

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE, NEAR CANTERBURY*

TIM TATTON-BROWN

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Pan Garrard, Mark Horton and Richard Reece

One of the least well-known of all the Archbishops of Canterbury's palaces in Kent situated at Bekesbourne 4.8 km. south-east of Canterbury (Fig. 1). This post-medieval palace, which was once a large complex of sixteenth-century brick buildings lasted for only just over a century and today only a small part still remains above the ground (N.G.R.: TR 193555). Very little has been published about the palace though Hasted wrote a short account of the history of the manor and its buildings in his famous *History*.¹ Much more can be gained from surviving documents (particularly those in Lambeth Palace) and Andrew Butcher has summarized this history below, concentrating on the light the documents throw on the buildings of the palace.

In the autumn of 1976 the Canterbury Archaeological Trust were approached by the present owner of 'The Old Palace', Mr John Quine, who told us that the digging of a large sewer trench through his garden in 1972 had cut through a mass of brick walls and that the area in question was still partly open and a brick 'tunnel' could still be traced across the area. On inspection, it was quite clear that a major drain and several brick wall foundations of the Tudor palace had been discovered and partly destroyed. The site itself was not a scheduled ancient monument and, after consultation with Mr. Tony

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¹ E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, ix, 2nd edn., Canterbury, 1800, 268-71.

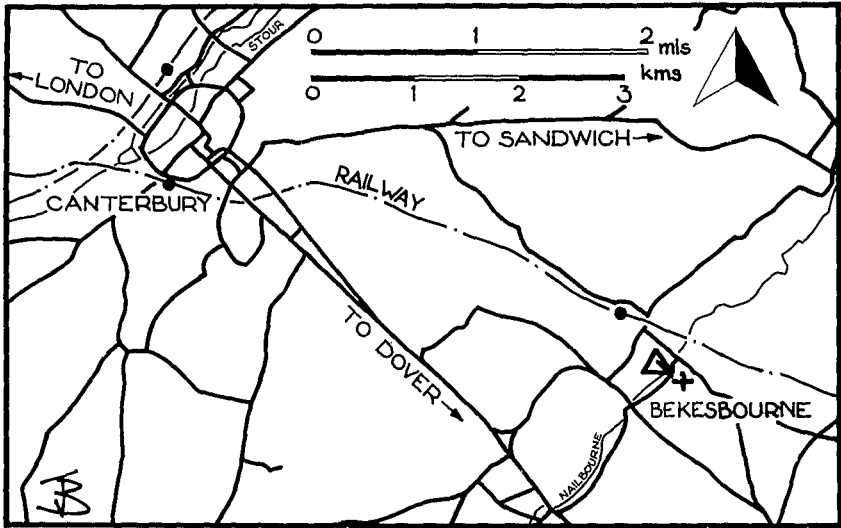


Fig. 1. Canterbury and Bokesbourne — Location Plan.

Musty, of the D.o.E., it was decided to clean up the mess and try and find what remained of the palace in this area, so that the whole site could be scheduled.

Small-scale excavations were then carried out on the site in November and December 1976 with a group of 'job creation scheme' excavators and a little financial help from the D.o.E. (Ancient Monuments Inspectorate). Work was then discontinued due to bad weather and other commitments in Canterbury. Then during the summer and autumn of 1977 the work recommenced and we were able to continue our work largely at weekends with volunteers (no finance was available). The excavations were more protracted than we expected because underlying the post-medieval palace levels were the remains of a fine medieval building and below that some Iron Age and Roman levels. Work finally finished in early January 1978 when the whole area had been excavated down to the natural silts of the Nailbourne valley.

The Bokesbourne site lies alongside the river Nailbourne on its north-western side at about 18 m. above sea-level (Fig. 2). Geologically the site lies on alluvium which overlies Head brick-earth and Upper Chalk. The natural levels under the archaeological features were therefore a complicated sequence of chalky silts and clays.

The excavation itself was 50-100 m. west of the present house which is built within the surviving sixteenth-century gatehouse

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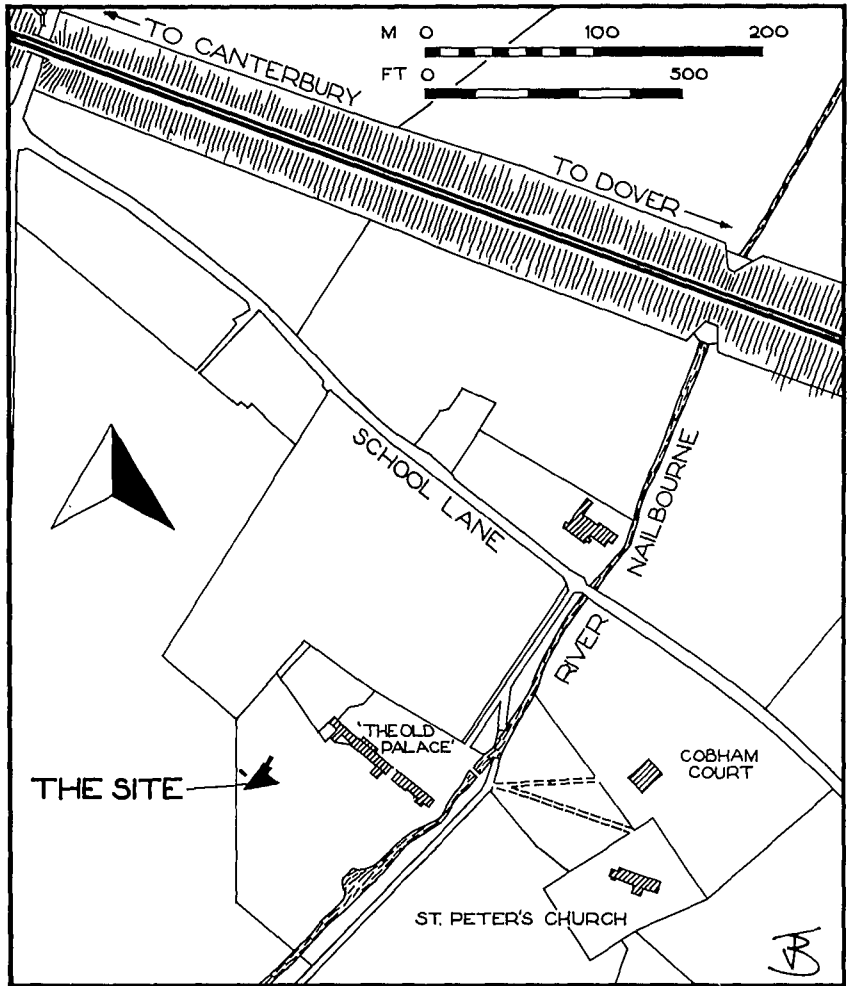


Fig. 2. Bekesbourne 'Village' and the 'Old Palace'.

range, and it was obvious both from the documentary material and from our small excavation that the whole area to the south-west of the gatehouse range had once been covered by the main buildings of the palace. We were fortunate in being able to obtain the services of Mr. Basil Turton who carried out a detailed resistivity survey of the whole of the supposed main area of the palace. Unfortunately, the complications of the natural features in the area made this survey difficult to interpret.

HISTORY OF THE 'BISHOPS PALACE' AT BEKESBOURNE

Andrew Butcher

The manor of Livingsbourne in the parish of Bekesbourne is known to have possessed manorial buildings, including a manor house, from at least as early as the late fourteenth century when it was owned by a family of London wine merchants called Doget.² Little, however, is known of these buildings. Brief mentions of the house and its outbuildings at this date record repairs to the barn and pig-house as well as the provision of lead for the mill, repairs to the bridges, and a 'cisterna', and the making of a door for the buttery.³ Though the manor was farmed directly by this prominent London family its role within the merchants' economy was probably small, supplying households in London and Sandwich, and there is no indication that the owners visited their property. If Livingsbourne is to be regarded as a merchant investment in the countryside, it must be as a very limited one, and it seems unlikely to have encouraged any substantial building work.

A change in attitude towards the property probably came after Canterbury Cathedral Priory took possession in 1443⁴ though, as lessors of the manor, it may be that they made no considerable improvements much before the end of the fifteenth century. The evidence of a lease drawn up on the 3rd June, 1492, however, clearly suggests that changes had taken place in the second half of the fifteenth century,⁵ changes which may parallel changes noted elsewhere for the nearby Cathedral Priory manor of Chartham.⁶ This lease of the manor to John Egriden of Eythorne reserves to the Priory as escheats, forfeits, etc., all rents of assize, and various other perquisites, and also makes exception, to the use of the Priory, of 'the hall with rooms and kitchen there, separated from the rest of the buildings by wall and fence, as well as the ponds there'. As early as the priorate of William Sellyng, then, there

² Hasted, *op. cit. supra.* 269; B.M. MSS Harl. Roll Z. 5, 1365-66. For refs. to Doget family as London Wine Merchants see S.L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of medieval London, 1300-1500*, Chicago, 1948, 337.

³ B.M. MSS Harl. Roll Z. 5, 1356-66; Harl. Roll S. 6, c. 1383-84.

⁴ Hasted, *op. cit. supra.* 269; MSS. C(anterbury) C(athedral) L(ibrary), Ch(artae) Antiq(uae) B. 293 (17th Nov. 1443).

⁵ MS. C.C.L., Ch. Antiq. B. 312¹.

⁶ See M.J. Sparks and E.W. Parkin ' "The Deanery", Chartham', *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxix (1979), 169-82.

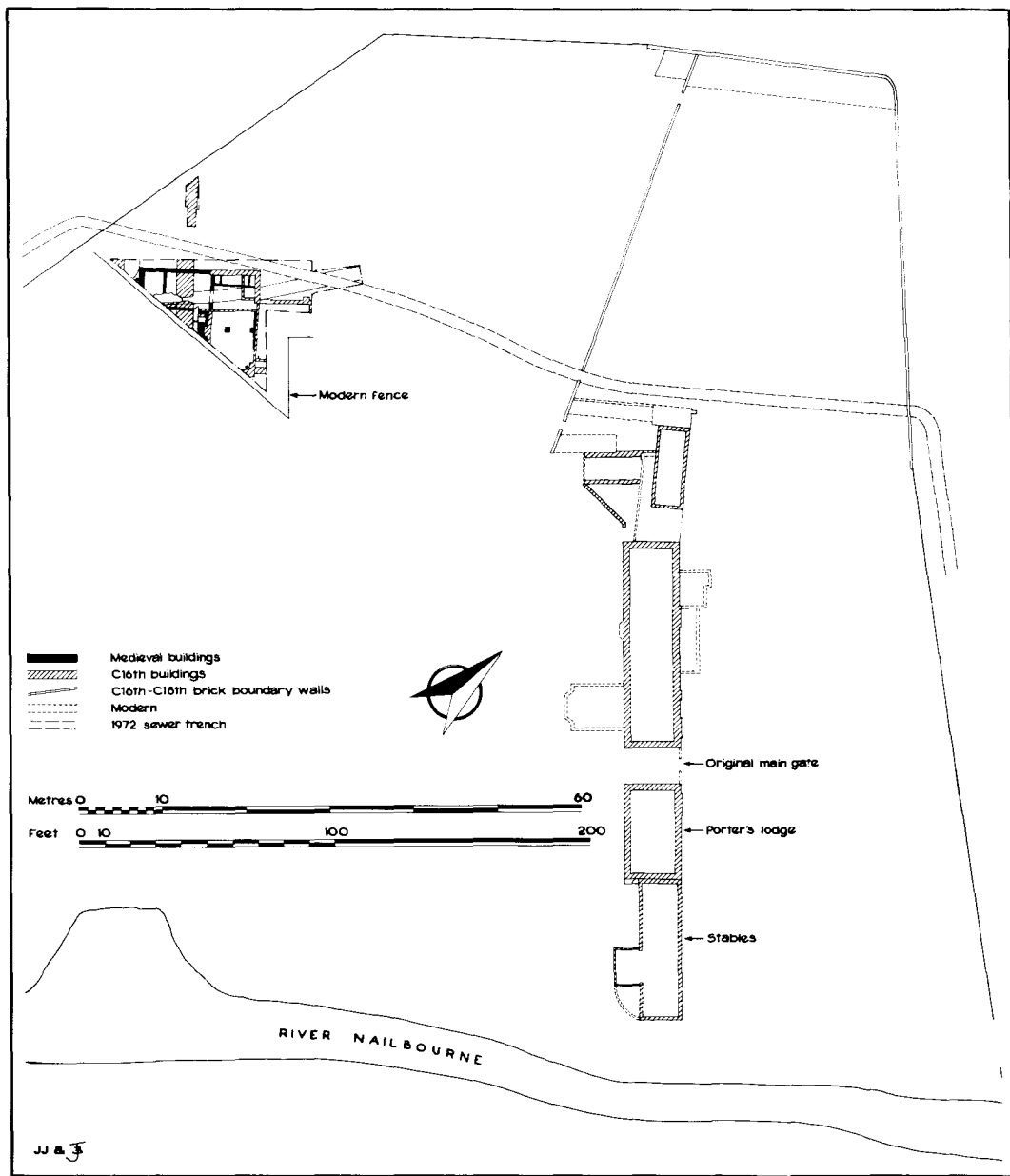
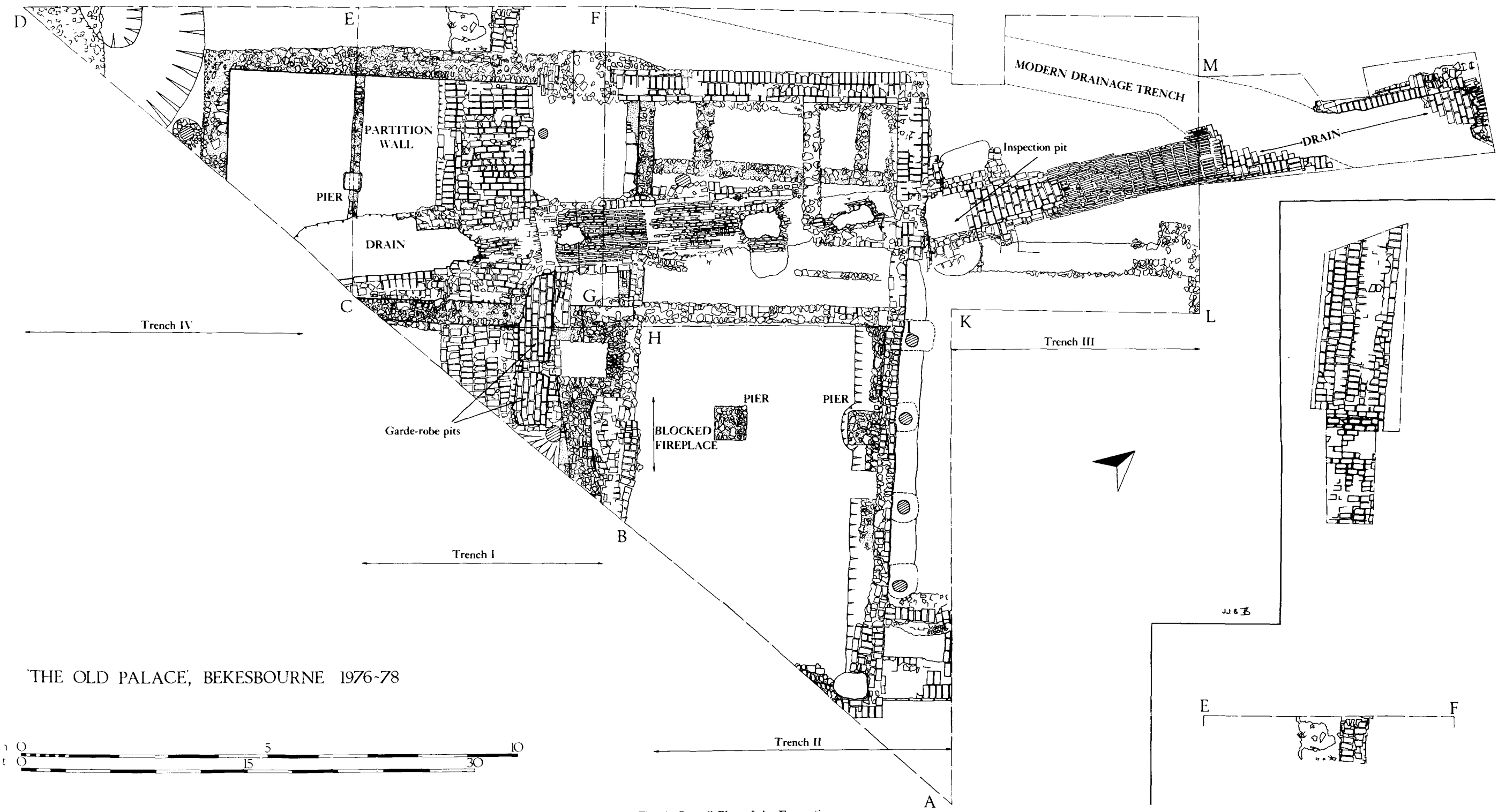


Fig. 3. Plan of the 'Old Palace' with the Excavations.



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Fig. 4. Overall Plan of the Excavations.

would seem to have been a house, within its own grounds, distinct from the rest of the manor, which may be the same as the priors' 'mansion' described in the early sixteenth century.

To what extent Prior Thomas Goldstone II was responsible for refashioning the house of 1492 is unclear, but the description given in his obituary makes clear that a separate and substantial dwelling was in existence in 1517 alongside a house for the working *firmarius*:

'Et apud Bekysborne in manerio vocato Levynsborne mansionem Prioris satis pulctrum cum capella annexa in honorem Annuntiationis Dominicae ac Patronum Ecclesiae celebriter dedicata, ac noram Aulam Dormiterio Fratrum adjacentem, cum mansione firmarii ibidem cum omnibus aliis ad eandem mansionem pertinentibus, aedificio super portam et duobus horreis solum exceptis'.⁷

The chapel, it seems, was dedicated in 1501 by Dom John Thornton, Suffragan Bishop to Archbishop William Warham, through Prior Goldstone II,⁸ and it is likely, as suggested elsewhere,⁹ that the house at Livingsbourne along with that at Chartham was developed for the recreational purposes of the Cathedral Priory.¹⁰ When in 1540 the property was surrendered into the King's hand it would seem that Cranmer was able to achieve an earlier ambition to acquire the Livingsbourne mansion, but whether, as Hasted suggests, he improved the property as one of his palaces, finishing the gatehouse in 1552,¹¹ or whether he merely fixed plaques of his arms to the Priory building previously described, remains unclear. Other brief descriptions of the early sixteenth century in 1538¹² and 1542¹³ reveal no more than the existence of a pigeon-house and stables.

The survival of a survey of 'Howshold stuf' in the Livingsbourne mansion probably drawn up near to Archbishop Parker's death in 1575,¹⁴ however, permits a glimpse of the house after what may have been considerable rebuilding. Writing to Lord Burghley on 12th March, 1573, Parker said: 'I would remove some part of an old, decayed, wasteful, unwholesome, and desolate house at Ford to enlarge the little house I have at Bekesbourne',¹⁵ and assuming this work to have been carried out then the inventorial description of c. 1575 is testimony to Parker's achievement. The survey moves from

⁷ H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, London, 1691, Vol.1, 148

⁸ W.G. Searle, (ed.), *The Chronicle of John Stone*, Cambridge Antiquarian Society Publications, xxxiv, Cambridge, 1902, 193-94.

⁹ Sparks and Parkin, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ *Cal. of Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, 1538, Vol. i., nos. 310 and 528.

¹¹ Hasted, *op. cit.*, 270-71.

¹² MSS CCL, Register T2, p. 112.

¹³ MSS CCL., Register U, p. 49.

¹⁴ L(ambeth) P(alace) A(rchives), MS 737, ff. 147v-154.

¹⁵ J. Bruce (ed.), *Correspondence of Archbishop Parker*, Parker Society, 1853, 419.

the Hall to the Great Parlour and the Inner Parlour and then to the Great Chamber, the Painted Chamber and the Green Chamber. There is then a description of the contents of the 'Press in the Lobbie bie', a closett, the Bed-chamber over the kitchen and the Inner Children's Chamber. Further details are provided of an Armory, a Garret Chamber, a Granary, a Buttery and an area beneath the stairs, a kitchen, a Bolting House and other house nearby, a Larder, a Long Garret, Stables and Library. The house is well-furnished and the Library provided with a remarkable collection befitting the residence in which Parker took so much pleasure.

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century it seems that extensive work was carried out under Archbishop Whitgift between 1589 and 1592. The building accounts which survive for these years¹⁶ seem to show the construction of the Long Gallery as well as much new glazing in studies, parlours, kitchen, larder, a chamber over the larder, a chamber over the kitchen, and an old garret above the kitchen, and in the so-called 'great window' in the Long Gallery. At this time, too, buttresses were constructed, the wash-house was repaired, a new bridge was built, and other unspecified work was carried out in the house. Between 1592 and 1647 the only evidence for the Bishops Palace' comes when the building accounts of 24th March – 28th July, 1632, when substantial but unspecified repairs were carried out at a cost of £28–10s.–9d.¹⁷ The house as described before its demolition in 1647, however, can have been little different from that completed under Archbishop Whitgift.

Some time after 16th April, 1647, the 'Bishops Palace' at Bekesbourne was sold off by the Commonwealth Commissioners, and in June 1656 Robert Hales entered into a contract with Richard Reade, yeoman of Wingham, and William Bennett, carpenter of Deal, by which 'all that parte, etc., of the Mancon howse commonly called or known by the name of the Bishopp's Howse' was to be pulled down and taken away.¹⁸ All that was to be left standing was the 'foundations of the outward walls of the Mancon adjoining and fencing the orchard garden and the little Court there to be the same height as other walls encompassing the orchard and garden'. In the event all that was left is substantially what may be seen today and what was described in 1660 as being virtually all in ruins except for the lodge, the housekeeper's house, and part of the stables.¹⁹ Fuller surveys of 1667 and 1669 indicate that the general dilapidation of

¹⁶ LPA, Carte Miscellanea VI, 84, 86b, 86d, 86e, 93, 112.

¹⁷ LPA, TG 56.

¹⁸ KAO, MS. U88/T14.

¹⁹ LPA, TC 3, f. 3.

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the whole manor was prolonged. 'I finde', wrote the surveyor in 1667, 'all out of Repayre. The pale fences for 40 Rodd all downe. The out houses ready to drop and the dwelling house being a long rowe of building formerly the Gatehouse in soe badd order that wee beleive 100^{li} will not repayre it as it should be The Parsons footebridg to church is much decayed (and if it bee incumbent on our Swayne) hee must repayre that speedily'.²⁰ And in 1669 the surveyor, though finding the Gatehouse in reasonably good repair, was still disposing of the bricks from the demolition.²¹

On 16th April, 1647, however, the Commonwealth Commissioners surveyed the house that they were about to dispose of and their description survives to provide a detailed picture of the 'Bishops Palace'.²² The so-called 'Mansion House' was a brick-and-timber construction. Below stairs there was a great Hall, and a Great and Little Parlour both lined with oak, as well as a Chapel paved with tiles. There was a Buttery, a Beer Cellar, a Wine Cellar, a Kitchen, Scullery, Larder, Bakehouse, Brewhouse and a Stillhouse with another room inside it. And there were also several Woodhouses and Coalhouses and other outhouses. Above stairs there was an oak-lined Great Lodging Chamber and three smaller chambers on the same floor one of which was oak-lined; here, too, was a Long Gallery and two Studies both of which were wainscotted. On the upper floor, reached by a pair of stairs between the Kitchen and the Hall were two Great Garrets. Above the Kitchen there was a Great Chamber, above the cellar two Small Chambers, and over the Porch an oak-lined Chamber and a Little Study. The long Gatehouse, built of brick, was described as being 'on the North Side a faire Court before the House'. On the ground floor were four rooms and above stairs four chambers and a garret. To the left of the Gatehouse as you entered the court was the Porter's Lodge, with four rooms, four chambers and a garret above. On the east side of the court was a Barn of two bays and three small stables, and on the south-west side there was an old Pigeon House. The premises were all tiled and beyond them were two Gardens, a Greater and a Lesser, both enclosed by brick walls. The Commissioners valued at £500 the materials to be sold and included an Apple Orchard, a Hop Garden, and the six-acre Forestall before the mansion in their survey.

The documentary evidence for the 'Bishops' Palace indicates at least four broad phases of development prior to demolition. In the

²⁰ LPA, TC 4, f. 20-20v.

²¹ LPA, TC 4, ff. 32-33.

²² LPA, Comm. XII a/23/186-8.

late-fourteenth and early-fifteenth centuries it seems likely that the manorial buildings at Livingsbourne would have given little sign of developments to come. Between 1443 and 1540, however, in the hands of Canterbury Cathedral Priory, both demesne and manorial buildings were integrated within an estate policy which developed alongside a withdrawal from direct exploitation, providing accommodation for the *firmarii* and, in special cases, recreational facilities for the monastery in expanded and improved manorial premises. At Bekesbourne, once these premises fell into the hands of the archbishops they were developed still further as rural palaces. Between 1540 and c. 1575, perhaps especially during Archbishop Parker's term of office, and between c. 1575 and 1641, perhaps at the instigation of Archbishop Whitgift, the 'Bishops Palace' achieved a magnificence only to be swept away in the Civil War to leave the remnant of Lodge, Housekeeper's House, and Stables.

THE EXCAVATIONS

When work started in November 1976 on the excavations, the site was covered in irregular holes and spoilheaps, which had been left there by the mechanical excavator. Unfortunately, when the excavator driver had broken through the sixteenth-century brick drain with his new sewage trench, he decided to 'follow the old tunnel' and cuts had been made into it in several places. Our first task therefore was to clean up the brick drain at the point where it had been cut through by the modern trench. We then laid out three trenches (with metre-wide baulks between them) over the area that had been disturbed by the mechanical excavator. The area available for excavation was limited on the south by an orchard whose boundary fence ran diagonally across the site (Figs. 3 and 4). Later, a fourth diagonal trench was added at the south-west corner of the site and the baulks were removed. Finally an extra *sondage* was dug in December 1977 to the north-east of the other trenches. This was to locate the continuation of the sixteenth-century brick wall (Fig. 4, inset) and when this was achieved excavation ceased.

The trenches themselves were numbered I — V, and for brevity the layers are given as, for example (III — 4) which means Trench III and Layer 4. If a small find number is mentioned this is placed first, e.g. (5, III — 4). All the main sections were drawn (Figs. 7 and 8) and they are located on the main plan (Fig. 4).

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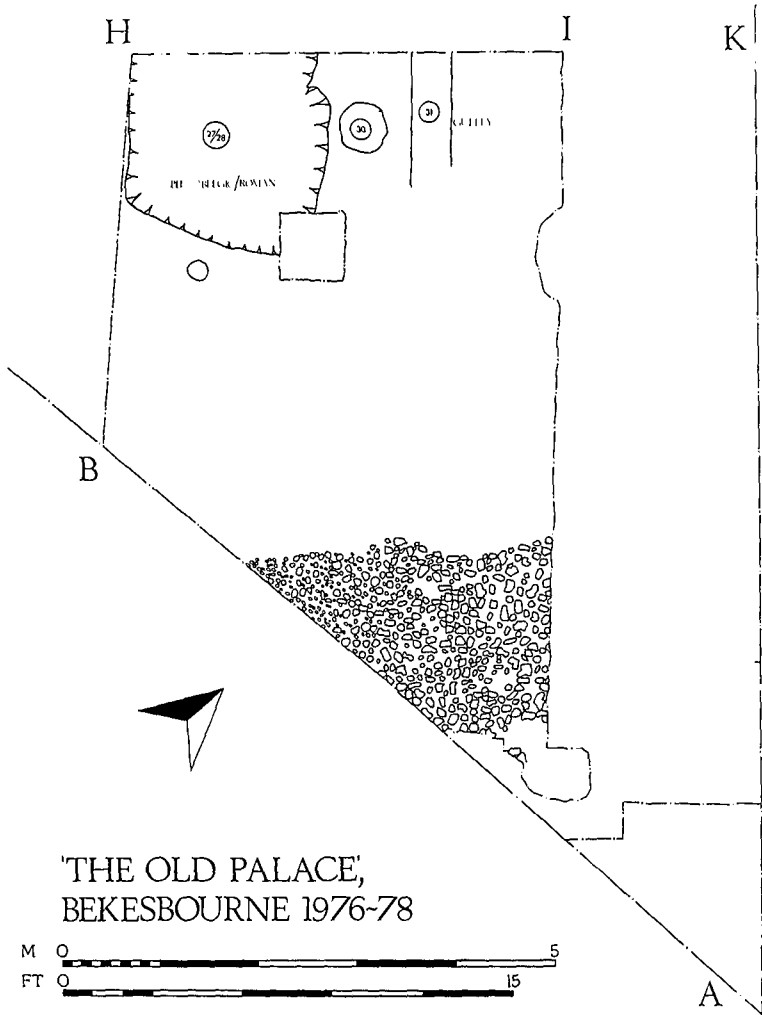


Fig. 5. Plan of pre-medieval Features in Trench II.

The Iron Age and Roman Levels

In two areas of the excavations pre-medieval levels were excavated. These were located in the south-east part of Trench II (Fig. 5) and alongside the western side of Trenches I and IV. In these areas a mixture of Iron Age, Belgic, early and late Roman and thirteenth-century pottery was found, and the only features to be discovered



General View of the Excavations showing the Brick vaulted Drain.



The medieval half Cellar.

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PLATE III



The sixteenth-century Brick Walls and Drain cutting through the medieval half Cellar.

PLATE IV



Detail of Brick Garderobe Bases and vaulted Drain.



Plaque relating to Thomas Cranmer's Building Work.



Plaque relating to the Arms of Archbishop Matthew Parker.

were a gulley and three pits which were probably Roman in date (Figs. 5 and 6).

As was mentioned above, the natural levels were chalky-silts and clays, which formed part of the recent alluvium of the Nailbourne valley. In one area a small section of these was excavated (I — 9 and 10), and we were able to compare these silts with other silts of a post-Roman date (Fig. 7, Section E—F). It was quite clear that some flooding had taken place in the area in the early medieval period, but this is to be expected as the site is close to the river.

A few very small sherds of Iron Age pottery were found which are perhaps earlier than the Belgic period (see pottery report below), but the first main concentration of pottery is Belgic to early Roman (i.e. late-first century B.C. to early-second century A.D.) and much of this material was found in the large pit (II — 27 and 28) on the site (Fig. 5). The pit also contained a Roman quern fragment and much daub. Associated with the pit are two other very small pits and a shallow gulley (II — 30 and 31) and together all this suggests that there was probably early Roman occupation on the site.

Quite a lot of late Roman material was also found in our trenches including two Constantinian coins and Oxfordshire pottery (fourth century), but most of this material came from later contexts or was found in the thick silt/soil level underlying the later medieval building levels (II — 14, 16 and 22, and IV — 13 and 1-8). This silt/soil level obviously built up over a very long period of time (perhaps a millenium) and it is significant that it contains thirteenth-century pottery from the Tyler Hill kilns as well as the Roman material.

No Anglo-Saxon or eleventh-twelfth-century material was found on the site, and this must indicate that the area of Bekesbourne (earlier called Livingsbourne) village in the Anglo-Saxon²³ and Norman periods did not reach as far as the 'Old Palace' site. The church, which is only about 200 m. east of the present site (Fig. 2), was certainly in existence by the mid-twelfth century and either this church or Patribourne church is mentioned as belonging to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, in Domesday Book. The church, however, is situated well up the hillside, and this is the most likely area for the early medieval population to have been situated. In the thirteenth century the church was considerably enlarged, and this is the time when medieval pottery is first found on our site, perhaps indicating a considerable population increase. During the time of the Black Death

²³ A pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery was discovered and excavated in the 1960s by Dr Frank Jenkins (as yet unpublished); it is located about ½ km. due east of the church (N.G.R. TR 199555).

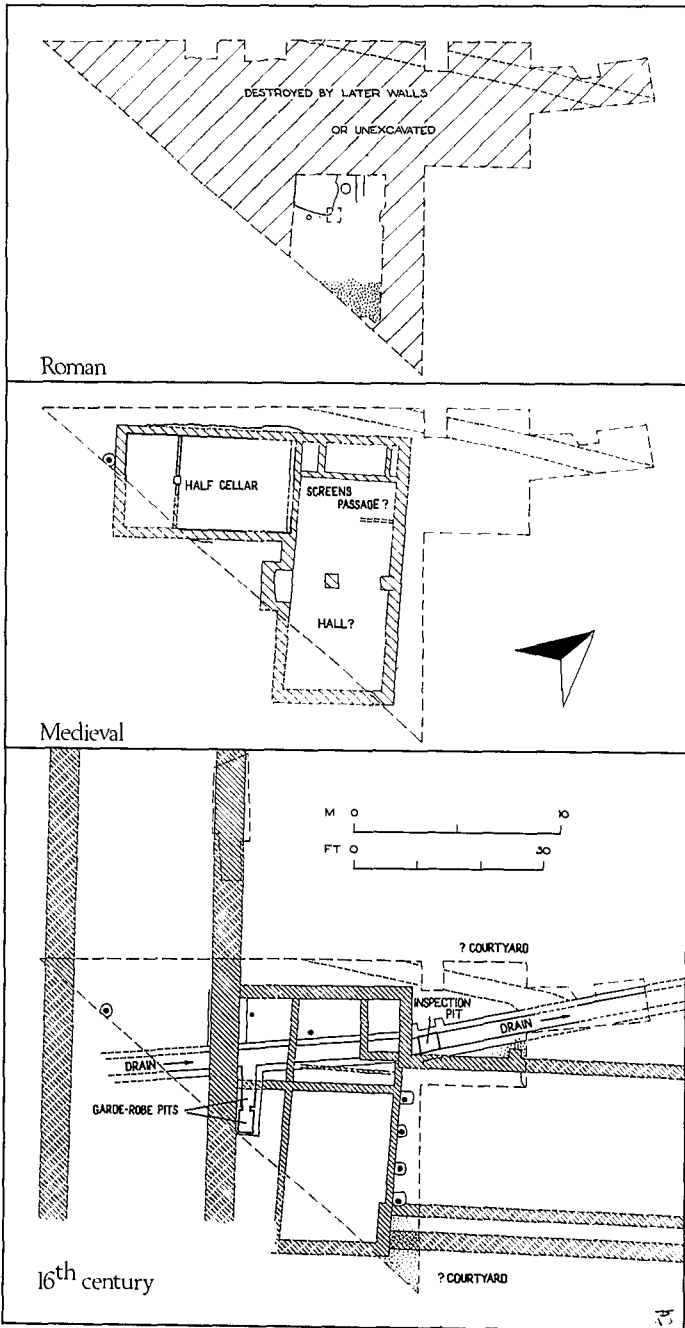


Fig. 6. Phase Plans (Roman, medieval and sixteenth Century).

in the mid-fourteenth century there was clearly a very considerable population decline in Bekesbourne, and this probably produced the situation which continued well into the post-medieval period of Bekesbourne being a village with only a church and two manor houses. Even today the village population is small and most new nineteenth- and twentieth-century housing was built close to the railway station or the aerodrome (now disused) and away from the church. Unfortunately, not enough finds were made on the site to give an 'archaeological' date to the first medieval buildings that were found (see below), but a date in the fifteenth century is most likely. Some fourteenth- and fifteenth-century pottery was found, but surprisingly little. This is probably because the upper levels of the site had been badly disturbed by the sixteenth-century palace levels.

The Medieval Building

The first substantial building that was erected within the area of the excavation was a fine late-medieval building of flint and chalk-block (Figs. 4 and 6). As it turned out most of this building was within the area of the excavation and it was possible to reconstruct the whole of its plan (Fig. 6, middle), which was L-shaped. All of the upper parts of the walls had been completely destroyed in the sixteenth century and all that survived in the eastern half of the building were the foundations of the walls. The south-western wing of the building had a half cellar and so some of the inside of this part of the building had survived, showing several phases of use. Elsewhere, no floors had survived though some of the loose glazed tiles in the destruction levels on the site may have come from this building. Not only had most of the levels associated with the medieval building been destroyed by later work, but also the later brick walls had cut through or covered the earlier walls.

The eastern part of the building, which was perhaps divided into three bays, almost certainly contained the hall in the two south-east bays. Dividing this hall into the putative two bays were a central pier foundation and opposite it, in the northern wall, another pier foundation coming out from the wall. On the south side of the possible hall was the base of a fireplace; the tile-on-edge floor, with heavy burning on it, had survived under sixteenth-century brickwork (Fig. 7, Section B – H). As a base to this brickwork several moulded blocks of stone were used. These perhaps originated in the medieval building rather than the palace. At the north-western end of the building were three small rooms separated from each other by

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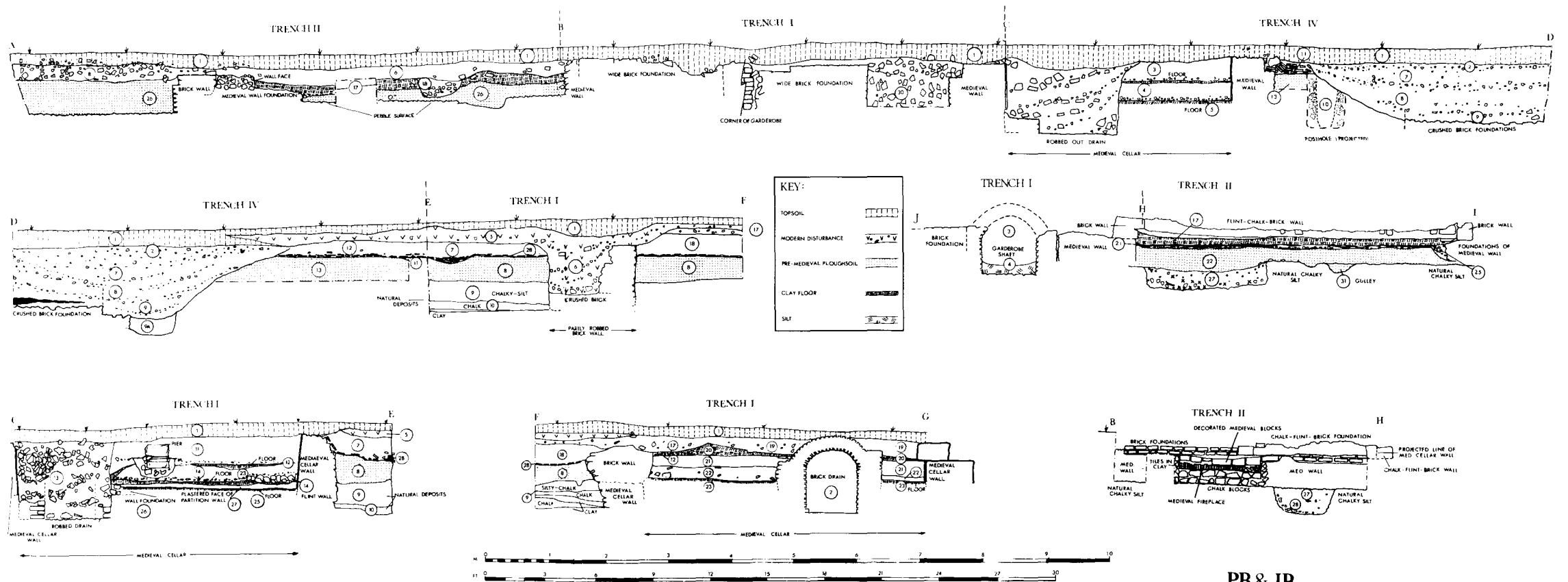


Fig. 7. Trench Sections A — D, D — F, J — I, C — E, F — G and B — H.



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PB & JB

Fig. 8. Trench Sections M — L, and K — A.

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walls only *c.* 30 cm. wide as opposed to the outer walls of the building which were 50-60 cm. wide. Though very small in size, these rooms may represent the service end of the building which was divided from the hall by a screens passage. This would mean a front door on the east side of the northern end of this part of the building. At the other end of the screens passage would have been the access to the half cellar, as well as perhaps the way to the first floor above the cellar, which must have contained the main chamber. In the medieval destruction level of the 'service end' were found two lead ventilating panels (25 and 26, II — 4; see report below), which were exceptionally fine for this sort of medieval building.

The half cellar, as was stated above, has in it several floor levels (Fig. 7, Sections C — E and C — D). The earlier clay floor (I — 25) ran apparently across the whole of the cellar. Then, on top of this was built a narrow cross-wall, which divided off the south-western third of the cellar. Another cross-wall, dividing off the north-eastern third, could also have been built but this would have been destroyed totally by the massive sixteenth-century brick wall. Another slightly higher clay floor (I — 15 and 23, and IV — 5) was then built. This had iron nails on it and traces of staining, which suggested a plank floor. This floor also covered the earlier partition wall. The cellar was then filled up a bit more with loam, clay, mortar and some rubble (I — 14 and 22, and IV — 4) and a final floor (I — 12) was constructed. Into this floor above the earlier partition wall was set a small pier. Again another pier, now destroyed, could have lain at the other end of the cellar. The final fill of the cellar (I — 11 and 21, and IV — 3) contained bone, oyster shell, some late-medieval pottery and roofing-tiles. This must have been the early sixteenth-century destruction level. The upper part of the building above the cellar was almost certainly timber-framed (the walls were far too insubstantial to take anything else) and though it is likely that the main 'hall' part was timber-framed also, it is possible that the ground floor walls at least were of stone (flint on the outside and chalk block covered in plaster, as in the cellar, on the inside). The fact that there was a fireplace built into the south wall would also suggest stone rather than timber-framing.

A precise date for this building is difficult due to the lack of stratified levels, but some of the pottery in the fill of the lower part of the half cellar may suggest that the building was constructed in the late-fourteenth to early-fifteenth century rather than the late-fifteenth century. The building was therefore originally perhaps part of the Doget's manor house rather than the Priors' (see above). However, it clearly continued in use till the early-sixteenth century and so it must have been one of the buildings used by the Prior or his

firmarii. It must have been too small for the Prior's 'mansion', so perhaps it was the domestic dwelling-house used by the *firmarius*.

The Archbishop's Palace

As we have seen above, the manor of Livingbourne and its associated buildings were acquired by Archbishop Cranmer in 1540, and some time after this, he and the later Archbishops Parker and Whitgift constructed the 'Bishops Palace' on the site. Today only the remains of the north-east wing (the gatehouse wing) survive above ground. In the centre of this wing was the main gateway with, on its south-east side, the porter's lodge and beyond this the stables. As can be seen from the plan (Fig. 3), the stables were only of one storey and hence had only fairly thin walls. Above the stables the sixteenth-century queen-post roof still remains in part. The rest of the gatehouse wing still survives to two storeys high, but here only the nineteenth-century roofs survive. All these buildings are constructed with red bricks laid in an English bond in thick layers of yellow mortar. At the south-east end of the stables Caen stone quoins are still visible and some of the windows surviving in the porter's lodge are also the original sixteenth-century windows with their stone surrounds. Unfortunately, the part of the building which lies north-west of the gateway (the present 'Old Palace') was completely rebuilt in the nineteenth century and, not only does it have a new roof, but also a crenellation was added to the top of the sixteenth-century walls and the whole building was covered in rendering. Also a new wing was built on to the south-west. Only the thickness of the walls and the small pilaster buttresses on the north-east side tell us that the basic fabric of this part of the building is sixteenth-century. To the north-east again is a separate flint and brick building and, though this, too, has been heavily restored, it seems likely that this also formed part of the palace buildings. The fact that the building is on a slightly different alignment (and nearly parallel to the medieval building in our excavations) and is partly made of flint may also suggest that it is late-medieval in origin. South of this building three fragments of walls, which survive in a modern courtyard (Fig. 3), were also almost certainly part of the palace. They have the same English bond brickwork as in the main buildings.

On the outside of the north-west wall of the porter's lodge, and clearly set into it at a later date, are two stone plaques. On (Plate V) one is carved T.C. 1552 (clearly Thomas Cranmer) while the other (Plate VI) has the arms of Matthew Parker. It seems very

likely that these plaques were originally set over the archway of the main gate and when the archway was demolished, the plaques were moved to their present position.

North-west of all these buildings is an area of walled gardens and, though these have been heavily reconstructed, they must in part be the walled gardens (and orchards) mentioned in the seventeenth-century documents (see above). It is also clear from the documents that the largest buildings of the palace must have lain to the west (south-west) of the surviving buildings and that all these buildings were demolished in the later seventeenth century. Our excavations, though limited in scale, bear this out.

Apart from the large brick drain which was discovered before the excavations began, a series of brick-wall foundations were soon uncovered (Fig. 4), and it was clear immediately that we were dealing with only a very small part of two large ranges of the palace (Fig. 6, bottom). Again the limited area of the excavation and the very extensive robbing of all the main brickwork meant that it was not possible to interpret the function of this part of the palace, particularly as even the floors here had been completely removed.

In the south-west corner of the site, our excavations in Trenches I and IV (and later V) showed that we had cut across the foundations of a substantial range of the palace. The main wall foundation here was 1.40–1.80 m. thick. It was particularly thick where it crossed the filled-in medieval cellar and where the drain passed through it. The foundation itself, though containing many broken bricks, had clearly been built in English bond brickwork just like the surviving gate-house range, i.e. two rows of headers (up to six deep) were laid on rows of stretchers and so on (Fig. 4).

Above ground, the wall was perhaps just less than 1 m. wide (c. 3 ft. wide), and this would allow the range itself to have been at least two storeys high. The south-west wall of this range was almost certainly located in the very corner of the trench and, though even the foundation had been robbed here, it is likely that this wall was also the same width as its north-eastern counterpart. Running under this range and badly robbed at its southern end was a well-constructed barrel-vaulted brick drain (Fig. 7, Section F — G, and Fig. 8, Section M — L). The drain, which had a brick floor as well, had very little silt in it and in fact most of the fill was very modern. Connecting with this drain were two garderobe pits, which contained little silt in the bottom (I — 4). The garderobes themselves were perhaps at first-floor level in the range described above. The drain then ran under a complicated area of brick walls before turning slightly just before an inspection hole. After this the drain continued for an unknown distance in a north-easterly direction

under what must have been open courtyard. The inspection hole was obviously situated in the corner of this courtyard and a small amount of pebbling survived, (Fig. 8, Section M — L) in the area to confirm a courtyard surfacing. The drain itself must be connected with the Nailbourne stream above and below the palace area thus allowing fresh water to be flushed through it all the time.

Joining the large range mentioned above to another range at right angles to it (Fig. 6, bottom) is an area, which has a whole series of brick-wall foundations. Unfortunately, as these foundations were very fragmentary, few conclusions can be reached as to their function. It is clear, however, that all these walls were built after the drain had been constructed and that they appear to exhibit at least two phases. The largest of these walls (an outside wall with the courtyard) turns through two right-angles before becoming the main north-west wall of the range. The other wall of this range on the south-east side was certainly rebuilt at a later date a little to the west of its original line making the range narrower. Within the small part of this range that was excavated was a mass of broken glazed floor-tiles (II — 9). These tiles, which probably came from the Low Countries (see report below), must have been used for the floor of this range though none were found *in situ*. In the most easterly corner of the excavation (Trench II) were found at least two consecutive layers of gravel metallings (II — 8). This must also indicate an outside courtyard and the upper of these gravel levels overlies the earlier south-east wall of the range. Within the excavations were found various post-holes (Fig. 6, bottom). These were perhaps used for scaffold posts during building work.

During the later part of the seventeenth century all these buildings were pulled down and the bricks robbed out and sold. (Several houses in the neighbouring village of Littlebourne still show where some of the bricks went). It is unfortunate that this robbing was so extensive that today modern ground level is almost certainly below the ground levels of the floors within this part of the palace. This means that the majority of surviving material and small finds from the palace were in the topsoil levels, if they survived at all. It is, however, possible that in other areas of the palace (as yet unexcavated) much more will survive, and this applies particularly to the area of the palace nearer the Nailbourne. We hope therefore that a much more extensive area-excavation of the palace will take place one day allowing the remains of the great hall, kitchen, long gallery, wine and beer cellars, etc., to be examined.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE

THE POTTERY

N.C. Macpherson-Grant

Belgic

1. (II — 27) Jar in fairly hard dark grey ware — rim and neck lightly burnished.
2. (IV — 9) Jar in reduced dark grey ware. Light burnish as 1.
3. (I — 19) Flagon in grey ware speckled with grog. Oxidized orange-brown surfaces.

Romano-British

4. (II — 7) Jar in grey sandy ware.
5. (II — 23) Jar in oxidized orange-pink sandy ware.
6. (II — 16) Dish in grey ware with fine sand-temper.
7. (II — 27) Flanged-rim bowl in dark grey sandy ware — soot encrusted.
8. (II — 16) Flanged bowl in light grey grogged-ware, with all surfaces roughly burnished.
9. (II — 16) Flanged bowl with ware and surface treatment as 8. Sooted.
10. (IV — 3) Jar in light grey grogged-ware with orange-buff surfaces. Light burnish on shoulder and inside rim.

Nos. 8 – 10 were examined petrologically at Sheffield University by Miss A. Mainman, as part of a larger research programme into the late-Roman wares in the Canterbury region and her detailed results will be published separately. However, it can be safely said, that the form, fabric and finish of these three vessels are typical of the hand-made late-Roman tradition in east Kent.

11. (I — 21) Base of Oxford region import in fine light-grey ware, oxidized pale pink. Dirty brown colour-coat. Worn.
12. (II — 17) Bowl in fine orange ware with dull red colour-coat. Two narrow rouletted bands below rim. An Oxford region import (see discussion).

Medieval

13. (II — 29) Cooking-pot in dark grey sandy ware.
14. (II — 6) Cooking-pot in grey sandy ware with light shell-temper mostly on the surface.
15. (II — 6) Cooking-pot in light grey sandy ware mixed with shell. Pale orange oxidized surfaces. Exterior sooted.
16. (I — 8) Jug in light grey sandy ware, with marked inner rim bead. Dull brown-green glaze.
17. (I — 8) Cooking-pot in grey-dark pink sandy ware with sparse shell temper. Sooted exterior.
18. (I — 8) Cooking-pot in hard light grey sandy ware with pink-grey oxidized surfaces. Internally ledged to receive lid.
19. (II — 17) Cooking-pot in grey sandy ware. Buff surfaces. Exterior sooted.
20. (II — 25) Cooking-pot in grey sandy ware with sparse chalk temper.
21. (IV — 6) Cooking-pot in grey sandy ware. Sooted.
22. (II — 7) Cooking-pot in oxidized brown-red sandy ware. Sparse shell-temper mostly on the surface.
23. (II — 4) Jug in grey sandy ware with dark pink-red surfaces.
24. (II — 6) Cooking-pot in grey sandy ware with markedly everted and hooked rim. Medium shell and red grit inclusions to fabric.
25. (II — 13) Jug in dark grey sandy ware, oxidized orange inside and dark red-brown outside. Brown-green glaze over two cream painted bands.
26. (II — 7) Jug in grey sandy ware.
27. (II — 6) Dish in light-grey sandy ware with oxidized buff-pink surfaces. Two rows of holes, stabbed down from the rim top, and one below the inner rim bead, pushed outward. Rim and interior splashed with light apple-green glaze.
28. (II — 7) Jug sherd in orange sandy ware. Decorated with an applied 7-petalled 'rose', covered with a thick lustrous brown-green glaze.
29. (II — 3) Jug in light grey hard sandy ware, finer than above. Rim top bevelled outward to a sharp edge.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE

Late-medieval/post-medieval

30. (II — 6) Dish in orange slightly sandy ware. Exterior sooted. Interior covered with a thick, matt orange-brown glaze. Glaze covers single applied pipe-clay wavy line, on rim flange.
31. (III — 4) Dish or bowl in fine hard grey ware. Dark olive-green glaze with metallic lustre on underside of rim and interior.
32. (II — 6) Jar in fine hard orange ware with orange-brown glaze inside and on distinctive D-sectioned rim.
33. (I — 19) Imported Bellarmine jug sherd in grey stoneware. Stamped.

Discussion

The excavated pottery covers most of the archaeological phases from the Iron Age to post-medieval. The Iron Age sherds are scrappy but distinctly different from the flint-tempered wares now known to slightly precede or accompany traditional Belgic wares on sites in east Kent. These are therefore somewhat earlier.

The collection of Belgic sherds is unexciting but useful — those illustrated (Fig. 9, nos. 1–3) probably belong to the mid-late first century A.D. Continuing occupation is suggested by Romano-British coarse wares, in particular no. 7 (Fig. 9); a form common in the late-first and early-second centuries A.D. The two native copies of flanged bowls and the jar with burnished shoulder (Fig. 9, nos. 8–10), represent the later Roman phases. Occupation during this period is confirmed by the two Oxford region imports, in particular no. 12 (Fig. 9) belonging to Type C75 group of Dr Young's series,²⁴ and dated by him to A.D. 325 – 400 +.

No Saxon pottery was found in the excavation and the site was probably not reoccupied until the very late-twelfth, or more certainly the early-thirteenth century. The very shelly wares of the mid-late twelfth century are absent; nos. 14–15 and 24 (Figs. 9 and 10) have only a light shell addition to a predominantly sandy fabric. Their forms, too, together with those of the accompanying purely sand-tempered wares (e.g. Figs. 9 and 10, nos. 13, 17, and 19) emphasize an early-thirteenth century date. The sandy fabrics can all, presumably, be sourced at Tyler Hill kilns, Canterbury, with nos. 16, 18, 20–21, 23, and 25 (Figs. 9 and 10); these wares on this site

²⁴ C.J. Young, *Oxfordshire Roman Pottery*, BAR 43, fig. 62, 164, 166–7.

TIM TATTON-BROWN

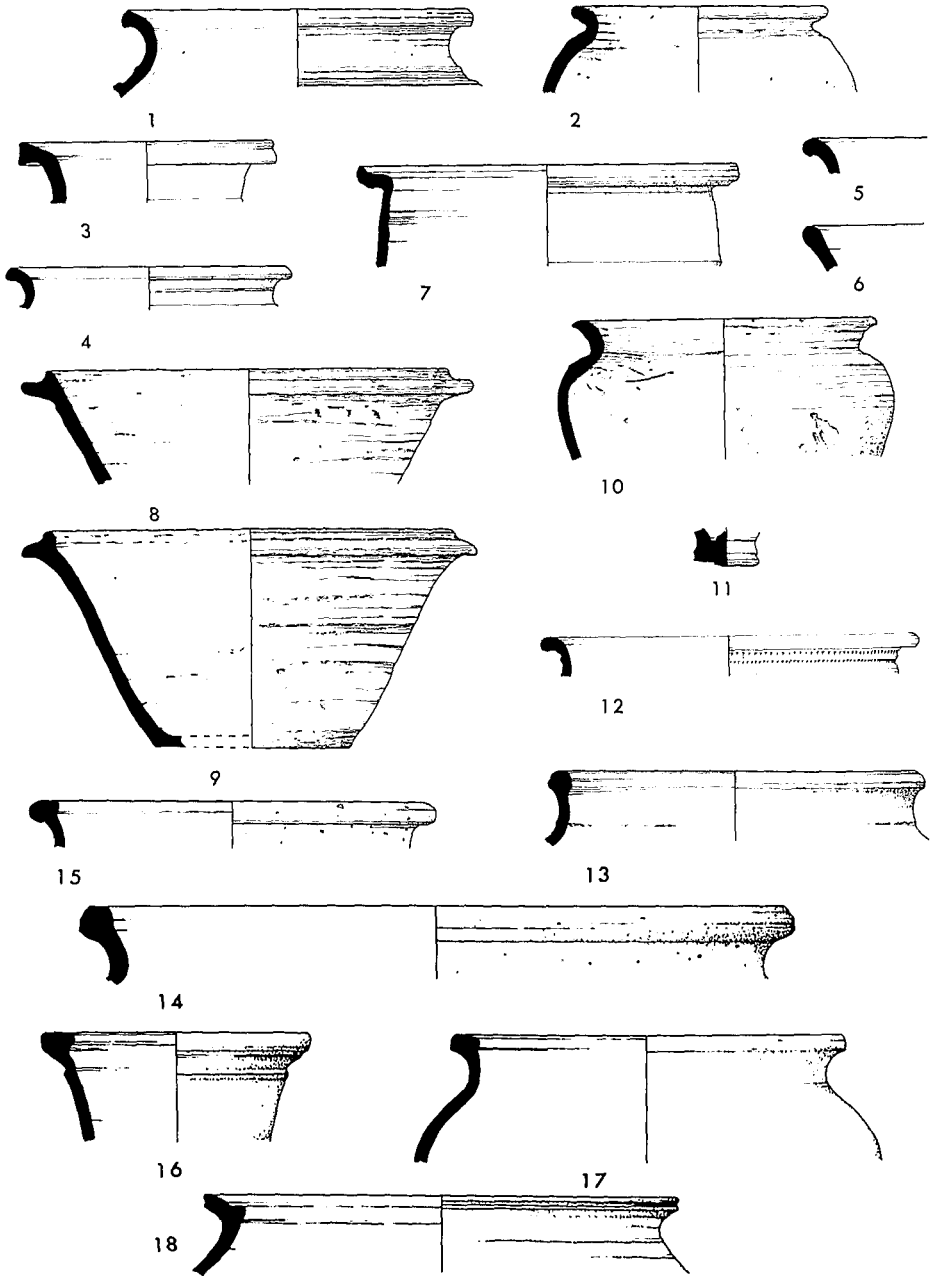


Fig. 9. Pottery Drawings, 1-18. ($\frac{1}{4}$)

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE

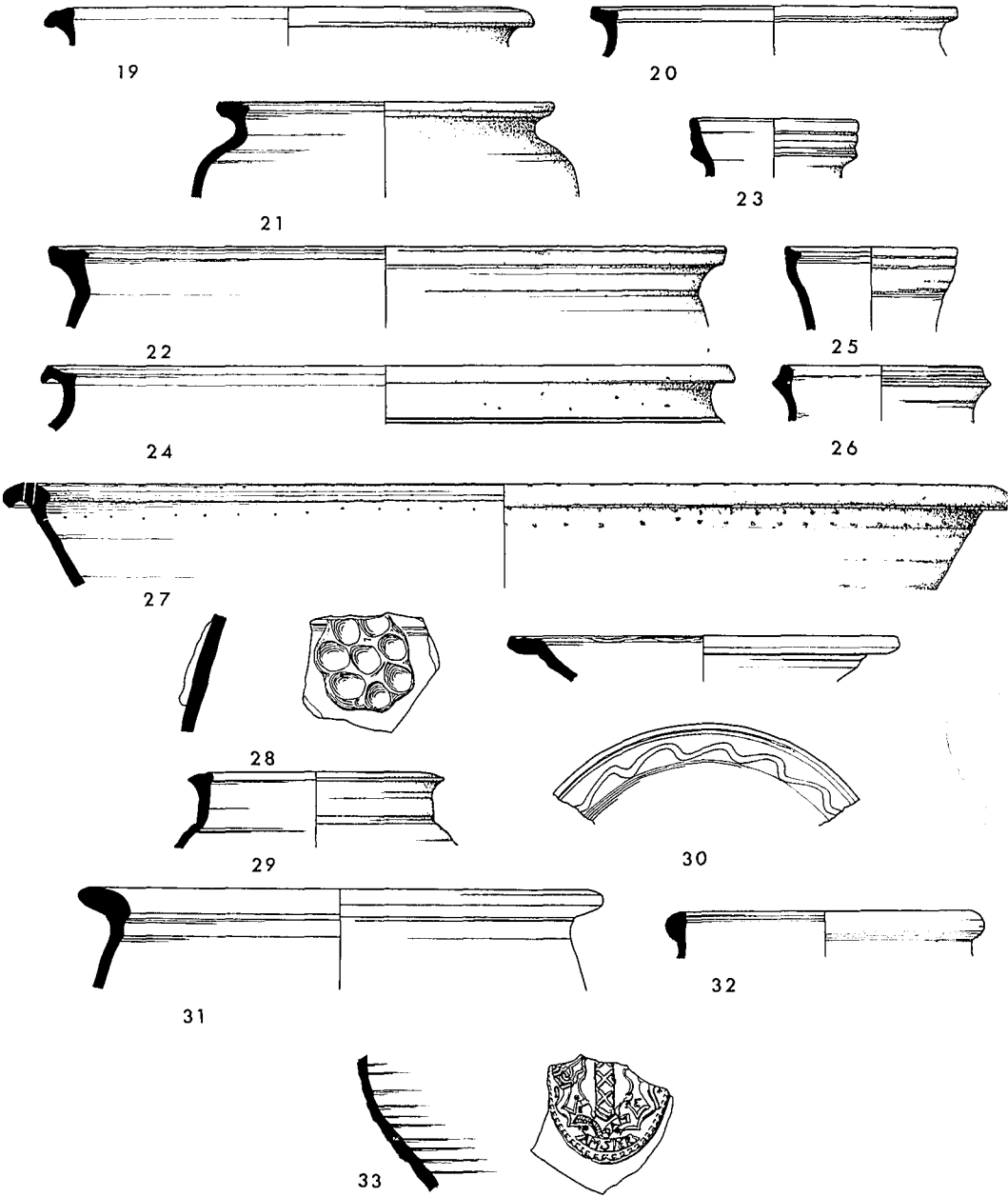


Fig. 10. Pottery Drawings, 19-33. (1/4)

are well into the mid-late thirteenth century. The large dish and jug rim (nos. 26 and 27, Fig. 10) are typical of the early-mid fourteenth century. Sherds from a Saintonge 'lustrous' green glazed jug, an Aardenburg jug and a Surrey ware measure belong here.

The angularity and hard sandy fabric of no. 29 (Fig. 10) is still a Tyler Hill type product, and should be late-fourteenth century, tentatively very early-fifteenth century.

The later and post-medieval phases were not very productive. A sherd of 'Tudor Green' (white fabric, green glaze, possibly a late Surrey ware) came from the construction phase of the brick palace. Of the remainder, nos. 30 — 33 (Fig. 10), the earthenwares could belong anywhere between 1550 — 1650, with perhaps an emphasis towards the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. The latter in particular for the stoneware sherd (no. 33, Fig. 10), but presumably before 1650. The earthenwares are all unsourced, but there is no reason why they should not be from the east Kent region.

THE FINDS

Pan Garrard

Copper Alloy Objects

Fig. 11

1. (2, II — 6) Two fragments, perhaps plate rim; dia: 20 cm. Highly polished internal surface; exterior surface roughly smoothed with coarse file.
2. (7, I — 21) Sheet strip fragment, 0.70 cm. wide; two rivet holes, one with a rivet *in situ*. Could be binding for small box. (Not illustrated).
3. (8, III — 4) Blank disc; dia: 3 cm., 0.20 cm. thick. (Not illustrated).
4. (10, IV — 9) Small pin with twisted wire head; 3.80 cm. long, 0.05 cm. thick. (Not illustrated).
5. (19, II — 5) Two similar pins as 4. (Not illustrated).

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE

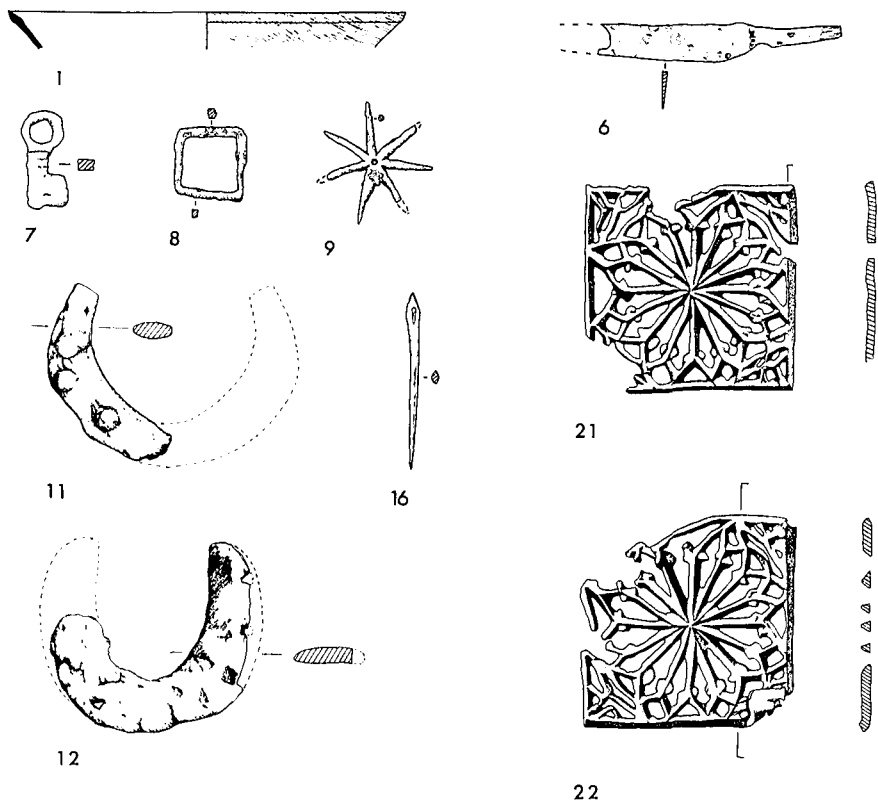


Fig. 11. Small Finds Drawings. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

Iron Objects

Fig. 11

6. (I, II — 15) Knife, straight upper edge, traces of wooden handle; part of the blade is missing.
7. (3, II — 16) Key, band around the shaft; heavy corrosion obscures the wards; probably hollow-shafted.
8. (4, IV — 8) Buckle; spike missing.
9. (5, III — 4) Seven-pointed spur rowel;²⁵ radius 3 cm.
10. (11, II — 17) Heavy sub-rectangular object, very corroded, (not illustrated).

²⁵ London Museum, *Medieval Catalogue*, H.M.S.O., 1975, 103 ff., 109, fig. 34, no. 7. A5018, with six points.

11. (12, IV — 5) Horse-shoe fragment.
12. (13, II — 29) Horse-shoe fragment.
13. (14, I — 21) Horse-shoe fragments. (Not illustrated).
14. (22, +) Tool, possibly a chisel with an off-centre handle fixture. (Not illustrated).
15. (24, II — 15) Fragment, square in section, apparently blunted with use at one end; 7.50 cm. long, 1.50 x 1.20 cm. thick. (Not illustrated).

Bone Objects

Fig. 11

16. (6, II — 29) Needle with key-hole eye; tool marks on shaft.
17. (20, II — 12) Piece of worked bone, sharpened to a point; 8.50 cm. long. (Not illustrated).

Glass Objects

18. (9, II — 19) Lozenge-shaped fragment of window glass, opaque from corrosion, grossing on one edge. (Not illustrated).
19. (21, II — 12) Fragments of plain window glass; grossing on one fragment edge. (Not illustrated).

Lead Objects

Fig. 11

20. (18, II — 12) Strip of window lead; square in section, pinched at the mid line: 0.20 cm. thick, 4.30 cm. long. (Not illustrated).
- 21 and 22. (25 & 26, II — 4) Two lead ventilating panels of an architectural character, perhaps fourteenth–fifteenth century. Flat on one side with raised decorative surface on the other, giving a triangular section: 12.70 cm. square. (Traces of white mortar were found on their edges). Some similar panels are described as coming from Clarendon Palace,²⁶

²⁶ *Antiq. Journ.*, xvi (1936), fig. 10, 83 ff.

Bardney Abbey,²⁷ Stanley Abbey,²⁸ and Hampton Court,²⁹ York Museum collection,³⁰ but none in quite the same style of tracery. The 'Rose Window' floor tiles of the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey are similar, but of a much more elaborate design.

THE GLAZED TILES

Mark Horton

Plain Tiles

A number of plain tiles were recovered in the excavation. None of them bore any form of decoration, apart from the use of slip and glaze.

Group I: Nine fragments of floor tiles (from II — 9 and 17); they have a bright red orange-pink fabric, with a sand and grit temper, with a particle size up to 4 mm.; some have a grey core. There is a medium bevel along the edge, and there are nail-holes in each corner. One fragment has a heavy coat of white slip, the others are plain glazed with colours ranging from mid-brown to olive-green to yellow. 18.40 cm. square and 2.70 cm. thick.

Group II: Four fragments (from II — 9 and one from 4); all have an orange-pink to red fabric, a coarse gritty temper and a slight bevel. Where nail-holes are visible they are along the sides, it being likely that there were eight nail-holes on each tile. Glazes employed are yellow, green-yellow and brown-yellow, the latter is used with a slip, to give a mottled appearance. 3.30 cm. thick.

²⁷ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Lond.*, 2nd ser., xxiii (1909-1), fig. 1, 366 ff.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, fig. 2, 366 ff.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, fig. 10, 83 ff.

³⁰ L. Weaver, *English Leadwork Art and History*, London 1909, Figs. 373-4, 219 ff.

- Group III:* Thirteen fragments (from II — 9, 14 and VI — 9); all have an off-pink maroon-red fabric, and a fine grit temper. There is a slight bevel and each tile has two nail-holes in opposite corners. Glazes are bottle-green to yellow-green. 18 cm. square and 2.80 cm. thick.
- Group IV:* Six fragments (from II — 9, 11, 12 and 29) of pink-red brick fabric with a coarse grit temper, and a grey core. A medium bevel is employed, and four nail-holes are visible in the centre of each side. The glaze is orange-yellow. 23 cm. square, and 2.80 – 3.20 cm. thick.
- Group V:* Six fragments (from II — 9, 11, 12 and 29), of a pink/maroon-red fabric, with a mixed grit temper; a slight bevel, and nail-holes visible in the corners. A variety of glazes is employed with slips of white, and a creamy-white clay, sometimes applied in streaks. Glazes often bottle-green to brownish-yellow in colour. 10.10 cm. square and 2.70 cm. thick.
- Group VI:* Four fragments (from II — 4 and 9) of bright red fabric with a fine grit and sand temper, and a medium bevel. Tin glaze, nail-holes; almost bricks. 5.20 cm. thick.

Although a number of plain tiles, up to 22 cm. square, have recently been discovered in medieval contexts in Kent,³¹ the Bekesbourne tiles are somewhat later. These tiles all have nail-holes,³² indicating that they were probably made in the Low Countries; furthermore, tiles of this size only achieved wide-spread popularity in the Netherlands in the early-sixteenth century. Tiles still *in situ* of this date, and identical to the Bekesbourne fragments, can be seen at the Princehof Museum at Delft. To find tiles imported from the Low Countries should occasion no surprise. There was considerable trade in plain tiles from the late-fourteenth century onwards into southern England, and it is possible that the tiles were carried over as ballast.³³

³¹ *Arch. Cant.*, lxxix (1964), 110; lxxxii (1967), 143; lxxxiv (1969), 151.

³² These are small holes, formed by the nails that were used to hold the tile down during shaping. Tiles made in the Low Countries were sometimes shaped using a template, and the practice was carried over to the Delft wall-tiles in the seventeenth century; see, E.S. Eames in A.B. Emden, *Medieval decorated Tiles in Dorset*, London and Chichester, 1977, 3.

³³ *Proc. Hants. Field Club*, xxx (1965), 29–33; *Antiq. Journ.*, xvii (1937), 442; *Proc. Hants. Field Club*, xxxi (1976), 23–42.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE 'OLD PALACE', BEKESBOURNE

THE COINS

Richard Reece

- (15, II - 20) House of Constantine, A.D. 335-45. Copy as HK 87.
- (16, II - 22) Constantine I, A.D. 320-2 RIC 7. London Mint A2 225.
- (17, III - +) Nüremberg token. Hans Krauwinkel. Mid-sixteenth century Barnard, Germany 84.
- (23, +) Small bronze Roman coin; illegible from corrosion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We must thank first and foremost Mr. and Mrs. John Quine and their family (particularly Robin who worked on the excavations), for encouraging the excavations to take place and for providing many facilities. Paul Bennett has been responsible for much of the work on site and without his help this report could not have been written. We would also like to thank all the volunteers who helped in the work, particularly the boys from St. Edmund's School, Canterbury, and John Bowen and Jonathan Joy, who drew most of the plans and sections. All the finds were cleaned and conserved by Mrs Pan Garrard, while the pottery was sorted by Nigel Macpherson-Grant and drawn by Mark Duncan.

Finally, I must thank Andrew Butcher for his very important historical conclusion and Beckie Bennett for typing the report.