

All Saints Vestry

Kingston Upon Thames

**Historic Building Investigation
and Recording**



December 2006

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All Saints Vestry, Kingston Upon Thames

HISTORIC BUILDING INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

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All Saints Vestry, Kingston Upon Thames

HISTORIC BUILDING INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out building investigation and recording on the vestry at All Saints Church, Kingston upon Thames on behalf of the Rector, Revd. Jonathan Wilkes. The survey took place prior to restoration work on the vestry, which is part of an ongoing project of restoration on the church.

The investigation consisted of the photographic recording and analysis of the stone fabric forming the vestry, which is situated in the north eastern corner of the church. The vestry was probably built after the construction of the adjacent Holy Trinity Chapel in 1477 and most likely dates to the early 16th century.

Later changes to the vestry include the insertion of a doorway in the east elevation and the realignment of the roof to allow light through an early perpendicular window which had been rendered over as part of 18th century works. There is also evidence for various small repairs including the insertion of drainholes, the addition and subsequent removal of a chimney and the replacement of damaged stones.

Examination of the stonework showed that many stones were primary and, because of weathering, were in a fragile state. Photographs of both elevations with the phases clearly marked were produced as well as a photographic archive of the stones to be replaced during restoration.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by the rector of All Saints Church in Kingston Upon Thames, under advice from English Heritage, to record the stonework of the vestry prior to its restoration. The restoration work to the vestry of this Grade I listed church includes resetting of the doorway, a new roof and the replacement of many individual stones including the reinstatement of a string course to both elevations.

1.2 Aims and objectives

1.1.2 The general aims and objectives were:

- To record the vestry stonework prior to the beginning of restoration work.
- To produce a brief report detailing the findings of the survey.

- To deposit the survey archive with the Museum of London Archaeology Services

1.3 Methodology

- 1.1.3 The recording programme was generally undertaken to level II of English Heritage Building Recording Guidelines. The survey initially sought to work to the architects (Thomas Ford and Partners) drawing nos. 02 rev. B and 03 rev. B which showed the current elevations and the stones to be replaced. However upon inspection, these drawings were found to be inaccurate both in the size of the individual stones and the amount of stonework courses depicted. The interior of the vestry had been rendered and painted and so interior inspection of stonework was not possible. At the time of survey part of the ceiling had been removed allowing a cursory inspection of the roof.
- 1.1.4 The site work included two principal elements: a photographic survey and a written, descriptive survey. The *photographic survey* consisted of general views and specific details (external and internal) and was undertaken using 35 mm black and white print film, colour slide film and digital photography. Scale photographs of each elevation were annotated to show the areas of insertion and repair to the primary fabric. The *descriptive survey* added further analytical and descriptive detail.
- 1.1.5 Early photographs and sketches of the church were studied to provide an historical context to the recording, along with books and papers relating the history of the church. These are listed in Appendix I.
- 1.1.6 The project archive, which will include slide photographs, negatives, notes, drawings and this report will be deposited with the Museum of London archives.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 1.1.7 The parish of Kingston upon Thames is situated upon the river Thames approximately 10 miles to the south west of central London. Formerly in the county of Surrey, Kingston upon Thames is now the royal borough of Kingston upon Thames, which is part of Greater London.
- 1.1.8 It is thought that a church has been on the same site at Kinston Upon Thames since around 838 AD when King Egbert founded All Hallows church for his council. A later church, St Mary's, stood adjacent to the site of All Saints and a plaque outside the south door of All Saints marks the outline. The church of All Saints was built in the early 12th century by Gilbert the Norman, although little survives of this church (Cowie, 1988).
- 1.1.9 Like most ecclesiastical buildings, All Saints has been continually built upon and

remodelled throughout its history. The tower has been rebuilt several times - the last time in 1708. In the 18th century the church was given a classical façade and the fenestration scheme was altered, this work is depicted in several sketches of the time. There were two periods of major works listed in the 19th century, the first by Brandon in 1862-6 and the second by Pearson in 1883.

1.1.10 All Saints church is located on Church Street, in the heart of the town's retail district. An Anglican church with an active congregation it remains open for use every day and is an important focal point for the community.

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 Introduction

1.1.11 All Saints has a cruciform plan with a central tower. The vestry lies in the north eastern corner of the church adjacent to the Holy Trinity Chapel.

1.1.12 Unlike the flint and stone construction of the main body of the church, the vestry is constructed of regular coursed ashlar sandstone (probably Reigate stone) which is extremely calcified and weathered. The mortar is a pale cream in colour with small lime inclusions.

1.1.13 The vestry is single storey and is 4.77m long by 5.24m wide and stands 3.30m high, it currently has a flat roof behind a parapet which slopes downwards at one end to accommodate the perpendicular window in the adjacent wall. There are rectangular windows to both elevations with decorative hood moulding and moulded sills and jambs. The elevations have a stonework plinth and string course, both of which are very weathered. The east elevation has a doorway which was inserted during works in the 19th century.

1.1.14 The vestry and the adjacent chapel have previously been dated to the 15th century but as discussed later in this report the vestry was constructed after the chapel and so it may date to the very early 16th century.

1.1.15 The Victoria County History of Surrey refers to the Vestry as 'the least restored part of the church' (VCH Surrey Vol 3, p508) however there have been various alterations to the structure in the past.

3.2 The eastern elevation

1.1.16 The stonework is mostly primary but large parts are badly eroded and in need of repair. Most stones are very blackened by calcification and pollution but some stones appear clean as fracturing has occurred and the exterior layer has fallen off. This is probably as a result of brushing the stonework for assessment. Some stones are heavily fragmented.

1.1.17 There is a line of prominent string coursing forming the third course down from the top of the wall. The string course is extremely weathered and on this elevation is

most prominent on the extreme south eastern side.

- 1.1.18 During the 19th century a doorway was inserted into the eastern elevation of the vestry. There is no evidence in the building fabric of an earlier doorway prior to this date and early sketches of the church confirm this (Figures 2 and 3).
- 1.1.19 The doorway is recessed with a moulded stone two-centred arch and jambs. The doorway measures 218 x 98 cms and the moulded stonework is in a hollow/reveal design. It is raised above ground level (by 29cms) and is accessed from the street by two stone steps. There is a patch of grey coloured mortar with a circular indentation above the arch of the door. This is probably from a modern external light fitting which has since been removed. The door itself is an arched wooden vertically planked door set within a studded outer rim and it has two wrought iron hinges.
- 1.1.20 An early photograph (Woodriff, 1980) shows the vestry to have had a brick chimney at the point above where the doorway is now located. This chimney was removed at the same time as the door was inserted. It is likely that the chimney was added in the early part of the 19th century and then removed during one of the periods of restoration in the mid-late 19th century.
- 1.1.21 Immediately to the south of the door is a primary square headed window (135 x 190 cms) with moulded head, sill and jambs, suggestive of an early 16th century date. The moulded hood around the top of the window is extremely weathered, however the moulding is visible on the southern side. The end of the moulding on the northern side has been cut by the later insertion of the doorway. The moulding arches out approximately 10 cms from the base of the stone. One stone has the face fractured off and therefore has no decorative moulding.
- 1.1.22 The jambs of the window are moulded in a reveal design and there are claw tool marks visible on the south jamb. There is one replacement stone on the north side of the window, this stone also has recent mortaring and is part of repairs to the south eastern jamb of the doorway. The sill is formed from two pieces of stone, which are moulded, and there is a thin layer of slate below the bed joint of the sill masonry at the base of the window. There is a cast iron frame with three arch detail. Some of the lead is recent replacement. The window frame probably dates to the 19th century. The frame and glass are covered by a modern metal protective grille. There is a metal fitment remnant beside the window which is possibly part of a shutter fitting.
- 1.1.23 At the base of the elevation a single stone has been removed. There is rubble infill but this is recessed into the wall. It is possible that either the rubble infill has eroded or a stone face was applied but has since been lost. This may be the location for a vent which was later closed up.
- 1.1.24 There is an unlined drain hole on the southern corner, which begins five courses from the top course. A pipe runs down to the base of the building. There is recent

cementitious mortar repair work behind the drainpipe. At the base of the pipe the mortaring extends outwards to a nearby vent. The hole is not lead lined and the stonework within is extremely calcified suggesting it has been there a long time. However, it is probable that this drain was inserted at the time of the 19th century works to the vestry to allow rainwater egress from the newly realigned roof.

1.1.25 The eastern corner of the building has had most of the lower quoins replaced fairly recently, although not in keeping with the style of the building. The mortar for this was a sandy brown colour and had been covered with a lime wash to blend in with the primary stonework, but this wash is now eroding off.

3.3 The northern elevation

1.1.26 As with the east elevation, the stonework mostly appears primary with some areas of repair and replacement. The string course continues from the east elevation but is very weathered.

1.1.27 The main feature of the elevation is a window just to the west of centre. At 81 x 89cms the window is narrower than the east elevation window, the hood mould is heavily eroded and the moulding is only visible on the western side. The window has a two arch leaded decoration with clear glass and a protective metal grille. There are two metal fitment remnants either side of the window. The window appears to be primary and is suggestive of an early 16th century date.

1.1.28 The stonework to the north east of this elevation has a distinctive dark cream colour and the stones are extremely crumbly as a result of damp possibly relating to the drainpipe. The roof of the vestry also leaked on a regular basis (pers. comm. with church volunteer) and this will have affected the stonework.

1.1.29 There are replacement quoins with painted mortaring on the corner of the building as discussed previously in §3.2.10 and there are patches of recent mortaring behind the drainpipe.

1.1.30 There is a section of red brick replacement on the top course of the right hand side of the building. There are small pieces of red brick/flint infill visible below the window and on top of the course above the drain hole. There is a stone on the 5th course from the bottom on the north western side that appears to be an old replacement. This stone has claw tool marks running horizontally across it.

1.1.31 The drainpipe to the north east corner of this elevation is cut into the string course and lead piping protrudes from the hole into the hopper beneath. This lead hopper is embossed with decoration and probably dates to the 18th century remodelling of the church. The pipe beneath the lead hopper is a later replacement.

1.1.32 There is a drain hole to the western side of the elevation and this hole has also been cut into the string course. There is no lining and there are no fittings apparent. The plinth at the base of the wall appears to have been cut to allow the downward pipe.

However, the stonework is very fragmented in this area making it difficult to confirm this has been done. Both of the drain holes which cut into the string course are likely to be original to the building.

- 1.1.33 There is another hole beside the window. This has the remains of a terracotta tile around it and probably dates to the 19th century. This is possibly part of the pipework of an old heating system. The interior of the vestry has a circular vent at this point. On the exterior, beneath this hole, is a small pipe which probably relates to an internal washbasin.
- 1.1.34 From an examination of the join between the vestry and the chapel it can be seen that the vestry is a later addition. The chapel wall is rendered so the join cannot be examined but the stonework at plinth level in both buildings is visible. The corner of the vestry has a specially mitred stone which extends around to form part of the chapel wall. This shows that care was taken to bind the two plinths together but the construction of each is distinct.
- 1.1.35 Beside this elevation is a chest tomb which has a red brick pedestal abutting against the lower masonry. This tomb has many inscribed plaques most of which are indecipherable. One visible detail is the family name 'Bradney' and a date of 1817 upon one plaque. There are the tops of three possibly upright stone slabs between the lower vestry wall and the pedestal base, probably covering an entrance to a vault underneath.
- 1.1.36 Sketches of the church dated 1787 do not show a chest tomb in this position but a drawing dated 1798 does. This indicates that the chest tomb was erected at the end of the 18th century. It is also likely that the tomb has been reset at some point.
- 3.4 The Roof
- 1.1.37 The current roof of the vestry is a flat structure hidden behind a parapet. The current roof was probably added in the 19th century to replace a previous single-pitch roof which is shown in early sketches.
- 1.1.38 During the 19th century works, a medieval perpendicular window was revealed in the north eastern elevation of the chancel. This window had been covered and the wall rendered, probably during the 18th century 'dressing' of the church. The ghost of this window was included in sketches of the church in the 18th century by CT Cracklow (published in 1823) and H Hunt (published in 1851). According to the inscription in the current glass of the window there was a Victorian memorial stained glass window placed there in 1862 indicating that the window was reopened as part of the 1862-6 restoration works.
- 1.1.39 Prior to the reinstatement of the window, the single-pitch vestry roof originally sloped away from the chancel wall and would have covered the lower level of the window. The roof is now flat with a sharp pitch downward at the point where it meets the chancel wall. This was carried out in order to maximise height in the

vestry whilst also accommodating the length of the perpendicular window without blocking out light.

- 1.1.40 When the single-pitch roof was replaced the walls of the vestry were also levelled at the top. The string course remains in its original position upon both elevations.
- 1.1.41 Inside the vestry part of the ceiling has been removed and it was possible to see the oak beams supporting the roof structure. The visible beams measure 10" x 10" and are approximately 16ft long and have imprints of the lath and plaster ceiling that would have once been attached. Some beams have eroded to around 5" deep in parts and, in one case, modern timber had been added to provide extra support.
- 1.1.42 It is possible that some of these beams are primary to the vestry construction and have been reset at the time of the changes to the roofline.

4 CONCLUSION

- 1.1.43 The current investigation has suggested that the vestry was a secondary addition to the chapel. This is based partly on the assumption that it would have been better integrated into the design of the overall scheme of the church but also on dating evidence of the windows.
- 1.1.44 The mitred stone forming part of the plinth at the corner of both buildings shows that care had been taken to bond the chapel and the vestry together. However the square headed style of the windows on the vestry is suggestive of a slightly later date than the chapel. The chapel was built shortly after 1477 and therefore it is proposed that the construction of the vestry was sometime in the very early 16th century.
- 1.1.45 Much of the stonework of the chapel is primary, although there have been many changes to the vestry since its construction, the main ones being:
- The enclosing the window and rendering of the chancel wall - early to mid 18th century.
 - Addition of tomb adjacent to the north elevation - between 1787 and 1798.
 - Addition of chimney to the east elevation - early 19th century.
 - Removal of the chancel wall render and reinstatement of perpendicular window; realignment of vestry roof to accommodate length of perpendicular window - circa. 1862-6.
 - Removal of chimney, addition of drainage hole and insertion of doorway to the east elevation - circa. 1883.

Alison Kelly
Oxford Archaeology
December 2006

APPENDIX I BIBLIOGRAPHY

Published Sources

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(1823, reprinted 1979) London : Phillimore for the Surrey Local
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- Woodriff, B *Kingston upon Thames as it was : a selection of old photographs*
(1980) Nelson : Hendon Publishing Co.

Sketches and photographs

- 1787 - 'Kingston Church' (Anon. British Library collection)
1787 - 'View of Kingston Church in the County of Surrey' (Anon. British Library collection)
1798 - 'All Saints Kingston' Published by JP Malcolm
1823 - 'All Saints Kingston' by CT Cracklow
1851 - 'Kingston Church' by H Hunt
c.1880 - Photograph of the north-eastern entrance to All Saints Church

APPENDIX II SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Vestry, All Saints Church, Kingston Upon Thames

Site code: ASI06

Grid reference: TQ178693

Type of evaluation: Historic building recording

Date and duration of project: Site work undertaken in September 2006.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES. It will be deposited at an appropriate museum or other agreed body.

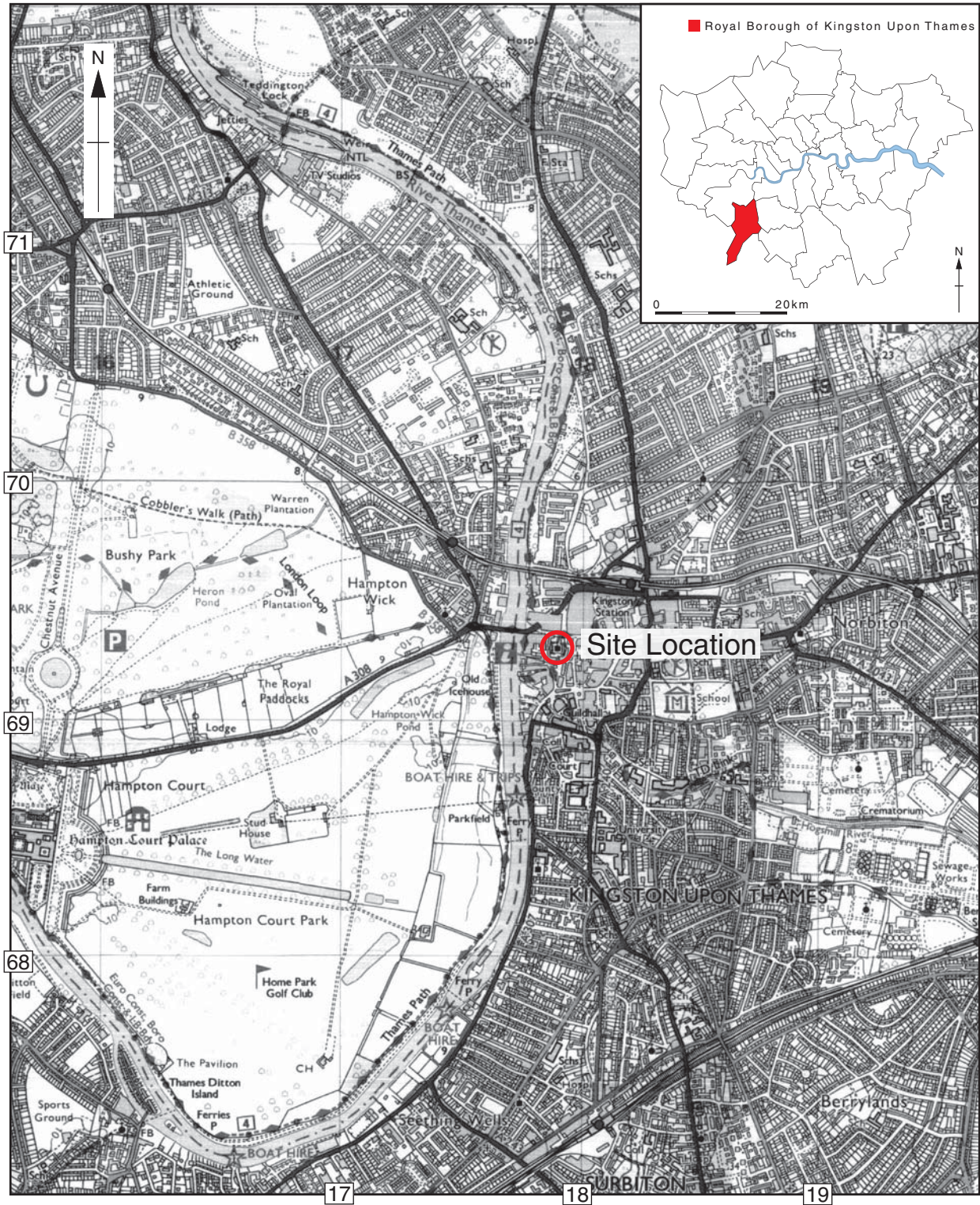
Contents of Archive:

1 x set colour slides

1 x black and white prints

Report

Site notes and sketches



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: Site location



Figure 2: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: 1787 sketch
'View of Kingston church in the county of Surrey'



Figure 3: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: 1798 sketch 'All Saints Kingston' by JP Malcolm



Figure 4: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: Phased east elevation



- 19th Century repair
- Mid-late 20th Century
- Late 20th Century

Figure 5: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:Phased north elevation



Plate 1: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: East Elevation



Plate 2: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: North Elevation



Plate 3: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: East elevation - detail of window



Plate 4: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:
East elevation - repair at base of pipe



Plate 5: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:
East elevation - rubble infill at base of elevation



Plate 6: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:
East elevation - drain hole to south east



Plate 7: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:
East Elevation - string course



Plate 8: All Saints Vestry, Kingston:
North Elevation - window detail



Plate 9: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: North Elevation - repairs to corner and discolouration of stonework caused by damp



Plate 10: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: North Elevation - stonework behind the Bradney tomb



Plate 11: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: North Elevation - replacement stone with tool marks and weathered plinth



Plate 12: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: North Elevation - detail of join with Holy Trinity Chapel



Plate 13: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: Roof timbers inside the vestry



Plate 14: All Saints Vestry, Kingston: The earlier perpendicular window from inside the church



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