoal was recovered, with only a trace of other species. Most of the samples also yielded charred cereal remains. Two of the samples, Samples 17 (partition beamslot 212) and 13 (context 189), were grain-rich. The grain was mostly a short-grained free-threshing variety of *Triticum* (wheat), with only very small quantities of *Hordeum* sp. (barley), *Secale cereale* (rye) and *Avena* sp. (oats). There was also a slight presence of *Vicia faba* (bean) and *Pisum sativum* (pea). The weed seeds tended to be from species with relatively large seeds, such as *Vicia* or *Lathyrus* sp. (vetch or tare). The material represents either waste from the later stages of grain clearing or was derived from the accidental charring of grain that was being parched to harden it for hand milling.

In contrast, Sample 16 (context 210) was dominated by small weed seeds, particularly *Medicago lupulina* (black medick). Numbers of cereal grain (mostly wheat) were equalled by chaff fragments (wheat and rye). While this assemblage was not as clearly burnt straw as Sample 8 from Building A2, it certainly represents waste from a much earlier stage of crop processing than either Samples 17 or 13. The remaining samples, Samples 22 (context 231) and 15 (context 204), contain more equal ratios of grain, chaff and weed seeds and are not so distinctive in character.

Conclusions

The environmental evidence suggests that agricultural processing activities involving cereals and hay were occurring on the site in the 12th century, prior to the site becoming a suburb of Oxford. The botanical remains from the 13th and 14th centuries were appropriate to a site of urban character, but by no means exclude the possibility of continuing agricultural activities. Grain, straw and cut sedge were all brought to the site. Various possible interpretations can be given to cereal remains, ranging from large scale grain processing to domestic use of grain and straw. However, there was no evidence for brewing on the site. The proportions of barley and oats, the grains most likely to be used for malting, were very low.

Finds of burnt straw are surprisingly rare in the archaeobotanical record, which makes the contents of Sample 8 particularly interesting. This is presumably because straw is very vulnerable to complete combustion and its charred or silica remains are very fragile. However, another example was discovered elsewhere in St. Thomas's parish at The Hamel.[73] This material comprised wheat with a little rye straw and was from a 12th to to early 13th-century ditch.

The other sample of special significance was Sample 10 from Building A2, which gave evidence, if not of a physic garden, then of a medicinal herb plot. The medicinal use of plants in England is documented from Anglo-Saxon times onwards,[74] but archaeobotanical evidence is very sparse. Interestingly, seeds from at least four of these plants, opium poppy, greater celandine, hemlock and henbane were identified from a 15th-century drain at the Dominican Priory in Oxford.[75] Although the possibility was

[73] M. Jones, 'Carbonised plant remains', in Palmer, 'The Hamel', Fiche.

[74] E.g. O. Cockayne, *Leechdoms, wortcunning and starcraft of early England* (1866).

[75] M.A. Robinson, 'Plant and invertebrate remains from the Priory drains', in G.H. Lambrick, 'Further excavations on the site of the Dominican Priory, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, I (1985), 196–201 and Fiche.

raised that some of the plants identified from the drain were grown in a physic garden at the monastery (and seeds of other potential medicinal species were also present) this interpretation was not given the consideration it deserved.[76]

DISCUSSION

Pre-Building Activity, 12th century

The earliest activity in both trenches indicates that in the 12th century the site was open wet pasture, cut by substantial ditches, which served either for drainage (264), or livestock restraint (689). The small quantity of pottery retrieved from these early contexts supports the conclusion that the site was not occupied or built on at this time. Some cereal processing was occurring on the site, although the evidence for this derives from just one sample from ditch 689 (TrA), and therefore is an insufficient basis upon which to ascertain its extent.

Curiously, neither this site nor The Hamel revealed clear evidence of the existence of what would later be St. Thomas's Street. Even assuming that any roadway in the 12th century would have been narrower than the later road, it would be reasonable to expect that its line and orientation might be inferred from adjacent linear features, running either parallel, or at right-angles, to its line. Neither of the pre-building ditches on the present site was on such an alignment. A feature observed during the latest stages of excavation at Ayer's Yard to the west[77] may have been a roadside ditch, but this could not be certainly established. A 'ditch 7 ft. deep apparently running parallel to the road to Osney' was recorded by Rigold. However, neither observation gives a clear indication of the alignment of these features.

The most likely interpretation is that the original roads or trackways meandered across the pasture from the Castle towards the chapel (later the parish church) of St. Thomas, and St. Thomas's Street only became formally defined and 'straightened' when the field and drainage ditches were infilled and the area was developed in the 13th century.

The 13th-century cob-walled buildings

The earliest buildings in both trenches were cob-walled structures, each with interior floors of silty clay overlain by occupation layers and hearth debris. There is relatively little evidence for the use of cob as a building material in medieval Oxford. Two 10th-century buildings of apparently similar type are known, the first being a post-and-mud or clay-clad structure on the site of the later All Saints' Church in the High Street,[78] and the second being a possible cob-walled building at 79–80 St. Aldate's.[79] Excavations at 83 St. Aldate's in 1970–71[80] identified a possible remnant of cob wall on a stone footing, dating to the early 13th century; it was the earliest structure on the site and demolished within 20–30 years. Of more significance,

[76] Mrs C. Dickson, pers. comm.
[77] Roberts, this volume.
[78] 'Oxford before the University', Oxford Archaeological Unit/Oxford Univ. Cttee. for Archaeology Monograph, in prep.
[79] B.G. Durham, op. cit. note 12.
[80] Ibid.

however, are the three cob buildings, probably of the early 14th century, that were excavated at Ayer's Yard.[81] These are considered further below.

A fine example of a cob-walled building, preserved to a height of 1.8 m., was excavated at Wallingford Castle in 1972.[82] It had been buried beneath the upcast of the rampart, and dated from the late 12th or early 13th century. Other cob buildings of similar date were found in excavations of the medieval rural manorial complex at Chalgrove.[83]

Both cob buildings at St. Thomas's Street, A1 and B1, were constructed directly onto the levelling deposit, with no stone footings to support the cob. It is likely that both were single storey and roofed with thatch or shingles. No roof tile or slate was found in contemporary contexts, and the weight of a tiled or slated roof would arguably have required the support either of more substantial walls, or of a stronger element of structural timber than was suggested by the postholes in either building.

The long sides of the buildings on the north side of St. Thomas's Street lay parallel to the street frontage, as shown on the present site, and at Ayer's Yard. Building B1 was divided into three cells each measuring 3 m. west-east by approximately 5 m. north–south (internally). The extent of B1 can be ascertained with reasonable confidence, with reference to the west wall as seen in the watching brief and the deduced plot boundary to the east. If it is assumed that the 13th-century street frontage lay under the revealed 19th-century frontage, then an approximate interior dimension for B1 would be 10 m. west–east by 5 m. This was then subdivided by one, possibly two north–south party walls.

The structural characteristics of A1 are less evident. The north wall was set approximately 2 m. further south than that of B1. This may indicate that Building A1 was considerably smaller than B1, although the line of the present street veers to the south-east, and this could have accommodated the offset to the south of the entire building. Of the structure itself, only the cob wall and two postholes, presumably structural, survived.

There was very little evidence either for the function of the buildings, or for the occupations of their tenants. The east cell of B1 had at least one rendered interior wall, and floors that showed less evidence of wear than the west cell. This could suggest that the building served a dual function as dwelling and working space. The environmental analysis of the contemporary charred deposits within B1 indicate crop processing, but this need not mean anything more than domestic usage. The yard to the north of B1 shows little disturbance by rubbish pits, but this does not necessarily argue against the building being a dwelling, as the rubbish could have been taken further away. The original north door of B1 was blocked in, possibly at the same time that the 'outbuilding' B3 was constructed, in the late 13th or early 14th century. A possible open bay in B3 could be seen as an indicator that the building served to house livestock of some kind, or alternatively it could have been used for storage. There was no evidence of interior rendering in A1, and no clear evidence to indicate a distinction in use defined by a partition, as with B1.

If A1 and B1 functioned as small dwelling/workshop units, then the occupations of the tenants left no physical evidence, either as archaeological deposits or artefacts. A fragment of a whetstone found in the interior layer of building A1 (642) could be associated as much with domestic as craft use. Given that the integrity of the finds from layer 642 is in some doubt

[81] Roberts, this volume.

[82] R. Carr, 'Wallingford Castle', CBA Group 9 *Newsletter*, iii (1973), 18; J. Chapelot and R. Fossier (trans. H. Cleere), *The Village and House in the Middle Ages* (1985), 255–6, fig. 84.

[83] P. Page, forthcoming, 'Excavations at the site of the medieval moated manor at Hardings Field, Chalgrove, Oxon'; currently unpublished TS. report held by Oxford Archaeological Unit.

(see Description, above, Transitional phase A2–A3), the importance of this artefact should not be overstressed.

This was also the case at The Hamel, where the mid 13th-century buildings fronting St. Thomas's Street could be linked to documented tenants with occupational surnames (for example, Walter the Carpenter and Walter the Tanner), but yielded no archaeological evidence of their tenants' occupations. The documentary sources, discussed at length by Palmer,[84] suggest that the cloth industry, building and fishing were the predominant trades in the parish of St. Thomas. However, none of these left identifiable traces at the present site.

The construction of both A1 and B1 can be dated by the pottery within the cob wall fabric and primary floor layers in each case, to the early to mid 13th century. Although Oseney Abbey's Chapel of St. Thomas itself dates from the late 12th century, therefore, development of St. Thomas's Street appears to have begun several decades later, with Buildings A1 and B1 on the north side of the street apparently contemporary with the first development of the south side, as seen at The Hamel. However, the Ayer's Yard cob-walled buildings are dated rather later, to the early 14th century, by pottery associated with the cob walls themselves and with floor surfaces. The earliest stone-built buildings on Rewley Lane (now Hollybush Row) have been dated to the mid to late 13th century.[85]

The evidence for the structure of B2, to the west of Trench B, derives solely from the section seen in the watching brief. It appears to show a wall built in the post-pad and panel style of B3, rather than the cob of B1, although, unlike B3, there are evident domestic floor surfaces to the south of the wall. Whether this indicates that the use of cob was not ubiquitous along the street frontage, or that the tenant of B1 used B2 and B3 as 'outbuildings' is not clear. However, the fact that B2 appears to have been demolished and left undeveloped at the same time as B1/B3 suggests that they could have been linked by common tenancy.

The impression from the structural characteristics of the cob-walled buildings at Ayer's Yard, and the associated finds, is that the buildings served similar functions and were occupied by tenants of similar status.

At the site of Rigold's observations in 1948[86] the situation is less clear. What was interpreted as the made-up clay and gravel 'cushion' for a 'cruck-house' could well have been the remains of cob walls. The observation that the building 'lay obliquely to the road' is puzzling, but, given the circumstances of the recording, might not be significant. What is interesting is that there was no evidence of a stone-built building dating to the 13th century – in other words cob-walled buildings may have extended from near the west end of St. Thomas's Street at least as far as a point opposite The Hamel. In spite of the late date attributed to the buildings at Ayer's Yard, it is tempting to suggest that such a range of cob-walled buildings of similar size and alignment represents a deliberate and planned programme, which could have been sponsored by Oseney Abbey, possibly in conjunction with the lord of North Oseney.

The suburb of St. Thomas's was not wealthy by comparison with other areas of the town, and none of the excavated sites has so far shown the variety of ceramic imports that are found in St. Aldate's. This lends weight to the idea that the western route out of Oxford was never as important as the southern, and therefore the adjacent suburb was more insular and less open to trade. The evidence of the finds assemblages suggests that the tenants at The Hamel, who occupied stone-built and timber houses, were at best only marginally wealthier than the tenants in the cob dwellings on the north side of the street. The fact that cob was used on

[84] Palmer, 'The Hamel', op. cit. note 8.
[85] Roberts, this volume.
[86] Rigold, 1951, op. cit. note 6.

the north side of the street in preference to stone and timber, therefore, cannot readily be attributed to differences in status; it tends, rather, to support the argument that the cob houses were a deliberate development.

It is clear that Osney Abbey was undergoing a period of great expansion at the time. At its height it employed 40% of St. Thomas's wage earners, but paid less than average wages. With extensive building going on within the town walls at this time, it might be suggested that the cob buildings were a cheap, quick way to attract tradesmen and so stimulate the local extra-mural economy. Chapelot and Fossier[87] have argued that the use of cob as a building material requires careful organisation. Construction using such material can only take place in the late spring or early summer, to allow the cob to dry sufficiently before winter, and 'a sustained working rate and consequently a fairly large labour force' is required, as all the material in the walls of each building must go through the drying process at the same time; in other words, each building must be constructed in a short space of time. They suggest that a modest building would require a labour force of up to 12 people. Given that the north side of St. Thomas's Street could have been the site of approximately 80–100 m. of cob-built buildings, built within a relatively short space of time, it is a possibility that their construction was contracted to a single building 'gang'. As to the instigator of this development, Osney Abbey itself would be a prime candidate, possibly in partnership with the lord of North Osney.

After the initial building on the site, the stratigraphic sequence in the two trenches shows distinct differences. Whereas the cob-walled building B1 survived until the mid 14th century, albeit with some alterations, building A1 was replaced before the end of the 13th century with a more substantial structure, at least partly stone-built (A2). Contemporary activity in the form of a number of large rubbish pits to the north, and a quantity of pins and buckle ends, suggest more intensive domestic occupation. Whether the associated 'herb garden' sample is an indication of the occupation of the inhabitants, or the remains of a private herb bed, cannot be known for certain; however, the only other example of such a concentrated group of 'medicinal' herbs from a medieval context in Oxford came from the Blackfriars Priory,[88] where specialised cultivation of herbs might be expected.

The succeeding structure A3 appeared to have a lifespan of up to 300 years, but there is little distinctive evidence of the occupation of the inhabitants. Wilson notes that the high proportion of foot and head elements among the animal bone assemblage suggests links with animal-product manufacturing such as hide and skin working, hornworking and tallow preparation. The pottery assemblage indicates a continuing scarcity of imported ware, suggesting that the inhabitants were perhaps less well-off than the contemporary occupants of the south side of the street, or the suburb of St. Aldate's.

In contrast, Building A4 and the contemporary contexts produced finds including a quantity of knife handles and a cistern tap. The earliest documentary reference to this property (in 1807) indicates that it was a stone-built public house, known as the Turk's Head by the early 19th century. It may have been so earlier; the dating material from A4 associated contexts suggests that it preceded the documented building, and the finds would not be out of place in a public house.

In contrast to the apparently unbroken sequence of building and occupation in Trench A, the demolition of B1, B2 and B3, probably by the mid 14th century, led to the site being cleared and apparently remaining undeveloped until the 17th century. This appears to reflect

[87] J. Chapelot and R. Fossier, op. cit. note 82.
[88] See note 75.

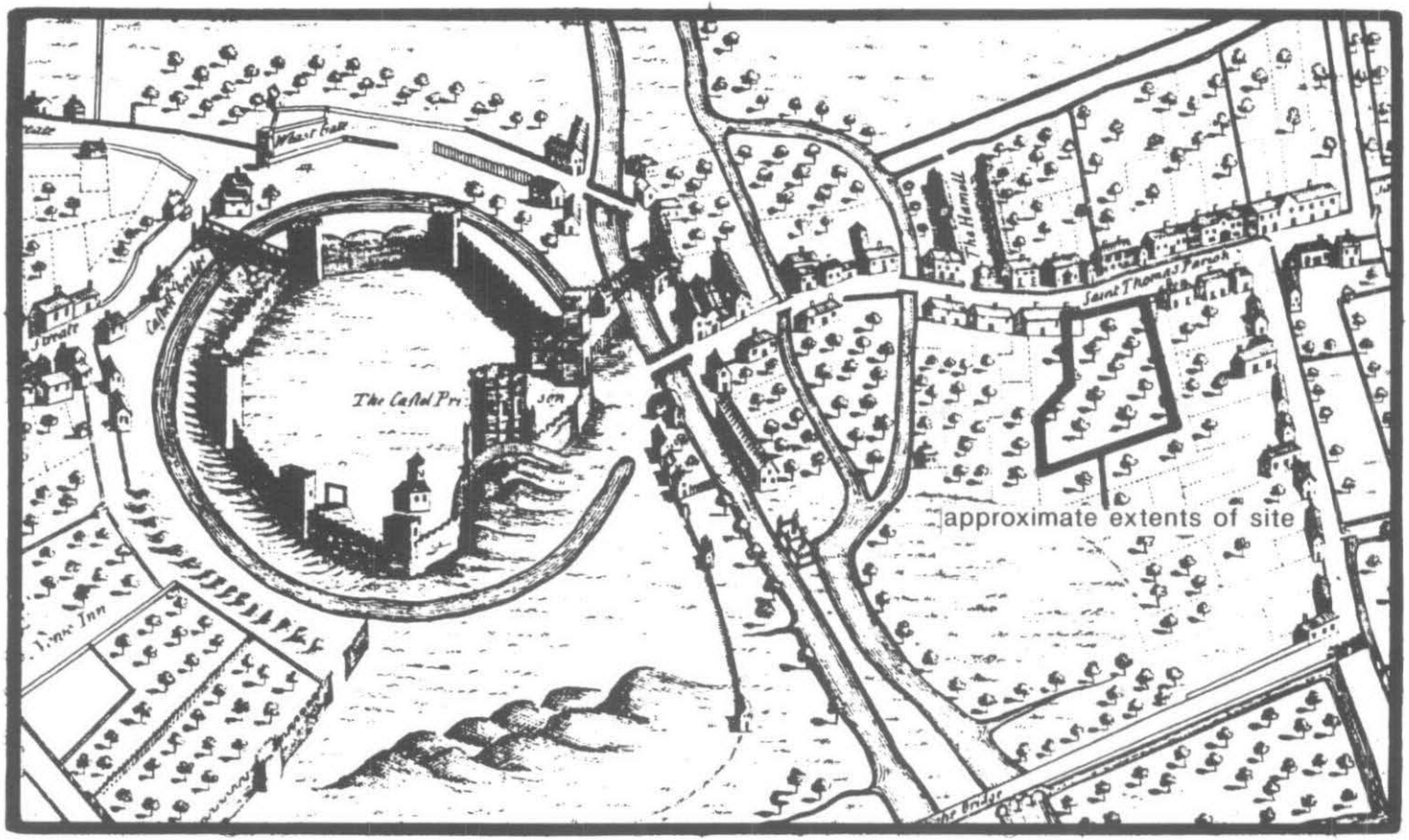

Fig. 13. Detail of Loggan's bird's-eye view of 1675, showing St. Thomas's Street.

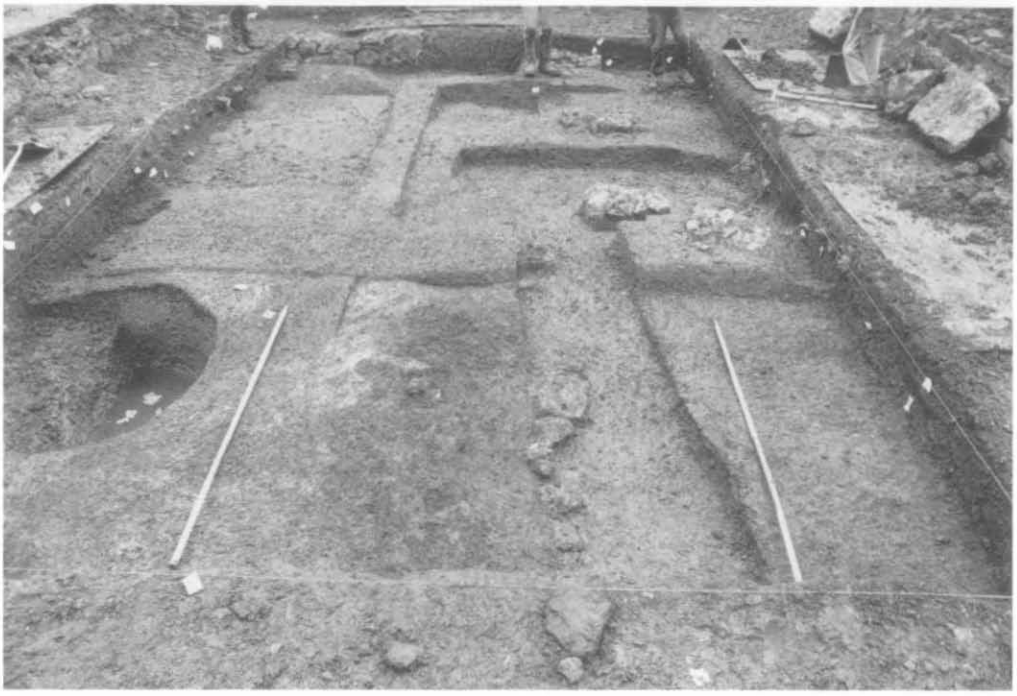

Fig. 14. The excavations. Trench B, looking north, showing the Phase B1 building with the cob wall in the centre of the picture. The post pads of Building B3 are visible behind it.

the decline in prosperity in the parish in particular, and indeed the town as a whole. Agas's map of 1578 shows a part of the north side of St. Thomas's Street empty of buildings, and the area to the north as an orchard. The archaeological evidence corresponds well with this, showing a substantial layer of cultivation soil (134/140) sealing the earlier deposits in Trench B. Finds from this layer were varied in date, and included a 14th-century pendant depicting the arms of the Beauchamp family (Fig. 12 No. 2), and a Long Cross penny of the 13th century; this tends to suggest that the layer was imported as soil, rather than allowed to accrue. A Krauwinckel Jetton (SF23) dated to 1586-1635, similar to one found in a late 16th-century context in Hollybush Row,[89] was also found in this layer.

Agas's map suggests that the plot boundaries to the west and east of Trench B may have been suppressed during this undeveloped phase, implying the aggregation of adjacent properties. However, the subsequent building (B5) respects the earlier property boundaries, which must imply that the original boundaries were at least recorded in some manner, if not still visible on the ground.

Loggan's map of 1675 (Fig. 13) clearly shows the area as completely developed along the frontage of the street. This is reflected in the archaeology. The function of the probably timber-framed building B5 is not clear from the archaeological evidence, as so little of the fabric

[89] L. Allen, 'Small Finds', in Roberts, this volume.

survived *in situ*. However, the balance arm from a small set of scales, found in the demolition trample of the building, might suggest that at least part of the building functioned as a shop. The title deeds suggest that No. 54 High Street St. Thomas's, the frontage of which was the site of Trench B, had a long association with bakers, the earliest record being in 1606. This does not necessarily mean that the site was built up as early as this date, but by 1686 the property is referred to as a malthouse which, as far as the date is concerned, would correspond with phase B5.

Very little of the later development of this part of the site survived. The two north-south walls just exposed on either side of the trench correspond to the building walls indicated on the 1st edition O.S. Map, as does west-east wall 121. No internal features survived, either because of modern clearance, or more likely, because the building had a suspended wooden floor.

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