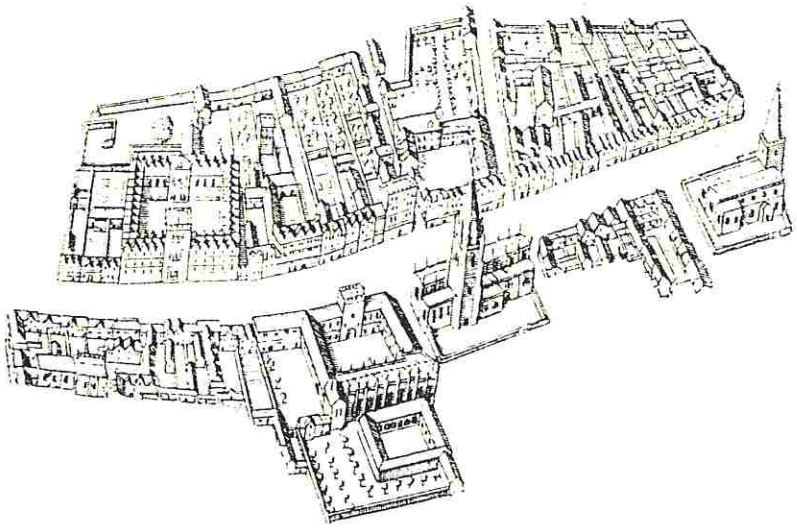
ALL SOULS COLLEGE
OXFORD

A SURVEY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

1991-2



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

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Abstract: Following the publication (1989) of the 1986 Chichele lectures on All Souls, an Oxford College and its Buildings, *by H Colvin and J S G Simmons, OAU carried out an exploratory survey of the archaeological potential of the 15th-century college.*

The questions which prompted the survey are outlined by Peter Salway, former fellow of the College, and the results of three trial excavations are compared with a geophysical survey of the Great Quad. Parts of the medieval hall and cloister were located, and from demolition deposits of the cloister came a decorated lead writing crayon of medieval type, which is unique in England. The various survey techniques are used to argue the layout of the N part of the college and thus the relationship between the principal buildings. This may have implications for the understanding of other late medieval collegiate plans and the function of detached college cloisters.

1 Introduction

All Souls is perhaps now the most medieval of Oxford colleges, the only one devoted exclusively to fellows in the medieval tradition. Most of the structure of the Front Quadrangle was built between 1438 and 1444 and is largely unchanged in its general function, surviving changing times in which All Souls has maintained and enhanced its importance and influence in the wider world. Sometimes wealthy, other times less so, since its foundation it has managed to retain rooms and services which are the epitome of Oxford academic life.

OAU's objectives in undertaking this survey were two-fold: to assess what might be learnt from the standing fabric about medieval college life, ie the provision made by the founder for the fellows, and secondly to look at the below ground deposits to see whether they might hold the key to the date of the eastern extension of the medieval town and to other questions related to the foundation of All Souls itself.

The College was on the point of repaving large areas of its formal quadrangles, and the broad research themes were developed to take advantage of the ground disturbance; this in turn spawned an attempt to answer several specific architectural questions about the buildings taken down in the early part of the 18th century to create the Great Quad.

The general precepts of the survey were set out in a paper to the College by Peter Salway; OAU is also deeply indebted to Professor Salway for his introduction to officers of the College and for his interest and enthusiasm in seeing the project through to completion. His background note on the site is set out below, and his formulation of questions that might be approached by an archaeological survey forms an appendix.

2 The history of the College

No Oxford college is known to have had a full archaeological study of its site and standing buildings carried out this century, the nearest perhaps being Gunther's presentation of J C Buckler's records made in Magdalen College in the last century (Gunther 1916, 393-434).

The site of All Souls is topographically unusually interesting, as it lies immediately outside the 10th-century town (whose eastern defences probably ran through Radcliffe Square in front of Brasenose College), but inside the later medieval walls. Catte Street linked what is believed to have been the site of the original East Gate with the later entrance through the northern walls known as Smithgate (just north of New College Lane). It is possible that the Saxon eastern extramural suburb was incorporated into the town about the time of the massacre of the Danish inhabitants in 1002 and the Danish sack of Oxford in 1009. Support for a pre-Conquest extension is provided by Dr Turner's recent review of the distribution of 'mural mansions' in the 13th-century town, evidently the ghost of a late Saxon system of defensive obligations. (Turner 1990, 73-80). Archaeological support for this is lacking however, partly because the area is sealed by historic buildings of the university and its colleges where the opportunities for below-ground research are very rare.

2.1 For the post-Conquest period, the acquisition of most of the site for the College in stages in the 15th century, and the erection of the medieval college buildings in the mid and late 15th century, must effectively have sealed a series of superimposed medieval townscapes under horizons that should be individually datable for different parts of the site. Large areas are likely to have been little disturbed since. The arrangement of the plots taken over for the College was worked out on paper by H.E.Salter (Salter *Survey*), but has never been tested on the ground, and there are uncertainties (see Colvin and Simmons (1989), 4). A number of academic halls (as well as private houses) were demolished to make way for the college, making it probable that material relevant to the early history of the University is present on the site.

2.2 All Souls is fortunate in being the only Oxford college to have full medieval building accounts for its foundation period. There is thus an unusual opportunity to link documentary and archaeological evidence, and the likelihood that significant new information about building methods could be obtained. It is particularly helpful that Colvin and Simmons have so recently assembled their guide to the documents, both for this and subsequent periods. Their work provides a convenient and solid platform from which to address various questions to which we do not have answers. Earlier published studies include Ernest Jacob, 'The Building of All Souls College', A.H.M.Jones's contribution to the *VCH* vol. III, and the *RCHM* inventory *City of Oxford*. We are also very fortunate in having the view of the college drawn about 1600 known as the *Typus Collegii*, as well as two views by Loggan and a number of 18th-century sketches made before the major changes of the Hawksmoor period. It seems likely that as much is now known as we are likely to obtain without corresponding archaeological investigation being undertaken, and some of the questions to which this might be directed are listed below (see Appendix 1).

3 The Fieldwork

The following account of the excavations and survey has been presented in such a way as to yield as broad as possible a picture of the College's heritage, and thereby to act as a framework for consideration of aspects not covered in the recent account of its architectural history (Colvin and Simmons 1989). The discussion section concludes with a consideration of how a minimal amount of above ground survey in the ranges of the Front Quad might complete the picture of at least the medieval college.

Three trenches were excavated in 1991 ahead of repairs to the paving in both quadrangles, and OAU is grateful to the College's staff and contractors for their

cooperation. The trenches are first described, followed by a discussion of their significance.

Trench 1: Front Quad (Fig. 1)

The first trench was dug on an E-W alignment at the west end of the central pathway in the Front Quadrangle, 2 m long by 1 m wide. The stone paving slabs forming the path had been removed in the area covering the trench, and this revealed a modern conduit 4, running east-west through the northern half of the trench, reducing the accessible deposits by half.

In the undisturbed S half of the trench was a modern build-up layer 2; this was removed, and immediately below were what appeared to be intact medieval deposits. Excavation of the first, 5, revealed the S edge of an east-west cut, 15, presumed to be the robbing of a stone wall which had run continuously through the area. Only a small part of the feature was accessible, being mostly concealed by the conduit, but by slight undercutting it was possible to reach its bottom which contained four distinct fills 6, 11, 13 and 14.

Removal of the last of the fill layers of 15 left a series of deposits on the S side of the trench. The uppermost, layers, 8, appeared to be a small late medieval midden containing large amounts of oyster and mussel shells, ash and charcoal. The next layer down, 9, was a thick deposit of clay loam up to 0.30 m in depth, also containing occasional oyster and mussel shells and flecks of charcoal.

Under layer 9 was a pit-like feature, 18, taking up the east half of the existing area of the trench and extending beyond it to the E. What could be seen of it was a sub-rectangular with steep sides, sloping at about 20° from vertical to a flat bottom. It contained five distinct fills, 10, 16, 17, 19 and 20; some of which, 16, 17 and 20 were fairly organic in character.

With the removal of the pit, the trench contained a single layer, 12, continuous throughout the trench but the top of which had been cut away, to the N by feature 15 and to the east by pit 18. Only the top 0.20 m of this layer, 12, were excavated for dating evidence, after which point the trench was abandoned for reasons of safety, because the total depth of the trench now 1.60 m and there was insufficient space to fit shoring.

All the above deposits belong produced pottery of the 15th century, and their implications for the site before the foundation of the College are discussed under 6 below.

Trench 2: Great Quad W side (Figs. 1-2)

A N-S aligned trench was opened near the SW corner of the Great Quadrangle, parallel with the cloister W range, in the hope of locating the medieval cloister. Length 4.60 m, width 1.10 m.

The top surface was stone paving slabs forming the pathway around the Great Quadrangle. Their removal revealed a very compact modern make-up layer 101, cut away in the SW corner of the trench by a post-hole 120 (fill 119). Beneath was a second modern build-up layer 102 with two post holes cut into it, 118 and 133.

Removal of layer 102 revealed five more post holes, 105, 108, 122, 131 to the N and 135. All the post-holes were at a level where they could have been used for scaffold poles for the Hawksmoor rebuilding. The last-mentioned (135) cut into the fill of a large, east-west aligned feature 109 running through the centre of the trench, 1.60 m wide and 1.10 m in depth.

Excavation showed this to result from the robbing of wall 123, which is assumed to have been the S (or outer) wall of the medieval cloister walk (123, see below). The robber trench contained five distinct fills, 106, 112, 113, 114 and 160.

To the S of the robber trench were layers of fill 103 above 126 and 127, the later sealing a gully or eaves-drip 140 with fills 137-8. The gully cut layers 139 above 141, which sealed a cobbled surface 142 and another compacted surface 148 with a sherd of c 15th-century pottery. All these are assumed to have been courtyard levels of the 'slype' or yard between the cloister and the ante-chapel. They were the deepest layers which were properly excavated at this end of the trench, but in the 'free section' afforded by the cut of robber trench 109 could be seen deeper levels 148, compacted 151 and then 152.

To the N of the robber trench was a layer of gravelly, stony loam 116 overlying mortar surfaces 128 and 129. Although any relationship with the wall trench was lost to robbing and erosion, it is assumed that these surfaces were the bedding for a tile floor of the cloister walk. If so they would have originally abutted the wall of the cloister, which presently only survives as a footing 123, 1.1 m wide at a depth of 1.25 m below ground level. Here it was of coursed limestone blocks, angular/subangular in shape and with an average size of 0.28 m x 0.20 m x 0.10 m. They were bonded with a light yellowish brown, very sandy and slightly clay, silt loam with 15% fine gravel. Excavation in this part of the trench was restricted to a total depth of 1.70 m, at which point three courses of stone were visible, but the footing was still deeper.

On the assumption that 128 and 129 (above) were the sole surviving remains of the flooring of the cloister walk, the deposits beneath them must predate the cloister. There was an extensive depth of fill with pottery of the late 11th or early 12th centuries. The deposit was in thin layers, which were excavated as 143-7 and 149, beneath which was a horizontal layer of crushed stone and mortar 150. Beneath this was more layered fill of similar date 153-9, 161-3. Excavation was terminated at depth of 2.7 m for reasons of safety, with no sign of the bottom of the fill.

Trench 3 Great Quad, S side (Figs 1, 3)

This trench was parallel with the N wall of the 18th-century hall, in an area of paving slabs which were to be replaced. It was intended to locate the remains of the medieval hall, which had projected N at about this point. The slabs were lifted, and exposed a small pit 219 and a make-up layer 201. Beneath this were post-holes 205 and 215, and a pipe trench 223, all cut into a demolition horizon consisting of 202 to the W and 208 to the E. Layer 202 proved to overlie the fills 211 and 212 of a robber trench 203, and to the E, and separated from it by 0.25 m was the L-shaped robber trench 207 of walls 209 and 210.

Emptying of the robber fills showed the plan of wall 220, the E wall of the medieval hall. Its footing was 1.3 m wide, of large and well-laid stones, contrasting with the much more irregular and loosely bonded stonework of the L-shaped walls 209 and 210. The latter are assumed to have belonged to a separate building, perhaps the buttery, built against the E side of the hall. Although respectively 1.1 and 0.6 m wide, they had no real face at any point, which perhaps made sense where the buildings abutted, but the internal face of the 'buttery' was just as irregular; the point where its N wall 209 adjoined the hall was difficult to reconstruct.

Within this building, in the angle of walls 209 and 210, were a series of floor surfaces which abutted the surviving stonework. Uppermost was a very hard floor 217, and beneath it

silty and mortar floors 225-8, 233-5 and 243-5. It was difficult to identify similar floors of the hall W of 220 because there had been some erosion to the side of the robber trench. However a small extension of the trench westwards showed three hard mortar surfaces 240-2 in a very restricted area, and possibly a pre-college loam deposit 221.

4 An assessment of the pottery

by Maureen Mellor

The most significant group of finds for this stage of the investigation is the pottery, because of its ability to provide dating and indications of usage. The following is a preliminary assessment in advance of a full study of the material.

4.1 Pottery from the upper levels of *Trench 1* in the Front Quad included some modern material, but everything below it was medieval. Earliest was 12, with range of wares, but the various fills of Pit 9 included 15th century jugs and a Tudor-type chafing dish. Layers 8 and 9 which sealed the pit yielded jugs and a lid of a similar date, and the fills of the presumed robber trench 15 included more 15th-century jugs, one showing the deep grooving typical of potters imitating metal vessel, and another chafing dish of local type.

The interest of this assemblage is that pit-digging, a midden phase and the robbing of a wall all contained pottery of the 15th century which, by available dated sequences, might have been placed in the later part of the century. At All Souls however these activities should have ceased abruptly at the completion of the quadrangle by 1442, and this therefore provides a *terminus post quem* for a group of pottery which, though small, will be a type collection for the period.

4.2 In the Great Quad, *Trench 2* showed another important series of pottery groups from the fill layers beneath the first cloister level 129. Most of these layers included at least a few sherds, and apart from a small percentage of 15th-century wares which presumably arrived with the construction of the cloister wall, all were of the late 11th to early 12th centuries. They were predominantly of the local Early Medieval Ware (Fabric *AC*) with a few sherds of St Neots type and a several fragments of at least one Stamford Ware pitcher.

This material corresponds most closely to pottery found beneath the first silting beside the Norman castle mound at Oxford (Mellor 1976, 264) . Perhaps the most interesting of the sherds was part of the shoulder of a fire cover (curfew) with decorative cordons, in the local fabric. The group is late Saxon in general feel, and is possibly the earliest substantial group of pottery to be found in the area of Oxford that was added to the primary Saxon *burh*. It deserves careful analysis of the pottery types.

From levels above the pit came a few sherds of 15th century type (116), perhaps related to the flooring of the new cloister. Apart from these, the next group of pottery was of the 2nd half of the 17th-century, including stoneware from Frechen in Germany, and probably reflects rubbish dumped when the cloister was taken down in 1703.

4.3 *Trench 3* immediately N of the present hall was interesting for the college levels. The deepest deposits 213 and 246 were typical of the 14th-15th centuries, with fragments of jugs and cooking pots. Above this began the series of floor levels associated with the supposed buttery, and four of the early layers produced both local jugs and domestic wares. In later floor levels the first of the imported Rhenish vessels appears, initially part of a tankard from Raeren, and in the latest a sherd from a different source, possibly Langewehe (233). The latest of these floor assemblages is still of the 16th century, and it may be that during the 17th and

early 18th centuries the buttery was solidly floored with slabs. The robber trenches yielded Frechen stonewares, Surrey wares and local Brill types of the 17th century, and there is no reason to doubt that the building stood until the rebuilding during the 1720s.

The Trench 3 assemblages were of very small sherds as one would expect in the floors of a working buttery. They differ from the Trench 1 material principally in the presence of domestic wares (ie cooking pots) rather than simply drinking wares and table wares.

4.4 These All Souls trenches provide the basis of an important sequence of pottery for Oxford, dated in relation to well-documented building programmes. Trench 2 adds significantly to the material recovered in less controlled circumstances during the digging of the static water tanks in the Great Quad in 1941 (Jope 1941, 89-90; Jope 1951-2, Fig. 39, 15), and although the earliest pottery was not quite so early as the late Saxon St Neots ware recorded by Jope at that time, the fact that it comes from a coherent feature excavated by archaeological techniques means that their significance is all the greater. For the later pre-college period the Trench 1 assemblages will be an important type-collection for the early 15th century, and the Trench 3 material is important as an indicator of the usage of a college buttery in the 15th and 16th centuries.

5 Report on Geophysical Survey of Great Quadrangle (Fig. 4)

by A D H Bartlett

5.1 *Introduction*

The survey was undertaken in May 1992 as part of the wider archaeological investigations by the Oxford Archaeological Unit for All Souls College, the purpose being to test for evidence of any surviving wall footings or masonry from the 15th-century hall and cloister.

The survey results were overlaid on a plan of the college supplied by OAU which showed a hypothetical ground plan of the hall and cloister as reconstructed from old illustrations. Information on the depths of masonry finds was also made available by OAU, ie 1.5 m in Trench 2, 0.5 m in Trench 3, (see above).

The resistivity survey covered the present grassed area of the quadrangle (in fact slightly larger than that shown on the available plans), and was located by reference to a baseline measured to the surrounding buildings. The resistivity coverage was supplemented by a less detailed magnetic survey which, since it does not require probes to be inserted, could be extended in part across the gravel. Crosses indicating the ends of the baseline were marked on each of the plots for ease of registration.

5.2 *Survey Procedure*

The resistivity readings were collected (with a Geoscan RM4 meter) at 0.5 m intervals using the twin electrode probe configuration (a four probe technique in which one pair of current and potential probes remain fixed through the survey, and the second pair mounted on a frame is moved for each reading). The depth of penetration achieved by this method approximates to the probe spacing, and so, given the considerable variation in depth at which the masonry was excavated, the coverage was duplicated using both 0.5 and 1 m probe spacings. Each set of readings was presented on plan both as graphical traces plotted in two directions through the data, and as half-tone plots showing three alternative treatments of the data, as described below.

Magnetometer readings were recorded at 0.3 m intervals along traverses 1 m apart using a Geoscan FM18 magnetometer and plotted on a separate plan.

Similar treatments have been applied to both sets of resistivity results. The graphical plots (not illustrated, see Figs. 1-2, OAU archive) showed the untreated data (after initial correction to a few wild values caused by poor probe contact). Low readings were seen at the edges of the plots, attributed to the conductive effects of the iron edging strip which surrounds the lawn. The large-scale (1:250) half tone plots showed essentially the same values, but employing slight numerical smoothing (ie taking a weighted mean of each reading with its neighbours) which reduces small-scale noise in the data. Further plots (iv, not illustrated; v, see Fig. 4) show the effects of a high-pass filter in which the mean of readings at a stated radius (five reading intervals in this case) is subtracted from each value in turn. This tends to suppress variations wider than the filter, and emphasises narrower anomalies in the data, which may represent such features as walls. Plot iv showed variations in a range of approximately one standard deviation about the mean, and plot v had been truncated to show the positive anomalies (above the mean) only against an arbitrarily low background. This may break up the continuity of some of the features, but clarifies them for labelling. In all cases high readings were represented by black areas on the plot, and low readings by white.

5.3 *Results*

Resistivity (0.5 m Survey): A number of detected features have been labelled in plot v (Fig. 4), but could also be recognised in the other plots. The most conspicuous anomalies are two very strong rectangular features (A and B), which are likely to be well preserved and near the surface. It seems more likely that either or both or them could represent the wartime static water supply which has been reported here, rather than a medieval structure.

Several other features do however relate quite well to the expected plan of the medieval buildings. They include the rectilinear anomaly C which appears to represent the N end of the hall, and the linear features D and E which are likely to be the S and east walls of the cloister. The plan of the cloister is incomplete, as would be expected if stonework had been robbed, but some further details can be conjectured. The N wall of the cloister may be represented by a rather irregular alignment of anomalies at F, and there may be anomalies relating to the inner walls of the S, E and N ranges at G, H and I.

1 m Survey: The results from the 1 m survey were quieter and less affected by small or superficial disturbances than was the 0.5 m survey. The anomalies identified as likely to represent the main medieval structures are however still visible, and perhaps display improved continuity if less clarity than in the 0.5 m results. The anomalies which appear to represent the three sides of the cloister were noted on the unfiltered plot (ie those marked D, E and F on Fig. 4). The hall was also visible. Anomalies which might relate to the inner walls of the cloister are again not very clearly defined. Other anomalies, for instance positive anomalies at both NE and SE corners of the survey, were present in all the results but were difficult to account for in terms of the known features of the site, and there also appear to be quite distinct features within the cloister garth.

Magnetometer survey: This survey was carried out to test for any such magnetically detectable features as pits and ditches, and also to check on the extent of modern disturbances to the site (which are usually characterised by the presence of highly magnetic debris such as bricks or iron). There was strong interference from the iron border to the lawn, and also from the strong rectangular resistivity features (A and B on Fig 4), which again suggests they are of modern origin. There also appears to be an iron pipe running E-W across the middle of the lawn, which corresponds well to low readings in the resistivity survey. Otherwise the site does not

appear to be excessively disturbed, which increases confidence in the resistivity findings. Other significant findings could be negative anomalies corresponding to resistivity anomalies (E and I of Fig. 4), which could indicate relatively non-magnetic masonry giving a reduction in magnetic response. A positive anomaly in the S part of the cloister garth has the appearance of a substantial pit, and again corresponds to a resistivity anomaly.

5.4 *Conclusions of the geophysical survey*

The findings from the survey are broadly compatible with the assumed plan of the medieval hall and cloister, and suggest (as did the trial excavation) that the hall is the better preserved. It appears possible (from the 1 m data) to trace a fairly complete plan of at least the outer walls of the cloister, but masonry (on the evidence of the 0.5 m survey) probably only survives near the surface intermittently. The inner walls of the cloister can only be traced very tentatively, and do not appear to be well preserved.

6 Interpretation of the Archaeological Survey (Fig. 4)

Within the obvious constraints of small trenches in the environment of a working college, the excavation has produced some important results.

6.1 *Findings in the Front Quad*

Trench 1 in the Front Quad was useful as a preview of what could be expected beneath the gravel surface of an All Souls quadrangle. The only structural evidence we have is in the way that the 15th-century pit (9) was overlaid by a suspected E-W robber trench (15), with pottery assemblages more characteristic of tableware than domestic types. This might therefore be the backyard activity of the pre-college Charltons Inn on the High Street, but in view of the E-W alignment of the robber trench (15) it might equally relate to a tenement fronting Catte St; perhaps one of the lesser tenements and shops noted by H E Salter within Charltons Inn was in fact facing onto Catte Street, and was sufficiently well established to have a domestic yard behind it (Salter *Survey*, I, 129)

6.2 *The site of the medieval cloister and hall*

By contrast with the tentative findings from the Front Quad, the two trenches in the Great Quad were exactly as needed to solve many of the questions posed of them relating to the college itself.

On the W side of the quad, soft fill extended down to the limit of safe excavation, yielding pottery of the late 11th or 12th centuries. The deposit overall was deep enough to be the fill of a substantial cellar, and the lack of any associated wall within the excavated area may ultimately help in the reconstruction of early medieval property boundary here by a process of elimination. The cellar may indeed have been on the site of a pre-Conquest property, whose existence would explain the earlier 11th-century pottery finds recovered at a depth of 1.8 m during the digging of the static tanks under the cloister (Jope 1941). This would take us back close to the period in the first two decades of the 11th century when it is likely that Catte St was first enclosed by an extension to the town defences (Munby, in Durham forthcoming).

For the later medieval period, Salter identified the property immediately N of the college chapel as St Thomas' Hall, but Colvin noted a discrepancy in Salter's plan (which he has left uncorrected in his Fig. 1: 1989, 4), and it seems likely that the early cellar was in fact

on property which was to become either Grampound Hall or Godegnave Hall. Although Catte St was at the heart of early university activity in the 13th century (*VCH* 4, 28), there is no direct evidence that either of these properties was an 'academic hall'.

For the College period, there can be little doubt that the robbed wall in Trench 2 (123) belonged to the S range of the medieval cloister, and although there were no convincing remains of cloister walk surfaces, the location of this wall with respect to the chapel, and the discovery of weathered cobbling to the S (142), makes a convincing case that this was the S or outer wall of the cloister. Pottery of the 15th century would indicate that mortar layer 129 to the N was all that survived of the first surface of the cloister walk. There is very little on the resistivity plot to indicate the inner or garth wall, which on the evidence of the New College cloister should be centred about 5 m from the outer; but perhaps the inner wall had a less substantial footing because it was carrying only arcading.

The cobbling (142) would be an external surface of the 'slype' between it and the Chapel. On the basis of the *Typus Collegii* of c 1600 the W and N sides of the cloister have been reconstructed in Figure 4 as a rectangular plan, 8 bays N-S and 6 bays E-W. Interestingly the N-S bay-length seems to match that of the Hawksmoor W cloister, although offset. Furthermore there are blocked areas in the stonework of the back wall of the present cloister at a height (3.85 m) and spacing (3.45 m) to have been sockets for tie-beams in a previous structure, perhaps the medieval cloister, and these match the intervals of the existing bays (11ft 6ins, 3.5m), offset by c. 1.45 m S. The coarse facing of the surrounding stonework makes it unlikely that the sockets relate to the short-lived 1703 cloister, and they therefore tend to confirm Colvin's conclusion that the inner face here was retained from the medieval cloister wall (1989, Figs. 34, 60).

As an initial hypothesis it was therefore conjectured that the Hawksmoor cloister was on the same line as the medieval cloister, and had borrowed its bay-spacing, possibly its inner footings. Those dimensions on the *Typus* which can be checked on a modern plan suggest that it was based on a measured survey; plotting the line of the N range on this assumption puts it close to the lobby of the Codrington Library.

If one reconstructs a symmetrical cloister using six bays for the N range as shown by the *Typus*, the S range would overlap the NW corner of the hall sufficient to have a communicating doorway between the two. This however would be in direct contradiction to what Loggan shows (*Scenographia* of 1675 from the N, and his view of the college from the S in Colvin and Simmons Fig.3), and also with the plan developed by Colvin and Simmons from the available sources (1989, Fig. 4), where there is clear space between the cloister and the hall. Without confirmation of this junction by excavation under the lawn, the evidence of the geophysical survey is important here, and it seems to be showing the two buildings as joined. We are grateful to Alister Bartlett for providing the following additional note to his geophysical survey, which goes some way to resolving this difficulty.

6.2.1 *Postscript to Geophysical survey Report*, by A D H Bartlett

[This note is prompted by questions raised by the Oxford Archaeological Unit when attempting to reconcile the findings of the recent resistivity survey of the Great Quad (see above) with a reconstruction of the former cloister based on other evidence, including the plan of c 1600 and excavation finds.]

The survey results showed that, although parts of the buried medieval structure are likely to be ill-preserved, there are clearly defined linear features (labelled D and E on Fig. 4) for which the most satisfactory explanation would be that they represent surviving footings of the outer

walls of the S and E ranges of the 15th-century cloister. An alternative view, that they may represent cobbled paths outside the cloister, could be invoked if necessary to account for discrepancies, but would require that the wall footings themselves have been robbed with great thoroughness. The difficulty with interpreting the resistivity anomalies as wall footings is that those presumed to be the E side of the cloister are not accurately parallel to the Hawksmoor colonnade which now forms the west side of the Great Quad, and which has been assumed to occupy the site of the west range of the cloister. A cloister incorporating the resistivity findings and the colonnade would not therefore be rectangular, although shown as rectangular in the view of 1600 (*Typus Collegii*).

The 1600 view appears to be a projection based on a measured ground plan, which I have attempted to reconstruct in part by tracing outlines from a copy of the drawing enlarged to (approximately) 1:250 scale. When this tracing is superimposed on a modern plan there is a good fit of the boundaries to Catte Street and the High Street, but a mismatch as noted above between the cloister and the resistivity findings. There are also, however, discrepancies between other features as shown on the old and new plans, and particularly in the alignments of the east range of Front Quad and the chapel. If the tracing is rotated slightly about the SW corner of the college to bring the east range of Front quad and the chapel more nearly into alignment with the modern plan, then the correspondence between the cloister outline and the resistivity anomalies is much improved.

The tracing gives good reconciliation with the resistivity features D and E, as well as with the anomalies representing the N end of the old hall. There are also resistivity disturbances on the line of the N range of the cloister, and even an anomaly which may correspond to the turret shown in the drawings at the NE corner of the cloister. The masonry excavated in trenches 2 and 3 also fits well into the plan, but the presumed correspondence of the west range of the cloister with the present colonnade does not. The western boundary of the cloister instead appears to have been some 2-3 m east of the present line of Catte Street.

It is clear from this modest exercise with tracing paper that the internal discrepancies in the 1600 drawing are such that it cannot be relied upon to provide an unambiguous location for the cloister. It is however based on a plan which is accurate in many respects, and elements can be selected from it to support either the survival of the alignment to Catte Street, or the correspondence between the hall and cloister as depicted and the resistivity findings. Further evidence from other sources (including the proposed radar survey or additional trenching) may determine which of these alternative schemes should be accepted.

6.3 *Cloister and Hall, a 'best fit'?*

The discrepancies between the various illustrations of the cloister and the archaeological and geophysical evidence are clear. Alister Bartlett's interpretation of the geophysical results seems to confirm the evidence of the *Typus* for the relationship of the cloister to the hall, and this will be accepted, although we have provisionally accepted the evidence for medieval masonry features in the existing W range of the cloister and therefore retained the orientation square to the chapel. It must be noted however that the cloister plan shown on Figure 4 is still provisional, embodying geophysical, cartographical and archaeological evidence. It would require a thorough survey of the standing W wall and a careful consideration of evidence for the widths of the cloister ranges shown on the *Typus* before any attempt at a full reconstruction. We acknowledge gratefully the work done by Mr Bartlett in reconstructing the cloister plan, without which Figure 4 would be much less satisfactory.

The overlap between cloister and hall has some interesting inferences for the functional

relationship between hall and cloister, separated as they were in construction by at least 26 years. Colvin makes it clear that the cloister at New College would have been the model for the All Souls cloister. At New College the cloister has access to the ante-chapel, to a yard comparable to the All Souls 'slype', and to the bell tower. One of Prof. Salway's research questions was whether the 'slype' at All Souls would have needed a direct link to the gardens to the N without going through one of the buildings; there are plenty of Oxford examples of buildings which leave a modest passage between two open areas, but the inference from the resistivity plot is that there was no such passage at All Souls. Such a passage could have been created by shortening the cloister N-S, and we must therefore ask whether the All Souls cloister had a special function which needed it to have intimate access from the hall. Colvin is slightly dubious about the function of a cloister in college life, but he acknowledges that at All Souls the fellows were not prepared to do without, nor were they prepared to see it incomplete. He quotes a letter suggesting that the cloister was used for 'processions, for private prayer and for burials' (Colvin and Simmons 1989, 16). There is nothing in Anthony Wood's account of the college to suggest that he found memorials of any burial in the cloister two centuries later, but either way it is clear that all the perceived functions relate much more to the chapel than to the hall.

For the remainder of the cloister we are inclined to follow Colvin's conclusion that the present W range incorporates some of the medieval masonry and hence preserves the line of the medieval cloister, and it is here interesting to note the sinuous shape of the Catte St frontage; is this one of the reverse-S boundaries which Salter in 1936 interpreted as the ghost of plough furlongs predating the late Saxon town extension here (Salter 1936, 9)?

It is possible that the college was prepared to accept an asymmetrical cloister in order that it should have a direct link to the hall, and saw no difficulty arising from isolating the slype from the garden N of the hall. Corroboration probably lies only just beneath the grass, and ground probing radar may provide the answer when the system has been perfected by the University Research Laboratory for Archaeology. We are grateful to Prof. Michael Tite and Christopher Meetes for their help, and for allowing us to inspect their preliminary data, which gives a result not inconsistent with the resistivity plot. It is understood that the ability of the system to resolve smaller archaeological features will be improved, and it may be that corroboration of the relationship between cloister and hall will then be possible.

In planning further geophysical survey it is worth noting that the different survival of the two main buildings under the Great Quad may relate to their date of demolition. The cloister was taken down in 1703, and the stone used for new work in the college, while the hall was presumably taken down only at when the replacement was ready to be built in 1730-33. By this time Hawksmoor and Townesend were no doubt sufficiently sure of their requirements that they did not need to recover stone from the hall footings. Much of the core of their new buildings seems in any case to be of brick, and there may have been little use for stone rubble. For our purpose this means that there is reason to suppose that the initial excavation findings are representative of the below ground remains for both hall and cloister, and that the critical area at the NW corner of the hall may still survive as masonry, perhaps with spurs to the cloister. On present evidence however the geophysical work argues a more intimate relationship between the hall and cloister at All Souls than in the only other detached college cloister in Oxford, and implying a wider variety of usage of the cloister than that inferred from a contemporary source.

One metal object from the cloister excavation was of wider significance, a lead stylus or 'writing lead' with a decorative head from the robbing of the cloister foundations which must date to 1703. Writing leads are common from medieval deposits in Oxford, but this is the first English find with a decorated head. The only previously known examples are from

near the Pantheon in Paris, believed to have been used by students (Biddle 1990, 735). Of medieval form, this lead is unlikely to have been in use in 1703, and most likely derives from debris of the 15th-century cloister used to infill the void at this time, or even from a previous use of the area, when Catte St was the centre of the Oxford book trade.

6.4 *Trench 3: the hall and 'buttery'*

The third trench exposed medieval walling of two buildings immediately beneath the quadrangle gravel. The major N-S wall was clearly the E wall of the hall, but the way it had been demolished meant that the two internal floor surfaces survived only in a limited way in the available area. To the E however was an unexpected second building, with a W wall forming a second skin against the side of the hall, then returning E as a crude rubble wall. With its series of about six internal floor surfaces, the deepest deposit of this building was at the same level as the pre-hall surface. From an intermediate floor level came a fragment of a jetton which Nicholas Mayhew dates to the 14th-15th centuries.

Assuming that this was the building shown linking the kitchen and hall on the *Typus* of c. 1600 it is slightly further N than shown by Colvin and Simmons on their interpretive plan (1989, Fig 4). Otherwise it is in the conventional position of a medieval buttery, and the pottery identified by Maureen Mellor, including both tablewares and domestic wares, would seem to confirm the identification. However it provides no easy explanation of why the 'buttery cellar' was W of the hall at All Souls.

7 Conclusions

Provisional conclusions from the fieldwork would be as follows:

1. There was major late-Saxon activity shown by the cellar-like feature on the Catte Street frontage, perhaps part of the property which had been responsible for 11th-century pottery found under the quad in 1941. This would later have been the medieval Grampound Hall or Godegnave Hall.

2. The largely robbed foundation of the cloister S wall was of massive proportions and seems to match a major anomally on the geophysical plot, but the garth wall may have been less massive. Its proportions match the arcading shown on the *Typus* assuming may have had a bay width similar to that of the Hawksmoor colonade, but it has not yet been possible to reconcile the bay spacing with blocked timber sockets in the standing W wall.

3. There is no reason to think the cloister walk was used for burials on any large scale.

4. Cloister walk surfaces have been stripped of any tiled surface.

5. The medieval hall survives well, but erosion of the edge of the wall trench had left no trace of the medieval floor surface. There is as yet no evidence for doorway communicating with the cloister.

6. Part of a medieval 'buttery' survives, further N than the projected line of the chapel, of unexpectedly crude rubble construction, but with an independent wall against the hall. On the evidence of levels it was an early addition to the college plan.

8 Recommendations on future research priorities

The results of the excavations have gone some way to answering the questions posed by Professor Salway. We have a hint of a large and prosperous dwelling in the Great Quad facing Catte Street in the 11th century (Appendix 1, 1.1). The absence of 13th- and 14th-century features in this area may suggest a decline, although the excavated sample is really too small (1.2). The only tenuous evidence of a pre-college property boundary was running E-W across the Front Quad, and its message is perhaps that the High Street plots were so crowded by the 15th century that properties were established behind, fronting onto Catte St. The activity is however so late that it would not preclude the suggestion that the masons had established a temporary lodging in the quad during the building work (1.3); the pottery from this trench comprises and important and closely dated assemblage which merits full study.

For the medieval college we now have independent resistivity evidence of the shape of the hall, and the finds from the adjoining building are what might be expected of the buttery. It is possible that a refinement of the radar data may show the 1630 cellar extension N of the chapel (2.1). For the cloister we have perhaps come nearest to answering the questions, but we have as yet failed to show whether it had a doorway from the hall, and a case is made for a survey of features on the inside face of the surviving W wall on Catte St. There is as yet no evidence of a lavabo within the cloister (2.2). There is no special reason to think that features under the Great Quad are being masked by deep rubble spreads, and it is possible that most debris at this stage went into the robber trenches; now we have identified the sites of the two static tanks it is clear why Jope felt they had encountered cloister debris (2.3) (Jope 1941, 89-90).

It is possible that four anomalies near the NE corner of the cloister on the resistivity survey might relate to the turret visible on the *Typus*, or just possibly to an unfinished bell tower (2.4). On the question of the internal arrangements of the medieval domestic ranges surviving in the Front Quad, more can be said (2.6), and this constitutes the major recommendation for completion of the assessment phase of the survey as follows:

Informal observations in several Oxford colleges, including All Souls, suggest that a study of surviving evidence for the relationship between external masonry and internal carpentry would be instructive. From 14th-century New College to 17th-century Oriel College, Oxford residential ranges commonly have massive timber framing in their staircases, of a type which would normally be expected in fully timber-framed buildings, but here occurring in buildings which are outwardly of stone construction. The framing is used to provide the collegiate arrangement of stairs, chambers and studies on two floors. At All Souls the special arrangement of the upper floors, with their high open roofs, and the different roof type adopted at for the Old Library, has already been partly examined during recent re-roofing, and raises the particular question of the date and character of the heating provision in these buildings.

The interest of these observations, apart from the light they throw on the working environment of early fellows, lies in the relationship of the original carpenter and mason. This must have started at the design stage of the buildings, and would affect the order in which different parts were erected; were these effectively timber-framed buildings clad in stone, with the carpenter a joint designer with the mason?

The medieval buildings of All Souls, because of their original building accounts, their high rate of survival of original work, and the level of previous study, present an unrivalled opportunity to examine these questions, and thereby to contribute to our understanding of the setting of medieval academic life.

It is therefore recommended that, in order to complete the present survey and at the same time to identify research priorities in the longer term, a detailed architectural survey should be made of a typical college staircase at All Souls (selecting one with minimal alterations from its original form), together with a more rapid appraisal of surviving elements in other parts of the Front Quad (excluding the chapel). Such a survey would comprise a cross section from ground-floor to roof, an elevation and two floor plans, together with relevant details and a descriptive report. Added to the results of the below-ground archaeology this would create a rounded assessment survey of the college, as a contribution to research for the College's history and as a model for similar problem-related surveys elsewhere in the city and university.

Oxford Archaeological Unit

March 1993

APPENDIX 1 Questions addressed by the survey by Peter Salway

1 The site before the College

1.1 Could we discover anything about the origins of the Saxon suburb, and about its incorporation into the town? Might the plots fronting onto Catte Street reveal anything about the date of the street itself, and was it always on exactly the same line? (Queen Street, for example, has been proved to have been much wider in the early medieval period, and to have served as a market).

1.2 Might there be signs in pre-college deposits of the later-medieval urban decline, which has sometimes been cited as giving the opportunity for colleges to take over areas of the town previously occupied by townspeople. If so, had this happened in this part of the town at a date early enough to explain the concentration of academic halls subsequently demolished by the College, or not till around the time of foundation of the College itself?

1.3 Was it the location of previous property boundaries or of surviving medieval buildings that dictated the narrowness of the Front Quad and the curious turning of the medieval hall at right angles to the chapel? (Colvin and Simmons 1989, 4) What constricted the site to the east? Was there a building on the property known as Studley's Entry still standing - or is Salter's plan wrong? Were any existing buildings retained for temporary occupation while the Front Quad was being finished (contemporary documentary evidence shows fellows being boarded out during the construction)? Were there any temporary timber buildings? Where were the masons' lodges and yards on such a restricted site? We know that a garden was rented outside the Eastgate for storage of materials, fabricating ironwork and similar activities, but there must have been some working areas on the site itself. Logically this might have been on the strip behind Studley's Entry E of the quadrangle, but can this be confirmed?

2 The Medieval College:

2.1 What was the exact size and location of the hall? Can any details of its internal arrangements be discovered? Is it possible to confirm or deny the identity of the various ancillary buildings labelled by Jacob and Jones? What was the size of the medieval kitchen? Have the structures visible in the *Typus Collegii* between the kitchen and the hall been correctly identified as the buttery? It is curious that the undercroft below the Chapel that is said to have been the buttery cellar is on the opposite side of the medieval hall. Did that cellar perhaps communicate directly with the high table end of the hall, as at Warkworth Castle? Are any of the other existing cellars medieval, and might they reveal information about medieval buildings formerly above them? We know that the 'Inner Seller' was lengthened in 1630 'shootinge along betweene the Chapell and the Cloystere' (i.e. under the medieval yard or 'slype' that lay immediately N of the N wall of the Chapel). This suggests that the original 'Inner Seller' itself was perhaps medieval; it certainly must have related to the medieval hall, not the present one.

2.2 What was the exact size and location of the cloister, and is it possible to distinguish which were the three sides finished by 1491, and which the fourth side added later? Was this 'the side' for which an item for cleaning on completion appears in the accounts for 1509-10? Is the existing Radcliffe Square wall of the present arcade really partly medieval (Colvin and Simmons Fig 60)? Was the cloister walk paved? Was there a lavabo on the monastic pattern? How long was the cloister cemetery in use, if ever? Are there surviving burials, or were they moved when the cloister was demolished? Was the cloister built against the NW corner of the hall, and did it communicate via a doorway, or was it kept clear of the

hall?

Is there any evidence for medieval gardening? The 'Cloister Greene' was converted into a 'Garden with Arbours' in 1611, which itself would be interesting to investigate. However, did this refer to the cloister garth or the garden E of the cloister visible on the *Typus*? Are there more medieval tiles to be found to match those discovered in 1940 in the N Quad?

2.3 When the medieval hall and cloister were demolished in the 18th century, was the rubble spread out in the Great Quad, or used in the new buildings? If the former, it would make survey by surface techniques (e.g. resistivity survey) more difficult, but might yield preserved architectural fragments, glass, etc., from the medieval buildings; if the latter, medieval material may have been incorporated into the later fabric, and may come to light accidentally or during survey.

2.4 Was a start ever made on the medieval bell-tower planned to be built outside the NW corner of the cloister? Was there a temporary timber belfry?

2.5 Were any of the other buildings illustrated in the *Typus* medieval? What was the yard between the chapel and cloister used for, and how was it reached? Did it communicate with the garden E of the cloister? What was the exact plan and size of the medieval vestry (an 18th century sketch plan exists, and the door was located during recent restoration)?

2.6 What more can be learnt of the internal arrangements and changing use of the residential wings of the Front Quad (see Colvin and Simmons, p.12-15)? To what extent do the original 'framed-sets' survive?

3 The Early Post-Medieval College

3.1 The area between the present Warden's Lodgings and the Front quad experienced a large number of documented changes in the 16th and 17th centuries. It must be possible to identify many of these on the ground and in the standing buildings, with a high probability of being able to add further information. These buildings must also seal beneath them important information about the High Street frontages in the second half of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th, since they were presumably first covered by new college buildings around a century later than the plots lying under the Front Quad. Some areas probably lay open or gardened for much longer. Rose (Or Red) House, for example, was acquired to form the Warden's garden.

3.2 Among the individual details that might be investigated are the arrangements for the 'Warden's Parlour Closet', which was supplied with a 'voydinge channell into ye (High) streete' in 1629, and given a water supply from the Carfax conduit 'by pype and cocke' in 1630. The water supply from Cumnor recorded as established in 1617 by 'watercocke and conduite under the Butlers windowe' (probably at the west end of the present Manciple's House) was presumably for the kitchen and the college at large. This, too, might be located.

3.3 Other points that might be investigated are the 16th century Warden's kitchen, the 1753 rebuilding of the college woodhouse and 'necessary house' (are there any pictures of the latter's 'elegant classical portico')? and the details of the rebuildings in the Manciple's House area.

3.4 Various developments occurred in the late 17th century and early 18th before the Hawksmoor period. The documents indicate a complicated history in the area immediately N of the medieval cloister. Was the building that was a storehouse till 1571 replaced by an entirely new building? What was done when this structure was remodelled in the period 1669-75 to provide more rooms? Were these developments exactly on the site originally intended for the bell-tower? What happened in this corner of the site when the cloister was demolished, and replaced by a colonnade in 1703, in anticipation of the house for Clarke that was not in the event built? Can we discover anything further about that colonnade?

4.0 **Hawksmoor to the present.**

4.1 It is likely that much could be learnt about internal alterations by study of the standing buildings, and therefore about how spaces were used at different dates. It would be particularly interesting to investigate the successive decorative schemes through paint and wallpaper sampling, and to trace changes in College taste (this form of investigation is currently meeting with much success in a number of National Trust properties).

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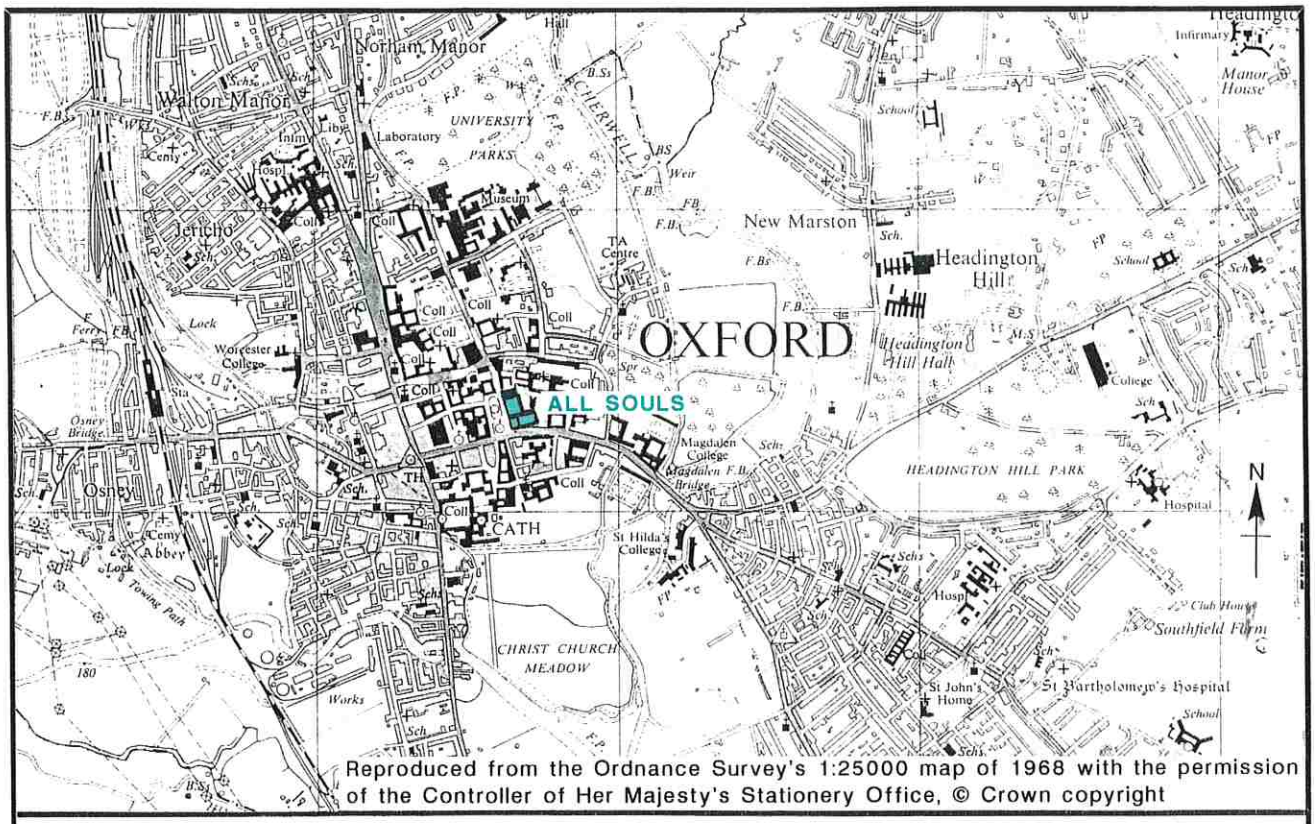

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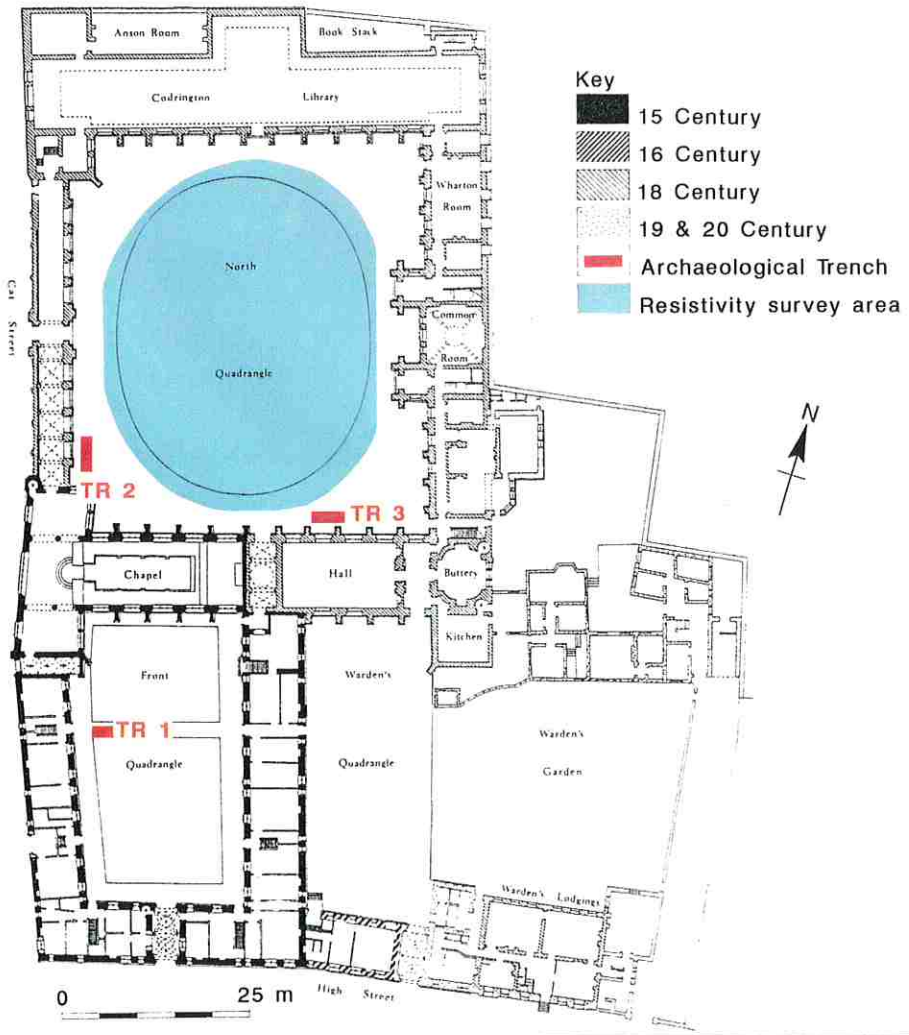
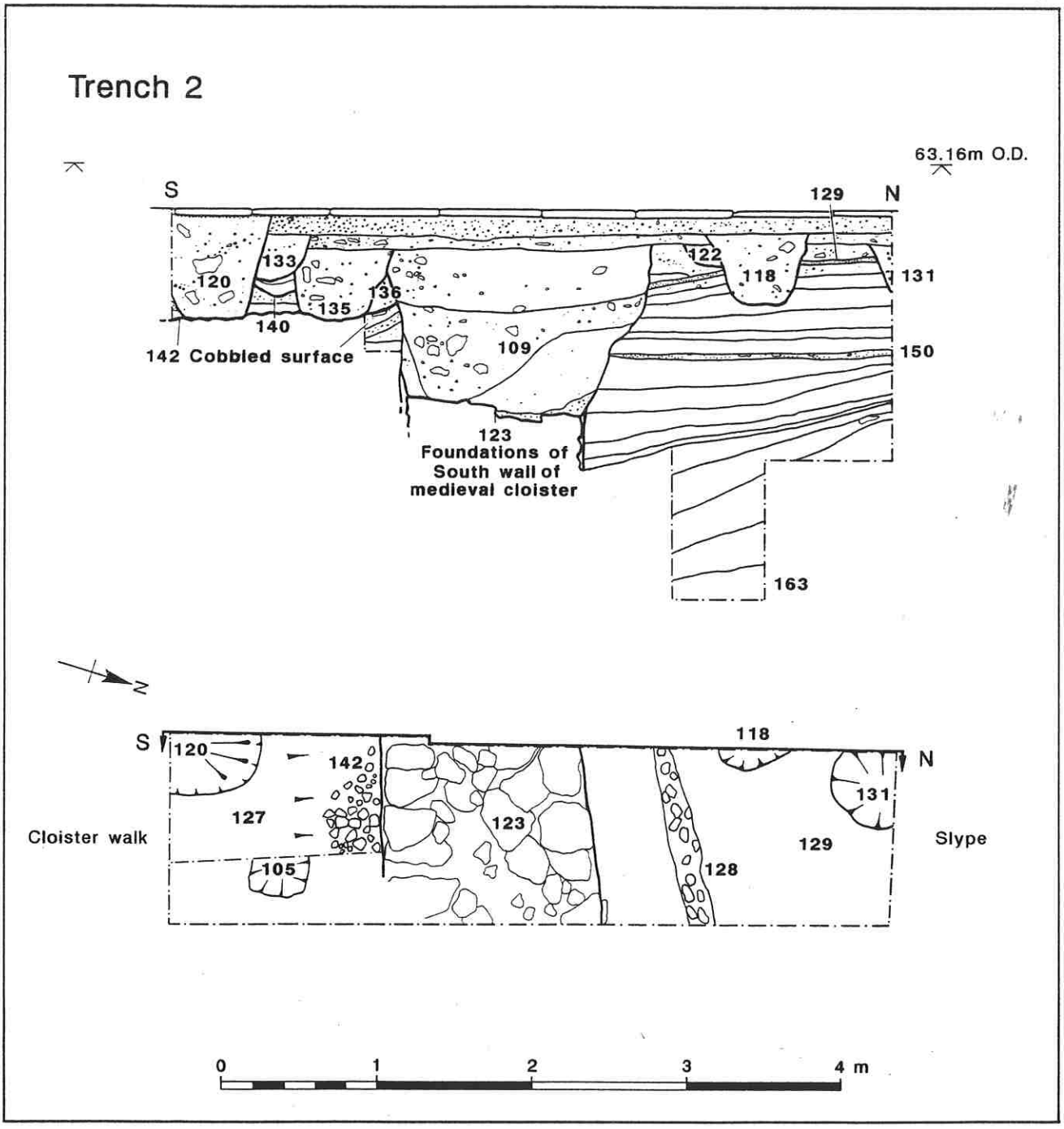


Fig. 1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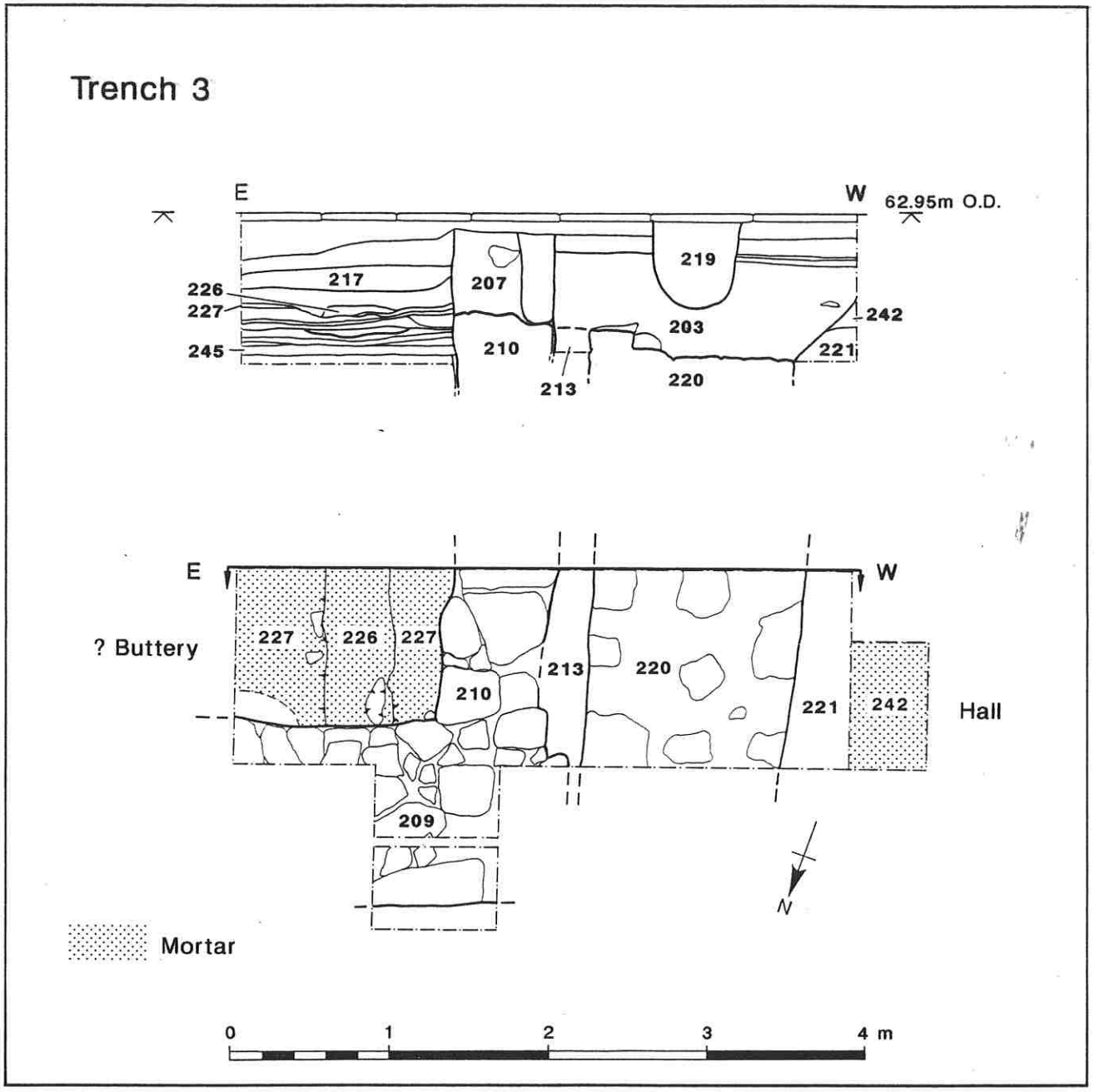
63.16m O.D.
S
N
129
133
120
136
135
140
142 Cobbled surface
109
122
118
131
150
123
Foundations of
South wall of
medieval cloister
163
S
N
120
142
127
123
118
131
129
128
105
Cloister walk
Slype
0
1
2
3
4 m

Fig. 2


Trench 3
E
W
62.95m O.D.
219
217
207
226
227
242
203
245
210
221
213
220
E
W
? Buttery
227
226
227
213
220
210
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242
Hall
209
N
Mortar
0
1
2
3
4 m

Fig. 3

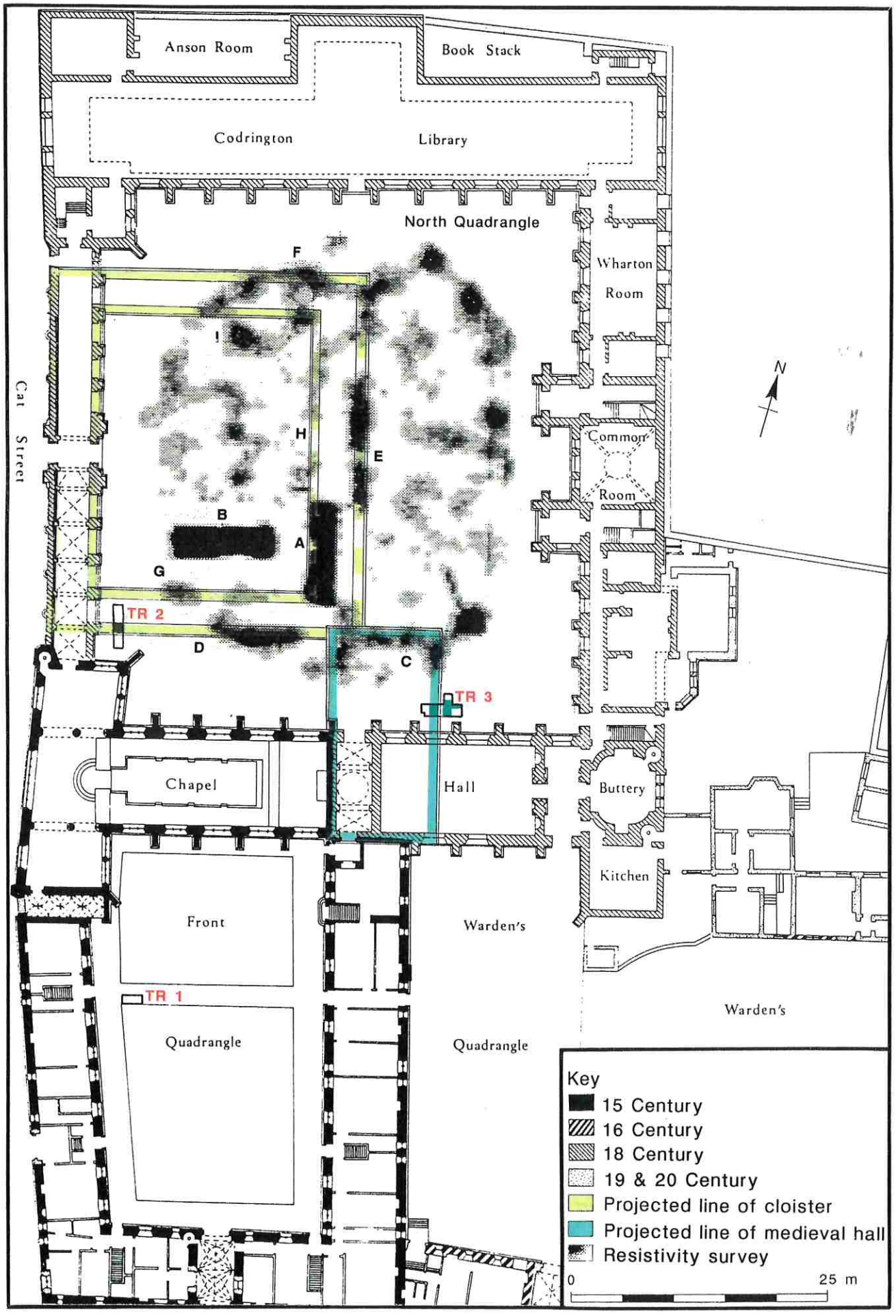
Anson Room
Book Stack
Codrington
Library
North Quadrangle
Wharton
Room
Common
Room
Cat Street
F
I
H
E
B
A
G
TR 2
D
C
TR 3
Chapel
Hall
Buttery
Kitchen
Front
Warden's
TR 1
Quadrangle
Quadrangle
Warden's
N
Key
15 Century
16 Century
18 Century
19 & 20 Century
Projected line of cloister
Projected line of medieval hall
Resistivity survey
0
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Fig. 4

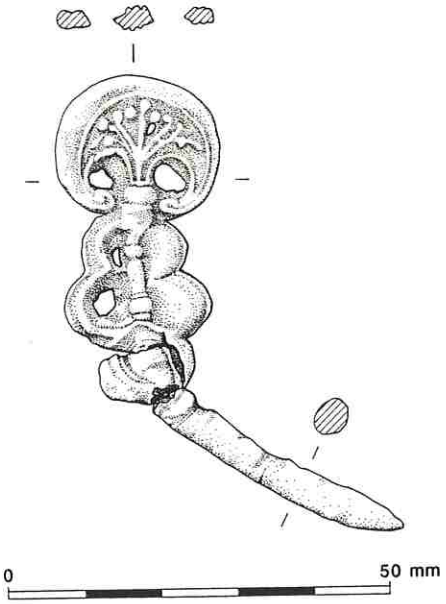

Fig. 5

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