

# SBG87

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SBG87

St Bartholomew the Great churchyard, Cloth Fair, EC1  
K Wooldridge

NGR: TQ 31968 81734

SMR: 043639-43

For 5 weeks in April-May 1988 excavations were carried out within the churchyard of St Bartholomew the Great Church, jointly funded by English Heritage and the parish. The archaeological excavation preceded the development by the parish of part of the churchyard. The area of excavation, measuring approximately 75 sq m, was located between the 14th c Lady Chapel of the church on the S and Cloth Fair on the N.

The earliest features on the site were two linear ditches running in an approximate E-W direction. The ditches were sealed by a metallised surface containing some sherds of abraded Roman pottery. It was sealed by deposits through which a large number of inhumations had been made.

Sixty-six articulated and seventy-five disarticulated inhumations were recorded. In addition to the inhumations, two rectangular chalk and mortar features, adjacent to the N wall of the Lady Chapel, may have been tombs or burial vaults. All of the inhumations and the possible tombs are presumed to date from after the foundation of the priory in 1123.

The earliest wall foundation recorded was a semicircular chalk and rammed gravel structure predating the main foundations of the 14th c Lady Chapel. The position of the semicircular structure suggests that it may have been an apsidal chapel to the chancel of the 12th c church.

Two phases of construction were identified in the exposed foundations of the 14th c Lady Chapel. The different phases of foundation suggested that at least part of the Lady Chapel had been constructed prior to the demolition of the E end of the 12th c church.

Following the dissolution of the priory, the Lady Chapel was sold for private use. Some evidence for the post-Dissolution use of the Lady Chapel came from a pit adjacent to the Lady Chapel wall which contained 1,857 18th c pipe clay wig curlers, as well as a large quantity of post-medieval glass and pottery.

*London Archaeol*, 6, 1989, 48; *Medieval Archaeol*, 33, 1989, 181

Moore, A, 1988 St Bartholomew's Crypt, Finds Appraisal

Spence, C (ed), 1989 *Digging in the City: the Annual Review 1988* (DUA, MoL), 13

Wooldridge, K, 1988 St Bartholomew the Great Church Cloth Fair EC2, Archive Report