

**EXCAVATIONS OF MEDIEVAL AND EARLY  
POST-MEDIEVAL FEATURES AT  
90–93 BROAD ST, READING**

*By Andrew Norton and Daniel Poore*

with contributions by

*Paul Blinkhorn, Joan Dils, Denise Druce, Emma-Jayne Evans, Rowena Gale, David Higgins,  
Claire Ingrem, Graham Morgan, Ian Scott, Terence Smith and Rachel Tyson*

Illustrations by

*Anne Stewardson and OA Graphics Office*

Oxford Archaeology  
Occasional Paper No. 13

This book is part of a series of Occasional Papers published by Oxford Archaeology – which can be bought from all good bookshops and internet bookshops. For more information visit [thehumanjourney.net](http://thehumanjourney.net)

Excavations at 90–93 Broad St, Reading Figure 1 and Excavations at 7–8 Broad Street, Reading, Berkshire, 2002 Figure 1 are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office,  
© Crown Copyright, AL 100005569

© 2007 Oxford Archaeological Unit

ISBN 978-0-904220-42-1

# Contents

|   |      |
|---|------|
| List of Figures .....   | iv   |
| List of Tables .....  | v    |
| Summary .....   | vii  |
| Acknowledgements .....  | viii |
| Project Background.....   | 1    |
| Archaeological Description .....  | 1    |
| The Finds .....   | 12   |
| Pottery by <i>Paul Blinkhorn</i> .....  | 12   |
| Glass by <i>Rachel Tyson</i> .....  | 20   |
| Other Finds .....   | 22   |
| Environmental Evidence .....  | 23   |
| Animal, bird and fish bone by <i>Emma-Jayne Evans</i> with bird and fish bone by <i>Claire Ingrem</i> ..... | 24   |
| Plant Remains by <i>Denise Druce</i> , with charcoal by <i>Rowena Gale</i> .....                            | 28   |
| Discussion.....   | 28   |
| Archive.....  | 32   |
| Bibliography .....  | 32   |

## List of Figures

|           |  |    |
|-----------|--|----|
| Figure 1  | Site location.....   | 2  |
| Figure 2  | Speed's map of Reading of 1611.....  | 3  |
| Figure 3  | Area A features .....  | 4  |
| Figure 4  | Section 2 across the southern limit of the site.....   | 5  |
| Figure 5  | Sections through bell mould pit 503 and cess pit 637.....  | 6  |
| Figure 6  | Area B and C features.....   | 7  |
| Figure 7  | Section through chalk extraction pit 1401, rubbish pit 500 and<br>gravel extraction pit 712..... | 8  |
| Figure 8  | Elevation of wall 193 .....  | 10 |
| Figure 9  | Property boundaries, from the Amyce survey of 1552 and<br>the 1st edition OS map of 1879.....    | 11 |
| Figure 10 | Pottery Nos 1–8.....   | 17 |
| Figure 11 | Pottery Nos 9–18 .....   | 18 |
| Figure 12 | Pottery Nos 19–28.....   | 19 |
| Figure 13 | Pottery Nos 29–36.....   | 20 |
| Figure 14 | Glass.....   | 23 |
| Figure 15 | View of the excavation area, looking east. Area B to left, Area A to right.....                  | 29 |
| Figure 16 | View of Area A, looking east .....   | 30 |

## List of Tables

|         |   |    |
|---------|---|----|
| Table 1 | Pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by fabric type, main fabrics only, expressed as a percentage of the phase total by weight (in g) ..... | 12 |
| Table 2 | Animals, birds and fish identified to species, by phase.....  | 25 |



## Summary

*Between February and April 2002 Oxford Archaeology carried out excavations at 90–93 Broad Street, Reading (NGR SU 7142 7342) in advance of a new retail development. The excavations revealed a cultivation soil and ditch that may have represented activity within the grounds of the Saxon Minster; a small assemblage of early to mid Saxon pottery was recovered from later deposits, including a single sherd of Ipswich ware. Medieval gravel pits, cess pits and a bell mould pit were revealed within the back yards of tenements fronting Broad St and Chain St, immediately to the north of St Mary's Churchyard. It is likely that the bell mould pit was for the casting of a 13th-century bell for St Mary's. The pits contained exceptional assemblages of bird, fish and animal bone, suggestive of primary butchery and skinning in the vicinity, as well as the presence of a high status household. There were also notable assemblages of 11th- to 13th-century pottery and 16th- to 17th-century glass.*

## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology is grateful to John Mowlem and Company PLC, who funded the archaeological investigations, analysis and publication. OA would also like to thank Kev Beachus of the Babbie Group, for his co-operation and help on site. Thanks are also due to Joan Dils for her historical research and to the OA staff for their hard work in excavating the site, especially the weekend support team of specialists and managers, some of whom had not dug for some time. The authors would particularly like to thank Emma-Jayne Evans for her thoughts on the animal bone assemblage, and Anne Stewardson and the OA graphics office for their hard work in preparing the illustrations. The excavations were managed by Dan Poore, and Alan Hardy oversaw the post-excavation phase of the work. Julian Munby proved invaluable as a sounding board on ecclesiastical and medieval matters. The report was edited for publication by Anne Dodd.