

INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS
IN 1981 BY THE CANTERBURY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

For the Trust, 1981 has been another busy year for excavation and, particularly, for building recording. During the earlier part of the year, work was completed on the last two stages of the 68–69A Stour Street sites (CB/R IV and V), and a final interim report appears below. Work also continued in the undercroft of the solar at the Poor Priests' Hospital, and two new sites were investigated at 15a Dane John and 2–3a Marlowe Avenue. At the Dane John site part of the outer ditch to what was, almost certainly, the original motte and bailey castle at Canterbury was found, and at the Marlowe Avenue site a Roman street was uncovered, which was the continuation of the street found originally on the Marlowe Car Park site (Fig. 2).

In February and March brief excavations were undertaken at Bigbury Camp (N.G.R. TR 115575), the great Iron Age hillfort 2 miles west of Canterbury. Though this excavation was slightly disappointing in that nothing was found in the interior of the fort, some new evidence about the defences was, however, forthcoming.

In the early autumn a small training excavation was undertaken at 3 Queen's Avenue and part of a small Roman road was found. Part of the south side of the main Roman street that came in through Burgate was also observed in the cellar of 68 Burgate during building work. Finally, a small excavation was undertaken during the summer in the Conduit House of the Dean and Chapter which had been badly vandalised and is now to be restored. Parts of two Roman cremation burials were rescued during drainage work in the outer court of St. Augustine's College (see below, pp. 318–24, for full report).

The most important building recording work during the year has been the completion of the survey of the West Gate and the detailed survey for the Dean and Chapter of the Infirmary ruins. These

ruins, which are now in very poor condition, comprise the remains of the southern arcade and some buttresses of the early twelfth-century Infirmary hall, and the southern arcade, south wall and much of the east end of the Infirmary Chapel. The Infirmary Chapel, which is largely of a mid twelfth-century date, also includes some early fourteenth-century work. At the same time the opportunity was taken of surveying the Table hall which adjoins the north-east corner of the Infirmary hall. This remarkable building, which is now the Choir House, still retains its original king-post roof (probably built in the third quarter of the thirteenth century) and some very fine mid fourteenth-century traceried windows with corbelled heads on either side. This building survived the dissolution because it became the house attached to the second prebendal stall. Drawings were also made of the remaining ruined walls of the Greyfriars in Canterbury which are near the boundary wall between the Franciscan gardens and the passageway to St. Peter's Street.

Finally, a detailed survey was made of Horton Manor chapel (N.G.R. TR 115552, Fig. 1). This building, which is now in very poor condition indeed, consists of a small nave and chancel. The nave roof is of particular interest as it was originally a scissor-braced roof (perhaps c. 1300 in date) which later had a collar-purlin and crown posts inserted into it (perhaps in the late fourteenth century). As well as the chapel, drawings were also made of the medieval roofs at Horton Manor itself. These roofs are arch-braced with late crown posts (perhaps late fifteenth-century) and are large for a medieval timber-framed building. The house, which was probably originally 'H'-shaped, also contains other remains of its timber-framing (though now mostly concealed) and a fine c. sixteenth century brick-mullioned window on the east side.

TIM TATTON-BROWN

1. THE POOR PRIESTS' HOSPITAL — THE SOLAR UNDERCROFT

A third major excavation took place within the Poor Priests' Hospital on Stour Street, in advance of reconstruction work by the City Council, who are now using this very fine building as a new museum for Canterbury.

This excavation, in the solar undercroft of the hospital, continues previous investigations in the hall¹ and part of the service wing south

¹ See *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1980), 399.

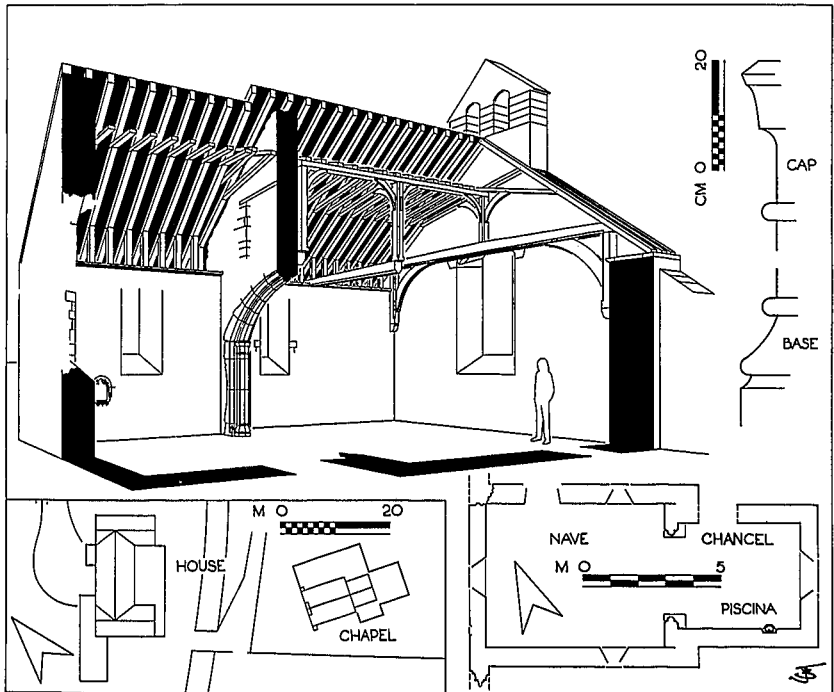


Fig. 1. Perspective Drawing of Horton Manor Chapel, with (inset) Plans.

of the hall. Our earlier work indicated that the earliest major medieval structure on this site was a stone house, possibly that of the moneyer Lambin Frese, who is known to have resided here c. 1175. After 1220 the building was modified and extended when it became the 'Hospital of St. Mary of the Poor Priests.' The hospital was subsequently rebuilt in the late fourteenth century (most of the present fabric is of this date) and ultimately partitioned and modified from 1575 onwards when the building was given by the Crown to the City for the use of the poor. It later became a bridewell, a workhouse and a Blue Coat school.

The earliest levels, investigated only in a small cutting in the south-west corner of the solar undercroft (the deepest of all the trenches cut in the hospital to date), indicated the presence of an early half-cellar in this part of the building. A mortar floor overlay the offset foundation of the early west wall, suggesting that this half-cellar may have been part of the original stone house of Lambin Frese. Access to the half-cellar may have been through a door at the

east end of the early screens passage in the hall. The floor was sealed by layers of flood silt interspaced with new floors and dumped material, indicating attempts to keep pace with a rising water table.

The cellar was perhaps finally filled in in *c.* 1220 when the stone house was converted into a hospital. The infill was capped by a sequence of floors associated with at least two parallel east—west dwarf walls. These walls, (set only 1.25 m. apart), may have divided the undercroft into two roughly equal areas separated by a narrow passage and supported an upper floor — the solar.

These levels were sealed by extensive destruction deposits of the late fourteenth century. Most of the above-ground fabric of the original stone building was demolished and a new structure built on the old stone foundations. The east wall of the undercroft was almost totally removed. A new wall separating the hall from the solar was built, and the solar wing extended further to the east. A new north wall incorporating a central fireplace and a single arched door at the west end (giving access to an open yard to the north of the solar undercroft) was also built. In the north-east corner of the undercroft a previously unknown door was located. This door gave access both to the chapel and to the exterior of the building. A number of windows originally lighted the undercroft; two windows in the east wall (which still survive), and a third (now blocked) in the south-east corner. Other windows may have existed in the now-rebuilt west wall. A clay floor capped the destruction/construction deposits. The remains of a screen foundation joining the west doors of the hall and solar were found. Occupation detritus sealed the clay floor and was in turn sealed by deposits of mortar and sand consistent with bedding for a more durable floor of stone or tile.

These levels were sealed by dumps of garden soil and clay deposited sometime after 1575 when the building was given over for the use of the poor of the city. The dumped deposits were in turn sealed and cut by a sequence of sprung floors, post-holes, and brick-built features associated with the later use of the building.

During the excavation in the solar a service trench was cut to the south of and outside the chapel. A wide chalk-block off-set for the fourteenth-century south wall of the chapel was uncovered in this trench. Surmounting this foundation were three plinth courses of ashlar Kentish ragstone blocks, capped by another course of ragstone blocks with a simple chamfer. The wall face was then carried up in roughly-knapped, coursed flints with large ragstone quoins tying the corners. A hitherto unknown buttress was discovered in the middle of the chapel wall on the south side when a pavement was laid and a previously unknown inscription uncovered

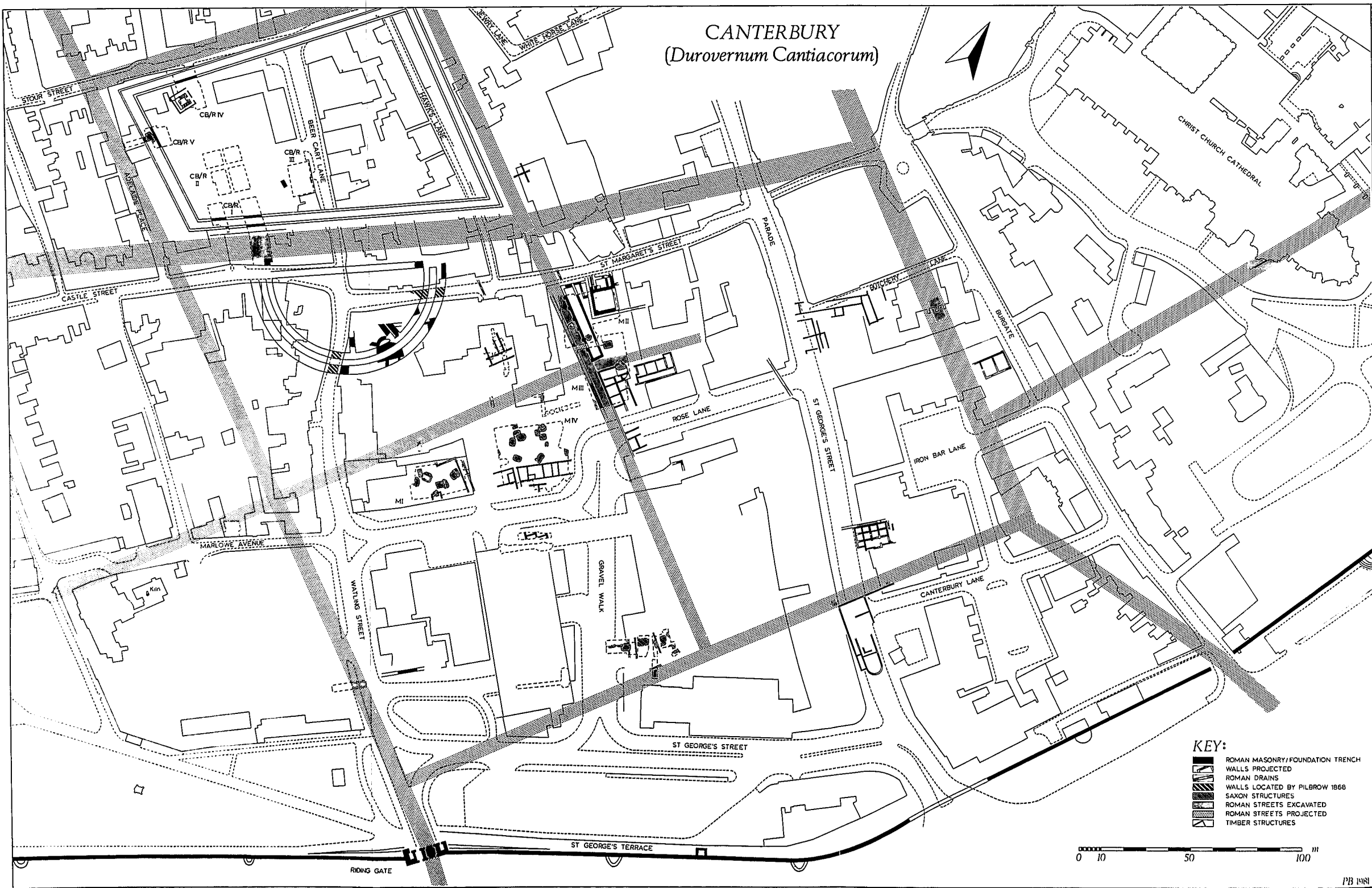


Fig. 2. Eastern Area of Canterbury, showing all major Roman Features so far known (1981).

over a door leading to the chapel on the south side.

Two major areas are still due for excavation within the building, the chapel and the south end of the service wing. Work in the chapel should begin early in 1982. A full interim report on our work at the Poor Priests' Hospital has been recently published by the Society in the memorial volume to S.E. Rigold.²

PAUL BENNETT

2. 68-69A STOUR STREET

The excavations on 69A Stour Street (CB/R4) and the adjacent site on Adelaide Place (CB/R5) reported on last year,³ were completed by mid-1981. The excavations, undertaken in advance of the construction of a number of houses, were partly financed by the developer — Piper's — and with additional grants from the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Department of the Environment and the Kent Archaeological Society.

Continuing the successes of 1980, the two sites produced an interesting sequence of Roman levels. The earliest deposit consisted of a pebble-studded horizon strewn with occupation detritus. Cutting this horizon were three mid first-century ovens or small kilns, each with a stokehole and a well-preserved firebox. A dump of brickearth sealed the early levels and was in turn capped by a layer of rammed gravel deposited c. A.D. 70-80. Associated with the gravel layer on CB/R5 was a narrow Roman street, aligned roughly north-west/south-east. The street, which was later overlain by the south portico of the putative temple enclosure, was barely 2 m. wide. A second street, found under the west portico of the enclosure on CB/R4, and roughly at right angles to the former, was probably contemporary and may represent part of an early road system. These levels were sealed by further dumped deposits.

Flanking the south edge of CB/R5 was the verge of a major Roman street. This street, with multiple metallings and aligned roughly north-west/south-east, was probably Roman Watling Street (Fig. 2). Sealing the dumped deposit and extending over both sites was a well-defined construction horizon. The construction deposits associated with the laying-out of the huge colonnaded enclosure, the

² Alec Detsicas (ed.), *Collectanea Historica: Essays in Memory of Stuart Rigold*, Maidstone, 1981, 173-86.

³ See *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1980), 406-410.

probable temple enclosure, date to the late-first or early-second century. Both the stylobate and outer *temenos* wall robber trenches were found on the CB/R5 site, while only the stylobate robber trench was within the CB/R4 area. Three sides of the enclosure have now been located, flanked on the east by the major Roman street (with the theatre opposite) and to the south by Roman Watling Street. No sign of mortar or durable floors survived within the portico, yet in each case a thick deposit of brickearth sealed the construction horizon. This deposit, which contained first-century material, was capped in each case by rough metallings containing fourth-century finds. It seems plausible that the portico was paved with slabs of stone that were later robbed. At least two phases of stylobate gutter were excavated, together with an extensive sequence of courtyard metallings. The remains of a small, rectangular timber-framed building, with a narrow external ambulatory and an inner *cella*, (both with clay floors), were located on the CB/R5 site (Fig. 2). This building was perhaps a shrine and may indicate that the enclosure could have contained not only a major classical temple but also a number of smaller shrines. This possible shrine was built when the enclosure was first laid out and was probably demolished in the third century, at a time when the porticoes also seem to have been partly dismantled and a final sequence of courtyards laid over them.

Occupation within the enclosure continued well into the fifth century as attested by the remarkable multiple burial found on CB/R5 and reported on last year. Similar late Roman or Saxon levels were not found on the CB/R4 site. Here, a thick deposit of 'turned-over' soil, containing post-Conquest material sealed and partly removed the latest Roman layers. This uniform black-brown loam, found on previous CB/R sites, may be the product of agricultural activity in late Saxon or early Norman times.

The robbing of the masonry walls of the south and west porticoes took place in the late twelfth century. Only a few medieval pits were emptied on the CB/R5 site, while a much greater number cut the archaeological levels on CB/R4. Here the earliest pits seem to have been cut at the same time as the robbing of the portico. A line of pits, at right angles to Stour Street, may represent a boundary. On the frontage of Stour Street the pits were sealed by a small timber-framed and clay-floored 'workshop', containing at least two small hearths or ovens of thirteenth-century date, and which had an associated barrel-lined well. Cutting these levels and bisecting the site was a large flint wall, set at right angles to Stour Street. This wall was associated with a single-phase clay floor and is possibly part of a large stone house for which no documentary evidence has

yet been found. The two small timber-framed hall-houses reported on last year were positioned on either side of the stone wall.

The CB/R4 and 5 sites are the last of the series of developments in this area. The final report on this series of excavations is now in preparation.

PAUL BENNETT

3. DANE JOHN SITE

During the summer of 1981 excavations prior to redevelopment were undertaken on the site of the old City Council offices at 15A Dane John.

Although the excavation proved to be one of the deepest ever undertaken by the Trust, and extended over an area of nearly 300 sq. m., virtually no pre-Norman stratigraphy was found. This may be due in part to later, fairly extensive disturbances, but also indicates that this area of the city was unoccupied open ground during the Roman and Saxon periods, a suggestion supported by Professor Frere's small 1948 excavation 27.45 m. south of the Riding Gate.

The most important discovery was of a large flat-bottomed ditch running approximately north-east/south-west across the north-west side of the excavated area. This ditch is probably the original of the so-called Black Ditch, mentioned in documentary sources as being an open sewer up until the eighteenth century. The original ditch, however, was much too large to have been dug purely as a sewer. Although its full width was not discovered, a calculation shows that (assuming it was symmetrical) it would have been more than 17 m. across at the top, and 3 m. deep (the bottom of the ditch was over 5 m. below modern ground level).

The material found in the primary fills of the ditch indicates that it must have been excavated at some time before the twelfth century, and this suggests that it is in fact a great Norman defensive ditch.

For many years the Dane John mound, situated about 100 m. to the south of the excavation, has been regarded as the possible site of a Norman motte, constructed just after the Conquest and pre-dating the Norman Keep which was erected at about the turn of the eleventh-twelfth century. This new evidence suggests quite strongly that this is in fact the case, and that the large ditch found on the Dane John site is the bailey ditch for a Norman motte and bailey castle centred on the Dane John mound (Fig. 3). That this earlier

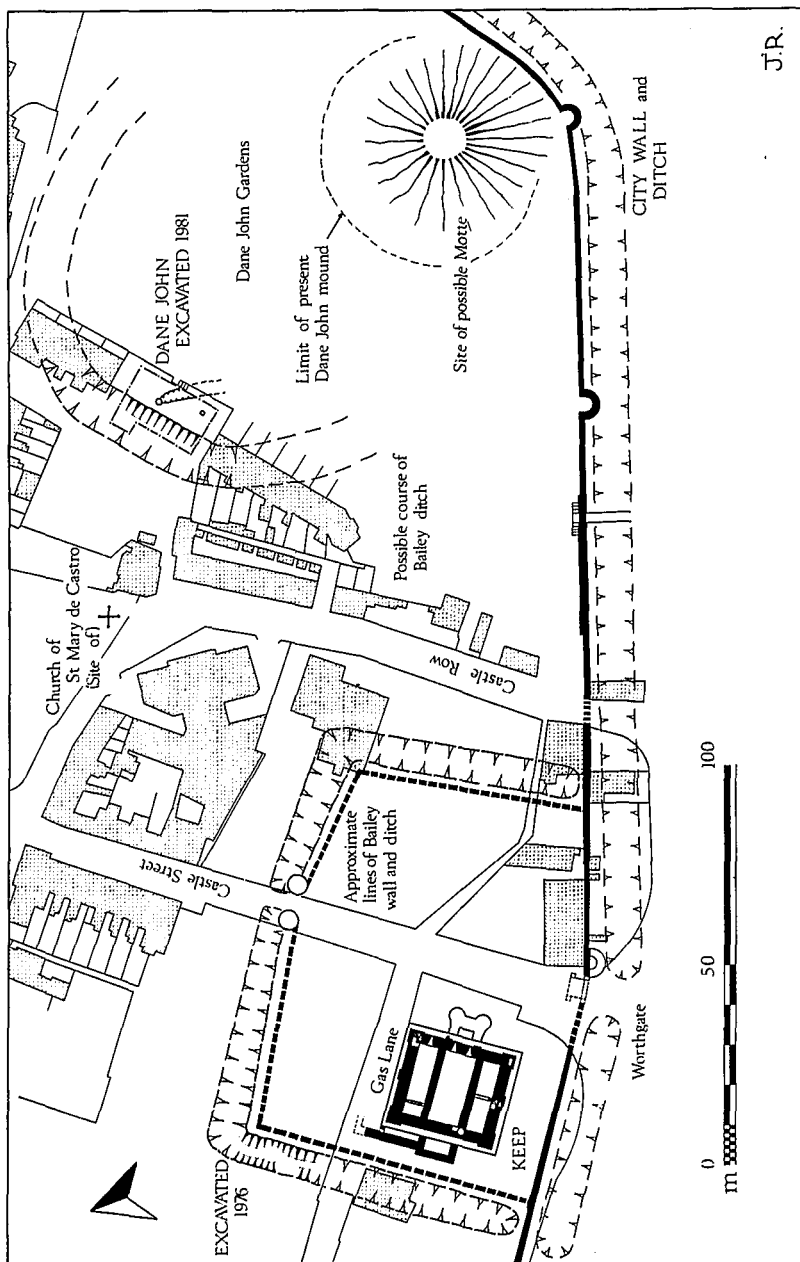


Fig. 3. Canterbury Castle and the Dane John Area.

defensive system was abandoned upon the construction of the Norman keep (situated about 220 m. to the west of the site) is indicated by the primary fill of the bailey ditch. Overlying a primary silt deposit was a thick layer of organic material containing pottery dating to the late eleventh–twelfth centuries, i.e. after the abandonment of the ditch for defensive purposes it was used for the dumping of cess and other organic material.

A number of features was found inside the area enclosed by the ditch, but because of the lack of dateable material, not all can be definitely ascribed to the period of occupation of the motte and bailey. These features included two wells which were probably back-filled between the late-eleventh and the twelfth centuries, a number of pits and another, much smaller, ditch which ran due south from a terminal end situated a few metres from the edge of the great bailey ditch (Fig. 3).

Probably in the thirteenth century, the semi-backfilled bailey ditch was re-cut, and used exclusively as a sewer. It is possible that it was then diverted so as to run into the city ditch somewhere near Worthgate, although there is no evidence for this. From this time onwards the ditch progressively silted up, until by the sixteenth century it was virtually completely back-filled.

Documentary evidence related how the 'Black Ditch' or 'Dyke' was used as a common sewer south of St. Mary's Lane right up to the eighteenth century. Since the ditch found on site was definitely backfilled by the sixteenth century, this may refer to some other ditch. It can be tentatively suggested that at some time between the end of the medieval period and the end of the sixteenth century, a new and smaller ditch was cut, aligned parallel to the original ditch, but further to the north-west (possibly behind the later tenements along Castle Row). Spoil from this recutting may have then been dumped into the original ditch, though no direct proof of this, or of the existence of a later ditch, was discovered during the excavations.

It may have been at this time also that a general reduction of the ground level over the whole area occurred; this levelling removed most of the earlier stratigraphy and truncated all of the earlier features. Shortly afterwards a large quantity of garden soil was imported, covering the whole area and sealing the latest ditch-fill deposits.

The area was used solely as a garden throughout the seventeenth century (documentation specifically says 'fruit garden'). Towards the end of the century the gradual north-east/south-west slope downwards of this area was terraced. This releveling cut right down to the natural brickearth in the northern part of the site, removing all the earlier horizontal stratigraphy in this area.

Post-dating this terracing, but possibly associated with the garden (which was still in use to the south) was a number of rubbish pits and a heavily rutted cart track, which probably ran west from an entrance on Castle Row next to the present public house, and then north across one corner of the site. Early in the eighteenth century a certain amount of levelling up occurred and a large road or courtyard, made mainly of crushed brick, was laid within the terraced area and also partially across the top of the garden deposits. Immediately after this, a wooden post-supported building measuring 9 m. by 5 m. was erected between the terrace and the edge of the courtyard. Contemporary with this building and adjacent to the end of it was a large oval pit. These features were obviously connected, though no use can at present be ascribed to them since the only structural remains left were the large post-pits and voids of the building and a number of posts in the base of the pit, indicating that originally it was probably shuttered. The life-span of the building can however be dated fairly accurately, by coins found in related layers and a *terminus ante quem* provided by documentary evidence, to a period between 1737 and 1790.

Sometime in the second half of the century, but pre-dating 1790, the wooden building was demolished and the terraced area and pit were used for the deposition of rubbish. Very large quantities of eighteenth-century pottery and butchered bones were found in the backfill of the pit and levels overlying the brick courtyards as well as coins dating to between the 1740s and 1770s.

In 1790 the 'Dane John land' of which the area covered by the site was a part was leased by Alderman James Simmonds, who undertook to level the site and landscape the entire gardens. This activity is represented on the excavation by the final backfilling of the terraced area as well as an enormous dumping of material, almost certainly from the gardens to the east. This raised the level across the whole of the site by about 1 m. These deposits were in turn cut by the foundations of buildings constructed in the 1830s, which still stand to the north of the excavation.

JOHN RADY

4. 2-3A MARLOWE AVENUE

From September to November 1981 a small excavation prior to re-development was carried out on open ground between numbers 2 and 3 Marlowe Avenue. The excavation was financed by the developer, J.F. Berry, Esq.

The most important structure found during the excavation was a major Roman street which ran approximately north-east/south-west across the north-west side of the excavated area. This road ties in with the Roman street plan deduced from previous excavations to the north and is important because it shows that the street grid extended south of Roman Watling Street (which was about 20 m. north of the present site), into an area of the city which appears to have been generally unoccupied during the early Roman period at least (Fig. 2).

Six phases of metalling were discerned altogether and, although little datable material was recovered from the road surfaces themselves, the dating of associated deposits indicates that it had a life-span running from the first to the fourth (and possibly early fifth) centuries. The first street metalling was laid over a raft of re-deposited brickearth which was imported from elsewhere and which contained a few sherds of early Flavian pottery. These dumps partially sealed the earliest deposits on the site which have been tentatively dated to a period before A.D. 75. Associated with this street was a road ditch and a number of post-holes adjacent to it, which were similarly aligned and which contained pottery dating to the last quarter of the first century.

Another two road surfacings were laid in quick succession and a large quantity of road silt built up along the edge of the last of these and into a depression (not a true ditch) alongside the road. This silt contained a lot of pottery which dated from the late-first to the early-second century. Because of later disturbances no exact stratigraphical relationships between the roads and road silts and the deposits to the south-east of the road can be made, but it is certain that the area immediately adjacent to the road was purely open ground between the early second and fourth centuries during which period a number of pits was dug.

At some time after the deposition of the third road surface and the silting up of the depression, a large number of intercutting post-holes, dug through the road silt, was placed alongside the street frontage. These are probably contemporary with the fourth or fifth road metallings, and may date to the third century. It is more likely that they represent a series of fence lines along the street edge rather than a building, since no other remains such as floors were found.

A total of six road surfaces was eventually laid, the final one being greatly disturbed by medieval activity. The later Roman levels were completely cut away in the centre of the site by post-Roman features which truncated the row of postholes, and severed the stratigraphy on the north-west of the site from the stratigraphy on

the south-east side. The edge of the later roads and any road silts from them had also been cut away by these disturbances. It is likely, however, that the latest of these roads was contemporary with a metalled surface constructed of flint and tile that was found on the south-east side of the site and which probably fronted onto the road. This courtyard sealed deposits dating to the late third/fourth centuries that represent the gradual accumulation of material on the open ground adjacent to the road. Found directly under the courtyard was a coin of A.D. 390-95 which dates it to at least the early fifth century and implies that the possibly associated road was still open at this time. It is likely that this metalled surface represents the forecourt of a late Roman building that remains undiscovered to the south-east of the excavated area.

Sealing the courtyard was a 15 cm. thick deposit of black loam, a layer that has been found elsewhere in the city and which may represent an abandonment deposit post-dating the Roman occupation and pre-dating the Saxon resettlement.

No sign of any Saxon occupation was discovered on the site (although a large number of *Grubenhäuser* was found on the first of the Marlowe excavations in 1978, situated only 45 m. to the north-east), but this may be due to the extensive disturbance of the earlier deposits which occurred from the Saxo-Norman period onwards.

These disturbances consisted of a number of rubbish pits containing large groups of pottery and a series of very wide shallow features dating to the medieval period. It is possible that these large sub-rectangular features were gravel quarries since one of them had removed most of the later Roman road, but others were situated off the road and no gravel could have been extracted from them. In one of these was found a gold ring set with a blue stone (being studied by John Cherry at the British Museum) which has been dated to the late thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Although the site is adjacent to a road (now called Marlowe Avenue but originally St. John's Lane) that has existed here from at least the twelfth century, it appears that from this time up until the nineteenth century, no buildings fronted onto it at this point. No signs of any buildings were encountered during the excavation and the fact that pits were dug here continuously up until the sixteenth or seventeenth century suggests that the area was always open ground. The small areas of intact stratigraphy that remained after the digging of these pits show that the site was probably also used for agricultural purposes, the disturbance of the latest Roman road also indicating that the ground had been ploughed or turned over.

A horizon of scattered peg-tiles sealed these deposits and may represent the demolition of nearby buildings that might have

occurred when this part of the city was perhaps abandoned during and after the Black Death in the fourteenth century.

Eventually the area became used as a garden, and a number of late and post-medieval cess pits were dug.

At some time in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this activity was continued with the construction of a large rectangular cess tank along the street frontage. This was built of brick, limestone and shale blocks as well as re-used, possibly Roman, tufa. All of the cess tank, apart from the bottom half of the side along the street frontage, was demolished in the late eighteenth century. The upper half of the remaining wall was then rebuilt, probably to above ground level, and extended south along the street, so that it separated the road from the open ground behind it (this wall was later demolished to below ground level). At the same time the cess tank was rebuilt on a smaller scale, utilising the boundary wall as one of its sides. The cess tank was eventually backfilled (possibly in the 1830s) with large quantities of domestic rubbish, including eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century pottery, chamber pots, bottles, animal and fish bones and ash.

No. 2 Marlowe Avenue was built adjacent to the site in the early nineteenth century and layers relating to its construction were excavated as well as post-holes belonging to a conservatory that was later built up against it.

One of the latest features found on the site was the foundation of a circular structure about 4 m. in diameter that was situated between no. 2 Marlowe Avenue and a garden boundary wall (the foundations of which were also discovered) which is shown on the 1873 first edition Ordnance Survey map. There is evidence that no. 2 Marlowe Avenue was occupied by brewers in the nineteenth century and also from this period onwards there was a large brewery on the other side of the street. It is quite possible that this circular structure was a building connected with brewing, maybe an oast or malt house.

Excavations in the area should continue in 1982 with another small site between no. 3A Marlowe Avenue and St. John's Lane.

JOHN RADY

5. BIGBURY CAMP

As a result of proposed apple-tree re-planting, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust undertook a 'rescue' excavation in the south-

INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS IN 1981

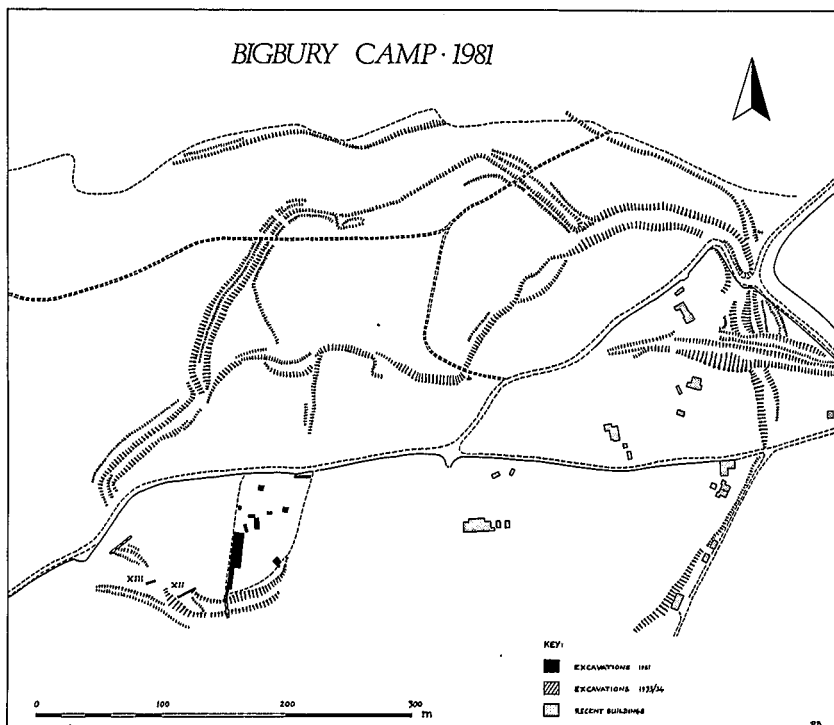


Fig. 4. Bigbury Camp, locating 1981 Excavations.

west corner of Bigbury Camp during February and March 1981.⁴ Prior to this date, no large-scale excavation had taken place within the interior of the camp, previous excavations at Bigbury concentrating on the defences on the north side of the camp.⁵ Two sections had, however, been cut across the relatively well-preserved south-west defences by R.F. Jessup⁶ in 1933–34 (Fig. 4).

The field being planted represented the only surviving relatively

⁴ Under the supervision of Kevin and Paul Blockley of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust.

⁵ R.F. Jessup, *Arch. J.*, lxxxix (1932), 87–115; R.F. Jessup, and N.F. Cook, 'Excavations at Bigbury Camp, Harbledown', *Arch. Cant.*, xlviii (1936), 151–268; F.H. Thompson, 'Interim Reports on Excavations at Bigbury', in *Arch. Cant.*, xciv (1978), 279–80; *Arch. Cant.*, xcv (1979), 301–3; *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1980), 411–3.

⁶ Jessup and Cook, *op. cit.* in note 5.

undisturbed area within the camp; the remainder being disturbed by housing, coppices, ploughing and gravel quarries. It was therefore considered essential to conduct as large an area excavation as possible within the area to be replanted.

Approximately 4,500 sq. m. of the interior was available for excavation and a little over 500 sq. m. was excavated in the four weeks available. The main excavation consisted of a large area, 52 m. long and 10 m. wide at its maximum, cut across the rampart into the interior of the camp (Fig. 5, Trench I). A series of smaller trenches (Fig. 5, Trenches II-XI, and Fig. 4, Trenches XII-XIII) was designed to answer specific questions about the defences, the nature of the deposits behind the rampart, and to define the extent of an hitherto unrecorded, backfilled gravel quarry which divided the field.

Trenches I-XI showed that the stratigraphy, within the area bounded by the defences, was very shallow, consisting of a 20 cm. thick deposit of dark clayey grey loam with many pebbles, overlying natural clay and gravels. The upper 15 cm. of this layer had been recently harrowed after the removal of apple trees. The roots of these trees, and limited ploughing between them, had badly disturbed the stratigraphy; plough and root marks being visible in the natural gravels. No evidence was located of intact Iron Age stratigraphy within the interior; the only evidence for occupation of this date being a few residual sherds of Iron Age pottery located in the plough-soil.

Features located within the interior proved to be either of post-glacial or recent origin. Four post-holes were located. Three of these (Trench XI, Fig. 5) may represent a fence line along the northern edge of the field. The fourth (Trench II, Fig. 5) was undated but contained a similar fill to those in Trench XI and is therefore assumed to be of recent origin.

The two other features located within the interior of the camp can be assigned to a phase of gravel extraction which took place prior to the 1930s. Feature 'B' in Trench I (Fig. 5) was 2.2 m. deep and 1.5 m. wide with marks on the side indicating that this was a machine-cut hole, probably dug as a test pit during gravel prospecting in the area. Also relating to this phase in the history of Bigbury Camp was a small backfilled quarry, the extent of which was traced (Trenches I, IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X, Fig. 5). This was excavated to a depth of 1 m. into the natural subsoil, it being evident that this quarry, like that to the west of the excavated area, may be very deep. The uppermost backfill of this quarry provided numerous small residual sherds of Iron Age pottery in layers of redeposited occupation material, mixed up with the quarry backfill.

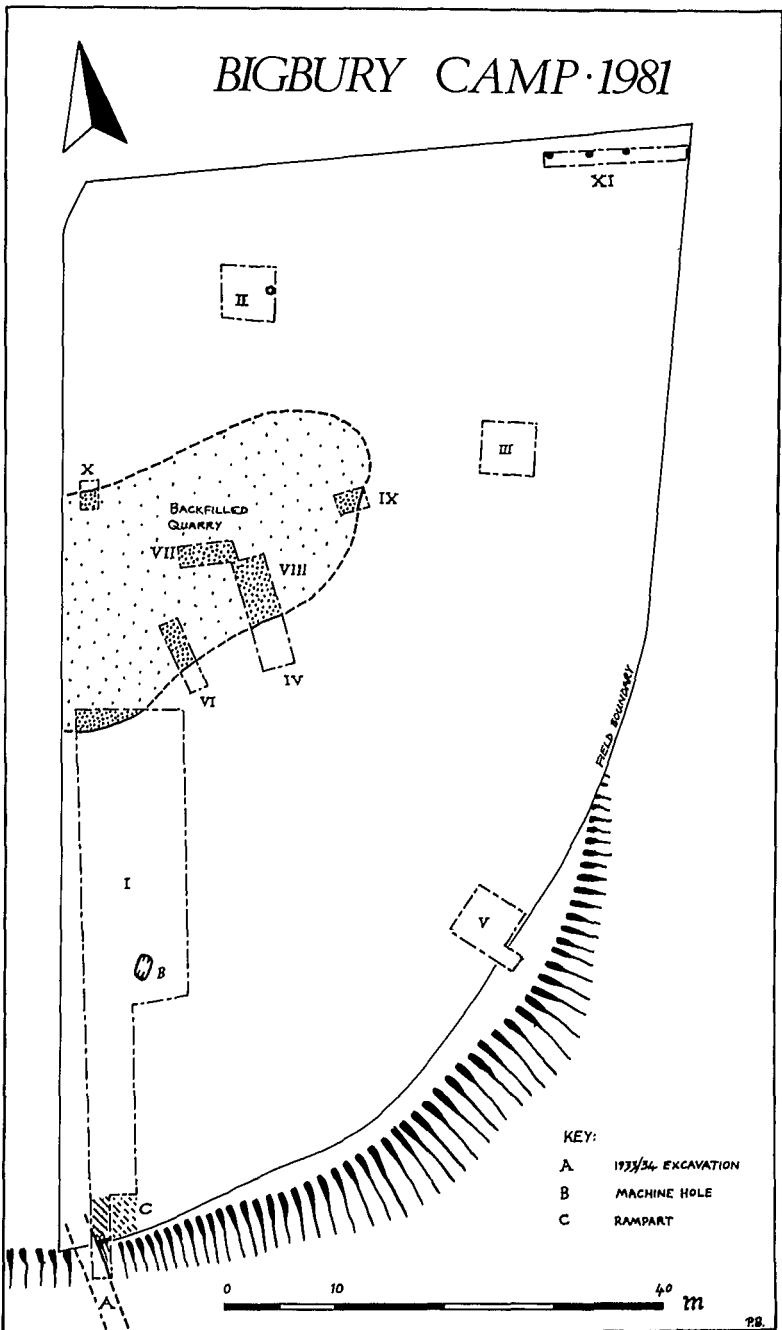


Fig. 5. Bigbury Camp: Excavations 1981, locating Trenches I-XI.

INTERIM REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS IN 1981

On the south side of Bigbury Camp, the defences have been degraded by prolonged ploughing in the early 1930s, so that only in the immediate area of the present excavations are any comprehensible traces of the defences visible. A series of three ditches may be discerned in this area (Fig. 4), forming part of an elaborate south-west entrance. Of these three ditches only the outermost remains uninvestigated. These ditches were largely untouched by ploughing, although a length of the defences, between the road and Trench XII (Fig. 4), has recently been buried during a partial back-filling of the gravel pit which lies just inside the west entrance to the camp.

The southern end of Trench I located the rampart and lip of the ditch, as well as defining the line of Jessup's trench excavated in 1933-34, but at the time not accurately plotted. The rampart located in Trench I consisted of a 30-cm. thick layer of fine yellow-brown silty loam, with many pebbles. This sat immediately behind the lip of the ditch. Trench V, excavated to trace the rampart further to the east, located no certain evidence for this rampart. In front of the rampart in Trench I, a 12-cm. thick layer of silty loam, with much charcoal, fire-cracked flints, flint fragments and pebbles, was located. It is tempting to see this as evidence of Caesar's attack on Bigbury in 54 B.C. Samples of this deposit were taken for radio-carbon dating.

Overlying these burnt layers were the remains of the rampart pushed into the ditch. An adjacent quarry face provided an opportunity to look in detail at the inner two of the three ditches. Trench XII (Fig. 4) across the inner ditch, produced evidence for a previously unlocated palisade trench in front of the rampart. This had an irregular V-profile, 70 cm. deep, 1.4 m. wide, set some 1.2 m. back from the inner lip of the ditch. A complete section was obtained through this inner ditch, which was 2.4 m. deep and 5 m. wide. Trench XIII (Fig. 4) produced a section through the middle ditch, which was 2.2 m. wide and 1.2 m. deep. A detailed description and analysis of the fill of these ditches will be given in the final report, along with the details of the pottery recovered.⁷

Profiles were drawn across the defences, and a contour survey of the area bounded by the inner ditch will be undertaken before the apple trees are planted in the spring of 1982.

The rescue work was made possible by grants from the Depart-

⁷ A full report of these excavations will be included in F.H. Thompson's report of his work at Bigbury in *The Antiquaries Journal* (forthcoming).

ment of the Environment and the Kent Archaeological Society, and with the permission of the farmer and landowner Mr. Gordon McCabe. Mr. Schmidt, the farm manager, was most helpful throughout the excavation. Thanks are due to our week-end volunteer Alan, and our full-time excavators, who worked remarkably well in adverse weather conditions.

KEVIN and PAUL BLOCKLEY

6. No. 3 QUEEN'S AVENUE

A three-day training excavation for the Canterbury Junior Archaeological Society took place at 3 Queen's Avenue, from the 26th to the 28th October, 1981. This training dig, the first undertaken by the society supervised by members of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, was only partially completed and will be finished next year.

The site was chosen because of its proximity to Roman Watling Street which lies approximately 30 m. to the south-west (the site is also 406 m. north-west of the Roman London Gate), and the chance find of some Roman roofing-tiles during the laying of a new garden path.

The earliest feature so far uncovered is a well-metalled Roman lane. The lane, with a shallow side gutter, was only partially within the excavated area, and was aligned roughly north-north-west/south-south-east. Pottery of the first and second centuries A.D. was recovered from the road gutter. This narrow lane may have been associated with an industrial suburb to the west of the Roman town, since a number of pottery and tile kilns have been found in this area.

The Roman levels were sealed by a 0.3 m. deposit of dirty brick-earth, which was in turn sealed by garden topsoil. A number of features was located in the interface between brickearth and garden soil; these included three field drains and a cart track, all containing nineteenth-century pottery.

PAUL BENNETT

7. CONDUIT HOUSE, MILITARY ROAD

For a week during July, the Conduit House for the Dean and Chapter's water supply was cleared of rubble, cleaned and surveyed.⁸ The building, which is about a half mile north-east of

⁸ It is hoped that the Dean and Chapter will now restore the water supply which, due mainly to vandalism, has been cut off for about six years.

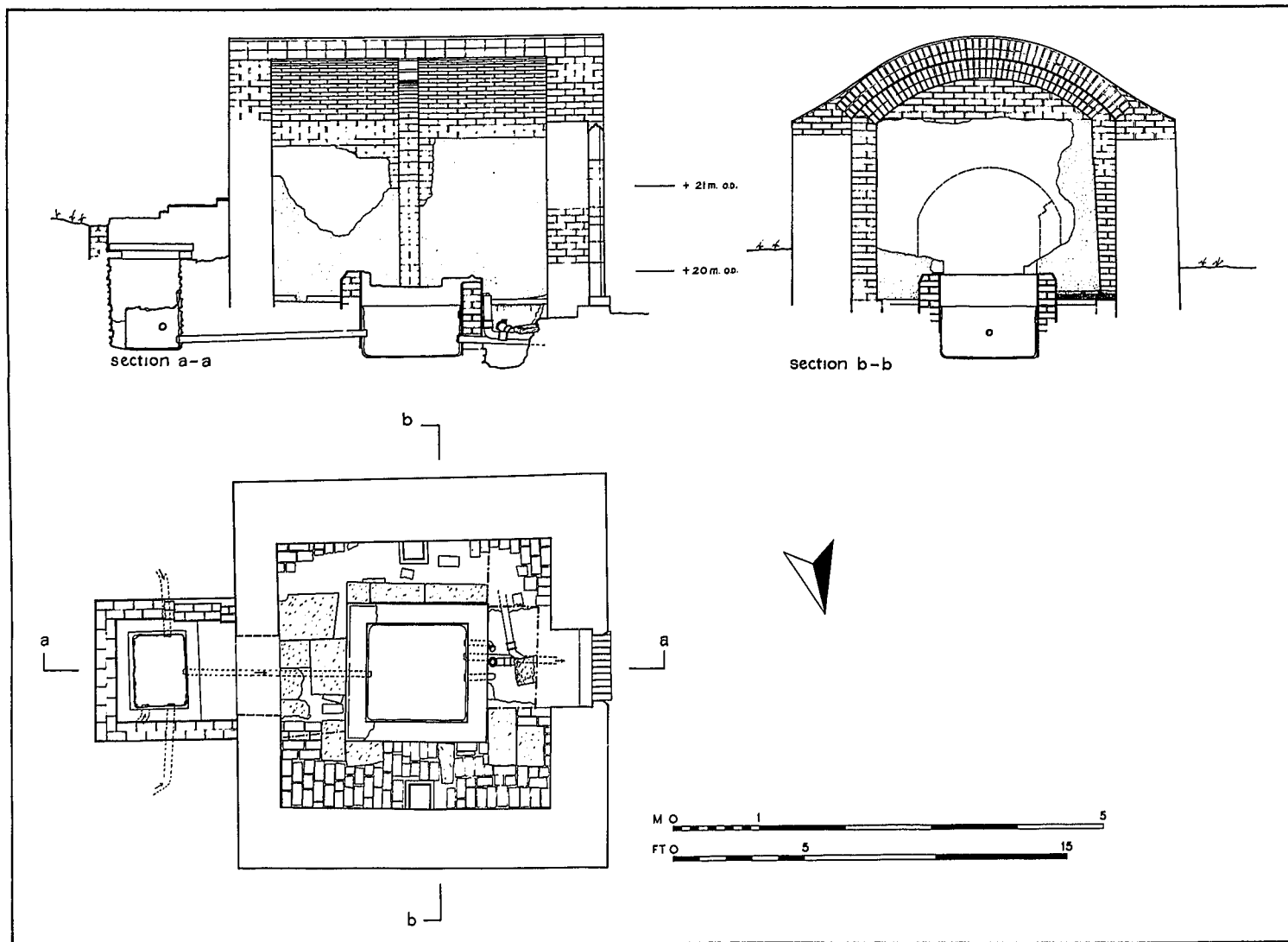


Fig. 6. Plan and Elevations of Conduit House, Military Road, Canterbury.

Canterbury (N.G.R. TR 15955860) probably had its origins in the conduit house built by Prior Wibert for Christ Church Priory in the middle of the twelfth century. The original building appears to have been circular,⁹ and our work was not able to show with any certainty that any of the surviving building dated from the medieval period (Fig. 6). Most of the present building, which has walls in a sort of chequer work, probably dates from the seventeenth century, though the brick barrel vault and internal piers, and the surviving lead-lined tanks and pipes are probably nineteenth-century in date. There is also quite a lot of re-used stone apparent and this may have come from an earlier conduit house.

Once the building had been cleared of rubble, the existing water supply was restored. This consisted of three 3-in. lead pipes which entered a lead-lined tank situated outside the east wall of the Conduit House (Fig. 6). This tank had also originally been covered by a nineteenth-century brick vault, though it is now covered by a concrete slab. From this tank the water flowed through another 3-in. lead pipe into a second tank inside the Conduit House. Three more lead pipes left this tank on the west side, the middle of which was the main one which carried the water down the south-east side of Military Road to the Precincts.¹⁰ Two joining cast-iron pipes were also found just outside the west side of the tank, but their function is as yet unknown. Between the Conduit House and the Water Tower (and later the cistern in the Green Court) on the north side of the Cathedral, there is a fall of about 10 m., so with an inverse siphon in operation quite a good head of water could be built up. This water supply to the Cathedral Precincts has functioned for more than 800 years, so we hope that very soon it will be working again.¹¹

TIM TATTON-BROWN

⁹ It is depicted as the circular *turris* in the famous 'Waterworks Plan' of c. 1160, see *Arch. Cant.*, vii (1868) pl. 1, opp. p. 196 and Fig. 33 opp. p. 161.

¹⁰ We are grateful to Mr. Gordon Evans of the Mid-Kent Water Company for supplying us (via the late John Hayes) with a plan of all the water pipes in this area. It shows a series of catch pits on the spring line to the east and south-west of the Conduit House, which connect with the Conduit House by 3-in. lead pipes.

¹¹ I am grateful to Nicola Godwin, Luc Lepers, Joel Defrémont and Mike Weetman for carrying out the work for the Trust, and to Laurie Sartin who did the survey.