

This is a copy of the archaeological assessment of the site of the proposed new car park now known as ‘**The Barbican Approach**’ at Lockyer’s Quay in Plymouth, Devon. For those interested, the report contains a fair amount of historical information about the monumental arched gateway and the immediate area. We were given this report prior to us re-erecting the archway due to it being Grade II listed, and its re-construction was part of the conditions of the new car park being developed.

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EXETER  
ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF  
THE SITE OF A PROPOSED CAR PARK  
ON LOCKYER’S QUAY,  
SUTTON HARBOUR, PLYMOUTH.

by

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This archaeological assessment was commissioned by Plymouth City Council in accordance with the guidance given in the Department of the

Environment's Planning Guidance Note No. 16 (1990), and was carried out by the Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit (EMAFU) in July 1993.

The assessment covers the area of a proposed multi-storey car park on the south side of Coxside Creek to the rear of Lockyer's Quay ([centred on SX48725410: Fig. 1](#)). The western part has been identified as the possible site of an 18<sup>th</sup> century prison for French prisoners-of-war (Gill 1976, 13, 36), and is bounded on the north by a wall and monumental gateway. These are listed as a *Building of Special Architecture or Historical Interest* (Grade II: DoE 1975 ref: 23/675). Immediately to the south-west lies Teats Hill House, which is probably mid 17<sup>th</sup> century in origin, and to the north-east there were earlier quays and buildings on the line of Sutton Road/Commercial Road, behind the present Johnson's Quay.

## 2. ASSESSMENT BRIEF

This includes:

- 2.1 The identification of any above or below-ground features or areas of archaeological interest within the assessment area.
- 2.2 The evaluation of their date and significance.
- 2.3 The provision of recommendations as to any archaeological recording which may be considered necessary prior to and during the implementation of site works

## 3. BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Historical

Although the earliest medieval quays were located around the present Parade, by the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century other quays and warehouses had been built around the north shore of Sutton Pool and on both sides of Coxside Creek. The latter are depicted behind the Chinahouse on a map and drawing of 1672 by de Gomme (Gill 1976, 15), and on a later 1725 map ([Fig. 2](#)). There are three sets of structures to the south of Coxside Creek, two of which have associated quays. They consist of a group of several buildings above the old Bayly's Wharf coal yards, including Ivy Cottage (now demolished: Pye 1991: Stead 1992), another set near Queen Anne's Battery to the south-east and another (Teats Hill House and a building to the north) lying immediately to the west of the current area of assessment ([Fig. 1](#)) & ([Fig. 2](#)).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries Teats Hill House and the area eastwards to Sutton Road and southwards to Teats Hill Road formed one property owned by the Molesworth family. It included the two quays shown immediately to the north of the buildings on the 1725 plan, one or both of which was probably built

by Thomas Teate in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. From at least 1737 until the construction of the original Lockyer's Quay in *c.* 1833 (Gill 1976, 36) the property was leased to a succession of tenants, including William and Benjamin Hancock, William Parr, John Rodd and Robert Fouracre, and finally Ambrose Nicholls and Richard Odgers. The first three of these were shipwrights, and the property included a shipyard, dwelling houses, ropehouse and (from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) a tar yard and tar house.

In 1825 the property was purchased by a group including Edmund Lockyer, who in 1833 built Lockyer's Quay and a copper ore yard behind (Gill 1976, 37). This can be identified with the former C.M.T yard in the west part of the site: the area to the east had been occupied by the tar yard since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and was later converted into coal yards. A contemporary plan (Gill 1976, 36) shows the yard with a spur of the Princetown & Dartmoor Railway entering it. By 1879 the copper boom was over and the yard was occupied by a lead and manure works. Latterly it has been used for fish storage (Gill 1976, 13), as a builders' yard, and for assembling components for the new dock and harbour wall.

The area of the former coal depot and Parr Lane in the eastern part of the site fell within the same property. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century no buildings are depicted on the site ([Fig. 2](#)), although a tar yard was present in 1811 ([Fig. 3](#)). This was succeeded by a coal depot when the area was redeveloped with the construction of Lockyer's Quay in *c.* 1833. The outer walls of the yards of this depot remain, though much altered and repaired. Parr Lane and the line of Parr Street are first depicted in 1846, together with a structure at the east end of the intervening strip adjoining the Eagle Tavern. This lies to the rear of the earlier tar yard, and may lie on or near the site of the associated tar house. The section lying within the site boundary has been demolished and now forms lock-up garages.

### **3.2 Borehole and probehole survey**

A borehole and probehole survey of the site was undertaken by F. Sherrell Ltd for Plymouth City Council in June-July 1993. The locations of the holes are depicted on ([Fig. 1](#)) and the results relevant to this assessment (i.e. above bedrock level) are given in the Appendix.

Generally the recorded depth of bedrock confirms the approximate line of the pre-1833 shoreline projected from the historical sources and depicted on ([Fig. 1](#)). The present surface of the site slopes gently from south to north and from east to west. The depth of overburden above the natural limestone and mudstone bedrock increases sharply to the north of the projected early shoreline, except in the case of probeholes No. 8 and No. 10 (3.30 and 3.00m respectively), and boreholes No. 8 and No. 9 (6.10 and 1.80.). Probeghole No. 10 may be sited within a small inlet in the

shoreline or over a weakness in the bedrock. The results of boreholes No. 9 and No. 10 indicate that the shoreline prior to the construction of the tar yard lay further to the south and that the tar yard is built on reclaimed foreshore. Another interesting anomaly is the level of the limestone bedrock recorded in borehole No. 4 (2.40m depth); this is higher than it appears in bore holes No. 1 (5.0m) and No. 6 (4.40m) and may represent a small spur of bedrock projecting out from the shoreline. It also corresponds with the projected site of an earlier quay ([Fig.1](#), area B).

The description of the overburden given in the logs is generally not specific enough to allow the identification of any archaeologically interesting deposits or remains. From the historical evidence, and the presence of coal, clinker (and concrete in some cases), it is probable that much of it represents earlier foreshore deposits (e.g. in borehole No. 8) with later 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century make-up and rubble above and infilling behind the Lockyer's Quay frontage. It is still possible however that the remains of the earlier quay for instance and of any buildings associated with it may survive under and within the overburden.

### 3.3 Physical development

The position of the earlier quays and shoreline before the construction of Lockyer's Quay and the copper-ore yard in *c.* 1833 has been sketch-plotted with reference to the borehole logs (see above and Appendix) and to historical sources which depict the earlier shoreline in relation to Teats Hill House, the rectangular structure lying to the west of the store to the north, and Shepherd's Wharf ([Fig. 1](#)). All are shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century maps ([Fig. 3](#)) & ([Fig. 4](#)), and Teats Hill House and Shepherd's Wharf are also depicted on earlier sources ([Fig. 2](#)).

Prior to 1833 the shoreline ran through the centre of the present yard and the former coal depot to the east, and then skirted the tar yard and formed a small inlet under the western edge of Commercial Road. Prior to the construction of Johnson's (formerly Coxside) Quay in *c.* 1825 it ran northwards along the line of Commercial/Sutton Road. Thus the northern part of the yard in the west of the site, including the wall and monumental gateway fronting the quay ([Fig. 1](#)), lies on reclaimed land and dates to 1833 or soon after. It is apparently depicted on a contemporary map (Gill 1976, 36) and was certainly present by 1846.

An earlier quay (in area B. On [Fig. 1](#)) is shown on a *c.* 1811 and 1831 plans projecting out from the original shoreline, and appears from borehole evidence to lie on a limestone outcrop. It is not shown on the 18<sup>th</sup> century plans, although two separate quays are depicted to the north of Teats Hill House on the 1725 map ([Fig. 2](#)). The western of these is depicted in various shapes and sizes on all plans. It is generally placed opposite Shepherd's Wharf (although on Simpson's 1786 plan it has

been misplaced to the west; Gill 1976, 34), and formed the western limit of the property prior to 1833.

Apart from the 1833 plan mentioned by Gill, the original Lockyer's Quay and the yards behind are depicted on maps of 1852, 1877 and 1879 ([Fig. 4](#), surveyed in 1856). Originally this yard only occupied the western two-thirds of the present yard, but by 1856 had been extended to its current size. The wall fronting the quay is shown together with buildings within the yard and along its rear face. This wall and the building at the south-west corner of the yard are shown on all 19<sup>th</sup> century maps; the remainder were all subsequently demolished, rebuilt and/or enlarged in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century. All the buildings within the yard have now been demolished. The monumental gateway (labelled Jefford's Gate in 1905), together with the railway tracks passing through it, are shown on several plans of the 1890s and early 1900s, when the yard was used as a cement works.

Therefore the present yard dates to *c.* 1833 and overlies an earlier 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century quay ('B' on [Fig. 1](#)). Within the yard the only original features to survive are the wall and gateway at the front ('A' on [Fig. 1](#)), the gate pillars ('C' on [Fig. 1](#)) at the end of Parr Lane, and the remaining wall ('D' on [Fig. 1](#)) at the rear. This is on the line of a 1725 property/field boundary ([Fig. 2](#)) and may predate Lockyer's Quay.

### 3.4 The prison

Gill (1976, 13, 36) suggests, on the basis of oral history, map evidence, and the quality of the monumental gateway that the yard was the site of a prison or barracks for the French prisoners-of-war, probably built between 1757 and 1765 when shed prisons were being erected on Coxside. There is also a tradition that there are cells under the stairs of Teats Hill House and within the 'tunnel' ('D' on [Fig. 1](#)) at the rear of the yard.

However, the historical evidence and the line of the shoreline prior to 1833 ([Fig. 1](#)) does not support Gill's suggested date for the wall and buildings. The quay and buildings which were depicted on Donn's 1765 map were also present in 1725 ([Fig. 2](#)) and thus were not built between 1757 and 1765. They can be identified with Teats Hill House and not the yard to the east. Although Teats Hill House and the quay are not shown on Bayntun's 1757 plan of Sutton Pool, this does not mean that they did not exist. Bayntun's plan was produced as a consequence of a contemporary court case; properties not in dispute, such as those along the south shore of Coxside Creek, would not necessarily have been included. Secondly, three mid-18<sup>th</sup> century prisons-come-hospitals are known to have existed on the north side of Coxside Creek at the Chinahouse, Sugar House (now demolished) and behind Shepherd's Wharf, but there are no known documentary references to any on the south side. Several mid-late 18<sup>th</sup>

century leases exist for the Teats Hill property, but unlike those for the properties on the north shore, do not mention a former use as a prison. Furthermore, the contemporary shoreline lay behind the monumental gateway and the wall flanking it. The latter therefore can only have been erected in their present position in or after 1833, when Lockyer's Quay was built, and cannot therefore represent the *in situ* remains of an 18<sup>th</sup> century prison. Also, although there was an earlier quay ('B' on [Fig. 1](#)) on the site, the gateway does not coincide with it. Finally, it is yet to be proved whether the arch ('D' on [Fig. 1](#)) in the retaining wall led to a tunnel containing cells; it may instead represent a later recess cut into the retaining wall.

Thus three possible origins for the gateway and wall remain:

- (i) That it was commissioned by Lockyer as a prestige feature to mark and celebrate the completion of his new ore yard and quay;
- (ii) That it is an earlier structure which originated elsewhere and was reassembled at its present site for the same purpose;
- (iii) That it was brought from a site elsewhere on the same property, and may have been part of a prison (although no documentary or map evidence has been found for a prison on the site).

## 4. SURFACE STRUCTURES

### 4.1 Monumental gateway and wall (A)

*Date c. 1833*

This consists of a *c.* 25m length of rubble limestone wall topped with coping stones and containing a central gateway and four false arches, three to the east of the gateway and one to the west; it is truncated at the east end by the modern yard entrance, beyond which it does not continue. Originally it did come further eastwards, as four arches are shown to the east of the gateway on a late 19<sup>th</sup> century photograph reproduced by Gill (1976, 36). The (blocked) gateway is flanked by two smaller arched doorways (also blocked) and is built of dressed limestone blocks; the four engaged pillars on the front face have moulded capitals. No datestone or inscription is evident. The rear is plainer and the false arches are not visible. A wall scar is visible alongside the eastern flanking doorway, and probably belongs to the building depicted on the 1852 and 1879 (1856) plans ([Fig. 4](#)).

### 4.2 Gate pillars (C)

*Date 1852-1856*

These are located at the entry into the yard at the west end of Parr Lane. They consist of a pair of square limestone ashlar pillars capped with square coping

stones in the form of a low pyramid. Probably dates to the extension of the yard eastwards between 1852 and 1856, although in quality and context they are equivalent to the monumental gateway.

### **4.3 Retaining wall and tunnel arch (D)**

*Retaining wall, ?late 18<sup>th</sup> century or c. 1833*

The retaining wall forms the rear wall of the yard in the western part of the site; it may continue behind the store to the west and beyond the limit of the yard to the east. It is built of roughly-coursed, mortared rubble limestone, is steeply battered and c. 9.5m high. No features are visible in it, apart from the (possibly inserted) brick arch of the “tunnel” and inserted joist sockets belonging to the building (now demolished) at the south-west corner of the yard.

*‘Tunnel’ arch (D) ?19<sup>th</sup> century*

This is built of brick, and appears to have been inserted into the bottom of the retaining wall near its west end. Rubble stonework (? blocking) extends across the line of any brick jambs immediately below the arch, and below this is a large block of stone set within the wall, which is placed too high to represent a threshold for a door and again extends well to each side of any possible jamb.

According to local tradition there is a tunnel behind this archway containing cells for the French POWs (see section 3.3 above), and there also believed to be ‘cells’ under the staircase of Teats Hill House. However, the archway is far too small to be an entrance, unless the lower part has been demolished and completely rebuilt, which will only be ascertained by further investigation. Moreover, it is likely that the retaining wall is built against a quarry face, and thus any tunnel would have had to have been driven through rock, although it may have made use of a natural fissure. Finally, there is no historical evidence to support oral tradition that the yard (and Teats Hill House) was a prison.

## **5. AREAS AND FEATURES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST: RECOMMENDATIONS**

These are shown on ([Fig. 1](#)).

### **5.1 Feature A: monumental gateway and wall**

This was probably built by Edmund Lockyer when he completed his quay and copper-ore yard in c. 1833. Previously it was thought to have been the remains of

an 18<sup>th</sup> century prison: it may originally have stood elsewhere, and subsequently been dismantled and re-erected on its present site.

### 5.1.1 *Significance*

- (i) With the infilling of Coxside Creek this will represent the last visible evidence of the coming of the Princetown & Dartmoor Railway in 1825 and the subsequent redevelopment of the creek by Johnson and Lockyer
- (ii) Whether or not it was built for the site or moved from elsewhere, it represents a structure of quality and some attractiveness which can only enhance the general appearance of the area.

### 5.1.2 *Recommendations*

Should the wall be demolished, dismantled prior to rebuilding elsewhere, or conserved by partial rebuilding and extensive repointing, the following archaeological recording is recommended to be undertaken *prior* to the start of the work:

- (i) A full drawn and photographic record of both faces of the gateway and the flanking doorways;
- (ii) An outline drawn and photographic record of the remainder of the wall.

This would serve as a permanent record of the wall and gateway, and would assist any subsequent re-assembly and reconstruction which may be considered necessary.

Provision should be made for:

- (iii) An archaeological watching brief on groundworks located adjoining the wall or on its line to east to west.

## 5.2 **Area B: site of quay**

This probably dates to the late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but may have originated in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. The area of the quay has only been sketch-plotted and there may originally have been buildings to its rear, as is the case with other quays of this period around Sutton Harbour.

### 5.2.1 *Significance*

This is some interest with respect to the date and development of the quays around Coxside Creek and Sutton Harbour in general.

### *5.2.2 Recommendation*

Provision should be made for the observation and recording of any archaeological remains of the quay and associated structures revealed during any groundworks within or adjoining this area.

## **5.3 Feature C: gate pillars**

These date to 1852-1856, although as with the gateway it is possible that they have been moved from elsewhere.

### *5.3.1 Significance*

Along with the gateway these pillars illustrates the relatively high contemporary status of the yard and its builder (Lockyer).

### *5.3.2 Recommendation*

An outline photographic record should be made. [This has already been undertaken as part of the assessment.]

## **Feature D: retaining wall and ‘tunnel’ arch**

### *5.3.3 Significance*

The retaining wall is possibly 18<sup>th</sup> century in date and therefore the earliest surviving feature on the site; it is probably built along the limit of quarrying. The ‘tunnel’ arch has been thought to lead to a tunnel and cells for French POW’s built in the 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but there is as yet no historical or physical evidence to support this.

### *5.3.4 Recommendation*

There should be provision for archaeological observation and recording during any work affecting the wall or archway.

## **5.4 General**

At the time of writing, specific information on the nature and extent of construction works is not available and thus the archaeological implications (if any) of these cannot be assessed.

### 5.4.1 Recommendation

Prior to the commencement of site works there should be a rapid appraisal of the proposed construction works (particularly groundworks) when the extent and nature of these are known, and provision made for any archaeological observation and recording which may be considered appropriate.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was commissioned by Plymouth City Council and undertaken with the assistance of J. Phillips and Dr. K. Ray. The assistance of F. Sherrell Ltd in supplying borehole information is gratefully acknowledged. The project was administered by Peter Weddell (EMAFU).

It was based on studies made of the Sutton Harbour Company (SHC) records, assisted by Pat Marshall (SHC); assistance was also provided by the staffs of the West Devon Record Office, and Crispin Gill. Tom Dixon compiled the figures, and the text was typed by Pam Wakeham (both of EMAFU).

## 7. SOURCES CONSULTED

### 1. Primary

*Note;* DRO -- Devon Record Office, Exeter  
WDRO--West Devon Record Office  
SHC--Sutton Harbour Company

1672 Illustration of the Citadel & Sutton Pool by Bernard de Gomme (Pye 1991, Fig.3; Gill 1976, 15)

1725 Board of Ordnance plan of Plymouth (Fig. 2)

1757 Plan of Sutton Pool by Edward Bayntun (copies held by WDRO & SHC)

1765 Map of Plymouth by Benjamin Donn (copy held by (WDRO)

1786 Map of Sutton Pool by William Simpson (Pye 1991, Gill 1976, 34)

1811 Plan of Sutton Pool by Adams(Fig. 3; copy made by R. Handsford Worth) in 1933 and held by SHC, location and original not known)

1816 Property description held by the WDRO (ref: Acc 500/1)

1831 Plan of Sutton Pool by William Rendell (Pye 1991)

1846 Plan of Sutton Pool by Joseph Locke (DRO, ref:DP211)

1852 Plan of Sutton Pool (DRO, ref: DP226)

1877 Plan of Sutton Pool (Duchy of Cornwall Office)

1879 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS 1:2500 (Surveyed 1856, Fig.4)

Various large-scale plans and maps of Sutton Pool and Coxside creek held by the SHC and dating 1811, 1878, 1894-5, 1895, 1897, c. 1900,

1905 and 1911.

Title deeds held by SHC (ref: D2) for the area, dated 1744-c.  
1930.

## 2. Secondary

Department of the Environment 1975 List of Buildings of Special Architectural & historic Interest in the District of Plymouth.

Gill, C 1976 *Sutton Harbour*.

Pye, A. R. 1991 The Baylys Wharf Redevelopment Scheme, Sutton Harbour, Plymouth. An Archaeological Assessment. EMAFU Report No 91.39.

Stead, P. M. 1992 Archaeological Evaluation at Ivy Cottage, Teats Hill Road, Plymouth. EMAFU Report No 92.28

## 8. APPENDIX

### **Borehole and probehole results from survey carried out by F. Sherrell Ltd in July 1993**

#### 1. *Boreholes* (numbered on [Fig. 1](#))

|       | <u>Depth (cm)</u> | <u>Description</u>   |
|-------|-------------------|--|
| No. 1 | 0-10              | Tarmac   |
|       | 10-60             | 'stone fill'   |
|       | 60-120            | Loose clayey gravel (mudstone & limestone)   |
|       | 120-500           | Dark grey sandy silt. Containing traces of clinker & coal, & (below 300cm) fragments of wood, shell & occasional pottery |
|       | 500+              | Limestone bedrock  |
| No. 2 | 0-30              | Concrete   |
|       | 30-130            | 'Bricks, cobbles & clay'   |
|       | 130+              | Limestone bedrock  |
| No. 3 | 0-30              | Concrete   |
|       | 30-80             | 'Fill, brick, slate & clay'  |
|       | 80-170            | Orange-grey sandy gravel & small cobbles of brick  |

|      |         |   |
|------|---------|---|
|      |         | & limestone; more silty below 150cm with traces of clinker.                       |
|      | 170+    | Limestone bedrock.  |
| No.4 | 0-10    | Tarmac  |
|      | 10-60   | 'Brick, stone, fill'  |
|      | 60-150  | Loose gravelly sand with mudstone, concrete, brick, coal, clinker fragments       |
|      | 150-200 | Clayey silt with mudstone, brick, coal, clinker & shell fragments                 |
|      | 200-240 | Silty gravel – limestone & mudstone   |
|      | 240+    | Limestone bedrock   |
| No.5 | 0-30    | Concrete  |
|      | 30-150  | 'Ash, bricks, clay & slate'   |
|      | 150+    | Limestone bedrock   |
| No.6 | 0-30    | Concrete  |
|      | 30-60   | 'Stone, brick, clay fill'   |
|      | 60-170  | Loose silty sand with limestone, mudstone, brick & glass fragments                |
|      | 170-440 | Soft clayey silt/sand (no inclusions noted)                                       |
|      | 440+    | Mudstone bedrock  |
| No.7 | 0-160   | Loose sandy gravel of mudstone, limestone, brick with fragments of clinker & coal |
|      | 160+    | Limestone bedrock   |
| No.8 | 0-260   | Medium/dense sandy gravel of limestone, brick & concrete; more sandy below 160cm  |
|      | 260-490 | Brown silty clay. No inclusions noted.  |
|      | 490-610 | Clayey gravel of weathered limestone & mudstone . No inclusions noted.            |
|      | 610+    | Limestone bedrock   |
| No.9 | 0-180   | 'Clay, wood, slate & cobbles'   |
|      | 180+    | Limestone bedrock   |

## 2. *Probholes* (numbered on [Fig.1](#))

|    | <u>Depth (cm) of increased resistance (bedrock)</u> |
|----|---|
| P1 | 300   |
| P2 | 210   |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| P3  | 330  |
| P4  | 360  |
| P5  | <i>c.</i> 210-240  |
| P6  | 150  |
| P7  | <i>c.</i> 120  |
| P8  | 330  |
| P9  | <i>c.</i> 400 [not clear; only piecemeal resistance to <i>c.</i> 730cm, possibly indicating drilling has coincided with a fault/weakness in the bedrock] |
| P10 | 300  |
| P11 | 600  |
| P12 | <i>c.</i> 210-240  |

End of assessment.