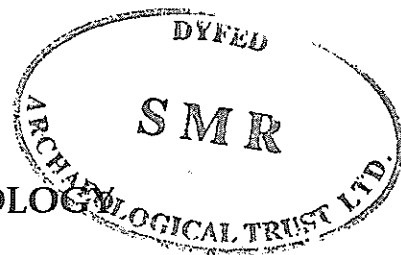


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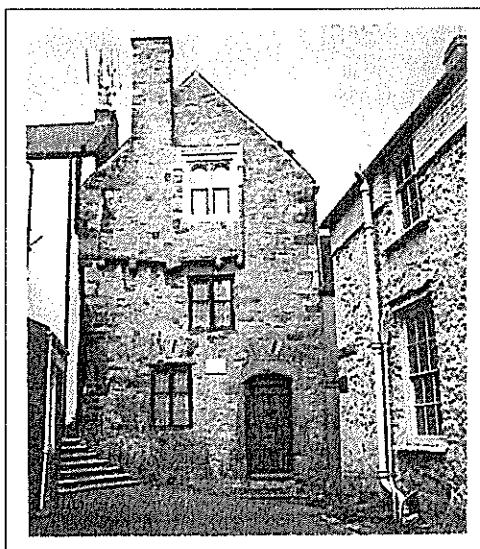
ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

07/12/98

No. 1 QUAY STREET, TENBY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING, DECEMBER 1998

Project Record No. 36888



Report prepared for the National Trust
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology were invited by the National Trust to undertake a brief archaeological record of the south wall of No. 1, Quay Street, Tenby, during removal of plaster on 3 December 1998. The wall is shared by the National Trust owned Tudor Merchant's House, a masonry town house of the late 15th century.

The plaster strip revealed a number of features relating to the Tudor Merchant's House, including the exterior of the large cylindrical north wall chimney, formerly corbelled, a blocked first floor doorway possibly representing the former main entrance, and a ground floor opening of uncertain nature.

The present No. 1 Quay Street was probably built between 1867 and 1888, replacing an earlier cottage.

1.2 Commission

No. 1 Quay Street adjoins the National Trust owned Tudor Merchant's House, in Tenby, with which it shares its south wall. No. 1 Quay Street underwent refurbishment in late 1998 as part of a conversion undertaken to the designs of Pembroke Design Ltd. The work involved removal of internal partitions, ceilings and finishes, and was undertaken by David Griffiths & Son, builder, of Pembroke Dock.

The site was visited by Margaret Evans of the National Trust on 1 December 1998. Recognising the importance of features exposed on the south wall of the Tudor Merchant's House, she telephoned *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology* later that day requesting, on behalf of the National Trust, that an archaeological record be made of the wall.

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology agreed, subject to the usual terms and conditions, to undertake the record and to produce a short report based on the findings. Three copies of the report will be submitted to the National Trust.

2.1 The Tudor Merchants House

It is a three-storey, masonry structure built terraced within a pronounced north-south uphill slope (see Fig. 1). It features a massive ground floor fireplace, a hearth on the north wall of the first floor served by a circular chimney, observed to have been partly corbelled during the 1998 recording (see below) and a second floor chimney on the east wall, facing Quay Street, also partly corbelled. Four raised crucks resting on corbels support the roof. The house is now entered at ground floor level through a doorway in the east wall, onto Quay Street, access between floors being by means of modern staircases. There is a blocked doorway in the first floor north wall, also observed during the 1998 recording (see below), which may represent an original entrance. Attached to the north-west corner of the house is a latrine tower which served all three floors until the late 16th - 17th century.

The house was restored by the National Trust in 1939. It was further renovated in 1984 when an internal concrete floor was removed. The latter task was accompanied by a limited archaeological investigation, by *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology* (then Dyfed Archaeological Trust), in which stratified floor deposits were noted. In addition, the cess-pit at the base of the latrine tower was excavated. The results of the latter have been published (Murphy and O'Mahoney, 1985; Murphy, 1989). An overall report on the house was also prepared for the County Sites and Monuments Record, a copy of which is included within the present report as Appendix I.

Fig. 1 - Site location and overall elevation

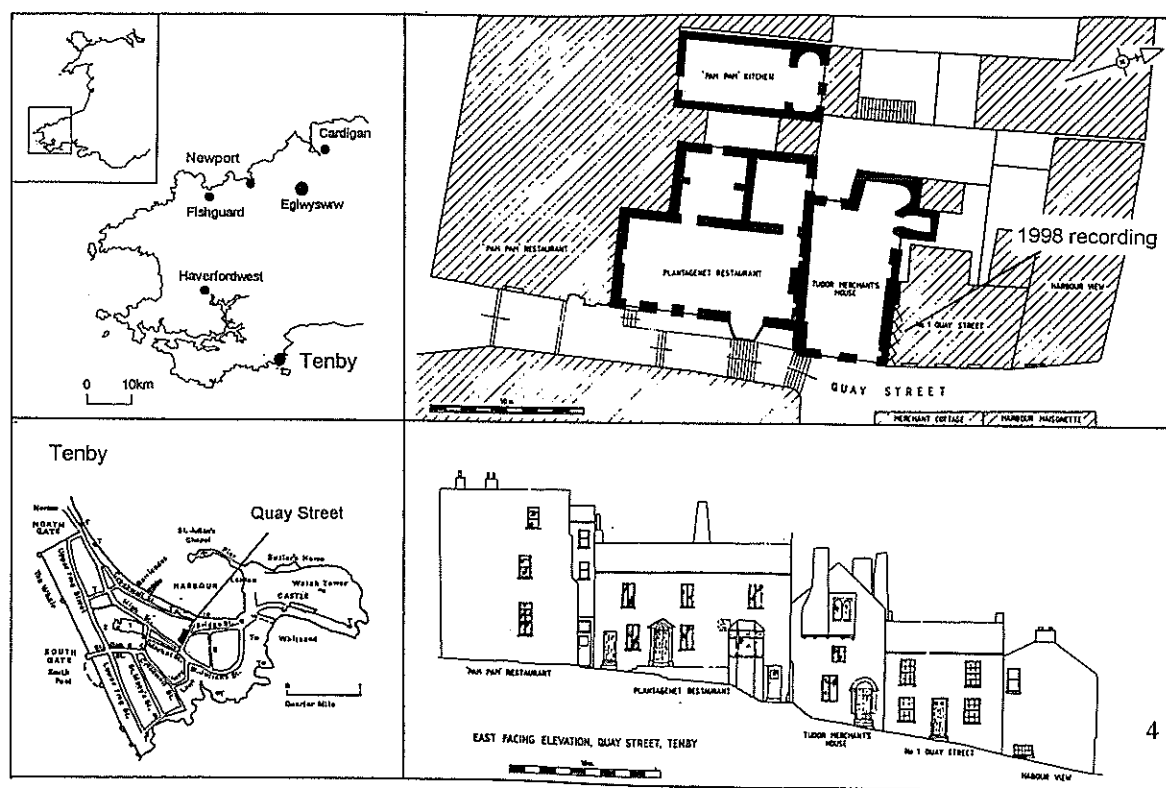
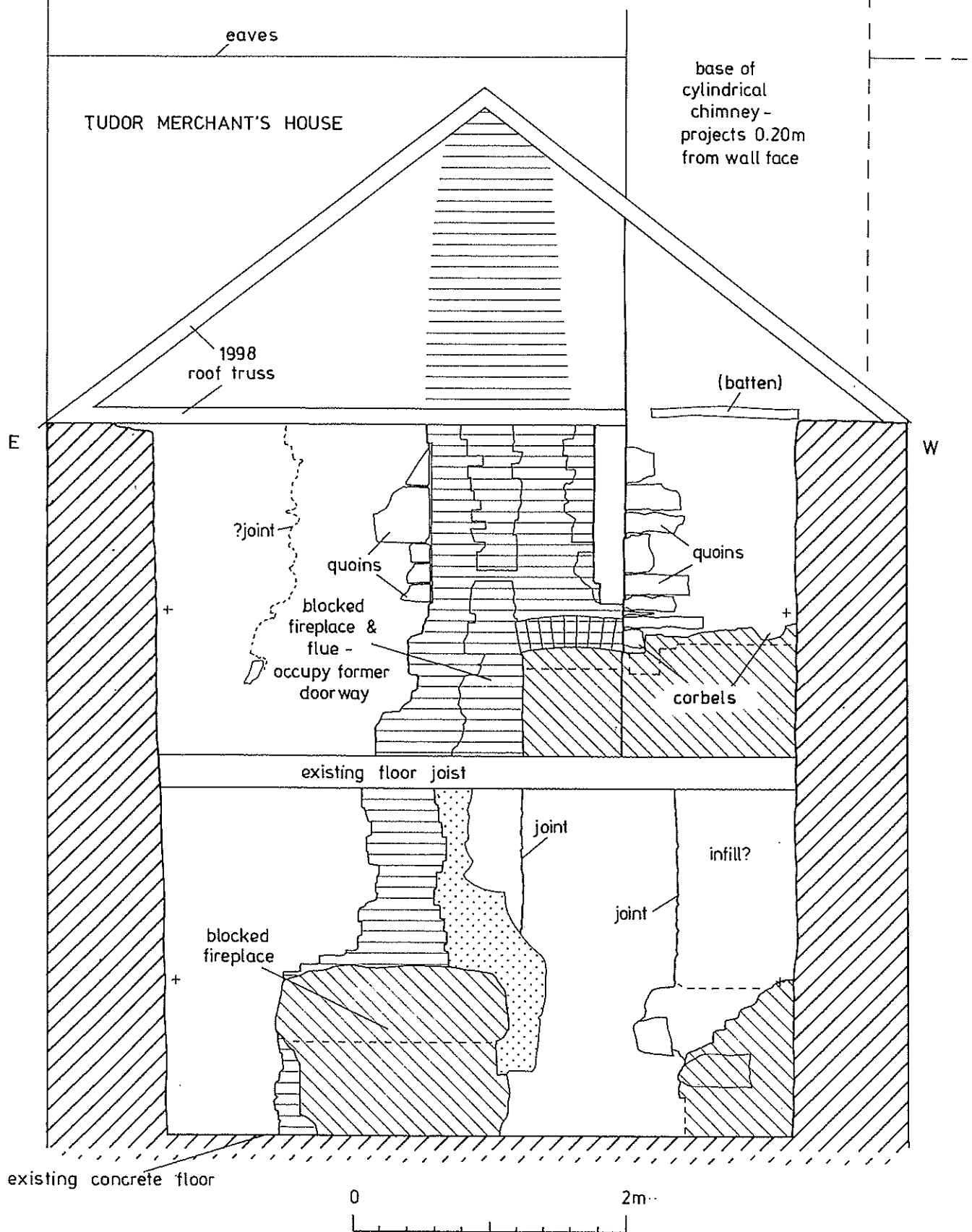
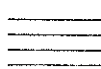


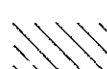
Fig. 2 - No. 1 Quay Street, Tenby - elevation of south wall



- corework



- brickwork



- breezeblock & brickwork

2.2 The archaeological recording (Fig. 2)

The external (north) face of the east half of the north wall of the Tudor Merchant's House forms the end (south) wall of No. 1 Quay Street, which is floored at a level 1.00m lower than the Merchant's House. After removal of finishes from within No. 1 Quay Street, this wall was photographed and elevations were drawn, at 1:20 scale, showing the extent and nature of the various builds that were present (see Fig. 2).

The ground floor of No. 1 Quay Street roughly corresponds to the ground floor of the Tudor Merchant's House, but it is floored at a level 1.00m lower than the latter building. Nevertheless, the facework continued downwards to the latter floor level, suggesting that the Merchant's House was at first free-standing and built into the north-south uphill slope (see Fig. 1). The wall features an inserted, brick-lined fireplace and flue which served the ground floor of No. 1 Quay Street. The fireplace was blocked with breeze-block and brickwork in the later 20th century when its form was obscured, but the nature of the brickwork suggests a late 19th - early 20th century date which is confirmed by the contemporary fireplace on the first floor (see below). The fireplace may lie over the site of an earlier drain outlet from the Merchant's House, which was observed in 1984 (see Appendix I, 3). It interrupts an area of corework which appears to represent a former masonry projection that was cut back flush to the wall-face at a subsequent date. A masonry stair leading up to a first floor doorway in the Merchant's House is depicted in an etching of 1812, by Charles Norris (when No. 1 was a smaller building, see Section 2.3 below) and this corework may represent the stump of this former stair. To the west, the upper half of the wall features two vertical joints, 1.10m apart, which may represent a blocked doorway; however, the area to the west of the western joint, which is partly obscured by the inserted rear wall of No. 1, was more randomly coursed than the rest of the wall and appeared to represent infill. No evidence of an opening in this location was visible within the Merchant's House in 1984 (see Appendix I, 3) but the form and dimensions, and the apparent sill level, of the joints suggest that a blocked doorway may be represented by one or both of these joints.

The first floor of No. 1 Quay Street, which roughly corresponds to the first floor of the Merchant's House, was served by a fireplace which shared the brick flue from, and was contemporary with, the ground floor fireplace; the small grate has a segmental brick head from the late 19th - early 20th century and was blocked with breeze-blocks and brickwork from the later 20th century. The brick lining, which at this level featured some limestone rubble, ascended the full height of the wall into the gable, but the chimney has now gone. The flue had been inserted into an earlier opening which was represented by two vertical joints 1.20m apart, with good quoins. This opening corresponds with a blocked doorway seen from within the Merchant's House in 1984 (*ibid.*) and which had a 2-centred head, probably contemporary with the rest of the Merchant's House and dating from the 15th century. Immediately west of the door was the eastern quoin of a square projection, the western return of which lay behind the inserted rear wall of No. 1. The projection is 0.20m deep, and represents the part-external flue from the first floor of the Merchant's House which rises the full height of its north wall to terminate as the cylindrical chimney noted in 2.1 above. The flue was formerly corbelled out, and the faces of corbels were visible to the east and west; the area beneath the corbelling had been infilled, to the first floor level of No. 1, with breeze-block and brickwork during the later 20th century.

2.3 No. 1 Quay Street

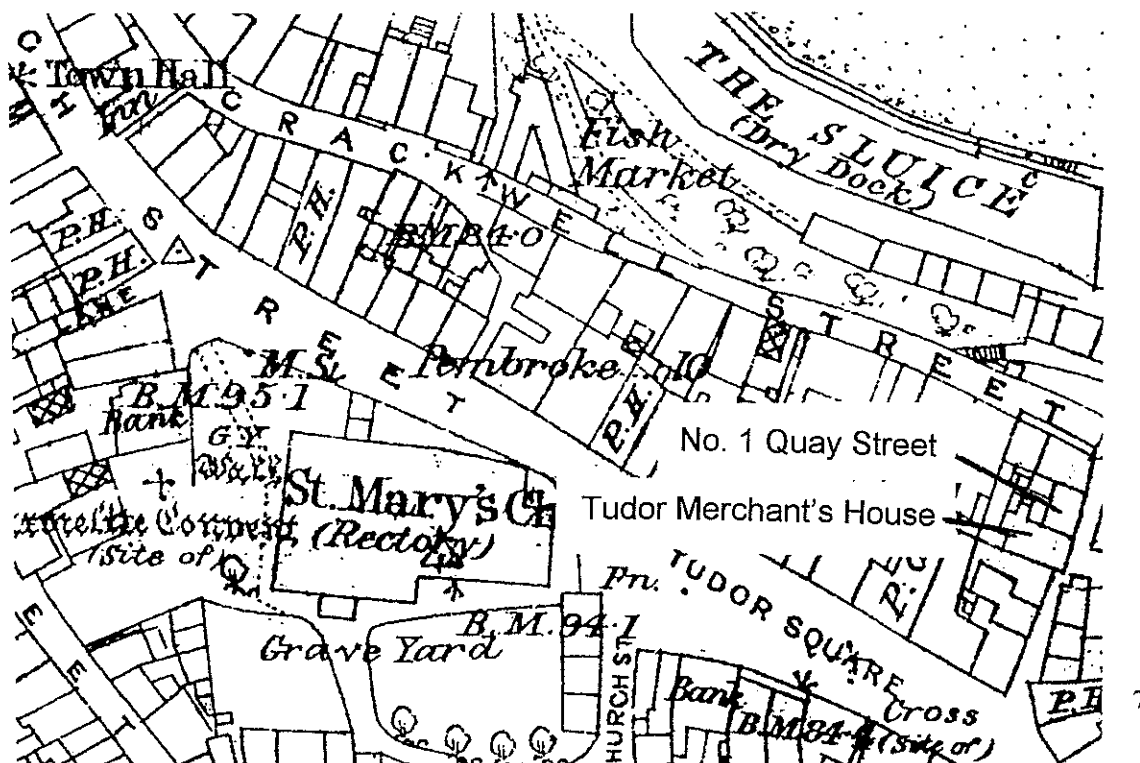
The present front (east) and rear (west) walls No. 1 Quay Street both butt against the north wall of the Tudor Merchant's House and are therefore later than the Merchant's House. It appears that the present No.1 was constructed between 1867 and 1888; it is shown with its present overall plan on both the first and second editions of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500, Pembrokeshire Sheet XLI.11, of 1888 and 1907 respectively (see Fig. 3), but without the rear (west) extension, which was added later in the 20th century. However, the present building is not the first to occupy the site. Charles Norris depicted a small, low cottage in an etching of 1812 (see Appendix I, 3) which may be the same one that was described in 1867 as 'uncomfortable close' to the Merchant's House and 'equally old' (*ibid.*). The removal of the external masonry stair to the first floor doorway of the Merchant's House will have had a profound effect on this building and it may be that the cottage, and stair, were demolished soon after 1867 and the present No. 1 Quay Street constructed.

The house now comprises two storeys, but there is a cellar beneath the northern half where the building has been terraced into the steep hillslope (see Fig. 1). The walls are in random limestone rubble, and are without dressings or any detail that may provide firm dating evidence. The four present window openings all face the street (west); the rubble in the slightly splayed reveals has been slightly squared and is in a paler limestone than the surrounding walling, but this may have been deliberate and it is unlikely that they are secondary insertions. The former 6-pane windows were of 19th century form and lay beneath timber lintels. The main doorway lay in the east wall of the ground floor, facing the street, and it too featured a timber lintel of apparent 19th century date. The late 19th - early 20th century ground and first floor fireplaces of the south wall are mirrored in the north (gable) wall, with similar brick construction.

The two-storey, lean-to extension to the rear (west) of the building was added in the 20th century, and entered from both storeys of the main building. It was not closely examined, but the doorways into the main building both featured inserted breeze-block surrounds from the later 20th century.

The roof timbers had all been removed when the site was visited in December 1998, and replaced by softwood trusses. The internal studwork partitions, and central straight timber stairwell, were still in situ and datable to the late 19th - early 20th centuries. The concrete ground floor is also 20th century.

Fig. 3 - Copy of part of Ordnance Survey 1:2500 First edition, Pembs. Sheet XLI.11, showing No. 1 Quay Street.



3.0 CONCLUSIONS

Plaster stripping within No. 1 Quay Street revealed a number of features relating to the Tudor Merchant's House, including the exterior of the large cylindrical north wall chimney, formerly corbelled, a blocked first floor doorway, and a ground floor opening of uncertain nature.

There was evidence that the Merchant's House may have, at first, been a free standing structure, or that at least no contemporary buildings lay against its north face. Features relating to the ground floor of the Merchant's House included a possible blocked north wall doorway in addition to the blocked door still visible further west. A late 19th century fireplace in this wall may overlie/occupy a former drain outlet from the Merchant's House.

A doorway, now blocked, lay in the north wall of the first floor of the Merchant's House. It was served by an external masonry stair, the stump of which was observed at ground floor level. It is possible that this first floor doorway represents the original main entry to Merchant's House, in which the living accommodation probably occupied the first and second floors in an arrangement characteristic of first floor halls of the late medieval period. The present No. 1 Quay Street may have been erected between 1867 and 1888 when a cottage was demolished along with the external stair.

The cylindrical chimney on the north wall of the Merchant's House is corbelled out at first floor level, but the corbelling is obscured by later 20th century blockwork.

4.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The archive, indexed according to the National Monuments Record (NMR) material categories, will be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record, curated by *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology*, Shire Hall, 8 Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo SA19 6AF as Project Record No. 36888. It contains the following:

- A.1. Copy of the final report
- A.4. Disk copy of report

- B.4. Field notebooks

- C.1. Catalogue of field drawings
- C.2. Site drawings
- C.3. Survey drawings

- D.3. Mono/colour prints and negs

- G.1. Source documentation
- G.2. Correspondence on archaeological matters

- I.4. Final report - disk
- I.4. Paste-ups

- J.2. Final publication drawings

- M.1. Non-archaeological correspondence

There is no material for classes E, F, H, K, L and N.

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgments to - Margaret Evans of the National Trust for commissioning the record; David Griffiths, Builder, for permitting access to No. 1 while construction work was in progress, and Ken Murphy of *Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology* for permitting the use of his 1984 work and discussing the results of the record.

6.0 REFERENCES

Murphy, K., and O'Mahoney, C., 1985, 'Pottery from the Tudor Merchant's House, Tenby', *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales*, 8, 25-39.

Murphy, K., *et al.*, 1989, 'Analyses of a Cesspit Fill from the Tudor Merchant's House, Tenby', *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, XXXVI, 246-262.

TUDOR MERCHANT'S HOUSE, TENBY. PRN 8886

During renovation work in 1984 of the Tudor Merchant's House, Tenby, the opportunity arose for limited recording and survey work. Several problems were posed by the building as it stood; Were the positions of the doors original? Was the painted partition wall an original feature? When was the house constructed? What was the function of the tower like structure attached to the north east corner of the building? These and other questions have been answered with varying degrees of satisfaction.

In 1938, when the house first came under the ownership of the National Trust, an extensive renovation programme was initiated. Part of this work involved the removal of the majority of the 18th and 19th century floor levels and the insertion of a massive, 35cm thick, concrete raft floor. With the removal of this concrete floor in 1984 four trenches were dug through the surviving early floor levels. In addition a small rock cut cesspit was emptied of its fills, and the area at the base of the chimney was examined.

Two sections across the house, one longitudinal section and one through the cesspit are illustrated.

On the southern and southeastern sides the building was terraced into the hill slope, the walls resting on upstanding plinths of shale bedrock. No evidence of earlier structures was discovered during the excavations. The earliest floor consisted of upstanding blocks of bedrock infilled with crushed shale and mortar (16), over which was laid a thin skim of yellowy-brown mortar (15) sections 1, 2 and 3. This surface of this floor was even and compact, and may have been in use for several decades. No finds were recovered from this early floor layer.

Over the primary floor debris accumulated (12, 53) sections 1, 2 and 3. Over the debris white mortar floors were laid piecemeal. Only at the west end of section 1 and the north end of section 3 do these floors survive in any form resembling completeness. Elsewhere the mortar has broken and become mixed with over and underlying layers. Layers 9 and 11, thick white mortar floors, terminate abruptly on two sides. They may have originally butted up to a thin partition wall or screen, perhaps a stair screen as the main floor joist above section is chamfered to provide extra headroom. These floors (9 and 11) are the only indication of early, though not original divisions in the ground floor of the house.

The centre length of section 1 shows several broken mortar floors (19, 21 and 23) intermixed with disturbed occupation layers. A trample floor of earth and

regularly cleaned out. There are numerous references in Medieval and later documents of payments to a "gong farmer" for cleaning out cesspits. At the end of its useful life the cesspit was not cleaned but backfilled. Samples of the deposit, (85) may reveal dietary habits and disease of the inhabitants of the house in the early 18th century.

It seems probable that the drain, (80) is in the position of an earlier drain which would have allowed excess liquid to escape from the garderobe tower. Whether an original drain would have followed the same course as the brick drain (28) is unknown.

The main use of the cesspit would have been from the first floor, where the position of the seat can be seen. On the ground floor the cesspit may have been open, or at least separated from the main room by a door. The purity of the organic deposit, (85) suggests the pit was used only for toilet facilities and not as a general rubbish dump.

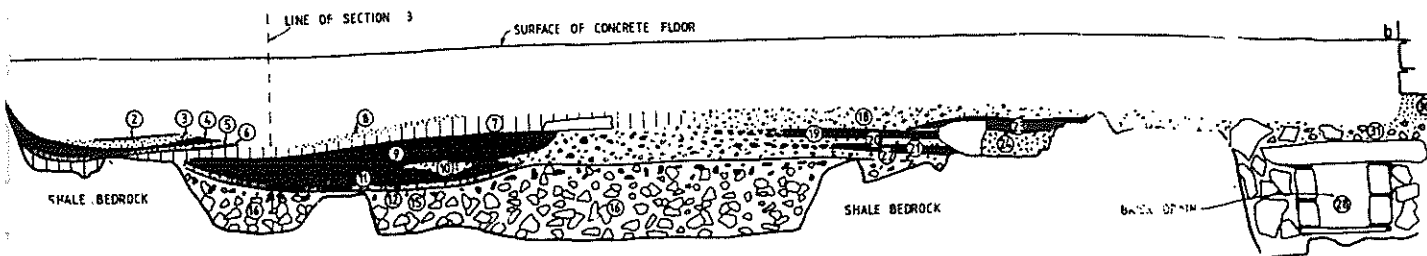
The room formed at the front of the house by the insertion of the timber partition wall had no provision for a hearth or chimney. It may have served as a shop or workroom.

Some general observations were made on the house during the excavation work. First the blocked door through which the brick drain makes its entrance. Externally the door has a large stone lintel and jambs. It was probably the original rear entrance to the building.

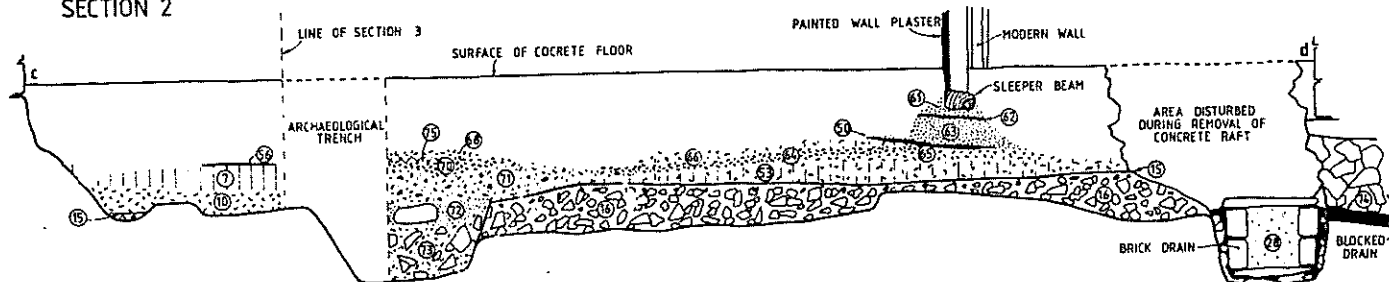
In 1867 Barnwell states that the tudor Merchant's House and what is now the Plantagenet Restaurant had interconnecting doors and were divided into numerous tenements. These doors, now blocked, can be seen inside the Merchant's House. It is tempting to suggest that the division of the house into tenements, the construction of the brick drain, the blocking of the original door and the building of the timber and painted plaster wall were contemporary, that is late 18th or early 19th century.

On the first floor of the Merchant's House there exists a blocked door of dressed stone with a pointed arched head. The cottage, No.1 Quay Street, is built against the wall in which the door is situated. In 1867 Barnwell states the cottage on the south side of the Merchant's House was uncomfortable close and equally old. The blocked door originally would have led out onto an external stone flight of stairs. This method of access to the first floor was not uncommon in Tenby. Many external steps survived into the early 19th century. Charles Norris sketched and described several buildings with external stairs in 1812. In particular his etching described as "Ancient Cottage adjoining White's House" depicts an external stone stair leading up to the first

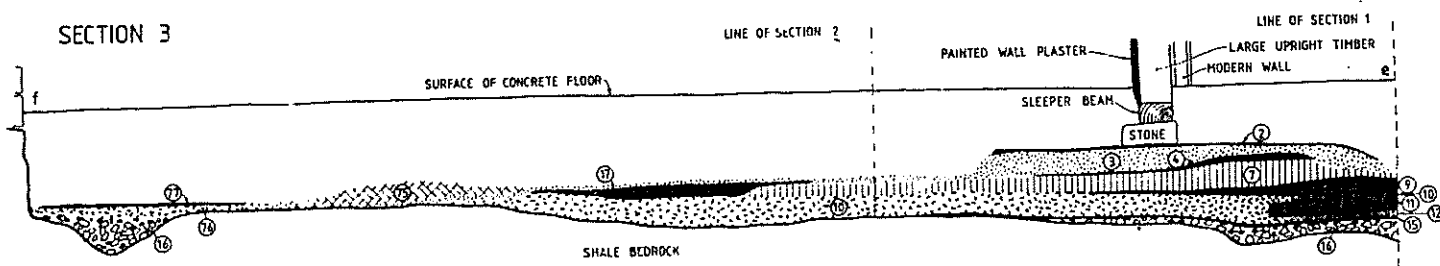
SECTION 1



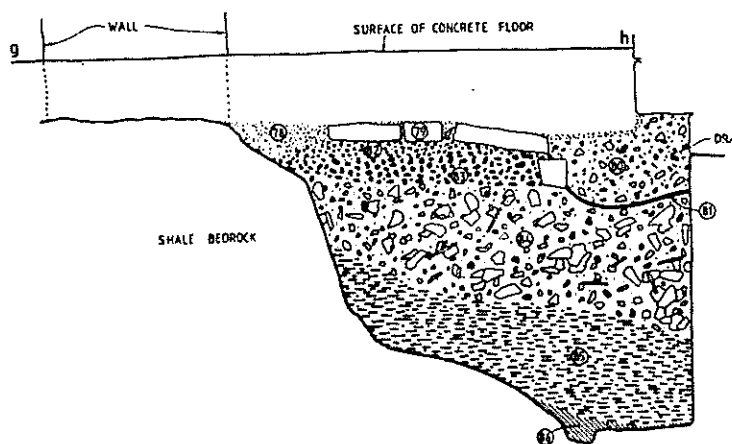
SECTION 2



SECTION 3

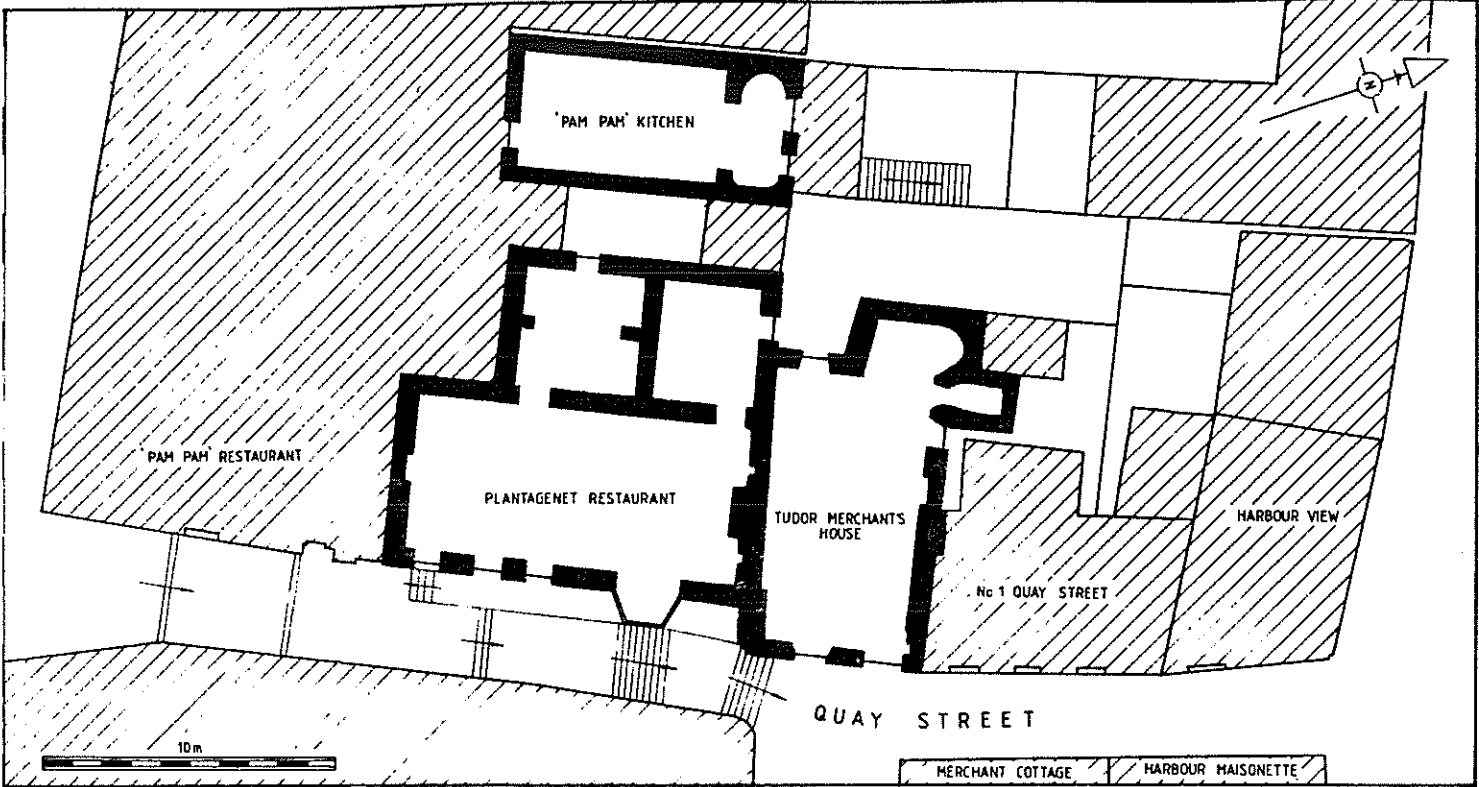


SECTION 4



- MORTAR FLOOR
- MORTAR LIMPS
- COAL DUST
- CHARCOAL
- ||||| ASH
- XXXXX CLAY FLOOR
- ////// CLEAN SAND
- ORGANIC MATERIAL





Allowing for the presence of late 17th century pottery over the earliest floor, and the subsequent build up of floors prior to the erection of the wall, a late 18th century date, at the earliest, is suggested.

Ken Murphy April '84