

St Oswald's Old Church, Fulford



View of the north side of the church, probably 195 by D.W.L. Ake

An overview of the archaeological investigations undertaken in the 1980's, with an assessment of the history of the church and its dedication.

This summary report is written by Christopher Rainger and primarily based on the archaeology, research and draft report by Prof. Philip Rahtz MA, FSA, Hon MIFA and Lorna Watts MA, FSA, MIFA. and '*Oswald, Northumbrian King to European Saint*', 1995, edited by Clare Stancliffe and Eric Cambridge.

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1. Introduction

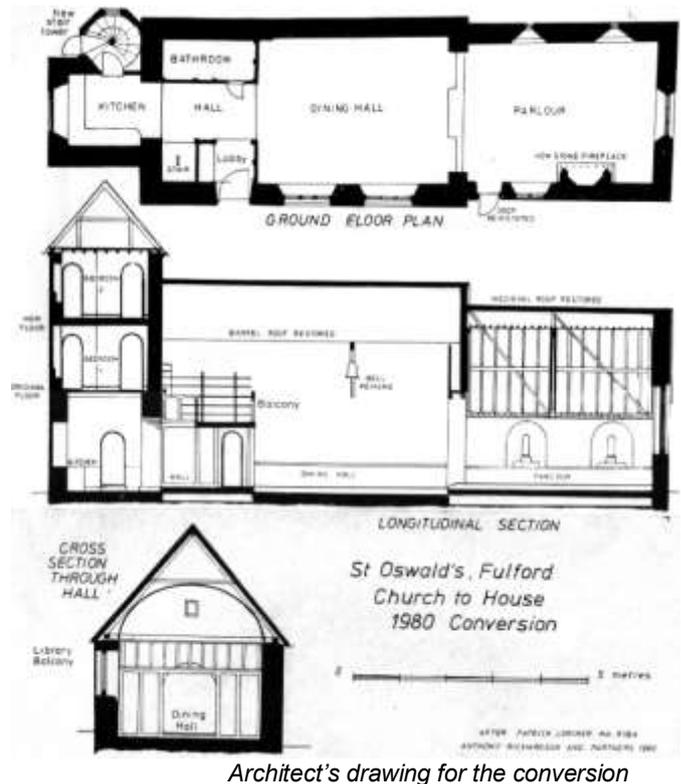
The old church of St Oswald stands on slightly elevated ground close to the east bank of the river Ouse at the end of St Oswald's Road, approx. 500m from the centre of the village. It was replaced in 1866 by a large new building in Main Street, Fulford, after which, it was placed in the care of the Church Commissioners. The chapel was used as a mortuary chapel until its sale to Mr Roy Grant in 1980. It has a Grade II* listing.

Mr Grant commissioned the architect, Patrick Lorimer, of Anthony Richardson and Partners, to design the conversion of the two-cell church and tower into a hall-house, now known as St Oswald's Hall.

Archaeological investigations were undertaken during the conversion works by Professor Philip Rahtz, the founding head of the Department of Archaeology at the University of York, and his wife, Lorna Watts. David Brinklow of York Archaeological Trust (YAT), also undertook a detailed examination of the building.

Further investigations were undertaken in 1984 and 1986-87 by Duncan Hawkins and Julie Lockyer, students of the Department of Archaeology at the University of York.

Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts wrote an unpublished draft report on their work in 2000. Interim Reports by Rahtz and Watts were published by YAT in 1981, and for the Church Commissioners in 1981.

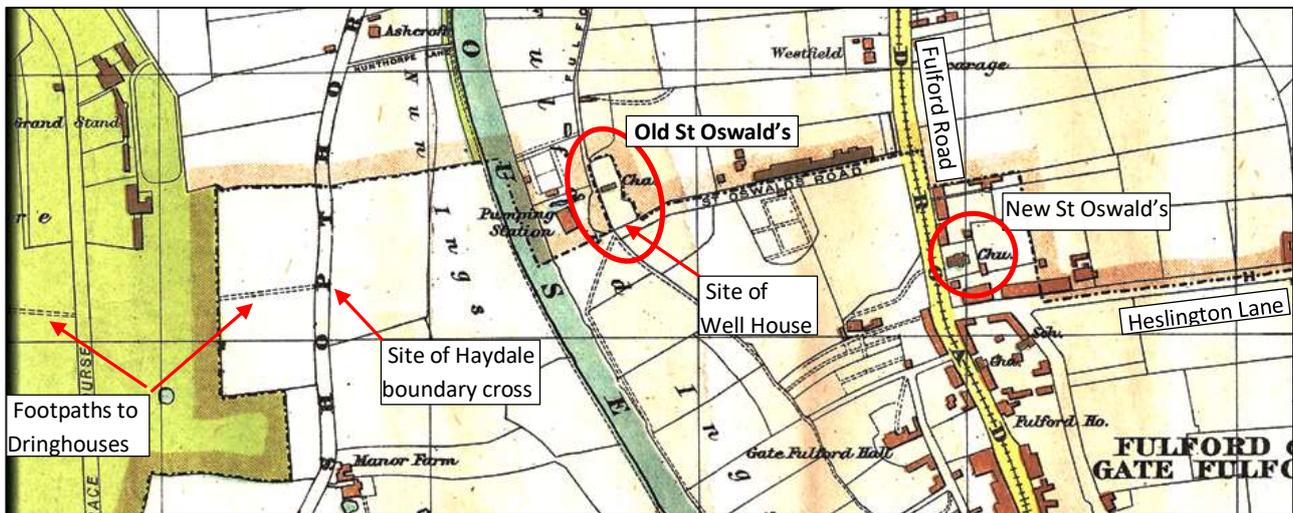


Architect's drawing for the conversion

In 2010, Philip Rahtz passed the files to the late Richard Hall, then the Director of Archaeology at YAT. YAT has kindly granted access to these documents to Fishergate, Fulford & Heslington Local History Society (FFH) and the Society's current Chairman, Chris Rainger, has used these documents as the main basis for this discussion paper. Any errors or misunderstandings are entirely his responsibility. FFH are raising funds so that YAT can bring the Rahtz/Watts investigations to publication and make their research papers on the church available for further scholarly investigation.

Old St Oswald's is an important building in the history of Fulford. These archaeological investigations, and the associated detailed examination of the building are an extremely valuable contribution to understanding the reason for its remote location and dedication.

The location of the church presents two possible options which are not necessarily mutually exclusive: either the village began in the area around the church and later relocated to its present site; or the church pre-dates the foundation of the village and was originally a chapel associated with a ferry and/or ford across the river Ouse. The dedication to St Oswald also raises interesting and related questions.



Part of Bacon's Map of York. c.1910.

Finds from the church and surrounding area are significant in dating the settlement. The excavations discovered a number of Mesolithic flints and evidence of Roman occupation. Roman and Mesolithic items have previously been found at nearby gravel pits and also on the recent excavations in Connaught Court. A fragment of pottery, believed to be Anglian, was found in a pre-church context during excavations adjacent to the church tower. The earliest evidence of a Christian presence on the site is a small piece of 9th/10th century Anglian-form cross-shaft, retrieved from the north wall of the chancel.

During the excavations, it became clear there had been an earlier church, probably pre-Conquest, slightly to the west of the existing building. The west wall of the new church was founded on the east wall of the earlier building in the early 12th century. Discovery of a single timber post suggests there may also have been an earlier timber church, but the evidence from this small excavation was inconclusive.

2. Historical Overview

The first written reference to the church is in 1349, during the Black Death, when temporary permission was granted for burials to take place in the grounds. St Oswald's was then a chapel of St Olave's in Marygate, York, both owned by St Mary's Abbey. Except for this short period, villagers were required to take their dead to St Olave's for burial. St Olave's had begun as a private chapel of the Anglo-Scandinavian Earls of Northumbria, whose hall stood nearby. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that Earl Siward founded St Olave's in 1035 and was buried there in 1055.

After AD954 and the death of Eric Blood-Axe, the last Viking king of York, Northumbria became part of the 'kingdom of England', governed by earls appointed by the English king. Anglo-Scandinavian York was an important royal and ecclesiastical power-centre. New laws were codified and Yorkshire and the Ridings became governmental entities.

A number of villages and landed-estates around the city were re-organised during the period leading up to the Norman Conquest and this is probably when Fulford was established. Its 'street-village' layout is typical of the period, with long and narrow 'toft and croft' plots stretching from the Roman road frontage to parallel back-lanes.

Fulford was certainly well-established by 1086. The Domesday Book described the village as one mile in length and half a mile in width, (*A History of Fulford; Pickering and Briddon*) and owned by the Norman, Count Allan, who had replaced the defeated earl Morcar.

Perhaps the village was 'planted' here by an earl of Northumberland because of the proximity of Germany Beck, with the intention that this watercourse and the adjacent marshy ground by the Ouse, could be used as an outer defensive point for the city in the event of an invasion from the south - as happened in September 1066.

The name Fulford translates as '*muddy ford*', usually assumed to refer to Germany Beck, but possibly referring to a ford across the river Ouse at St Oswald's, or near Landing Lane. The river was tidal until construction of Naburn weir in 1757 and the first competent survey, by Thomas Surbey in 1699, found only 200mm of water near Fulford at very low neap tides.

The potential for St Oswald's to be near a river crossing point is indicated by old maps, which show there were trackways and a medieval city boundary stone, Haydale Cross, on the west bank of the river, opposite the church. The paths are discontinuous, but lead across the Knavesmire to the Roman road and pre-Norman village of Dringhouses, with its church of St Edward the Confessor (originally dedicated to St Helen). On the Fulford side of the river, St Oswald's Road (formally Church Lane) links up with Heslington Lane and beyond to the Iron Age boundary earthwork of Green Dykes, and the Roman Roads leading east and south.

3. The Question of Dedication and Dating

There are two possible Saints to consider. Either Oswald, king of Northumbria, or Oswald, bishop of Worcester and York.

Academics specialising in this period consider the more likely of these was Oswald, king of Northumbria, who had been converted to Christianity by monks from Iona during his exile in Scotland. Oswald brought Aiden from Iona to Northumbria and encouraged him to promote Christianity to both the nobility and ordinary people.

Oswald established his control of Northumbria at the battle of Heavenfield, where he defeated a much larger Mercian and British army led by Cadwallon in AD634. Before the battle, Oswald is reputed to have erected a large wooden cross and prayed for success. His victory is seen as pivotal in the re-establishment of Celtic Christianity, which led to the 'Golden Age' of the Kingdom of Northumbria.

King Oswald was killed on 5th August AD642 by the Mercian king Penda, who displayed his head on a spike at Oswestry. The warrior-king became a Christian martyr and parts of his body were distributed to religious establishments and venerated in reliquaries.

He was particularly venerated in the north of England and the high altar at Durham Cathedral was dedicated to him. A reliquary said to contain St Oswald's head was moved from Bamburgh to Gloucester in AD909, probably passing through York on its journey.

The earliest reference to a church being dedicated to Oswald was located near Hadrian's Wall, and mentioned in the Annals of Symon of Durham in AD788, although the church

would have existed for some time before this date. Today there are some 70 churches dedicated to St Oswald, most of which are in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

The other possible St Oswald was the Bishop of Worcester, who was proclaimed a saint shortly after his death in AD992. He was also Archbishop of York from AD972 until his death. York was also held as a joint See with Worcester between AD972 and 1016 and also in 1040, during the time when Siward was Earl of Northumberland. The possible dedication of a chapel in Fulford to St Oswald may reflect his political importance and as a reformer of the church at this time.

One further factor when considering foundation or naming dates for the church are the political and ecclesiastical associations. For much of its existence, St Oswald's was a daughter chapel of St Olave's, built in earl Siward's estate between 1035 and 1055. Siward is known to have established new villages around the city and may have founded Fulford.

However, if the fragment of 9th /10th century cross derives from this location, it shows this was a Christian site well before 1055, although the date of dedication may not be contemporary with the cross.

It may also be significant that Tostig Godwinson was earl of Northumberland after Siward, from 1055 to 1065, and like Siward, his estates included Fulford. After his death at the battle of Stamford Bridge, his wife, Judith, left the country and actively promoted the cult of St Oswald in her native Flanders and Germany. Perhaps the original church was built at the site of the stone cross during his earldom.

*12th Century St Oswald's reliquary from Hildesheim, Saxony.
The cult of St Oswald was promoted in north-western Europe
by Earl Tostig's widow, Judith of Flanders.*



Dedications can arise from later events and need to be considered with other documentary and archaeological evidence. If the dedication was contemporary with the first church on the site, then the view that dedications are *'unlikely to have been given later than a generation after their death'* (Butler, 1986) may be significant. However, the political importance of king Oswald's sainthood may over-ride this principle, particularly as his continuing importance is demonstrated by Alcuin's writings in the late 8th century.

For these two possible Saints, Butler's approach would date the first cross, or the founding of a chapel dedicated to king Oswald, to the period AD642-700, although his political and religious importance may extend this period. There is also potential for a foundation date linked with the transfer of his head to Gloucester in AD909.

A dedication to Bishop Oswald would give possible dates of AD992-1060, which would fit neatly with earls Tostig and Siward and the possible foundation of the village.

Alternatively, the dedication may be a re-naming, such as that of an existing chapel, or the 9th/10th century cross, or even the re-dedication of an earlier wooden cross. It could also

relate to the building of a chapel linked to a holy well which may have previously been known by a pre-Christian name.

There are a number of early churches dedicated to St Oswald with springs or holy wells in close proximity, so it is even possible that the site was identified with this Christian king as early as St Aiden's mission to convert Northumbria in the mid-7th Century, or soon after.

This was also the period when Fishergate began to flourish as a manufacturing and trading community or 'Wic'. A cross and/or church standing on the ridge of higher ground at St Oswald's would have been a prominent landmark to passing ships.

Excavations at Fishergate House found the graveyard of St Helen's church, where the earliest Christian burial dates from the 7th-8th century. St Helen's church had Lady Well in its grounds, close to the river Ouse.



1850 OS map showing springs and ponds close to Old St Oswald's Church and Well House and its outbuildings, before the churchyard was extended.

Perhaps the most straightforward explanation is that St Oswald's church originates from the Christianisation of a pagan holy well and river crossing site in the 7-8th century, perhaps with a wooden cross. This was made more formal by erecting a stone cross in the 9-10th century, perhaps with a small timber chapel nearby. In the 11th century, the first small stone chapel was built slightly to the west of the present building and dedicated to St Oswald. This chapel became structurally unstable and was re-built in the early 12th century. There may have been a very small settlement adjacent to the church, but Fulford was probably founded separately along the Roman road for strategic and practical reasons in the early-mid 11th century.

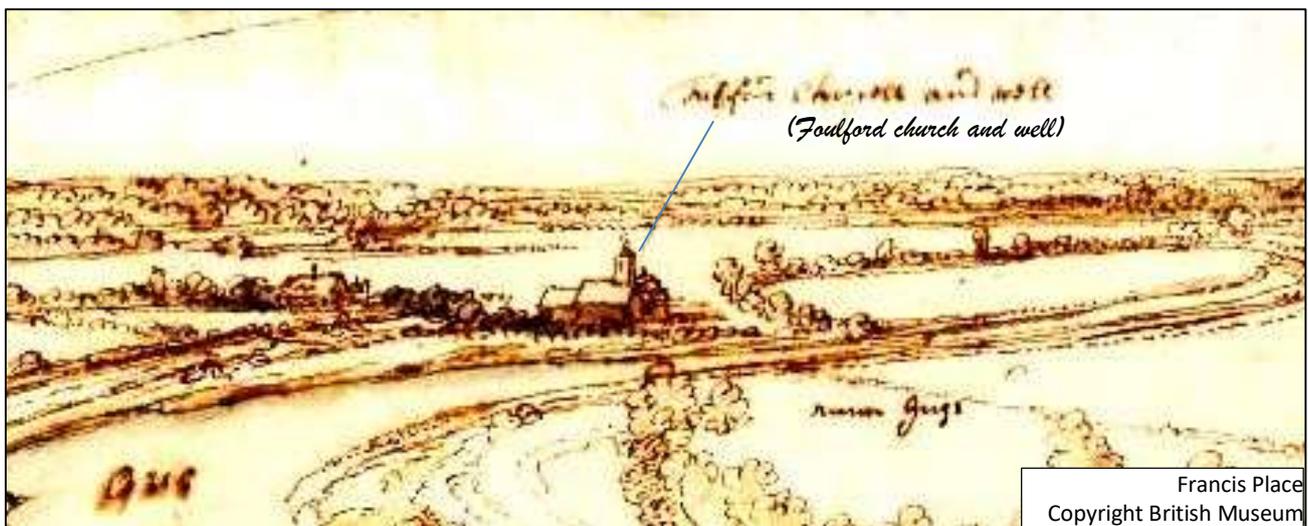
4. Constructional Development of St Oswald's

The constructional development of the church has been traced from the archaeology and close inspection of the building, together with documentary research.

The church has a simple chancel and nave, generally built of Tadcaster Magnesium Limestone. Some masonry is laid in well-bonded ashlar, the remainder in rag-stone.

The present nave was built in the first half of the 12th century, with the chancel added towards the end of that century. The east wall of the chancel was rebuilt in the 13th century and a large window inserted in the first half of the 14th century. Both nave and chancel were re-roofed in the 15th century.

In the 17th century, larger windows were installed on the south walls of both nave and chancel, and the roof was re-modelled.

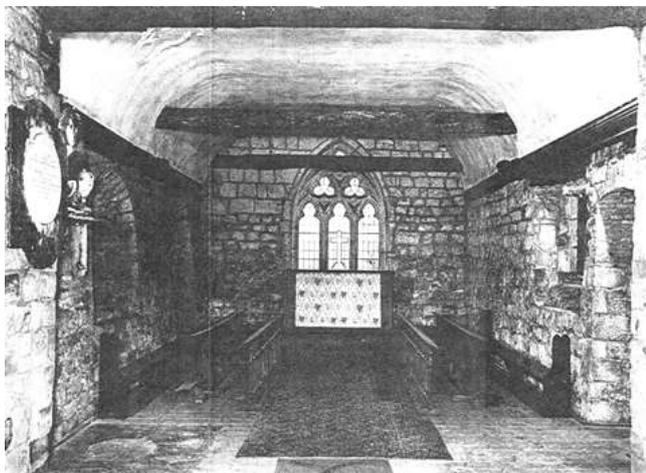


A decayed steeple is referred to in 1577, but this may have been replaced by the small one shown in Francis Place's view of c.1705, looking south from Clifford's Tower (the building behind the church is probably Well House). This is the earliest image we have of the church and it appears to show the steeple rising from the roof of the nave, rather than being a separate structure. The archaeology appears to show the present tower of 1795 to be built on the foundations of a 13-14th century tower. Also in 1795, a faculty was granted for construction of a vestry and gallery to be built at the west end of the nave. A further faculty was granted on 13th February 1819, to install new pews and a new pulpit. The plastered barrel-shaped roof was also installed around this time, along with another timber cross-beam. These works probably reflect the increasing population and wealth of Fulford.

The wooden floor is 500mm above the original stone floor level, and joist holes in the walls indicate that it had been raised before. Three grave marker plates set in the wooden floor had probably marked graves in the original stone floor.

Burials were again prohibited after the Black Death dispensation of 1349 lapsed. In 1398, St Mary's Abbey took action to enforce the requirement that Fulford burials must take place at St Olave's. Burials at St Oswald's became more routine after the Dissolution of St Mary's Abbey and baptisms and weddings were regularly taking place by the mid-17th century. In addition to burials in the graveyard, memorial plaques were installed commemorating owners of Water Fulford Hall and other wealthy residents of the village.

Fulford began to grow as a suburb of York during the 19th century and the small church and its graveyard was becoming inadequate for the increasing population. A large new church of St Oswald's was built in Main Street and consecrated in 1866.



View of the chancel in 1967



View from the chancel towards the nave and tower

Photographs inside Old St Oswald's Church shortly before its de-consecration

In 1869-70, shortly after the church was replaced, works were undertaken to convert the old church into a mortuary chapel. This included removal of the gallery and plastering the walls of the nave and chancel, adding a pitch pine dado and installing a new floor and pews. The churchyard was extended to the size it is today, taking in the site of Well House, which stood on the site of the Lych Gate, next to St Oswald's Road.

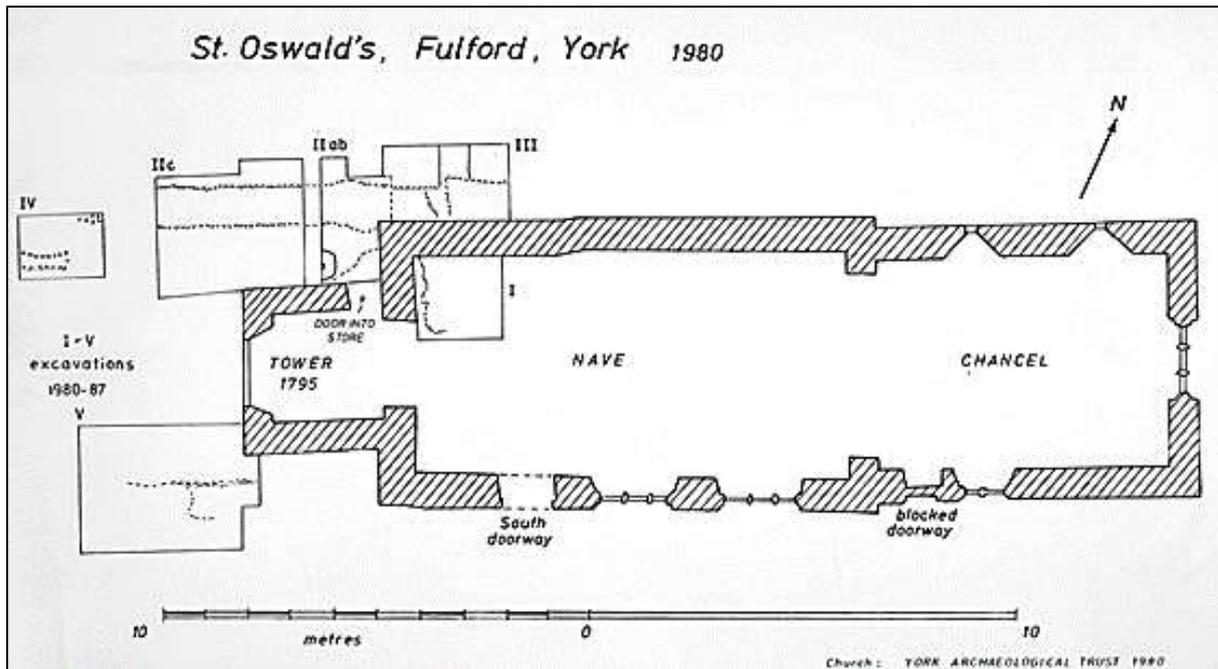
No further works were undertaken until 1934, when plaster was stripped from the walls, the dado removed, and stonework repaired. The east window in the north wall of the chancel was also opened up.

The churchyard continued to be used up to 1902 and monthly services were held until the 1970's. In 1972-3, pupils from Fulford School recorded the inscriptions on over 350 stones in the churchyard, noting the names and other details on all that were decipherable. This record is lodged at the Borthwick Institute, where the Parish Records of births, marriages and deaths are also kept.



*St Oswald's from the west bank of the Ouse. George Nicholson c.1820. (York Art Gallery)
Well House can be seen behind the church and a landing stage projects into the river.*

5. Archaeological Evidence and Observation



Plan showing the layout of the church and location of archaeological investigations.
The dotted lines are foundations which pre-date the present building

Archaeology

Initially, a small hand-dug excavation was made outside the north face of the tower, on the site of the proposed new stair turret.

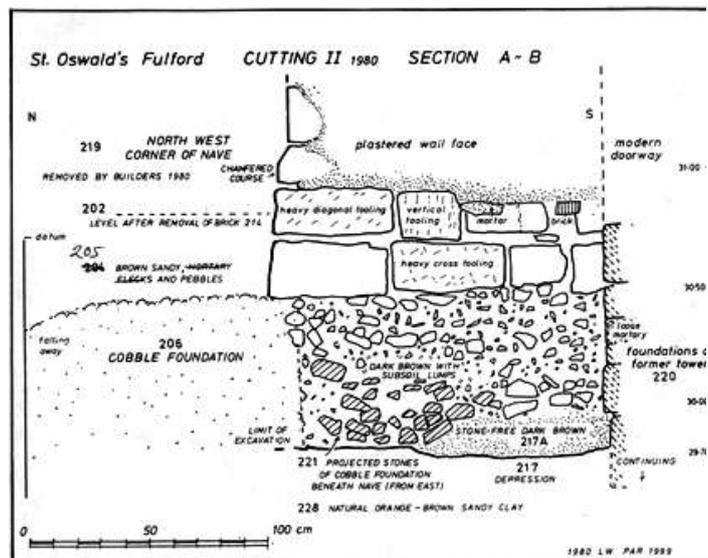
The earliest finds here were a struck flint flake and a small piece of Roman bottle glass, conceivably from a square cremation bottle. There was also a sherd of Anglian pottery with very small rosette stamps.

The earliest structural feature was a massive cobble-filled trench foundation over 1m wide. This was encountered below the Norman foundation of the nave corner, and turned from this point westwards, from where it was traced for several metres beyond the tower.

This is probably the foundation of the north-east corner of an earlier pre-Conquest church, built of stone or timber.

Just south of the cobble footing was a 500mm diameter post-pit, with a partially burnt pad-stone at its base. The post had been substantial in size and could have been from an earlier timber building, perhaps part of an arcade of timber posts supporting the roof. Or, perhaps it supported scaffolding for construction of an earlier stone church.

Five courses of foundation material were also found under the north wall of the tower, the lower two courses of which extended at least 300mm under the Norman nave. There was

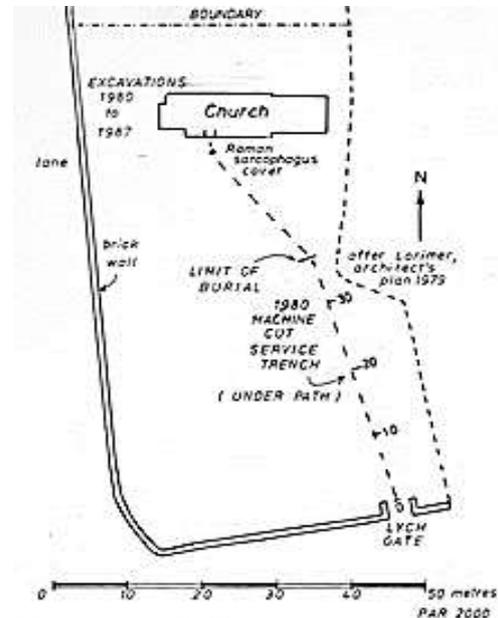


also buff mortar and tile in these courses, not present in the Norman work. Two stones retained some very fine brick-tempered cement, almost certainly re-used Roman work.

These earlier foundation courses sloped downwards towards the west at the same angle of inclination as the present west wall of the nave. This suggests that reconstruction of the previous building was due to structural instability and the new structure was built further away from the river on more solid ground.

Further excavations adjacent to the north wall of the nave found more evidence of earlier construction and some interesting finds. Among these was a 2nd century Roman pot rim, a piece of Roman tile, and a small green 'melon' bead, drawings of which are included in the Appendix.

Other small archaeological excavations were undertaken adjacent to the church and during the installation of a water pipe across the churchyard, a large stone Roman coffin lid was found close to the main door of the church.



6. Building Description and Interpretation

During the conversion work, a detailed examination of the building was undertaken by David Brinklow of York Archaeology Trust. This survey also drew on examination of the building in the 1950s by the late Dr Eric Gee, former Head of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in York. Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts have included the unpublished YAT material in their draft report on the church, of which the following is an edited summary.

Chancel:

The chancel is chiefly late 12th century, and slightly later than the nave. At the junction of the chancel and nave externally it can be seen that the rough masonry of the chancel is built against the better ashlar of the nave.

Externally, the east wall has a chamfered plinth for three quarters of its length and there is some diagonal tooling at the bottom (late 12th/early 13th century). The upper part is of 14th-century date but there is much patching at the north end. Internally the nave is of three builds; the lower part is built of coursed rag ashlar, probably 13th century, and above is a large 14th-century window, modernised externally and of the same date as the good ashlar of the upper part of the wall.

The east window has a two-centred head, chamfered reveals and no label on either side; there are three trefoil lights under geometrical tracery. The centre light has mullions which have been cut away at the bottom. The reveals show red colouration under coats of whitewash and a stone near the bottom of the south side shows coarse tooling of 14th

century type. To the south of the window and set in the lowest part of the wall is a small oblong recess or aumbry.

The north wall of the chancel is of rubble with a chamfered 'water-table' stone externally, and above are four courses of 17th-century brick. Internally there is a straight joint at the north-east corner representing the line of the original east wall, and corresponding to the lowest courses of it. In the wall are two small round-headed windows with the heads in one piece and a round-headed rere-arch, the voussoirs of which have good diagonal tooling (c.1180). On the outer side can be seen holes for an iron wind-lap.

To the easternmost window is a deep square recess or aumbry.

There was a doorway into the chancel on the south side. This was blocked in recent times and re-opened as part of the conversion in 1980.

Nave:

The north wall of the nave is of two constructions; externally, that to the east is built of large blocks of ashlar with narrow mortar joints and diagonal tooling at the bottom where the soil has protected it. There are good quoins and at the top is a chamfered 'water-table' stone. Internally this part of the wall is of coursed large rubble, with bands of smaller rubble. A disturbance here almost certainly indicates the blocking of a window. The remainder of the wall has fallen at some time and shows at least three rebuilds. (Note that two lines in the masonry at the end are misleading as they are the re-used jambs of a Norman window.)

The external south wall of the nave is chiefly of early 12th-century date, with ashlar masonry and a chamfered 'water-table' stone like the east end of the north wall. Two windows in this wall each have a square head, three square-headed lights, a splayed internal opening and an oak beam at the head. The window to the east is of 17th-century date but the other is modern, with brick splays and a sill formed of a 14th-century coffin lid.

The rebuilt south doorway has a lofty round-headed rere-arch with well tooled voussoirs and jambs. Externally, the continuous 12th century surround is much lower than the rere-arch.

Two sections of the chamfered water-table stone of the south wall to the east still retain an incised chevron ornament and are quirked.



*View from the south by DWL Ake, 1953.
From A History of Fulford by Pickering & Briddon*

The west wall of the nave had been rebuilt in medieval times and then almost entirely rebuilt again in brick when the tower was constructed in the late 18th century. It is pierced by a simple round-headed tower arch.

Tower:

The tower is of two stages internally and of one externally. It was built in 1795 using buff-red brick with red brick quoins and dressings. The east elevation has no features; the north wall is plain except for a single oblong belfry light and the south wall is featureless.

In the west wall is a large segmental headed window at ground-floor level with red brick arch and jambs. It is of three lights, with a high transom and it has a frame of oak, well pegged. The west wall has a plinth and some stone base courses. The pyramidal roof is of red fish-scale tiles like all the other external roofs.

Roofs:

In the chancel roof, the wall plates are moulded and battlemented and of fifteenth-century date, although much restored.

At the centre of each wall plate is the sawn-off end of a contemporary 15th century hammer beam. Attached to the north hammer beam is a head with flowing hair and long beard (probably a Green Man - see image below) and the other is carved with a winged grotesque. There are the remains of similar beams at the west end.

At a later date, most probably in the seventeenth century, the roof was heightened and three large beams with chamfered lower edges were fitted. The whole roof was given a plaster barrel vault in the early 19th century.

The nave roof has two large cross beams of 17th-century date and otherwise has an early 19th-century ceiling, as before. The roof in the tower is of oak with chamfered joists and a trap door (18th century).

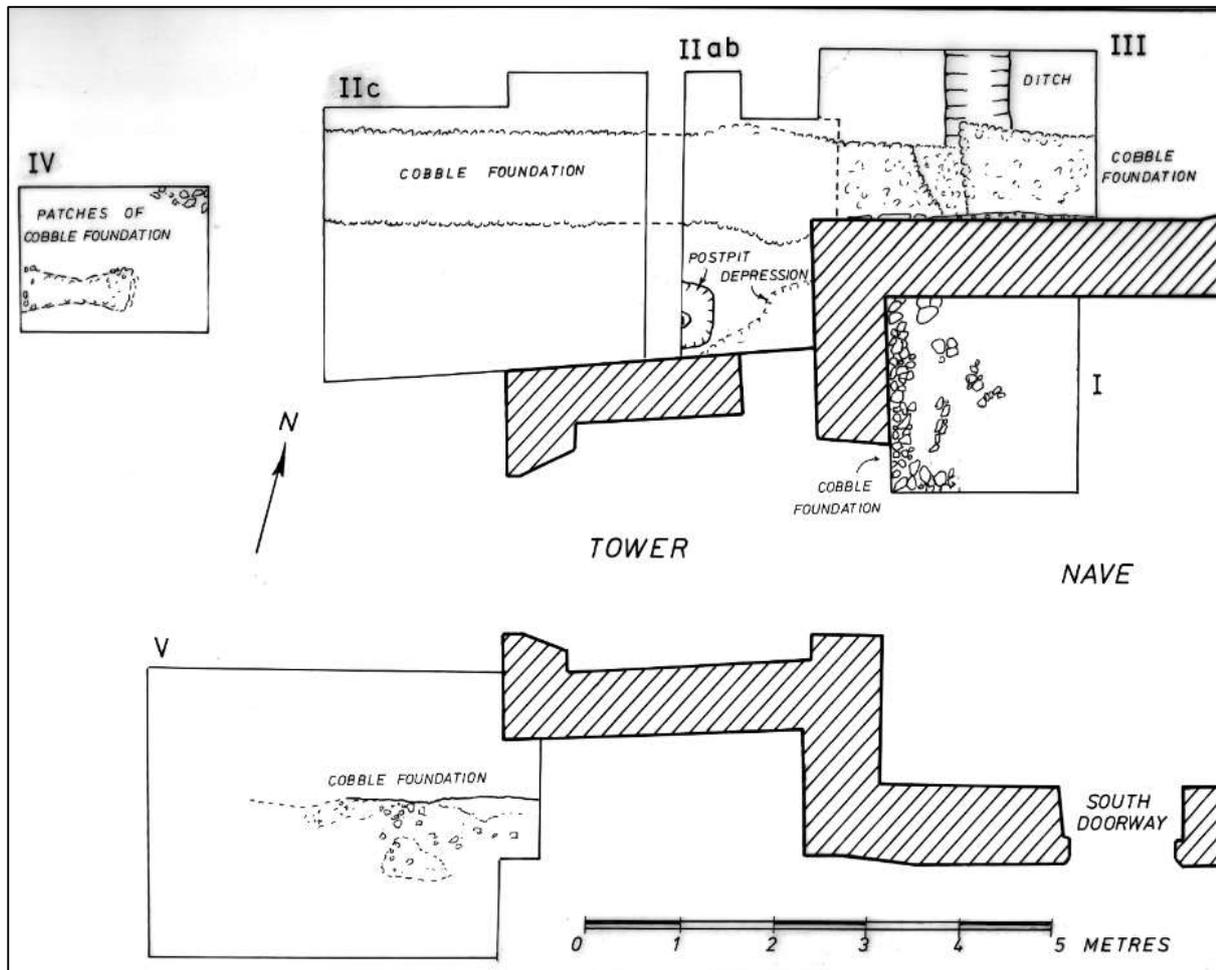


*Green Man(?) on a 15th century hammer- beam on the north-side of the roof
Image courtesy Allan Francis*

7. Principal Finds

Introduction

The following descriptions of the principal finds are edited from the reports by Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts, with specialist input from others. References have been retained to assist with following up in the original documents. More details of the finds are included in the Appendix.



Plan of excavations showing early phases of construction at the west end

Only a small number of items were discovered in excavations within and adjacent to the church and in the churchyard. Mesolithic flint flakes and nodules were found, suggesting there has been human activity in the area since the end of the last ice age.

Roman finds included tegulae, sherds of pottery vessels, a melon bead, a piece of tile, a coffin lid, and sherds of glass likely to have been from a funerary bottle.

Anglian finds included a sherd of pottery decorated with a small rosette stamp.

The most significant find is the 9-10th century piece of a stone cross.

Flint Flakes

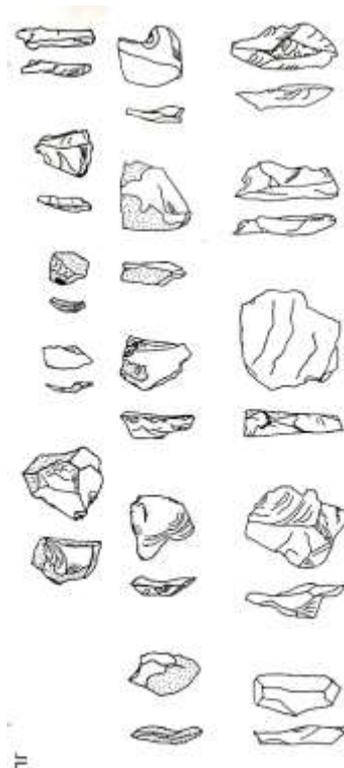
These provide the only evidence for prehistoric habitation or use of the area, but there is no feature which can be related to the flints.

FL 1 Flake 51 x 17 x 3 mm; one face is half cortex, the other flaked to a sharp edge with secondary working (337A, ditch fill)

FL 2 3 flakes, not illustrated (217A)

FL3 In 1986-7, in Cutting V, Julie Lockyer recorded flint 'nodules' in her context 507, a 'dark brown silt, chalk and pebbles, with light-weight slag'. (Unfortunately, this context is not shown on any drawings or further mentioned in her text; but was a pre-burial/church context.)

A copy of Julie Lockyer's drawings is shown opposite



Roman Sarcophagus Cover

This was found in the service trench excavated across the churchyard, close to the south door of the church.

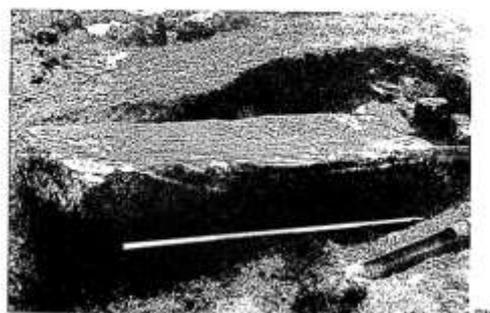
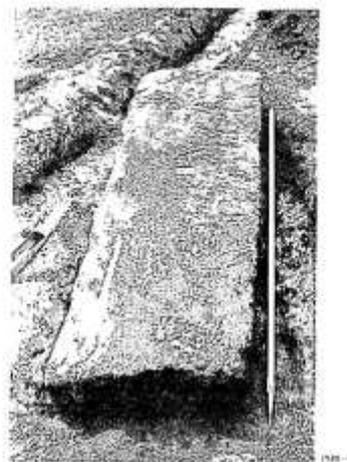
It was lying upside down with the keeled side underneath, on an E-W orientation and probably marked a later grave. The cover was hit and displaced by the JCB excavator and there was no opportunity to examine the ground beneath it.

The cover is of gritstone: the surface found uppermost exhibited coarse pick dressing on its southern half; the northern half appeared to have been worn smooth by passage of feet, as if it had been more exposed; there were also patches of a blackened surface. The sides of the cover show diagonal pick dressing of a type familiar in the Roman sarcophagi of York.

The dimensions of the cover are 2350mm in length, and 800-820mm wide. The original uppermost surface has a central raised keel, a profile which is also common in York, and similar examples can be seen in Museum Gardens.

It may have originally laid on a sarcophagus in the church area, or come from further afield.

Other stone coffins have been found in the vicinity, including a nearby gravel pit during construction of the sewage pipeline in 1892, and across the river in 1813 and 1826.



Sculpture

This was noted in the course of examination of the interior walls of the church by the York Archaeological Trust in 1980. It was set low down in the interior north wall of the nave, and was broken and worn.

The piece was examined by the late Jim Lang and described in his *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture from North-East- Yorkshire* (Lang 1991, 101-2 and illustrations 323-5). Lang comments that the piece is Upper Jurassic Sandstone, similar to sculpture in Middleton, Sinnington and Stonegrave (Howardian Hills, north of York). Details in the Appendix.

Images of the St Oswald's Cross fragment from the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture from North-East- Yorkshire (Lang 1991, illustrations 323-5).



Lang identified the piece as *'perhaps a lateral arm of a cross; there are protuberances which may have been a ring or disk'*. Other features suggest a cusped profile, *'within, the carving is worn but the head and shoulders of a figure with upturned face and long hair may be made out; 'the small portrait head placed near the centre of the cross may have gazed upwards at a lost motif.'*

'An alternative interpretation is that of a crouching figure like those on the baptismal scenes on the Durham crosses Nos 5 & 6. Certainly portrait heads on crosses in this position are rare in Yorkshire.'

'the cross form may have resembled St Mary Castlegate(2) with its broad arm-pit and cusp. Here however, there is little evidence for a disc or plate which would suggest a later date.'

'The basic form is Anglian...of the ninth to tenth century.'

Lang's comparison of the cross with Stonegrave is particularly interesting as the sinuous shape of the cross-shaft carving on the St Oswald's fragment is very similar. In *'Viking Age Yorkshire'*, 2014, Matthew Townend suggests that the Stonegrave cross is from a *'distinctive religious community, perhaps with links to Celtic culture, [which] may have existed or been re-established in the 10th century.'*



10th Century Cross at Stonegrave, N. Yorks.

This is a particularly intriguing idea, given that the Christian church re-established in northern England by King Oswald and Bishop Aiden was Celtic in character. It also suggests a narrowing of the date for the St Oswald cross-fragment to the 10th century.

While there must be the usual reservations as to the original provenance of the sculpture, this is the principal evidence for a pre-Conquest Christian presence on the site of St Oswald's old church, also represented by the cobble foundations of an earlier building, discovered during the excavations west of the church.

8. Concluding Remarks

Proximity to the river Ouse means this area has a history preceding the Roman period. The ready access to food, communication routes and the presence of fresh water springs all emphasise the importance of this place in people's lives.

Archaeological excavations and careful examination of the building has given us valuable information and the existence of an early Christian foundation raises much speculation.

Although it may have been preceded by a wooden cross, the Anglian-style cross of AD800-1000, is probably the first significant Christian feature on the site, most likely related to the river crossing and perhaps Christianising a pagan spring or holy well which had long been used to plead or give thanks for a safe crossing over the Ouse.

The date of its foundation and the question of which St Oswald to whom the church is dedicated remains unproven. King Oswald is more likely, particularly as he became an important saint in Northumbria. However, Archbishop Oswald of Worcester and York could just be the one, as he was a near contemporary with earls Siward and Tostig and lived at the time when the village of Fulford was probably established.

One further possibility for an 11th century dedication is that it was intended to revere both Saints, with Archbishop Oswald having taken the warrior-king saint's name in tribute to a continuing reverence for the cult of King Oswald.

The history of old St Oswald's church and Fulford is far from complete, with many intriguing questions which can only be answered through further research and investigation.

I hope this paper is helpful in stimulating interest in such an interesting and important subject for the village of Fulford.

"It pleases me to stand in silence here;

A serious house on serious earth it is...."

Church Going
Philip Larkin

Written by Christopher Rainger, Chairman of Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society.

Chris is a retired civil engineer who spent much of his working life restoring Britain's historic canal infrastructure. Since retirement, he has applied the same passion to local history. He takes full responsibility for his limited scholarship which has probably led to errors, misunderstandings and some daft theories.

Chris is very grateful to York Archaeological Trust for granting access to the Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts documents, and to Dr. Ailsa Mainman for her academic rigour and encouragement. He is particularly grateful to Lorna Watts for her permission to use the record of the excavations and draw extensively from the manuscript of her draft report of 2000. Thanks also to Allan Francis, owner of St Oswald's Hall, for his kind support to my research.

January 2017

For more information on Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society see: - <http://ffhyork.weebly.com/>

The website will also soon contain many of the original documents from the Rahtz/Watts investigations.

Further reading:

Oswald – Northumbrian King to European Saint. 1995. Edited by Clare Stancliffe & Eric Cambridge.

Viking Age Yorkshire. 2014. Matthew Townend.

York – The Making of a City 1068-1350. 2013. Sarah Rees-Jones.

Anglo-Saxon Art. 2012. Leslie Webster

How Christianity Came to Britain and Ireland. 2006. Michelle P. Brown

Anglo-Norman England 1066-1166. 1987. Marjorie Chibnall.

Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture - <http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catalogue.php>



Appendix

A. Summary of Finds

The following descriptions are edited from the reports by Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts.

Building Stone

Padstone (at base of posthole 224, Cutting II.), Coarse limestone, similar to Barnack; apparently burnt, or rich in iron, or sandstone.

Blocks (in context 101, Cutting II). Two large limestone blocks, one plastered on external face; and a dressed piece (context 2261) max 15 x 6.8 x 9.0cm.

Slag

A piece of 'light-weight' slag is recorded from 507, in Cutting V, this context (with flint nodules).

Fired Clay - Roman:

A number of fragments of tegulae were recorded.

In Cutting I, there were several in the cobble foundation 107; these were of salmon-red fabric with yellow clay inclusions up to 1cm in size, and yellow clay striations; the largest piece was 14 x 10 x 1.4cm thick.

In Cutting II, another fragment was recorded in the pre-church feature.

In Cutting III, an edge piece was found in ditch 337 (337A); this was 5 x 5.2 x 1.5cm thick; the fabric is dull reddish, with 'folded' layers of salmon-pink and yellow clay; one surface exhibits wood-grain impressions.

In Cutting IV, four fragments were again found in the cobble foundation 413, and three more in the other cobble foundation 422.

In Cutting V, there were no pieces,

These tegulae fragments may indicate Roman structures in the area; or they may have been imported to the site in soil; especially those among cobbles which may have come from the original source of these. They must be evaluated in the context of the few other Roman finds from the excavations and the adjacent area.

Fired Clay - Medieval or later tile:

Fragments of ceramic roof tile were recorded in many contexts; service trench, 201, 202, 208, 210, 211, 213, 216, 217, 220, 227, 422, 427, 558. That from the service trench (unstratified) was complete; reddish ceramic with patches of white gritty mortar; peg hole 3cm from upper edge.

Fired Clay - Medieval or later floor tile:

Service trench near south doorway: a fragment with dull dark green glaze; 9.0 x 6.5 x 2.4cm thick.

Cutting 1, 105A, grave fill; four fragments (a-d):-

- a. dull red sandy fabric, unglazed, interior partly reduced; max 9.7 x 7.1cm, x 3.0cm thick
- b. corner, very dark green glaze, partly worn off; max 9.0 x 4.7cm x 2.3cm thick, bevelled edges
- c. about half; pale dull red, coarse sandy fabric; traces of pale yellow glaze along one edge; the complete tile would have been 14.1 x 9.5cm x 2.3cm thick.
- d. about two-thirds; in similar fabric to c; traces of yellow-and ?brown glaze; the complete tile would have been 14.4 x 14.1 cm x 2.3cm thick.

Cutting II, 211; sliver, dark green glaze; 2.2 x 1.4cm, x 1.3cm thick.

Cutting III, I, topsoil; fragment, coarse red sandy; on upper surface is patchy yellow glaze, trickling over edges; slightly bevelled sides; 4.0 x 3.0 x 2.4cm thick.

Brick:

Service trench, unstratified; fragment, ?lower surface grass- or straw-marked.

Cutting IV; fragment recorded in 417, grave fi11; and in dump from 1980 work.

Daub:

Cutting I, 105A, grave fill; very pale burnt buff and pink clay, max 5.1 x 4.8cm, x 1.9 cm thick.

105A, burnt clay 'plug', whitish outer surface, core pinkish; possibly a plug for a peg-hole.

Clay pipes

Cutting I, 105A, grave fill; complete? Cl8 bowl with flat spur; also piece of stem 0.8 x 0.7cm, bore diameter 0,3cm, Cutting V, 504; fragment recorded

Mortar

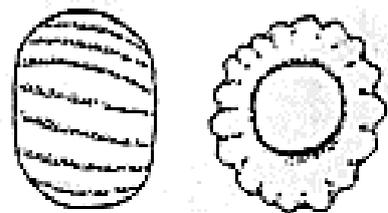
Mortar was recorded from 107, 120, 212, 217A, 304, 305. Those from 120 were pale buff-brown. In the absence of the survival of any samples, none can be related to structures.

Glass - Roman:

Fragment of pale green glass, possibly from a cremation bottle, 5-sided, irregular, 22 x 18 x 4mm thick (Cutting II, 217A),

Melon bead (vitreous paste); pale turquoise green, vertically-ribbed; 13mm diameter, 9mm long, perforation circular, 6mm diameter (Cutting III, 337A).

[pictured right]



Side view View through the bead

Glass - Medieval:

Three window glass fragments (Cutting I, 104).

These were examined in 1980 by David O'Connor; they have been subsequently lost, but O'Connor wrote Interim notes as follows;

'The largest piece is definitely medieval stained yellow glass with one grozed edge; there is decoration of drapery; on the evidence of the style of this and the grozing, a date of 1310-40 is suggested. A comparison may be made with the glass in the nave of York Minster',

'The medium-sized piece of blue-pot metal is probably medieval; the shade of blue would be consistent with the date suggested for the larger piece above',

'The smallest piece is decaying; there can, however, be seen traces of paint, a shaped border quarry. The paint is white with brown diaper work. The piece is probably also fourteenth century. (See O'Connor in Interim Vol 3, no 1, pl6, fig 3)'

'While the glass fragments indicate the existence of stained glass in St Oswald's in the fourteenth century, there is no evidence to show which window is represented'.

Metal – Iron:

Nails were recorded associated with coffin residues in Cutting IV (427) and Cutting V; and a piece of knife blade from the topsoil 502 (Cutting V)

Metal - Bronze:

Sixteen tinned bronze pins were found in Cutting V, probably shroud pins; their context is uncertain, since the numbers on the bags (Grave 3, context 213, small finds 46, 49, 50.) are not in the surviving records. Their lengths are (in mm.) 21 (1), 22 (1), 23 (1), 24 (1), 26.27 (3) and 3 incomplete; those that are complete have thickened and sub-spherical heads (c2mm in diameter); and all have shank ?mm in diameter).

Metal - Miscellaneous:

(base metal and iron): a number of coffin fittings were recorded in non-grave contexts in Cutting V (504, building rubble; 508 ?grave upcast; and 566, loose cobbles).

In two graves were elaborate fittings. In grave 551 (skeleton 559), a wooden coffin was indicated as a grey stain; there were gilded iron handles, decorated plates on the lid, with black enamel paint, with red-painted letters; name ended in _SON; date of death - August, 1850, aged 72.

In grave 571 (skeleton 570), an immature person was in an ?iron-faced wooden coffin, with a metal plate formerly on the lid (lettering illegible), The lid was secured with domed metal nails, penetrating linear scalloped-edged metal ribbon

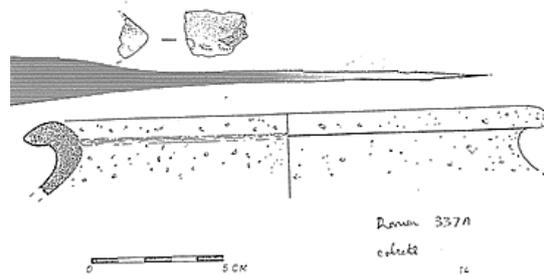
Pottery

The few pieces found-in excavation were examined for Duncan Hawkins by Dr Ailsa Mainman, of the York Archaeological Trust. She gave verbal identifications to him, but no written report survives; the identifications given below are those of Dr Mainman, except where otherwise indicated.

Pottery – Roman:

Two calcite-gritted sherds, (right) one a rim, were found in the fill (337A) of ditch 337, in Cutting III; they are likely to be late Roman, but such sherds may extend into post-Roman times.

Eight similar, calcite-gritted sherds were among the finds surviving from Cutting V; but they were not marked, nor was the bag in which they were; so their context is not known. All are body sherds.



Pottery - Anglo-Saxon:

The single sherd found is from a pre-church context (217A) in Cutting II, in the fill of a depression or ditch. It is a small irregular piece 21 x 16mm, apparently from a small lug, or part of a swelling towards a spout, boss or handle. The fabric is a dark grey coarse ware, with reddish patches; it is tempered with sparse quartzite grits and some organic material. One facet is decorated with parts of three stamps, each of barred semicircle and half rosette. This is comparable to Spong 4D, and could in this case be of the early period (AD450-650); but Dr Catherine Hills suggests that the sherd could be later than this, in the middle Saxon period (AD650-850). It is now realised that stamped pottery extends into later centuries rather than used to be thought.

Pottery – Medieval:

Cutting I; - 2 sherds of CI3-14 (108, a disturbed layer)

Cutting II: - sherd, 35 x 25 x 6mm thick; fine hard fabric, sparse quartzite sand temper, pale grey interior, pinker towards the exterior; exterior smooth with patches of pale apple-green glossy glaze (205) (York White Ware, c1200-1250)

- sherd of fine hard dark red; splashes of buff-brown glaze on interior; and on exterior, thick crackled dark greenish-yellow glaze over stabbed, wavy incised lines and girth grooves (205) (?Bransby Ware, C13-14)

- 2 sherds of Gritty Ware (C11-12) (211)

- sherd, hard reduced interior, orangey-brown exterior; splashes of glaze (Humber Ware)

-2 sherds of green-glazed

Cutting III - sherd 20 x 12 x 6mm thick; vesicular light sandy brown with dark grey surfaces; very fine quartzite temper, also micaceous; possibly C11-12? (PAR) (337A, fill of ditch 337)

-sherd, triangular 30x30x30x6mm thick; very fine dark red semi-stoneware; dark glossy maroon glaze on exterior and patchily on interior; late C16 'Cistercian Ware' (331, topsoil)

-sherd 30x39x6mm, probably from shoulder of jug; fabric dull buff fine sandy with sparse quartzite grits; interior dull very dark grey; exterior thick crackled dull green glaze, darker in girth grooves (337A, possibly intrusive in this early context) (Bransby Type, c1250-1350)

- sherd from base of jug; fabric pale grey interior, pinker towards exterior; medium fine hard, sparse small quartzite sand temper; pale apple-green glaze (cf no - above) on side and base; base angle thumbed from side (330, topsoil) (York White Ware)

Cutting IV - sherds of glazed York White Ware (details and contexts needed]

- sherd of C16-17 (both 427, grave fill)

Cutting V - 2 sherds reddish CI4 (557)

Human Bone

All human bones found were reinterred (218) or lost. There is thus no possibility of a proper report on them. The minimal data recorded are as follows;

Cutting II, 218 - legs and part of pelvis. In Duncan Hawkins' text, there are details of the part skeleton 218. They are apparently a report from an informed person, unfortunately not named. She or he lists among the bones unfused femur lower extremities; the left bones appeared to be more robust than the right. It was concluded that the skeletal remains were of a child, probably under 12 years,

Cutting III, 340, infant (?modern)

Cutting V, 559, adult, died aged 72 (from inscription)

Cutting V, 585, immature skeleton,

The incomplete skeleton 565 is shown in fig 000, plan 4. It appears from the drawing that the skeleton was an adult, c1.60m tall. The rough size of the other skeletons may be guessed from the length of the graves of coffins drawn in the plans of Cuttings IV and V.

Animal Bone and Mollusca

A fragment of a ?horse. jaw was found in Cutting II, 208, the fill of a ?scaffold post-hole.

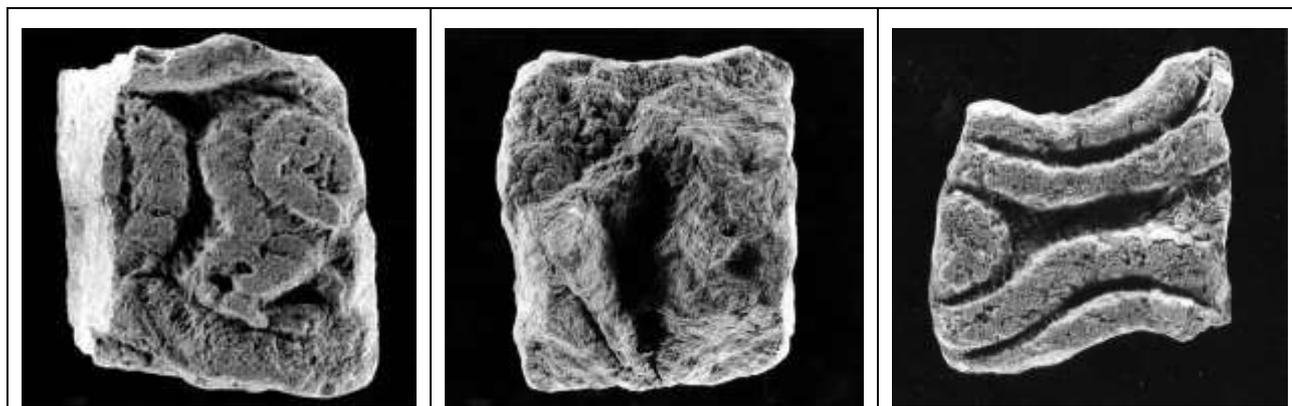
A piece of a nearly-straight long bone (?leg) of a large bird, such as a goose or swan, was found in Cutting V, 508, dark sandy soil; it is 7.5cm in length, 9-11mm in diameter (ovoid), with an internal diameter of 6-9mm. The exterior is polished by use. The extremities, where the bone is cut transversely, are also very smooth; this seems to be a complete implement, or fitting, or decoration,

Oyster shell fragments (3) were found in the pre-church feature, Cutting III, 337A, and are probably of Roman usage. Another fragment came from Cutting V, '216', an unknown context.

The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture at Durham University, 2017

Volume 3: York and East Yorkshire

York St Oswald Fulford 01, York



Object Type: Fragment of cross-head.

Measurements: H. 21.2 cm (8.3 in); W. 21.3 cm (8.3 in); D. 17 cm (6.7 in)

Stone: Medium-grained, calcareous, very pale brown (10YR 7/3) sandstone; probably Middle Calcareous Grit, C

Evidence for Discovery: Found low down in north wall of nave during church's recent conversion to a house

Stone Type: Medium-grained, calcareous, very pale brown (10YR 7/3) sandstone; probably Middle Calcareous Grit

Present Condition: Broken and worn

Church Dedication: St Oswald Fulford

Description: Perhaps a lateral arm of a cross; there are protuberances which may have been a ring or disk.

A (broad): Plain, flat edge mouldings at top and bottom of the fragment curve, suggesting a cusped profile. Within, the carving is worn but the head and shoulders of a figure with upturned face and long hair may be made out. To its left is a curving band.

B and D (narrow): Broken away.

C (broad): The flat edge moulding indicates a cusped arm with a flat boss within it. The border is echoed by two flat strands following its contour and sweeping around a flat central boss. Some gesso adheres.

Discussion: The cross form may have resembled St Mary Castlegate 2 with its broad arm-pit and cusp. Here however, there is a little evidence for a disk or plate which would suggest a later date.

The basic form is Anglian.

The small portrait head, placed near the centre of the cross, may have gazed upwards at a lost motif. An alternative interpretation is that of a crouching figure like those on the baptismal scenes on the Durham crosses, nos. 5-6 (Cramp 1984, ii, pl. 44, 206; pl. 45, 210).¹ Certainly portrait heads on crosses in this position are rare in Yorkshire.

Date: Ninth to tenth century

References: Brinklow 1981, 34

© The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture at Durham University, 2017

B. Church Interior

The following information about the church interior, fittings and monuments, is from the Rahtz / Watts draft report, which was mostly derived from the examination of the building by York Archaeology Trust and Dr. Eric Gee in the 1950s (?) and also the excellent booklet '*A History of Fulford*' by Joan Pickering and Irene Briddon, 1976.

BELL

This was made by William Blews and Sons of Birmingham in 1869 (Allison ed 1976, -).

BENEFACTORS TABLES

There are three tables, all of the same type with plank face, moulded surround painted red and otherwise gold letters on black. One board was put up c1782, the other c1806 and the third is c1873 (see also Pickering and Briddon 1975, 58-91). [are these the ones which were stored at Lincroft Farm? CR]

BRASSES

Two grave marker plates were set in the wooden floor. In 1980 they were removed, conserved by YAT, and returned to the then owner, Roy Grant. Their location and inscriptions were as follows: -

In the nave to the east of the south door, a large oblong plate with good lettering; To Master Areton Akers (who died in 1799). (Dr Gee gives the inscription, varying slightly from the version quoted by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 57-8; also see below).

In the nave to the east of the tower arch, on the floor, an oblong plate; to Master Robert Andrews (who died in 1803). (The inscription is already published by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 58.)

Outside the church to the south of the south door of the chancel, on a large stone slab, an oblong plate in a very good cursive hand (to various members of the Rusdell [?correct] family, who died between 1698 and 1715. The inscription is published by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 60.)

BURIALS UNDER THE WOODEN FLOOR

Robert Oates Esq, son of Robert and Isabella Oates, died 28th of February 1763, aged 64.

Robert Oates of Water Fulford Gent, died July 27th 1739, aged 76. Isabella Oates, wife of Robert Oates gent, died 8th June 1756, aged 84.

Isabella Oates, daughter of Robert Oates, died 28th of January 1760, aged 64.

Ann Key, died Feb 1st 1775.

Hic jacet Cor. Guilelmus Redman de Water Fulford Generosus obit Septem. Xvii 9/a[?].
Dom. MDCXLIX. I layd This Here that all the world may see I had a friend and thou alone
wast hee. John Redman.

Here lieth the body of Jane the daughter [obliterated] departed this life 179-.

Here lieth the Body of John Taylor of Fulford Esq; who departed this life the 10th of December 1705. A.E. [obliterated].

Here lieth the body of William Williamson Marsh who died July aged years [rest obliterated].

OTHER INSCRIPTIONS

Name and date on back of one of the nave floor boards: W Hall 1871.

William Smith, who died in 1786 and Joseph Smith, who died 1811; (inscription given by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 57). These two brothers were described as 'lovely and pleasant in their lives'.

The internal wall memorials were removed and reset in the modern church.

COFFIN LID

Part of a fourteenth-century coffin lid forms the sill of the window to the west, in the south wall of the nave. It has part of the stem of a foliated cross incised on its surface (sketch by Gee)

DOORS

In the south wall of the chancel, the doorway has a door with two panels externally and six panels inside. The panels, the upper ones of which are shaped to fit the two-centred head, are plain and the frame has a simple ogee mould (early 19th century).

The south doorway of the nave has a door with four panels, the lower ones plain and the upper ones gilded. At the top are two shaped glazed openings with radial glazing bars forming a fanlight (18th century).

FONT

'Georgian, simple and delicate; small stone bowl is supported on a column' (Gee, paper originating from Council for Places of Worship, later than 1969). This now in the new church.

BENCHES

Pine, Victorian; a few have panelled backs.

CHOIR STALLS

Timber book-rests on simple wrought-iron supports.

HATCHMENTS

Two of arms of Oates and Richardson families (removed to new church). (24.6.69 Quinquennial Inspection says Key and Barstow families). The following details are based on Dr Gee's notes:-

On the north wall of the nave, over the Richardson monument, a large square placed diagonally, with a border of gold and black velvet (sketch by Gee). The arms on an elaborate cartouche are sable, on a chief argent three lions heads erased sable langued gules (RICHARDSON), impaling per pale nebue argent and azure two mullets

counterchanged (ATHORPE). (William Richardson, died 6th October, 1816, married Elizabeth, daughter of George Athorpe of Howden). The helmet has a closed visor with masks on it and above a crest - a lion's head erased ermines langued gules. There are palm leaves at the back of the boldly conceived mantling.

Over the tower arch, a square placed diagonally, with a border of skulls and crossbones at the corners and bones crossed in saltire in the centre of each side (sketch by Gee). Arms on a formal shield:- azure a saltire engrailed argent between four crosses crosslet fitches (OATS) impaling argent three lions jampbs erect clawed gules two and one (BEDFORD). (Robert Oates, died 27 July, 1739, married Isabella, daughter of Samuel Bedford). Crest:- on a helmet, issuing from a ducal coronet a cross crosslet fitchee sable. An elaborate mantling argent and gules. (Pickering and Briddon 1975, 62 note that two hatchments from St Oswald's are now at the new church).

WALL MONUMENTS

On the north wall of the chancel, an oblong white marble inscription slab with shaped base, foliated console on either side supporting a moulded section above which, set on a grey marble background, is a seated female figure gazing at an urn (sketch by Gee). At the top is a shield.

Near this places lies interred
the body of JOHN KEY of Water Fulford Esqr
who died the 24th day of December 1778
Aged 62 years KATHERINE KEY as a Testimony of Respect
and gratitude to the memory of a
beloved and lamented brother has caused
this monument to be erected.

In the same vault are deposited the Remains
of ANN KEY, and MARY KEY the sisters of the
said JOHN KEY and KATHERINE KEY

On a snail moulded support at the bottom is 'T. KING Ft. BATH'.

On the north face of the chancel opening, a monument with a white oval inscription slab on a grey marble background with round features at the top and bottom (sketch by Gee). The inscription is as follows:-

IN A VAULT
NEAR THIS PLACE
ARE INTERRED THE REMAINS
OF
WILLIAM WOOTTON ABNEY ESQR
OF MEASHAM
IN THE COUNTY OF DERBY, WHO
DEPARTED THIS LIFE
MAY 18th 1822
AGED 42 years

On the north wall of the nave, the conical monument has an oblong white marble slab with moulded cornice, above which is a draped urn set against a shaped marble background, but later a skull was set on a prolongation of the background (sketch by Gee). The monument is signed 'Bennett and Flintoft Sculpt York'. (The inscription, to William Richardson of Fulford, who died in 1810, and to his wife Elizabeth, who died in 1841, is given by Pickering and Briddon, who also note that the Richardsons were related to the Sandys and Sandys-Renton families (1975, 58)).

On the nave north wall is a monument consisting of a lancet window form set against a freestone slab (Gee sketch). A shaft on either side, with a moulded cap and base, supports a moulded two centred head with a chevron ornament and stands on a plinth with a sill between. In the window opening is a black marble slab and the whole is supported on corbels with shields on the outer surface. (This is to Ann Frances, who died in 1848; the inscription is given by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 58).

To the west of the last monument, a plain white marble oval slab.

BENEATH THIS PEW
ARE INTERRED THE REMAINS OF
MARY REDWOOD
THE WIFE OF CAPT REDWOOD OF HIS MAJESTY'S
FIFTH REGT OF DRAGN GDS,
AETAT 24

On the south wall of the nave is a monument with an oblong white marble slab with cornice and supported on foliated corbels (Gee sketch). Above the slab is a large urn on a pedestal and on the urn a coat of arms (gules), three escallops (or) with a crest:- an arm (azure and or), holding a flag (tasselled) and on it (azure and or), eight cross crosslets (counterchanged) and a Saracen's head. The motto is 'Je vive en esperance'. The whole is set against an obelisk of grey marble and is signed 'Taylor, York'. (This is the monument referred to above, under 'Brasses' to Master Aretas Akers, who died in 1799; recorded by Pickering and Briddon 1975, 57-8. Dr Gee notes that this was a branch of a family who lived at Mailing Abbey, Kent.)

TOWER BELL CHAMBER

In 1980, the tower was cleared of guano, nests, eggs and dead birds; two of the latter were collected by the Environmental Archaeology Laboratory of the University of York, as specimens for comparative purposes. The bell and its frame were also removed and conserved. The bell is now (2000) in St Oswald's Hall, suspended in a way that it can be rung by pulling a rope.

PLATE

A cup and paten of silver:

The cup 22.7cm (9in) high, diameter of bowl 10.8cm (4^{1/4}in), depth 10.2cm (4^{1/2}in), diameter of foot 10.2cm (4in) has a bell-shaped bowl, a stem with a moulded band and a moulded and shaped base. It is marked 'The Gift of Mrs Ann Key to St Oswald's Chapel at Fulford 1768'. The marks are S.W., a lion passant, a crowned leopard's head, and ffl (London mark for 1767).

The paten is a plain salver on three legs 17.8cm (7in) in diameter and 3.2cm (1¹/₄in) in height. Same inscription underneath and marks R.R. and otherwise the same as the cup.

A large brass dish with broad ring, a medallion in the centre and swirling quadrooning between. On the rim is a border of fleurs de lys with very prolonged bases. Inscribed on the rim: 'St Oswald Chappell (Gabriel Hayton) Chappellwardens of Foulforth 1708. (William Ward Jnr). There is another undecipherable inscription in Gothic hand round the medallion (cf one at Southstone, Worcs. drawn in the Wares Diocesan Architectural Report 1863, now lost).

A pewter plate, the surface of which is covered with odd bits of pewter (probably the result of a fire of 1876). On the back repeated twice is a mark - a horse's head issuing out of a cornet and under it 'London' and 'FC. The plate is not mentioned in a terrier of 1786, but in that of 1817.

A large pewter flagon with shaped handle and domed lid. Inside is the mark - out of a ducal coronet and horse's hoof (made by Yates and Birch of Birmingham c.1800).

TOMBSTONES IN THE GRAVEYARD

Dr Gee has a brief note on these with sketches; for a full account, now see Buckingham 198-.

A schedule of over 350 tombstones in the churchyard was compiled by pupils of Fulford Comprehensive School in 1972-3, under the supervision of Mr. A Cheetham. This and all other parish records are available for inspection at the Borthwick Institute.