

**St Nicholas Church, Newton Blossomville, near Olney
Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**Oxford Archaeological Unit
1993**

St Nicholas Church, Newton Blossomville, near Olney, Bucks Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a watching brief for new drainage works in September 1993 at St Nicholas Church, Newton Blossomville, near Olney, Bucks on behalf of Shenstone and Partners who were acting for the Parish Council. The parts of three walls were revealed in trenches dug for french drains and soakaways.

Background

The existing Church is 12th century in date but much of it dates from the 14th century. The church was rebuilt in 1862. The church is at the NE end of the village. In the interests of economy no further background work has been carried out.

Strategy

The strategy was to inspect the trenches once they had been dug but before the drains were inserted. The sections were cleaned and were to be drawn if any archaeological deposits were observed. After inspecting the sides of the trenches, which were quite clean and showed the subsoils, four points were cleaned and investigated further because deposits other than the natural subsoil or gravesoils were present.

Results

Three areas to the S and one area to the E of the church were inspected. To the S of the porch, at the S side of the church, a 1 m deep soakaway revealed a wall aligned roughly N-S which was in a trench cut into the churchyard soils. There was modern tile in the soil under the wall.

To the E of the porch, where the trench was 0.50 m deep, was a large flat stone slab 0.35 m wide and of unknown height and length at a depth of 0.2 m. This stone lay under the present porch and may represent a wall.

Further along the S wall of the church at the joint of the nave and the chancel was a rough coursed wall which was under a sloping foundation of a ?19th-century buttress. Only the top course of this wall was visible. The sloping foundation overlay the threshold for a door further to the E in the chancel wall. The doorway was complete with stone slab threshold and pointed arch but it was blocked by masonry. There were no indications of the doorway in the interior of the church.

At the E wall of the church was a 19th-century drain.

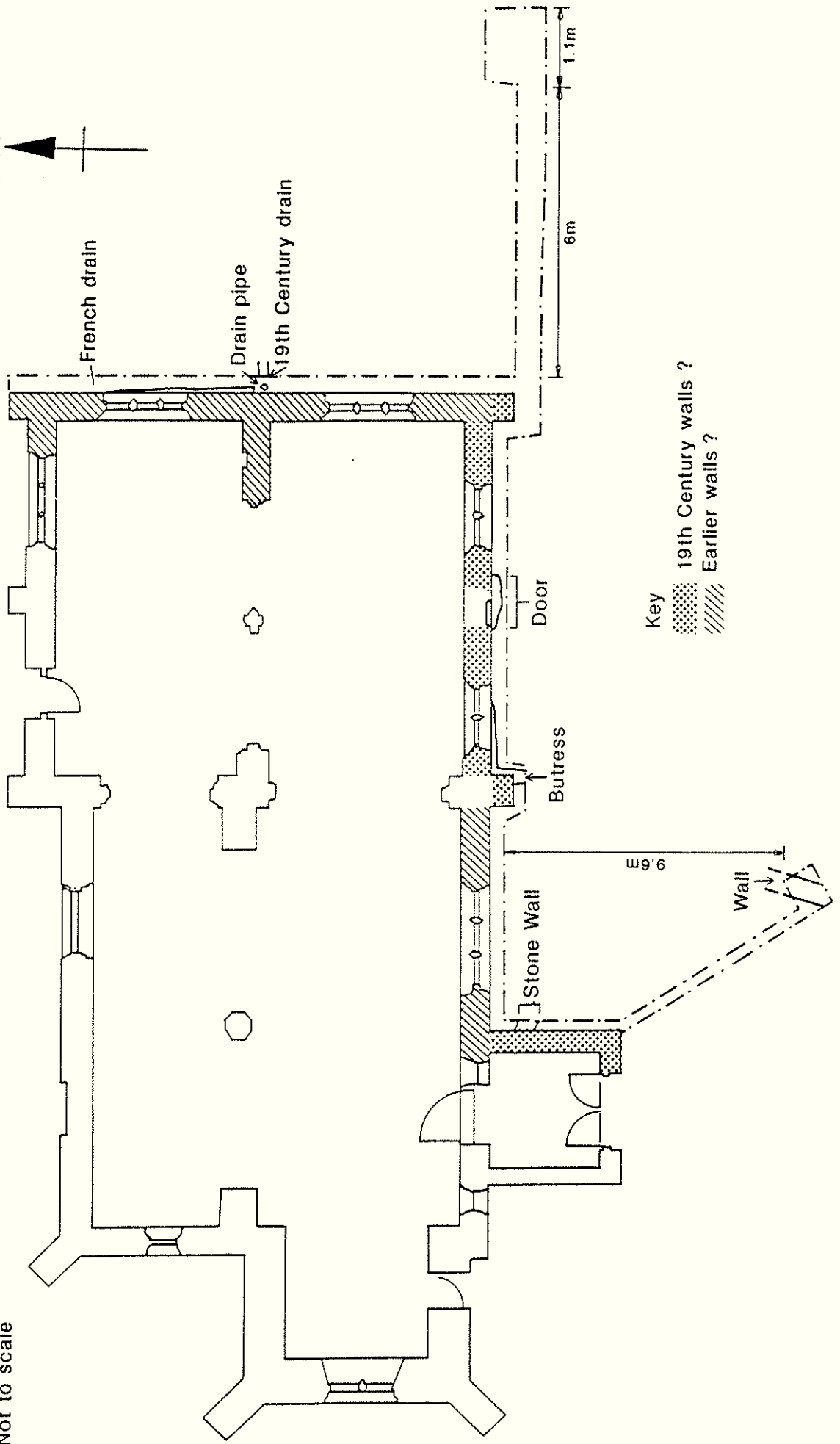
Conclusions

Two walls may be older than 1862 and may well be medieval. These lie under the porch and at the junction of the nave and chancel. The wall to the S of the porch may be a recent churchyard wall leading to the porch. The wall under the porch may be from an older porch. The wall under the present buttress may be from a medieval buttress. No floors were seen to indicate that the church was larger than it is now. The comparative details of the walls were not clear as the church has recently been refurbished.

M R Roberts MIFA

St Nicholas Church
Newton Blossomville

Not to scale



Key
19th Century walls ?
Earlier walls ?