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ST. ISHMAEL'S CHURCH ROSEMARKET PEMBROKESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

JULY 2000



Report No. 2000/53

Report Prepared for:
Wyn Jones: Architect and Historic Buildings Consultant



A R C H A E O L O G

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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 2000/53
PROJECT RECORD NO. 42533

JANUARY 2001

**ST. ISHMAEL'S CHURCH ROSEMARKET PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
JULY 2000**

By

Pete Crane BA Hons. MIFA

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ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Epost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com Website: www.acadat.com

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
PRN 42533

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations on the 14th July 2000. The investigation was carried out after the excavation of a shallow trench for water and electricity services to enter the building. The trench disturbed the top of a large number of graves which contained some re-deposited human bone fragments. It also cut the wall footing of a building which is shown on the tithe map of 1843, the site of which now lies within the churchyard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Neil Ludlow for his work on the church which is copied in Appendix Two.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project commission

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations on the 14th July 2000 on behalf of Wyn Jones, Architect and Historic Buildings Consultant.

1.2 Scope of project

The investigation was carried out after excavation of a shallow trench, by the contractors on site, to enable water and electricity services to enter the building. This report is limited to the trench excavation. A copy of a report by Neil Ludlow of Cambria Archaeology for Cadw is included in the archive.

1.3 Report outline

This report describes the physical environment of the site (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results (Section 3) and the conclusions (Section 4), based on the results of Sections 2 and 3. Supporting data, including detailed records of the watching brief are given in a Appendice One.

1.4 Abbreviations

Sites recorded on the regional Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) have been identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Any new sites discovered during the course of the project have been allocated a new PRN and identified by their NGR.

Archaeological features and contexts will be referred to using the continuous three-figure numbering system (e.g. 001) employed by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

St Ishmael's Church lies on the southern edge of the village of Rosemarket. The village is 7.5km to the south of Haverfordwest and 7.5km to the north-west of Pembroke. The church is sited at c. 30m OD on the break of slope on the north side of the valley leading into Westfield Pill, the village of Rosemarket lying to the north. The underlying geology is Old Red Sandstone. The Ordnance Survey grid reference is SM 95300814 and the site is designated PRN 3194 (figure 1).

2.2 Archaeological Background

Adjacent to the south side of the churchyard lies the earthwork of Rosemarket Rath PRN 07 (figure 1). This site is an inland promontory hillfort, probably dating to the Iron Age although evidence from elsewhere indicates that such sites can be occupied, or re-occupied into the Roman and post-Roman periods. This site has been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Pemb No 223). On the opposite side of the small valley is another site, known only by the place name of Camp Park (PRN 2344). This could suggest another prehistoric site, but the name is probably derived from its proximity to Rosemarket Rath.

In the valley to the south of the church there were two medieval mills PRN 12495 and 12496 (figure 1). On the other side of the road to the north of the church there is the dwelling of Cross Farm PRN 7763, part of which is medieval. 150m to the north-east of the church there is a free standing medieval Dovecote, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Pemb No 224). 200m to the east of the church is the reputed site of St Leonard's Holy Well PRN 3193.

A full description of the Church and its history is included in Appendix Two, although a summary is given below:

The earliest evidence for the church (PRN 3194) is indicated by its Celtic dedication, suggesting a pre-Conquest date. The church was granted to the Knights Hospitaller of Slebech Commandary before 1176, probably c. 1145. After the Dissolution in 1536, the church passed into the hands of the Crown. In 1625 the rectory was held by Sir John Stepney of Prendergast. In 1656 Rosemarket was united with Llangwm and Freystrop, a union which survived until very recently.

The 1843 Tithe Map of Rosemarket (figure 2) shows shows two small buildings and a wall on the north side of the churchyard. These features together with the churchyard entrance are plotted on the first edition 1889 Ordnance Survey 6 inch map (Pembrokeshire XXXIII SE), but the small buildings are no longer shown on the second edition O.S. of 1908 and the outbuilding adjacent to the entrance appears as it is now.

3. SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 Fieldwork

The service trench was fully open by the time of inspection. The trench was 300-350mm wide and 450-600mm deep. It ran along the west side of the path from the north churchyard entrance before turning eastwards c. 1.5m-2m north of the line of the north transept (figure 3). It then ran c. 1m to the east of the north transept before entering the north side of the church (figure 3). The trench sides showed a large amount of disturbed deposits throughout its length, except for a section 9m to 11m south of the gate where a lime mortared wall, or wall footings, probably running east to west, were encountered (photo 1). There may also have been a small amount of undisturbed material on the north side of the wall footings, but this could not be established within the limited confines of the trench. The wall location was plotted and photographed. Bones had been collected by the contractor and these were quantified (see Appendix One). No artefacts were recovered.

3.2 Interpretation

The disturbed soils observed are likely all to be the result of multiple grave cuts, with all the later burials below the bottom of the trench. The wall or wall footings are part of the structures shown on the tithe map, probably outbuildings or part of a property boundary wall. This wall was destroyed when the churchyard was enlarged near the beginning of the 1900s. On the north side of this wall there may have been a small amount of undisturbed natural as this later expansion of the churchyard did not have such a high density of graves. The bones recovered were nearly all human and probably are disturbed remains of earlier burials in the upper fills of later graves.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Except for the one probable post-medieval wall, or wall footings there was little disturbance to the archaeology except for the upper fills of graves, by this service trench. The contractor was requested to return all recovered bone to the trench.

5. ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The archive is currently held by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations, The Shire Hall, Llandeilo, Carmarthen as project number PRN 42533.

6. SOURCES

See sources consulted in Appendix Two

APPENDIX ONE: DETAILED RECORDS OF WATCHING BRIEF

Bone

The contractor excavating the trench had collected bones and numbered the bags. The numbering ran from the church gate along the trench to the church but an exact correlation could not be made, as the worker in question was not on site. After assessment the contractor was requested by the archaeologist, subject to the agreement of the vicar, to replace the collection in the trench, above the cable so it was obvious they had been disturbed.

Bone assessment was not undertaken by a specialist and is a guide only.

Numbered

- 4 1 bone, human limb, both ends missing
- 5 1 bone, human leg, ends missing
- 6 2 bone fragments, 1 human, plus cow tooth
- 7 2 bone fragments, both probably human, 1 possibly toe
- 8 1 bone in 2 fragments, human? thin limb

- 10 c. 10 v. small bone fragments, probably human

- 11 1 bone in 2 fragments, human? limb
- 13 1 human leg bone c.7 fragments. 1 human skull fragment.
- 14 4 bones all human: 1 arm, 2 rib? 1 back
- 15 13 bone fragments, probably human, including 1 ball joint - probably leg and 1 pelvis fragment
- 16 3 bone fragments, human: 1 back, 1 limb, 1 pelvis?
- 17 human: 1 toe/finger, 2 limb fragments, 1 collar bone fragment, 1 rib and 4 other fragments
- 18 human: 1 rib fragment, 1 limb fragment
- 19 c. 11 fragments probably all human including: 2 lower arm/leg, 1 skull fragment and 1 animal bone rib? with sawn end
- 20 human: 2 toe? 1 lower leg, 1 pelvis or shoulder fragment, 6 other limb? fragments
- 21 human: 1 collar bone in 2 fragments, 1 rib fragment, 1 other fragment
- 22 human: 2 skull fragments
- 23 human: 1 toe, 1 limb fragment, 1 animal limb sheep?
- 24 4 bone fragments

Un-numbered:

- a 1 animal, cut end, probably cow
- b 1 probably human limb bone fragment
- c 1 fragment, possibly shoulder, animal or human
- d 1 bone in 3 fragments, probably animal, but could be adolescent human

APPENDIX TWO: REPORT ON THE CHURCH BY NIEL LUDLOW FOR CADW ©

ST ISMAEL, ROSEMARKET, PEMBROKESHIRE (PRESELI)

Dyfed PRN 3194

RB No. 3377

NGR SM 9530 0814

Not listed (1998)

SUMMARY

Medieval church; 70% medieval core fabric.

A multicell church, small-medium sized. Consists of chancel, 2 bays; nave, 3 bays; medieval. North transept/chapel, 1 bay, with skew-passage; north porch; c.1600. Limestone rubble construction. 18th - early 19th century external render; plastered within. Slate gable roofs. Medieval chancel arch and squints, north door, corbels, and ?re-used window dressings. Transept arch, tomb recess, ?altar recess, corbels, skew-passage arch, vault, blocked window, porch door?, western bellcote buttress?, from c.1600. Other openings mainly from 1856, neo-Gothic, with yellow oolite dressings. Western single bellcote, 1856.

Roofs: 1856 and 1891. Floors: 1891. Finishes: 18th century - 20th century.

Condition - good. Some plaster fair; some external ivy.

Archaeological potential - good-very good. Platform around 60% of church; external drain around 100% church, exposing footings in 30% of church, in primary cutting around 20% of church; floor raised in 20% of church; suspended floors in 60% of church; below-ground heating chamber in 5% of church; external memorials significantly close to 10% of church.

Structural value (pre 19th century) - good. 70% medieval core fabric; medieval chancel arch, squints, door, corbels, window dressings. Tomb recess, ?altar recess, corbels, arches, vault, blocked window, door?, bellcote buttress?, from c.1600

Group value - high. Medieval landmark church, in centre of village representing former medieval borough; early 19th century masonry building in churchyard; adjacent hillfort (and castle) site; nearby dovecote visible from church.

Phasing:

Phase 1 - Nave, late C12?.

Phase 2 - Chancel, C14-15?.

Phase 3 - North transept and skew-passage (and north porch?), c.1600.

Phase 4 - Restored 1856, high impact; walls partly rebuilt.

Phase 5 - Restored 1891, medium impact.

DESCRIPTION

St Ismael, Rosemarket, is a multicelled church, small-medium sized. It retains approximately 70% pre-19th century core fabric.

The present church consists of a 2-bayed chancel, a 3-bayed nave, a single-bayed north transept with a skew-passage, and a north porch. Construction is in limestone rubble, with much rebuilding/refacing from 1856 and 1891. The chancel arch and squints, the north door, ?rood-loft corbels, and ?re-used window dressings are medieval. The transept arch, tomb recess, ?altar recess, corbels, skew-passage arch, vault and blocked window, and the porch door and western bellcote buttress?, are from c.1600. Other openings are mainly from 1856, in neo-Gothic (early English) style, with yellow oolite dressings; the western single bellcote is also from 1856. There are remains of 18th - early 19th century external render; pointing is mainly from 1891, slightly ribboned, with some poor 20th century cement repointing. The interior is plastered except in the transept and skew-passage. Roofs are slated gables.

The east and south walls of the chancel, and the upper quarter of the east bay north wall, were largely refaced in 1891, with a triple-lancet east window in brick. The remainder of the east bay north wall is medieval, with extensive remains of 18th - early 19th century external render, and the eastern jamb of a possible blocked window is visible externally; the west bay is entered from the north transept skew-passage (see below), above which is an internal, weathered ?medieval corbel probably associated with a former roof. A narrow, full-height internal recess, with a medieval 2-centred head, at the west end of the south wall may be associated with the former rood-loft (but a mid-19th century description places the stair on the north side of the chancel - see Structural Development below). The low, plain, full-centred semicircular chancel arch may be from the later 12th century; either side is a plain square squint from the later medieval period, while above the apex, near the summit of the gable, is a small square recess, probably medieval and possibly associated with the rood itself. A flue rises through the interior of the wall to the south of the arch, to emerge in the gable-slope as a limestone ashlar stack with a ceramic pot, from 1891. The softwood roof has scissors-braced trusses from 1856, arch-braced from contemporary wall-corbels; the matchboarding was added in 1891. The passage and sanctuary are polychrome-tiled, from 1891 when the floor was raised, with contemporary woodblock flooring.

The upper three-quarters of the nave south wall were rebuilt in roughly squared and coursed rubble in 1856; the lowest quarter exhibits external render like that in the chancel. There are 3 windows in the south wall, all from 1856; the eastern two have 2 uncusped lights and a plain, circular-pierced spandrel, in 2-centred surrounds of chamfered yellow oolite. The westernmost is a single uncusped lancet in yellow oolite. At the east end of the south wall is an external stepped buttress from 1891. The north wall is original and unfenestrated but is pierced by a north door with a segmental surround possibly from the late 12th century. In the west bay, the external face of this wall exhibits, midway up, a weathered, ?medieval corbel - function? *in situ*?. The west wall is also original and features a large, central external buttress, double-shouldered; it carries a gabled single bellcote with a triangular-headed opening, rebuilt in 1856, but is pierced by a single, segmental-headed light without a surround, probably from c.1600. The softwood nave roof has queen-post trusses from 1856, arch-braced from wall-plates; the matchboarding was added in 1891. Floored as the chancel, with a below-ground heating chamber for a former 'Porritt's' stove, from 1891; the flue led to either the chancel arch chimney (see above) or to that above the north transept arch (see below).

The long north transept is entered from the nave through a plain, full-centred semicircular arch, probably from c.1600; above it, the south face exhibits 4 medieval corbels associated with the former rood-loft. Emerging through the roof above the arch is a second chimney with a cylindrical stack in limestone ashlar from 1891. The upper two-thirds of the east wall, the western half of the north wall and the uppermost courses of the west wall were rebuilt/refaced like the nave south wall in 1856. The transept is lit by a window in the east and north walls. The east window has 2 uncusped, semicircular-headed lights in a square, ovolo-moulded surround in yellow oolite from 1856, replicating an original from c.1600. The north window may re-use some repositioned dressings from the 13th century; it has 2 uncusped lights and a plain-pierced spandrel in a 2-centred surround of double cavetto-moulded yellow oolite and a drip-mould on stiff-leaf stops, (re)built in 1856. Internally, the north wall exhibits an empty tomb-recess with a plain, segmental

head, and a small, square recess in the angle with the east wall, possibly associated with an altar; both features are also seen at St Ishmael's, Pembs., where they are dateable to c.1600. There is also a small, square recess in the west wall. All features indicate that the transept was used as a chapel. The softwood roof has scissors-braced trusses and matchboarding from 1891. Floored as the chancel and nave. The transept was dedicated as a Lady Chapel in 1942 (Nicolle, 1983, 5).

A plain, segmental arch in the east wall of the transept southern bay, from c.1600 and with a deeply chamfered southern stop, leads into a skew-passage; either side of the arch are 2 contemporary internal corbels possibly associated with the transept altar-beam, or statuary. The passage features an unusual, unquoined right-angled return to the chancel north wall, again similar to that at St Ishmael's, also dateable to c.1600; a slight external squinch at the junction with the chancel is of unknown function. The passage has a nearly flat, segmental barrel-vault from c.1600, sloping down to the south, over which is a slated lean-to roof to the chancel north wall. It emerges in the chancel as a 'segmented' semicircular arch, and was lit by a window in the outside wall, blocked with masonry, and internal breeze blocks from the later 20th century.

The north porch entry is through a plain, semicircular-headed arch that may be from c.1600; the gable above was rebuilt in 1856. The side walls have internal masonry benching with 20th century paved seating, and an original corbel possibly associated with the former roof. The softwood roof has scissors-braced trusses and matchboarding from 1891. The tiled floor is either from 1856 or 1891 and laid directly on the substrate.

A possible earthwork platform is visible around the north, south and west sides of the church; it is very uneven to the north and may be enhanced by, or even comprise, building debris. A concreted external drain of variable depth surrounds the church, exposing footings around the south side; to the north-west, it lies within a cutting that is at least partly primary. The chancel floor has been raised. Floors are suspended in the nave and transept. There is a below-ground heating chamber in the nave. External memorials lie significantly close to the east wall.

Structural development

The nave facework is in large rubble; the small semicircular-headed chancel arch and the segmental north door may date it to the late 12th century. The chancel is in smaller rubble and it may be a late-medieval replacement an earlier short chancel, with contemporary squints. The long north transept and skew-passage, with a plan and detail similar to the south transept and passage at St Ishmaels, Pembs., are from c.1600. The porch door is also semicircular-headed but may be late rather than early, possibly dating the porch also to c.1600; the bellcote buttress may too be contemporary.

The church was in a 'ruinous state' in 1640 (Nicolle, 1983, 5), and in 1674 the patron, Sir John Stepney of Prendergast, was ordered to repair the chancel; 7 years later it was recorded that the church roof was good and no faults were reported in the general condition (ibid.).

The church was in 'good order' in 1807 (ibid.). In 1833 it was described as 'not distinguished by any architectural details of importance' (Lewis, 1833). An engraving from c.1855, reproduced in Nicolle, 1983, purports to represent the west end of Rosemarket Church but shows a west door with a full-centred semicircular head of plain, and decidedly Romanesque character, and a massive, single bellcote pierced by a similar opening, but not on a buttress. Further doubt may be cast on the subject being Rosemarket Church in that the building is shown in a state of semi-ruin, and almost completely overgrown, a condition which is suggested by none of the other sources.

An account of 1856 (Glynne, 1885, 215-6) describes the church, in general form, as at present. The chancel arch was 'low, rude and obtuse', and the transept arch was similar. The chancel side walls exhibited internal stone benching which continued either side of the chancel arch. The rood-loft steps survived on the north side of the chancel arch. The north door was 'ill-shaped' and 'obtuse', while the north porch doorway had a 'deformed' arch. The bellcote was described as a double bellcote and the present buttress is suggested. The

windows were 'mostly wretched', but the north transept was lit by a 2-light window in its north wall, with a square head 'of Perpendicular character', which has survived. The skew passage, north transept internal corbelling and porch benching were noted. The west end of the nave was not floored, 'only the bare earth', and the west window was ivied.

The church was restored later in 1856 (Nicolle, 1983, 7). The yard build-up around the church was removed and a drain was excavated. The nave south wall was almost completely rebuilt, and the transept walls were partly rebuilt/refaced, while the church was refenestrated. The nave roof was restored. The bellcote was rebuilt in its present form and the 'miserable and decayed' seats for 135 worshippers were replaced by new pews for 248. A plan accompanying the restoration (ibid.) shows the nave and north transept both seated, stalls in the chancel, a triple-decker pulpit and a free-standing stove in the nave. It was intended to block the skew passage off from the chancel, but this was not undertaken.

A second restoration was undertaken in 1891 (Green, 1913, 267; Nicolle, 1983, 5). The chancel was partly rebuilt/refaced, with a new east window in brick. The north transept and porch were reroofed, and the nave and chancel roofs were matchboarded. The church was refloored, the chancel floor being raised (Anon., 1898, 182) and a heating-chamber being inserted in the nave, with flue(s) to chimney(s). A buttress was built against the nave south wall at the junction with the chancel arch. The remains of the rood-stair, and the chancel benching were removed (RCAHM, 1925, 313). The church was again reseated. The chancel arch, north door and porch door were intended to be rebuilt (Nicolle, 1983, 5) but this was not carried out.

The simple softwood stalls, with bookboards and a reader's desk, the softwood and iron altar rail, the softwood pews and the pulpit are from 1891. The panelled oak altar table and similar reredos are from the mid 20th century. The softwood altar table in the north transept is from 1942.

The oolite font has a square, deeply-cushioned bowl from the 13th century, the square stem and base are 'modern' (RCAHM, 1925, 313).

There is a bell in the bellcote.

A late medieval tombstone was discovered within the church during the 1856 restoration (Nicolle, 1983, 5); the present whereabouts are unknown.

The church was not listed in 1998.

SITE HISTORY

There is some evidence for the pre-conquest religious use of the site - Celtic dedication; adjacent hillfort (and castle) site.

St Ismael, Rosemarket, was a parish church during the post-conquest period, of the medieval Deanery of Rhos (Rees, 1932). It was granted to the Knight Hospitaller of Slebech Commandery by the knights William FitzHait, Robert FitzGodebert and Richard FitzTancard, before 1176 (Rees, 1897, 98) and probably c.1145 (Anon., 1898, 183), as 'Ecclesie de Rosmarche'. There is no separate valuation of the church in the 'Taxatio' of 1291 (Green, 1913, 266-7), but in 1338 the Commander of Slebech received £24 from Rosemarket church and glebe (Anon., 1898, 183). In 1535 the church was returned £8 annually to Slebech (Rees, 1899, 287) and the vicar, collated by the Preceptor, received a stipend of £4 out of which he paid a tithe of 8s (Anon., 1898, 183). In 1536 the church had an annual value of £4 (Green, op. cit.).

At the dissolution Slebech Commandery, and all its appurtenances including the patronage of Rosemarket, fell to King Henry VIII. It remained in royal hands, but in 1625 the rectory was held by Sir John Stepney of Prendergast (ibid.). In 1656 Rosemarket was united with Llangwm and Freystrop (ibid.), a union which persisted into the 20th century.

In 1786 the discharged vicarage had an annual value of £15 (£30), rated in the king's books at £4 (*ibid.*), and it was endowed with £200 royal bounty by 1833 (Lewis, 1833).

In 1998 St Ismael, Rosemarket, was a parish church. The living was a vicarage, held with Burton (Benefice 666) in the Archdeaconry of St Davids, Rural Deanery of Roose (St Davids, 1997-8).

An original dedication to St Ismael may have been changed to St Leonard in the early post-conquest period (Nicolle, 1983, 3); it later reverted to St Ismael.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Map Evidence

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(HPR/93 - Rosemarket)

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Salter, M., 1994, The Old Parish Churches of South West Wales.

APPENDIX THREE: CATALOGUE OF WATCHING BRIEF ARCHIVE

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

- A. Copy of final report.
- B. Site records, and site notebook.
- D. Site photographs - catalogue, colour slide and B/W contact sheets.
- E. Finds catalogue, individual finds record and finds report.
- G. List of references, including primary and secondary sources.
- I. Archive report and draft copies of final report.
- M. Miscellaneous correspondence.

There is no material in categories C, F, H, J, K, L and N.

The archive is currently held by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire as project number PRN 42533.

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION AND ADJACENT SITE PRN NUMBERS

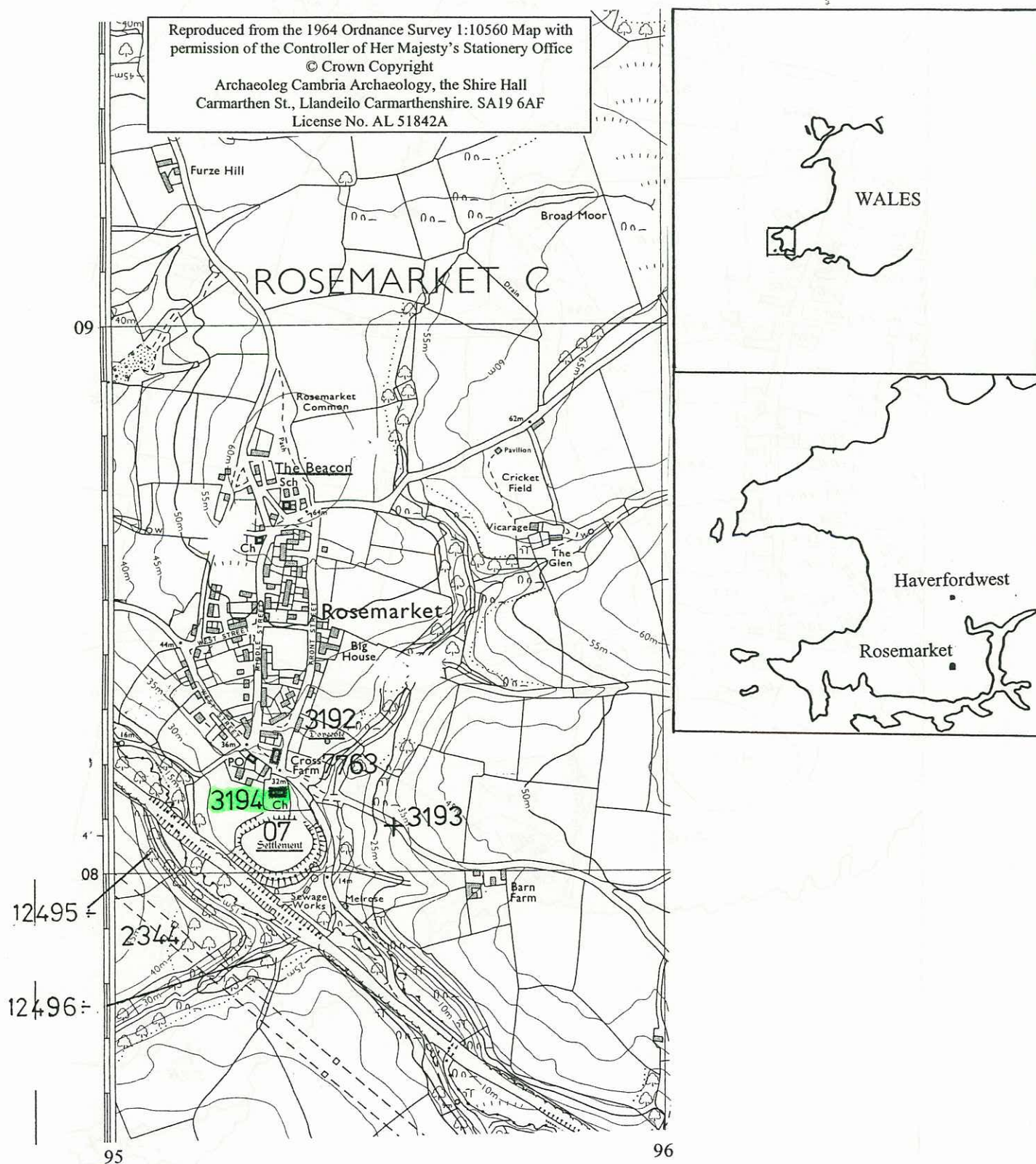
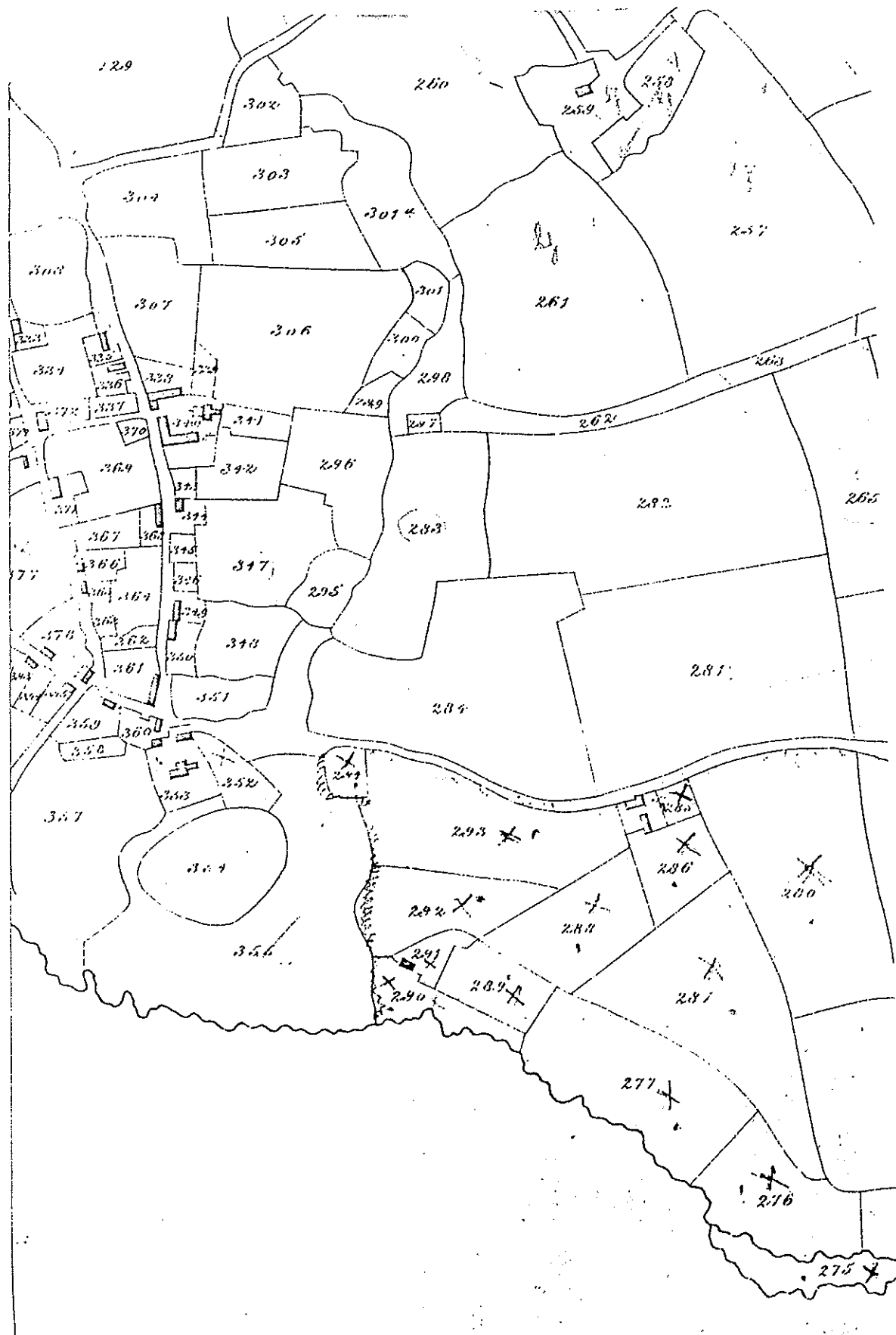


FIGURE 2: PART OF THE 1843 TITHE MAP OF ROSEMARKET





**PHOTO 1: WALL FOUND 9 TO 11 METRES SOUTH OF
CHURCHYARD GATE**



**ST. ISHMAEL'S CHURCH ROSEMARKET PEMBROKESHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
JULY 2000**

REPORT NUMBER 2000/53

JANUARY 2001

This report has been prepared by Pete Crane

Position Senior Archaeologist

Signature Pete Crane Date 18 January 2001

This report has been checked and approved by Gwilym Hughes on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Director

Signature Gwilym Hughes Date 18/01/01

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report