



Trinity Chequer, Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Excavation

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Trust for Wessex Archaeology Site W227: TRINITY CHEQUER

By A. V. Jenkins

INTRODUCTION

Trinity Chequer lies to the north-east of the Cathedral Close and the south-east of the market place. It is bounded by Brown Street, Milford Street, Gigant Street and Trinity Street; and it takes its name from the Trinity Hospital.

The site of the excavation was on the west side of the chequer, and immediately before the excavations was being used as a temporary car park. As a result of a road building scheme, which was later abandoned, the three houses designated 47, 49 and 51 Brown Street were demolished and the tenements had become available for archaeological investigation prior to the institution of a new development scheme.

What is probably the earliest reference to the site can be found in a record dating from about 1270-1280 contained in Deed No. 5 of C. Wordsworth's "Castulary ...". It grants a tenement belonging to John de Wich (chaplain of St Martins) and John, son of William Baker (vicar), to St Nicholas' Hospital. The tenement was described in the manner typical of the time as situated in Brown Street between the tenement of William of Twynham and that of Sebode the Cutler. Later deeds give street numbers, which allows easier identification of the properties, but the early ones define tenements only by the names of owners, occupiers and neighbours. So where leases and transfers of land ownership, or records of them, are few, there may be insufficient information to reconstruct a complete list of former occupants. Photocopies of several such records from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which relate to properties in Brown Street may be found in the site archive.

Material relating to the most recent history of the site includes a painting of 47 Brown Street dated 1913 which shows a two storeyed brick building of a generally eighteenth or nineteenth century style. Surprisingly there is a passageway through to the back immediately alongside the passage belonging to No. 49. A colour slide of this painting is in the archive.

A sketch plan of 49 Brown Street made by an estate agent in 1949 allowed the eventual identification of many of the later archaeological features with the 19th century wing, coal sheds, out-houses, etc. A photocopy of this plan is in the archive. An undated glossy (mid twentieth century?) photograph of the front of the shop showed the gable ends to be against the adjoining buildings. In it 51 Brown Street can be seen to have been another brick building two storeys tall in recent times.

Between 1985 and 1987 small-scale excavations had been carried out in the adjoining tenement to the east (i.e. across the Town Ditch), which fronts onto Gigant Street, and a few doors to the north at 39 Trinity Street. These proved that there was an almost undisturbed build-up of archaeological deposits dating from the thirteenth century until the present day, and that no cellars or deep foundations had destroyed the earlier layers as often happens elsewhere.

Strategy and Method

The excavation was carried out as a project of the Manpower Services Commission under the direction of the Trust for Wessex Archaeology.

A rectangular trench measuring 13.5m x 32m was opened within these plots. "The first stage of the excavation involved the removal of the car park surface and modern make-up layers using a mechanical excavator. About 0.38m (15 inches) of rubble and tarmac was removed in this way. Below this all excavation [was] done by hand. It eventually became evident that the eastern edge of the trench had failed to include the Town Ditch, the channel which for centuries formed the property boundaries in the middle of the chequer. An extension of 5.0m by 4.0m was therefore made to the north-east corner of the trench. Since it was not possible to extend the trench into the road the western limit was perforce behind the line of the street frontages of the houses.

So as to maximise the area excavated the spoil was removed in skips. The time and effort required to remove the extensive modern deposits meant that it became impossible to excavate the entire site down to the natural deposits. As a result excavation to natural was restricted to a section through the dwellings at the western limit of excavation, a sub-trench one metre wide the length of the backlands of 51 Brown Street and two sub-trenches set at 90° to the first running across the backlands of No. 49 and part of No. 47.

Excavation

The area of excavation can be considered in four parts which correspond with the town ditch and the three tenements which ran between it and the street. These divisions are traditional and date from the laying out of the city. In consequence there are no well defined phases or cultural periods, nor clear relationships between the tenements. Where possible archaeological layers and features were designated Early, Middle or Late, but in reference only to the site itself. That is, Early should not be taken to mean Early Mediaeval. A few of the deepest features and deposits were assigned to a "Foundation" phase on the basis of stratigraphy rather than datable artefacts.

During the early stages of the excavation context numbers were given to a wide range of rubble layers, patches of tarmac, service trenches, sewer pipes, etc. of Victorian or more recent origin. None of these is described individually in this report on account of their being of little value for archaeological information, neither were they included in any matrix diagram. On the Context Phase Index in the archive they are designated Modern or Unstratified.

Note: Within the frame of reference of this site the term "wall" refers, unless otherwise specified, to a low structure of no more than 0.7m high, built on the ground rather than in a trench and composed in the main of flint nodules in mortar but also in places of tiles laid diagonally or herring-bone fashion. Greenstone blocks are incorporated at intervals (not necessarily regular) of a few meters, presumably as supports for the posts which form part of the frame of the dwelling.

The Town Ditch

The Town Ditch is the name traditionally given to a diversion of the River Avon through a network of artificial channels for the purpose of providing a drainage system. Its course from north to south through the middle of Trinity Chequer is marked on Naish's 1751 map of Salisbury, where it can be seen to form the rear boundary of the properties on Brown and Gigant streets. Unfortunately the height of the water table prevented the complete excavation of this feature.

Foundation

No deposits datable without doubt to the foundation of the city were encountered here, but because of the difficulties of excavation and the likelihood that the channel was cleaned out and even rebuilt from time to time a thirteenth century origin is not disproved.

Early - Middle:

A wall [830] 0.55m in thickness composed of undressed chalk blocks set in a clayey matrix (831) ran north-south beyond the limits of excavation. It butted the natural geological deposits and was taken to be an early, if not the original, western wall of the channel. Since no similar corresponding wall was found on the east it was presumed to have been removed during later reconstruction.

Two parallel walls, [038] and [381] of similar construction 1.4m apart and approximately 0.5m thick comprising alternate bands of dressed greensand blocks and two or three courses of bricks [143] and [382]. The western wall was built immediately over the chalk wall [380], but the full depth of the eastern wall was not exposed. Both walls ran north-south beyond the limits of excavation.

A square-sectioned drain [383] measuring 0.4m x 0.4m built of bricks and integral with the upper (brick) courses of [381]. It ran in from the north-east at an angle of rather less than 90 degrees.

Late - Modern:

A series of rubbles and silts - (145), (211), (212), (366), (376), (387) - between the walls of the channel [038] and [381] showed contours indicative of both deliberate and natural filling.

Since it was not ascertained whether the ditch had been built with a floor or with sides only the possibility remains that the chalk blocks [830] are a foundation layer for the western wall rather than an earlier construction.

The rubble layers are likely to date from 1875 or thereabouts when the town council sold off the Town Ditch to owners of adjoining lands who were required "to fill up at his own expense his portion of the Ditch to the satisfaction of the council."

51 Brown Street

Sufficient of this tenement was excavated to allow some finer distinctions to be discerned in the phasing, especially at the front of the plot. The benefit of this though was almost entirely negated by the disturbance caused by the more recent episodes of rebuilding, which severed the stratigraphic relationship between the front of the house and the backlands. These two areas are considered separately.

Fronting the Street

Foundation period

Phase I:

Postholes and stake-holes were found beneath the deepest recognisable floors of the house fronting onto the street. They varied in size from 0.1 to 0.2m in depth, formed no recognised pattern or clear relationship with any other feature. The larger holes were filled with slumps from upper layers, the smaller ones were hollow as might be expected where the wood has rotted away. These features and their fills are: [752] (753), [763], (764), [766] (772), [773] (774), [775] (776), [777] (778), [779] (780), [781] (782), [783] (784).

A roughly triangular patch of crushed chalk (706) (791), 5m x 2m lay immediately to the south of these holes. It sealed none and overlay the compacted topsoil which the holes intruded, it would otherwise have been taken as belonging to phase II.

The postholes, stake-holes and patch of chalk can be interpreted as contemporary on the basis of parsimony, but in the absence of pattern or distinctive finds their function cannot be determined. A flimsy early shelter is a possibility, but there was no hearth which could be associated with certainty - unless it remained unexcavated beneath a baulk.

Early period

Phase II:

Two fireplaces are placed in this phase only because it was unclear which the earlier. The size of the house makes it most unlikely that they were contemporary; and as a general principle systems evolve from simple to complex. For these reasons the firepit is almost certainly older than the more formal hearth (which on intuitive grounds should belong to the next phase). The length of time over which either was in use is also unclear, nor could the distinct accumulations of occupation debris proper to each be discerned.

An egg-shaped shallow fire-pit [754], 0.8m long, was filled with ash (755). It overlay posthole [763].

A hearth [726] 0.8m wide and at least 1.5m long (partly obscured by the baulk) composed of slightly overlapping tiles set in mortar (727). It was placed roughly in the middle of the room. Variations in the alignment of the tiles and in the colour of the mortar indicated that it had not been built as one but that it was extended east, south and west and also that the middle was renewed; which is suggestive of a long period of continuous use. The identification as a hearth was confirmed both by the signs of burning which it bore and by the composition of the associated occupation layer (721).

An irregular patch of broken tiles [744] measuring 1.0m x 0.4m extended between the hearth [726] and the western limit of excavation.

A similar, but less clearly defined area of clay with fewer tiles (745) lay south of the hearth.

A very dark brown, almost black, layer of occupational debris (721) and (746), 0.11m thick, extended at least 3.5m x 2.0m and contained charcoal, bone and rubble. It immediately overlay floor (745). The thickness and extent of this layer also suggest the long persistence of [726] as the domestic focus.

Phase III:

Early clay patches

A wall [806] of flint and mortar, 3.6m long and 0.5m wide set 0.3m into the original ground. It ran parallel with the street and was evidently the back wall of the earliest substantial dwelling on tenement 51.

No corresponding north wall was observed, but the lowest courses [810] of the southern boundary wall (visible in the side of the trench) were of a construction, depth and alignment to suggest association. A gap of 1.0m between the two walls may be the earliest indication of the passage which was recorded on the OS map of 1880.

Irregular patches of clay (685), (705) and (745) only 0.02-0.03m thick were bounded by [806] on the east side and must represent the floor of this structure. The southern edge of (705) also respects the line of the documented passageway, but the possibility of erosion cannot be overlooked.

Occupation debris or midden comprising a dark organic layer with bone, potsherds, charcoal, and lenses of clay, mortar, etc, was found in discontinuous patches but given a single context number (787).

The early occupants seem to have allowed rubbish to accumulate on the floor for a time but not indefinitely. Every now and then patches of clay were put down, over the worst areas perhaps. The laying of an entire new floor marked the transition to the next phase, but this was not accompanied by a concomitant improvement in cleanliness.

There is a conflict in these early phases between the architectural implications of two of the archaeological features: i.e. the central hearth and the cuts and deposits interpreted as a passageway. While the first implies a single storey building, the second seems to imply an

upper floor. But the passage may have been preceded by a simple path at the side of the house, and the differences in the patterns of erosion and deposition too subtle to detect.

Phase IV:

First chalk and mortar floor

A new house of some substance is evidenced by the rebuilding of the eastern wall [300]. A new course of walling relating to this phase was also observed in the southern face of the trench. These walls were made of flints set in mortar just as the earlier ones were, but are characterised by a greater use of greenstone slabs - presumably as post pads. The floor was more solidly laid and the hearth more carefully constructed than hitherto.

A wall [300] of flint and mortar marked the east or back of the building. It immediately overlies wall [806] and was of the same dimensions. There was a gap for the passageway of 0.7m between the end of [300] and the southern wall [810] observed in the baulk.

Crushed chalk (699) was the main component of the associated floor which extended from the north side of the tenement to feature [710] in the position of the presumed wall of the passageway. In the east of the room the floor was laid in sandy mortar (299) rather than chalk. Since the line of distinction runs parallel with the east wall and is marked by three sandstone blocks some sort of internal partition or area of separate function is indicated. In the south-west corner - where there was likely to be a door to the street or passage - the chalk was worn and patched with sandy mortar (676).

The associated hearth [701] was rectangular in shape and 0.7m wide but its length was not determined because of incomplete excavation. It was composed of a single layer of broken roof tiles and mortar laid directly on the chalk floor (699) with a second layer (722) along the southern edge making a slightly raised back. It was placed roughly in the middle of the room.

Phase V:

A new hearth [526] was built immediately over [701] of the same dimensions and orientation and of similar style - a bed of horizontal tiles with a raised back, two tiles high, on the south side. This rebuilding of the hearth had clearly been necessitated by the accumulation of occupation debris to the height of the earlier hearth. A floor (616) of clay embedded with tiles and bovine metapodials was laid to the north and east of the hearth. The fact that the bones did not appear crushed or worn may attest to the supposed rapid accumulation of domestic rubbish underfoot. The bovine element may be connected with the horn core pits found in the back of this tenement: there is no certain proof of this though.

A large patch of clay (666) measuring 2.2m x 1.8m lay south and west of the hearth. It was worn away on the western side where one would expect a door to the street to be located, and delimited by linear feature [710] on the south side.

Sandy mortar (640) covers the extent of the supposed passageway at approximately the same height as (666) from which it is separated by [710]. The contemporaneity of this particular layer is somewhat conjectural, since the passageway need not have been level with the living area.

The linear feature [710] 0.1 to 0.2m wide running parallel with the south wall of the building, and taken to represent the wall of the passage contained a loose fill of soft dark earth, such as might result from the decay or removal of a partition.

The south face of the trench showed a rebuilding of the south wall of the dwelling when the floor levels were at about this height. As a result of modern disturbances and the limits of excavation the presence of new walls on the other sides was not detectable.

Phase VI:

This phase follows some redesigning of the house. After a new floor had been laid the new hearth was built more solidly than before and in a different place - against the south wall instead of in the middle of the room.

The new floor (466) was of rubble and sandy mortar.

The hearth [190], 0.9m wide and at least 1.4m long, was built against the south wall rather than in the middle of the room. This hearth was more substantial than its predecessor being composed mainly of roof tiles set in mortar at an angle of 45°. The back was a few centimetres higher than the base and was made of tiles laid horizontally. The front and sides were finished off with a facing of vertical tiles.

A wall foundation [180], 0.08-0.15m wide ran E-W and divided the floor layers into northern and southern parts. It was composed of flints and pieces of sandstone set in mortar (184), and directly overlies the very similar feature [710]. On the 1880 OS map a wall is marked in this position delimiting a passage from the street to the back-lands.

Occupation debris built up around the hearth and across the floor, and was occasionally overlaid with a patch of clay.

Whereas earlier occupation layers contained potsherds datable only to any time in the thirteenth

or fourteenth centuries, this phase yielded none. Nor did it contain datable non-ceramic material. Thus a fifteenth to sixteenth century date for this phase is fitting circumstantially but unproven.

A chalk floor (010) was eventually laid over the occupation debris and around the hearth. This was soon overlain in turn by a wooden floor as evidenced by the small amount of domestic rubbish which accumulated and the quite visible lines of the joists running parallel through the chalk.

Here the truly archaeological record of the front house ceases. Naish's map of 1751 (when the house was becoming "ruinated") shows a single dwelling at the street front and an empty garden behind. No path is marked - so a two-storey building with a passageway might have been standing by then. But more probably the map was not meant to be read to such a degree of detail. The 1880 OS map shows the garden filled with a row of (archaeologically unattested) houses and a covered passageway at the front. The archaeological record resumes in a sense with the foundations of the twentieth century brick building.

Multi-phase:

Only one well was noted in No. 51. It was poorly related stratigraphically to other features, yet common sense says that it ought to date from the earliest times and that it is unlikely to have become redundant until after the reticulation of the water supply.

The well [216] of dressed chalk blocks, had an external diameter of 0.8m and an internal diameter of 0.50m. The pit in which had been built measured 1.4m by 1.2m. The backfill (601) between the well structure and the sides of the pit comprised a dark brown sticky clay with occasional gravel, potsherds and fragments of tile. The topmost 0.1m of (601) was excavated as context (417) but was not a distinct deposit. An area of tiles (253) measuring 1.9 x 1.6m immediately around the well may have been deliberately laid rather than a result of the 19th century demolition.

Modern - post-1797?:

In 1797 a Richard Dawkins paid £121 for a 40 year lease of a property which was described as a "tenement and garden (now divided into five)". The map of 1880 shows six square buildings on No. 51, which must be the same sub-divisions. These dwellings were, however, without foundations of sufficient substance to be noticed by the archaeologists, and were therefore probably wooden structures - erected perhaps by William Brooks, carpenter, the previous lessee.

The Back-lands

Foundation/early period

In the back-lands the earliest identified feature was a gully [801] cut into the natural soil. It ran roughly parallel with the property boundary and was been presumed to have drained into the Town Ditch and to have been dug at the same time. Unfortunately the estimated point of junction lay beyond the limits of safe and speedy excavation. It seems to have begun in the middle of the plot where it was destroyed by a later building. By the time when the chalk

block structure was constructed in the backlands this gully had almost entirely filled up with garden soil within which was a long, thin, narrow layer of broken chalk (612). It was impossible to discern whether this chalk was a deliberate deposit or a natural accretion. The lack of datable artefacts from the fill means that it is impossible to be sure when the backland sequence begins.

The gully was at least 15m long, about 1m wide and of uncertain depth. A black organic deposit (800) and (805), 0.15m deep, in the bottom may be the remains of household slops. A less organic upper fill (799) and (804) were taken to be a result natural filling during disuse.

A sequence of features in the backlands could not be securely be related to the front of the house and to other features in the backlands and it is possible that the back-lands sequence almost entirely post-dates the sequence at the front of the house, where the occupational deposits must have ceased with the introduction of wooden floors.

An early building in the middle of the back-lands of 51 was indicated by a number of walls which were only partially examined.

The west wall [795] was 0.5m thick and built of undressed chalk blocks in mortar. It was aligned N-S, was visible for only 0.6m north of the southern limit of excavation and appeared to be truncated by later activity. Another 1.0m of wall [518] on the same alignment and of the same form of construction was taken to be part of the same feature.

The north wall [614] was likewise 0.5m thick and built of chalk blocks set in mortar, but was topped off with a row of tiles set diagonally which looked incongruous and may derive from a later phase. It ran parallel and contiguous with the boundary wall. Which of these two walls was earlier was not clear.

The east wall [692] was also 0.5m thick and built of undressed chalk blocks in mortar. Its extent was not determined.

The south wall was entirely conjectural and presumed to lie beyond the southern limit of excavation.

Another building may have been located immediately east of [692] at this time, but it was not completely excavated and seems to have been largely obliterated by the large disturbance [812].

A wall (392) of flint and mortar, 1.73m long and 0.45m wide. It ran immediately alongside [300] and slightly overlay [806].

A patch of sandy mortar (397), 0.7m x 0.4m, which appears in photographs as a related floor.

A layer of clay and charcoal (418) stretched east about 4m from (392), but was not well recorded. It may be the floor and occupation layer(s), but it may instead be a part of the widespread sooty layer (590)/(691).

The position of well [216] and the failure to observe a north, south or east wall also argue for the interpretation of this part of the site as a courtyard. In which case wall (392) must be seen as a second rebuilding of the east wall of the front structure.

Structure 592:

A small cellar or pit with disproportionately thick walls stood in the back-lands against, but not incorporating, the boundary wall with 49 on the north side. The earlier walls [614] and [692] were incorporated on the north and east sides, new walls built on the south and west.

The north wall was provided by the continued use of [614], part of an earlier structure of which very little was excavated.

The east wall [731] lay immediately west of [692], was 0.45m thick, 0.5m deep, and was composed of roughly dressed chalk blocks and mortar.

The west and south walls [729] were 0.8m thick and otherwise of the same depth and construction as [731]. They were built as one, but not keyed in with the north and east walls to which they were a later addition.

Within the confines of this structure the original soil had been removed and all the layers were of cultural derivation. Only the deepest could be considered to relate to the form or function of the structure. There was no floor comparable in immensity with the walls.

A thin, 0.02m, layer of organic sandy clay (748) lay in the bottom immediately above the natural gravel at the level of the base of the walls. This may represent the floor or may have derived from the former function of the pit, or even result from in-filling on disuse.

Soft, crumbly mortar (747) filled much of the pit. Only 0.05m deep on the west side it rose to 0.3m deep on the east. It is unlikely therefore to be a floor which has sub-sided - deliberate tipping is more likely.

At this point is the somewhat arbitrary division between the Early and the Middle period contexts with evidence of a fire- related event of unknown duration, purpose or cause.

A thick (up to 0.25m) deposit of soot and poorly fired clay. This layer is identifiable with the widespread layer (590) encountered immediately east of this structure and throughout the back-lands. Evidently the pit or cellar was open when this material was being produced and the source was probably nearby.

Layer (590) measured at least 15m x 8m and was encountered throughout the back-lands of both tenements 49 and 51. There was some indication that it continued into 47 also but, this was not determined with certainty. It was of a very distinctive composition - black and sooty with abundant flat or amorphous fragments of poorly fired clay. The upper and lower boundaries of the layer were clear. It reached a maximum thickness of 0.30m immediately to the east of structure [516], the small back room or cellar of No. 51. Within the structure the equivalent layer was of similar thickness but was located at a lower depth, a condition such as might result from the decomposition of an underlying soluble or biodegradable layer. A non-contiguous layer (628) of identical composition to (590/691), of the same thickness and at the same depth, was located within the back room of tenement 49.

The ovens or kilns in the back of 49 suggest that this material is the waste from a backyard industry. The lack of charred wood, highly fired tile, or any other by-products of intense combustion have been taken to mean that an early conflagration is not indicated.

The walls were then changed to function as the foundation of a small room [516].

The east wall [731] was partly rebuilt in the same style - perhaps re-using the original building material.

The fill of the pit was levelled off with a layer of grey grit up to 0.15m deep.

A clay floor (690) 0.07m thick was laid.

Three courses of flints in mortar (517), (592) were laid on the chalk blocks.

An L-shaped hearth [574] of tiles set vertically in mortar was built in the south-east corner of the structure. Since some of the tiles were on a base of mortar (644), some on chalk (645) and some on clay, the hearth must have been rebuilt and extended.

This dwelling would have been in use either at approximately the same time as that in the extreme south-east corner of the site or later. Both have floors which are cut through by horn core pits, but in this case there seems not to have been a build-up of garden soil over the floor before the pit was dug.

Middle or Late Period

In the extreme south-east of the site were indications of the corner of a building [555] of unknown dimensions but which must have been hard against the Town Ditch.

The north wall [558] of this structure is continuous with the boundary wall of the tenement. It was built primarily of flints in mortar (559), sandstone blocks were also incorporated. It was 0.4m thick and 2.5m were visible.

The west wall [556] ran south from [558] at an angle greater than 90°. It was 0.35m thick and 1.5m were visible. Also of flint and mortar, but without sandstone blocks.

The floor consisted of a layer of crumbly pale yellow mortar (792) 0.05-0.10m thick extending from the walls.

The hearth [560] was set against the western wall and extended beyond the southern limit of excavation. It was 0.6m wide and built of tiles in mortar set vertically and surrounded by flints.

Eventual abandonment is indicated by the partial demolition of hearth [560] and the

accumulation of a layer of garden soil (788) over floor (792) before the horn core pit [790] was dug inside the building.

Horn Core Phase (1628 - 16???)

Four pits were assigned to this phase. No simple stratigraphic relationship was demonstrable among them: but because they had all been filled with randomly aligned horn cores they were placed together on the grounds of their similarity. The presumption is that they result from the same activity or industrial process and that this was practised continuously over an unknown period of time rather than sporadically. It is also presumed that the pits were not part of the process, but were dug merely to bury the cores, that the cores are waste products, and that it was the laminar outer part of the horns which was utilised. However, no associated artefacts were found which could define the process more closely.

A sub-rectangular pit [303] also numbered [682] 1.3m x 0.7m with vertical sides 0.3m deep (but truncated) had been cut within the confines of the front house. It was filled with two distinct layers (298) and (414) or (683) of closely packed horn cores with occasional potsherds. The late disturbance [812] had obliterated the layer from which this feature had been cut, but its proximity to and alignment with wall (300) strongly suggest that it had been dug at the time when the wall was defining activity areas. A sherd of Verwood pottery came from layer (298).

A squarish pit [388] 0.9m x 0.2m. Only 0.2m deep it may well have been deeper if buried wall (516) had not been encountered. The horn cores were closely packed and another sherd of Verwood pottery was included among them.

A pit [749] of irregular outline, or else several intersecting pits dug within the backfilled earlier cellar or store-room [592]. In this fill (655) the cores were less densely packed.

A pit [790] of unknown dimensions only partially revealed within structure [555] in the extreme south-east corner of the excavated area. The fill (791) was also less densely packed with horn cores than were those of the pits closer to the street. This pit was dug after structure [555] had become disused and 0.1m of garden soil had accumulated on the floor.

The sherds of Verwood pottery (i.e. late fifteenth century) allows this phase to be reasonably identified with the years following 1628 when John Leminge, a skinner, is mentioned in the land transfer documents.

c.1650 - 1675

A low (0.55m), but substantial feature had been sunk into the ground near to the south-east corner of the site. It comprised two side walls with four cross members which together formed three square compartments measuring 1.5m x 1.5m. It was immediately west of [555], adjacent to the plot boundary and only slightly off the modern alignment. It was not clear in the stratigraphy which of the buildings was first, but a kink in the end of one wall made it look as though it had been squeezed in after [555].

The two parallel walls, [492] and [496], were 1.5m apart and built of chalk blocks, (493) and (497), which had been squared on the inner face but not on the outer and which varied in size from about 0.1m x 0.1m to 0.3m x 0.2m. They were jointed with very little white mortar. [492] was 4.7m long, 0.3m thick and 0.55m high; [496] was 5.3m long and also 0.3m thick and 0.55m high. It inclined slightly inward at the eastern end.

The tops of these walls were regular and even, strongly suggesting that this was their original height and that they had suffered no demolition. Since the walls were not of equal length it is clear that the three squares were a later adaptation and not the original design. This conclusion is put beyond doubt by two lines of evidence. (1) Wooden planks (741) in the bottom of the feature were overlain by the cross-members and (2) the western end of [492] had been extended to bring it in line with [496]. This extension was not of dressed chalk but of less costly construction - (713) was a course of flints and chalk pieces overlain by both intact and broken tiles, the whole set in mortar and rising to a height of 0.2m. (702) was a single course of flattish chalk pieces. (709) comprised several courses of both broken and complete tiles set in mortar which brought the height of the extension to 0.5m or a little less than that of the main

walls.

As originally built a layer of gravel (794) of between 0.02m and 0.05m thick had been laid as a bedding for the wooden floor (741). These planks covered all of the bottom of the feature and although being of various lengths were all 0.15m wide and 0.02m thick. They fitted together evenly.

The cross-members were numbered [494], [498], [581] and [583]. They were all made primarily of dressed chalk blocks, the end ones to the same height and thickness as the main walls, the two inner ones were a little less substantial.

Immediately above the planks a 0.05m layer (720) of mortary earth was found in the bottom of each compartment.

Among the documents relating to the site we learn that a lease held by Thomas Spencer, a felt-maker, lapsed in 1675. If these tanks or vats were installed by him for fulling, then it is surprising that they did not contain substantial quantities of fullers' earth or wool. There is however no other feature on the site which is more easily identified with felt making, nor is there a more obvious interpretation of this very substantial feature.

1680-1760

The archaeological sequence in the back-lands fades out with the development of garden soil over the remains of the earlier features.

1760

A 0.1m layer (520) of chalk, broken tile, ash and charcoal in building [516] indicates that it was pulled or burned down. This layer is tentatively identified with the "ruinated" condition of a property mentioned in 1760.

Mortar (thickness not recorded) was laid over the demolition debris, the pit, the hearth, the south and west walls of the small room [516], and beyond the southern limit of excavation. This is tentatively identifiable with the repairs which were to be made by Joseph Maton during his occupancy of 1760-1766.

The archaeological sequence of the backlands effectively finishes with the development of the garden soil.

49 Brown Street

On this tenement there stood a timber framed building which is described in Volume 1 of the Salisbury listings of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments as of 16th century construction with a 19th century wing at the rear.

The ground floor of the 16th century building comprised a living area (192) and a passageway (036) from the street through to the backlands. Numerous service trenches had been cut through this passageway rendering it worthless for archaeological purposes and excavation was soon abandoned in this area. The western half - or street side - of 192 was excavated to natural. The deposits beneath the south-east corner of the 19th century wing were partly excavated, but not down natural.

FRONT ROOM

Features predating the listed building:

There were no postholes and hearths at the earliest levels of this tenement, instead a substantial

structure is implied by two (perhaps three) walls and a floor laid directly on the original ground surface.

The north wall [247] of the front room was of flint and mortar, 0.7m high, varied in width from 0.2m to 0.35m and included one pair of greenstone blocks 1.5m from the western l.o.e. and another at 5.0m. No foundation trench was visible on the south of this wall - and the north side was not excavated.

A wall (069) 0.3m thick probably also of flint and mortar with some greenstone blocks, runs parallel with and is the same length as [247] at a distance of 1.3m north of it. There was no construction trench on the north side - the south side was not excavated. The space between this wall and [247] was the passageway through the 16th century building, so it seems to date from the earliest period.

The south wall is not attested at this phase and it is presumed to have been rebuilt later as wall [100].

A floor (759) of crushed chalk heavily impregnated with ash, grit and general occupation debris butted the north wall [247], on the south side it was cut by foundation trench [756].

The floor was renewed once before the house was rebuilt.

An overlying chalk floor (760) and (751) also extended from wall [247] to cut [756] and was built up against the hearth.

The 16th century building:

The flint and mortar wall [247] was apparently retained on the north side without modification.

A foundation trench [756] for wall [100] was cut through the earlier layers. This was the only rebuild at any time on the street front which allows positive identification with this building phase.

A flint and mortar wall [100] incorporating two greenstone blocks 3.2m apart. This wall is 0.3m thick, 0.7m deep, and parallel with wall [247], but has no foundation trench. This paradox can be resolved if wall [100] was rebuilt when the 16th century building was erected and [247] was not.

A compact yellow-brown clay floor (207), 0.06m to 0.08m thick, extended from wall to wall and immediately overlay the construction trench.

A rectangular hearth [681] measured 2.0m long by 0.8m. It was composed primarily of hand made bricks with the exception that the eastern end was of flint nodules. The base was of bedded whole and half bricks. It had been built against wall [247] and probably - though not certainly upon floor (207). Two Georgian coins from the sooty fill - not the fabric - of this feature indicate that the hearth was used for 200 years.

A dark grey clay (200) with charcoal, chalk and grit inclusions can be taken to be the first occupation debris trodden into the surface of the new floor.

Back Room

Early-Middle Period:

Unlike tenement no. 51 considerable archaeological deposits remained *in situ* behind the front room, but this part of the house was not excavated systematically, nor down to natural. However the stratigraphy in the side of a back-filled well located beneath the back wall of the "nineteenth century wing" showed that the earliest substantial cultural layer beyond the house was a floor of tiles set on edge rather than flat. This layer was cut by a well [664] which must have been dug at the same time as a new floor was laid.

Middle Period:

The new floor (808) of square tiles (each 0.25m x 0.25m) of the same type as those constituting hearth [570] in tenement 51. Only eight and three half tiles were exposed revealing an area of three and a half tiles by seven and a half. Some tiles were missing and the floor undoubtedly continued beneath the unexcavated layers. Red clay rather than mortar had been used as a setting. At the time when this floor was already missing a few tiles (i.e. before it went out of use and was overlaid by another layer) an event occurred which left a black ring (834) 1.0m in diameter. A similar feature [547] alongside is easier to interpret. It is also circular, about 1m in diameter, and clearly the cast of the bottom of a barrel in which a number of the staves can be discerned.

A layer of demolition debris, or possibly a new floor in itself, overlay (808). It was composed of at least four contexts: (563), (566), (588) and (631) which are all made up of clay, sand, mortar and broken tile in varying but similar proportions and was continuous with the fill (663) of the well. It is (588) which bears the imprint [547] of the barrel. Layer (631) was immediately overlain by one of the small kiln structures [620] which suggests that the ground may have been levelled or consolidated for that purpose.

Backlands

Three low structures in the back-lands of 49 were of a form suggestive of ovens or kilns. They were all keyhole shaped and built of brick, but only one or two courses high and with no indication of the construction of their upper parts - or whether they ever had any. Many of the associated and nearby layers contained abundant soot, but other products of burning, e.g. charcoal, ash, pottery or burnt bone, were almost entirely absent. A widespread sooty layer with frequent inclusions of badly fired clay (590) could not be positively related stratigraphically with these features.

Kiln [635] was 2m long, 1.2m in diameter and two bricks high. The base was of bedded bricks, the second course was laid radially. The stoke-hole faced south-east and was 0.6m long by 0.4m wide, the chamber was 0.9m in diameter.

Kiln [622] was built in the same way as [635], but was slightly smaller measuring 1.2m long, 0.9m wide and having an internal diameter of 0.6m. The stoke-hole faced east.

Kiln [620] was located across the tenement boundary and had been truncated by the 19th century building in 51, but was clearly recognisable as another example since it had been built in the same way as the other two. The surviving part measured 1.0m by 0.5m and had an internal diameter of 0.7m. The stoke-hole faced north and measured 0.7 x 0.5m. During excavation it was interpreted as a different feature - number [568].

A floor of brown clay (567) extended north from the tenement boundary wall, underlay [620] and butted [568]. The use and survival of this material for a floor forces the conclusion that this "backyard" industry must have been under cover.

The stratification around the kilns did not contain sufficient detail to determine whether they had been in use at the same time or successively. Nor were there artefacts of a type or quantity to indicate a function. The discovery on the site of a device for holding clay pipes during firing suggested the making of pipes as the purpose of the kilns. This possibility must however be discounted because of the complete absence of pipe fragments, pipe moulds or white clay from the associated layers.

Late -Modern Period:

Immediately overlying sooty layer (590) and located between the kilns and the eastern limit of excavation in the back-lands of 49 were some patches of floor and short lengths of wall. These were not of any obvious function and generally unremarkable except for being identifiable on the 1880 OS map.

A wall [626] 2.0m long, 0.2m wide and less than 0.2m deep composed of flints and diagonally set tiles. It extended north at 90° to the boundary wall, but was not bonded to it.

A chalk floor (826) extending from [626] and the boundary wall [120] beyond the eastern limit of excavation.

A wall [824] parallel with and of almost identical dimensions and construction to [626].

An L-shaped patch of flint and mortar 2.0m x 1.3m extending beyond the eastern limit of excavation.

A wall [129] adjacent to the boundary wall joining [824] to [626] also of flint tile and mortar and with a greensand block at each corner. The 1880 map shows a space between [824] and [626] so this may be a threshold and not the base of a wall or building.

As with the identical layer (691) in 51 the sooty layer (590) showed no evidence of intense heat and for that reason cannot be identified with "the second malthouse which had been burnt down by fire long since " in 1879.

47 Brown Street

Only the southern part of this property lay within the area of excavation, and that which did had been severely disturbed by modern service trenches. Therefore there is no archaeological record of the history of this tenement beyond the observation that here also at the street front were walls of flint and mortar, and floors of chalk and clay interspersed with occupation layers. In depth they were similar to the layers in 49 and 51. Regarding the back-lands there is insufficient evidence for any conclusions whatsoever.



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