Chapter 5: The Town: Detailed Studies of Sites Within the Late Saxon and Medieval Town

Edited by Anne Dodd with contributions by Fr Jerome Bertram and Julian Munby

SUMMARY

A series of excavations were carried out on the line of the main E-W street axis of the late Saxon and medieval town, the High St and Queen St. The earliest excavation took place between 1973 and 1974 in the interior of All Saints Church on the High St. This showed substantial late Saxon occupation on the site, including a timber-lined cellar; the cellar was succeeded by the building of a simple stone church, and the excavation revealed evidence of the growth of the church into its later medieval form, and its effect on the street layout around it. Four separate excavations were carried out in Queen St: No. 4 Queen St (1986), Nos 7–8 Queen St (1985), Nos 33–34 Queen St (1988) and Nos 43–44 Queen St (1989). Although these were all small-scale investigations, dug from the basements of existing buildings, they revealed evidence of street surfaces and occupation from the late Saxon period into the 12th and 13th centuries, adding to information gained from earlier archaeological work on this street frontage. Numerous observations of early street surfaces have been recorded throughout the town centre since the 19th century, and these are summarised to give a comprehensive survey of the known extent of the earliest street layout in the late Saxon town. The construction of a new surface water drain along the High St in 1981 provided an opportunity for the archaeological recording of the drain trench. Numerous observations were made of a medieval central drain, or 'kennel', which may date to the foundation of the *burh*. Further observations made during the laying of a foul sewer in Turl St (1981), near its junction with the High St, showed the first street surface following a line that had apparently been deflected by the extended All Saints Church. The form, extent, dating and affinities of the observed features of the late Saxon town are reviewed. Developments of the 12th and 13th centuries are described, but the later phases of All Saints Church are not considered in detail.

BACKGROUND TO THE EXCAVATIONS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (FIGS 5.1, 5.2)

The location of the excavations reported in the present chapter is shown on Figure 5.1. Before the excavation of All Saints Church, in 1973–4, the study of early street frontages in Oxford had been concentrated on Cornmarket St and Queen St. Figure 5.2 shows sites investigated up to the early 1980s in Cornmarket St and Queen St, and the location of Queen St trenches reported in the present chapter. Study of early occupation in the town started with the work of Jope and Hope Taylor at the former Clarendon Hotel on the west frontage of Cornmarket St (Gaz No. 33). In what was arguably the most significant excavation of late Saxon archaeology in the city to date, they recognised rows of late Saxon and Norman structures, including many cellar pits, aligned on a street frontage that apparently extended up to 3 m east of the modern road edge. Their results encouraged Cherry to study the adjoining site (Gaz No. 35), where similar important evidence was recovered of late Saxon cellars and pits. A watching brief carried out by Hassall at Nos 44–46 Cornmarket St, again on the west frontage (Gaz No. 34), recorded a late Saxon cellar and pits projecting forwards under the line of the modern west street frontage, and evidence of late Saxon bone and iron working. Sturdy's work on the east frontage of Cornmarket St (Gaz No. 31) showed an area of undisturbed loam topsoil with only two early pits; evidence of occupation on the frontage appeared to date to the 12th century and later.

Davison's excavations on the corner of Queen St and St Ebbe's St (Gaz No. 86) revealed a concentration of pits and postholes of 10th- and 11th-century date towards the Queen St frontage of the site. Amongst these features were a cellar pit with slots and recesses for timber lining, and a possible sunken hut. The lack of pits from the late 11th and 12th centuries suggested that the Queen St frontage might have become continuously built-up by that time. Further work was carried out over an extended period by the OAEC and OAU in the central block of properties on the south side of Queen St, at Nos 11–18 on the site of the medieval Hinxey Hall (Gaz No. 85). Pits of the 10th and 11th centuries were recorded on the Queen St frontage, and a series of gravel street surfaces were recorded at Nos 11–12. Further south within the property block numerous stakeholes and postholes were seen, but no coherent structure could be discerned.

Jope's observations at the Clarendon Hotel had prompted interest in early street surfaces and alignments, and evidence was collected from numerous small-scale observations, as well as controlled excavations. The most significant breakthrough came when a section across the west continuation of Queen St, the former Castle St (now rerouted), was recorded during the Westgate redevelopment (Gaz No. 14). A series

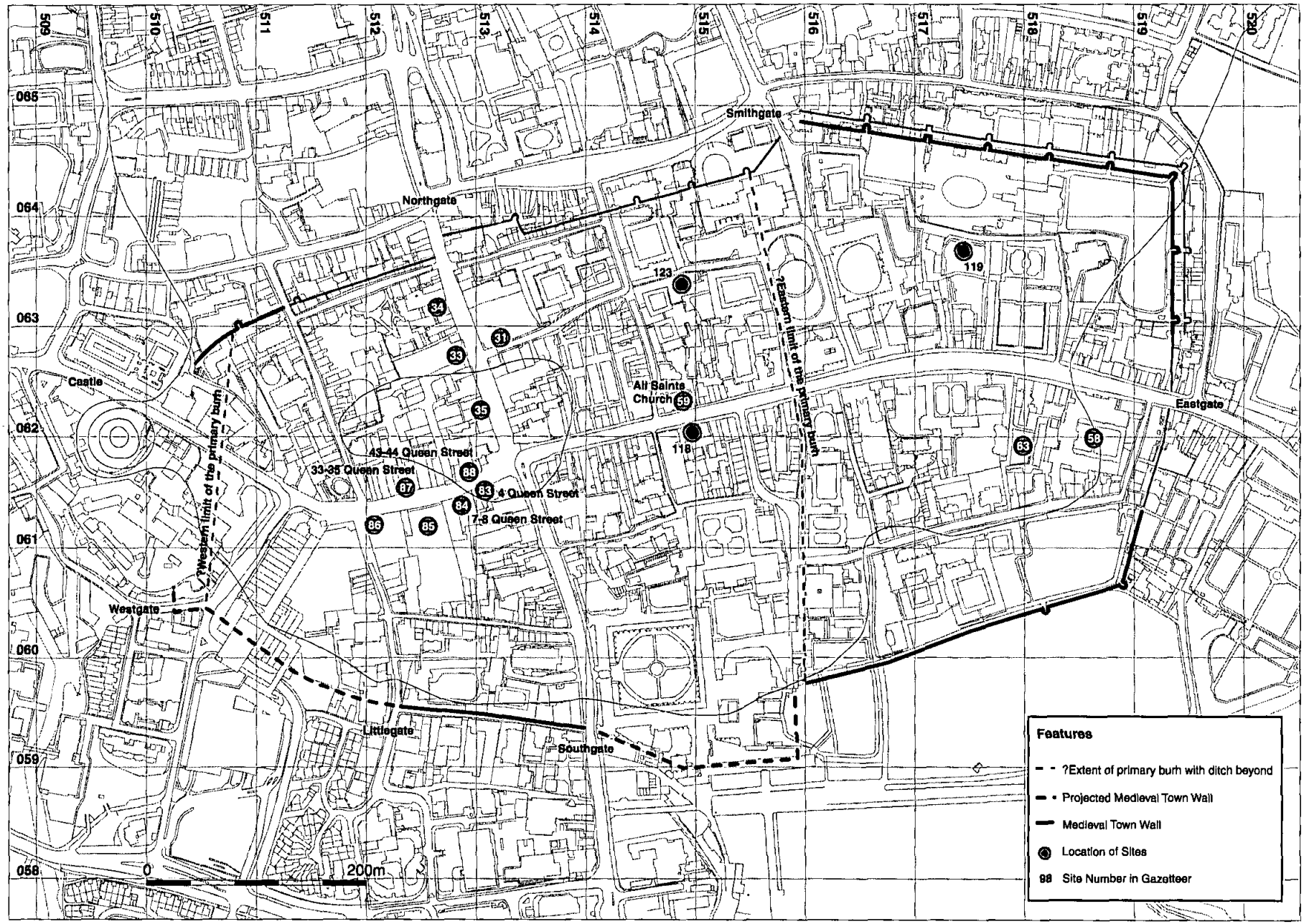


Figure 5.1 Location of sites reported in Chapter 5.

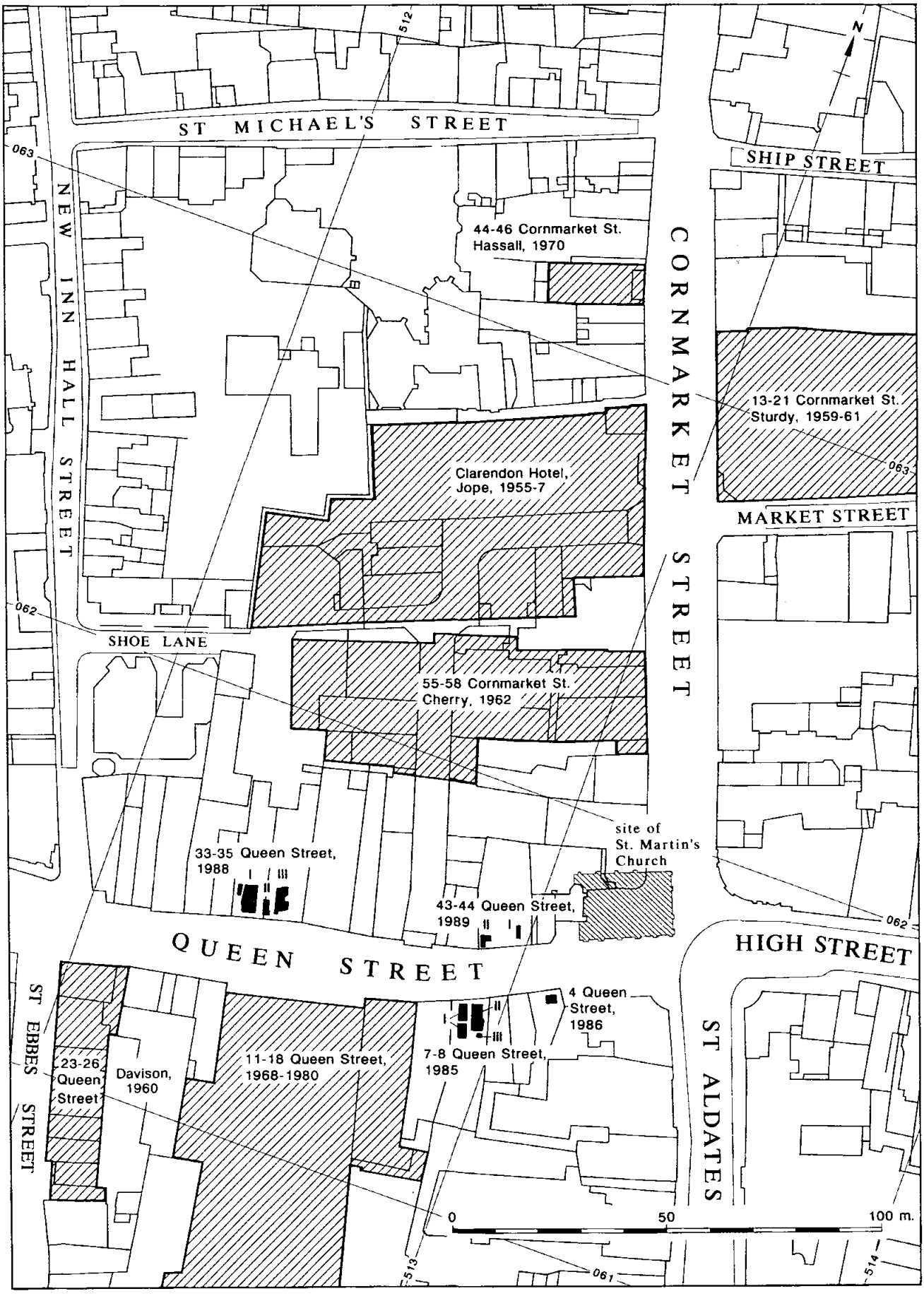


Figure 5.2 Earlier excavations in the town, and trench locations for Queen St sites reported in the present volume.

of 18 superimposed surfaces was recorded, representing a sequence of road surfaces with overlying accumulations and evidence for two phases of a central drainage channel. The location of observations of street surfaces is shown on Figure 5.24, and the evidence is summarised in Table 5.2.

The new excavations and observations reported in this chapter therefore presented the opportunity to address a number of research themes for which there was a growing body of data. Foremost amongst these was the attempt to define the extent and plan of the original *burh* from the evidence of the primary street surfaces, and the observed variation between late Saxon and later medieval street frontages. Evidence of pre-burghal settlement was sought, to add to existing knowledge of the origins of settlement at Oxford, the effect of pre-existing features on the planning of the *burh*, and the date and context of its foundation. The excavations and observations revealed further details of the internal arrangements of the *burh* and the medieval town, producing new evidence of wide streets which may have had a market function, the encroachment of occupation on wide streets, the laying-out of property plots, and the provision of drainage. Particular interest was focused on excavation of further cellared buildings, to add to knowledge of their form, function and dating. The excavation at All Saints Church provided the opportunity to recover evidence of the form of the medieval church, which had been demolished and replaced in the early 18th century, and to study the effect of the church on the topography of the surrounding area. In addition, the excavation sought evidence for the date and context of the church's foundation and for the nature of earlier occupation on the site.

EXCAVATION REPORTS

Introduction

During the course of post-excavation analysis, an attempt was made to integrate the evidence from All Saints Church and the Queen Street sites into a single study of late Saxon market frontages. As part of this process, a single phasing system was adopted to cover all sites. Not all phases were present at all sites. In the event, the decision was taken to present the sites separately, but at such a late stage in the production of the report that it was not possible to redefine the phasing.

All radiocarbon dates are quoted at the 95% confidence level. A full report on radiocarbon dates will be found in Appendix 2 to this volume, below; the dates from All Saints Church are summarised in Table A2.4, and their probability distributions are shown in Figures A2.4 and A2.5.

Excavations at All Saints Church 1973–4

Introduction *(Figs 5.1, 5.3; Plate 5.1)*

A rescue and salvage excavation within the former church of All Saints in the High Street was carried out from April 1973 to April 1974 (Fig. 5.3; Plate 5.1). The church had become redundant in 1971 and the standing 18th-century classical building was to be converted to a library for Lincoln College, requiring the excavation of a basement reading room occupying the whole of the interior to a depth well below the original ground surface of the city. In view of the archaeological potential of exposing most of an early medieval town church and the deposits beneath it, the College's governing body allowed a controlled excavation of one sixth of the interior, followed by a detailed watching brief of the remainder during the contractors' excavation. The area of controlled archaeological excavation was limited by the (then) recent experience in underpinning Winchester cathedral, where the structure had moved as a result of excavation.

The assistance and cooperation of the College is gratefully acknowledged, particularly that of the then bursar Christopher Ball, the architect Robert Potter and the main contractors Messrs Benfield and Loxley. The assistance of The Society of Antiquaries, Morrells Brewery, City Motors and Hartford Motors is also recorded, with thanks. The excavation was directed overall by Tom Hassall for the OAEC, with Brian Durham; Humphrey Woods acted as assistant supervisor, Maureen Mellor was finds assistant, and much of the digging was done by members of the Oxford University Archaeological Society. Anne Dodd is grateful to Humphrey Woods for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this text.

The standing building which was to be converted to the college library had replaced a medieval church, which had collapsed at the beginning of the 18th century. No upstanding medieval fabric remained, and at the time of the excavations a programme of research was undertaken to locate any reliable illustrations or descriptions of the church's medieval form. The results of this work are presented below, followed by a detailed account of the excavations and salvage observations.

The medieval church: documentary and architectural evidence by Fr Jerome Bertram

A miraculous event in the life of St Edmund of Abingdon occurred at All Saints Church, in the second decade of the 13th century, when his preaching in the churchyard dispersed the rain falling elsewhere in Oxford (Lawrence 1960, 102). All Saints at this time was one of eight Oxford churches or chapels which had been granted or confirmed to St Frideswide's Priory at its refoundation by Henry I in 1122 (*CSF* i.10–11), but by 1326 the vicarage was in the hands of the Bishop of Lincoln, and became part of the foundation endowment of Lincoln College in 1427. Although the college had a chapel of its own, the church was frequently used by the Fellows, while remaining in parochial use. The central location of the parish

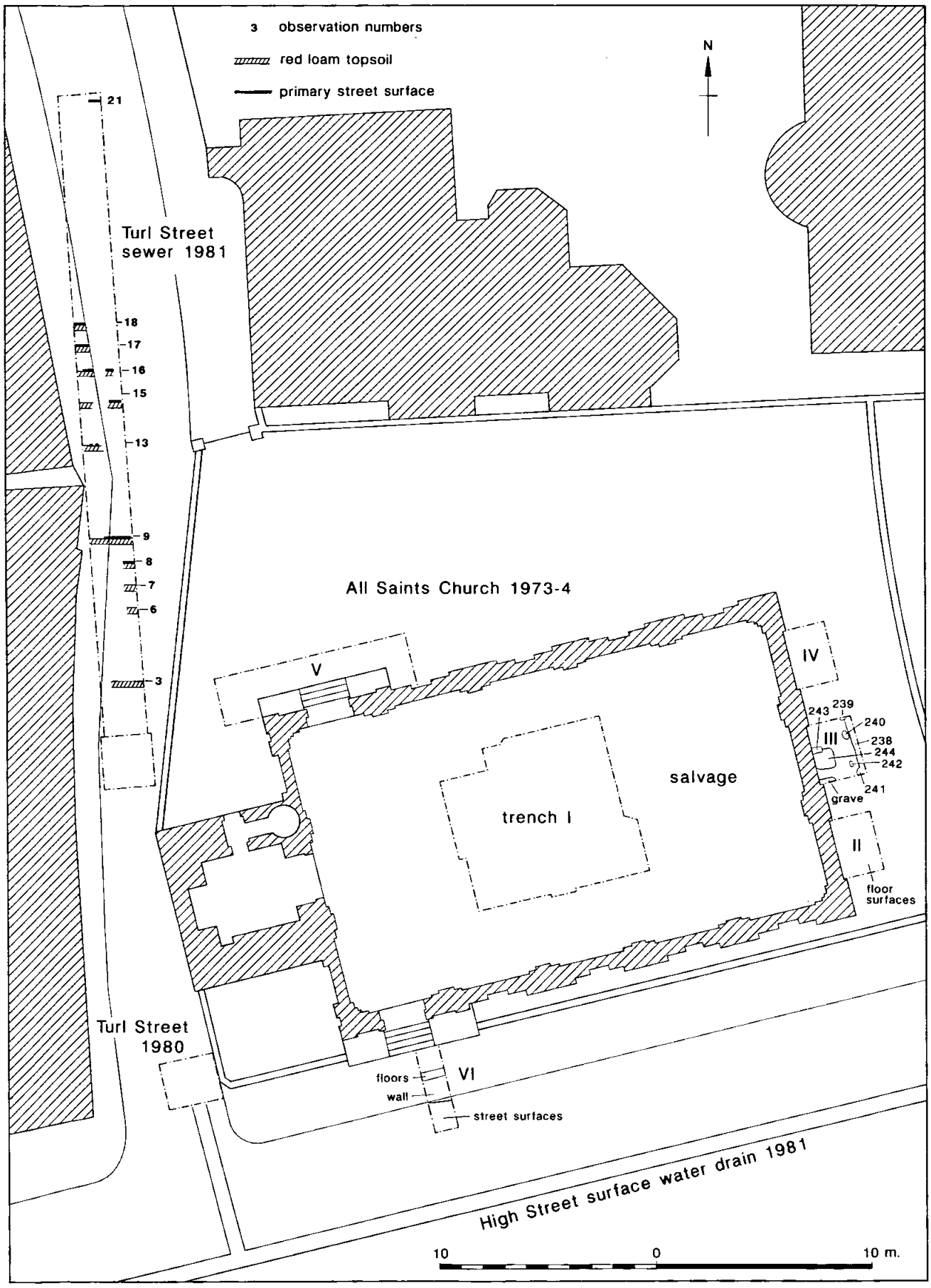


Figure 5.3 All Saints Church trench location plan, with location of observations in Turl St Sewer, 1981.

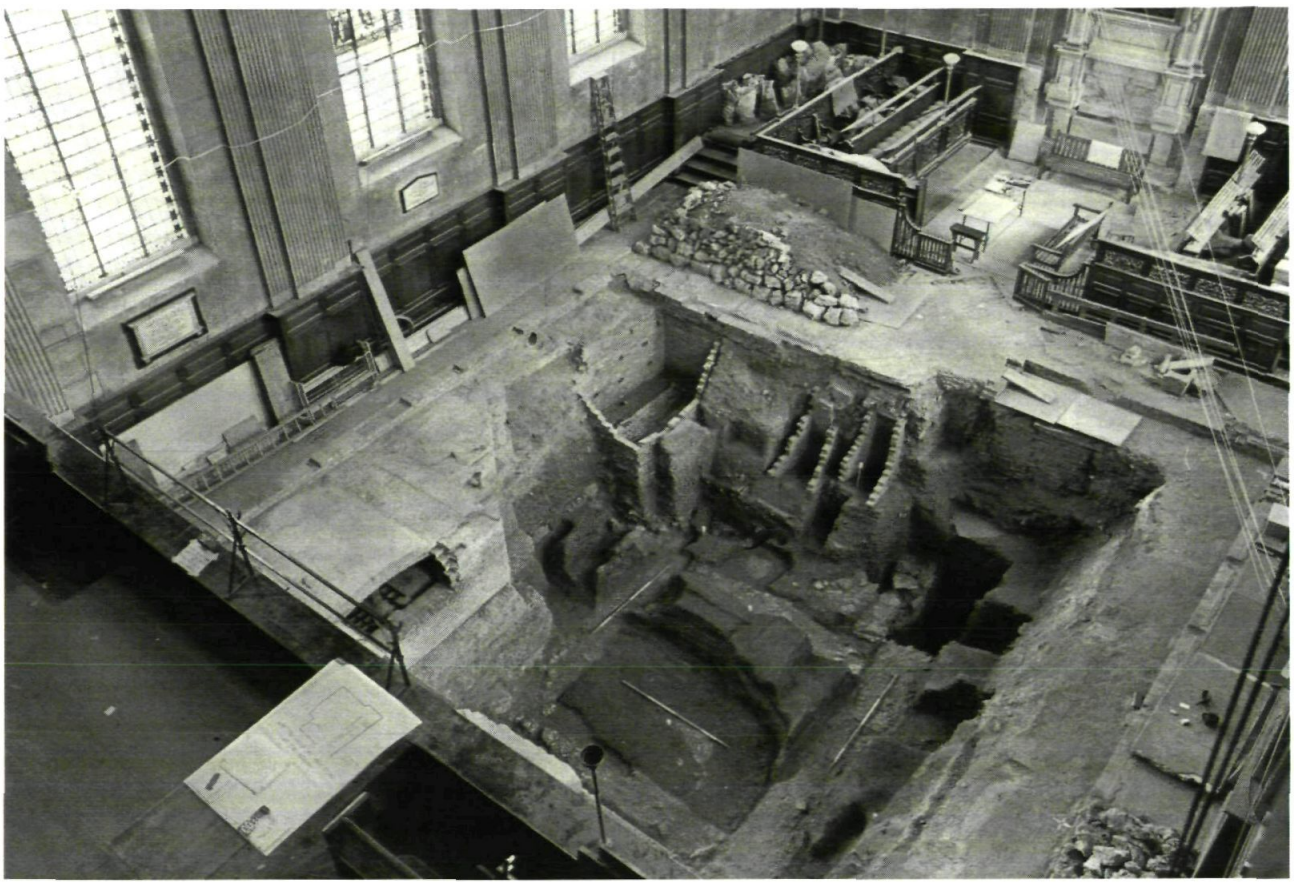


Plate 5.1 All Saints Church, general view of excavation, from the SW.

brought many prominent townsmen within its ambit, in the membership of fraternities, in the foundation of chantries, and for burial. A gild or fraternity of St Mary existed in 1349, William of Bicester's Chantry was established in 1350, and John of Studley's in 1377. Chapels or altars of the Virgin, St Anne, the Trinity and St Thomas are recorded in the 14th century, and those of St Nicholas and St Catherine in the 15th century. The church was patronised by the gilds of glovers, skinners and goldsmiths for their annual masses.

In 1662 the steeple of All Saints Church rocked, stones were blown off, and 'people removed from their beds' (Wood *L&T* i.433). In March 1700 the steeple finally fell, damaging much of the church. The medieval church was then demolished, and the present building was constructed by 1720, to the designs of Dean Aldrich and Hawksmoor (Colvin 1954, 1983; Jeffery 1992). After the demolition of St Martin's at Carfax in 1896 All Saints absorbed its parish and became the City Church, and so remained until its closure in 1971.

The full history of the church is given in *VCH* iv (370–3), and in Green 1979 (96–104, 665–70). The following account concentrates on the evidence of the building history of the demolished medieval church.

The development of the church (Fig. 5.4)

Anthony Wood's account of the medieval church was written in 1662, some half a century before its collapse, and is a primary source for its layout; to this can be added his description of the monuments (Wood *City* ii.106–12; iii.147–56). Other 17th-century accounts of monuments by Dingley (ed Nichols 1867) and Symonds (1905) confirm or add to Wood's information. No certain representation of the church exists, apart from its depiction on the maps of Agas (1578) and Loggan (1675; Fig. 5.4); a possible plan and putative views are discussed below.

In Wood's time the church consisted of a nave, chancel, north chapel, south aisle, south chancel, tower and chantry chapel. The nave and south aisle were evidently of almost equal importance, since Dingley in one place refers to them as nave and north aisle. The northern chancel was known as the College Chancel, and the southern as the Parish Chancel. The explanation for this complex naming of parts of the church becomes apparent from the excavation.

Wood gives no dates for the nave or tower, but describes each of the 'chapels' or 'chantries' in turn. St Anne's Chapel was clearly the projecting chapel on the north side of the chancel shown in Loggan's birdseye map in 1675 and was 'built by one of the

Figure 5.4 Loggan's bird's-eye view of Oxford, 1675 (detail), showing All Saints Church (No. 33) and St Martin's Church at Carfax (No. 32) looking south.

Burchesters of Oxon in the beginning of Edw. III'. A licence for this chantry was procured by Nicholas Bicester in 1350, although the chapel existed by 1333; it is likely to be of mid 14th-century date, and this is confirmed by the excavation of its underlying crypt.

The Virgin Mary's Chapel was the south aisle, which is first mentioned as a chantry in 1349, though Wood says it was 'of an ancient erection'. It appears from the archaeology to have been the earliest church, and it is possible that it was taken over as a chantry chapel (possibly by the gild of cordwainers) after a new nave and chancel were built on its northern side. The chapel of the Holy Trinity or St Catherine 'being the same, I suppose', was the south or parish chancel, and was built by 'John Stodeley, several times mayor of Oxon, about the year 1371'. The chantry was licensed in 1376. The Glovers' Chapel seems to have been a small chantry, 'that little one on the south side of the Virgin Marye's Chapel, built (as 'tis said) by one John Berry or Barry, alderman of Oxon, and maior thereof the 31 and 32 of Henry VIII (1540)'. Its roof can perhaps be seen on Loggan's map, behind the west end of the nave.

The north, or college, chancel was repaired and possibly extended in 1473 by the Rector of Lincoln at a cost of £12 13s 4d; the parapets and low-pitched roofs shown on Loggan's map suggest a general rebuilding of the upper stages with clerestories, probably about this time.

An early plan of All Saints?

At the time of excavation there was considerable interest in finding a contemporary illustration of the medieval church before its collapse in 1700. Among the topographical collections of Henry Hinton in the Bodleian Library is preserved a plan of a church which could be the old All Saints. It is bound up with miscellaneous City and University material (MS Don. c.97, f.107; Clapinson 1972). Dimensions are given on the plan in feet and inches, and correspond to a remarkable degree with the dimensions of the excavated parts. There are however three main objections to this being a plan of All Saints:

(a) St Anne's Chapel is shown much too small: it should extend for two bays from the east wall, which would then agree with the excavated crypt. To achieve the layout of the plan we should have to suppose that the western half of the chapel was demolished when it was converted into a vestry, which seems unlikely.

(b) The tower is shown on the north side, whereas Loggan shows it on the south. There is however evidence that Loggan was wrong in his positioning and that it really was on the end of the north nave. Wood states that the grave of Elizabeth Dennis, 1637, was 'towards the lower end of ye body' ie the nave. Dingley describes the same monument as 'near the font' and continues to describe the Southam monument as 'a little lower than the former (ie Mrs Dennis) in the steeple wall'. This implies that the tower lay at the end of the nave. Wood's general account of the monuments points to the same conclusion since he works his way round the church (unlike Dingley who wandered about and managed to record the same monument three times) and visited in turn the College Chancel, 'Body', Tower, Parish Chancel and South Aisle; a plausible route if he worked down the two halves of the church from east to west, but definitely eccentric if the tower lay off the South aisle. This argument is discussed again below however, where it is noted that Wood does not record memorials *within* the towers of any other church in Oxford, and it may be that the memorial in question was on a wall which he recognised as the outside face of the tower enclosed by the W end of the nave.

(c) The date: the plan is evidently a copy, in Hinton's hand, on paper watermarked in 1815. No mention of it has been found in his manuscripts, and there is no caption to the plan. If it be genuine, we must suppose a now lost source from which Hinton copied it, and not the same source which Buckler copied (see below), since he shows the tower on the south, like Loggan. A possible clue may be the comment in the plan on the south chancel 'Horner burying place'. Wood records that there was a monument to Edward Horner, 1675, on the south wall of the College chancel (which by no means rules out his having been buried the other side of the wall), but there are no other Horner monuments, certainly not enough to impress the visitor that this corner was set aside for that family. The possibility is therefore that the plan was made by or for a relation of Edward Horner to record his burying place, possibly on the destruction of the old church.

A view of the old church?
by Julian Munby

There are several drawings that purport to show the old church of All Saints, but it is highly doubtful that any are primary records, and they rather provide a cautionary tale in the use of this kind of evidence.

A drawing by J C Buckler of the church from the north-east purports to show the old church in typically convincing fashion (MS Don. a.2 f.47). The inspiration for this view may have come from an older drawing of which at least three copies exist in the Bodleian Library. One in Dunkin's collection (G.A. Oxon a.115 p.52) is clearly described as being 'copied from Loggan's print', and may have been drawn by John Dunkin. Two others are in the Morrell collection, in an album of drawings (MS Top. Oxon b.123 f.81) and an extra-illustrated copy of Peshall's *City of Oxford* (1773; MS Top. Oxon c.299 f.40); the first of these also gives Loggan as a source, but neither is signed or dated.

When seen together, these three are evidently the same drawing, if not by the same hand: they are identical in most respects, except for the water spouts on the tower and the somewhat impressionistic distribution of churchyard monuments (though these are all represented in the same manner). The window tracery in the Dunkin version is more accurately drawn. They are all pen and wash drawings of the view from the north-east (at ground level) and, significantly, have no background. The source is indeed, as stated, Loggan's birdseye map of Oxford (Fig. 5.4), which gives the north-eastern view of the church, and has precisely the same window openings as shown on the drawings, though less detail is visible at the scale of the map (approx 1:3, 300), and from its elevated viewpoint.

The existence of three similar drawings of the same subject, in a style not dissimilar from other late 18th-century topographical drawings in these collections, is itself of interest. Examination of other drawings in these albums soon reveals the frequency with which unusual drawings of vanished antiquities were copied and, with such minor works unsigned and undated, it can be impossible to decide which is the 'original' source. That the drawings were never believed to derive from an independent source as a representation of the old church is indicated by the absence of any similar view from the illustrated histories of Ingram (1837) and Skelton (1823), both of whom sought out precisely such illustrations. The views of the church must be taken as reconstructions of the probable appearance of the old church, drawn to satisfy the needs of print collectors in the great age of gothic antiquarianism before 1800.

Stained glass in the medieval church
by Fr Jerome Bertram

There are several accounts of the medieval heraldic glass of All Saints, the fullest being the account of Richard Lee, Portcullis Pursuivant, on his 1574 visitation (MS Wood D. 14 f88), and copied by Col. Chester (MS Top. Oxon c.172, p 246); it is also mentioned by Wood and Richard Symonds. Eight shields of arms are described, of which that of Bishop Bekynton (*ob.* 1464) may be of significance as a benefactor of the College, as his bequest may have been partly expended on the church. The glass is described in the Oxford glass *Corpus* (Newton and Kerr 1979). Glass recovered during the excavations is described in Chapter 6.

Monuments and brasses in the medieval church
by Fr Jerome Bertram

The monuments and brasses in the medieval church are best described by Wood (*City* iii.147–56) though nearly all were also described at about the same time by Dingley, who corrects Wood in places and draws several shields and brasses (Dingley 1867). Another 17th-century account by Symonds adds nothing to Wood (Symonds 1905). Wood describes 42 monuments in order as he walked round the church, to which a further four are added from Hutton's notes (Wood *City*, cited in footnotes).

There were at least 22 brasses in the old church. Indents survived in the new church and churchyard for 15 brasses, though only three could be positively identified with brasses recorded by Wood and Dingley. The explanation for the disappearance of the brasses at this time can be found in the Churchwardens' Accounts for 1701 which record:

> Item rec'd of Francis Sawyer for ye Stayres ...00:04:00
> Item rec'd of Mr Payne for Brass ...02:01:00
> Item paid 3 labourers for removing the stones, 82 dayes ...00:17:00
> Item paid Mr Townsend for a Wheelbareough ...00:09:00

Evidently the churchwardens tried to cover the costs of clearing the ruins by selling everything they could, even the brasses.

Full accounts of the brasses and indents, with scale drawings of the indents, appear in 'The Lost Brasses of Oxford' in the *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society* (Vol XI pt 5, 1974, 334–47). Manuscript drawings and description in two volumes are deposited in the Oxford University Archaeological Society's Archives in the Ashmolean Museum.

Topography of the churchyard *(Figs 5.4, 5.5)*
by Julian Munby

Although not shown on Salter's *Map* (Fig. 5.5), there was a road round the back of All Saints cemetery serving a series of tenements facing the churchyard, of which the eastern arm still survives. In the 16th century it was known as 'Rotten Row' (Green 1979, 39n), and it is clearly shown on Loggan's map of 1675 (Fig. 5.4). Many of the properties facing

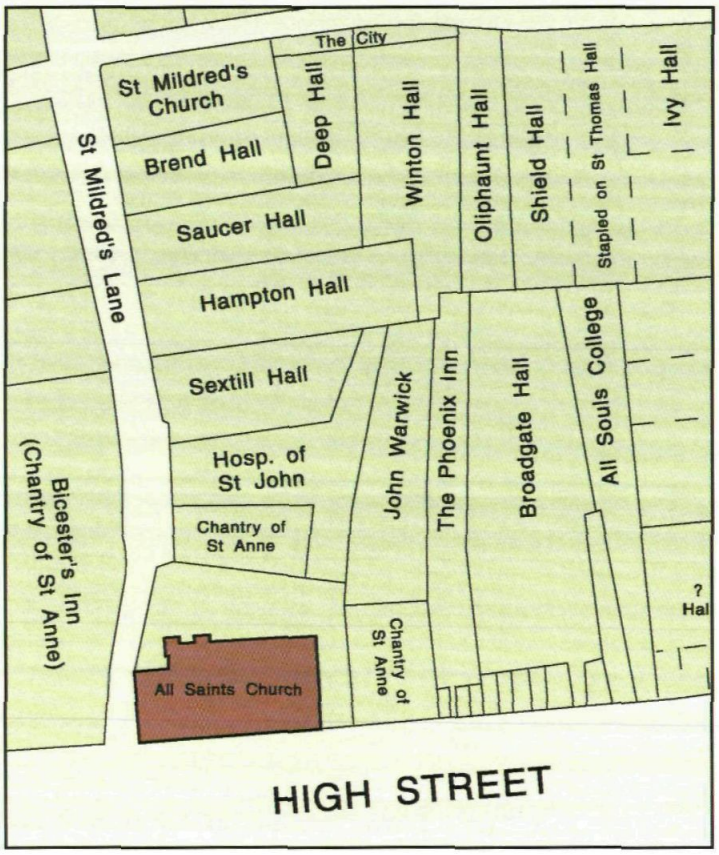


Figure 5.5 All Saints Church: medieval landholding (after Salter).

the row belonged to St Anne's Chantry in All Saints, having previously belonged to the Bicester family, but it is not possible to reconstruct the location of all the medieval tenements, which were small (*Survey* NE(151–7)). At least one on the north side was a horsemill and oven around 1200, NE(60/152), described as being 'between two ovens' in 1238/9 (*CHSJ* ii.21) and next to a bakehouse in 1259/60, NE(59/153). In the north-east corner was the bell-founder Oliver Seinter in the late 13th century, NE(156), while at the east end of the churchyard began the shops of the Spicery on High Street.

All Saints was not the only Oxford church to have a road round the churchyard, as St Peter-in-the-East had a road on the north side of the cemetery (*Survey* NE(217)) and St Aldate's was surrounded by roads or lanes. In this instance, it may be surmised that the road was made when the cemetery was formed, to compensate for the loss of High Street frontage.

The excavation (Fig. 5.3)

The excavation of the church and pre-church deposits at All Saints can be seen as three operations: firstly, the controlled excavation of about one-sixth of the internal area of the existing 18th-century church (Trench I); secondly, salvage recording of the major structures exposed as the builders excavated the remainder (Trench I salvage); and thirdly the recording of trenches dug outside the church during the contract (Trenches II–VI).

The collapse of the medieval church, and its complete replacement in the early 18th century, meant that no upstanding medieval fabric survived to guide the interpretation of the excavated remains. In addition to the demolition and rebuilding disturbance, underfloor heating had been introduced into the church during the 19th century, and this, together with the digging of numerous brick burial vaults, meant that earlier features had been considerably disturbed. The results of the internal excavations, both rescue and salvage, need to be considered as a whole, and the salvage findings are therefore introduced in parallel with the controlled excavation in the following description. The most valuable stratigraphic data came not surprisingly from the controlled excavation, but it was alarming how often the salvage findings contradicted the conclusions of this work without supplying sufficient data to produce an alternative approach. It should be said, therefore, that the interpretation of certain features must remain conjectural, especially those of the earliest phases, and those associated with the construction of the N nave, where the least evidence survived.

Numerous medieval burials were recovered during the excavation. These divide into two main groups, 16 from an early, external cemetery (see Phase 6) and 32 from the interior of the medieval church (see Phase 9); these were examined by Eric Edwards with the assistance of Dr Colin Woods and advice from Mary Harman. The records of this analysis and a brief report are contained in the project archive; the principal features have been summarised by Angela Boyle in Table 5.1. Some skeletons observed during salvage recording were not retained for analysis (AS60, AS100, AS205, AS216, AS217, AS243, AS248, AS250 and AS251).

Phase 1a (Figs 5.6–5.9)

The earliest levels on the site, represented by phases 1 and 2, had been extensively disturbed by later structures and pits and surviving deposits were concentrated in three blocks, in the N, centre and S of the trench. Further early features were observed in salvage recording of the contractors' excavations; principally between the S edge of the trench and the S wall of the church, in the external excavations for light wells (Trenches II and III, see Fig. 5.3) and in the external sewer connection trench in the High Street (Trench VI, see Fig. 5.3). It was accepted at the time of excavation that there was no chance of equating layers across the divides between the blocks of stratigraphy, and deposits were recorded as subdivisions of one or two principal layer numbers for each block. In retrospect, it proved possible to equate certain characteristic horizons in adjoining blocks.

The original ground surface, AS156, AS156/1 was found in all three blocks, being a red-brown loam 0.25 m–0.35 m thick, with no visible turf line. The loam overlay natural gravel at a depth of approx 61.90 m OD. A number of postholes and stakeholes had been cut into the original ground surface: AS157 in the N block, AS161 in the centre, and AS130/1, AS163, AS164 and AS165 in the S.

In the N block, posthole AS157 was sealed by an ashy loam layer (AS112/9), but in the centre and S blocks a considerable quantity of charred grain appeared to have been spread over the site. Within the centre block, a dense mass of undistorted charred grain (AS 113/9) lay in a saucer-shaped depression, AS 113/9A, 0.05 m deep. The charred grain also filled posthole AS161, and burnt layers containing areas of charred grain overlay the other features (AS163 under ash AS110/9, AS130/1 under charcoal AS126/7, AS164 and AS165 under loam AS126/8 and 126/7). A similar burnt layer containing charred grain was recorded in the S extension trench, layer AS224. A distinctive layer of burnt, powdery clay sealed the phase 1a deposits in each block (AS112/8 in the N block, AS113/8 in the centre block and AS126/6 in the S block).

Samples for analysis and radiocarbon dating were taken from the large grain deposit AS113/9. The deposit was found to contain in excess of 4500 grains of threshed and fully-cleaned wheat, mixed with fired soil and unburnt brown loam (see Robinson Chapter 7). A radiocarbon determination was obtained on two samples of the grain, and gave a date of cal AD 880–1150 (HAR-466 I and II). Small quantities of late Saxon pottery were recovered from ash layers, chiefly of the local handmade shell-tempered tradition (fabrics *B* and *H*), but including a few sherds of Stamford ware (see Mellor, Chapter 6). An iron collar from a tool (Fig. 6.19 No. 42) occurred with pottery in the ash overlying stakeholes AS164 and AS165, while an iron knife (Fig. 6.18 No. 23) was found in the ash sealing posthole AS163. A fragment of lead waste (SF AST.198, not illustrated) was found in layer AS112/9; small chips had been cut from it with a knife.

Phase 1b (Figs 5.6–5.9)

Within the central block, the burnt powdery clay was sealed by a layer of loam mixed with charcoal, clay and grit (AS113/7). The loam appeared to form a ridge at its E edge (AS113/7A), which was also visible in the N block of deposits. Overlying the loam was a conspicuous spread of mottled red and yellow clay (AS113/5), also visible in the N block (AS112/6), which seemed to respect the line of the ridge. It was noted that this material had the appearance of burnt daub.

A number of postholes appeared to have been cut through loam AS113/7 and sealed by the red and yellow clay (AS122, AS117/1, AS152 and AS162 - the last including packing stones; possibly also AS160). Within the N block, stakeholes AS131 and AS140 appeared to have been cut into the red and yellow clay, and the clay partly filled a posthole, AS155. To the N of the clay was a layer of ash (AS112/7) cut by two further stakeholes AS141 and AS142. There was no clear correspondence between deposits in the N/centre blocks, and those in the S block. In the S, the burnt powdery clay of phase 1a was overlain by gravel (AS126/4) and hard-packed clay and loam (AS126/5). These were sealed by AS126/3, a crescent-shaped layer of ashy loam and gravel, which also sealed stakehole AS150. A small area of clay (AS126/2) over AS126/3 might have been an extension of the red and yellow clay, but it lay 0.15 m higher.

The pottery was predominantly of the local, handmade shell-tempered tradition (see Mellor, Chapter 6), but included a jar of Stamford type F and a blackware from the Pas de Calais.

Small quantities of bones of cattle, sheep, pig and horse occurred in the deposits of phases 1a and 1b (see Wilson, Chapter 7), together with small quantities of bird bones.

Phase 2a (Figs 5.6–5.9; Plate 5.2)

A series of postholes was revealed, on a N-S alignment, corresponding to the line of the loam ridge of phase 1b (Plate 5.2). The postholes ranged from 0.20 m to 0.40 m in diameter, but extensive truncation by later features made it difficult to

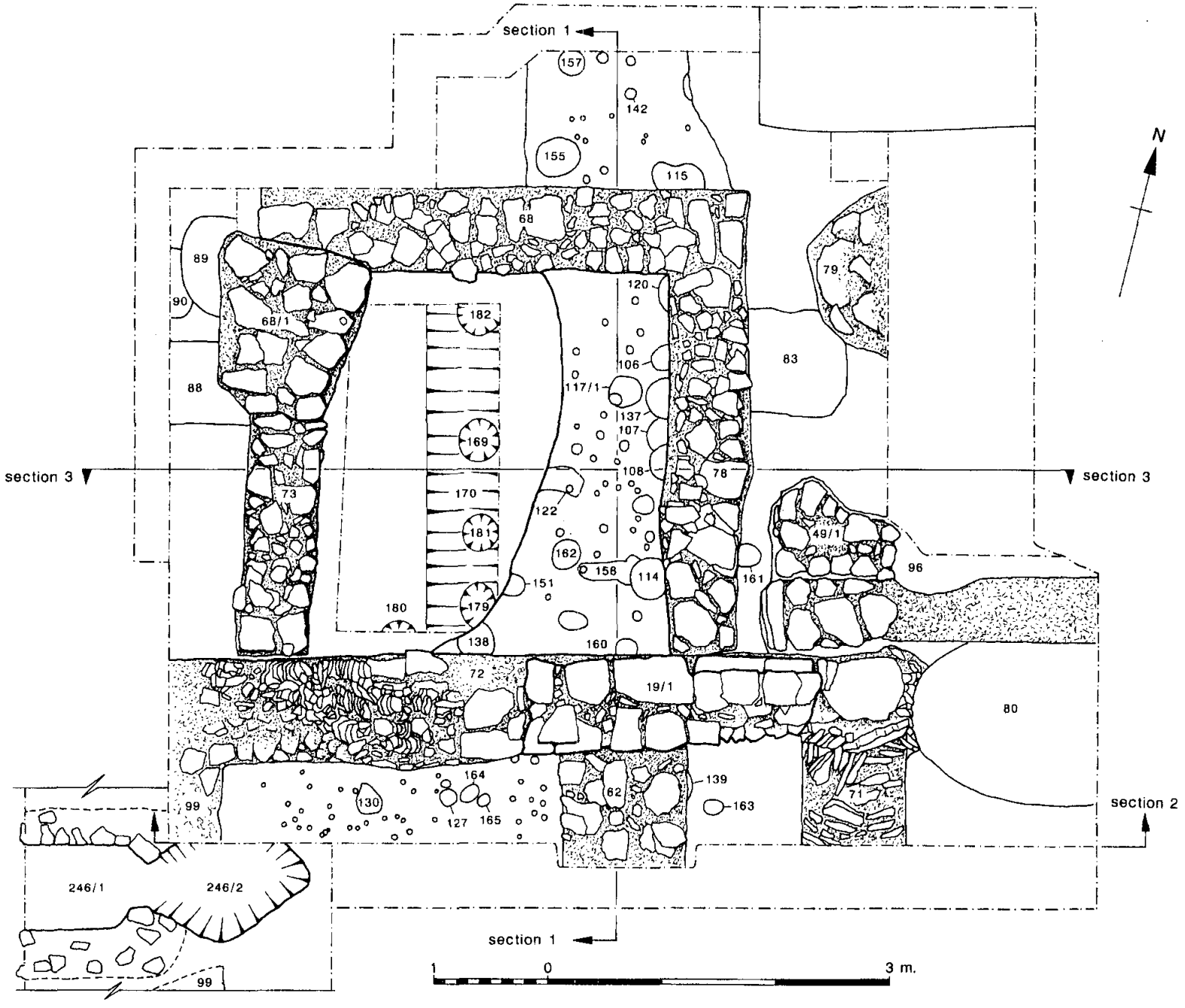


Figure 5.6 All Saints Church; composite plan of excavated features, Trench I.

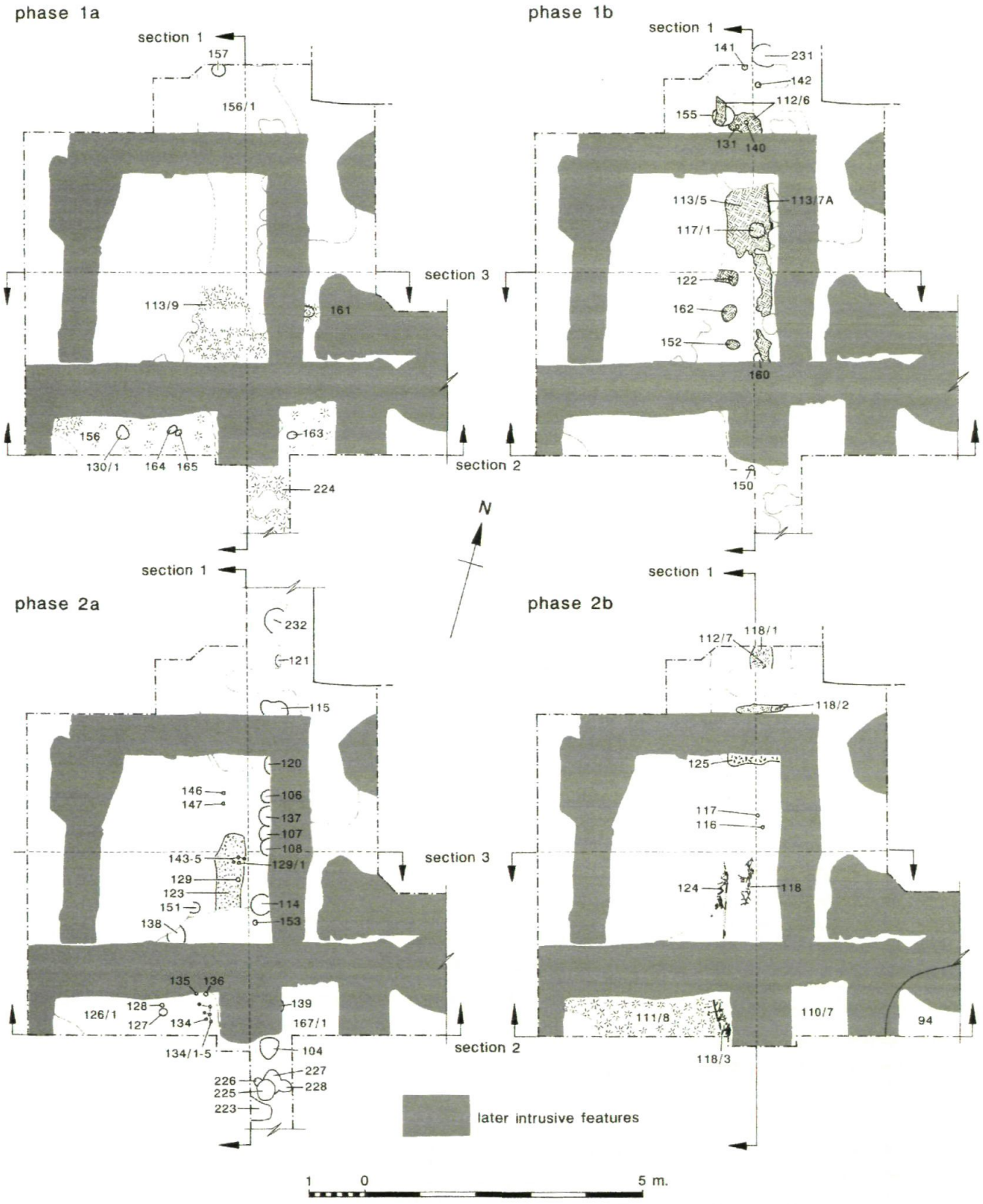


Figure 5.7 All Saints Church Trench I and salvage; plans of features, phases 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b.

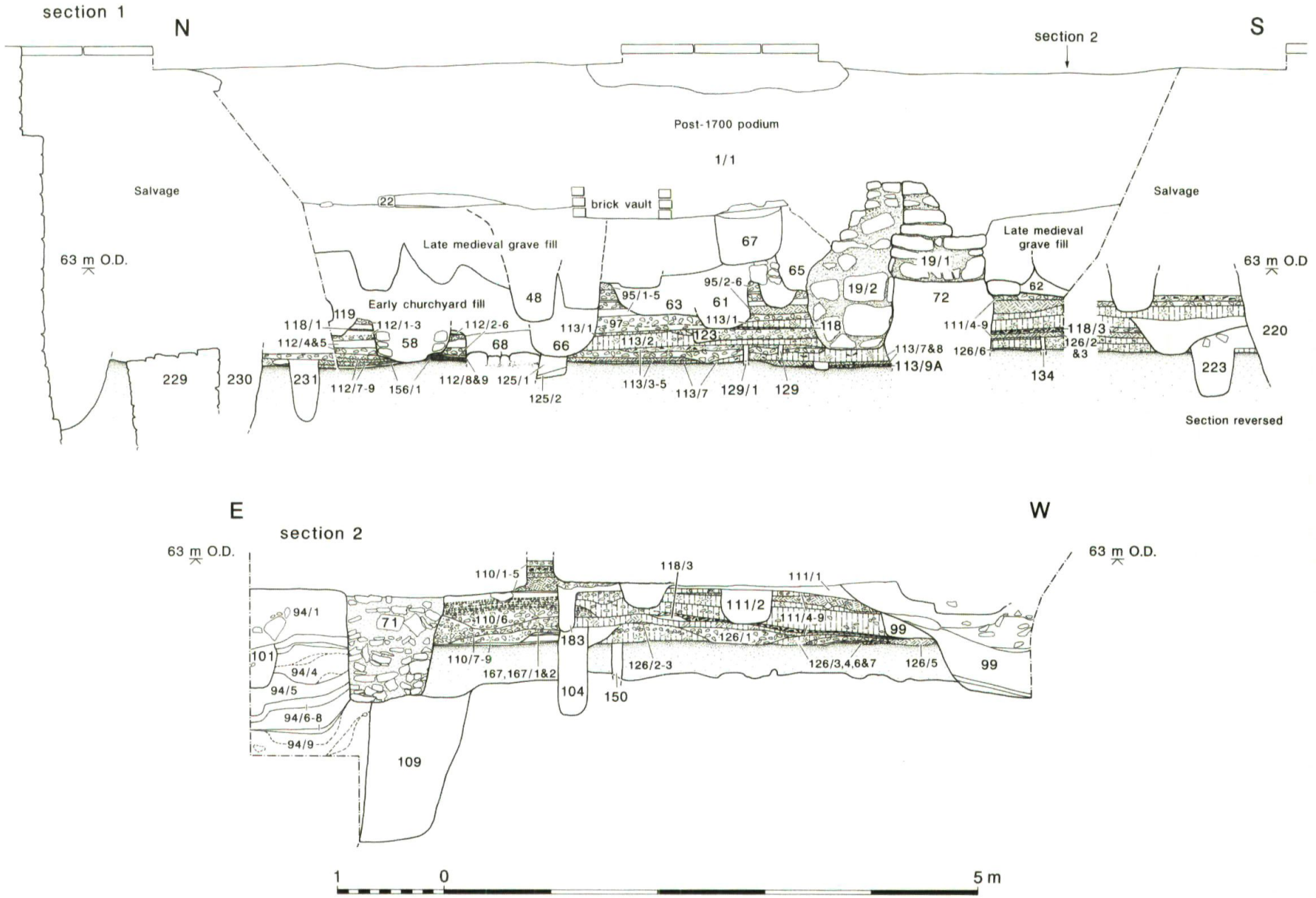


Figure 5.8 All Saints Church Trench I; sections 1 and 2.

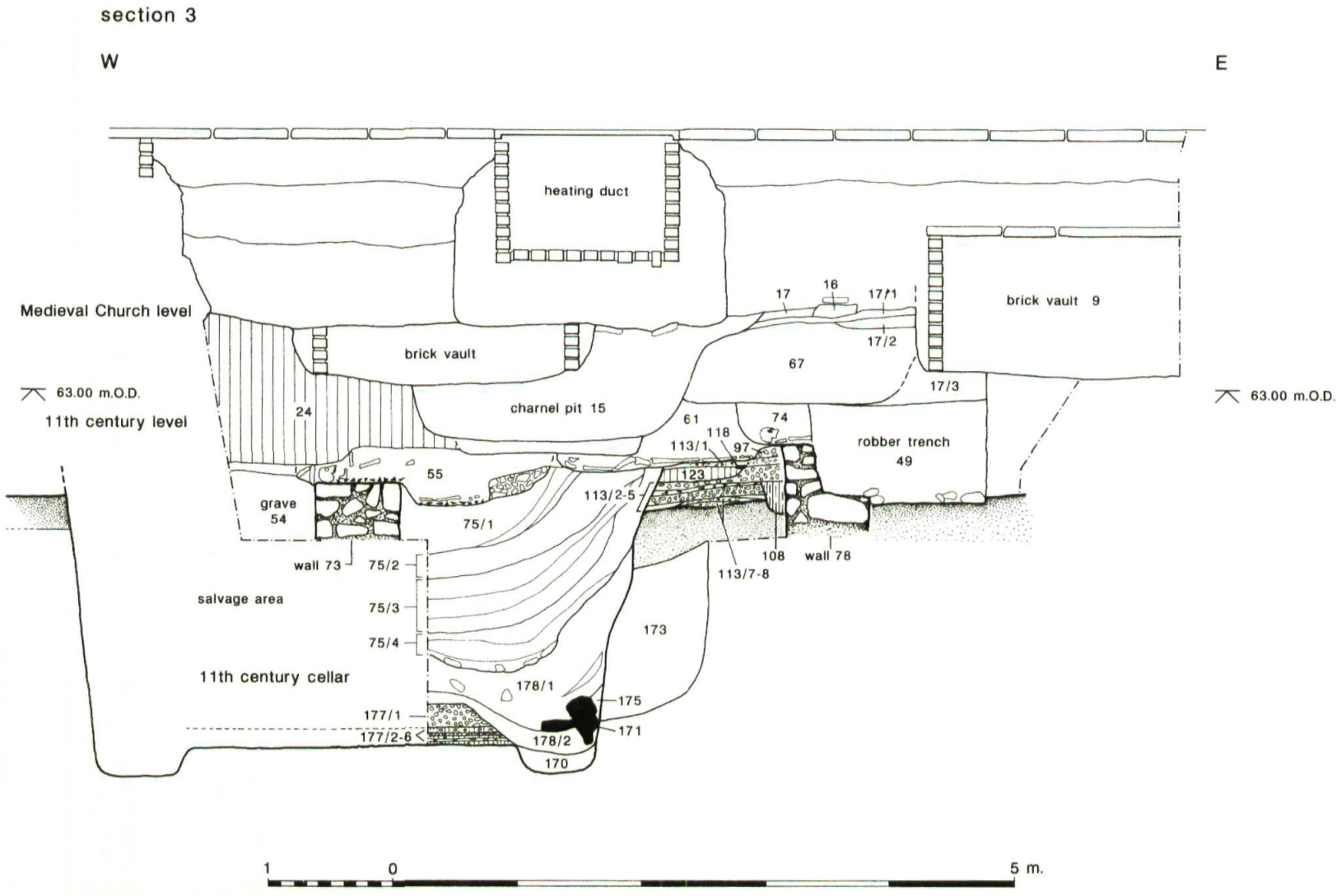


Figure 5.9 All Saints Church Trench I; section 3.

Plate 5.2 All Saints Church, view of Phase 2a buildings, with the posthole alignment marked by the ranging rods, and the unexcavated cellar pit in the foreground; from the W.

establish depths, or to identify securely the levels from which they were cut and filled. This makes it difficult to be certain whether the alignment represents one or several phases of construction, and equally difficult to assess the relationship between the posthole alignment and the other postholes and stakeholes attributed to this phase. One possible clue may lie in the observation that a number of postholes in the N-S alignment shared a specific form of cut; it was recorded that the holes had been cut obliquely from the W, and that packing had then been inserted to hold the posts upright. This cut was recorded for postholes AS232, AS115, AS120, AS106, AS107, AS108 and possibly AS104. It was also clear that posthole AS108 cut (and therefore possibly replaced) posthole AS107. At the N end of the alignment, posthole AS232 cut an earlier posthole, AS231, while at the S end of the alignment, a series of intercutting postholes (AS226–8) were succeeded by posthole AS225.

In the N block, postholes AS121 and AS115 were recorded as cut into gravel AS112/5 and sealed by ashy loam AS112/4. Posthole AS115 was packed with gritty red clay and loose brown loam. In the centre

block, posthole AS120 had been cut away by walls AS68 and AS78, but a fill of red clay survived at its base. It was sealed by charcoal, beneath a layer of loam AS125/1. Postholes AS106, AS137 and AS107 were cut into red and yellow clay AS113/5 and were filled with dirty, gritty loam with some charcoal, under ash. Posthole AS114 was to the W of the main alignment, and lacked the characteristic oblique cut; however, it was also cut into clay layer AS113/5. In the S block, posthole AS139 appeared to continue the N-S alignment, but its stratigraphic position was not clear. A large posthole, AS104, appeared from the section to be cut through AS126/3, the crescent-shaped layer of ashy loam and gravel recorded under phase 1b above. It also appeared to cut a wedge of laminated clay and charcoal, AS167 and AS167/1. Within the S extension, postholes AS223–228 were all recorded as cut into layer AS224, burnt clay containing charred grain (see phase 1a above).

A number of further postholes and stakeholes appear to belong to this phase of activity. In the centre block, stakeholes AS146, AS147 and AS153 were cut into red and yellow clay AS113/5; stakeholes AS143–5 and AS151, and posthole AS138 were cut into the underlying loam layer, AS113/7. The N-S posthole alignment and stakeholes AS129 and AS129/1 were sealed by AS113/2, an uneven layer of mixed grit, dirty loam and burnt clay which possibly represented a yard surface. A large gravel-filled slot, AS123, was cut into AS113/2. Layer AS113/2 overlay a layer of hard-packed ash and charcoal (AS113/3) and a layer of dirty pebbly loam (AS113/4) but the relationship of these layers to the posthole alignment was not clear. In the S block, W of the main posthole alignment, a gravel makeup layer AS126/1 and stakeholes AS134/1-/5, AS135, AS136 were sealed by a compact loam layer, AS111/9.

A short length of copper alloy rod (SF AST.191, not illustrated) was found in feature AS123. A roughout for a bone threadpicker (Fig. 6.20 No. 47) was recovered from layer AS113/4, and the base of an iron blade and part of a tang, possibly a knife or tool, from layer AS113/2 (Fig. 6.18 No. 25). Pottery from this phase consisted of a minimum of four jars, predominantly of the local shell-tempered tradition; three sherds of St Neot's-type ware were also present (Mellor, Chapter 6).

Phase 2b (Figs 5.6–5.9; Plate 5.3)

The next structure was represented by three stretches of wattle fence, which had been burnt *in situ*. They lay a little to the W of the posthole alignment of phase 2a. The three stretches were numbered AS118/1-/2 in the N block, AS118 in the centre, and AS118/3 in the S block.

The best-preserved stretch was AS118, which was of woven wattles (Plate 5.3). The upright posts were relatively substantial pieces of oak (see Robinson, Chapter 7), and the wattles were mostly hazel rods. A rather heavier timber, AS124, was associated with the

Plate 5.3 All Saints Church, the best-preserved section of charred fence AS118.

fence; it appeared to respect the W edge of gravel-filled slot AS123 described under phase 2a above. Over and around timber AS124 was an ash deposit, numbered AS113/6, a sub-layer within AS113/2, into which the slot was cut. Two stakeholes, AS116, AS117 were recorded as cut into the underlying layer, AS113/3, but may have been associated with the fence AS118. The burnt fence and ash were overlain by a sequence of fragmentary layers of ashy loam, gravel, clay and loam (AS113/1, AS95/3-/6 and hard-packed orange gravel AS97).

Within the N block, further sections of charred fence survived (AS118/1, AS118/2) within a layer of grey-brown ashy loam (AS112/3). The remains of the fence had been badly damaged by later deposits. The ash and burnt fence were overlain by patchy surfaces of loam and gravel (AS112/2 under AS112/1).

In the S block, the charred fence was recorded as AS118/3; the uprights had been destroyed by the later wall AS62, and the fence appeared to have collapsed to the W. The fence was overlain by a spread of fine grey ash, AS118/3 equivalent to layer AS113/6 in the central block. The charred fence horizon was sealed by a sequence of fragmentary layers of hard-packed loam, gravel and clay, recorded as AS111/4-/7 (see Phase 3a, below).

A sample of the charred fence, AS118, was radiocarbon dated to the period cal AD 900–1220 (HAR-419). A fragment of a glass linen smoother (Fig. 6.20 No. 50) was recovered from gravel spread AS97 within the central block, and a spindlewhorl of chalk or limestone (Fig. 6.21 No. 71) was recovered from an occupation layer, AS111/7, in the S block. A minimum of seven jars were recovered from layers AS97, AS111/6-/7, AS95 in the central and

S blocks. The local handmade shelly ware was still the dominant fabric, but the proportion of St Neot's-type ware had increased to 20% of the assemblage. A small proportion of continental imported pottery was also present, as in Phase 1 (see Mellor Chapter 6). Cattle, sheep and pig bones were recovered in greater quantities than from Phase I deposits (see Wilson, Chapter 7), and oyster shells were also present.

Salvage observations (Fig. 5.3)

A group of features observed during salvage recording should be noted here, because their level and the pottery within them indicate that they were late Saxon. A lightwell dug against the E wall of the church was recorded as Trench III. It showed a beam slot, AS238, running N-S, which was cut to a depth of 0.31 m through old topsoil down to gravel. The beamslot contained fragmentary burnt daub, with ash at the bottom. At its N end it was cut by posthole AS239, the most northerly of a sequence of four postholes (AS239–242) on a slightly divergent alignment. To the W of the postholes was a pit, AS244, filled with successive layers of burnt topsoil, ash, gravel and charcoal. The upper fills appeared to be clay and detrital floors, that had slumped into the pit. Parts of two graves (one AS243, the other not numbered) were seen on the E side of the lightwell, where they emerged, or survived, beneath the E wall of the church (see Phase 6 below). A copper alloy strip (SF AST.247 not illustrated) was recovered from pit fill AS244/4. The pottery recovered from pit AS244 consisted of a small quantity of the local handmade, shell-tempered ware (Mellor, Chapter 6). A series of alternating ash, clay and gravel layers, possibly also representing floors, was recorded in the S lightwell, Trench II.

The sewer connection trench ran S from the S door of the church, and was recorded as Trench VI. At the S end of the trench was a series of street surfaces, lying beneath the N edge of the modern High St; the earliest of these surfaces, AS263, was a metalled surface of small pebbles, lying directly on the natural gravel. A rubble wall, AS264, lay N of the road surfaces, on the line of the modern kerb; only the S face of the wall was seen, and it ran at a slight oblique angle, NW-SE, across the trench. It was noted later that the line of the wall was parallel to the line of the High St kennel, the medieval drain (see this chapter, below). The wall seen in the contractors' trench was packed with clay, but as it continued W out of the trench, it appeared to be replaced by a wall bonded with loose gravel. A sequence of floor layers, AS260, lay immediately N of the wall, but they had been truncated by the rubble footings of the 18th-century S porch. No finds were recovered to help with the dating of these features, and the relationship between floors AS260 and wall AS264 is not clear. The sequence of floor layers were at a similar level to the floor layers identified from Phase 2 in the main excavation, from *c* 62.00 m OD to *c* 62.70 m OD; wall AS260, however, may more appropriately belong with Phases 4–6, when stone buildings were recovered within the main area of excavation.

Phase 3a (Figs 5.6, 5.8–5.10; Plate 5.4)

The main feature excavated was a substantial, timber-lined cellar, AS75 (Plate 5.4). It lay only partly within the area of controlled excavation, and only the E edge could be safely emptied. (Figure 5.10 shows a suggested reconstruction of this feature, after Mason 1985, fig. 11.) Within the excavated area, the top fill was taken out as a horizontal spit, finds recorded as AS75/1, but as the subsidence profile became evident, the deeper fills were removed stratigraphically. The construction and use of the cellar are described as phase 3a; the demolition and backfilling are described under phase 3b, below.

The E side of the cellar had been cut into a natural feature, AS173, below the top soil. A slot, AS170, had been cut into the bottom of the cellar, along its E side, and four postholes were cut into the slot (AS169, AS179, AS181–2), 0.3–0.35 m in diameter and centred 0.7 m, 0.8 m and 1.1 m apart. The traces of a series of planks set horizontally on edge, AS176, were seen against the E wall of the cellar, surviving to a height of 0.50 m. Layers of gravel and soil (AS175) appeared to have been packed into the space between the planks and the cellar side. A further posthole, AS180, was seen partially, and probably belonged to the S cellar wall; there was no evidence of an associated slot. The posthole diameters were between 0.30 m and 0.35 m.

To the W of slot AS170 was a series of superimposed layers of loam with pebbles and clay (subnumbers of AS177), which represented successive cellar floors. The lowest surface (AS177/6) was a hard, compacted layer of pebbles mixed with clay and gritty loam. It was overlain by a layer of loose ash and charcoal, and over this was a sequence of four superimposed layers consisting of loam with pebbles, loose gravel, loam with pebbles and finally dirty orange gravel.

The outline of the cellar pit to the N and W was established from observations of the contractors' excavations. The W edge was seen three times; once in section beneath the Victorian boilerhouse floor, cut by a grave, at a point approx 1 m W of the main excavation trench; and twice during observation of the contractors' groundbeam slots, also at a point approx 1 m W of the main excavation trench. The N edge was not seen, but augering in the NW corner of the church suggested that the NW corner of the pit lay at a point approx 1 m W of the main excavation trench, and 1.20 m S of the N wall of the church. The overall dimensions of the pit may therefore be estimated as approx 6.50 m long (N-S) by 4.50 m wide, although the internal floor area was apparently narrower, perhaps 3.50 to 4.00 m wide.

It proved very difficult to assess the horizon from which the cellar had been cut. The surviving E edge had been heavily abraded by later demolition and

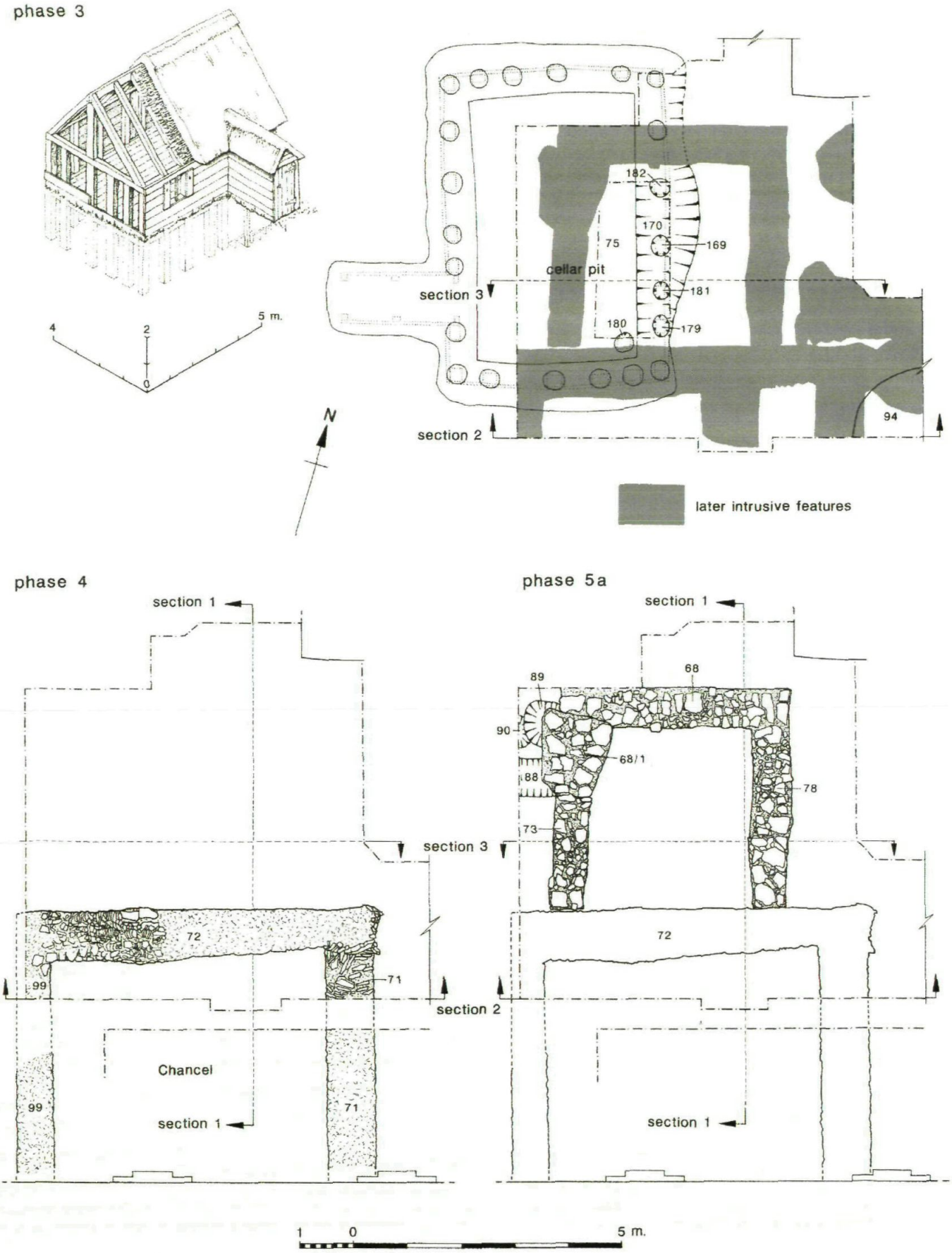


Figure 5.10 All Saints Church Trench I and salvage; plans of features, phases 3, 4 and 5a, with conjectural reconstruction of cellared building (after D J P Mason Excavations at Chester: 26-42 Lower Bridge St 1974-6, the Dark Age and Saxon Periods, Grosvenor Museum Archaeological Excavation and Survey Reports 3, Chester, 1985, fig. 11).

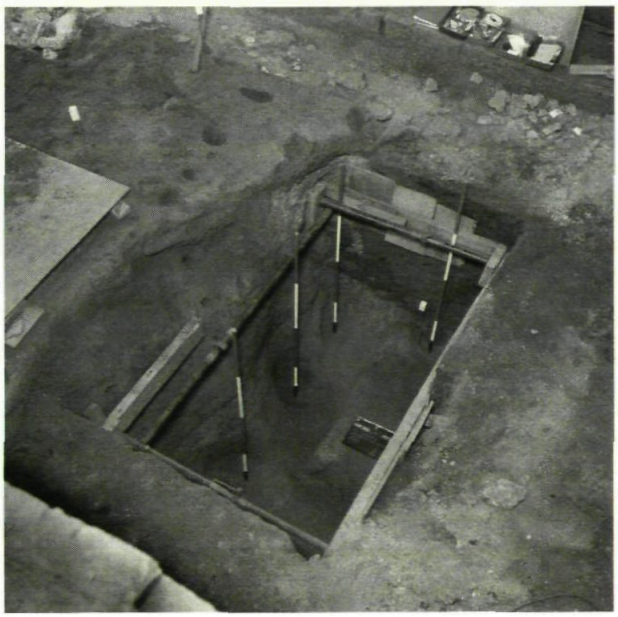


Plate 5.4 All Saints Church, the Phase 3 cellar pit under excavation, with the post settings marked by the ranging rods, from the N.

subsidence, but the cellar was probably dug from the level of gravel spreads AS97, AS95/2 and AS95/4. This suggests that it was approx 2.30 m deep. The contemporary ground-level layers must be represented by the latest layers predating the construction of the first church (see Phase 4, below). These were all fragmentary, but were represented by AS95/1, a hard-packed orange clay floor in the central block; AS110/1-/3 in the SE of the trench, and AS111/1, a thick loam occupation layer across the S block. A pit or posthole containing much animal bone, AS111/2, was seen in the S section, cut to a depth of *c* 0.30 m, and 0.50 m wide. It was on a line with the E wall of the cellar, and may have been associated with the same structure. It was overlain by layer AS111/1. In the SE corner of the trench was another pit, AS94, which also appears to have been contemporary with the use of the cellar. Two successive pits were recognised; the earlier had lower fills of gritty loam, burnt clay and ash AS94/7-/9, and red clay AS94/3, AS94/5 divided by dark loam, charcoal and grit, AS94/4. The fills of this pit were overlain by AS94/2, an occupation layer of hard-packed orange gravel apparently associated with a possible timber slot AS101. The pit was recut as AS94/1.

An iron key with a ring bow and hollow stem (Fig. 6.18 No. 21) and an iron strap slide from a buckle (Fig. 6.18 No. 18) were recovered from the lowest fill, AS94/9; a honestone (Fig. 6.21 No. 72) came from the recut pit AS94/1. A minimum of nine jars were recovered; by contrast with earlier phases, the local shell-tempered tradition had been largely superseded by St Neot's-type ware, which represented 85% of the assemblage (Mellor, Chapter 6). The majority of this pottery came from pit AS94, but St Neot's-type ware was also recovered from slot AS170 at the bottom of the cellar, along with sherds of Late Saxon Oxford ware, and a continental import, fabric X. A sherd of Pingsdorf-type ware was recovered from cellar floor AS177/5, and a pointed and polished rod of antler (SF AST.233 not illustrated) was found in layer 177/1.

Phase 3b (Figs 5.6, 5.8–5.10)

The cellar had been deliberately dismantled, before being backfilled. The E edge of floors AS177/1-/6 and the top of slot AS170 had been cut away perhaps to facilitate the removal of posts and planks; the floors were sealed by backfilling layers sticky loam 178/2 and organic loam 178/1. Within these layers were timber fragments, and voids representing further timbers (AS171); these had evidently fallen, or been dumped, into the backfill as the cellar wall was dismantled. A timber sample (234) taken from timbers AS171 was identified as oak.

After the cellar had been dismantled, it appears to have been used as a cess pit and finally levelled-up with rubbish (layers AS75/1-/5). There was pronounced slumping of all these layers, down to layer AS178/1, and a later grave, AS55, had subsided into the uppermost layer AS75/1.

A fragment of a coin of Edward the Confessor (SF AST.158 not illustrated), minted between 1042 and 1044, was found in the upper fill of the pit. A range of ironwork was also recovered (see I Goodall, Chapter 6), including three whittle-tang knives (Fig. 6.18 Nos 26–8), a knife blade (Fig. 6.18 No. 30) and two horseshoes (Fig. 6.19 Nos 36–7) of a type current from the 9th to the late 11th century. A padlock key (Fig. 6.18 No. 19) was also found. A copper alloy brooch (Fig. 6.17 No.1) from pit fill AS75, datable to the 7th to 9th centuries, is typologically rather early (see A Goodall, Chapter 6). A bone needle and spindlewhorl were also recovered (Fig. 6.20 Nos 46 and 48). A substantial assemblage of pottery was recovered, comprising a minimum of 34 jars (see Mellor, Chapter 6). The dominant fabric was again St Neot's-type ware (40%); the earlier shell-tempered fabric was present, but new handmade wares were also appearing, and some vessels were decorated with thumb impressions on the rim. The range of handmade coarsewares can be paralleled with the pottery from the latest pre-Mound level at Oxford Castle, and the dominance of St Neot's-type ware in Oxford is a feature of the early to mid 11th century. A range of regional imported pottery was recovered, as well as greyware and blackware vessels from N France, and Pingsdorf-type ware from the Rhineland. The greater part of the animal bone from the site was recovered from features of Phase 3, principally cellar pit AS75 and pit AS94 (see Wilson, Chapter 7). In addition to cattle, sheep and pig bones, the assemblage from pit AS75 included the bones of cat, roe deer, hare, red deer, dog and fox. Two

fragments from pit AS94 were part of a pike dentary. Pig bones and oyster shells were noticeably abundant.

Phase 4 (Figs 5.6, 5.8–5.10)

A stone building was constructed on the site. Although there is no direct evidence of its function in this phase, it is likely that it was a church, and it was certainly a church by phase 6 (see below, and discussion). This assumption underlies the interpretation of numerous features described under phases 4 and 5.

Parts of three walls were recovered, suggesting that the building may have been of rectangular plan. The N wall was represented by a foundation trench with pitched stones in loose yellow gravel, AS72. Above this was a single course of mortared pitched stones, overlain by large blocks of well-laid coursed limestone rubble, AS19/1. The exact relationship between these walls is unclear, but a fragment of 13th-century window glass (Fig. 6.20 No. 56) and a sherd of later medieval pottery (fabric *AQ*, not earlier than the late 12th century) were found with wall AS19/1, suggesting that it may have represented a later build, or rebuild, reusing the foundations of the original pitched stone wall. Two nails (SF AST.135 not illustrated), also from AS19/1, were the only other small finds from Phase 4. The W wall of the building (AS99) was seen in the contractors' trial trench, and again subsequently in the salvage recording when it was described as of identical build to AS72. The E wall, AS71, was also seen in salvage recording and was described as a pitched stone foundation trench, with bonding of loose dirty yellow gravel. It cut pit AS94 (see above). The pitched stone foundations were at a level of 62.90 m OD. The internal faces of walls AS99 and AS71 were 5 m apart and the width of the walls varied from 0.70 m (AS99) to 1 m (AS72).

The pottery assemblage from Phase 4 was very small, and no trends could be detected (see Mellor, Chapter 6).

Phase 5a (Figs 5.6, 5.8–5.10; Plate 5.5)

A smaller stone structure (Plate 5.5) represented by walls AS68, AS73 and AS78 was butt-jointed to wall AS72. It was approximately square in plan, measuring 4.5 m W-E externally and 3 m W-E internally, 4.2 m N-S externally and 3.4 m N-S internally. The walls were narrower than those of the original building, measuring 0.7 m to 0.8 m in width, except in the NW corner where there was a substantial thickening to 1.30 m (AS68/1). Wall AS68 was packed with yellow gravel, and patches of mortar were noted. At its W end, AS68/1 was an area of ragstone rubble packed with loose yellow gravel, which may represent an attempt to strengthen the corner. Wall AS68 was cut into topsoil AS156 near its junction with wall AS78, but along much of its length it cut AS75, the uppermost fill of the timber-lined cellar. It is possible that AS68/1 was strengthening to counteract subsidence into the relatively soft pit fill. Wall AS73 appeared to stop just short of wall AS72, and was separated from it by a thin band of earth. It also cut AS75. W of this building was a series of small features whose function is not clear. A robber trench, AS88, may be related to the similar feature AS245 (see Phase 6); its relationship to wall AS73 was unclear. Pit AS90 was cut by pit AS89 which was itself cut by wall AS73 and the area of possible strengthening AS68/1. These features were all cut into the fill of pit AS75.

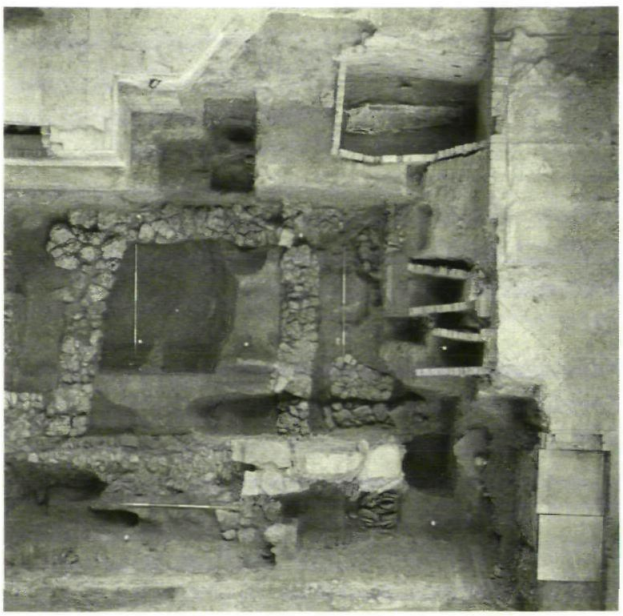


Plate 5.5 All Saints Church, the short-lived square N cell of Phase 5, butted onto the pitched-stone foundation of the first church building (foreground), looking N.

Phase 5b (Figs 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11)

A further alteration to the rectangular stone building of Phase 4 may belong to this phase. Immediately E of Wall AS72 was a robber trench AS80, which cut pit AS94 and pit AS96 (including the top fill of AS96, stone packing AS49/1). Its fill was mostly loose, soft loam with impressions of grass or other vegetation. At the bottom were the remains of a coral rag wall (AS80/1) bonded with loose gravel which appeared to have been added onto wall AS72, probably representing an E extension of the first stone building. The wall appears to have been deeply-founded, its depth being recorded as at least 61.24 m OD. The E continuation of this extension was represented by an E-W sleeper wall AS213 with a S return, wall AS202, both seen in plan only during salvage recording of the contractors' excavations. The building of this extension, possibly to form a lengthened chancel, would appear to imply the total or partial demolition of wall AS71, the former E wall

of the original stone building. It may have been perforated to form a chancel arch.

As before, there were very few finds from Phases 5a and 5b. No pottery was recovered from the square extension, but small numbers of sherds were recovered from the robber trench AS88 and pits AS89 and AS90 immediately to its W. Most of these sherds were of St Neot's-type ware, with two sherds of Pas de Calais ware, and two sherds of handmade wares (fabrics *BF* and *BS*). Thirteen sherds were found from the robber trench of the proposed chancel extension, AS80 (see Mellor, Chapter 6); the assemblage represented a range of fabrics, including the handmade, calcareous-tempered Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*), Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*), St Neot's-type ware and Stamford-type ware.

Phase 6 (Figs 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11; Plate 5.6, Table 5.1)

The small, square building represented by walls AS73, AS78 and AS68 was demolished, or fell down, and was superseded by a cemetery. Sixteen burials were identified, aligned W-E, with heads to the W, and laid out across the area previously occupied by the building (AS50, AS53, AS54, AS55, AS57, AS58/1-/2, AS61, AS63, AS64, AS65, AS66, AS69, AS74, AS82, AS85; see Table 5.1). Grave AS58 contained two burials, AS58/1 (upper) and AS58/2 (lower). Grave AS54 was overlain by grave AS50, and cut by grave AS55. Grave AS74 was overlain by grave AS64 and grave AS63 was cut by grave AS53. The graves were dug to levels between 61.90 m OD and 62.90 m OD, and were cut into, and filled with, a firm, weathered loam AS24/1. Layer AS24/1 was distinctively different from layer AS24, the disturbed, dry and friable layer into which the later burials were cut, and this suggested that the earliest burials were in an external graveyard to the N of the church, subsequently enclosed in later phases of building.

Nine of the burials overlay the walls of the square building (AS50, AS53, AS55, AS57, AS63, AS64, AS65, AS69, AS74) (Plate 5.6); burials AS58/1 and /2 lay N of the building, and AS61 in the centre, while only the skull and lining stones of burial AS82 were seen in a small 'window' excavated to the E of a later robber trench. The stratigraphic position of the three remaining early burials is more puzzling, however. Only the upper half of grave AS54 survived, the remainder having been cut away by graves AS55 and AS50; although the surviving bones lay relatively deep, on the W side of wall AS73, there was no evidence to confirm whether the missing leg bones had originally lain over or under it. Grave AS85 was only partially recovered, but appeared at first to have been cut by wall AS68. Burial AS66 lay immediately S of wall AS68 and its left shoulder blade was missing, appearing to have been cut by the wall. However, all features in this area were affected by subsidence into the soft fill of the cellar pit AS75 below, and it was the opinion of the excavators that subsidence had caused the apparent anomalies in the position of these burials. Five other burials showed signs of subsiding into the fill of the underlying cellar pit AS75 (AS55, AS57, AS61, AS64, AS69).

Ten of the graves had stone linings in a mix of mortar or cob (AS53, AS54, AS55, AS57, AS58/1–2, AS63, AS65, AS69, AS74, AS82); in at least three cases the W end of the cist was incomplete, leaving a slot to support the head (AS54, AS58/2 and AS63). Burial AS55 lay on a bed of charcoal. Graves AS50, AS61, AS64, AS66 and AS85 were unlined; of these, AS50 was laid on a coffin-shaped bed of ash, while the remainder were simple burials.

Samples from graves AS55 and AS57 were submitted for radiocarbon dating. Burial AS55 had an age-range of cal AD 980–1270 (HAR-418) and burial AS57 had an age-range of cal AD 1010–1290 (HAR-729). A full report on radiocarbon dates is given in Appendix 2, below; the dates are summarised in Table A2.4 and the probability distributions are shown in Figures A2.4 and A2.5.

A further burial should be noted here, AS243, seen during the contractors' excavation of lightwell III. This burial lay beneath the extended E wall of the N chancel, and a prick spur of 10th- or 11th-century date was associated with it (Fig. 6.19 No. 38). Quantities of ash and burnt clay were recorded beneath the bones of AS243.

Some evidence was also recovered for alterations to the structure of the church in this phase. Following the extension of the chancel (phase 5), the former E wall appeared to have been replaced by a chancel arch, approx 1 m to the W; a buttress-shaped footing of coral rag bonded with dirty red gravelly mortar, AS62, was built up against the S (internal) face of wall AS72 and may represent the base of an arch. A possible S respond, AS 220, was noted during salvage recording in the form of an irregular area of post-medieval disturbance against the S wall of the standing church, that appeared to represent the robbing of a stone structure aligned with AS62.

A footing, AS245, of coral rag bonded with gravel was observed during salvage recording at the W end of the building, slightly off the line of wall AS72. At its E end it underlay a later pier base (AS81). Footing AS245 was seen for a length of 1.5 m, and was at least 0.80 m wide; it may represent the N wall of a lengthened nave. Observations during salvage recording approx 1 m to the S showed that the original W wall, AS99, had been dug out. The robber trench was backfilled with redeposited occupation material; the lowest fill was of ash and charcoal, overlain by loose gritty humic material and stones. Over this was a second layer of ash and charcoal, approx 40 mm thick, and this was overlain by a thick wedge of mixed stones with large lumps of burnt clay and daub showing wattle impressions. The top fill was of loose, dry, humic material, sealed by a medieval burial (not certainly recorded, but probably AS102). Wall AS99 had also been cut by a pair of furnaces, AS246/1 and AS246/3, one upon another, which were almost certainly the source of the burnt material

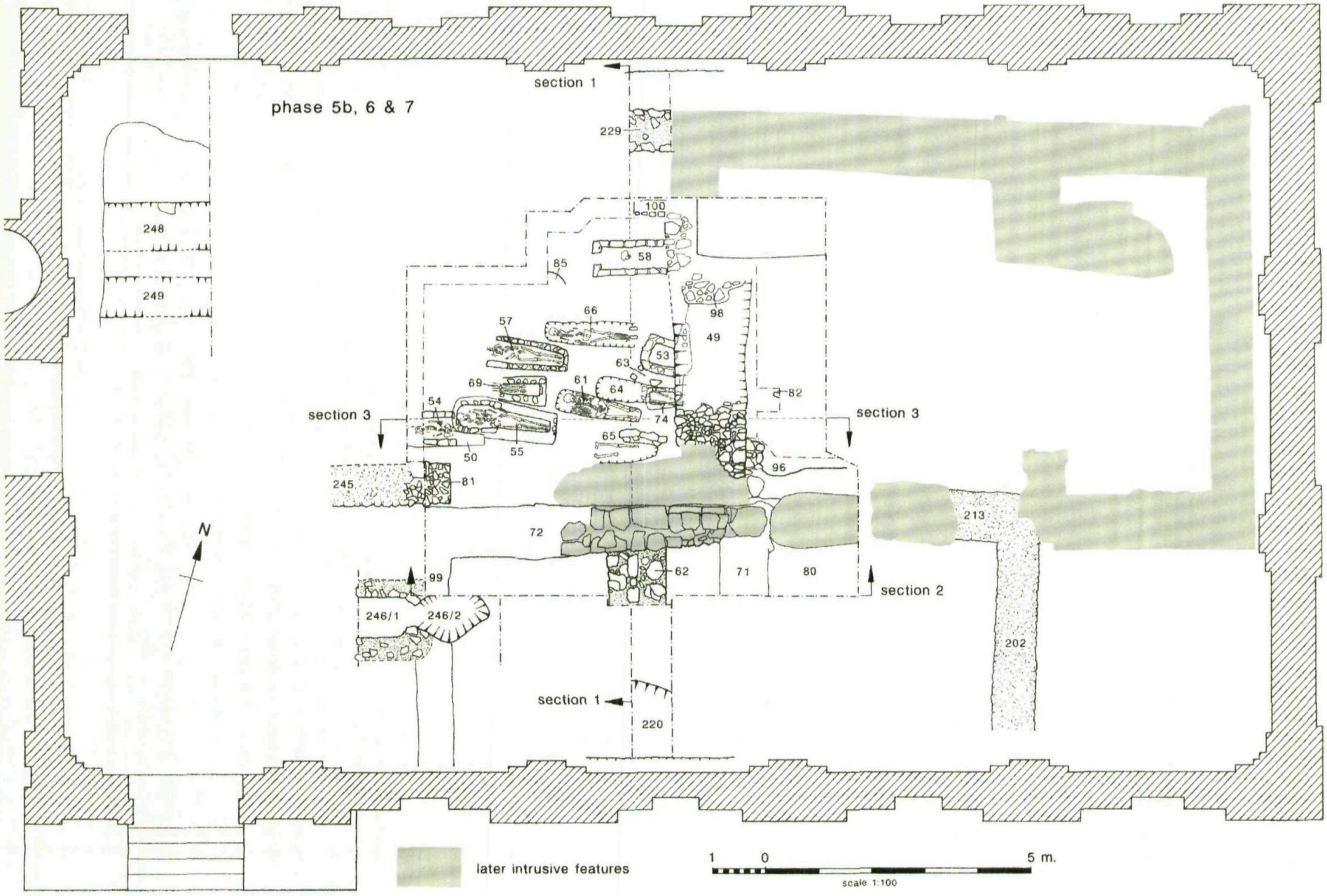


Figure 5.11 All Saints Church Trench I and salvage; plans of features, phases 5b, 6 and 7.

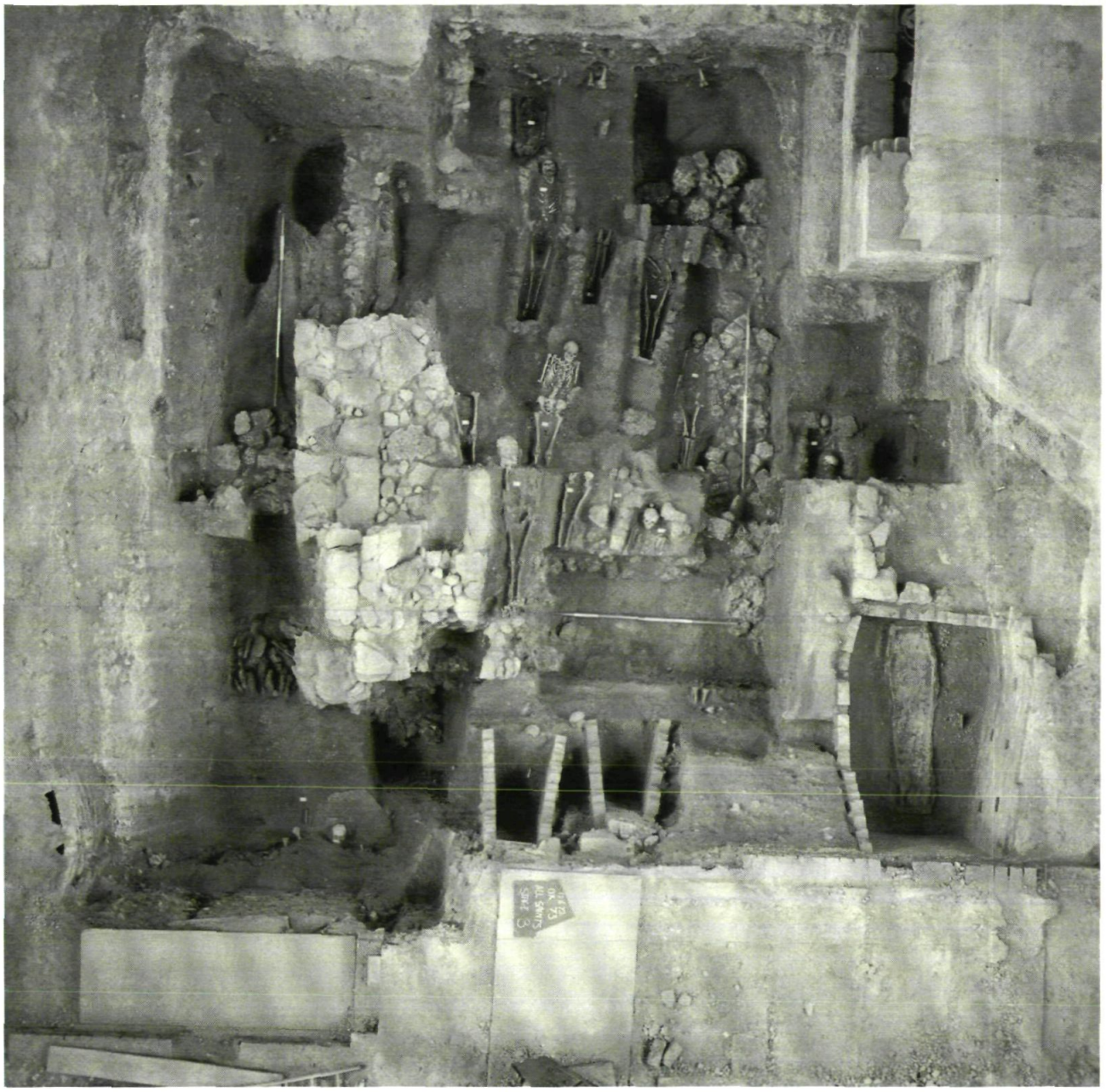


Plate 5.6 All Saints Church, burials of the Phase 6 external graveyard, overlying the square N cell, from the E.

in the robber trench. The upper furnace, AS246/1, was a stone-lined chamber, 0.75 x 0.90 m at least, the stone and its clay bonding being burnt to a red colour. A narrowed flue linked it to a stoke-hole, AS99/1 (fill numbered AS246/2), which lay within the internal area of the rectangular building. Beneath AS246/1, and slightly to the S, was the burnt channel of an earlier furnace, AS246/3. Because the features were observed during salvage recording, it was not possible to be certain of the level from which they had been cut. However, the floor of the original stone building must have been at a level of around 63.00 m OD, and this would suggest that the upper furnace had been cut to a depth of 1.10 m below floor level, with the earlier furnace approx 0.30 m lower. The function of these structures is considered further in the discussion (below).

A set of copper alloy folding balances (Fig. 6.17 No. 8), which could date to before or after the Conquest, was recovered from graveyard fill AS24/1. A simple, iron buckle of trapezoidal shape (Fig. 6.18 No. 17) was also recovered from the graveyard fill AS24/1. Pottery (Mellor, Chapter 6) recovered from the robber trench of wall AS99, and from the furnaces, consisted of small quantities of St Neot's-type ware, Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*) and Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*). The pottery from the cemetery came almost exclusively

Table 5.1 Burials from All Saints Church

Context	Layer	Phase	Age	Sex	Height	Bones present	Comments
50	L24/1	6	12–14	m?	5′0″	post-cranial, fragmentary	
53	L24/1	6	17–25	m	5′4″	skull and upper body only	slight calculus and attrition, infection of left mastoid process
54	24/1	6	ageing adult	f	4′11″?	fragmentary and poorly preserved	wasted mandible, vertebral osteophytes, osteoporosis
55	24/1	6	25+	m	5′7″	incomplete	slight calculus, unerupted lower M3
57	24/1	6	35+	m	6′0.75″	post-cranial only	osteoarthritis and osteoporosis in most vertebrae, sacrum, knees and hips
58/1	?	6	5–6	–	–	skull and fragmentary post-cranial	lambdoid wormian bone
58/2	24/1	6	35+	m	5′6″	post-cranial only	wormian bones, periodontal disease and alveolar resorption, calculus, arthritis and osteoporosis of vertebrae, degeneration and vertebral osteophytes
61	24/1	6	18–20	f	5′10″	skull and incomplete post-cranial	metopic suture, wormian bones, lambdoid ossicles, caries, abscess, periodontal disease, calculus, lumbar osteophytes
63	24/1	6	40+	m	5′8.5″	skull and fragmentary post-cranial	caries, tooth loss, periodontal disease, heavy calculus, uneven wear, vertebral degeneration, marked osteophytes
64	24/1	6	20–23	f	5′6″	pelvis and leg bones only	bowing of femora and tibiae
65	24/1	6	20–25	m	5′10″	femora only	
66	24/1	6	25–34	m	5′3″	skull and incomplete post-cranial	caries, tooth loss, periodontal disease, heavy calculus, incisor overcrowding, wear uneven, cervical and lumbar degeneration
69	24/1	6	16–23	m?	5′11″	fragmentary post cranial	
74	24/1	6	2	–	–	fragmentary	
?82	robber trench	?6	45+	m	–	skull only	periodontal disease, calculus
85	?	?6	2–3	–		fragmentary	
18	L24	9	?	m?	5′5.5″	post-cranial only; parts of 3 individuals	anterior right lateral fusion of 5 thoracic vertebrae
20/1	L24	9	?	m	5′5″	post-cranial only	
20/2	L24	9	38+	m	5′5.5″	incomplete cranial and post-cranial	caries, abscesses, periodontal disease, calculus, attrition, lower M3s unerupted, extra cusps on lower left molars, vertebral osteophytes, depressed fracture of parietal (possibly post-mortem)
20/3	L24	9	40–50	m	5′9.5″	cranial and incomplete post cranial	caries, tooth loss, abscesses, periodontal disease, calculus

23	4	9	50+	m	5′4″	complete	caries, tooth loss, abscesses, periodontal disease, only one M3 erupted (microdontic), uneven attrition, vertebral osteophytes, bowed leg bones indicating possible rickets
25	L24	9	infant	–	–	skull fragmentary	neo-natal (aged 2–3 mths max.)
29	L24	9	38+	m	5′6″	incomplete post-cranial only	severe degeneration of thoracic vertebrae, osteophytic lipping of femora, pelvis and sacrum
30	L24	9	30–40+	m	5′4″	incomplete post-cranial only	left tibia shaft has abscess cavity associated with inflammation of the inner surface
31	L24	9	20–25	m	5′7″	incomplete cranial and post-cranial	caries, tooth loss, abscesses, periodontal disease, calculus
32	L24	9	13–16	?	4′11″	incomplete post-cranial	
33	L24	9	?	f	5′6.5″	mandible and post-cranium	caries, tooth loss, periodontal disease, calculus, unerupted M3, vertebral degeneration and osteophytes
33/1	L24	9	30–40	m?	5′3.5″	incomplete cranial and post-cranial	caries, periodontal disease, calculus, unerupted upper M3s, vertebral osteophytes
34	L24	9	ageing adult	f	4′11″	incomplete cranial and post-cranial	one tooth surviving, all sockets resorbed, vertebral osteophytes
35	L24	9	?	?	5′3.5″	lower legs only	
36	L24	9	18–21	m	5′10″	cranial and post-cranial	tooth loss and socket resorption, caries, periodontal disease and associated alveolar resorption, calculus slight, sacralisation of 5th lumbar vertebra, forward outward bowing of femora
37	L24	9	18–25	m	5′6″	fragmentary	shovel shaped upper incisors, abscess, calculus, caries, microdontic M3, periodontal disease, extension of abscess into right maxillary sinus
38	L24	9	20–25	m	5′10″	skull and post-cranial	metopism, right side of 5th lumbar vertebra sacralised, periodontal disease, abscess, caries, attrition, vertebral osteophytes, healed fractures of left ribs 4–6, also left tibia and fibula
39	L24	9	16–20	m	5′4″	lower left leg only	
40	L24	9	16–18	m	5′5″	pelvis and legs only	pronounced forward and outward bowing of femora
41	L24	9	16–20	?	(f)=4′9″ (m)=5′0″	lower legs only	

Table 5.1 (continued)

Context	Layer	Phase	Age	Sex	Height	Bones present	Comments
42	L24	9	?	?	5′4″	lower legs only	arthritic lipping seen on articular surface of tibia?
43	L24	9	20+	?	?	lower legs only	
44	L24	9	30–35	m	5′6″	skull cap and fragments of leg	wormian bones? two individuals
45	L24	9	25–35	m	5′6″	incomplete skull and post-cranial	caries, tooth loss, abscesses, periodontal disease, calculus
46	L24	9	35–45	m	5′8.5″	incomplete post-cranial only	
47	L24	9	adult?	m	5′2″	fragmentary post-cranial	lumbar osteophytes, periostitis and exostoses running length of left nutrient foramen (proximal region of femur)
48	L24	9	20–23	f	4′7.5″	fragmentary	caries, periodontal disease, abscesses, calculus, attrition, ?spinal curvature associated with compression of thoracic bodies
51		9	45+	m	5′5″	incomplete skull and post-cranial	wormian bones, small lambdoid ossicle, partial metopism, slight caries, periodontal disease, calculus, severe attrition, right humerus has periostitis as do femora and tibiae, vertebral degeneration
59	24	9	35–45	m	–	skull only	caries, abscess, periodontal disease, calculus
67	24	9	38–42	m	6′0.5″	poorly preserved post cranial only	
70	24	9	40+?	m?	5′7″–5′9″	incomplete leg bones only	
86						foot bones only	

from the general fill layer AS24/1, and many sherds may therefore have been redeposited by grave digging. The assemblage included the local late Saxon shell-tempered ware, Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*), and Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*). Regional imports included St Neot's-type ware, a Stamford-type pitcher with a light green glazed spout, a sherd from a jug with an applied triangular red strip, and another with dark green glaze, possibly from the Nuneaton kilns in Warwickshire. These glazed jugs are associated with the late 12th century; at the Hamel, in W Oxford, they were dated to *c* 1190 (Mellor 1980, 161). The animal bone assemblage from Phases 4, 5 and 6 was very small (see Wilson, Chapter 7).

Phase 7s (Figs 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11)

Very few features survived from this phase, but they appear to relate to the construction of the N nave of the church. Footing AS229 was observed during salvage recording; it consisted mainly of irregular limestone rubble packed with earth, and was cut away for the insertion of the later chancel arch footing AS233 (see Phase 8). Footing AS229 cut an earlier pit, AS230 (not planned). A length of approx 0.80 m of footing AS229 was observed, running W, before it was concealed by the floor of the Victorian boilerhouse, which was not lifted; augering further W failed to detect any continuation of the footing. This is considered further below (see discussion). Two robber trenches, AS248 and AS249, were observed during further salvage recording in the NW corner of the standing church. Both ran W-E, but not on the same alignment as AS229. Robber trench AS248 was approx 1 m wide and contained one or two surviving stones, but its fill was mostly of mortar and small rubble, with soil and charnel at a higher level. Robber trench AS249 was narrower, approx 0.7 m wide, and was similarly filled with white mortar and small rubble. The function of these walls is not clear, but it is possible that they represented further elements of the N nave wall, the change in line from AS229 suggesting that there may have been a N transept. The building of a new N nave implies that the existing N wall must have been perforated to form an arcade; a coral rag pier base, AS81, partially exposed under the W edge of the trench, may have formed an element of this. The E wall of the new north nave or transept was probably represented by a robber trench, AS49, which is considered further in phase 8.

Phase 8 (Figs 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.12; Plate 5.7)

The N side of the church was again extended, with the addition of a N chancel represented by AS206, AS207 and AS209. Most of the features associated with the N chancel lay outside the main area of excavation, and were recorded under salvage conditions.

AS206 was a wall footing, surviving to a width of approx 1.1 m. The N face had been robbed out, but the S face survived; the wall had a rubble core. AS207 was a wall returning S from AS206, and AS209 was a footing of loose stones with gravelly packing which returned E from AS207. At its E limit, AS209 was cut into the old ground surface in a semicircular shape; this suggests that the N chancel may originally have had an apsidal end. Opposite AS207 to the S was a buttress-like footing, AS201; no details of the build of this footing were recorded, but the excavator noted that it appeared to have been straight-jointed onto wall AS213, and could therefore represent a S respond to AS207, forming an arch into the apse.

The addition of a N chancel implies that the original E wall of the N nave must have been demolished or perforated, to provide access between the two. In addition, for the same reasons, the N wall of the existing S chancel may have been perforated. The line of the original E wall of the N nave was probably represented by robber trench AS49. Three of the early burials from Phase 6 (AS53, AS64 and AS74) were cut either by AS49 or by the robbed-out wall. Unrobbed stone (AS49/2) survived at the S end of the robber trench, consisting of limestone rubble packed with dirty yellow gravelly mortar; it appeared to be faced on its N side. The stone survived where it was overlain by a later burial, AS67, which was radiocarbon dated to cal AD 1250–1430 (Har-730; see Appendix 2, Table A2.4 and Figures A2.4 and A2.5). It was integral with AS19/2, a wall of coral rag bonded with identical mortar, which lay immediately to the S. AS19/2 was built up against a third wall, AS19/1, consisting of large blocks of limestone, with cream, sandy mortar. This was set on a single course of mortared pitched stones, overlying the pitched stone foundation of the original stone building, AS72. Although the relationship between these walls remains very difficult to determine, it seems likely that the walls represent the creation of a massive stone footing, formed by adding to existing foundations; the footing could plausibly have supported both a chancel arch to the N, and an arch in an arcade running W, dividing the N nave from the S nave.

A construction trench, AS49/3, for the surviving stonework AS49/2, was detected down to the level of the original ground surface, and two earlier pits in the base of the trench had been at least partially packed with stone, as if for a sub-foundation (pit AS96 with stone packing AS49/1; pit AS98 with stone packing AS98/1, see Fig. 5.11).

The N respond of the N chancel arch was represented by a footing of large, well-mortared stones AS233; this was of integral build with the N chancel wall AS206, and cut the stonework of the earlier wall AS229.

The evidence for the perforation of the former N wall of the S chancel is less clear. The wall represented by robber trench AS80 and footing AS213 must have been partially demolished, since three graves, AS59, AS60 and AS18 (phase 9) were subsequently dug across its line. Immediately E of these graves was a pier base, AS200, observed during salvage recording.

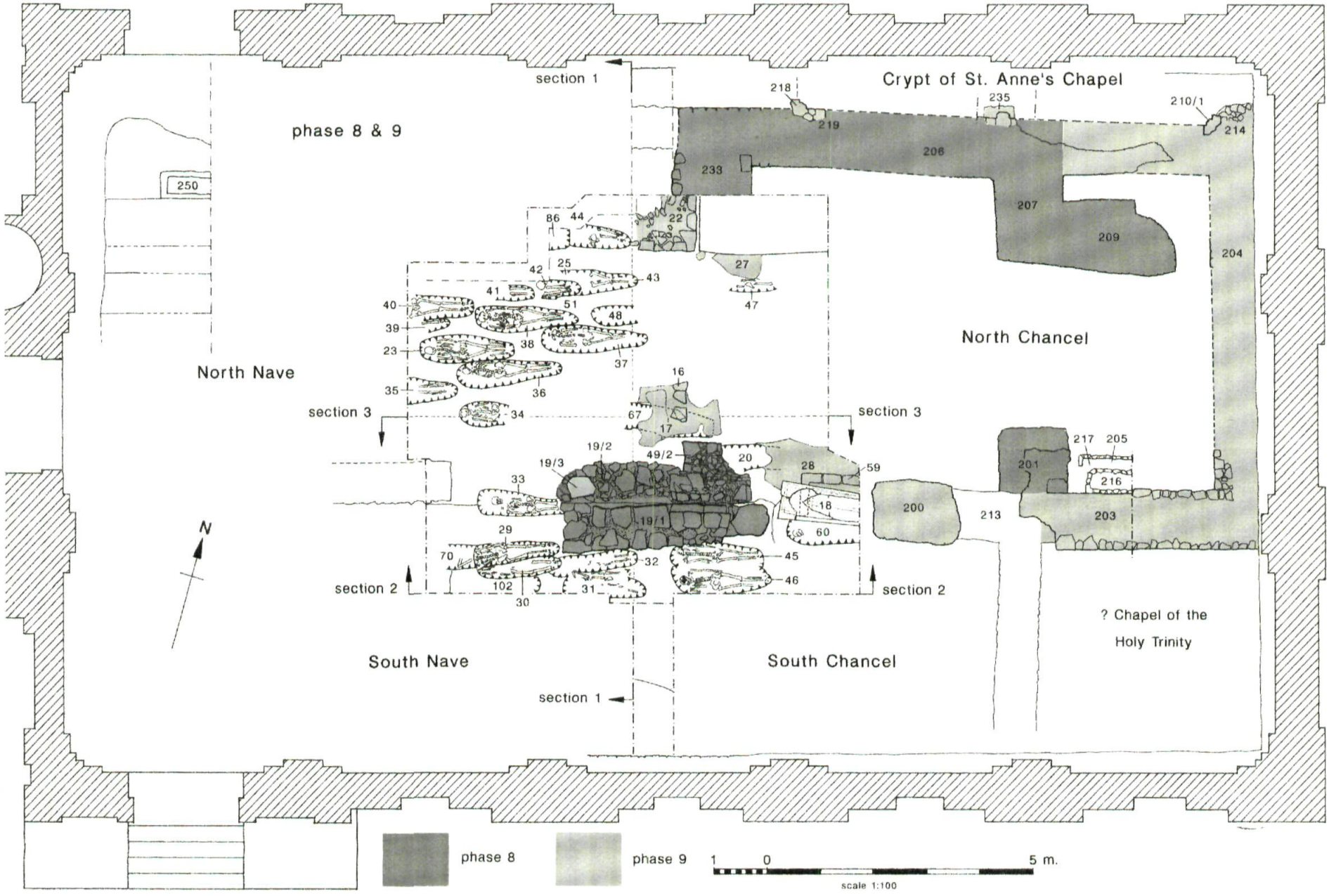


Figure 5.12 All Saints Church Trench I and salvage; plans of features, phases 8 and 9.

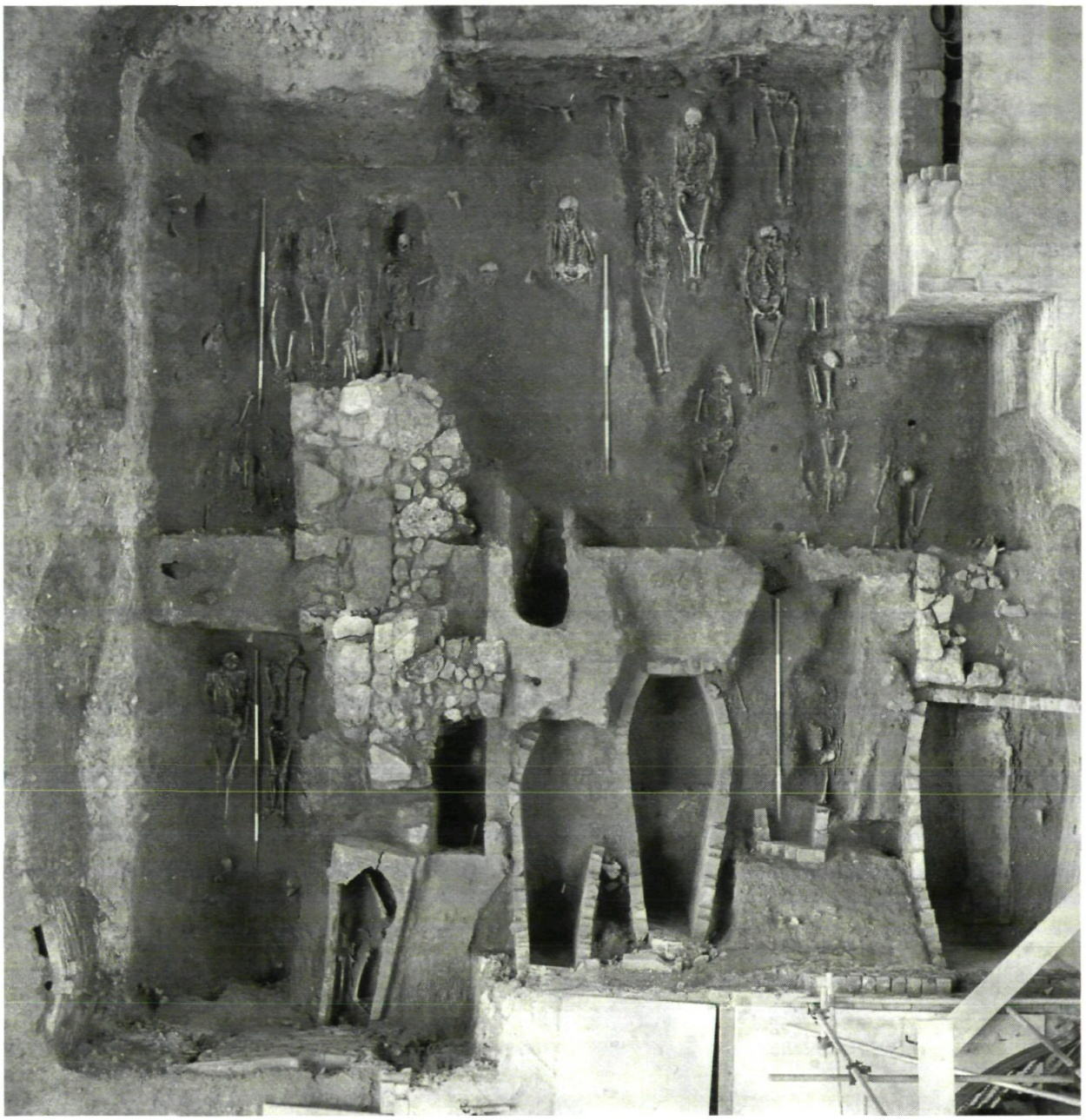


Plate 5.7 All Saints Church, general view of Phase 8 and later features, from the E.

It was constructed of large pieces of rough limestone set in yellowish-brown mortar. It was noted by the excavator that pier base AS200 must have been later than grave AS59, since a full-length adult grave could not have fitted into the space available once it had been built. The sequence would appear to be that the N wall of the S chancel was perforated, and an arch inserted, with grave AS59 put into the resulting space. Subsequently pier base AS200 was constructed, cutting the grave. The insertion of a stronger pier base may have been associated with the construction of the Chapel of the Holy Trinity at the E end of the S chancel, which was licensed in 1376 and was probably built by 1371.

Pottery was recovered from robber trench AS49, and the assemblage contained fragments associated with the highly-decorated pottery of the period, made in the vicinity of Brill/Boarstall (Bucks), dating to the mid 13th century (Mellor, Chapter 6). A copper alloy ring with a stone or paste setting (Fig. 6.17 No. 5) and a fragment of the foot of a copper alloy jug or small skillet (Fig. 6.17 No. 12) were found in robber trench AS49. Also in robber trench AS49 were a fragment of vessel glass (SF AST.116 not illustrated) and a fragment of architectural stone, possibly part of a mullion, which was heavily burnt on the surface of the moulding (BM39).

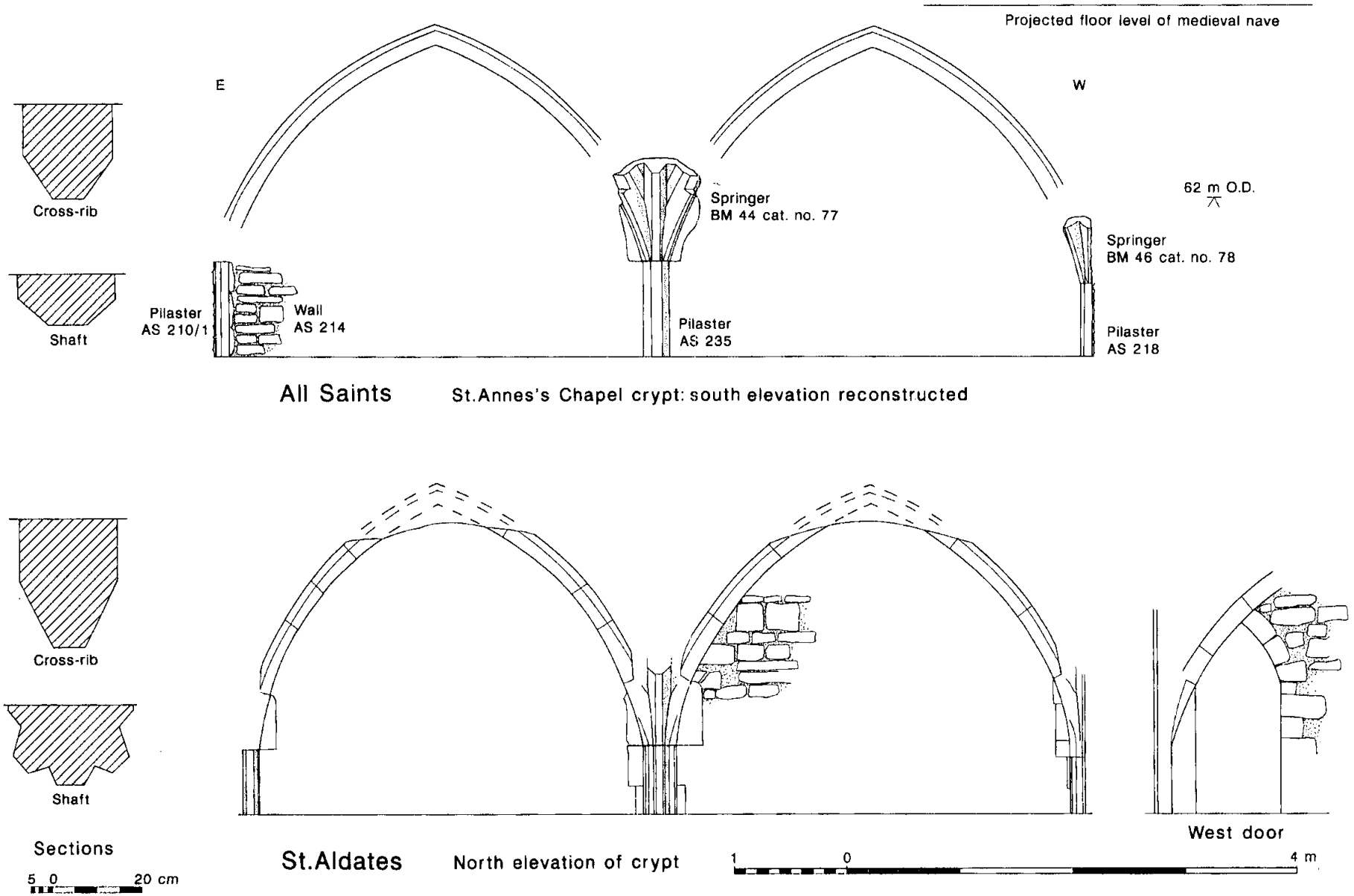


Figure 5.13 All Saints Church Trench I and salvage; conjectural S elevation of St Anne's Chapel crypt, with N elevation of crypt of St Aldate's Church.

Phase 9 (Figs 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.12, 5.13)

In the final stage of structural development, the N chancel was rebuilt with a squared E end (walls AS203 and AS204), and a chantry chapel upon a vaulted crypt was added to its N side. These features were seen in plan during salvage recording of the contractors' excavations. Some facing stones survived on both inner and outer faces of AS203, and on the inner face of AS204 at the re-entrant angle with AS203. The N wall of the N chancel, AS206, was extended beyond the earlier apse footings AS207, AS209. The N face of the extended wall had been partially robbed, and the wall cut a pit, AS208 (not illustrated), of which the top fill was very dark sticky loam with large quantities of oyster shells and animal bone.

The crypt was given the overall number AS210. It was filled with charnel, with a particularly large number of skulls. In the SW corner of the part of the crypt contained within the standing church was a pilaster, AS218, surmounted by a springer AS218/1 (BM46). A small section of the S wall of the crypt, AS219, was butted onto the topmost course of the pilaster; it was bonded with limestone mortar. Wall AS206 had been partially robbed out for the insertion of crypt AS210 and its structural components, including AS219. In the SE corner was a pilaster, AS210/1, with a small surviving section of the E wall of the crypt, AS214. Equidistant between pilasters AS218 and AS210/1 was a central pilaster, AS235. A springer which had been disturbed by the contractors can only have come from this central pilaster (BM44).

The crypt can be substantially reconstructed from the evidence of the two springers. These show that there were two quadripartite vaults based on segmental arches. The chamfered ribs are rather stouter than those of the Congregation House at the church of St Mary the Virgin, or the vault beneath Tackley's Inn at 106–7 High St. The radii of the arches are estimated from the springers to be between 8 ft 6 ins and 10 ft, and in Figure 5.13 they have been reconstructed on the assumption that they were all intended to be similar at 9 ft. This would have enabled the builders to construct semicircular arches centred at floor level across the 18 ft diagonals of the two compartments, with side and cross ribs perhaps centred 6 in above floor level to give a flat-topped vault. This would explain why the side and cross ribs appear to spring at a slightly steeper angle than the diagonal ribs. The wall of the crypt was of coarse, rough-faced rubble bonded with limestone mortar.

The crypt is discussed below (Chapter 6) by Stephen Terry. He adduces the crypt at St Aldate's Church as the closest analogue to that at All Saints (also illustrated in Fig. 5.13). He identifies the chantry chapel as that of St Anne, built *c* 1333 by William of Bicester.

A few fragments of floor surfaces survived within the main body of the church. A series of floor surfaces were recorded as AS17–AS17/3. Floor AS17 was of pale grey-brown mortar, approx 50 mm thick. It overlay a similar floor, AS17/1, over a gravel floor, AS17/2. Floor AS17/1 was at a level of 63.62–63.67 m OD, and partially overlay robber trench AS49. Three stones in a line, AS16, were set into layer AS17/1, and could represent the line of a sanctuary rail or rood screen. Floor AS17 was banked up against the W face of the stones. Floor AS27 overlay robber trench AS49 at the N end. It was also of mortar, described as resembling AS17 and AS17/1, and was at a level of 63.70 m OD. AS28 was an irregular floor, also of mortar, at a level of 63.62–63.73 m OD. It lay up against the N side of burial AS18. A shallow plinth, AS22, of roughly-faced limestone blocks with loose earth packing, lay slightly SW of the chancel arch footing AS233. It may represent the base for an internal structure such as a pulpit.

In addition to the 16 early burials described under Phase 6 above, a further 32 inhumations and a fragment were found in the area of the controlled excavation (see Table 5.1; burial numbers AS18, AS20/1, AS20/2, AS20/3, AS59, AS67, AS23, AS25, AS29, AS30, AS31, AS32, AS33, AS33/1, AS34, AS35, AS36, AS37, AS38, AS39, AS40, AS41, AS42, AS43, AS44, AS45, AS46, AS47, AS48, AS51, AS70, AS86. There was an additional bone fragment recorded as Small Find 86). Large areas of the interior of the church had been removed by the construction of later vaults and graves, however, and these burials probably represent only a sample of the actual total. Most of the burials were cut into layer AS24, a loose, dry loam, and the grave fills were of similar consistency; this loose, dry fill contrasted with the firm, weathered loam fill of the earlier 16 burials, and the 32 burials associated with it are interpreted as interments in the interior of the extended church. Because of the dryness and mobility of the fill, however, it was very difficult to discern the sequence of digging and redigging, and the bulk of these internal burials cannot be dated closely. Burial 67 was submitted for radiocarbon dating, and gave an age-range of cal AD 1250–1430 (Har-730: see Appendix 2).

A small number of burials were directly associated with structural features of the church. Grave 47 was dug into the N end of robber trench AS49, and grave 67 overlay the S end, above the surviving stone AS49/2. Grave 59 overlay the robber trench AS80 of the N wall of the S chancel. The grave was stone-lined, and the skull lay on a bed of ash in a wooden coffin. The base of the grave was formed by a large flat stone slab and possible traces of quick lime were noted below the coffin. The S side of the grave was subsequently cut away by the insertion of burial AS60, which was not recorded in detail. Grave 18 overlay grave 59, and contained a quantity of disarticulated bone which represented the remains of at least three individuals, deposited in a limestone coffin. The grave was covered by the inverted stone base of the coffin, whose exposed surface was decorated by a crudely-chiselled cross. Iron nails were recovered (SF AST.101 not illustrated).

Grave AS20 cut through the NE corner of the stone footing AS49/2, AS19/2. The grave was reused for successive burials, AS20/1, AS20/2 and AS20/3 and was presumably covered by a marked slab. Graves AS29, AS30 and AS33 lay immediately W of wall AS19/1, to which a mortared stone capping AS19/3 had been added. The capping overlay grave AS33, which contained two burials.

The location of these graves implies the existence of arches W of wall AS19/1 and AS19/3, between the N and S naves; W of pier base AS200, between the N and S chancels, and between AS233 and AS49/2, AS19/2, between the N nave and N chancel. A group of graves clustered in the N nave.

Grave AS25 was of an infant, and this inhumation had probably been accommodated in a wooden coffin, since an iron nail was recovered (SF AST.111 not illustrated). The remains of wooden coffins were otherwise recorded in only three cases, AS34, AS45 and AS59, but in the dry conditions timber tended to disintegrate at a touch and therefore may have been missed.

A number of further burials were recorded under salvage conditons. Graves AS205, AS216 and AS217 were situated near the S wall of the extended N chancel. Grave AS205 was lined on the N with the base of a child's stone coffin laid on its side. It contained a female with two infants, and overlay AS216–7, both of which were also lined with stone.

The pottery from Phase 9 included a number of vessels in Late Medieval Oxford ware (see Mellor, Chapter 6), which were found within the general internal fill layer AS24, and in association with the internal burials; these vessels included a shelled lamp, a possible lid and the base of a bottle, and they may have been used in the church during the late medieval period.

Some Small Finds were associated with individual graves. A scale tang knife (Fig. 6.19 No. 34) with traces of a wooden handle and five hollow copper alloy rivets came from grave AS18; also from this grave were a nail (SF AST.101 not illustrated), a copper alloy lace end (SF AST.103 not illustrated) and two copper alloy pins with coiled wire heads (SF AST.102 not illustrated). Three similar pins (SF AST.69 not illustrated) were recovered from AS23/1, the fill of grave AS23. Iron nails were recovered from grave AS25 (SF AST.111 not illustrated) and grave AS70 (SF AST.139 not illustrated). The remaining Small Finds were recovered from the general fill of the church, AS24, and can only be located loosely within Phases 7–9. Numerous coins and jettons were found (see Chapter 6); these included two farthings of James I and three farthings of Charles I. Ten jettons and tokens were found in layer AS24, of which the earliest dates to 1490 and the latest to 1670. Items of dress comprised a copper alloy buckle (Fig. 6.17 No. 2) and strap end (Fig. 6.17 No. 3), a copper alloy lace end (SF AST.119 not illustrated) and pin (SF AST.79 not illustrated). Two copper alloy discs were also found (SF AST.59 and SF AST.88 not illustrated). Ironwork of these phases consisted of a whittle tang knife (Fig. 6.18 No. 33) and a small number of nails (SF AST.100 not illustrated). Numerous fragments of decorated window glass were also found (see Fig. 6.20 and Chapter 6); all phase 9 window fragments except Fig. 6.20 No. 56 derive from layer AS24, and all datable fragments were of the 14th or 15th centuries. Four fragments of alabaster sculptures were also recovered from layer AS24 (Fig. 6.21 Nos 74–5, and SF AST.297 and SF AST.298 not illustrated) and date from the late 15th and 16th centuries. A delicate filletted roll moulding was recovered from layer AS24 (BM38).

Phase 10 (post 1700) (Figs 5.8, 5.9)

Beneath the pews and flooring of the standing 18th-century church was a thickness of loose concrete, probably laid during the installation of a system of 19th-century hot air channels emanating from a boiler in the NW corner of the church. A number of brick burial vaults (AS6–12, AS14) and a number of inhumations (AS1–5, AS13) were sealed by the concrete. A pit, AS15, in the centre of the church contained charnel material, presumably the upcast bones from building work in the 18th and 19th centuries. All these features were set into a 1 m thick layer of rubble, AS1/1, evidently the demolition remains of the medieval church left as a podium for the new church. Other late deposits included the backfill of the crypt of St Anne's Chapel (AS210/2), the construction trench for the N wall of the 18th-century church (AS234), and what was possibly a robber trench (AS220) of the early chancel arch (see Phase 5).

Numerous small finds came from the rubble layer, AS1/1. Items of dress comprised a copper alloy lace end (Fig. 6.17 No. 4), a copper alloy wire eyelet (Fig. 6.17 No. 6) and three copper alloy pins with coiled wire heads (SF AST.32 and AST.43 not illustrated, and Fig. 6.17 No. 7). Two copper alloy book clasps were found; one (Fig. 6.17 No. 9) had a simple incised design, while the other (Fig. 6.17 No. 10) was of a design common to late medieval and post-medieval book clasps. Ironwork from layer AS1/1 comprised a double-looped buckle (Fig. 6.18 No. 16) of late or post-medieval type, a whittle-tang knife (Fig. 6.19 No. 35), probably of 17th-century date, and a rowel spur (Fig. 6.19 No. 39) probably of the mid or late 16th century. A bone ring (Fig. 6.20 No. 43) was also found. A fragment of plain roll moulding was recovered from construction trench AS234 (BM27); a further 20 fragments of architectural stone were recovered from layer AS1/1 (see Chapter 6); most recognisable mouldings were Perpendicular. No animal bone was recorded from Phases 7–10.

Watching Brief observation at High St/Turl St junction (1980) (Fig. 5.3)

Further evidence which may relate to the structure of the medieval church was recorded during the

construction of a surface water manhole at the junction of the High St and Turl St. A stone undercroft with internal plaster was seen, extending under modern Turl St from the All Saints Church side. It had apparently been relined or infilled with rubble stonework, which probably derived from the medieval church; it is possible that the rubble represents the base of the medieval church tower.

Discussion

Phase 1, late 9th and 10th century (Fig. 5.7)

The earliest recognisable activity (Phase 1a) at All Saints Church was represented by a scatter of timber settings with no associated floors. Stakeholes AS130/1 and AS163–5 were cut into the original topsoil, and formed a W-E alignment across the S of the trench, but this could not be related to any coherent structure. The timber settings were then overlain by burnt deposits, including carbonized grain (AS113/9). This was principally threshed and fully-cleaned free-threshing wheat, mixed with fired soil and unburnt brown loam, and Robinson (Chapter 7) comments that layer 113/9 appears to represent a major accident to stored grain, rather than the result of a minor spillage of grain into a fire, or the burning of crop-processing waste. It is unclear whether the burning took place *in situ*. Robinson comments that the mixed nature of layer 113/9 suggests that the grain was not charred *in situ*, but had been spread by subsequent levelling of the site. In the preliminary analysis of the site (see archive) it was noted that patches of charcoal corresponded with burnt patches in the overlying clay, and that a clay sample retained a cast of vegetation on its underside. Brian Durham considered that this could only have been formed by grain before it had been charred. He proposed therefore, that the grain had been charred *in situ*, suggesting that grain processing had been carried out on the site, which might conceivably have been a horse-mill.

A small number of metal finds from the ash layers suggest that there was occupation on or near the site; these comprised an iron collar from a tool, an iron knife and a fragment of worked lead waste.

The dating can only be approximate. The radiocarbon dates (HAR-466-I and II; see Table A2.4) were replicate measurements on the same material and are not statistically significantly different at 95% confidence. Their weighted mean is a range of cal AD 880–1150, with a very high probability that the grain dates to the 10th century (Fig. A2.4). The dates were subsequently combined with other information from the site, including other radiocarbon dates and stratigraphy, and remodelled using a Bayesian approach. This model suggests an estimated date for the grain at 95% confidence level in the range cal AD 890–1030. The probability distribution is shown in Figure A2.5, and the methodology is explained in Appendix 2 to this volume, below. The pottery would support a date in the late 9th or 10th century (Mellor, Chapter 6), and it is possible that this activity can be associated with the early years of the *burh*; the alignment of stakeholes AS130/1 and AS163–5 is parallel to the High St, and may possibly suggest the marking-out of a plot.

Phase 1b probably represents the establishment of a building plot on the site, although the small size of the trench places severe limitations on interpretation. A N-S ridge (AS113/7A) formed at the edge of a layer of loam, and at right-angles to the High St. This alignment persisted in subsequent phases, until the foundation of the church (Phase 4). The ridge was respected by a conspicuous coating of slightly burnt, red and yellow clay (AS113/5), with numerous postholes and stakeholes on a N-S alignment. No floor layers survived. It was suggested by the excavator that the postholes and stakeholes might represent marking-out of a plot, and the ridge might possibly be the remains of the W wall of a building to the E, which had been weatherproofed by the application of the clay. Alternatively, it is possible that the features represent the fragmentary remains of a post-and-mud wall, or a clay wall reinforced with timbers. A building of this type, dated to the later 11th century (WEL6), was excavated in London and was constructed of circular posts encased within earthen wall-cladding (Horsman *et al.* 1988, 62, 78, fig. 70 b); slightly earlier examples have been found at Goltho in Lincolnshire (Beresford 1975, 37–40, fig. 18; 1982, 119, fig. 6). A rather later example of a clay-walled building was excavated at Hen Domen (Building XXII, mid 12th century) and provides an interesting parallel; the remains of this building consisted of a thick layer of clay on its E and S sides, set into a trench, and reinforced by stakes at the corner. The clay was integral with, or added to, an internal wall of wood (Barker and Higham 1982, 33, 90, figs 21, 23, 24, 27).

Phase 2, later 10th century (Figs 5.3, 5.7)

The fragmentary remains of the Phase 1 structures were replaced by a much more substantial line of postholes for earthfast posts (Phase 2a); these were irregularly spaced, centred anything from 0.50 m to 1.50 m apart, and were between 0.20 and 0.40 m in diameter. The alignment was 8.50 m long, and ran N-S, at right angles to the High St. It was suggested in the interim report (Hassall 1974, 55) that the posthole alignment represented a property boundary, but it seems more likely that it was the wall of a building, replacing the earlier clay-walled structure. No evidence of end walls was found in the limited area of excavation, and the total length and width of the building cannot be estimated, but it may be comparable with numerous buildings excavated at Brandon Road, Thetford (Dallas 1993, 23–26 and figs 54–60, 62 and 64), at Lincoln (Perring 1981, 36–8 and figs 31–2), Durham (Carver 1979) and London (Horsman *et al.* 1988, bldgs pen9, pen12, mlk4, pen6, pdn6, iro3, pen13, wel3, wel5, pdn8, wel6, pdn9). No traces of the superstructure remained at All Saints, although a

fragment of burnt daub was recovered from posthole AS107, and the overlying layers contained burnt clay, which suggests that the posts may have supported a clay or clay-clad wall. Better-preserved examples from London and York showed the remains of wattle frameworks set within double rows of parallel posts (Horsman *et al.* 1988, building WEL3, 61, 77–8, fig. 70c) or woven horizontally around the upright posts and intervening vertical stakes (Hall 1984, 56, figs 29–31), but no wattle was recovered at All Saints.

In 10th- and 11th-century London it appears that such surface-laid buildings were ubiquitous, and represent standard domestic dwellings (Horsman *et al.* 1988, 108); the many postholes found in excavations of contemporary deposits in Oxford indicate that numerous ground-level buildings were also present here (Sturdy and Munby 1985, 93), but no clear building plans have yet been identified.

No evidence of floors was recovered, but a yard area may have lain to the W of the wall, represented by a truncated sequence of layers of loam and ash (AS113/3-/4 in the centre of the trench, and AS126/3 in the S). A number of stakeholes lay within the proposed yard area. These may represent the line of associated fences; the remains of burnt fences subsequently occurred in the same locations. The function of the large, gravel-filled slot AS123 is not clear.

Finds included a roughout for a bone threadpicker and the base of an iron blade and part of a tang. These finds, and the majority of the small pottery assemblage, came from the area of the proposed yard. The pottery was again predominantly of the local shell-tempered tradition (fabric *B*); three sherds of St Neot's-type ware were also present.

Observations made during salvage recording outside the church, and evidence from the recording of the Turl St foul sewer in 1981 (see Fig. 5.3), may help to reconstruct the likely layout of building plots at this time. Observations of the primary street metalling of Turl St (Table 5.2) suggest that the road originally ran E of its present course, and was deflected by the encroachment of the medieval All Saints Church. The phase 1 and phase 2 walls discussed above appear to represent the W walls of buildings aligned at right angles to the High St. A corner plot may therefore have lain between these walls and the original line of Turl St. The best evidence for a building occupying the corner plot at this stage came from observations in the sewer connection trench, Trench VI, outside the S doorway of the 18th-century church. Here, a series of floor layers (AS260) were observed, at a similar level to the phase 2 floor levels within the main area of excavation, overlying the original ground surface. These floor layers lay immediately N of a stone wall, probably of a later date; the primary street metalling of the High St was observed laid directly on the natural gravel, just to the S of the wall and approximately 0.20 m lower than the floor surfaces. The yard surfaces excavated in the main trench (AS113/3-/4) may therefore represent the back yard of a building on the corner plot, rather than a yard lying to the side of the building represented by the excavated posthole alignment.

The recording of a lightwell (Trench III; Fig. 5.3) revealed the W side of a beam slot (AS238), running N-S, with four associated postholes and fragments of burnt daub. A pit, AS244, lay W of the beam slot and postholes. This may suggest that beam slot AS238 represented a wall of a building on a further plot along the High St frontage. The upper fills of AS244 consisted of clay and detrital floors that had subsided into the pit. Floor layers were also recorded in the S lightwell (Trench II).

The post-built structure represented by the N-S posthole alignment in the main excavation area may have been a comparatively long-lived building. There was evidence of recutting of postholes (AS108 cutting AS107, AS225 cutting the intercutting series AS226–8), suggesting that posts had been replaced at intervals during the building's lifetime. No timbers were found, although some charcoal occurred in overlying layers, and it seems likely (as has been suggested for structures at Lincoln; Perring 1981, 40) that the posts were removed for reuse when the building was dismantled.

Phase 2b represents the destruction of a fence, constructed on the site slightly W of the post-line. The fence had burnt down, and its charred remains survived across the centre of the trench. It appeared to have fallen to the W, and a blanket of fine grey ash thinned out in the same direction, suggesting an extensive fire fanned by an E wind unimpeded by immediate buildings. The best-preserved section was made of hazel wattles woven between uprights formed of two or three strands which were apparently not inserted in the ground. It therefore had the form of a hurdle, presumably supported by driven stakes at each end (possibly represented by stakeholes AS116 and AS117). The wattles were riddled with the tunnels of wood-boring insects (Robinson, Chapter 7).

The burnt layers were overlain by a sequence of fragmentary occupation layers, which could not be related to any clear structure. Seventeen fragments of burnt daub were recovered (from layers AS113/1-/3, AS111/6–7 and AS97), most showing wattle impressions, and they could derive from the clearance of a burnt-out building. A fragment of a glass linen smoother and a spindlewhorl of chalk or limestone were recovered from occupation layers, together with pottery from a minimum of seven jars (from layers AS97, AS111/6-/7, AS95). The local handmade shell-tempered ware (fabric *B*) was still the dominant fabric, but the proportion of St Neot's-type ware had increased to 20% of the assemblage. A proportion of continental imported pottery was also present, as in Phase 1 (Mellor, Chapter 6). Cattle, sheep and pig bones were recovered in greater quantities than from Phase 1 deposits (Wilson, Chapter 7), and oyster shells were also present.

A sample of the charred fence was submitted for radiocarbon dating, and gave an age range of cal

AD 900–1220 (HAR-419, see Appendix 2). The date was subsequently combined with other information from the site, including other radiocarbon dates and stratigraphy, and remodelled using a Bayesian approach. This model suggests an estimated date for the charred fence at 95% confidence level in the much reduced range cal AD 980–1050. The probability distribution is shown in Figure A2.5, and the methodology is explained in Appendix 2 to this volume, below. The pottery shows an increase in the proportion of St Neot's-type ware from Phase 2a to Phase 2b, and this would support a date-range from the later 10th century into the early 11th century. In the preliminary analysis of the site (see archive), Brian Durham suggested that the extensive fire which destroyed the fence might have been that recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 1009, when the Danes sacked Oxford. While this remains a possibility, it cannot be certainly demonstrated that the fire was not a more localised accident, or an episode of site clearance prior to the construction of the substantial cellar of Phase 3.

Phase 3, early to mid 11th century (Fig. 5.10)

The cellar, feature AS75, was the most spectacular of the late Saxon structures at All Saints Church, but also the most destructive of early stratigraphy. Long after it went out of use, its soft fills continued to influence subsequent development on the site. It was only possible to excavate a small area of the cellar (see description, above), with supplementary information obtained by augering. The cellar was sub-rectangular in shape, and its overall dimensions may be estimated at *c* 6.50 m long (N-S) and *c* 3.50 to 4.00 m in width. The depth of the cellar could only be estimated (see description, above), but it was clearly very deep, probably around 2.30 m below the contemporary ground surface. There was no evidence of an entrance within the excavated area. Figure 5.10 shows a suggested reconstruction, after Mason 1985, fig. 11.

The E wall had been constructed of planks laid horizontally on edge, supported by timber posts set into a shallow slot. The space between the planks and the side of the cellar was packed with gravel and soil. The S wall may have been represented by a single posthole, with no evidence of a trench. A wedge of pebble and gravel floor surfaces was recorded in the base of the cellar, but no other internal features survived.

Very few finds were recovered from the construction and occupation deposits of the cellar; small quantities of St Neot's-type ware and Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) were recovered from the post slot of the E wall, and a sherd of Pingsdorf-type ware from cellar floor layer AS177/5. A pointed and polished rod of antler, possibly a bodkin, was found in the uppermost floor layer, AS177/1. A pit in the SE corner of the trench, AS94, may have been contemporary with the use of the cellar, and the pottery from pit AS94 was dominated by St Neot's-type ware (see Mellor, Chapter 6). A far greater number of finds occurred in the infill layers of the cellar, when it was used for cess and rubbish disposal. Animal bone from pit AS94 and from the cellar infill represented by far the largest assemblage from the site (see Wilson, Chapter 6). Wilson comments that the assemblage represents domestic refuse, with a noticeable abundance of oyster shells; it suggests a good standard of diet, but not particularly high social status (see Wilson, below). The small finds from the pit fills were principally domestic items of 10th- and 11th-century types including knives, horseshoes and a padlock key (see I Goodall, Chapter 6), but the presence of an early copper alloy ansate brooch, datable to the 7th to 9th centuries, is surprising (see A Goodall, Chapter 6).

A fragment of a coin of Edward the Confessor minted between 1042 and 1044, was found in the upper fill layers; this coin is most unlikely to have been in circulation after 1066. The substantial pottery assemblage paralleled the assemblage from the latest pre-Mound level at Oxford Castle (see Mellor, Chapter 6), and showed the dominance of St Neot's-type ware which Mellor has identified as characteristic of the early to mid 11th century in Oxford. It therefore seems likely that the construction and destruction of the cellared building can be attributed with some confidence to the first half of the 11th century.

Since the excavation of the All Saints cellar, numerous examples of similar structures have been reported from 10th- to 11th-century contexts elsewhere, and have been discussed by Hall (1984) and Horsman *et al.* (1988), amongst others. The evidence from Oxford was discussed by Sturdy and Munby (1985, 92–4). Sunken structures would now appear to be a characteristic (if short-lived) element of urban building tradition in 10th- and 11th-century contexts throughout the country.

The dimensions of the All Saints structure place it among the larger known examples, comparable with buildings from Chester (Mason 1985, 8–21), 16–22 Coppergate, York (Hall 1984; 1994, 59–61), Brandon Rd, Thetford (Dallas 1993, 25–6; buildings J and L), buildings FMO1-2 from Fish St Hill, London and buildings WAT1-3 from Watling Court, London (Horsman *et al.* 1988, 70; Schofield *et al.* 1990, 47–8), a building at Cannon St, London (Grimes 1968, 157, figs 34 and 35), the Magistrates' Court site at Ipswich (Dunmore *et al.* 1976, 135–7) and a large example at 9–11 St Martin's St, Wallingford (Durham 1980b). Within Oxford, the All Saints structure is comparable with a number of others, including building D6A at the Clarendon Hotel site, Cornmarket (Jope and Pantin 1958, 31), building B1 at 55–58 Cornmarket (Sturdy and Munby 1985, 67, 93, fig. 10), and cellar 3160 at 113–119 High St (Walker and King 2000). The evidence for cellar pits and cellared buildings in Oxford is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of this volume, above.

The post and plank walling of the All Saints structure is characteristic of these buildings, although exact methods of construction varied. At All Saints, the planks were retained by posts set into a shallow trench, and this technique was also employed for certain of the buildings at York (Hall 1994, 60), and in London for buildings FMO1-2 at Fish St Hill, and building MLK1 at Milk St (Horsman *et al.* 1988, 78–9). The limited evidence at All Saints suggested that the cellar was originally floored with a layer of pebbles, and was resurfaced with gravel and pebbles on several occasions. Gravel floors were recorded in four sunken structures at London (buildings FMO1, FMO2, PDN11 and PDN10; Horsman *et al.* 1988, 85 and table 80), but the use of pebbles is unusual; building L at Brandon Rd, Thetford, had a thick layer of flints at the bottom, although it is not clear whether this represented a normal floor (Dallas 1993, 26, fig. 65). Of the other Oxford sunken buildings, the structure at 55–58 Cornmarket St had a floor of earth or timber (Sturdy and Munby 1985, 67), and the structure E of Oxford Castle had a floor of clay over a make-up of clay and gravel (Hassall 1976, 250).

Present research favours the view that the large sunken structures represent a lower storey beneath an upper storey at ground level (Sturdy and Munby 1985, 93; Horsman *et al.* 1988, 68–70; Hall 1994, 61 but see also Hall 1984, 75). No clear evidence of the superstructure survived at All Saints, or at any of the other Oxford sites. It is generally considered that these structures were cellars, providing cool and secure storage, and offering a degree of protection against fire and theft. This interpretation has been advanced by Sturdy and Munby at Oxford (1985, 93), Mason at Chester (1985, 21) and by Horsman *et al.* at London (1988, 108–9) who conclude that the size of many cellars in London argues for their use in a commercial rather than a primarily domestic context. At York, Hall has suggested that the sunken level in the Coppergate structures may have been living and working space (1984, 75).

Phases 4 and 5, the foundation of the church, second half of the 11th century (Figs 5.10, 5.11, 5.14, 5.15)

The first church on the site was a very small, single-celled, rectangular building with wall-footings of pitched stone (Phase 4). A mortared wall above survived only on the N side, where the footing was capped with a course of mortared pitched stone. The internal length of the building would have been no more than 5 m; its width is not known since the S wall was not found. The footings of the E wall were continuous, suggesting that the original building was a single cell, without a contemporary chancel to the E. Disturbance by later graves meant that no associated floors could be identified.

The building was constructed clearly to the S of the infilled cellared building of the previous phase, and it is possible that the builders knew of the soft ground. It is dated confidently to the second half of the 11th century, on the basis of its relationship to the former cellared building (Phase 3), and from the evidence of documentary sources (see historical background, above) that the church of All Saints was granted (or confirmed) to the priory of St Frideswide's in 1122.

The possibility that this building was a secular structure cannot be entirely discounted, and the earliest burials certainly postdated the structural additions of Phase 5 (see below). The mood at the time of the excavation was to anticipate a church developed from a secular building, following Biddle's interpretation of St Mary's Tanner Street in Winchester (Biddle 1972, 104–7), and this partly explains the provisional ideas expounded in the interim report (Hassall 1974, 54–7). Nevertheless, the form of the first building, and its subsequent development in Phases 5 and 6 (see below), is closely comparable with other contemporary churches excavated elsewhere; by contrast, on present evidence an 11th-century stone house would be most exceptional and there is no compelling reason to prefer such an interpretation here.

The area of the main excavation was too restricted to give any clear picture of the setting of the newly-founded church. The apparent property boundary observed in earlier phases had clearly been ignored, however, suggesting that some amalgamation of property had taken place. Observation of the original line of Turl St (Fig. 5.3) implies that the first church would have been set some 6 m E of the road. Small amounts of 12th-century pottery from the external graveyard (Phase 6) perhaps indicate continuing domestic occupation on an adjacent tenement to the N, fronting onto Turl St.

Subsequently, additional cells were constructed to the N and E but the sequence of development was not apparent. A square cell was jointed onto the N wall of the church (Phase 5a). It was very small, measuring only 3 m across internally, and had been built over the area of the infilled cellared building (Phase 3); its N and W walls showed evidence of subsidence which the thickening at AS 68/1 may have been designed to counteract. It probably proved impossible to construct a stable building on the soft ground; this area was soon afterwards in use as a graveyard, and several burials clearly overlay the square cell.

The function of such a small structure is not clear. The walls were not thick enough to support a stone tower, and it is possible that the building was a *porticus* for burials. The possibility that at least one burial may have been inside the *porticus* is considered below (Phase 6).

The original cell of the church was also extended to the E, probably to form a chancel (Phase 5b); on the evidence of the N wall, it is assumed to be of similar width to the nave, deeply-founded but probably not as sturdy as the original work. The proposed chancel was 4.20 m long and the E wall of the original cell must have been partially demolished to form a chancel arch.

Phase 6, the W end of the church and the external graveyard, 12th and early 13th century (Figs 5.11, 5.14, 5.15)

The evidence for structural alterations to the church during this period was very insubstantial, and its interpretation relies on the implications and dating of the furnaces which were cut through the robbed-out W wall of the original cell (AS246/1 and AS246/3). In the interim report (Hassall 1974, 54–7) it was suggested that these furnaces implied a phase of domestic or industrial use of the site. However, subsequent analysis by Dr Peter Northover of small dribbles of waste metal from the furnaces, showed them to be of the high tin bronze used for medieval bells, and it seems more likely that the furnaces were associated with bell casting at the church. The OAU is most grateful to Dr Northover and Dr Chris Salter for commenting on the likely function of these structures. No fragments of bell mould were recovered, but fragments of burnt clay and daub were recovered from the stokehole, all showing wattle impressions, and it is likely that they derive from the superstructure of the furnaces. Dr Salter comments that the size of the features, combined with the evidence of heavy burning, suggests that they represent melting hearths in which the metals were melted down before being poured into the bell mould elsewhere on the site. Small quantities of pottery recovered from the robber trench and furnaces are datable to the 12th century, or early 13th century at the latest.

The demolition of the original W wall must imply that the nave was extended westwards, and the evidence suggests that this was carried out simultaneously with the construction of a tower in which the bells were to be hung. The excavations did not locate the tower, whose collapse in 1700 had led to the demolition of the medieval church. However, analysis of early maps and written descriptions (see historical background, above) suggested that it probably stood at the W end of the Parish (or southern) nave, and remains of rubble stonework were observed in a position consistent with this interpretation, during sewerage work at the junction of Turl St and the High St in 1980 (see description, and Fig. 5.3). The construction of a tower in this position would explain the deflection of Turl St to the west. The only structural evidence for the extended nave was a 1.5 m length of coral rag footing, AS245.

The early graveyard and burials

Following the demolition or collapse of the Phase 5 square cell, the area N of the original church was used for burials. Although most of these early burials were subsequently enclosed within the enlarged later medieval church, they were associated with a firm, weathered fill (AS24/1) which predated the addition of the second nave and chancel on the N of the church (Phase 7), and which contrasted markedly with the dry, loose fill of the church interior (AS24).

A total of 16 excavated burials are attributed to this early phase (Fig. 5.11 and Table 5.1). Nine of the burials overlay the walls of the collapsed square N cell, and therefore clearly postdated it. It cannot be definitely asserted that there were no burials on the site before the construction of this building, but it is considered unlikely. Three burials were originally thought to have predated the square cell (burials AS54, AS66 and AS85), since parts of the bodies were missing, and the burials appeared to have been cut by the walls. Subsequent analysis has suggested, however, that the same effect could have been caused by subsidence into the soft ground of the infilled cellar beneath. A fourth, burial AS61, lay entirely within the area of the square cell, and might therefore have preceded its construction; alternatively, it could represent a single internal burial. However, this burial was not significantly deeper than the others, and it shared the slightly offset orientation of burials AS53, AS55 and AS57, which overlay the walls; it therefore seems more likely to belong with this group.

Ten of the graves had stone linings in a mix of mortar or cob. Of these, burial AS55 lay on a bed of charcoal; another burial, AS50, was unlined but lay on a coffin-shaped bed of ash. The remainder were apparently simple burials. There was no association between age, sex and burial type, and it is interesting to note that individuals buried in stone-lined graves ranged from an ageing adult female (AS54) to a 2-year-old child (AS74).

Burials in stone-lined graves are known from numerous sites, and the examples from All Saints fit well with the general pattern; the evidence has been reviewed by White (1988, 22–5) and may be summarised here. Although the context and dating of stone-lined graves is not certain, they may be imitations of the more prestigious stone sarcophagi; many examples are known from monastic and cathedral sites, but they may be rarer in small urban graveyards. The use of stone-lined graves persisted into the later medieval period, but they seem to be most common in 11th- and 12th-century contexts.

Further stone-capped or stone-lined burials which may be contemporary with the All Saints examples have been excavated at Christ Church (formerly St Frideswide's). In work at the E end of Christ Church Cathedral (Gaz No. 20), Sturdy excavated five stone-lined burials which he dated to the late 11th or early 12th century. Subsequently, Scull excavated a further four stone-lined burials in Christ Church cloister (Gaz No. 23), one datable to before the Norman Conquest, and the other three to the first half of the 12th century.

One charcoal burial and one burial on a bed of ash were also excavated at All Saints. The charcoal burial (AS55) was submitted for radiocarbon determination and gave an age range of cal AD 980–1270 (HAR-418; see Table A2.4); remodelling of this date using a Bayesian approach (see Appendix 2) narrows the most probable range slightly to cal AD 1040–1250. Charcoal burials are known from numerous sites,

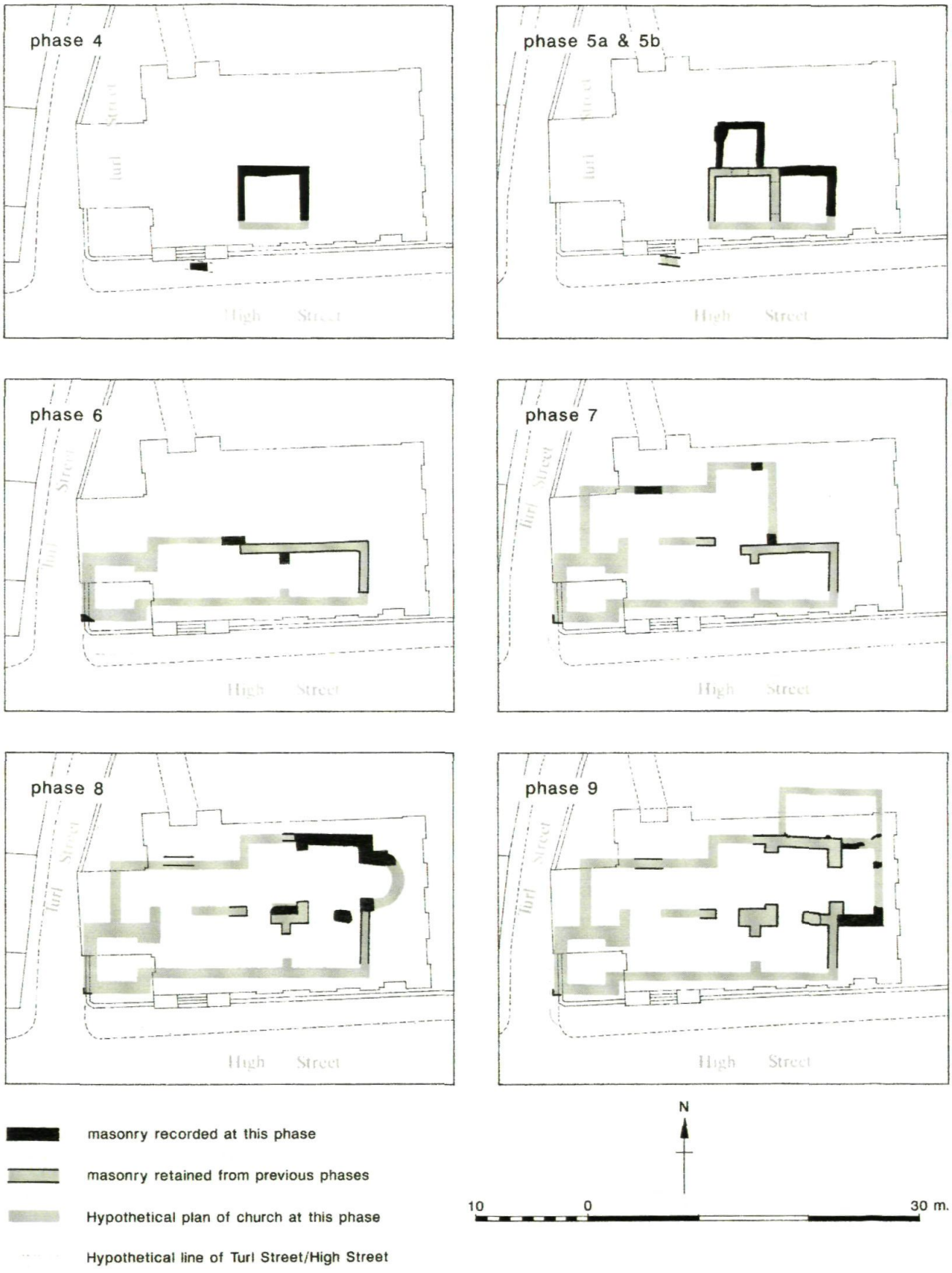


Figure 5.14 All Saints Church; phased development of the church.

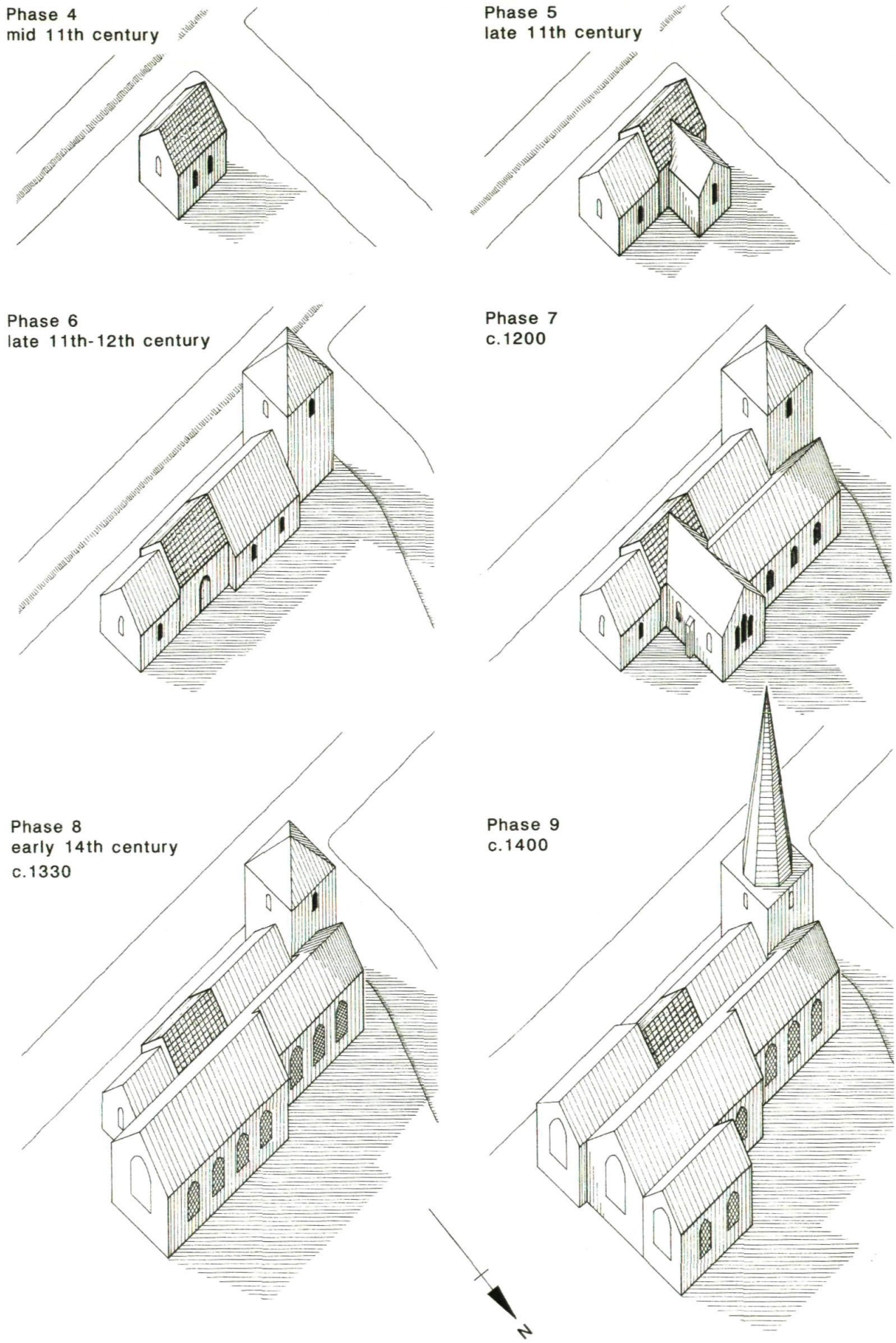


Figure 5.15 All Saints Church; conjectural reconstruction.

dating from the 9th to the 12th centuries; again, the evidence has been reviewed by White (1988, 25) and may be usefully repeated here. The significance of the practice is unknown, but such burials seem to be rare in early parish church cemeteries and most known examples are associated with cathedral churches. Two charcoal burials were salvaged by Hassall at Christ Church Tom Quad (Gaz No. 22) during drainage work. A radiocarbon date obtained on the earlier burial gave an unhelpfully wide age range of cal AD 680–1160 (HAR-190 (S); see Table A2.3). However, remodelling of this date using a Bayesian approach in combination with other burials from Christ Church and St Aldate's Church suggests a much narrower range of cal AD 810–970 (see Appendix 2). Two further charcoal burials from St Frideswide's were recovered by Scull, in Christ Church cloister (Gaz No. 23); one of these was submitted for radiocarbon determination and gave a radiocarbon age range of cal AD 770–990 (Burial 123, Lab. No. HAR-6819; see Table A2.3). Remodelling of this date using a Bayesian approach (reported in Appendix 2, below) reduces the date range to cal AD 860–980 at 94% confidence level. Very recently, eight more charcoal burials have been excavated during reordering work at St Aldate's Church (Gaz No. 121); three of these have been radiocarbon dated to cal AD 880–1000, cal AD 690–940 and cal AD 780–990 (NZA-12348, NZA-12349 and NZA-12347; see Table A2.3). Remodelling of these dates using a Bayesian approach (reported in Appendix 2, below) reduces these date ranges to cal AD 820–960 (at 94% confidence level), cal AD 830–960 and cal AD 860–980. The evidence from Oxford to date thus supports White's evidence from elsewhere, that charcoal burial was a relatively long-lived practice, probably lasting from the 9th century until the 12th.

Several of the graves at All Saints were intercutting, which might suggest that the cemetery was in use for at least two generations; grave AS54 was clearly earlier than graves AS50 and AS55; grave AS64 was later than AS74, and grave AS53 was later than grave AS63. Grave AS58 was reused for a second burial. Radiocarbon dates were obtained for burial AS55 (cal AD 980–1270; HAR-418, see Table A2.4) and burial AS57 (cal AD 1010–1290; HAR-729, see Table A2.4). Remodelling of the dates using a Bayesian approach (see Appendix 2) reduces these ranges to cal AD 1040–1250 and cal AD 1040–1270 respectively, and these dates, combined with the stratigraphic evidence, support the dating of the cemetery to the 12th or early to mid 13th century. Pottery from the graveyard fill certainly included redeposited material (Mellor, Chapter 6), but characteristic glazed sherds were present which have been dated elsewhere in Oxford to *c* 1190.

It is difficult to identify any pattern in the layout and organisation of the graveyard, and its full extent was certainly not recovered, since a further burial, AS243, was seen in lightwell III (Fig. 5.3), in a location which would have been outside the church even at its greatest late-medieval extent. A prick-spur of 10th- or 11th-century date was recovered from the same context, and may have been associated with this burial.

It is interesting to note that a set of small copper alloy folding balances for weighing precious metals, gems or precious substances such as spices or drugs was recovered from the external graveyard fill (A Goodall, Chapter 6). Churchyards were frequently used for public meetings and trading at this period (the Portmoot of Oxford is known to have met at St Martin's in the 12th century), and the All Saints' balances may well bear witness to trading on the site.

Phases 7–9, the later medieval development of the church (Figs 5.12–5.15)

The later development of the church is not considered in detail here, partly because it lies outside the main chronological framework of this volume, but also because the evidence was in many cases so fragmentary that any conclusions can only be tentative.

Early maps and written descriptions make it clear that a second nave and chancel were added to the N side of the church, to be designated ultimately the College's nave and chancel, with the parish using the older building to the S (see historical background above). The evidence for the construction of the N nave was the weakest of all the structural elements of the church, relying on a sighting of a limestone rubble footing, AS229, observed for a length of 0.80 m before disappearing beneath the boilerhouse floor, never to reappear. Augering beneath the boilerhouse floor showed that there was no continuous footing on this line. This wall would have been crossing the soft ground of the infilled cellared building, which had already led to the abandonment of the Phase 5 square cell; it is possible that the builders solved the problem by carrying the wall on arches with one or more stone piles, as for example at the 13th-century infirmary of St John's Hospital (Durham 1991, 34, 63) and the 14th-century N transept of St Michael at the Northgate. Two robber trenches (AS248 and AS249) may represent a further element of the N nave wall, and their position would suggest that wall AS229 was the N wall of a short N transept, which returned S to their alignment. However, the lack of evidence means that this interpretation can only be presented as speculative. The E wall of the transept or nave was represented by robber trench AS49, with only a small area of original stonework surviving at its S end (AS49/2). Pits underlying the wall were dug out and filled with stone (AS49/1, AS98/1) to provide a sounder foundation.

However tenuous the evidence for the N nave may be, there can be no doubt about the substantial evidence for the subsequent addition of a N chancel. There appears to have been a change of plan, when an apsidal-ended structure represented by footings AS206, AS207 and AS209 was apparently abandoned

in favour of a squared end, represented by footings AS203, AS204 and an extension of AS206. The footings ranged in width from 0.80 m (AS204) to 1.10 m (AS203, AS206).

The construction of the N chancel implies that the E wall of the N nave or transept must have been partially demolished; this activity must be represented by robber trench AS49. The surviving stonework (AS49/2) appears to have been integrated into a massive stone footing which may have supported both a chancel arch to the N and an arch in an E-W arcade dividing the N nave from the S nave. The N respond of the chancel arch was represented by AS233.

The dating of these major additions is very uncertain. The dating of the construction of the N nave relies on the group of 12th-century pottery recovered from the external graveyard fill that was enclosed by the new building. This assemblage included pottery dated to the very end of the 12th century (Phase 6, and Mellor Chapter 6), but the radiocarbon dates of burials AS55 and AS57 would allow the construction of the N nave to be 60 or 70 years later than this (Phase 6). The robber trench AS49 of the E wall of the N nave or transept, and the surviving masonry AS49/2, were overlain by burial AS67, which was radiocarbon dated to the range cal AD 1250–1430 (HAR-730; see Table A2.4). Remodelling of this date using a Bayesian approach (see Appendix 2) results in an age range of cal AD 1220–1410. Documentary sources suggest that the chapel and crypt of St Anne existed by 1333 (see historical background, above). Since St Anne's chapel was added onto the N chancel, the chancel itself should therefore predate 1333, and the radiocarbon date on burial AS67 would allow it to be at least as early as 1250. Moreover, pottery recovered from robber trench AS49 included fragments of highly-decorated Brill/Boarstall ware (see Mellor, below), datable to the mid 13th century. However, it also remains possible that the building of the chancel could be associated with the patronage of the Bishop of Lincoln, who held the vicarage in the early 14th century (see historical background, above), although the remodelled date range for burial AS67 now perhaps makes this less likely.

No archaeological evidence was recovered for the second family chantry at All Saints, that of the Holy Trinity, licensed in 1376. Wood clearly believed that this chapel was the old S chancel, and if there was any new building at this stage, it is likely to have been an eastward extension of the S nave, to give the squared-up outline depicted by Loggan. The construction of the Holy Trinity chapel would have required the partial demolition of the Phase 2 E wall of the S chancel, and this was possibly the time when a large arch was inserted in the old N wall, to communicate with the N chancel (footing AS200).

Church floors survived in only three small areas, and there is no evidence to confirm their date. A lightweight stone footing (AS16) over one floor surface may have been the base for a screen or rail. The lack of tile impressions on the floors suggests that at least in their later usage they were of bare mortar, although tiled floors had clearly been laid since numerous fragments of floor tile were recovered. The evidence of the architectural fragments suggests that some of the exterior of the church may have been whitewashed (see Chapter 6). A casement moulding with a sunk chamfer, probably 14th-century, showed evidence of successive painting of the interior of the church, first in red on white, then black on white and finally in whitewash, after which the stone itself had been reused as mortared rubble. The nave arcade may have had a roll-moulded label. The window glass included many finds of clear glass of post-medieval type. Of the medieval glass recovered, 83% was decorated but only 12% (nine fragments) was coloured. None of the decorated glass could be reconciled with the heraldic motifs of the 17th-century descriptions (see historical background, above). The parapets and low-pitched roofs shown on Loggan's map suggest a general rebuilding of the upper stages with clerestories, perhaps towards the end of the 15th century (see historical background, above). By the early 16th century, alabaster panels, of which four fragments survived, were fixed to the walls. No evidence was recovered for the 16th-century Glovers' Chapel, nor for the porch on the N side of the church, depicted by Loggan. Within the church, a shallow stone plinth (AS22) in the NE corner of the nave may have supported a pulpit, and extra stonework mortared onto the W footing of the chancel arch pier (AS19/3) may relate to its resiting at the time when seats were set up in 1636 (Wood *City* III, 152).

The later burials

Burials from the later medieval and post-medieval periods were recovered, but are not discussed in detail here. It is likely that the rebuilding work in the early 18th century caused considerable disturbance of the internal burials, and a charnel pit (AS15) in the centre of the church presumably contained many of the upcast bones. Additional disturbance had been caused by the digging of brick burial vaults.

Burials from the medieval church were sealed by the demolition layer AS1/1, and those that were retained for analysis are summarised in Table 5.1. All these burials came from layer AS24, a loose, dry fill which distinguished them from the earlier external graveyard fill, AS24/1. A total of 32 'medieval' burials were fully recorded, although several more were observed during salvage recording; most of these burials could date from any time between the addition of the N nave and the demolition of the medieval church. Only six graves had any stratigraphic relationship to structural features of the church. Burial AS67 has been discussed above, and burial AS47 was cut into the robber trench of the same wall, at the N end. Three intercutting graves lay

in the space between the N and S chancels (graves AS60, AS59 and AS18; the burial from grave AS60 was apparently discarded without analysis, and is therefore not included in Table 5.1). The earliest of the three, AS59, was a stone-lined burial with a stone slab for a base; the skull lay on a bed of ash, in a wooden coffin; possible traces of quick lime were noted below the coffin. Since this grave partly overlay the wall of the original S chancel (represented by robber trench AS80), it is almost certain to postdate the building of the N chancel and the creation of an interconnecting arch or arcade. The excavator noted that the grave was probably earlier than pier base AS200, which may be associated with the creation of the Holy Trinity Chapel in the 1370s. This evidence, though tenuous, suggests a late 13th- or 14th-century date for AS59, and this is late for a stone-lined burial. This burial was succeeded in the same location by grave AS18, which contained a stone coffin in which at least three individuals had been buried. The coffin was covered by an inverted stone slab on which a crudely-chiselled cross had been carved. This slab appeared to be the inverted base of the coffin. The occurrence of these burials in a 13th- or 14th-century context is notable, and it may suggest that this location in the church was associated with the burials of a prestigious family. Grave AS20 cut the NW corner of the S pier base of the chancel arch (AS19/1-/2, AS49/2); the grave contained three burials, and probably represents another family grave.

Three further intercutting stone-lined graves were observed during salvage recording (AS205, AS216, AS217; the bones from these graves were apparently discarded and are not included in Table 5.1). These lay inside, and respected, the square E end of the N chancel, and may therefore be presumed to be of early to mid 14th-century date or later. As with graves AS59 and AS18, it may be suggested that such a late occurrence of stone-lined graves is associated with burials in a very prestigious location; graves AS205, AS216 and AS217 would have been very close to the altar of the new N chancel. Although the skeletons were not retained for analysis, it was noted that grave AS205 appeared to contain the burials of a female and two infants.

It has not been possible to identify any of these individuals precisely, but current research into the records of Lincoln College has drawn attention to the existence of numerous wills of medieval patrons of the church, many of whom specifically requested burial at All Saints (*ex inf* Dr A J Dodd, from Salter's transcription of the Lincoln records in MS Top Oxon c. 396). A selection of these are noted below, with the date of grant of probate, and they illustrate the strong links which existed in the 14th and 15th centuries between the church and some of Oxford's most powerful citizens.

Hugh fil. I. of Curtlington (1294)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in cimiterio O. S. Oxonie

Philip de Wormenhalle (1314)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in ecclesia O. S. Oxonie
(He was the first husband of Alianore de Burncestre, *qv*, and Mayor of Oxford in 1310)

John de Hampton (1328)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in ecclesia O. S. Oxonie
(Mayor of Oxford 1319–20 and 1322)

Will. de Burcestre (1340)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepelliendum [*sic*] *in ecclesia O. S. Oxonie in capella Sancte Anne*
(This was the William of Bicester who instituted the chantry in St Anne's chapel. To his son he left *omnes libros meos de Romancia et unam mappam cum trella.* He was Mayor of Oxford five times between 1311 and 1339, and left family properties on the north of the churchyard, and the Mitre Inn on the corner of Turl Street opposite All Saints Church, to endow the chantry)

Hugh de Hampton (1342)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in cimiterio ecclesie O. S. Oxonie

Alianore de Burncestre [Bicester] (1348)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in capella Sancte Anne in ecclesia O. S. Oxonie iuxta tumulum Willelmi mariti mei
(Alianore was the wife of William of Bicester, *qv*)

Edmund de Kenyan (1414)
Lego...corpus meum ad sepeliendum in ecclesiam O. S. Oxonie in loco ubi Elizabeth quondam uxor mea sepulta fuit
(Mayor of Oxford in 1401, 1404 and 1412 and Member of Parliament for Oxford several times between 1379 and 1394. Father of Emmelina Carre, *qv*)

Emmelina Carre (1436)
Lego...corpus meum [ad] sepeliendum in ecclesiam O. S. Oxonie coram ymagine sancti Salvatoris iuxta filium meum
(Wife of John Carre, bedell of the University, and daughter of Edmund de Kenyan. Emmelina was a patron of Lincoln College)

William Dagville (1474)
...my body to be buryd in oure lady chapelle afore the awter in the churche of all halowys in Oxenford
(Of a notable Oxford family, Mayors on numerous occasions from the later 14th century onwards. William was Mayor in 1465–7, 1472 and 1474 and Member of Parliament for Oxford in 1449 and 1467)

Excavations at four sites on the frontage of Queen Street (Fig. 5.16)

The locations of the four sites are shown on Figure 5.2; the locations of earlier observations in the vicinity are also shown. Figure 5.16 shows a detail view of Queen Street from Loggan's map of 1675.

***Historical background** (Figs 5.16, 5.17)*
by Julian Munby

The topography of medieval Oxford is well established from the late 13th century, and some properties have ownership recorded back to the late 12th century. The boundaries of tenements can often be shown to be relatively stable over a long time, and the existing main street frontages in Oxford are also not very different from their later medieval alignments; significant changes since the 17th century are well recorded, being the subject of payments to the City. The area of Carfax has perhaps seen the most alteration, and it will be useful to outline the development of the central crossroads, since it has a bearing on the sites whose frontages are discussed here (Fig. 5.17).

The present open space at Carfax is a result of the Carfax Improvement Scheme of 1896 (*VCH* iv, 203), which swept away the church of St Martin (No. 32 on Loggan's map, Fig. 5.16), and began the process of rebuilding the other three corners. But this was only the second or third stage in a long sequence of changes which gradually opened out what had been a narrow crossroads in the later medieval period.

The largest encroachment on the central space was the church of St Martin, which after its 14th-century rebuilding (and with the Penniless Bench under its east end) effectively narrowed the end of Cornmarket and Queen Street, and even after rebuilding in 1820 took up much the same space (*VCH* iv, 386). It had a narrow cemetery behind it to the north-west, and a single property on the north side, which projected out as far as the east end of the church. Only with the purchase of Nos 62–5 Cornmarket in 1895–6 (*OCP*, 163) and the demolition of the church, was it possible to straighten out the southern end of Cornmarket. To the west of the church was No. 45 Queen Street, also existing in 1279 (though not in 1195) and probably built on part of the original cemetery: it also projected beyond the church, and was rebuilt in 1783 under the 1771 Mileways Act (*Survey* NW(16)). The whole of the north side of Queen Street was burnt in the great fire of 1644, though rebuilding is unlikely to have followed a very different alignment (Porter 1984).

Across the road on the south side was the site of the old Gildhall ('Oldyeldhall') at Nos 1–3 Queen Street (*Survey* SW(137)), and the adjacent Swindlestock Tavern SW(135). The Portmoot is recorded as meeting in the churchyard of St Martin's in the 12th century (*CO* ii, 550), and this first Gildhall must have been the centre of town government until the second Gildhall was acquired in 1229, on the site of the present Town Hall in St Aldate's (*Survey* SE(130)). The Oldyeldhall became part of Battes Inn of Merton College, and its medieval vaulted cellar (only removed in 1931) was recorded as coming up to the edge of the pavement line (Hurst 1899). The Swindlestock Tavern (later the Mermaid) also had a cellar, and while the building was demolished in 1706–9 to make a colonnade

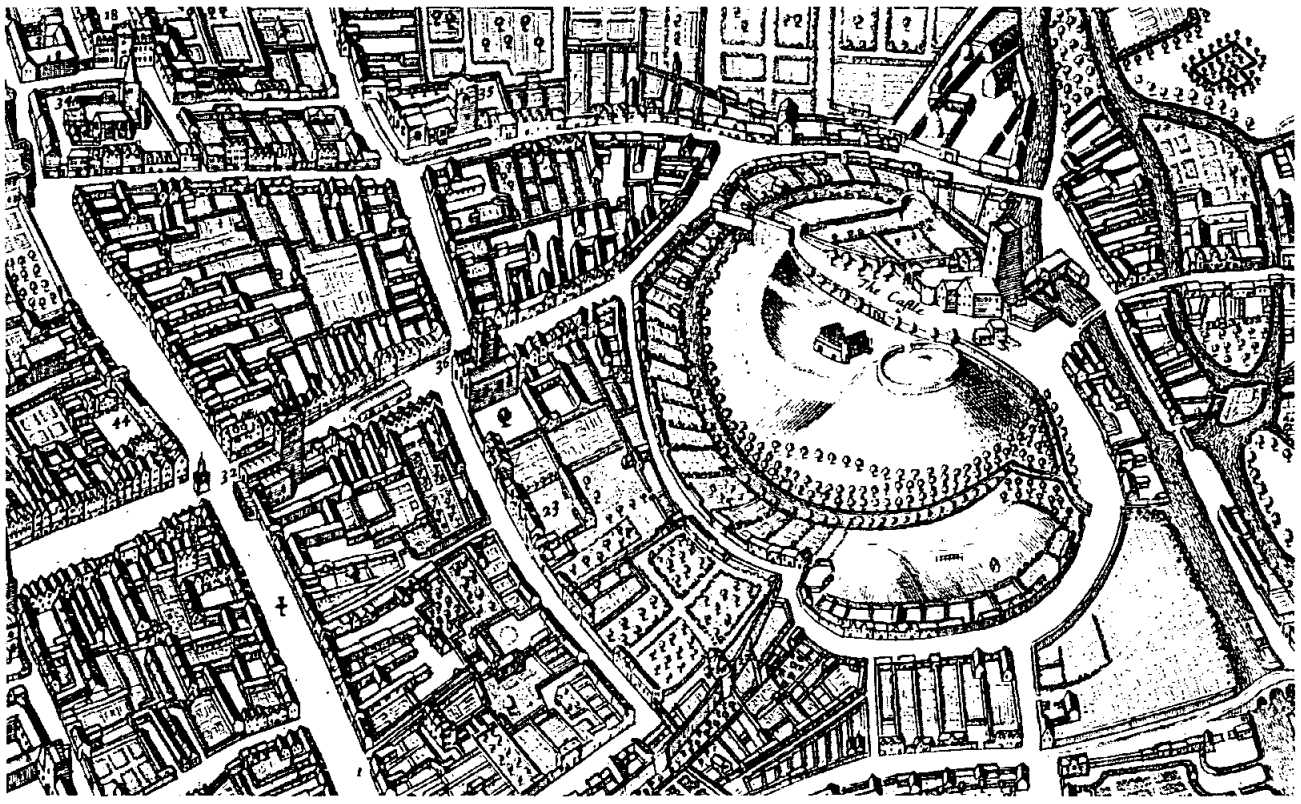


Figure 5.16 Loggan's bird's-eye view of Oxford, 1675 (detail), showing Queen Street (Looking south).

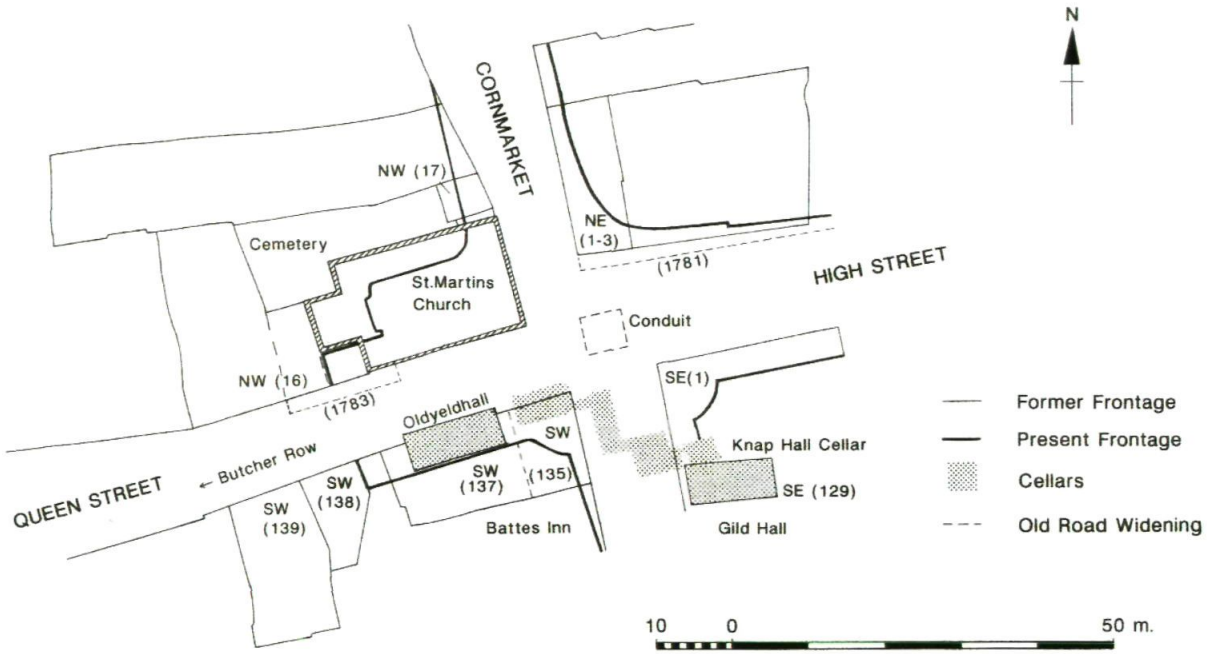


Figure 5.17 The development of Carfax, Queen St and High St, showing medieval topography and landholding (after Salter).

and open space for a butter market (*OCP*, 157), the extensive cellarage under Carfax and St Aldate's remained until the 20th century (see below). The site was later built over, and then finally removed for widening in 1931.

The church and the properties opposite may thus have slightly narrowed the eastern end of Queen Street, but one reason that the remainder of the street did not become narrower was the presence of the Butcher Row or Shambles in the middle of the road from 1556 until 1773; they had earlier been located in High Street (*VCH* iv, 306–7).

The High Street side of Carfax has also been widened, though the junction was never so narrow as Queen Street; it was obstructed by the large stone cistern of the Carfax Conduit from 1610 to 1789 (Cole 1964/5). On the north-east corner was a group of small medieval shops, including at least one tavern (*Survey* NE (1–3, 138–41). Their successors were purchased by the Paving Commissioners in *c* 1785 under an act of 1781 for widening High Street (21 Geo. III c.xlvii) and rebuilt about 8 feet further back (*S&T*, 8), but it should be noted that primary pebbled metalling overlaid by pitched stone cobbling was found a further 2.2 m back during redevelopment of No. 5 (Gaz No. 54). The present curved frontage dates from 1901.

The south-east corner is the least altered. Here were also small shops, including from the mid 14th century a cellared tavern at the corner (*Survey* SE(1)) and to its south the still-existing medieval vaulted cellar of Knap Hall (*Survey* SE(129), now the Town Hall Plate Room). The corner frontage was rebuilt and set back in 1931 (*VCH* iv, 203).

High Street and Queen Street properties

By the late medieval period the properties nearest Carfax were narrow and not very deep, as the tenements in adjacent streets competed for space near the centre of town. Further from Carfax along the High and Queen Street they are broader and generally run back to the parish boundary (All Saints parish in High Street, St Martin's and St Peter le Bailey in Queen Street). Many of the properties are documented back to 1279 (the Hundred Rolls survey) or earlier, and the regular appearance of many tenements on the 1875 OS large scale plan must often reflect their shape in the late medieval period which is sometimes indicated by earlier maps of ownership or may be implicit in long-term corporate ownership. A 12th-century Oseney property in Queen Street was still held by Christ Church in the 20th century, and New College owned 29 Queen Street for over 500 years (*Survey* SW (150), NW (7)); while the City has only recently sold to Lincoln College its earliest property, a house in High Street that it acquired in 1420 (*Survey* SE(17)). The history of ownership is very dependent on the corporate landowners, which means that some of the large private houses near the centre of the town are rather poorly documented by comparison with the massive archive resources of monastic and collegiate landlords. There is also a difference between the eastern and western halves of the town, since the 1279 description of Oxford in the Hundred Rolls is arranged in topographical order in the north-west and south-west wards, and incompletely by owner in the other two wards.

The street market

Oxford's twice-weekly market was a street market spreading out along the principal streets from Carfax, from earliest times until the Covered Market was opened in 1774 (Graham 1979); the market in Gloucester Green was only chartered in 1601, and there does not appear to have been a specific 'market place' in the plan of the town, except for an area inside Westgate reclaimed from the site of the castle barbican, and perhaps used in the 15th century (*VCH* iv, 305–12). Extramural streets such as Broad Street and St Giles clearly had appropriate spaces for marketing, even on their narrower medieval widths, and Broad Street was at one time known as Horsemonger Street. There were a few specially designated market structures from the 13th century, such as the butchers' shambles in High Street and the fish stalls below the Gildhall, but the cornmarket and the later butcher row were built only in the 16th century; the majority of sellers must have had removable stalls. The extent of the medieval market in *c* 1370 is described in a set of ordnances in the town's Red Book or custumal, where the location of each commodity is given in relation to side streets and named houses (Wood *City*, i.475–8; map p. 496). The antiquity of these arrangements cannot be known, but the site of the Cross Inn in Cornmarket was described in 1182 as being 'in the market' (*in foro*: *CO* ii.4), as was Knap Hall in St Aldate's and it is likely that the market was always held in the main streets. In addition to the temporary stalls there were of course separate and more permanent groups of shops devoted to individual trades such as the Spicery, Mercery, Drapery and Cordwainery, which were to be found in the upper end of High Street and the Cornmarket; these were not rigid divisions nor exclusive areas, however, and may have been (like the Drapery) groups of stalls within a single building or property (*VCH* iv, 27).

Excavations at No. 4 Queen St, 1986

Introduction (Figs 5.2, 5.18)

The excavation was carried out in 1986, and was designed with the specific intention of confirming suspected changes in the street frontage. The principal point in its favour from an archaeological viewpoint was, however, the comparative shallowness of the existing basement (62.90 m OD); the disdavantages were that the basement had already been largely infilled, and that it was very small in area which meant that the site had virtually no space for storing excavated spoil.

In the medieval period, the property (*Survey* SW (138)) was small and irregularly shaped, and lay beside the entrance of Battes Inn and the Oldyeldhall, which may account for its projection into the street. In 1279 it was one of four messuages belonging to the Bishop of Chester between here and the corner; in later years it may have been a tavern like so many nearby properties, but its detailed history is not well known, though it has survived until now as a separate holding.

The excavation *(Fig. 5.18)*

Phase 2

Overlying the natural ground surface at the E end of the trench was a series of six surfaces 4Q51–46. They survived over about 20% of its area. Layer 4Q51, the lowest (at a level of approx 61.70 m OD), was a hard compact surface of small pebbles in a matrix of light grey-brown clay loam. This was overlain by 4Q50, which was sticky grey-brown silty loam. Layer 4Q49 was very hard, almost concreted burnt gravel. This was overlain by 4Q48, a looser orange gravel. Layer 4Q47 was a hard layer of burnt gravel, and the uppermost layer was 4Q46, a grey silty loam. Layers 4Q51, 49 and 47 had the appearance of successive street surfaces, and the intervening layers appeared to be dirt built up upon them. No finds were recovered from these layers.

Phase 3

The street surfaces and dirt layers were cut by a well, 4Q44, and two pits, 4Q45 and 4Q32. Well 4Q44 and pit 4Q32 appeared to be in contemporary use.

Well 4Q44 lay across the W half of the trench. Its N and S sides were parallel (the S side coinciding with the S edge of excavation), but the E side had been much disturbed by later features. The well was excavated to a depth of 1.85 m below the concrete floor of the basement; augering for a further 1.3 m failed to reach natural gravel. The lowest excavated fills of the well consisted of sands and gravels, under loam.

Well 4Q44 was cut by pit 4Q45, of which a 0.4 m width was recorded N of the S edge of the trench. The lower fills of the pit consisted of thin layers of grey loam, often with charcoal, and thin layers of gravel. The pit appeared to be sealed by a gravel surface 4Q35 and a thick layer of occupation debris, 4Q34, consisting of grey-brown loam with charcoal fragments and patches of burning. A group of stones, feature 4Q43, were found slumped into the fills of pit 4Q45; they appeared to represent packing stones for a posthole cut from the level of 4Q35, 4Q34 above. Layers 4Q34 and 4Q35 dipped away to the N, probably owing to the subsidence of the fills of well 4Q44. Above this level, layers 4Q38 and 4Q39 sealed the fills of both pit 4Q45 and well 4Q44, and appeared to represent a general levelling-up of the site. Both layers contained considerable quantities of occupation debris.

Pit 4Q32 was seen on the N side of the trench. Its fills (recorded as 4Q36) were mixed with the fills of the well and pit 4Q45 to the S. The sides of the pit were heavily undercut and it proved very difficult to find an edge in relation to the well fills. The pit was cut through the series of pebble and gravel street

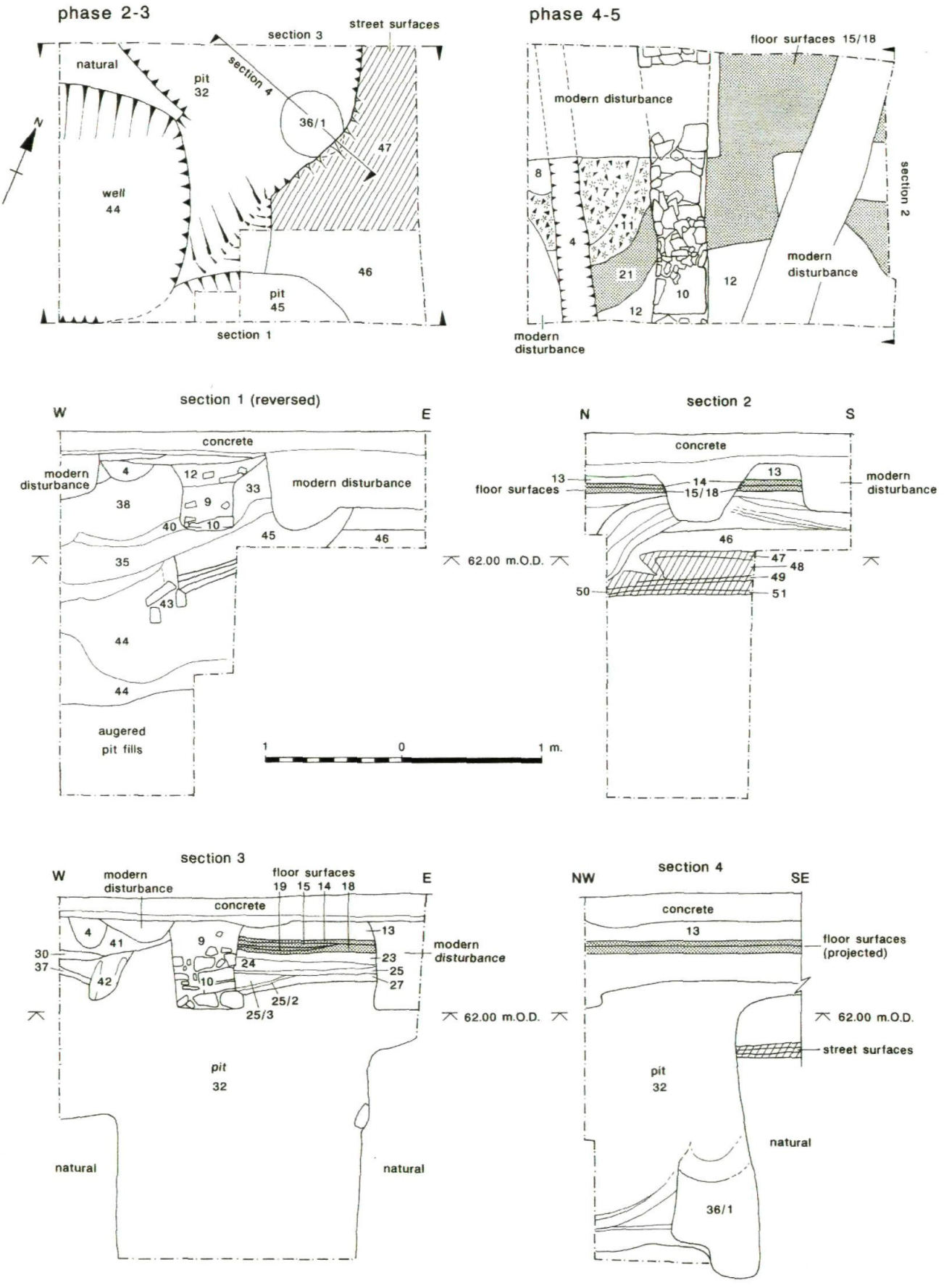


Figure 5.18 No 4 Queen St; plans and sections.

surfaces (Phase 2), and a large posthole, 4Q36/1, was found in the corner, filled with crumbly loam. Three small finds were recovered from layer 4Q34; a copper alloy object, possibly casting debris (SF4QS.4 not illustrated), a lead lump (SF4QS.11 not illustrated) and some fragments of window glass (SF4QS.9 not illustrated). The presence of the window glass suggests that there was a degree of redeposition in this context. A short length of copper alloy tube, possibly a lace end (SF4QS.7 not illustrated) was recovered from 4Q36, the fill of pit 4Q32. Pottery was recovered from layers 4Q34 and 4Q35, fill 4Q36 of pit 4Q32, well 4Q44, and levelling-up layers 4Q38 and 4Q39 sealing pit 4Q45 and well 4Q44. The pottery was predominantly St Neot's-type ware, with the late Saxon handmade shell-tempered fabric (fabric *B*) representing only 26% of the total, which is suggestive of an early to mid 11th-century date. The presence of pottery of the local sandy tradition, Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*) may represent intrusion from Phase 4 as a result of subsidence of the well fill. Stamford type ware and a possible continental greyware were also present (see Mellor, Chapter 6).

Phase 4

A slot or gully, 4Q4, overlay a diffuse pit 4Q8, and cut into an area of burnt flooring and hearths 4Q7, 4Q11, 4Q17, 4Q20–22 and 4Q41. These in turn overlay a small posthole, 4Q42, and a lens of gravel 4Q30. These levels yielded a small ceramic assemblage which was dominated by Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*). Also present was a jar with thumbed decoration; this type of decoration is not known locally before the mid 11th century, but fingertipping and thumbing increased in popularity before the century's end. A copper alloy object with traces of wood (SF4QS.5 not illustrated) was recovered from layer 4Q22.

Phase 5

The features of this phase could not be closely dated; the evidence suggests that there was a stone-walled building on the site, which was refloored a number of times.

A wall, 4Q10, ran NW-SE across the site, surviving for a length of 1.50 m. The wall was represented by a robber trench, 4Q9, with surviving stonework in the bottom. The surviving stonework (4Q10) consisted of large, faced coursed blocks on the E side of the wall, with a roughly-coursed rubble infill to the W; the stones were set in a yellow gravelly clay. The wall was parallel to the slot or gully (4Q4) described under Phase 4 above.

To the E of the robber trench was a series of thin lenses. Uppermost was silty loam, then yellow sand, small rubble, a burnt area and greyish loam, successively recorded as 4Q23–27, which overlay a burnt horizon 4Q29 and grey loam 4Q28. These layers may represent successive refloorings of the building, levelling up to counteract the subsidence of the fills of pit 4Q32 (Phase 3). A similar sequence of layers was observed in the E section, but disturbance by a modern pipe trench (4Q5) meant that the layers could not be definitely associated. These layers were dipping steeply into a feature to the N, which was obscured by shoring. A small cut (4Q31), which may represent a posthole, was cut into gravel lens 4Q30 (Phase 3).

Sealing these layers were dark loam 4Q18 and beige gravel 4Q19, underneath yellow loam, pink sand and ashy loam 4Q13–15. Layers 4Q18, 4Q19 and 4Q13–15 abutted wall 4Q10, and are interpreted as floors; they were also visible in the E section. They yielded a pottery assemblage which contained one sherd of Late Medieval Oxford ware, which could indicate a date possibly as early as the second quarter of the 13th century. Fragments of copper alloy plate, possibly a strainer, were recovered from layer 4Q19 (Fig. 6.17 No. 11), and a horseshoe (SF4QS.8 not illustrated) characteristic of the 9th to late 11th centuries was found in feature 4Q31.

Finds associated with the robbing of the stone wall (4Q9) included Rhenish stoneware from Frechen, English tinglaze earthenware, and black-glazed red earthenware, suggesting a mid to late 17th-century date (Mellor, Chapter 6). A fragment of window glass (SF4QS.10 not illustrated) was recovered from robber trench 4Q9, and a lead offcut (SF4QS.2 not illustrated) from its fill, 4Q12.

Phase 6

Beneath the concrete floor of the modern basement was recent makeup 4Q1–2 and 4Q6. Beneath were pipe trenches 4Q5 and 4Q16, cut into the earth floor, 4Q3, of a previous cellar, which was possibly continuous with the fill 4Q12 of the NS robber trench, 4Q9.

Excavations at Nos 7–8 Queen Street, 1985

Introduction (Fig. 5.2)

Archaeological excavations were carried out over a four-week period in 1985, in advance of the redevelopment of the site by Prudential Properties Ltd, whose cooperation in allowing access is gratefully acknowledged. The work was funded by HBMC. The trenches were dug in the basements of the two adjoining standing buildings, their size and location being determined by the standing partition walls.

Numbers 7–8 Queen St (*Survey* SW(140)) belonged to Merton College from 1499, and being situated between properties of the town on the E and New College on the W can have changed little; in 1668 a payment was being made to the town for an encroachment, presumably onto the road. None of these collegiate properties are likely to have had any academic occupants, but there is little evidence for its use.

***The excavation** (Figs 5.19–5.21)*

8 Queen St (Trench I)

The basement consisted of two rooms, divided by a partition wall. After removal of areas of concrete flooring, two trenches were laid out, one in each room. Both trenches were recorded as Trench I, with a continuous sequence of context numbers.

Phases 1–3

A large pit (7Q4 = 7Q9) had cut away earlier deposits across most of the trench (Phase 5). A number of early features were tentatively identified beyond its edges, of which the first was a shallow scrape, 7Q8/5, filled with burnt sand and gravel, which appeared to be a hearth (not illustrated). This was overlain by a layer of red loam, 7Q8, showing traces of burning; three shallow postholes (7Q8/1, 7Q8/2 and 7Q8/4) were cut into layer 7Q8. A single sherd of Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) was recovered from layer 7Q8. It was clear that one or more large features had been cut into the gravel, but these had been extensively recut by the later pit, 7Q4 = 9, and no relationship could be established between these early cuts and layer 7Q8. A small area of gravel surfaces was recorded (7Q5), overlying the red loam 7Q8 and the postholes. The layers of 7Q5 consisted of gravel over red loam, overlain by silt and a third layer of mixed gravel and silt. Small quantities of Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) were recovered from the gravel layers 7Q5, together with a few sherds from a Stamford ware jar.

In the S half of the trench was a series of layers, gravel 7Q7/1, ash 7Q7/2 and gravel 7Q7/3, over 7Q7/4-/5, layers of dark loam with charcoal and burning, which may have represented an early occupation layer. The top of these layers, at approx 62.05 m OD, corresponded to the height of gravel layers 7Q5, suggesting that they represent an equivalent phase of occupation, at a level broadly similar to the early metalled surfaces 7Q209 observed in Trench II to the E (see below).

Phase 5

A very large stepped pit (7Q4 = 7Q9) extended over most of the excavated area, lying immediately beneath the existing shop basement. The E edge of the pit was recorded in three places, but the other edges lay outside the area available for excavation, and it was therefore not possible to establish the pit's overall dimensions. The pit extended across the whole of the S half of the trench (7Q4/10, 7Q4/11), where it was cut by a post-medieval well, 7Q3. The remains of planking were recorded in the lowest fill of the pit, and it may therefore originally have had a timber lining. It was excavated to a depth of *c* 1.50 m, at a level of *c* 60.5 m OD. An iron hinge pivot (SF7QS.221 not illustrated) and a bone pin (Fig. 6.20 No. 45) were recovered from its fills.

The fills of pit 7Q4 = 7Q9 were cut by a steep-sided feature 7Q2 = 7Q10, of which only a small portion was seen in the NW corner of the trench. A chalk spindlewhorl (Fig. 6.21 No. 70) was recovered from 7Q2. Traces of a further pit, 7Q6, were identified in section on the E edge of the well construction shaft, 7Q3/1. It is probable that this represented later recutting of 7Q4 = 7Q9. The small, mixed pottery assemblage from pit 7Q6 probably represents redeposited material from the earlier pits. The pottery assemblage from pit 7Q4 and feature 7Q2 was dominated by Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*), with some Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*), and the assemblage is typical of the second half of the 12th century (Mellor, Chapter 6). Mellor notes that this assemblage contained an unusually high proportion of glazed sherds, which might suggest that this was not ordinary household rubbish, but rather the refuse from an ale house or shop.

7 Queen St (Trench II)

The excavation of Trench II was complicated by the presence of large features which had the effect of dividing the trench into several discrete areas of stratigraphy which could not always be related to one another. A pipe trench (7Q202) ran N-S across the centre of the trench; cut to a level of approx 62.20 m OD, it effectively divided the trench in two for all but the lowest layers. Two large pits, 7Q204 and 7Q230 dominated the NW and SE of the trench, respectively, cutting away all earlier deposits.

Phase 2

The original ground surface (7Q264) overlay natural gravel at a depth of approx 61.50 m OD. A Romano-British sherd was recovered from the ground surface.

This was overlain by a sequence of layers of coarse gravel, set in alternating sandy and clay matrices, 7Q209/1-/13. The lowest layer, 7Q209/13, lay directly above the old ground surface at a level of 61.70–61.80 m OD and was composed mostly of pebbles and small cobblestones (under 50 mm diameter), set in a thin, even layer of clean, grey clay. It extended across the entire area of Trench II, where not cut by later pits, and exhibited distinct areas of wear consistent with heavy use by traffic or prolonged weathering. The layer is interpreted as road metalling.

Layer 7Q209/13 was succeeded by several discontinuous layers of gravel and loam. Layer 7Q209/8 was a band of coarse gravel on an E-W axis, and appeared to form a pronounced hump over the underlying loam, 7Q209/9. The hollow to the S of this was filled by gravelly loam 7Q209/11, and a large fragment of a rotary quernstone (Fig. 6.21 No. 73) was recovered from its surface. These layers were covered by a thick layer of firm gravelly loam with stones, 7Q209/6, which extended the full length of the trench, N-S, where not cut away by later

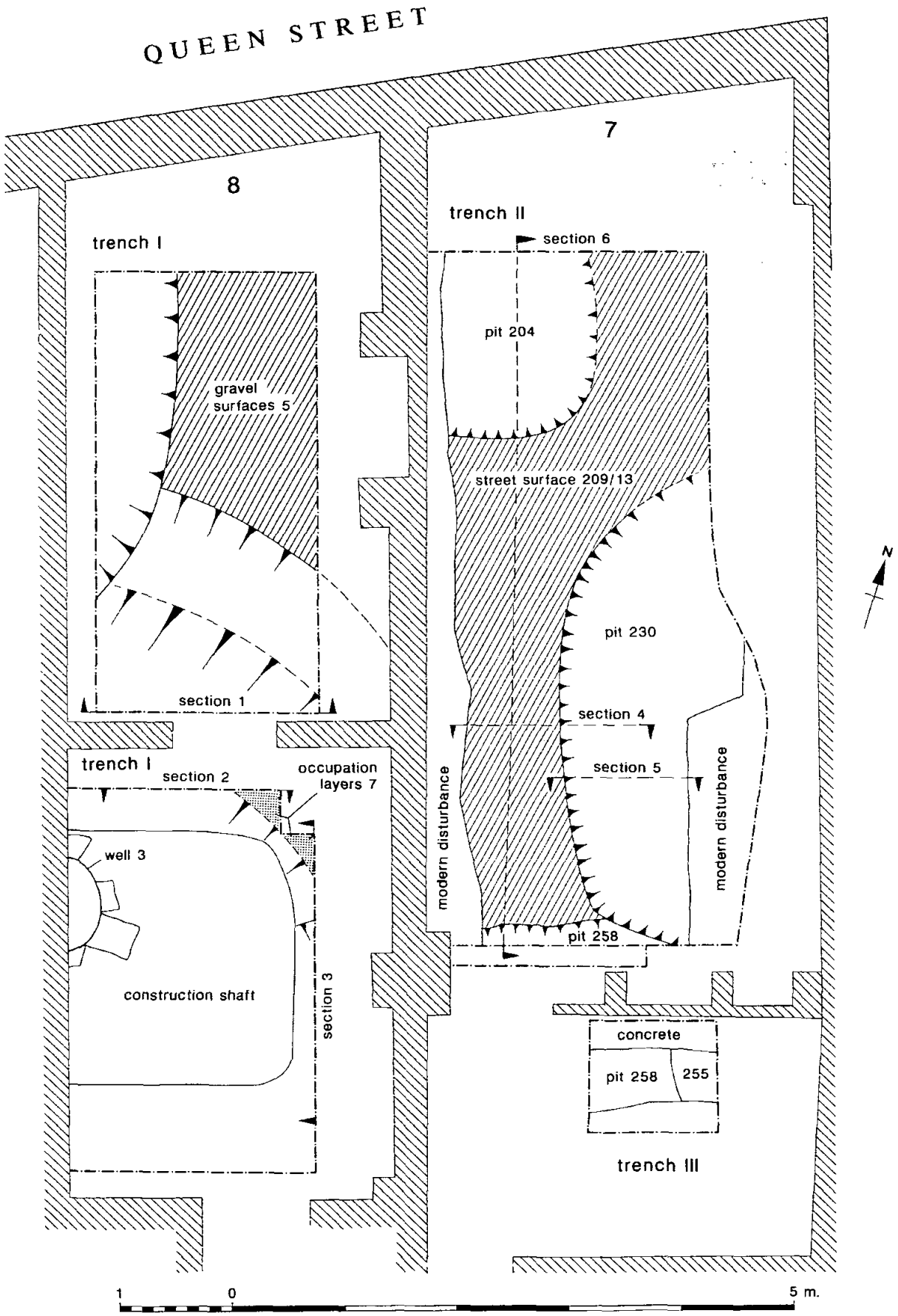


Figure 5.19 Nos 7–8 Queen St; plans of features, phases 1–3.

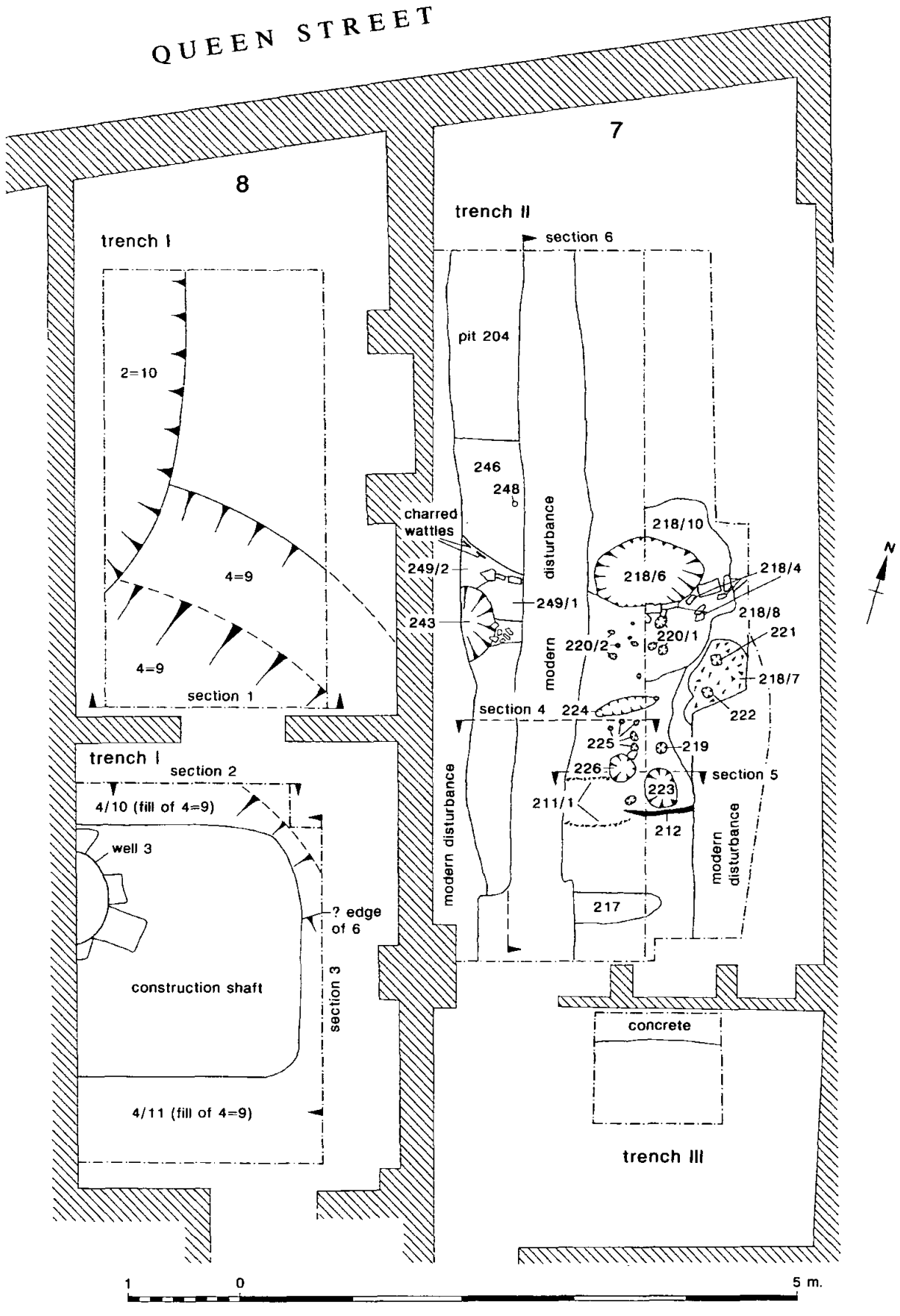


Figure 5.20 Nos 7–8 Queen St; plans of features, phases 4 and 5.

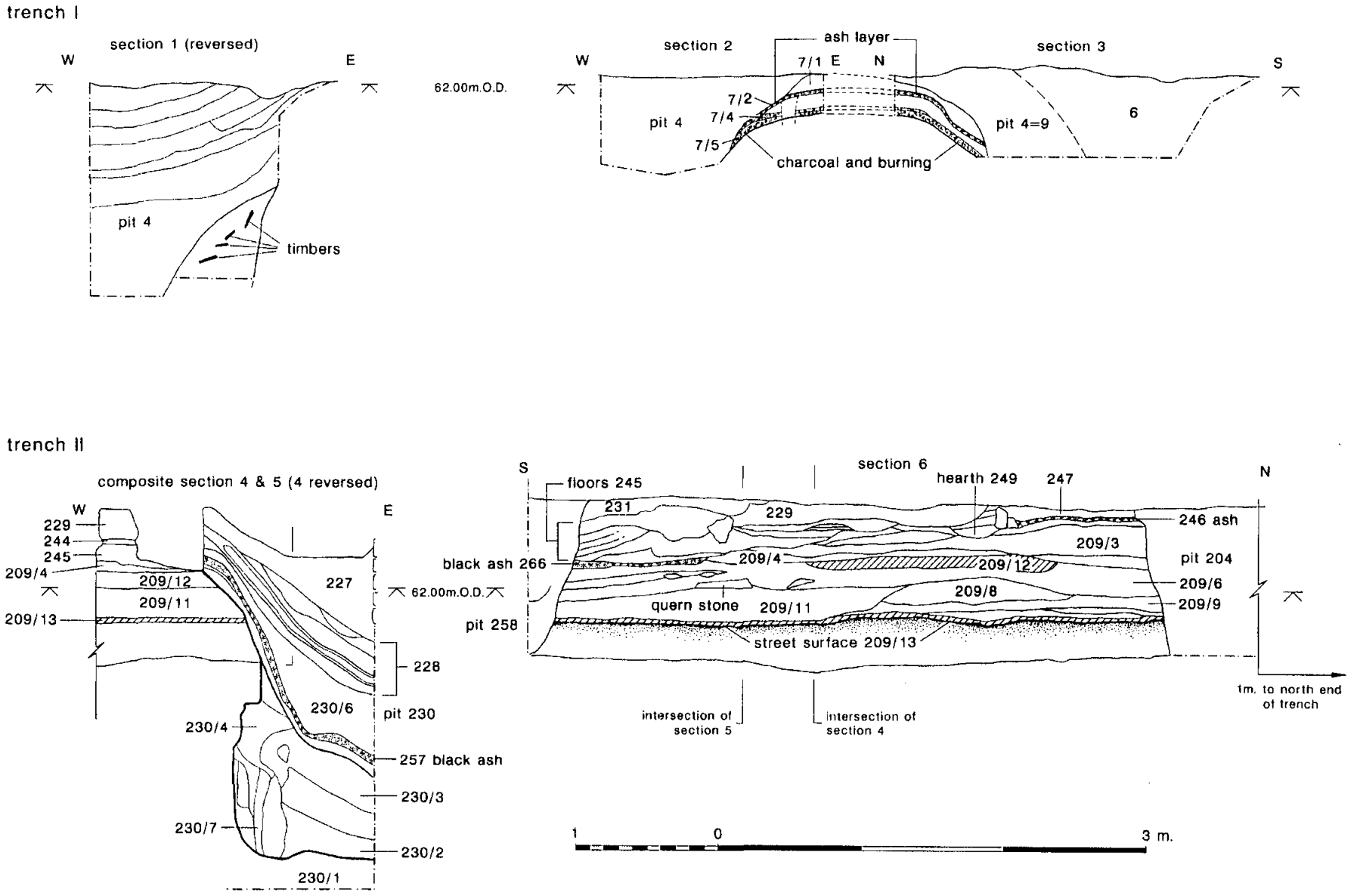


Figure 5.21 Nos 7–8 Queen St; sections and profiles.

deposits. Above 7Q209/6 was a distinctive area of small pebble metalling, 7Q209/12; its S limit formed a straight edge aligned approximately E-W, and it was noted by the excavator that the edge appeared to be dividing the metalled surface from an area of ashy floor, 7Q266, to the S. This floor lay immediately over the gravelly surface 7Q209/6. At this point the 7Q209 series of gravel surfaces gave way to a series of occupation layers 7Q245 in the S of the trench, while at the N end of the trench, a further 0.50 m of superimposed gravel surfaces continued to accumulate, layers 7Q209/5-/1 (see Phase 7Q4 below).

A very small pottery assemblage was recovered from layers 7Q209/9 and 7Q209/11, comprising sherds of late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) and imported greyware (fabric *J*). It is notable that the same fabrics formed the small assemblages recovered from the upper layers of this series of gravel surfaces (see Phase 4 below). A sherd of Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) was also recovered from floor 7Q266.

Phase 3

On the E side of the trench, a large pit, 7Q230, was cut through the series of surfaces 7Q209/6-/13. The pit could not be completely excavated because of the danger to the standing structures, but a sondage approximately 2.30 m deep was dug to a level of 60.00 m OD at the S end of the trench in order to record the pit fills. The lowest layer of fill was not fully excavated, but the fact that the layer was much more level than those above it suggested that the excavation almost reached the bottom. The lowest layer, 7Q230/1, was of moist red-brown clay and may have represented the pit floor. It was overlain by successive layers of sand and gravel, loam with cess, gravel and clay, representing the infilling of the pit (7Q230/2-/6). The SW corner of the pit cut another pit, 7Q258, which was examined in Trench III (below).

A knife blade (Fig. 6.18 No. 29) and a bone pin (Fig. 6.20 No. 44) were recovered from pit 7Q230. The small assemblage of pottery from the pit consisted of St Neot's-type ware with one sherd of Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*).

Phase 4

Above pit 7Q230 and the lower gravel surfaces in the S half of the trench, was a sequence of structural layers and features, which appear to represent three successive stages of occupation on the site.

On the W side of the trench, the latest surviving deposit in the 7Q209 series of gravel layers was layer 7Q209/3, consisting of loose yellow gravel up to 0.15–0.20 m thick. This was overlain by a series of discontinuous layers of ashy soil, 7Q261, 7Q251 and 7Q260. Set into these layers was feature 7Q249, a broad, shallow cut shaped like a small gully; it was filled with a layer of clay baked to a crimson colour, containing two upright stones and charred wattles and twigs. Several small angular pieces of rubble were set into the surface of 7Q251, and the presence of burnt daub was noted. It was overlain by red-brown sandy soil 7Q250/7Q252, containing small quantities of burnt daub. Immediately S of feature 7Q249 was feature 7Q243, a shallow-sided circular cut, approximately 0.60 m in diameter. It was cut into layers 7Q250/7Q252, and layer 7Q244, and was therefore slightly later than 7Q249. Its fill was of hard clay baked bright red, with a layer of white ash on top, corresponding exactly to that of feature 7Q249. These two features probably represent hearths.

In the SW of the trench, S of the two possible hearths 7Q249 and 7Q243, was a series of floors, 7Q245, formed of yellow clay frequently discoloured bright red, possibly by domestic fires. This layer, up to 0.60 m thick in places, overlay gravel layer 7Q209/3, and (at its S end) 7Q266, the earliest floor layer (Phase 2).

Immediately N of feature 7Q249 was a layer of black ashy soil, 7Q246, with charcoal and burnt wood resting on the surface. A stakehole, 7Q248, was cut into the ash and contained the charred remains of a stake. This layer was considered by the excavators to represent a destructive fire, bringing the first stage of activity to a close. A whittle-tang knife (Fig. 6.18 No. 24), a fired clay spindlewhorl (Fig. 6.21 No. 68) and several pieces of iron slag (SF nos 214, 215, not catalogued) were recovered from layer 7Q209/3.

In the SW of the trench, overlying the floor layers 7Q245, and possible hearths 7Q249 and 7Q243, was a floor of fine, compact clay, 7Q229, which was also of a bright yellow colour, with extensive areas of red discoloration probably due to domestic fires. Overlying 7Q229 in the SW of the trench was a further floor layer, 7Q231, of stony, grey-brown clay with some charcoal.

In the NW of the trench the burnt layer 7Q246 was overlain by 7Q247, a mid-brown clayey soil with small stones. This was cut by a large pit, 7Q204.

On the E side of the trench, gravel layers 7Q209 survived to a higher level. Layers 7Q209/2-/5 had slumped down into the underlying pit, 7Q230. Interleaved with these layers was a layer of burnt black ashy soil, 7Q257, which may correspond to the burnt layer 7Q246 in the NW of the trench. Overlying 7Q257 were two successive layers, 7Q228 and 7Q227, sloping into the pit at an angle of more than 45 degrees. Their finely-laminated texture and the presence of hearth-like deposits within them suggested that they were floors that had subsided into the pit as its fills compacted and settled, probably as a result of the rotting of organic matter. The lower layer, 7Q228, was of red and yellow clay, and is probably the same floor as 7Q229 to the W. The upper layer, 7Q227, was of brown stony clay, and is probably the same floor as 7Q231 to the W.

Floors 7Q229/7Q228 and 7Q231/7Q227, and pit 7Q204, appear to comprise a second stage of occupation, following the fire represented by layer 7Q246.

A bone skate (SF7QS.224 not illustrated) came from layer 209/5. A small quantity of pottery (see Mellor, below) was recovered from floors 7Q227 and 7Q228, consisting predominantly of St Neot's-type ware, with two sherds of Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) and one of Wessex-type (fabric *BF*). Pit 7Q204 contained principally St Neot's-type ware, but also a jar in Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*).

The third stage of occupation was represented by a series of structural features, and a hearth. By this stage, the stratigraphic sequence survived only in the SE part of the trench. In the SW of the trench, layers 7Q229 and 7Q231 had been truncated by the modern cellar floor. In the NW of the trench, pit 7Q204 had cut away all earlier deposits, while in the NE corner of the trench, the sequence of gravel layers 7Q209 terminated with layer 7Q209/1, a thin, compact layer of sand beneath post-medieval trample (7Q201/1).

In the SE of the trench, floor 7Q227 was overlain by 7Q213, a substantial layer of large, compact dirty gravel in a sandy soil matrix. A considerable number of structural features were cut into this layer. At the S end of the group were two postholes, 7Q223 and 7Q226, with stakehole 7Q219 and a cluster of five stakeholes 7Q225. Just N of these features was a slot, 7Q224. Towards the centre of the trench were stakehole 7Q222 and a rectangular stakehole or slot, 7Q221; W of these lay two further groups of small stakeholes, 7Q220/1-/2.

Also cut into layer 7Q213 was a sequence of hearth surfaces and burnt and ashy layers, recorded as subnumbers of 7Q218. The sequence is difficult to reconstruct, but appeared to begin with a rounded, vertical-sided cut, 7Q218/6, filled with loose sandy soil containing burnt daub, 7Q218/10. A hearth surface, 7Q218/4, was set into this and consisted of bright yellow clean sand with substantial pieces of burnt stone in its surface. It was overlain by red sand 7Q218/3 and ash 7Q218/2. Further burnt spreads lay to the SE of these deposits.

Further possible structural features lay to the S of the hearth area, cut into the surface of 7Q213 at a slightly higher level. Feature 7Q217 was a shallow linear cut, approximately 0.25 m wide, possibly a gully; it was orientated W-E and ran parallel to a linear timber stain, 7Q212, approximately 0.60–0.70 m to the N. The line of 7Q212 continued W, represented by two parallel linear bands of charcoal, 7Q211/1, which were seen in the overlying layer 7Q211, of dark brown-grey clayey soil, with gravel and charcoal.

Above the hearth were layers of clayey soil with much charcoal (7Q215, 7Q214, 7Q208), and dirty, gritty soil (7Q216, 7Q210). These were overlain by 7Q207, a clay soil with charcoal, and 7Q206, a gritty soil with charcoal; these were the latest medieval layers to survive beneath the modern cellar floor.

A substantial finds assemblage was recovered from the deposits of this stage. A fragment of iron bar, possibly the head of a tool or punch (SF7QS.206 not illustrated) came from hearth 7Q218/4. A fragment of lead waste (SF7QS.205 not illustrated) and a lump of iron slag (SF 206, not catalogued), a nail (SF7QS.208 not illustrated) and a decorated stone object, possibly a stamp (Fig. 6.21 No. 76), were recovered from the overlying ash layer 7Q218/2. An iron buckle (Fig. 6.18 No. 15) came from layer 7Q214, a decorated stone spindlewhorl (Fig. 6.21 No. 69) from layer 7Q215, and a lump of copper alloy waste with a fragment of copper alloy strip (SF 204, not catalogued) from layer 7Q216. An iron key with a pear-shaped handle (Fig. 6.18 No. 20), normally a pre-Conquest type, was found in layer 7Q211, and a horseshoe (SF7QS.201 not illustrated), of 9th- to 11th-century type, was found in layer 7Q210 (I Goodall, Chapter 6). Pottery (Mellor, Chapter 6) from the hearth deposits was a mixed assemblage of St Neot's-type ware, Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*) and Wessex-type (fabric *BF*). Pottery from layer 7Q213 was predominantly Wessex-type (fabric *BF*); pottery from other deposits was dominated by Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*), with a particularly large group from layer 7Q215. Stamford ware was present, together with a imported ware from Andenne in Belgium. The pottery assemblage suggests a date in the second half of the 11th century, possibly continuing into the first half of the 12th century.

Phase 7Q6 (modern levels)
(not illustrated)

Beneath the brick floor of the existing cellar (7Q201) was a drain (7Q202) and a thin earth layer of a previous cellar floor. Beneath was a layer of mortar thought to be spillage from the construction of the existing cellar walls, of which the N wall was recorded as 7Q203, a brick partition as 7Q234, and an earlier footing as 7Q232. In the SE corner of the trench a rough unfaced footing 7Q205 of soft stone appeared to be the lining of a pit.

Trench III

Trench III was opened in order to obtain an understanding of pit 7Q258, whose N edge had been exposed at the S end of Trench II, cut by pit 7Q230. The pit was filled with a series of layers of clay (7Q259), gravel and sand (7Q242–7Q239), loam (7Q238), dark grey sandy gravel (7Q237) and finally dark grey/black loam (7Q235). The pottery assemblage from layer 7Q242 formed two distinct groups, one of the early 11th century (or possibly the 10th century) and the other of the late 11th century with one sherd dating to the second half of the 12th century. The excavator noted that the second group of pottery almost certainly represented contamination.

Animal bone from Nos 7 and 8 Queen St was recorded and analysed as a single assemblage (see Wilson, Chapter 7). Wilson comments that the assemblage was typical of domestic refuse, especially table refuse, and also of internal house deposits. Much of the debris from Phase 4 was from floor

and hearth layers, with the remainder from pits, presumably where domestic refuse was thrown.

Excavations at Nos 33–35 Queen Street, 1988

Introduction (Fig. 5.2)

A large property on the north side of the road (*Survey* NW (10)), in 1279 this was two tenements, a 'messuage' on the west and a cellar and solar on the east. A 'cellar and solar' was a standard Oxford house type, probably with a part sunken shop or cellar with living accommodation above, and perhaps a hall behind. In 1333 there was a lane (on the west side) leading to a bakehouse behind. The property was given to Balliol College in 1459, and was leased as two gardens from 1550 to 1657, when it was built on and became an inn (see pl. in *Balliol Deeds*, 180); it was rebuilt in 1887 in a 'mild French gothic manner', as a temperance hotel of four storeys with two shops. Although the building was not Listed as of architectural importance, the City Council wished to preserve the facade as an important part of the street scene, which involved designing massive foundations to support the front wall while the rest of the building was demolished. As this was likely to destroy archaeological deposits, the developers agreed to cover the cost of an investigation. Three trenches were dug, but the results were limited, and only a brief summary is given here.

***The excavation** (Fig. 5.22)*

Trench I

Trench I was dug at the front of No. 33, and the area was divided by a drain run. Much of the trench was occupied by a very large pit, representing the construction pit 33Q5 and shaft 33Q4 of a well. The fills of these features were recorded as 33Q5/1-/7 and 33Q7. Pottery recovered from these features suggested that the well was constructed *c* 1600 and infilled in the early 17th century (Mellor, Chapter 6).

The well had perhaps been in the 'lane leading to the bakehouse' suggested by the documents (above). To the N of the well, a series of intercutting pits were excavated. The sequence was not entirely clear, and it is likely that the repeated pit-digging in this small area had led to considerable redeposition of material. The small quantities of pottery recovered from pits 33Q6 and 33Q11 consisted of handmade late Saxon shelly ware (fabric *B*) probably dating from the second half of the 10th century to the early 11th century (Mellor, this volume). Two featureless body sherds of Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*) were recovered from pit 33Q8, while pit 33Q9 contained one sherd of Romano-British pottery from the lowest excavated fill, and substantial quantities of Early Medieval and Medieval Oxford wares (fabrics *AC* and *Y*) from its later fills. The Small Finds from Trench I comprised nails from pit 33Q9 and from a late robber trench (33Q3, not illustrated), a fragment of window glass (SF33Q.8 not illustrated), probably redeposited in pit 33Q6 and a fragment of honestone (SF33Q.2 not illustrated) from construction trench 33Q5.

Trench II

Trench II was excavated in a stairway between Nos 33 and 35, in an attempt to get as close to the modern street line as possible. The earliest excavated features were a well, 33Q102, and a pit 33Q105. The well was augered to a depth of nearly 4 m (57.23 m OD) without reaching the bottom. Sherds from a vessel of St Neot's-type ware (fabric *R*) were recovered from the excavated upper fills of the well; the small quantities of pottery recovered from pit 33Q105 included two possible imports in the Saxo-Norman tradition, perhaps originating from Northampton (Mellor, Chapter 6). From the lowest fill of pit 33Q105 came an iron pivoting knife (Fig. 6.18 No. 31), datable to the 8th to 11th centuries, of a type used for craft working (I Goodall, Chapter 6). Pit 33Q105 was overlain by an area of burnt clay and ash, 33Q104, which may represent an early hearth. The area of burnt clay and ash was cut by a large pit 33Q103, for which there was no dating evidence; this was overlain by the modern floor.

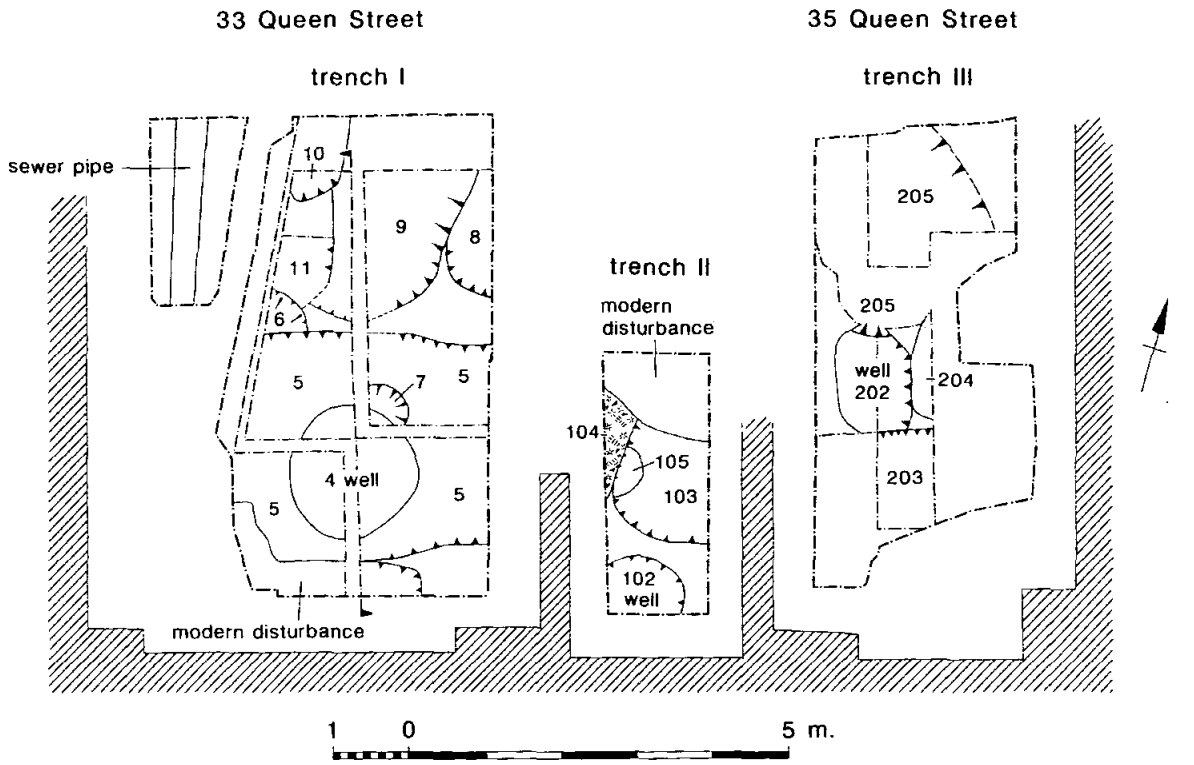
Trench III

The third trench was situated at the S end of the cellar of No. 35. The earliest feature was a pit or possible well, 33Q202, with clay loam fills, some of which were scorched. The feature was augered to a depth of 2.20 m, but the bottom was not reached. Feature 33Q202 was cut by pits 33Q203, 33Q204 and 33Q205. Pit 33Q204 was not excavated. The fills of pits 33Q203 and 33Q205 consisted of dark grey/brown loam with stone, brick, slate and mortar. Above the pits was a deposit, layer 33Q201, which in retrospect is interpreted as probably the upper fills of the group of pits. Layer 33Q201 was grey/brown sandy loam with brick, slate, mortar and charcoal. Pottery was recovered from layer 33Q201 and pits 33Q203 and 33Q205. The assemblage as a whole dates to the second half of the 12th century to the early 13th century. A small quantity of ironwork was recovered from layer 33Q201: an iron spike (SF33Q.13 not illustrated), a staple (SF33Q.12 not illustrated) and an iron strip (cat no 220). An unidentified iron object (SF33Q.6, now missing) was recovered from well 33Q202, and a horseshoe (SF33Q.7 not illustrated) of 9th- to 11th-century type, from pit 33Q203 (I Goodall, Chapter 6).

Excavations at Nos 43–44 Queen St, 1989

Introduction (Fig. 5.2)

The property was proposed for redevelopment in a similar way to Nos 33–35; rebuilding was to take place behind the facade, which would be retained. In 1875 this was the Three Cups hotel, which had faced



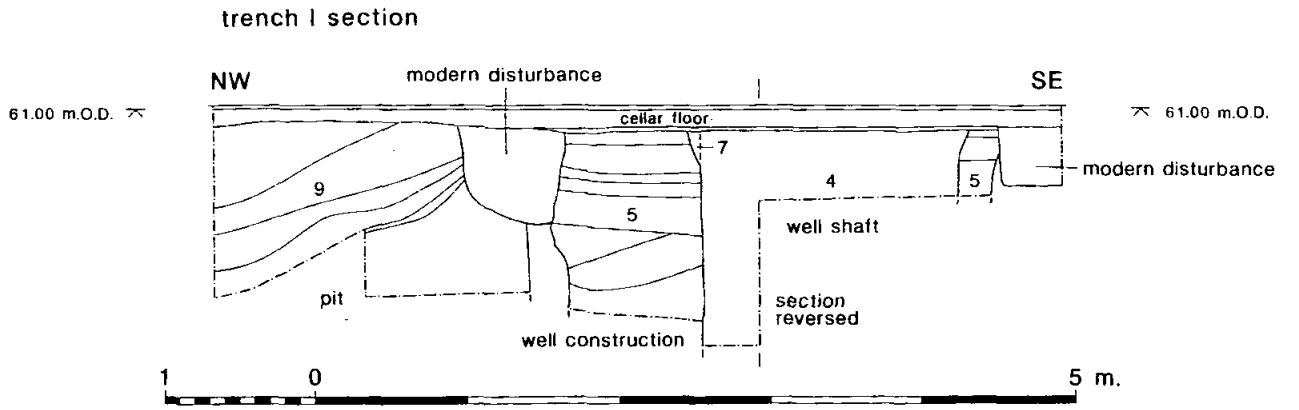


Figure 5.22 Nos 33–35 Queen St; plans and section.

onto a central yard, and parts of the Victorian building still survived within the modern structure. An added complication was the uncellared area to the rear, which adjoins the surviving part of the burial ground of the former St Martin's Church (probably in use by 1045). This was reserved for a separate contract which never took place, and the present report relates to the street frontage only.

Two trenches were excavated in the basements, Trench I centrally on the No. 44 frontage, and Trench II at the extreme SW corner of No. 43. Again, the results were very limited, and only a summary account is given here.

This property (*Survey* NW (15)) was 'at the west of St Martin's church' in *c* 1195, though by 1279 there was a cellar and solar built next to it on the churchyard, and in 1401 it was a messuage and shop next the churchyard. An All Souls College property from the 1440s, it was the Blue Anchor by 1619 and in 1645 was described as 'lately burnt', having been lost in the great fire of 1644 (Porter 1984, 294). After rebuilding it was for long known as the Three Cups.

The excavation *(Fig. 5.23)*

Trench I

Removal of the cellar floor revealed a number of pits. Pit 44Q5, in the NW corner of the trench, could only be partially excavated; its excavated fills consisted of a series of silty clay loams, and it appears to have been used as a cess pit. Pit 44Q3 was cut by pits 44Q2 and 44Q4. At the base of pits 44Q2 and 44Q4 were hollows filled with stones, and the fill of pit 44Q2 was extremely rubbly and included large stones and fragments of mortar. On the E side of the trench was a very deep pit, 44Q9, which could only be partially excavated. Beneath pit 44Q3, and cut by pit 44Q2, was a posthole 44Q10 with several stones grouped around its N edge. A small ceramic assemblage from pit 44Q2 included sherds of St Neot's-type ware together with a sherd of 17th-century Surrey Hampshire Border ware and an Oxford type A clay pipe bowl; this suggests that repeated pit digging in the area had led to the redeposition of material. Pottery from pit 44Q3 comprised St Neot's-type ware, Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*), and Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *Y*), including a sherd with applied strips and light green glaze, typical of the decorated tablewares of the 12th century (Mellor, Chapter 6).

The pits were cut into a series of well-preserved floor layers. The uppermost, 44Q6, was very hard in places, dark grey with the appearance of burning; it overlay 44Q7, biscuity red gravel and, at the bottom of the sequence, 44Q8, a mid-brown loam with charcoal flecks. Beneath the floors was a grey clay loam 44Q11, over the original red-brown loam topsoil 44Q12. A sherd of Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) was recovered from floor 44Q6, and a sherd of Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*) from layer 44Q8.

Trench II

Trench II was marginally closer to the street frontage because it extended into a passage leading to a space beneath the pavement. Beneath a brick floor were two post-medieval pits, 44Q104 cutting 44Q103. These had damaged a proportion of the underlying deposits in the E part of the trench, but deposits were better preserved to the W. Here, the original ground surface was identified as two layers of red-brown loam 44Q111 and 44Q110, the latter possibly representing a cultivated surface. This was overlain by a layer of charcoal with a thin lens of gravel, 44Q107/4, under a clay loam 44Q107/3. These layers were cut by a pit, 44Q106, seen partially at the S edge of the excavation. The pit was excavated to a depth of 1.1 m, but the bottom was not reached. The lowest fill, 44Q106/7 was silty loam with flecks of charcoal; above this, 44Q106/6 was clean gravel, 44Q106/5 was a burnt layer with charcoal; 44Q106/4 was a lens of clean gravel, 44Q106/3 was sandy loam with charcoal flecks, 44Q106/2 was a lens of clean gravel, and the uppermost fill, 44Q106/1, was sandy loam with a little gravel.

Overlying clay layer 44Q107/3, and slumping into pit 44Q106, was a burnt layer 44Q107/2, under a layer of yellow gravel 44Q107/1 which extended over most of the excavated area and also slumped steeply into the soft fill of the pit. This was overlain by two further layers 44Q113 and 44Q112, interpreted as fill layers deposited in the top of the pit after 44Q107/2 had subsided. A feature, 44Q109, was seen in the W section and appeared to have been cut into unnumbered layers probably equivalent to 44Q107/1 and 44Q107/2. It was not clear what the function of 44Q109 might have been, although it was noted by the excavator that it could have represented a beam slot or the remains of a cob wall.

Discussion

Queen St: Phases 1 and 2, the earliest evidence, 10th century *(Figs 5.18–5.21)*

In the old town of Oxford, there is seldom any difficulty recognising the distinctive red loam topsoil layer where the late Saxon archaeological sequence starts. The original soil profile was clear at Nos 4 and 7–8 Queen St. In other parts of the town there is growing evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity (see Chapter 2, above), but none was evident here, neither settlement nor cultivation. The small amount (approx 1%) of residual Roman pottery is typical of sites within the town centre.

A number of features excavated at No. 8 Queen St (Trench I) may hint at occupation on the E-W street axis before the foundation of the *burh*. The most convincing of these was a probable hearth (7Q8/5) with associated areas of burning, into which three shallow postholes had been cut. No dating evidence was recovered from these features, but they were overlain by two gravel surfaces which are likely to represent part of the primary street surfacing of the *burh* (7Q5; see also Observations of early street surfaces in Oxford, below). The gravel surfaces appeared to be slumping into areas of earlier disturbance, and a small quantity of Late Saxon Oxford ware was recovered from them (fabric *B*, 9th to early 11th centuries – see Mellor, Chapter 6) together with a little imported Stamford ware. A truncated series of occupation layers survived in the S half of the trench (7Q7), and their level suggests that they may represent activity contemporary with the gravel surfaces 7Q5 (Trench I) and 7Q209 (Trench II).

In Trench II, the earliest activity was represented by a sequence of gravel and stone surfaces. The earliest (7Q209/13) lay immediately above the original ground surface, and consisted of pebbles and small cobblestones with areas of heavy wear (see also Observations of early street surfaces in Oxford, below). This may represent an area of the primary street surface, but it extended as much as 8 m S of the modern street frontage and would imply that Queen St was originally much wider, at least at its E end. A wide wedge of street here may have been

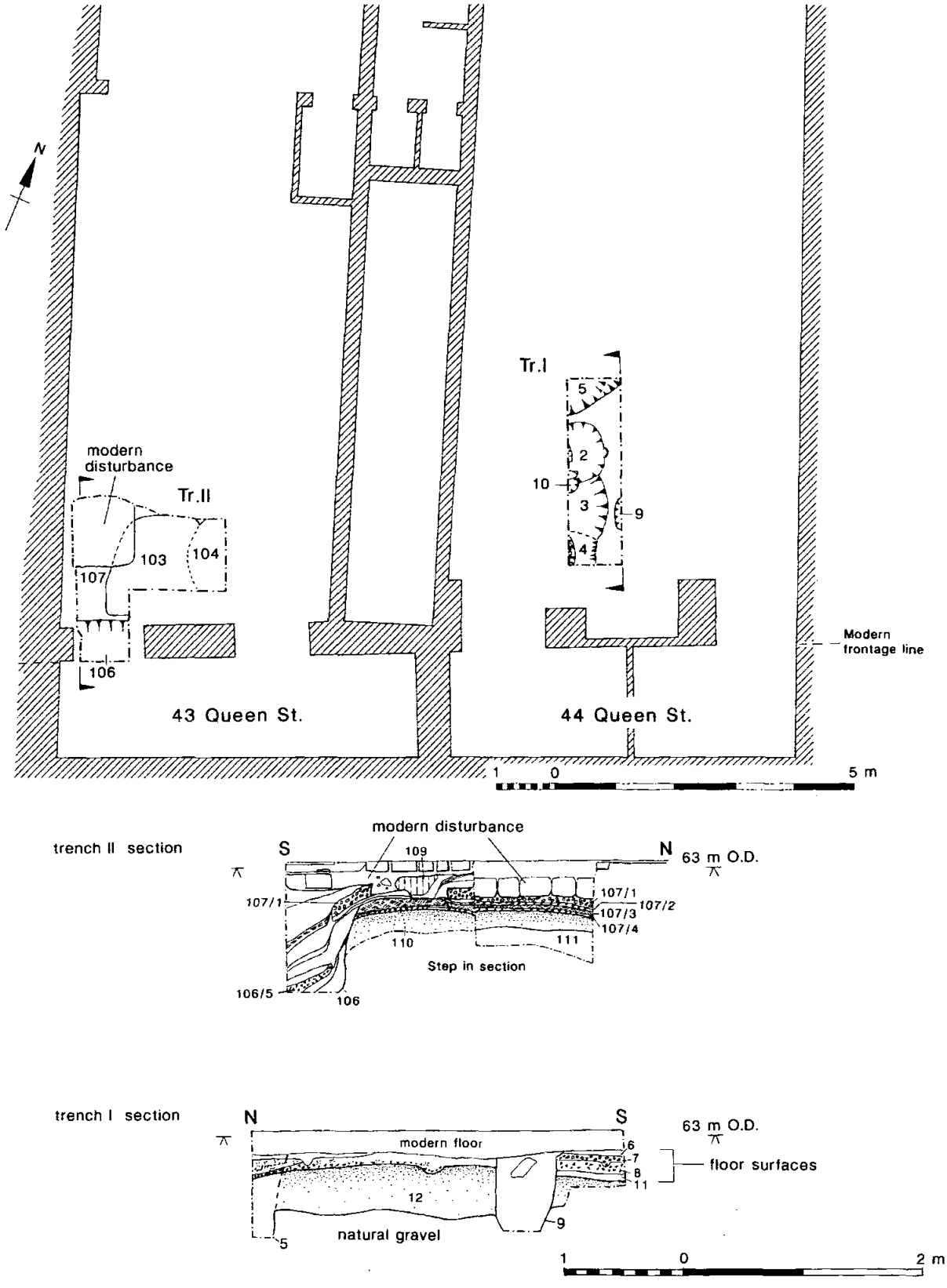


Figure 5.23 Nos 43–44 Queen St; plans and sections.

intended for marketing, but during the 11th century, at the latest, it seems to have been largely built over. The earliest evidence for encroachment is the extensive pit 7Q230, and subsequently, in the late 11th and early 12th centuries, a sequence of hearths and structural features occupied the site, with a large pit, 7Q204, lying within 2 m of the modern street frontage.

Phase 3, early to mid 11th century (Figs 5.18–5.21)

A number of features excavated at the Queen St sites may represent cellar pits similar to the example excavated at All Saints Church, although the evidence is less convincing. At No. 4 Queen St, a deep pit (4Q32) was partially excavated at the N edge of the trench. It proved impossible to identify certainly the level from which it was cut, but it was cut through early layers of street surfaces into natural gravel, to a depth in excess of 1.50 m. A single large posthole survived in the bottom of the pit, with a diameter of 0.50 m. The pit had the appearance of a corner of a rectangular feature, and may represent one corner of a cellar set obliquely to the road line. A small, mixed assemblage of St Neot's-type ware and Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*) came from the fills of the pit, but a substantial assemblage of St Neot's-type ware was recovered from the layer immediately overlying an associated well and pit to the W and S.

A second possible cellared building was excavated at No. 7 Queen St, Trench II. A large and exceptionally deep pit, 7Q230, was partially excavated on the E side of the trench, and appeared to be subrectangular in shape. No certain evidence of a floor or lining structure was found and it is possible that the feature was a well, but the settlement profile of layers tipping steeply at the edges and levelling out in the middle is more typical of a cellar than of the collapse of the central shaft of a well. The small assemblage of pottery from the pit consisted of St Neot's-type ware, with one sherd of Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*).

Phases 4–5, later 11th and 12th century (Figs 5.18–5.21)

At No. 7 Queen St, the relationship of the proposed cellar to surrounding and overlying features was unclear, because several floor layers survived only where they had subsequently subsided into the pit fill below, and because the presence of a deep, intrusive drain effectively divided the trench in two. The proposed cellar had been cut through a series of gravel layers which are interpreted as early street surfacing, suggesting that buildings were beginning to encroach on the roads. In the W of trench II, two possible hearths were excavated, set within a general horizon of layers of burnt clay, ash and charcoal with surviving fragments of burnt timbers. This evidence of extensive burning was considered by the excavators to represent a major destructive fire, although the possibility remains that the burning was more localised, and derived from an accident associated with the hearths.

The upper fills of the proposed cellar consisted of two floor layers of clay, the lower of which was discoloured by burning. These corresponded to similar layers on the W of the trench, and are interpreted as floors of a building laid down on the site after the fire associated with the earlier structures, and the infilling of the cellar. Pottery from these floors was predominantly of St Neot's-type ware, with a little Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*). Above this, numerous structural features of a later phase of occupation survived, although not forming any coherent structure. Numerous stakeholes, slots and postholes were recorded, but the most convincing evidence derived from a hearth and associated ash and burnt spreads, which may represent small-scale metalworking on the site. Finds from these layers included fragments of iron, lead and copper alloy working debris, together with part of an iron bar, possibly the head of a tool or punch, and a decorated stone object identified as a possible stamp. It seems likely that the site was in use for small-scale metal working. An iron key of pre-Conquest type and a horseshoe of 9th- to 11th-century type occurred in the overlying layers. The pottery assemblage from these deposits consisted predominantly of St Neot's-type ware, Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*) and Wessex-type (fabric *BF*), and Mellor comments that it suggests a date in the second half of the 11th century, possibly continuing into the first half of the 12th century.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE EARLY STREETS: SURFACES AND DRAINS

Early Street Surfaces (Fig. 5.24, Plate 5.8; Table 5.2)

Interest in the archaeology of Oxford's streets is not new; perhaps the first record was in a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in April 1807 (p 327):

> In August last, in Oxford, in High Street, the workmen making a new sewer, at eight or nine feet *from the present surface* came to an old pitching of a street, where they dug up 20 or 30 bullocks or cows horns, which are supposed to have been the remains of sacrifices.

Ninety years later, Herbert Hurst watched the installation of new drainage in Oxford, and described at Carfax 'the earliest roadway...in Oxford' (1899, 58). In 1894 he recognised and drew the lowest street level behind the N end wall of a cellar, which can be identified from his plan of Sotham's Cellars as the N-S cellar under the road joining those on either side of St Aldate's. His three views (one is a copy in colour) show 9 or 10 in. of stone paving resting 'directly on the red earth in situ', of which 5 in. overlies undisturbed gravel. No other paved surfaces are indicated. The depth of 11 ft. 7 in. (3.53 m) below

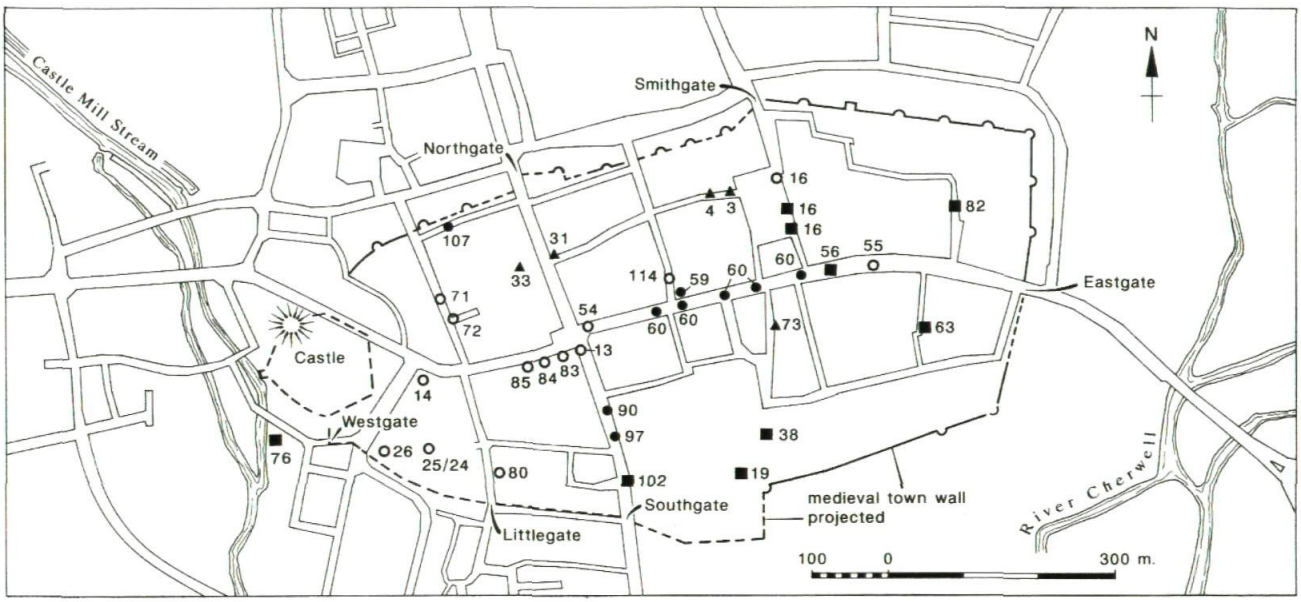


Figure 5.24 Observations of early street surfaces in Oxford.

the road surface is separately calculated 'to highest point at Carfax 13 ft or 13 ft 3 in' (MS Top Oxon b.81 f.46 (colour); c.312 pp.220–1). The published description is as follows:

Plate 5.8 24 New Inn Hall St, primary street surface observed in contractors' trench with a coin of Edward the Elder (SF 24N.501) pressed into its surface.

> Mr Hurst also reports that at a depth of 11 ft. 7 in. below the present surface of St Aldate's Street, and at a spot about 14 ft. from the crossing at Carfax there has been exposed the earliest road yet noticed in Oxford. . ..
>
> The section that has been cut through shows, above the well-known Oxford gravel, a depth of 2 3/4 ft. of which is visible, some 5 to 8 in. of the usual reddish earth with indications of vegetable soil; above this is the paved way, over which is 'made' ground 11 ft. 7 in. in depth. The road itself is formed of stones laid flat, only a few of which are as much as 8 in. long; many are much rounded on the surface, and nowhere is there a sign of finer stones having been laid over them.
>
> The stones are such as could be picked up upon the surface of the land, and some of the fossils which distinguish the top-rock at Headington and Bullingdon Green can be seen in some examples. The surface of the road clearly rises toward the middle of the present roadway (*Archaeologia Oxoniensis* 1892–5, 323–4).

As with so much of Oxford's archaeology, it was the work of Jope in the 1950s that confirmed the importance of observing and recording early street

Table 5.2 Observations of early street surfaces in Oxford

Gaz no	Location	Date	Observation
80	Beef Lane	1975	Drainage work in the W gateway of Pembroke College showed metalling on the old ground surface, of small limestone cobbles set in the red brown loam of the natural topsoil
3	Brasenose Lane	1961	Original ground surface at 1.9 m depth covered by 0.7 m of loam without metalling
4	Brasenose Lane	1991	Sewerage work outside NW corner of Brasenose College Old Quad showed original topsoil heavily iron-panned and burnt, with no primary metalling, but remains of a cobbled surface above
13	Carfax	1894	At 14 ft from the crossing, at a depth of 11 ft 7 in, gravel overlain by reddish earth and above it a paved way of stones laid flat, only a few of which were as much as 8 in long; many were much rounded on the surface, and nowhere was there a sign of finer stones being laid over them. At level of *c* 61.40 m OD
14	Castle St	1970	Complete section of the medieval street recorded showing 18 successive surfaces, representing a sequence of stone and gravel street surfaces with overlying accumulations. Lowest surface (at *c* 61.40–61.50 m OD) described as uneven, compressed into very thin topsoil and consisting of fragments of irregular limestone cobbles, small stones and coarse gravel, heavily compacted. Late Saxon pottery (fabric B) was recovered from the accumulations above the lowest layer. Two features cut from the 7th and 10th layers (from the bottom) might be central drainage channels; these contained pottery of the 11th and 12th centuries
16	Catte St	1980	Primary surface (at *c* 61.15 m OD) metalled with 15 mm pebbles in a single layer pushed into the loam topsoil; above was a layer of black detritus and limestone 150 mm cobbles lying flat but not 'laid', and a second layer of stones in gravel. It seemed possible that both layers of stones were one repaving. Cut by probable medieval mid-road drain
19	Christ Church Cathedral Garden	1961	At N boundary of Cathedral Garden, earliest road surface of thin gravel overlay deposits with 12th-century pottery
24–6	Church St	1970	Excavations at 34 Church St showed the earliest street surface sealing an earlier N-S ditch; it was made of flattened limestone cobbles worn smooth on their upper surface; the surface was identical to the earliest surface seen in the Church St section (see below). 3 pot sherds were embedded in the street surface, including an early Stamford-type. A N-S section across Church St showed a series of early street surfaces. The lowest consisted of cobbles and compacted gravel pressed into a thin layer of original topsoil. The cobbles were flat and angular, varying in size between 20–50 mm and 100–150 mm, and were worn smooth on their upper surface. Towards the centre of the street they were shattered and very compressed. The surface sealed a posthole packed with stones, the top of which were incorporated into the surface itself. 2 further postholes cut through the surface. The surface was overlain by loam and patches of gravel cut by a pit containing pottery of the second half of the 11th century. A series of five later surfaces were also recorded; the latest was probably datable to the late 18th or 19th century and it appeared to have destroyed the later medieval street surfaces. Further recording of sections showed that the primary street metalling extended to the W end of Church St
33	Cornmarket St former Clarendon Hotel	1954–7	No primary metalling identified, but sequence of later gravel metalling surfaces recognised
31	Cornmarket St nos 13–21	1959–61	Area up to 7.7 m wide along Cornmarket St frontage was free of early pits
38	Corpus Christi College	1986	Observation beneath the floor of a small cellar on the line of the former Shidyerd St; no sign of metalling on the original topsoil, which may have been disturbed previously by the cellar
54	High St no 5	1976	Areas of 20–30 mm quartzite pebble metalling on original ground surface, extending at least 2.2 m back (N) behind modern street frontage. Stones described as 'limestone sets' formed a secondary surface 0.1 m above the first

Table 5.2 (continued)

Gaz no	Location	Date	Observation
55	High St no 33 'Drawda Hall'	1982	Primary street surface of pebbles observed at 59.7 m OD (see Table 5.3). Cut by probable medieval mid-road drain and subsequent recut
56	High St no 91	1979	Metalled surface of pebbly gravel in orange sandy clay at 2.08 m below tarmac; gravel not seen, and it is not clear whether this was the primary surface. The level of the surface was *c* 60.15–60.35 m OD, which may be compared with the primary street surface at 59.85 m OD at the E end of the High St Surface Water Drain (see below). The gravel surface was overlain by silty loam with charcoal and preserved wattles, and above this a second good surface of stones in compact clay
59	High St All Saints Church Trench VI	1974	A sewer connection trench dug S of the church revealed early street surfaces beneath the modern road. A rubble wall lay beneath the modern kerbline, with the street surfaces to its S. The lowest street surface was metalled with pebbles of 20–30 mm diameter with traces of red topsoil, lying immediately on natural gravel at a level of *c* 61.90 m OD. Above this, the subsequent surfaces appeared loose and irregular, suggesting that this was the edge of the road
60	High St Surface Water Drain	1981	12 observations of primary street surface along a 300 m drain trench in the centre of the High St (see below); the primary street rose from a level of 59.85 m OD at the E end of the trench, to 61.95 m OD at the W end. In 7 cases, the street surface is described as pebbles, and once as pebbles and bone overlain by small stone slabs (observation S, Table 5.3); in one place it was described as cobbled. In 5 cases, it is noted that the pebbles of the primary street surface were laid directly on gravel. A layer of 'early' metalling was recorded (observation Q), and a later metalled surface of cobbles and bone at 62.55 m OD (observation R). The most westerly observations recovered later surfaces of yellow gravel and blackened rubble (observation S). Early surfaces cut by 11th/12th century mid-road drain (the kennel)
60	High St Foul Sewer	1983	4 observations of the primary street surface along a foul sewer trench. The level of the surfaces was recorded as 61.95 m OD, 62.06 m OD and 62.09 m OD. In the two most westerly observations, it was recorded that the metalling was laid on a considerable depth of topsoil
63	Logic Lane	1960–61	The 12th-century gravel road surface of the former Kybald St was seen at a depth of 0.7 m
71	New Inn Hall St nos 1–7	1980	A drain connection exposed a fragment of small pebble metalling on topsoil at a depth of 2.4 m below tarmac
72	New Inn Hall St nos 18–24	1979	A metalled surface of hard-set cobbles was seen just above the original ground surface at 62.41 m OD, with a coin of Edward the Elder pressed onto the surface (Cat no 126)
73	Oriel St tunnel	1985	A note on the site section drawing suggests that there was no metalling on the surface of the 0.1 m of original topsoil
76	Paradise St	1980	A black cobbled surface was observed at 1.35 m below tarmac, with preserved leather; there were suggestions that there was a stone-lined drain, or possibly that this was a stone causeway
82	Queen's Lane	1970	Observation of a sewer connection trench to St Edmund Hall revealed undated gravel and loam street surfaces to a depth of 0.75 m, below which was a disturbed loam. No original surface was seen, partly owing to the collapse of the trench
83	Queen St no 4	1986	Overlying the original ground surface was a series of six surfaces, which survived over about 20% of the area of the trench, and appear to represent a series of three successive street surfaces and the accumulations on top of them. The lowest surface, at *c* 61.70–61.80 m OD, was a hard compact layer of small pebbles in light grey-brown clay loam. The second and third surfaces were of hard, burnt gravel. No finds were recovered from these layers, but they were cut by features containing pottery characteristic of the 11th century (see excavation report, above)

Table 5.2 (continued)

Gaz no	Location	Date	Observation
84	Queen St no 7	1985	A sequence of layers which may represent successive street surfaces and overlying accumulations were recorded in Trench II. The lowest (7Q209/13) lay directly above the original ground surface (here recorded as pale orange clay), at a level of *c* 61.70–61.80 m OD; it was composed mostly of pebbles and small cobblestones under 50 mm diameter, set in a layer of clean grey clay. It extended across the entire area of Trench II where not cut by later pits, and exhibited distinct areas of wear consistent with heavy use by traffic or prolonged weathering. It was succeeded by several discontinuous layers of gravel and loam, including a more extensive layer of firm gravelly loam with stones (7Q209/6) with an area of small pebble metalling (7Q209/12). The evidence suggests encroachment by buildings at the S end after this level, with continuing accumulation of gravel surfaces at the N end of the trench. Sherds of Fabric *B* were associated with the layers
85	Queen St nos 11–12	1968–80	Original topsoil seen at 61.88 m OD, with gravel surfaces extending several metres behind the modern frontage, but no other primary metalling. It contrasted with the findings further W at 23–6 Queen St, where Davison found early pits extending forward of the modern frontage, and where there is no reference to early metalling
90	St Aldates no 7	1980	Primary metalling of random non-calcareous pebbles on gravel, at 2.15 m below tarmac (approx 61 m OD)
97	St Aldates opp no 97	1980	Sparse scatter of small, irregular, non-calcareous pebbles at 1.8 m depth (approx 59.50 m OD). No evidence of topsoil between pebbles and gravel
102	St Aldates opp Christ Church Tom Quad S lodging	1980	Gravel at 1.15 m, no primary metalling. Later surface of limestone setts at 0.5 m depth
107	St Michael's St opp no 25	1976	Small rounded pebbles (*c* 10–30 mm diameter) on natural gravel at 2.3 m depth, forming a hard surface, with a cobbled surface at 0.2 m above this
114	Turl St Foul Sewer	1981	11 observations were made during tunnelling for a foul sewer, at approx 1.2 m intervals, and are identified by ring number (see Fig. 5.3). Red topsoil was recorded at rings 3, 6 and 7 but no pebble metalling was present above it. Pebble metalling was first seen at ring 8, at the extreme E edge of the tunnel section, overlying red topsoil over natural gravel. This pebble metalling extended further W at ring 9. At ring 13, the E of the section was obscured; on the W side the pebbles were very sparse, and overlain by brown loam under a layer of charcoal which was also observed at ring 16. The observation just before ring 15 showed the primary pebble metalling and a later sequence of gravel and clay road surfaces on the E of the trench; the W of the trench was affected by a pit cut down to the level of the red topsoil. At ring 16 primary pebble metalling was recorded across the centre of the tunnel but on the W edge there was an area of unsurfaced topsoil 0.1 m higher than the pebble metalling, suggesting that turf had been stripped before the pebble metalling was laid. At ring 17, pebble metalling was seen over a thin layer of red topsoil on the W of the tunnel, but the E side was cut away by a later pit. At ring 18, a large pit cut away most of the E side of the tunnel, but pebble metalling over a thin layer of red topsoil was observed at the W edge. The final observation was N of ring 21. Here, gravel road surfaces were observed overlying red topsoil on the E of the tunnel but the distinctive primary pebbled metalling was not seen; on the W, the tunnel face was obscured by boarding retaining the unstable fill of the former sewer trench

surfaces, and in his excavations at the Clarendon Hotel, Cornmarket (Gaz No. 33), it was demonstrated that the late Saxon street frontage lay some 3 m east of the later medieval line. Subsequently, the presence or absence of early street surfaces was often recorded in small-scale observations as well as controlled excavations. However, it was not until Hassall's work at Church St and Castle St in 1970 (Gaz Nos 14, 24–6) that the primary street surface was finally exposed and recorded by controlled archaeological

excavation. Hassall commented that the distinctive construction of the lowest street surfaces suggested that they were part of a single scheme for the laying-out of the streets of Oxford (Hassall *et al.* 1989, 127). This echoed the conclusions advanced by Biddle and Hill (1971), that the recognition of a network of contemporary, late Saxon streets forming a rectilinear system argued strongly for their origin in a single planned development. Biddle and Hill (1971, 78) considered that the rectilinear street system of Winchester was laid out before the mid 10th century and was a primary feature of the fortified *burh*. Hassall (*et al.* 1989, 127, 272) advanced the view that this was also true for Oxford, and that the laying out of the town's basic street grid dated from the foundation of the *burh*. This conclusion has informed much of the OAU's more recent work in the city, and observations of the early street surfaces have been undertaken regularly and systematically, whenever opportunities were available.

The observations

A summary of observations relating to early street surfaces is given in Table 5.2, and the locations of the observations are shown on Figure 5.24. The table records a total of 57 separate observations. Of these, 12 derive from the watching brief on the High St Surface Water Drain, 1981 and 4 from the watching brief on the High St Foul Sewer, 1983 (see also Observations of the medieval mid-road drain or kennel, below). A further 13 observations were recorded during a watching brief on the construction of a foul sewer in Turl St, in 1981. A further 3 observations were made during excavations reported elsewhere in this chapter (see All Saints Church and Nos 4 and 7–8 Queen St, above), and are repeated in summary form in the table. Negative evidence is incorporated, as well as positive evidence, since the absence of early metalling may suggest that particular roads or passages were not a feature of the earliest street layout, and represent later additions; or alternatively (as in the case of Cornmarket St and Turl St), that they have subsequently been broadened, narrowed or realigned. As archaeological evidence, not all the observations are of equal value, because inevitably many are from deep contractors' excavations which were not under archaeological control.

Discussion

Table 5.2 lists 40 observations of a surface which is interpreted as the primary street metalling. The fullest accounts are from the observations at Castle St and Church St, where the surface is described as compacted, and consisting of irregularly-sized fragments of limestone cobbles, small stones and gravel pressed into a thin layer of the original red loam ground surface. Associated pottery included fabric *B* and early Stamford ware. The surface at Church St was recorded as worn smooth, and the cobbles were shattered and very compressed towards the centre of the street. The extensive earliest surface at No. 7 Queen St was described in very similar terms, as consisting of pebbles and small cobblestones under 50 mm diameter, overlying the original ground surface but here set in a matrix of clean, grey clay. The surface showed distinct areas of wear consistent with heavy use by traffic or prolonged weathering, and the associated pottery was predominantly fabric *B*. However, this surface extended at least 8 m south of the modern street frontage and this would imply that Queen St was originally very much wider than in the later medieval or modern periods. It is possible that this was so; clear evidence exists for the realignment of both Cornmarket St and Turl St during the 12th to 13th centuries, and a very wide space at the east end of the original Queen St may well have been used for market trading. However, it must be noted that on present evidence the sequence of surfaces at No. 7 Queen St might equally represent a cobbled yard or passage. The earliest surface at the nearby site at No. 4 Queen St was a hard, compact layer of small pebbles, also in a matrix of light grey-brown clay loam. This lay much nearer to the modern street frontage; it was cut by a pit (7Q32) which contained pottery typical of the 11th century, and this suggests that encroachment was early and extensive.

In more limited exposures, the primary surface has usually been seen in section only. It is characteristically described as composed of small cobbles, pebbles or stones with a diameter (where recorded) of between 10 mm and 30 mm. The stones are variously described as limestone, quartzite and non-calcareous. The primary surface is usually described as set into the original red loam ground surface, although the excavations in Queen St showed an original ground surface of clay. The absence of old ground surface was noted in several places, where the primary street metalling appeared to have been set directly into the natural gravel; five such cases were recorded in the High St, two in St Aldate's and one in St Michael's St. Observation 16 of the Turl St sewer (Fig. 5.3) showed an area of unsurfaced topsoil 0.1 m higher than the pebble metalling, which suggested that turf had been stripped prior to the laying of the street. The absence of topsoil in the High St and St Aldate's may well be due to wear and weathering on the gradient of the gravel terrace before the establishment of the *burh* and its streets, while at St Michael's St it is at least possible that the turf and topsoil could have been stripped for reuse in the defensive rampart.

Very few finds have been recovered from the primary street surfaces, but the most important was the coin of Edward the Elder found pressed into a primary surface of hard-set cobbles in New Inn Hall St, during the contractors' cleaning up work (Plates 5.8, 6.1). This coin (discussed by Lyon, Chapter 6) dates to *c* AD 920, and provides the strongest evidence yet available for the likely date of the earliest street layout. It is consistent with the small

quantities of pottery recovered at Castle St and Church St, and with the documentary evidence of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the Burghal Hidage (see Chapter 2 above). Figure 5.24 shows the locations of the observed primary street surface in Oxford, and it may be suggested that this offers some evidence for the layout of the original *burh*. It is notable that no difference in composition is apparent between the first surfaces within the area of the proposed primary *burh*, and those at Catte St and 33 High St, which lay within the area of the proposed later extension.

The medieval mid-road drain or 'kennel' (Figs 5.24–5.26, Plate 5.9; Table 5.3)

The early history of street cleansing in Oxford is marked by the outraged complaints of the University to the Crown about the filthy and unwholesome state of the streets, and subsequent orders for the clearing of dung, the removal of pigsties, and control of animal slaughtering. After 1355 the University won control and appointed masters of the streets, to enforce the cleansing that was carried out by individual property owners, the town and parishes (*VCH* iv, 350–1). A comprehensive set of town by-laws of 1582 forebade the sweeping of

> donge, rubbyshe, or other thinge noyant downe into the channell of the streete, wharby the common course shall or may be lett [obstructed]. But everie person shall swepe together and take uppe the said things noyant owt of the said channell so farre as their grounde reachyth, and cause the same to be carryed away twyce everie weeke (RCO, 1880, 422).

The central channel, or 'kennel' was a feature of the streets in the medieval town, though not one that occurs often in records. It survived in the stone and cobble surfaces laid by the Paving Commissioners, set up by the Mileways Act of 1771, and is shown in early street views, while examples can still be seen in Brasenose Lane and Radcliffe Square; new roads however, were to have side gutters and pavements, and this practice will have been followed in the macadamizing of city streets after 1868 (*VCH* iv, 352). Buried drains were also provided by the Paving Commissioners, and one from Carfax to Magdalen Bridge was built along High Street in 1778, replaced in 1806 and finally superseded by the new sewerage system after 1873 (*VCH* iv, 353–4).

The observations

In January and February of 1981, a watching brief was carried out on the construction of a new surface water drain along 300 m of the High St. Recording was by the daily inspection of the working face at the end of the trench, because the side sections tended to be more disturbed by parallel service trenches. The principal observations, designated by the letters A-S, are set out in Table 5.3, in order of distance west from the starting point of the trenching at manhole 623 outside No. 91 High St. The locations of the principal observations are shown in Figure 5.25, and two sections are reproduced in Figure 5.26. During unrelated sewer work to the east, a further section of the kennel was recorded opposite No. 33 High St, and this is also shown in Figure 5.26; the location of this observation is shown in Figure 5.24 (No. 55). In 1983 a small number of observations were made during the construction of a foul sewer at the west end of the High St (HSFS83), with supplementary information from an observation in 1992; these are also summarised in Table 5.3 (letters T-V) and illustrated in Figure 5.25. A previous observation of a kennel had been made in Catte St during trenching for manholes in 1980; this section is shown in Figure 5.26, and the location of the observation is shown on Figure 5.24 (No. 16).

Discussion

Typical sections of the kennel showed it to be a straight-sided trench of the order of 1–1.2 m deep below the original metalling of the street (see Fig. 5.26, observations M and N), and 0.9 m or more wide. The gravel side of the channel was marked by a vertical-running void at observation F and a white ash-like material at observation N, suggesting that it may have had a timber lining. The section observed at No. 33 High St (Fig. 5.26, feature 1) showed a profile on the north edge of the channel which could have resulted from the removal of a timber lining and erosion of the kennel side. A number of soft spots were detected by augering along the length of the kennel (observations D, L and Q), suggesting that there may have been soakaways at intervals along its line. At the junction of the High St and Catte St (observation C), a rather deeper feeder drain from Catte St appears to have joined the High St kennel, the junction being recorded as a possible ditch, HS8, up to 5 m wide. A section of the Catte St drain, recorded in 1980, is shown in Figure 5.26.

Two recuts were seen. At observation K, the kennel (recorded as HS6/2) was recut at the same level (floor at 60.80 m OD), on a line 0.20 m north; the recut line was recorded as HS6/1. A second recut was seen at 33 High St (Fig. 5.26, feature 2) and here the second cut was offset to the north by half the width of its predecessor, and its floor was approx 0.7 m higher. The existence of a butt-ended channel, HS6/3, approximately half way along the line of the kennel (observation L) is suggestive of recutting, although it was not possible to clarify the relationship between HS6/3 and other observations.

The line of the kennel was by no means straight, and it deviated both north and south of the line of the modern drainage trench; the reconstruction of its line in Figure 5.25 is based on the alignment of the short lengths of the kennel that fell within the

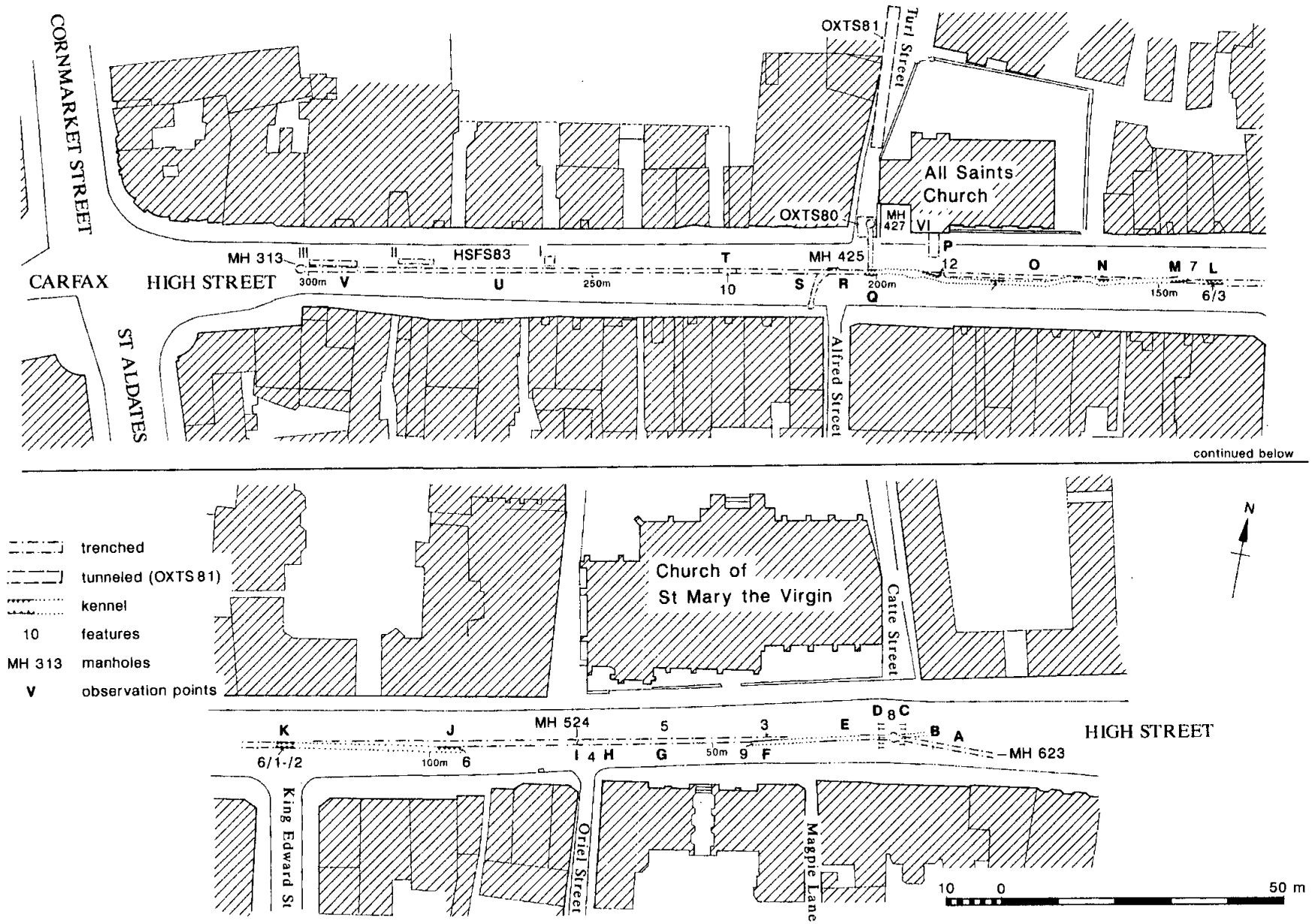


Figure 5.25 High St Surface Water Drain, 1981, and High St Foul Sewer, 1983; location of trench and observations.

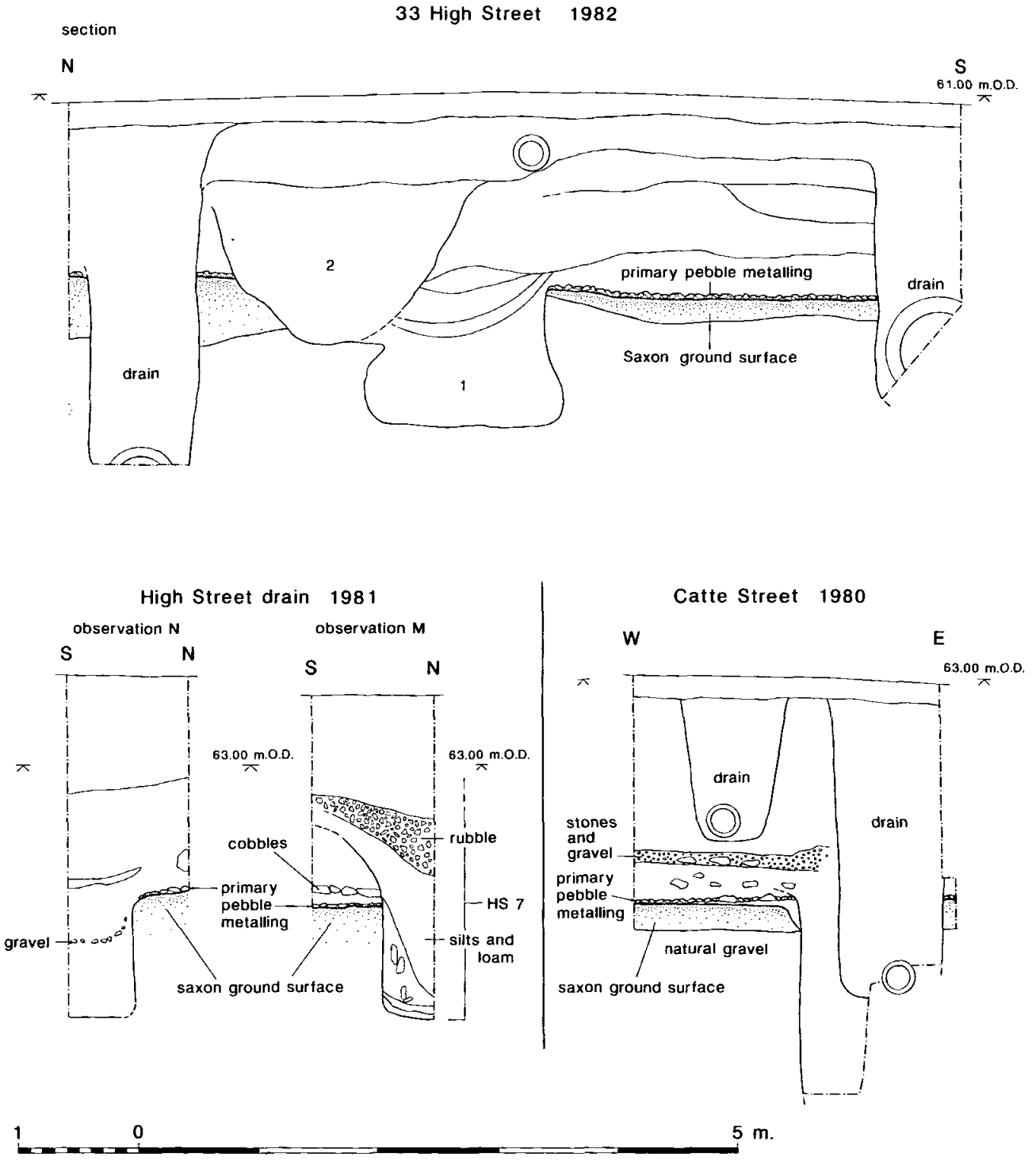


Figure 5.26 Mid road drain or 'kennel', sections; 33 High St 1982, High St Surface Water Drain 1981, Catte St 1980.

modern drainage trench. The marked deviation outside All Saints Church suggests that the kennel may have respected the line of the High St frontage; a small section of wall seen in All Saints Church Trench VI was aligned NNW-SSE, and ran parallel to the line of the kennel at this point. When the kennel appeared outside the frontage of St Mary's Church, it was running parallel to the wall of the churchyard. On present evidence, St Mary's Church is thought to represent the eastern limit of the primary *burh* and the kennel would have opened into a defensive ditch beyond. No remains of a defensive ditch were revealed in the watching brief, but surprisingly the original street surface was not visible at observation G; while this may be due to the relatively high level of the modern drain trench (floor at 60.25 m OD) at

Plate 5.9 High St Surface Water Drain, work in progress; looking E along the High St. All Saints Church can be seen in the centre of the picture

this point, the possibility cannot be ruled out that it was passing over the infill of a late Saxon defensive ditch for the eastern defences.

The drain would have operated by gravity, down the west-east slope of the High St from Carfax perhaps as far as the River Cherwell. Modern levels show a fall from a level of approx 65.50 m OD at Carfax, to a general level of between 58 and 59 m OD at the east end of the High St. Observations of the pre-*burh* ground surface of the town suggest that the watershed may have lain to the east of Carfax in the late Saxon period. Hurst (see Table 5.2) recorded the ground surface near Carfax at *c* 61.40 m OD, while the highest level recorded in the High St watching briefs was at 62.10 m OD at a point 80 m E of Carfax (observations T and U). From this point E the level of the primary street surface overlying the old ground surface fell steadily, from 61.95 m OD (observation S) to *c* 59.50 m OD (at 33 High St).

The evidence for dating the kennel is very tenuous, and the likely degree of redeposition in a road-centre drain must argue for great caution in ascribing dates from the evidence of the small number of finds. Where the kennel floor was seen, it was overlain by thin layers of primary silting. The earliest sherd of pottery, recorded as SF9 (see Mellor, Chapter 6), came from the primary silting of the butt-ended channel HS6/3; this was of shell-tempered handmade Late Saxon Oxford ware (fabric *B*). A knife (Fig. 6.18 No. 32), and a small number of sherds of Early Medieval Oxford ware (fabric *AC*, 11th- to 12th-century) were recovered from the primary silts of the kennel at observations M and Q (SFs 10, 11, 13 and 15). The upper rubble fill of the kennel at observation M contained sherds of 14th- to 15th-century pottery (SF18). Pottery was also recovered from the adjacent and higher street surfaces. A sherd of St Neot's-type ware (fabric *R*) lay over the primary pebble street metalling just W of observation C (SF7). Small quantities of 12th-century pottery were recovered from later deposits at levels approx 0.50 m higher than the primary metalling (SF3 from thick silt overlying the primary street surface, found at approx 60.60 m OD, observation B; SF4 from a layer of red-brown gravel at the top of ditch HS8, found at approx 60.80 m OD, slightly W of observation B; SF14 from S section at observation P, level not recorded; SF17 from red-brown gravelly silt, found at approx 62.45 m OD, observation S at 251.4 m W). In two cases (SFs 3 and 17), it is recorded that the layers were dipping slightly, as if into the central kennel.

The combined evidence of the finds and the sections (especially observation M, Fig. 5.26) suggests that the kennel was predominantly a feature of the 11th and 12th centuries, and was allowed to silt up from the later 12th century onwards. In the 14th or 15th century it may have been lined with rubble to form a shallow stone-lined trough no more than 0.20 m deep. The date of its origin is much more difficult to assess. The single sherd of fabric *B* from the butt-ended kennel HS6/3 would be consistent with silting in the kennel as early as the 10th century. In addition, it was noted that in two places (observations N and Q) the edge of the profile of the layers above and below the primary pebble metalling curved down into the drain, but without the pebbles. This would hint strongly that the kennel was at the very least following the line of a feature of the primary surface, and nothing in the site records would contradict this. It should be noted that, if we are correct in assuming that the primary *burh* ended at St Mary's Church, the kennel would have opened into a defensive ditch beyond. The kennels observed beyond (33 High St and Catte St) would therefore represent a later build, and may not have been constructed until there was substantial settlement of the E suburb.

Table 5.3 Observations of the High Street Surface Water Drain 1981 and Foul Sewer 1983, with further observations of High St Surface Water Drain 1982, and observations in 1992

Obs	Location	Date	Primary street m OD	Kennel	Other features
A	8.0	20.01.81	59.85	Not seen	Medieval pits
B	11.5	21.01.81	59.90	Not seen	Primary metalling of pebbles on natural gravel, overlain by 10 layers mostly of silt with a few thin gravelly layers, and uppermost a surface of stone setts
C	16.4	21.01.81	59.90	Not certainly identified; possible ditch recorded in N section	Possible junction between High St drain and a drain from Catte St, to the N, in the form of a ditch HS 8 up to 5 m wide
D	18.50	22.01.81			Manhole excavation; ditch HS 8 augered to 58.6 m OD; natural gravel not reached
E	26.0	22.01.81	60.00	Recognised as old street drain running along line of new trench	Primary metalling of pebbles on natural gravel; above it mainly silty and loamy surfaces with gravel at high level
F	38.90	24.01.81	60.00		Probing located a hard cobbled surface at 60.00 m OD
	41.30			Recorded as HS 9, disappearing out of S of trench. Void observed between silt and gravel representing possible timber edge	Pit disturbance HS 3
G	59.80	26.01.81	not seen	Not seen	Pit HS 5 cut from high level
H	67.30	27.01.81	60.65	Not seen	Natural gravel at approx 60.55 m OD; above gravel was a disturbed pebble metalling, and at 61.51 m OD was the top of a 0.35 m depth of black stony silt
	75.00				HS 4 stone-lined pit or feeder drain
I	77.00	29.01.81			Trench for Manhole 524 showed profile of collapsed timber drain coming from (former) Schools St, floor at 59.8 m OD
J	88.80	28.01.81	60.98	The kennel (recorded as HS 6) lay just behind the S section, its floor at 60.45 m OD; it reappeared in S section by 95 m W	S section showed pebble metalling on natural gravel, above which was 0.8 m of gravelly surfaces, the uppermost being black
K	129.20	30.01.81	not seen	Kennel, HS 6, on same alignment as modern trench although there was a suggestion that it had been interrupted or kinked. The end section showed a recut which was recorded as HS 6/1, distinguished from the reestablished line at that point, recorded as HS 6/2. Floor of this feature at 60.8 m OD	

L	133–141 140.4	02.02.81	61.60	Kennel probably running down line of modern trench, extending into S section from time to time as though through further kinks. Probed to 59.85 m OD at 137 m W, suggesting possible existence of a deeper channel beneath. Feature butt-ended at 140.4 m W, recorded as HS 6/3	Pebble metalling on gravel seen in end section, beyond butt end of HS6/3. Possible soakaway
M	146.30	03.02.81	61.85	Recorded as HS 7 as it reentered the trench from the N. Kennel floor at 60.9 m OD, cutting into primary metalling. See section, Fig. 5.26. HS7 showed signs of relining with small stones at a high level, with 14th- to 15th-century pottery. Pottery from the primary silt was c 12th-century	Primary metalling of pebbles cut by kennel (HS7)
N	159.60	03.02.81	61.92	13 m length of modern trench studied, showing kennel running diagonally, with hint of a slight bend at 157 m W. See section, Fig. 5.26. Animal bone from fill recorded as HS 7/1. Thin silt layer above primary metalling was sloping into the kennel. Kennel moved N again by 164 m W. A vertical-running void and white ash-like material in side of kennel suggested a plank lining	Pebble primary metalling with thin silt layer above
O	176.20	04.02.81	61.95	Not seen; run out to S of modern trench around 169 m W, as if respecting frontage of All Saints Church	Pebble primary metalling
P	188.00 193.00	05.02.81		Side drain HS 12 feeding into kennel running just outside S side of trench, where its unconsolidated infill caused a major collapse of the trench side. The kennel seems to change direction N at this point, coming back into the trench where it widened to at least 1.2 m at 193 m W	
Q	197.60	06.02.81		Recent sewer enters drain trench from Turl St. Kennel augered to 59.95 m OD. At 198 m W, augered to 59.3 m OD without reaching gravel	'Early metalling' recorded at 61.90 m OD, over pale brown silt sloping into top of kennel
R	200.5	16.02.81			Connection to new Turl St drain showed a later metalled surface of cobbles and bone at 62.55 m OD
	210.0	23.02.81			Side drain connection showed gravel surfaces on S side of High St at around 62.7 m OD, with a camber of 1:20 or 1:25 towards the middle of the road
S	216.90	07.02.81	61.95	Not seen	Primary metalling of pebbles and bone, overlaid by small stone slabs. Beyond Manhole 425, 200 m W, the modern trench had been narrowed and began rising at a steeper angle than the natural profile, with the effect that the gravel disappeared below the floor of the trench at 221.5 m W. Pit seen in S section.
	227.5 to final manhole at 300.85				Further observations in 1981 were restricted to later metalling of the street. Yellow gravel surfaces were observed in N and S sections from 227.5 m W to 235 m W, and beyond this were blackened rubble street surfaces to 251.4 m W. There were few useful observations between here and the final manhole (313) at 300.85 m W, but it was noted that the silty road surfaces were dipping to the S

Table 5.3 (continued)

Obs	Location	Date	Primary street m OD	Kennel	Other features
T	223.8	09.02.92	61.98		In later work, the primary metalling of pebbles with bone was observed, cut by a large pit, HS 10
	236.0	Mar 83	62.06		During the laying of a foul sewer in March 1983, primary metalling was observed at 236 m W and 242 m W
	242.0	Mar 83	61.95		
U	279.0	Mar 83	62.09		Primary metalling laid on 0.25 m original topsoil
V	295.0	Mar 83			Primary surface of 0.1 m layer of concreted pebbles in original topsoil, laid on topsoil which may be as much as 0.6 m deep. Level not recorded
33 High Street	see Fig. 5.24	14.02.82	c 59.5–59.7	During sewer work unrelated to the above, a trench was dug further E along the High St opposite no 33, 'Drawda Hall'. This showed two kennels (see Fig. 5.26), an earlier (1) cut by a later (2). Kennel 1 had suffered erosion by undercutting of one side. Kennel 2 appeared in the E section to have a ditch-like profile, but in the W section it had the straight-sided profile seen elsewhere and may therefore have had a lining	Primary street surface of pebbles

Key:
Obs Observation key letter (see trench plan, Fig. 5.25)
Location Metres W of the first and lowest manhole, 623, outside no 91 High St
Primary street Level at which primary street metalling observed, in m OD
Kennel Observations of kennel