ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON PARKSIDE, COVENTRY, IN 2010

A tale (possibly) of John Garton, Pinner, and his neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s

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Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 2005
MAY 2020

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SUMMARY *Stuart Palmer MCIfA*

In 2010, Archaeology Warwickshire were commissioned to undertake an excavation on the site proposed for a new church on Parkside, Coventry. The site lay between the medieval city wall and the road to London and previous evaluation had suggested that significant medieval remains could be present despite the street frontage having been removed for road widening in the early 20th century.

The excavations recovered evidence for a series of building plots, probably set out in the 13th century but not developed until the 14th century. In the 15th century the plots of two included stone founded timber framed rear wings used as artisanal workshops. These were dilapidated by the 17th century but documents show the frontage was entirely redeveloped c1711, when it became The Three Swans Inn.

Shortly after the post-excavation process was underway it became evident that the requisite funding for full analysis and publication would not be forthcoming. Rather than see it abandoned, Archaeology Warwickshire determined to self-fund dissemination focussing on a few key research themes (Egan 2007; Hunt 2011) which the excavated and documentary data could hope to address. Iain Soden was therefore tasked with 'getting to the nub of what makes this site stand out and what makes it different?'

The report focuses therefore on an early 16th century occupant of the site, a pinner, probably John Garton, his workshop, his diet and the end of his career when the tools of his trade, debris and stock was strewn about his workshop and deliberately dumped in a pit just outside. The pottery he used at table and in his kitchen is barely discernible from that of his immediate predecessors and his successors, but a dearth of popular drinking mugs suggests he may not have been much given to drinking. The presence of chafing dishes suggests he or his neighbours were nevertheless acquainted with fashionable contemporary dining habits. Garton's Coventry was part of an England experiencing great change. He was perhaps one of the city's last medieval inhabitants, on the threshold of a revolution. John Garton's next door neighbour seems to have pursued the trade of a skinner, for a time, lining garments with soft rabbit fur and minniver (squirrel fur possibly from Russia), although this may have been short-lived in the difficult, uncertain economic swell of the 1520s. He was suitably pious at a time when religious observance and both its public and private face was to come under close scrutiny and eventually great change.

1 **INTRODUCTION** *Stuart Palmer MCIfA*

1.1   Careering around Coventry's Ringway St John's, simultaneously mis-reading exit signs and the elastic space between more seasoned commuters, a driver might catch a glimpse of a curving wall of sky-blue glass folding abruptly around what since around 1900 has been the aptly-named Short Street. This diminutive link runs from the historic thoroughfare of Much Park Street, gateway to the City from London, to the adjacent Parkside, aligned along the medieval town wall and ditch for perhaps a hundred metres. The historic Much Park Street frontage is now marked solely by the much-altered, timber-framed former Admiral Lord Rodney pub, now proudly sporting the façade of a popular nightclub.

1.2   Overshadowing the timber-framed pub, the gleaming glass-wall of 'The Welcome Centre' for Christian Life Ministries, completed in 2011, was the impetus for a programme of archaeological exploration whose ambition was to recover traces of medieval Coventry and draw out the lives of Coventrians past. What follows is a distillation of the enormous amount of data meticulously teased from the ground from archaeological contexts that define individual events, and from artefacts and ecofacts, the sign-posts of material culture and economic activity. This archaeological archive was then tested against the historic documents treasured in local archives to ferment a tale (possibly) of John Garton, a pinner, and his neighbour and how they fared in Coventry in the 1520s, against the backdrop of the city wall, a literal stones-throw from the great royal hunting park of Cheylesmore.

1.3   Preluding and indeed concluding our tale is the founding of the above church on Parkside, one of a number emerging to service population influx in the industrially-minded city in the years before and after WWII. Piecemeal acquisitions since the war culminated in their 21st century desire to expand across a number of former and derelict properties. In considering the application (Planning Ref 21449/G) Coventry City Council's then planning archaeologist Chris Patrick identified the site as retaining archaeological potential and required the church to provide further information as to the archaeological significance of the site. Site evaluation by the former Birmingham Archaeology (2010) identified surviving medieval and post-medieval remains worthy of excavation and preservation by record.

A Tale (possibly) of John Graner, Pinner and his neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s
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335
340

7-10 MPS (1970-74)

WHITEFRIARS STREET (2003)

68-70 WHITEFRIARS STREET (2004)

CROWN COURT (1986)

STONE HOUSE (1970-74)

White Friars Lane

TINY TIM'S (2009-10)

120-1 MPS (1997)

WHITEFRIARS LANE (2003)

WHITEFRIARS (1960s ONWARDS)

Much Park Street

122-3 MPS (1970-74)

WL14/CUS14 (2014)

THE GREYHOUND PUBLIC HOUSE (2010)

WHITEFRIAR'S GATEHOUSE

112-122 MPS (2007-10)

St.Johns Ringway

A4053

FORMERLEY MUCH PARK STREET

SITE

NEW GATE BEGUN (1350s)

Short Street

PARKSIDE 1987

MULTIANGULAR TOWER (1640s)

St.Patricks Ringway

PARKSIDE

(Wall present here by 1393)

Paradise Street

London Road: A4114

785
785

● Archaeological fieldwork

- - - Former line of road

Information based upon Historic Towns Atlas VOL 2 (Lobel 1979):

Town wall, none visible

Town ditch, none visible

CHEYLESMORE PARK

0 10 100m

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Fig 1: Parkside, Coventry: Location of excavations 2010

1.4   In 2010 Archaeology Warwickshire (formerly Warwickshire Museum Field Archaeology) were commissioned to undertake an excavation of the site proposed for development, which, on the basis of the evaluation results, had the specific aims of - *recovering as much information as possible on the origins, date, development, phasing, spatial organisation, character, function, status, significance and the nature of social, economic and industrial activities on site*. Indubitably worthy aims such as these are an archaeologist's grist but very often also a discomfiture when not realised.

1.5   The excavations began in March 2010 under the direction of this author (Stuart Palmer). The levels of archaeological preservation on site were such that the field team worked cloaked in a sense of privilege; it didn't even rain that much! The team were regaled from neighbouring residences and provided guided tours for local witnesses: the expectations for an illuminating report were high. After 40 working days it was completed to the satisfaction of the planning authority and the project moved into a post-excavation phase. Artefacts and environmental samples were processed and assessed and analysis proceeded until the point that the client, the church's construction team, collapsed amidst widescale economic recession and hence invoices went unpaid.

1.6   Since it began in earnest in 1991, commercial archaeology has been susceptible to the ebb and flow of economic fortune, to boom and bust and overextending. The practise is for some a luxury, the unnecessary icing on the heritage-cake. Consequently, despite the preliminary assessment of the results clearly demonstrating the high value of the excavated assemblages, the prospect of acquiring a source of funding to complete the works to the level originally hoped for rapidly diminished.

1.7   Faced with such a dilemma, Archaeology Warwickshire determined to find a way to do justice to the archaeological resource which would otherwise remain as a collection of finds boxes, records and plans in store. The ensuing plan brought Iain Soden into the picture to distil the results of the excavation into a presentable report. Since he is a Coventrian and has spent much of his career since 1984 both working in and regularly revisiting many aspects of the city's archaeology, both in the field and in print, the choice of Iain was straightforward.

1.8   Iain's brief was therefore to get to the nub of what makes this site stand out. What makes it different? This, as will be seen, is something which has taxed those who have

been charged with characterising medieval urban archaeology in recent years and establishing where the profession's priorities might lie. Faced with any number of redeveloped medieval frontages, how can a site with no surviving frontage, lacking its (very prominent) town wall boundary also, and with only two out of six plots substantially represented by both buildings, yards and garden, be said to contribute to furthering our understanding of Coventry's history and archaeology?

2 MUCH PARK STREET'S SOUTH SIDE - A HISTORY OF THE ROW

The descent of the land

c1300-1400

2.1 In this early period of the street's development, nothing can be taken for granted and the most to be hoped for is a snapshot of a succession of interests which may sometimes relate the name or interest of a plot and its neighbour or neighbours in the form of an abuttal. It is a period in which the town wall was first constructed, so any property on the south side of Much Park Street ought, in theory have as a rear abuttal, firstly the park of the Earls of Chester, with its ditch, bank with hedge from at least 1237 (the date of the death of the 7th and last independent earl), followed by the Town Wall and its gates from the late fourteenth century.

2.2 In fact the earliest and best reference which details an ideal location just as one might hope for is a charter of 1298 in which William Copstone, a chaplain, (who founded an [archaeologically excavated] chantry in the Benedictine Cathedral) gave to John le Whyteleye, merchant, and his wife Margery, a messuage towards 'le mulnestones' , between land which Geoffrey le Lef once held and that which Simon Russell did, extending from the highway to Sir Robert de Montalt's park (CA: BA/H/8/82/1; cited in Coss 1986, doc no 160, p112). As an adjacent plot 'Le mulnestones' or 'The mill stones' are met with in only one other document, later in 1338, but there too they are related to the Whyteley family who held it, in that case just Margery (presumably as a widow) (Coss 1980 doc 322, p78). The name of the plot, which at that date may have straddled both sides of where the town wall would one day be built, may relate to a field in which millstones were quarried, some millstones left stacked in the street which were a local landmark, or perhaps a shed-load on the corner or could equally be either the name of a tavern or perhaps an urban mill. Perhaps the first of these, back from the frontage is the most likely. A tavern or horse- or foot-mill are more likely to have continued to generate documentary references; a happenstance temporary landmark was less likely. And indeed the stones are never heard of in documents again. While it may be suggested that this property is close to Jordan Well and backed onto the original park boundary (thought to be the Red- or Hyrsum-ditch hereabouts), not only does it lack explicit reference to those features but the Whyteley plot crops up again in 1308 (below) and a clearer descent begins to appear.

2.3   So at least there is a reference to a short row of three premises: the Copstone/Whyteleye messuage and their neighbours Geoffrey Le Lef and Simon Russell at the end of the 13th century. In 1308 the abovementioned Whyteleye messuage crops up again in an abuttal, but possibly on the other side this time when a charter records the passage of a messuage from Joan, widow of John Lewyne to her daughter Margaret (CA: BA/H/8/276/1). This was said to lie between the tenement held by William Weston (son of Richard) and that held by the draper William de Whyteley (son of John). Significantly, it will be seen from the document reference that this is the first occurrence in the excavated row of a document deriving from what would become a Holy Trinity Guild (HTG) holding (CA: BA/H).

2.4   Geoffrey le Lef and William Whyteleye both crop up from around 1280 in the city's Hundred Rolls when they already held property in the immediate area (2 cottages and 1 cottage, respectively) from Geoffrey de Langley of Shortley who held his lands of the (by then Royal) manor of Cheylesmore (Coss 1986, 385).

In summary a row of four (reading west to east) is postulated thus, although which four is unclear:

1298		Formerly Geoffrey le Lef (west)	Wm Copstone to John de Whyteleye and Margery his wife 'le mulnestones adjacent'	Formerly Simon Rusell (east)	BA/H/8/82/1 'Le Mulnestones'
1308	Richard de Weston, Wm de Weston (west)	John Lewyn, Margaret Lewyn	Wm de Whyteleye (east)		BA/H/8/276/1
1338			'le mulnestones' still in Whyteleye family hands		Coss 1980, doc 322, p78

2.5   In 1349 Cheylesmore Park, previously much encroached-upon and barely acknowledged by high-status properties at the city end of Much Park Street which ate into its old boundary, was described as newly-enclosed, or perhaps re-enclosed, a retrenchment of the requirements of park-lore with newly-agreed boundaries (SBT DR10/350). This is presumably its new and final boundary, well south of the administrative line of the so-called Red- or Hyrsum-Ditch, and where within a generation the Town Wall would be built to fossilize the arrangement between city and manor.

2.6　By 1393 the Town Wall hereabouts had indeed been constructed. In the foundation grants to the Holy Trinity Guild is a messuage, occupied by Robert Littleman, with two shops (which were very probably rather ramshackle affairs) either side, and a garden, lying between a tenement sometime John de Keresley's and one belonging to John de Schepeye's chantry, extending from Much Park Street to the Town Wall (CA: BA/B/16/14/5; ah). This house belonged to the Holy Trinity Guild in 1393, and was presumably among the Holy Trinity Guild possessions that passed to the Corporation after the Guilds and Chantries were dissolved in the 1540s.

2.7　Around the second half of the fourteenth century a row of five properties (reading west to east) can be discerned, if only tentatively. Again it is not clear which five, or quite how each relates to the earlier block of four, thus:

		Holy Trinity Guild plot		Benedictine Priory interest		
1343			Nicholas de Baxterley, formerly Henry att Murye, senior			BA/H/8/136/1
1349	Ric de Keresley		Once Jordan Shepey's	Wm Freberne, formerly of Thos son of Nichlas Crompe, Rob Fyssher and Ellis Freberne		BA/B/16/292/17 ?previously misidentified? Cheylesmore Park abuttal
1366			John de Schepey to John de Pappenham			BA/H/8/137/1
1386	Once Ric de Keresley's	John de Toftes and John Pomfret to Robert Littleman	Once Jordan Schepey's			BA/B/16/303/1 (also BA/B/16/292/26 ?previously misidentified - note the abuttals)
1392				Simon (Freberne) holds of the crown as of Cheylesmore Manor		PA468/5/3/59/1 Royal gift of 2 tenements to new HTG
1393	John de Keresley	Robert Littleman (HTG Foundation Endowment) messuage with 2 shops either side	John de Schepey's Chantry land			BA/B/16/14/5 (ah) Town Wall abuttal
1393	HTG foundation endowment of garden behind plots					BA/B/16/14/5 (ah) Town wall abuttal
1411			Vacant plot once owned by Schepey, occupied by John Yate	Widow of Simon Freberne, formerly Ellis Freberne	John Hurley	Coss 2013, 161.5. Town wall abuttal

2.8   When in 1410-11 the Benedictine Cathedral Priory put together its rental/cartulary, its holdings and rents on Much Park Street were included. One property backed onto the Town Wall south of Much Park Street and is seen in Dr Nat Alcock's published street-reconstruction (in Coss and Lancaster Lewis 2013, 38; plan 7 and doc 161.5). It notes a messuage owned by the widow of Simon Freberne (and at least one generation of Frebernes beforehand), flanked by John Hurley on the east and a vacant plot of John Schepey (and his heirs) on the west, the latter held by John Yate, cordwainer. To the east there is a break in ownership and tenancy, while to the west further data is lacking.

2.9   For the period of most of the fifteenth and into the sixteenth centuries we must rely upon a mixture of Holy Trinity Guild rentals, incomplete 1520s censuses and the Coventry Leet Book in a somewhat circular 'argument' to associate use with tenancy of the principal excavated back-plot and its neighbours. It is however, an argument not without merit.

2.10   It is clear that the excavated rear wing of no 95 includes the remains of a pinner's workshop, together with pits containing the waste of the pinning industry nearby.

2.11   For much of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries a succession of pinners, but only ever one at a time, appear in the Coventry Leet Book on Much Park Street, as making contributions to the city's coffers for various purposes, as follows (Dormer Harris, 1907-13):

Date	Dormer Harris (1907-13) page:	Hulton 1999 page:	Name	Occupation given	Named for Much Park St in..
1435	179		John Bailey	Pinner	King's Loan
1444	212		John Ravon	Pinner	King's Loan
1449	251		John Ravon	Pinner	Armoury list
1522		59	John Garton*	Pinner	Muster roll

John Garton occupied one plot, his landlord unrecorded by (possibly unknown to) the enumerator in the city's 1522 muster roll, but was recorded as owning the adjacent plot, tenanted by John Merlor, a weaver. Garton was said at the time to be physically unfit to serve in the militia; (see below).

2.12   It is reasonable to suggest that since only one pinner appears in these lists for Much Park Street at any one time, each was working from (and probably resident at) the principal excavated rear wing of what would become 95 Much Park Street. If privately-

owned, it was probably not at this stage within the purview of the Holy Trinity Guild whose property on this stretch of the street had been noted from 1393. The HTG plot must be one of those adjacent, as will be seen below.

2.13   From 1485 we have largely a mixture of Holy Trinity Guild rentals and later city-wide census-type records from which to gauge the street's makeup until 1534. Already by 1485 it was increasingly a time of great hardship for many people in Coventry and the entire city was in the economic doldrums, in a perfect storm of a national crisis in the woollen textile industry combined with an agricultural slump, although more recent research has made it clear that the pervading gloom does lift somewhat if one considers the city on a plot-by-plot basis, with wide variations within the overall downturn (Phythian-Adams 1979; Leech 2009). For anyone trying to trace plots and buildings, the issue is fraught with vacancies – and plummeting rents as tenants moved around suddenly to lower their payments, abandonments and even demolitions. The years 1518-1525 were the nadir of this downturn, but which led to a very long slow recovery, hindered by the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539 and the Guilds and Chantries in 1547. It is in this period that we can see the end of a pinning industry on the excavated plot, and potentially a period of abandonment, perhaps leading to some demolitions. This period destroys many otherwise long documentary threads and individual plots designated one way in the medieval period, disappear and re-emerge with entirely different threads beginning. It can be an (almost) new topography.

2.14   The appearance and swift disappearance of John Garton, pinner, relating to two adjacent tenements in the 1522 musters can be seen to provide a likely documentary link with no 95 Much Park Street *and* one of his neighbours (it would seem to be 94). While it is not absolutely certain, at least no better links have been found. That one plot has a pinner's workshop (95) and pits containing pinner's waste are also found close by. It does seem more than coincidental, while the (tentative) identification of no 94 with a (possibly) long-lived 10s annual rent on a street with an otherwise wide variety of rent-values (see John Bull, below), adds weight to the argument. It is thus plausible that Garton lived for a time on one plot, paying 10s rent and worked from that next door, where he also had a tenant paying him 6s per annum.

2.15   Phythian-Adams' work on the city's difficulties included a survey of occupations in the households of the city, ward by ward (Phythian-Adams 1979, appendix 3c, table 38). There he shows that of the metal crafts, only two pinners of note survived in the city

after 1524, both in the adjacent Jordan Well Ward. By 1524, there were none at all listed in Much Park Street Ward. On the excavated plots, the last of three pinners, probably John Garton, had ceased manufacture (probably at no 95) between 1522 and 1523, allegedly infirm, perhaps due to age or injury (he was said in his entry for 1522 in Hulton (1999) to be unfit to serve in the militia, which was listed for ages 16-60).

2.16   The 1581 survey of Coventry Corporation property (BA/A/1/2/3) is particularly significant here, since the city owned a series of four adjoining properties, which can be identified with the houses from 92-3 to 98-9 Much Park Street.

Ref/estate	Rent	Description	Location
16.1 [=20.6] Wardens	3s 4d	There is within New Gate a cottage & a garden i.t. Widow Blevyn, on S side of street & a cottage or ten with a garden on N side, i.t. – Shingleton. Mr Kevett holds & pays to city 3s 4d quit rent. *Qu How Mr Kevett holds this land*	near Newgate
16.2 [=20.7] Wardens	2s	Four cottages or tens lying together, breadth by street 20 yds, cont 4 ½ bays & a shore, 10 yds long & 4 gdns on backside, length from houses 29 yds, breadth all together, 20 yds as the houses be. Orchard at the end of them, extending to the town wall. Bounds: Mr Kevett (E); Mr Nicolls (W). [=20.6]	about 85 MPS
		[Mr Nicholls] [Randle Harwar]	[unknown] 90-91
16.3 [=21.1] G&C	8s.	Two tenements together, Griffin Lewes & Amye Haywood, breadth by street 9½ yds, 2 bays, a little bay & a little shore. Garden belonging to Griffins House, length from house 29 yds, breadth through 5 yds. Bounds Randle Harwar (E) At backside of Amye Haywood's house there is an alley, length from house 29 yds, leading to an orchard belonging to the same house, length from twon wall 20 yds, breadth 6 ½ yds. Bounds Randle Harwar (E); City (W)	92-3 MPS
16.4 [=21.2] G&C	14s	Tenement adjoining last [l6.3] i.t. Roger Barton, length by street 8 ½ yds, 7 bays & a shore, orchard on backside extending to town wall, breadth 11 yds. Bounds: City on both sides	94-5 MPS
16.5 [=21.3] G&C	10s	Adjoins to same [16.4]. i.t. John Rogerson, length by street 7 yds, 5 bays. It has an inner court 13 yds long, 7 yds wide. Garden on backside extends to town wall lengthways, breadth 7 yds. Bounds: City on both sides	96-7 MPS
17.1 [=21.4] G&C	20s	Adjoining above [16.5] i.t. Griffin Lewes, breadth by street 13½ yds, 14 bays of building. Garden & orchard on backside from house to town wall, length 18 yds & as much in breadth. Bounds: Mr Over (W); City's land (E). Standards, cistern of lead, 3 ft 11 in breadth, depth 4 ft, length 6 ft, one brewing lead 4 ½ ft by 2 ½ ft deep.	98-9 MPS
		[Mr Over] CCA/2/3/466. 1799-1878	100 MPS
		Holy Trinity Church [house behind 104-6 MPS]	101-3 MPS
17.2		E end house at corner of Dead Lane [HT Church ho behind it]	104-6 MPS

> Table of Holdings in 1581. [Entries identified by page and item number; pp 20=21 repeat pp. 16-17.
> Descriptions given as abstracts not full text]. The first column indicates if the site is part of the former Guild &
> Chantry property, or Wardens (City's own property pre-Dissolution), or part of Wheatley's charity

2.17   Other than this, the people whose names had become associated with the south side of the street mostly fall silent in documents and it is not for some time that this row of properties once again becomes more easily discernible (if not wholly visible). It is not beyond reason to suggest that some buildings at least may have been shut up untenanted; some of these may have been demolished.

The post-medieval descent of Nos 96, 97, 98 and 99 Much Park Street

2.18   The plot which became no 98-9, if not the actual building, can be traced at this stage. In 1671 it was said to be formerly of Richard Dixon and Dorcas Parnell (CA: BA/B/16/313/4); other than her interesting name, Parnell is otherwise silent, but Dixon, in occupation since at least 1654, provides an abuttal to the adjacent messuage in that earlier year (CA: BA/A/4/81/1).

2.19   That 1654 abuttal relates to the neighbouring messuage, which was sold by the city to John Gamble, fuller, occupied by (the late) John Rogerson and John Gamble (on the south side of MPS), between the tenement held by Richard Dixon (above) and one held by Nicholas Burton. It was said to comprise one bay at the front, two behind and two bays of barning beyond a court, the barning and court extending to the town wall, and being 7 yards wide. Burton's widow crops up again in a 1683 release (BA/D/1/19/9).

2.20   The 7-yard frontage dimension of 1683, transposed to the 1886 1st edition 1:500 scale Ordnance Survey map and measured at scale make it clear that the plot exactly covered both nos 96 and 97 together. This width corresponds to the whole of the grant to John Gamble in 1654 (CA: BA/A/4/81/1).

2.21   In 1671 the messuage of Nos 98-9 was subdivided and leased to William Hobson (silkweaver), which he lived in at the time (CA: BA/B/16/313/4), and John Goddard (CA: BA/B/16/313/4-5). There was a garden to the rear which Hobson cultivated. With its separate garden, this suggests a strong similarity to the original 1393 Holy Trinity Guild foundation endowment of BA/B/16/14/5 (ah), above.

Fig 2: A photograph taken between 1900 and 1931 looking south and showing nos 96-7 Much Park St, with nos 1-3 Short Street (separated rear wing and converted former outbuildings) behind. The rear wing of no 97 (1-2 Short St) is clearly timber-framed, jettied out and brick-nogged, being perhaps of 15th-17th century date. The frontage of nos 96-97 show all the brickwork and window/doorcase shapes typical of the late 18th- to early 19th century and an arrow-straight ridge-line, hardly the stuff of slums awaiting clearance. The gable end of the 1711 Three Swans Inn (Nos 94-5) is at far left, apparently box-framed with brick-nogging. At far right is 3 Short Street, which stood over an excavated basement room. It appears to be of brick, probably itself a re-build.

2.22   In 1697 the lease passed to Thomas Orme, mason, but was occupied by Thomas Jackson and William Smith. Orme himself lived on the west in the adjacent dwelling (that of Richard Dixon). Hobson's late tenancy is referred to in passing (CA: BA/B/16/313/2).

2.23   In 1705 the tenancy which Hobson had enjoyed was passed on to Samuel Wareing, tailor. Thomas Orme still lived adjacent (on the west). John Goddard remained in occupation too (CA: BA/B/16/313/3). The leases demonstrate that No. 98-9 was in fact leased, firstly in two sections, then in three, before it was finally all sold to Thomas Orme/Arne.

Date	Owner or lease/chief interest	Occupier	Abuttals	Ref
No 98-9				
1654	City	Richard Dixon and Dorcas Parnell		BA/A/4/81/1; BA/B/16/313/4
Hinder part and W of garden				
1671; 1697	City	John Goddard sen & jun		BA/B/16/313/4-5
1697	City	John Goddard, Thos Jackson and Wm Smith		BA/B/16/313/2
Front and E of Garden [then subdivided]				
1671	City	Wm Hobson		BA/B/16/313/4
Front part W and 1/3 of Garden				
1697-1705	City	Thos Orme/Arne, Mason		BA/B/16/313/2
Front part E				BA/B/16/313/2
1705	City	Sam Wareing	Orme (west @99)	BA/B/16/313/3
Whole [probably]: Fee Farm grant				BA/A/4/81/1
1716	Sir Thos White's Charity	Thos Arne, - Randle and John Goddard		White's charity accts 1802, App II p179
1719	Thomas Arne/Orme			BA/B/16/313/2, 5 [ref to fee farm sale]
1728	Thos Arne, Mason			BA/A/7/2/3 [assignment of £3 fee farm rent]
No 96-7				
1654	John Gamble, Fuller	former, John Rogerson; John Gamble	Richard Dixon west @98-9; Nicholas Burton east @95	BA/A/4/81/1 Fee farm grant
1709		Wm Parker		PA310/8
1713		Wm Parker		PA539/1/1
In the later 19th-century, the one frontage was formally subdivided into two (to become 96-97 Much Park Street)				

The post-medieval descent of No 94-5 Much Park Street, the former medieval pinner's plot

2.24   Sometime, probably in the later seventeenth-century, the old and probably much-dilapidated buildings on the frontage of no 94-95 were taken down and new ones built.

They were described in 1713 as being 'new' in 1711, when they comprised 5 bays with a 26 foot frontage, and which constituted a new-build property known as 'The Three Swans Inn' (CA: PA539/1/1; PA310/8). The property then passed through a number of hands as several tenants and mortagees tried with great difficulty to keep the new inn on an even keel; some failed. Its street frontage and its backage onto the Town Wall were stressed and the usual list of tenants, past and present were related. Equally useful are the abuttals, given as John Bull on the east (no 93) and Wm Parker on the west (no 96).

2.25   The 26-foot dimension of 1711-13, transposed to the 1886 1st edition 1:500 scale Ordnance Survey map and measured at scale make it clear that the plot frontage covered both the later nos 94 and 95 together, the plot being divided lengthwise to accommodate Court no 22 from before 1851 behind the frontage and the creation further back of properties 16-15/42-41 Parkside.

2.26   In 1762 William Greenwood, mason paid £120 for the property to the devisees of the late Robert Sanders, Roper. The property comprised a messuage with brewhouse, barn, and garden on the south side of Much Park street, and had been successively occupied by Richard Warren, William Waters and Henry Toms; it is confirmed as 'once' having been the Three Swans Inn and its garden extended to the Town Wall (CA: PA553/2/1-2). It was probably an inn for perhaps barely a generation.

2.27   In 1798 a Lancashire Gentleman, John Folds (Senior) of Danser House, Burnley inherited the principal interest in the block of property (equating directly to 94 & 95 Much Park Street) (CA: PA 553/5/1). His father had been William Folds who was the elder brother of the late Peggy Greenwood (née Folds). Peggy had married John Greenwood of Coventry, son of the above William Greenwood, mason. It seems John and Peggy had died without issue and her nephew had benefited.

2.28   In 1834 John Folds (Senior) was fully in possession (CA: PA 583). Although he died in 1837 he left his estate in the hands of Burnley-based friends to administer his property for the benefit of his descendants – namely his son John Folds II (d1842), John (III) (d1858), John Oswald Folds (d1874) and John Henry Folds, aged 21 in 1877. In an 1878 abstract of title part of the estate was described as in 1861 comprising '*a messuage on the south side of Much Park Street, once occupied by John Denham, Peter Clampfield, Thomas Walker, Joseph Lewin, Joseph Corbett, Thomas Goodall,*

Thomas Brown and William Palmer'. (CA: PA583/10) The last, William Palmer, was living and working 1765-84 (CA:CCA/2/3/181/20d; BA/A/4/85/1).

2.29   In 1878 the Folds Estate, comprising nos 94 and 95 Much Park Street along with nos 1-5 Court 22, was conveyed to Job Reynolds a Cow Keeper of Coventry (CA: PA583/33). Attached was a garden with a dwelling of its own (called Carchester Cottage), extending to Coventry Park. Thomas Lower, Paper-hanger who doubled as Coventry's Town Crier (CA: PA506/208/47,48) was then living at no 94, while the separate cottage and garden was occupied by William Husselby (CA: PA583/21).

No 94-5 - New in 1711 and known for a while (c1711-25) as 'The Three Swans Inn'

Date	Owner or lease/chief interest	Occupier	Abuttals	Ref
?c1654		Nicholas Burton		PA539/1/1
1709	Chris Wale	Nicholas Burton, Widow Tysell and Wm Parker	John Bull @ east and Wm Parker @ west	PA310/8
Property rebuilt as The Three Swans Inn (New in 1711)				
1711	Chris Wale			PA310/9
1713	John Wykes	Thos Willes, comber-Mortgagee		PA539/1/1; PA310/11
1713	John Wykes	John Sparkes	John Bull @east, Wm Parkes @west	PA539/1/1
1718	Geo Millward	Geo Millward, Innkeeper		PA310/13
1721-	Ric Wareing, baker	Geo Millward, baker and Innkeeper and Ric Wareing		PA310/14
-1725		Joseph Ash beerbrewer (defaulted)		PA310/15
1725	Rob Sanders, Roper			PA310/16
c1715-62		Richard Warren, William Walters, and Henry Toms		
1762-98	William Greenwood	William Walters		PA553/2/1-2; BA/A/4/85/1
		John Denham, Peter Clampfield, Thomas Walker, Joseph Lewin, Joseph Corbett, Thomas Goodall, Thomas Brown		PA583/10
1765-84		Wm Palmer		CCA/2/3/181/20d; BA/A/4/85/1
1798	John Folds (Sen)			PA 553/5/1
1834	John Folds (Sen)			
1837-77	Folds family of Burnley, Lancs			
In the later 19th-century, the one frontage was subdivided into two (to become 94-95 Much Park Street)				

The post-medieval descent of Nos 92-93 Much Park Street

2.30   This property is best known from a document of 1784, when the plot was described as having a 9.5 yard (19'6"/ 8.68m) frontage and a measurement from street to Town Wall of 65 yards 8 inches (195'8"/59. m) (CA: BA/A/4/85/1). The abuttal to the west (94) makes it clear that it is no 93 while a list of previous occupiers is helpfully given. The dimensions of 1784, transposed to the 1886 1st edition 1:500 scale Ordnance Survey map and measured at scale make it clear that the plot at that date covered what would become both nos 92 and 93 together, the plot behind the frontage being then divided lengthwise to accommodate Court no 21 from before 1851.

2.31   John Bull is potentially the most interesting tenant. In an age when rents did not change much (financial crises notwithstanding), his 10s per annum tenancy may relate to the sixteenth-century 10s tenancies found in the city's muster Rolls of 1522 for Much Park Street, of which there were 13 so valued (out of 120 for the entire ward) (Hulton 1999). This might not be any more significant, but for the fact that while some of the 13 can be immediately ruled out (such as those with clear monastic landlords), one stands out from the rest – Hulton's entry number 48, tenanted by John Garton, pinner, whose rent was in fact 10s per annum - but whose landlord was not stated. Ironically, he is noted as being the landlord of the adjacent plot (which in all probability has to be no 94/95 – where the workshop stood), and where John Merlor, weaver apparently also lived, paying Garton 6s per annum rent (Hulton 1999, 59). The association of Bull as a successor of Garton's plot is not compelling but is perhaps possible.

Date	Owner or lease/ chief interest	Occupier	Abuttals	Ref
Nos 92-3				
		Edward Smith		BA/A/4/85/1
1702		John Bull		PA96/29/1
1709		John Bull		PA310/8
1713		John Bull		PA539/1/1; BA/A/4/85/1
1716	Sir Thos White's Charity	John Bull (10s rent)		Sir Thos White's charity accts 1802, App II p179
		Wm Burney		BA/A/4/85/1
		Chas Oughton, Jack Loverage & Edw Pickering		BA/A/4/85/1
1743		William Berry		PA96/29/2
1761		Edward Berry		PA96/29/3
1761-84		Edward Berry		BA/A/4/85/1
1784	Sam Vale and Thos Miles	Thos Jobbet, Wm Palmer & John Brookes	Wm Miller @ east (no 91), Wm Walters @west (no 94)	BA/A/4/85/1
In the later 19th-century, the one frontage was subdivided into two (to become 92-93 Much Park Street)				

The end of the row's history

2.32   In 1900-1901 the nearby 98-100 Much Park Street were lost as the new Short Street was pushed through to link Much Park Street and Parkside, where vast new factories were springing up.

2.33   Either side of the creation of the new street, the community along Much Park Street appears to be one of solid sufficiency, although the conditions of the court-housing behind were probably deteriorating. From 1874 to 1922 Coventry trade directories show that the frontage buildings of nos 91-97 Much Park Street supported trading premises of a greengrocer (91), a hairdresser or general shop (92), a florist and a winder (93), a tobacconist and the town crier (94), a stay-maker (95), and two indeterminate shops (96, 97). There was a degree of permanence about the tenancies too, with some being very long term, such as Maria Mason, a shopkeeper at number 97 in 1874, who was still there in 1898 and whose tenancy was continued by her daughter Susan right up until 1931. Meanwhile the Courts behind were usually fully tenanted with a procession of names.

2.34   Successor to the Folds estate, Job Reynolds died in 1905 but in a 1911 recital of his will his testators, including the new owner Harry Reynolds listed his estate as 94 and 95 Much Park Street and (to the rear) Court 22 nos 1-4; also no 5 in said Court with garden and appurtenances…and also that messuage... built upon the said garden and fronting Parkside…known as Carchester Cottage (43 Parkside) (CA: PA1111/7).

2.35   Meanwhile as regards these properties at the far south end of the site, over and against the line of the former town wall, an 1891 abstract of title for 41 and 42 Parkside indicates the manner in which the 19th-century Court Housing to the rear was put up in what had long previously been gardens (CA: PA1111/1).
        '*Messuage, garden, outbuildings were erected and built by Thomas Hales on part of a garden which formerly extended from MPS in Coventry to the town wall, which separated the said garden ground from Coventry Park; which said messuage and premises were then known as 16 Park Side (no42), formerly in the occupation of Thomas Hales, then of William Hall, afterwards John Gascoigne and then William Ward. Also 15 Park Side (no41), formerly in the occupation of Thos Kirby and then of Mrs Tipson, then of Mrs Allen.*'

Fig 3: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map, sheet XXI.12.17, of 1886 before
Short Street was built. Parkside is at the foot of the view

Fig 4: Detail from Second Edition Ordnance Survey map, sheet XXI.12.17, of 1905
Short street has removed nos 98-100 and linked to Parkside

19

2.36   This was clearly the Thomas Hales whose name was already given to 'Hales Yard' in 1851 (Board of Health Map) which became Court 24 and which was mostly lost when Short Street was created in 1900/1901.

2.37   This pair of Parkside properties passed to Sarah Jane Greenhill in 1928 and upon her own untimely death immediately to GW Butler (a grocer of 45 Much Park Street, who also briefly owned no 96 Much Park Street) but who also died very soon afterwards (CA:PA1111/1,2,3, 4,5,6,7).
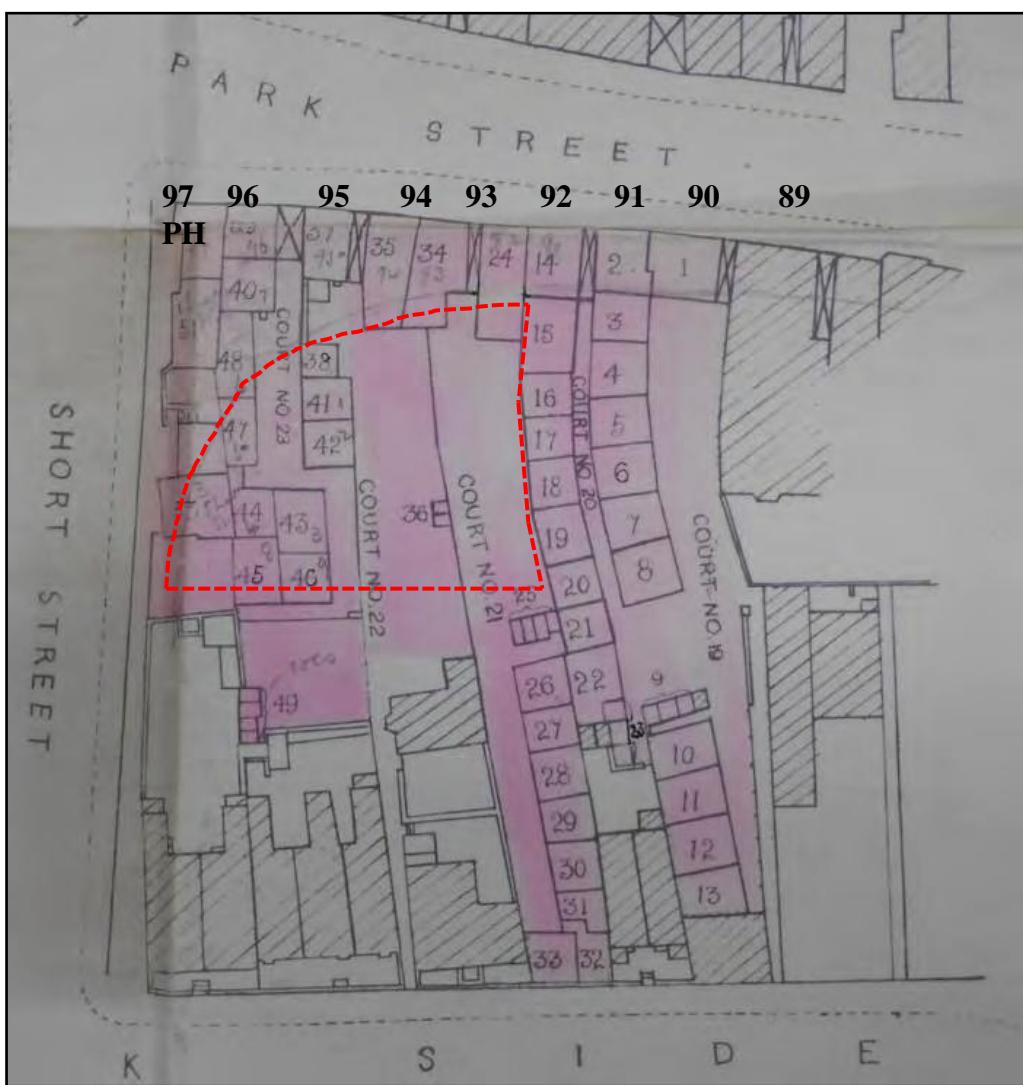
Fig 5: The site as scheduled in 1931 for demolition (CA: CCA 3/1/7942), the last street numbering **in bold**. PH (no 88) is the former Admiral Lord Rodney/Rainbows, which still stands. Superimposed is the main area of the 2010 excavation in red, which follows the alignment of the 1933 post-demolition back of pavement, a site edge which survives today. This map was accompanied by a schedule of the buildings demolished and their owners and occupiers (below).

2.38   In pursuance of the Housing Act 1930, Coventry Corporation demolished all of numbers 90-97 Much Park Street and 1 and 3 Short Street as slums, unfit for human habitation, although there was some public opposition. In England 1931 was the very nadir of the Great Depression. As the very first of the city's slum-clearances, Coventry (No 1) Clearance Order 1931, was formalised on 3 September, sealed on 1 December of that year and put into effect the following year (CA: CCA/3/1/7942). The schedule drawn up at the time shows that almost all of the buildings in question were occupied right up until the end, the owners and tenants given six months to quit. A total of 143 people (50 men, 52 women, 19 boys and 22 girls) lost their homes. They clearly were overcrowded as the frontage buildings contained between one and nine people (nine at no 91), while the tiny Court houses contained between one and six individuals. Only number 88, The Admiral Lord Rodney public house (now Rainbows) was left of the extended row.

2.39   The last interests in the row were as follows:

Number on map	Address	Nature of property	Owner	Occupier
1	90 MPS	Shop	Jos Gardner, Mrs M E Gardner, Lancelot Cleaver	Louisa Reading
2	90a MPS	Boot repairs	ditto	Albert Cory
3-13	Court 19	10 homes	ditto	In full occupation
14	91 MPS	House	Charles Hobley, F Neale, Thos Band	Charles Satchwell
15-23	Court 20	8 homes		In full occupation
24	92 MPS	House and shop	Amelia Golby	Henry Parker
26-33	Court 21	8 homes	ditto	In full occupation
34	93 MPS	House and florists	Amelia Golby	George Kirby
35	94 MPS	House and tobacconists	Harry Reynolds	J H Lewis
37	95MPS	Dwelling	Harry Reynolds	Harry Reynolds
38		Building used as a washhouse belonging to no 94		
39	96MPS	House	Trustees of late G W Butler, dec (Thos Hancox, Thos Band)	Alfred Ireland
40-49	Court 23	9 homes	ditto	In full occupation
50	97 MPS	House	ditto	Susan Mason
51	1 Short Street	House	ditto	-
53	3 Short Street	House	ditto	-
Numbers on map not in left hand column denote WCs or other outhouses				

2.40   The entire Butler estate was conveyed to Coventry Corporation in advance of demolition and in 1935 was bought up for advertising billboards (CA: PA1111/10). It was split into two flat areas of land described as 236 square yards and 359 square yards fronting Much Park Street (CA: PA1111/8, 9).

2.41   Meanwhile 41 and 42 Parkside passed from the Thomas family into commercial hands; firstly to Mills & Allen Ltd and then in 1965 to Mills & Rockley Ltd. In 1979 it came into the hands of Coventry City Council.

3   THE EXCAVATIONS

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PLOTS 93-97 MUCH PARK STREET

The easternmost excavated fringe – no 93

3.1   The medieval plot which became part of No 93 Much Park Street was barely impacted by the excavations as only a narrow sliver of the plot lay within the excavated area. There were a few unrelated features at the edge of the plot which date from the 13th-14th century beginnings of the layout (Pits 518, 780, 783).

3.2   There was, however, along its western edge a long, 1m-wide boundary ditch (822) which was aligned north-south and demarked the earliest layout of the plots, dividing what eventually became no 93 from no 94 to the west. It was discerned at various points along the entire depth of the plot as excavated. While the digging of the ditch, ostensibly one of a row of burgage plots laid out on virgin ground, is indicative of the first activity on the plot, which may have been at any time in the 13th century, the pottery from its backfill (824) was firmly in the second half of that century and possibly even the beginning of the 14th century. It is possible that the economic offer of the plots on either side of the ditch, 93 and 94, may not have been taken up for quite some time.

3.3   A length of very similar ditch (889) was discerned forming the entirely parallel boundary between 94 and 95, at least at the southern half of the excavated area. The two parallel ditches demarked a plot for no 94, of which more below.

3.4   The ditches were deliberately filled in before the 14th-century was far advanced, possibly earlier. It would seem moreover, that they were not replaced by permanent boundaries since, where they were sampled, none of them seem to have supported anything like either a later wall-foundation or a row of post-holes which might betoken either a wall or a fence. A hedge is a distinct possibility but cannot be confirmed since the series of perfectly-aligned back walls to the rear yards (960, 833, 567) are too incomplete (because of later damage) to do more than suggest that they were deliberately discontinuous to take account of such boundaries.

3.5   From its mid-14th-century construction onwards, all of the householders who set up homes and businesses along this row would have needed individual access to their

gardens and specifically to the town wall beyond, as each was held responsible to the city for clearing vegetation growing against the town wall. This was taken very seriously by the city authorities, probably because of widespread and unacceptable breaches, at least until 1611 when ivy, brambles, hazels and grass are all singled out as a problem in the Leet Book (Willcox and Divett 2000). These might suggest that overgrown wall-backed gardens were a common issue for the city. The issue went away when in 1662 the wall was slighted on Crown orders after the English Civil War.

3.6   The area nearest the frontage of no 93 was not further excavated as it was very much damaged by modern development, recently demolished. It appears not to have extended as far back as the other properties, and may not have had a medieval rear wing.

3.7   Behind the former frontage location lay a mixture of 19th-20th century development interspersed with a scatter of large pits, which were in use from the 15th century. The largest was 783/786, in excess of 2m across, (later cut by another pit (542) in the 17th century) while that closest to the frontage was 679, a 17th-century pit in which was deposited the part-butchered carcass of a cow. Such carcasses and their parts are often found buried in urban situations, in which the animal is simply buried where it fell, not least because it is so large and both costly and messy to butcher, or in cases where the meat has gone rotten before consumption. A similar example was excavated at nearby Cheylesmore Manor, Coventry in 1992.

Fig 6: Excavating pit 679 with its part-butchered cow carcass
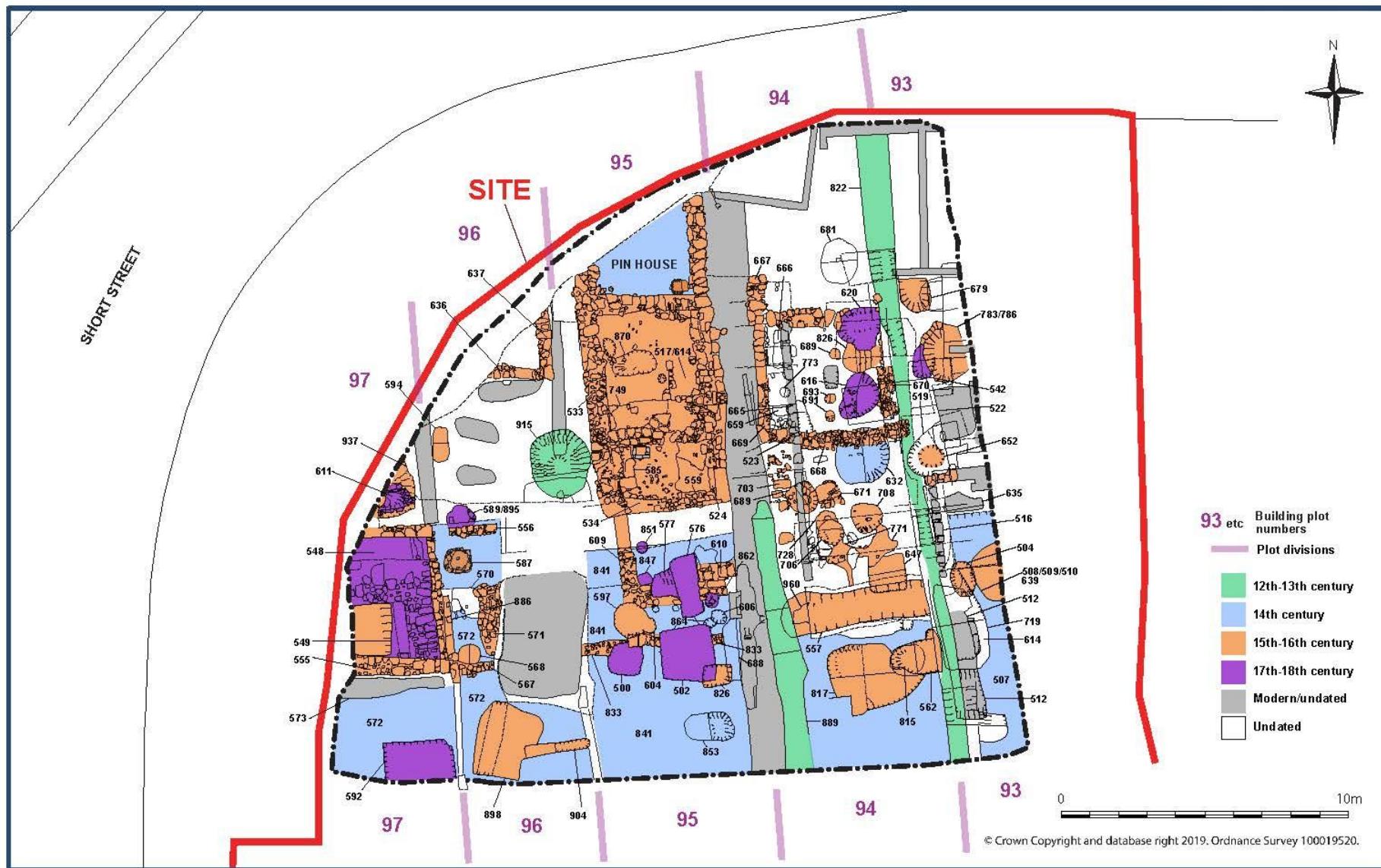
Fig 7: Colour coded phase plan

3.8   The most distinctive pit on 'this plot' is 519/658, of the early 16th century, in fact probably an encroachment from 94-5, and which will be dealt with in that plot's sequence, below.

3.9   Much further back, in the garden-area of the plot, the natural geology was covered by an old topsoil containing 14th-15th century pottery (507). Into it had been cut pits 504 (15th-16th century) and 634/639, containing secondary deposits of pottery sherds and dating the latter's filling firmly to the later 17th century. There was considerable residuality.

3.10   Beyond that (to the south) lay large 19th-century pits (719/512) with a substantial clay lining (511) and other recent foundation disturbance.

The coherence of plot no 94

3.11   This plot contains the distinctive remains which constitute a rear wing, a yard area and part of a rear garden. Along with 95, more of this plot survived to be excavated than the others.

3.12   The most northerly part of the excavated area, the former frontage, had been destroyed by modern buildings, so the frontage excavation-edge stepped in to a point at which medieval remains were seen to commence, and included most of a rear wing.

3.13   The northernmost surviving area comprised the sandstone foundations of a 4.5m-square building, almost certainly the rear wing, which was divided lengthwise down the centre by a row of postholes, presumably supporting the roof or ceiling (689, 691, 693; a fourth had been destroyed by a later intrusion). The western wall (667) was once connected to the frontage and to judge by a slight change of thickness at its northern junction, the building comprised the second phase of a two-phase wing, the later of the two being slightly thinner-founded but better preserved. The remains of the northern wall (actually part of the earlier phase) and its eastern wall (670) were much damaged by later pits and other disturbance; only its width can be surmised at c4.5m – it stretched probably right up to the lost frontage.

3.14   However, the south wall of this wing (523/668) made a direct stratigraphic relationship with an earlier large pit (632), some 2m wide, over which its south wall had been constructed, evidently needing lots of small rubble packed in to prevent the foundation

A Tale (possibly) of John Garton, Pinner and his Neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON PARKSIDE, COVENTRY, IN 2010
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spreading.   The pottery from its fills (664, 665), 16th century rather than earlier, suggests that this secondary rear wing is a relatively late addition to the plot.

3.15   A yard containing numerous smaller pits lay behind the wing.

3.16   The fifteenth-seventeenth centuries accounted for a number of pits in this yard area, most of similar size, being c1m across and all sub-circular. However, the number (four) over a period of about 200 years hardly suggests a great press for space or intensive use of the space (689, 708, 722, the last of these cut by pit 706). Marked clay tobacco-pipe bowls from on top of a post-pad (671) date the end of this short sequence to the period 1660-1700, refining the dating from pottery debris from the last pit fill.

3.17   A scatter of sandstone may denote the remains of a disturbed wall foundation (703), while a surface (771), cut by pits 706 and 708 is largely undated, except for the clay-tobacco pipe bowls (above). The sandstone and the post-pad (671) together suggest that the northern portion of the yard was covered over, providing a covered walkway across the plot – from no 95 opposite whose back door it lay. The bottom (southern part) of the yard did, however, overlie a large 1.5m-square pit (647), but which contained very little 16th-17th century pottery.

3.18   The yard was separated from a garden by the line of a former wall (probably a timber slot-founded) which had been robbed out (557) except for the terminal of its construction slot (960). It was undated but its two ends both respected the original plot-boundary ditches (822 to the east and 889 to the west), whilst its robber trench post-dated both the 14th-to 15th-century garden soil and pit 647, so it is probably during the 16th-17th century that it was removed. If here had been a gap in this divider, it was not discernible on the ground.

3.19   In the garden towards the back of the plot lay a couple of intercut pits. Pit 817, at over 3m long, was one of the few pits on the plot which might be considered an extraction pit for raw materials. It is dated to the 14th-15th century, and was cut by a smaller pit (815). While the larger pit cut through the 13th-14th-century and later garden soil, in its backfill it contained small amounts of pottery arguably only from the 14th or (maybe) early 15th century, suggesting perhaps that any extraction was done here early in the life of the plot, when the first frontage buildings were being put up. The material extracted was not stone, but a weathered clayey-sand material, useful for plugging into

stone foundations for bonding purposes. Such extraction pits are not unusual quite close to rear wings in Coventry, found for instance on Whitefriars Street (a former Gosford Street plot) in 2004.

The centrepiece of the excavation – the plot at no 95

3.20   Like the other plots, and most demonstrably so in this case, no 95 comprised the rear wing of a late medieval building, a partly covered yard behind, and a garden to the rear of that.

3.21   The building comprised a 4m-wide rear stone-founded range to a frontage that was lost to the modern road alignment. This rear wing stretched back in excess of 10m (the back wall of the frontage was absent so a closer measurement is not possible). This range is dealt with below, with the benefit of the finds-dating and the name of the known Much Park Street pinner of 1522.

3.22   A covered yard with lean-to lay behind the wing, later taken down and beyond that was a garden, separated from the yard and buildings by a wall.

John Garton's place – a late medieval cottage industry

3.23   The excavated remains reached their apogee in the 15th century, just as medieval Coventry in general did, if only briefly, before a major recession hit the city from mid-century. From this time the central portion of the site is dominated by the sandstone-founded rectangular building which formed the rear wing of the frontage of no 94-5, which was redeveloped in 1711 and eventually entirely lost when the modern curving arc of the road was created. Unfortunately, there is no evidence for the frontage in the excavated area and with it the living quarters of the plot. Nor has anything between the middle of the plot and the Town Wall survived, taken out by 19th century buildings, including a cellar.

3.24   The fifteenth-century rear wing, however, far from containing just the service area for the plot, also became a workshop for a pinner, as will be seen. It may once have been John Bailey or John Ravon's beforehand in the period 1435-49 (as industries often ran with master and apprentice working in the same place with the latter taking over the former's premises) but the best dating and the documentary evidence suggest John Garton, who either left the premises or died in 1523-4, is most likely represented here.

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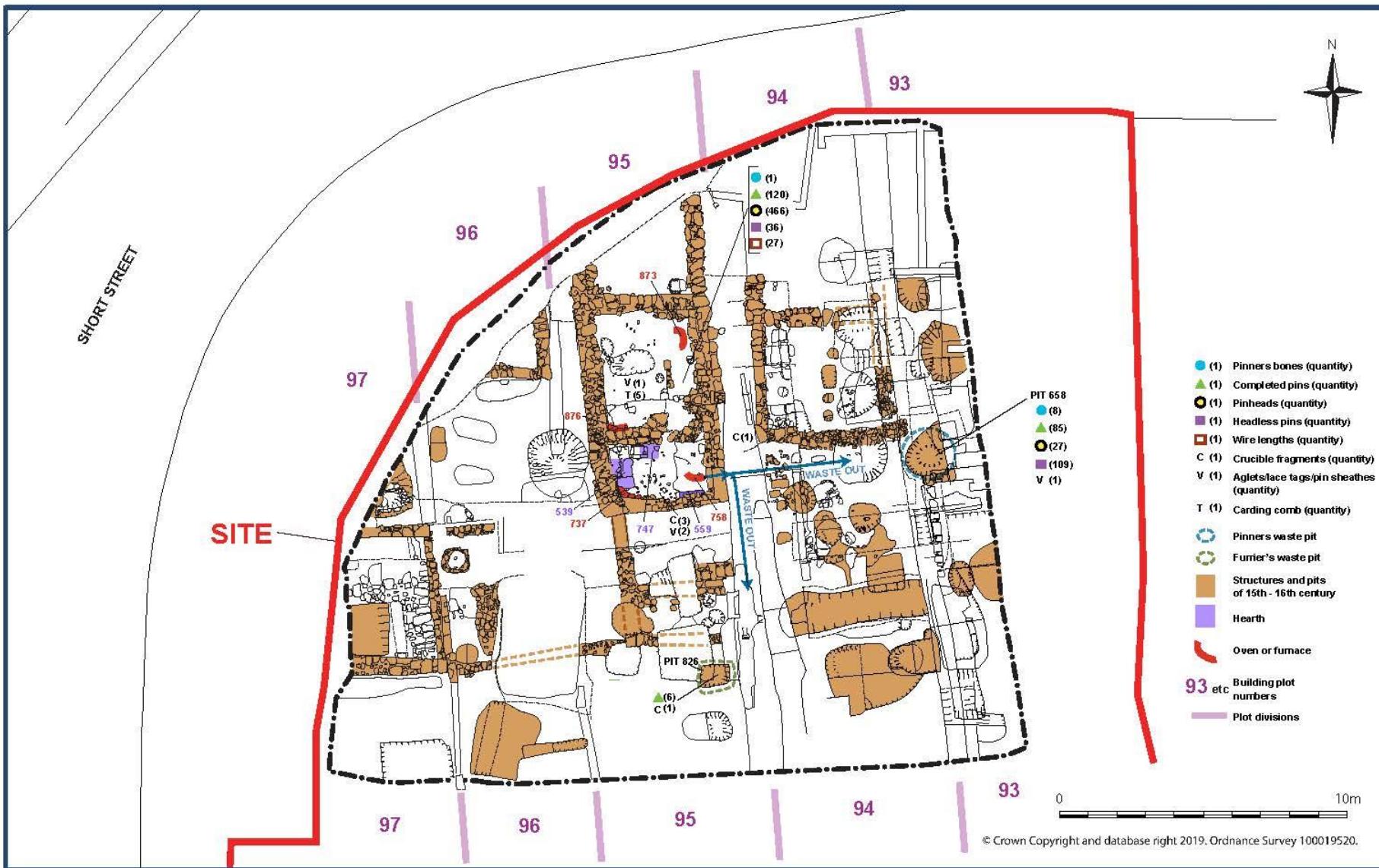
Fig 8: Plan showing the excavated rea wing with heat-sources and distribution of pinning debris

3.25   The range is notable for the multiplicity of (mostly discarded) hearths and fireplaces within it and the possible different arrangements they may have engendered. Not a single chimney can be confidently located. In a near-contemporary description, quoted elsewhere, William Harrison noted that old men of his day (1577) had seen many changes in their lifetime, including '*the multitude of chimnies latelie erected, whereas in their young daies there were not above two or three if so manie, in most uplandish townes of the realme (the religious houses, and manour places of their lords always excepted, and peradventure some great personages), but ech one made his fire against a reredoses in the hall, where he dined and dressed his meat.*' (Harrison 1577, II, 239-40, cited in Ayres 1981, 36). A picture of smoke-filled rooms emerges!

3.26   This rear wing, serving a frontage that would eventually become nos 94 and 95 Much Park Street, comprised long east and west sandstone wall foundations [533 and 515/524/525] with a southern gable wall foundation [534], and was subdivided by two cross-foundations [531 and 536, the former possibly for a reredos]. These created two whole rooms and a partial northern example which was incomplete – and which presumably adjoined the former frontage of the plot.

3.27   The northern, incomplete room contained a sequence of earthen floors, 924, then 955 and finally 918. The first two of these contained sufficient quantities of 14th century pottery (71 sherds and 38 sherds) to state with some certainty that this portion was constructed and came into use in the 14th or early 15th century. However, the surviving wedge of room at the edge of the excavation contained no features which might indicate what it was used for. The latest floor layer (918) contained 15th-16th century material.

3.28   The sandstone foundations of the entire wing for the most part were almost certainly the firm dwarf walls upon which were laid the sole plates of a timber-framed superstructure, probably box-framed. Perhaps the end gable was stone up to its apex. Fireplaces and ovens may have vented into sandstone superstructures, but equally may have been configured using clay-daub chimney canopies and smoke-hoods (although no daub was recovered). Smoke vents through thatch could also be configured via a hipped gablet, or even wall-mounted timber-slat louvres. A 1931 photograph (seen above in relation to documents and below in relation to no 97 Much Park Street) shows that a rear wing on an adjacent plot was timber-framed, close-studded, eventually became brick-nogged, and was even partially jettied out on at least

one side, so the superstructures of such blocks could be quite sophisticated and not necessarily overawed by a generally more publicly-visible frontage.

Fig 9: Hearth or bench slabs (531) uncovered with their own kerb, looking east. The cross-wall behind (or possibly a reredos) has been removed. Scale 1m

3.29   Within the rear wing the larger complete room was the middle one, measuring approximately 4m north-south x 3m east-west. To its south lay an end room measuring only 2m north-south x 3m east-west. The dividing wall between the two incorporated a dog-leg which is redolent of the back to a fireplace (see 531 above) or possibly (since full-blown chimneys are rare in vernacular houses of the later 15th-century) a free-standing reredos baffling the heat from an array of successive sources in the smaller, end room, such as the curving kerb of a stone oven base [737] about 90cm in diameter, which had a thick ash deposit (739) over its flagstone floor [748]. The curving stone-kerb remains of a second former oven lay nearby [758], with a scorched ledge from a later small hearth [559] was built into the end gable wall foundation [534]. Against the very back of the fireplace/reredos lay a rectangular sandstone hearth with pitched roof-tile edging [747] and measuring about 80cm x 80cm. These heat-sources all appear to have functioned during the life of the building around them, but none appear to have

been in use for very long, quickly replaced by another nearby. Altogether most may have lasted for no longer than a couple of generations during the 15th -16th centuries. The exception was the scorched ledge (559) upon which was found a clay tobacco-pipe bowl of 1810-40, the only suggestion that the wing may have survived into the 19th-century – although a single bowl, close to the surface at the beginning of the excavation, may be intrusive (with no other late material nearby) and therefore misleading. It may also be pertinent to note that in the period c1850-60 a salt-glazed sewer pipe which ran to Much Park Street from the plot, did so alongside the wing (suggesting it took account of the still-standing building). However, this is just as easily explained by the need to find a straight line from the new court housing, through the frontage alleyway to the street; that this course ran alongside the foundation and not through it, and turned as few corners as possible, was a matter of purely good sense, adopting the shortest, straightest possible line.

Fig 10: The rectilinear hearth 747 in the small end room, looking south. The internal gable wall (or possible reredos) lay across the foreground; scale 1m

Fig 11: The sub-circular oven kerb 737 (flat base 748) with block of fill left for sampling, looking south. The rectilinear hearth 747 is to bottom left, showing their proximity. The reredos location is at the foot; scale 1m

3.30   At little more than 2m across, there was insufficient space in the small end room for all of these heat-sources to have been in operation at the same time and some sequence to them is assumed, although they are not all stratigraphically linked. Certainly the end gable-mounted scorched ledge [559] may be an early post-medieval example, with an intrusive early 19th century clay tobacco-pipe bowl lying in the ashy deposit which had accumulated over it. There was almost no waste of any kind of this late date from inside the wing, so it is perhaps plausible that the rooms, unless boarded over (but which here has left no mark) went fully out of use in the early 17th century, or was put to simply a storage use. If it survived much longer at all, it is suggested that it was finally demolished when the frontage of 94-95 was rebuilt as the Swan Inn in 1711 since fully-18th-century domestic debris is in very short supply indeed. While a storage-based survival into the 19th-century is plausible (suggested only by the single clay tobacco-pipe bowl), it lacks accompanying domestic debris to accompany it in any quantity whatsoever.

3.31   There had also been two round ovens in the larger complete room (the middle room). However, these comprised only vestiges (861 and 873). Neither had clear dating evidence attached, but it is in proximity to the latter that the interior floor deposit

containing numerous pinning products and equipment came (517/614), close to what seems to have been an external doorway and threshold leading into the yard to the east.

Fig 12: The fireplace and reredos removed, showing the curved vestiges of former oven 861, looking west in the middle room; scale 0.5m

3.32 The interiors, including the remains of the ovens and hearth, also contained plenty of evidence of iron smithing. There were some amorphous lumps of iron, a little smithing slag and a smattering of hammerscale within the floor deposits. There was also a fragment of furnace lining bottom suggestive of some smelting (although a single fragment is scant evidence indeed). However, there was no obvious anvil-location as the hammerscale was spread around and the smithing slag was present in only small quantities. This ferrous metal-working may therefore have been related to the earlier ovens and hearths and subsequent non-ferrous smelting for wiredrawing and the pinning industry (and the dismantling or destruction of the first hearths/ovens) scattered or destroyed the locational evidence. Certainly of the ovens and hearths present, most did not survive to the end of the building's life. Nowhere is there evidence of a vat or cistern for quenching hot, recently-worked metals. If dealing only with small items these could of course have been dipped and doused within strategically-placed portable containers, whether metal or even pottery, easily moved around or replaced if broken. Such might be a prime use for a Midland Purple bung-hole cistern, a few of which are known from this site. Their low-mounted bung-hole, quickly un-bunged, might also be useful for directing water onto unwanted or uncontrolled fires which needed dousing down, some 3-4 gallons at a time.

3.33   The only heat source which survived to the end of the end room's life was the large rectangular stone bench (535) which stood against the west wall. This appears to have been a raised hearth (or possibly also an anvil-base), which not only covered over (and therefore replaced) the remains of oven 737/748, it was also uncomfortably close to hearth 747. The reredos would have acted as a baffle to absorb the heat which 535 generated and prevent it from affecting the middle room overly.

Fig 13: Raised bench-hearth, scorched (535); the reredos to the right, looking west; scale 1m. This was probably the latest working industrial position in the building.

3.34   Five substantial pieces of non-ferrous metalworking crucibles were found. Their locations are instructive. One came from the fill of pit 826 behind the wing. One derived from the sewer pipe trench alongside the wing (where a former doorway had opened eastwards), while three come from floor layers (713, 858) within the small end-room of the wing itself, the location of the greatest concentration of hearths and ovens.

3.35   It is however, the pins themselves, to varying degrees of completion, which dominate the figures, along with the paraphernalia of cutting and working the wire (wiredrawing), adding the heads, sharpening the ends.

3.36   At the southern end of the rear wing, furthest from the frontage, a further lean-to building was constructed on dwarf sandstone foundations (609 on the west, 610 at the

south, its eastern wall lost, if it had had one). Internally, there was only one contemporary feature, a small portion of surviving floor (847).

3.37   If ever there was sufficient room to get access around the south end of the lean-to, connecting between the yards of 94 and 95 to that of 96, it was probably soon lost as a configuration of post-holes and a post-pad strongly suggests the gap was filled in by a further structure (supported on 604, 606, 562 and an un-numbered post pad).

3.38   Behind all these yards ran a dividing wall or other subdivision which ensured that the yards were kept separated from the gardens behind. Its foundation was variously robbed out (960 on no 94), partly destroyed in the 20th century (567 on no 96) and here on no 95 was lost and rendered discontinuous by a series of pits in the 17th-18th century (833).

3.39   Those pits (597, 576, 577, 500, 502) are hardly redolent of intensive occupation, as they date to after c1550 to c1700 and suggest that the rear-wing lean-to's were lost in the 16th-century.

3.40   Those which cut through the foundation of the garden wall 833 were later, and date reliably to the second half of the 17th century (500, 502 – which included clay-tobacco pipe bowls of 1660-1700).

Fig 14: Pit 502, cut through the late medieval garden wall foundation (833) at top and bottom of this view; looking west; scale 1m. This late 17th-century pit contained lots of broken roof tile, perhaps marking localised clearance and tidying after a demolition.

3.41 This late date suggests that there may have been a deliberate attempt to restrict pit-digging within the garden during the period that the town wall stood (c1355-1662), perhaps because the area behind the wall was 'militarised' or just because its use was discouraged by the city authorities for anything but horticulture, driven by a need to access and maintain the wall throughout. Only in 1662, when the town wall lost its *raison d'être*, could the strict garden-division be legitimately lost and the wall taken down where the householder wanted to remove it. Although it had never stopped all pits (or any kind of misuse of 'civic' land) only then could they legitimately encroach from the back yards. At the back of no 95 the increasing irrelevance of the rear wing and the loss of the lean-to's meant that the probably messy piece of yard-space attracted some pit-digging, at least until the plot was redeveloped as The Three Swans Inn in 1711.

Pinning as specialist metalworking in late medieval Coventry

3.42 Pinning and related wiredrawing have been known to archaeologists in Coventry for a very long time, as just one of the high-profile (but lower status) metal-working trades documented in medieval Coventry. Amongst local archaeologists Woodfield (Gooder et al, 1966, 129) first drew attention to it, but in more recent years background waste evidence has been found further up at 112 Much Park Street (Colls and Mitchell 2013, 62-3, 67). Wire-caches and pinners' bones are not uncommon waste finds across the city, but never before in respect of a located workshop as here at 94-95.

3.43 The late Roger Brownsword looked extensively at the pins and other considerable pinning waste from the town ditch-side excavation site at Cox Street in 1978 (Brownsword in Bateman and Redknap, 1986, 134-41). It is pertinent to quote here some of what he said at that time (in relation to residual dumped waste in the town ditch) since for the first time on a well-stratified production site, it holds good here in Much Park Street.

3.44 Brownsword cast considerable doubt on (the then-) received-wisdom (Tylecote 1972) that brass pin-making was only introduced into England in 1543, citing convincingly even at that stage numerous dated excavated examples from Coventry and elsewhere from the 15th century. He went on to say (1986, 136):

'Documentary evidence from the Coventry Leet Book (Dormer Harris 1907-13) is concerned mainly with wiredrawing, which may or may not be linked directly with brass pin making. If iron-wire-drawing and brass-wire-drawing was being carried out by the

same craftsmen, it was not specifically mentioned in the Let Book record, nor in any other record known to the writer. The aspects that draw the two trades together are obvious, however. Later records from elsewhere in the UK refer to card-makers (for carding wool) also making pins. However, both pins and wool-card teeth are more likely to have been made of iron wire. Brass pins, if coming into fashion late, may have been made by the card-wiredrawer in some areas or under some circumstances, but at Coventry 'pynners' are specifically mentioned in documents of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.'

3.45   Brownsword also notes specific and numerous documentary references from the fourteenth century across the city which separate cardmakers from pinners as distinct trade-names, noting also needlers. The earliest reference to a pinner is to Andrew le Pynner in 1328 (Fox 1947, 58) and by 1414 they were organised into their own craft fellowship, the guild of pinners and needlers (with a seven-year apprenticeship), later amalgamated with those of the tilers and wrights (entirely separate from the card-makers, who were then amalgamated with the saddlers) (Nowell 1926-9, 38; Phythian-Adams 1979, 101). In 1435 the carpenters became associated with the pinners, a process complete by 1448, while ten years later the coopers were added although they seceded for a time before eventually acquiescing with the pinners' rules in 1539. Brownsword goes on to note (1986, 137), however, that (before trades diverged):

'It is clear that the Coventry 'wire-trades' were producing a range of goods, including needles, wool-cards, domestic pins and wire for general use: all of this in iron form. What then of brass wire goods? No mention occurs in the documents to suggest either a separate trade or a combined wire craft using both ferrous and non-ferrous metals.

'My own view would favour the development, perhaps in the early fourteenth century, of iron wire workers turning their skills to brass wire work; or perhaps increasing brass-wire output from existing skills in both metals.

'The Leet Book evidence, although not specifically mentioning brass wire, is of considerable interest on two counts: first in the detail concerned with the control of the craft and attempts to regulate and improve on what are seen as poor workmanship practices (Dormer-Harris 1907-13, 180-4). Secondly on the light it throws on the organization of the trade.

'Wiredrawing featured a number of skills, broken down into several distinct craft sections and related to the stages of manufacture. The smith supplied the iron bar to the brakeman who drew the metal through a wortle-plate to produce coarsely worked wire rod. The gurdellman or middleman drew out the wire still further through a gurdell

or draw-plate with holes of decreasing diameter. The final stage involved the overhouseman who produced even finer wires.

'Two kinds of wire were in production at Coventry; 'Cardwyre' and 'Mastermannes wyre', the latter probably being the common wire of everyday use and the former thinner wire for wool cards (ibid, 849).

'Although no specific mention of brass wire is made, either in the Leet Book or elsewhere in the Coventry Archives, it would appear that brass wire was being dawn in the town in the fifteenth century. This proposition is based upon the nature of the wire and the pins found at the site (Cox St 1978); also, on the assumed ability of the medieval craftsmen to transfer an iron-drawing capability to drawable brass with only a little modification of the work process.

'Specialist pinners probably worked in iron and brass depending on demand and would have taken their reduced wire from the middlemen or overhousemen, as would the wool-card makers or needlers. The brass pins and wire produced at Coventry show the 'pynners' were involved with drawing the wire as well as final finishing, but not with the coars drawing from bar or hammering out from bar or strip. Scrap sheet work and finished brass sheet work may have been produced by specialist sheet workers, although it is possible a multitude of operations were being carried out under one workshop roof or by a discrete group of individual workers.'

3.46 As will be seen below there is equivocal evidence on the Much Park Street site for the brass pinner's trade having either grown out of a similar one in iron, with some evidence for (admittedly indistinct) iron-smithing and even perhaps contemporary wool-card making, also incorporating scrap material indicative of the smelting of waste brass/bronze and the intermediate drawing of brass rods and drawing into wire.

3.47 Brownsword emphasised the carefully-organised nature of who did what under a protective craft-guild umbrella, designed to protect standards, reputations and jobs. The enterprising, however, might just bend the rules in order to maintain their income when the city entered a long period of economic difficulty in the late 15th century.

The economy and housekeeping of a pinner

3.48 While the remains of this period are widespread, a few contexts stand out from the rest and have been investigated extensively for that reason, including sampling by sieving to retrieve small mammal, bird and fish bone and charred/mineralised seeds. The presence of pins and pin-heads too became apparent.

A Tale (possibly) of John Garton, Pinner and his Neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s
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3.49   Inside the rear wing a series of floor surfaces had accumulated, some of which produced pottery (575 (C16th) over 528 (medieval); 526 over 527 (C16th) and 539, 540, 566, 661, 705, 710 and 715 (all C16th) with a separate short sequence 918, 614, 517 (all 15th-16th). Many produced domestic food bone.

3.50   Layers 614 (and the associated 614/1) and 517 (with 517/1) are particularly instructive, since they were the principal origin indoors of unfinished pins, pin-heads and pinners' bones, the single tell-tale sign of the pinning industry in the building.

3.51   The craft material from the floors of the end room (with all the later hearths) comprised:
- 3 non-ferrous metal-working crucible fragments (with a fourth just outside to the east)
- 2 brass aglets (also sometimes called pin-sheaths)

3.52   However, further from the later heat sources, the material from the middle (perhaps storage and finishing) room far outweighs this:
- 1 pinner's bone
- 120 finished pins
- 466 unattached pin-heads
- 36 unfinished (headless) pins
- 27 brass wire lengths
- 1 brass aglet or pin-sheath
- 5 wool-carding combs

3.53   Most of these were found in a discrete area within the eastern side of the room which was outlined by a stone kerb. This may indicate the base of a large storage cupboard, or perhaps an under-stairs space.

3.54   Pinners' bones (see 6.28), usually (including here at Much Park Street) large mammal metatarsals, have been found elsewhere in Coventry, with some published, such as from Cox Street (the medieval Mill Lane) where over 40 were excavated in 1976-8 (Bateman and Redknap 1986, 24-6, 151-2).

3.55   Outside lay a pit which produced similar waste, indicating that it was related closely to the ongoing waste or end of the industry [658].

- Pit 658 was sub-circular in plan and measured approximately 0.8m across. It contained fills 520, 520/1, 520/2 and 520/3. The last of these fills contained eight pinner's bones and a large assemblage of related bone, suggesting that the pit marks the clearing out of the pinner's work at the end of his tenure. It also contained quantities of food bone (see animal bone, this report).

3.56 Pottery from both pits is of the 15th-16th centuries, with a preponderance of Midland Purple types, but with the 16th-century type-fossil Cistercian Ware conspicuous by its absence. That type is found in tiny quantities only, inside the rear wing (527) in a possible floor layer which the excavator at the time in 2010 thought might just be a demolition context (and consequently with 526 over it).

3.57 The continued deposition of pottery in rubbish pits during the 16th century indicates that the plots were not totally abandoned during the nadir of the medieval city's fortunes in the period c1518-1525 or perhaps again directly after 1539, but there may well be a wide variation in the economies of individual plots lying cheek-by-jowl. It is unfortunate that in this case so little of each plot was available for excavation (the frontages lying under the present road), or, had been destroyed (by the 19th-century Carchester Cottage up against the former Town Wall remains). Plot 94-95 is by far the largest of the (roughly) separable portions of the excavated area and the best indicator in the excavated row of the late medieval economy.

Pit 658 – the lifestyle and demise of a pinner and his craft

3.58 John Garton, pinner, was said to be unfit for the militia in 1522 (above). By 1523/4 he had ceased to trade and the economy was such that no pinners practiced thereafter anywhere from Much Park Street Ward. It is very likely therefore that the contents of this pit (520, 520/1, 520/2 and 520/3) represent either his or his succeeding tenant's clearance of his workshop, either after his death or his departure from the street, and maybe even the city.

3.59 The craft-material deposited in this pit is considerable and complement the waste from inside the building:
- 9 Pinner's bones
- 85 finished pins
- 27 unattached pin-heads

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- 109 unfinished (headless) pins
- 1 aglet (also called pin-sheaths)

Pit 826 – evidence for a second craftsman and his religion

3.60 Alongside the pinner, or possibly just pre-dating or post-dating his presence, was a further tradesman, principally it seems a skinner (see animal bone, this report).

- Pit 826 measured c1m east-west x c0.7m north-south and its fills 827, 827/1 and 827/2 contained a great deal of pottery, copious quantities of animal (but not food) bone (see Emily Johnson's report below) and 18 bone and jet beads.

3.61 The craft-material deposited in this pit is notable for its contrast with the pinning waste, comprising:

- 6 finished pins
- 1 non-ferrous metal-working crucible fragment
- 1 whetstone
- A distinctive animal bone assemblage that betokens rabbit and squirrel 'feet-on' fur pelts.

3.62 However, this pit also produced a collection of beads, potentially from a rosary or *paternoster*. Beads were used in both counting and in saying prayers and sets were usually strung in tens, a set known as 'Ave beads', divided by a single larger bead called a 'gourd' or 'paternoster bead'. At the end of the string a crucifix or a tablet could be hung. They were usually attached to belts or girdles (Standley 2013, 64-5).

3.63 During the later reign of Henry VIII the rosary was officially disapproved of. Later, in the 1549 articles of Edward VI, clergy were ordered to admonish those who prayed using beads, and deny them communion. They returned to favour briefly under Mary I, but in 1559 on the accession of Elizabeth I, preachers were to remind congregations that prayer beads were 'maledictions of God'. They were finally outlawed in 1571 (ibid).

3.64 Jet was widely held to have magic, talismanic powers, capable of driving away venomous beasts, while elsewhere it was ascribed anaesthetic properties (Standley 2013, 86). It was thought to cure cataracts and toothache. Standley goes on to say:

'If used in a smoke bath it could reveal if someone was epileptic, or if they were a virgin; (further discernment between these two is difficult to comprehend). If worn and melted, used in divination, it was said to aid those with swellings of the skin or flesh or were afflicted by gout. Should a man need protection against witchcraft, then jet would serve this purpose'.

3.65   The excavation of a small workshop working jet behind 113 Much Park Street (reported in Colls and Mitchell 2013, 63-8) is surely the local origin of the jet beads here; it would be perverse to look elsewhere.

Pins and trinkets in 16th-century society

3.66   A recent programme of research has been undertaken across widely divergent parts of England which throw considerable and surprising light upon the humble pin and its significance within society (Standley 2013).

3.67   It should perhaps go without saying that in a society which was just as concerned as our own about personal appearance, pins were used in vast quantities for the making of clothing, particularly in the home where much dressmaking (and mending) took place. On certain sites, where such activities were known or suspected, the presence of pins confirms the practice. Not far from Coventry at the gentrified former Cistercian house at Combe Abbey in 1993-4 recording work on the first floor, in the lee of a huge former west-facing first-floor sixteenth-century window, found copious quantities under the floorboards and between the joists, where needlework and dressmaking was wont to make the most of the afternoon and summer evening light (Soden 1995).

3.68   However, the uses and significance of pins goes much further. As Standley relates, citing other sources (2013, 38):
'..pins may have been gifted, such as a gravoir, or simpler, less ornate pins used in head-dresses that may have been the type sold by Chaucer's friar and mercer. Small pins could have been relatively cheap gifts bought in large numbers for courted women and brides. Pins were commonly found in brides' trousseaus, along with clothes, household goods and other dressmaking items such as needles and thimbles...'

3.69   Lace-ends, aglets or tag-ends, also commonly called 'points' are also an occasional find and there are a number from this site. Standley (2013, 49-51) notes that they are usually under-represented in the archaeological record, usually due to an absence of

sieving in archaeological strategies, although does not say the same about pins, which although numerous are usually just as small but do not apparently suffer the same under-representation.

3.70   Tag-ends are usually (quite properly) interpreted as the chapes wrapped around the end of a lace to prevent it fraying with use and are found where lace-up clothing was prevalent. Their type is, of course, still used today, mostly of plastic, on every kind of lace-up shoe. However, they have also occasionally been labelled 'pin-sheaths' or point-protectors, from a few examples found previously with the point of a pin inside them, and specialist dressmaking uses (Hobley 1971, 119-20, citing Groves 1966, plate 58). This might suggest that individual, larger pins might be sold with some 'protection' for the purchaser, to prevent them pricking themselves. There are three such tag-ends from the floors of the pinners' workshop here, with a fourth from pit 658. Whether this is enough to suggest a pin-related use, or whether the pinner was also making lace-tags from thin bronze sheet, and if so for exactly what purpose, is impossible to answer.

3.71   Such particular pins, carried around outside the home or the dressmaking environment, might on occasion be imbued with startling properties, to which end young ladies at court wishing to become pregnant (presumably by their husbands) were encouraged to stick pins in Henry VIII's codpiece. The outcome is not recorded.

3.72   With the demise of the pinning capacity of the plot, the property continued, although perhaps the buildings may not have been lived in, but rather used for storage. It is also possible they were left derelict for a while. As related above, there was a later need for pit-digging on the plot, and successively the stratigraphic relationships made by the pits show that the lean-to's and other buildings were indeed lost, bit by bit, until the Three Swans Inn was built in 1711, after which no contemporary pits were dug at no 95.

An open-plan plot at no 96

3.73   Early material on this plot is just as disturbed as the others. There are hints at a boundary ditch shared with no 95 but these are muddled by the similar lines adopted by later walls and foundations, right up until the 20th century. A large 2m-wide pit (915) does date from the second half of the 13th century, but its fills (916, 917) include only

a scatter of pottery of the 12th-13th-centuries. Everything else post-dates these beginnings by some way, and 13th-14th century pottery is unfailingly residual.

3.74 If no 96 acquired a rear wing, it was much shorter than its neighbours to the east at nos 94-95. Two truncated wall foundations (636, 637) jut into the excavated area from the north but make for a wing almost 5m shorter than at 95, and surely only one room deep behind the (now inaccessible) frontage. In the yard area behind it lay pit 594, but its fills (595, 596) contained only small amounts of pottery dating to the period 13th-15th centuries. The pit's purpose is unclear as this infilling with residual pottery leaves it lacking easy interpretation. This yard is remarkably clear of other medieval features or indeed anything which might suggest the space was impeded or divided up in any way. It is possible that it was indeed kept clear for the most part and that it was an open space, accessible from Much Park Street up an alley between nos 95 and 96, but this cannot be confirmed.

3.75 Further back lay a further yard area, at least some of which may have been covered over. The background soil (572) was the equivalent of buried soils which stretched through into adjacent plots (such as 841) and contained residual and abraded pottery of the 12th-14th centuries (dominated as ever by Nuneaton A wares, but with a few earlier Coventry products), attesting perhaps the first, indeterminate uses of the plots. This layer was discontinuous but was found right back into what became the garden-backplot, just like on the adjacent plots. All 15th century and later features were cut through it, but in turn it hid or covered very little.

3.76 About half of the yard area was in fact utterly destroyed, smothered by the 20th-century insertion of a 4m x 3m deep concrete tank which also protruded into the former rear garden. The remaining portion was covered in the same old topsoil which contained 14th century abraded pottery, probably a former garden surface and is to be equated to 572 across the yard and 841 stretching across no 95 and on into no 94, along with 507 over in no 93 to the east.

3.77 Surviving features within the yard comprised two boundary walls (556 on the north side, 567 on the south adjoining the garden). Both were relatively flimsy and almost certainly supported a timber frame, perhaps suggesting that the yard was roofed over, however temporarily that may have been. A stone post-pad at the half way mark, possibly for a roof-support, might corroborate this idea.

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3.78   Two pits lay at the surviving north-west and south-west corners of the yard (587 and 568 respectively), while a substantial spread of sandstone (571) had been cut away by the abovementioned concrete tank; it was possibly a hardstanding but this is unclear. A nearby layer (570) may be related. Both of the two pits were sub-circular and 587 was stone-lined.

Fig 15: Pit 587, north to bottom; scale 1m.

3.79   Another stone-lined pit lay just outside the building in the yard (589). This was also a circular pit of about the same size, c1m diameter, but it had been clay-capped and was filled with ash-rich material. It contained very little pottery but what there was dates its infilling to the later 17th century.

3.80   In the rear garden, beyond the garden dividing wall, lay a very large pit (897, 3m x 2m in plan) and a 2m-long, 40cm-wide gully or slot connected to it (904). Neither produced much pottery (from 898 and 906), but both just enough to date them to the 15th century or later. Together they constituted the only features in this part of the garden cut through the old, 14th-century garden soil; their purposes are unknown although 897 was large enough to have been for extraction purposes.

A portion of no 97, 'the corner plot'

3.81   Only a small portion of no 97 was included in the excavations, since here the pavement of Short Street, created from c1900, swung across to close off the westward side of the site in a swinging arc where it would join Much Park Street to Parkside.

3.82   There were no features on this plot which dated earlier than the 15th century, and any early occupation was represented only by residual pottery of the 13th and 14th centuries.

3.83   As with the other plots there appears to be a rear wing (or just a space) relating to the Much Park street frontage, an addition on the rear (where the other excavated plots have a yard), and a garden beyond that. Interestingly, the various compartments all line up with those of the other plots, so the rear wing is comparable in length, the yard occupies a similar portion and proportion of ground, and the garden begins on the far side at the same point.

3.84   Of the former rear wing nothing remained to be excavated within the site, so nothing can be said of its form or size. In this area only a two-phase pit survived. The first phase was a wide shallow pit cut into the natural clay (937) and within this was set a stone-lined pit (611).

3.85   Just to the rear of the pit lay a separate, stone-founded building, of which the north, east and south foundation walls were excavated (553, 554 and 555 respectively). A secondary line of neat stone foundation (886) was also built up against outer face of the east wall (554). The interior of the building measured 4.1m north to south by at least 3m east to west.

3.86   The inner face of the walls was in each case very well constructed, using mostly well-coursed squared stones, although not quite of ashlar quality. Up to six courses survived in places. The inner face is of much better quality than the outer, leading to the supposition that the building which these walls describe seems to have possibly been initially a semi-basement. Either that or it had a considerable air-gap beneath a timber floor, of which no vestige remains.

3.87   Within this possible semi-basement, at least one portion of a former sandstone superstructure had either collapsed onto the natural ground or there was a deliberate infilling with a thick layer of rubble (548). Pottery from within it dated this episode to the 17th or 18th century.

Fig 16: A possible semi-basement? The stone building on Plot 97 during cleaning, looking north-east

3.88   Beneath the rubble was a short sequence of layers, 951, 952 (17th century) and 728 (15th-16th century).

3.89   In one corner of the building, beneath the rubble, apparently lay a 2.1m-deep square pit (549) containing numerous rubbish layers (947, 948, 550, 551, 552 and 782 – newest to oldest in order). Only the earliest two, 552 and 782, contained any dating evidence, and both dated to the 15th-16th century. However, although on first inspection this seemed to be something like a garderobe pit within the building, closer scrutiny shows that it contained at its south-western corner, the only modern driven concrete pile on the site. The south wall foundation of the building (555) had sagged and bowed as the pile was driven, and the layers within the pit would seem to be the same layers as under the rubble, merely drawn down and deformed by the concussion of 20th-century foundation-piling. It is not clear what the pile was for, but it may have been to support the massive bill-boards which fringed the site during the 1960s and 70s and which would have needed sufficient solidity against their natural inclination (on a site with an open plot behind and a road in front) to act like sails in high winds, from whichever direction the wind blew.

3.90   Two 19th-century features lay up against or alongside this building in close association (one of them a salt-glazed drain 573 carefully running parallel to the south wall),

suggesting that the building did indeed still stand at the time or its footing had been re-used for a later building. This may just be the (clearly timber-framed and brick-nogged) building which is shown in the pre-1931 photograph of the site and at that date appears to form at least the furthest part (furthest from the camera) of no 3 Short Street, just to the right of where the first-floor jetty ends (see Figure below). The evidence however is equivocal.

Fig 17: The post-1904 but pre-1931 photo. What is potentially the timber-framed superstructure of the excavated building behind no 97 (3 Short Street) is arrowed. When the corner of Much Park and Short Streets was subsequently rounded off, a huge swathe in an arc of the frontage foundations was lost under the carriageway and pavement.

3.91   Behind (south of) the building the old garden soil (572) continued to extend, just as it did with all the plots, probably up to the former town wall. A single large rectilinear pit (592) was found dug into the garden surface and contained 17th- to 18th-century dated finds.

At the back of the plots

3.92   In the southern half of the site a watching brief was maintained on mainly foundation and service trenches. This was in the region of the former Carchester Cottage and ran around 20m of the south edge of the site and up the east edge for some 25m. Foregoing evaluation trenches by Birmingham Archaeology had suggested that there was much less archaeology in this area.

A Tale (possibly) of John Graner, Pinner and his neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON PARKSIDE, COVENTRY, IN 2010
May 2020

archaeology
warwickshire
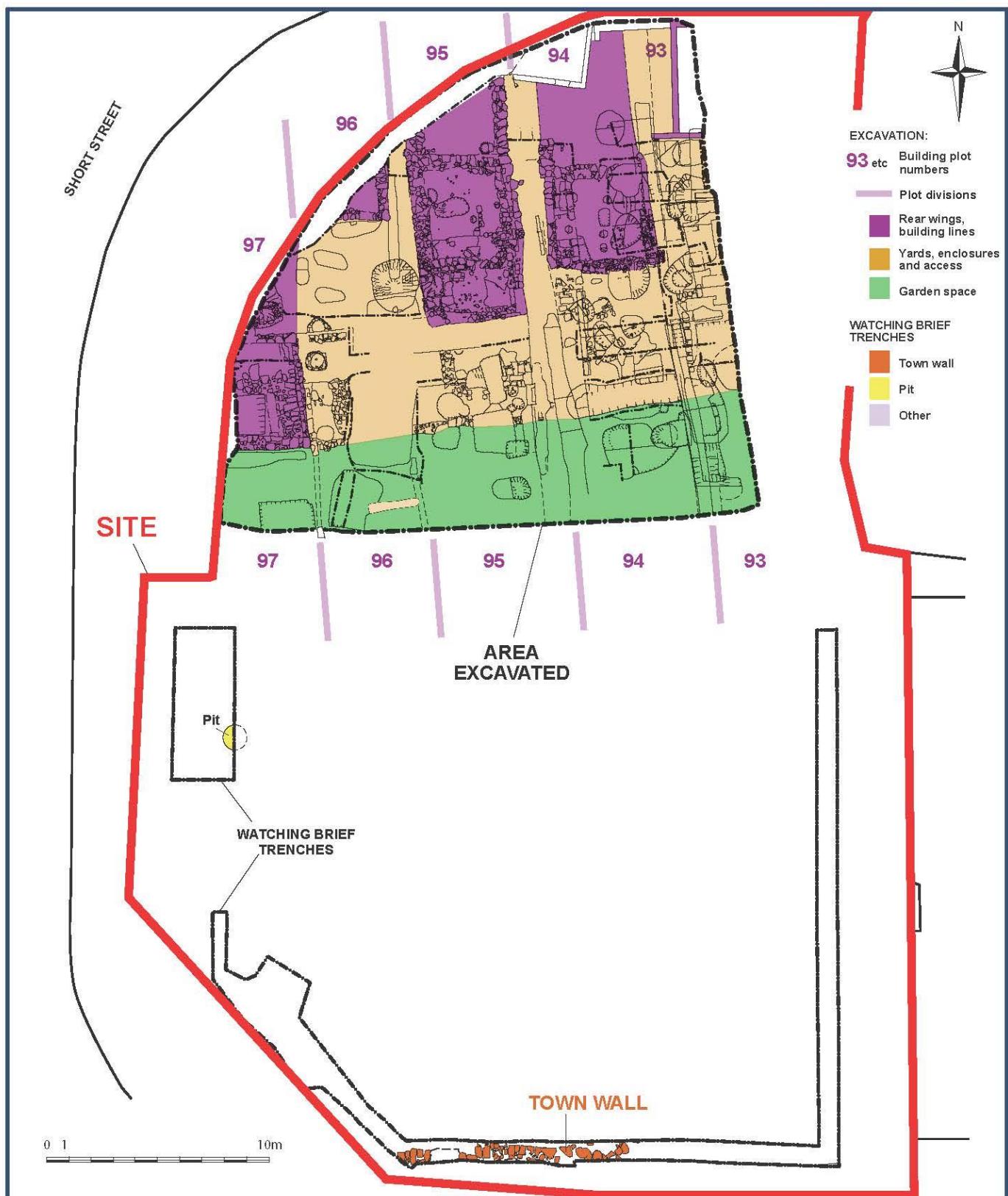
Fig 18: Plan showing area excavated with detail of watching briefs

A Tale (possibly) of John Garton, Pinner and his Neighbour in Coventry in the 1520s
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ON PARKSIDE, COVENTRY, IN 2010
May 2020

archaeology
warwickshire

3.93　At the back of pavement and in the angle between Parkside and Short Street, the trenching came upon a configuration of brick foundations including a spiral stairway going down into a cellar, a feature not previously known for the houses on Parkside.

Fig 19: Spiral brick staircase (formerly with timber tread-nosings) down to a Parkside cellar, looking south; scale 0.5m

3.94　It is likely that this cellar, and any others which may lie nearby on Parkside, had utilised the former town wall and its foundation on their south side, since to dig that away would have been a thankless task. In fact the northern edge of the sandstone, clay-bonded foundation of the town wall was present along much of the southern watching brief trench (965), where it directly overlay natural sandstone and clay (900). Its width was not apparent in these works but previous works in 1991 on The Cheylesmore indicate it is up to 2.1m wide at foundation level.

Fig 20: Foundations of the town wall, north to right; scale 0.5m

4   POTTERY

4.1   The site produced pottery dating from the 12th/13th centuries to the 19th century. The assemblage was scrutinised and quantified by Stephanie Ratkai soon after the fieldwork and I am grateful for her excellent bench-work as the foundation on which I have based the following highlights and interpretation from my own experience of the city's ceramic traditions over 35 years.

4.2   This might be a typical urban assemblage from Coventry but for a few notable characteristics, mainly absences. These may not be particularly significant in terms of dating, as a hiatus is not unusual in a city with fluctuating medieval and post-medieval fortunes, but might be more so in terms of site status at any particular juncture and the changing nature of occupation on the plots.

4.3   The demolitions of 1931 and the subsequent smoothing off of the street-corner (with the consequent loss of the historic frontage) undoubtedly took with it a swathe of occupation debris along with the superstructures of all the buildings and any late floors. The levelling of the ground no doubt scraped away the tops of many pits and not a few square metres of later ground surface where it might otherwise have been left standing proud of the roads adjacent. However, this does not fully explain the notable ceramic profile of the site, in which the better-represented plots (dominated by nos 94-95), have a very distinctive ceramic profile.

The origins and development of the plots

4.4   The earliest pottery from the site is Coventry D ware. However, it occurs in only a handful of sherds, all abraded and not from diagnostic parts of vessels. Their production date lies between c1150 and c1240, but their few scattered and abraded remnants here indicate that they are obviously residual in later contexts (always alongside equally-abraded Chilvers Coton products).

4.5   Also present in relatively large quantities were the everyday cooking pots and jars of local manufacture which include Coventry A wares, but amongst which can be seen a few shelly ware sherds, probably from the Northamptonshire area, and a very few sherds of flint/gravel tempered types, possibly from Wiltshire, previously known on only one or two sites in Coventry but better known from Long Compton and the Chipping Campden area. However, the seigneurial links with Coventry through their feudal

overlords, the independent Earls of Chester, a link continuing with their Earl of Arundel successors after 1232 (Soden 2009, 119) is insufficient to suggest an influence over the pottery supply (Chris Dyer pers comm), even if the seigneurial link Coventry's Benedictine Cathedral, completed c1224, was the spiritual centre of the Earldom and that Richard, brother of Hugh Kevelioc, the 5th Earl, was buried there (ibid).

4.6   None of the local jar/cooking pot types include the earlier, 12th-century examples, which are characterised by incised wavy lines and pie-crusted rims and are most commonly found on sites further towards the city's early core. Nor do they contain more than a couple of examples of roulette-stamped bodies which were a hallmark of the 12th century Stafford- and Chester-types. All are plain and as such the earliest examples are here suggested to belong to the 13th century, not 12th.

4.7   A few contexts, such as 825, contain well-preserved early jars/cooking pots which suggest primary or near primary deposition in open features. Notably however, the ditches which characterise the earliest divisions to create the plots all contain backfills which include widespread quantities of Chilvers Coton A wares and smaller quantities of Cannon Park wares. Vessel forms represented are (probably) jugs, mostly green glazed from Chilvers Coton and splash-glazed orange/green in Cannon Park types.

4.8   These types, equally abraded for the most part, characterise features dated to the 14th century, although one may add five sherds of a London-type ware jug (four from 786, one from 811), with its characteristic orange glaze and thick white-firing trailed slip over lines of applied 'scales' , previously noted in quantity from the Benedictine Cathedral Priory (Clarke and Soden in Rylatt and Mason 2003, 109). It may also have been present at 7-10 Much Park Street but was not recognised (see Wright 1982, 122-3). Also present is a single sherd of a possible Kingston-type jug from the Surrey Whiteware tradition, with its characteristic linked-ring-and dot applied decoration (Pearce and Vince 1988, fig 16 and p35-7). With its fast-burgeoning woollen cloth industry, the city's fourteenth century links to London are to be expected reflected in travelling ceramics, and more such examples will surely be forthcoming.

4.9   What seems clear from the assemblages dominated by Chilvers Coton A wares and their contemporaries, is that there are very few features of the 13th or 14th centuries. The vast majority of these mainly baluster jugs and jars is that they comprise a wide range of sherd sizes, almost all of which are heavily abraded by wind and rain and the

passage of feet, just as their unglazed local cooking pot cousins. If there has been 13th-14th century occupation on these plots, other than for cultivation as a garden, it has been totally disturbed by the later buildings and yard occupation. It is also distinctly possible that while the plots were laid out in the 13th century, possibly for burgage tenure, it was a very long time before they were taken up, perhaps a couple of generations. It is possible that in that intervening time, at least some of the contemporary pottery was imported with rubbish from elsewhere in the city.

The 15th -16th centuries: a working pinner and his neighbours

4.10   The transitional period from the medieval to the post-medieval in Coventry is usually a richly rewarding horizon for imported pottery, but this site is notable for the relative dearth of such material. There are none of the pedestal and thumbed-footed Raeren, Cologne and Siegburg mugs seen elsewhere in Coventry and just outside, even at the supposedly conservative Charterhouse, and certainly further up Much Park Street behind 112-22 and on Whitefriars Lane, just opposite. So too the presence of Rhineland Frechen wares, ubiquitous elsewhere as Bartmann jugs (so-called Bellarmines) are noticeable by their absence but for a handful of sherds in total, just one or two, here or there. This dearth was also noted at Far Gosford Street (Soden in Mason et al 2017, 153).

4.11   It is not just the absence of the imported drinking vessels which warrants a remark; drinking vessels of the late 15th and the first half of the 16th century are notably very few, and then represented by only a few sherds. Elsewhere this function is usually performed by the so-called Cistercian wares, found in a variety of fragile, thin-walled cup-forms and are usually the well-potted pre-Reformation predecessors to their more inexpertly-thrown descendants, the early blackwares, appearing in Coventry and Warwickshire around 1475 and remaining in constant use up to the Dissolution in 1539. Their fragmentation when broken can be spectacular and with the exception of their more-sturdy bases they shatter into very many body and rim-sherds. However, the entire site produced only 22 sherds and its helpful dating indicators can scarcely be brought to bear here.

4.12   In the absence of the otherwise ubiquitous dating aid of Cistercian ware, there do appear to be some 16th-century type fossils. A few sherds suggest the site contained at least five Martincamp stoneware flasks, including a single, almost complete example from context 564 (reconstructed). These 16th-century type-fossils are distinctively

mammiform, lack a 'base', and very fragile, so their sherds are often widely scattered and dispersed. Other than the reconstructed example there were a further five sherds from elsewhere.

Fig 21: Reconstructed Martincamp flask (context 564); scale 30cm

4.13   The reconstructed example appears to be a type II flask, and dates from around the middle of the 16th century (Hurst and van Beuningen 1986, 102-4). Although only ever seen so far in small quantities around the city, it compares with other examples excavated from within the city over the Benedictine Cathedral nave (Clarke and Soden 2003, 115), behind 112-22 Much Park Street (Ratkai in Colls and Mitchell 2013, 75) and (another near-complete example in the suburbs at Barras Lane (Soden 2005, 149 & fig 46) at Far Gosford Street (there too against a background of almost no bellarmine jars -Mason et al 2017, 152-3) and at Charterhouse (Soden 1995, 96 & 99). The neck and upper body of another flask or costrel neck from 623, in a hard white/buff-firing fabric, may be either a type I flask (c1475-1550) or be in imitation of a Martincamp flask form, which its neck and shoulders closely resemble, but the absence of glaze would have meant it would constantly weep and evaporate its contents.

4.14 The assemblage of the 15th and 16th centuries is dominated by storage and preparation vessels, be they pancheons/bowls cooking pots, jars, cisterns, and occasional jugs. They occur in a number of fabrics, from late Chilvers Coton (Nuneaton) C ware through transitional and mainstream Midlands Purple (from a probable variety of sources) to plain local redwares and glazed red earthenwares. All have been seen in Coventry before on a wide variety of sites and this dominance may be typical of the period, if (for instance) the dumped material found in the city ditch on Hill Street is a reliable indicator (Mason et al 2017, 53-4).

4.15 Most recognisable are the tall straight-sided two-handled cisterns, often with an applied bung-hole near the base, and with crescentic cut-outs on the bifid rim which may have been to help the contents 'breathe' around a lid. Since so few ceramic lids are ever found (there are none here), a turned wooden lid seems a probable accompaniment. The scalloped rim-form is most readily seen (as here) in Midlands Purple-type fabrics, but on this site is also met with in a plain unglazed red-ware type. It has previously been seen in quantity at Cox Street 1976, Charterhouse 1986-7, behind 112-22 Much Park Street and at Hill Street 2005 (Bateman and Redknap 1986, 73-5; Soden 1995, 96; Ratkai in Colls and Mitchell 2013, 48; Soden in Mason et al 2017, 152). This distinctive late medieval and early post-medieval form, which also occurs at Leicester, should perhaps now be considered a staple of the Coventry consumption market.

4.16 Also in Midlands Purple type on this site is a possible candlestick base (context 540) and from context 613 comes a so-called chicken-feeder, comprising deep concentric circular channels, and a form still in use for that purpose for poultry today.

4.17 The 15th-16th-century cooking pot/jar in Coventry typically has either a bulbous or a squareish profile with a slightly elongated, if not extravagant, slightly out-turned rim. Numerous examples, including that illustrated below, have a close parallel in an example with the typical flaring rim from Hill Street (Mason et al 2017, 58, fig 5.4:2). Whether glazed or not, the pot is of a size given to ease of movement, unlike the larger (and very fragile) cooking pot/jars of the 12th-14th centuries which preceded them.

Fig 22: A probable Nuneaton-made jar, in firing terms approaching the hard 'proto-stoneware' of Midlands Purple, glazed green on the inner base (context 827); scale 30cm

4.18   Possible 15th-century table-wares from the site are very few and confined to only 49 sherds representing a very few forms in Surrey Whiteware-type, or so-called 'Tudor Green' (Pearce and Vince 1988, 79-81), although they may be a purely local Chilvers Coton (Nuneaton) product when found in Coventry. The most common form here is the lobed cup, already seen on many sites in Coventry and dating to the first half of the 15th century, along with at least one jug. With the complicated lobed cup form and its very thin walls, their propensity when broken to shatter into tiny sherds means that the number of vessels represented here is impossible to assess. The excavated occurrences across the city suggest it was a widespread favourite and it remains a type-fossil for mid-15th-century deposits.

4.19   Possibly the most unusual table-ware from the site (if one might pun on the term) is what appears to be a chunky ceramic table-leg or child's chair-leg in an orange-firing fabric with an olive glaze, probably a Nuneaton product – the object from which it derived would surely not have travelled far as it would have been very heavy. It is decorated with scored chevrons down the outside and the inner face of the leg has a deliberate cut-out on the leg's inner face which might suggest it is mimicking the form of a cloven hoof. As such it might have taken an animal form and been a child's riding-

toy, although static. It had sheared off along the top, where it had formerly made a junction with a flat platform, perhaps the chair seat or saddle, and had splayed outwards when too much weight had been placed on it. This one leg was the only part present.

Fig 23: Solid glazed red-ware chair/table/riding toy leg (context 827); scale 30cm. The far, inner side is deliberately notched, perhaps to imitate a cloven hoof.

4.20   Of particular note, and also from context 970 is a body sherd in a hard-fired late Nuneaton fabric which bears a piece of script in relief. Its regularity and one deeply incised edge suggest it has been applied using a roller-stamp. It has not been evenly applied, partly because the curve of the pot wall has militated against this, and as a result the lettering is indistinct. The sherd has also broken along the top of the 'inscription', further masking its message, which is exactly 10mm high. Not all of the characters appear to be proper letters, in Lombardic script, but may be deliberate word-breaks or even letter-approximations; certainly there is also one 'pellet' which could also be a deliberate break, just as is seen on a medieval coin.

4.21   From what little is 'legible', it is suggested here that, however poorly applied, and however literate the potter (or the stamp-maker) either a religious inscription (such as a rosary) or something apotropaic, to ward off the evil eye, or even a pun is possible, such as a suggestion for an example from the ditch at Hill Street (see below) of 'What is mine is mine'.

4.22   Unfortunately in the present example, too few certain letters can be discerned to be sure of the intention, so a 'nonsense' verse is all that can reasonably be suggested, leading to the suggestion that the potter or the stamp-maker, or both, were only semi-literate. The market was seemingly not particularly discerning in its taste.

Fig 24: Roller-stamped sherd (970), raking light from left (at left) and from right (at right). Script is 10mm high.

4.23   Such pots bearing inscriptions, whether impressed, roller stamped or in applied letters, were once thought very rare. However, Coventry seems to produce an unusual concentration of them, while they still seem to be rare elsewhere. The first example, published by Gerald Dunning, came from Hertford Street and is in the Shelton Collection in the Herbert Museum (Dunning 1967). A second (with applied letters) from Coventry derived from Bayley Lane's Castle Bakehouse in 1990 and was dated on epigraphic grounds to the 1440s (Soden 1990). A third is from Flore, near Northampton (Blinkhorn and Dix 1992, 107-8). Fourthly is an example from the city's defensive ditch at Hill Street in 2005 (Blinkhorn in Mason et al 2017, 54-5), while the latest in 2010 is from this site (above). With four out of five deriving from Coventry, the one thing which unites them all is that they are all in late Chilvers Coton fabrics, tending towards the emerging Midland Purple. The well stratified examples lie in solidly 15th- or early 16th-century contexts.

Fig 25: Base of an early post-medieval chafing dish from 970, one of at least three from the site

4.24   Like its inscribed vessels, Coventry has also produced an unusually high concentration
of 16th century chafing dishes, reflecting perhaps greater refinement at table but
certainly changes in eating and food serving habits during the period. The Shelton
Collection alone contains 41 (in 1992 this was in excess of those held by the British
Museum). In recent years others have been excavated at the Benedictine Cathedral
Priory (imported Saintonge ware), Charterhouse (late medieval redware) and more
recently behind 122-3 Much Park Street. There are parts from more examples here at
this site, including a complete base from context 970 (in a glazed redware); further
fragmented examples have been recovered here in Midland Yellow (context 697) and
a fragment in a manganese-mottled earthenware (context 578), this last one seemingly
being from the later 17th century. It remains a matter of conjecture how exactly they
were used, usually thought to be to keep food warm at the table, rather like fondue-
sets. However, if so, there is so far no plausible suggestion as to why the perforated
bowl never seems to bear any scorch-marks or ash-staining from the hot fuel inside.
Increasingly during the 16th century they are considered sufficiently highly-valued to
appear in local Coventry and Warwickshire household inventories, such as next to Hill
Street Gate, Coventry in 1532 and at Stoneleigh in 1556 and 1558 (Soden 2005, 176;
Alcock 1993, 24 and 35). However much they might have been suddenly sought after,

perhaps reflecting a growing sophistication at the table, like all ceramics, they were vulnerable to breakage.

The early post-medieval plots

4.25   The material of the period 1550-1700 is very much present, and in large quantities. There are numerous multi-handled drinking mugs (so-called 'tygs'), in their upright, deeply-striated forms, with widely varying amounts of glossy black glaze, often inexpertly applied, over a hard brick-red or even harder grey fabric. Although their thinner upper walls are not well represented, their sturdy bases are, early examples (c1580-1640) being only adequately potted and lacking the finesse of their Cistercian-ware forebears. Present too are a few press-moulded slipware plates of c1700-20, (both dark-on-light and feathered types) alongside Midland blackware hollow-ware chamber- pot types, pancheons, butter-pot types and cream-bodied vessels with black glazes mottled brown with added manganese. These are classic Staffordshire products of c1680-1720. The blackwares here do, however, occur only in moderate quantities but lack the diversity of forms which characterise the mid- to late 18th century output from Staffordshire. A single sherd of a pierced lug (for suspension) from the shoulder of a costrel is the only unusual blackware type present and is probably late 16th-century. Elsewhere four sherds from context 506 derive from a blackware/manganese-mottled form, possibly a cup-salt or vase, having lobed or fluted side walls and a wavy, pie-crusted everted rim, a type not met with elsewhere and frustratingly very incomplete.


10 cms
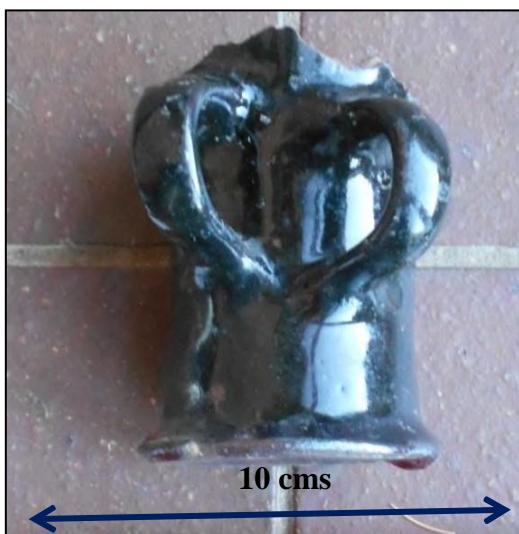
Fig 26: One of a number of 'Tygs', tall straight drinking vessels, often (as this example) with multiple handles (Context 506). Probably from the first half of the 17th century.

4.26 Present in most later sixteenth- to seventeenth-century contexts are the vulnerable sherds of vessels in the soft, powdery white fabric of Midland Yellow, probably made at Polesworth in north Warwickshire. Their custard-yellow glazes craze and flake off easily, very similar to tin-glazed earthenwares, and although in colour they look much like a Staffordshire slipware background, they are very much the poor-relation and are utilitarian, mostly without decoration. They are present only in limited quantities of bowl/jar forms (plus the chafing dish mentioned above), are very abraded and lack the undoubted variety that is seen elsewhere in Coventry (such as at the unpublished Bayley Lane 1988-9 where amongst other things, a zoomorphic apple-baker is notable (Steve Moorhouse, pers comm), or the anthropomorphic bi-chrome stove-tile from Charterhouse, for which see Soden 1995, 97 & 99).

4.27 One notable absence, noted elsewhere in city excavations, is of tin-glazed earthenwares. Apart from a small handful of tiny sherds, one polychrome sherd may be from a Netherlands maiolica altar vase but this is a small sherd in isolation (from context 617). Tin-glazed earthenwares remain puzzlingly absent from most Coventry sites.

4.28 It seems inescapable that the rebuilding of nos 94-95 in 1711 as the Three Swans Inn changed the status of those plots completely. Previously there is an abundance of ceramics used and broken and disposed of behind the frontage. After 1711 little was deposited. Even though the inn may not have lasted for much more than a generation, it seems reasonable to suggest that the change of use also resulted in a change of attitude, and the rear plot may have been used for stabling, laundry, brewing and baking, all activities which took up plenty of room but which did not necessarily allow for the same ground to be used for rubbish disposal as in earlier times. When the inn ceased to function, the occupiers of the plot did not go back to previous ways, perhaps because they had little room to dig rubbish pits and were largely faced with flagged, brick or tile surfaces which militated against such convenient but untidy disposal.

Dwindlings and endings

4.29 While the vast majority of the pottery dates from the 15th-17th centuries, there is a considerable and un-reversed tail–off in the early 18th century, such that amongst the stratified material (11 of 12 boxes), there was no Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware, nor any of its immediate successors, Creamware and Pearlware. This is at odds with all other plots excavated further up Much Park Street, where continuity

right through the 18th century is the key. In the 19th century very little material was deposited here, beyond a few sherds of mocha and a few Underglaze transfer-printed earthen-wares.

4.30   For the 19th century one can simply say that with the rear plots of the Much Park Street frontage covered by new court-housing and related wash-houses and WCs from around 1820-30, with their brick and tile floors and brick alleyways and back yards (known from elsewhere in the city), there was a decreasing opportunity for the deposition of rubbish in earth-dug pits, which neatly and very plausibly accounts for the almost total absence of Victorian or early 20th-century pottery. For three-quarters of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th, the story must differ slightly. It is also possible that some pits of later date could have been dug at the very back of the plot or garden, which would put them further south, beyond the excavated area, and where the 19th-century development of houses on Parkside would have destroyed them. This undoubtedly happened to some earlier pits too, since the bottom of the garden, for some in the shadow of the town wall, would always have been a suitable place to dispose of rubbish, more so than the immediate back yard.

4.31   It is also possible that later owners or tenants chose to dump rubbish in the former town ditch, just across the (by then) ruinous town wall at the edge of the newly-vulnerable Cheylesmore Park. Just such a late dump, on the park edge, occurred in the open ditch and was excavated on Friars Road in 1990 where it was dated from the types present to around 1810 (Soden 1990, unpaginated archive report).

4.32   The excavated plots have a very distinctive ceramic profile, which speaks of long, uncertain beginnings in the 13th-14th centuries, a sudden and extensive flowering in the 15th to 17th centuries followed by a rapid demise, at least in terms of major changes in deposition, perhaps for reasons of rebuilding, new financial impetus and eventually the smothering of the site in impervious materials.

5 ANIMAL BONE *Emily Johnson PhD*

Introduction

5.1 The selected zooarchaeological assemblage from 94-95 Much Park Street, totalling 2492 animal bones, was derived from both hand-collected and bulk-sampled contexts, (*carefully chosen because they were relatively discrete, were well-dated, were seen to be unusually productive in terms of a range of finds and could be closely-linked in date, proximity and stratification to the pinner's workshop already known from existing finds- and documentary research* – Iain Soden). The preservation of the assemblage was exceptionally good, with well-preserved bone surfaces, excellent preservation of small mammal/ microfaunal bones, and a very low proportion of indeterminate specimens (Table 1). All registered 'Small Finds' made of bone were also included in this analysis.

Context	Sample	Area	N	NISP	Preservation %	
					Moderate	*Good*
517		Middle room	12	10	8.3	91.7
	1	Middle room (floor)	10	9		100
539		Middle room	69	62	8.7	91.3
	1	Middle room	10	3		100
540		Middle room	18	16	5.6	94.4
566		Middle room	1	1	100	
614		Middle room	2	0		100
	1	Middle room	39	23		100
705		Middle room	6	6	16.7	83.3
710		Middle room	16	14		100
713		South room	5	3		100
520		External pit 658	344	326	28.2	71.8
	1	Second fill (from top)	187	178		100
	2	Third fill (from top)	186	35		100
	3	Basal fill	82	54	3.7	96.3
827		External pit 826	874	827	7.8	91.8
	1	Second fill (from top)	469	469		100
	2	Basal fill	149	127	1.3	98.7
521		N/A	3	3		100
572		N/A	1	0		100
589		N/A	1	1		100
617		N/A	1	1		100
657		N/A	1	0		100
664		N/A	1	1		100
US		N/A	5	1		100
Total:			2492	2170	7.2	92.6

Table 1: Zooarchaeological assemblage by context showing total fragment count (N), the number of identifiable specimens (NISP, including partially identifiable specimens) and the proportion of bones displaying varying preservation levels.

5.2   Given the size and complexity of the assemblage it was decided to divide material into three categories – that from inside the building (middle and south rooms), dating to the 15-16th century, and the fills from two external pits [658] and [826], dating to the end of the 15th- or beginning of the 16th-centuries.

Method

5.3   The assemblage has been recorded onto an Excel spreadsheet (*in archive*). Where possible, bones were identified to taxa and element (Schmid 1972; Hillson 1999) and the bone zones present noted (Serjeantson 1996). Bird bones were identified using Cohen and Serjeantson (1996). Determination of sheep and goat specimens used criteria outlined in Halstead and Collins (2002), Zeder and Lapham (2010) and Boessneck (1969); where this was not possible a combined ovicaprid class was used. Differentiation of rabbit and hare bones used Callou (1997). Identification of small mammals and microfauna used Johnson (2016).

5.4   Elements that could not be confidently identified to species, such as long bone, rib, cranial and vertebral fragments, have been categorised by taxa size (large/ medium/ small) and type (mammal/ bird/ fish). For mammals, large was equal to cattle-sized; medium was ovicaprid/pig-sized; small was rabbit size and microfauna was rat-sized or smaller. For birds, large was goose-sized, small was thrush-sized or smaller. The identification of fish bones was not undertaken, but specimens have been separated from the other zooarchaeological material to facilitate any future analysis.

5.5   Mammalian age-at-death data was collected where possible. The state of epiphyseal bone was recorded as fused, unfused and fusing, and any determinations of age made using Silver (1969). Dental eruption and attrition was recorded on teeth within mandibles and maxilla using Grant's (1982) wear codes on cattle, ovicaprid and pig teeth, with age determinations following Halstead (1985) and Jones and Sadler (2012) for cattle, Payne (1973) for ovicaprids, and Hambleton (1998) for pigs. Whole long bones were measured using standards set out in von den Driesch (1976) for domestic mammals and Cohen and Serjeantson (1996) for birds. Sexually dimorphic bones were recorded, and specimens have been studied for non-metric traits and pathology.

5.6   Surface modifications resulting from butchery, burning, gnawing and other taphonomic agents were recorded. Fracture freshness analysis was performed on all marrow-bearing bones (the humerus, femur, radius, tibia, mandible and metapodia) of large

and medium mammals, recording the presence of fresh (peri-mortem, for marrow extraction), dry and mineralised (taphonomic) and recent (non-archaeological) fracture (see Johnson 1985).

5.7   Particular attention was paid to any manufacturing waste. Evidence of polish, sawing (where this was not obviously butchery related), file rasps, pin-holder grooves, wider grooves and enlarged foramen on bird bones were all noted on specimens that had not been predesignated as registered 'Small Finds'. Copper staining was also recorded separately with a subjective scale of heavy, medium, light and very light used to categorise the intensity of green-blue copper salt staining on specimens, indicative of burial amongst copper objects, in this case usually pins or pin-debris.

Results

5.8   Overall, 815 specimens were identified to taxa or most likely taxa (c.f.), and a further 1335 were identified to taxa type (table 2). The taxa represented (by NISP and the minimum number of individuals [MNI]), the element distribution and the surface modifications results showed considerable differences between the three comparable context groups, which are described below and then discussed together.

Taxa	NISP	Internal	Pit 658	Pit 826
Cattle	65	9	27	28
Ovicaprid	57	13	20	23
Sheep	10	0	5	5
c.f. Goat	1	0	1	0
Pig	76	8	8	60
Horse	7	0	7	0
c.f. Horse	3	0	0	1
Cat	1	1	0	0
Rabbit	132	0	1	131
Hare sp.	12	0	0	12
Red squirrel	338	0	0	338
Large mammal	150	30	58	59
Medium mammal	109	35	29	45
Small mammal	26	0	0	26
Domestic fowl	11	3	6	2
c.f. Domestic fowl	1	1	0	0
Galliform	1	0	1	0
Goose	29	3	7	19

c.f. Goose	5	1	0	4
Mallard	1	0	1	0
Duck sp.	61	0	61	0
Corvid sp.	2	0	2	0
c.f. Pigeon sp.	1	0	1	0
Bird	116	18	87	11
Large bird	9	0	8	1
Small bird	7	0	7	0
Microfauna	612	0	5	607
Anuran	3	0	1	2
Ray sp.	1	1	0	0
Fish	315	24	242	49
Large fish	8	0	8	0
Indeterminate	322	41	206	69

Table 2: Taxa representation by NISP for the overall assemblage and the three comparable context groups. A full itemisation of taxa per context can be found in table 3.

Bone from the room interiors (The pinner's workshop)

Taxa abundance

5.9   An assemblage of 188 animal bones derived from the middle and south rooms. In terms of taxa, the main three domesticates were represented; a mix of cattle (NISP=9; MNI=2), ovicaprid (NISP=13; MNI = 2) and pig (NISP=8; MNI=1) specimens, some of which were from juvenile (cattle and ovicaprids) or neonate (pigs) individuals. Cats were represented by one tibia fragment. Bird bones were also present, including domestic fowl (NISP=3) and goose (NISP=4). Fish bones, including a probable Thornback Ray buccal spine, were also identified (n=24). Other partially identifiable specimens included medium and large mammal cranial, rib, vertebral and diaphysis fragments.

Bone modifications and manufacturing evidence

5.10   Butchery was identified on 38 elements and included knife (cut marks) and cleaver (chop marks and bone splitting) butchery. The latter was particularly prevalent on ribs, which were chopped part way and then manually cracked, and vertebrae, which were split sagittally (i.e. head to tail or tail to head).

5.11   Burning was identified on 10 fragments – one medium mammal rib was roasted (approaching carbonisation), six avian long bone fragments were carbonised, and

three medium mammal ribs were calcined. This may represent a mix of cooking-related burning (suggesting some but minimal roasting of rib portions) and heat exposure related to disposal – perhaps from throwing refuse into a hearth.

5.12   A mix of freshly (peri-mortem, n=5, plus a further four part-fresh breaks) and drily (n=10) broken marrow-bearing bone was present from the internal contexts. This relatively higher proportion of dry fracture than seen in the other assemblage groups may result from trampling and disturbance, which may be expected from floor contexts.

5.13   Taphonomic surface modification included canid gnawing on 7 fragments. There were clearly dogs around in the building to chew on food waste that retained some flesh.

5.14   In terms of modifications possibly related to manufacturing waste, 22% (n=188) of specimens had copper staining, and possible pinners waste was present (n=4), including two registered finds SF291 and 296.

Bone from pit 658

5.15   The fill (520) of external pit [658], including environmental samples <1>, <2>, and <3> of the second, third and basal fills (from top) contained a much larger animal bone assemblage, totalling 799 specimens. Of this assemblage, 148 bones were identifiable to taxa or probable taxa, 445 were identifiable to taxa size and type, and 206 were indeterminate.

Taxa abundance

Mammals

5.16   *Cattle* were represented by 27 specimens (MNI=3). Elements included material with age at death information, including two mandibles aged at 1-8 months (Halstead 1985) and two unfused left distal radii, with six other specimens fully fused. Metapodia were particularly well represented (n=9), all of which had potential evidence of manufacturing waste.

5.17   *Ovicaprid* bones (NISP=26; MNI=2) included five specimens identified as sheep and one possible goat from the morphology of the mandible and tibia (Halstead and Collins 2002; Zeder and Lapham 2010). One mandible was aged 3-4 years at death (Payne 1973), and of five bones with fusion information, one proximal tibia was unfused.

5.18   *Pig* bones were also present (n=8; MNI=2). Elements were largely appendicular and all bones with fusion data were unfused (n=5), including one possibly neonatal specimen.

5.19   Seven *horse* metapodial fragments were recovered, all of which had modifications related to pinning activity save one accessory metapodia, which likely entered the assemblage attached to specimens required for pinning.

5.20   *Leporid* species were identified from one rabbit proximal ulna.

5.21   Partially identified large and medium mammal specimens included rib, cranial and vertebral fragments, along with long bone fragments, several of which had modifications possibly associated with pinning waste. Several fragments of microfaunal mammal bones were also observed but were not able to be identified to taxa.

Birds

5.22   A total of 174 specimens were identified as bird bones. In addition to those directly identified to taxa or taxa type, a further 102 were identified as bird (n=87), large bird (n=8) or small bird (n=7), particularly including phalanges, ribs, vertebrae and diaphysis fragments particularly of femur, that may account for a skewed distribution of elements for those identified to taxa.

5.23   Ducks were particularly common (NISP=62), including one synsacrum identified to species as mallard. Although it is likely that most duck specimens were domestic, some may represent wild species. Elements included many crania and distal limb fragments, particularly radii, ulnae, carpo-metacarpals and tarso-metatarsals and many phalanges. The under-represented humeri and femora may have been identifiable as avian only, yet a lack of vertebrae for the at least 3 individuals represented here (and indeed all bird specimens) is quite striking. Possible manufacturing evidence was identified in the form of enlarged foramen on duck long bones.

5.24   Other avian species were less well represented. Further domestic species included chicken (n=7, MNI=1) and goose (n=7, MNI=2). One specimen was identified as possible pigeon (*columbidae* sp.) and two ulnae were identified as a large species of corvid. One of the ulnae had enlarged foramen similar to the duck examples.

Other taxa

5.25   A total of 250 fragments of fish bone were identified during the analysis. One anuran long bone fragment was also recovered.

Bone modifications and manufacturing evidence

5.26   Evidence of butchery was observed on 75 elements (where refitting bones are counted as a single specimen). Cut marks, indicative of knife butchery, were evident on 26 bones, largely avian. On the avian specimens cut marks likely indicate disarticulation and carcass portioning, but may also relate to filleting, especially for bones of larger species such as ovicaprids and cattle. Cleavers were often used to portion carcasses. Butchery on the ribs tended to follow consistent rib lengths and techniques, with cleaver chops or sawing part way through the bone followed by a manual crack to separate rib portions. Vertebrae tended to be split sagittally.

5.27   Marrow exploitation was identified on cattle and ovicaprid long bones through the presence of fresh (peri-mortem) fracture (n=13). Some taphonomic fracture was also identified in the form of dry breaks on three specimens.

5.28   A total of 23 elements had evidence of heat exposure, all of which were approaching calcined or were calcined, suggesting burning at high temperatures. Only one was identifiable as an ovicaprid mandibular condyle. This high-temperature burning likely relates to accidental or intentional disposal into hearths.

5.29   Taphonomic modifications included canid gnawing, identified on 12 specimens, and rodent gnawing, identified on a further two. One fragment was possibly digested, and a fish vertebrae had crush marks consistent with accidental chewing and expectoration. Scratches that could represent trampling were identified on a sheep mandible and tibia fragment.

5.30   Evidence for bone modifications relating to manufacturing waste was often recovered from this context, recorded on 35 elements including 15 bones that had not been identified as registered Small Finds. Sawing (unrelated to butchery), filing and polishing were some of the most commonly observed modifications, as well as the thin grooves associated with pin holders and larger grooves associated with some other manufacturing process. Enlarged, burnt foramen on bird bones (n=4) was a further modification suggestive of some sort of manufacturing process. In addition, the

majority of specimens from this context (63.8%; n=799) showed evidence of copper staining, from being in a burial environment in close proximity to copper objects; a large amount of pinning waste was present in this pit.

Bone from pit 826

5.31 A total of 1492 specimens were recovered from fill (827) of external pit [826], including environmental samples <1> and <2>. The number of bones identifiable to taxa or probable taxa was 623, with a further 800 identified to taxa size and/or type, and 69 indeterminate.

Taxa abundance

Large and medium mammals

5.32 *Cattle* specimens (NISP=28; MNI=2) included one mandible aged at 1-8 months (Halstead 1985), and of eight postcranial bones suitable for fusion analysis one proximal femur was unfused. A pelvis acetabulum was morphologically female.

5.33 *Ovicaprid* specimens (NISP=28; MNI=4) included 5 that were identified as sheep (Zeder and Lapham 2010). Of 15 specimens suited to fusion analysis two proximal tibiae were unfused. Some pathological changes to ovicaprid bones were noted, including mild calculus on a mandible and healed periosteal new bone formation on a radius diaphysis (Baker and Brothwell 1980).

5.34 *Pigs* were represented by 60 bone fragments (MNI=4), of which 51 were cranial, mandibular or tooth fragments, with only 9 postcranial specimens. Of five bones suited to fusion analysis just one pelvis acetabulum was fused, with two unfused distal fifth metatarsi, a proximal radius and ulna, and four other specimens that were neonate or juvenile. Along with three mandibles aged at 7-14 months, and one aged 14-21 months (Hambleton 1998), this suggests consumption of young animals, possibly including suckling pig. Through dental morphology, one canine was identified as female and eight tusks were identified as male.

5.35 One possible horse accessory metapodial was identified (RF126).
Specimens identified as large and medium mammals largely comprised rib, vertebral and diaphysis fragments.

Small mammals

5.36   The bones of small mammals and microfauna were particularly well represented in the assemblage from pit [826]. In addition to those elements identified to species, some 662 elements of the extremities, including carpals, tarsals, metapodia and phalanges were recorded as indeterminate microfaunal specimens from [827] <1>. This material was assessed to contain *rabbit* and *squirrel* material of a very similar nature to the rest of the small mammal/microfaunal assemblage and thus further very time-consuming analysis would not yield additional useful zooarchaeological data. Some elements of indeterminate taxa would be identifiable to element using a comprehensive reference collection. Three distal radii fragments and one distal tibia, all unfused, belonged to either a very large hare, or perhaps some mustelid species, and a single metacarpal indicated a species between rabbit and squirrel in size.

5.37   *Leporids* were well represented in the assemblage from [826]. Rabbits and probable rabbit bones were exclusively from the extremities, including tarsals (n=1), metapodia (n=63), and phalanges (n=67), representing at least four individuals, two of which were juvenile from unfused distal fourth metacarpals. Hare species (NISP=12; MNI=2) included three distal radii and the metatarsals from two hind paws, which were unfused. The two paws were from two animals through size difference.

5.38   *Squirrel* bones were the most frequently identified elements in the [826] assemblage at 338 specimens, representing at least 25 individuals (and likely more based on the unidentified squirrel bones as indicated above). Based on their morphology and size the specimens have been determined as red squirrels. All specimens were from the distal limb, with the hind limb overrepresented and the rest of the skeleton completely absent. Some bones showed butchery evidence – a distal tibia showed a cut mark, two astragali were split and a further one was cut, and the proximal process of a calcaneum was also cut. The likely origin of these marks was skinning and removal of the foot.

Bird

5.39   Avian specimens were present in the assemblage, including domestic fowl (NISP=2, MNI=1) and goose/ probable goose (NISP=23; MNI=3). Goose specimens were solely from the wing, particularly radius, ulna and carpometacarpal fragments.

Other taxa

5.40   Fish specimens were present in this assemblage (n=49), including some scales that were well-preserved. Two anuran long bone fragments were also identified.

Bone modifications and manufacturing evidence

5.41   Butchery evidence was recorded on 74 elements. Cut marks on the long bone diaphyses and ribs of larger species suggest filleting; on articulations of bones of smaller species they likely derive from carcass portioning. On cranial fragments and extremities cut marks may relate to skinning – indeed, this is likely the case with all red squirrel and leporid specimens showing butchery characteristics. Chopping, splitting and sawing marks showed some repeated butchery traditions. The chopping and cracking of ribs was seen again in this assemblage, as was sagittal splitting of vertebrae. There was a repeated butchery technique affecting pig mandibles, with the mandibular symphysis split with a cleaver.

5.42   The presence of fresh (peri-mortem) fractures on marrow-bearing bones of cattle, ovicaprids, pigs and large and medium mammals suggests exploitation of marrow (n=23). Fractures caused by deposition and disturbance were rarer (dry = 5, mineralised = 4). Despite their rarity, they suggest that some minimal disturbance affected the specimens after deposition.

5.43   Like the other context groups a very small amount was burnt – one medium mammal long bone fragment and one indeterminate fragment were burnt at high temperatures

5.44   Taphonomic surface modifications were recorded in the form of canid gnawing, on 32 specimens, indicating that dogs were allowed access (whether intentionally or accidentally) to domestic refuse, and a further specimen was rodent-gnawed.

5.45   In terms of manufacturing evidence, it is clear that this pit contains the waste from a very different process to the other external pit. The abundance of small mammal (red squirrels, hares and rabbits, perhaps among other fur-bearing mammals) suggests fur working – either the removed feet that arrived as part of the pelt, as is often the case when skinning smaller mammals, or whole pelts with the feet still attached. This last is unlikely as pelts were expensive. Some pinners' waste is present in this pit, so it may have been open at the same time as the pinners' was in operation – but the amount of copper staining on the zooarchaeological assemblage is drastically lower (<1%) than

in the other external pit (658), indicating that metallic pinning waste was not deposited here. One further industrial process that might be in evidence could be to do with the concentration of geese wings present in the assemblage, whose feathers could be the target material.

Discussion

5.46   In discussing and comparing the zooarchaeological assemblages from these three context groups, two main themes emerge that will form the structure of this section – consumption and manufacture.

Consumption

5.47   It is likely that part of the assemblage from 94-95 Much Park Street represents domestic food refuse, which may indicate the diet of the pinner and other people living on the plot.

5.48   The meat of cattle, ovicaprids (predominantly sheep), pigs, domestic fowl and fish contributed to the pinner's diet, with possible other contributions from rabbits, ducks and geese (Figures 27, 28 and 29). Not all taxa represented here are indicative of diet as at least some derived from manufacturing processes, as will be discussed below. There is little evidence that the nearby royal hunting park directly influenced the pinners table. Coventry's connection with aquatic resources is in evidence through the frequency of fish bones; further analysis would help identify if salt and/or fresh-water fish were being consumed.

5.49   Analysis of age-at-death data gives an indication of the quality of meat consumed. Cattle specimens suggest that veal may have been eaten from the presence of mandibles aged 1-8 months. The fusion analysis suggests that the meat of some older juveniles, prime meat-weight animals and older adults may have also been eaten. This may reflect a mix of meat and milk slaughter, with very young males killed to free up milk for human consumption, and older species slaughtered at different meat weights. Ovicaprid dental and postcranial material suggests consumption of animals aged around 3-4 years and older, which reflects the importance of sheep to the wool economy (Grant 1988). Pigs were clearly eaten from a range of ages, favouring young meat, based on mandibular ages of 7-14 and 14-21 months, and possibly suckling pig based on neonatal specimens. This is to be expected for pigs, which reproduce quickly and are usually solely meat animals as they do not produce any secondary products

(Grant 1988). Thus the pinner's tastes are probably fairly standard for what was available in Coventry at the time, although the consumption of younger beef may suggest a degree of prosperity.
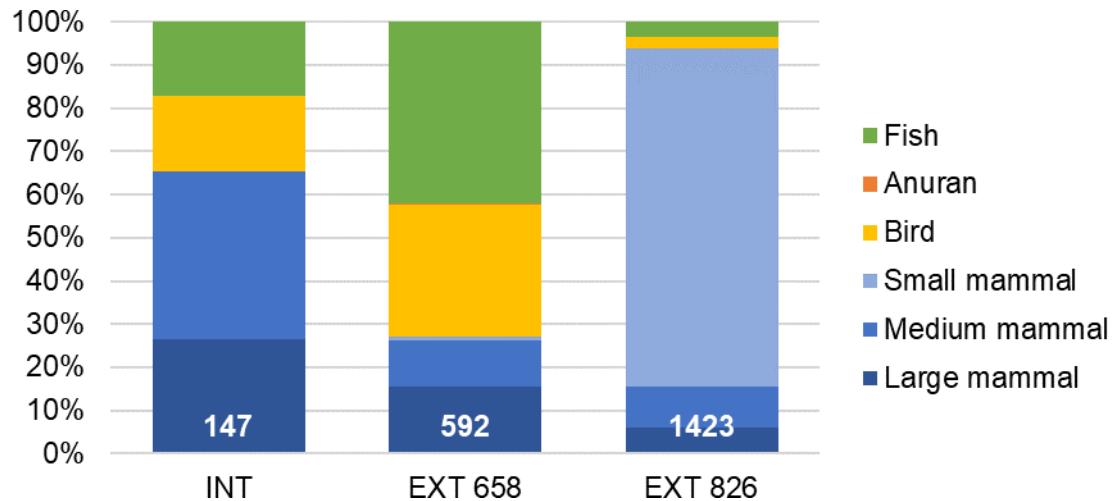

Fig 27: Taxa abundance proportions grouped by taxa size and type, including partially identified specimens. Numerical values are at the base of each bar.
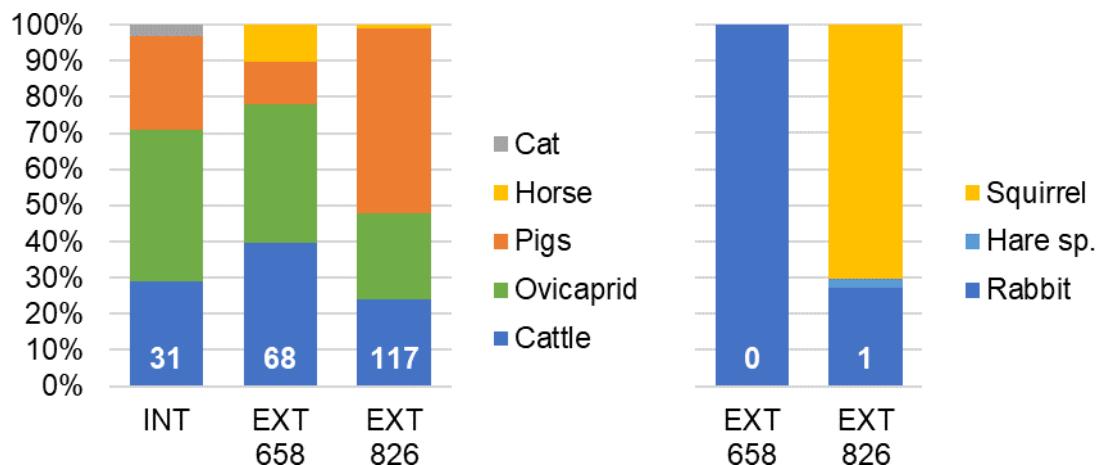

Fig 28: Taxa abundance proportions for fully identifiable large and medium mammal specimens (left) and small mammal specimens (right). Nunmerical values are at the base of each bar.
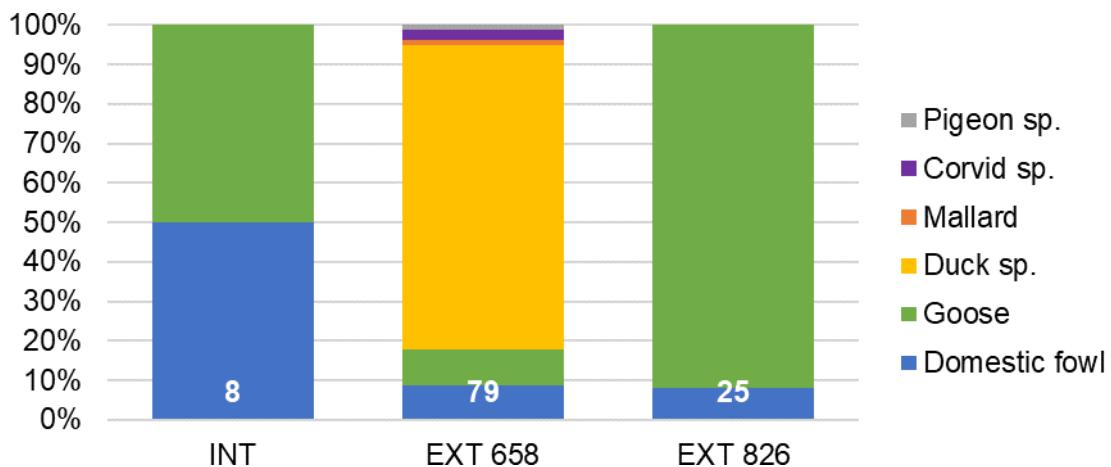
Fig 29: Taxa abundance proportions for fully identifiable bird specimens. Numerical values are at the base of each bar.

5.50   From the element representation, this assemblage likely does not represent primary butchery, and rather represents carcass portions acquired from a butcher. High meat-utility upper limb bones were rare for large and medium mammals (only present in pit [826]), with the lower limb bones, the thorax and (particularly for medium mammals) the skull overrepresented. For birds, the thorax was underrepresented, indicating again that whole birds were not processed on site. If deboned meat fillets were bought from the butcher this would explain some underrepresentation of the meat-rich elements.

5.51   The butchery and burning evidence suggests that most meat was boiled, likely as part of pottage (Hieatt 2013; Wilson 1973; as has also been suggested in the environmental sample report). Given the frequency of cleaver-butchery used to split bones, and the lack of whole bones of large and medium mammals, it is likely that meat cuts and fish were portioned so they would fit in boiling pots (Seetah 2006). Opening of marrow cavities causing fresh fractures would have facilitated the enrichment of stews with marrow and other nutrients. The lack of evidence for roasting further supports boiling as the most common form of cooking.

Manufacture

5.52   Based on the taxa representation and the evidence for bone surface modification it can be suggested that the tools and waste from more than one industrial process contributed to the zooarchaeological assemblage (see also the RF report).
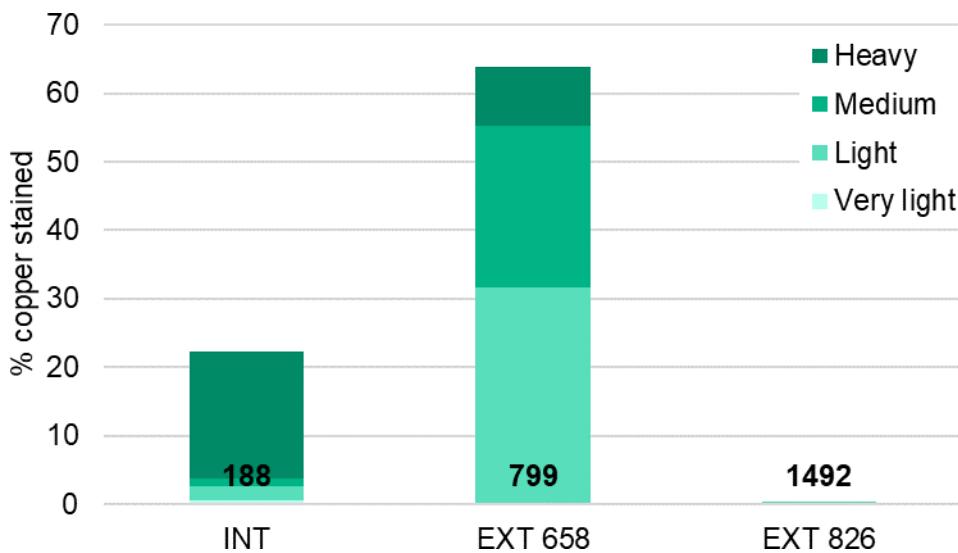
Fig 30: Percentage of each context group affected by copper staining from pinner's waste, in varying degrees of subjective intensity.

Pinner's waste

5.53   Evidence for pinner's waste was recovered from all context groups, but was by far the most commonly identified in the interior (middle and southern) rooms and pit 658. Bone modifications associated with pinning included polishing, sawing, file rasping, and slots for holding pins, particularly when associated with cattle or horse metapodia.

5.54   Specimens with particularly large grooves, unlikely to hold pins, must have been part of a different manufacturing process also taking place at 94-95 Much Park Street (see RF report). It is likely that these bones were acquired solely for pin-making, rather than being reused components of meals. Further possible pinners', or other manufacturing, waste was identified on several bird bone specimens, on which several foramen had been slightly enlarged and burnt around the edges (see RF report). In total, twenty-four additional specimens of manufacturing waste were identified in the assemblages of the interior rooms and pit 658 that had not previously been identified as registered 'Small Finds'. Metal waste from pinning was also prevalent in these contexts which led to extensive copper staining; this was almost entirely absent from external pit 826 but had greatly affected the majority of bones from 658 (Fig 30).

Fur-working waste

5.55   As well as manufacturing waste associated with pinning, refuse from very different craft processes was likely present at 94-95 Much Park Street, entirely found in pit 826. The abundance of leporid and squirrel foot elements (including distal tibiae, carpals and

tarsals, metapodia and phalanges) but with a dearth of other skeletal elements identified as these species suggests that these elements were arriving on site attached to furs, and as such may represent the waste of a skinner or tailor working on the plot, although no such industry contemporary with pin-making was mentioned in the documentary background from historical sources.

5.56 This zooarchaeological signature has been interpreted as evidence of fur-working for similar deposits, such as in Viking Age Birka (AD 750-975), where an abundance of squirrel bones were all specimens from the tail, distal limb and paws (Wigh 2001), and in the high proportions of squirrel remains in a 14th century deposit at The Bedern, York (Bond and O'Connor, 1999: 366; Thomas 2005). However, the latter deposit was previously alternatively interpreted by Serjeantson (1989: 133) as the remains of a whole garment trimmed with paws, a style which is known from pictographic sources (*ibid.*). In any case, hundreds of squirrel pelts were required to make even small garments (*ibid.*), so our initial MNI of 25 may not represent a long-lived intensive industry. This is the case even considering the other individuals represented by the additional unidentified microfaunal bones, unless other waste was deposited elsewhere. This may reflect the transitive nature of tenancy during the years of the economic downturn that had its nadir in Coventry in 1518-1525 (Documentary background).

5.57 The general dearth of other skeletal material associated with leporids and squirrels in particular suggests they were skinned elsewhere. Possibly they were imported to Coventry – the trade of squirrel furs from long distances is reported in documentary sources from the thirteenth century, including from the fur-trading centre of Novogrod, Russia (Serjeantson 1989; Maltby 2013). A local origin should not be ruled out, and rabbits in particular may have been kept more locally in warrens, which were set up in the 15-16th centuries as a source of food and fur (Grant 1988; Serjeantson 1989). These were managed and legally owned by the wealthy, although their inevitable escape meant they were established in the wild eventually by the later medieval period (Grant 1988). It may be possible that the presence of these species represents association with the royal hunting park, although the incredibly secretive red squirrel may not have been easy to acquire. Wherever these skins originated from they represent the *chaîne opératoire* and trade networks of medieval industries dealing with animal products, which may on the one hand have been local or on the other fully international.

5.58　The fur industry was particularly lucrative in the medieval period (Maltby 2013), yet legislation and restrictive practices governed who could trade in and wear furs, particularly based on social status (Serjeantson 1989). Squirrel fur was particularly common in the Royal Court in the 14th century but its popularity was replaced by other furs by the fifteenth. In the 16th century the number of people who could afford to wear furs was increasing (*ibid.*), and perhaps the evidence for a skinner or tailor operating here in this period may relate to this increased demand.

5.59　If we are to assume that the waste from each of the two pits is representative of the waste *and* diets of two different craftspeople, it is possible that the fur-worker had a slightly different diet to the pinner. The more meat-rich bones of cattle upper limbs (the scapula, femur and humerus) were only present in pit 826, and the proportion of pig elements was higher in the skinner's waste pit (figure 28). However, the relatively small sample size of food refuse precludes further investigation.

Conclusion

5.60　This incredibly well-preserved zooarchaeological assemblage gives a fascinating snapshot of life on 94-95 Much Park Street in the late 15th- to the early 16th-centuries, with both food and manufacturing waste deposited at the site.

5.61　The inhabitants of this tenement likely ate beef, veal, mutton and pork, in addition to chicken and possibly goose and duck. Fish were also an important dietary component. The bones and attached meat of the domestic food mammals were largely chopped up into smaller portions and boiled, probably as part of pottage, which may have also been the case with fish and smaller food animals including birds. The diet represented here could probably be described as typical for the time and place, although there may have been some variation in the diet of the two craftspeople that may have been operating from the site.

5.62　These crafts are in evidence from the other taxa represented, particularly the small mammals and the bone surface modifications. The zooarchaeological material indicates that the waste from a number of crafts including pin making, fur working and a third undefined industry (possibly fletching – Iain Soden) was deposited on the premises. The variance in crafts may reflect the transitive nature of tenancy and trade in the economic downturn affecting Coventry in this period.

6   OTHER FINDS *Iain Soden, with bone artefacts by Trista Clifford*

6.1   The small finds are not atypical of an urban site in Coventry, but there have been apparently excellent levels of retrieval, leading to 334 individual find-entries in total, although some involve numerous examples in one cache, such as one of 450 pin-heads. A very few received more than one number when reunited with other joining elements across contexts. The levels of residuality observed in the ceramics are unavoidably carried across the small finds too, reducing their importance in many cases.

6.2   The materials represented are not unusual, and, as one might expect on a site containing metal-working, there is a preponderance of copper alloy and iron present, a dominance also seen on most consumer-sites, possibly because traditionally the two metals, with all their corrosion-products, are relatively easily seen by the naked eye in a range of soil conditions. Also noted are glass, flint, worked bone, stone, ceramic, leather, jet and lead all in relatively small quantities.

6.3   Some examples are illustrated below, but only if they are rare or of particular note on this site or in a Coventry context. The entire assemblage is listed in archive.

6.4   The full type-list, of all dates, is as follows:
- 134 Copper alloy: C17th Nuremburg jetton fragment, coin, pins (818 recorded in groups or singly), wire, aglets, buckles, skimmer, ring, two armorial harness pendant, a key, sheet, amorphous lumps, fragments, a possible sword-handle guard;
- 58 Iron: nails, buckle, wool-card fragments, wire, sheet, amorphous lumps, hammerscale (from samples);
- 41 Worked bone: pinners' bones, tuning pegs, needles, button blanks;
- 27 Stone: millstone, lava querns, whetstones, non-ferrous casting moulds;
- 26 Glass: mainly window, vessel;
- 19 Jet: beads;
- 13 Ceramic: crucible fragments, counters, cresset lamps, furnace lining;
- 9 Leather: shoe fragments;
- 8 Lead: amorphous lumps/sheet and fragments;
- 2 cloth (disintegrated)
- 2 Flint: blade and flake (residual Neolithic);

6.5   Given that most of the pits from the 15th century onwards cut through 13th-15th century contexts, principally a widespread garden soil with a great deal of pottery, the majority of items is residual and so their value in understanding the use and occupation of each plot is strictly limited. However, there are a number of finds-types which attest the specialist activities carried out here, not least on the pinner's workshop plot.

Copper alloy

6.6   There the grand total of some 818 pins attested by completed points and shafts, unattached shafts, wire and pinheads awaiting fixing are testament to the output of the pinner, although as (mostly) the last products as the industry died, it is not possible to say how long he worked there or what his level of output might have been, per day, per week or even year. The presence of amorphous lumps of iron, widespread hammerscale, a piece of (*ex situ*) burnt-clay furnace bottom, ceramic crucibles and some non-ferrous casting moulds (although only as halves stylistically 300 years apart – and from different plots) might suggest a local range of products produced by neighbours at different periods far more disparate than pins suggest, or perhaps that either a pinner graduated from items of one material to another or from one product to another. On the other hand the property, with its succession of hearths and furnace-remains, may first have been used by a ferrous-metal-worker who then passed the plot onto a non-ferrous metal-worker, or a succession of them. Certainly the exclusive way in which the Coventry craft guilds worked militated against men of one trade dabbling or switching to another, so rigorous were the rules set down to ensure quality and facilitate protectionism by the 15th century. A succession of tenants using the plot's heat-sources seems the most likely, each being dispensed with (and the old ovens superseded) when the old incumbent gave way to the new and a potential change of craft.

6.7   It may thus be said that the vast majority of the copper alloy, iron and worked bone, and even some of the other materials present are not related to the occupation of the site but to the product of a short succession of craftsmen who worked there. For the most part, these do not constitute the assemblage of a domestic consumer site but the vestiges of a production site which, since they were dropped, scattered (fuel and hammerscale), lost, broken during the fabrication processes, unfinished (as most of the pins were), unsold or simply of insufficient quality to sell, form the body of waste that lies behind the sweating artisan and his weekly presence at the market stall or annual appearance at the fair.

Fig 31: A cache of 109 unfinished pin shafts and 450 unused pin heads; scale 10cm

6.8   The pins themselves are unprepossessing, all of the types present having been previously found and classified at either Cox Street (Bateman and Redknap 1986) and Coventry Charterhouse (Soden 1995). The unfinished examples cannot, of course, be classified.

6.9   From the pinner's rear range floor deposit (520) three fragments of thick wire or bar constitute the only potential evidence that the pinner was also drawing his own wire (crossing craft-guild boundaries). Surrounded by hundreds of pin-heads and pins, it is far from conclusive but this separate, preparatory phase of the process was normally carried out by a 'wiredrawer'.

6.10   Other than the above, the site produced many small fragments of sheet, wire (some twisted), a hook-and-eye fastener, fragments of chopped-up vessel, buttons, small mounts or stiffeners and an array of various buckles from the 14th to the 17th centuries.

6.11   There are also a number of copper alloy items which may be said to be of intrinsic interest. Ten buckles, of which nine are entirely copper alloy, date from between the 13th and the 18th centuries, although three of them were not stratified and two derive from overall garden soils of some longevity. They are also spread over all the plots

represented, so clearly represent sparse casual losses over many generations. While all have forms that are datable, between the 13th and the 17th centuries, all the types have been found on Much Park Street (1970-74 and 2007-10) previously and they are not significant for dating as they are mostly residual alongside similarly dated pottery.

Fig 32: Thick, solid copper wire or bar (context 520; interior floor); scale 10cm

6.12   Some intrinsically interesting items are made so by reason of their decoration. Two heraldic horse harness-pendants are of particular note. One, from a 15th-century context in the floor of the middle room of no 95 (853), is 18mm across. It is residual since it is cast with the arms of England as they were before 1340 (three lions or, more properly 'leopards passant'), which by the 15th century would have constituted improper heraldry, since in 1340 Edward III quartered England's lions with the Lys of France as part of his claim to the French throne. A second, larger (40mm long x 24mm across) example bears the cast arms of the Clifford family (in heraldic terms '*Checky or and azure a fesse gules*'), from a 14th- to 15th-century century garden soil (523). It bears vestiges of bright blue enamel checks alternating with traces of gold leaf, in correct representation of the heraldry.

6.13   The de Clifford family actually held lands across many midland counties, including Weston-under-Wetherley in Warwickshire and at the start of the 15th century Richard de Clifford was Bishop of Worcester. By the end of the medieval period the Clifford family held lands in Walsgrave and Caludon, on the eastern side of Coventry. A tiny third shield is plain, from (858), also 15th century, from the end room of no 95 and would probably have been soldered onto a larger assembly.

Fig 33: Three lions of England before 1340; greater than life size.

Fig 34: Arms of Clifford; greater than life size; the impressed squares were blue enamelled, the raised ones gold-leaf covered. The 'fesse' or band across the centre was red enamelled.

6.14   Decorative horse pendants are not uncommon finds, whether from excavation or by metal-detection. A square gilded example was found at Much Park Street Stone House, while enamelled heraldic examples may be found from (for instance) Stourpaine and Hanford, Dorset (Keen 1984, 124). Closer to home, two residual enamelled examples were excavated at Gosford Street, 'between the bridges' in 2007, one probably bearing the arms of the de Bohun family (Hylton in Mason et al 2017, 164-6).

6.15   From a kitchen comes part of a copper alloy skimmer or strainer (SF 70; context 520, floor of the pinner's middle room). It is much buckled and broken so may have been destined for the copper-smelting pot in the early 16th century. A similar skimmer, for separating curds and whey or any liquids of different densities and qualities, comes from a 16th-century Dissolution context at Coventry Charterhouse (Soden 1995, 137-

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8). They are common on sites with a strong kitchen/dairying presence, for which reason they have been regularly reported from monastic sites (ibid 138).

6.16   An unusual find for any site is SF88, what appears to be a 90mm x 30mm laminated lozenge of copper-alloy, wood and iron all riveted through and with considerable adhering corrosion products. It comes from context 665 (fill of 14th-century pit 632 in the plot of no 94). This seems may be a sword guard and has a slim slot through the middle through which a blade-tang of rectangular section measuring 25mm x 5mm would have passed into the handle-grip. The stratigraphic sequence means that its deposition predates the erection of the rear wing of number 94.

Fig 35: Composite copper-alloy, iron and wood sword hilt guard, riveted through. The central tang slot is clear. Scale 10cm

6.17   Two pieces of decorated copper alloy sheet were recovered. One is very definitely a two-part strap end (SF156, context 869, a 15th-century floor layer in the middle room of the rear wing of no 95, what apparently became the pinner's workshop). It is 60mm long x 18mm wide, tapering slightly to an eventual chisel-point. The outer face is chased or chip-carved in a design which appears to be a swan-necked bird, its head turned and looking back over its own neck, wings and tail feathers. In the curve of its body rest a nest-bundle, probably of its young. Its neck and breast is covered with either stylised feathers or more likely wounds. It may therefore represent a pelican, pecking at itself, a depiction (*a pelican in its piety*, Jonathan Parkhouse pers comm)

which was meant to represent Christ's Passion and the Eucharist, since the pelican was felt to be particularly devoted to its young and would peck at its own breast to provide its own blood in an act of self-sacrifice, rather than see them go hungry.

Fig 36: Pelican strap-end, 15th century (SF156 (869)). Shown here not to scale, tilted to catch raking light

6.18   A second decorated copper alloy sheet is SF 36 (context 648, fill of pit 647, in the yard of no 94) and again is of 15th or possibly 16th century date. It is chased in a looping foliate design, depicting two opposed leaves, but with the flower above obscured by corrosion products. The flower depicted is a matter of conjecture therefore, although many have religious connotations. A bend across the sheet, to form a second narrow face, might suggest it was shaped around a sharp edge, perhaps a book or more likely a small wooden box, and to which it was once tacked.

Fig 37: Foliate-decorated sheet (SF36, 648, fill of pit 647), perhaps a reinforcement plate from a book or a box. Shown here not to scale, tilted to catch raking light.

6.19 A small copper alloy key is SF 37 (523, a 14th-century occupation layer = 841 in plot 95 and the former Birmingham Archaeology evaluation trench). It measures 40mm in length and is too delicate to have been for anything more robust than a lightweight container, perhaps a trinket-box.

Fig 38: Copper alloy key (SF37 (523 [=841]); scale 5cm

6.20 A large and robust copper alloy moulded pin-head (SF98, context 624, fill of pit 620) is a singular find, quite unlike the tiny clothes-pins which otherwise characterise the site. Its shank has been lost, but it appears to have had four tapering faces. The extant head is moulded into an ornate terminal. It is probably a hair-pin and its context is securely in the 17th century on plot 94. Pit 620 was cut into the demolished remains of no 94's rear wing.

Fig 39: Elaborate moulded hair-pin head (SF 98, 624, fill of pit 620); scale 5cm

6.21   A small belt- or clothes ornament (SF104, context 564, fill of pit 502) takes the viewer back into the realms of love and devotion, but in a pit which is securely dated by pottery and clay tobacco pipes to 1660-1700. This is a small dress-accessory for attachment by means of spikes which were pressed through the material and then bent over, as one still is. It forms the stylised shape of a heart, with a clenched hand and pointing finger. It is presumably meant to be worn near the breast and is an indicator of one's heart's desire: 'You have my heart', 'My love lies here' or similar. As a love-token it lies solidly within a (by then) long tradition of charms and trinkets reported from the length of England by Standley (2013, 27-45).

Fig 40: Dress-accessory as a love-token (SF104, context 562, fill of pit 502)

Iron

6.22   Iron fragments or objects are not particularly numerous on a site where an unfocussed scatter of hammerscale suggests there was some ironworking. In fact there is nothing which can be said to have been made on the site. All of the fragments have considerable corrosion products, although most are identifiable with some confidence.

6.23   A small axe-head (from 709) could conceivably have been used to cut wire on a wooden stock, or chop bone, but equally has a long list of possible purposes in town and countryside. A similar example was found at 112-122 Much Park Street (Colls and Mitchell 2013). The head of a bill-hook or slashing hook (from 688), widely used in coppicing and hedge-laying is a long-lived form which is still in use today. Its date is thus uncertain.

6.24 A large key (827) a hinge (563) and a brush/comb (520) are all household items and derive from early 16th century contexts, 827 being one of the pit-fills which held evidence of the skinner's craft or industry. A square buckle fragment (579) is both broken and rudimentary; it is likely to be from a horse harness or other heavy-duty strapping.

6.25 Blade fragments were relatively common (503, 540, 707, 709, 725, 730, 836). Such whittle-tang knives from the size of a modern pen-knife to that of a large dinner-type knife, are found on a very wide array of both urban and rural medieval sites. These examples are not well preserved. Notably none is of anywhere near a size that might marry up with the composite possible sword-guard (copper alloy, above).

6.26 Wire fragments derive from 782 & 821. There is nothing to suggest either that they were part of any putative wiredrawing on the site or that they are rubbish from some discarded object. Two irregular fragments of nailed iron plate binding are of uncertain purpose (552 and 865).

6.27 The remainder of the assemblage comprises nails and amorphous lumps. These stretch across all plots and all periods.

Worked bone

Pinners waste and other bone working waste

6.28 Pinners waste was recovered primarily from external pit [658], but also from within the excavated principal rear wing. The evidence for pin making typically consists of large mammal sized long bones with the proximal end removed. The end is then facetted to provide a flat surface, which exhibits a series of distinctive longitudinal grooves in which the pin was held in place, with transverse file marks made when sharpening the point; these grooves could be discerned on several smaller, broken pieces as well as more complete bones. Although in some cases green staining from copper alloy was present, there are also examples where none was evident and therefore staining alone is not necessarily indicative that a bone had been utilised in pin production, rather that the bone had been disposed of in proximity to copper alloy waste.

Fig 41: Two typical chopped, sawn and modified pinner's bones from the site, one copper-stained;
scale 10cm

6.29   In addition to the pinner's bones, exterior pit [658] produced examples of another, perhaps related, process exemplified in Small Finds 27 and 83. A single longitudinal groove was incised in the shaft of the long bone, 4-5mm in diameter as opposed to the 1-2mm diameter of the grooves on pinner's bones. The groove may have allowed a bone or metal object of equivalent diameter to be held steady for filing or polishing, in a similar manner to the sawn grooves on a pinner's bone. On SF83 the groove is oriented more or less along the midline grooves on opposite faces of the shaft, however on SF27 the groove is off centre, and there are also two further grooves on the squared off side, both of which are diagonal. Transverse filing marks are also present however the tool used appears to be more of a rasping blade, producing a coarser set of marks than the tool used for dress pins. On SF81 and 185, two proximal ends exhibiting these grooves, suggests that the proximal was either not removed for this process, or was also selected as suitable. The ends of bones SF27 and 83 have been sawn transversely down to the middle and a piece of bone removed; on 83 this has been carried out at least three times, leaving a section of bone exposing the bored-out central cavity. Several pieces of sawn off fragments of 9-14mm thickness exhibiting a U- shaped groove in the upper surface are the removals from this process,

although they do not conjoin either of the larger bones. Removing a succession of pieces in this way may have served to keep the object in the optimal position for filing, or, was perhaps related to a corresponding reduction in length of the object being manufactured. The nature of this object is not clear; it seems unlikely that such a large groove should have been used to hold fine dress pins but they may have held larger objects of similar form, or be related to an earlier stage in pin manufacture. Pinner's bones have been recovered in some numbers from previous Coventry sites, most notably from the town wall and ditch at Cox Street (Bateman and Redknap 1986), but never before in respect of a definable workshop.

6.30   Egan (2005, 138) describes a similar bone from Abbotts Lane, London, associated with pinners' waste, which also displays these larger grooves and raises the possibility of an alternative use. Bone SF 83 is copper stained in the vicinity of the groove whereas 27 is not. One possible candidate are two bone tuning pegs (SF62, and 212), recovered from the same pit, which have a comparable diameter shaft to that of the grooves. Lawson (1985, 154) describes the manufacture of tuning pegs from Battle Abbey involving coarse filing using a rasp and illustrates three examples showing oblique file marks (ibid fig.47 no. 28, 34, 38).

6.31   Lastly, a group of duck and corvid bones was also found to have been utilised, but to uncertain purpose. The group consists of seven leg bones in which the foramen has been enlarged and there is evidence of burning around the opening. This implies the application of a very fine object –a fine drill, wire, or the point of a pin?- to the opening, heated either by friction or by the object itself. The perforation provided by the foramen may have been used to refine the point of the pin, or to facilitate the application of a wound wire head (Caple 1992). A chicken femur from external pit [827] exhibiting a hole at the distal epiphysis may have been used for a similar purpose. Unfortunately no descriptions or depictions of pin making exist prior to the 18th century (ibid) therefore it is not possible to say with certainty whether this group of objects are related to the craft.

Other worked bone objects

6.32   The excavations produced five pieces of button making waste in the form of sawn, flat large mammal long bone fragments with circular button blanks removed (Small Finds 1, 43,120 and [713]). Four needle like implements (4, 126, 127 and 146) are rather large and coarse; they may alternatively have been employed as fasteners for cloth or

clothing. Small Find 126 in particular has a slight prominence to one side of the head which would prevent its effective use as needle by hindering its passage through the fabric.

6.33   Two tuning pegs from stringed instruments were recovered. Peg SF212, of Lawson's type A (Lawson 1985, 153) would have been suitable for an instrument with an open frame such as a harp or lute, whereas peg 62, of type B with the drilled hole at the head would have been used in instruments with a box like frame such as a zither, psalter or keyboard instrument (ibid). Notably, there is damage to the edges of the squared head of peg 62 that suggest it was in use before discard.

Fig 42: Bone tuning pegs; scale 10cm

6.34   While they are not uncommon on many medieval sites in both town and country, or indeed on any of Coventry's excavated urban plots and monastic sites, medieval Coventry is notable by the late 15th century as having acquired a great musical reputation. Music was very much appreciated and there were many professional musicians in the city. Each night a band of professional musicians (the waits) hired by the Corporation, walked the streets serenading the inhabitants after dark, often until

midnight (and presumably to the chagrin of insomniacs). Elsewhere the city was called upon to regularly supply musicians (specifically including lutenists and other string-players) for feasts and entertainments as far afield as Maxstoke Castle (near Coleshill) for the earl of Stafford during the 15th century (Ed).

6.35 Two large bone needles fashioned from bird bone attest some heavy-duty sewing or possibly for use on a textile loom. One comes from a pinning-related context.

Stone

6.36 Three separate halves from stone casting moulds may represent a minor side-line for a nearby non-ferrous metal-worker, but can hardly have been a sideline on this site as two represent buckles which in form are as much as 350 years apart. The third is simply for a poorly-formed 2.5cm-diameter sub-circular disc, which may actually be a discarded attempt at a mould. Of the two buckle-moulds, one (from 910) is half of a 14th-century type with projecting 'horns' on its end (see: https://finds.org.uk/counties/findsrecordingguides/buckles/#Buckles_which_begin_in_ the_14th_century), while the other (from 570 from no 96 Much Park Street) includes half its pouring funnel and is for a saddle-backed square shoe-buckle, 4cm across, solidly post-medieval and as late as the 18th century. The four ceramic crucible fragments (from 687, 713[2] and 827) are all well-used and all appear to have been used for non-ferrous metalworking, since all sport cupric waste products. Related to these are a number of lumps and fragments of copper alloy, including parts of former objects, partly melted and cooled fast into its own smelted products. It is possible that the craftsmen on the site were gathering their own raw materials from domestic waste before preparing it, perhaps even drawing their own wire, although that trade and pinning were very much separate in terms of guild-terms. A small pit probably for such a purpose, full of waste 'bits' and fragments, was excavated at Derby Lane, Coventry in 1984. How the pinner made the hundreds of pin-heads is unclear, but melting his own raw materials for this from reclaimed waste seems possible. From the 12th to the 16th centuries the copper which was used to smelt with additives to cast alloy objects was imported through east coast ports all the way from Sweden or the central-eastern Tatra Mountains, south of Krakow, which made their way out via the River Vistula and the Hanseatic port of Danzig (modern Gdansk). The Tatras were the source of 60% of Europe's copper. The costly cargoes of ingots can still be found in port-books such as those of Boston (Rigby 2005, 43), along with huge quantities of Swedish iron, known as Osmund. So too could copper rod be imported, ready to be drawn into wire and

pins. Mudstone moulds might suggest some actual objects were also being made close by, but they occur here as halves (or less) in only small numbers, the fragments spread over many generations; they are surely happenstance imports from other plots. The numbers are nothing like what was found previously, for example, on the Herbert Art Gallery site in the 1950s or on Bayley Lane in 1988-9 where the tenement of *John Foundur* (foundryman) was part excavated (Soden 2005, 160 and fig 50). A single fragment of furnace bottom lining (context 665) is a tantalising suggestion of a focus for such metal-working, but it must lie somewhere beyond the excavated area.

6.37   Sharpening stones, also called hones or whetstones, of which there are seven fragments (from 539, 579, 704, 725, 827), are mainly of Garnets Mica Schist, probably from Trelleborg in Norway, where an industry existed quarrying tens of thousands for the English market alone. It is probably these in large numbers on which duty was paid at ports such as Boston, Lincolnshire from the late 14th century (Rigby 2005). The same port was also handling querns in large numbers, such as perhaps the lava fragments from this site (from 736 and 871). At Boston there was a Hanseatic *faktorei* (trading enclave) and, although it traded extensively all along the North Sea littoral, that port enjoyed a particularly close affinity to the Hanseatic *kontor* (one of four principal trading centres) at Bergen which had privileged access to Swedish and Norwegian produce.

6.38   The recovery of fragments of broken millstone are less significant but for the early reference to a plot in the vicinity (not closely located) called *le mulnestones* (see above), which seems to have been associated with Much Park Street. Found only once in the city's archives, it does, however, crop up in a private cartulary of the Langley family, which also suggests it was a plot of land somewhere around the northern reaches of Cheylesmore Park before the city wall was built and its ditch dug (Coss 1980). It is possible that the royal Cheylesmore Park quarries there were making millstones before 'parking rights' restricted it and/or the growing city swamped it.

Glass

6.39   Twenty four fragments of vessel glass from context 624 appear to derive from a moulded and faceted (but otherwise plain) 17th-century wine glass, but with paper-thin walls; it is badly shattered. No attempt has been made to reconstruct it on paper.

Otherwise vessel glass was limited to fragments of a single 18th century shaft and globe bottle (720).

6.40   There was a scatter of fragments of window glass, some of them painted, but in such small numbers (23, from across the five plots) not to suggest that any one plot or building possessed a single glazed window before the 17th century. Metal window frames were re-usable with old or new leaded panels inserted, and could be taken out and removed at demolition. Any amount of lead cames would also have been robbed from the city's monastic sites at the Dissolution (to melt and reuse the lead), spreading complete and shattered quarries of medieval stained or painted glass around the city. This site lies a stone's throw from both the Whitefriars and Charterhouse.

Jet

6.41   A total of eighteen complete or broken jet beads were recovered, all from one pit-fill context which was sieved for maximum retrieval (827/1 from pit [826]). The beads range in size from 4mm diameter (of which there were eight), through a mid-range of 6-8.2mm (ten, of which three were broken halves) up to a single example of 12.8mm diameter. In addition there was a single disc-shaped, partly-pierced unfinished rough-out from the same context.

6.42   It is perhaps coincidence that just before the excavations at this site, the debris of a jet-worker's workshop, making many hundreds of beads and other objects, was excavated further up Much Park Street, the first such evidence found in the City and only a matter of less than a hundred metres away (see Colls and Mitchell 2013). The beads here (specifically at 95 Much Park Street) might perhaps be entirely a matter of a consumer throwing away a rosary (in perhaps difficult reformation times) but for the occurrence of a single unfinished disc, which begs interpretation. One rough-out is surely insufficient to postulate a jet-worker on the plot, but its unpierced state means it can never have been strung on a rosary, or anything else, even in its rough disc state. It is possible that it was simply a curio, perhaps kept by a child. The remaining eighteen examples, including a large 'paternoster'-type bead, may have constituted a single rosary.
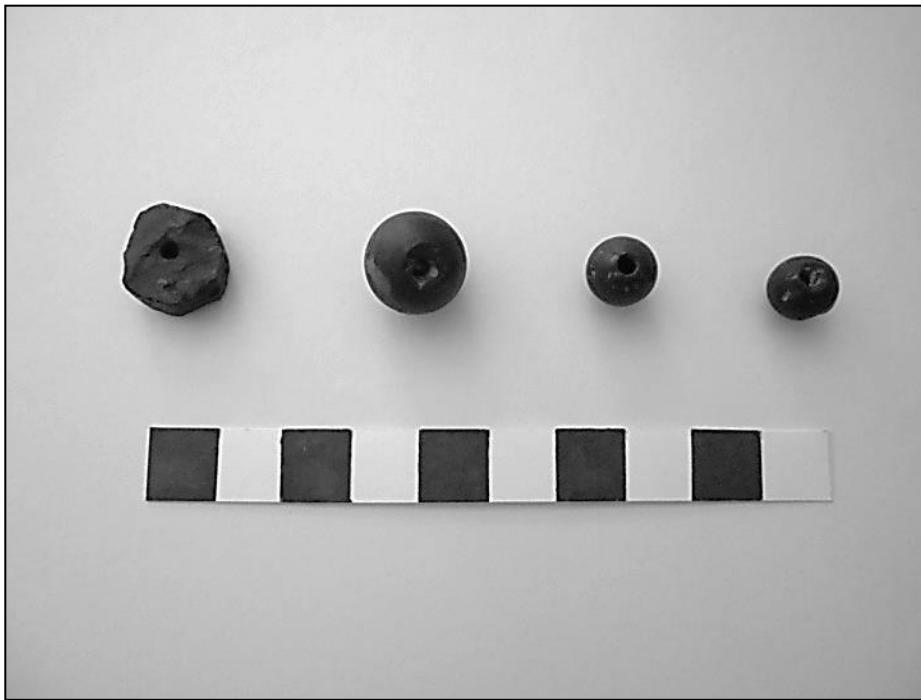
Fig 43: Three of the largest jet beads and a blank, partly-pierced rough-out, all from context 827/1; scale 10cm

Ceramic

6.43   Six counters fashioned out of knapped sub-circular potsherds or pieces of tile, suggest either gaming for pleasure or the formal counting-board, but are from scattered contexts of different dates. If from the counting-board, some might go with the single fragment cut from a 17th-century Nuremburg jetton. However, if cut for gaming then they are a poor relation of the occasional early bone chess-pieces found from Coventry, such as from Bayley Lane in 2006. Gaming otherwise is perhaps notable by its absence, and there are no bone dice such as are not uncommon elsewhere in the city.

6.44   Lighting in the houses was presumably mostly by rush-lights or candles, which leave no trace (except where their ceramic or metal holders survive), but two fragments of glazed ceramic cresset lamps – for a floating wick- were also excavated (from 539 and 548). One of these appears to be of a fabric and with an apple-green glaze derived from Nuneaton (Chilvers Coton), while the other, smaller example (548) is in a red firing coarse Coventry fabric and is dark green glazed. There is a complete example in Coventry's Shelton Collection. Shaped a little like mortars, their preposterously-thick bases meant they were difficult to knock over in domestic chambers where bracken

and herbs were strewn on the floor as a renewable carpet, and where fire was a constant fear. They might also be safer where children were present; domestic burn-accidents were a regular occurrence in the published Coroner's Rolls, including at Coventry.

Fig 44: Larger cresset lamp exterior; scale 10cm

Fig 45: Larger cresset lamp's broken face; scale 10cm

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Leather

6.45 A small number of fragments of leather, deriving from worn out shoes, were retrieved from context 782. They comprise pieces of rand (toe piece), vamp (centre upper) and pieces of sheet and a knotted strip. These included a child's shoe. This is not a significant group and no further work has been carried out. Excavations in Coventry have always produced quantities of leather, particularly shoes, from water-logged contexts, and the large, important excavated collections to which the reader is referred for their study can be found from Hill Street, in Mason et al (2017), from Broadgate East in Rylatt and Stokes (1996), from Cox Street in Bateman and Redknap (1986) and from the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum's Shelton Collection in Thomas (1980).

Lead

6.46 Lead objects were few. Most notable was a thick, pierced sub-circular weight from context 871, which had been unceremoniously bashed along its edges to make it (slightly) more rounded, for what purpose is unknown. Amongst an array of everyday potential domestic and agricultural uses for such weights, items like this have been known to be included in apotropaic charms or amulets (Gaskell in Page et al, 2018, 132-3). It may simply have been used as a loom-weight.

6.47 A short length of lead wire was un-stratified, while the remainder of the lead was either folded sheet, or melted lumps.

Fig 46: Rounded-off lead weight (871)

7   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1   While this site has been hampered by the loss of the entire historic frontage in the 1930s, it was always notable that as a row of street-side plots, it constituted one which had both a street frontage on one of Coventry's most prominent medieval thoroughfares, Much Park Street – the road from and to London, and also a closed-off rear garden for most of its early life, by the construction of the town wall, ostensibly in the 1350s -1385 and which stood as the most solid of rear boundaries until 1662 (Gooder 1971, 4). It thus had much which might mark it out as different from most others; and so it has proved.

7.2   In the West Midlands Regional Research Framework for Archaeology, Seminar 6, which was held in 2003, the present author delivered a paper in which the Post-Medieval Archaeological Resource Assessment from about 1539 onwards noted that it was a priority to address issues of '*continuity at a reduced level*', given that the city was known to be ailing in the early 16th century, although different commentators agree little on the extent and severity of the ills. Here, for once is a plot with a definable (pinning) industry (and a second of a skinner) which dates to that downturn and period of civic stagnation. It can be seen that the plot which emerged on the other side did so only slowly and then with little to mark it out. Redevelopment took place eventually only in 1711 and then with mixed fortunes.

7.3   Subsequent to the excavation at this site, the Archaeological Research Framework for the West Midlands was published (Watt 2011). Dr John Hunt carried out the overview of the medieval period within this framework (Hunt in Watt 2011, Ch 6: 173-203) and noted that key issues in the region's large towns (6.2.2-) included Industry and Production, stating '*the study of production sites is clearly a priority*' (ibid 184-5). In relation to smaller towns he also made a canting allusion to crafts and trades, noting that '*non-agricultural occupations play a crucial role in defining a place as a town, but the range of occupations was not as great as in the case of large towns..and.. their role in contributing to the material culture of a place.*'

7.4   Addressing this issue from a different angle, it was asked some years ago of the late Geoff Egan how different town and country were in terms of their material assemblages. His reply (Egan in Giles and Dyer 2007, 197-211) contains a clarion call

to medieval archaeologists to do what this report has attempted to do – to seek to recognise the extraordinary amidst a morass of (medieval) homogeneity. He saw:
'…*the overall uniformity of English everyday material culture. Where there is variation it is for reasons other than an urban-rural polarity.* <u>*The social and functional character… of each individual site is a more significant factor*</u>. *The prominence of ceramics in the material record has meant that regionalism can be overstated. Other objects, such as metalwork, do not vary greatly from one region to another. ..it seems unlikely that it will be possible to deny the essential homogeneity of the mass-produced goods used in both town and country across England.*' (ibid 206).

7.5   It is to be hoped that the social and functional character of the site at what became 94-5 Much Park Street in 2010 is to be plainly seen as the significant factor in this case.

7.6   This excavation has characterised the singular workshop of an early 16th-century pinner, who may or may not have been called John Garton, and his erstwhile neighbour, an un-named skinner and possible fletcher of arrows, who briefly catered for some wealthy tastes in clothing with fur garments or their linings in rabbit and minniver.

7.7   The plots, or parcels of land on the south side of Much Park Street first enter the documentary record at the end of the thirteenth century, and indeed an excavated row of dividing boundaries may originate in this period, although the pottery which derives from their infilling suggests some may have been open for some time before occupation debris filled them in. Thus these potential 'burgage plots' may have got off to a faltering start, not least because they perhaps began life in a planning grey-area lying within part of Cheylesmore Manor and the hunting park attached to it. Formerly a baronial manor under the earls of Chester and then their former stewards and heirs, the de Montalts, it passed in the early 14th century to the Crown, in particular Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II, and her son, John of Eltham and thence to Edward, The Black Prince. It was in reference to their successive tenures of the park that the northernmost ditched boundary of the Manor seems to have been pulled back southwards from the so-called 'Hyrsum Ditch', lying east-west across the northern half of Much- and Little-Park Streets to what became the town walls in the mid-14th century and a more settled situation in which the growing town and city formally acquired the land which it needed on which to expand- Much Park and Little Park Streets and Dead Lane between. While the

current excavations cannot add anything to discussion of how this was done, it does confirm the dating of the process as being largely the early-middle 14th century.

7.8   The excavated plots bear the first signs of occupation during the 14th century and on through the 15th century, as all the plots contained a homogenous garden soil which contained pottery and other finds of this period, although mainly residual. The numbers of pits dug during and datable to this 14th-century period were very few, suggesting that either these plots were not particularly popular at first (perhaps lacking the formalisation of agreement between Crown and the city), or that construction-access to build the town wall for at least a generation prevented sensible use of the properties which backed directly and most closely onto the city's greatest building project. The reliably-documented interests of the Holy Trinity Guild and others in specific lands in 1393 and definable plots stretching from street to town wall, confirm the completion of the principal land transfers and the stability of the layout to everyone's satisfaction.

7.9   The 15th century saw the new street frontage reach maturity and in the cases of nos 94 and 95 Much Park Street, that frontage acquired rear wings. One of them, at 95, probably of a single storey and thatched, was initially used to house a succession of metal-working hearths, but which were subsequently and successively decommissioned and dug away, leaving little of the detail of the ferrous- and non-ferrous-metalworking processes for which they were used. The other (94) was of two structural phases but with no metal-working purpose or any heat-source whatsoever.

7.10   The thatched rear wing at no 95 may have become the workshop of a pinner named John Garton, the end of whose trade is inferred in his growing infirmity in documents of the 1520s, a period of great economic uncertainty across the city, but one in which apparently prosperous plots can still be found alongside suffering neighbours and disadvantaged landless neighbours alongside wealthy property owners in a chequer-board of economic stresses in which the city suffered most in the years 1518-1525. The identification of John Garton is very much dependent upon the reliability of the documentary references – and perhaps a leap of faith, but with only two subsequent pinners in the city thereafter, and neither in Much Park Street Ward, his name as the 1523-4 tradesman on the plot is perhaps compelling.

7.11   John Garton or not, the end of the pinner's workshop, whether because of age, infirmity, death or just plain economic ill-fortune, is clearly indicated by the wholesale discard of the tools of his trade, debris and both the finished and unfinished stock which was both

strewn about his workshop and deliberately dumped in pit 658 just outside. Surrounded by the odd pin and unsoldered pin-head, the last phase of hearths in the rear wing's south room might never have been used again and there is a case to suggest that the rear wing, if not the frontage, became disused or was relegated to a store-room by whoever tenanted the building thereafter. Its gradual dilapidation by the 17th century seems likely and further pits of that date include amounts of buried building materials and well-dated clay tobacco pipes. From 1662 the town wall behind the plot was gradually dismantled (at a rate which is unclear in relation to many plots) and the rear vista afforded to the plot opened up onto the former Cheylesmore Park. Documents show the frontage was entirely redeveloped c1711, when it became The Three Swans Inn, after which almost all the previous garden and yard levels were covered over, probably with largely hard surfaces.

7.12　Next door at what would eventually become no 94, a suitable tradesman contemporary with John Garton is not known, although John Merlor, noted in the 1524 Muster Roll as a weaver, is an obvious candidate, as the wide, square unheated rear wing of 94 could certainly have held a loom-frame. Merlor, as his neighbour, apparently leased his property from Garton. In the 1520s, Coventry's distinctive sky blue cloth had long since ceased production (with woad and alum supplies cut off from the 1460s) and the city's cloth products held no further kitemark of quality and little residual mystique and international value. Capping had begun to emerge as a fashionable industry and enduring wealth was becoming, for the moment, vested in fewer hands. Either Merlor, or whoever tenanted no 94 for a time, seems to have pursued the trade of a skinner, however briefly, lining garments with soft rabbit fur and the immensely sought-after minniver (squirrel fur) although this may have been short-lived in the difficult, uncertain economic swell of the 1520s, the nadir of a drastic downturn beginning as early as the 1480s. A squeeze on wealth always leaves a few whose strong finances continue to afford the best finery and amongst whom a market is to be found, for at least a while. A concentration of goose wing bones is puzzling, except and unless someone on the plot was also producing one of two things – musical bone pipes (but no finished or half-finished examples have been found) or perhaps more likely the fletching of arrows for which large, distinctive wing-feathers were needed (Armitage, in Soden 2010, 45).

7.13　The two plots with their two tradesmen enjoyed potentially different types of diet, whether because of the cost of living or their personal tastes. The pinner was perhaps the better-fed, and a wide variety of meats appear to have been consumed. His

skinner-neighbour may have been more conservative, but insufficient food bones from 'his' pit are present to be sure. What is clear is that while the range of different meats at table reflects what Armitage (in Mason et al 2017) called 'the solid sufficiency', if a little restricted, which was to be had in a city with a strong supply-chain from its hinterland and a number of commercial butchers. However, neither enjoyed the much wider variety of species consumed by the inhabitants of Cheylesmore Manor (Locock in Soden et al 1992, 54). Clearly there was no substitute for private access to land, and clearly the Town Wall at the back of the plots did its job, preventing the inhabitants of early sixteenth-century Much Park Street from exploiting their proximity to it. Differences do exist from this view to other previously-excavated plots. The pinner here ate mutton rather than lamb, and this might reflect a traditional kill-off pattern which notes that sheep were kept primarily for their wool and only those past the age of good regular fleece production were destined for the table. This however, is at variance with results from Hill Street, just outside the city wall where excavations produced good contemporary evidence for the city probably raising its own flocks for consumption in their prime rather than later consumption merely of 'mutton' (Armitage in Mason et al 2017, 108). It is perhaps to be suggested that herein lies a subtle difference in access to livestock between one plot and another.

7.14   John Garton, either aged or ailing, or both, in 1523 lived at a time of local economic hardship, part of a wider recession perhaps, in modern parlance, but his pinning business was one which teetered and collapsed. Within the year only two pinners were left in the city. His brief appearance in records may be backed up with a short period of solid self-sufficiency from the debris of his life. He ate well, although he probably struggled to see any benefit from living close to the bounty offered by poaching in Cheylesmore Park, just over his (exceptionally large) garden wall, the city's defensive wall which he had to pay annually to help maintain and put in time and effort to keep clean and tidy. He probably recycled copper waste to save money and resources. The pottery he used at table and in his kitchen is barely discernible from that of his immediate predecessors and his successors, but a dearth of popular drinking mugs suggests he may not have been much given to drinking. The presence of chafing dishes suggests he or his neighbours were nevertheless acquainted with fashionable contemporary dining habits. His skinner-neighbour was suitably pious at a time when religious observance and both its public and private face was to come under close scrutiny and eventually great change. Garton's Coventry was part of an England

experiencing great change. He was perhaps one of the city's last medieval inhabitants, on the threshold of a revolution.

7.15   Industry and production, crafts and trades are the watch-words of the prevailing published research framework. This archaeological site, although lacking a frontage, and backed up against the almost impenetrable town wall and the edge of the hunting park, from which evidence has so clearly separated it after many generations of construction, addresses the industry of a pinner, it seeks to establish his diet and his status; it has also identified his skinner-neighbour and has observed some late medieval religious observance. While there are many aspects in which the excavated plots bear striking similarities to other street-frontages in Coventry, the identification of a craftsman, potentially by name, and of his last output as his industry died, marks it out as most unusual. Hundreds of pins and dozens of pinners bones, potentially attributable to John Garton's handiwork, and deposited in The Herbert Museum, Coventry will be of interest to specialists for many years to come.

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Project details

Project name	Archaeological excavations on Parkside, Coventry, in 2010
Short description of the project	A tale (possibly) of John Garton, Pinner, and his neighbour in Coventry in the 1520's The excavations recovered evidence for a series of building plots, probably set out in the 13th century but not developed until the 14th century. In the 15th century the plots of two included stone founded timber framed rear wings used as artisanal workshops. These were dilapidated by the 17th century but documents show the frontage was entirely redeveloped c1711, when it became The Three Swans Inn. The report focuses on an early 16th century occupant of the site, a pinner, probably John Garton, his workshop, his diet and the end of his career when the tools of his trade, debris and stock was strewn about his workshop and deliberately dumped in a pit just outside. The pottery he used at table and in his kitchen is barely discernible from that of his immediate predecessors and his successors, but a dearth of popular drinking mugs suggests he may not have been much given to drinking. The presence of chafing dishes suggests he or his neighbours were nevertheless acquainted with fashionable contemporary dining habits. Garton's Coventry was part of an England experiencing great change. He was perhaps one of the city's last medieval inhabitants, on the threshold of a revolution. John Garton's next door neighbour seems to have pursued the trade of a skinner, for a time, lining garments with soft rabbit fur and minniver (squirrel fur possibly from Russia), although this may have been short-lived in the difficult, uncertain economic swell of the 1520s. He was suitably pious at a time when religious observance and both its public and private face was to come under close scrutiny and eventually great change.
Project dates	Start: 01-01-2010 End: 30-12-2010
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	PC10 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	21449/G - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Conservation Area
Monument type	BOUNDARY DITCHES Medieval
Monument type	PITS Medieval
Monument type	PITS Post Medieval
Monument type	FOUNDATIONS Medieval
Monument type	FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	PINS Medieval
Significant Finds	HORSE TRAPPING Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval

Significant Finds	COIN Medieval
Significant Finds	BUCKLE Medieval
Significant Finds	PINNERS BONE Medieval
Significant Finds	FLINT Mesolithic
Significant Finds	GLASS Medieval
Significant Finds	BEAD Medieval
Investigation type	"Full excavation"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST MIDLANDS COVENTRY COVENTRY Parkside
Postcode	CV1 2LU
Study area	1 Hectares
Site coordinates	SP 33687 78853 52.406267875698 -1.504752850149 52 24 22 N 001 30 17 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology Warwickshire
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Patrick
Project director/manager	Stuart Palmer
Project supervisor	Stuart Palmer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	HERBERT ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Industrial","Leather","Metal","Worked bone","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	HERBERT ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	HERBERT ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM
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