

St. Thomas of Canterbury Parish Church Goring, Oxfordshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

December 1994

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief at St Thomas of Canterbury Parish Church Goring, Oxon, during the excavation of drainage trenches along the exterior of the S wall of the Nave and the W porch.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Church of St Thomas was built in the late 11th century, probably by Robert d'Oilly, and was dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury following the incorporation of the church into the precinct of the Priory of St Mary, late in the 12th century.

The church is sited on the N bank of the River Thames, and consists of a Norman W tower, nave and chancel, with the addition of a 13th century N aisle. The fabric is generally notable for its lack of ornamentation.

Archaeological excavations carried out in 1892-3 by Mr Percy Stone uncovered the ground plan of the claustral area of the Priory, and confirmed that the original parish church building had been extended to the E by approximately 30 m, to allow the Nuns privacy in their own church.

After the dissolution, the claustral buildings, along with the church extension, were demolished. In 1937 the original apsidal end of the chancel was restored.

Results (Fig 1)

The site was visited on Nov. 15th. on completion of the excavation.

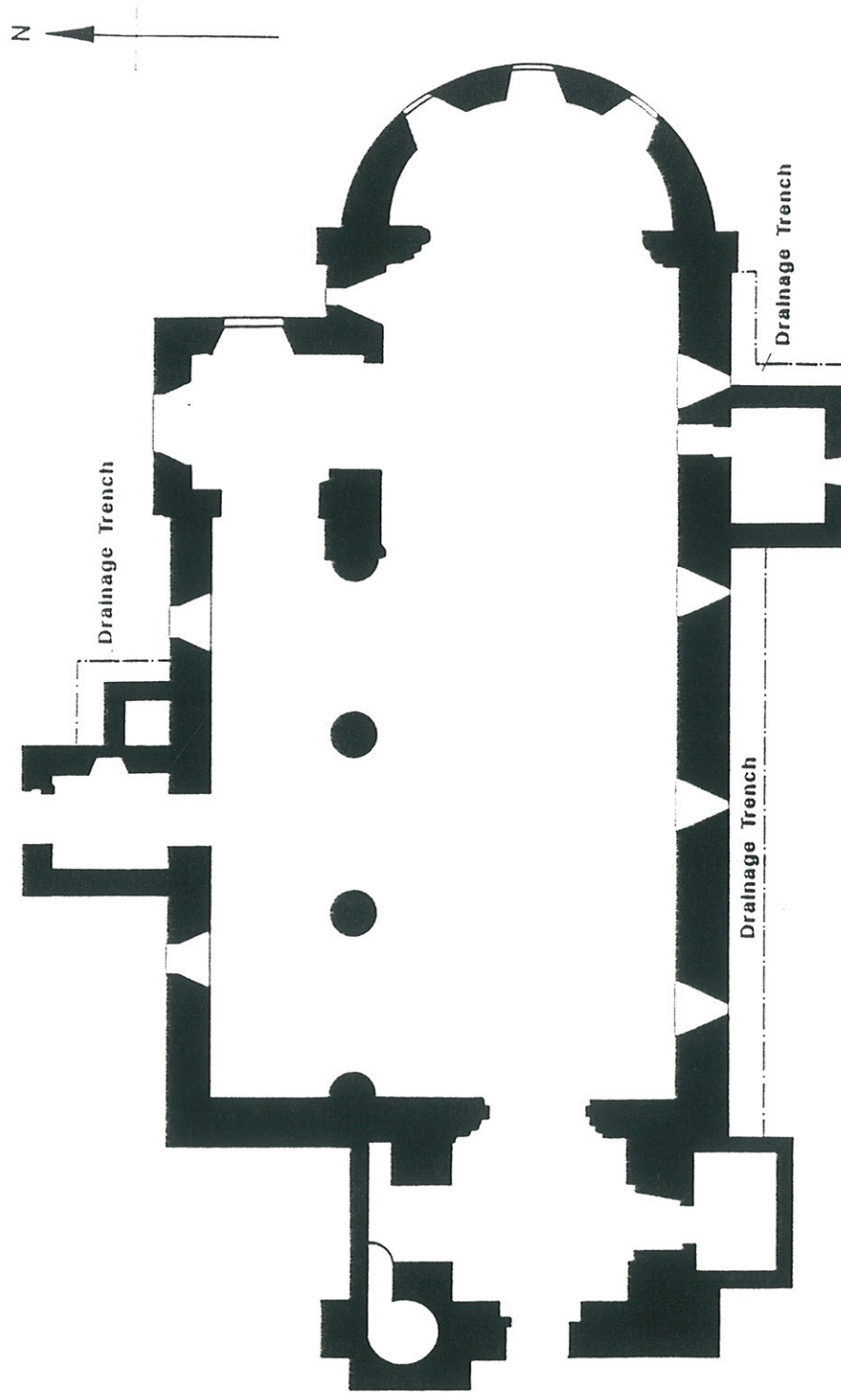
Observation of the excavated trenches showed that the trenches were cut to a width of approximately 0.40 m, and a depth not greater than 0.35 m. The deposits revealed in section were a mix of dark brown loamy topsoil with occasional lenses of silty clay and inclusions of small limestone pieces and brick and tile fragments.

Conclusion

No archaeological deposits were revealed by these trenches. The presence of stone, tile and brick inclusions in the topsoil could be 16th century demolition material scattered by subsequent grave digging, or it could represent the backfilling of the Victorian excavations.

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Goring: The Church of St Thomas of Canterbury



scale 1:300 approx.