

**17 RED LION LANE (BRIDGE SQUARE), FARNHAM (SU 8411 4652)
REPORT ON EXCAVATION**

The Excavation

Two trenches were laid out, one in each room of the cottage. Trench A, in the room adjoining the road, was six feet by two feet (1.83 x 0.6m) in extent and trench B, in the adjoining room on the north, was three feet by four feet (0.9 x 1.22m) (Fig 2).

Trench A

The floorboards had previously been removed and digging through the earth layer immediately revealed a ten inch (0.25m) thickness of relatively modern building rubble. Beneath this layer, excavation revealed a wall made of blocks of very compacted limestone, set directly on a single layer of tiles. Only one layer of the blocks remained and these were bedded in clay though there was the occasional trace of mortar. Each block was about 10" x 9" x 5" (25 x 22 x 12cm) and had been shaped by chisel. Five such blocks were traced running in a north-south direction. To the south the wall continued into the side of the trench and probably passes under the partition wall of the present cottage. Four feet four inches (1.32m) to the north, the wall ends in an area of fragments of shattered limestone. There was no sign of any foundation under the tile layer. The occupation layer surrounding the wall produced a few pot sherds - one of which, a rim, dated to the 15th century - and an ulna, tibia and rib probably all from an ox. These bones had all been broken, presumably to extract the marrow. The tiles on which the wall was set and which extended either side of it, were originally intended as roof tiles and are also tentatively dated to the mid-15th century. The chiselling marks on the limestone indicate a date prior to AD 1180 (A R Dufty, pers comm) and it would seem reasonable to assume that these blocks were robbed from an earlier building.

A band of oyster shells ran under the wall but above the tiles at about an angle of 45°. Beneath this occupation (layer 3) was a band of clay/soil mix which lay on top of a three inch (7cm) layer of gravel. This in turn overlay a second occupation layer (6), which yielded several splinters of bone. This layer rested on a four inch (10cm) band of tiles which completely covered the floor of the trench. The tiles were in fragments, which did not fit together, and were rather thicker than the wall tiles, being about 5/8" (1.6cm) thick. The tiles were not arranged in any order and could have been discarded after breakage, from a nearby house. Underneath the tiles was a layer of sand, which in turn rested on white clay. This latter layer appeared to be the natural, though it was not tested to any depth because of the increasing dampness as the river level was approached.

Trench B

This trench revealed the foundations of a demolished brick wall which used to form the end of the present cottage and traces of this wall could be seen in the existing walls. The foundations of this demolished wall had so disturbed the strata that it was no considered worth continuing excavation in this trench.

Conclusions

The immediate area would appear to have been used as a rubbish dump during early medieval times. This was followed by a period of neglect until the mid-15th century when a substantial building made of limestone blocks was constructed (or one with limestone foundations). This in turn was probably demolished when the present house was built, as the wall did slightly intrude into the top rubble layer (layer 2).

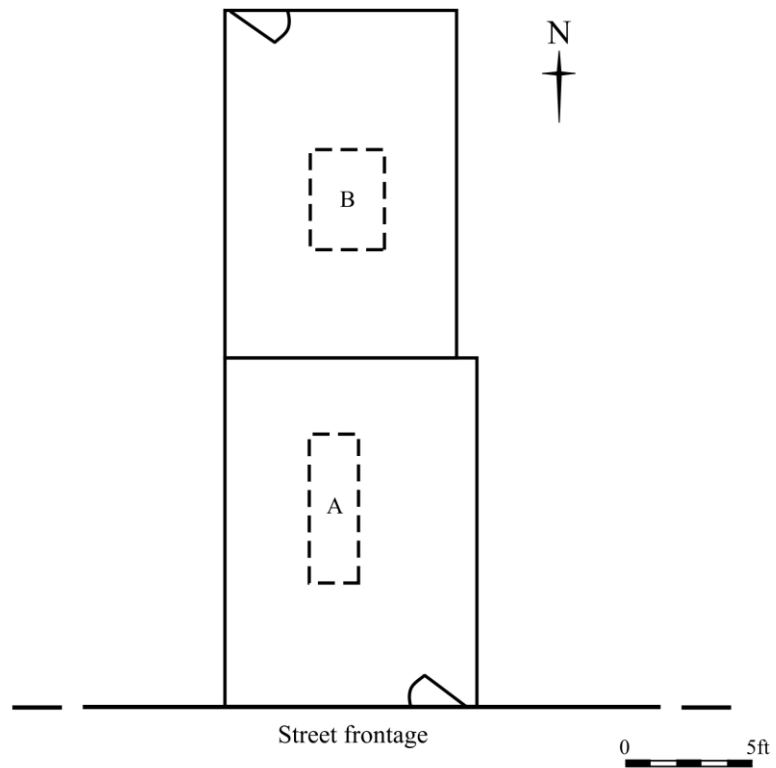
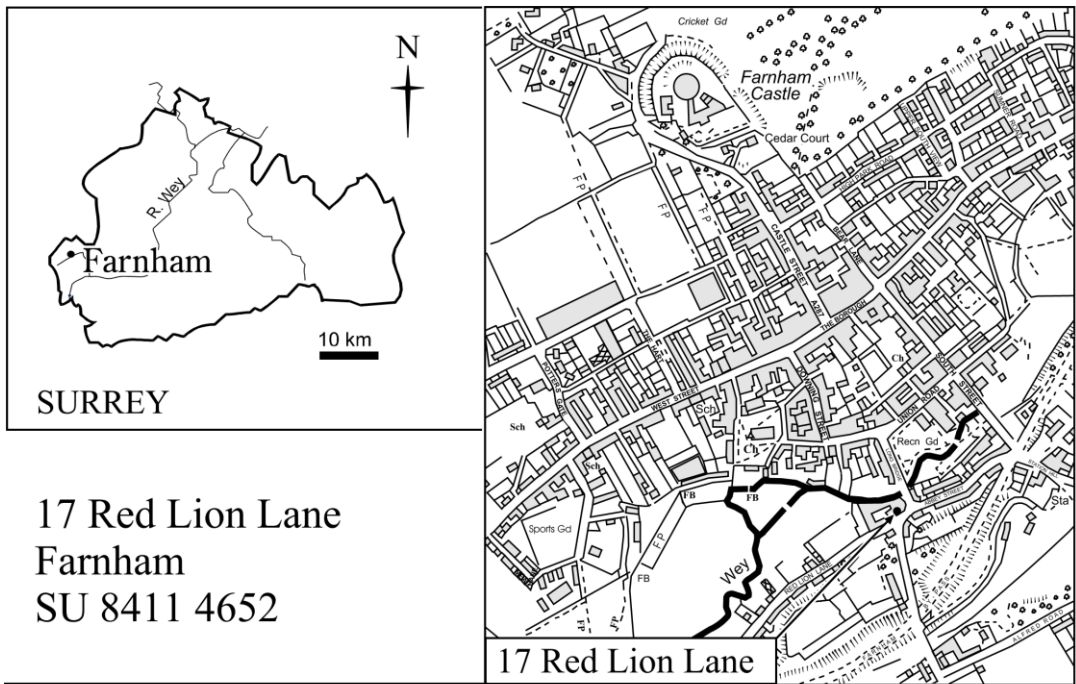


Fig 1 Location plan

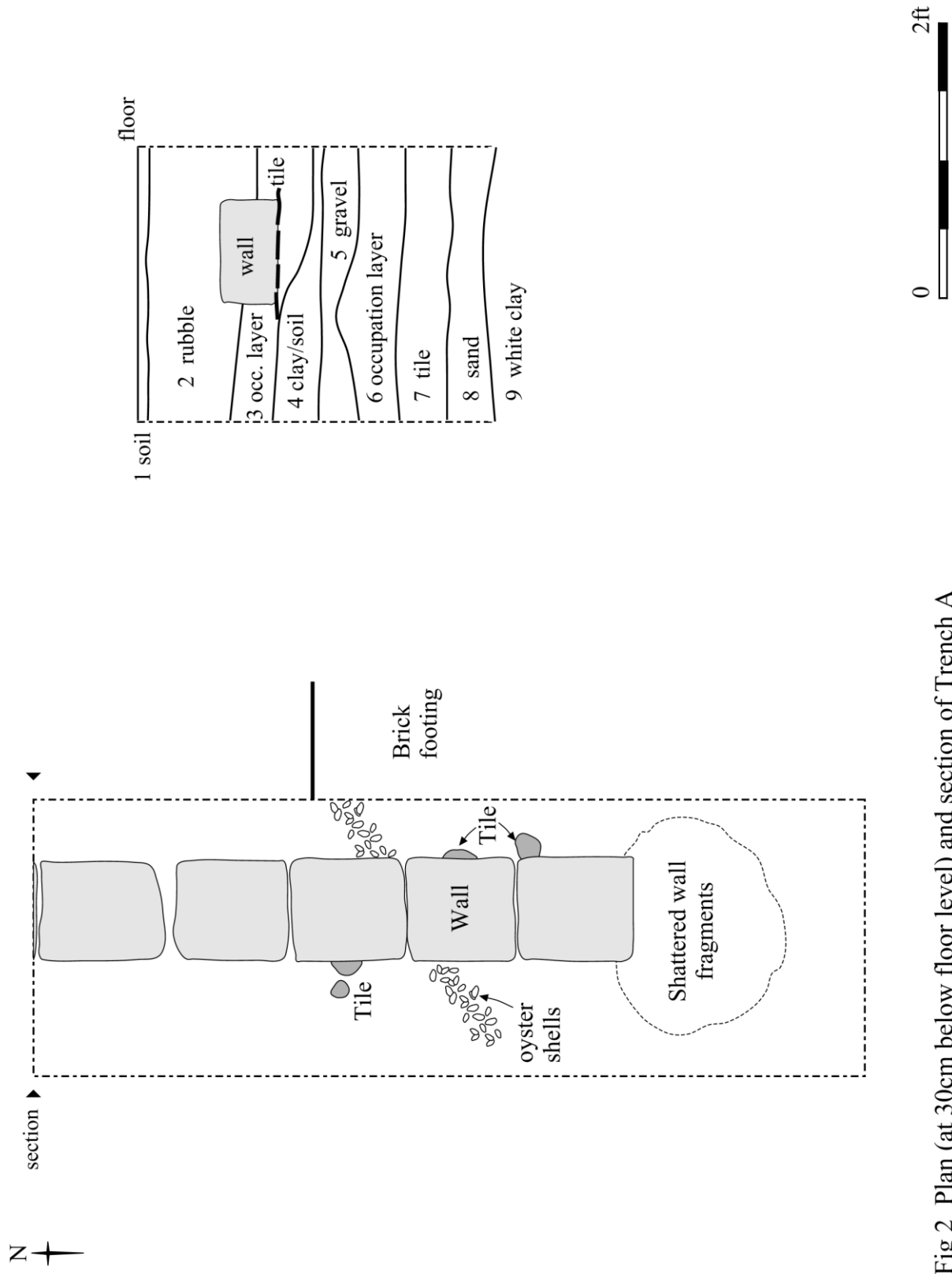


Fig 2 Plan (at 30cm below floor level) and section of Trench A