



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	Bell Cablemedia Trenches Clifton & Bootham, York		
CLIENT NAME	N/A		
YAT PROJECT #	0439	YAT REPORT #	1996
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	YORYM:1996.416	GRID REFERENCE	SE 5938 5295 – 6004 5232
PLANNING REFERENCE #	N/A	AAI OPS NOTICE #	96017

This is a reformatted version of an earlier report from S:\archive\0032_watching brief reports.
No image files were present so figures are not included.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Beginning on 20th August 1996, York Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological watching brief on excavations undertaken during the laying of cable ducting to the north of the city, along the south-west edge of the road (A19) from Clifton Green to Bootham Bar (National Grid Reference SE 5938 5295 to SE 6004 5232).

This work was undertaken by PK Martin Ltd. and was carried out under Operations Notice 96017 dated 30th May 1996 and served on the City of York Council on 6th June 1996.

It must be noted that the excavations undertaken to the north-east of the area covered by the operations notice, i.e. Bootham, was not covered by this particular operations notice. The work on this particular section of trenching had been partially completed before an archaeologist was informed and had visited the site. The watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Bell Cablemedia Ltd. by Russell Marwood on behalf of the York Archaeological Trust. All records of the watching brief are stored under the Yorkshire Museum accession code YORYM: 1996.416.

The aim of the watching brief was to establish the character, date and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits disturbed during the operation.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The excavations lie within the York Area of Archaeological Importance and along the approximate line of the Roman road as it leaves the north-west gate of the fortress. The RCHM volume, EBORACUM, Roman York, states that evidence for this road, designated Number 7, exists in the obsolete parish boundaries formally running along Clifton and in a find in 1929 of road metalling near a fountain on Clifton Green, (National Grid Reference SE 5932 5302) and in April 1960 in front of the White House, Clifton, (National Grid Reference SE 5968 5262).

York Archaeological Trust has carried out several other watching briefs along the line of this Roman road. These include YORYM: 1996.169 Bootham School, Bootham, York, where a Medieval cobbled surface was exposed. Also property refurbishment at 3 Clifton, YORYM: 1994.1780, produced disturbed inhumations of no specific date. The construction of a staircase at 5-9 Clifton, YORYM: 1994.1812, exposed an undisturbed 3/4th century Roman burial.

Shallow excavations at 84 Bootham, (York Archaeological Trust accession number P0290), produced no datable archaeological evidence. Occupation debris and a floor surface at Bootham school were exposed in 1954 and at the corner of Avenue Terrace and Clifton in 1947, which included finds of 3/4th century pottery. In 1858-78 groups of cremations in 2nd century pottery vessels were found to the north-east of the junction between Burton Stone Lane and Clifton.

COMPLETED BY	Russell Marwood	CHECKED BY		FINISHED	22/03/18
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3.0 THE EXCAVATIONS.

The trench excavations were undertaken along the south-west side of the main road, approximately 1.70m from the pavement edge. There were also a number of trenches dug beneath the pavements of side roads joining the south-west side of the main road. All trenches involved some machine excavation and were dug to various depths, nominally 0.30m deep beneath the pavements and 0.50m deep beneath the roads with a width of 0.40m. Several inspection chambers were also dug along the line of the trench, usually to a depth of 1.5m.

The machine dug trenches were mainly recorded using the south-west facing sections, although in some instances identifiable deposits were exposed in the base of the trench, but access to record these was difficult.

4.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS.

The upper deposits removed from the excavations consisted of several phases of modern road surfaces. Those below the tarmac showed little signs of any archaeological evidence. The cobbles found near to Bootham Park may have formed a surface or carriageway but its precise date cannot be established.

The cobbles encountered at the deepest points in the excavations seems to be part of the fabric of the Roman road previously described and designated by RCHM as Road No.7. The other excavations yielded nothing in the way of stratigraphically datable finds. Several very small sherds of Roman Samien pottery were discovered in the deposits just above the surface of the Roman road although these were mixed with other small pot fragments of a much later, late Medieval period.

With little in the way of datable archaeological finds along the majority of the excavations, it may be assumed that any archaeological evidence, if it did occur, has been removed during the construction of the highway.

The excavations nearest Clifton Green and immediately to the south-west seem to suggest that the natural sub-soil, and so in theory, the Roman archaeology, is nearer to the present day surface the further south-west one travels from the Legionary Fortress.

The exposure of Roman Road No.7 in the section of trench backs up the previous recorded evidence for the road.

Adding this to the previously recorded evidence of scattered occupation along the line of the road, it can be assumed that ribbon development , mainly of the 2nd century, lies along the line of Clifton/Bootham.

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5.0 CONTRIBUTIONS

This report is the result of the combined efforts of a number of staff from York Archaeological Trust. The principal contributors were as follows:-

Excavation and Report Coordination: Russell Marwood
 Editor: Martin Stockwell
 Pottery: Patrick Ottaway
 Digital Mapping: Rhona Finlayson

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