

Wirksworth Meadows Examination.

Today's work has concentrated on the west side of the examination where, last time, we found an underlying layer of stoning similar to those previously found, which represented wall foundation remains of a building, whose date we regard as being Saxo-Norman (say 950 to 1250). It is not yet clear if the line of stoning in this, the west, side of the examination represents wall foundations or simply represents another edge to the imbricated yard here.



Overview of the examination looking east towards the boundary wall of the Meadows.

In the foreground is the west side examination, in the background part of the building. The yard is out of picture on the right (south). We are still having to work around the root plate of the tree.

In the case of today's work, we have been extending the examination in a north-east direction following the stoning in the trench. On the west side this stoning is overlaid by contexts 101 and 102 (turf and topsoil) containing post-medieval finds and pottery such as musket or gaming balls as well as stonewares and Midland Black wares, for example. Below this is context 202 which is a hard clay surface, there is then a context (204) of hand sized stone tumble associated probably with the larger underlying stone and then a very thin and intermittent organic context (205) which overlies the stones themselves. However, the clay surface does not extend over the whole width of the stoning and the east side of the stoning simply has a deeper version of the subsoil (context 203), which is more friable and again contains small amounts of pottery, again in this case Saxo-Norman wares, overlying and interspersed with the stoning. The relationship between these two contexts is not wholly clear as yet but they appear to be butted up to each other. The stoning crevices tend to be rather gritty and contain soil, gravel, red chert, pebbles and other

small random stones perhaps from an “in use” phase. On the west side the stone tumble is quite limited and the edge of the main stoning is very pronounced. On the east side we have not yet found the back edge of the stoning.



- Finds: 1. Stamford type ware with thin clear glazing over small square rouletting (context 203)
2. Midland Shelly ware (context 203)
3. Piece of Ceramic Building Material (CBM) (context 204)

The finds continue to be of a whole with the rest of the site, that is Saxo-Norman wares. Although an oddity from today's work is a piece of CBM lying within the stone tumble. This piece is unlike any of the brick we have found in the upper layers, it is a fine sandy fabric which powders to the finger and at the moment may be residual (that is to say perhaps out of its proper place), had we found this in a Roman site I would have regarded it as a piece of floor tile.

As the stoning layer is continuing in a north-north easterly direction we will have to follow it in order to find an edge or turn: this has so far not yet emerged.

Our next dig date is provisionally Sunday the 26th June.