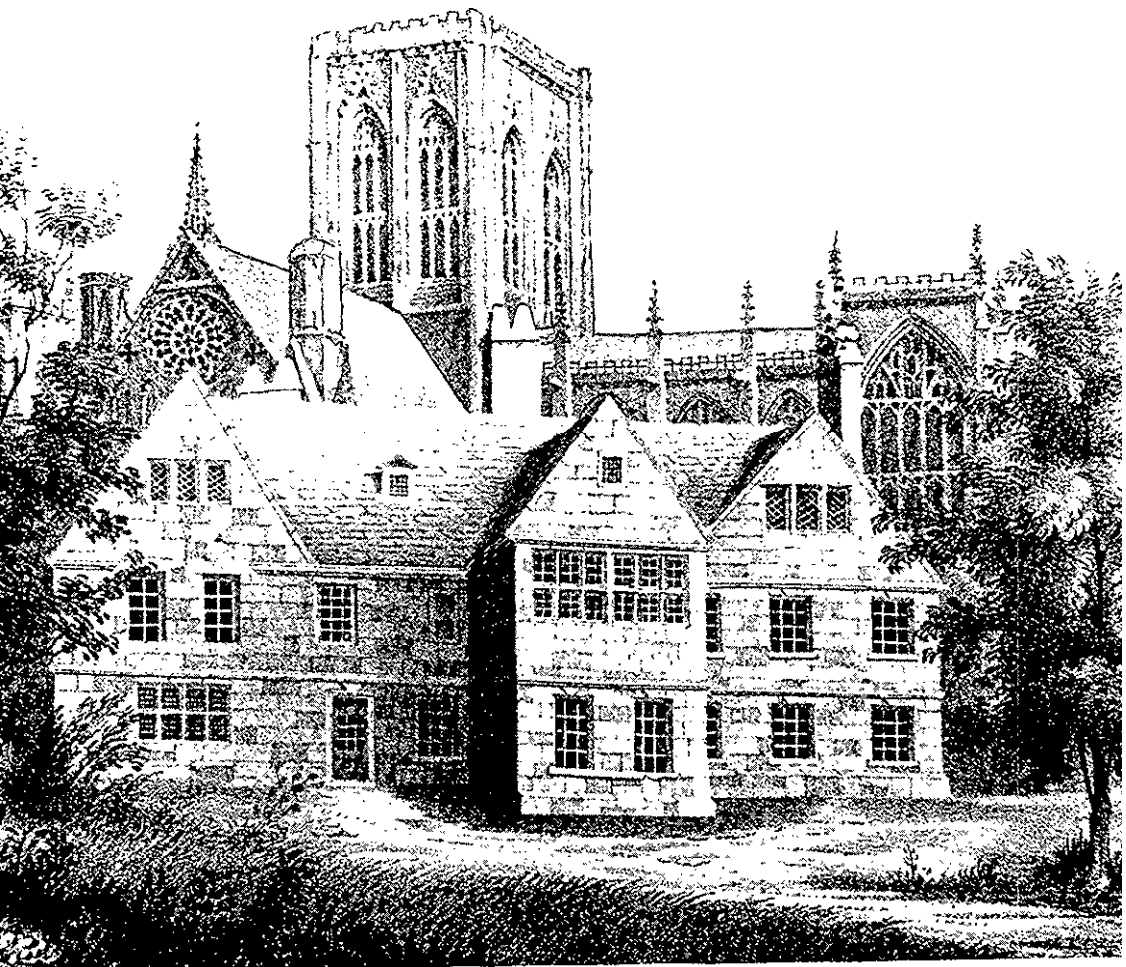


Volume 23 No 2

ARCHAEOLOGY IN YORK



Interim





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Cover illustration: The Old Deanery with York Minster
in the background, by W. Monkhouse.

Outline

Life has been busy at the Trust since the last issue of INTERIM. As well as our usual work in the field, on finds and in the conservation laboratory, we have had the excitement of appearing on the hit Channel 4 archaeology programme Time Team. What is more, this was not just a normal episode of Time Team, but a Time Team Special involving three days of excavation, and a series of live broadcasts over the weekend, so the viewers could follow the results of the digs as they took place. The Trust was involved in exploring two sites: an area of Viking occupation on Walmgate and the remains of St Leonard's Hospital near the main city library. As well as reaching lots of viewers on television the excavation also attracted large numbers of visitors to the sites themselves, with long queues waiting to see the archaeological excavation 'in the flesh'. In the next issue of INTERIM we hope to bring you more detailed reports of what we found during the excavations, as well as the results of some of the research carried out on these sites since the programme was made.

The summer season saw the field team busily employed on a large number of sites both in York and in the surrounding countryside. There seems to have been a burst of development activity on the west bank of the River Ouse in the centre of York in recent months. Close to Ouse Bridge the foundations for a new hotel at 14 Skeldergate disturbed well-preserved remains of medieval hearths and riverside buildings. A rapidly mounted excavation recorded four of the foundation pits in detail and the sections of all of the others, which contained archaeological deposits, were drawn.

The possible redevelopment of the NCP car park site at 64-74 Skeldergate was preceded by desk-top study and observation of engineering test pits. The results unsurprisingly demonstrate that Roman deposits of the character and quality of those exposed during work on the Queen's Hotel site in 1989 are present below the surface here as well. Details of precisely what the deposits consist of and how deep they are will have to wait until the site reaches evaluation stage.

Further down the River Ouse on New Walk small scale excavations were undertaken to examine the 18th century well house at Pikeing Well on behalf of the York Millennium Bridge Trust. Here the original flag floor of the well was uncovered and a nearby building, also visible on the 1852 Ordnance Survey map, was identified as an 'open receiver' well. Historical research discovered that although the original well structure was certainly built by the York architect John Carr, it was also rebuilt in 1858 by one of his successors, Thomas Pickersgill.

Out in the countryside, close to the edge of the village of Wilberfoss, topographic and geophysical survey had suggested a number of features in a pleasantly rural field which may be archaeological in nature. A possible mill leat and a deer-park boundary were both tentatively identified. Subsequent trial excavation has demonstrated that the mill leat is actually a former meander of the adjacent Foss Beck, which was of sufficient interest for the Humber Wetlands Project to visit and sample. The bank which marked the deer-park boundary, was associated with a ditch but so little dating evidence was found that definitive identification was impossible.

Close to the north transept of Ripon Cathedral pavement works and the re-alignment of a boundary wall revealed the remains of a number of human burials. These were disconcertingly close to the surface. Presumably much of the original overburden had been removed when Minster Road was constructed in 1884. One burial within a stone cist had been disturbed when a brick vault had been inserted in the 19th century.

The past few months have also seen the successful completion of three notable projects at Conservation, all of which involved work for the purposes of display, as well as research.

The Barland's Farm (Romano-Celtic) boat has been completed after three and a half years in conservation with us (see last Outline). The many planks and frames that came to York in fragments have finally been stabilised and re-assembled using a resin and filler system developed by the Trust especially for the job. The boat is now back at the museum at Newport, Gwent, where a section of it has been reconstructed as a temporary display, pending the fitting out of a special gallery to receive it. It represents the most complete and best preserved boat of its period in the UK.

Work was also undertaken on a small dugout boat, only 6ft long, from Salford Museum. Thought to be Saxon in date, this was found at the end of the last century during the digging of the Manchester Ship Canal. Despite receiving no real conservation at the time, it had been heavily restored using sheets of black-japanned iron sheet and hand-forged nails. The original wood was in fine condi-

tion still and, apart from a good all-round clean, our job was to de-rust, strengthen and m-fix the Victorian repairs to render the boat fit for display *again*. *It is not* often that we are asked to work on materials quite so recent!

The final touches are being put to the 8ft long mid 16th century stave-built cannon from excavations at Sammy's Point, Hull. This has been another long-term project – the cannon has been undergoing treatment with us for about two and a half years. Now one and a half tons of ugly and concreted metalwork has been transformed into a fine and very presentable piece of early ordnance, ready to take pride of place in the new medieval galleries at the Hull and East Riding Museum. This gun, which was breach-loading and would have fired stone shot, was originally mounted in a block-house in the citadel built by Henry VIII., and was one of the port-pieces that defended Kingston-upon-Hull from attack from the Humber estuary.

In this issue of INTERIM we focus on recent work carried out within the walls of York, including the discover of a Roman barrack-block underneath the Primitive Methodist Chapel on Davygate. Fortuitously we also have an article about recent work on the site of St Leonard's Hospital, so when it comes to seeing the results of our excavations for Time Team in the next issue you will already know the background to the site. All this, as well as a chance to find out about the development of the Minster Precinct, and the opportunity to meet YAT's latest member of staff.

The Editors

NEWS ON PUBLICATIONS FOR 2000

NEW PRICE REDUCTIONS

AY 3/3 *Excavations and Observations on the Defences*
was E35.00 NOW £24.00

AY 10/3 *The Bedern Foundry*
was £12.00 NOW £8.00

AY 11/2 *The Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew, Fishergate*
was E38.00 NOW E25.00

AY 12/2 *The Cemetery at 46-54 Fishergate*
was £23.00 NOW E10.00

AY 14/7 *Biological Evidence from Anglo-Scandinavian Deposits at
16-22 Coppergate*
was E32.00 NOW E15.00

AY 17/10 *Finds from the Fortress*
was E22.00 NOW £15.00

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

AY 7/2 *Anglian York: A Survey of the Evidence, Tweddle, Moulden and Logan* £30.00

AY 10/4 *The College of the Vicars Choral of York Minster at Bedern: Architectural Fragments, Stocker* £20.00

AY 15/5 *Bones from Medieval Deposits at 16-22 Coppergate, O'Connor* £16.00

AY 17/12 *Bone, Antler, Ivory and Horn from Anglo-Scandinavian and Medieval York, MacGregor, Mainman and Rogers* £22.50

NEW FOR 2000

AY 17/13 *Wood and Woodworking in Anglo-Scandinavian and Medieval York, Morris* (forthcoming) £34.00

AY 17/14 *Anglo-Scandinavian Finds from York, Mainman and Rogers* (forthcoming) £28.00

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Finding our Past: the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Yorkshire

Since my last INTERIM article, there have been exciting developments for the Portable Antiquities Scheme nationally. The Scheme's first annual report was publicly launched in March by the Rt. Hon. Alan Howarth MP and the pilot scheme was re-christened 'Finding our Past'.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has boosted the Portable Antiquities Project by funding a further five new posts,, and new Finds Liaison Officers have been appointed in Northamptonshire, Kent, Hampshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Wales, Dorset and Somerset. This means that more than half the country is now covered by the scheme.

The future of the Yorkshire pilot project looks bright; the York recording scheme is still one of the most successful in the country. Between October 1997 and September 1998 over 4,155 objects were recorded by the Finds Liaison Officer. Most of these finds were metal objects (1,080) or coins (2,077), but worked stone objects (416) and pottery (582) were also reported. Apart from Norfolk, where a colossal 13,624 objects were reported, more finds were recorded from Yorkshire than any other region. The next few months will see a period of consolidation, based upon the very firm foundations built thus far and publishing some of the patterns which are beginning to emerge from the recording of this vast body of archaeological data.

Metal-detector users continue to be responsible for the great majority of objects found and recorded, ranging

from 90% in Norfolk to 99% in North Lincolnshire, with 94% of finds in Yorkshire being found by detectorists.

One of the most spectacular and important finds reported to the scheme has come from here in Yorkshire. A splendid Anglo-Saxon gold and garnet pectoral cross (Fig.1) was found in Holderness (East Yorkshire). Only a handful of Anglo-Saxon pendant crosses are known and this one, which was made in the first half of the 7th century, is probably one of the earliest. It was found by a farmer about 30 years ago and was only recognised as a potential treasure when it was brought to a Finds Day at Hull Museum in March 1998.

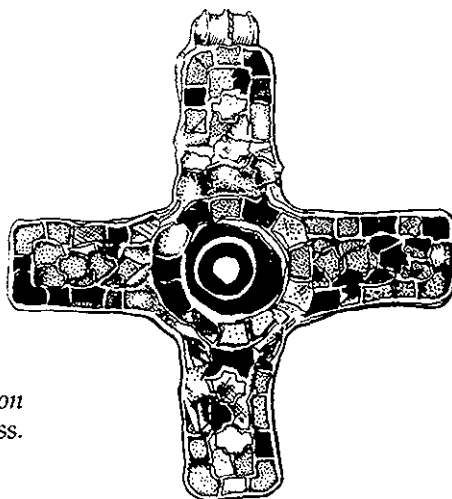


Fig.1 Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon pectoral cross from Holderness. Actual height 53.43mm.

In recent months an increasing number of non-metallic objects have been brought in to the Portable Antiquities Officer for recording. As a result of increased contact between the Officer and local metal detecting groups, several metal-detector users in Yorkshire have brought in pottery and flint scatters recovered by field walking.

Richard Ward from Scarborough has found some wonderful worked flints. Richard's flints come from a part of North Yorkshire where records of non-excavated finds are scant. His group includes examples of types of flint not natural to that part of the country, which may shed light on trade and exchange between people long gone.

In an attempt to promote the work of the Portable Antiquities Scheme a website has been launched at www.finds.org.uk, which allows individuals, school groups and societies to view and search portable antiquities data. The objects being brought in by members of the public for identification and recording have continued to add important detail to our knowledge of Yorkshire's archaeology.

The annual report of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, is available through your local Finds Liaison Officer, Ceinwen Paynton, at the Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, York, or Dr Richard Hobbs, MGC Outreach Officer, c/o Dept. Coins & Medals, The British Museum, London.

Ceinwen Paynton
Finds Liaison Officer, Yorkshire Region

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES WEBSITES ON LINE!

www.finds.org.uk

and

<http://www.yorkarch.demon.co.uk/portable/index.htm>

St Leonard's at the Theatre

It is commonly held that a measure of the status of a town or city lies largely in the range and significance of the institutions it houses. As England's second city, medieval York was richly endowed with many great institutions. One of the foremost but lesser known of these was the Hospital of St Leonard's. The medieval city actually boasted many hospitals, some of which specialised in particular categories of people and illnesses; for example, four were leper hospitals (see INTERIM 19/1). All of these, however, with the exception of St Leonard's, were relatively small. The role of a medieval hospital was not one that can be directly equated with modern views of a 'hospital'. Whilst St Leonard's cared for both the curable and incurable sick, it also housed orphans and the infirm, provided food for the prisoners of York Castle, and gave alms and food at the gate for numbers of customary dependants and itinerant beggars. There were also numbers of 'corrodies' living within the hospital who were not necessarily poor or sick; rather, they were residents in sheltered retirement, whose residency had been purchased.

Known as St Peter's until the late 12th-early 13th century, St Leonard's has some historical claim to pre-Norman Conquest origins, though possibly not as an independent body. This status was achieved by at least the early 12th century, however, and upstanding remains of this period, in the form of part of an undercroft, survive at the Theatre Royal, York. Like all great medieval hospitals, St Leonard's was integrated within the ecclesiastical network, and followed the Augustinian rule. The status of the

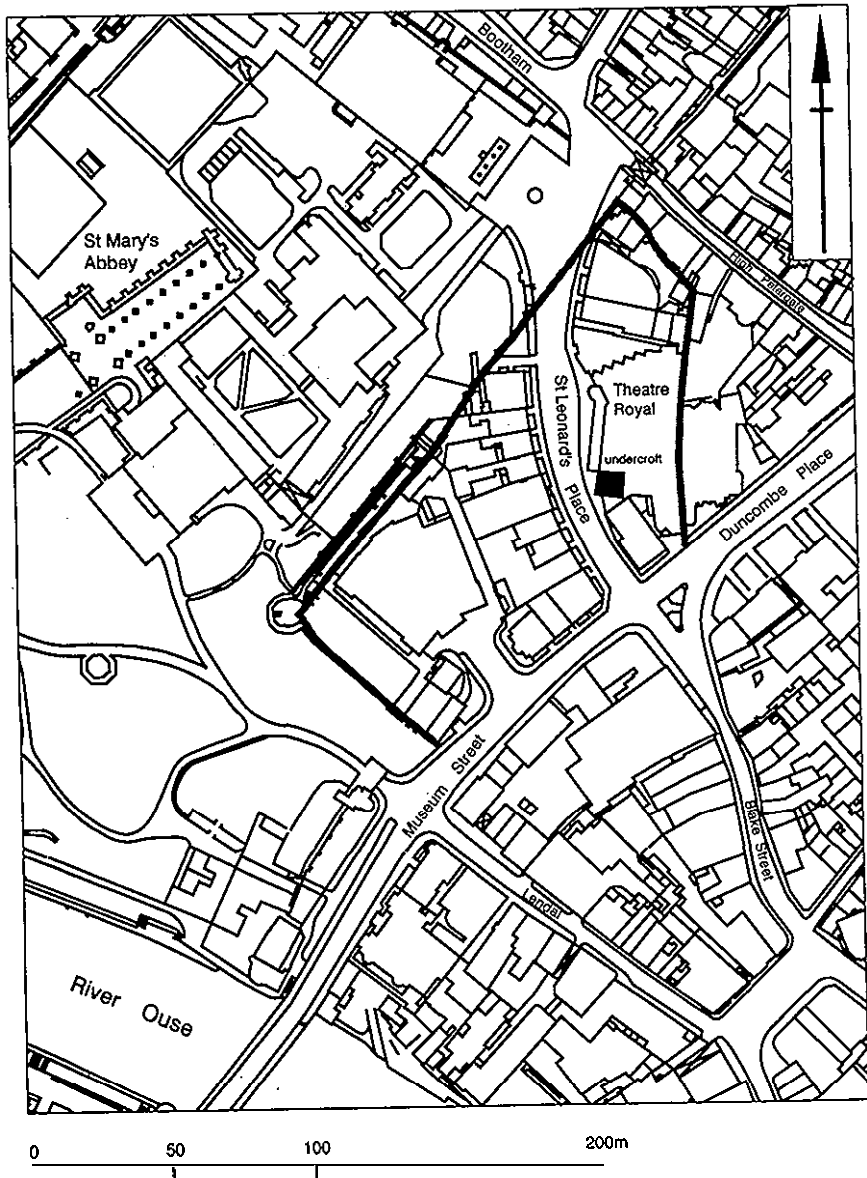


Fig.1 Plan showing the location of the Theatre Royal site

hospital was such that in the 13th and 14th centuries it was the largest establishment of its kind in England, at least in terms of numbers of staff and inmates, as well as being the wealthiest.

St Leonard's was located in the north-west corner of the old Roman legionary fortress and possessed its own walled precinct with two gateways. Much of the course of the precinct walls is known (Fig.1). Remnants of these walls can still be seen behind the City Library and in parts of the eastern wall of the theatre. Where they do not survive in this latter area their course can be followed in the alignment of property boundaries. Documentary sources provide us with some information about the range of buildings that once existed at the hospital; they included a church, workshops, ranges of infirmaries and so on. Unfortunately the layout and positions of these buildings are not known. The only other free-standing structures of this great hospital still extant today are parts of a second undercroft with an adjacent chapel and vaulted passageway, immediately to the south of the City Library.

The only previous archaeological work that has encountered remains of St Leonard's have been certain of the Trust's watching briefs maintained on service works in Museum Street in 1979 and 1990 that uncovered parts of a number of walls. It was therefore with enthusiasm that in September 1998 the Trust accepted a commission to carry out a watching brief, together with limited excavation works, during a programme of internal alterations within the undercroft at the Theatre Royal. This undercroft was more extensive until 1901 when most of it was destroyed during an earlier programme of theatre alterations. Today

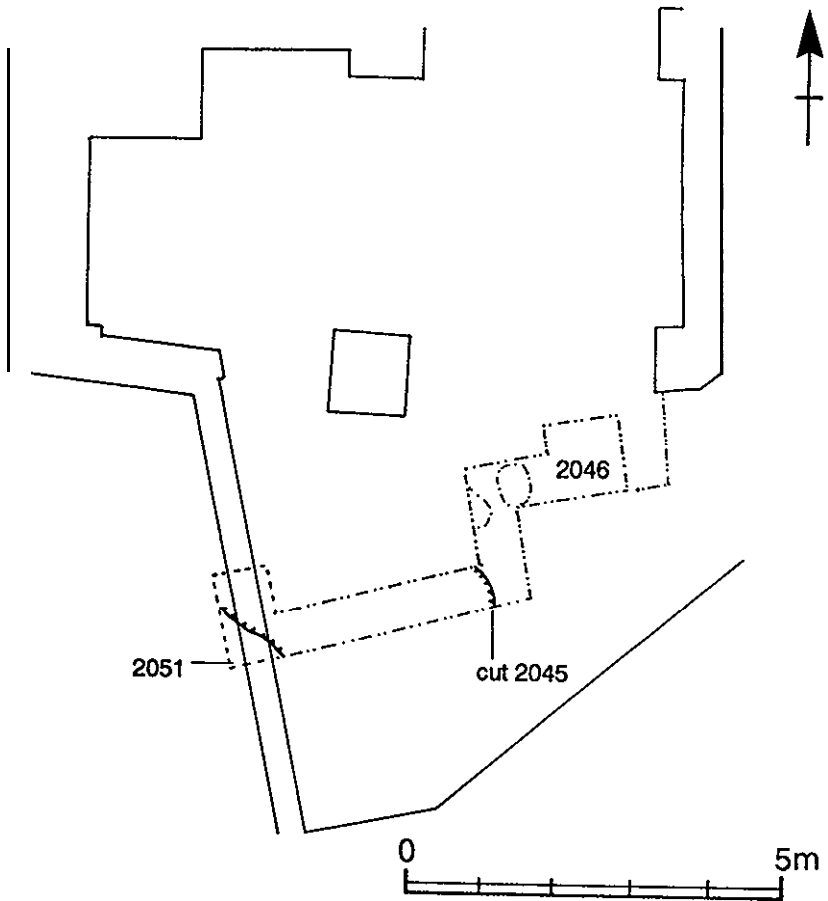


Fig.2 Phase I plan (11 th-12th century)

it consists of two vaulted compartments supported by squat piers adorned with scalloped capitals and chamfered bases. The groined vaulting is of rubble construction and has slightly pointed transverse arches. A projection in the north-west corner of the undercroft, which is believed to be a later insertion, may have supported a stair turret.

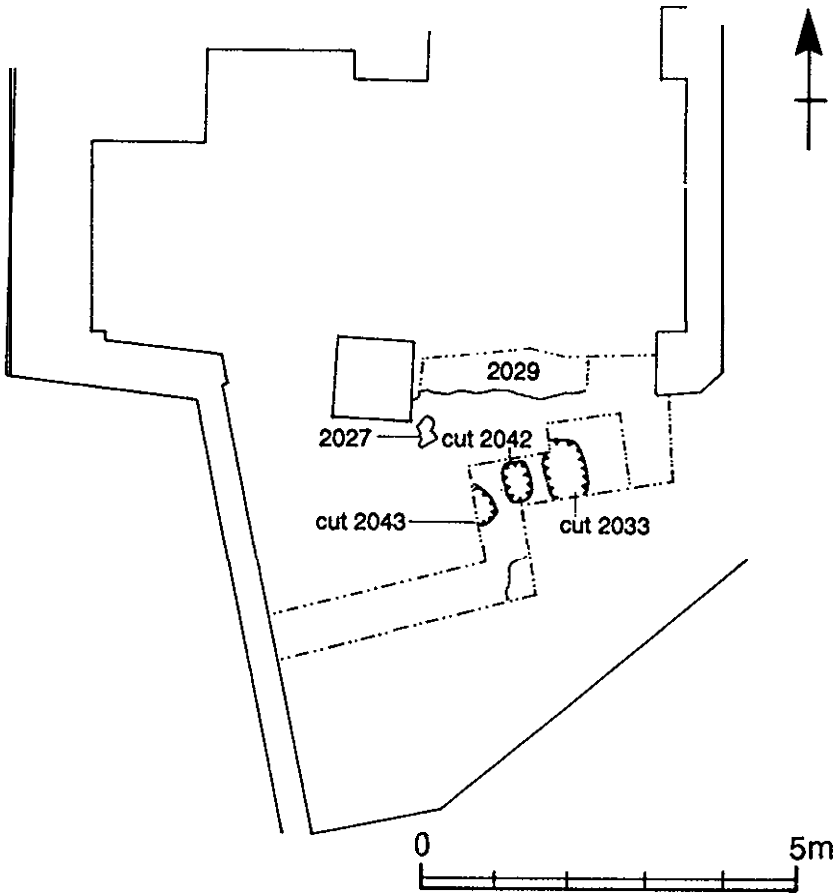


Fig.3 Phase 111 plan (14th century)

The archaeological and construction works were carried out to different depths in two conjoined areas of the undercroft and several phases of activity were discerned. The earliest of these, Phase I (Fig.2), included 11th-12th century deposits through which a very large, steep-sided feature of unknown purpose had been cut. Large quanti-

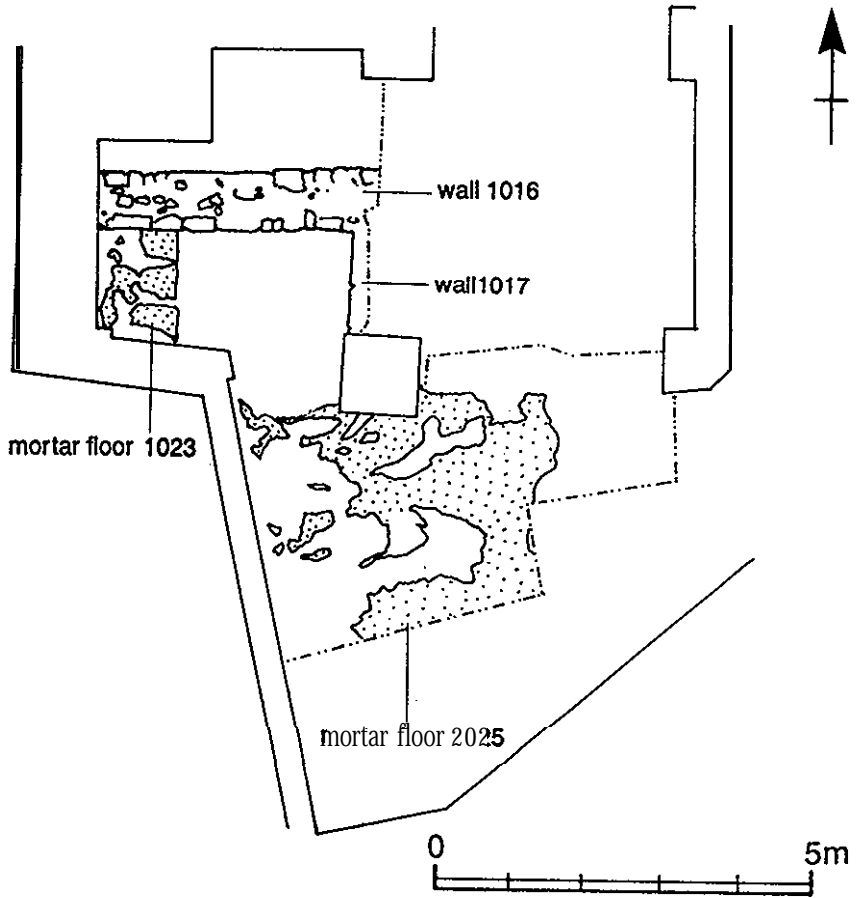


Fig.4 Phase IV plan (probably 16th century)

ties of residual Roman brick and tile from this feature were probably derived from old Roman buildings. All of this activity pre-dated the construction of the undercroft in the 12th century, an operation which is assigned to Phase II. Phase III was represented by a series of three large post-holes together with a number of deposits including con-

struction debris and dated to the 14th century (Fig.3). The post-holes may relate to a scaffolding system, presumably for the purposes of building repair or alterations. An important point to note here is that although pre-undercroft and 14th century (post-undercroft) deposits were found, the expected 12th-14th century floor layers that must have been associated with the undercroft were absent and had been lost to later truncation.

Phase IV was characterised by a re-ordering of internal arrangements within the undercroft. Major elements of this included two new bay dividing walls and the laying down of an extensive, though patchily surviving, mortar floor (Fig.4). Dating evidence for this activity was limited, though a 16th century date seems probable. Whether this was prior to the closure of the hospital in 1540 during the Reformation, or after, is not certain; in light of subsequent activity at the site the former is perhaps the more likely option. It is clear that the succeeding Phase V deposits relate primarily to the discard of building rubble. Interpretation of the broader picture represented by this activity is not straightforward. It may be that the Phase V deposits are indicative of post-Reformation abandonment and even partial demolition of the undercroft. On the other hand, in a post-Reformation change of function, keeping the building in a clean and tidy order may not have been necessary or important and any demolition works may relate solely to new requirements engendered by a change in function. Significantly, the construction of what may have been a buttress appears to relate to Phase V This strengthens the case for a change of function within an adapted building.

Later developments at the site relate to the period after the incorporation of the undercroft within the Thea&e Royal, which is believed to have taken place in 1744. During Phase VI of the later 18th (possibly early 19th) century those areas of the undercroft investigated were seen to have had all earlier deposits capped with a thick layer of rubble. In the south area at least, this was then sealed by an extensive mortar floor. Further raising of floor levels took place in Phase VII during the 19th century. This was accompanied by the narrowing of the south-eastern arch of the undercroft. Phase VI embraces all modern 20th century works in the examined areas. This includes use of part of the area for toilet facilities, with subsequent conversion in the 1960s to a theatre club bar.

Whilst these works were being carried out the opportunity was taken to inspect other parts of the theatre that are known to contain upstanding medieval fabric. These include a gateway, with cruciform arrow-slit openings above it, in the east wall of the theatre, a barrel-vaulted chamber, a former window opening and various other pieces of walling. It seems likely that further fabric survives in addition to this, though for the most part is covered with more recent rendering. Clearly, there is much still to be learnt about the surviving parts of England's largest medieval hospital.

Acknowledgements

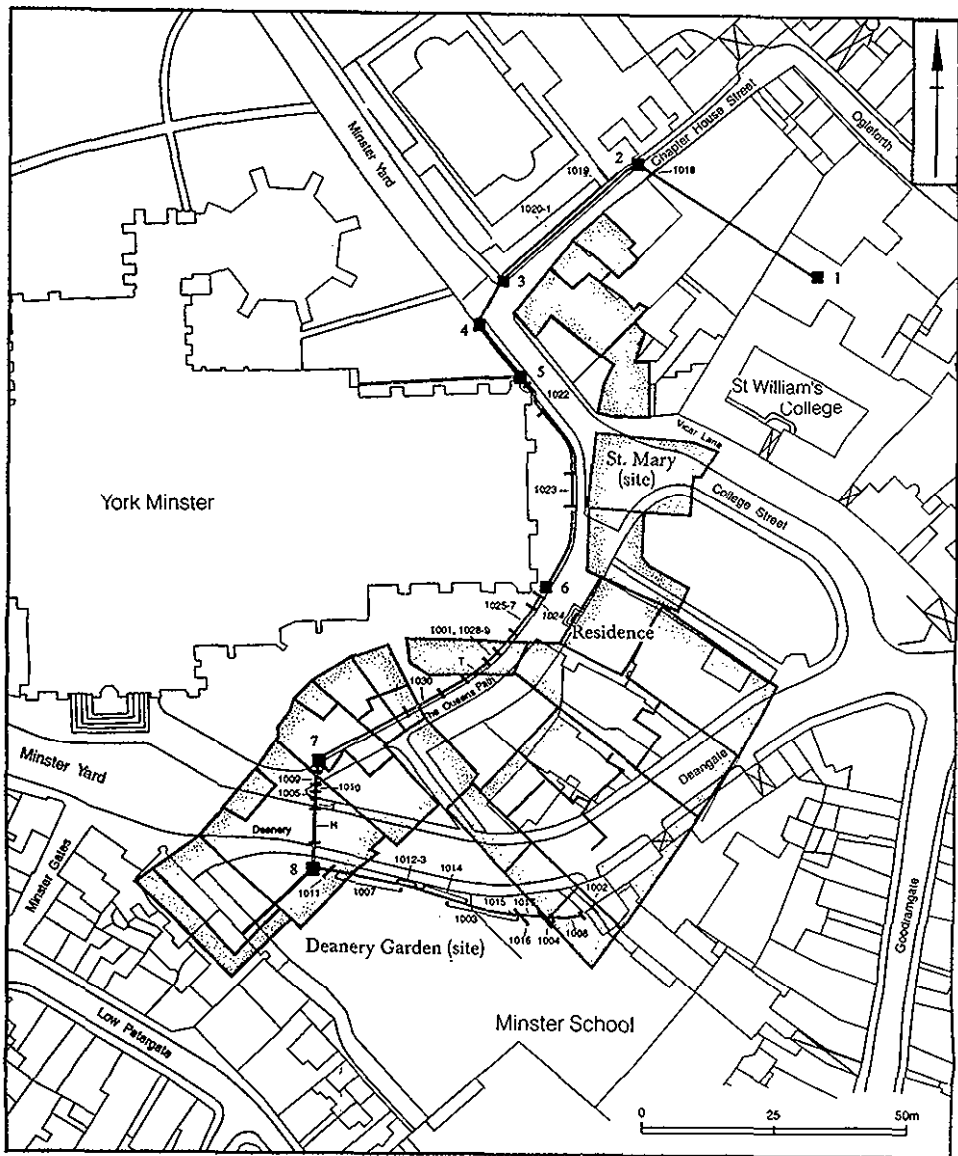
Thanks are due to M. Andrews for his photographic and excavation skills employed at the site.

Mark Johnson

The Quest for the Minster Precinct

The part of the former Roman fortress north-west of Goodramgate has formed the Minster precinct since before the Norman Conquest. A thoroughfare might have connected Petergate and Chapter House Street as early as the 7th century, but it was closed by the 14th century as access to the precinct became increasingly restricted. The main street within the precinct was known as Minster Yard. During the medieval period it became densely populated with buildings including the Deanery, the Archbishop's residence and numerous prebendal residences. Indeed, houses once actually stood against the Minster, and were only demolished during the later 16th century. It is thought that the church of St Mary-ad-Valvas, demolished c.1365, stood a little to the east of the Minster; part of its foundations were exposed during building work in 1967. However, the precise layout of the precinct is little understood.

While the street system in the Chapter House Street part of the precinct has changed little since medieval times, that immediately south and east of York Minster has been completely transformed. An Act for clearance of the buildings cluttering the Minster Yard on the south side of the Minster was passed in 1825, and it was enforced soon after. St Peter's School, now the Minster Song School, was subsequently constructed on this open ground, but it was set back from the Minster. The buildings on the south-west side of Vicar Lane were also cleared, forming the College Green in front of St William's College. Only The Residence (6 Minster Yard) survives of the buildings shown on



Junction box and cable trench



Features shown on Benson's 1917 plan

Fig.1 Site location plan showing position of cable trenches and main archaeological features

Baines's 1822 map of York between St William's College and Minster Gates. Then, in 1903, Deangate was constructed to ease the flow of traffic, further opening up the former precinct. Another part of Minster Yard, now the footpath between Deangate and College Street, was renamed The Queen's Path. The only part of Minster Yard that retains the name is the lane between College Street and Minster Court.

Recently, an opportunity to investigate the precinct arose because the Dean and Chapter of York Minster decided to create a computer link between the Minster, St William's College and the Minster School. This would require cable trenches to be dug between the three buildings (Fig.1). Although these trenches would be very shallow, at around 0.4m deep, York Archaeological Trust was asked to monitor this work, which took place during January and February 1999, just in case archaeological features were unearthed.

The most notable building that might be encountered during the excavations was a predecessor of the existing deanery, known as the Old Deanery, which stood close to the south doorway of the Minster. There are numerous references to a Deanery from the 12th century onwards; it probably had a separate kitchen, and Dean Hamilton was given permission to fortify it in 1302. However, the architecture of the Old Deanery building, as shown in later, contemporary drawings, suggests it was constructed in the 16th/early 17th century. Furthermore, a report of 1538 states that the Council of the North decided not to meet at the Deanery because there was no garden or open air for them. This description does not accord with the Old

Deanery, which is mentioned in the 18th century by Francis Drake as having 'large gardens', an assertion supported by contemporary drawings. It is therefore likely that the Old Deanery was the early post-medieval successor to a medieval deanery. It contained 50 rooms, and housed Council of Peers of Charles I in 1640. The Old Deanery is possibly depicted on Speed's 1610 map of York, and appears to have formed part of a group of buildings on Baines's 1822 map. Benson's 1917 reconstruction of the Minster Yard (Fig.1) concurs with the evidence from contemporary drawings, whereas more recent reconstructions show the Old Deanery as a smaller building situated a little further south-west. The buildings south of the Minster also included prebendal houses, such as that of Strensall, which were turned into private residences in the 16th century.

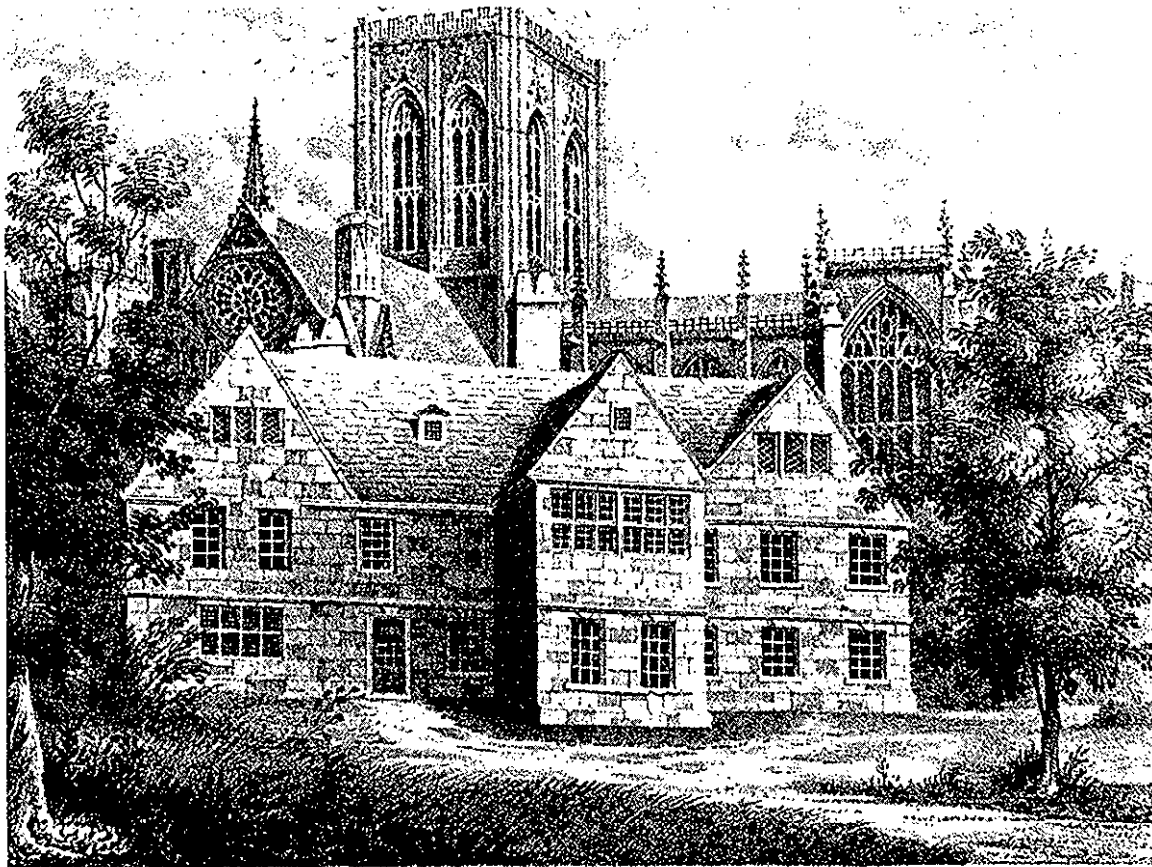
As expected, the cable trenches between St William's College and the Minster, which were laid in streets that had been established in the medieval period if not earlier, did not encounter medieval structures. The archaeological evidence was confined to the construction history of some of the more recent standing buildings along the route, notably the modern entrance to the Treasurer's House on Chapter House Street.

However, the cable trenches between the Minster and the Minster School produced several archaeological features of interest. There was evidence for several buildings south of the Minster. The occurrence of several separate medieval demolition deposits, incorporating architectural fragments, brick and tile (1001,1003,1005,1007,1025 and 1030; Fig.1), indicates that the built up character of Minster

Yard (prior to the early 19th century clearance) had developed by the 14th/15th century.

In addition, three possible medieval walls were found. Two of the walls (1011 and 1004) appear to correspond to features shown on Benson's plan of Minster Yard, the Old Deanery and the Old Deanery boundary wall respectively (Fig.1). However, drawings of the Old Deanery show it as a 16th/17th century building. The evidence therefore suggests that this was a post-medieval structure that incorporated re-used medieval building material. The mortar/stone surface 1009 could have been a floor within the Deanery. North-east of the boundary wall lay a brick surface, which was probably a yard in the Strensall prebendary property.

The third wall foundation (1016), found south-east of the site of the Old Deanery, does not appear to coincide with any structures on Benson's plan, and no buildings are depicted in this position on early 19th century drawings or Baines's 1822 map. The presence of a mortar floor (1017) to its north-east, and a pit (1015) to its south-west, suggests that 1016 formed the south-west wall of a substantial medieval building. This structure was evidently demolished when the properties depicted on Baines's plan were established; the boundary wall 1004 was built above it. Bearing in mind the indications that the Old Deanery was constructed no earlier than the 16th century, it is possible that this medieval building was the predecessor of the Old Deanery. This would be the fourth and earliest position of the deanery identified to date; the latest two (modern) versions were constructed to the north of the Minster.



Sketched & Drawn on Stone by H. Monkhouse

H. P. Hodson Lith. York

The Old Deanery

It therefore seems that the remains of important medieval and post-medieval buildings that stood within the Minster precinct lie less than 0.4m below the present ground surface. This is remarkable when one remembers that medieval buildings elsewhere in York can be 3m or more below the present ground level. The reason for this is probably the presence of York Minster itself. In many other parts of York, it was possible to allow the ground level to rise through the accumulation of rubbish and the construction of successive buildings on top of the remains of their predecessors. This was especially the case along the riversides, where raising the ground level reduced the threat from flooding. The area around York Minster, however, was different. When the Minster was constructed, the ground level in its vicinity became fixed because the ground surface could not rise without submerging the bottom of the building including the doorways. Strange as it may seem, the archaeological impact of York Minster on the surrounding land has been as great as its architectural contribution to the townscape.

Acknowledgements

The cable-laying team from Dewsbury Civil Engineering Co. Ltd. were most co-operative during the archaeological investigation. I am also grateful to David Brinklow and Richard Hall, who undertook some of the monitoring work.

Kurt Hunter-Mann

The Former Primitive Methodist Chapel, 3 Little Stonegate

During the latter half of 1998 a watching brief on a new development on, and behind, the site of the former British Gas showrooms in Little Stonegate/Davygate demonstrated that medieval and post-medieval deposits and structures survived close to the present ground surface. An excavation towards the Little Stonegate frontage had investigated some of these deposits and structures, but it was only during the course of the watching brief that Roman structures and associated deposits were encountered. When a revised version of the planned development took the former Primitive Methodist Chapel at 3 Little Stonegate into the scheme, it became apparent that work in the chapel cellar to strengthen the existing structure was likely to damage or destroy a part of the Roman legionary fortress never before seen by archaeologists using modern techniques of recording. Accordingly some of the work in the chapel cellar was observed and recorded by York Archaeological Trust, while five of the new foundation trenches and a lift pit were hand dug and recorded by YAT

The first trenches dug by the contractors were for temporary supports and although these were relatively small, typically 1.2m by 0.8m and 0.85m deep, Roman walls were almost immediately encountered together with deposits of both Roman and post-Roman date. One of these small trenches produced no fewer than three walls, all of differ-

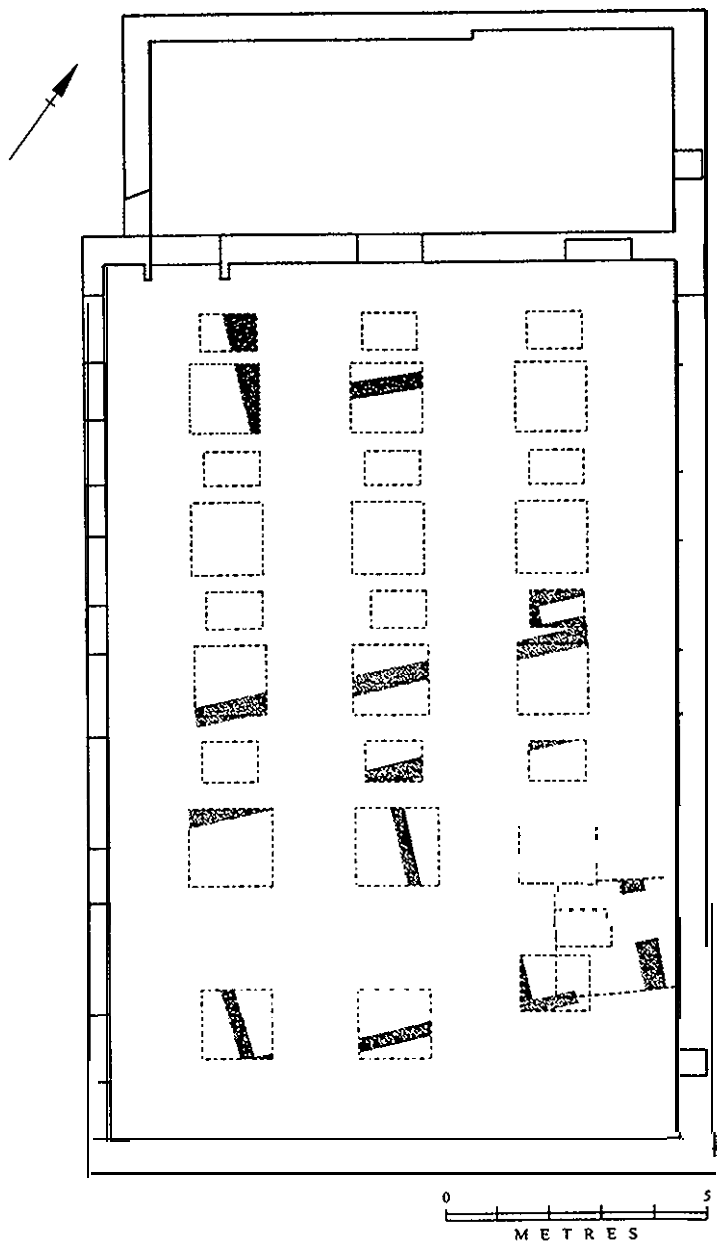


Fig.1 Position of Roman walls

ent date. The small size of the trenches made interpretation difficult, but comparison of the walls observed in the chapel with the suggested layout of the Roman fortress seemed to indicate that the trenches had exposed parts of the north-east ends of two barrack blocks, one of which, the north-western, had not been seen before (Fig.1). There appeared to be a narrow passage or alley between them, similar to that recorded in excavations at the City Garage, 9 Blake Street, which also ran between two probable barrack blocks. The upper deposits in these trenches were always dark grey loams and are 'probably post-Roman in date, but below these lay a relatively clear sequence of floor and occupation deposits belonging to the Roman period. In one trench, butting a wall, were a number of horizontal tiles laid in a regular pattern and associated with ash deposits. This was probably a hearth but it was not possible to establish if it was used for cooking or for other purposes.

The five trenches dug by YAT were c.1.5m square and c.1m deep and their excavation greatly amplified the picture presented by the temporary support trenches. The YAT trenches provided a more detailed understanding of the stratigraphic sequence in the area as well as revealing details not observed in the contractor's trenches. It was quickly noticed that our trenches contained large numbers of small circular stakeholes in the later Roman deposits. Often these were no more than c.0.05m in diameter and 0.20m deep and many appeared as voids. Not all were small, however; one of the largest, more properly considered a post void, was 0.17m across and at least 0.71m deep. Interestingly, some of these stake and post voids could be

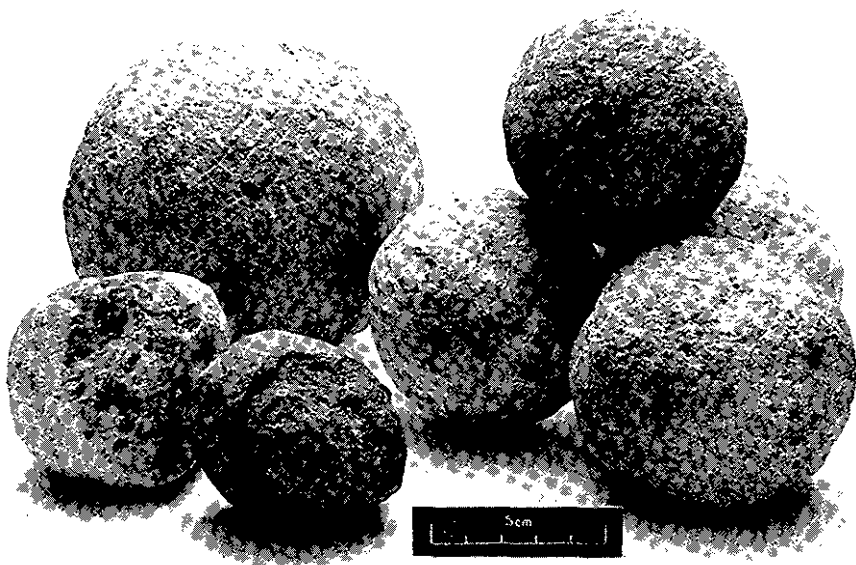


Fig.2 Possible ballista balls

shown to be stratigraphically earlier than the construction of the latest stone phase encountered. Excavation confirmed that late re-builds of the stone walls were much more poorly constructed than the earlier walls. These late re-builds used very roughly dressed masonry with little mortar bonding, although there was some evidence for clay being used to bond at least one section of wall.

Finds were plentiful from these trenches but it was not always possible to relate them clearly to the stratigraphic sequence. Most of the pottery recovered from the site dated to the 2nd or 3rd century with a tiny amount from the 1st century and a small quantity from the 4th. The scarcity of 1st century pottery can be attributed to the fact

that the earlier Roman levels were not reached during the excavation, but the relative lack of 4th century pot is more of a mystery. As well as pottery, finds included animal bone, tile and worked stone, one fragment of which seems to bear part of an inscription. Other finds of interest include a curious semi-circular lead disc and a number of limestone balls up to c.0.10m in diameter. These are probably ballista balls, ammunition for a Roman catapult, and were found in a restricted area at the north-east end of the barrack blocks (Fig.2). It would appear possible that parts of the buildings investigated may have been used as a store or armoury.

Further work on the finds is still in progress, and they may provide more information about these structures. However, the site has already provided useful new evidence for the layout of the Roman fortress and for the dating of the structural sequences observed.

D.T. *Evans*

Summer by the Seaside: Archaeological Salvage Works in Scarborough

Archaeologists have become accustomed to developments that involve considerable destruction of their primary resource, or layers of archaeological deposits as they used to be called. In the normal run of things this is a process that happens with the planning consent of the local authority. Occasionally, however, a developer or contractor carries out works that are to the detriment of archaeological deposits without these necessary consents. In some instances these works may even be in breach of orders put in place to protect the archaeology of a given site. Readers may be familiar with recent media coverage over the unregulated destruction of significant Viking Age deposits at the Littlewoods site in York which ironically took place over the same weekend as the highly successful **Time**Team excavations from York were being broadcast. Less well known, however, are events that took place in the North Yorkshire coastal resort of Scarborough earlier in 1999.

Background (Figs.1 and 2)

The Scarborough site was located in the core area of the old town on a plot of partially open ground bounded by Cook's Row, St Sepulchre Street and Springfield. As this land was proposed for housing development an archaeological evaluation consisting of 11 small trenches had already been carried out by the Scarborough Archaeologi-

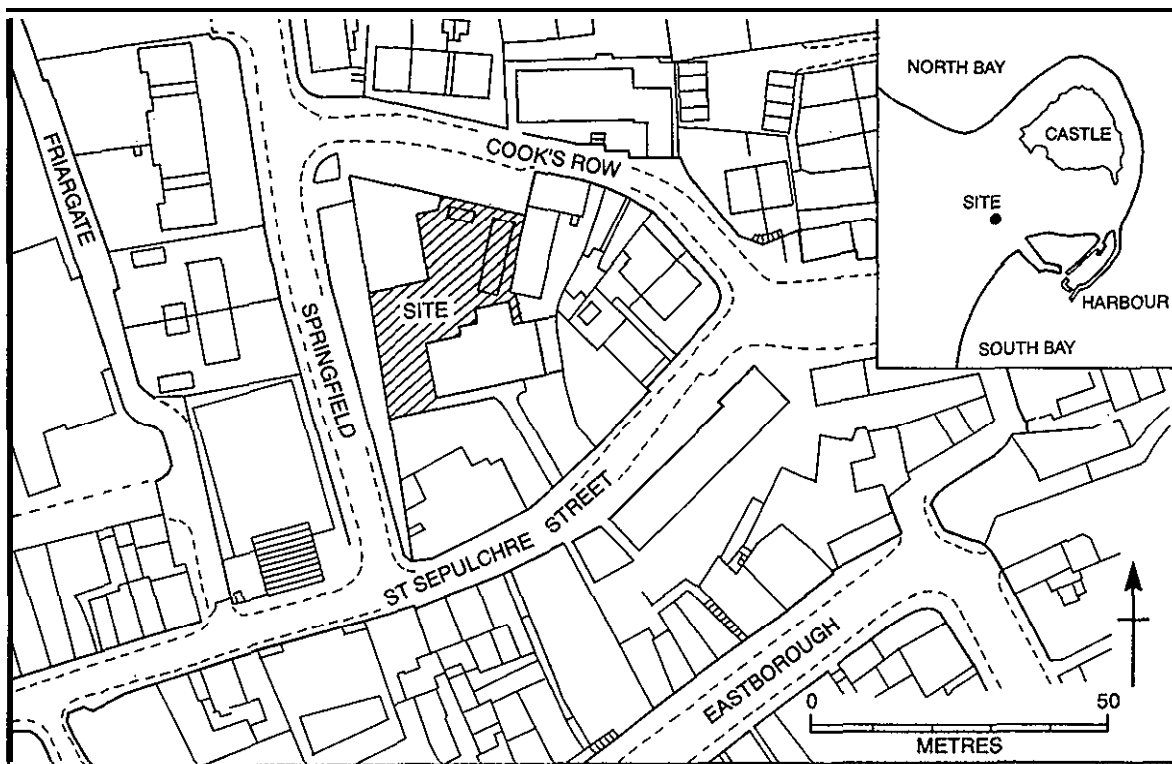


Fig.1 Site location plan

cal and Historical Society (SAHS) on a part-time basis over the period 1996-8. The results of this work demonstrated a build-up of several metres of medieval deposits, many of which were waterlogged and thus provided ideal conditions for the preservation of timber and other organic objects. Excavation showed the site was bisected by an old stream channel running east-west, the Damyot, the waters of which were subsequently diverted through a medieval culvert. In the southern part of the site stone walling from the long-demolished medieval church of St Sepulchre was found, overlaying an earlier phase of probable timber buildings. The northern part of the site revealed a mass of waterlogged deposits within which more unidentified timber structures were evident. Medieval stone building(s) were subsequently built in this area.

The SAHS report stated that the site was 'one of the most important archaeological sites in Scarborough' and that 'the remains merit long-term preservation'. As a result of the proven archaeological significance of the site the Local Authority placed an order that insisted on archaeological deposits being considered within any overall development plan before building or demolition works could take place. Unfortunately, this constraint was breached when in December 1998 two greenhouses and a large World War II air-raid shelter on the site were demolished. More unfortunately still, the rubble from these structures was neither stockpiled on nor removed from the site, but buried within two purpose-dug machine holes!

As a result of the Local Authority's response to these illicit works, two members of the Trust's staff were

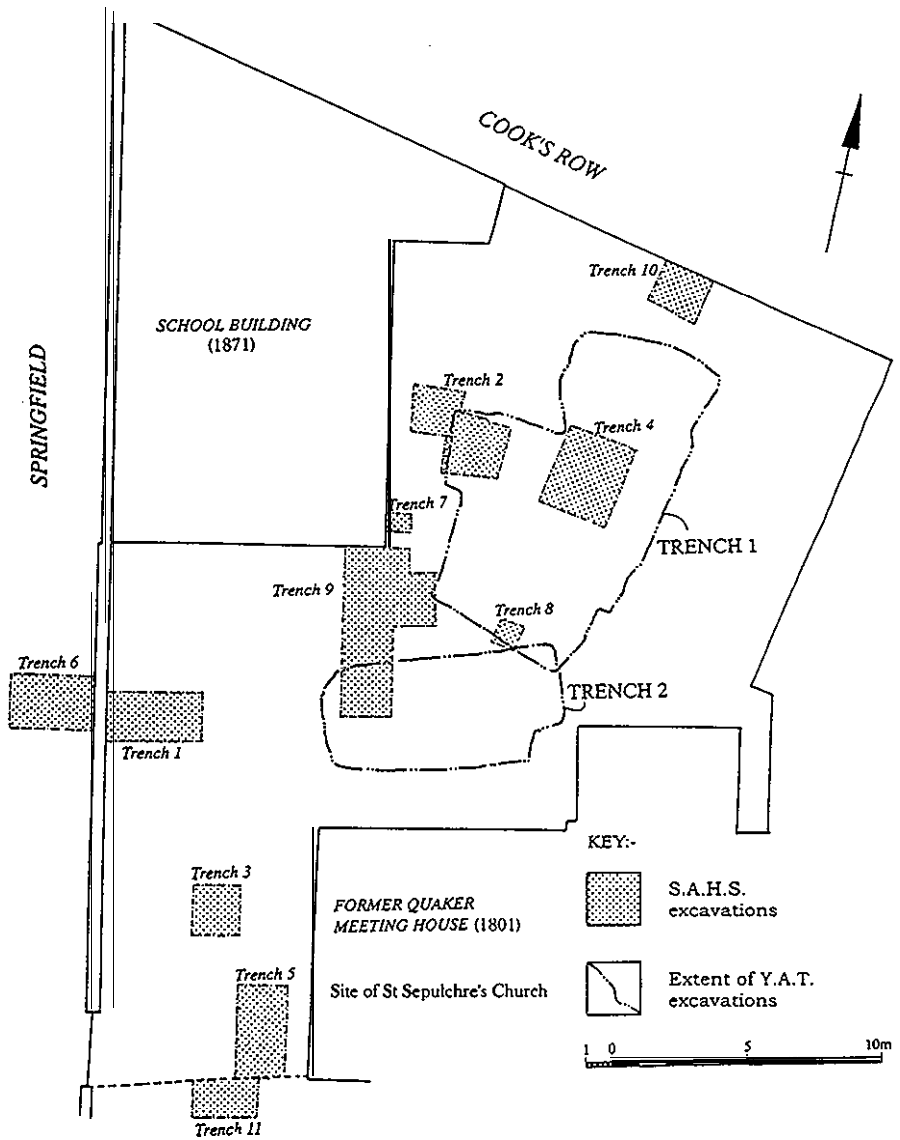


Fig.2 Trench location plan

despatched to oversee the mechanical re-excavation of the holes, both which were reputedly of a size around 1.5m x 2m. Proceedings started inauspiciously when on the first day the archaeologists were ordered off the site by the landowner. Fortunately, this situation was quickly resolved and work re-commenced. Things got worse when, after three days of machining, the full extent of the first hole (Trench 1) became apparent; it was not 1.5m x 2m but 12m x 8.5m and up to 1.9m deep! The second hole (Trench 2), a relative tiddler by comparison, proved to measure some 9m x 4.25m and up to 2.12m deep. These trenches were of irregular shape and profile, thus presenting a multi-phase slice through the archaeology of the site. Although the cutting of the machine holes had caused considerable damage they did not penetrate to the levels of the deepest deposits present and so these at least remain intact.

The Local Authority specification for archaeological works required only the cleaning up of the re-emptied holes, followed by their recording. This included detailed planning of the trench bases and the drawing of sections. Accordingly, no archaeological excavation as such was involved. Nevertheless, examination of the remains present, including the elucidation of stratigraphic relationships, did enable a sequence of events to be established. Sadly, the only physical connection between the two trenches was at the uppermost levels and so the bulk of the archaeology of each trench can only be tentatively linked to that of the other.

Results (Fig.3)

Trench 1

Evidence of the earliest activity reached in this trench, Phase I, consisted of a discontinuous stretch of north-south aligned walling (part of which had been revealed in the SAHS evaluation), associated at the southern extreme of the trench with a series of internal clay floors and a setting of hearth stones. It is possible that these structural remains, which are clearly part of a building, originally related to a major east-west aligned wall at the extreme north of the trench. This latter wall may well have had a prolonged life as it was certainly present in a later structural development.

Evidence for Phase 2 comprised almost exclusively of traces of the robbing out of the Phase 1 north-south wall. Fifteenth century pottery was recovered from deposits of this phase.

Large-scale building works mark the activity of Phase 3. The key elements of this consisted of a further north-south aligned wall that at its northern end was keyed into a more substantial east-west aligned wall. Areas of contemporary cobbled surfaces, almost certainly of exterior usage, overlay the robbed remnants of the Phase 1 wall and formed part of this development. In the western part of the trench a further area of cobbles along with a short stretch of stonework may also belong to this phase. The function of this stonework is not certain but it may represent an external stair support. Immediately west and north of Trench 1, two SAHS trenches uncovered further structural remains that may be associated with this

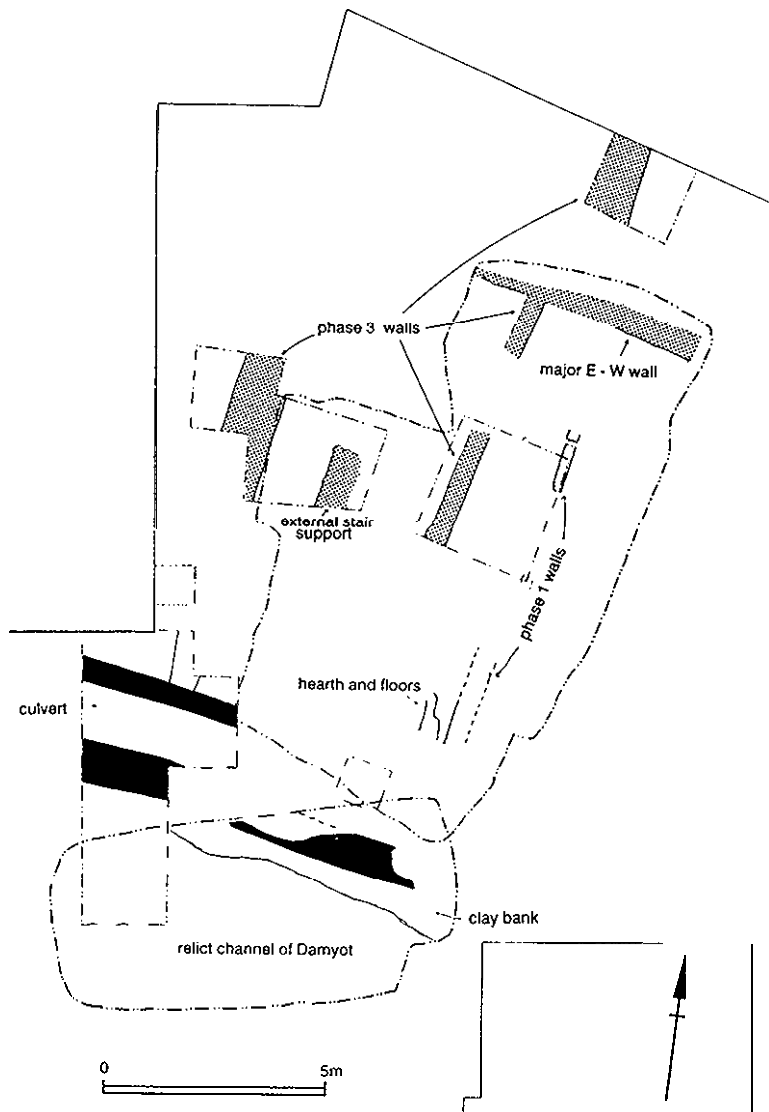


Fig.3 Multi-phase plan of Trenches 1 and 2 showing major structural elements

phase. The northern trench contained a north-south aligned wall that seems likely to have related to the major east-west wall in Trench 1, immediately to the south. The second SAHS trench contained a further north-south aligned wall with an adjacent hearth. Collectively the Phase 3 features appear to represent parts of a major building or, perhaps more likely, a range of buildings, of 15th century or later date.

Robbing of parts of the walls of the Phase 3 building(s), probably during the 15th-16th centuries, forms Phase 4 within Trench 1 and suggests the virtual abandonment of the site. Subsequently (Phase 5) an extensive series of deposits composed largely of rubble and refuse were dumped across the site, which by this time appears to have formed little more than a waste ground. During Phase 6 a deep topsoil built up over the site which, judging from early maps of the area, is likely to have functioned as a garden soil until the early 19th century.

Trench 2

Whereas remains of occupation characterised the medieval deposits of Trench 1, an entirely different sort of activity was represented in Trench 2. The earliest deposits encountered were water-lain stream deposits within what is likely to have been the natural course of the Damyot beck. The uppermost of these Phase 1 deposits contained many well-preserved organic materials, chiefly wood but also fragments of leather and textiles, in addition to pottery of 13th-14th century date.

Phase 2 witnessed the human management of this watercourse. This was achieved by the construction of a

sturdily built stone culvert which was protected on the south side, at least, by a clay and earth bank. A series of deposits, many predominantly of rubble, were also dumped into the old course of the Damyot. The presence of some water-lain deposits above this level within the old watercourse indicates that some flow still occurred within the stream, though this may merely have been periodic excess flood water that was beyond the capacity of the culvert.

This culvert is thought to have been constructed in the 15th century; a further stretch of it was exposed to the west within one of the SAHS trenches. Quite why the Damyot was culverted is uncertain. It may relate to land reclamation along its course or it may have been harnessed as a source of motive power. Alternatively, it could have been used for scouring/cleansing purposes within the Franciscan friary known to have existed to the west, though the full extent of this institution is uncertain.

Some robbing of stonework from the culvert took place in Phase 3 and seems likely to mark the demise of the artificial channel. As no evidence was found for further water-lain deposits it must be assumed that some alternative scheme of water management was in place elsewhere. The demise of the culvert is likely to have coincided with the 15th-16th century abandonment of the building(s) immediately to the north in Trench 1. Extensive dumping of waste materials in the area of Trench 2 (Phase 4), together with the development of a deep topsoil (Phase 5), correlate directly with Phases 5 and 6 of Trench 1.

Summary

In conjunction with the SAHS evaluation, the recent work by York Archaeological Trust has revealed interesting aspects of the development of this plot of ground. In the northern part of the site a major building or range of buildings was present. This is likely to have had a prolonged life and underwent a series of remodellings. On the basis of wall thicknesses and the presence of a possible exterior stair foundation the building is likely to have been of more than one storey. Clay floors and hearths were present within the interior of the building whilst cobbled metalling formed exterior surfaces. The Damyt flowed immediately south of the building(s), initially within the bounds of its natural channel. This was subsequently constrained within a stone-built culvert and attempts were made to infill its old course. At some point around the 15th-16th century both the buildings and culvert went out of use and were partially robbed. Immediately after this the site was used as a general dumping ground before being converted to garden usage. Throughout the 19th-20th centuries the site was progressively built upon.

Perhaps the *most* obvious question that arises from the archaeological works at the site concerns the historical ownership of the medieval structures that were found. Their size and quality of workmanship point towards high status and ownership/control by an institution or individual of some wealth. Whilst the identity of this authority is unknown, the date of structural demise, around the time of the Reformation, does raise the possibility that the remains may once have formed part of the Franciscan friary.

Whilst the Trust's work has served to shed further light on this small part of Scarborough the cost in terms of archaeology destroyed has been high. The fact that in this instance the Local Authority responded positively may help to make such losses less common.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Brian Milner for the exercise of his skilful excavation and recording techniques. Gratitude is also owed to Trevor Pearson who kindly volunteered his excavation and surveying expertise. Figs.2 and 3 were produced by Russell Marwood; parts of Fig.2 are based on a drawing originally produced by Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society.

Mark Jolmson

Meet the Editor

Some of the more observant of our readers will have noticed a new name on the list of editors of INTERIM — David Petts.

A child of the swinging seventies, David comes from Reading, which he maintains is not as bad as everybody seems to think. As is mandatory for archaeologists, he first became interested in the subject through a combination of digging holes in the back garden (not always in the lawn) and plenty of childhood visits to medieval castles. It was in his capacity as a precocious child that he first came into contact with the York Archaeological Trust. As a winner of one of the Trust's archaeological scholarships in the mid-1980s he spent a week in York seeing what real archaeologists do. The high-point of this visit was being on television when an item about the scholarships was shown on Saturday Superstore.

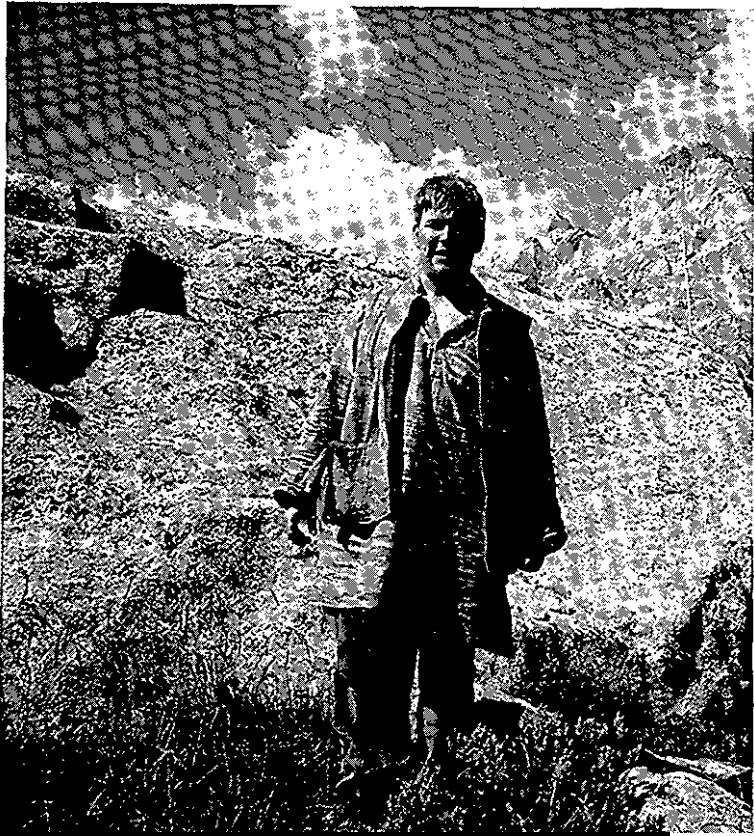
Surprisingly, this early brush with YAT did not put David off archaeology, and when his school made him do work-experience, he spent a week in the back of a Land-rover with the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in Salisbury, drinking coffee, doing the Guardian crossword and looking through misted up windows at a very rainy Salisbury Plain. He followed this up with a season digging with the British Museum on a Bronze Age waterfront site in Surrey, where he discovered that much of British archaeological life revolves around the pub.

When it came time to **fly** the nest and go to university David decided York was a fairly safe bet, and came here to

study archaeology. His high-point as an undergraduate in the Department of Archaeology was rising to the dizzy heights of Co-Pub-Crawl Rep. in the Student Archaeology Society. Whilst at York he continued to dig, working on a range of sites including a medieval castle in Wales, a Late Roman cemetery in Algeria and a Merovingian church in Paris. During his time digging he sustained one broken collar-bone, concussion, a mild attack of dysentery and a minor car-crash — it was at this period he had his first inklings that life as a field archaeologist might not be for him.

Nonetheless, after graduating from York he spent a year digging, including a very, very cold month in Catterick with English Heritage, and a long hot summer working on a small Roman town in Essex. At this point he decided that he was not one of nature's Field Archaeologists, and that he would never learn the arcane art of rolling cigarettes in the rain, so he returned to the bosom of his family to do an MA in Roman Archaeology at Reading University. His decision to study Roman archaeology grew out of an interest in his work on the Roman site in Essex, and the fact that he had studied relatively little Roman archaeology at York. However, after a whole year of villas and amphorae at Reading he decided that he was really an early medievalist after all!

Despite this he was not put off academia and stayed at Reading to do a PhD on burial in early medieval Western Britain (i.e. the rainy bits). Whilst his fellow research students at Reading excavated in Majorca, Cyprus and Jordan he got as far as a one-day conference in Swansea (yes, it rained). Whilst working for his PhD he also claims to have



churned out various papers on a wide-range of subjects, both late Roman and early medieval. In a review of one of his papers he was accused of ‘observing a polysemy in the landscape of Roman Britain’ -he is still not sure if this is good or bad.

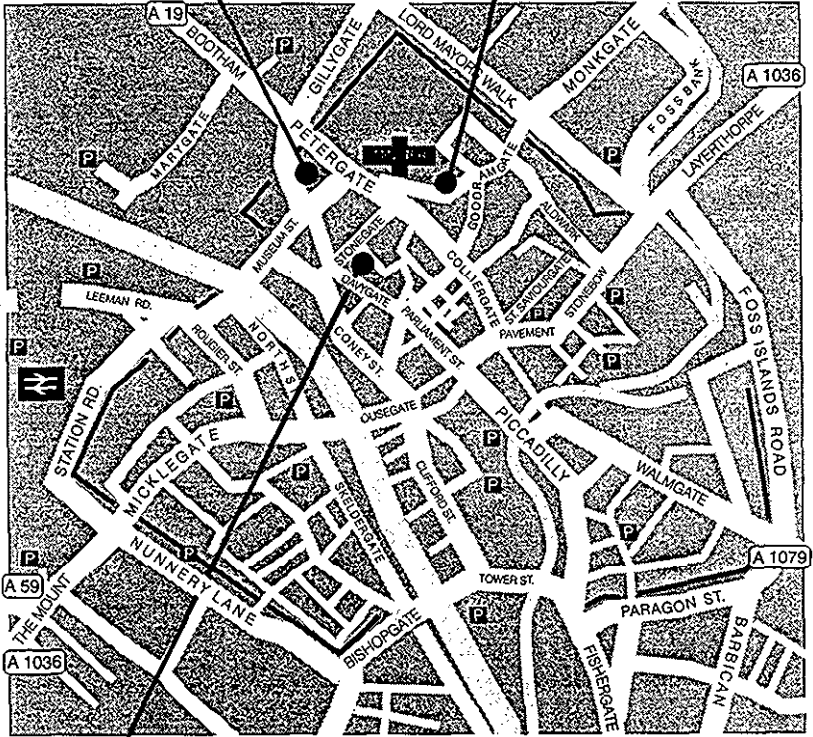
All good things come to an end, and eventually he ran out of funding, so he took up a job with Oxford University Press, gaining a little editorial skill and a large collection of books, using his staff discount card. After eight months at

OUP he finally escaped back to York and YAT, where he is now working on preparing a number of fascicules for publication.

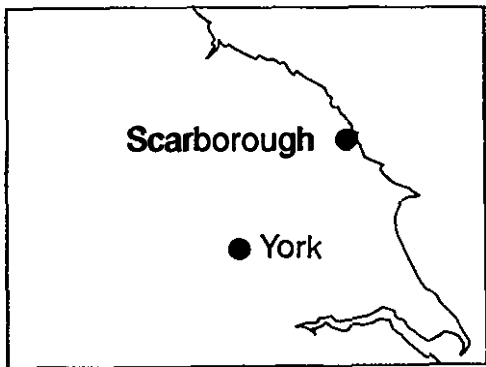
When not slaving over Trust publications, or his still unfinished PhD, David somehow manages to cram even more archaeological research into his schedule, and has even been heard to say that sometimes he wishes he could go back into 'the field' (but only when the weather is fine). Apart from archaeology David is interested in travelling, when time and money allow, and is hoping to make a return trip to the Himalayas in the next year, as he enjoyed the altitude sickness so much last time. He also enjoys music, and has a taste which may charitably be called eclectic. Despite now having a job at YAT he still has a few ambitions left, including learning to speak Welsh and to play the bagpipes. For the sake of our sanity we can only hope they remain unfulfilled.

Theatre Royal

Minster Precinct



Little Stonegate



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in Scarborough

Meet the Editor

