

A record of part of the precinct wall of St John's Abbey, Colchester, Essex

February 2002

on behalf of
Purcell Miller Tritton
for the MoD

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NGR: TL 99675 24656



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Plate 1 General shot of west face of abbey precinct wall.

Plate 2 Close-up shot of west face of abbey precinct wall.

1 Introduction

A short section (TL 99675 24656) of the core of the precinct wall of St John's Abbey, Colchester, Essex was recorded photographically in 2002, where part of the face had recently collapsed. The section of wall concerned extends along the east side of Flagstaff Road. The recording was undertaken to comply with one of the conditions of the Scheduled Ancient Monument consent for the repair of the wall.

The photographs were taken by Alison Colchester of the Colchester Archaeological Trust. The recording was commissioned by Simon Marks of Purcell Miller Tritton for the MoD.

2 Methods

- 2.1 The photographic record had to be made in two phases, because the parts of the face to either side of the exposed core were too unstable to allow the debris at the foot of the wall to be safely removed without further collapse.
- 2.2 The appended colour prints showing the core are at a scale of 1:20. North is to the left as viewed. The location at which these two shots were taken is marked on Figure 1.

3 Discussion

- 3.1 The wall has been dated to c 1095-1133 (*CAR 9*, 219-21), but the evidence is not conclusive. The core of the wall exposed in Flagstaff Road apparently contained no peg-tile, brick or any other material which would help date it, although the absence of peg-tile is consistent with a date before the late 13th-century.
- 3.2 The face has been so extensively patched that it is difficult to be certain what is original. The face on the wall forming the north-east corner of the precinct had been refaced in the 15th or 16th centuries (*CAR 9*, 219). The same might be true of the wall in Flagstaff Road.
- 3.3 No worked stone was noted in the collapsed wall face material.

4 Archive

The negatives and a copy of this report have been deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code 2002.23 record.

5 Acknowledgements

The Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Purcell Miller Tritton for commissioning the work, and the MoD for funding the work and for access on site.

6 Reference

CAR 9 Colchester Archaeological Report 9, *Excavations of Roman and later cemeteries, churches and monastic sites in Colchester, 1971-88*, by Nina Crummy, Philip Crummy and Carl Crossan, 1993

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