ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN ROBERT MILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

BY

BINGHAM HERITAGE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

June 2012

TEST PITS AT ROBERT MILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Numbers CB02, 03 and 04

CONTENTS

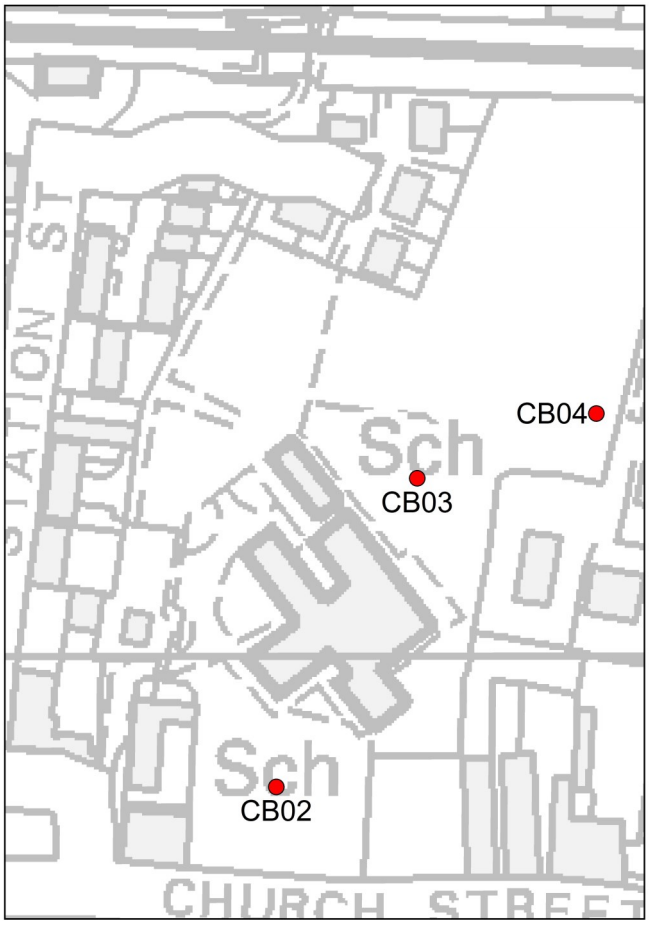
CB02, 03 and CB04

INTRODUCTION

In June 2012 three archaeological test pits were dug in the grounds of Robert Miles Junior School. They were done as a school project in which the children did the digging, sieving and finds washing. All this was done under supervision by BHTA. An archaeologist from Trent & Peak Archaeology, Laura Binns, was in attendance throughout the project.

The site of CB04 on the school field

The site of CB02 on the front lawn



Location map showing the sites of the three test pits
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The school was built in the 1960s and opened in 1965. It was sited in the grounds of the Bingham rectory, which had been here possibly since the middle ages. The most recent rectory was built in 1764-1770 by Rev. John Walter and it was demolished to make way for the school. Old maps show that the south western part of the school is built over the rectory, the rubble of which must underlie it. The rectory grounds and gardens were extensive and they were used for public functions throughout the last two centuries.

The two pits CB02 and CB03 were sited close to the school buildings to give information about the school and the gardens. CB04 was sited on the edge of the school playing field near the edge of the lake deposit. The archaeology in them was completely different from each other; each pit giving information about a different element of the rectory and grounds.

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One pit, CB02 dug in the front garden, was sufficiently interesting that a request was put to the headmaster, Mr Rob Gilbey, to dig a larger pit around the site of CB02. This pit measured 4 x 7 metres and was dug in July 2013. The dig took place during the first week of the school holidays and there was no participation by the children, though many of them came to view the dig with their parents.

In June 2014 a report on the larger dig was presented to the school along with over 500 photographs taken during the dig. A day- long series of events was arranged by the teachers for Year 4 and Peter Allen, chairman of BHTA, gave a 15 minute assembly to the whole school to tell them what had been done. Pupils then devised an exhibition of the finds. On this occasion a child-friendly report was delivered to the teachers for them to use in devising the day of events.

The full report is given separately. Here, only the three test pits are reported on.

CB02, 03 and CB04

ROBERT MILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

SITE HISTORY

The school is known to occupy the site of the Georgian rectory built in 1770 by Rev John Walters and demolished in the 1960s to make way for the school, which opened in 1965.

The 1586 estate survey placed an earlier rectory on the site by references from other properties said to border it and the Market Place. Its exact location, however, was not identified.

Apart from the list displayed in church, the earliest documentary reference to Bingham's rectors was in the hearth tax return of 1674 which listed Dr Brunsell [the rector] as having five hearths, implying a large house. Rev. Walters would have demolished this building to make way for his new rectory.

A document of 1687 "signed" by Samuel Brunsell as Rector plus churchwardens and constables describes the Rectory as a "Parsonage House" as follows:

> *There belongs to the rectory of Bingham in the Vale of Belvoir in the county of Nottingham A Parsonage House with barns, stables, and other outhouses about the court before the house. There is a dovecote adjoining to a garden on the east side of the court. Also a malt house and dairie commonly called the Kilne adjoining the north side of the backyard on the north side whereof and the foresaid garden is one acre and kitchen garden.*
>
> *To which orchard and the foresaid garden is adjoined a parcel of ground about one acre being grass ground commonly called the Ponds. A small piece of ground on the west side of the aforesaid backyard commonly called the Hog Yard with a little spoug of ground adjoining on the North side commonly called the Ice Lake all these with the parcels following being well and distinctly fenced with ditches, pales or hedges and staffs and rails. Also adjoining to the said parcels are the North side a Meadow close of about seven acres distinctly fenced as before called the Butt Close adjoining to that on the North side and fenced about in the like manner a pasture close of about nine acres and a coney close of about tenne acres adjoining thereto on the east side both together being commonly called by the name of the High Close.*
>
> *There is also a rent charge of £23 per annum payed by ever and equal portions on the anniversaries of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Michael the Arch Angel by the Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield and his heirs and successors.*

The disposition of Butt Close and High Close matches today's Butt Field and Parson's Hill. The lake is evident in later maps and clearly seems to have been used as a source of ice in winter - a common practice in those days. The court on the south side of the house is likely to be the 17th century stone floor found in CB02 and covering the full extent of the further excavations described in the full report on the "Big Dig" at the school undertaken after the test pits described in this paper. (See menu item Robert Miles Jnr School , click on **INTERPRETATION**).

The Georgian rectory had a range of farm outbuildings including a tithe barn, to the west of the plot. The remaining grounds were generally described as pleasure grounds and had a large pond towards the north. Rev. Walters was fond of hunting.

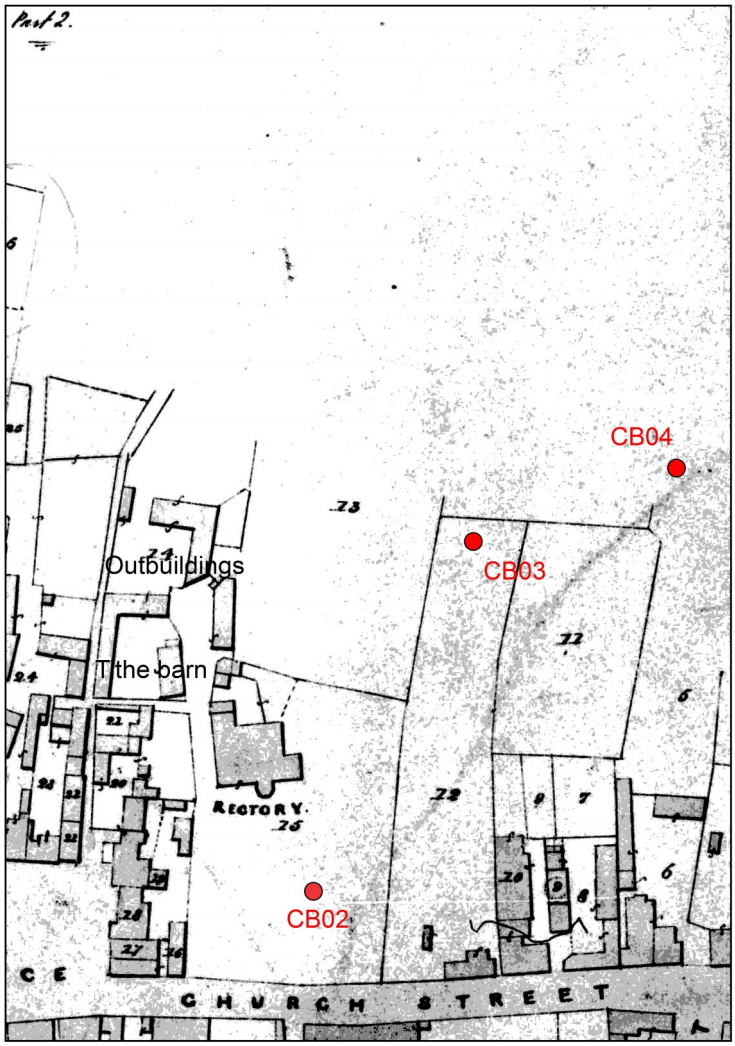
Reverend Miles, who became rector in 1845, is known to have laid out the formal gardens that surrounded the house, including water features.

The Georgian rectory, a view from the south. The drive way on the left led from a gate on Church Street in what is now the south west corner of the school grounds.

This picture taken from the north east shows how extensive the rectory was behind the frontage shown in the top picture. The nearest part of the building with the mock Tudor chimneys is in the style of the Church House and is thought to have been built by the Rev. Robert Miles in the mid 18th C.

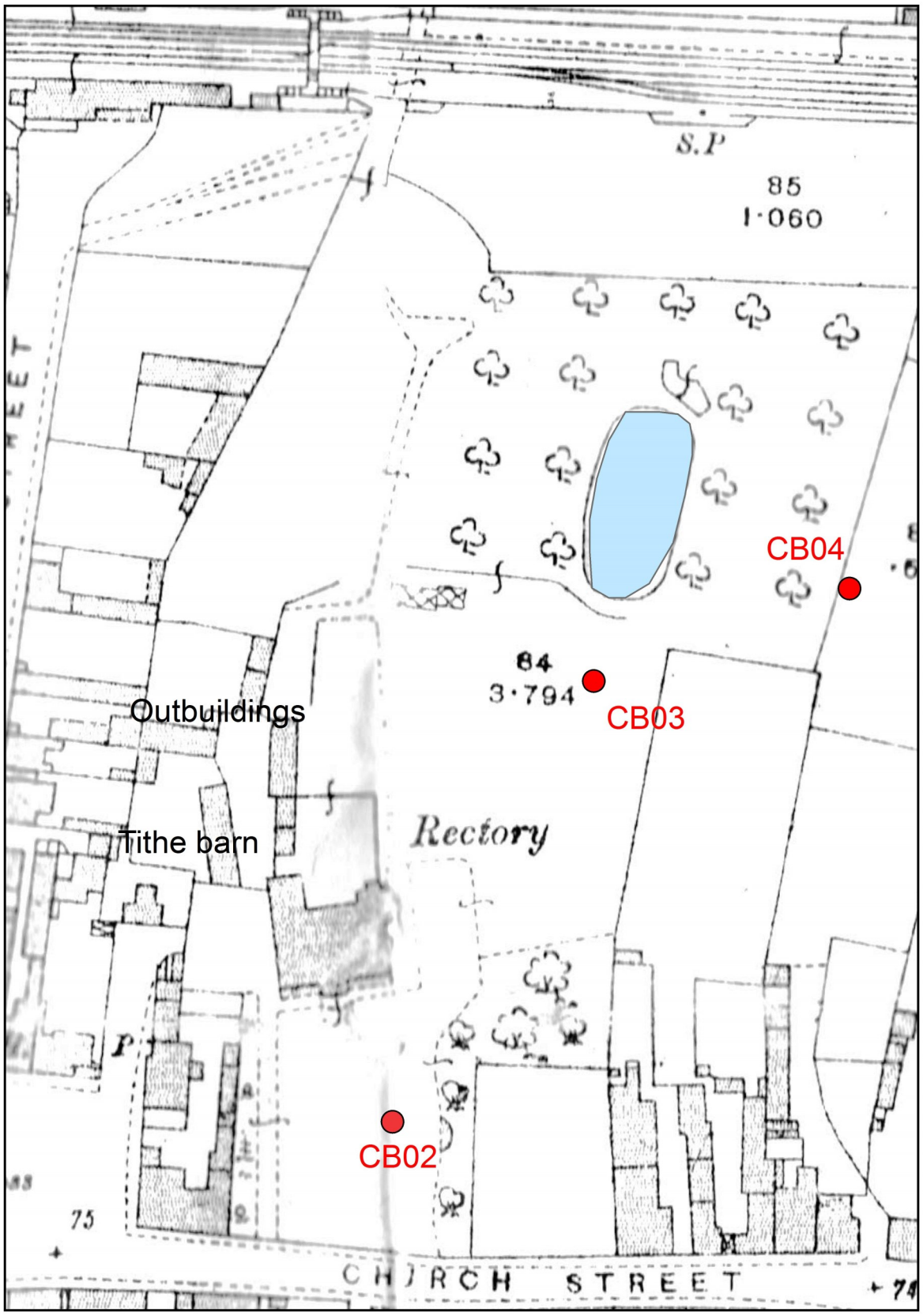
This picture was taken from the east during demolition in 1960 and shows the extension that was probably built by Rev. Robert Miles. The diamond pattern in the Welsh slate roof and the brick-work are typical of the mid 19th C and contrast sharply in style with the original Georgian building to the left.

This picture, taken from a similar vantage point to the top, showed the rectory in its heyday, complete with ornamental gardens



The earliest plan we have is the tithe map. The 1910 map shows the pond well.

This extract from the tithe map of 1841 shows the rectory before the extension built by Rev Robert Miles. The tithe barn and the extensive out-buildings are at the back. The picture below is the only one we have of these outbuildings. All the rectors for which we have any record had glebe land and were involved in farming. These outbuildings were probably part of the farm building complex.



This plan dates from 1910. Note the different outline to the rectory itself. This plan shows it as it was after the mock Tudor extension built by Robert Miles. The outbuildings have also been modified or modernised since 1841. The drive from Church Street is clearly shown.

Two pictures from different eras showing the rectory gardens in use for public functions. The top picture is thought to be prior to the First World War. It was taken on the front lawn. The mud wall with tile top that forms the boundary with No 9 Church Street runs behind the tents at the top of the picture. The site of the flagpole was discovered in the big dig done here in 2013.

The lower picture is of a medieval pageant in 1938. Events like this were a regular feature of the rectory gardens and many were reported in the newspapers during the 19th century..

CB02

LOCATION AND PROTOCOL

NGR	470594.339967
Height OD (mid point rim of N face)	22.698 m (at 470537. 339942 corner of Market Place. Tree cover prevented a reading at the site.) [error 0.014 m] Verified one year later when the pit was located using GIS.
Dig dates	21 – 25th May 2012
Pit site	Front lawn in Robert Miles Junior School, central position to avoid the tree roots.
Pit protocol	1-metre pit, 10 cm spits, all sieved. Pit orientated N-S. North face sections only described and measured unless otherwise stated. Photographs taken facing north unless otherwise stated. The stone floor located at c75 cm was partly removed around the post hole and the pit was dug to a maximum depth of 108 cm.

Post hole. Post hole, located at c75 cm depth is 27 x 23 cm at the top reducing downwards. Long axis approximately 350^0 . Hole becomes smaller downwards. Hole is inclined at 10^0 to the east. Top level of fill starts at about 30 cm down. Fill scooped out and probed to 180 cm depth; hole walls grey-green sandy clay with long sliver of oak attached to the wall. Fill includes lump of organic material, possibly rotted wood; mostly sandy clay possibly filtered down from the upper layers.

CB02

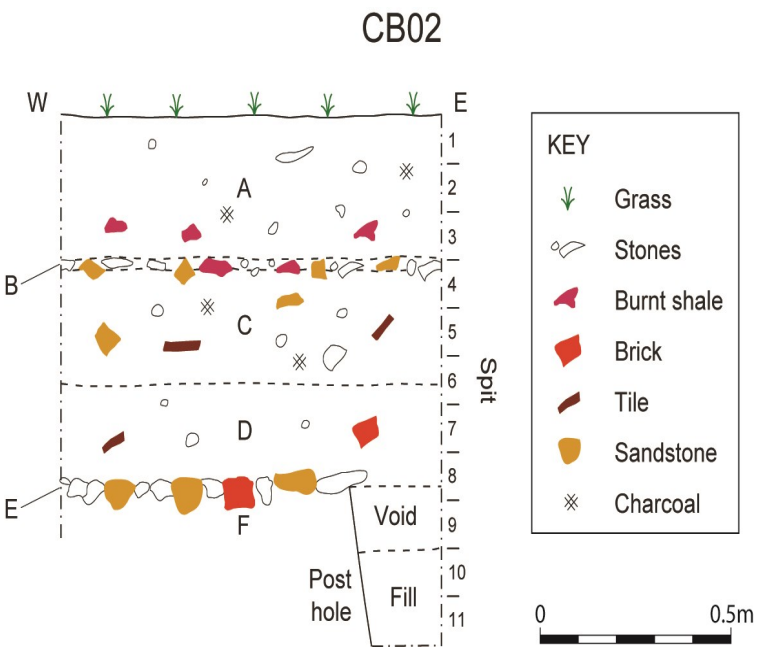
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Description of pit

The sequence revealed in the test pit was validated in the larger dig and some of the questions raised by the test pit were answered.

The sequence in the test pit is:

Topsoil (context A)
Made ground (contexts B to D)
Stone floor (context E)



A Topsoil of dark brown loam with pebbles and cobbles of rounded quartz and subangular skerry, burnt shale, charcoal. 30 cm thick on north face, 22 cm on south face.

B Layer of brick, burnt shale, Skerry, rounded stones. Thickens to 22 cm on south face where a layer of mortar 4 cm is at the base.

C Reddish brown gritty clay loam with bricks, tiles, stones and clay lumps

D Brown gritty clay loam with fewer inclusions

E Layer of closely packed skerry, sandstone, some brick with variable thickness. It forms an irregular surface. Sandy clay with mortar and charcoal in interstices, large stones partly overlap a post hole.

F Rubble of skerry, tile, brick with sandy clay and mortar.

Post hole probed to 180 cm depth. Walls grey-green sandy clay. Wood preserved on the side. Rectangular section 27 x 23 cm at top. Narrows downwards, inclined 10^0 to the east.

The topsoil was deposited after the school was built in the early 1960s and though it contains a range of pottery types it was probably re-deposited here during landscaping having been collected from around the building site and stockpiled for the duration of the building phase.

A thin layer of building rubble with burnt shale immediately beneath the topsoil is the northern edge of the track laid by the contractors while the school was being built in the early 1960s. The big dig done in July 2013 shows that the original test pit was sited at the edge of the road with part of the test pit intersecting it. The deposit in the test pit thickens to 22 cm along the south side of the pit.

Made ground continues beneath this layer down to the stone feature that has been identified as a floor. The made ground is mainly building material of various kinds

A post hole in the corner of the pit was partly capped with large stones. Immediately beneath the stones was a void for about 15cm and below that a black peaty fill.

Slivers of wood adhered to the sides of the post hole. The post hole was probed to 180 cm depth making it about 1 metre deep. Sandy material infill might be run-off from the sides of the hole.

Finds

By far the most abundant find in this pit is building material, with roughly 10 times the weight of anything else. It includes brick, red clay tiles, both flat and curved, plaster with one piece having a red painted surface and others with impressions of reeds on the inside, limestone roofing slate with holes, ceramic tile and mortar. Where they could be measured the brick ranged from 2-inch thick Tudor to Georgian and some pieces were burnt as though used in chimneys.

Among the glass there is quite a lot that is green or aqua, flat and around 1/16th inch thick. Very little is clear. It is possibly window glass and earlier than the 20th C. Much of the glass of all kinds has a patina where it has reacted chemically with the soil through time. Other glass is clearly from large green bottles, but there are also fine bottles. One heavily patinated piece is a punted base to a 5 cm-diameter bottle. A circular piece about 2.5 cm diameter was impressed by the seal of the Brunsell family crest presumed to have been set on the shoulder of a wine bottle. This has been identified as showing the coat of arms of the Brunsell family who were rectors in Bingham from 1662 to 1708

Material	**Weight in grams**
Building material	10,882
Miscellaneous objects	1103
Bones and teeth	920
Metal	599
Coarse Earthenware	514
Clay pipe	191
Post medieval pottery	152
Modern pottery	138
Glass	138
Stoneware	134
Medieval pottery	51
Coal	46

The predominant metal objects are nails, mostly 1 to 1 1/4 inch, rusted and with square sectioned heads. All of these objects could be the debris from demolished buildings.

Among the miscellaneous objects are oyster and cockle shells and pieces of stone, which were probably used for building.

The bones and teeth show evidence of butchery. Among them are mostly pig with lamb, mutton, goat, horse and chicken. Cat bones were probably the pet, but there ware some small human bones, the presence of which is not easy to explain.

One unusual bone had Roman numerals carved on it. They are not clear, but seem to suggest the number 1035.

The clay pipes range through the 17th and 18th C with no clear 19th pipes. Most of them date from the 17th C with all bowl fragments except one from this period. The exceptions are a bowl identified as being made by Richard Brinsley between 1710 and 1729 and another by Thomas Crew dated 1670-1696.

Pottery finds were dominated by fabric and ware types that span the period mid 17th to late 18th C, though there was a single sherd of Cistercian Ware that was first being made in this region in about 1450. They compare well with the pottery found in the Big Dig carried out in July 2013 around this test pit.

There was hardly any 19th C pottery. A single sherd of cane-coloured Ware possibly from the mid 19th C and some sherds of an unknown type were all that were found.

The most abundant is Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware which was made in vast amounts in Stoke on Trent between 1720 and 1780. Both plain and moulded ware types were found. Much less common were sherds of oriental imported ware types, blue and white hand-painted pottery and cream ware. The brown-glazed stoneware was almost all Nottingham made and attributable to the 18th C. Some sherds had an orange body which characterised the early period, 1690 to around 1715. Half a dozen sherds were late 19th to mid 20th C.

The coarse earthenware was predominantly red-bodied and, a little less, pink-bodied black glazed, but brown glazed and vitrified sherds were also found.

Only 6 of the 33 brown stoneware sherds were attributable to the 19th C. These were all Derbyshire made. The rest were 18th C, most of which were made in Nottingham or Crich. Some sherds with an orange fabric typical of the earliest phase of Nottingham-made pots were found. Little information was presented that enabled the forms to be identified

The post-medieval pottery includes Mottled Ware, Staffordshire Slipware, Black Slipware, all of which range from the mid to late 17th C to the middle 18th C. Coarse Black Ware is probably from the same date range, but has not been studied in detail. Sherds of Cistercian Ware date from the mid 15th C to mid 16th C. The Midland Yellow Ware came into production in about 1575 and lasted until the end of the 17th C.

The post hole did not contain any pottery sherds. Slivers of wood were attached to the side and there was a peaty substance in the lower part of the hole, thought to be rotted wood.

Interpretation

The topsoil is likely to have been re-deposited on the site after the building of the new school in 1965. The burnt shale found in this pit was confirmed to be the feather edge of the track that was found in the big dig to be the builder's access road during this construction work.

The sequence alongside and beneath the road consists of topsoil and made ground beneath it resting on the 19th C ground surface. This made ground has been shown in the big dig to have been re-deposited here during landscaping at the time the new rectory was being built in 1764—1770. Apart from the building materials in it the glass, in particular, has a 17th-18th C look about it. Much of it was thin (1/16th inch thick) window glass, the same as in the big dig pit. The piece of glass with the Brunsell coat of arms would have been a seal put on the shoulder of an onion bottle and is also important for dating. There is, in fact, nothing in the content in this test pit to conflict with the conclusion in the big dig. There is a suggestion that the edge of the demolition layer found in the big dig consisting mainly of roofing material extended to this position.

Some dog bones indicate that the test pit cut into the burial site of the south dog.

The limestone roofing material, often with fossils in it has been identified as Liassic in age, probably worked in quarries in Barnstone, where limestone paving slabs called Urrs were extracted in the late 19th century. (see CB01 for full details)

The stone floor, encountered at 75 cm depth, was probably laid in the late 17th C. Building rubble was found under the top layer of stones within which there is evidence of an earlier surface. The pit was excavated only to 108 cm in a small area close to the post hole. It showed that the rubble beneath the floor consisted of skerry, tile, brick with sandy clay and lime mortar. The base of this layer was not encountered, though the underlying sand was seen in the post hole.

surface, 27 x 23 cm, and is orientated 350^{o} It is inclined at about 10^{o} to the east. Whether this inclination is original or an artefact of later activity is not known. The post hole was probed to 180 cm depth. It contained a peaty substance that may be rotted wood and some slivers of wood attached to one side. The walls of the hole are sand, which confirms the discovery of about 1 metre of sand beneath the floor elsewhere in the large excavation. Though some stones were found in the hole there was no base stone. The post hole does not seem to have been deliberately filled in. The top of the post hole, situated in the north east corner of the test pit, coincided with the stone floor and it seems that the two are connected. It was partly covered with a large stone, 30 x 18 cm.

The underlying sand is a natural deposit.

CB03

LOCATION AND PROTOCOL

NGR	470629.340047
Height OD (mid point rim of N face)	22.279 m [error .036 m]
Dig dates	21st -25th May
Pit site	Lawn area NE of main school building
Pit protocol	1-metre pit, 10 cm spits, all sieved. Pit dug by children under supervision, sieving and washing also done by children. Pit orientated N-S. North face sections only described and measured unless otherwise stated. Photographs taken facing north unless otherwise stated. The pit was dug to the stone garden feature at 67cm depth, then half the feature was removed and a 50cm-wide trench was dug to the natural deposit on the eastern side of the pit. It reached bottom at 114 cm.

CB03

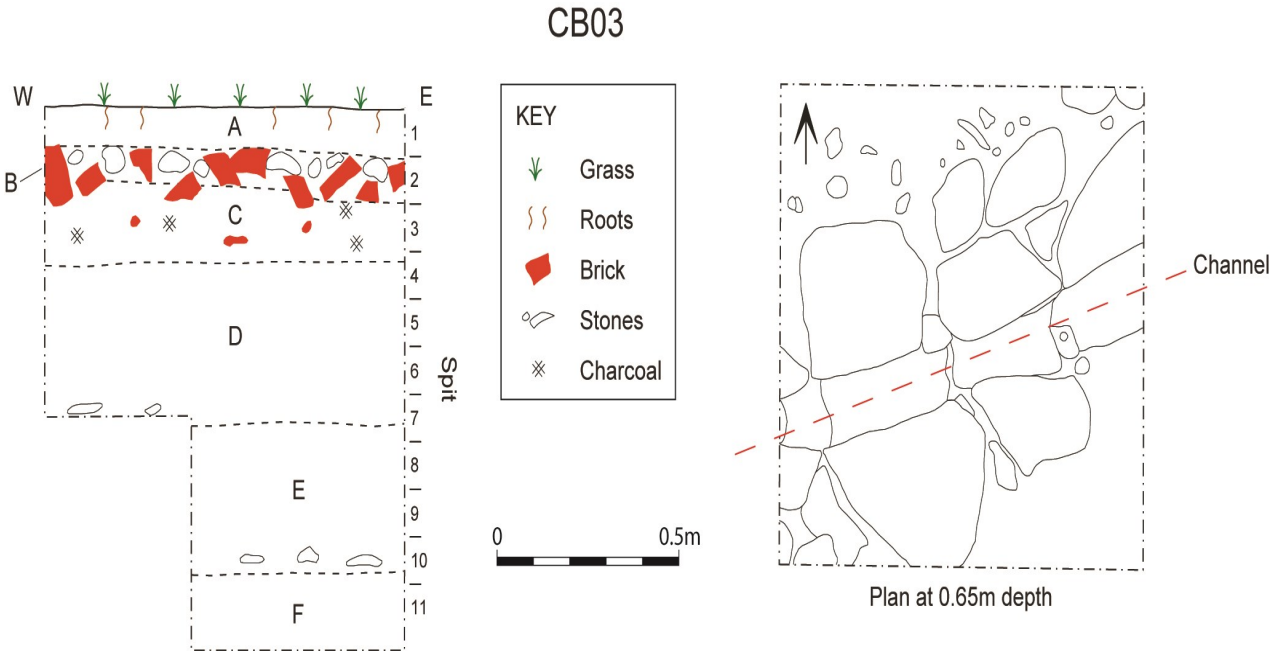
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Description of pit

The sequence in the pit is:

Topsoil (context A)
Building rubble (context B)
Topsoil and subsoil (contexts C and D)
Garden feature
Subsoil
Natural deposit

The topsoil is only about 10cm thick and as it lies on the layer of building rubble it was probably deposited during landscaping after the school was built in the early 1960s.



A *Turf on brown loam topsoil*
B *Brick rubble consisting of large bricks on north side of pit, fades on other sides.*
C *Dark brown loam with small pebbles and charcoal*
D *Dark brown clayey loam*
Garden feature of large stones at the base of context D
E *1-2 cm red-brown clay at the top and beneath the garden feature. Under this is brown-grey sandy loam with no finds. A layer of stones at the bottom.*
F *Black peaty clay*

The building rubble is mostly brick and it thins across the test pit towards the south side. This is likely to be part of the layer of rubble created during the demolition of the Georgian rectory in 1960.

The rubble was probably deposited on the pre-1960 land surface; the sequence of pebbly topsoil (context C) and subsoil (context D) is likely to be original garden soil. However, it is above the

Children working in the test pit.

Stone feature found at 67 cm depth.

garden feature, which suggests that the soil had been re-deposited, possibly during a re-modelling of the garden when the garden feature was thought old fashioned.

The garden feature was encountered at 67 cm depth. It is in the form of a drain with a channel draining gently to the north east. It was made using skerry and limestone roofing slates. The slates, some of which have holes in them, formed the base of the drainage channel. The feature was laid on a layer of red-brown clay.

Beneath the feature is a layer about 30 cm thick of brown-grey sandy loam, which contains no stones or pottery. At the bottom is a layer of stones, mostly skerry encountered at 98 cm depth.

The stones lie on black peaty clay which is thought to be a marginal deposit of the post-glacial lake.

Finds

No finds were recovered from below the stone garden feature.

The building material found is mostly brick with the greater concentration in the high parts of the pit. Where pieces are complete they are 2.75 or 3 inches thick, characteristically Georgian and Victorian. There was some plaster associated with the brick. The limestone slate, a few pieces with holes, was concentrated at the level of the garden feature. A piece of red clay pantile with a nib was recovered. Some stones were collected from beneath the garden feature.

Most of the glass was flat, aqua and thin (c1/16th inch) probably window glass, though there were small pieces of green bottle glass. Some of it had a chemical patina.

Other items include two clay pipe stems, oyster shells, coal, metal objects such as nails and clinker. The clay pipe stems were 17th C and mid 18th to 19th C

The pottery ranged from medieval to Modern.

The Modern table ware consists of a small range of pottery, such as White Ware and Transfer printed blue and white wares that include 19th C Willow Pattern and Flow Blue. Cream Ware, which preceded White Ware was common between 1740 and 1850, while Staffordshire White Salt -glazed Stoneware was made mostly between 1720 and 1780. There were in addition single sherds of unusual types similar to those found in the larger excavation in the school, such as cream bodied pale grey ware thought to be from a chamber pot and typically made in the period 1775 to 1825. All of this pottery was recovered from spits 2 to 6.

A few sherds of brown stoneware consist of 18th C and 19-20th C pieces.

Coarse earthenware includes Red-bodied Black Glazed, which is likely to be 19th C, and Vitrified Glazed Coarse Earthenware, which has a broader age range, but likely to be earlier.

Four sherds of post-medieval pottery include Midland Black Ware, Light-bodied Black Ware and Mottled Ware, found in spits 2 to 4. These are mainly late 17th to 18th C

There was only one sherd of medieval pottery; Nottingham Splashed Ware (1190-1250) from spit 4.

Interpretation

The topsoil and the layer of building rubble beneath it both reflect on activity during the building of the school in the early 1960s.

Beneath the building rubble and above the garden feature there appears to be a natural profile of topsoil and subsoil, but the pottery content shows no stratigraphy. All the pottery except the single medieval sherd is 17th to 19th C though the date range for some types extends into the 20th C. The glass recovered is mostly thin, aqua window glass, the same as in CB02 and the big dig, where it is thought to be from the windows of the rectory that was demolished in 1764 or so. The pottery types are similar to those in the test pit CB02 and larger excavation in the front lawn and have the same date range. The building material, mainly brick, is also not stratigraphically influenced. Brick pieces were found down to 50 cm and at 40cm a 2.75 deep piece was found. The main difference between the collection here and in the front lawn is that the date range into the 19th C is more pronounced here. Whereas in the front lawn the sequence below the 1960s deposits was primarily attributed to a landscaping episode in about 1770, here it is later. Willow pattern, Flow Blue, some of the brown stoneware are definitely 19th C.

It is suggested that the soil profile above the garden feature is not natural, but was deposited here in the 19th C when this part of the garden was remodelled.

This may indicate that the garden feature belongs to an early phase of development, possibly initiated by the Rev John Walter who built the Georgian rectory and, it is speculated, may have redesigned the garden to fit with his new home.

The complete absence of any finds in the soil below the garden feature is unusual. It is laid on black peaty clay from the lake deposit and it is possible that it was brought here as part of the landscaping to give the stone feature some elevation. In other words, apart from the peaty clay there is no natural deposit here.

CB04

CB04

LOCATION AND PROTOCOL

NGR	470676.340064
Height OD (mid point rim of N face)	21.575 m [error 0.021 m]
Dig dates	21st -25th May 2012
Pit site	Grass site at the side of the football pitch, near the eastern hedge.
Pit protocol	1-metre pit, 10 cm spits, all sieved. School project in which the children dig the digging, sieving and washing under supervision. Pit orientated N-S. North face sections only described and measured unless otherwise stated. Photographs taken facing north unless otherwise stated. Pit dug to 60cm with a shallow extension in the southern half to test the downward extent of the basal clay

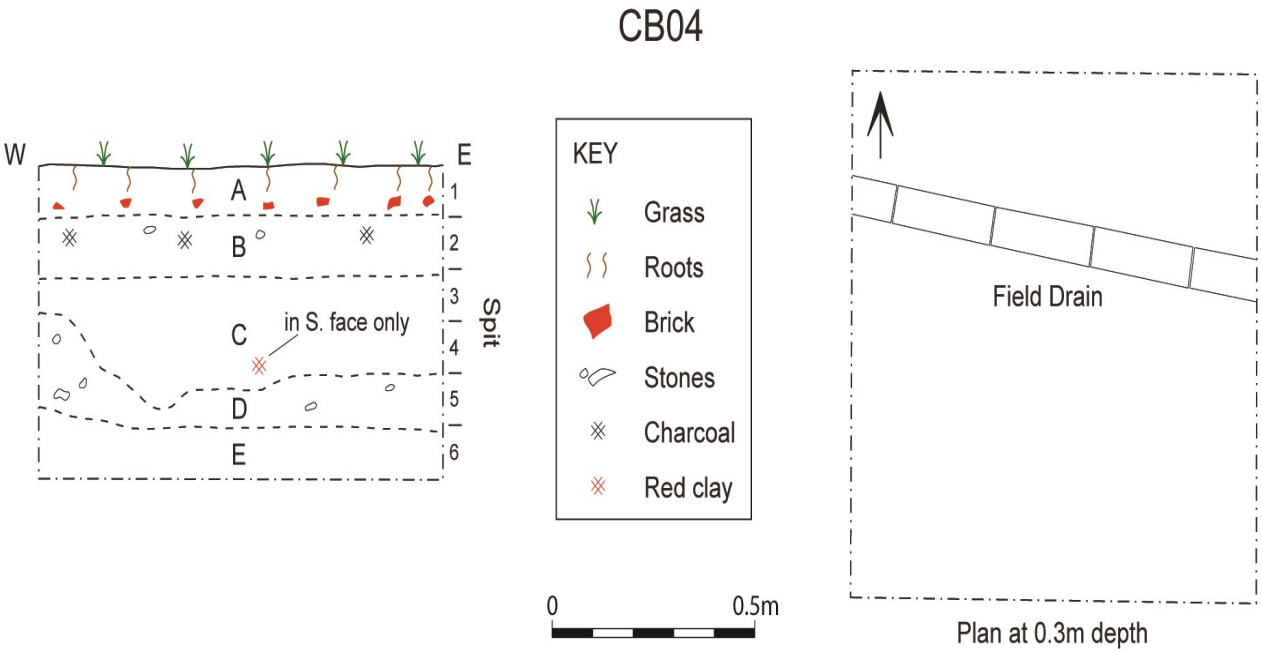
Field drain crosses the pit from west to east at about 30 cm depth. Three whole sections present and two partly buried sections, one at each end. The whole sections are 24.5 cm long and were removed. Depths to top of drain were 30 cm on the west and 27 cm on the east. Fill was firm brown clay. Drains now redundant, possibly 18th or 19th C.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Description of pit

Topsoil (context A)
Layer of brick pieces (context A)
Subsoil of brown-grey clay loam (contexts B and C)
Till (contexts D)
Possible lake deposit (E)

The topsoil is 10cm thick and has a thin layer of very small brick fragments at its base.



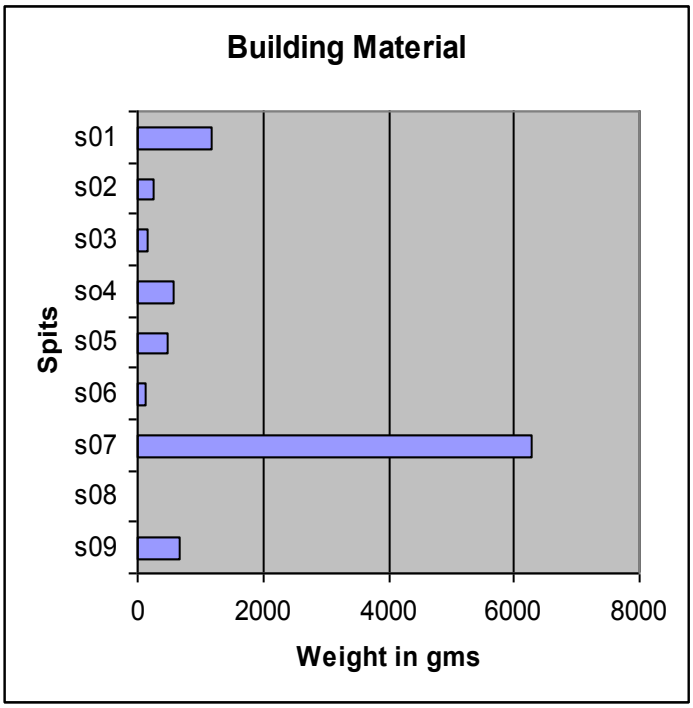
A *Turf on topsoil of dark brown loam with a thin layer of small brick fragments at the base.*
B *Subsoil of brown-grey clay loam with grit, chalk pebbles and charcoal near top. Stones up to 30 mm <1%.*
C *Subsoil of smooth brown-grey clay loam.*
D *Grey and red clay with small pebbles. It has an irregular top surface, possibly bioturbated and much disturbed. Red clay component is minor.*
E *Stiff brown basal clay*

Beneath this is brown-grey clay loam with chalk pebbles, stones and charcoal <1% in the upper part. It becomes relatively smoother downwards.

The land drain was set in the lower part of the clay loam, running at roughly ESE. The top was at 30 cm in the west and 27cm in the east. It seems to have been draining to the east away from where the rectory pond is shown on old maps. The drain is an inverted V shape. The height is 4 inches (10 cm), width 4 inches (11 cm) and the length of each segment is 9.5 inches (24.5 cm). Three full segments were present and two extras at the ends were partly revealed. The drain is now filled with clay loam and appeared to be functionless. There were no maker's marks on it.

Beneath the clay loam is a unit of grey and red clay with small pebbles. Its upper surface is highly irregular and in the south side of the pit there is a small inclusion of red clay in the overlying unit. The red and grey clay seems to be disturbed by various natural processes caused by plants and ani-

mals. The pebble inclusions seems to indicate that it is a till. However, it overlies a stiff brown clay, which is similar to the basal deposit recorded in LMCB03, the nearest garden and is thought to be a lake deposit.



Distribution of building material found in the pit.

Finds

Only 54 finds were registered in the database. Most were from the top 30cm.

The finds include brick, none of which has a measurable depth, plaster, slate, oyster shell, bones and teeth, glass, nails, clay pipe stems and pottery. The glass is mostly from bottles of various kinds, with only one piece of thin window glass. One bottle sherd with a heavy gold patina looks like it might be nearly black. This is the colour of the onion bottles that were common in the late 17th and 18th C. A piece of clear glass found between 20—30 cm depth was embossed with the words "[FIELD]/[S] HEMICAL CO[MPANY]/[LONDON] and is likely to be late 19th or early 20th C.

The pottery includes a single sherd of medieval Nottingham Green Glaze and a sherd of post medieval brown-glazed Midland Black Ware. The rest consist of 11 sherds of Modern pottery, four unglazed red earthenware, probably plant pot, and a single sherd of brown-glazed pink-bodied coarse earthenware. The modern pottery is not very distinctive, mostly being White Ware or Cream Ware. However, two sherds of Willow Pattern transfer-printed plates and one of cane-coloured ware are clearly mid 19th C or later.

Interpretation

Like with the other two pits in the school grounds the topsoil is likely to be a 1960s deposit, particularly as there is a layer, a single fragment thick, of small brick pieces at the base.

The deposit beneath this appears to be the original soil into which a field drain had been laid. Presumably the drain was set in a ditch, but there was no sign of an edge to it. This means, though, that the soil above the drain has been re-deposited. The drain is typical of those laid in the early 18th C and is undisturbed.

Apart from one bone (40-50 cm depth) and one piece of modern pottery from alongside the drain all the artefacts were collected from above the land drain. There is no stratigraphical arrangement of them. Except for the two medieval and post-medieval pieces the pottery sherds are most likely all to be19th C or later. The glass is also of this age, though there is the possibility of one piece being from a late 17th to 18th C onion bottle. The origin of this material is interesting. It does not show the same characteristics as the other two pits, being generally younger. Perhaps the most puzzling find is the clear, embossed glass bottle. The wording on it, FIELD S… CHEMICAL COMPANY, suggests that it might have originated from the rubbish dumped in the garden about 50 metres to the south (LMCB03) where the doctors lived. But it could also relate to the provision of something to do with gardening and relate directly to the rectory. An internet search failed to find any information about the company.

The design of the land drain suggests that it is early. At the end of the 18th century wealthy land-owners laid roof tiles over a channel cut into the bottom of a trench to act as land drains. Later, curved roofing tiles were made into horse-shoe shapes before firing and used inverted at the bottom of the trench cut for the purpose for land drains. The absence of the word DRAIN impressed into the land drain suggests that the ones in this test pit were made prior to 1826 when land drains became exempt from tax as long as they were marked with the word DRAIN. All the pottery could have been in use in the first quarter of the 19th C. Only the embossed glass does not fit with this date.

The natural deposit at the bottom of the pit is difficult to interpret. The disturbed upper part of the clay strongly resembles till in other pits, but the stiff brown clay beneath it resembles the lake deposit. The glacial till in the East Midlands is considerably older than the lake deposit and cannot be on top of it. This means that the material resembling the till is probably an outwash re-deposited on top of the lake clay at the edge of the lake. This commonly happens during periods of heavy rain after a dry spell. Subsequently it was disturbed by animals and became a soil at the lake edge.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PITS

CB02

IMG_1405 *Stone floor and post hole in NE corner CB02. Cap stone to the left of the post hole*

IMG_1407 *N face of CB02 showing the topsoil and, to the right, the edge of the building rubble used for the road. The light coloured context is the infill laid on the stone floor.*

IMG_1408 *Close up of top of post hole in CB02. Note rectangular shape*

IMG_1420 *CB02 view N. Stone floor partly removed.*

CB03 and CB04

IMG_1399 *CB03 Close up of E side of feature CB03. Note hole in slate*

IMG_1418 CB03 full depth with half of the stone feature removed to show the peaty clay base.

IMG_1419 *CB03 full section N face*

IMG_1415 *CB03 close up of base of peaty clay*

IMG_1416 *CB03 rubble layer deposited during the school building.*

IMG_1394 *Old field drain inCB04. Facing N. spit 3*