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The Faversham Society  
Archaeological Research Group

Community  
Archaeology

## **Preston: A Most Peculiar Parish**

### **A Report on Keyhole KP101, The Old Wine Vaults Public House, Preston Street, Faversham**

**National Grid Reference TR 01543 61214**



**The Old Wine Vaults public house.**

## 1. Introduction

*Preston: a Most Peculiar Parish* is a new project starting in 2013 and planned to run for at least two and probably three years. FSARG will be working in the part of the parish known as Preston Within or Preston Next Faversham. Although nowadays included in the domain of Faversham Borough, the parish of Preston has a long history of its own with some astonishingly early documentary mentions e.g. in AD822 when the parish is donated to Christchurch, Canterbury.<sup>1</sup>

St Catherines, the parish church, is undoubtedly a very ancient foundation with both archaeological and documentary evidence putting its foundation well back into the Saxon period. Given the proximity of the rich Saxon Kingsfield cemetery, looted by brickfield workers and railway builders in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>2</sup>, some interesting questions are raised about this church and the area around it during these early times.

The aims in 2013 have been to examine the evidence for medieval land use along the line of Preston Street - the Mall. This is the shortest route joining Faversham town centre and the quays of the Creek to Watling Street running west to Rochester - London and east to Canterbury - Dover. This line forms the western boundary of Preston Within. Almost no proper archaeological work has been done along the Preston Street - Mall line, with only the looting (as mentioned above) and a few stray or accidental finds mostly of Roman burial material giving any information at all.<sup>3</sup> The main aim of the work in 2013 was to uncover medieval levels at well-spaced points along the line and see whether the evidence was for habitation or agriculture or both.

KP101 was located in the garden of the Old Wine Vaults, an ancient public house. This placed it at the centre of a fascinating and important part of Faversham town centre, lying on the crossover of Gatefield-Cross Lane (currently a much-used walkway but on the line of a road shown on the earliest of maps) and Preston Street. Although strictly speaking not in Preston parish, it is the northernmost point investigated on the town centre-Watling Street line explained above and lies only 100m from the Preston next Faversham parish boundary.

As well as producing significant research findings, this particular investigation made an important contribution to a *Faversham in the Making* event, a one-day community project where the Old Wine Vaults investigation and the Fleur de Lis museum (opposite on Preston Street) combined with a hands-on activities and re-enactors event in the Alexander Centre. KP101 itself was worked on for seven days and was visited by many people, estimated at around 1000 overall. Some of them came back every day and many of them were the kind of folk who would never go near a museum. So this excavation made a very successful community event<sup>4</sup> as well as (as this report will show) making an important contribution to the understanding of Faversham's history.

## 2. Geographical and historical background

### a) Geography

The garden of the Old Wine Vaults is level, at an altitude of 10.4m. It is surrounded by built up areas and the building faces onto one of Faversham's main roads, Preston Street.

### b) Geology

All of Preston Street is shown on the geological map as Head Brickearth overlying Upper Chalk. The Upper Chalk is dipping down quite steeply to the north.

To the west and south west of the Old Wine Vaults site, around 2m of brickearth overlay was stripped for brick making in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The block enclosed by Preston Street / Cross Lane / Bank Street / Stone Street does not, however, show any signs of having been affected - there are no

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<sup>1</sup> Hasted 1798 *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* Vol 6 pp532-49 on Preston

<sup>2</sup> Richardson A 2005 *The Anglo Saxon Cemeteries of Kent* Vol 1 BAR British series 391

<sup>3</sup> e.g. HER TR06 SW17 Romano British flagon found on building site of Argosy Cinema. Also see later in this report

<sup>4</sup> Margetts, Clive 2013 *Evaluation of FITM* unpub. document held by the Faversham Society

steep little cliffs, for example, showing the edges of extraction areas. Presumably the gardens were walled off long before the rapid expansion of the brick industry.<sup>5</sup>

### c) Known history

The building occupied by the Old Wine Vaults, 75 Preston Street, is one of Faversham's oldest standing buildings. It is a timber framed, jettied, two-storey structure dating from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, with many later alterations.<sup>6</sup> Its location on the corner of Preston Street and that ancient route way Gatefield Lane - Cross Lane means that references to the building in early documents can be confidently identified. Thus local historian Edward Crow, writing in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>7</sup>, says that the buildings either side of Cross Lane opposite Gatefield Lane were owned by Faversham Abbey until the Dissolution. The one 'up' from Cross Lane was leased to William Warmecourt in 1479 and then to his son Simon who was a brewer; thus the good justification for the claim that this is a 500 year old pub.

By 1750 the building was owned by Rigden, one of the two main brewers in Faversham's brewing history. It is possible that he started his first brewery on this site before moving to Court Street. By 1770 he had sold the house, yard and an associated hop field to Valentine Court (first one). The house and hopfield behind can clearly be seen in Jacobs 1774 map (**Fig 1a**). By the 1795 First Ordnance Survey draft map, however, the hopfield has given way to a laid out formal garden area with paths (**Fig 1b**). This is because the Courts were not brewers - Valentine I was a weaver, and his son Valentine II a maker of sackcloth, twine and ropes.

In 1840 (**Fig 1c**) the back plots were still open space, but by the 1865 map a row of houses had sprung up along Cross Lane. The main building itself stays as a sack and rope manufactory until close to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On the 1865 map (**Fig 1d**) the ropery is clearly marked in on the big plot next door which is part of the buildings estate until the 1930s. This is the plot that used to be the hopfield.

**Fig 1: Map sequence.**

**The red ovals enclose the main buildings of the Old Wine Vaults site. North is to the top of the maps with Cross Lane running roughly southeast to northwest.**



**a) Jacobs 1774.<sup>8</sup>**



**b) OS Surveyors 1795.<sup>9</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Twist, Syd 1984 *Stock Bricks of Swale No 2* Sittingbourne Papers Sittingbourne Society

<sup>6</sup> Swaine, A. 1969 *Faversham Conserved* Maidstone: KCC

<sup>7</sup> Crow E 1848-61 *Historical Gleanings relative to the Town of Faversham and Parishes Adjoining*. CD transcript by P Tann, 2009, Faversham Society: Faversham p 424

<sup>8</sup> Jacobs E 1774 <sup>8</sup> Jacobs E, 1774, *History of Faversham* reprint 1974 Faversham Society map of Faversham

<sup>9</sup> OS 1795 Surveyors First Draft map for Faversham



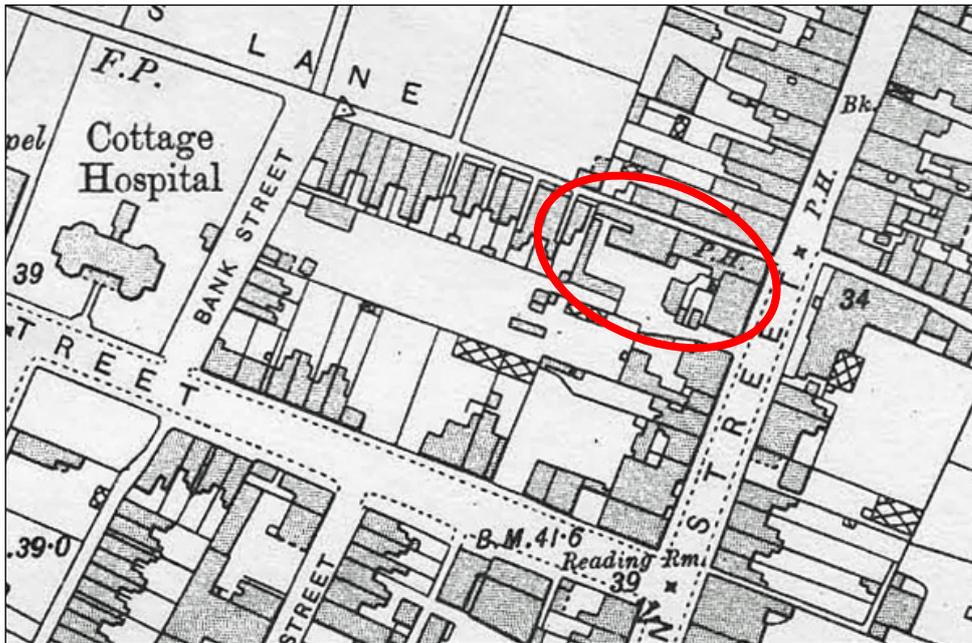
c) Tithe map 1840.<sup>10</sup>  
 131 & 140: Valentine Court I, 132 & 133 (Cross Lane cottage):  
 Elizabeth Court, Most of the rest of this block: Mary Chambers.



d) OS 6 inches to mile 1865.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Preston Near Faversham Tithe Award Schedule and maps 1840. KAS/ KCC archives.

<sup>11</sup> OS 1865 (1904 reprint) Sheet XXXIV.9.10 Scale of original 1:536



e) OS 6 inches to mile 1906.<sup>12</sup>



f) OS 1:1250 2013.

In 1854 Stephen Court, son of Valentine II, had applied for a license to sell alcohol but had been refused. It is not until 1897 that a license is granted to Stephen's son Valentine III. This starts off as an off-licence in the front and a wine and spirit bar accessible only through a small door in Cross Lane. This business was called the Albion Wine Vaults but quickly became known as the 'Hole in the Wall' for obvious reasons. In 1912 the pub was taken over by Rigdens and the off-licence side dropped. It has continued as a pub ever since.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1930s, the big garden plot next door (**Fig 2a & b**) was sold and the Argosy Cinema built in 1934-5 (**Fig 3a**). During the early stages of the building site preparation, a Roman cinerary urn and pottery were found (**Fig 3b**). The Argosy became renamed as the Regal, stopped showing films in the mid 1960s but

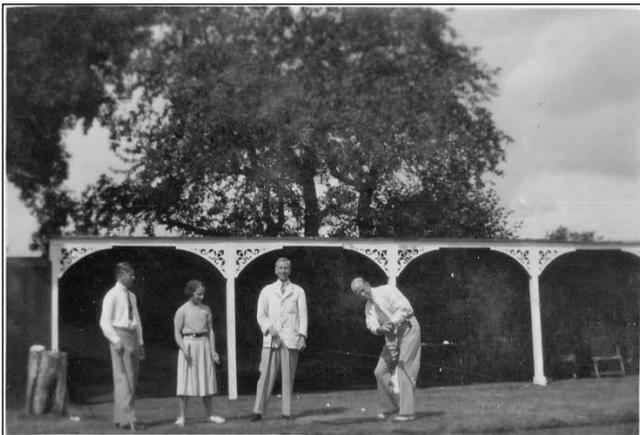
<sup>12</sup> OS 1907 Sheet XXXIV Scale of original 1:2500

<sup>13</sup> Stevens, Peter 1998 *A Record of Preston and Preston Street* No 62 Faversham Papers Faversham Society: Faversham

transformed again into a bingo hall. This closed in 1974.<sup>14</sup> In 1980, the large building was demolished and rebuilt on the Argosy footprint as a Safeway supermarket, now M & Co department store.<sup>15</sup>

Through this sale the pub lost a lot of land to the south but it did gain a little from the west. Around 1940, a small cottage, shown on the 1840 tithe map and owned by Mrs Elizabeth Court at that time so not part of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Cross Lane development, was demolished. The wall between the pub and this cottage continued to stand until the 1960s but was eventually demolished and the pub garden expanded.<sup>16</sup> This meant that a narrow structure lining the pub garden wall, visible on the 1865 and 1906 maps (**Fig 1d & e**), also disappeared. This structure was possibly a portico like those shown in **Fig 2a & b**.

**Fig 2: Photos of the pub grounds in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>17</sup>**



**a) A structure lining the pub garden wall.**



**b) The large garden next door to the OWV. Note the portico at the rear. This field is the site of the former ropery. The houses on the right are those in Cross Lane.**

The Hole in the Wall thrived until the 2000s when it became somewhat rough. It was closed and re-opened under strong new ownership and has gone from strength to strength on this ancient site.

The Old Wine Vaults is on the Kent HER as a listed building TR06 1281. Across Cross Lane is a 16<sup>th</sup> century property at one time the home of Edward Jacobs, a famous Faversham historian, TR06 SW1151. Almost opposite is the former Fleur De Lis public house TR06 SW1157 now occupied by the Faversham Society Museum. Apart from a small-scale investigation in the cellar of the Fleur de Lis during a renovation and the above mentioned cinerary urn find, there are no archaeological monuments or find spots charted in this part of Preston Street.

<sup>14</sup> Gareth Whieldon, Sep.2010 on [www. playingbingo.co.uk/land-bingo/lost-halls](http://www.playingbingo.co.uk/land-bingo/lost-halls)

<sup>15</sup> See Faversham Society plaque on side of M & Co in Preston Street, Faversham

<sup>16</sup> These estimated dates given by local residents during the week of public digging.

<sup>17</sup> By kind permission of Irene Andrews, grand-daughter of the licensee at the time.



**Fig 3a: Grand entrance to the Regal Cinema (originally the Argosy) from Preston Street.<sup>18</sup> Note that it is set back from the main road. See Appendix 3 for more about this short-lived 20<sup>th</sup> century Faversham 'wonder'.<sup>19</sup>**

**Fig 3b: The Roman finds on the Argosy site in September 1934. Finders as yet unidentified!<sup>20</sup>**



### 3. Location of the trench

The trench was located in the Old Wine Vaults rear public garden. This is a predominantly open area laid to lawn, inset with concrete bases on which combination tables / bench seating sits. The perimeter contains a number of flowerbeds, and in the southeast of the garden lies an open-sided wooden shelter. A footpath runs from the side entrance in Cross Lane through the garden to the pub entrance.

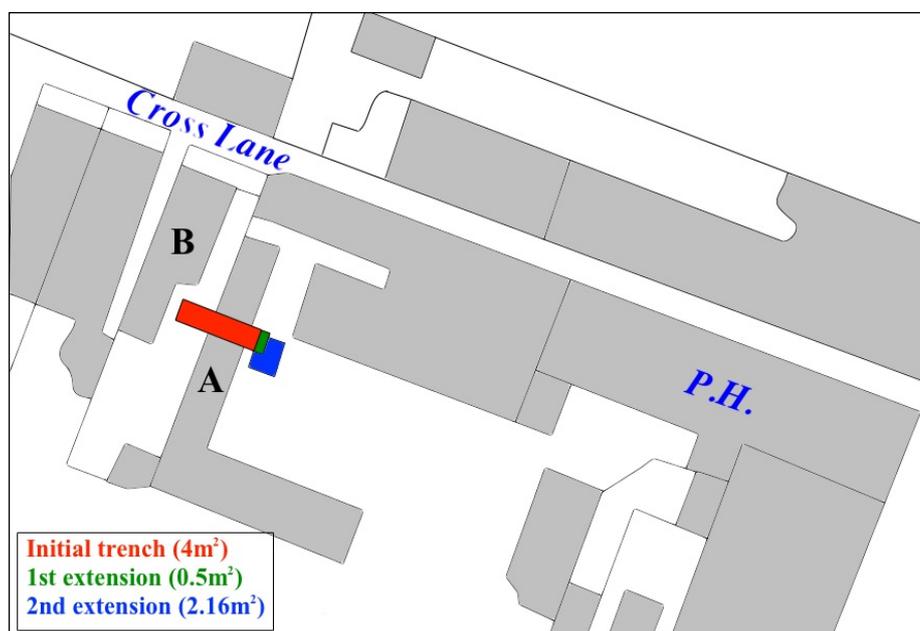
<sup>18</sup> Photo posted on [lost-halls](http://lost-halls) website, op.cit. by Martin Tapsell of Deal.

<sup>19</sup> Stevens 1998 op.cit. p 61-2

<sup>20</sup> Irene Andrews op.cit.

The actual position for the trench was therefore determined by a number of factors:

- Accessibility - the trench had to be positioned between the seating concrete bases. Since the excavation area needed to be fenced off for safety reasons, the trench needed to be located in an area where the public could easily watch the dig, but also where it would minimise any disruption to the pub business.
- Pre-excavation analysis – map regression and a geo-physical survey both highlighted an area that showed two former structures in close proximity of each other. These appear on both the OS maps of 1865 and 1906 (**Fig 1d & 1e**) and are marked as 'A' and 'B' in **Fig 4**. Building 'B' was identified as a very small, narrow cottage, but the other structure (A) had an unknown function.
- Observed features – following a period of dry weather conditions, a number of parched areas were clearly visible on the grass. It was thought highly likely that these would be wall-lines associated with the structures of interest. This would also provide a more obvious and perhaps more interesting spectacle for the public.



**Fig 4: The location of the trench showing the 2 structures of interest (as shown on the 1906 OS map). The 3 colours show the phases of the trench development over the period of the dig.**

It was therefore decided that the trench would be situated at the west-end of the garden in order to evaluate both of these structures and in particular structure 'A' as there was very little known about it.

#### 4. Procedures

A 1m by 4m area was measured out across the features of interest, running approximately northwest to southeast (shown in red in **Fig 4**). The area was then pegged out with string and the position was recorded by measuring to mapped corners of the pub. Turf was carefully removed and stored on plastic sheeting away from the trench. The excavation area was then fenced off in order to provide a defined working area for the team, and a safe area for the public to view from. Builder bags were placed a short distance from the trench to contain all the excavated soil, with room allowed for expansion as the dig progressed. A finds processing area was established adjacent to the garden entrance from Cross Lane in order to provide a both working and reception area for visitors.

Due to the scale of the excavation, activities and areas of responsibility were assigned to different team members (on different days) thus ensuring that every stage of the excavation and recording was covered with nothing being missed out.

The trench was then excavated using the single context method, each of which was fully recorded. All excavated soil was meticulously sieved with the spoil being periodically metal-detected. Finds were set aside for each context and special finds were given three-dimensional coordinates to pinpoint the exact find spot. Any features revealed were carefully recorded by means of photographs and drawings.

As the excavation progressed, and features appeared, the trench was extended a further two times at the southeast end – firstly by 0.5m<sup>2</sup> (shown in green in **Fig 4**), and then by a further 2.16m<sup>2</sup> (shown in blue).

Finally, the spoil was put back in, tamped down, watered and the turf replaced. The southeast end of the trench was left open by the request of the publican to allow them time to decide what to do with the interesting feature uncovered.

## 5. Findings

Please read in conjunction with the Harris Matrix (**Appendix 1**), and Small Finds Photographs in **Appendix 2**.



**Fig 5: The start of excavation.**

The turf and loose associated material were first to be removed (context [01]). This friable, fine grained soil was moderately sorted and contained a large proportion of vessel glass, CBM (ceramic building material - such as tiles & bricks), iron (mainly nails), with smaller quantities of coal, coke and clinker, slate and pottery. The variation in pottery dates was indicative of a well-churned (disturbed) layer. Over half was from the late post-medieval period (c1800 to present day), with around a quarter 'Redware' (c1600 - c1900), and a fifth from the post-medieval (c1550 – c1800) period. The remainder consisted of a few sherds of medieval (c1225 – c1400) and Roman (c43 – c410) pottery. There was a small quantity of bone (including a pig's tooth) and a piece of carved bone (see small find SF37 in **Appendix 2**) - possibly part of a small figure.

Once this loose material was removed, a contiguous, moderately sorted layer (context [02]) that spanned the whole of the trench, and extended to a maximum depth of around 19cm (southeast end) and 12cm (northwest end) was revealed. This was consistent with previous layer, but also contained quite a large quantity of mortar and plaster. Vessel glass and iron were in similar proportions, and of the pottery, the majority (93%) was late post medieval. Small finds (numbers 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40 and 44) consisted of

marbles, pre-decimal and decimal coins, buttons, and a small aluminium clockwork key. There was a small number of sheep and rat / mouse bone fragments, and 3 pieces of worked flint (a thumbnail scraper, side scraper and blade / point). Although this context is 'typical' pub garden material, the presence of 10kg of CBM and the mortar & plaster also suggested demolition material.

As the excavation continued, at a distance of approximately 1.5m from the northwest end of the trench, and at a depth of 16cm, the wall [05] identified in the pre-excitation surveys was revealed. This effectively divided the trench (from a purely physical perspective) into 2 defined areas that were subsequently excavated by 2 teams - see Fig 6.

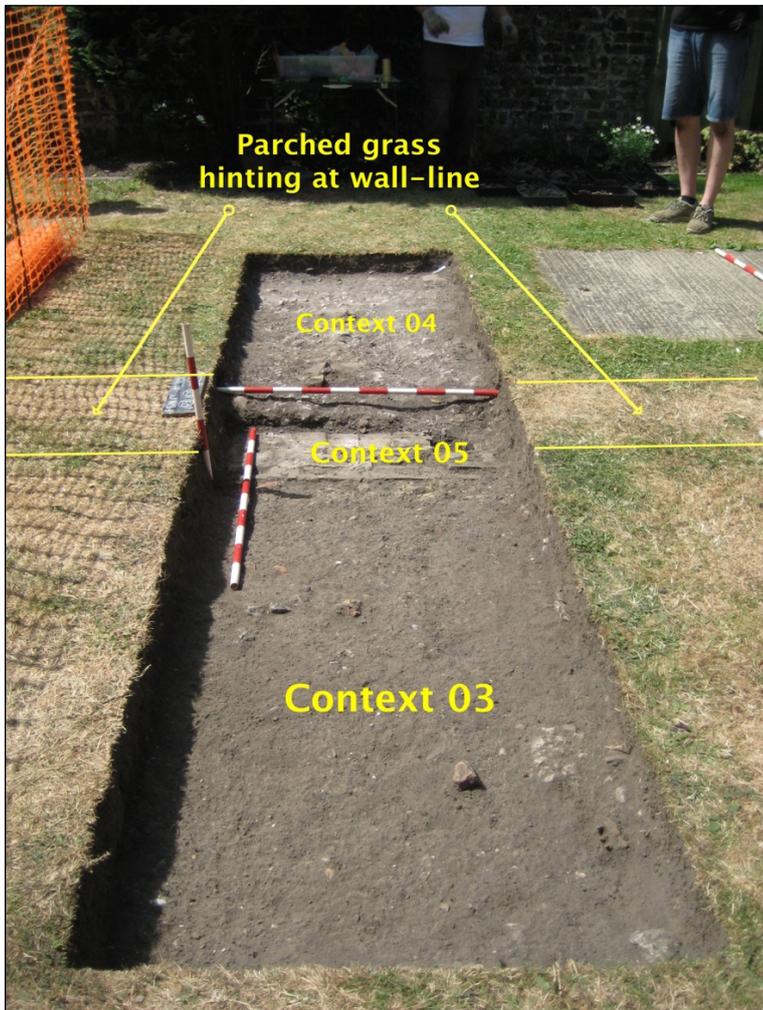


Fig 6: The trench (looking towards the northwest end) showing the wall [05] that divided the trench into 2 physical working areas.

### The area northwest of the wall.

Working northwest of the wall [05] beneath [02] was context [04] (see Fig 7). This 22cm thick layer contained more than 105kg of CBM, and 92kg mortar & plaster with OBM (other building material) and slate make up the remainder of the bulk material. Of the inclusions, iron was the most common (58%) with around 3kg in weight found, much of which was in sheet form. Pottery was the next prolific (20%) with just over 1kg of material, of which most (70%) was Redware, 27% late post medieval, and 3% post medieval. This was very poorly sorted (uneven distribution of materials) which suggested a substantial amount of disturbance.



Fig 7: Showing the surface of context [04] at the northwest end of the trench.

In addition, there was some 700g of vessel glass. Shell, bone (pig, sheep and cattle), clay tobacco pipes (CTP) and other metals making up the remainder. Two small finds were recoded (SF31 & 32) which consisted of a small glass bottle and metal button dating from the late 1800s to 1950.

The photograph (Fig 8) shows the surface of context [06] prior to its excavation. Similar to the previous layer, this poorly sorted context extended to 60cm below ground level, and consisted predominantly of CBM (51kg), mortar & plaster (6.8kg) together with other stone (6.2kg). Pottery was the most common of the inclusions with over 1.6kg recovered. The date of the pottery was mainly late post medieval (86%),

but the presence of small amounts of roman and prehistoric material, again, indicated that this area had been very disturbed. The reason why soon became apparent.



Fig 8: The surface of context [06].

With the removal of this layer, a more complex picture emerged (see Fig 9) showing 4 distinct areas (contexts [12], [13], [14] and [15]).

In the northwest corner, a small chalky triangular area (context [12]) was 33cm in depth (a maximum depth of 83cm below ground level). Consisting mainly of chalk (7kg) and mortar & plaster (2.5kg). The very few inclusions consisted of shell, iron, CTP, and post medieval pottery.

As contexts [13] and [14] were excavated, the explanation for the high disturbance became clear. Two sewer / drainage pipes were revealed (Fig 10). These headed in the direction of M & Co and were almost certainly associated with the Regal Cinema before that. The sketch in Fig 11 shows the relationship of contexts [12], [13], [14], [15], [29], [30], [31] & [32].

Having discovered the pipes, no further excavation took place around them since we did not want to compromise their integrity.

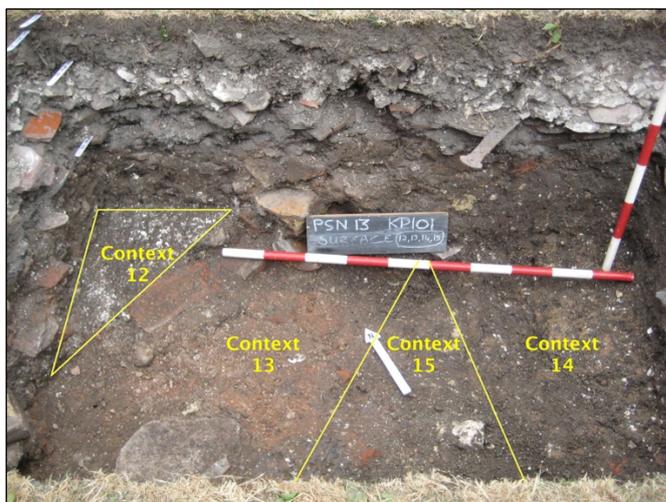


Fig 9: Shows the more complex picture with 4 distinct layers.



Fig 10: Photograph showing the 2 pipes with the excavated area [15] in between.

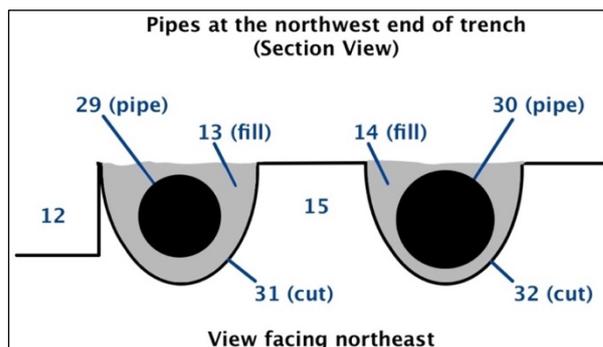


Fig 11: Sectional view of the 2 pipes showing the relationship between the contexts.

The small quantity of infill material that was removed from around the pipes ([13] and [14]) consisted of building material, mortar and plaster. The only accessible triangular area in between the 2 pipes was then focused on (context [15]) where it was carefully excavated down to a depth of just over 1m.

This was a compacted clay area containing mostly ceramic building material (over 14kg), mortar and plaster (1.6kg), other building material, with the odd piece of flint. Within this layer was a fairly large quantity of shell (1.6kg) and bone (1kg) of which the identifiable bone was from cattle. There was 737g of very mixed pottery including redware (40%), post medieval (24%), roman (12%), late post medieval (11%) plus late medieval and medieval. This assortment is clearly the result of the disturbance caused by the digging of the trenches when the 2 pipes were laid. The remaining inclusions were made up of 0.5kg of iron and a small quantity of clay pipes, glass and charcoal.

At a depth of just over 1m, a soft clay soil (context [19]) was only partially excavated down to our maximum safe depth of 1.2m, a further restriction being that of the tight working space. This consisted of CBM, mortar & plaster, coal, clinker and coke. The photograph (Fig 10) and drawings (Figs 12 & 13) show the completed excavation at the northwest end of the trench.

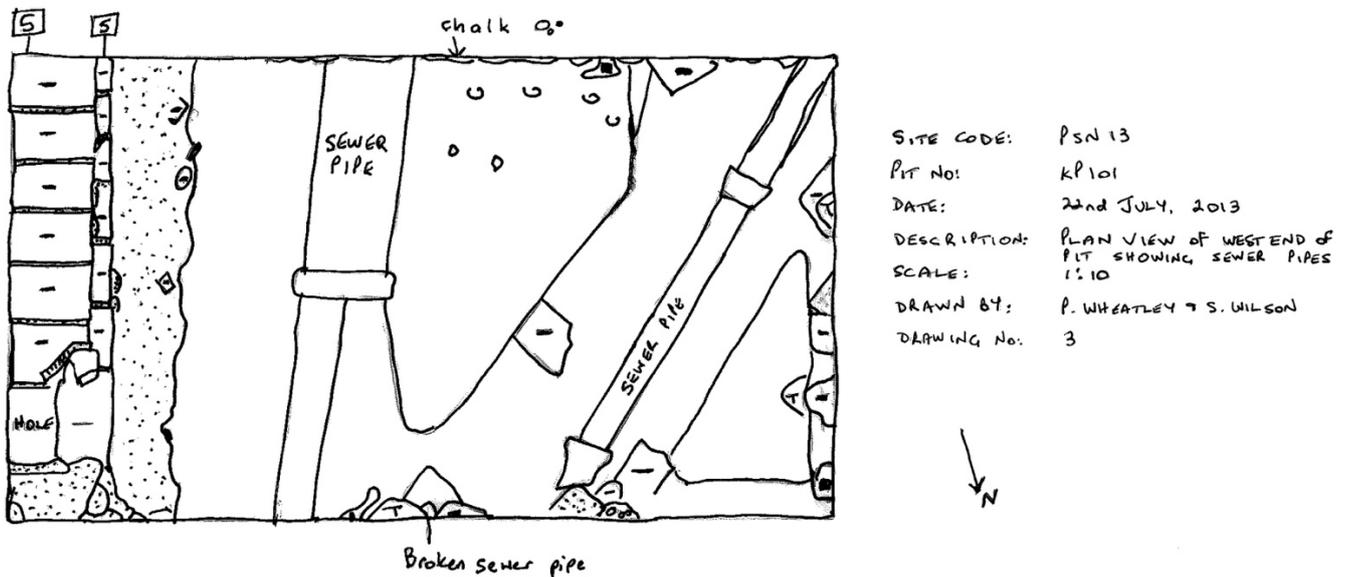


Fig 12: Drawing viewed from the opposite side of the trench.

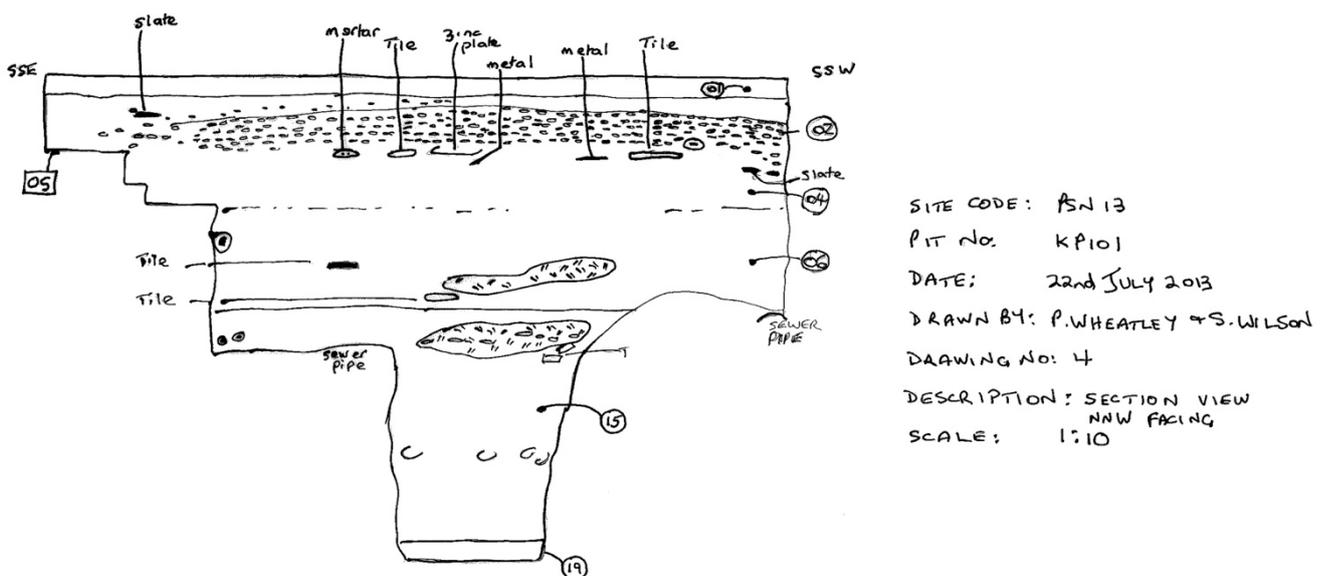


Fig 13: Section view looking at the north side of the trench.

## The wall

This wall [05] shown in **Fig 14** which was just 16cm below the ground surface ran directly across the trench in a northeast – southwest direction. The wall (which wasn't removed) appears to be the back wall of structure 'A' shown in **Fig 4**. Integrated into the wall in the northern corner was a shallow vertical drain. Either side of this wall was rough building material, presumably used as part of the footings.



**Fig 14: The back wall of the structure 'A' shown in Fig 4.**

## The area southeast of the wall

The layer beneath [02] was context [03]. This extended across the whole of the trench southeast of the wall [05], and is shown in **Fig 6**.

This extended to a depth 39cm below ground level and consisted mainly of CBM (nearly 10kg) and mortar & plaster (3.2kg), other stone (2kg) with smaller quantities of chalk and a worked flint. Inclusions consisted mainly of iron and lead (4.5kg), with nearly 1kg of predominantly late post-medieval pottery. There was also quite a large amount of cattle bone, with a smaller amount of pig, sheep, bird, rat / mice and the odd dog and fish bone. A number of small finds were recovered, including 2 coins (SF30 & 34), 2 buckles (SF41 & 51), a light base (SF50) and 2 other lead pieces (SF42 & 43). All appear to date between 1900 and 1960 and can be seen in **Appendix 2**.

As the excavation continued, a floor surface was revealed [08] comprising of 2 large flagstones along the southwest side, and a concreted area along the northeast side, edged with a single course of bricks mortared together [09]. This was at a depth of 39cm below current ground level. At the southeast end was another wall [07] that was not excavated (see **Figs 15 & 16**). This was clearly a substantial floor. Amongst the floor material was a miniature jug c1900 - 1960 (SF55).

The single row of bricks [09] was left in situ and not removed. This narrowed the width of the trench slightly from this point onwards. Along side of the wall [07] was an accumulation of loose building material presumed to be part of the wall foundations [16]. The material consisted mainly of CBM, mortar and plaster, with flint and coal / clinker / coke. The small amount of pottery amongst this was post medieval to late post medieval in date (c 1550 – onwards). This was not excavated beyond the removal of the loose material.



**Fig 15: Flagstone and concrete floor [08] with a wall [07] shown to the left of the floor in the photo.**



**Fig 16: Showing the single row of bricks [09] that edged the concreted section of floor (now removed).**

The flagstone and concreted area were then removed, revealing the next layers. These were defined separately at this juncture and classified as contexts [10] (under the concreted area) and context [11] (under the flagstones).

Context [11] (beneath the flagstones) was a shallow layer of material consisting mainly of coal / clinker / coke that was laid on top of context [10] to level the flagstones. A small amount of iron, bone and vessel glass was found, and the few pieces of pottery dated from post medieval to late post medieval.

Context [10] (beneath the concreted area) extended down to 67cm below ground level. This consisted primarily of CBM (24.6kg), coal, clinker and coke (15kg), mortar & plaster (10kg), with other stone and building material (14kg), flint (826g) including a scraper (worked tool), and a small amount of slate and chalk. The inclusions consisted largely of shell and pottery (in roughly equal amounts) – the pottery being late post medieval and redware, which together accounted for nearly 70% of the total pottery. There was also a small quantity of early medieval pottery (c 1050 – 1225), with a very small quantity of roman, with iron, bone (sheep and pig), and vessel glass making up the majority of the remainder. Two small finds were recorded from the area – a copper disc (SF47) and a small decorated ceramic tile (SF48).



**Fig 17: Showing context [17] at the northwest end, and [18] at the southeast end.**

The next context [17] lying directly under [10] extended from the northwest end of the trench by 0.8m where it met with context [18] (also under [10]) at the southeast end (see **Fig 17**). The layer consisted largely of CBM (8.5kg) and mortar and plaster. There was an almost equal amount of shell and pottery recovered, all of which was late medieval or earlier including a small quantity of late middle Saxon.

Context [18] extended 68cm from the wall [07] at the southeast end of the trench. This shallow (14cm) layer extended down to 78cm below ground level. Below this layer was context [22], both of which were cut into context [17]. It consisted of mainly mortar & plaster (4.5kg) with a small amount of CBM (300g). Other than that, it was devoid of other materials.



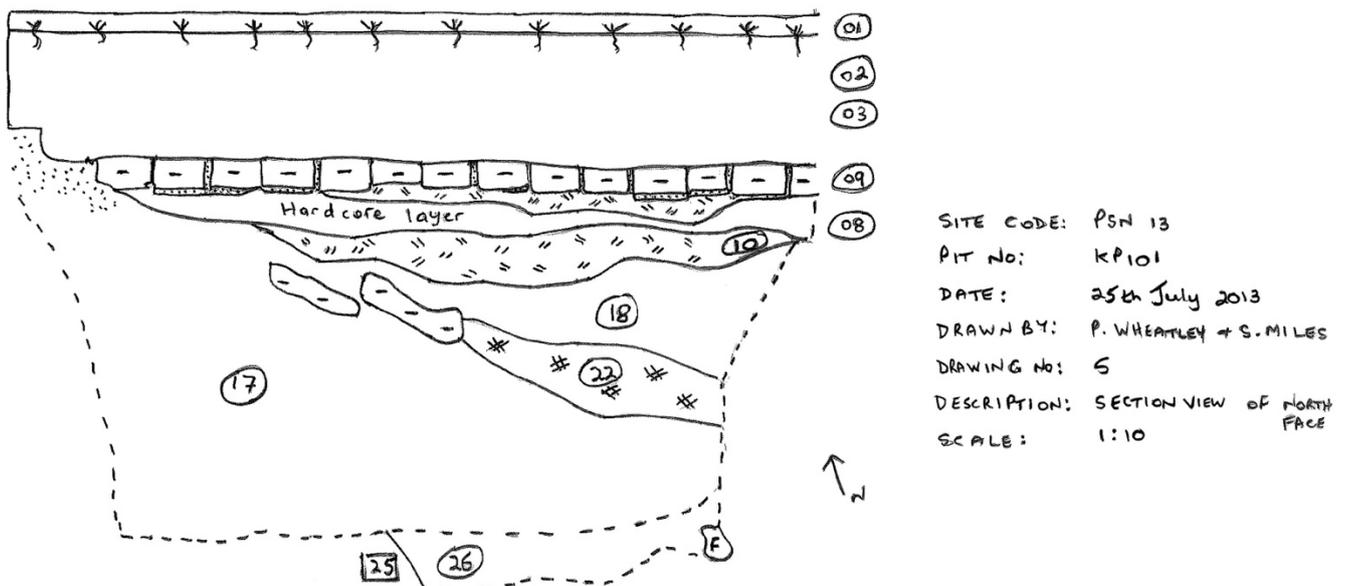
**Fig 18: Showing the surface of context [22] (raised area). Context [17] is in the foreground.**



**Fig 19: Showing the trench after the removal of context [22].**

Context [22] was an 18cm layer directly beneath [18] extending down to 0.96m below ground level and comprised of CBM (3kg), mortar & plaster (724g), with a very small quantity of coal / clinker / coke, flint and chalk. It contained shell (306g) iron (120g) and bone. There was also a small amount of pottery that was medieval, or early medieval in date (c 1050 – 1400). **Fig 18** shows the surface of it prior to its excavation, and **Fig 19** shows the trench after the removal of this layer.

Context [17] then continued to a depth of 1.3m. Within this layer were 2 small pits (cut and fill layers [23] & [24], and [25] & [26]). **Fig 20** shows the details of these together with the relationship of the contexts for this end of the trench.



**Fig 20: Section view of the southeast end of the trench looking northeast showing the context relationships.**

The small pit ([23] & [24]) at the southern corner of trench was of yellowish clay, consisting of CBM and mortar & plaster with a small quantity of medieval pottery. The larger pit ([25] & [26]) consisted of a quantity of CBM and mortar & plaster with a very small amount of flint. It contained very small amounts of shell, bone, iron, pottery and charcoal – the pottery dating from early medieval to medieval (c. 1050 – 1400). This was not fully excavated because it extended past our safe working depth, and completed the work at this end of the trench (at least at this stage).



**Fig 21: Maximum depth was reached, and concluded the excavation at this section of the trench.**

The small area previously unexcavated to the southeast of the wall [07] at the far end of the trench was then excavated in order to establish that this was indeed outside the structure. This was assigned context [20]. This was a thin (6cm) layer of dark grey ashy soil consisting mainly of coal / clinker / coke, and other building material, with small amounts of mortar & plaster, CBM and flint. There was a substantial amount (236g) of vessel glass, iron, pottery (which was mainly late post medieval in date), window glass, bone and CTP. At a depth of 39cm below the ground level, a new surface was revealed [21].



**Fig 22: The first glimpse of the stone surface.**

As this [21] was uncovered, a number of large stones became visible. Among these, the edge of a large piece of stone came into view. This looked like the edge of a cogwheel but only a small amount was visible as this was up to the edge of the trench. It was decided to extend the trench at the southeast end by a further 0.5m (see **Fig 4**) to be able to assess it more fully (**Fig 22**). The material removed (which is likely to have been continuations of contexts [01], [02] & [03]) was removed without further analysis or processing (although a small matchbox cover (SF 58) was discovered amongst the material) and was classified as context [99].

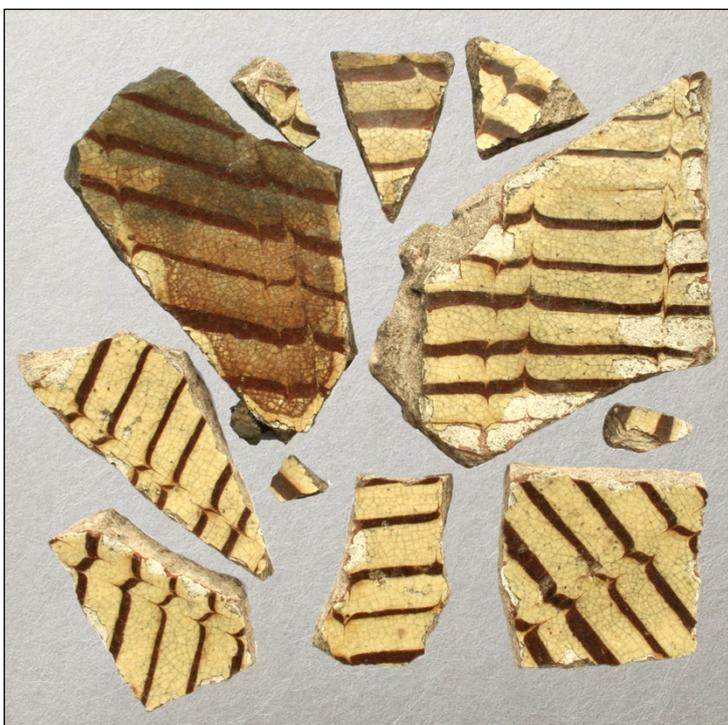
Once this was cleaned down, it became clear that this was a large diameter stone wheel with a serrated (cogwheel style) edge. From the arc that was visible it was possible to determine its approximate diameter, and the trench was further extended in both the southeast and northwest directions (as in **Fig 4**). Again, the material removed was not processed and was combined with the rest of context [99].

This now revealed layer - [21] - appeared to be a constructed surface comprising of the large stone wheel and smaller stones, the wheel obviously having served an earlier purpose. The loose material removed from between the stones contained mainly late post medieval pottery together with a few shards of Roman, post, and late medieval. There was also a small quantity of vessel and window glass. **Fig 23** shows the stone wheel and surface after the trench had been fully extended.

**Fig 23: The fully exposed stone wheel and stone surface following the 2 extensions to the trench (right), and a view (below) showing the thickness.**



The large stone wheel (categorised as SF53) measured approximately 1.18m (46½ inches) in diameter across the maximum points. It had a thickness (as measured from the exposed section) of some 24cm (9½ inches). A roughly cut square hole in the centre of the stone measured 25.5cm x 26cm (10 inches). Although some of the 'teeth' were broken off, it was estimated to originally have had either 41 or 42. The acid test determined that it was of sandy limestone in nature.



**Fig 24: Staffordshire slipware (late 17<sup>th</sup> Century – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries) found both under the stone wheel, and amongst the loose material within the large stones.**

Where the edge was exposed (**Fig 23**) a small amount of material was removed from underneath the stone (context [27]). This amounted to 3 buckets of fine-grained clayey sand type soil, the inclusions of which contained predominantly CBM (80%), together with 5 shards of post medieval pot, 4 of which were Staffordshire slipware (**Fig 24**).

The smooth rounded stones in the centre were granite boulders. Stones like these have been seen by FSARG a number of times in Faversham e.g. at Millers Cottage Tanner Street TP17. We think they are ships ballast from medieval or earlier vessels, but would be happy to hear of other interpretations.

## 6. Interpretation

As expected, a central wall divided this trench into two very different parts, the western 'former cottage' section and the eastern 'pub' section. The layers above the wall foundations corresponded to the time since the wall demolition, with local people remembering that as happening in the 1960s.

The top layers, [01] and [02], were typical of long-established public houses. There were large quantities of glass of many different colours (green, aqua, brown, white, transparent), most from bottles with some from glasses. Some of the bottles had lettering. Most of the pottery was 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> century, though with a sprinkling of earlier pieces. Once the separating wall emerged, however, marked differences appeared between the archaeology either side.

On the west side, the cottage demolition layer (created around 1940, according to locals) overlay two unexpected pipe trenches containing large pipes. From their directions, these pipes did not seem to be associated with the little cottage. Local people assured us from memory that the direction of these pipes went towards the former 'Ladies' at the Argosy / Regal / Bingo hall. We were unable to lift the pipes but a small triangle [15] between them and their trench fills was excavated with great difficulty (see **Fig 10**). This yielded a domestic midden type deposit of post medieval date, with lots of animal bone, oyster shell and sherds of modest post medieval red ware. A few pieces of earlier material were found but it was impossible to tell whether these were residual (mixed in) or from a lower layer at around 80cm down. The bottom of this small context [19] was identified as the natural soil, see **Fig 13** for a section drawing.

East of the wall was another very pub-like layer containing yet more vessel glass and also a large number of Bakelite bottle tops, many with 1930s dates on them. Others had designs or brewery names. Beneath this layer were large stone slabs, with a concrete slab replacing the stone in one part. These slabs ended to the east at a brick border. This surface does seem to be the floor of the covered precinct mentioned earlier and visible on maps and photographs.

Further east still, the brick boundary came hard up against the surface made up of the crushing wheel and its attendant rough paving stones - some of the slipware fragments were actually squeezed up in between brick and wheel, as if the brick boundary had been created as close as possible to the pre-existing crushing stone. This dates the crushing wheel surface as older than the slabs and brick boundary surface. Although we could excavate down the side of the wheel, we could not lift it but the slipware under and beside it and other pottery fragments dated the laying of this striking courtyard surface to around AD1800, with the crushing wheel probably 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The original purpose of this wheel has proved difficult to establish, except that it was not part of the local highly developed gunpowder industry.<sup>21</sup> The toothed edge implies use for crushing something slippery and wet, and the wheel is very like those used in the traditional cider making industry for the initial apple crushing. We have not yet found any record of cider making in Faversham but it is far from impossible: Hasted mentions '... a great quantity of cyder' being made around Maidstone in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>22</sup>

Another more unusual local industry involving crushing was the madder industry (for dye) mentioned by Edward Jacobs in 1774<sup>23</sup> and Hasted in 1797<sup>24</sup> as occupying fields around Faversham. There has even been mention of the windmill in Water Lane Ospringe being built in 1773 for the crushing of madder root.<sup>25</sup> According to Jacobs, John Crow, who won a prize as most productive madder grower in 1777, set up a crushing mill for the madder roots around this time.<sup>26</sup> Severe competition from Dutch growers did, however, lead to the failure of the English madder industry and by 1800 it had disappeared from Faversham.<sup>27</sup> This would fit perfectly with the timing of the laying the Old Wine Vaults courtyard surface wheel, which would have been redundant. I have not, however, been able to find a print or diagram of

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<sup>21</sup> Arthur Percival 2013 pers.comm

<sup>22</sup> Hasted E 1797 *History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* Vol. 1 General History and Soil p 265-271

<sup>23</sup> Jacobs E 1774 *History of Faversham* reprint 1974 Faversham Society p 97-99

<sup>24</sup> Hasted E 1797 op.cit

<sup>25</sup> Kentonline blog

<sup>26</sup> Jacobs E 1774 op. cit. p 99

<sup>27</sup> Thirsk J 1997 *Alternative Agriculture: a history* OUP: Oxford p116-7

the crushing wheels actually used in processing madder root - and would be very grateful if any reader can help us.

Under the slab section was a pit containing later post medieval material (18<sup>th</sup> century), but it was dug into a layer [17] early post medieval (e.g. some very early brick and tile fragments) and earlier in its content. **Fig 20** shows the west-east slope of this early context, which implies that the wall (or a predecessor) was actually set down into these earlier deposits, the wall base preserving the early deposits from rubbish pit digging. This would give the early post medieval / medieval land surface at about 50cm below present-day ground level, dipping lower to around 80cm where a pit had been created.

A small amount of residual Roman pottery was found scattered through the contexts, unsurprising given the 1930s find next door. The excavation was not, however, deep enough to access Roman burials, even if present.

## **7. Final comments**

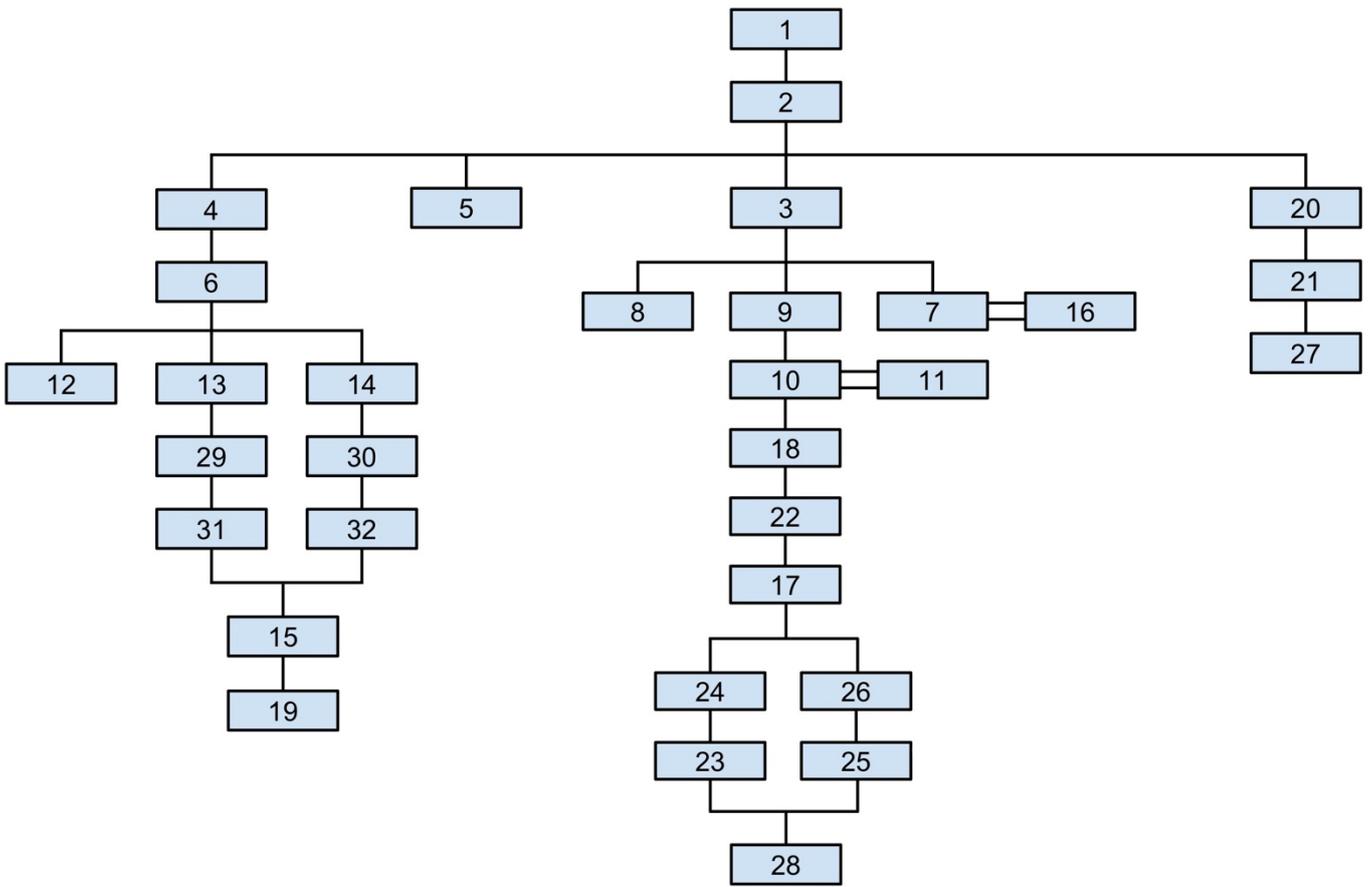
This was an excellent trench to excavate as part of a very public project. It had features, such as the dividing wall, matching up with a parch mark in the grass, that the visitors could easily understand yet enough intriguing detail to generate lots of questions and suggestions. Some of the visitors were able to give us essential information about events in the past such as the demolition date for the cottage. The crossing pipes offered a major excavational challenge. The discovery of the crushing wheel and appearing on Meridian TV were the icing on the cake!

## **8. Acknowledgements**

Great thanks to Nuala Brenchley Sayers and David Thompson, landlords of the Old Wine Vaults and especially to Nuala whose idea it was that we should dig there. Digging in a pub garden is always an enjoyable experience.

**Mike Tillman, Field Supervisor**  
**Dr Pat Reid, Researcher.**  
**April 2014**

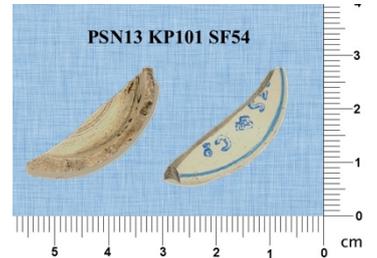
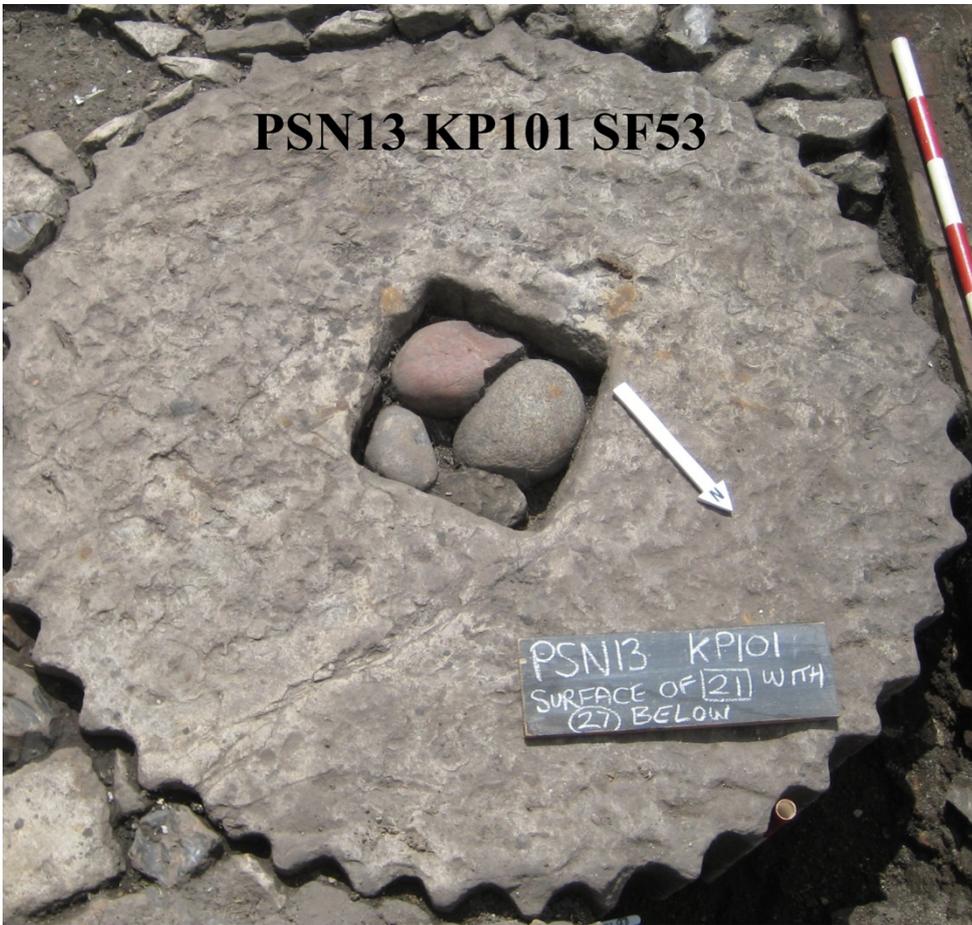
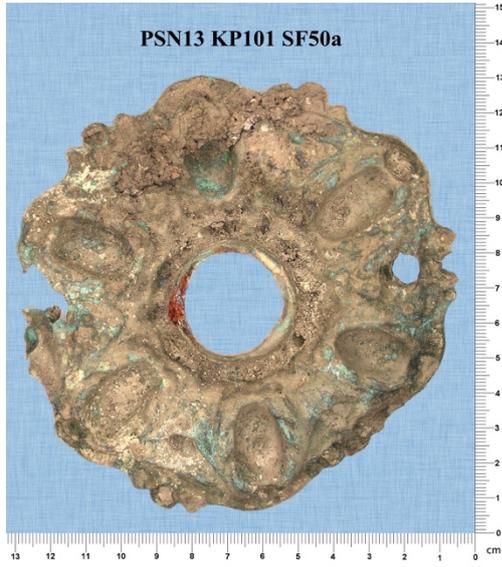
Appendix 1: Harris Matrix.



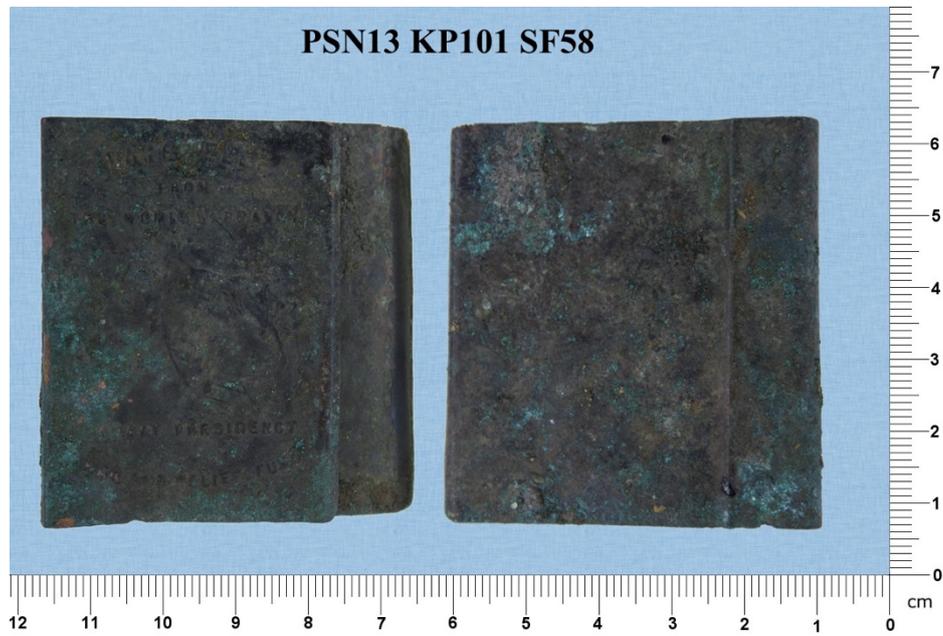
KP101 Harris Matrix

## Appendix 2: Small finds photographs.





PSN13 KP101 SF58



Small Finds No.	Context No.	Simple Name	Material(s)	Weight	Written Description	Earliest Date	Latest Date
30	03	Coin	Copper Alloy	2.68g	George V farthing. Badly corroded, 75% indistinct.	1910	1936
31	02	Bottle	Glass		Small glass bottle with screw top.	?	?
32	04	Button	Metal Alloy	1.07g	Metal alloy button: working clothes 4-hole suspender button with buckle motif and inscription, as illustration from www.etsy.com - antique buttons.	Late19C	1950
33	02	Button	Plastic	1.0g	This is a spherical button with a faceted surface and a loop fastening incorporated in its moulded design. The facets are triangular, as in a jewel. Probably from a female's cardigan	?	?
34	03	Coin	Copper Alloy	9.0g	This is a 1908 British one penny piece. The head is not visible due to poor condition with only part of the Britannia and legend visible on the reverse.	1908	1908
35	02	Button	Metal Alloy	4.0g	This is a stud or button with shank and dimpled outer/upper surface, grey in colour with a rivet like fixing. The dimples appear to make a pattern.	1900	1950?
36	02	Coin	Copper Alloy	7.0g	This is a 'two new pence' coin - the design changes in 1982 from 'two new pence' to 'two pence' and bronze changes to copper plated steel in 1992. This coin is 1979.	1979	1979
37	01	Carving?	Bone	1.0g	This is a small piece of bone carved in what seems like the legs of a small figure but could be part of something functional	?	?
38	02	Ball- marble?	Stone? Ceramic?	4.0g	This is a small sphere, probably a marble, greyish brown in colour	1900	1950
39	02	Coin	Copper Alloy	6.0g	This is a halfpenny of George V, dated c1910. The details are too hidden by corrosion to make out completely the obverse so difficult to date - appears to be a large head on obverse but not possible to see if the effigy has been modified. Ref: Seaby, Coins of England pp 332-3	1910	1910
40	02	Marble	Glass	5.0g	This is a much-worn glass marble with orange colour inside the clear glass.	1950	1960
41	03	Buckle	Iron (plated steel)	1.0g	This is a lightweight clothing buckle such as that used for ladies underwear. This buckle is broken with the pin missing.	1900	1960
42	03	Blob	Lead	9.0g	This is the result of a dribble of molten lead, mostly mottled grey but some parts shiny black. Perhaps from plumbing or other house repairs or building.	Not Dateable	Not Dateable
43	03	Blob	Lead	65.0g	large blob of lead, outcome of a dribble possibly from a furnace or domestic build/repairs. (see SF42). With this item, however, the reverse shows that it has come from a casting.	Not Dateable	Not Dateable
44	02	Key	Aluminium alloy	5.0g	this is an alloy clock or other clockwork item key , grey in colour with a dull surface. It has a round, flat solid handle and a square hole at the end of the key.	1950	1960
45	06	Marble	Glass	4.0g	This is a glass marble with inner colours of green, blue and orange	1950	1960
46	06	Carving	Bone	1.0g	This looks like a carved hand or foot, shiny and dirty white in colour. It may be part of a more functional item.	?	?
47	10	Parts of a disc	Copper Alloy	2.0g	These are parts of a disc, possibly a washer	1900	2000
48	10	'Tile'	Ceramic	11.0g	This is a small rectangle of blue and white pottery, very abraded into this shape with smooth rounded sides and corners, obviously by water action, probably a beach find. The	1850	1900

					pattern is transfer printed flower pattern. This is what is known as 'sea pottery' - see website for 'Beachglow' which sells such beach finds.		
49	06	Buckle	Copper Alloy & iron	10.0g	This is a D shaped buckle with corroded ferrous tongue. May be a broken example of a double sided buckle. Chape and main body is non ferrous. Ref: Whitehead pp102-103	1690	1720
50	03	Decorative base / light surround?	Copper Alloy	79.0g	A circular, copper alloy, press- moulded item with a circular hole in the middle. The rim is fluted. Symmetrical pattern all round. Could be base of a candle stick but more likely a surround for a light fitting, possibly a gas light.	1900	1950
51	03	Buckle	Copper Alloy	7.0g	This is a buckle for child's sandal or underwear, grey metal, slightly bent.	1950	1960
52	06	Broken glass object	Glass	2.66	Black glass object with rounded end, flat on one side and convex on reverse. It appears to have been moulded. There are small holes in either side which join in the middle as if for threading something through. It is possibly part of a large bead or lamp pendant.	1800	Now
53	21	Crushing wheel	Stone	0.5 tonnes	A large sandy limestone crushing wheel which has been laid flat, possibly as a garden feature or pathway. The edge is cut with 42 grooves throughout the depth. There is a square hole in the middle of the wheel, The wheel was possibly used for crushing apples with a spindle in the central square hole and the wheel standing on its edge in a trough being pulled by a horse or donkey.	1750	1800
54	06	Pot lid	Ceramic	3.0g	This is a fragment of a pot lid with lettering on it. The lettering is blue on white . .ES & C	1900	1920
55	08	Ornamental miniature jug	Ceramic	8.0g	This is a miniature representation of a jug - broken at the top and chip on the handle. It is all white.	1900	1960
56	06	Ornamental animal	Ceramic	6.0g	This is a brown glazed solid china ornament fragment.	1880	1920
57	06	Female figurine	Ceramic	3.0g	Vitrified china or porcelain moulded legs of a small female figurine, possibly a child. Above waist and top of legs at rear missing, also left foot. CHECK THIS FOR RO VENUS???	?	?
58	99	Matchbox cover	Brass	19.0g	Brass matchbox cover with inscription 'Farewell from the Women's branch of the Bombay Presidency War and Relief Fund 1914-1918' . Identified from various eBay sites but the Women's Branch of the BP is mentioned on the Imperial War Museum site. This is potentially a nice display item.	1919	1919

### Appendix 3: Time line.

- 1479: Home of Nicholas Warmecourt, succeeded by son Simon, a brewer.
- 1619: Listed as a public house.
- 1750: Possibility that Edward Rigden began his brewing here.
- 1770: Bought by Valentine Court 1.
- 1774: Valentine Court 1 described as weaver in a directory.
- 1847: Valentine Courts son, Valentine 11, described as sacking, twine and rope manufacturer.
- 1850s: Building of Cross Lane houses.
- 1854: Stephen, son of Valentine 11, applies for alcohol licence.
- 1897: Valentine Court 111 applies for license and is granted: pub is called *Albion Wine Vaults*, but quickly nicknamed the *Hole in the Wall*.
- 1912: Rigdens Brewery takes over.
- 1914: Valentine Court 111 dies.
- 1934-5: Building of Argosy Cinema, finding of Roman burial on site.
- 1940: Demolition of adjacent cottage.
- 1960s: Cessation of film showing in Argosy, conversion to Bingo Hall  
Demolition of west wall and extension of pub garden.
- 1974: Closure of Bingo Hall.
- 1980: Demolition of former Argosy and building of Safeways supermarket.
- 1996: Closure of Safeways and conversion to M & Co Clothing.
- 2009: *Hole in the Wall* closes down after some unfortunate incidents, re-opens, transformed, as the *Old Wine Vaults*.
- 2014: Old Wine Vaults renamed *The Vaults: Cask and Kitchen*.