



Society News

The Bulletin of the Enfield Archaeological Society



Above: EAS Festival of British Archaeology dig at Elsyng Palace, Forty Hall. Without doubt our most interestingly-shaped trench of the year.....

Top:which commanded the full attention not only of the diggers, but also the local parks constabulary. See p. 4 for the excavation report.

Forthcoming Events:

- 2 EAS
 - 18 Oct: The Roman Bones of Old Enfield
 - 15 Nov: Shakespeare's Curtain Theatre
- 2 Other Societies
- 4 Fieldwork Report
 - Seventeenth Century Threshing Barn Complex at Elsyng Palace (FXG13)
- 10 Pastfinders News

Society News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. The Editor is Jeremy Grove

020 8363 9681

www.enfarchsoc.org

<http://enfieldarchaeology.wordpress.com/>

Meetings are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield (*near Chase Side*) at 8pm. Tea and coffee are served and the sales and information table is open from 7.30pm. Visitors, who are asked to pay a small entrance fee of £1.00, are very welcome.

Forthcoming events

Forthcoming EAS lectures:

18th October

The Roman Bones of Old Enfield

Back by popular demand following his very well received talk on animal bones last year, our very own 'home-grown' bones specialist will be turning his attention to the finds from the Roman period in the Borough.

Neil Pinchbeck, EAS

15th November

Shakespeare's Curtain Theatre – The Whole Story

Julian Bowsher, Senior Archaeologist, MOLA

December

Winter break – no meeting

EAS Fieldwork



The Society carries out a busy programme of excavation and other activities.

Please contact Mike Dewbrey on 01707 870888 (office number) for more details if you are interested.

Blog: <http://enfieldarchaeology.wordpress.com/>

Website: <http://www.enfarchsoc.org/>

Meetings of other Societies

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY 7.45 for 8pm, Jubilee Hall, Enfield, unless otherwise stated

16 Oct	Enfield Railways Part 2 (West) Great Northern Line and The Hertford Loop	<i>Dave Cockle</i>
19 Nov	(2.15 for 2,30pm) Chingford Newsreels	<i>Dave Piggott</i>
18 Dec	A Seasonal Entertainment	<i>Christine & Peter Padwick</i>

HENDON & DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY 7.45 for 8.00pm Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley

12 Nov	Lions on Kunulua – Excavations of Early Bronze & Iron Age periods at Tell Tayinat, Hatay, Turkey	<i>Fiona Haughey</i>
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WEST ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP 7.45pm, Woodford County High School, High Rd, Woodford Green

14 Oct	Marks Hall - A Medieval and Tudor Mansion	<i>Tim Dennis</i>
11 Nov	Excavations at Draper's Gardens	<i>Neil Hawkins</i>
9 Dec	Pompeii and Herculaneum	<i>John Shepherd</i>

WALTHAM ABBEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 8pm, Parish Centre, Abbey Gardens, Waltham Abbey

17 Oct	The witch craze in Essex	<i>Christopher Thompson</i>
21 Nov	Hill Hall and its people	<i>Anne Padfield</i>
19 Dec	Christmas Meeting - Celebrating our 60th Anniversary	
16 Jan	The Markfield beam engine	<i>Ken Breerton</i>

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NORTH LONDON BRANCH

7.45 for 8.00pm Jubilee Hall, Enfield

12 Nov Order! Order! Development of the Office of Speaker of the House of Commons since 1945 *Matthew Laban*
 14 Jan King James I *David Smith*

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

6.30pm Museum of London, EC1

12 Nov Michael Faraday in London *Frank James*
 10 Dec The burnt Jubilee Book in the London of Richard II *Caroline Baron*
 14 Jan The Cheapside Hoard *Hazel Forsyth*

Archaeological finds Reporting at Epping Forest District Museum

10.30am – 3.30pm 19 October 2013

Epping Forest District Museum, Waltham Abbey

Epping Forest District Museum are hosting a Finds Session for the public to bring in archaeological objects to be identified, on 19 October.

This is organised by Katie Marsden, the Finds Liaison Officer for Essex, and is an opportunity for anyone to bring in single items or small collections of finds for identification. Katie will:

Book in the finds and give you a receipt
 Give you a realistic estimate of how long it will take to record the finds

Photograph the finds

Enter details onto the portable antiquities database

Arrange for the return of the find.

Epping Forest District Museum 39/41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL

For further information contact Katie Marsden on 01206 506961, or Jill Holmen, Collections Manager (Epping Forest District Museum) on 01992 716882. *(And please check availability before travelling – Ed.)*

LAMAS Local History Conference: THE RIVER AND PORT OF LONDON

10.00am – 4.00pm Sat 16 November 2013

Weston Theatre, Museum of London

Fee, (including tea and biscuits): £15; Early Bird £12 (until 1 November)

Tickets available from 1 September

Via Paypal LAMAS website or, c/o Eleanor Stanier, 48 Coval Road, East Sheen, London SW14 7RL

Displays by Local History Societies throughout the day

Lecture programme:

A changing port in a changing world. London's harbours from the 1st to the 18th century. Gustav Milne, Director, Thames Discovery Programme.

Re-invention and Change: the Port of London from 1790-1938. Chris Ellmers, Founding Director, Museum in Docklands.

Local history and the environmental history of the Thames 1960-2010. Vanessa Taylor, Research Fellow, Greenwich Maritime Institute.

'Primus Omnium', the world's first modern police force. Robert Jeffries, Curator, Thames Police Museum.

The Thames as a provider of drinking water. Mark Jenner, University of York.

'The Thames Beautiful'- the artist's perspective. Mireille Galinou, Arts and Museums Consultant, former Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings, Museum of London.

Final Report on the Excavation of the Seventeenth Century Threshing Barn Complex at Elsyng Palace

By Martin J Dearne

The annual excavation during the Festival of Archaeology on the site of Elsyng Palace in the grounds of Forty Hall in 2013 (site code FXG13) represented the completion of three years work on the large structure built over the south side of the east courtyard of the palace.

Initially unexpected as there had been no reason to suppose that the site had been used other than as pleasure grounds after palace demolition c. 1657, our understanding of the plan and nature of this large timber structure built on dwarf brick walls using materials recycled from the palace has steadily increased over that time. Thus, in 2013 it was hoped to excavate a sufficient area to answer the remaining questions about its plan and function. With the backing of the borough in the shape of the events programme of the newly refurbished Forty Hall and the generous permission of English Heritage as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, this was achieved - despite temperatures of 31°C.

Although one area (including a bonfire pit used by the crew demolishing the building) was excavated fully, most of the many trenches opened over a six day period (which also saw a programme of schools visits) involved only turf and topsoil removal as the plan was to follow already established wall lines and features and check the nature of the surfaces lying between them. This proved enough to both complete the picture of the building and recover crucial dating evidence (principally a single clay pipe of c. 1640 – 70, and the building of the structure over the robber trench for the demolition of the palace facade wall). This confirmed that it had been built just after the palace was demolished by Nicholas Rainton the younger of Forty Hall, who had added the palace to his estate, and lasted no more than about 40 years before a new owner of the hall did turn the

area into pleasure grounds with the planting of the Lime tree avenue.

Putting the three years' work together the following description, as ever only a brief summary of a much larger archive report, may be given.

The initially intended plan/extent of the building complex was evidently changed during construction. Thus, one dwarf wall was built running roughly towards the former palace gatehouse, but then partly demolished, leaving only one end of it to be incorporated in the building as completed and probably to serve as a courtyard surface edging. It had been necessary to terrace this wall into sloping ground. If it continued much further east it would have encountered the gatehouse site, which conversely seems to have been on a slight platform and this may have proved too difficult a combination of levels to cope with. The intention, to have the building as near as possible to the main approach road to the former palace, which led to the gatehouse, had therefore to be abandoned.

The overall plan of the building complex as completed was L-shaped, and it is now apparent that it comprised three discrete elements (Fig. 1) (and that what previously appeared to be an unlikely dog leg in its plan was introduced by a modern planning error). The most westerly element (Figs 1 and 2) remains the least investigated, but can now be seen to be internally 6.80 m wide. It was rectangular and internally 19.30 m long with some form of (?large) entrance at the north western end and a pedestrian one at the south eastern, plus at least one other in its south west wall. Although there was possible evidence for a chalk floor at its south eastern end, much of its floor was of rammed pebbles and roof tile fragments, near the north western entrance at least reinforced with mortar. This large apparently undivided, roofed space with a hard, rough floor which might aid the process, is interpreted as a threshing barn, probably with a thatched roof.

South east of this structure (Figs 1 and 2) lay a likely thatch roofed, probably asymmetrical courtyard around 6.50m east-west and a maximum of 7.30m north-south with a surface of rammed pebbles, and in some areas roof tile fragments. On the south west side its perimeter was evidently of timber framed construction on a dwarf brick wall, extensively traced in 2011. However, the wall altered its alignment in an unexcavated area between the two trenches cut in 2011 so that precisely where this occurred and so where the courtyard ended and the south eastern building (discussed below) began has to be an

assumption. On the north west one post pad formed of a block of limestone salvaged from the palace was found in 2013 (Fig. 4) and it is likely that a line of such post pads formed the (open) north western side of the courtyard. However, the courtyard surface evidently continued beyond the roofed area for at least 4.00 m to the north east. The courtyard also appears to have had a ? pedestrian entrance at its south west corner where part of a probable threshold, probably fronted by a slight porch, was seen in 2013. It must be attractive to see the courtyard as covered provision for the loading and unloading of carts, perhaps indicating the collection of threshed grain from the barn, or anything produced by activities in the south eastern building.



Fig. 4: The Post Pad. Set into the courtyard surface in line with the corner of the threshing barn (behind the bucket). (Photo N Pinchbeck)

This south eastern building (Figs 1 and 3) is the most fully investigated part of the complex, but, in part due to truncation during demolition, some questions remain about it. It appears to have lain at an angle to, and projected beyond the north east side of, the courtyard and been basically trapezoidal, from 7.00-8.40m south west to north east and around 4.00-5.00m south east to north west internally. However, it may have had a small south easterly projection at its south east corner. On the north west a dwarf wall ran a little over 1.00m south west from its northern corner, and everything suggests that the line of that north

western wall was at least approximately continued to the south west. However, how exactly the wall was formed and the roof supported here (?by more post pads) is the one substantive outstanding question about the building's form.



Fig. 5: The North West End of the Corridor at the End of the South East Building. Note the never- used wall running off to the left and roof tiles used to level up slumping of one wall. (Photo: N Pinchbeck)

From the widespread but tightly confined tile debris found, the south east building almost certainly had a tiled roof, and it seems to have been sub-divided. The south westerly ? c. 3.50m of it had a brickearth floor with an overlying occupation deposit including oyster and cockle shells and charcoal (and a complete boar's tusk came from this in 2013). To its north east this was bounded by a brick built ?storage bin setting. North west of that 2013 Trench E found a chalk floor running up to the setting and possibly another superficial feature set into it. It seems very likely that there was a partition of some form running north north west from the north west end of the ?storage bin setting in the unexcavated area between 2010 Trench 1 and 2013 Trench E, dividing these two areas. This chalk floored area was no more than 2.00m wide, and why a chalk floor was considered necessary here (unless it was simply convenient as there was chalk available from the demolition of the palace) is not immediately obvious. Functionally chalk floors were often used for buildings such as stables as the chalk absorbs urine, but this space is far too small for that to be relevant. However, if the floor was of chalk for a purpose, it might at least suggest some activity where liquid spills of some sort were anticipated (and one such possible activity might be brewing).

The chalk floor gave way on the north east to a floor similar to that in the courtyard. It is impossible to be sure whether there was another partition wall between them, but it seems unlikely. On the north east, the courtyard-like surface ran up to what seems likely to have been a separate corridor (Fig. 5) with dwarf brick walls, about a

metre wide and with a cambered mortar and tile fragment floor. This, at the north east end of the building, might well have had a separate entrance at its north west end and probably gave access to some form of feature c. 1.50 x 3.00m at its south east end.

Truncation makes interpretation of this feature difficult, but all the evidence points to something substantial having been demolished here and the 2013 work raised the possibility that whatever it was required a small south easterly projection to be included in the plan of the building. If so some sort of additional buttressing might be represented, but one cannot ignore the possibility, despite the lack of direct evidence for any form of fire, that it was a projecting brick chimney. Indeed, that the roof of this south easterly building seems to have been tiled unlike those of other parts of the complex might be explained if the demolished feature had been something such as a grain drying, or more likely malting, oven (and perhaps the adjacent storage bin setting held a receptacle for malted grain – or even a brewer's mash tub). Functionally therefore it seems likely that this south eastern building was split between storage and/or agricultural produce processing and domestic occupation. The latter one strongly suspects was seasonal and as much linked to the security of what must have been a rather isolated structure presumably holding significant amounts of grain as anything else.

Taking the building complex overall, its size, the provision of a roofed courtyard and of pebble surfaces around the building (now known to continue at least 4.20m to the south east, at least 4.00m to the north east and at least a short distance out from its south western side) suggest that its construction represented a significant investment of time and resources. One suspects that it signals the creation of an agricultural processing/storage/redistribution centre serving a significant estate or estates. Indeed, contemporary improvement of probably previously unused ground east of the palace site was shown by monitoring of the new cycle track nearby earlier in 2013. Especially as Rainton, like his eponymous great uncle before him, from whom he had inherited Forty Hall, is known to have enclosed common land in the area, one must strongly suspect that the building was intended to centralise the processing/storage of grain from perhaps dispersed lands in his ownership.

Certainly the approach road to the former palace would have enabled all weather cart transport to and from the building and easy access to areas well north and south of the site.

Widespread post palace rammed pebble surfaces have also been recorded not just immediately around the building under study, but at a number of more distant points on the former palace site, including one north of the palace gatehouse, which clearly levelled the surroundings of the raised platform on which it had been built, and again further north still and to the east of the palace site. Thus, the building may have sat at the centre of a much larger rammed pebble surfaced area, quite probably with paths if not roads leading away from it in more than one direction.

It is impossible to say whether grain was threshed here and then stored, threshed and transported elsewhere for storage (or for milling, as a mill is believed to have existed in the area immediately north of Maidens Brook, although it has not yet been located) or was at least in part malted here before use or transport elsewhere. However, it must be quite possible that the building represented a commercial farming enterprise which could potentially have been exploiting markets as far away as London.

In 2014 we hope to return to tracing the plan of the palace itself, but the three years on this threshing barn have not been without results in that direction since we traced the robber trench for the south facade wall of the palace below the barn and in 2013 saw a smaller wall running south that might indicate something like a decorative bastion projecting from it.

As ever the author is grateful to all the EAS members who worked on the excavation, and to those (Angie Holmes and Neil and John Pinchbeck) who led education sessions for local schools in partnership with the staff of Forty Hall; and to Jan Metcalf of Enfield Museum and the staff of Forty Hall who, along with Mike Dewbrey and others, organised the public events accompanying the excavation.

MARTIN DEARNE

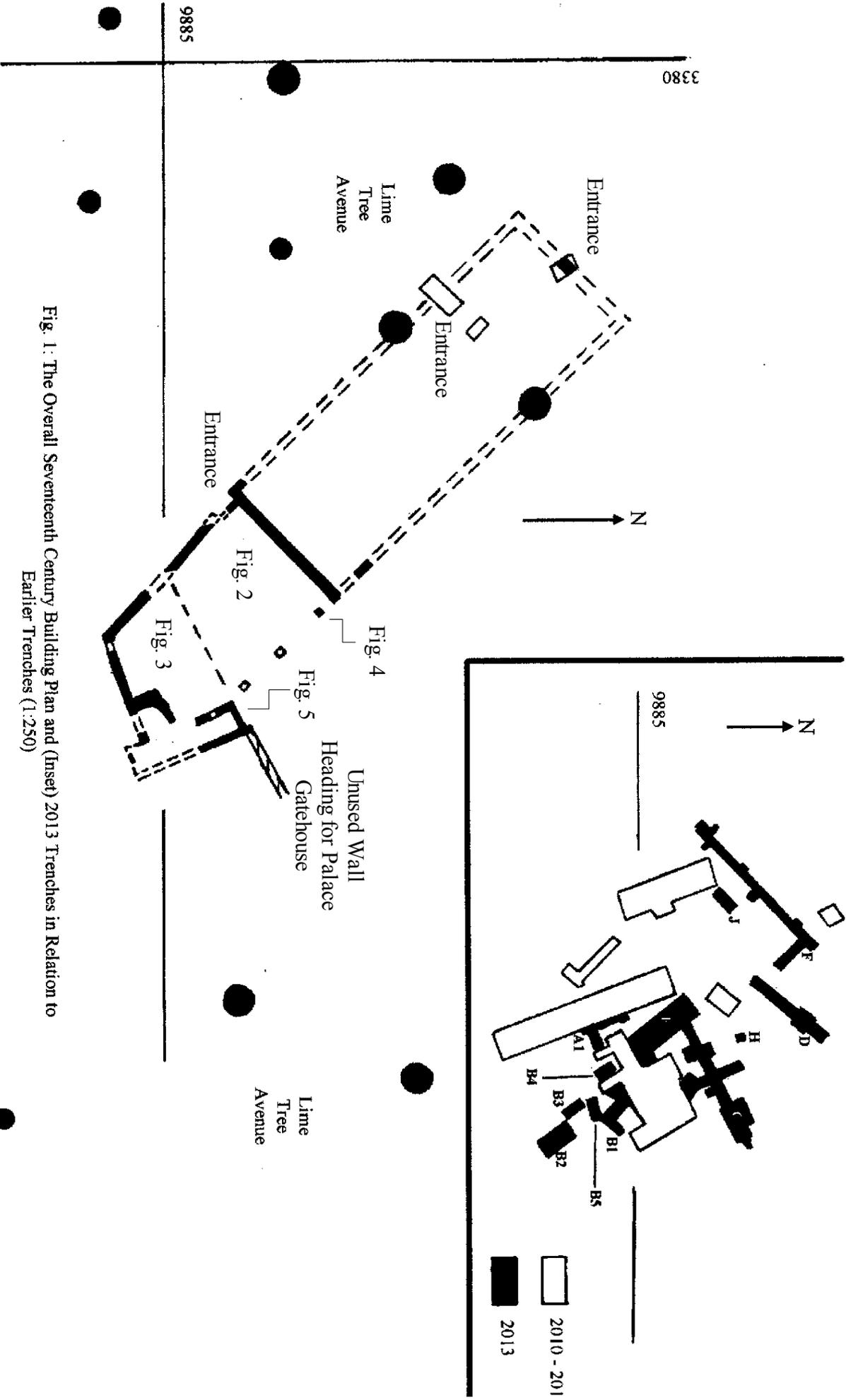


Fig. 1: The Overall Seventeenth Century Building Plan and (Inset) 2013 Trenches in Relation to Earlier Trenches (1:250)

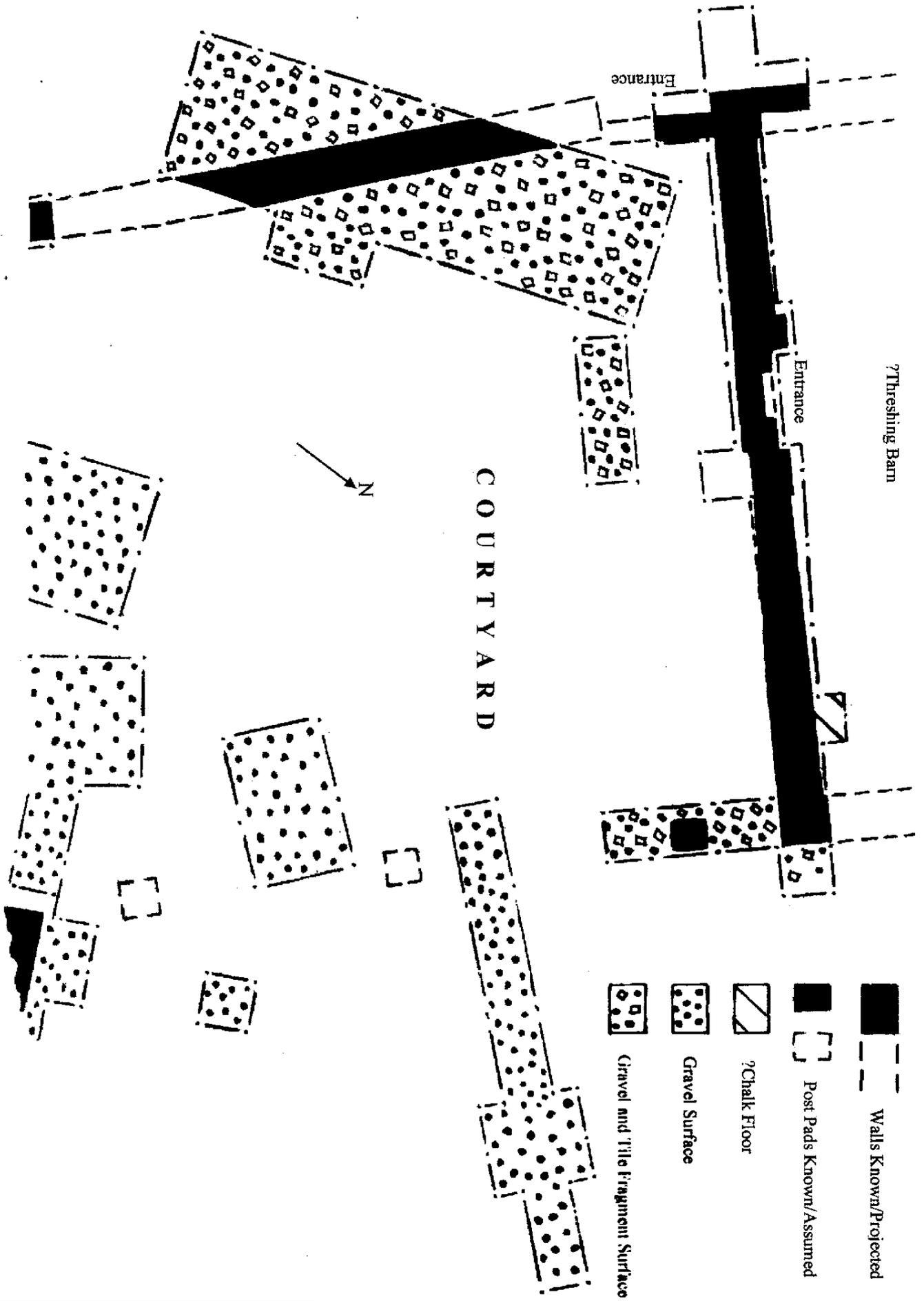


Fig. 2: The Courtyard (scale 1:50)

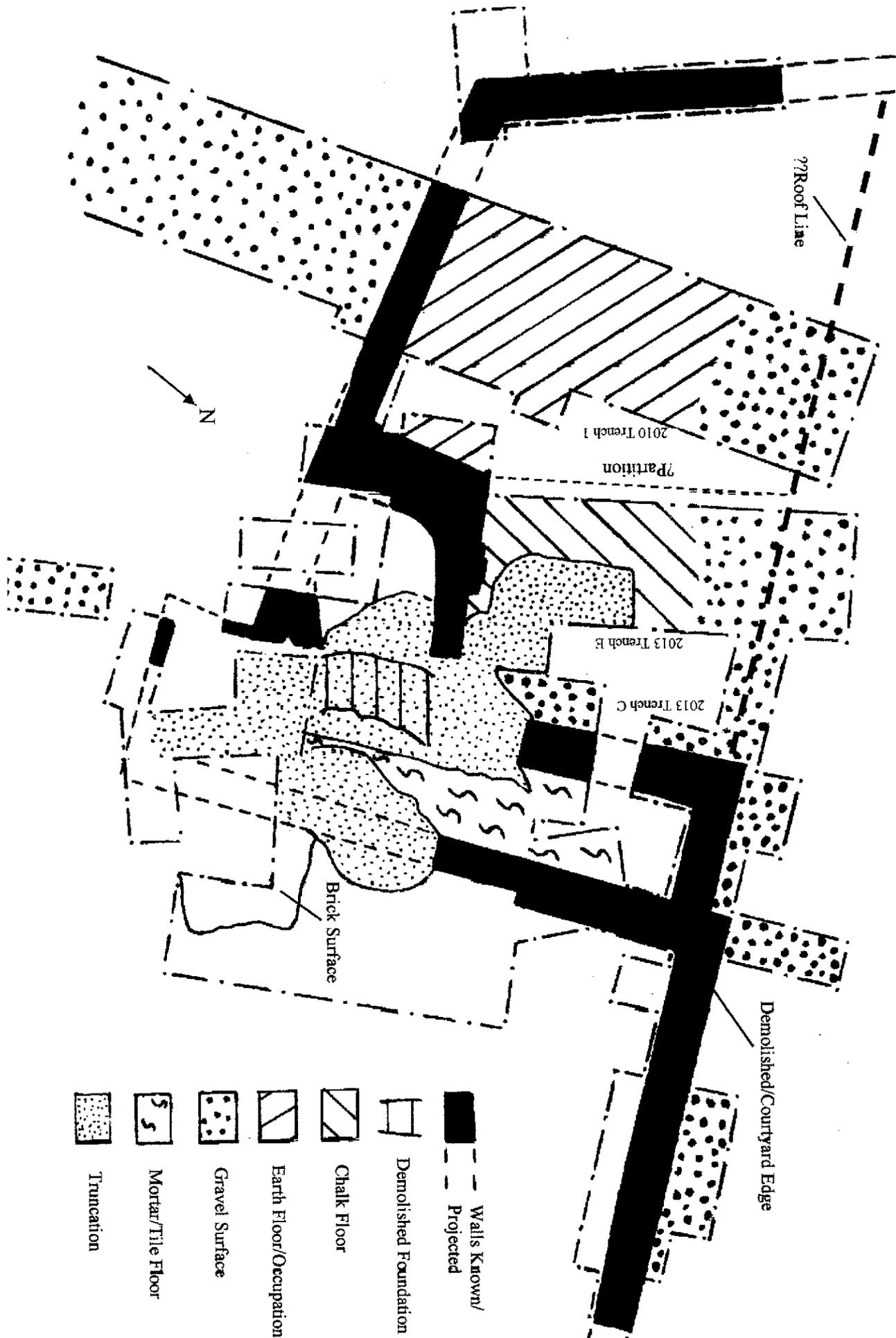


Fig. 3: The South East Building (scale 1:50)

PASTFINDERS NEWS

News of the Excavation and Fieldwork Group



I would like to begin with a big thank you on behalf of Martin and myself to everyone who came along to help out at the excavations in July this year.

The first surprise on day one of the dig at Theobalds was to find the location of our trenches covered in scaffolding and bricks due to over-running restoration work to the listed walls. Despite this initial setback two trenches were opened over a two day period. The trench on the west side of the boundary wall revealed that the wall postdates the brick drainage culverts which run beneath it, which were uncovered during construction of the new access road. This would suggest that the wall which truncates the water channels from the pond was built by James I around 1609-1610 when he was spending large sums of money on Theobalds.

The second trench also held a few surprises. This was cut on the north side of the wall which originally separated the New Privy Garden from the New Maze Garden in the early 17th century. The remains of what appeared to be a brick built garden seat built into the north side of the wall with a peephole window above were uncovered. Interestingly three such seats are mentioned in this location in the 1650 Parliamentary survey of the site, together with three doorways, two of which have been located. (Two further seats have since been excavated by MOLA close by.) Further excavation by the E.A.S. in this area also uncovered one of the brick water channels running parallel with the wall. These we now know are almost certainly late 16th century in date and would have fed water from the Old Pond into the garden or ornamental canal system within it.

The following week's excavation at Forty Hall saw us return to the site of the barn complex overlying the palace which we had revealed last year. As the trenches followed the structure of the barn it continued to grow in size until we began to speculate that we had not one but two barns in this location, or that the original barn had been

extended with the addition of an annex at some time during its short life. A possible porch area was uncovered together with a super 'post pad' made of a fragment of reused limestone from Elsyng Palace. This would have supported one of the timbers shouldering the roof. The roof was mainly thatched with a small tiled living area at one end.

A surprise find from the spoil was a superb example of a bronze or copper alloy strap end embossed with a foliate design which will no doubt decorate the front cover of the report! In true Time Team fashion, on the last day with only hours to spare a substantial 16th century wall was uncovered beneath the area of the barn which judging by the alignment is a demolished fragment of Elsyng Palace. Once again Elsyng has given us a tantalising glimpse of the secrets that lie buried under the parkland at Forty Hall, so no doubt we will return again next year to reveal some more! Despite the soaring temperatures this year our valiant excavation team managed to back fill all the trenches in time for tea and perhaps a well earned cold beer- many thanks again to everyone who persevered.

It is harvest time once again and hopefully we shall be organising a programme of field walking this year once relevant sites are available, all members who have expressed an interest in field walking activities will be contacted by e mail with details in the usual manner.

It is always sad when a pillar of the archaeological community passes away and this was indeed the case with Time Team's Mick Aston who died recently. Many have since said they feel as if they have lost an old friend, what we have also lost is Mick's wealth of knowledge of medieval monastic sites, but which will endure through the books he has written and his many appearances on Time Team. I asked Jon Cotton our Vice President what he remembered most about Mick and it was his down to earth approach when talking to people - he will be sadly missed.

MIKE DEWBREY

01707 870888