

Excavations at Parham House, Storrington, Nr Pulborough, West Sussex:

An interim report on the July 2009 excavations



Members of WAS excavating Trench L

Worthing Archaeological Society
July 2009

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
Summary	3
The Results	4
Test Pit 1.....	4
Test Pit 2.....	4
Test Pit 3.....	5
Test Pit 4.....	5
Test Pit 5.....	5
Test Pit 6.....	6
Test Pit 7.....	6
Test Pit 8.....	6
Test Pit 9.....	6
Test Pit 10.....	6
Test Pit 11.....	6
Test Pit 12.....	6
Test Pit 13.....	6
Test Pit 14.....	6
Test Pits 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22 & 22	7
Test Pit 17.....	7
Test Pit 23.....	7
Test Pit 24.....	7
The Finds	8
Interpretation	8
Acknowledgements	8
Appendix A	9
Preliminary Assessment of Finds PHP.09 May Excavation by Gill Turner	9
Pottery	9
Glass	10
Metal.....	10
Worked Stone.....	10
Clay Pipe	10
Brick and Tile.....	10
Worked Flint	10

Summary

The excavations in May 2009 established the general area of the parsonage demolished in the 1730s and the existence of a well made track way leading to the east gate of the graveyard. A yard surface possibly belonging to the Parsonage was uncovered, and this showed a marked correlation with the anomaly revealed on the resistivity survey conducted in 2007. It also coincided with the area demarked Glebe Land on the 1848 map. Over the weekend of 11th/12th July, 25 members of Worthing Archaeological Society were involved in further excavations to try to establish more closely the southern and eastern limits of the area occupied by the Parsonage. To this end it was planned to dig 22 test pits by hand (see Fig1).

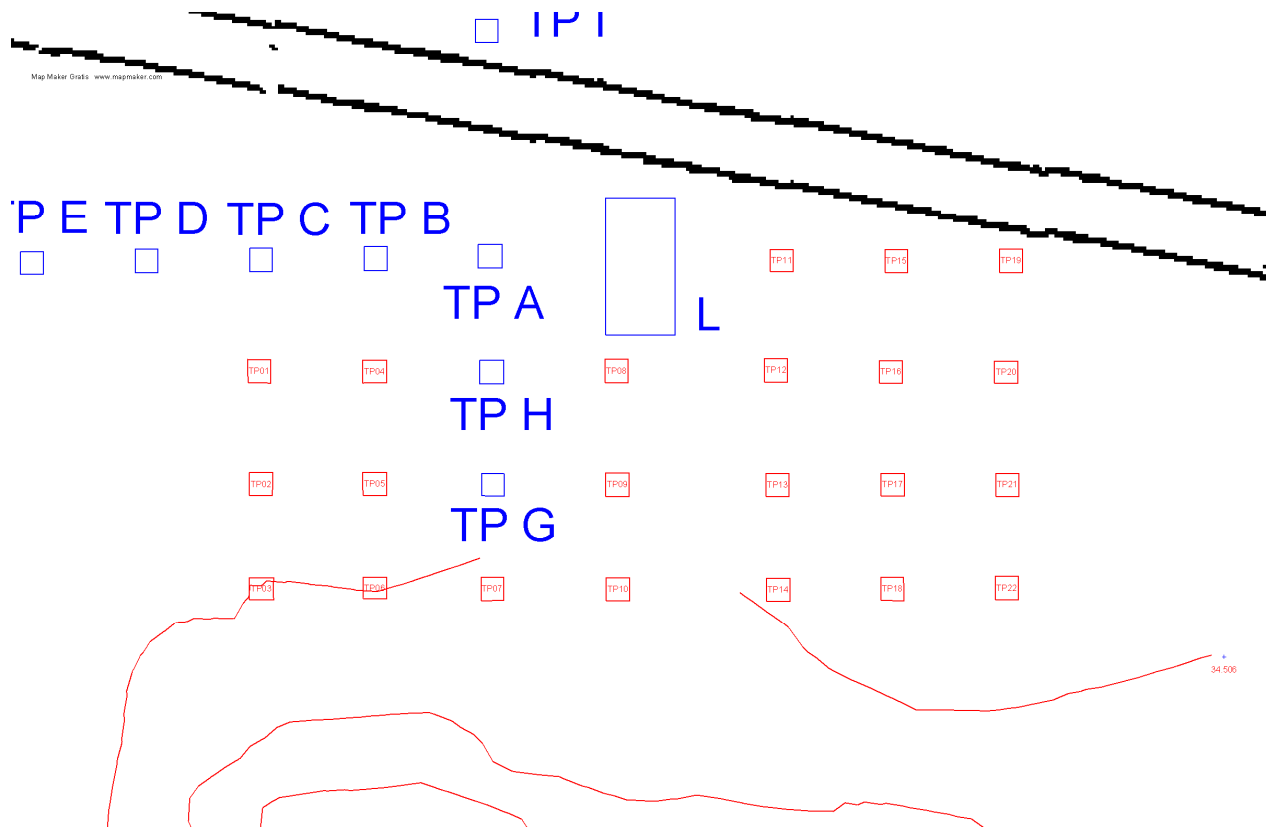


Fig.1 Proposed test pits, July 2009

The Results

Test Pit 1

This revealed disturbed natural ([242] at an unusually shallow depth for the site. The natural sand was in the northwest corner of the pit, and there was a distinct boundary between it and the adjacent deposit ([243]). It was therefore decided to extend the test pit into a 2mx 2m trench, trench M. This was dug to a depth of 45cm and revealed a spread of large flint pebbles (some of which appeared to have been worked, i.e. roughly dressed), closely packed in a sandy matrix (see Fig.2). The pebbles extended south and east of the natural, covering an area of 1.6m x 1.6m and extending into the western and southern baulks. The rest of the trench showed a deposit, [243], rich in artefacts with much degraded sandstone/mortar.



Fig.2 Trench M, looking towards the southern end, showing the spread of flints.

Test Pit 2

A packed chalk surface covered the area of the test pit at a depth of 21cm. Half of this was excavated to a depth of 35cm (see Fig. 3) to give a section that showed that the chalk blocks were crushed to form a cohesive unit that varied from 9 to 14cm thick (context [225], see Figs. 4 & 5). Beneath this was further subsoil that contained large pieces of CBM and bone.

Test Pit 3

Test Pit 3 uncovered a compacted sandstone surface ([230]) around the southern and western sides. Level with this was a deposit ([231]) with many artefacts including much metalwork and glass. It appeared that [230] had been cut into and [231] deposited as a fill, however no clear cut was identified, see Fig.6.



Fig.3. TP.02 looking towards the northern face



Fig.4. TP.02 Section

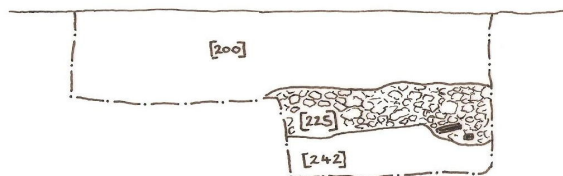


Fig.5. TP.02 Section

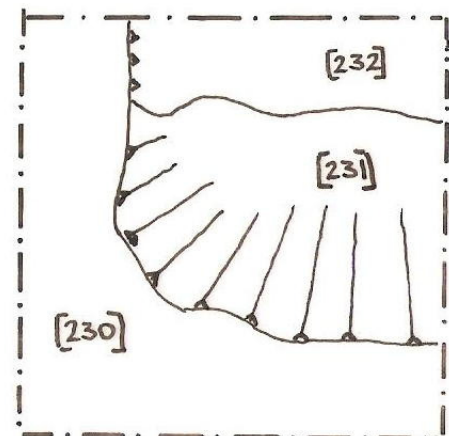


Fig.6. TP.03 Plan

Test Pit 4

This Test Pit showed a scatter of chalk and sandstone blocks at a depth of 13cm, though these did not appear to form a discrete deposit. Disturbed natural was recorded at 26cm depth.

Test Pit 5

This test pit revealed a packed chalk surface at 18cm depth. There were several small, pit-like features in this surface. The most notable (i.e. half way along the eastern edge of the test pit) contained a large piece of wood which appeared to have bark still present. This could be a post-hole; equally it could be a tree throw. At least one aerial photograph shows a line of trees running east-west across the site.

Test Pit 6

This test pit had a chalk surface at a depth of 17cm across its eastern side. It was unclear whether this was a boundary to the chalk surface or if it had been cut by a subsequent feature.

Test Pit 7

Showed a chalk surface at a depth of?

Test Pit 8

Showed a chalk surface covering the whole of the trench at a depth of 26cm (see Fig.7).



Fig.7 Test Pit 8 showing the chalk surface.

Test Pit 9

Showed a chalk surface covering the whole of the trench at a depth of 34cm

Test Pit 10

Showed soil directly above the natural, at a depth of 41cm.

Test Pit 11

The soil here was unusually hard and contained relatively large amounts of CBM. Several large (17-20cm diameter) pieces of clay were recovered. Blocks of chalk were encountered at a depth of 25cm, but we were unable to complete the excavation of this test pit.

Test Pit 12

Showed no features, the natural being reached at a depth of 39cm.

Test Pit 13

A chalk surface covered the whole of the test pit at a depth of 39cm.

Test Pit 14

A chalk surface covered the whole of the test pit at a depth of 42cm.

Test Pits 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22 & 22

Were not excavated.

Test Pit 17

This was excavated to a depth of 89cm. No features were recorded, though there was a change in the subsoil layer (It appeared blacker possibly due to a high ash content) immediately above the disturbed natural.

Test Pit 23

This was opened immediate to the south east of Test Pit 1. However, only the turf was removed before it was expanded to form Trench M.

Test Pit 24

This was dug 1.5m south of Test Pit 9 to try to establish the limit of the chalk surface. It encountered the chalk surface at a depth of 35cm. It was then extended to join Test Pit 10, thus forming **Trench N** (see Fig.8). The chalk surface terminated 6cm north of the northern edge of Test Pit 10 see Fig.9), at a depth of 41cm.



Fig.8. Showing how TP.10 and TP.24 were joined to form Trench N



Fig.9. Showing the termination of the chalk Feature just north of TP.10.

The Finds

Each test pit produced large numbers of finds including CBM, glass, metalwork, bone and pottery. These are currently undergoing analysis, and a fuller report will be published once this is complete. However, during the excavation we noted that the pottery record was consistent with the written record in that there appeared to be no pottery that post dated 1750. Archival research has shown that the Parsonage was demolished in the 1730s. A preliminary assessment of the finds from the May 2009 excavations is included in this report as appendix A.

Interpretation

It would appear that the yard surface of the Parsonage was fairly big, analysis of the test Pit results, coupled with the results from May 2009, suggest that the yard surface covered an area of at least 20m by 16m, and may well extend further. It should now be possible to establish its eastern and southern limits by digging well targeted trenches. The area occupied by the dwelling still eludes us, but is most likely to be to the west of our area of excavations.

Acknowledgements

The excavations would not have been possible without the kind permission of Parham Estate, and we would like to express our gratitude for their support of our work.

We would also like to thank the residents and staff of the House for their interest in the excavations. Special thanks to Lady Emma and Mr Barnard, Richard Pailthorpe and Sue Martin.

We also take this opportunity to thank Reverend David Farrant for allowing access to the church throughout the duration of the excavation.

Appendix A

Preliminary Assessment of Finds PHP.09 May Excavation by Gill Turner

Pottery

The pottery assemblage includes very few diagnostic sherds but there are one or two rims, bases and handles suggesting Medieval jugs and cooking pots and Post-Medieval stoneware jugs, earthenware bowls and large plates. The majority of the sherds are small and abraded.

The fabrics include flint and chalk tempered hand built cooking pots from the 12th century, coarse sandy wheel turned pots from the 13th and 14th, including grey/black wares with white decoration. and later, hard-fired red sandy wares from the 15th to early 16th.

The fine sandy wares are also present from the 13th-15th centuries including green glazed white/pale orange fabrics likely to be West Sussex ware and darker green glazed fine grey fabrics. Both would indicate jugs or jars.

There are a number of small fine white/cream sherds with bright green glaze identified as Tudor Green or Farnham/Border ware. The forms would have been cups or small jugs dating to Late Medieval and continuing into the early 16th century.

The Post-Medieval pottery (16th and 17th century) includes brown glazed earthenware with a wide range of forms including jugs, pots, jars and bowls.

There are also a small number of sherds with a fine sandy reddish fabric with a dark brown/black glaze. These may well be from 'Cistercian Ware' tygs (multiple handled cups) dating to the late 16th to early 17th century.

A few sherds of imported Stoneware from the Rhineland have been recovered probably from Frechen. These would have been from bearded jugs known as 'Bartmann' (formerly Bellarmine). These date from 1550 to around 1700. There is also one tiny rim sherd from a slightly later light grey stoneware jug from Westerwald with cobalt blue decoration and this dates from 1680 to 1720.

There is one sherd of slipware, a fine buff coloured fabric with a yellow glaze that could be Midlands Yellow Ware c. 1650 to 1750. This sherd has a number of holes that may indicate a use in the kitchen or dairy.

Finally there are 2 very small non diagnostic sherds of white tin-glazed ware with a soft, fine buff coloured fabric. There is no indication of decoration but they could be either Dutch or English tin glazed ware and date from 1550-1750.

There is no evidence of Cream Ware c. 1761 or later pottery.

Glass

All the glass shows evidence of corrosion. There are a number of dark green base sherds from 17th and early 18th century globular wine bottles as well as a few sherds of very thin pale green vessel glass. There is also evidence of window glass. A number of pieces of glass slag were found that may indicate glass manufacture.

Metal

The majority of the finds consist of iron nails. The small copper alloy bell is now likely to be post 1750 and the iron scissors/candle trimmers cannot be positively identified. There is an amount of 'drip' from molten lead.

Worked Stone

Worked Stone has been found that may be Medieval but likely to have been redeposited from the excavation of the Ha-ha.

Clay Pipe

Only one complete bowl was found and this has been provisionally dated to 1620-40.

Brick and Tile

One glazed Late Medieval floor tile was found. The majority of the brick and tile is non diagnostic but there are one or two peg tiles and one diagnostic brick that conforms to the size of a mid 15th century brick, commonly known as a 'Tudor' brick.

Worked Flint

There is a small flint assemblage that includes tools and debitage and would seem to be Late Mesolithic. The tools are burins or piercers and retouched blades and flakes. The debitage includes broken blades and bladelets, flakes, core fragments and a burin spall.