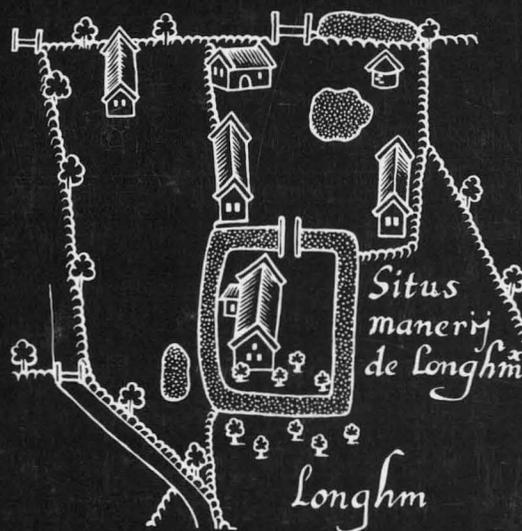


EAST ANGLIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO. 10

NORFOLK

Village Sites in
Launditch Hundred



NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Norfolk Museums Service

1980

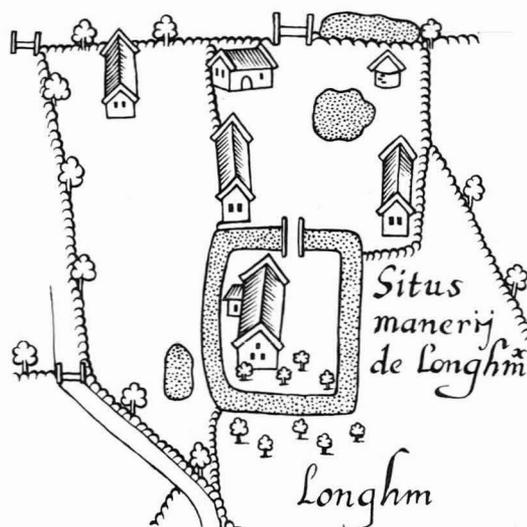
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Fieldwork and Excavation on Village Sites

in Launditch Hundred, Norfolk

by

Peter Wade-Martins

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PREFACE

The first part of this volume is a report on the results of field walking carried out by the writer on a group of villages in Norfolk between 1967 and 1970 as part of a PhD project on the origins of settlement patterns in Launditch Hundred (Wade-Martins 1971). Copies of the thesis, which contains additional illustrations and descriptions of some of the less informative villages, are deposited with Leicester University Library, the Local Studies Department of Norfolk County Library, and the Norfolk Archaeological Unit at Gressenhall. A summary of the main conclusions was published in Wade-Martins 1975.

The report should be read with the help of the 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map of North West Norfolk, Sheet No. 132, and Faden's map of Norfolk (1797) republished by the Norfolk Record Society in 1975.

Many fascinating hours have been spent in field walking and a large number of farmers gave permission for a total stranger to walk over their land. I was never refused access anywhere. All the finds were given to the Norwich Castle Museum. The information collected in the fieldwork has been transferred to the Norfolk Archaeological Index, copies of which are held in the Castle Museum and at Gressenhall.

Finally, one should never forget the untold number of peasants, craftsmen, small farmers and manorial lords whose unfailing presence over two thousand years has made this study possible. Nearly all of them have gone unrecorded, and it is sad that the most the archaeologist can do is plot their habitation sites on distribution maps.

Peter Wade-Martins

SUMMARY

The purpose of this survey was to take a relatively small area of the Norfolk countryside and to discover, as far as possible, how settlement patterns have evolved from Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval through to recent times. The area chosen was the Launditch Hundred in west central Norfolk containing forty-one medieval villages. Research involved a combination of detailed fieldwork around those villages where conditions were suitable, the excavation of a deserted village at Grenstein, the excavation of a Middle and Late Saxon settlement near the ruins of the pre-Conquest cathedral at North Elmham (Wade-Martins 1980) and a study of maps, both printed and manuscript, as well as other documentary sources. A study of three deserted village sites in the Launditch Hundred, Godwick, Pudding Norton and Bittering is to be published in a separate paper on DMV earthworks in the county in a forthcoming volume of East Anglian Archaeology.

An appraisal of the four Dark Age linear earthworks in west Norfolk including the Launditch involved a re-interpretation of their plan and function (Wade-Martins 1974). The overall pattern of these monuments was considered in relation to the expansion of Anglo-Saxon settlement in Norfolk.

Of the forty-one villages examined, fourteen are discussed here in some detail. Most of the fourteen can be traced back into the Late or Middle Saxon periods. The evidence for early Anglo-Saxon and sub-Roman occupation on these sites is enigmatic, and excavation on some Middle Saxon sites which may have been occupied earlier is now much needed. It appears that village greens were seldom occupied in this area before the twelfth century and that isolated churches, usually well separated from greens, often indicate the site of pre-Conquest village centres.

For comparison, one deserted village in Breckland (Caldecote) was examined and here a similar sequence was found. The same results were also obtained at West Dereham on the fen edge, although details of this are not included.

In general it can be said that the East Anglian village patterns of today are largely the product of the rise of the rural population up to the thirteenth century and the subsequent decline. Settlement in pre-Conquest times was frequently on different sites and often of a different character.

1. INTRODUCTION

I. SETTLEMENT STUDIES

Much has been written on the economic and social history of the English countryside, yet about the origins of the villages themselves we still know very little. How far the village patterns, the roads, the open fields and the parish boundaries in different parts of the country are the same as those in use in the Anglo-Saxon period is one of the most crucial and interesting questions in English local history and archaeology today. This type of problem has only rarely been adequately tackled. The work of Barry Cunliffe on the Hampshire village of Chalton (Cunliffe 1972) is a good example of what can be achieved by intensive archaeological fieldwork. Archaeology could be used much more in different areas to contribute to our understanding of the origins and development of the English countryside.

This survey was essentially an archaeological study, although it was in part geographical, and it relied heavily on manuscript maps which are the best type of document for providing a comprehensive picture of rural settlement and field patterns.

The sort of questions that any archaeologist or settlement geographer should be asking when considering the rural settlement of Lowland England are: (a) do the existing plans of villages have any bearing on their pre-Conquest forms? (b) do the apparent early Anglo-Saxon place-names of many villages really show that they have been in existence since before the seventh century? (c) in what order in a particular region were the pre-Conquest villages founded, and which villages have their origins in the Early, Middle and Late Saxon periods? (d) can any be traced back to the Roman period?

Furthermore, some villages were not recorded until after the Domesday survey. Yet, were these sites really new in the twelfth century, or could they not have existed in embryonic form in the Late Saxon period?

No reliable answer to these questions can be found without a tremendous amount of time-consuming fieldwork and detailed recording. As no similar study of a group of villages has yet been carried out elsewhere in England it is not easy to make comparisons, but the work of David Hall and others in Northamptonshire has produced some important results (Hall and Hutchings 1972).

The intention here has been to trace the existing village plans, the field patterns, the road systems and the parish boundaries of the Launditch Hundred back as far as possible in order to understand better the modern appearance of the landscape. East Anglia is a region which has seldom been subjected to any really detailed study of the settlement patterns, although there are useful general discussions on the landscape by Dymond (1968) Scarfe (1972) and Yaxley (1977). The origin of almost every single village in the region is unknown. We do not know whether existing villages relate to Roman settlements; the general opinion is that they do not, but this is usually speculation based on chance archaeological finds.

Four distinctive features of the East Anglian landscape are: (a) the large numbers of isolated churches; (b) the hundreds of scattered hamlets; (c) village greens, many of which were enclosed in the nineteenth century; and (d) the highest density of moated sites in England (Roberts 1964). Why are so many churches isolated? Does a church far

removed from its village demonstrate the movement of a population from a site near the church to a totally different one near the existing village? What proportion of villages were truly 'green' villages in the Middle Ages, and at what time did the 'green' settlement become such a distinctive village form, and for what reasons? Can one explain the high density of moated sites in East Anglia and determine at what date they were created?

There are at least two hundred sites of deserted villages in Norfolk (Allison 1955), and although no comparable figures are available for Suffolk, there is no reason to expect that the number there is any smaller. We do not know why there are more deserted villages in some parts of the region than in others. It would be interesting to know if villages in marginal situations were founded later than the others and also if they were deserted early during the population decline in the fourteenth century.

An attempt must be made to answer these, as well as many more detailed questions, before the East Anglian landscape can be understood by the historian. It is not just an academic exercise either, for this branch of archaeology is suffering from destruction of sites no less than many others. In Launditch Hundred some sites have been built upon since they were recorded. The infilling of the gaps within the villages, as well as the expansion of selected sites, continues.

II. METHODS

THE SAMPLE AREA

The piece of countryside chosen for study had to be large enough to make the conclusions reliable, yet small enough to allow a detailed investigation. An arbitrary ten- or twenty-kilometre square had obvious disadvantages of description and subdivision, while a sufficiently small geographical area with precise borders was difficult to find. A medieval Hundred, however, was the right size to allow a parish-by-parish analysis which is an important part of this type of landscape work, and the Launditch Hundred was the one selected. The writer had already excavated at Grenstein deserted village which lies within it, and was about to embark upon large-scale excavations adjacent to the Anglo-Saxon cathedral ruins at North Elmham. A combination of excavation and fieldwork methods could therefore be employed.

Launditch proved to be a useful area of study: the soils are not especially heavy or infertile, neither is the existing settlement pattern in any way exceptional for East Anglia.

METHODS OF FIELDWORK

In the majority of parishes within the Hundred there had been either no previous finds or none of importance for settlement archaeology. Distribution maps showed a very challenging gap in west central Norfolk, even for the Roman period (Clarke 1960).

Over a period of two years about a week of fieldwork was spent in each of the twenty-nine parishes. This was restricted to those parts which seemed likely to produce settlement evidence: around isolated churches, moated sites, greens and commons and in gaps along street frontages. The outlying parts of the parishes were usually only examined if archaeological evidence for settlement had been recorded. This rather selective approach may explain why comparatively few Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon sites were located. The earliest finds date mostly from the Middle Saxon period when the present village system seems to have originated. The method to some extent leaves unanswered the question of the origin of scattered settlements. Middle Saxon settlement was apparently nucleated, but this impression may be due in part to the way areas were chosen for fieldwalking.

Methods

Sometimes this work revealed a wealth of interesting archaeological material, while in other parishes the results were uninformative. Where efforts met with little success, this was due to local conditions of land use (either modern settlement or pasture land), and these parishes were excluded from the report. Where it has been necessary to make assumptions because of archaeologically blank areas, this is made clear on the distribution maps. The extent of the fieldwalking has not been shown on the maps partly because this would make them confusing and partly because fieldwalking conditions often considerably affect results, and these conditions are very difficult to quantify in map form.

The interpretation of settlement patterns using only the surface scatters of pottery is certainly hazardous; the number of sherds collected from a given area will depend so much on the time spent on the search and on prevailing field conditions. A direct comparison, therefore, between the numbers of sherds from different sites would be of little value, and usually this information has not been given in the text unless it appears significant. The amount of material required to postulate an area of settlement will also vary according to the period: five sherds of Middle Saxon pottery will be viewed differently from five of medieval date. Ironically, post-medieval pottery is sometimes not plentiful in some areas shown to contain settlement on sixteenth-century maps. An example of this is Longham. But one must try to interpret the evidence, knowing that the results are likely to be modified if a site is subsequently excavated or an early map is discovered.

East Anglia offers an almost unrivalled opportunity for archaeologists interested in settlement history, for it is the most extensively-ploughed region in the country: permanent pasture is now rare. Although this poses difficult problems in preserving settlement sites, particularly deserted villages, it provides an almost unlimited opportunity to search fields and to work out in detail the history of settlement from the Roman period right through to the present day.

Inevitably, though, the further one goes back in time the less the settlements are related to the existing framework, and therefore the more difficult they are to find without total field walking over every parish. The settlement patterns of the region have certainly never remained static, and even over a hundred years one can usually detect significant changes. With this constant shift in emphasis of village plans, therefore, it is often only the most recent habitation sites that are unavailable for study. By collecting pottery, by examining earthworks and by using documents and printed sources, a picture of evolution of many villages can be taken back to long before the Norman Conquest.

The other advantage which East Anglia offers is the relatively plentiful and uninterrupted sequence of pottery manufacture from the Roman period onwards. Our knowledge of seventh- to eleventh-century pottery is now sufficiently adequate to provide not only general distribution maps for the period but also detailed information about the form and size of many settlement sites. The location, the size and the shape of many pre-Conquest villages were recorded during this research in an area where none had previously been identified.

SOURCES

The study of seventh- to eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon pottery in East Anglia was put on a firm footing by Mr. John Hurst in a series of papers published between 1956 and 1958 and by West in 1963. Hurst defined Ipswich ware for the 'Middle Saxon' period, between AD 650 and 850: it was the first mass-produced pottery to be used since the collapse of the Roman industry in the early fifth century (Dunmore et.al. 1975, 59-60; West 1963). A settlement site which produces any quantity of this pottery should be of the Middle Saxon period. Ipswich ware has two main fabrics. There is a soft, fine, grey, sandy ware and a harder, better-fired, grey ware tempered with larger grits which leaves a 'pimply' feel to the surface. It is the pimply fabric which usually has the girth grooves so characteristic of this pottery. It was made on a 'slow wheel' and the shapes

are often baggy and the sides thicker than in later fabrics. How much of this pottery was actually made at Ipswich and how much at sites as yet unknown in the region is a subject needing much further study. Ipswich is the one site where kilns have been found (Smedley and Owles 1963).

Following on from this pre-Danish period we have the arrival of the three Late Saxon pottery types: Thetford, St. Neots and Stamford wares, all dated by Hurst to the period 850-1100. It is Thetford-type ware which is almost exclusively found in central Norfolk. It is a hard, well-fired, sandy, grey fabric with a rim usually characterised by an internal hollow for a lid seating (although pottery lids themselves are very rare). The main centres of manufacture were at Thetford (Davison 1967) and Norwich where kilns have been found. Isolated kiln sites have been found at the deserted village sites at Langhale, Kirstead (Wade 1976) and at Great Bircham (Rogerson 1978). A local softer fabric has been detected in the North Elmham excavations, and there is an eleventh-century version made at Grimston. The latter type continued parallel with Early Medieval forms, and Grimston itself remained a centre of pottery manufacture for the West Norfolk region until at least the fifteenth century. The Grimston Thetford-ware kilns are unpublished but a summary of the products was published by Clarke in 1970.

By the twelfth century, Early Medieval pottery had replaced Thetford ware (Dunning 1959). It was in use by the second half of the eleventh century, alongside Thetford ware, and then went on through the following century. This pottery is much thinner, with either a dark grey or reddish-brown, sandy fabric. The forms are far more varied than those of Thetford ware. There are large, baggy cooking pots with a wide diameter rim, very wide shallow bowls with near straight sides and simple vertical rims, and also pitchers descended from similar forms in Thetford ware.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries this pottery was replaced by both coarse-ware cooking pots and green-glazed jugs, usually called Grimston ware; these have grey fabrics.

In fieldwork, pottery must remain the only type of evidence for the Anglo-Saxon period. But careful collection and detailed recording can reveal much about a settlement when the distribution of pottery is plotted on a large-scale map. All the villages were studied using a set of 25 inch Ordnance Survey maps and the pottery finds were marked on these maps. This was the scale used throughout and nearly all maps of villages and fields were drawn from these maps and then reduced.

No survey of this nature would be complete without the use of documents. Unfortunately, however, many are relatively uninformative about the detailed layout of a village at any one time. The exception to this is the medieval parish survey and there is one for North Elmham dated 1454-5 (Yaxley 1980). But on the whole the villages do not have the wealth of detailed topographical documentation which is available for larger towns such as Norwich.

Of the greatest importance, however, are the manuscript maps. The choice of the Launditch Hundred was extremely fortunate, for large areas of seven parishes were owned by the Holkham estate after their purchase by Chief Justice Coke in the late sixteenth century. At this time they were surveyed in great detail. The earliest map is the survey of West Lexham dated 1575. All these original documents are preserved at the estate office at Holkham Hall and they have hardly been used as a source for historical research (Gray 1915, 314-331). The maps are detailed enough to allow accurate reconstructions of village layouts at the end of the Middle Ages. In addition there are other maps drawn on a larger scale, though often in less detail, in the early eighteenth century, and further ones made for a small atlas of 1779 in Holkham Hall. Following all these, there are the Enclosure Award maps, mostly dated between 1810 and 1820, which are

Methods

kept at the offices of the Norfolk County Council. If a parish has no pre-nineteenth-century map and the Enclosure map is missing, then there is always the Tithe map of the 1840s. For several Launditch parishes there are maps made both before and after the enclosures. As much of the medieval farming and settlement pattern was clearly dependent upon the commons, these maps have proved invaluable. Another most helpful map is Faden's map of Norfolk published in 1797 (republished in 1975); this shows most of the commons as they existed before the enclosures.

G.A. Carthew's History of Launditch (1877-1879) has at times been used, although it is largely a study of manorial genealogy.

Standard printed sources were consulted for the following: Domesday Book, the Nomina Villarum of 1316, the Lay Subsidy of 1334 and the census returns for 1801.

2. THE SETTING

1. THE EAST ANGLIAN LANDSCAPE

East Anglia, comprising Norfolk and Suffolk and the eastern part of Cambridgeshire, is one of the best defined natural regions of England. It has often been said how the region is bordered on two sides by the sea and on the other two by the Fens and the once densely forested areas of Essex. Only to the south-west was there any natural connection with the rest of England, here a narrow strip of chalk downland, 'the East Anglian gateway', joins the region to the Chilterns. The tremendous effort involved in constructing the successive Dark Age earthworks, especially the Devil's Dyke, across this narrow neck of land emphasises the insularity of the region until the Middle Ages better than anything else.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE REGION

East Anglia is a relatively flat plateau of land dipping gently eastwards to the North Sea from the chalk escarpment which runs along the east side of the Fens. Down the eastern side of the region the chalk is covered by Pleistocene Crags and along the east coast the chalk is up to 150 m below the surface.

The glaciers, after each of the four advances of the ice sheets, left behind a blanket of glacial till over the chalk and the Crags. This, and the more recent alluvial deposits of the Fenland, the Broads and the north coast have hidden almost all ancient surfaces. The retreating glaciers left the extensive areas of chalky boulder clay in Mid- and High Suffolk, and the Cromer-Holt morainic ridge in North Norfolk. Three quarters of Suffolk and over a half of Norfolk is covered by boulder clay.

The High or Mid-Norfolk landscape is typified by scattered shrunken villages with a predominance of nineteenth-century cottages, built, or refaced, in red brick. In this part of Norfolk there was a large-scale rebuilding in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Further south the low wide valley of the Waveney between the two upland areas is a region of slightly heavier soils. Here the older timber-framed and clay lump cottages have survived to a much greater degree. The heavier soils of South Norfolk and Suffolk apparently did not encourage the prosperity which gave rise to the Norfolk rebuilding in brick.

The rivers of East Anglia have been influenced by both the underlying geology and the effects of glaciation. The main watershed line runs through Mid-Norfolk (Fig.1), around the eastern side of Breckland and then down High Suffolk to the chalk downland of Cambridgeshire. The western group of rivers, the Nar, Wissey, Little Ouse and Lark, run westwards through the scarp to the Ouse in the Fens. Previously the rivers probably emptied into the Wash further west near Wisbech; this was before the cutting of the Ouse through the Fens to the Lynn estuary in Roman times (Salway 1970, 10-11). The eastern group consists of the Wensum, Yare, Deben, Gipping and Stour.

In the chalky boulder clay plateau land of Mid-Norfolk the rivers have cut shallow valleys with gently sloping sides. Dotted over the surface of the clay plateau, which drops slightly towards the east, are patches of plateau gravel some of which may be glacial kames. It is this type of upland clay scenery, interrupted by areas of plateau gravel and gentle shallow valleys, with which this report is concerned. ¹

The Geography of the Launditch Area

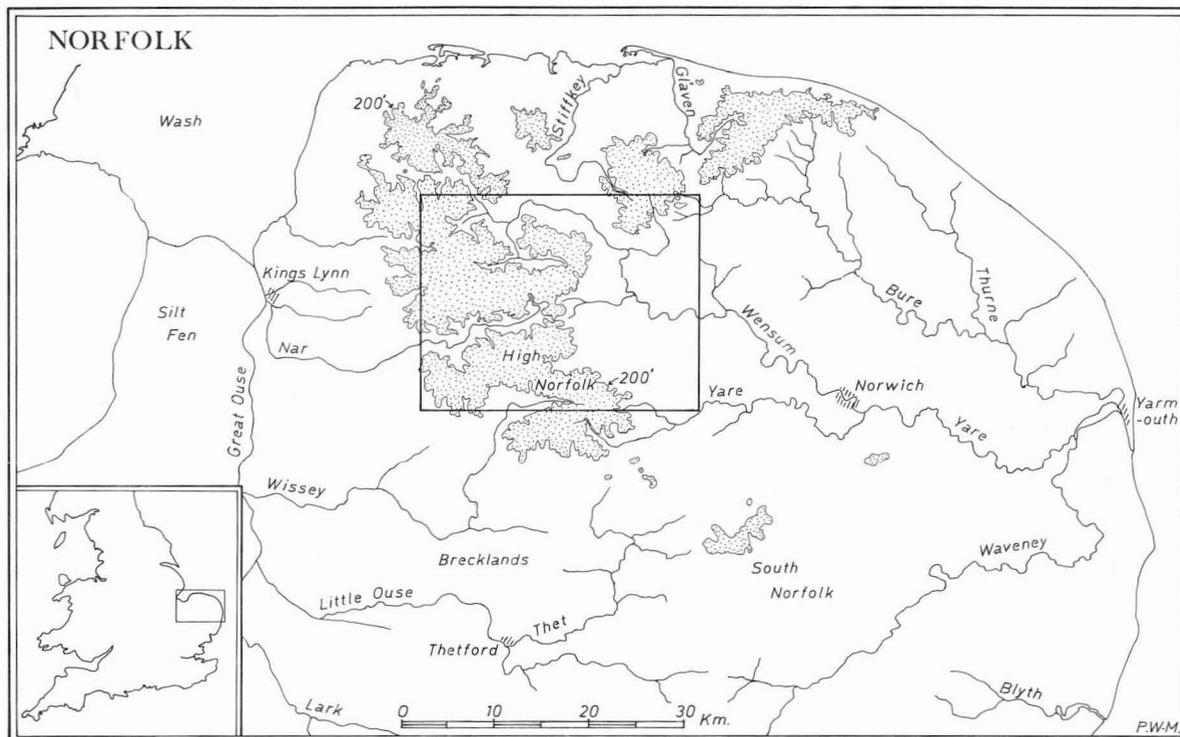


Fig. 1. The location of the Launditch Hundred; the square represents the area shown in Fig. 2.

II. THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE LAUNDITCH AREA

The watershed between the eastern and western river systems passes down the centre of the Launditch area (Fig. 2). The largest river is the Wensum; it rises to the north-west of the Hundred, flows past the north side, and then turns south forming the eastern boundary with Eynsford Hundred.

There are three main tributaries of the Wensum: an unnamed one in the north, the Black Water, and the Scarning River. The River Nar rises in Launditch and this flows westwards towards the Wash.

The rivers and the gently rising dip slope of the escarpment have both influenced the relief of the area. On the west side the land stands over 75 m O.D., but on the eastern side the plateau surface is 45 m lower. The Wensum and the Nar have both cut deeply into this surface, although the valley sides are usually gentle.

Any study of village patterns must include a comparison between village locations and the physical factors of drainage, relief and geology, and these points will be discussed as necessary.

THE LAUNDITCH

The Roman roads of the area and the Launditch itself have already been described by the writer (Wade-Martins 1974 and 1977). The Launditch was a dyke constructed in the late Roman or post-Roman periods to control traffic approaching central Norfolk from the west. Its name was used as the name for the Anglo-Saxon Hundred, and Blomefield claimed (1808, IX, 456) that the Hundred meeting place was located beside it, although he did not indicate his source.

III. THE VILLAGES OF LAUNDITCH HUNDRED

The Launditch Hundred was one of thirty-three Hundreds in the Domesday survey of Norfolk. It was slightly above the average in size, being larger than the densely packed Hundreds in east central Norfolk, but smaller than the enormous Freebridge and Clackclose Hundreds in West Norfolk. In the Domesday survey there were twenty-nine vills in the Hundred (Fig.2), while for all of Norfolk, Darby counted 726 (Darby: 1952, 101-2; 1935, 440). The Launditch vills are listed below in the order of their recorded size in 1086. Although the real population figures are difficult to assess, these, nevertheless, provide some comparative information (Fig.3).

Launditch Hundred: Domesday vills with their recorded populations(taken from Victoria County History I, 1906, 39-203)

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----------------|----|
| 1. North Elmham | 132 | 16. Whissonsett | 18 |
| 2. Mileham | 111 | 17. Scarning | 17 |
| 3. Swanton Morley | 97 | 18. (Godwick) | 14 |
| 4. Fransham | 52 | 19. (Sutton) | 12 |
| 5. Gressenhall | 50 | 20. (Kipton) | 11 |
| 6. Litcham | 40 | 21. Wendling | 10 |
| 7. Lexham | 37 | 22. (Kempstone) | 9 |
| 8. Tittleshall | 32 | 23. Beetley | 8 |
| 9. Dunham | 31 | 24. Stanfield | 8 |
| 10. Gateley | 31 | 25. Oxwick | 7 |
| 11. Weasenham | 28 | 26. (Bittering) | 4 |
| 12. Rougham | 26 | 27. (Longham) | 3 |
| 13. Horningtoft | 21 | 28. (Kirtling) | 2 |
| 14. Wellingham | 21 | 29. (Pattesley) | 1 |
| 15. Hoe | 20 | | |

Those vills now deserted are listed in brackets.

One can also calculate from the survey a set of relative valuations as follows.

Domesday valuations

| | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d |
|-------------------|-------------|----|----------------|-----------------|-------------|----|----------------|
| 1. Mileham | 60 | 10 | 0 | 13. Stanfield | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| 2. North Elmham | 32 | 0 | 0 | 14. Gressenhall | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Swanton Morley | 12 | 0 | 0 | 15. Whissonsett | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Fransham | <u>c.</u> 7 | 10 | 0 ² | 16. Scarning | <u>c.</u> 2 | 10 | 0 ⁵ |
| 5. (Kipton) | 7 | 0 | 0 | 17. Wendling | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| 6. Litcham | <u>c.</u> 6 | 0 | 0 ³ | 18. (Kempstone) | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Lexham | 5 | 5 | 4 | 19. Oxwick | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Gateley | 5 | 0 | 6 | 20. (Pattesley) | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Tittleshall | 5 | 0 | 0 | 21. Wellingham | 0 | 13 | 4 |
| 10. Weasenham | <u>c.</u> 4 | 0 | 0 ⁴ | 22. (Longham) | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| 11. (Sutton) | 4 | 0 | 0 | 23. Hoe | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| 12. Rougham | 4 | 0 | 0 | | | | |

The following were not valued separately: Dunham, Beetley, (Bittering), (Godwick), (Kirtling)

and one was not valued: Horningtoft.

The Villages of Launditch Hundred

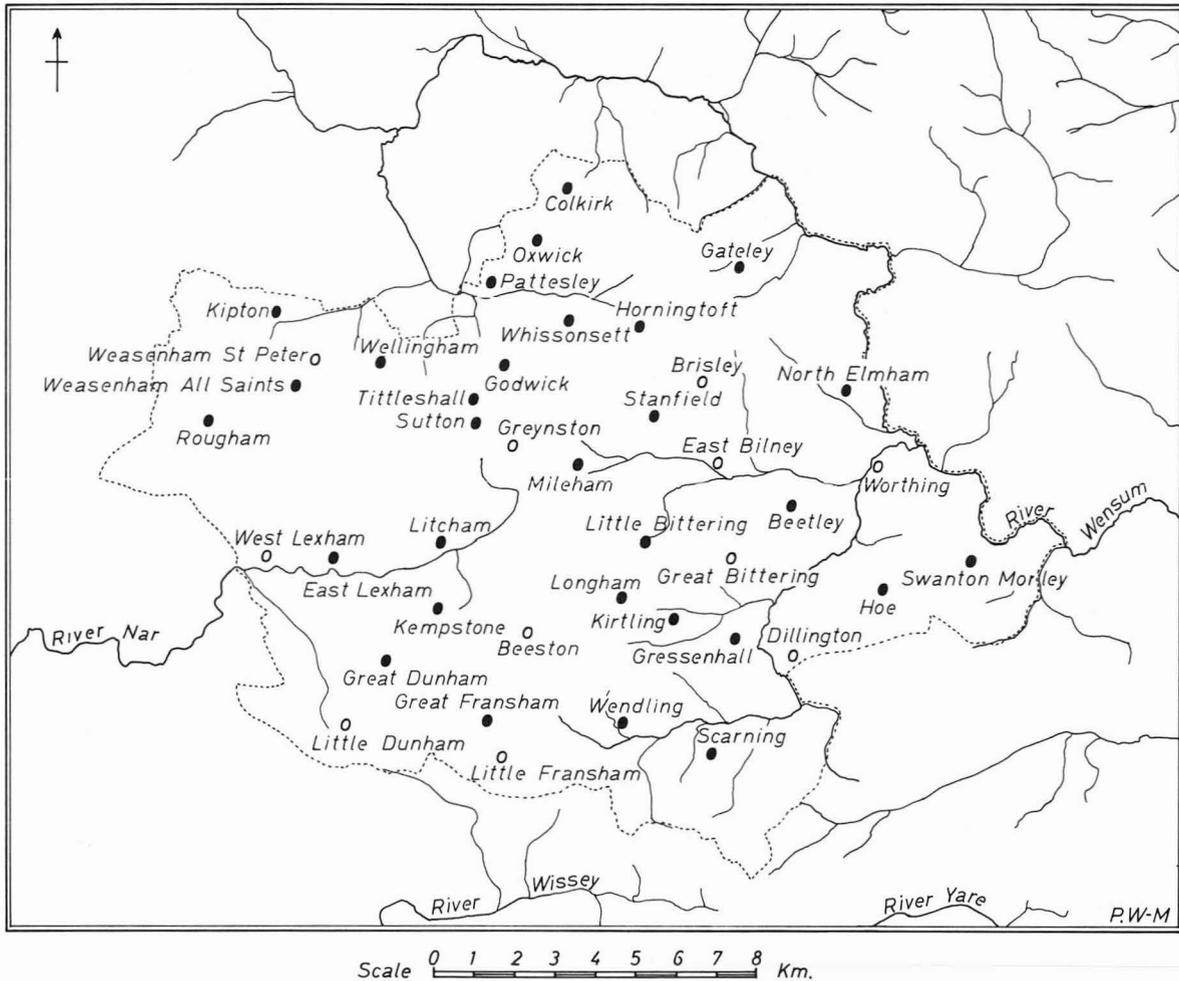


Fig.2. Villages in the Launditch Hundred: black circles villis recorded at the time of the Domesday survey; open circles not recorded.

There are many pitfalls in listing the villis according to their valuations, and no detailed analysis is possible. In the case of Mileham, the main figure also includes out-lying estates at Litcham and Great Dunham. The positions of Mileham and Gressenhall are noticeably different in the two lists, but there is no reason why the value of a vill should necessarily have corresponded with its size. Mileham was a royal manor at this time, and this may have been partly responsible for its high value. It is interesting that Kipton had a very high value for a small village. The three villis at the top of both lists, plus Litcham which was slightly lower, are still the villis which are prominent today. At the other end of the scale, within the dozen villis which had the smallest population in 1086 were all the ones which later decayed and were, perhaps, most affected by the reduction in the rural population in the fourteenth century. This was after a time when all the villis, however marginal their locations, had shown a steady rise. Of the lowest five villis on the Domesday population list, only Longham has survived, and even this is now a small village on a site different from the medieval one. While many factors affected village prosperity, the only one which could have influenced the fortunes of all these settlements for over a thousand years was the individual location of each village. Those which declined the most were, as this report shows, on the marginal land of the boulder clay plateau; they were slow to expand and the first to be depopulated. Those which flourished best were in sheltered valley situations.

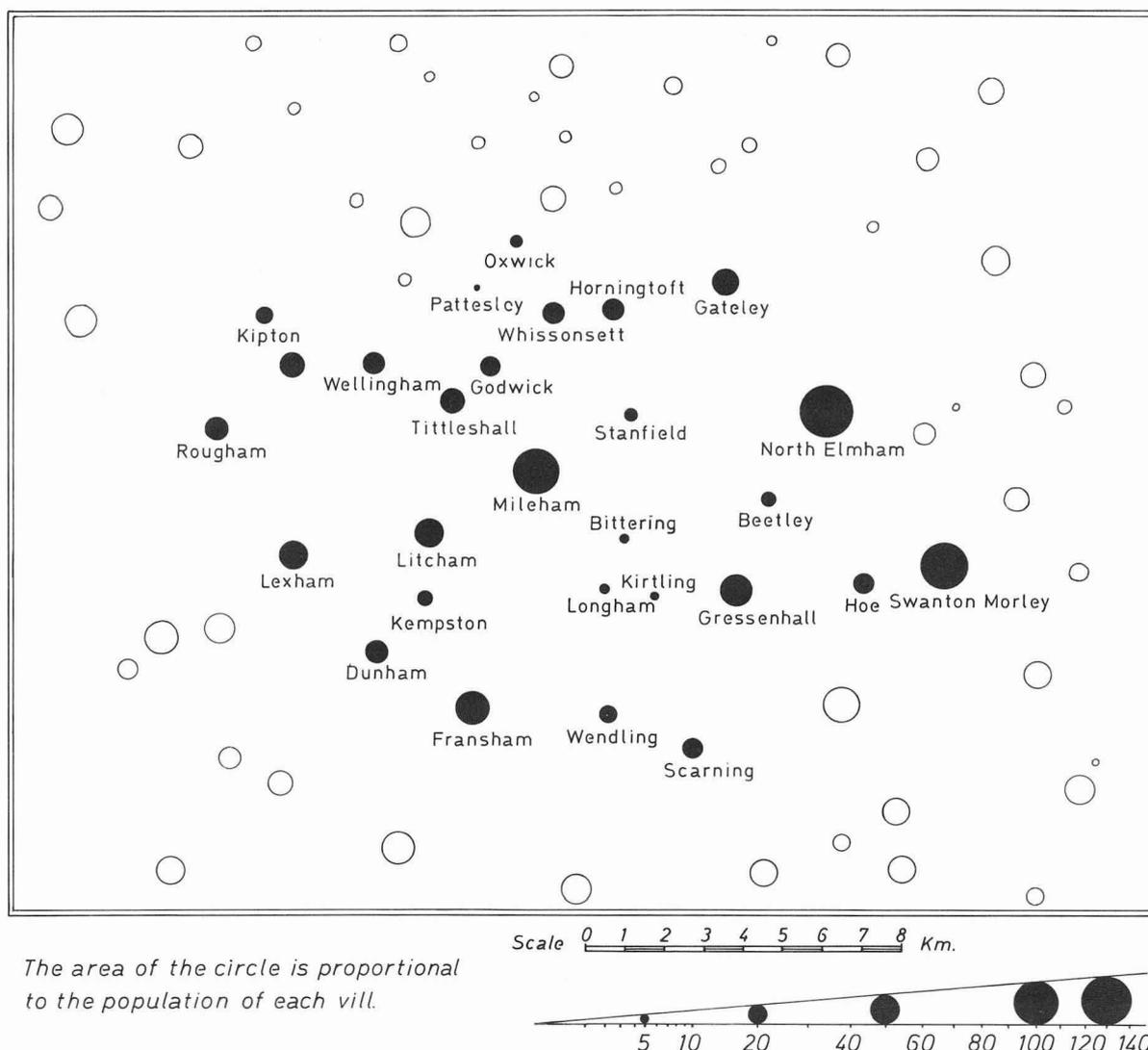


Fig.3. Population of the Launditch Hundred as recorded in the Domesday survey.

North Elmham was the largest village in central Norfolk in 1086, and in this case its size was not entirely due to its location; the bishopric of East Anglia was probably at Elmham from the seventh century until 1071, when it was moved to Thetford and later to Norwich. Mileham and Swanton Morley were, however, the products of a more natural and spontaneous growth. At Mileham a fine Fitzalan motte and bailey castle was built at the west end of the large Anglo-Saxon village. Mileham also became the site of the Hundred Court after it was moved from its original location on the Launditch.

The other Domesday statistics of particular interest are plough teams, which show the relative agricultural prosperity of each village at that time, and the woodland, which indicates the extent of early clearance. Darby's distribution map of woodland in 1086 points to a high concentration on the heavy soils of Mid-Norfolk (Darby 1952, 126-7). North Elmham had woodland enough to feed a thousand swine at the time of Edward the Confessor, but this had been reduced by nearly half in 1086. Mileham also had woodland for a thousand swine in 1086. Here were some of the last great areas of early woodland in the county which were not felled before the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. (The word 'early' is used here instead of 'primary' deliberately, because there is no way to tell how much of this woodland was the result of re-afforestation after the Roman period.)

The distribution of churches is not discussed here because the Domesday references to these are clearly incomplete.

The Villages of Launditch Hundred

The next available village list for Launditch is the Nomina Villarum of 1316 (Blake 1952, 268-9). This was compiled for the purpose of providing a check on every township in the county which could produce a foot soldier for the army.

The list had now grown to thirty-two if the mention of Little Bittering implies the existence of Great Bittering. Fransham, Dunham and Lexham are also in their double forms. Weasenham, however, is not, although the archaeological evidence is clear that by the Conquest Weasenham All Saints and Weasenham St. Peter had become separate settlements. The new villages which had appeared were Brisley and Beeston; these had come into existence in the twelfth century. It is possible that they had existed in embryonic form at the Domesday survey, but were not recorded. One other village, Greynston, had not only grown into a large village in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but had also been largely depopulated by 1316. Other villages which had decayed were Sutton (amalgamated with Tittleshall), Kipton and Kirtling (Kirtling Common in Longham).

The next list is that compiled for the Lay Subsidy of 1334 (Hudson 1895, 276-7). This provided a standardised taxation yield upon individual wealth in each village.

1334 Lay Subsidy

| | £ | s | d | | £ | s | d |
|--|----|----|----|---------------------|---|----|---|
| 1. Swanton Morley | 12 | 0 | 0 | 16. Stanfield | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| 2. Scarning | 10 | 14 | 0 | 17. Little Fransham | 3 | 8 | 0 |
| 3. Beeston with Little Bittering | 9 | 0 | 0 | 18. Litcham | 3 | 7 | 0 |
| 4. Rougham | 8 | 5 | 0 | 19. Whissonsett | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| 5. Weasenham | 3 | 0 | 0 | 20. Longham | 2 | 15 | 0 |
| 6. Great Dunham | 7 | 18 | 0 | 21. Horningtoft | 2 | 14 | 0 |
| 7. North Elmham | 7 | 10 | 0 | 22. East Bilney | 2 | 14 | 0 |
| 8. Hoe | 6 | 10 | 0 | 23. Gateley | 2 | 13 | 4 |
| 9. Brisley | 6 | 4 | 0 | 24. Kempstone | 2 | 12 | 0 |
| 10. Gressenhall and Great Bittering | 6 | 0 | 0 | 25. Oxwick | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| 11. Great Fransham | 5 | 10 | 0 | 26. Colkirk | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| 12. Tittleshall | 5 | 4 | 0 | 27. East Lexham | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 13. Little Dunham | 3 | 16 | 11 | 28. Wendling | 1 | 19 | 0 |
| 14. Mileham | 3 | 16 | 0 | 29. West Lexham | 1 | 14 | 0 |
| 15. Beetley | 3 | 12 | 0 | 30. Patesley | 1 | 12 | 0 |
| | | | | 31. Godwick | 1 | 4 | 0 |

The Domesday and Lay Subsidy lists show the relative wealth of each vill before and after the population peak in the thirteenth century, although of course wealth is not directly related to the size of the population. The 1334 list represents the situation after many villages had declined. Others, such as Rougham, were slower to do so. One new entry was East Bilney; although it was not on the 1316 list one can assume that it had grown up in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Although the overall patterns in the two lists of 1086 and 1334 are remarkably similar, some of the villages had shown a reversal of fortune. Beeston has risen to third place, even though it was not recorded two hundred and fifty years earlier. The same was true of Brisley. Mileham, however, had lost the position it held in the early Middle Ages. Colkirk was included in the Hundred now, while before it had been listed under Gallow Hundred. One village which was still absent was Worthing, but it was certainly in existence by the twelfth century for there is a fine small Norman church and Worthing was a chapelry dependant on Swanton Morley.

For the early seventeenth century there is an incomplete list of population figure for the parishes calculated by John Patten using the 1603 communicant returns (Patten 1975).

The Setting

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|----------------------|-----|
| 1. North Elmham | c. 650 | 13. Beetley | 133 |
| 2. Beeston | 430 | 14. Little Dunham | 130 |
| 3. Swanton Morley | 365 | Horningtoft | 130 |
| 4. Scarning | 355 | Stanfield | 130 |
| 5. Gressenhall | 350 | Longham | 130 |
| 6. Tittleshall | 300 | 15. Rougham | 100 |
| Whissonsett | 300 | West Lexham | 100 |
| 7. Litcham | 230 | Gateley | 100 |
| 8. Brisley | 200 | 16. East Lexham | 95 |
| Little Fransham | 200 | 17. Worthing | 80 |
| 9. Great Fransham | 166 | Wellingham | 80 |
| 10. Great Dunham | 160 | 18. Oxwick | 74 |
| 11. Weasenham All Saints | | 19. Kempstone | 40 |
| <u>and</u> | 300 | 20. Little Bittering | 10 |
| Weasenham St. Peter | | Pattesley | 10 |
| 12. Mileham | 135 | | |
| Wendling | 135 | | |

Not recorded: Pudding Norton, Godwick, Billingford, Hoe, East Bilney, Great Bittering, Greynston.

For modern times the census returns of 1801 give us the first near-accurate account of the size of each village. They are again listed in descending order of size (abstracted from Answers and Returns of the Population Act, 41 (1800, 236-7).

Census returns of 1801

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------------|-----|
| 1. Gressenhall | 1,224 | 18. Little Dunham | 210 |
| 2. North Elmham | 836 | 19. Great Fransham | 207 |
| 3. Swanton Morley | 560 | 20. Weasenham All Saints | 207 |
| 4. Beeston with | 511 | 21. Horningtoft | 197 |
| Bittering | | 22. Weasenham St. Peter | 196 |
| 5. Scarning | 439 | 23. Rougham | 178 |
| 6. Tittleshall | 439 | 24. Bilney | 165 |
| 7. Litcham | 426 | 25. Wellingham | 150 |
| 8. Whissonsett | 387 | 26. Stanfield | 149 |
| 9. Great Dunham | 361 | 27. West Lexham | 138 |
| 10. Mileham | 323 | 28. East Lexham | 119 |
| 11. Colkirk | 304 | 29. Gateley | 77 |
| 12. Brisley | 264 | 30. Oxwick | 61 |
| 13. Longham | 247 | 31. Worthing | 88 |
| 14. Beetley | 242 | 32. Kempstone | 50 |
| 15. Hoe | 234 | 33. Dillington | 41 |
| 16. Wendling | 229 | 34. Pattesley | 11 |
| 17. Fransham | 214 | | |

The Gressenhall figure was grossly exaggerated by the number associated with the workhouse, which was built on Gressenhall Common in 1776 for the Mitford and Launditch Union.

North Elmham and Swanton Morley clearly dominated the eastern side of the Hundred, and Litcham and Tittleshall the other. It is interesting that Mileham, despite its early achievement, never regained its position. Dillington is an enigma; it is a lost village somewhere between Gressenhall and Dereham, yet it is not in the Domesday survey and it was excluded from later lists until the nineteenth century, when it was a separate parish at the enclosures.

The Villages of Launditch Hundred



Fig.4. The modern civil parishes in the area of the Domesday Hundred.

Thus, there were forty-one places which had a separate entity at some time between the eleventh century and the present day in Launditch. If we were to look back further in time we would have to include an unknown number of early Saxon and Romano-British settlements for which there is no documentary evidence.

There were Domesday markets at Great Dunham and Litcham. Later there were weekly markets at Greynston, Tittleshall, Gressenhall and Little Fransham (Puddy 1957, 65), and also a market at North Elmham (Yaxley 1980, 535), and perhaps there were other smaller ones which went unrecorded.

Today there are only twenty-nine civil parishes in the Hundred (Fig.4), for some of the smaller ecclesiastical units were amalgamated with the larger ones in the seven-teenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as follows:

- (a) Godwick with Tittleshall
- (b) East Bilney with Beetley
- (c) Little Bittering with Beeston
- (d) Great Bittering with Gressenhall
- (e) Dillington with East Dereham

REFERENCES

1. Information from the following literature is incorporated in the chapter: Roxby 1928, 149-173; Steers and Mitchell 1967, 86-103; Clarke 1960, 13-27; Mosby 1938; Butcher 1941; British Association for the Advancement of Science 1961; Clarke 1937; Lambert, Jennings *et al.* 1960; Markham and Barnes 1963; Steers 1939-43, 231-258; Darby: 1934, 211-5; 1935, 185-201; 1969, 203-213; Allison 1955, 116-162.
2. Calculated; three ploughlands included in value for Necton.
3. Calculated; four ploughlands included in value for Mileham.
4. Calculated; one ploughland included in value for Sporle.
5. Calculated; half ploughland included in value for Gressenhall.

3. BEETLEY

Beetley church stands on a spur between the Black Water and the Scarning River just south of North Elmham. The main east to west Roman road ran over the top of this spur, roughly following Stony Lane, Chapel Lane and Sorrell Lane, and then on to Worthing. The church is 300 m to the north of this road, and the present village lies further north in a small sheltered valley which forms a tributary of the Black Water.

A limited amount of field walking has produced some Ipswich ware and Thetford ware on the north and east sides of the church. The village may, therefore, have grown up on the sheltered north slope near the church and then spread down the hill during the Middle Ages and is now clustered around the crossroads in the valley. Medieval material has been found on the north side of the lane which runs eastwards from the crossroads showing that there has been some shrinkage since medieval times.

There was only one manor in Beetley (Blomefield 1808, 466). There is a fine moat which lies in the valley meadows just beside the Black Water in the north-east corner of

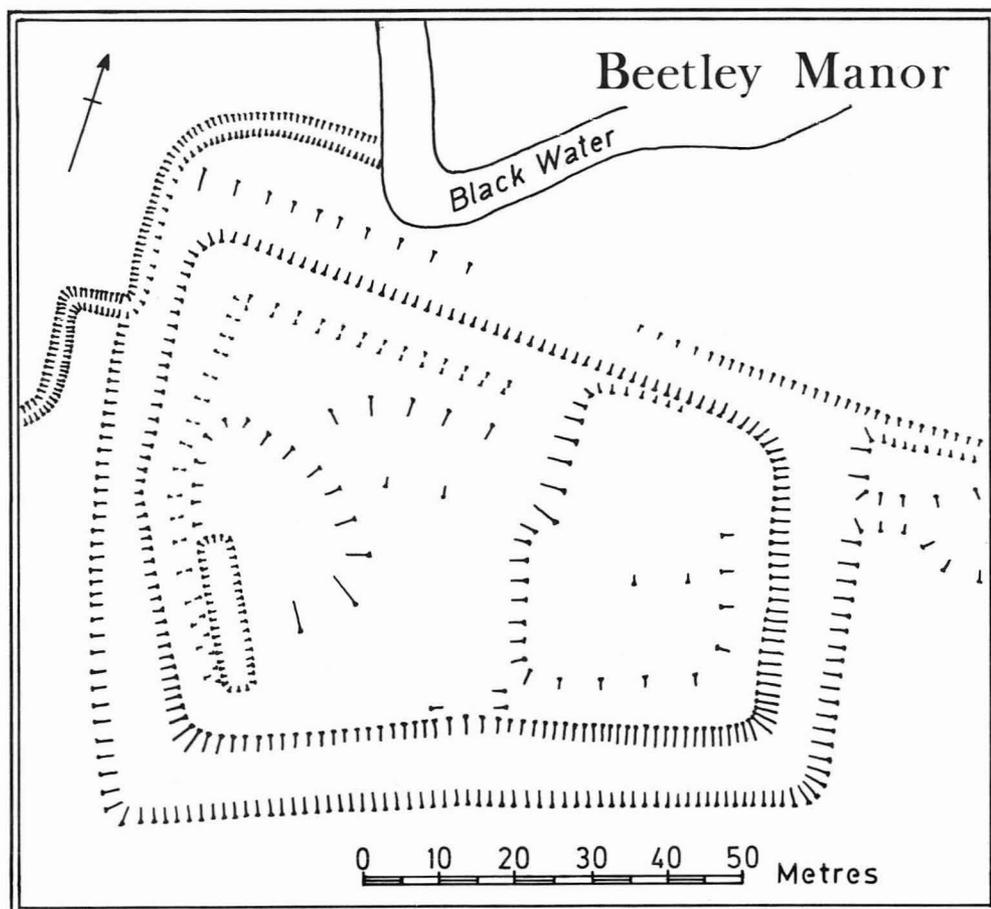


Fig. 5. Plan of moat in river meadows in the north-east part of Beetley parish. Scale 1:1,000.

the parish in a similar location to the nearby moat at Worthing (Fig.41). It is a large rectangular moat, which was apparently constructed in two periods (Fig.5). The higher eastern half was presumably the site of the manor house; this end was separated from the other by a drop in the interior level, and the west half is low-lying and marshy. A small excavation in c. 1954 by the Dereham and District Archaeological and Antiquarian Society produced much thirteenth/fourteenth-century pottery. The seventeenth-century Old Hall may be the successor to this medieval site.

Thus, Beetley village grew up on a hillside near the church and then later moved down to the crossroads in the Middle Ages. The original medieval manor was not near the village, but it had apparently moved there by the seventeenth century.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1086 Betellea; 1202 Betele; 1356 Betelee.

4. EAST BILNEY

East Bilney lies to the north-west of Beetley and today it is incorporated within Beetley parish.

The plan of the village is dominated by a remarkable road pattern, formed by a line of roads and lanes creating an oval over 900 m long and 600 m wide. This oval (Fig.6) is aligned roughly north-west to south-east, and the village lies scattered around the two ends and along the south side. In the eighteenth century no less than eight roads radiated from this oval but none ran across it.

The plan of the village in Fig.6 is taken from the 1905-6 editions of the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of Bilney. With the exception of the present East Bilney Hall built in 1866, this plan differs little from the Tithe map of 1838, which is the earliest large scale map of the parish. On Faden's 1797 map of Norfolk, the road to the south of the church which forms the south end of the oval is not shown, although there must have been a road here, for it runs alongside Martyr's Cottage (see below) and there is a steep bank along the north side of the road at its east end, unlikely on an early nineteenth-century creation.

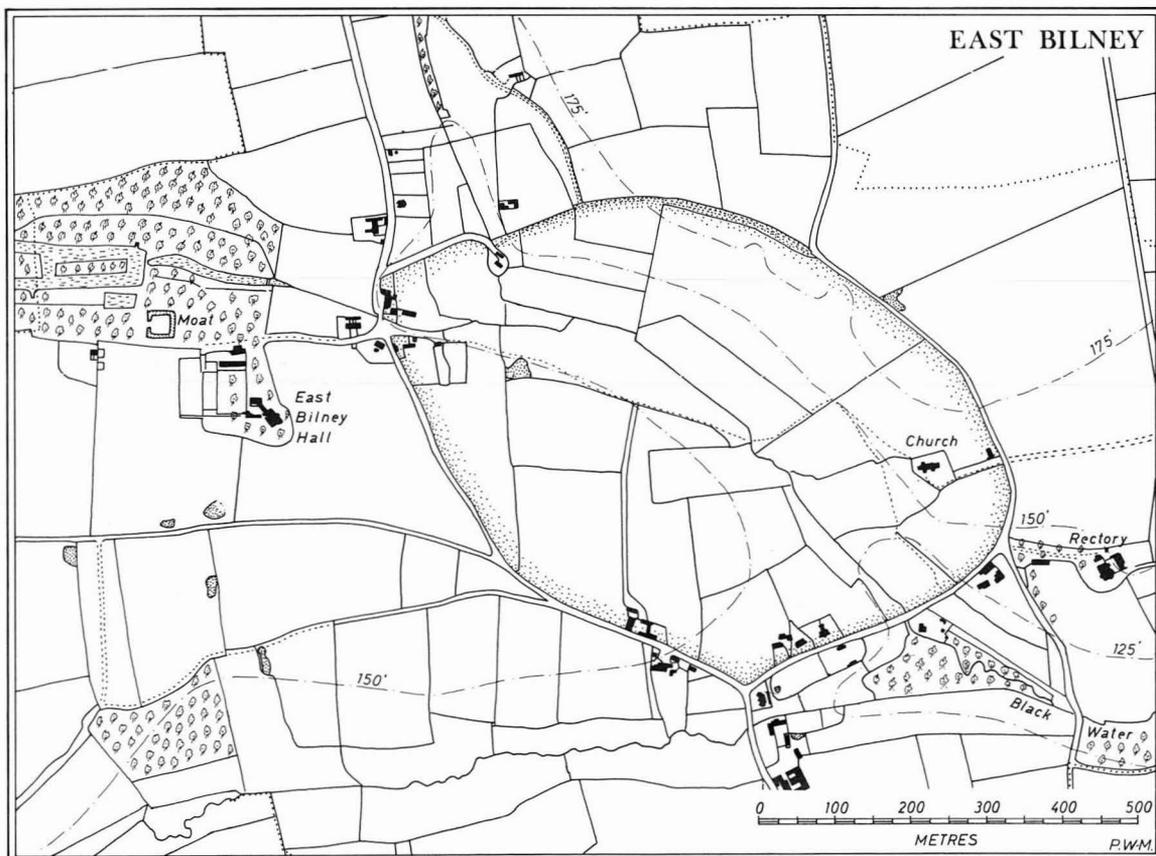


Fig.6. East Bilney in 1905. The church stands within an oval area from which ten roads radiated in the eighteenth century. Scale 1:10,000.

The church is at the east end of the village and lies within the oval. The Black Water valley passes down the middle and the church stands on the valley slope. A comparison between the fields within and without the oval reveals very little. This area may have been a medieval deer park, although there is no clear evidence for a perimeter bank. The one moated site lies to the west of the oval adjacent to the eighteenth-century ponds landscaped for the previous hall.

There are several houses standing just within the oval, and a date for the construction of the earliest of these could provide a useful clue to the time the 'park' fell into disuse. There is a fine timber-framed house now called the Martyr's Cottage on the south side (to the east of the road junction) which is a rare example of exposed timber framing for this area. This house is dated to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries¹; so this house could provide a terminus ante quem for the disintegration of the 'park' boundary.

Little has been found to help reconstruct the development of the village. Presumably the site of the church, which is recorded in 1254, pre-dates the oval enclosure, but the small quantities of medieval pottery found in its vicinity are insufficient to suggest settlement here.

Place-name spellings 1086 Bilenei; 1221 Belneia; 1254 Bylneye.

REFERENCE

1. Information from survey of building by David Yaxley and Norma Virgoe.

5. BRISLEY

Brisley has one of the largest surviving village greens in central Norfolk. One can still see here a type of medieval landscape which has largely disappeared with the Enclosures. The green consists of 52 ha of open common lying to the east of the parish church; many of the farms and cottages which make up the village are scattered around this open area. There is also a cluster of houses around the church and a slightly separate hamlet called Potthorpe along the Horningtoft road.

Brisley is not mentioned in the Domesday survey; it was probably then still part of Elmham. The first known reference to Brisley dates from 1100-07, when it was called Bruselea. There is no sign near the church of Anglo-Saxon occupation.

There is no Enclosure Award and the common was never enclosed, although it has been encroached upon at various times. The earliest map is the Tithe map of 1838 and the plan of the village has changed little since that time.

The green has an 8-shaped plan, with a central constriction at the point where the main road crosses it. Around the common the continuous outline of the actual edge of the green is clear, even though it has in places become hidden behind gardens and buildings. Such a two-phase settlement, with the later occupation actually on the green obscuring the original frontage, can be seen best along the east and north-west edges and particularly along the north side where there is the beginning of a three-phase sequence; in front of the second stage there is yet another attempt to take in areas of green (Fig. 7).

The shape of the southern half of the green, particularly the way the tail-end turns to the east, suggests that the whole block of arable land between the common and the water meadows of Panford Beck was taken out of the common at some stage. The same is also true of the north-west side where Wood's Lane is a likely original edge to the common. A large intake on this west side would explain the very angular outline of arable land which projects into the common. The green in its original form was, therefore, apparently twice its present size.

Fieldwalking has revealed no archaeological evidence for medieval settlement along the west side of Wood's Lane, except opposite Brisley Hall, so presumably medieval settlement was concentrated along the green edge to the south of the hall which was not accessible for fieldwalking. The moated sites of Brisley Hall and Old Hall were probably focal points for settlement in this area during the Middle Ages.

On the east side a careful search has not produced any medieval material; this helps to confirm the hypothesis that this block of land was in fact an intake at some time after the Middle Ages.

One other outstanding feature of the village is the number of clay pits around the green. Few, if any, were dug after the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map was made in 1904, but a count of the pits on the two available maps shows that while eighteen had been dug by 1838, another sixteen were dug after that. Over half of the pits were, therefore, made during the last century, but one cannot be sure how many, now obscured, were dug earlier.

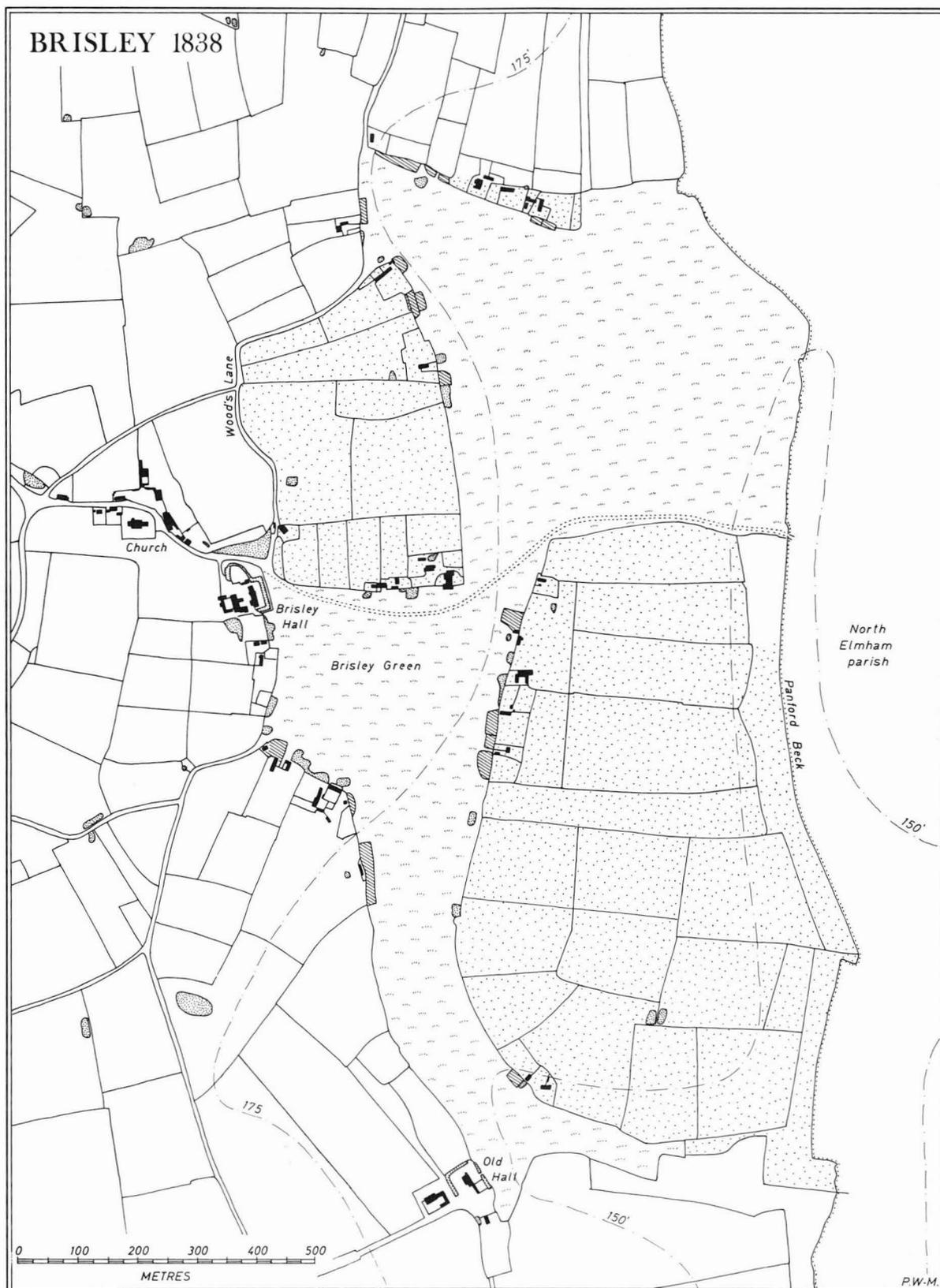


Fig. 7. Brisley in 1838 showing the area of common which survives today. The three lightly stippled areas are suggested post-medieval enclosures of the common. The shaded areas are secondary encroachments; most of these were made prior to the Tithe Award map of 1838. The heavily stippled patches are ponds - probably marl pits - which are characteristic features of common perimeters. Scale 1:10,000.

Summary

The available evidence points to a post-Conquest origin for the village, although this is not conclusive. One can postulate that an original nucleus, presumably located near the church, gave rise to a green settlement in the Middle Ages: Brisley contains all the essential elements of a green village and the encroachments on the green provide an interesting exercise in the study of village topography.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1100-7 Bruselea; 1196 Brisele; 1257 Brysele; 1344 Brisele.

(the first element: briosa = OE gad-fly.)

6. HORNINGTOFT

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The parish lies across a ridge of high land over 60 m O.D. between various tributaries of the river Wensum. The higher land is in the north-east and south-west parts of the parish; running diagonally through the centre is a wide shallow valley which drops away to the north-west and south-east. There were two pieces of common in the two lower parts of this valley to either side of the village. No map of the parish earlier than the Enclosure Award of 1816 survives.

The church stands at a crossroads near the centre of the parish in the middle of the slight valley. The tower, which collapsed in 1796 (Pevsner 1962, 206) has not been rebuilt.

The small and scattered groups of cottages and farms lie along the street between the church and the enclosed common to the north-west. The houses are few and far between, and there is only a slight cluster along the old south edge of the common. Elsewhere there are two farms and some cottages at the road junction south of the church, and there are two houses on the north end of the second common further east. The present Manor House is a nineteenth-century farm built after Bryant's map of Norfolk was published in 1826.

Two aspects of the 1816 parish plan are striking (Figs.8 and 9). Firstly, there was a large wood on the east side which then covered a medieval moated manor site (p.27). Around the edge of the wood there was a bank and ditch which can still be seen on the west side of this area. This boundary outlined a wedge-shaped area, which may have been the demesne land; it spread out towards the east as far as the parish boundary with Elmham. It respected this boundary and there is no suggestion that it extended over the border into Elmham. Secondly, there is a curving line of a road and a parish boundary to the north of this manor site which is closely mirrored by another further west, where the north part of the village street and the enclosure road across the old common define the opposite side of an incomplete oval. The enclosure road slightly distorts the curve of the pre-enclosure track across the common which can be seen on Faden's map of Norfolk (1797). The fact that the demesne apparently adjoined but did not infringe on this area suggests that the outline of the oval may have been already established when the medieval demesne was organised. This oval could have been a deer park as at Bilney (p.20) or possibly the outline of an early land holding as suggested for Stanfield (p.50).

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

ROMAN PERIOD

The straight southern side of the possible demesne has recently been confirmed as a Roman road which continued to the north-west through Oxwick and on to Toftrees (Wade-Martins 1977). There is also a small scatter of Roman pottery to the south-west of the village just outside the area shown in Fig.9.

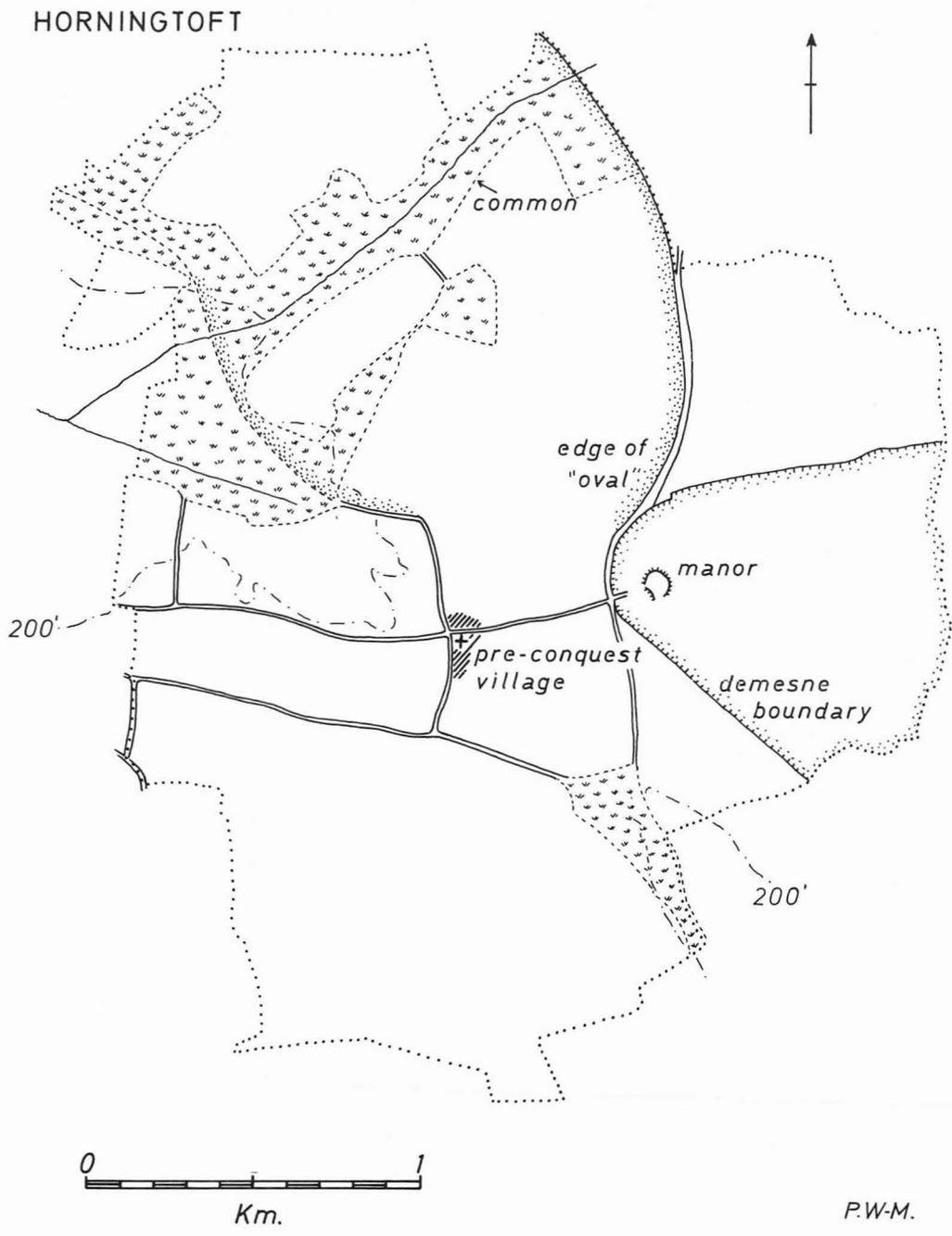


Fig.8. A plan of Horningtoft parish showing an interpretation of the medieval road pattern and the lines of two early boundary features. To the east lies the demesne area and the moated manor site within. In the northern part of the parish is a large oval of unknown origin.

MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.9)

The church stands on the highest point in the valley; from the church the land drops away gently in all directions except to the east. A thin scatter of Ipswich ware covers c. 2 ha just to the east of the church.

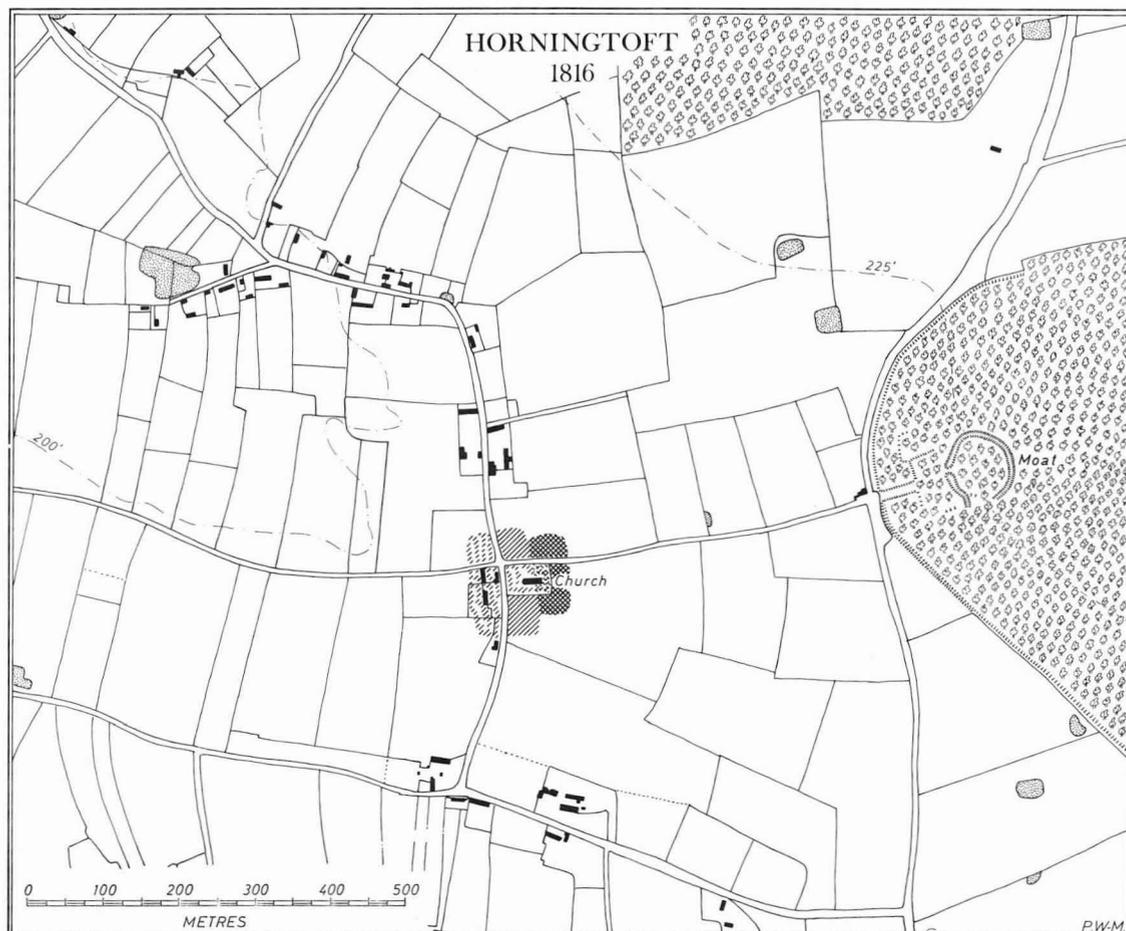


Fig.9. Horningtoft in 1816. The shaded areas indicate Anglo-Saxon settlement: double shading, Middle Saxon; single shading, Late Saxon. Scale 1:10,000.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.9)

The way the Middle Saxon settlement is set apart from the present crossroads is quite distinctive. In the Late Saxon period the settlement became established around the modern crossroads. On the east side of the crossroads there are good signs of an occupation area covering c. 150 m of the present road frontage by the end of the eleventh century. Although modern buildings prevent a search on the opposite side, this area could well have been occupied too.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.10)

The search for occupation in Horningtoft is rather restricted by meadows and houses which cover much of the frontage north of the church; but the south side of the north end of the street is arable land.

Nearly all the Early Medieval material came from the same area as the Late Saxon occupation; most of it was from the south side of the church, but two sherds were also found on the south side of the common at the north end of the street. However, it was not until later that the frontage between the church and the green became extensively occupied.

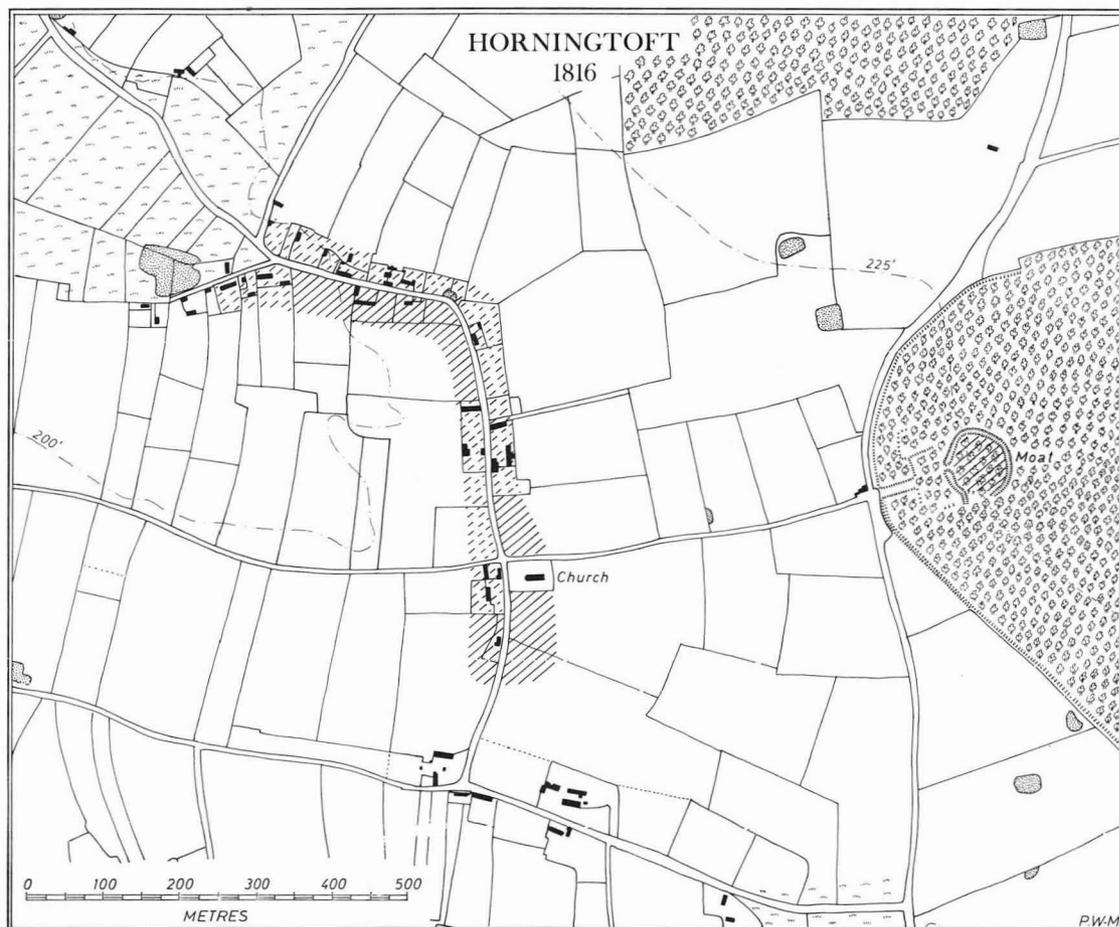


Fig.10. Horningtoft in 1816. The shaded areas indicate medieval settlement, in addition the moated manor lay to the east of the village. The areas of common land in the late eighteenth century are also shown. Scale 1:10,000.

Fig.10 is an attempt to demonstrate the extent of occupation in the later Middle Ages, although much of it has to be conjectural because of the lack of suitable areas for field walking. There was no occupation along the east side of the common, but how far the settlement stretched along the south side is not clear. Even so, the actual extent of green settlement was certainly small compared with the size of the occupied street frontage between the common and the church.

The lack of medieval material from around the group of houses at the road junction south of the church shows that this was probably a later addition to the village. It was mostly to the north of the church, between the church and the large green, that the village spread during the Middle Ages.

The medieval manor site

Set apart from the village was the presumed site of the medieval manor house (still called 'Danish Earthworks' on Bartholomew's quarter inch map of Norfolk). No clear dating evidence has been obtained from the site in recent years. It has not recently been cultivated and it owes its preservation to the wood which covered the area until 1852. It was described in 1879 by Carthew, who wavered between a 'Celtic', 'Saxon' or 'Norman'

date for its origin; his plan shows a small circular earthwork, possibly of a building, in the middle of the roughly-circular moat. The moat is now much disturbed and the internal features have disappeared.

Circular moats are unusual, but they do occur; a smaller example can be seen at Hardingham. On the west side of the Horningtoft moat there was a narrow entrance, and on the south side there was a wide gap in the ditch where there may have been an extension of the moat into what is now an arable field. To the west of the moat a bank and ditch run around the perimeter of the meadow. This boundary was in use at the same time as the manor site, for there is an entrance through the bank where the road from the village led up to the west entrance of the moat; this moat is situated symmetrically within the enclosure. Between the boundary bank and the moat there are traces of other earthworks, but some of these appear to be of more recent origin. This layout of a manor house and demesne land is repeated at Mileham (Chapter 9). From 1296-7 the manor was the property of the Castello family (Carthew 1879).

POST MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Although there is no map earlier than the Enclosure Award to guide us, it is possible to see how the village plan has evolved since the Middle Ages. There was a slow depopulation of the village between the church and the green. This has continued until almost the present day. There was some growth in a small area of settlement south of the church and also further east at the north end of the small common.

III. SUMMARY

The village began near the church, no earlier than the seventh century. It then expanded northwards to fill the frontage between the church and the common. Further research is required on the date and significance of the oval area of land to the north of the village; both the early village and the manor site lie outside this area.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr. Schram's notes: 1086 Horninghetoft; 1196 Hornigetoft; 1249 Hornigetoft; 1269 Horningtofte.

7. KEMPSTONE

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Kempstone is a deserted village which retains a small parish of just over 320 ha on the south side of the Nar valley between Litcham and Great Dunham (Allison 1960, 57). Most of the parish lies on the south side of the valley, and the ruined church and Kempstone Lodge stand together near the top of the slope overlooking Litcham Common which lies to the north. The only people living in the parish at the time of the survey were a farm manager at Kempstone Lodge, a farm foreman in the Manor Farm a little to the south-east and a group of families in a pair of cottages between these two farms.

The manuscript maps for Kempstone are (a) a map of c. 1725 in Holkham Hall Estate Office, (b) very small-scale maps of 1779 and 1799 in the Holkham atlases and (c) an Enclosure Award map of 1814.

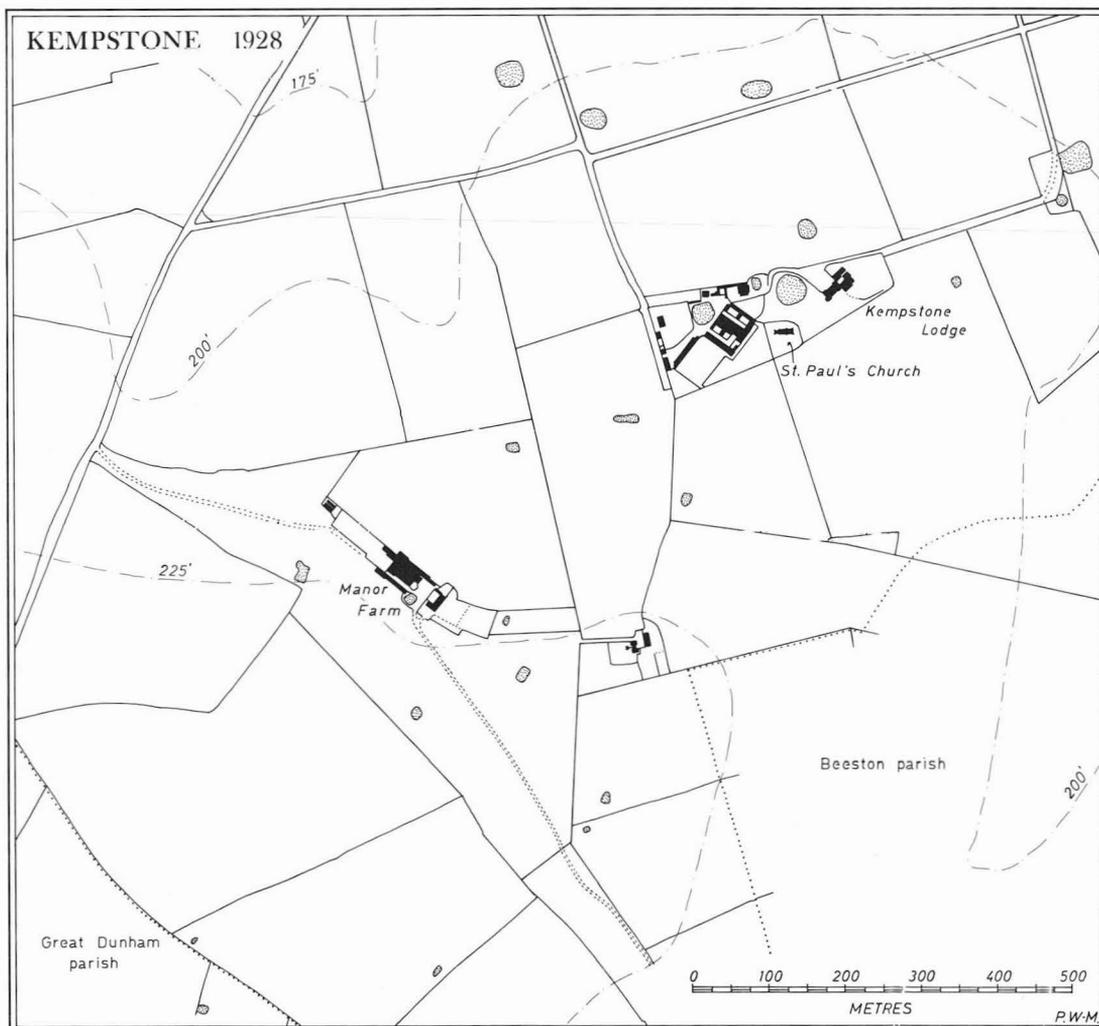


Fig.11. Kempstone in 1928. Scale 1:10,000.

The parish lies in the angle between two Roman roads. Along part of the west side was the Toftrees to North Pickenham road. Across the north end of the parish was the Caister to Denver route (Wade-Martins 1974, 24). The line of this latter road is indicated by the parish boundary and the south side of Litcham Common. (Neither road line is within the area covered by Fig.11 but should be clear on Ordnance Survey maps: one from TF 870 155 to TF 872 166, the other from TF 890 171 to TF 868 165).

The hill on which Kempstone church stands is bounded on the north side by the Nar valley and on the east by a small tributary of the Nar which rises in Great Dunham. Faden's map of Norfolk (1797) shows Kempstone surrounded by commons from Woodgate Farm on the east side, around the south end nearly as far as the Roman road in the north-west. Within Kempstone there was additional common land at Kempstone Green (Fig.13) near the present Manor Farm and the Old Covert in the Nar valley. The pattern of large closes in the south-west part of the parish, coupled with the fact that across the boundary the land was all heath until the nineteenth century, suggest that Kempstone Green was previously part of a much larger area of heathland. This possibly large heath, probably taken in for arable within Kempstone parish in the seventeenth century, influenced considerably the medieval settlement and field patterns. It was mostly the flatter upland which formed the heath; the better drained valley side was arable, and the meadow land along the Nar was again common land.

The settlement pattern of today (Fig.11) is much the same as it was in the eighteenth century. Near the church is the Lodge Farm, and the house east of the church is on the site of the pre-enclosure farmhouse. Since the enclosures the nineteenth-century farm buildings have replaced those originally near the house. Along the north side of Kempstone Green there were two groups of buildings, and one of these, Manor Farm, still remains. At the east end of the green there are two cottages of mid eighteenth-century date.

The road system of the eighteenth century underwent many changes during the enclosures in 1814 (compare Figs.11 and 12). Most of the field system and roads were altered under the influence of the Holkham Estate. Fig.12 is a reconstruction of the earlier arrangement of roads in the centre of the parish based on the map of c. 1725. All those in the vicinity of the medieval village appear to be primary to the field pattern. But the road from the north-west corner of Kempstone Green to Litcham is later, for it cut across the old furlongs and strips shown on the eighteenth-century maps.

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

ROMAN PERIOD

In the north-west corner of the parish (outside the area covered in Figs.12 and 13) on the slope overlooking the east to west Roman road, is a spread of Roman pottery, tiles and iron slag covering c. 12 ha. The extent and quantity of the slag demonstrates that there was considerable industrial activity in this area. The sherds are difficult to date, but may span the first to at least the third centuries.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.12)

Only one certain sherd of Ipswich ware has been found on the village site and this was just south-east of the churchyard. Therefore the settlement could hardly have started before the ninth century. By the end of the eleventh century the settlement area was about 250 m long. The recorded Domesday figure at this time is only nine people, which corresponds with the archaeological evidence for a small area of settlement.

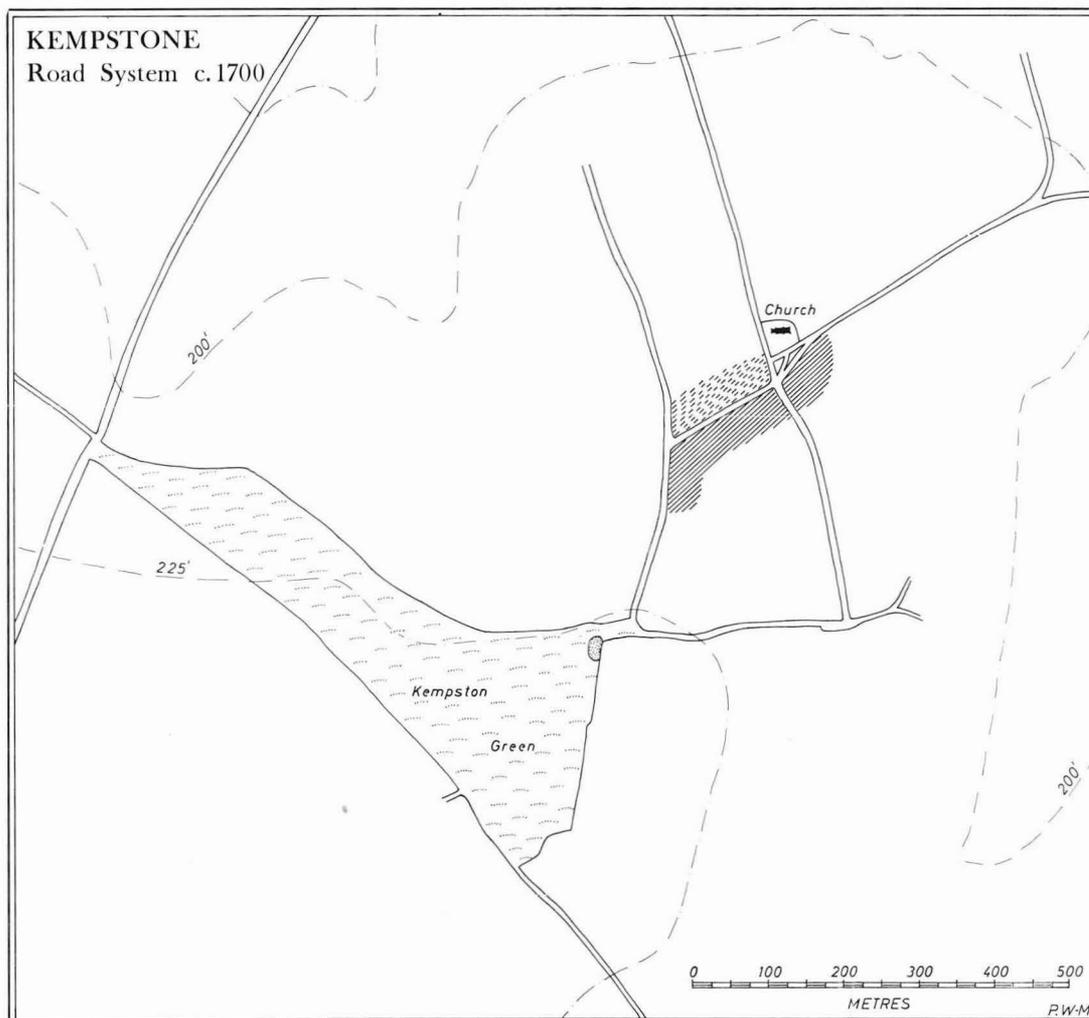


Fig. 12. Kempstone road system c. 1700. The shaded areas indicate Late Saxon settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

THE MIDDLE AGES (Fig. 13)

During the twelfth century people started living around the village green; it has already been suggested that this green was a small corner of a large heath, covering several square kilometres, stretching deep into Dunham. The absence of archaeological evidence for habitation along the west side of the green supports the view that this side was not the actual green edge in the Middle Ages.

By the end of the thirteenth century most of the habitation on the green was along the north side. This hamlet had grown considerably, but it never entirely replaced the original settlement near the church as it did at Longham (Chapter 8). The northern hamlet survived as long as the green settlement, and they were definitely two separate settlement areas.

A house site has been located to the south of the present lodge. Signs of a moat are visible on an air photograph taken in 1953 (Plate I), but little trace of it remains today. This enclosure was called Halcott on the early eighteenth-century map. Within the moat is a heavy concentration of fifteenth-century pottery.

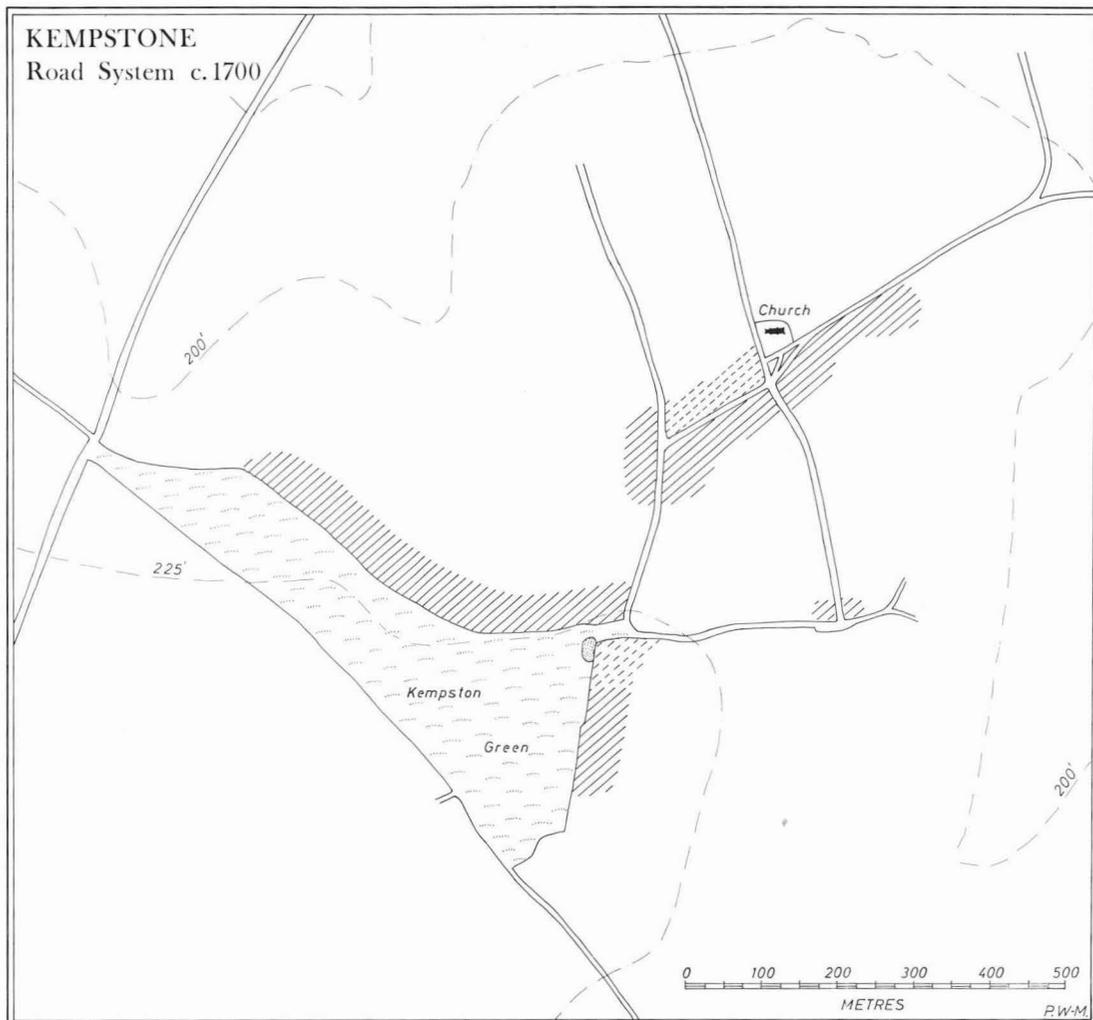


Fig.13. Kempstone road system c. 1700. The shaded areas indicate medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

III. SUMMARY

Kempstone village had a similar evolution to Longham and Stanfield, from a church site to a separate green. There was apparently no direct link between the early village and the Roman settlement in the valley near the Roman cross roads.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.Schram's notes: 1086 Kemestuna; c. 1100 Camestone; 1248 Kemeston; 1269 Kemston.

8. LONGHAM

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The parish is roughly square in shape, about 3 km from north to south and 4 km from east to west. The boundaries are strongly influenced by a Dark Age dyke, called the Launditch (Lewis 1957; Wade-Martins 1974), and the Roman road, but the relationship between these features and the parish boundary is not as straightforward as one might expect. The writer has already suggested that the present very straight boundary on the west side of the parish (Fig.4) is a nineteenth-century feature: the result of land improvement (Wade-Martins 1974, 29). The old slightly meandering line of the Launditch to the west of the parish boundary was destroyed just prior to 1814 when the new parish boundary was laid out.

At the north-west corner of the parish the boundary takes a sharp turn; here, the Roman road and the dyke cross; in the Dark Ages this point was strategically important and it was very fitting that it should later have become the site of the Hundred court (Blomefield 1808 IX, 456); the Anglo-Saxon Hundred was named after this earthwork. On the sixteenth-century map a pair of gallows is shown standing nearby, possibly a continuation of the tradition of the court meeting place.

When one stands near the church, its extreme isolation and separation from the modern centre of population at the old Kirtling Common is very apparent. The only other buildings within a quarter of a mile of the church are the nineteenth-century Longham Hall, described by Carthew as a 'plain, ugly building of white brick, in true Holkham fashion' (Carthew 1879, 270), and farm buildings, a pair of labourers' cottages and also the vicarage four hundred yards to the south.

A fine series of maps of Longham is preserved at Holkham Hall. The maps are: (a) sixteenth-century, possibly c. 1595, but undated, by Haiwarde; (b) early eighteenth-century; (c) 1779; (d) 1799; (e) 1814. There is also an Enclosure Award map of 1816.

The sixteenth-century map is a relatively accurate and detailed document on a scale of nine-and-a-half inches to one mile, showing the village, the greens, the fields and all the strips in use at that time (Fig.15). In each field or strip the name of the tenant or owner, and sometimes even the name of the field, is shown; the houses are drawn in elevation and in some detail (Fig.20). The early eighteenth-century map is of a larger scale, although less detailed, and buildings are not generally shown. The small maps of 1779 and 1799 are in atlases of those dates, although the second one was obviously drawn from the same survey as the first. The maps of 1814 and 1816 are contemporary with the enclosure of the commons and also the entire re-organisation of the farming system, which was part of the farm improvement policy of the famous Thomas William Coke. A comparison of all these maps reveals much about the evolution of the landscape from the end of the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century.

THE PARISH AS DEPICTED ON THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MAP

Within the heart of the parish were two commons: South Hall or Southhall Green and Kirtling Common. It was entirely around these two greens that people lived in the sixteenth century. The church was already isolated. Around Southhall Green there were

sixteen groups of buildings; these groups varied from single houses to groups of up to three buildings. The larger groups probably represented farmhouses with subsidiary out-buildings. Only the manor house had a larger number of buildings. This stood beside a northerly extension of Southhall Green. At the south end of the green there was a deserted moat of the subsidiary manor of Gunton's.

Joining the two commons there was a narrow piece of green and on the north side of this was a further single group of buildings. It was around Kirtling Common that the second main group of houses stood.

Here there were also sixteen groups. An area of strips projecting into the common formed an encroachment along a spur of higher land in the otherwise low-lying common. The original very straight west edge of the common can be seen all the way down this side.

It is interesting that both greens correspond to low-lying land within the parish. The west end of Southhall Green was its highest point and from there the ground drops away gently towards the south-east. The lowest part of the green was its southern boundary; the ditch bordering the southern side would have drained both the green and the properties to the south. Kirtling Common corresponded to a small valley which continues towards the east down to the Scarning River at Gressenhall. Two small streams, which both rise at Longham, meet at Kirtling Common in a Y-shaped valley. Only in the last few years has it been possible with improved drainage to cultivate the meadows in this valley. The edges of the green on the north and south sides stood on top of the valley slope.

The church, by contrast, stands on one of the highest points in the parish, at c. 91 m O.D. The last house to stand near the church before the present hall was built was the rectory; its location was marked 'Situs Rectorii' on the sixteenth-century map.

Of the two manor houses, Longham Manor had the best location. It was situated near the head of a slight valley which extends eastwards down to Kirtling Common and was sheltered from all sides, except, possibly, the east. Gunton's Manor on the other hand was in a far more exposed situation with less adequate drainage (Fig. 19).

Nearly all the open fields over the parish, as well as the enclosed fields which were often old furlongs, had a strong north-to-south orientation. Only eight small furlongs in the whole parish ran in the reverse direction.

The roads and the major divisions between the furlongs all had either a north-to-south or an east-to-west orientation. The two roads which obviously ran contrary to this trend cross over strips and can be taken to be secondary features. It is, therefore, possible that the estate which became the parish was laid out on a rectangular plan at some stage. The Roman road and the Launditch are closely tied into this layout.

The houses

The first Longham map is one of the best of the sixteenth-century manuscript maps of Norfolk to portray details of houses (Figs. 18 and 20). While admittedly the method of representing details is repetitive and somewhat stylised, some information can be obtained about the domestic architecture of the time. Buildings of the lower social order from this time very rarely survive in the county. Of the sixty-two buildings shown, probably over half were houses. Three types of house are represented. Firstly, the farmhouses, which had a door and a window in one side and usually also a window in a gable wall. Secondly, there were the cottages which had a door, but no window in the side wall. The numerical relationship of single cottages to farms is 9:7. Thirdly, there was the manor house. Unfortunately, the end view given for this building obscures all details of its plan.



Fig.14. Longham in 1816. The stippled areas indicate common land in the late sixteenth century (Fig.15). Scale 1:10,000.



Fig.15. Longham in the late sixteenth century. The double shading indicates Middle Saxon settlement; the single sloping shading is Late Saxon settlement; and the vertical shading represents early medieval expansion from the Late Saxon areas. Scale 1:10,000.

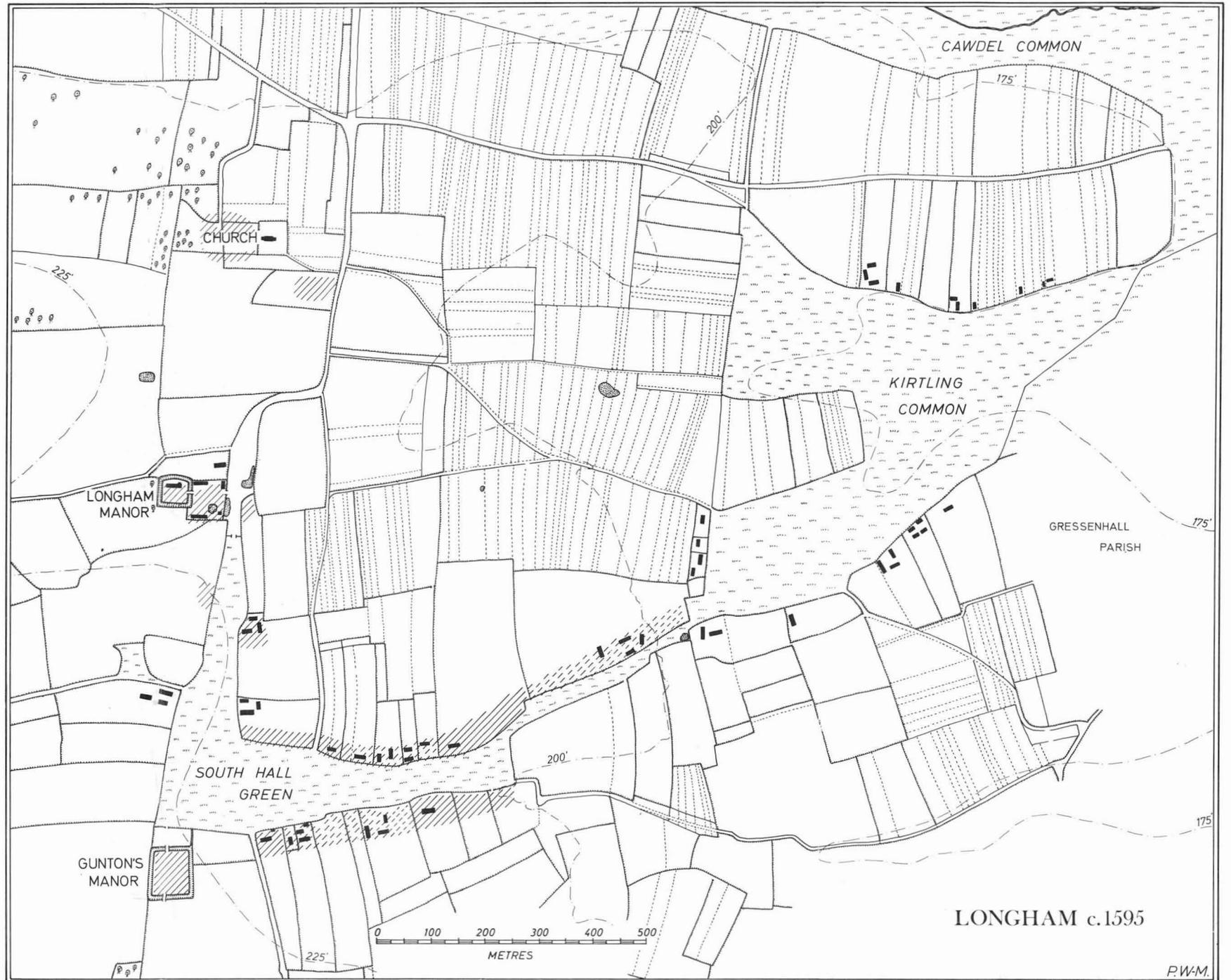


Fig.16. Longham in the late sixteenth century. The shading indicates medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

Topography

None of the houses shows any sign of two floor levels, or even half stories in the roof; never is one window depicted above another; the doors always reach well up to the eaves. Only two houses, both of the larger variety, had chimneys in the gable walls. Points projecting from the top of the gables of some other houses may have been chimneys. Barge-boards are usually shown. There are no signs of elaborate timberwork in the walls. All the houses, except probably the manor house, were low, thatched, probably clay-lump buildings. The distinction between the farmhouses and the small cottages is fairly clear, for while the larger houses often had outbuildings associated with them in a square around yards, the cottages seldom did.

The overall picture of the manor house is particularly good (Fig.18). The house, with a porch on the west side, stood to one side of the moat surrounded by trees. A bridge led into the outer enclosure, a typical feature on moated sites in Norfolk. Near the middle of this enclosure there was a pond for watering the farm animals, while around the yard stood the farm buildings. A small, probably circular, building which stood in one corner could have been a dovecot. A gateway led out of the yard onto the green. This site was abandoned as the manor house when the hall near the church was built in 1816, and the house was pulled down shortly afterwards.

A close comparison between this and the modern 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map shows that no building standing in the late sixteenth century, except for the church, survives today; all the houses one sees were built in the eighteenth century or later.

The houses depicted on the map are all relatively small, unsophisticated structures; they were no doubt survivals of the type of architecture used by the labourers and small farmers in the Middle Ages. Any discussion of the houses excavated in Norfolk on deserted village sites will not be complete without reference to maps such as this, as few other documents could illustrate so well the landscape of a medieval village.

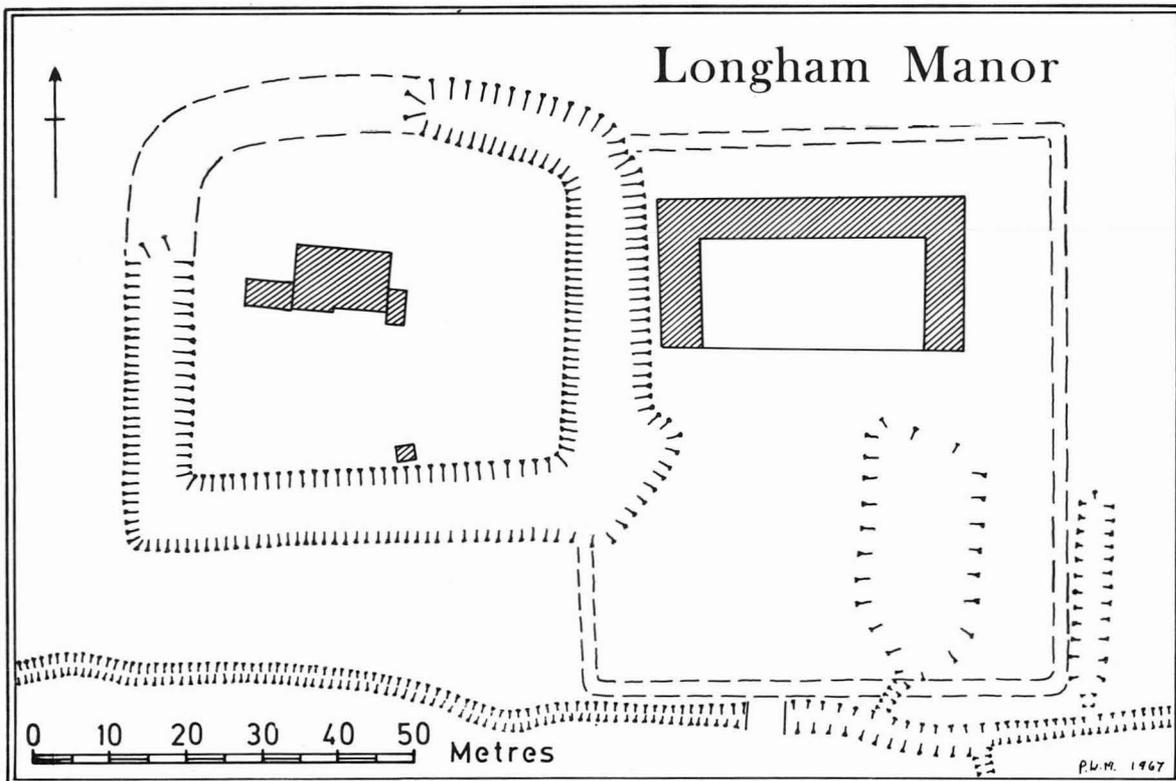


Fig.17. Plan of Longham Manor moat. Scale 1:1,000.

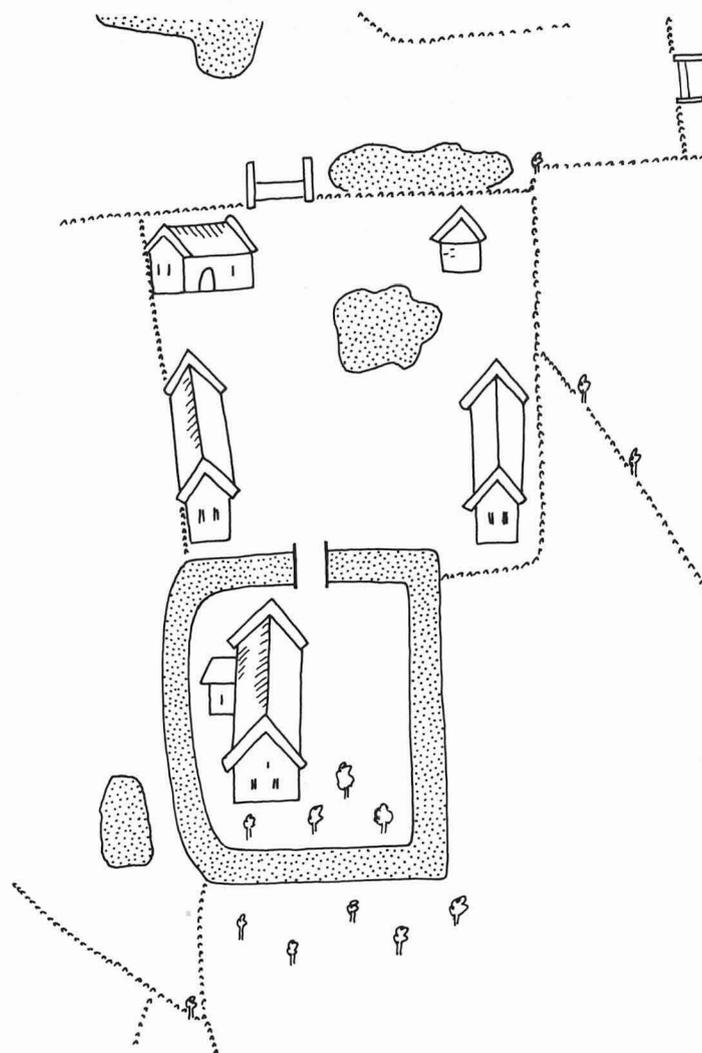


Fig. 18. Longham Manor as depicted on late sixteenth-century map.

SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHANGES TO THE SETTLEMENT PLAN

By the late eighteenth century the final trend in the pattern of green edge settlement had become apparent. Around Southhall Green eight house sites had been abandoned in the previous two hundred years; no new ones had been established. On Kirtling Common four house sites had been deserted, but four others had been created, three by partial or total encroachment on the green. Southhall Green was, therefore, declining as a village centre. Kirtling Common on the other hand was retaining a fairly static population.

Forty years later, just after the enclosure of these two greens, there was no habitation at all along the old north side of Southhall Green; in all only five house sites still remained (Fig. 14). On the old Kirtling Common the population was expanding slightly. Near the church the new hall and several cottages had been built by Thomas William Coke for the Holkham estate. The population declined from 198 in 1821 to 231 in 1901 (Bryant undated, 144).

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

LATE ROMAN OR EARLY SAXON PERIOD

The only Roman finds to come from Longham so far are a late third-century coin from c. 100 m to the north-east of the church and a very battered rim of Samian ware from across the road; two small sherds of hand-made pottery also come from this latter area. This is not sufficient material to indicate Roman occupation, but it might suggest very late

Archaeological Evidence

Roman or sub-Roman settlement, or the re-use of Roman objects in the early Saxon period. It is particularly interesting that all three Roman finds should have come from near the church. The possibility of a relationship between a thin scatter of Roman finds with Middle Saxon pottery has been seen elsewhere (e.g. Mileham and Sutton).

MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.15)

Eight distinctive sherds of Ipswich ware were found in an area 100 m south-east of the church. The area in which they were found was about 100 m across from east to west, which suggests a small Middle Saxon settlement here, but smaller than that at Mileham (Chapter 9) or Weasenham (Chapter 12).

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.15)

During this period the pottery becomes more plentiful and just over thirty sherds of Thetford ware have been found. These came mostly from the areas to the south and east of the church, but with a few from the west. The pottery spread covers an area over 300 m across.

EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.15)

The area of occupation during this short period was largely the same as it had been before, although there was now much more emphasis on the west side of the church. The major development came in the twelfth century when for the first time settlement took place around the green. Two sherds of Early Medieval ware have been found on the north corner of Southhall Green, and one on the north-west corner of the green.

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.16)

It was during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that the village grew to its maximum size. Throughout these centuries the area of settlement near the church remained fairly static and afterwards declined quickly.

There seems to have been two areas of occupation near the church, one on the west, served no doubt by the road still surviving in the sixteenth century; the other was a smaller area to the south-east. Only in these areas are the pottery scatters sufficiently intense to suggest occupation.

Further south the manor was no doubt in use (Fig.17); three medieval sherds have been recovered from here, although conditions made field walking difficult. Opposite, across the green which was narrow at this point, there was a further small area of medieval pottery. Gunton's Manor we can take to have been in use by this date (Fig.19), although adverse conditions prevented a search for datable material; Thomas Gunton held a manor in Longham in 1347 (Bryant undated, 145).

The main weight of settlement was on the north and south sides of Southhall Green. Here the finds point to almost continuous occupation along both sides by the fourteenth century, probably right through to Kirtling Common. Pottery has been found around much of this area, and the only gaps are where, for agricultural reasons, it was not possible to search.

Around Kirtling Common there is very little trace of medieval occupation, although the area has been intensively searched. The only definite evidence comes from the south-east and south-west corners. Along the north and west sides, there was occupation in the sixteenth century, but no medieval pottery was found; on the north side there was an area of late fifteenth or sixteenth century development. This idea of a late date for the settlement is further brought out by the way the houses in the late sixteenth century appear to be standing on the ends of strips.

To suggest the size of the medieval population is of course not easy. There were, until recently, earthworks of three properties on the south side of Southhall Green, each about 30 m across (Plate II). If this was the average width, then a total green frontage, where settlement can be proved or inferred, could be about forty-five tofts.

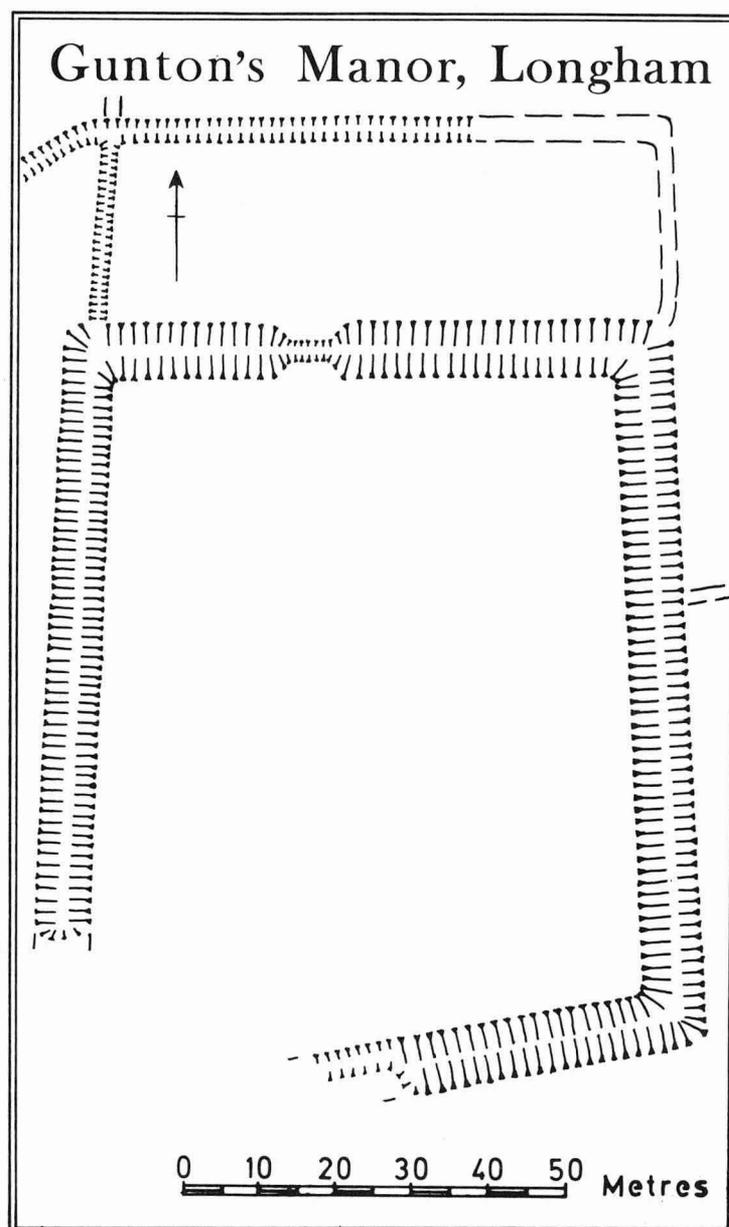


Fig. 19. Plan of Longham Gunton's Manor moat. Scale 1:1,000.

POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The settlement pattern shows itself clearly on the sixteenth-century map (Fig. 15), and archaeological evidence adds nothing further to this. Indeed, finds from this period are fewer than from the preceding one. It is doubtful if archaeology alone could have been used to reconstruct the settlement pattern of the later period.

Seventy metres to the west of the church is a rectangular area measuring 15 x 6 m thickly scattered with bricks, flints and tiles. This is the 'Situs Rectorii' on the sixteenth-century map.

III. SUMMARY

As the village has seen two major shifts in its settlement pattern, much of the area of Anglo-Saxon and medieval occupation is available for an archaeological survey. From this work it has been possible to build up a picture of most periods of settlement from Middle Saxon times to the present day, but the origin of the settlement is still obscure.

Summary

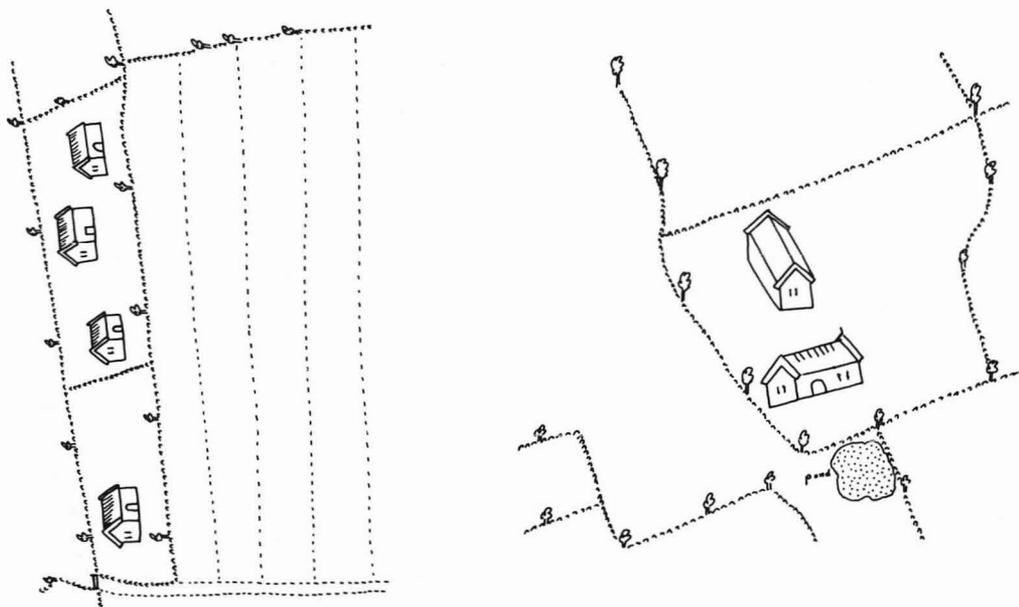


Fig.20. Two groups of Longham cottages as depicted on the late sixteenth-century map.

The site chosen for the Middle Saxon settlement was a relatively well-drained spot, but a water supply was not difficult to obtain: nineteenth-century clay pits in slightly lower ground west of the church are invariably full of water. The proximity of the crossing point of the Launditch and the Roman road may also have been an important factor. Indeed, it is inferred that 'Longham' is derived from 'Lawingham' and that it was the people of early Longham who were responsible for the construction of the dyke (Lewis 1967, 425). The rectilinear layout of the parish was apparently orientated deliberately on the axis of the Roman road and the dyke.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries the settlement grew around the Middle Saxon nucleus. The greens may have been in existence in the low-lying areas within the parish well before the twelfth century, but it was not until this time that there was any settlement around them. From the twelfth century the settlement around Southhall Green grew so that probably by the end of the Middle Ages it had spilled over into Kirtling Common. (Kirtling was recorded as a separate village in Domesday, but no evidence earlier than the fourteenth century can be found on this green; perhaps Domesday Kirtling was in nearby Gressenhall parish).

By the end of the Middle Ages the area around the church was no longer an important element in the village plan, and by the late sixteenth century the church was isolated.

In the late sixteenth century Kirtling Common had roughly as many houses as Southhall Green. Much of the settlement around Kirtling Common apparently began in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. Perhaps in the early sixteenth century the village was at its most extensive, but in terms of numbers it was already on the decline. The c. 1595 map demonstrates how the area of medieval settlement was gradually being abandoned. The maps of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries show the second village movement in process from one green to another.

The study of this parish has revealed, perhaps better than any other in this report, how unstable and changing were some of the rural settlements in Norfolk.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr. O.K. Schram's notes: 1086 Lawingham; 1219 Lauingham; 1250 Longham.

9. MILEHAM

I. TOPOGRAPHY

This parish of 1,120 ha lies to the north of Longham. It is roughly rectangular in shape, 4 km from east to west and c. 3 km from north to south. Forming a spine along the northern part of the parish is the main road; archaeological evidence from the village suggests that this road was in use by the tenth century, and by then it was probably already part of the main east-to-west route across Norfolk. A castle was built adjacent to the road at the west end of the village in the eleventh century. At the other end the church is set well back from the street and somewhat apart from the present village (Plate III). Since the Middle Ages this has been a 'street village', although the population over five centuries seems to have shifted gradually westwards from the medieval area between the castle and the church. The Middle Saxon and most of the Late Saxon and medieval village has been deserted, so here also it is possible to study the archaeological evidence for early settlement. Although Mileham formed part of the Coke estates since the sixteenth century, no detailed map of the parish earlier than the enclosure map of 1814 has been found.

The village is well situated in a slight valley at the head of two streams which fall away to the east and to the west (Fig. 46). At the east end of the village lies the source of the Black Water which flows eastwards to the Scarning River beyond Elmham; to the west is the head of the River Nar. The Nar rises just to the north of Mileham, in Tittleshall parish, but it curves close by the village before turning west to flow down to the Fens and the River Ouse.

On the east side there is a very straight boundary separating the parish from Stanfield. This is marked by an early nineteenth-century hedgerow along the west side of Stanfield High Green planted when Stanfield Green was enclosed. As with the Launditch (Wade-Martins 1974, fig. 4) the earlier meandering hedgerow can be seen on the Enclosure Award map running parallel to the modern boundary. The way the old line followed such a direct course from the north-east corner of Mileham suggests that this also was an ancient boundary. The writer (1974, 28) has suggested that this line was a northern extension of the Launditch. It may have been built across the Black Water valley at some time during the Anglo-Saxon period when the east-to-west Roman road was being replaced by the Mileham route. The crossing point of the Mileham road and this boundary is now too altered by a modern crossroads for one to discover whether this alignment was ever a defensive structure.

There were three pieces of common land near the village. A small green lay to the west and this merged into the meadows of the headwaters of the River Nar. South of the meadows the same common land continued as a large open area. North of the village there was a long thin common reaching from the main street of Mileham northwards into Tittleshall. There was also a small green at the east end of the village at the head of the Black Water.

The earliest map of Mileham is Faden's, drawn only twenty years before the Enclosure Award. It is not old enough to add much to the picture we have of the village in 1814 except to show the areas of common. There were small greens at either end of the street, and the frontage between showed an uneven scatter of houses with concentrations

in two places. One area of houses was immediately to the west of the castle; another lay further east near Mileham Hall. There were a number of gaps in the frontage which seem to have been created either by population shrinkage or movement. This is confirmed in part by the archaeological evidence.

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

THE ROMAN AND EARLY SAXON PERIODS

These two periods present us with the most enigmatic evidence for occupation. No Roman site has yet been found in the parish, although there are several stray finds consisting of one coin and twelve sherds of pottery. The coin, of Gordian, was discovered in 1935 in the grounds of the now demolished Mileham Hall on the north side of the village street nearly opposite the church¹. The pottery found during field walking was scattered in an apparently haphazard way in the vicinity of the village. Two sherds came from near the moat to the north of the village; one came from the north side of the central part of the village; three came from the rear gardens of Mileham Hall; one came from just to the west of the church; one came from just to the east of the church; and finally three came from the west end of the village.

In 1839, a square, silver, Roman dish with beaded edge and incised foliate ornament was ploughed up in an 'Alder Carr' somewhere in Mileham. It is now in the British Museum (British Museum 1964). Which wood this was is not recorded (Bryant undated, 150; Victoria County History of Norfolk I, 130). Only two woods stood in the parish in the early nineteenth century. There was one to the north of the village, called Mileham Wood in 1797 and Great Wood on the 25 in Ordnance Survey map. The other was in the centre of the parish and is called Horse Wood. The latter is perhaps the more likely spot, as the find spot was said to lie 'in the second Alder Carr between Mileham and Longham'. However, it is not low-lying and wet as alder carrs usually are.

We have, therefore, fourteen widely-scattered Roman finds from the parish, but the occupation site or sites from which they were derived has not been located. There is a concentration of material in the vicinity of the church, but not enough to suggest Roman occupation. It is possible that the sherds represent some post-Roman activity predating the introduction of Ipswich ware. This is, however, a suggestion which can only be verified by excavation.

THE MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD (Figs. 21 and 22)

Ipswich ware comes from the vicinity of the church, and from nowhere else in the village. About 120 sherds were found. These were equally divided between the fields to the south and east of the church. The area stretches for rather over 200 m from west to east and about 130 m from north to south, covering an area of nearly 2.5 ha (Fig. 21). The site is on slightly sloping ground which drops away to the south. The church stands at the north side of the site on the top of a slope and the south side is bordered by the edge of an area of flat damp ground. On the plan of the village (Fig. 22) it can be seen how the site is set apart from the present road system, to which it does not relate. Except for the church itself, there is nothing in the present village plan which can have been influenced by the site of the early village. The site of the church was, however, apparently determined by the location of this nucleus; it is reasonable to suggest (although it could only be proved by excavation) that the church was a pre-Danish foundation.

At Mileham the relative scarcity of Late Saxon pottery near the church shows that by the middle of the ninth century the village had moved further north away from the site of the church. (This is in marked contrast to other sites, such as Longham, where the distributions of Middle and Late Saxon overlap). There is little evidence of disturbance by later occupation on most of this site, and it would indeed be an ideal one to excavate.

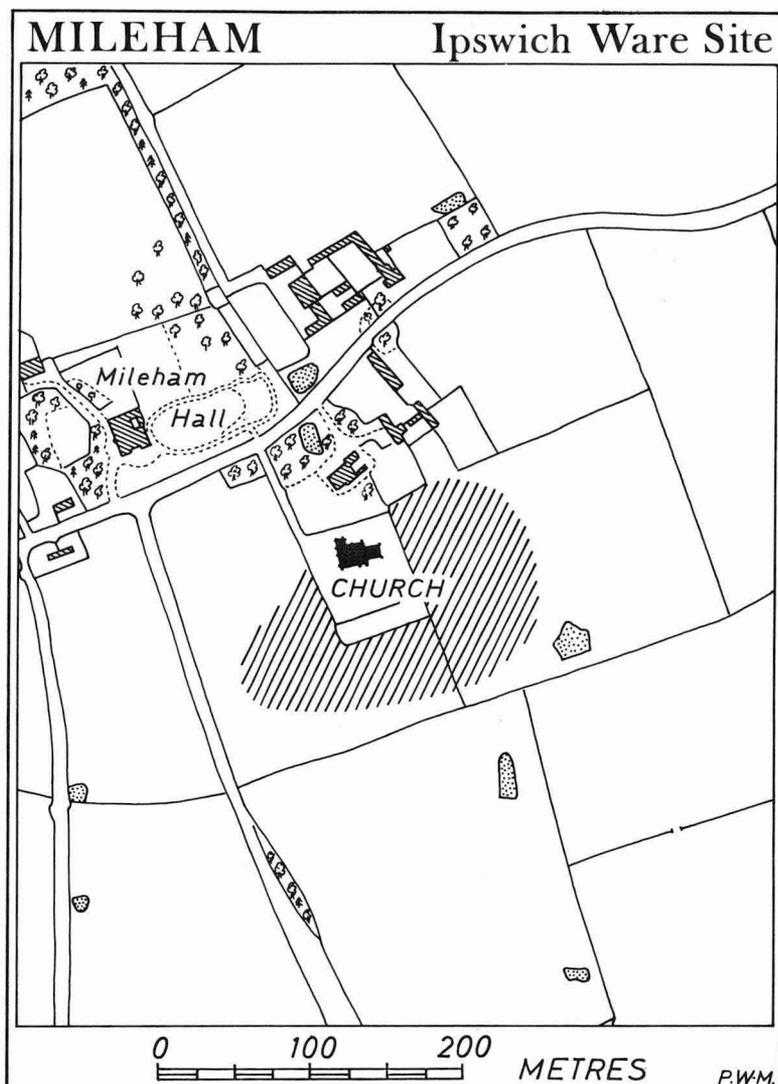


Fig.21. Mileham Ipswich ware site. Scale 1:5,000.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.23)

By Late Saxon times the pattern of settlement in Mileham had changed. The village had by then moved further north to occupy the sites of many of the present properties which lie along the village street at the east end of the modern village (Fig.22).

About sixty sherds of Thetford ware have been found in the village. Although this is much lower than the number of Ipswich ware sherds, this is due largely to the disproportionate time spent by the writer searching for the early pottery. The main weight of material comes from the fields along the main street at the east end of the village. The scatter of pottery shows that by the eleventh century the village must have occupied the street frontage on both sides of the road for a length of about 0.5 km. Domesday records a total male population of 111, a large number compared with the surrounding villages. By the eleventh century the present settlement pattern of Mileham had become established; the medieval plan represented more of an extension of this framework than any substantial alteration.

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.24)

After the Conquest a new element arrived to dominate village life - the motte-and-bailey castle (Blomefield 1808, 22; Braun 1942, 40; Carthew 1879, 10-16; Gentleman's

MILEHAM
MIDDLE SAXON POTTERY

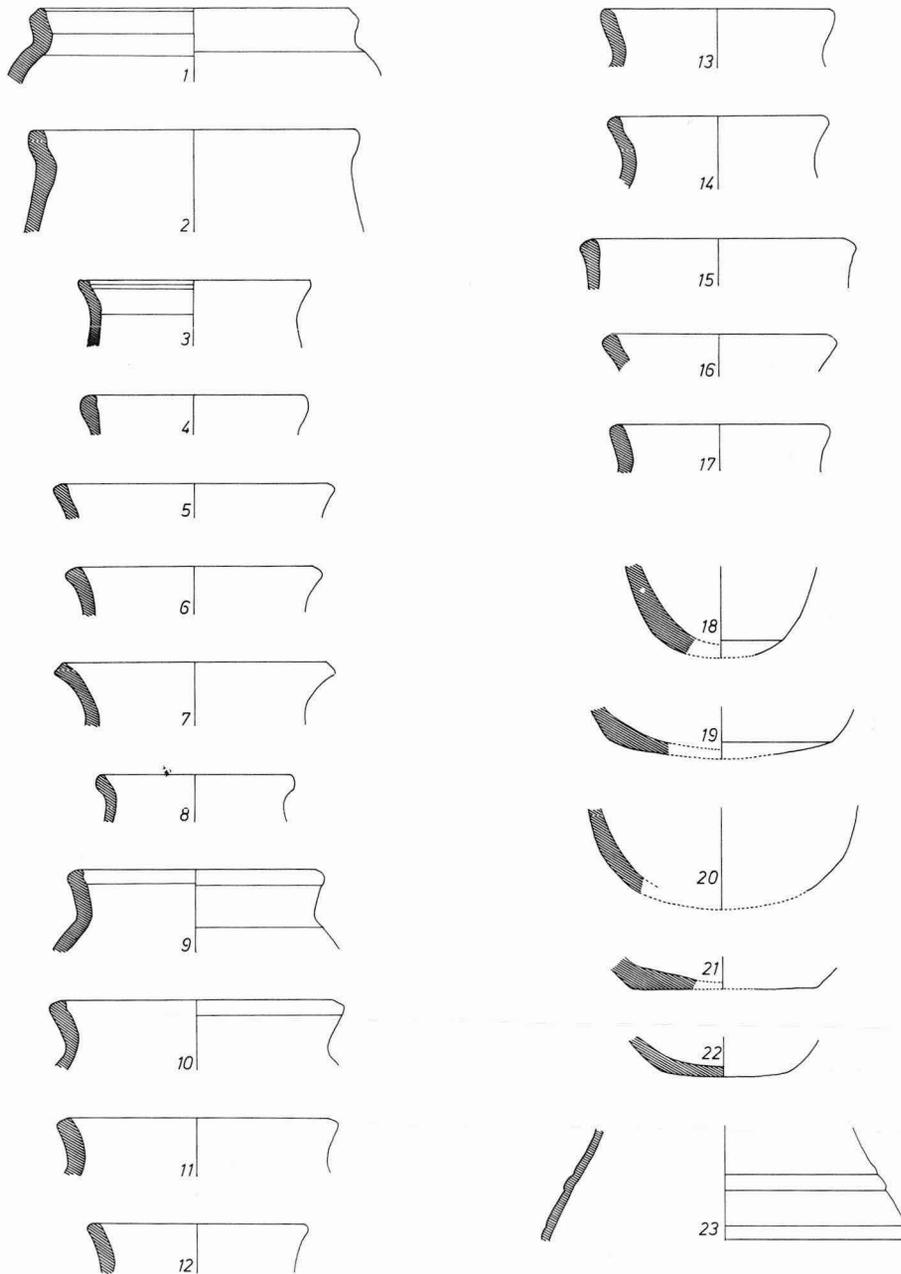


Fig.22. A selection of Ipswich ware from around Mileham church. Scale 1:4.

Magazine 1819, 513). At the Domesday survey the manor was held by the king; it was a large manor, valued at the time at £60. Henry I gave it to the Fitzalan family (Carthew 1877). The estates of Mileham included outlying manors in Litcham, Dunham, Thetford and Bittering. The castle in its present form is probably a Fitzalan construction of the early twelfth century. The motte and a small bailey stand within an outer enclosure. Excavation might show whether this outer bank and ditch formed an earlier ringwork. The fact that the bailey is so small suggests that it was built later than the ringwork and had to be laid out within a rather restricted space. On top of the motte stands a small, massively built, rectangular keep, now lost in the undergrowth². Traces of flint walls can also be seen in the north bank of the bailey, but not in the outer encircling earthwork. A motte and bailey within a ringwork is a strange arrangement, not paralleled in East Anglia.

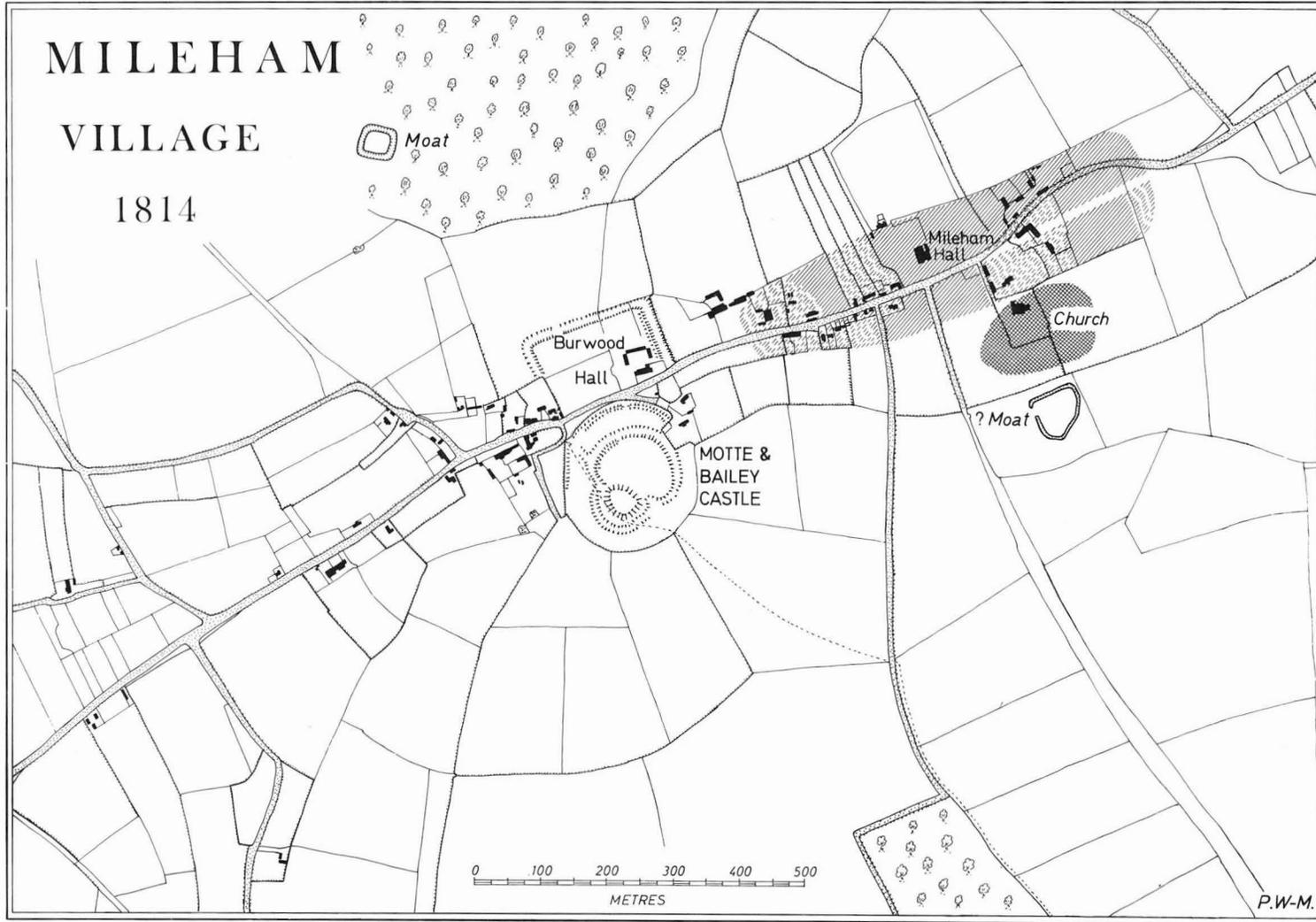


Fig.23. Mileham in 1814. Double shading indicates Middle Saxon settlement, and single shading Late Saxon settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

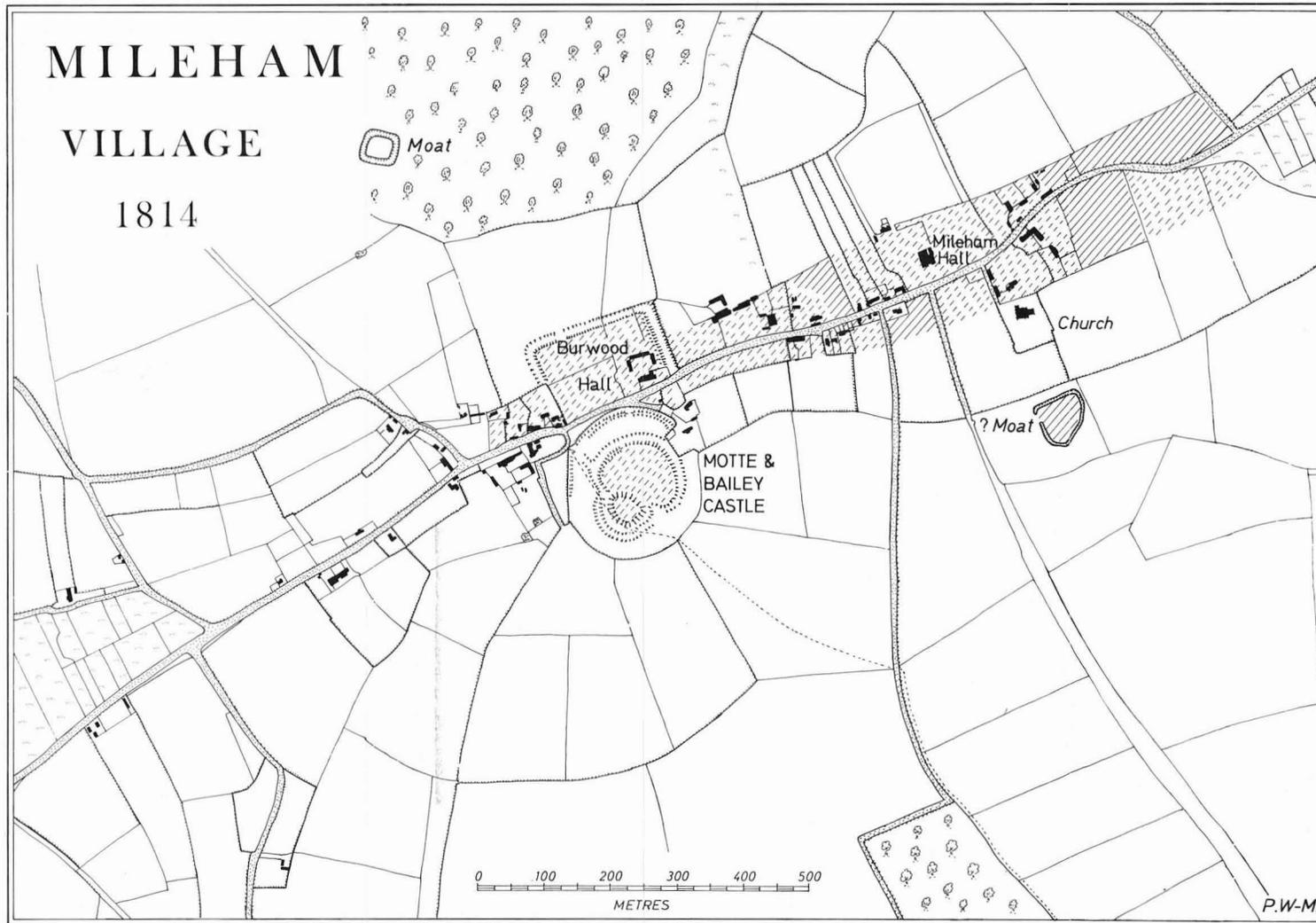


Fig.24. Mileham in 1814. Shading indicates medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

On the north side of the castle, across the street, is a large rectangular enclosure which appears to be a later extension of the fortifications. Excavation across the eastern defences of this enclosure has revealed twelfth-century pottery sealed in the soil line under the bank³. The bank and ditch are both much larger on this side, so perhaps at some stage this part of the earthwork was refurbished. The north enclosure was apparently thrown up across the line of the main street. These additional earthworks would have provided a very effective method of controlling the traffic on what was probably one of the main east-to-west routes across Norfolk in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This road was still the main route from King's Lynn to Norwich in the seventeenth century (Ogilby 1675).

A field study of the minor earthworks and field boundaries in this parish is particularly rewarding, for one can still see the boundary of the old castle lands stretching in a great arc to the south of the castle. There is a continuous line of hedgerows from the south-west side of the castle for 1.5 km sweeping down to the south and then turning eastwards to the Launditch. The north end of this line where it joins the castle ringwork can be seen in Fig. 23. At the other end, the line stops abruptly at the Launditch, and there is no suggestion that the course was resumed on the other side. Around the south-east side the Launditch itself was used as a boundary. From the east side of the castle a similar hedgerow line curls past the south side of the church, and only at the east end does it diverge from the present hedgerows to rest at the head of the Black Water. From here the Black Water and then the ancient Stanfield/Mileham parish boundary completed the circuit. Although this land division may be twelfth-century, the Launditch and the Stanfield/Mileham parish boundary were probably already well established by that date.

The size of the area enclosed by these boundaries is just over 280 ha, a quarter of the total acreage of the parish. In 1249 John Fitzalan had a park in his manor of Mileham. In 1302 a capital messuage in Mileham consisted of 93 ha of arable, 1.5 ha of meadow, the same of pasture, as well as herbage and underwood in the park (Cal. Inq. IV, 53). In 1559 Mileham Park and wood was sold to Thos. Gresham; the park contained a total of 209 ha.

This demesne boundary has a parallel at Castle Rising; on a map of 1588 a large oval-shaped area of similar size was shown on the south side of the castle. Like that of Mileham it is still followed by modern hedgerows, and the two ends of the continuous boundary join onto the castle at either side. There is another comparable example outlined by the parish boundary at New Buckenham, although it is linked to the new town and not the castle. Earthworks of another boundary bank enclosing a smaller area can be found at Horningtoft (Chapter 6).

Immediately south of the church, just inside the demesne boundary, there was a ditched enclosure which was levelled and ploughed in about 1965. It stood in damp ground, but the interior was no doubt effectively drained by the narrow 'moat' and the possible demesne boundary ditch (Fig. 23). It was a rather irregular enclosure with a straight northern side, and entrance in the north-west corner. Seventeen sherds of Early Medieval pottery have been collected from the site; it is, therefore, datable to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, and it may have contained a subsidiary building for the castle, possibly connected with the demesne farm.

The medieval pottery provides the greatest weight of material from the village. Wherever it is possible to examine the street frontage between the castle to the west and a point 400 m beyond the church to the east, pottery is found to be fairly thickly scattered. The medieval village was restricted largely to this area; little material comes from the road frontage beyond, in either direction. No signs of occupation can be found, for instance, along the north side of the green at the east end of the village. There may have been medieval occupation just to the west of the castle, but this area is densely settled today and it is not available for investigation. There was certainly none further west along the street.



Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate I. Aerial photograph of Kempstone from the north-east showing the church and Lodge Farm, with an earthwork of an enclosure to the south of the farm house and Manor Farm behind (Fig.11), 1953. (Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No. LF13)



Plate II. Vertical aerial photograph of Longham showing the church, Longham Hall Farm with Longham Manor moated site to the south close to the now disused airfield (Fig. 14). (Ministry of Defence Air Force Department photograph, Crown Copyright: No.5076 3G/TUD/UK/100 V Pt.1, 30th March 1946)

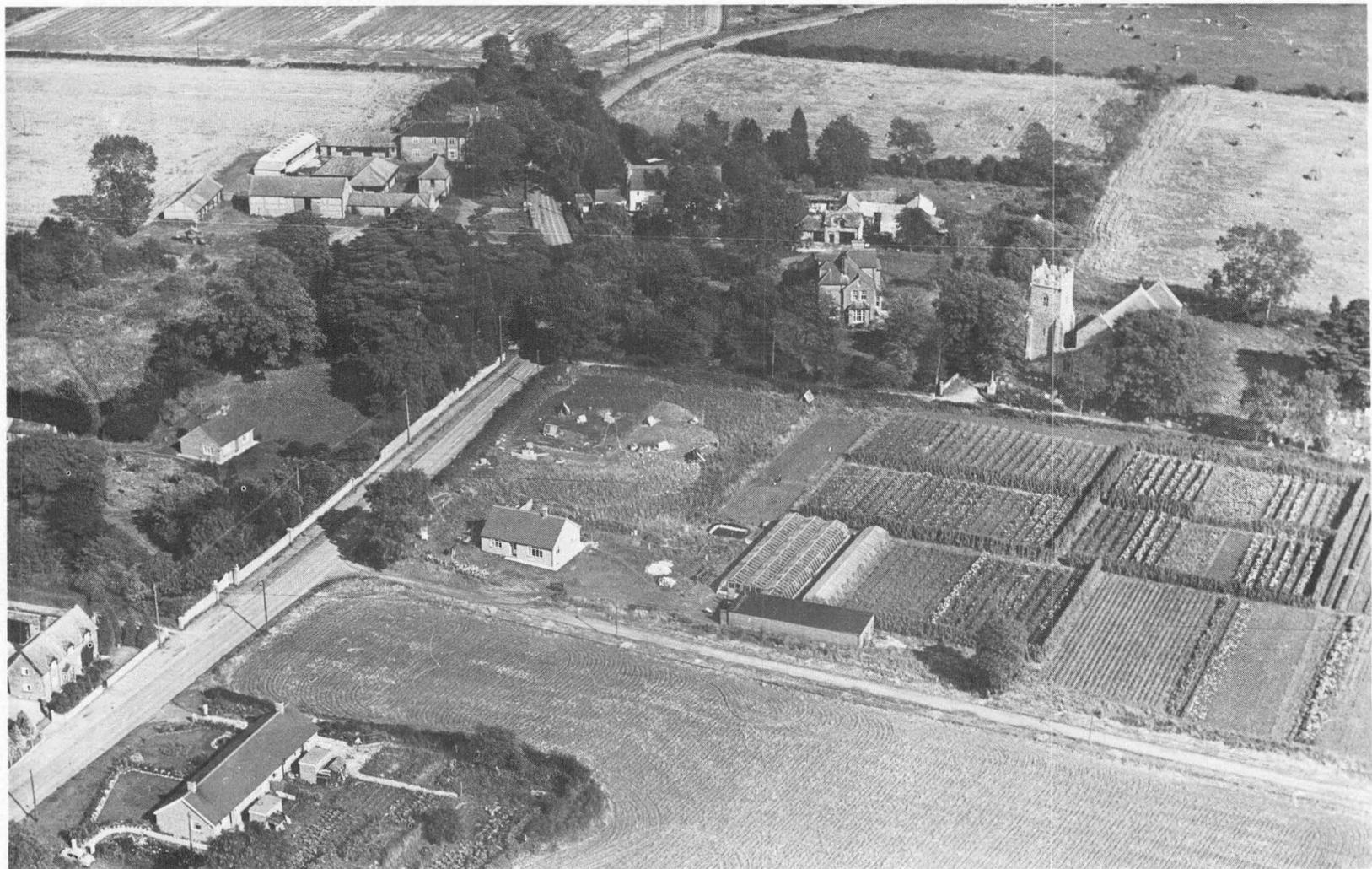


Photo: Wing Commander Ken Wallis

TF 9219/B/AEG2

Plate III. Aerial photograph of the east end of Mileham village from the south-west showing the church set back from the main street (Fig. 21), 1965.

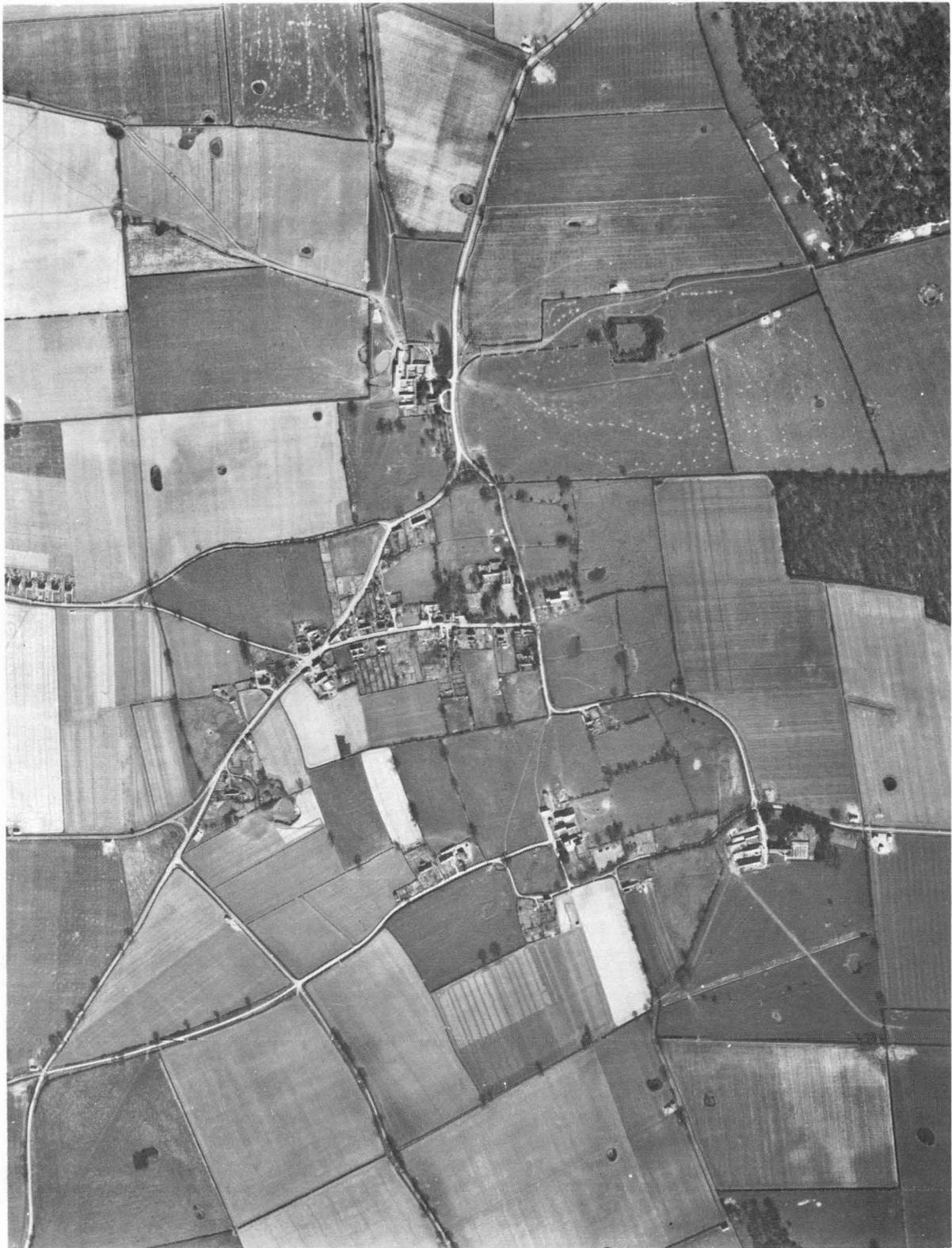


Plate IV. Vertical aerial photograph of Tittleshall showing Tittleshall village, Peakhall moated site to the north and the lost village of Sutton to the south (Fig.27).
(Ministry of Defence Air Force Department photograph, Crown Copyright: No.5036 V Pt.1: 3G/TUD/UK/100, 30th March 1946)



Photo: Derek Edwards

TF 8522/A/ALY 9

Plate V. Aerial photograph of Thorpe Green, Weasenham St. Peter, from the south with the new road across the bottom of the picture (Fig.34), 9th August 1977.



Photo: Derek Edwards

TF 8722/A/ALY 11

Plate VI. Aerial photograph of Wellingham from the north showing the church, Manor Farm and the small village behind (Fig.38), 9th August 1977.



Plate VII. Vertical aerial photograph of Caldecote deserted village, now in Oxborough parish, showing the farm buildings, the site of the church just to the north and the village earthworks to the south (Fig.43). (Ministry of Defence Air Force Department photograph, Crown Copyright: part of No.2188 FS 106G/UK.1634, 9th July 1946)



Photo: Derek Edwards

TF 6602/B/ADC23

Plate VIII. Aerial photograph of West Dereham from the east showing the church on the hill with the site of the medieval village on low ground to the south, 12th July 1974.

Archaeological Evidence

Set back from the street on either side are two meandering hedge lines which were the rear boundaries of medieval properties. Although neither of them was entirely continuous in the early nineteenth century, it is not difficult to complete the pattern. In one place the north side of the churchyard follows one of these boundaries. Those properties on the north side of the street were much deeper than their counterparts on the opposite side.

How far this belt of medieval occupation was subdivided into particular properties is not easy to gather from the early nineteenth-century map. In places one may guess that a particular enclosed area is a residual medieval property, but there has certainly been a tremendous amount of shifting and alteration of the property structure since the Middle Ages.

One interesting sidelight on the daily life of the medieval population emerges from the general distribution of the pottery and how it relates to field manuring. As one might expect the material is not limited just to habitation sites. On the north side, where pottery can be found, the area covered extends beyond for at least three hundred yards. However, on the south side, behind the demesne boundary, one rarely finds pottery. Obviously, although the medieval peasants were prepared to manure their own fields with domestic refuse from their farms, they seldom did so on fields of their lord.

THE POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD

In the absence of earlier maps, that of the Enclosure Award of 1814 has had to be used to reconstruct the post-medieval settlement pattern. The map shows that after the Middle Ages there was a shift of the village nucleus to the west away from the area between the castle and the church. The grounds of the late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century Mileham Hall, now demolished, occupied a considerable length of street frontage near the church; further west a frontage 300 m long had been taken over by just one farm by the early nineteenth century. To the east of Mileham Hall one farm unit was occupying a similar area. Further east, the end of the medieval village had been completely deserted.

III. SUMMARY

The first definite traces of occupation near the village are Middle Saxon. A site covering nearly 2.5 ha has been found around the church, and it is suggested that the church was founded by the ninth century and that subsequently the village moved north from its old site to lie along the main street. The village was then well placed to become a prosperous settlement in a sheltered location on a busy road. After the abandonment of stretches of the Roman east-to-west road the route through Mileham became part of the main line of communication between east Norfolk and the King's Lynn area. By the eleventh century the settlement stretched for 0.5 km along both sides of the street. During the succeeding centuries it expanded westwards at least as far as the motte-and-bailey castle and probably for a short distance beyond. The castle was no doubt built in Mileham because of the strategic importance of the village. An extensive area of the parish was apparently laid out as demesne land. This is presumably the area occupied by the park from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.

The majority of the properties between the church and the castle later fell vacant or were incorporated into larger units. In post-medieval times the new population centre lay to the west of the castle and has remained there to this day.

REFERENCES

1. Norwich Castle Museum records.
2. The dimensions of the keep are 9 x 11 m. There is a central partition wall on the long axis. The outer walls are c. 3 m thick. In the end wall of a cottage east of the castle re-used window and door stones can be seen, no doubt taken from the keep.

3. Excavations by Mr.M.Taylor across the defences found twelfth-century pottery in the old soil line. Note in Norfolk Research Committee Bulletin, 18, 1969, 7.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1086 Milham, Meleham; 1220 Mileham.

10. STANFIELD

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Stanfield is a small parish lying to the east of Mileham. The shape of the parish might suggest that it was created out of a part of Mileham (Fig.4), but this would conflict with the apparent early date of the parish boundary between the two (p.40).

The village is in the middle of the parish, and the church lies slightly apart from the village (Fig.25). Two nineteenth-century houses, the rectory and the manor house, stand near the church; they are both on the sites of buildings shown on the 1815 map. The manor house is surrounded by a moat which is partly filled in. The moat was complete in 1815 and one can see that the entrance was then on the south side where there was also a group of outbuildings. The boundaries of small plots of land on the side of these outbuildings indicated the outline of an outer enclosure.

Unlike Mileham and Longham, the manor site was very near the church. David Dymond has shown that the proximity of the church to the manor house was a common feature in Suffolk where he has calculated that out of fifty-two 'isolated' churches in West Suffolk at least thirty-six are beside existing halls or moated sites (Dymond 1968, 29). The pattern frequently occurs elsewhere (Page 1927, 449).

The church and the two houses stand on the south end of a spur of land created by two small southward-flowing tributaries of the Black Water. On this ridge the fields to the north of the church are on an area of plateau gravel which makes them stony, hence possibly the place-name 'stony field'.

The old common is now much obscured. It occupied an area of high ground on the west side of the parish. Although one can see how the houses along its east side are set well back from the nineteenth-century enclosure road, the boundary of the common is not immediately obvious. There has been much uprooting of this old hedge line since the Enclosures, but the frontage of the houses, the line of ponds and a low bank still point to the edge of the old green in various places. The arrangement of enclosure fields on the common is markedly different from the field pattern further east.

In 1815 when the enclosure map was drawn, the original sides of the common to the east and south were still intact, even though the parish boundary along the west side had been modified (p.40). This preservation of the common edge contrasts with Longham where in the same year nearly all the boundaries of Southhall Green were uprooted under the influence of Thomas Coke of Holkham. Stanfield was not owned by the Coke family; no such great farm improvement schemes were carried out here, and it was only over the enclosed common that new hedges were planted.

There was one other small area of common near the village; this lay to the north of the church. It started as a roadway near the church and then turned to the north and widened out into a long narrow green. One farm stands at the north end of this, but no trace of medieval settlement can be found around it.

There appears to have been comparatively little interference with the field system in this parish during the early part of the nineteenth century. One can see today a pattern of

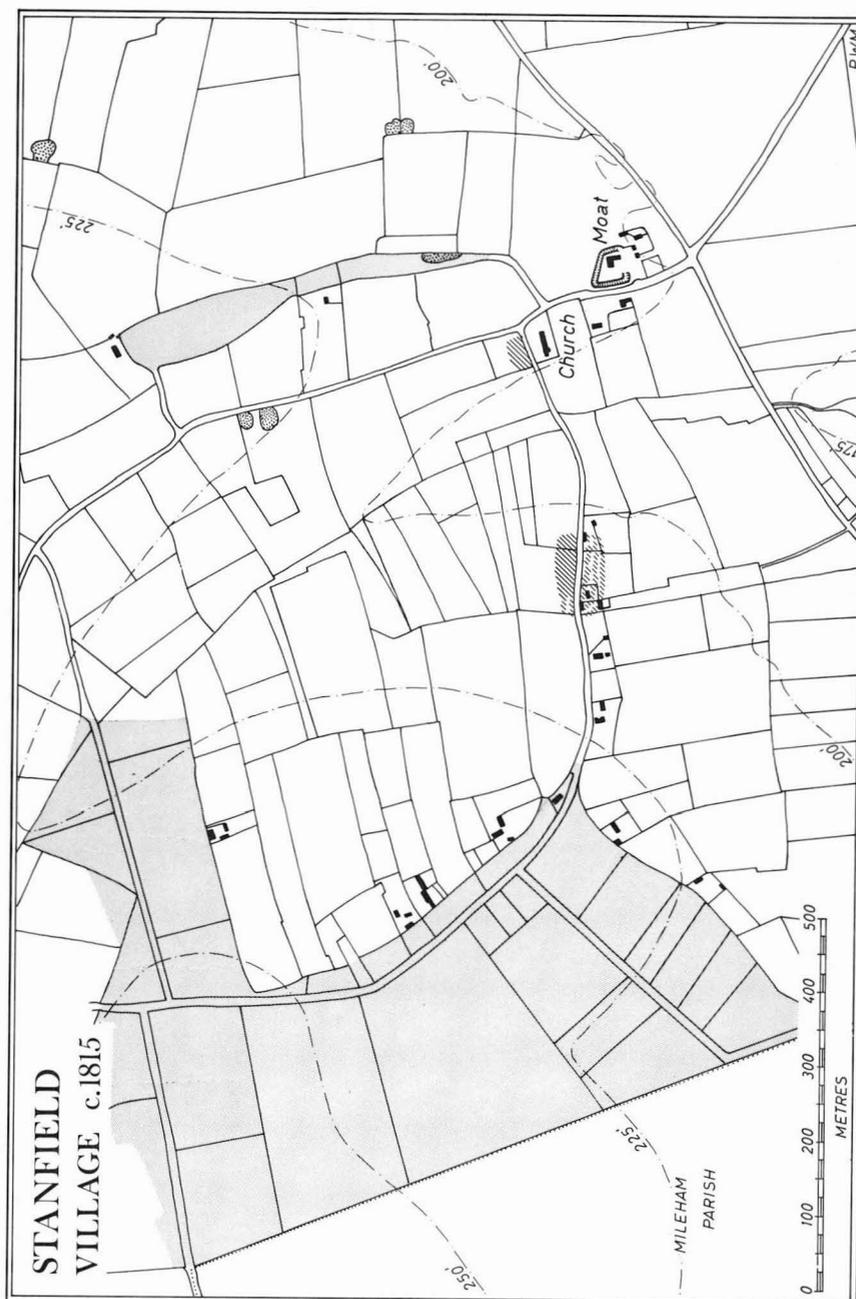


Fig. 25. Stanfield in 1815. The stippled areas indicate common land in the late eighteenth century. Shading indicates areas of Late Saxon settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

hedgerows which is the result of the slow breakdown of the strip system since the Middle Ages. The alterations of the past 150 years have partly obscured this pattern, but on the Enclosure Award map many of the strips are shown still fossilised as long narrow fields. The outlines of some of the furlongs at that time were also clear. The old strips showed up well on either side of the main Stanfield to Mileham road and also to the north-west of the church.

The small irregular fields near the village contrast noticeably with the larger fields with straighter hedges to the north, south and east. Although the inaccuracies of the nineteenth-century survey slightly distort the overall picture, when the map is re-drawn (Fig. 25), an area of old closes stands out as a block to the north-west of the church. There the fields were smaller, narrower, and more compact than they were elsewhere. This neat unit is surrounded on the east, west and partly on the north by areas of old common and on the south by the village street. The church and the manor site were set slightly apart from this area, which might represent an area of early clearance, although there is no evidence for its origin.

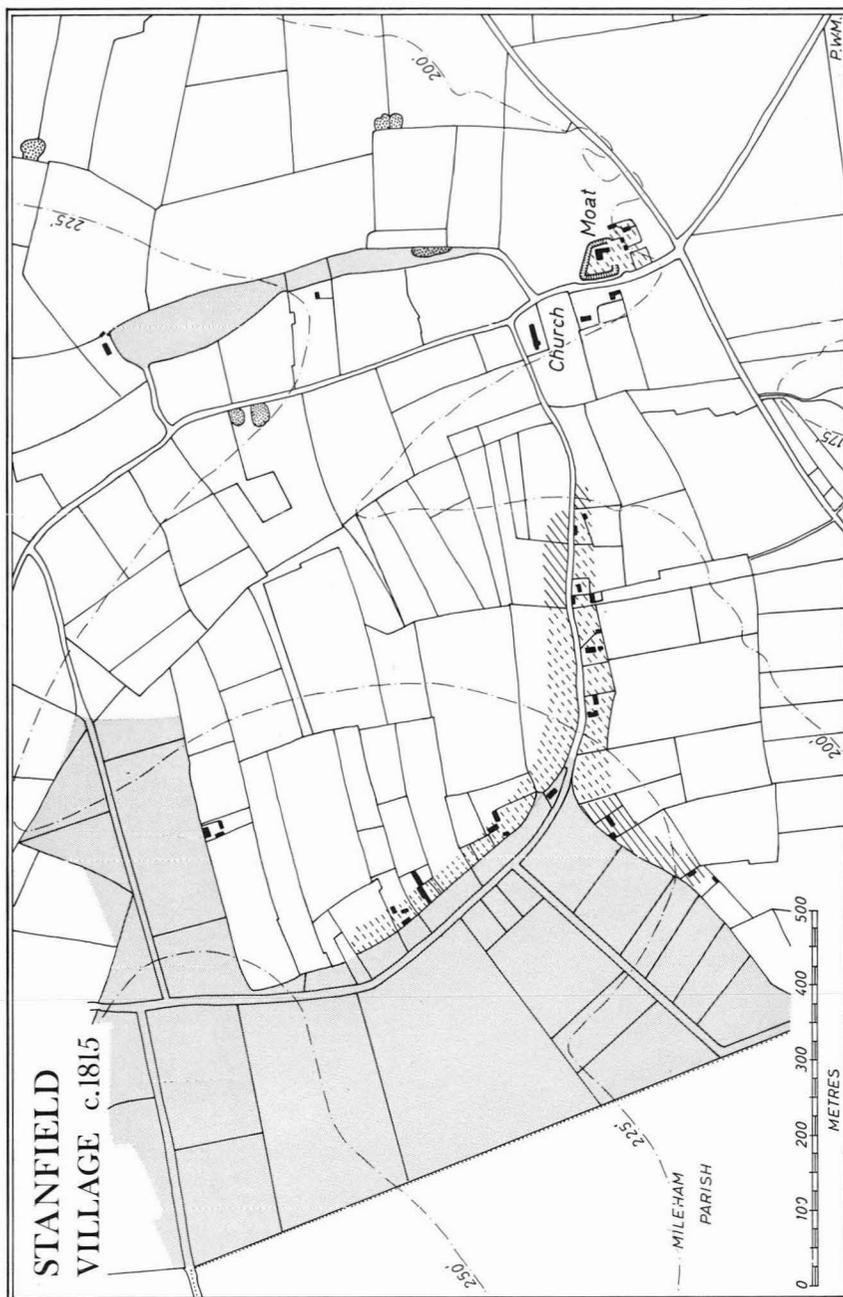


Fig.26. Stanfield in 1815. The stippled areas indicate common land in the late eighteenth century. Shading indicates areas of medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

While it is difficult to search for material within the present village, sufficient space is available in three places: (a) near the church, (b) along the north side of Church Lane which runs westwards from the church to the village and (c) along the south-east side of the green. The number of sherds collected from this village is small.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig. 25)

Some evidence of occupation comes from the north side of the church on the opposite side of the deep sunken street, which in itself must indicate a prolonged period of use. There are sherds of Thetford ware here and further west across the valley, also on the north side of Church Lane. The valley bottom was too wet for habitation and it effectively divided this early village in two.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig. 26)

One may assume that the moated site, probably with its enclosure, was there at least by the fourteenth century. Rectors are recorded at Stanfield by 1311 (Blomefield 1808, 52), and they may also have lived nearby. Otherwise there was little activity near the church after the Late Saxon period. The village now lay further west half down Church Lane and half alongside the common.

POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The decline of the population in the fourteenth century which was a general phenomenon in Western Europe (Duby 1968, 306-9) can be seen clearly in villages such as Stanfield. From the fourteenth century, until quite recently, the overall picture was one of gradual shrinkage. The pottery shows that after the Middle Ages there was little further settlement on the north side of Church Lane. On the south side the street frontage thinned out, as the settlement did around the green. On the south side of the green, where there is good evidence for medieval settlement, there are no houses today.

III. SUMMARY

A small village was first established in about the tenth century on the gravel spur beside a small stream. It started on the south side of a block of land which is fairly clearly defined, but not easy to interpret. During the Middle Ages the accent was on settlement near a common, well removed from the pre-Conquest village site. After the Middle Ages the decline in the rural population brought about the disintegration of the medieval plan. The apparently haphazard scatter of houses at the west end of the village is the relic of a once more populous medieval green village.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr. O.K. Schram's notes: 1086 Stanfelda; 1196 Stanfeld; 1269 Stanfeld; 1302 Stanfeld; 1384 Stanfeld.

11. TITTLESHALL AND SUTTON

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Tittleshall, or Tittleshall-cum-Godwick as it was known until this century, covers nearly 1400 ha of high boulder clay upland on the watershed between the Nar and Wensum rivers. It is the largest parish in the Launditch Hundred after North Elmham. Unlike North Elmham, however, its size is not primarily a reflection of the relative importance of the village; it is due to the desertion of three separate villages around Tittleshall, and the amalgamation of most of their lands into the one parish. Godwick is a deserted village with fine surviving earthworks. Its parish occupied the north-east corner of Tittleshall, and the old boundary between the two parishes can be found on the late sixteenth-century maps, which survive for both. The second deserted village is Sutton. The site of this village was lost until it was re-located during this survey; and it was not included by Allison in his list of lost villages (Allison 1955). It lay close to Tittleshall village in the vicinity of Cokesford Farm (Fig.27); this area is called Sutton Green on a late sixteenth-century map. The third village was Greynston (Chapter 18). Of this cluster of four medieval villages only Tittleshall has survived.

Sutton was spelt Suttuna in the Domesday survey and the few recorded later spellings do not vary at all from this form. The topography suggests that despite its proximity to Tittleshall (unusually close for pre-Conquest villages) it should be regarded as the southern TUN.

There is a rich collection of manuscript maps for Tittleshall. These documents are: (a) a map of 1596 for Tittleshall only (Godwick has a separate contemporary map); (b) an undated map of c. 1600 showing only some scattered fields in Tittleshall, each field described in detail; (c) a large scale map c. 1725 of both Tittleshall and Godwick; (d) a small-scale map of 1779 and 1799 for both parishes in the Holkham atlases; (e) an 1839 Tithe map for Tittleshall and Godwick. Copies of all these are at Holkham Hall.

In 1596 there were still many areas of common scattered around the outlying parts of the parish, for in a large parish, without a high population, there was not the pressure to enclose the waste land for arable. The commons survived into the early eighteenth century, but by Faden's survey of 1797 all had gone except one small part beside the Tittleshall to Wellingham road and this has only been ploughed up within the last ten years. Similar large-scale eighteenth-century enclosures by the Holkham estate took place at Weasenham All Saints and Kempstone; they represent the final phase in a long series of intakes of the heath and waste land which had been a part of the expanding agriculture of the area since the open fields were laid out. Sutton Green had been three times the size of the area it covered in 1596, for all the fields to the south-east were large closes, quite different from the adjacent open fields. By the sixteenth century the commons were being replaced by these larger closes rather than by open fields.

Except for Sutton Green all the commons were around the edge of the parish, and they were all, except for the common near Grenstein Farm, on relatively high ground.

The village in 1905 (Fig.27 and Plate IV) was surprisingly nucleated for a boulder clay upland village; the two nucleated villages of Mileham and Elmham are both on gravel in sheltered valleys. The village lay along the one main street, the High Street, which

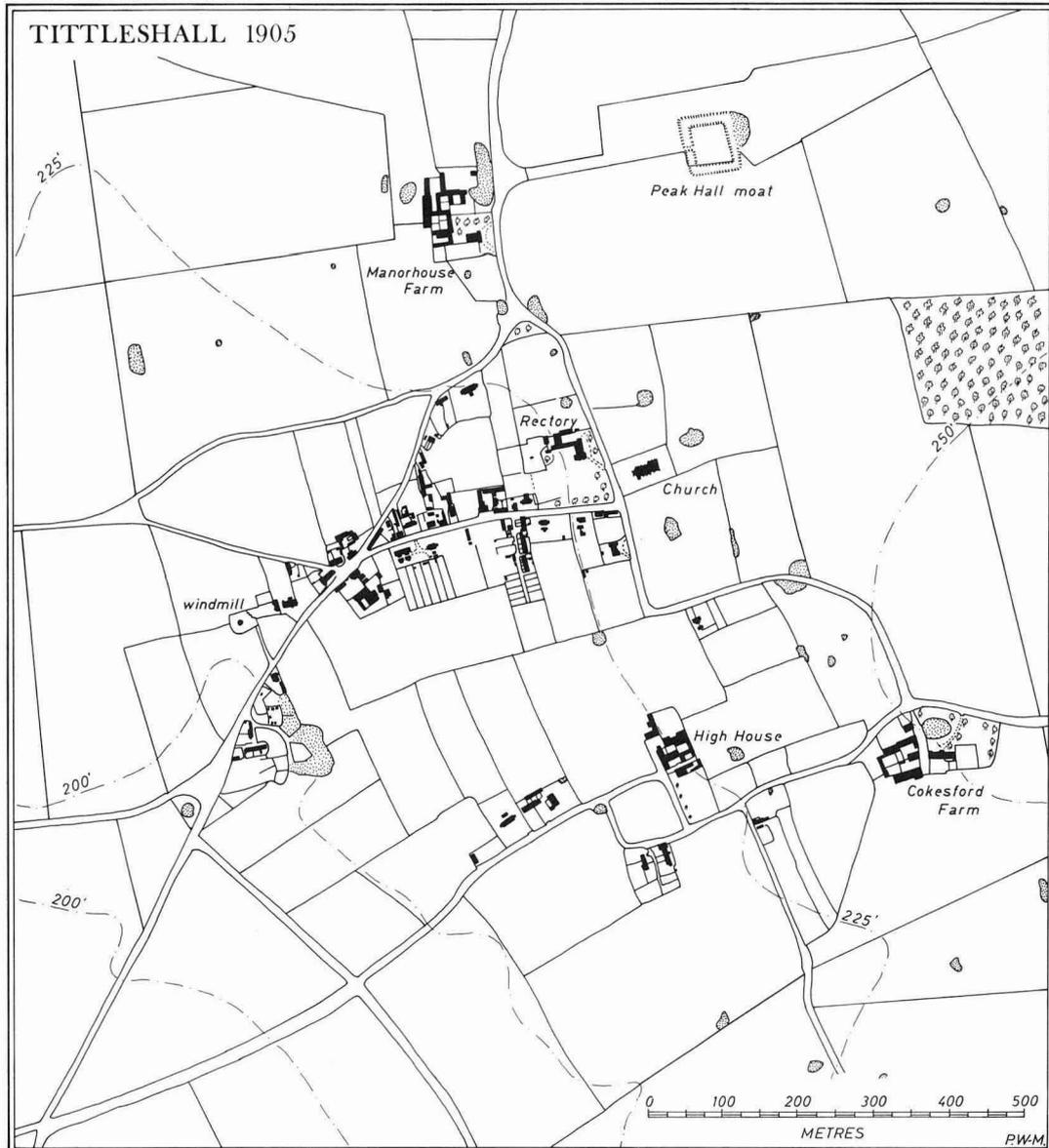


Fig.27. Tittleshall and Sutton in 1905. Scale 1:10,000.

ran westwards from the church, and nearly all the other groups of cottages were in this area. Outside the village centre there were three large farms: Manorhouse Farm, High House Farm and Cokesford Farm. Around High House was the only other cluster of dwellings.

This pattern can best be interpreted when it is compared with the village plan of 1596 (Fig.28). At that time the main street was in a less developed form; there were only a few houses on its south side and those on the north were clearly resting on the ends of the open field strips. The plan suggests that this is a secondary settlement.

The site of Manorhouse Farm had a green-edge location on the west side of Peakhall Green. The buildings in this area on the map appear to be remnants of a much reduced medieval settlement.

The third cluster of dwellings around the site of High House Farm was a great deal larger in 1596 than it was in 1905 and had almost as many houses as the main street itself. This is a reflection of the dual origins of Tittleshall. The northern village near the

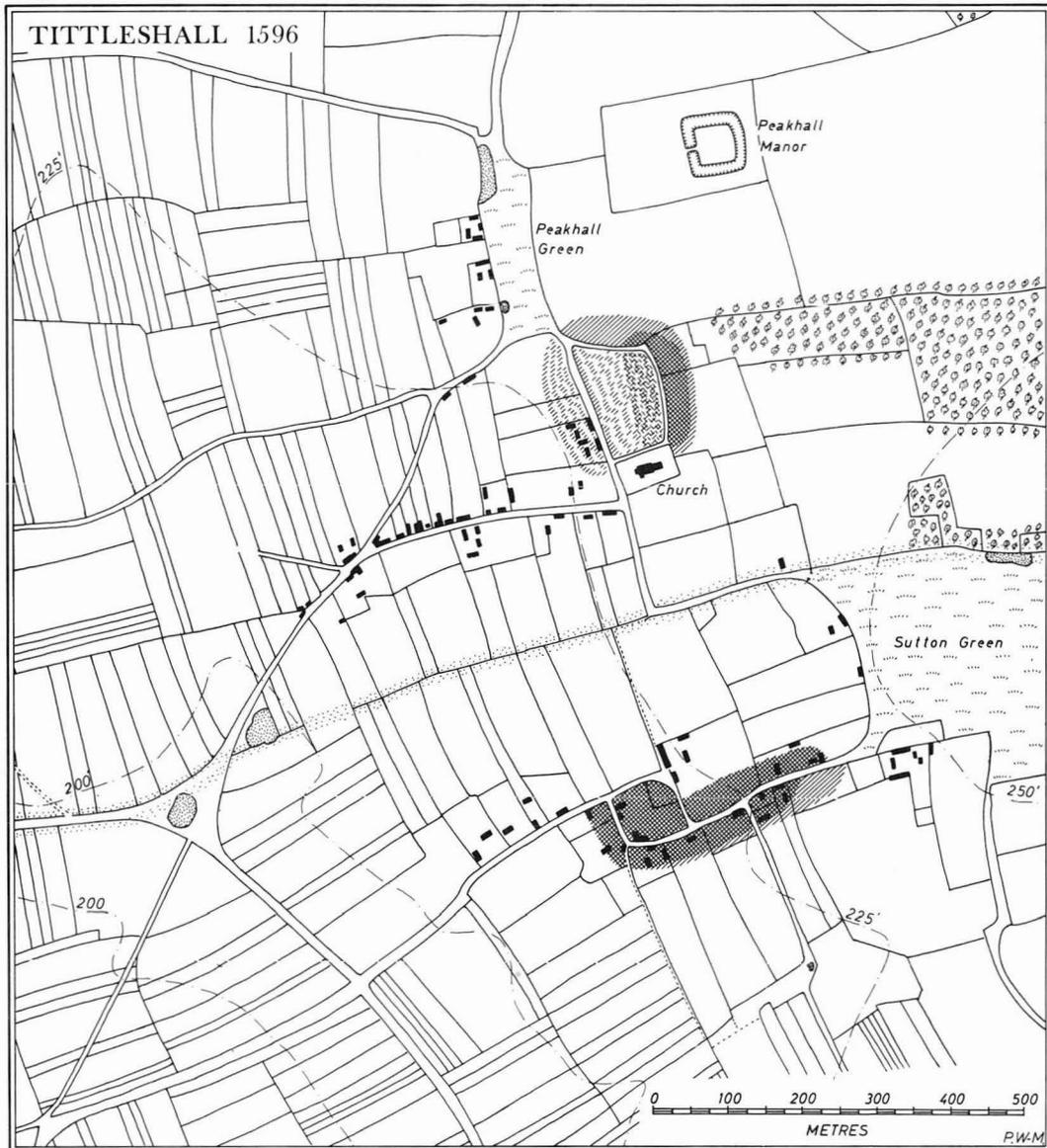


Fig.28. Tittleshall and Sutton in 1596. Double shading indicates areas of Middle Saxon settlements, and single shading Late Saxon settlements. The line of a Roman road runs from east to west across the map. Scale 1:10,000.

church was the successor to the medieval village of Tittleshall. The southern hamlet was the village of Sutton which gave its name to Sutton Green.

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

ROMAN PERIOD (Fig.28)

Two sherds of Roman pottery, one colour-coated and the other a grey coarse ware, were found in the vicinity of Sutton. There was no known Romano-British settlement site in the vicinity, and it is possible that they came with field manure from a Roman settlement elsewhere.

Bagshawe (1977) and the writer (1971, 146-7) have both suggested that a Roman road passes through the parish. The course of the route running west to east across Tittleshall can be seen on Fig.28. It ran almost exactly midway between Tittleshall and Sutton villages along the north side of Sutton Green.

MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.28)

No early Saxon site has yet been located and the first reliable traces of settlement start in the succeeding centuries when both Sutton and Tittleshall were first occupied. The two sites lie opposite each other on either side of the Roman road. A total of ten Ipswich ware sherds have been found on the two sites, and their distribution indicates approximately the locations of both early villages. However, with only this number of sherds the areas shown as Middle Saxon settlement in Fig.28 should be viewed with great caution. The amount of fieldwalking on these two sites was limited.

Sutton lay in the same position it occupied throughout its history. Not sufficient material has been collected to assess the relative importance of the various parts of the street frontage, but pottery lies scattered along both sides for a distance of over 300 m. If this was all in use at one time, then the first village was comparatively large, but the evidence certainly does not permit too bold an interpretation. As the site was occupied throughout the Middle Ages and afterwards, the evidence has become too obscured by later materials to give a good impression of the early site. This village is interesting, though, because it is the only possible Middle Saxon village street found in this survey which is still in use today. The long use of this may explain why the street has sunk so deeply below ground level.

Middle Saxon Tittleshall stood to the north of the present parish church, and the street which ran northwards from the east end of the graveyard in 1596 was possibly the village street. Sherds have been discovered along the east side of this road; the opposite frontage was not available for field walking. The length of the Middle Saxon site was approximately 200 m.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.28)

Sutton stayed on the same site, although it probably shrank from its original size; Thetford ware was found only on the north side of the street.

Tittleshall probably grew at this time, but the local conditions severely hamper fieldwork in the area of the early village. One can assume that it expanded to the west to occupy most of the rectangle of streets north of the church.

Although Sutton and Tittleshall in their early days were of roughly similar size, by the Domesday survey Sutton was apparently already the minor partner; only twelve people were recorded in the survey, while in Tittleshall there were thirty-two.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.29)

Sutton remained a street settlement throughout its life. The archaeology supports the evidence on the sixteenth-century map in showing that there was little medieval activity around the west end of Sutton Green; indeed there had never been much expansion in that direction. The village was limited very much to its original site, probably because it started to decline at an early date. It is unusual to find a village which apparently maintained such a constant plan.

Tittleshall, however, did not remain static: Peakhall Green took the overflow from the original site and there was a migration first towards this green and later down High Street towards the west.

The medieval Peakhall moated site is a fine one. Fig.28 and Plate IV show the outer enclosure which surrounded the moat. Soil marks within the enclosure, which is now ploughed, still reveal the traces of the manor outbuildings.

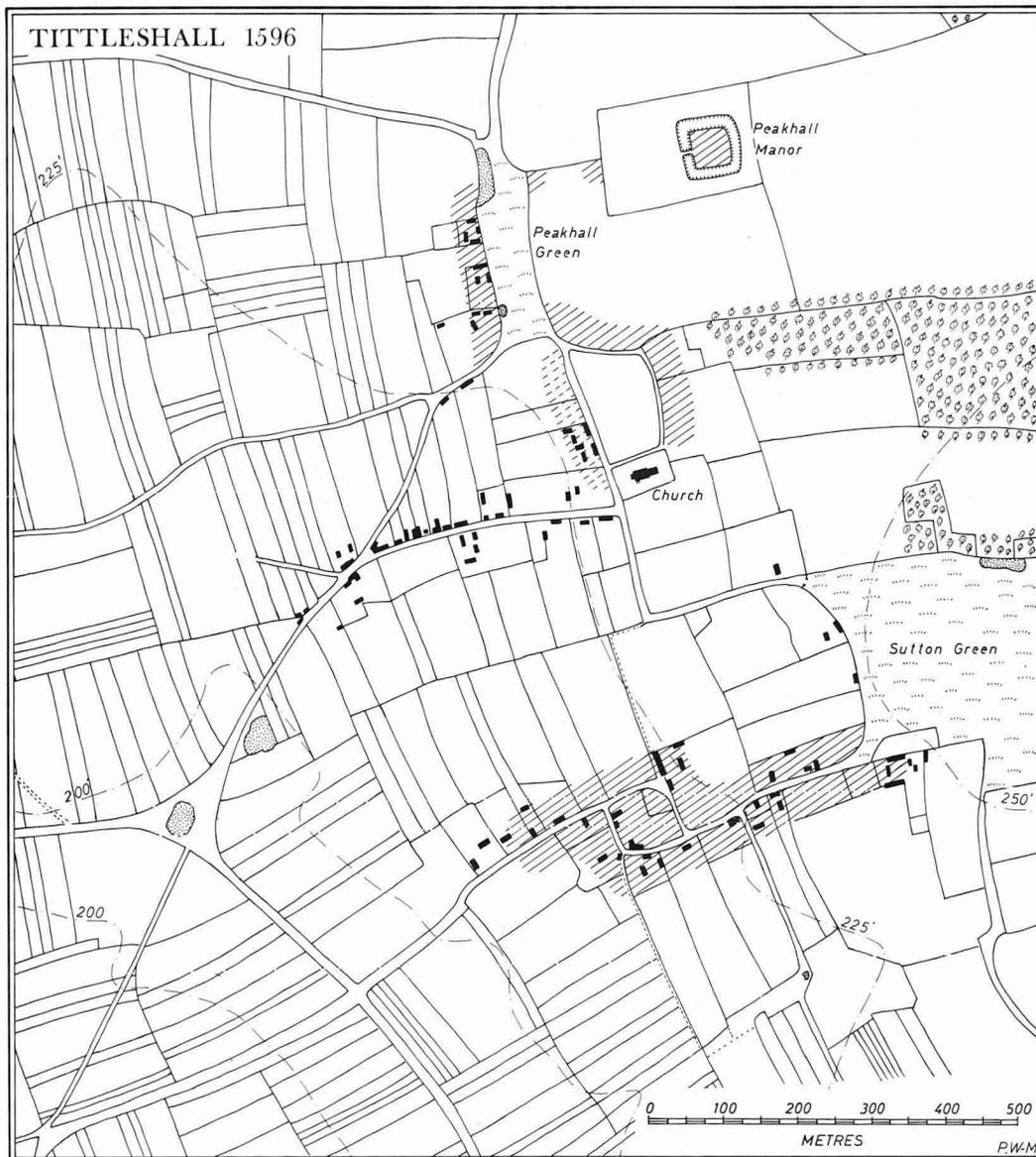


Fig. 29. Tittleshall and Sutton in 1596. The shading indicates areas of the two medieval settlements. Scale 1:10,000.

Careful searching along the main street has failed to locate medieval occupation material, and it is safe to assume that this was a late medieval shift of the village from its nuclei north of the church and Peakhall Green.

Tittleshall had a church at the time of the Domesday survey, but Sutton was, possibly, by then already a subsidiary hamlet of Tittleshall and never had one.

III. SUMMARY

This survey has revealed the pre-Danish site of the previously unlocated lost village of Sutton and also a similar site for Tittleshall. The Roman road may have, to some extent, influenced the plans and locations of both pre-Conquest villages. The road patterns in both areas are aligned with, or at right-angles to, the direction of this road. The two sites were on opposite sides of the road and at the same distance from it. Sutton had become the minor partner of these two villages by the Late Saxon period and it was, apparently, always without its own church.

The medieval site of Tittleshall, although largely inaccessible and, therefore, difficult to study, appears to be largely a deserted village. It is actually a good example of a shift of a village site. Sutton did not follow the standard pattern of expansion around a green and remained on its Middle Saxon site probably because it never experienced any vigorous growth after the ninth century.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1086 Titeshala; 1166 Titeleshale; 1200 Titleshal; 1287 Titeleshal.

1086 Suttuna; 1207 Sutton; 1333 Sutton.

12. WEASENHAM ALL SAINTS

THE WEASENHAMS

The parishes of Weasenhams All Saints and Weasenhams Saint Peter, incorporating the lost village of Kipton (Allison 1955, 151), cover an area of 1320 ha. They lie on high open ground more typical of the west Norfolk scarpland than the central Norfolk boulder clay area. The geology is still boulder clay, but it is only 5 km further west, roughly along the line of Peddar's Way, that the drift geology gives way to the underlying chalk escarpment. These two parishes lie almost entirely above 60 m O.D.

Whin Common (Fig.39) extended from Wellingham across the top of the high ridge of boulder clay to become Weasenhams Moor. The large southern heath corresponded closely to a band of sand and gravel, which stretches from Tittleshall westwards through Weasenhams All Saints to Rougham. It was this latter belt of light soils which gave rise to the heath along the southern edge of Wellingham (p. 72).

The manuscript maps of these two parishes are: (a) maps of c. 1590 of each parish at Weasenhams Hall; (b) a map of c. 1730 of both parishes in Weasenhams Hall; (c) a very small scale map of 1779 and 1799 in Holkham atlases; (d) a pre-Enclosure Award map of both parishes in 1809 in Holkham Estate Office.

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The areas of high exposed boulder clay plateau and the lighter soils further south created very different conditions which were both marginal for farming. One finds frequently that common land was located in situations less suited to productive agriculture - poorly drained valleys, exposed boulder clay plateau areas, sandy heathland, and also in the distant and less accessible parts of a parish. At Weasenhams All Saints the parish was large, and wide areas of marginal land had been set aside for common grazing by the sixteenth century.

In recent years the complete re-alignment of the main road, the A1065, through the village has much altered its appearance. The road system prior to this (Fig.30) was apparently the one that was in use during the Middle Ages; unlike Weasenhams St. Peter there has been little alteration in the intervening centuries. The church stands in the middle of a rectangle of roads with a cluster of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century cottages to its south. To the south of these there is a small green which had a pond in the middle until the recent road widening. Around this, in addition to the seventeenth-century 'Ostrich' pub, there was another cluster of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cottages some of which were recently demolished. To the west of this group there was the manor house built in 1904.

There were two more outlying areas of late eighteenth-century occupation. One lay to the west of the manor house, where there had previously been a fork in the road; the other was to the east of the manor house at the present High House Farm.

There were, therefore, five scattered clusters of houses in the early nineteenth century at the time of the enclosure of the commons; later, during the nineteenth century, another group of houses was built north of the church.

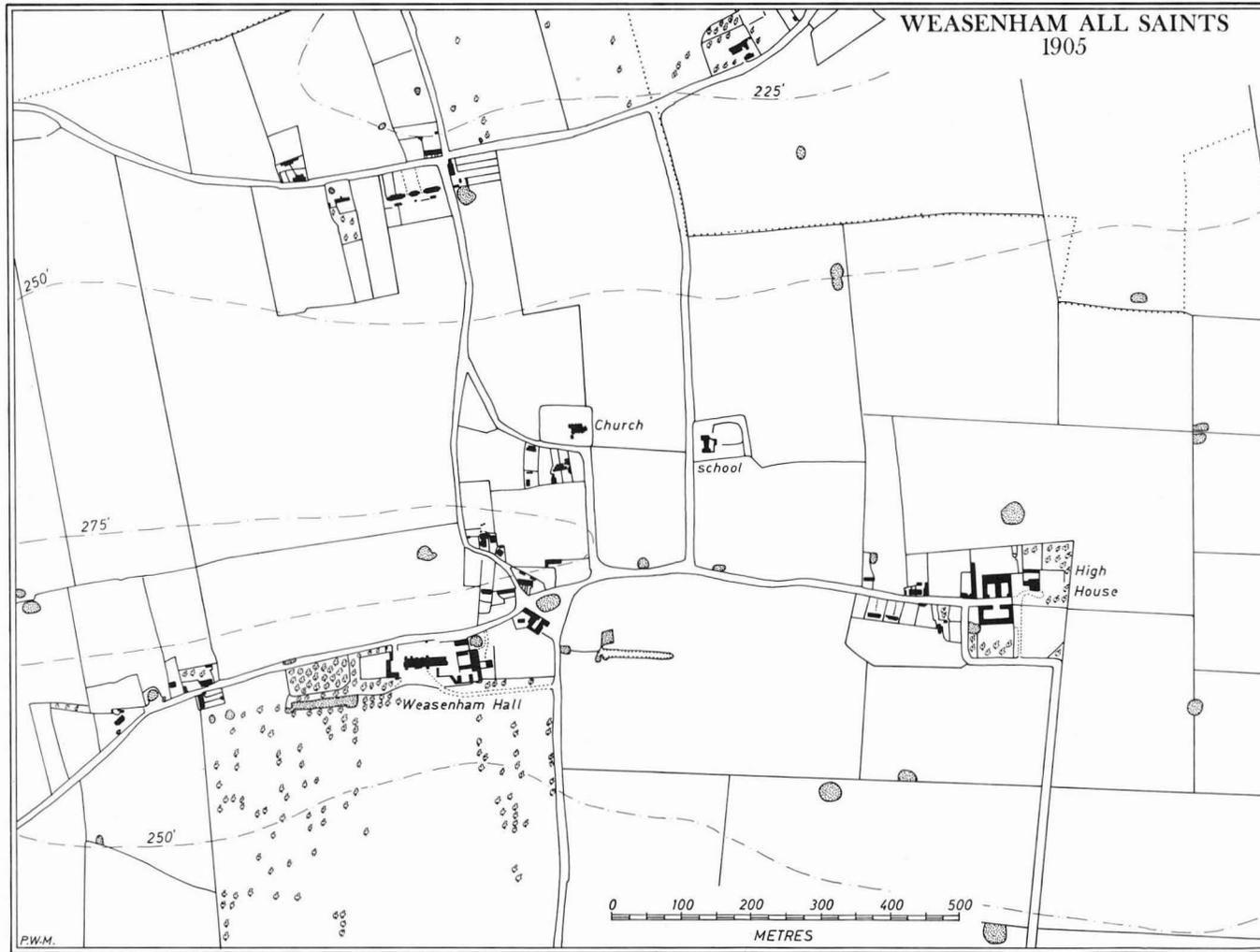


Fig.30. Weasenham All Saints in 1905. Scale 1:10,000.

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

MIDDLE SAXON (Fig.31)

An Ipswich-ware site covers an area which on conservative estimates would be in the region of c. 300 m long and c. 100 m wide. The rectangular shape of the site suggests that it was arranged along an east to west street. The parish church stands at the west end of this area.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.31)

There are plentiful scatters of Late Saxon pottery in all the areas shaded on Fig.31. It seems the village expanded from the Middle Saxon site so that by the end of the Late Saxon period it covered an area about 500 m across. However, as there are only twenty-six people recorded in the Domesday survey for both Weasenhams it seems that in this case there is a discrepancy between the documentary and the archaeological evidence.

The village plan had been created by the tenth century, for by then the frontages were extensively settled. The regular arrangement of the streets suggests that the shape of this village did not evolve naturally. The church is approximately in the middle of a rectangular area bounded by roads to the west, south and east; and there was probably also a road across the north side, for at this point both north to south roads slightly change alignment on the c. 1590 map (Fig.33). There was also still a furlong boundary in this position on the map. Within this rectangular area there is a road running southwards from the church parallel to the other two roads. At the church it turns through a right-angle. The scatter of Saxon and medieval pottery suggests that another road ran due east from the church to complete an east-to-west route across the middle of the square. The church stands where these internal roads would have crossed. So here there is some good evidence of early village planning. In the Middle Ages the main manor house stood on the south side opposite the road leading northwards to the church. This would be a key position in the village plan in pre-Conquest times, and the medieval manor may have been perpetuating the location of the Late Saxon manor site.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.32)

During most of the Middle Ages the village, which continued to expand, retained the plan formed during the preceding period. Some areas of Saxon occupation did however go out of use, particularly the central area south of the church. In place of this there was a gradual spread eastwards in the direction of Whin Common. Whin Common (or Weasenham Moor) has been carefully searched and there does not seem to have been any colonisation around the common itself, and the small westward projection of the common was not inhabited until possibly the fifteenth century. While plenty of medieval material can be found between the old village area and this small green, there is little evidence of medieval activity actually around it. All this contrasts with Weasenham St. Peter (Chapter 13) where there was already settlement on the common by the thirteenth century.

On the map of c. 1590 the words 'Situs manerii de Easthall' in 'Hallwood' on the south side of the village pinpoint the medieval manor house of Easthall, one of the two manors of Weasenham (Blomefield 1809, 76-9). Along the south edge of Hallwood is a long pond, about c. 100 m from end to end. This was almost certainly part of the manor house enclosure, but there is now no trace of a moat on the other three sides. The other manor house was to the west of the church in 'Manor Close', where on the map it says 'Situs manerii de Northall'. Both manor houses were, therefore, closely connected with the village and not set apart from it, as for instance at Horningtoft (Chapter 6) and Colkirk (not described).

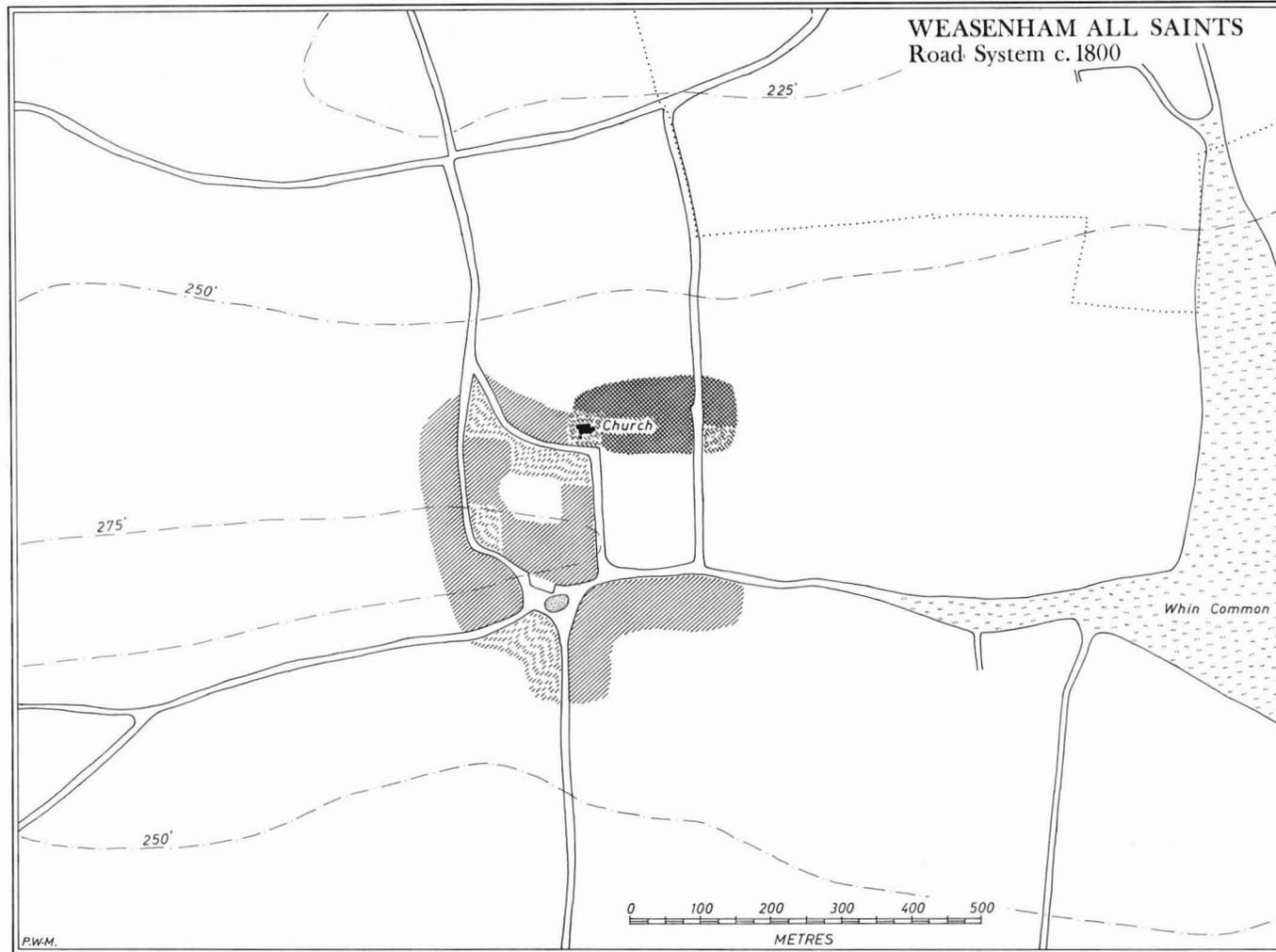


Fig.31. Weasenham All Saints road pattern c. 1800. Double shading indicates Middle Saxon settlement, and single shading Late Saxon settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

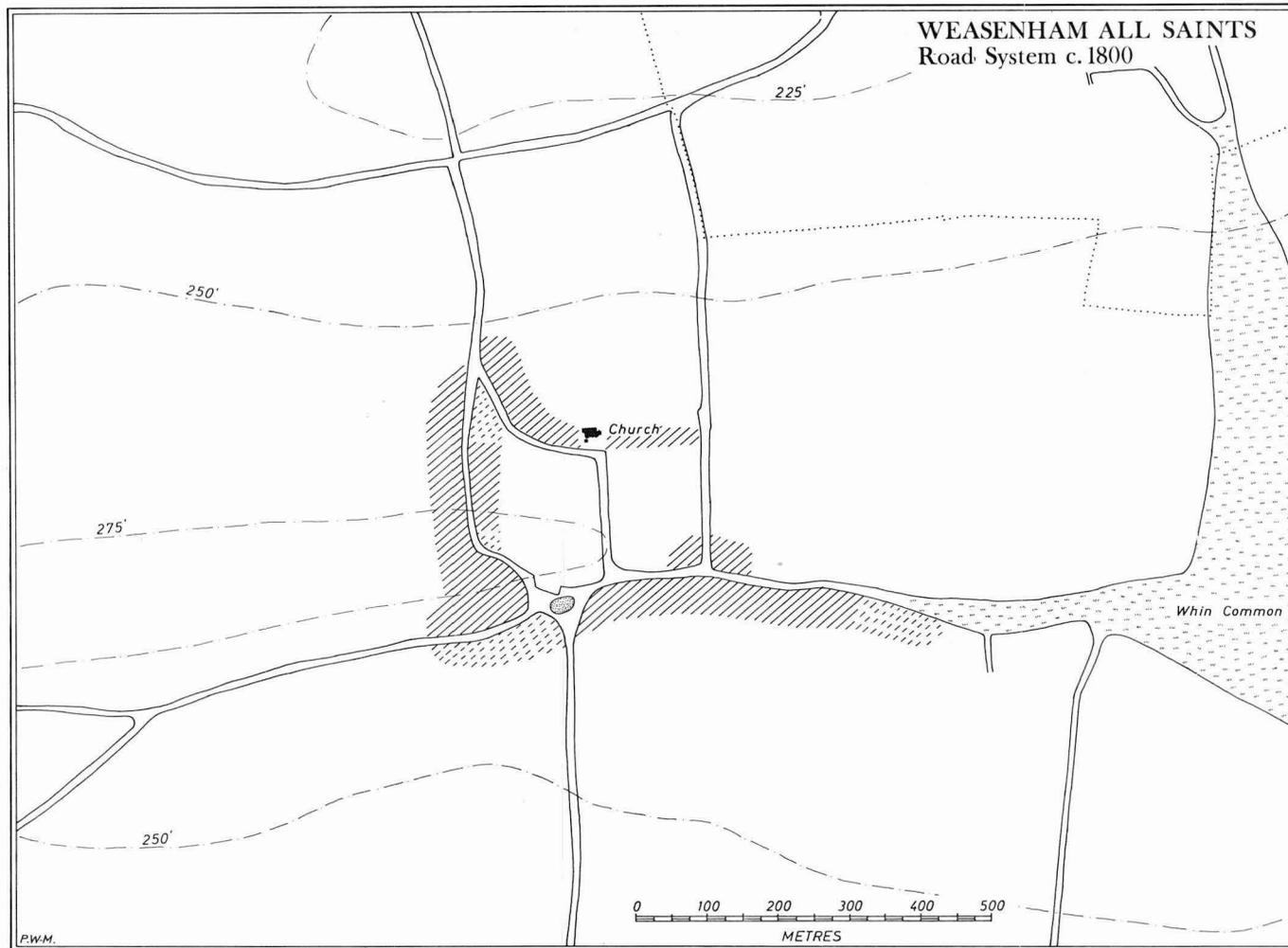


Fig.32. Weasenham All Saints road pattern c. 1800. Shading indicates medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

III. THE PARISH IN THE LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

By c. 1590 settlement was well dispersed over the parish, and the church had become isolated (Fig. 33); as the village had expanded outwards so the old village nucleus decayed. The only area of the medieval village still to be inhabited was around the small green south of the church. The site of Easthall Manor had been superseded by a new one further west, where a large manor house stood surrounded by outbuildings.

To the west of the new manor house there were a few scattered cottages as far as the road fork, but it is apparent that these properties had been created out of open fields. To the north of the church there were two groups of houses which were on sites also probably not settled before the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries.

The map is the witness to the final expansion of the village in an easterly direction, for the hamlet near Whin Common was the most densely populated at this time. On the narrow green leading to the common there were at least ten households and probably more. On the south side there were other properties which had been abandoned, so this final outward thrust of the village was already on the decline.

Two buildings on the map which stand out as being different from the rest are the manor house and a post mill. The manor house was the only two-storeyed house in Weasenham at that time; as well as the normal row of windows in the side wall there was an upper row of dormers in the roof. There were also chimneys at either end; only six other houses are shown with chimneys at all. The post mill, on the north side of the parish, was a two-storeyed structure standing on a mound. On the front were two pairs of sails and on the opposite side there was a window in the upper floor and a door with a ladder below. The ordinary cottages were low structures with a door on one side, usually towards one end. In the same wall there were one or two windows and some had a window on the gable wall.

The open fields and the roads in the parish are interesting, for, unlike Weasenham St. Peter, most of the furlongs and primary roads are either aligned north to south or east to west, a further indication of a certain amount of deliberate planning. The later roads cut across this pattern. These differences between Weasenham All Saints and St. Peter may in part be due of course to the fact that the topography of the land surface is more level in the former. Nevertheless, the regularity of the layout at All Saints is particularly striking.

IV. SUMMARY

Weasenham All Saints was one of the larger villages in the Launditch area during the seventh and eighth centuries. The size of the Late Saxon habitation area was probably greater than one would have expected from the Domesday survey.

The two Weasenhams grew during the Middle Ages in different ways. At All Saints, the village was still arranged very much on the same lines as the Late Saxon village plan; only in the latter part of the fifteenth century was there any significant growth near Whin Common. This hamlet remained in the late sixteenth century when a similar one at St. Peter had already disappeared. In comparable environments two largely different types of village growth were taking place at the same time. The reasons for this are not clear.

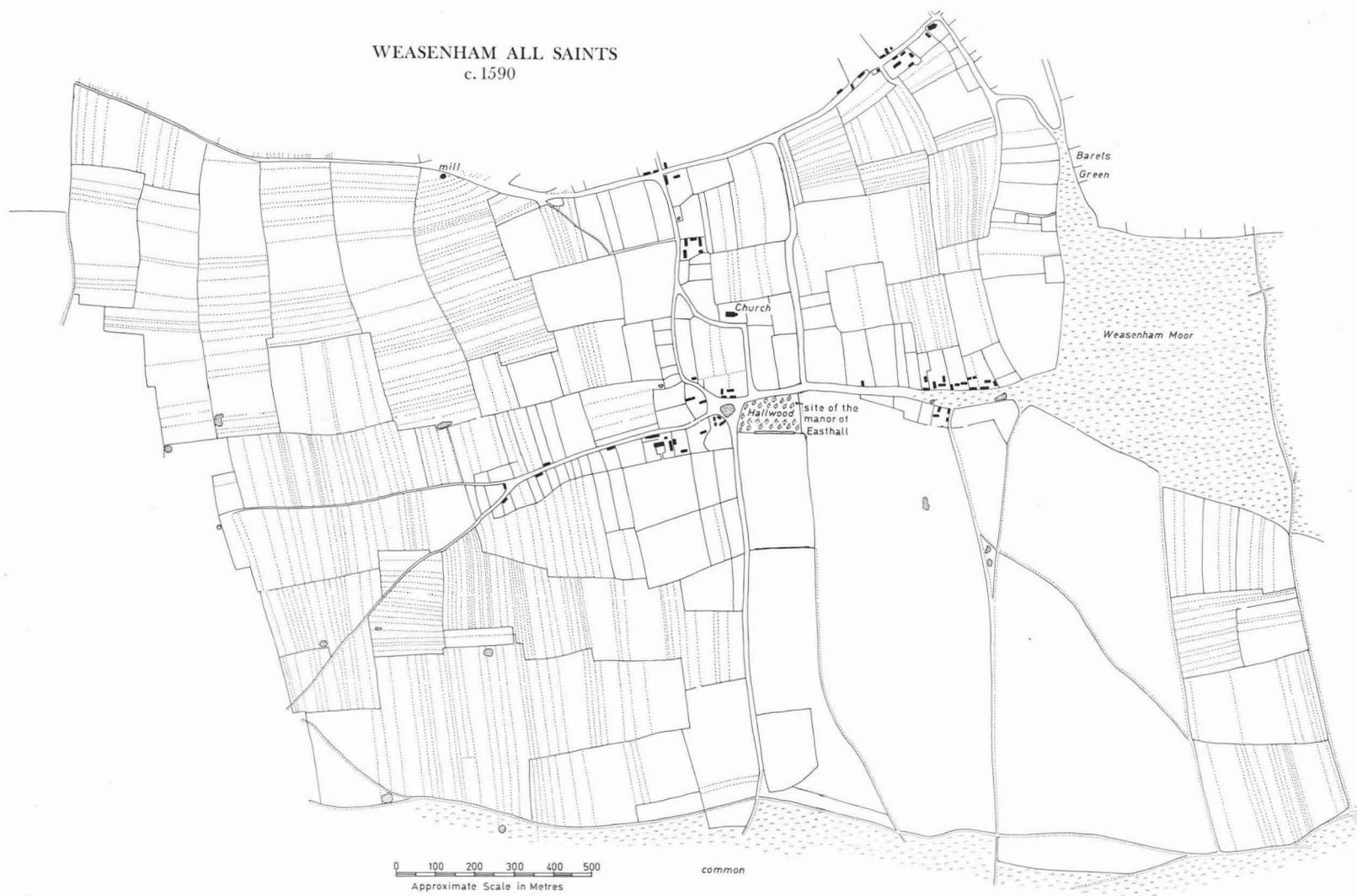


Fig.33. Weasenham All Saints parish in the late sixteenth century.

13. WEASENHAM ST. PETER

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Weasenhams St. Peter is a long rectangular parish with its village in the south-east corner. Somewhere in the north-west part lies the site of the lost village of Kipton, but nothing remains of this and its name is only preserved in that of Kipton Ash Farm. The site has not been located by the writer and it is by no means certain that it is close to the farm.

St. Peter's church lies on a projecting spur on the north side of the boulder clay plateau on which Whin Common is situated, and the parish covers the north side of the slope down to the valley. Most of the village today lies north-west of the church around what was known as Thorpe Green in the sixteenth century. One can see from the maps and from observation on the ground that nearly all the houses on the east and possibly on the south sides actually lie within the limits of the medieval green. At the south end there is a bulge around which the main road has to take a detour. The original south edge appears to be the rear boundary of these properties. On the east side it is followed by the front of only one pair of cottages which is tucked in well behind the others. This small-scale encroachment has been a gradual process over the last two hundred years (compare Fig. 37 with Plate V).

North-east of the green there are scattered groups of cottages along the road leading north from Manor Farm.

A comparison between Figs. 34 and 35 will show that the road systems in use at the turn of the eighteenth century and today are remarkably different. The roads leading to Whin Common were closed when the common was enclosed in 1809 and so also were four roads on the north side of the village. An understanding of this older and more complex road pattern is essential for the interpretation of the medieval and earlier villages.

II. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Two spreads of Roman material were recorded in 1968 1 km north of the village, while a mid second-century dupondius was found in 1951 in the field north-east of the Manor Farm. In the north-west corner of Kipton a small Roman site has been recorded recently, but it is too far removed to be of relevance to Weasenhams St. Peter. There is no trace of early Saxon occupation near the present village.

MIDDLE AND LATE SAXON PERIODS (Fig. 35)

Only one sherd of Ipswich ware has been found by the writer near the village. This came from the north side of the main road, to the north-west of the church. This is not sufficient evidence for occupation, considering the amount of time and detail in which this village was studied; less effort produced much better evidence for Middle Saxon occupation at Weasenhams All Saints. It is unlikely that there was occupation in this village before the latter part of the ninth century.

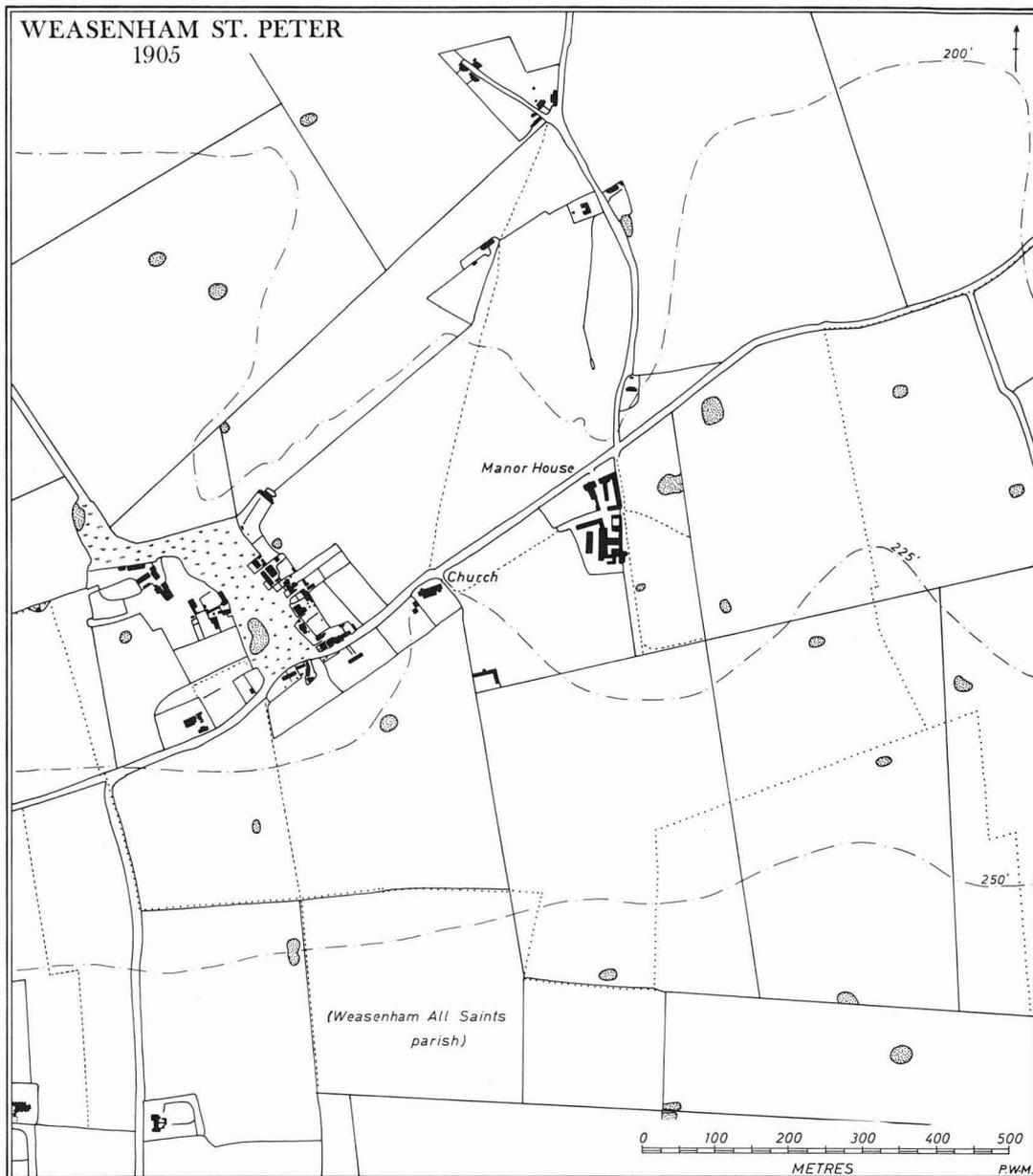


Fig.34. Weasenham St. Peter in 1905. Scale 1:10,000.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries the village rapidly developed and expanded. The spread of Thetford ware stretches from the site of the old crossroads near the church uphill for a distance of 400 m. The field walking evidence points to a village of considerable size by the end of the eleventh century (Fig.35). There was also one small outlying site to the north-east of the church at another road junction. The present village green lies close to the church, but there is no suggestion that the village expanded down this way until the twelfth century. Although much of the open frontage is occupied, careful searching of the field behind the tofts on the east side revealed no Thetford ware sherds.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.36)

In the twelfth century there was some settlement on the green. Elsewhere the village was much the same as it had been before.

During the thirteenth century the village continued to expand southwards to Whin Common and soon overflowed onto the common in Weasenham All Saints, but there was



Fig.35. Weasenham St.Peter road pattern c. 1800. Sloping shading indicates area of Late Saxon settlement, vertical shading indicates additional area of early medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

never continuous occupation along the street frontage between the church and the common. A gap almost made the Whin Common settlement a separate hamlet. Around the small green there was probably not much activity during the Middle Ages. The twelfth-century settlement on the north side of the green definitely died out, for, except for one sherd, the pottery from this area is exclusively Early Medieval.

The outlying site near the present Manor Farm continued and expanded from its Late Saxon nucleus. One is tempted to interpret this as the Late Saxon and medieval manor site, standing slightly apart from the village.

In the latter part of the Middle Ages the main village seems to have suffered a rapid decline, for there is little material from the site that one can date later than the fifteenth century. The hamlet around Whin Common underwent a similar decline. Contemporary

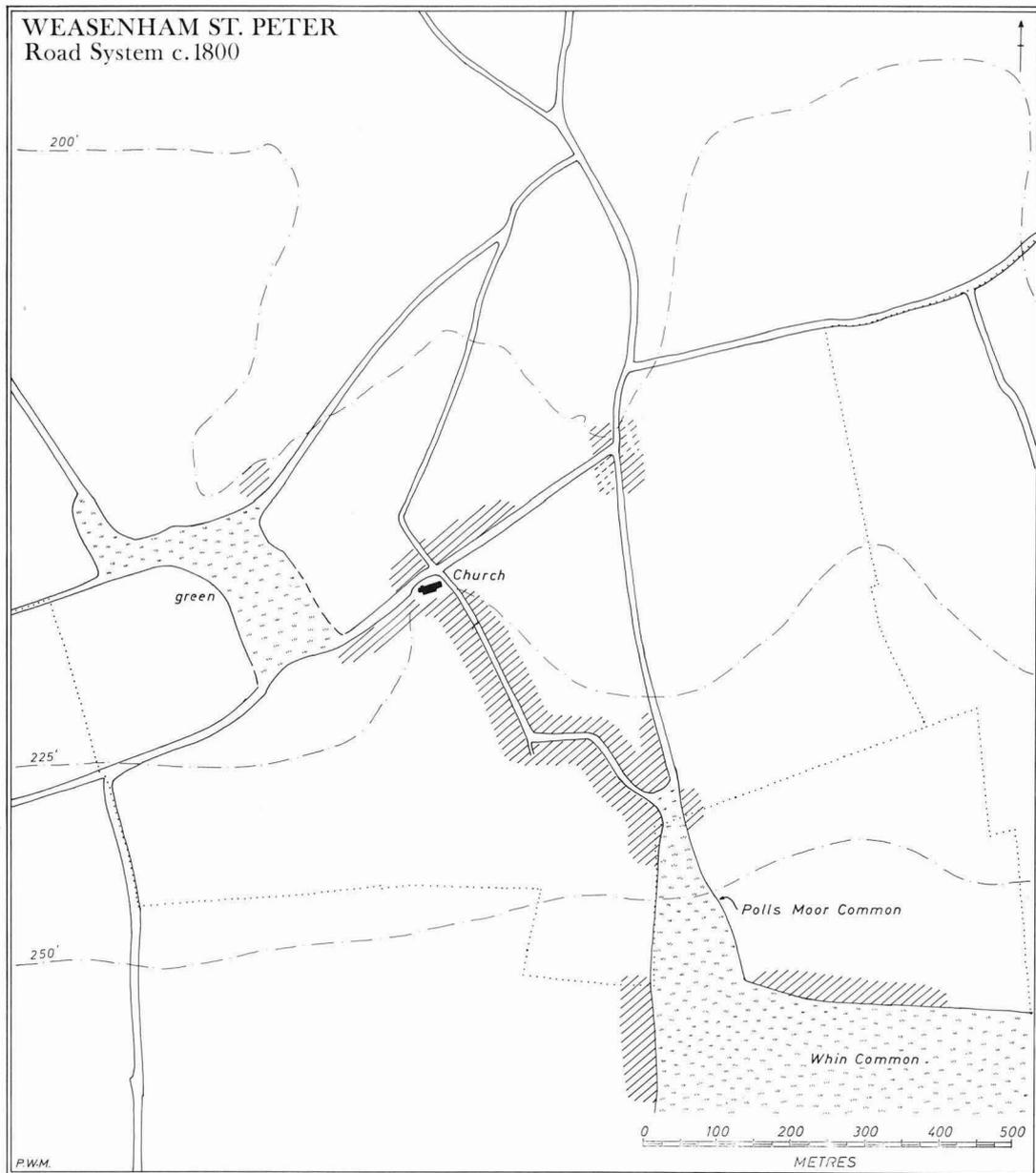


Fig. 36. Weasenham St. Peter road pattern c. 1800. Shading indicates area of medieval settlement. Scale 1:10,000.

with this a new area of habitation grew up north of Manor Farm. Here there is good evidence of scattered settlement from the fifteenth century down to the present day (Figs. 37 and 34).

III. THE PARISH AT THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

When the parish was first surveyed about 1590, the transformation from the medieval pattern of settlement to the one seen today was almost complete (Fig. 37). The large village site between the church and Whin Common had already vanished; there was a small settlement around the green, then called Thorpe Green; and the scattered roadside hamlet north of Manor Farm was already flourishing. One can see that many of the buildings in this northern area had been placed on the ends of strips; a number of these closes appear secondary to the original field pattern. The same applies for the third area of



Fig. 37. Weasenham St. Peter parish in the late sixteenth century.

The Parish at the End of the Sixteenth Century

occupation around the other small green further north called Northings Green. Although field conditions prevented a search in this area, the house sites were without exception on strips and are, therefore, probably late medieval in origin.

The word 'Thorpe' is usually taken to indicate a secondary hamlet, an offshoot from, or a hamlet dependent upon, the main village (Cameron 1963, 78; Schram 1961, 145). We have seen that this indeed was the origin of the Thorpe Green community in the twelfth century. The houses on the west side of this green were also built on strips.

The houses on the c. 1590 map are drawn in elevation in the same way as they were on the early Longham and Tittleshall maps. They were certainly drawn by the same hand as the Longham houses and the same stylisation is used; the distinction between cottages and farms also applies. One very unusual building is a long barn, possibly a hundred and fifty feet from end to end, at the Manor Farm.

The sixteenth-century map is also remarkable in showing the open field system of a parish almost intact. At Longham and Tittleshall, at about the same time, the enclosure of the open fields was already well advanced. There is no suggestion of this at Weasenham; although the great variety of the widths of strips shows that a lot of amalgamation had already taken place, the old open field economy was still preserved. Perhaps this points to a regional variation between the more fertile boulder clay area of central Norfolk and the type of West Norfolk scenery typified by the Goodsands Region of the north-west and Breckland. Weasenham is on the edge of the Goodsands Region.

All the furlongs are named, and 'Micklemerfurlonge', 'Shortlande', 'Wheatcrofte' make fascinating reading even though they are not particularly informative. The name 'Overblackland' for the furlong where the Roman coin was found may be indicative of an occupation site, but nothing else has so far been recorded from this spot.

The roads of the parish fall into two groups. They are either 'primary', forming part of the original open field layout, or later routes which have come into use where it was necessary to have a road cutting across strips.

The road names such as 'Massingham Waye' add little to what is already obvious, but the name 'Kirkgate' for the medieval village street between the church and Whin Common gives us a street name for the deserted medieval village.

IV. SUMMARY

At Weasenham we have a case of twin villages with the same name, distinguished only by their different church dedications. Weasenham St. Peter apparently started about two centuries after the other and was, therefore, probably the daughter village. St. Peter's started on a spur of land in the late ninth century, on the site today occupied only by the church. In the tenth and eleventh centuries it spread up hill to the south and during the Middle Ages the village site reached as far as the common. The way the village overspilled into All Saints parish is unusual, but emphasizes the close link between these two parishes. Thorpe Green was a twelfth-century offshoot from the main village and was not a Scandinavian settlement as the name might suggest. By the sixteenth century there was nothing of the medieval village left, except for a small cluster at the church crossroads; it is interesting that this part of the village site should be the first to be settled and the last to be abandoned. The medieval village was replaced by three separate groupings: Thorpe Green, Northings Green and the hamlet to the south of Northings Green. The occupation of Northings Green was short-lived and the adjacent hamlet has declined and is still declining for in 1971 two rows of cottages stood empty awaiting demolition. The hamlet around Thorpe Green has grown, and has shifted around the green with more settle-

ment on one side than the other at various times since the Middle Ages. From about the middle of the eighteenth century there has been a continuing process of encroachment upon the green by staking out garden plots, and later by building houses on them. The first piece of encroachment was early, for on the south side this had already taken place by c. 1590 (Fig.37).

The entire medieval village and one of its later offshoots, Northings Green, have vanished. Today there is no sign of settlement on the hill; even the road system for that village has been replaced by the nineteenth-century field system.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1086 Wesenham; 1205 Weseham.

14. WELLINGHAM

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Wellingham is a very small isolated village, visited by few people. The parish covers just over 400 ha, and lies in the north-west part of the Launditch Hundred, just to the west of Tittleshall. For years it has shared a rector with Tittleshall to which it appears as a rather poor neighbour. This is one of those remoter parts of Norfolk where the village has hardly changed in the last hundred years. The population in 1821 was 140 (Bryant undated, 241), and in 1911 the number was down to 114 (Kelly 1916, 522).

The place name was spelt Walnccham at Domesday and Welingham in 1196 and it altered little thereafter. Ekwall considered that the first element was Wellingas despite the strange Domesday spelling (Ekwall 1960, 505). This element means 'people by a stream or spring' and the second element 'edge' or 'slope'. This fits in with the topography, for, on the slope beside the stream which flows past the church, a Middle Saxon settlement has been located.

The village is dominated by the church; beside the church is a nineteenth-century Holkham Estate farm which has a well-preserved group of contemporary barns and out-buildings (Fig.38 and Plate VI). Wellingham felt the heavy hand of Holkham in the nine-

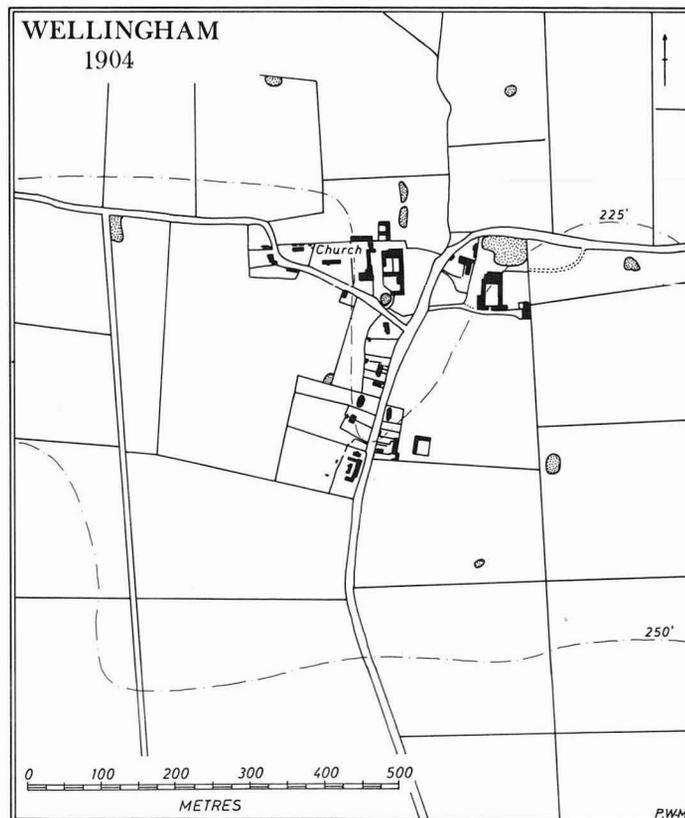


Fig.38. Wellingham in 1904. Scale 1:10,000.

teenth century, perhaps even more than Longham. All around the village lie large rectangular fields, and the farm dominates the twenty or so small labourers' cottages. The church stands on a slight hill, and in the small valley to the east lie the farm and most of the cottages. The village street runs along the bottom of the valley beside a swift-flowing dyke which drains the boulder clay upland area to the south. There is only one other farm and this is to the east on the opposite valley slope. Most of the surviving cottages were built after the enclosures and lie on the area of the former village green which extended from Whin Common on the high land to the south down into the valley.

Sir Edward Coke bought Wellingham in 1592 (James 1929, 305) along with Weasenham and Toftrees, but we have no map of the village from that time. The first map is of the early eighteenth century and it shows the areas of fields owned by Holkham, but little detail of the village itself. There are tiny maps in the Holkham atlases of 1779 and 1799, but the first large-scale detailed map is the pre-Enclosure Award map of 1809. These maps, with Faden's of 1797, reveal the layout of the large area of common, the evolution of the modern field system, and the pattern of settlement prior to the enclosure (Fig.39).

It was not until 1957 that the line of the Roman road forming the east side of Wellingham parish was recognised (Edwards 1957). This road, forming an extension of the Holkham to Toftrees route (Margary 1967, 273-4), ran from Toftrees to join the Peddars Way at North Pickenham. Along the east side of Wellingham it made a slightly curving line separating Wellingham from Tittleshall; on the early map it is called 'Streete Way'. This portion of the Roman road was still a line of field lanes and farm tracks until the late eighteenth century.

Along the south side of the parish bordering the edge of a small common there is another long straight piece of parish boundary. It appears that this is also of Roman origin and that it is part of an east-to-west road from Brisley to the Fens (Bagshawe 1977). Fieldwork, however, has not so far produced any evidence of an occupation site near the possible Roman crossroads in the south-east corner of the parish.

An unusually large proportion of the parish was given over to common. A broad strip of common land, an extension of Whin Common, divided the arable land in two; it stretched from the Roman road on the east side right across the parish into Weasenham. An entirely separate heath lay along the south edge of the parish alongside the east-to-west Roman road; this heath was never enclosed, and was not ploughed up until recently.

The parish covers some of the highest parts of Launditch Hundred. Much of the area of Whin Common is over 75 m O.D. Most of the common, though, lay over the more gentle dip down to the valley in which the village now stands. A small wedge of common projected down this valley for 400 m, and this formed the village green (Fig.39).

II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

ROMAN PERIOD

In this village also there is a thin scatter of Roman material in the vicinity of the Middle Saxon site. This is near the church where at least three sherds of Roman pottery have been found.

MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD (Fig.39)

On a slight spur of land, formed by a curve in the small stream, the church stands typically on a high position; the land drops away from the church very gently in all directions except to the west.

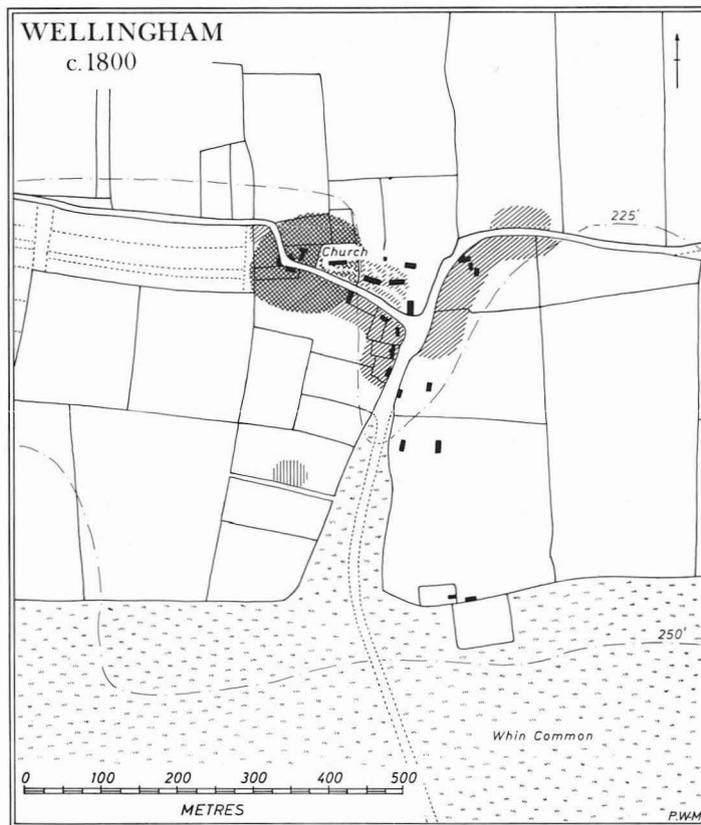


Fig. 39. Wellingham in c. 1800. Double shading indicates Middle Saxon settlement, and the single shading indicates Late Saxon settlement. An area of early medieval expansion is shown with vertical shading. Scale 1:10,000.

It is possible to indicate an approximate area of Middle Saxon occupation even though half of it is covered by buildings and a meadow. Most of the site which can be studied lies to the south of the church, but sufficient pottery was discovered in the field beyond the meadow to the north-west to show that the settlement was not just limited to the south side. Whereas on some of the previous Middle Saxon sites the church has stood to one side of the site, here it seems to be roughly in the middle. About twenty-five sherds of Ipswich ware have been found; however, the number of sherds depends so much on the amount of time spent looking in the most fruitful places. It would be fair to say that the amount of material is greater than Longham and Horningtoft; it roughly approximates to the Mileham site which is of similar size.

LATE SAXON PERIOD (Fig. 39)

From the slightly elevated Middle Saxon site the occupation area spread down the slope into the valley. Most of the village lay on the west edge of the valley and did not occupy the opposite slope until the twelfth century. The Domesday figure is twenty-one people, the same as for Horningtoft, although on archaeological grounds the size of Wellingham appears to have been greater than Horningtoft. This discrepancy is due to the very real limitations of both the Domesday figures and the scatters of archaeological material as sources of evidence.

EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig. 39)

Where it is possible to differentiate areas of Early Medieval from Late Saxon occupation it is worthwhile considering them separately. On the west side of the green, within

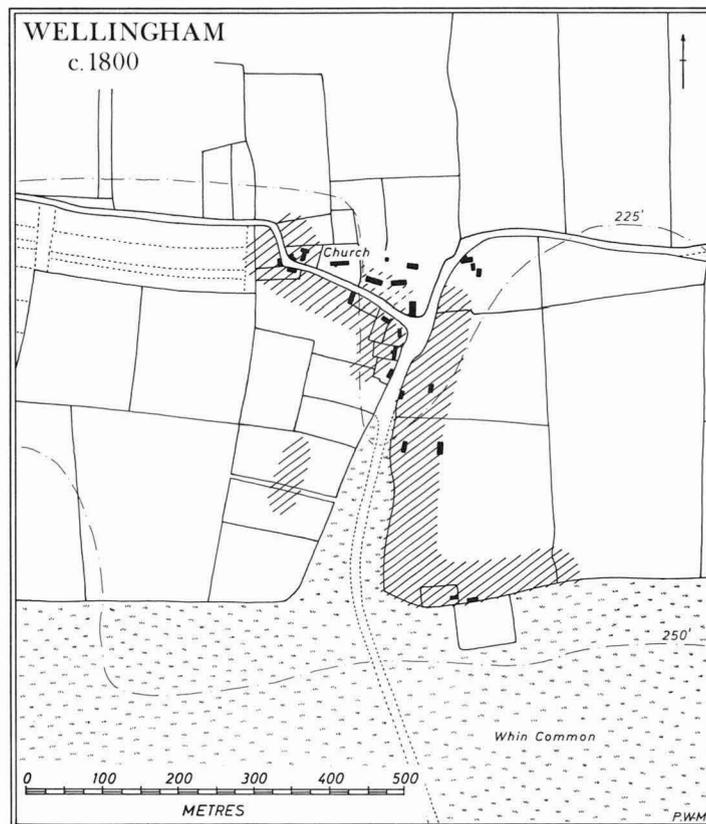


Fig.40. Wellingham in c. 1800. Shading indicates medieval settlement.
Scale 1:10,000.

a short distance of the Whin Common, there is an area of twelfth-century pottery indicating early expansion towards Whin Common. Elsewhere the village was much the same as for the Late Saxon period, but with more activity around the green away from the old focal point near the church.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (Fig.40)

The village reached the edge of Whin Common on the east side of the green only. There is no trace of occupation along the edge of the common on the opposite side; even down to the west edge of the green it was rather sporadic. When the medieval population was at its highest over half of the frontage of the village was on the green and the common.

Although the farm site beside the church is called Manor House, there is no moat and neither was there one in the early eighteenth century. If there was a manor house on the site in the Middle Ages, no trace of it now remains.

III. SUMMARY

At Wellingham there is insufficient Roman material near the original village to support any idea of continuity, but the very thin scatter of Roman material on the site of the Middle Saxon village is not easy to explain, particularly as it was only found near the church.

Middle Saxon Wellingham seems to have been relatively large. In the Late Saxon times the village expanded and began to take on the valley-side emphasis it had later.

Summary

However, it was not then in any sense a green village. Only in the twelfth century did settlement first reach as far as the green. Later, in the Middle Ages, over half the people apparently lived beside the green.

Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a gradual return to the type of village one would have seen much earlier. In size and layout the village of today differs little from the village of the twelfth century.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1086 Walnccham; 1196 Welingham.

15. WORTHING

Until the enclosures, Worthing was a green village running along a road bordering the low-lying common near Worthing Mill. In the early nineteenth century the thinly-scattered green frontage was 650 m long (Fig.41). This location was probably determined by the crossing point of the Scarning River at Worthing Mill, but the existing road junction at the approach to the river was almost certainly planned at the enclosures; archaeological fieldwork in the gaps along the edge of the green has not so far produced any evidence for medieval occupation.

The church is situated on the side of the valley further upstream, well separated from the existing village. In the nineteenth century the road made a detour around the church, but this has since been straightened. Although there is no archaeological evidence for occupation between the village and the church, Thetford ware and medieval coarse and glazed wares have been collected on the south side of the latter.

The present village is not on the site of the medieval one, which was probably to the south and south-east of the church. It was not mentioned in the Domesday survey and an eleventh century date for the first village seems likely on archaeological grounds.

A small moated site (Fig.42) lies in the meadows at the bend in the river north of the church. A raised rectangular platform in the north-east corner may perhaps represent the manor house. The presence of the moat here close to the church might explain why this river meadow was the only one which was not a part of the common in the eighteenth century.

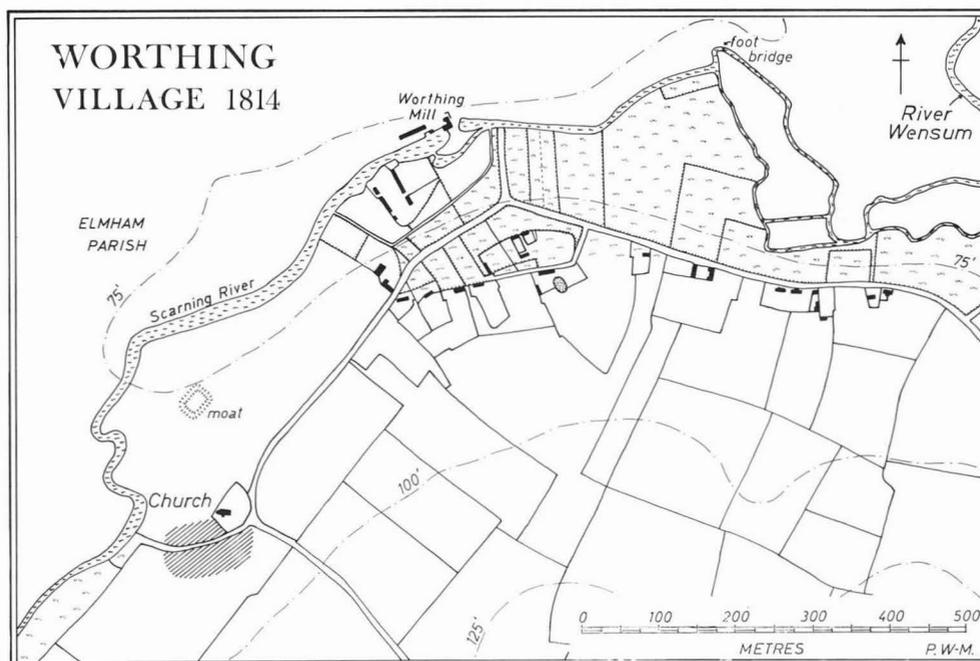


Fig.41. Worthing in 1814. The shading indicates Late Saxon settlement. The areas of common in the late eighteenth century are indicated. Scale 1:10,000.

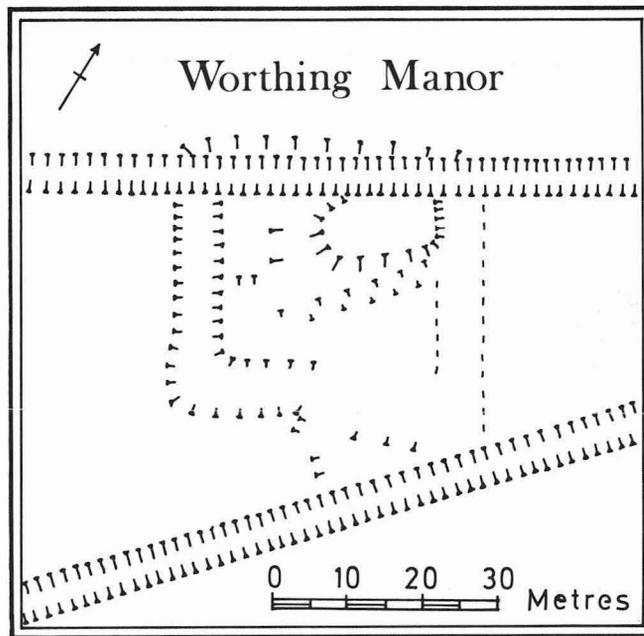


Fig.42. Plan of moat in river meadows north of Worthing church.
Scale 1:1,000.

The piece of land adjacent to the mill was isolated from the common by a small leet, and this was also private land (Fig.41).

Somewhere near the village is the line of the Billingford to Denver Roman road. At present there is a gap in the known line of the road in Worthing Parish. There are no features on the early nineteenth-century enclosure map which can be related to the road, which was probably abandoned in favour of the present valley-side route at an early stage. It appears that the village was founded only 250 m away from the line of the Roman road, although the road itself was probably already disused by that date.

Place-name spellings

Extract from Dr.O.K.Schram's notes: 1209 Wrthing; 1228 Worthing.

16. CALDECOTE

I. INTRODUCTION

Having considered in detail the origins of the fourteen most informative villages in the Launditch area, it is worthwhile considering one other village in different surroundings. The site taken for this purpose is the deserted village of Caldecote.

Caldecote has been chosen because it was perhaps the finest deserted village in Breckland. It is now totally levelled and ploughed and, therefore, is an ideal site for field walking.

II. THE VILLAGE SITE

The site (TF 743 033) lies on the northern edge of Breckland, with the fen edge only three miles to the south and the beginning of the chalk upland only a mile to the west. A small southward-flowing tributary of the river Wissey, surrounded by marsh and woodland, curls around the north and west sides of the site which stands on a gentle sandy rise overlooking the valley. The highest point is around Chapel Hill, an upstanding sandy mound on which St. Mary's church once stood. The ruins of the church were still visible in Blomefield's day (Blomefield 1808, VI, 59), but only foundations now remain.

The vertical R.A.F. air photograph taken in 1946 (Plate VII) was apparently the only record made of this fine site before it was levelled in 1959. The scheduled site was bulldozed and ploughed and there was no opportunity for excavation (Deserted Medieval Research Group 1960, 6-7; 1961, 6; 1962, 5).

Fig.43 is a reconstruction of the outline of the earthworks based on the air photograph. Several hedges and buildings were removed during the 1959 improvement scheme and, therefore, some of these have been simplified on the drawing for the sake of clarity. Most of the earthworks lay slightly downhill from the church and the main village street meandered south-eastwards from it for at least 700 m. The street was outlined on either side by ditches, and the tofts down the east side of the street were also defined by a complex arrangement of ditches. There were no earthworks along the west side.

Although details are rather obscured by trees on the photograph, there was probably another street which ran westwards from the first at a point opposite the north end of the line of tofts. Along the north side of this western street there was another system of earthworks representing a far more uniform layout of enclosures. Again there were no earthworks on the opposite side.

The plan of the village in the Middle Ages, therefore, had two lines of properties of roughly similar length forming two sides of an open area; this area was possibly a green. There are no pre-enclosure maps of Caldecote, so there are no details of the extent of the medieval commons. Faden's map of 1797 records only an area called Caldecote Fen on the village site; the site must have largely reverted to heathland after desertion and this explains the good preservation of the site. Some of the tofts down the eastern street had a width of 50 m, while others were half that size. Several had cross ditches subdividing them into front and rear compartments. There were no definite earthworks of

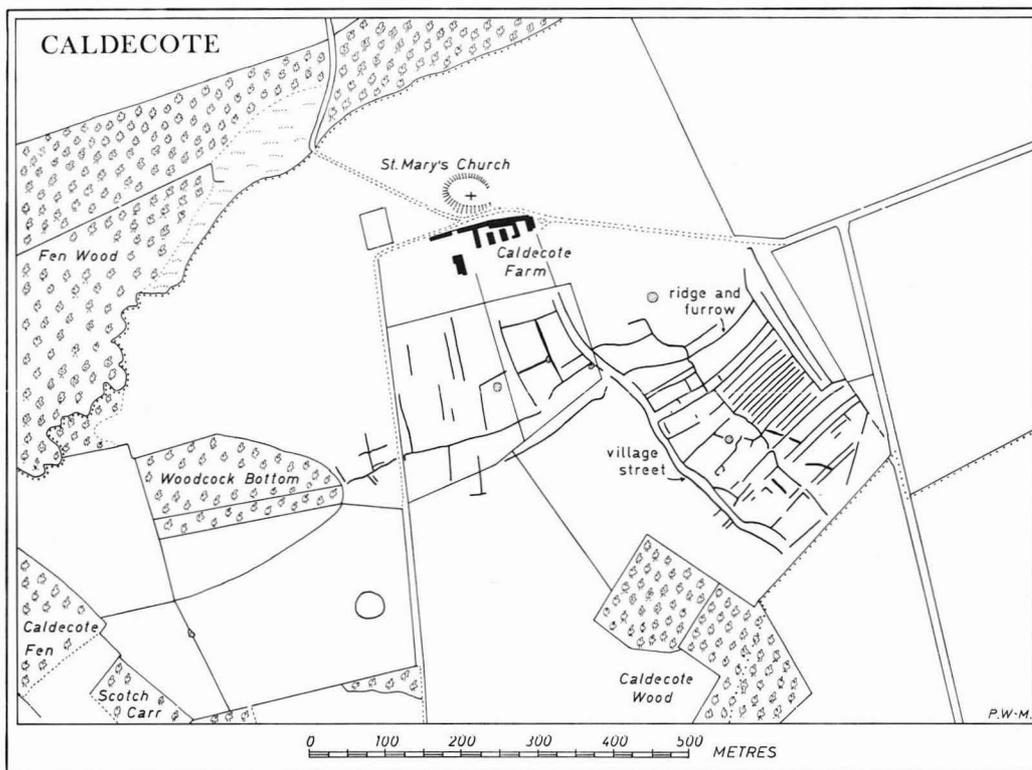


Fig.43. Caldecote deserted medieval village plan of earthworks prior to destruction. Scale 1:10,000.

buildings, although several upstanding platform areas along the street frontages suggest possible house sites.

Behind the rear boundary ditch was an area of ridge and furrow. Upstanding ridge and furrow is very rare in East Anglia and was unknown in Breckland except for this one example (buried ridge and furrow has been excavated at West Stow). In many classic examples of deserted villages in the Midlands, the ridge and furrow comes right up to the rear boundaries of the village, but Caldecote was the only recorded example of this arrangement in East Anglia. The average width between the centres of the furrows was c. 6-7 m. To the east of this furlong there were the beginnings of another with the strips running in the reverse direction.

Along the east-to-west street the tofts were more regular, each about 50 m wide, suggesting that they may have been later than those down the other street.

Around the church there were no earthworks and most, if not all, of the medieval village lay in the area already described.

The north-to-south street continued north towards the church and passed possibly just to the east of Chapel Hill where there is some suggestion of a sunken way.

III. THE POTTERY EVIDENCE

From the time the site was first studied by the late Rainbird Clarke in 1959, the possibility of continuous occupation from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages has created much

interest. The material collected by Clarke showed quite clearly that there was Bronze Age/Iron Age activity. Early Roman material was also found, as well as a small quantity of soft, black, burnished pottery, taken to be early Saxon.

Since then the identification of a large box-full of material collected by the writer has clarified the situation and also reduced the likelihood of continuity.

IRON AGE

A considerable quantity of prehistoric sherds have been found; they come mostly from two general areas. Occupation was most intensive on the north and east sides of the site of the church, and in a more scattered form along the sandy rise overlooking the river to the west of the medieval village. The pottery was tempered in one of three ways: with large flint grits; with organic material which burnt out to leave a corky texture; with a fine sandy texture. Most of the sherds are dark grey or black, although a few have a reddish-buff surface. Many of them are burnished but only a few are decorated. These sherds appear to be of Iron Age type, although they are difficult to date.

LATE IRON AGE AND EARLY ROMAN PERIODS

There is an interesting scatter of flint and second-century Roman pottery over the whole site, but not enough in any particular place to indicate a nucleus of settlement in the vicinity of the later village. It is clear, though, that occupation ceased during the second century.

EARLY SAXON PERIOD

There is no pottery from the site which can be dated between the third and eighth centuries¹. Though some of the pottery is similar to early Saxon fabrics, the nature of the assemblage and the total lack of characteristic early Saxon decorative motifs, rules out much hope of continuity. The sherds taken by Clarke to be early Saxon are almost certainly Iron Age.

MIDDLE SAXON PERIOD

Half a dozen body sherds of Ipswich ware came from the general area of the farm buildings. These point to the location of the first village in the resumed sequence just to the south of the church.

LATE SAXON PERIOD

The tenth and eleventh centuries saw the revival of settlement in the village area; there are good traces of habitation to the east and to the south of the church. A little later the settlement expanded further over the site occupied subsequently by the medieval village. This secondary settlement was spread down the east side of the north-to-south street and to a lesser extent along the east-to-west street.

MIDDLE AGES

It was in the twelfth century that habitation really expanded onto the east-to-west street. At the height of the village growth in the Middle Ages there was occupation along the whole of the east and north sides of the possible green. With this expansion the original Middle Saxon settlement just to the south of the church was abandoned.

The pottery indicates a date for desertion in the fifteenth century. In the poll tax assessment for 1379 Caldecote with Oxborough had fifty-nine taxpayers (Allison 1955, 145). As the figures for Caldecote were amalgamated with the adjacent parish, one can see that Caldecote was already on the decline and it probably had already passed its peak by the middle of the fourteenth century.

Summary

IV. SUMMARY

It is interesting that it is at a Breckland village site where such good evidence for prehistoric settlement has been found. None of the Launditch villages produced anything approaching this quantity of prehistoric material.

There was a break in the occupation sequence from the second century for about seven hundred years before a small village grew up near the site of the church. It was not until the tenth century that the village developed to any size. The irregular pattern of village earthworks down the east side of the main street owes its origin to the village expansion in the twelfth century, while the north side of the green was not heavily settled before the thirteenth century.

The village had started to decline by the fourteenth century if not earlier. The date of desertion of the village agrees with the conclusions of Keith Allison (1955) who found that most Breckland desertions had taken place by the latter part of the fifteenth century.

REFERENCE

1. The author is most grateful to Stanley West for help with the identification of the material from this site.

17. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

I. ROMAN PERIOD

In the Launditch area sizeable Roman settlement sites have now been identified on Roman crossroads at Billingford, Kempstone and Toftrees. In addition to these, several lesser settlements are known; some were villas and others were apparently villages or hamlets. None of the known Middle and Late Saxon village sites in the Hundred owes its origins to the Roman period.

The number of Romano-British sites so far recorded is presumably a small fraction of the real total in the Launditch Hundred; only when work has been carried out over much wider areas will the gaps be filled. Fieldwalking for this report was confined largely to the areas around churches and village sites, and no attempt was made to cover all the fields in a particular parish.

II. ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

With the end of Imperial rule in Britain in the early fifth century, a true Dark Age descended upon East Anglia. Contemporary commentators, such as Gildas and Nennius, as well as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle are almost completely silent about the events which took place within the region before the ninth century.

Despite considerable efforts to find early Saxon settlements in the Launditch area, nothing, except at North Elmham, has changed the situation as it was at the start of this study, when there was no settlement which could be dated to the fifth, sixth or early seventh centuries. There are traces of occupation in three places near the Anglo-Saxon cremation cemetery on Spong Hill, North Elmham, but all need further investigation before the nature of this occupation can be clarified (Hills 1977, 4-5). None of the nine Roman sites examined has produced any recognisable post-Roman (that is Anglo-Saxon) pottery, and none of the later villages has yielded anything except enigmatic evidence for pre-seventh-century activity. The problem is that the cultural attributes of the sub-Roman population in the fifth and sixth centuries have not been identified. Somehow we must bridge this gap of over two hundred years.

The linear earthworks are of the greatest importance for the early post-Roman period (Wade-Martins 1975). It may never be possible to provide an accurate date for the Launditch and Panworth Ditches. The western pair, the Fossditch and Bichamditch, are, however, more substantial, and if a fifth-century site could be found which was destroyed by either of these two earthworks, then a closer date might be obtained. The four dykes appear to form a group in West Norfolk; they were orientated so as to interrupt east-to-west communication along at least three Roman roads, and were constructed at some time after the late fourth century and before the foundation of the united East Anglian kingdom in the second half of the sixth century.

The distribution of the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries suggests that during the initial settlement period in the fifth and first half of the sixth centuries the main weight of the migrations was around the Wash and into Breckland (Hills and Wade-Martins 1976, fig.1). It is best, therefore, to interpret the Fossditch and the Bichamditch as an attempt by these settlers to consolidate their hold on the east side of the Fenland sometime during the fifth

Anglo-Saxon Period

century. The very existence of these four dykes (in two opposing pairs) suggests that there was a period of stalemate in the political turmoil of that time, with the western region firmly under Anglo-Saxon control and the *civitas* of the Iceni lingering for a while, perhaps supported by federate troops (possibly even with central command still at Caistor-by-Norwich).

The origins of the early Saxon cemetery at Spong Hill in relation to the Roman settlement at Billingford are especially interesting; the cemetery was only a short distance from Billingford, which was vulnerable to incursions from the west along the two Roman roads which converge on this area. These two roads were not only lines of possible invasion from the west; they were also the backbone of any sub-Roman defensive system against settlers around the Wash. However, it would be wise to postpone a discussion about the origins of early Saxon settlement sites which used this burial ground until the results of excavation of the cemetery are published.

J. Dodgson in 1966 cast strong doubt upon the long-held theory that -ingas place-names indicate the settlements of original Anglo-Saxon migrants of the fifth and early sixth centuries. He demonstrated convincingly that the early Saxon cemeteries and the -ingas place-names are in fact complementary in their distribution. In East Anglia the -ingas names occur most frequently in the central and eastern districts of medium and relatively heavy soils, while the distribution of cemeteries has a western orientation over the lighter soils of West Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Breckland. The majority of -ingas place-names, Dodgson suggested, should be understood as belonging to a time following the migration phase and the abandonment of early Saxon cemeteries. In his view, the -ingas place-names were in vogue at a time when the settlement was being expanded from the original migration areas; these place-names were given to colonies of Anglo-Saxon people during the expansion phase in the later sixth and, presumably, seventh centuries. He set a final limit for the frequent adoption of place-names of this nature at the time of widespread conversion to Christianity; by then it had already become an archaic word-form in the German homeland.

Cox in 1973 examined the distribution of -ham and -ingaham names in the Midlands and East Anglia. He showed that there is a remarkable correlation between the distribution of -ham names and the pattern of Roman roads. He proposed, therefore, that -ham names indicate primary settlement from the roads, and that these were followed in the settlement sequence by -ingaham names and then again by those places with -ingas and -inga- elements. Kuurman (1974) came to similar conclusions for the East Midlands. This has all been summarised by Gelling (1978, 106-120).

There are two problems with this theory. It is not necessarily a valid assumption that primary settlements were usually located near Roman roads. It is possible that (except for settlements of federate troops) they were often located in areas less exploited by the Romano-British population, especially on marginal soils; Anglo-Saxon cemeteries do tend to be on lighter, poorer soils in East Anglia - a fact rather played down by Cox. The distribution of cemeteries and -ham names do not really correspond as closely as his chronology requires. However, it is certainly true that Cox's distribution of -ham names is closer than the distribution of -ingas names to the pattern of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. Even the period of -ham names could well belong to the time of secondary settlement when the intermingling of the two populations took place.

More work needs to be done on Norfolk place-names to ascertain which of the apparently -ingas place-names are actually derived from the singular suffix -ing of the Clavington type (Gelling 1978, 109-10 and 120-1). Once the names of this type have been identified the pattern of -ingas names may have to be revised.

In Breckland and west Norfolk much of the population was apparently Anglo-Saxon by the end of the fifth century, judging by the concentration of recorded cemeteries. But for central Norfolk and High Suffolk there is still an obvious gap in our understanding of the situation until the second half of the seventh century. There was possibly still a large Celtic population, although later no doubt it became dominated by an Anglo-Saxon minority. How long the Romano-British settlement sites continued is at present unknown; we can only guess. Except possibly for types of Romano-Saxon pottery, we cannot at present recognise any finds of Roman character made after the early fifth century. The matter cannot really be taken much further through fieldwork; the question of the survival of Romano-British settlements must remain unanswered until the upper levels of settlement sites have been carefully excavated if, indeed, any can be found where these levels have not been damaged by cultivation. Only in the seventh century, with the introduction of Ipswich ware, does this apparently aceramic population make its appearance again in the archaeological record.

The linear earthworks are the best evidence we have for the controlled Anglo-Saxon movement into the central areas. With this relatively slow Anglo-Saxon expansion there is little reason why Roman sites could not have survived with a declining economy throughout the fifth century.

Within the Launditch Hundred, the following villages had been founded by the time that Middle Saxon Ipswich ware was in use (c. A.D. 850-650):

Beetley, Great Dunham, Little Dunham, North Elmham, Horningtoft, ?Kempstone, Longham, Mileham, Sutton, Tittleshall, Weasenham All Saints, Wellingham.

These twelve were probably not the total for the area; further fieldwork would reveal more.

The important consideration at this stage is to see how far back in time these settlements can be projected. Kempstone produced only a single sherd despite a fairly thorough search and, therefore, may not have been established before the ninth century. Great and Little Dunham each had only a single sherd, although here the local conditions prevented much fieldwork near the churches. All the others were, apparently, growing villages by the eighth century (assuming, that is, that more abundant pottery evidence indicates more prolonged settlement, which is of course a dubious argument). None, however, has provided a single sherd which can be positively identified as early Saxon.

The following four Ipswich ware sites produced a thin scatter of Romano-British pottery:

Longham, Mileham, Wellingham, Sutton.

Both Longham and Mileham have also each produced a Roman coin. In the first three examples the small number of Roman finds were concentrated near the church; at Sutton there was no church, but they were still in the general area of the early village.

At North Elmham the Middle Saxon deposits contained very few sherds of Roman pottery, although Roman tiles were frequently found. Therefore, the Roman finds from these four sites might represent an earlier phase of activity; perhaps these sites were already settled before the commercial distribution of slow-wheel-made wares in central Norfolk. Such - as yet very hypothetical - occupation was not characterised by early Saxon pottery, but perhaps by local hand-made ware of poor quality which does not survive in ploughsoil conditions. All this clearly raises questions which will only be answered by large-scale excavation.

Anglo-Saxon Period

In Launditch there are eight villages with -hām endings:

Dunham, Elmham, Fransham, Lexham, Litcham, Mileham, Rougham, Weasenham.

Half of these sites have produced Ipswich ware pottery and, except Fransham, the other sites are inaccessible. The archaeological evidence, therefore, supports the view that -hām villages were relatively early, although there is no firm archaeological evidence that any of them pre-date the mid seventh century. Usually the -ing and -ham villages have the choice locations, and frequently it was the -ham villages which became the market centres during the Middle Ages. It is particularly significant that the three largest Roman period settlements, at Billingsford, Kempstone and Toftrees, seem to have been replaced by Elmham, Litcham and Fakenham respectively, all with -ham endings.

On the whole villages with -tūn endings (Beeston, Greynston, Kempstone, Kipton, Sutton, Swanton Morley) appear to be later, even though their origins were spread over several centuries. Unlike other groups, two-thirds of these are now deserted villages; they may indicate, therefore, a phase of settlement expansion onto marginal land. When the population apparently declined in the latter part of the Middle Ages, a high proportion of these were depopulated.

THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES

The archaeological evidence from urban and rural sites strongly suggests that during these centuries the population of East Anglia started to rise rapidly; some small farms grew into villages, while other entirely new sites came into being.

It is possible to distinguish through fieldwork between a village, a small hamlet or a single farm only by the relative sizes of the different sites. In economic terms the difference is easier to define: a house, or a group of houses constituting a hamlet, is usually a group of people engaged almost entirely on a single occupation, mostly farming; a larger group of houses becomes a village when the size of the settlement is great enough to allow specialisation within that community; then some people take on a trade as their main occupation, even though they may continue to farm in a minor way. Such detail can only be viewed by excavation, and fieldwork usually only provides evidence of growth and sometimes industry (e.g. metal working and pottery making). A good example of such growth in the Launditch area is Greynston (Chapter 18); here we can trace the site from its origin, perhaps as a single farm site in the eleventh century, to a green village in the thirteenth century.

Fig.2 represents the distribution of the villages which were listed in the Domesday survey. Fieldwork has shown that some of those not listed were already in their infancy by this time, although they were apparently too small to be recorded as separate settlements. The actual locations of most of the Domesday villages shown on this map are accurate, and they inevitably differ from those locations indicated by Darby, who had to use the positions of existing village sites (Darby 1952, 106).

Where there were two adjacent villages with the same name such as Great and Little Dunham, they were presumably listed together, although just to the north of Launditch in Gallow Hundred both 'Raynham' and 'South Raynham' have separate entries (Darby 1952, 102).

The following villages were apparently too small to be listed separately by the Domesday surveyors:

Beeston, Beetley, (Great) Bittering, Brisley, Dillington, (Little) Dunham, (Little) Fransham, Greynston, (West) Lexham, Weasenham (St. Peter), Worthing.

Where the prefix is in brackets it is assumed that only one of a pair of villages bearing the same name is listed. On the whole, with the exception of Weasenham, the archaeological evidence supports the view that they were no more than small hamlets by this date.

It is the considerable size of many of the eleventh-century villages, such as North Elmham, Mileham and the Weasenhams, which is surprising, although both the archaeological and the Domesday evidence confirm that it was already a highly prosperous region.

The eleventh-century villages usually followed the same road system which is in use today; however, some of the Middle Saxon sites, such as Mileham, did not. It is hardly surprising that the further one goes back in time the less the settlements can be related to modern features.

Some suggestions of Anglo-Saxon village and field planning have been considered. The very regular arrangement of the Weasenham All Saints street plan is probably the result of a deliberate layout. There is also some evidence of early field planning orientated on a Roman road and the Launditch at Longham.

The majority of tenth- and eleventh-century villages were apparently placed on fairly high ground, often well above the level of the medieval greens. The North Elmham cathedral site is a classic example of a high location, partly superseded in the Middle Ages by the street village in the valley below.

One of the most interesting, and perhaps most important, results to come out of this work is the complete absence of pre-Conquest occupation around village greens, wherever green edges were accessible for field walking. Thorpe (1961) argued from continental examples that the green village had been introduced into Lowland England by the Anglo-Saxons as the typical type of settlement pattern during the pre-Conquest period. However, this research has shown that green villages, as we normally understand them in East Anglia, did not come into existence until the twelfth century. In the tenth and eleventh centuries the villages were still clustered around crossroads or along streets. Even in the Breckland, where there was obviously very intensive Anglo-Saxon settlement, Caldecote had no occupation actually around the green before the twelfth century. This medieval village pattern in East Anglia was a secondary development from the Anglo-Saxon settlements, and should not, therefore, be equated with Migration Period village patterns in north-west Europe.

III. THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

With better drainage and probably drier conditions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there was a gradual but significant movement from the higher level sites to the greens and commons.

In Launditch in the Middle Ages the typical village was arranged around a green; by the thirteenth century there were roughly twice as many of these as there were villages strung out along streets. The greens were frequently in the damper parts of the parish: either in the valleys or on the flat boulder clay plateau areas which were probably still difficult to drain in winter. Because these areas were not easy to cultivate they were possibly already set aside for communal grazing by the time of the Conquest. It is significant, though, that they were not focal points for settlement before the twelfth century.

At Caldecote in Breckland there was precisely the same evolution of village form as there was in Launditch. The early village stood around a high point, later dominated by the church; then in the twelfth century there was a movement to the green. The lack of

The Medieval Period

earthworks and medieval pottery around the church site suggests that it had already become isolated from the village by the thirteenth century.

The development of the one village examined in West Norfolk, West Dereham, near the Fen edge, was similar. The results of fieldwork in the fields near the church have not been described in this report, but from an Ipswich ware site on the hill around the church the settlement spread southwards down the slope to the green in the Middle Ages. The scattered village now lies around the south side of the hill, while the church stands up alone on the hill above (Plate VIII).

IV. ISOLATED CHURCHES

The study of all these villages has revealed a lack of stability of settlement sites throughout the whole history of the post-Roman period. Many villages started to shift from their original sites in the twelfth century, and this is probably the explanation for the majority of isolated churches in many parts of East Anglia (although in Mileham the village had already shifted slightly away from the church site by the end of the ninth century). Village patterns have rarely been examined in depth in East Anglia, but one of the most perceptive studies on the subject was 'The Suffolk Landscape' by David Dymond (1968). He put forward four possible explanations for the isolated church.

Firstly, it may be thought that the church had been left behind by a village which has either died or moved. The Black Death is commonly supposed to have been the cause, but in practice this is rarely or never proved ... (So,) ... except in detail, the settlement pattern was not greatly affected ... The possibility must therefore be faced that most of these churches have always been isolated. For example, Depden near Bury St. Edmunds is listed by M.W. Beresford as a possible deserted medieval village. Good air photographs taken by J.K. St. Joseph did not however show the slightest trace of an early village around the isolated church; the main settlement lies a quarter of a mile away around a forty-three acre green, and may always have been there.

The other suggestions he put forward were: because it was roughly central in a dispersed parish, because the old church site was determined by a pre-existing pagan site; or because the site was determined by that of the manor house (Dymond 1968, 28-9).

There was no suggestion of re-use of an early Saxon site in Launditch, but with the almost complete lack of evidence for such sites this is only to be expected. The idea that the church was to be central between the scattered hamlets is also difficult to accept, for we have seen that post-medieval scattered settlement patterns were mostly products of the final expansion and fragmentation of the villages after the thirteenth century.

There is at first glance some support for Dymond's suggestion of 'manorial linkage', for in ten of the Launditch villages the church and a manor site were in close proximity:

Beeston, Little Bittering, Brisley, North Elmham, Little Fransham, Kempstone, Mileham, Stanfield, Wellingham, Worthing.

However, these account for only 25% of the isolated churches (even if one is correct in assuming that the moated sites are manorial and that they are in the approximate positions of their unmoated precursors), and Beeston is the only example where there is an isolated church not apparently near the site of an early village.

Dymond's principal explanation of village movement does have general validity, but only from a post-twelfth-century viewpoint. There are no earthworks of Middle and Late

Saxon date around the churches, but the pottery evidence for early settlement in their vicinity is unequivocal. By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the majority of the churches were already lonely monuments in the landscape.

V. VILLAGE GREENS

It was the twelfth, thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries which saw the full development of village greens. Before that time, as we have already seen, the population within a parish was usually nucleated. But even the green settlement did not remain stable for long: some villages such as Longham, apparently shifted from one green to another; while at Weasenham St. Peter the main settlement moved away from the site near the large common to a new street hamlet further north. Other green villages, as at West Lexham and Grenstein have entirely vanished.

Why was the green apparently so essential to the village economy after the eleventh century? On this Dymond said:

More research is needed into the origin of these commons and greens. Their main function in the past was of course to pasture animals. Domesday Book shows there were many plough-teams at work in High Suffolk, and the acreage of arable land must have been considerable. Up to the mid-fourteenth century, even more land became arable as assarts were made from the woodland and waste. As well as the highly priced meadows, the greens and commons which survived were vital for the draught-animals and other stock in the parish. It seems that the Anglo-Saxon and medieval economy of this area was a mixed one, which necessitated the provision of substantial acreages of permanent pasture. D. Charman has already commented on the apparent lack in East Suffolk of references to the pasturing of arable after harvest and in the fallow year. If it indeed never became the custom to use such land as pasture, it is probably because of the original provision of these permanent pastures (Dymond 1968, 30).

As the rural economy and the population expanded, and as the conversion of waste into arable intensified, so the people became more dependant upon these pieces of common grazing for their farm animals. The excavations at both Thuxton and Grenstein have provided a picture of these villages; they were filled mainly with small farmsteads each with a living-house and separate outbuildings. These were not the homes of landless labourers living at subsistence level. Each household probably had at least one animal that needed room to graze. This picture is fully supported by the documentary evidence for the high proportion of free peasantry in East Anglia in the Middle Ages (Dodwell 1941).

VI. THE RURAL DEPOPULATION

In 1963 R.E. Glasscock analysed and mapped the 1334 Lay Subsidy returns for East Anglia and Lincolnshire. Of Norfolk he said that the evidence substantiated the belief that it was one of the richest counties in medieval England, and the figures he used represented a population already in decline. Cautley in his introduction to Norfolk Churches calculated that there are 659 surviving churches in the county which were built before 1700, and that there are an additional 245 in ruins (Cautley 1949, 1). The density of medieval churches in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk was greater than anywhere else in England: in Norfolk, including the large areas of desolate Breckland, there was, on average, one for just under every 800 ha (Cautley 1940, 1). Over a quarter of these have since been abandoned, while many others serve very diminished communities, and in some, such as at Horningtoft and Brisley, worship is now confined to the chancel. These figures alone would exemplify the prosperity and density of the medieval population and also the extent of the subsequent decline.

A revealing account of the rise and fall in the size of the medieval population in a limited area of Eastern England between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries has been given for the Cambridge area by C.T. Smith. He calculated that the number of people between 1279 and 1524 dropped by no less than 48.5% (Smith 1965). Miss F.G. Davenport arrived at an even higher figure for the Norfolk Manor of Fornsett: only fifty-seven dwellings held in bond tenure were standing in 1565, while the vacant plots numbered no less than seventy-eight. At Fornsett, during the period 1376-1565, the population was no more than half that which it had been during the early part of the fourteenth century (Davenport 1906, 98-105). A 50% reduction in the rural population over Western Europe was apparently normal in the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth centuries (Duby 1968, 234-311). Hatcher (1977, 69) concludes that the English population had declined by at least 60% between the Black Death of 1348-9 and the mid-fifteenth century.

In Norfolk rural depopulation was certainly a gradual process, and some villages were apparently depopulated sooner than others. Whereas Grenstein and Caldecote were deserted during the fifteenth century, Godwick still had a few houses in 1596. The abandonment of villages represented a slow retreat, particularly from marginal situations, over a period of several centuries. While some villages disappeared entirely, most of the others were left with large gaps between the surviving dwellings, such as at Horningtoft and Mileham.

It is generally accepted by historians that the decline had already started by the beginning of the fourteenth century and that a deterioration of the climate was one of the causes of declining yields and subsequent famine. The Black Death and succeeding plagues accentuated the economic decline (Saltmarsh 1941).

Although a gradual recovery in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries may have brought about a more flourishing Tudor and Elizabethan economy, there is little sign in Norfolk of a population revival in the rural areas. In many villages the decline continued. Godwick disappeared in the seventeenth century, and West Lexham, an extensive village in 1575, had vanished entirely by the end of the eighteenth century. The agricultural revolution perhaps brought about a temporary halt to this process, and the nineteenth century saw a period of rebuilding of labourers' cottages; since then, however, the decline has continued until recently.

The extent of village depopulation was far greater than Allison perhaps appreciated (Allison 1955). In Launditch, an area without particularly heavy soils, 40% of the medieval village sites have been abandoned. If this figure is used to estimate a county total, the figure would be in the region of 400¹. His research, however, was not designed to locate sites which have been depopulated by migration. Rougham, West Lexham, Longham and Weasenham St. Peter are all deserted villages, but villages still exist as small settlements elsewhere within the parish. If one was to include Roman, sub-Roman and early Saxon villages as well, the number would be considerable; the archaeological potential for research and excavation on these deserted sites in East Anglia is enormous.

VII. MOATS

Moated sites are found in many locations, and they vary greatly in size and shape. It is interesting that some, such as those at Worthing and Beetley, occur in very low-lying situations where it might even be difficult to build a house today. Several of the manor sites may have been long established by the time of the climatic deterioration in the fourteenth century. No doubt it was the damper conditions in the later Middle Ages which brought about the digging of many moated enclosures. Nothing has been found during the course of this survey to alter the accepted view that they were not usually constructed before the thirteenth century (Le Patourel and Roberts 1978, 51). The

twelfth-century enclosure near the church at Mileham is not a typical moated site. From the national and regional distribution one can see that their construction was greatly influenced by the heaviness of the clay soil (Emery 1962; Roberts 1964). On the heavier boulder clays of Suffolk they occur far more frequently than they do in Norfolk. Certainly their main function was to drain a house site, usually for a manor, although, no doubt, social prestige and fish rearing were also sometimes involved.

There was possibly a distinction between the manor sites within the village and those in outlying parts of the parish. While the former were usually the capital manors, the others often probably originated as sub-divisions of manor land.

VIII. DISCUSSION

East Anglian settlement patterns frequently diverge just as field systems once did, from normal Midland types. Farms are frequently dispersed or in small hamlets. They often carry the name End or Green ... Most greens, commons and ends are almost certainly medieval, but little work has been done on their origin, which seems, however, to be related to the flexibility of traditionally East Anglian field systems and to the multiplicity of small manors. A similar tentative explanation might be adopted for the loose grouping of houses in many East Anglian villages, often suggesting a loose association of two or three nuclei (Smith 1964, 127-8).

It has been possible to answer some of the questions raised in this summary of the East Anglian settlement pattern. Other problems remain, in particular the proliferation of manor sites and their relation to assarting and the extension of the open fields.

We are now able to suggest how the dispersed East Anglian settlement patterns came to differ from the more nucleated Midland system. The pattern of dispersed hamlets is the end-product of a population expansion which took place up to the middle of the thirteenth century, followed by a further dispersal and a decline in population which has continued until recently in many areas². No doubt in part it was due to the flexibility of the social structure of East Anglia which made this type of settlement pattern possible. Quite a proportion of the dispersal took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when the feudal structure had broken down. The idea of 'polyfocal' villages as described by Taylor (1977) does not seem to apply in the area examined.

The villages of Launditch area can usefully be compared with those of West Cambridgeshire (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments 1968, 4, 34, 48, 90). The shift of settlement from an original nucleus near the church is clear at Caxton and Comberton and also Eltisley, which has a typical plan of the church just beyond the head of the triangular village green. Other villages, such as Barrington, raise problems, for here the churches actually stand within the greens. This coincidence of church and green is met with only rarely in the region. The pattern found at Litcham, Old Buckenham and Mulbarton in Norfolk and at Mellis and South Elmham St. Michael in Suffolk, where the church is on the side of a green, also needs further study.

Village mobility was not, of course, confined to East Anglia as has been shown for Northamptonshire (Taylor 1978): although for the East Midlands it has so far proved difficult to trace this mobility back into the pre-Conquest period.

The East Anglian medieval village patterns were too varied and irregular to conform to any regular classification or to be compared with continental village types. The one shape which is relatively standard is the triangular green, but this rarely dominates the continental village patterns (Smith 1967, 264-286; Thorpe 1961; Thorpe 1964; Dickinson 1949; Meitzen 1895; Vahl 1931).

Discussion

Any piece of countryside, however small, holds many secrets; to examine a group of parishes in depth and to see how they have evolved over two thousand years is one of the most exciting and rewarding activities in field archaeology. When it is possible to explain why a church stands on a hill perhaps a mile from its village, why a road takes an apparently unnecessary turn and why some Anglo-Saxon villages have grown into market towns while others have totally decayed, a landscape study brings its own rewards.

IX. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Miss Barbara Green and the staff of the Archaeology Department of Norwich Castle Museum were always most helpful, both in providing access to the museum records and to the finds stored in the collections. Dr. W. O. Hassall, the librarian of Holkham Hall, gave much advice during the search for manuscript maps, and the late Earl kindly gave permission for these maps to be photographed. Norfolk County Council provided access to the enclosure documents in their keeping and supplied negatives of particular maps. Dr. John Pattern kindly provided information about the 1603 communicant returns for each village.

Professor Charles Thomas, who was supervisor for the thesis, provided enormous support to the writer. Mr. John Hurst as an Inspector of Ancient Monuments and as secretary of the Deserted Medieval Villages Research Group also gave much encouragement.

Mrs. Norma Virgoe and Edwin Rose kindly checked both the final draft and the proofs of this volume.

REFERENCES

1. This assumes an approximate figure of 1,000 medieval villages for the county; in White's Directory of Norfolk in 1854 there were 740.
2. Keith Wade (1976, 122) has tentatively suggested that there was a dispersal settlement pattern at Langhale by the eleventh century; but the evidence for pre-Conquest date for this settlement pattern is ambiguous. Such a claim cannot be substantiated without further fieldwork.

18. GRENSTEIN (GREYNSTON)

I. SUMMARY

Grenstein (site 7225) is the nineteenth-century spelling for a medieval village situated on the boulder clay upland of central Norfolk. It grew up in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as part of an expansion onto these soils; it was deserted probably in the fifteenth century, at a time when other villages in the area on marginal soils were also declining.

The village consisted of about twenty-six tofts. One of these was excavated during 1965-6 to reveal an elaborate layout of house, yards and outbuildings of late fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date.

II. INTRODUCTION

THE SETTING

The relief of central Norfolk rises gently to the west in response to the rising dip-slope of the underlying chalk escarpment.

The rivers run to east and west off this plateau in wide gentle valleys. Grenstein stood on a south-facing slope on the side of a valley where the two river systems meet (Figs. 45-6), with the Black Water to the east and the Nar to the west.

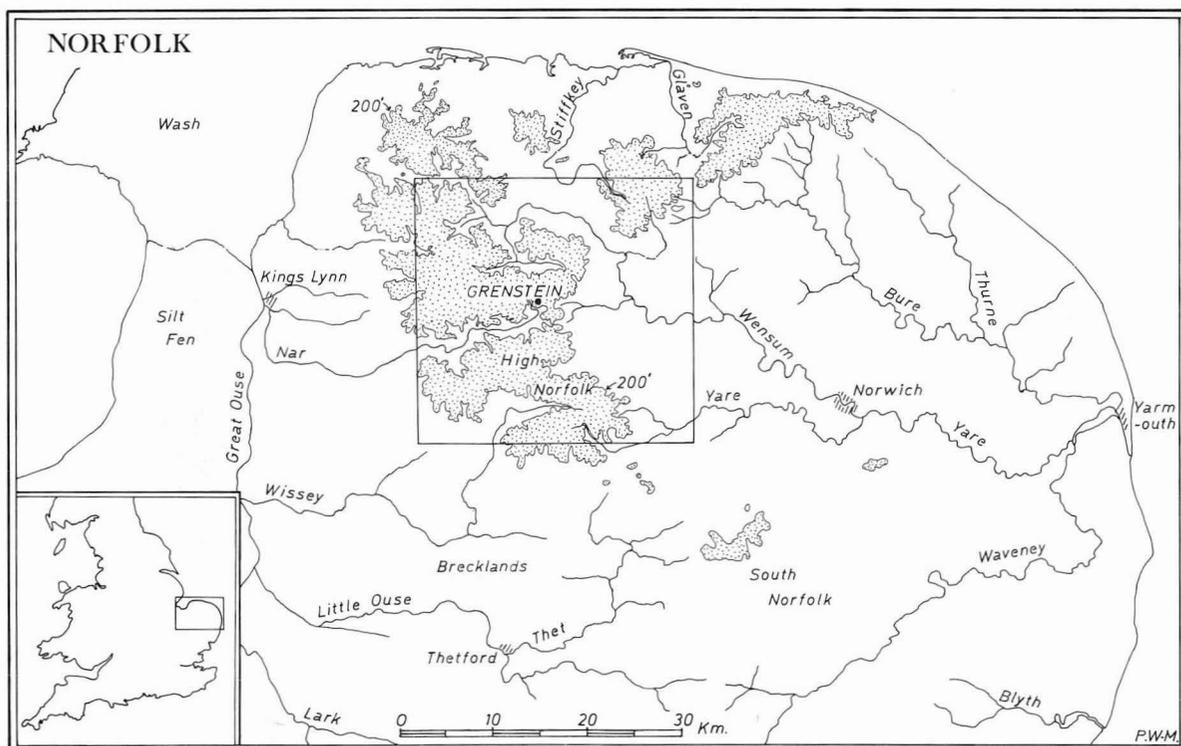


Fig. 44. A map of Norfolk showing the location of Grenstein on the boulder clay upland of central Norfolk at the watershed between the Wensum and the Nar; the square represents the area illustrated in Fig. 45.



Fig. 45. The deserted villages of West Central Norfolk: the sites illustrated include both certain and possible examples recognised by Allison and the writer. The two excavated sites at Grenstein and Thuxton are shown in capitals. Some of the villages have been completely deserted and others moved onto fresh sites (e.g. Houghton).

As Part 1 of this volume shows, central Norfolk had a relatively high rural population in the thirteenth century; Grenstein is surrounded by a considerable number of shrunken and deserted villages. Indeed it is unusual to find a village in this area which does not exhibit some signs of shrinkage, although the gaps in street frontages are today often being infilled with new housing. Fig. 45, which shows several sites recognised since 1955 (Allison 1955), displays the extent of village desertion in the area. Thuxton, in the south-east corner of Fig. 45, was excavated by the writer and Lawrence Butler in 1963-4, and a report of this work will be published separately.

There is a marked contrast between the locations of Grenstein and Mileham, which lies 1.5 km to the south-east. Mileham began in the Middle Saxon period (p. 41), and it lies in the shelter of a dry valley, partly on well-drained gravel soil. It contains the fine earthworks of a Norman motte-and-bailey castle and was a successful village in the Middle Ages. Grenstein, on the other hand, stood in a comparatively marginal situation

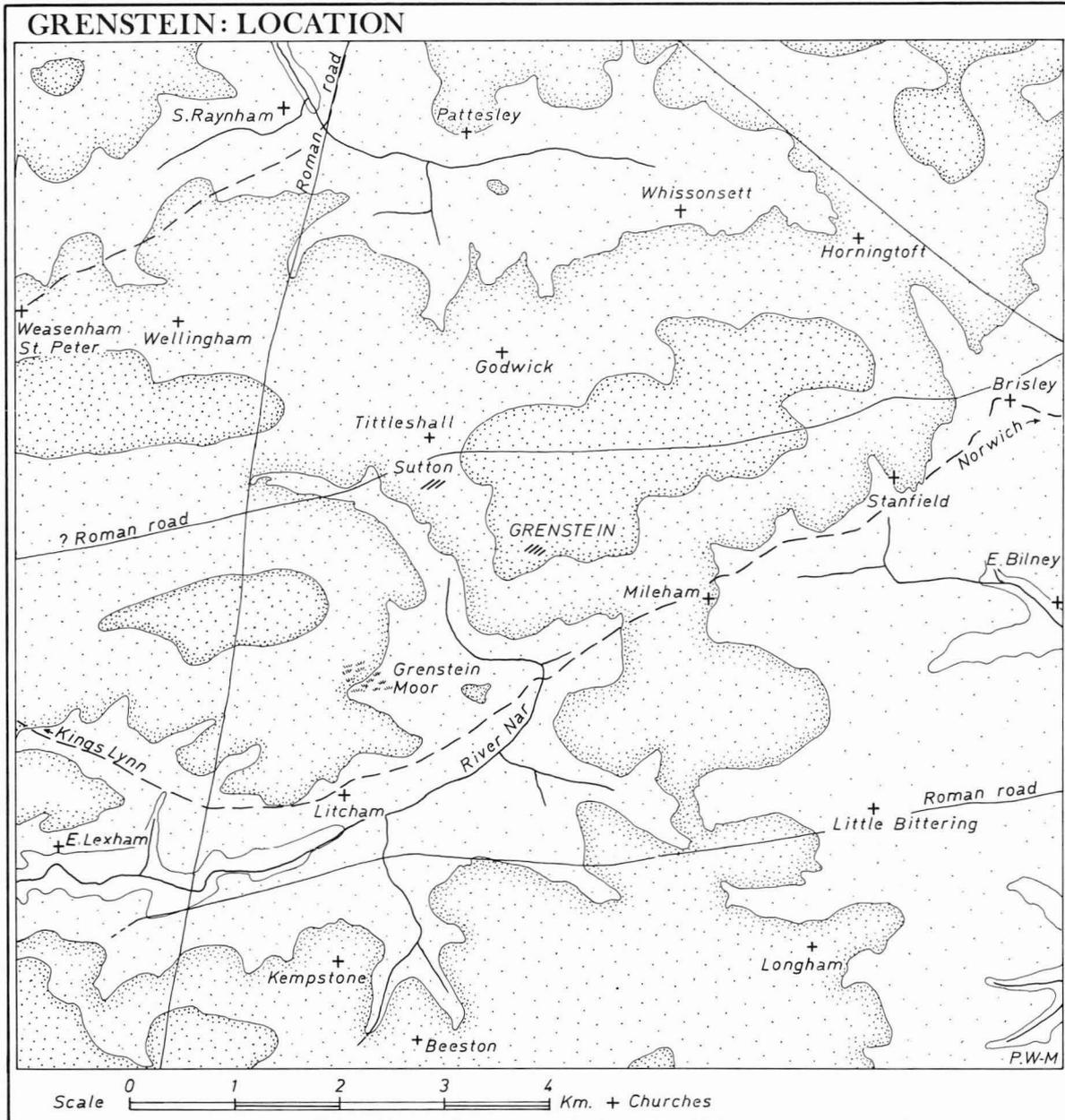


Fig.46. The topography of the Grenstein area showing nearby villages, including both deserted, shrunken and surviving examples.

on heavy boulder clay soil and on an exposed windswept hill slope. It is hardly surprising that Grenstein started much later and was probably deserted in the fifteenth century (p.99).

THE PLACE-NAME

In its modern form, as used throughout this report, the place-name Grenstein is a nineteenth-century creation. It is used in three places on Ordnance Survey maps: for a pair of eighteenth-century cottages which stood, until recently, near the village site, for Grenstein Farm in the upper reaches of the Nar valley and for Grenstein Moor further west.

Grenstein Farm was a model nineteenth-century farm created by the Holkham Estate in 1816 out of an area of low-lying common in the Nar valley and outlying portions of other farms (Martins 1980). The two cottages were first called 'Grenstein' on the 1880 edition of the Six-Inch Ordnance Survey map. However, up until the time they were demolished

in c. 1970 local people called them 'Granston' or 'Granson' cottages. Granston, Granson and Grainston presumably developed from the medieval word Greynston. The early spellings, as supplied by the late Dr. Schram, are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| <u>Greineston</u> | 1198, 1202, 1203, 1209, 1223, 1251 |
| <u>Greyneston</u> | 1209, 1210, 1243, 1257, 1267, 1308, 1330, 1333 |
| <u>Greinston</u> | 1285 |
| <u>Greynston</u> | 1356, 1376, 1387 |

He suggested that these spellings indicated a compound Greinestun meaning 'Grein's Farm', containing an old Norse personal name Grein, also found, for instance, in Grainsby (Lincs). The personal name is, therefore, an Anglo-Scandinavian hybrid (a 'Grimston-hybrid'), which he felt was not likely to be earlier than the tenth century. Dr. Schram's notes are currently in Uppsala, Sweden, where Dr. Sandred is preparing the Norfolk volume for the English Place-Names Society.

III. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

by David Yaxley

This note on the documentary history of Grenstein or Greynston makes no claim to be exhaustive. The obvious printed sources have been searched, the manorial documents at Holkham examined, and the indices to the collections in the Norfolk Record Office checked, but circumstances did not permit investigation in, for instance, the Public Record Office or the British Museum. The objects of the enquiry were limited: to discover something of the nature of the settlement at Greynston and the date of its desertion, and to locate the site of the manor or manors.

Greynston is not mentioned in Domesday Book. The editor of the Victoria County History text, following Carthew, identifies Greynston with Suttuna (Victoria County History I, 157; Carthew 1879 I, 83). This was held in 1086 by Boteric from Rainald son of Ivo, and before the Conquest had been part of Archbishop Stigand's estate of Mileham. Rainald's fief, after having passed to the Giffards, came by marriage to Richard Fitz Gilbert, earl of Clare, in 1164. In 1236 Roger de Greynston held one knight's fee in Greynston of the earl of Clare. Was this the Suttuna of Domesday? The estate maps at Holkham locate Sutton around the present High House and Cokesford Farm to the south and south-east of Tittleshall church (Fig. 47). Sutton Green extended east and to the north of the present road to Stanfield, while Sutton Heath was in the extreme south-west of the parish, on either side of the present Litcham road. (Holkham Estate, maps of 1596 and 1725-8). By the fifteenth century the settlements at Sutton and Greynston were distinct. In 1452-3, for instance, we find a reference to two messuages in Tittleshall 'in the area called Sutton' abutting on Sutton Green, and many entries in the court book of 1518-46 show that Sutton was largely within the manor of Greynston but quite separate from Greynston itself (Holkham, Tittleshall Reg. Bks. 5, 16). However, its separate appearance in Domesday Book and the fact that it had its own large green and heath together suggest that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, at least it was as important as Tittleshall.

The earliest surviving reference to Greynston that has been found is an exchange of land in 1198-9 in Tittleshall and 'Grimston', possibly a misreading of Greinston (Carthew 1879 II, 767). Greynston sounds pre-Conquest, but its omission from Domesday Book suggests either that it did not exist in 1086 or that it was then merely a subordinate farm or minor settlement. The fact that Roger de Greynston held it in 1236 and 1242-3 is surely definite evidence that by the early thirteenth century it was more than just a farm or even a manor house (Blomefield 1808 X, 66; Carthew 1879 I, 84). Roger de Greynston died before 1243, and in 1251 Ranulph le Cunte and Joan his wife had a grant

Documentary Evidence

of free warren over demesne lands in Greynston and Tydeshal, together with a weekly market on Wednesdays at Greynston and an annual fair on 19-21 July (Cal.Chart.R. 1226-57, 358). How long the market and fair flourished is not known, but it is interesting that in 1267 the lord of the capital manor, Hamo Chevre, had a grant of a market and fair in Tittleshall on exactly the same days (Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 80). Ranulph must have been either a subtenant or the heir of Roger de Greynston, for the de Greynston family continued as mesne tenants for the fee. As has been said, Simon de Grymeston and Hamon Thornekyn held the fee in 1302 (Feudal Aids III, 416; not 1218-19 as Blomefield 1808 X, 66 has it), and in 1346 it was held by Robert de Greynston and Ralph Caley (Feudal Aids III, 540). The Caley or Cailli family held land in West Norfolk and in the Flegg area, and had held land in Tittleshall in the thirteenth century. If the manor of Caleys ever had a separate existence it must have been after 1302 and before 1401, when the heirs of Geoffrey Boteler held the whole fee. There is no evidence to bear out Bryant's statement that Robert de Greynston and Ralph Caley held the fee in 1420 beyond a vague reference in Blomefield, and no other evidence for the participation of the Caley family after 1401 has been found (Blomefield 1808 X, 66; T.H.Bryant undated, 219). The manor remained with the Boteler family and was leased regularly from 1421. In 1451-2 John Botiler of Norwich, gent., sold it to Walter Dorward of London, mercer, and others, and in 1458 Dorward granted it to William Bozoun of Whissonsett. By 1497 it had passed into the hands of William Wayte who, dying that year, left the manor and premises to his wife Margaret for her lifetime. The Waytes remained in possession until 1595, when they sold it to Sir Edward Coke and it was united with the capital manor of Tittleshall (Blomefield 1808 X, 66; Carthew 1879 II, 767).

Were there ever two manors in Greynston? The apparent splitting of the fee before 1302 would seem to provide circumstantial evidence for this, but as we have seen the two halves were reunited by the beginning of the fifteenth century. In 1421 we find a reference to Greynston manor and 'lands called Calyes in Tyteshall', and in 1431 to 'Grymeston manor and Calyes' (Holkham, Misc. deeds, 2042, 2049, 2050). Thereafter in the fifteenth century the style is always the manor of 'Greynston and Caleys' or 'Greynston alias Caleys'. The court book of 1518-46 adds to the confusion by using half-a-dozen variations before settling for either 'Greynstonhall cum membris' or, more frequently, 'Greynston-hall Calys Nortons cum membris in Tittelleshale'. A Robert de Norton of Tittleshall occurs in 1343, and the fifteenth-century rental has a message 'formerly Nortons but now belonging to John Wayte'; otherwise no references have been found to this elusive 'Nortons manor' (Holkham, misc. deeds, 2018; Tittleshall Reg. Bk.5). Caley's, therefore, seems to have had a separate existence only in the fourteenth century. However, the fifteenth-century rental/survey, under the heading manerii de Caleys perquisit de Walter Durward 4 Ed.IV (1464-5) has 'the site of the manor containing with an adjacent croft 8 acres of land lying in Greynston and abutting on the common called Wodmergrene towards the west [altered from the east] upon the wood called Caleyswode towards the east and the croft between the way leading from Wodmergrene towards Mileham to the west and an inclosure to the east and abutting on Burwodegrene to the south'. Burwodegrene must have been a green to the west of the moated site in Mileham (marked by a cross on Fig.47) which is almost certainly the site of the manor of Burghwoodhall. The slightly confused description quoted would seem to place the site of the manor of Caley's exactly on the site shown on the map of 1596 (Fig.47), if we can accept that Dovesgreen was called Wodmergrene in 1464. In fact, the name Dovesgreen does not appear in the rental, and the earliest occurrence found is only 1526. It is true that a message called Doves appeared in a grant of 1462, but of possibly greater derivational significance is the presentment in 1538 of straying animals on the common pasture called Doffehousegrene (Holkham, Tittleshall Reg.charter 198; Bk.16). Wodmergrene appears much earlier, in a grant of a message in 1351 (Holkham, Tittleshall Reg.57). However, the same piece of land appears as Greynstongrene in 1427, 1440, 1446 and 1462, when it had a line of messages along its western edge. This is confusing, for, as we shall see, Hall Green also went under the name of Greynston Green in the fifteenth century. One certainty, fortunately, is that the

Callesgrene of a court presentment of 1526 cannot be the same as Dowesgrene/Wodmergrene, as reference is made to a road and path leading from it to Dowysgrene. Possibly Callesgrene was the same as the Caleysdrove which had the road leading to it obstructed in 1532. In the fifteenth-century rental two messuages, also belonging to Durward, abutted on Calye grene to the west and upon the wood of Greynstonhall. One possibility is that Callesgrene stood to the south of Dowesgrene and next to Burwodegrene.

It seems probable, therefore, that we should take the location of Callis manor on the map of 1596 at its face value; but was this also the site of Greynston manor, or must we look elsewhere? The map shows a small house with a central chimneystack at the south-east corner of the site - not a very impressive building for an important manor, but very similar to medieval manor houses on other maps of the period, e.g. Longham, Heacham and Gnatingdon. The fifteenth-century survey, however, refers to the site of Greynston: 'John Gerrard chal have ye west part of ye manor yerd of ye manor Greynstonhall in tetushalle yt is for is seyn ye wody part fro halle grene over to ye dich next ye Cley pastur and same John cha kepyn ye fenses of ye sayd dich fro ye south ende of ye sam incla [inclosure] over to ye pounte [pound or pond?] and hav ye profyts ye dich into ye holle of ye dich and as far reseyan yt is for to say fro ye seyde pounte into ye weye there tha was defended be Water Durward'. Unfortunately this is undated, but probably comes from some time shortly after 1451. If the halle grene is the same as the Hall green of the 1596 map it is evident that the wooded west part of the manor yard was the Lounde. Greynstonhallelounde occurs later in the same rental as containing 12 acres, of which 4 acres were covered by wood; the whole abutted on Greynstongrene on the west and Greynstonway on the north. Another abuttal, of 3 acres of land against Greynston grene on the north and le ynge on the west, confirms the identification of Greynstongrene with Halle grene, for Le Ing is marked on the 1596 map as the common leading off the south-west corner of Hall Green, and the name occurs many times in the rental. There is no doubt, therefore, that Hall Green went under the alias of Greynstongrene in the fifteenth century, at the same time that Dowes grene/Wodmergrene was also called Greynstongrene.

All this is very confusing, but two probabilities emerge: first, that the site of Caley's manor is as shown on the map of 1596; and second, that the manor yard, at least, of Greynston manor lay in the Lound. Whether the moat in Lounds Wood (Fig.48) (which, incidentally, is almost exactly the same size as The Lounde of the fifteenth century) is the remains of the moat of Greynston manor is an open question. Many medieval manor-houses were surrounded by extensive enclosed and ditched yards (Yaxley & Virgoe 1978, 10, 17, 20). The fifteenth-century rental, by its numerous references to Le Lounde, suggests that part of it, at least, had become wood long before the middle of the century, and it is likely that the practical site of the manor had been at Caley's for some time, probably since the two halves were reunited under the Botelers towards the end of the fourteenth century.

Evidence for the state of the settlement at Greynston is lacking until quite late in the Middle Ages. Grants of messuages in Greynston occur from the middle of the fourteenth century, and the fifteenth century has a number of references to Greynston street. Grants of 1427, 1440, and 1446 refer to three sets of adjacent messuages lying with their east heads abutting on Greynstongrene (Holkham, Misc. Deeds 2034, 2095, 2099, 2127, 2129; Tittleshall Reg.57, 125, 144, 158, 252). Assuming that this is the green later called Dowes Green - there is no hint of any settlement to the west of Hall Green - it fits in well with the pattern of toft boundaries described in this report (Figs.49 and 50 and Pl.X and XI). In 1462 a grant was made of three messuages 'lying together in a certain area called Greyneston'; these were not adjacent, but the same grant includes another three messuages, apparently next to each other and abutting on Greynston green (Holkham, Tittleshall Reg.198). It is not really possible, of course, to add all these grants together to produce 15 messuages in a line, but it must be evident that in the middle of the fifteenth century Greynston consisted of a number of messuages and crofts along the western side

Documentary Evidence

of a green. This is not to say that they were still all built up or inhabited. The surviving documents are typically vague on this point. The court book of 1518-46 has plenty of references to built-up messuages, but the vast majority are in Sutton. Only in 1521 do we find a reference to two messuages, one of them 'vacant', in Greynston, and these were certainly not abutting on Greynston Green. There are also the usual injunction to repair messuages and tenements. At least half of these were stated to be in Sutton. It is possible that some, at least, of those not given a specific location were in Greynston, providing evidence of a sort for decay in the settlement in the early sixteenth century; but the paucity of all references to buildings in Greynston in this period is probably even more significant. There are also some presentments of men who had broken the lord's hedges, notably in 1536-7 when eleven people were named. In 1518 Richard Hooke was presented for erecting a new bank and hedge, and in 1526 he was accused of putting a hedge on Callesgrene and blocking the road and path leading to Dowes Green. The fifteenth-century rental has numerous examples of amalgamation of lands in the fields amounting to compact holdings of up to ten acres; these were probably not enclosed, although ten acres in East Field to the east of Sutton Green were noted as enclosed. The 1596 map shows the whole of Tittleshall east of the village, Sutton, and Greynston lying in large enclosures, but it is likely that a large proportion of this had been the demesne of the various manors, and the rest of the arable land of the village was still largely unenclosed.

To sum up, the relationship between Tittleshall, Sutton, and Greynston is interesting but obscure. What evidence there is seems to suggest that at the time of the Conquest Tittleshall and Sutton were of roughly equal size and importance. Tittleshall, however, had the church, and became the ecclesiastical parish. At some time in the century after the Conquest Greynston emerged, possibly as a new settlement, complete with manor-house, on land hitherto largely common and heath in the south of the parish. A similar movement may have occurred during the same period at Hempstead by Holt (Yaxley 1978, 60). Greynston had a manor-house, a settlement, two greens, two commons (The Ing and Grenstein Moor in Litcham), fields, and woods, and its manorial bounds extended up to Tittleshall village and included Sutton. The manor took the name of the seat of the lord, although Sutton remained at least as populous as Greynston. Both were important hamlets as late as the fifteenth century, but in the period centred on 1500 the peasant houses of Greynston began to disappear, although the reason for the wastage is not apparent. By the time of the sale of the manor to Coke in 1595 only a farmstead and a cottage, both near the Lound, and the site of the manor of Caley's with its solitary house remained.

IV. THE VILLAGE SITE

LOCATION

Although entirely within Tittleshall parish, the site is much closer to Mileham. Tittleshall is one of the larger parishes in central Norfolk, because it now includes the lands of three deserted villages: Grenstein, Sutton and Godwick (Chapter 11). Fortunately, a fine series of manuscript maps of Tittleshall (described on p. 53) allows one to see how it and its three dependents have altered since the sixteenth century. On a map of 1596 (Fig.47) Grenstein is shown already deserted. Godwick in 1596 was in the final stages of decline, but there was still a handful of cottages. Sutton is described in Chapter 11 (pp.53-8).

Fig.47 is taken from that part of the 1596 map which shows the Grenstein area. The village green called Dowes Green in the centre of the plan still retained its shape although the village had already been abandoned for about two centuries, and the village name for this area had been lost; previously the green had been referred to as Wodmergrene or Greynstongrene. Occupation in 1596 had shifted to the west along Grainston Lane, where there were two cottages and a farm called 'Austen's'; this was the first piece of property to be purchased by Chief Justice Coke, the Attorney General to Queen



Fig.47. A plan of part of the Grenstein area re-drawn from the map of Tittleshall of 1596.

Elizabeth I, who lived at Godwick Hall (James 1929, 305). The site of this farm was just south-west of the modern Grenstein Cottages. To the east, on the other side of the lane, there were two cottages close together, gable ends on to the street.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE LATE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LANDSCAPE

The series of manuscript maps of Tittleshall and the Enclosure Map of Mileham together show how the sixteenth-century landscape around Grenstein was gradually, but almost totally, swept away after the abandonment of the village. The open field system was slowly replaced by large enclosed fields between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries; at the time of the enclosures in the early nineteenth century the three commons (Hall Green, Doves Green and a green between the village site and the moat to the east, identified as Burwodegrene on p.97), were enclosed, and the old fields were removed and replaced by a regular pattern of enclosures. Then later in the century, before the first edition of the Six-Inch Ordnance Survey map of 1880, those fields in Mileham which

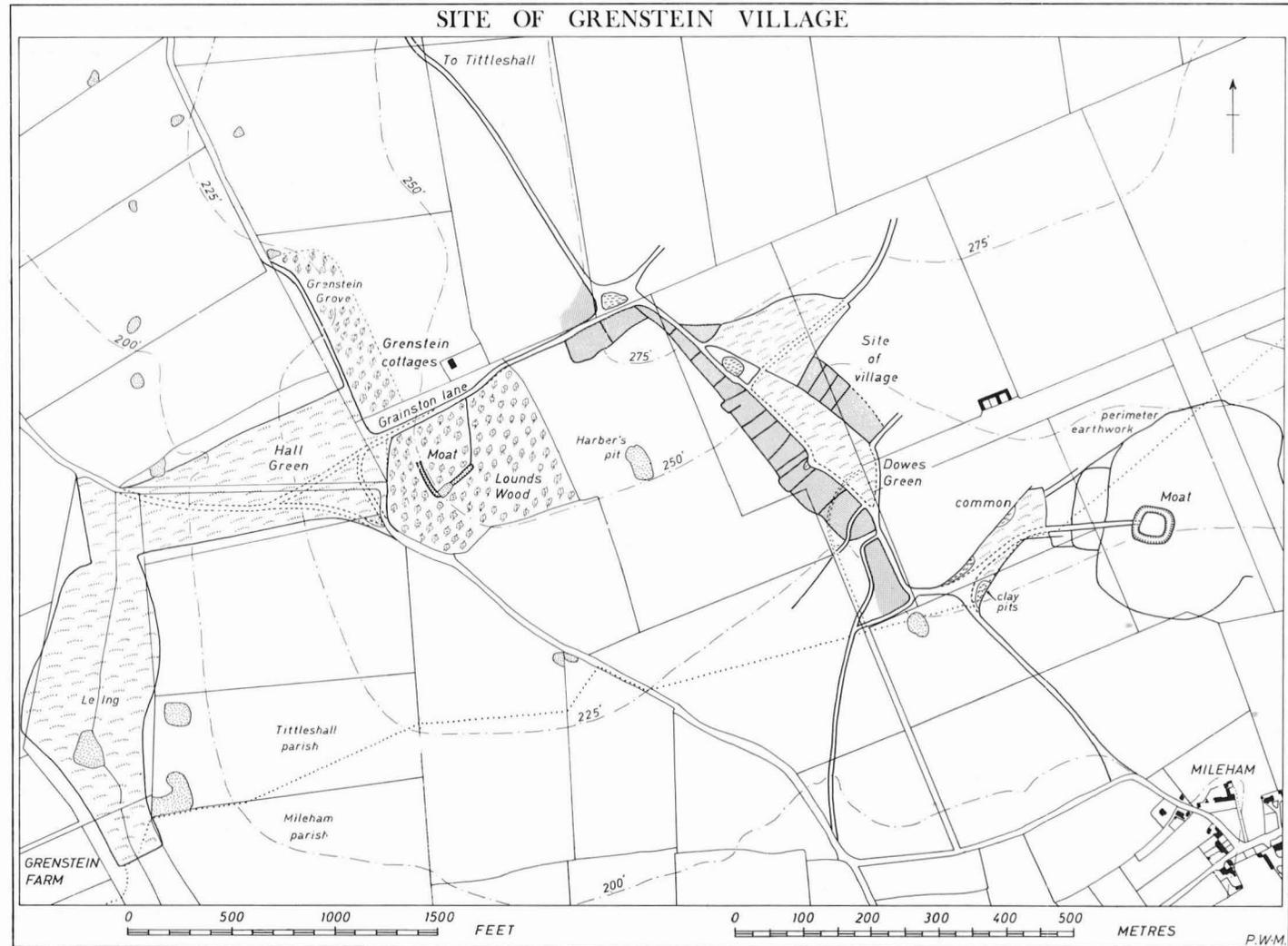


Fig. 48. The village site in relation to the late nineteenth-century field pattern, showing the village plan and the sites of the two adjacent moated manors. Scale 1:10,000.

belonged to the Holkham estate were again modified and replaced by the geometric pattern of fields with straight hedgerows as seen today (Fig.48). These re-arrangements were carried out under the influence of the Holkham estate which owned most of Tittleshall and also the northern side of Mileham. Finally, in 1959, the earthworks of the village were bulldozed and ploughed. Except for the moats, nothing of the medieval landscape around Grenstein survives. The village plan has, therefore, had to be reconstructed from air photographs and from detailed field surveys.

Fieldwork at Grenstein was assisted by air photographs of the site taken by Dr.St.Joseph before and after destruction of the earthworks in 1959 (Pl.IX and XI); Plate XI is a particularly good example of an air photograph of a soil mark site.

V. A DESCRIPTION OF THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

THE VILLAGE PLAN (Figs.49-51)

With the aid of the air photographs and the sixteenth-century map it has been possible to reconstruct the village plan. The village green was in two parts separated by a ditch (Fig.49). The main area of green was a long narrow triangular piece of land which ran down the hill slope along the east side of the main street. At the north end of the green was the village pond, which would have played an important part in the daily life of the farming community. It is the upcast from the digging of this pond which is so obvious in Plate XI. The village had about twenty-six tofts, of which twenty-two can be recognised on the air photographs. These tofts have been numbered 1-26 in a clockwise direction around the village in Figs.49-51. The majority of them were in a continuous row along the west side of the main street.

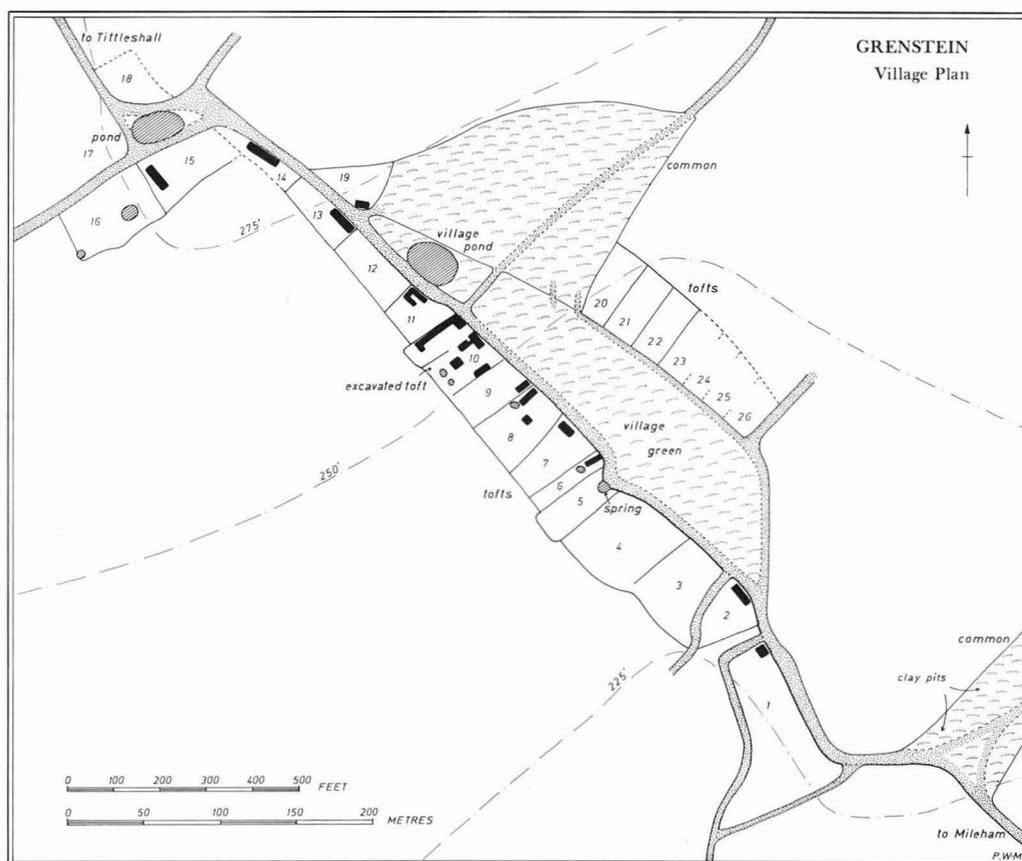


Fig.49. A reconstruction of the village plan based on air photographs, field surveys (Figs.50 and 51) and excavations. The tofts are numbered 1-26. Scale 1:5,000.

Description of the Medieval Village

When the site was levelled in 1959 the soil from the upstanding bumps was spread out and pushed into the hollows. Those protruding features which contained lighter-coloured clay were then revealed as soil marks when the field was ploughed. The bulldozing also had the effect of spreading out the clay, so the buildings often appear in Plate XI to be wider than they really were. Subsequently excavation showed that little of the upper features survived this activity.

THE TOFTS

Toft 1. This was a long sub-rectangular toft running parallel to the street for about 100 m. It was apparently bounded by roads on all sides: a heavy row of flints shown in Fig.50 suggests there was a road along the south side; and there are signs on the air photographs of a road leading around the rear of the toft and away from the village towards the south-west. There was a roughly square building which showed as a 9 m wide spread on the surface in its north-east corner. Unlike the soil marks of most of the other buildings this one had a heavy concentration of flints on the surface.

Toft 2. This had a slightly curving frontage and a triangular shape; the road along the north-west side may have been secondary to the original plan, for there were soil mark indications of an original toft boundary running back from the street almost at right-angles to it just south of the road. A building ran along the front of the toft: a slight bump was visible on the air photographs, and the building left a dense soil mark about 6 m wide along the side of the street.

Toft 3. This was a rather featureless enclosure partly obscured by a nineteenth-century farm track. The soil mark of the northern boundary was just distinguishable near the street on the south side of the farm track.

Toft 4. This toft was the first in a series (Nos.4-10) with the rear boundary set back further from the street than the rest; it was about 9 m longer than toft 3.

Toft 5. A nineteenth-century marl pit on the frontage marked the site of a small pond visible on the 1596 map. Local farm workers have said it contained a spring which rarely failed as a water source (it is marked as 'spring' in Fig.49). The deep ditch along the main street drained water into this pond and also acted as a channel to clear surplus water downhill. On the toft there was a large scatter of flints, probably from a ploughed-up yard; many of them were burned and cracked, and there was also a thick scatter of iron slag. This toft may have been the site of a village smithy, well-placed beside a reliable supply of water.

Toft 6. This particularly narrow toft was the first of six (Nos.6-11) slightly terraced into the hill slope. There was a good soil mark of a building endways to the street, and behind this a small pit or pond.

Toft 7. This toft had a rather irregular shape. There was clearly a major building or group of buildings in the north corner, with two spreads of flints indicating extensive areas of yards.

Toft 8. The plan superficially resembled that of the excavated toft, number 10. In the middle, well back from the street, was a clear square soil mark. Around this were several small areas of flints from fairly extensive and probably largely undisturbed farmyards. On the north side there were good signs of an outbuilding, perhaps forming part of a range around these yards.

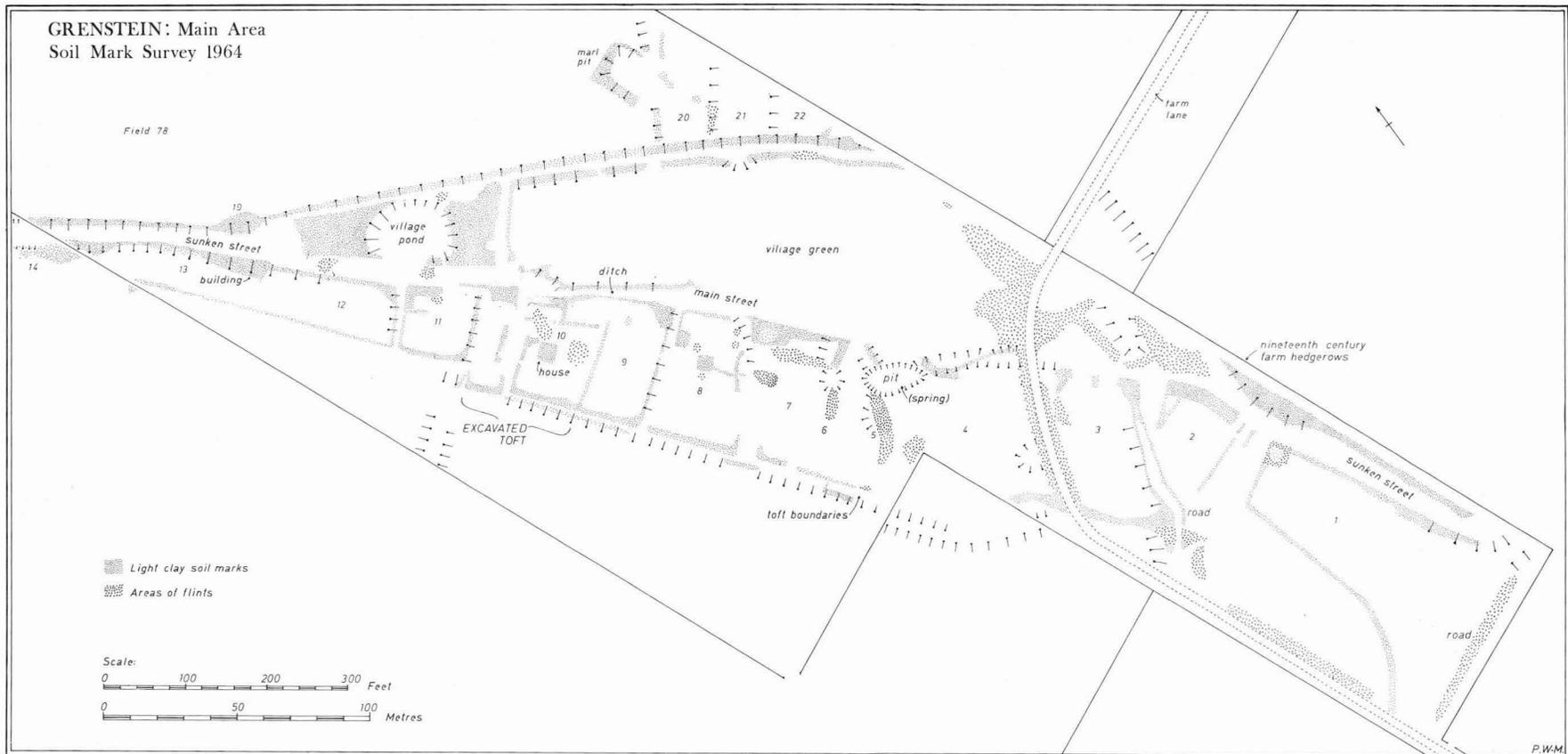


Fig.50. The 1964 soil mark survey of the village green area, showing the patches of lighter clay soil representing boundary banks and individual buildings, and the area of flints representing streets and farmyards, etc. Scale 1:2,500.

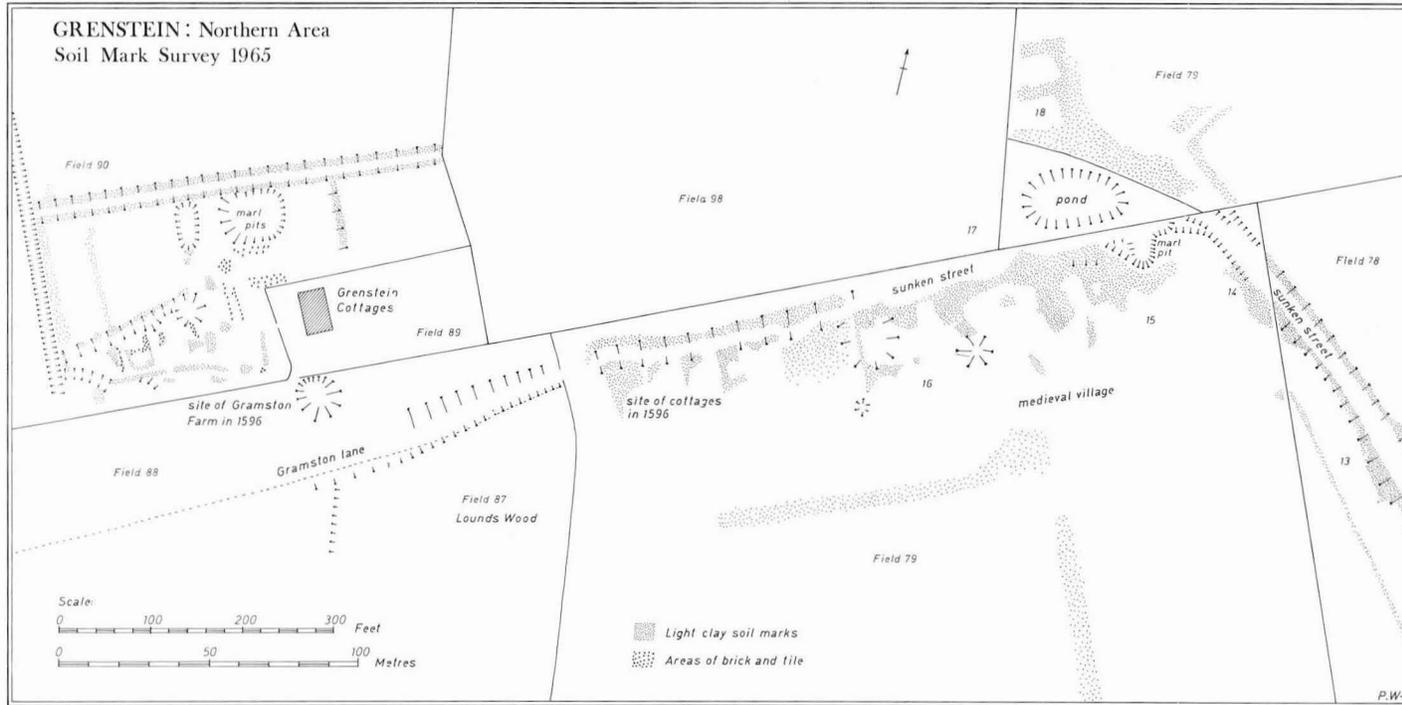


Fig. 51. The 1965 soil mark survey of the north end of the village, showing the areas of lighter clay soil representing boundary banks and buildings, and the areas of brick and tile from post-medieval buildings on Gramston Lane shown on 1596 map. Scale 1:2,500.

Toft 9 was partly stripped and Toft 10 was fully stripped during the 1965-6 excavations.

Toft 9. In the south-east corner there was a suggestion of at least one building.

Toft 10. For a full description of the excavated features, see p.114 onwards. On the surface the toft boundaries were clear, and so also was the house in the centre.

All along the front of the first ten tofts, the deep ditch alongside the street served to drain surface water. However, further uphill, after a slight change of alignment along the front part of toft 11 (Plate X), the ditch was much smaller. This and the rest of the tofts in the row had their longer axes parallel to the street, instead of being at right angles to it as before.

Toft 11. In the north-east corner there was a U-shaped group of buildings, with the long axis parallel to the street.

Toft 12. A slight suggestion of a building in the south-east corner was not definite enough to merit inclusion in Fig.49.

Toft 13. This was similar in plan to number 11, with a building in the south-east corner running along the street.

Toft 14. The boundaries of this had almost disappeared, but there was a good soil mark of a building beside the street.

Toft 15. Around the corner there were two further tofts. At the west end of No.15 there were good soil marks of a building.

Toft 16. This was the last toft in the sequence. To the west there were no further soil marks which belonged to the medieval village; the surface scatter of medieval pottery apparent over all the tofts just described is also very much reduced west of this point. There were no signs of buildings within the toft, but there were the hollows of two partially-infilled ponds.

Toft 17. Only the slightest trace of a clay and flint spread could be seen in the angle between these two roads, but this part of the site had been ploughed for far longer, and under these conditions little more would survive.

Toft 18. In the opposite corner of the crossroads to toft 17 the air photographs show rather more, and the outline of a toft can be seen.

Toft 19. This is the only example in the village where occupation encroached upon the common. In the front of the toft was the soil mark of a building, approximately square in shape.

Tofts 20-26. Along the east side of the village green there was a row of about seven tofts, but traces of only the three at the north end of this row were visible; the rest lie under the adjacent field which has for long been under the plough.

Discussion

Pottery from the surface was not collected toft by toft, so it is not possible to discuss the dates of desertion of different parts of the village. However, it was noted that the Thetford ware came largely from around the northern crossroads.

Description of the Medieval Village

Only six out of the twenty-six tofts were without some frontage on the green. It was very much a 'green village' - a plan apparently adopted during the twelfth century after an expansion away from an eleventh-century nucleus at the crossroads to the north. The village green with its pond became the focus of the community. At the crossroads at the north end there was another pond. In addition, some of the tofts had their own water pits: three of these can be seen in Fig.49.

THE MANORS

There were apparently two manors associated with the village: Greynston Manor and a second short-lived manor called Caley's. These are discussed by David Yaxley on p.97.

Greynston Manor

'The Lounde' in 1596 (Fig.47) just south of Grainston Lane, is Lounds Wood which still survives (Fig.48). Inside, there are traces of a moat. The name 'Hall Green' west of the wood, can be related to this moated site, which is probably the site of Greynston Manor - hence the survival of the name 'Grainston Lane' in 1596. The undergrowth in the wood is so dense that it is not possible to examine the site in detail. The south and west sides of a moat can be seen, but the others are not clear.

Caley's Manor

To the east of Dowes Green on the 1596 map are the words 'Situs Manerii de Callis' and 'Callis Wood'. David Yaxley has argued that this reference should be taken at face value as indicating the site of Caley's manor (p.98).

A fork of the road to Mileham turned to the east through a small common, which has been revealed largely by an air photograph, (Plate XII), and has been identified as Burwodegrene. This led directly up to another moat (Plate XII) equated by David Yaxley with Burghwoodhall, a Mileham manor. Running almost exactly due west from the bridge, a heavily-metalled flint road surface has been turned up in the ploughsoil. The small common was surrounded by a ditch, and within this area were a number of dark crop marks, probably of infilled medieval clay pits. Clay pits are a frequent feature around commons in the region and a number were excavated at North Elmham (Wade-Martins 1980).

The almost-square moat of Burghwoodhall was cleaned out in 1944, when timbers of the entrance bridge were found on the west side along with sherds of medieval pottery and a tenth- or eleventh-century sword (Wilson 1965, 39). It is not clear why a sword of this date should turn up in the medieval moat.

The air photographs have revealed a large oval enclosure around the moat. Between the west side of this enclosure and the small common there was an outer enclosure; the crop marks of this can be seen in Plates XII and XIII.

VI. THE EXCAVATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The main object of the 1965-6 excavations was to examine the plan of one toft. Toft number 10 was selected because it was near the centre of the village; this was stripped along with the front of Toft 9 (Plate XIV and Fig.52). In addition, sections were cut through the pond at the north end of the green and the main street (cutting A).

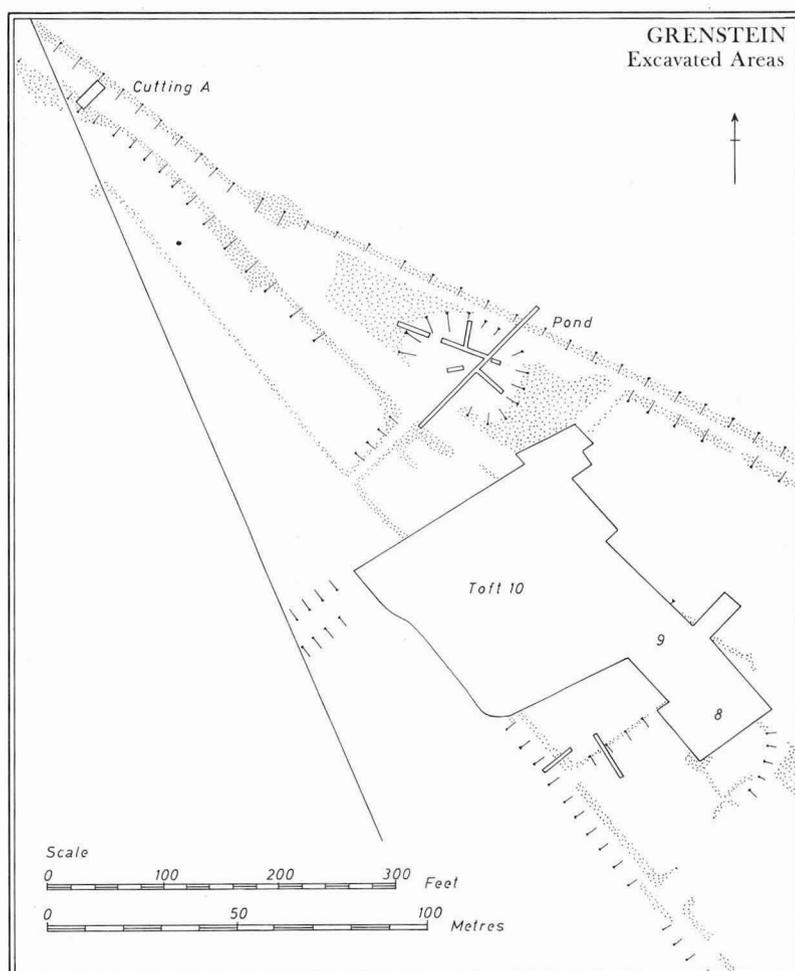


Fig.52. A plan showing the areas excavated in 1965-6: Cutting A (Fig.53), village pond (Fig.54) and tofts 8, 9 and 10 (Figs.56 and 57). Scale 1:2,000.

CUTTING A (Fig.53)

Cutting A was dug to examine a piece of the main street near its northern end where it ran as a sunken way from the green to the crossroads. (The dark mark of a sunken way could not be seen here because the bulldozing had pushed clay soil from toft 14 into the street: see Fig.53, layer 2).

The surface was made of well-worn flints with two cart ruts, 7 to 10 cm deep, with centres 1.5 m apart (Plate XVI). Between the two cart ruts the surface was worn flat. As maps show, this road remained in use until the nineteenth century.

The sequence in Section A-B (Fig.53) was as follows:

a) A ditch (7) ran under the west side of the final road surface. This is probably the ditch which ran all along the frontage of the medieval tofts. Under the street the shallow grooves in the natural clay represented medieval cart ruts contemporary with this ditch (marked 'original cart ruts' on Fig.53).

b) The road surface later spread over the silting of this ditch, sometime after the village was deserted; the second and final set of cart ruts, which left deep grooves in the natural clay under the street, came into use as the street shifted slightly to the west.

The Excavations

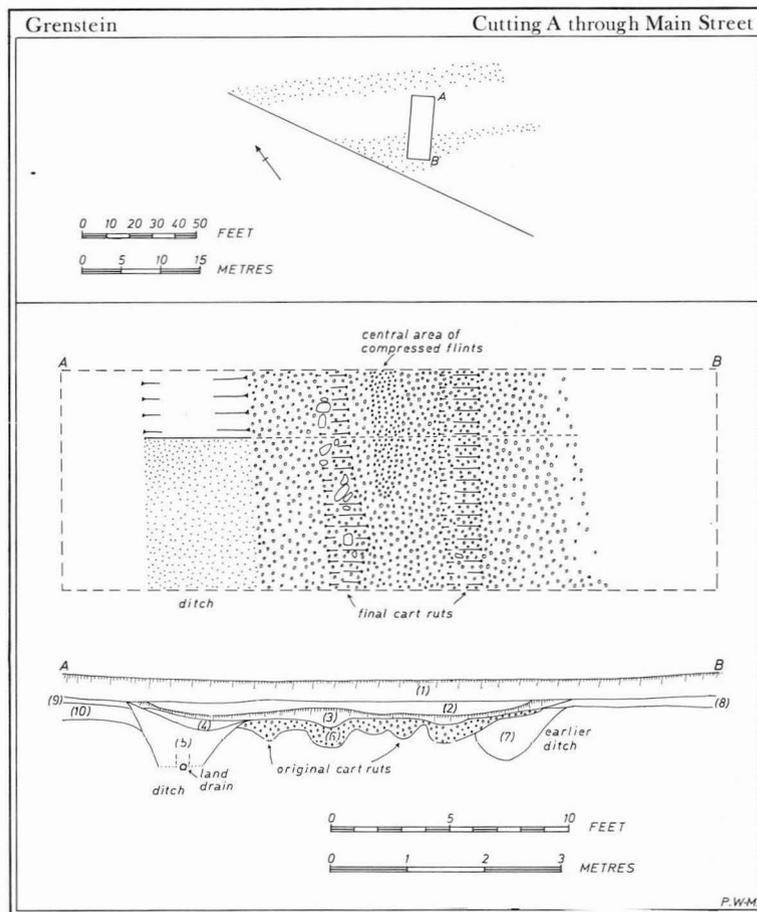


Fig.53. Cutting A through main street, in front of toft 14: plan of cutting and section. Scale of section 1:100.

Key to Fig.53

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Loam, old topsoil.
4. Dark greyish-brown (10 YR 4/2) loam. Upper filling of ditch.
5. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay loam. Lower filling of later ditch and land drain trench.
6. Compact layer of flints. Main street surface.
7. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay loam. Filling of earlier ditch.
8. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay loam. Bank beside earlier ditch.
9. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay loam with many flints and pieces of chalk.
10. Brown (10 YR 5/3) silt loam.

c) Finally, a ditch was cut along the eastern side of the street, partly through the side of the medieval road surface. No dating evidence was obtained for its cutting, but this ditch was probably dug in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries when the road was still in use.

The finds were insufficient to assist with the dating of the road sequence.

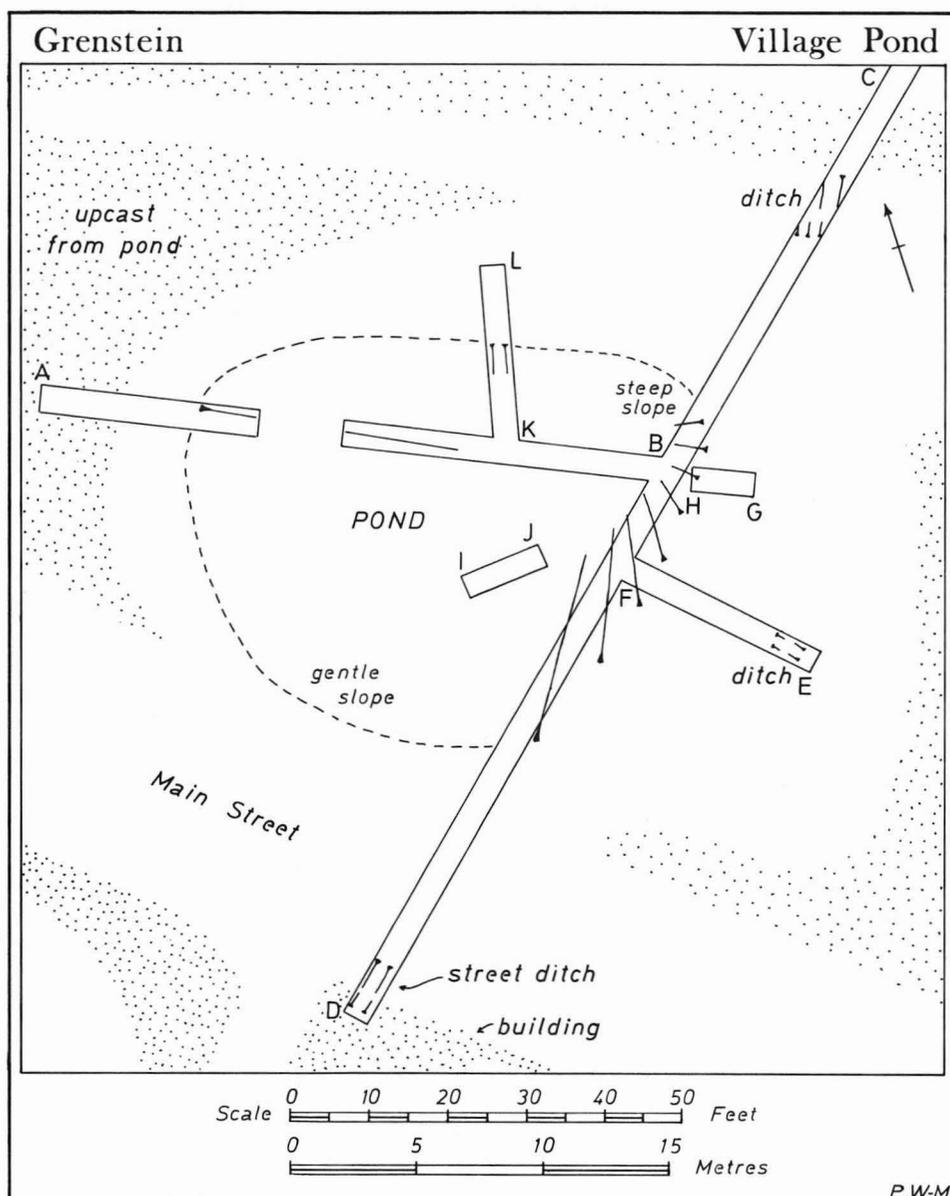


Fig. 54. Plan of cuttings dug mechanically through the pond on the village green.
Scale 1:300.

VILLAGE POND (Figs. 54-5)

The purpose of this excavation was to examine the shape and depth of the main village pond and to determine the date of its filling. Sections were cut mechanically across the dark circular area visible on Plate XI. It was found that the pond was smaller than it first appeared, for the upcast had been dumped outside an oval area defined on the north and east by a small ditch. This ditch prevented access to the steep back edges of the pond, where it reached a depth of 1.8 m below the original ground surface. Towards the street the pond was unenclosed, and a gentle slope would have allowed access however low the level of water sank in the pond.

The only find was a green-glazed thirteenth-century twisted handle from layer 9 in section D-C. The village people had clearly avoided dumping rubbish into the pond in order not to foul the water.

There is no suggestion that the pond was ever cleared out; the sections showed a gradual and even silting of the pond, the texture becoming more compact with more clay and less silt towards the bottom. The fine compact clay level at the bottom was the result of wash from the sides.

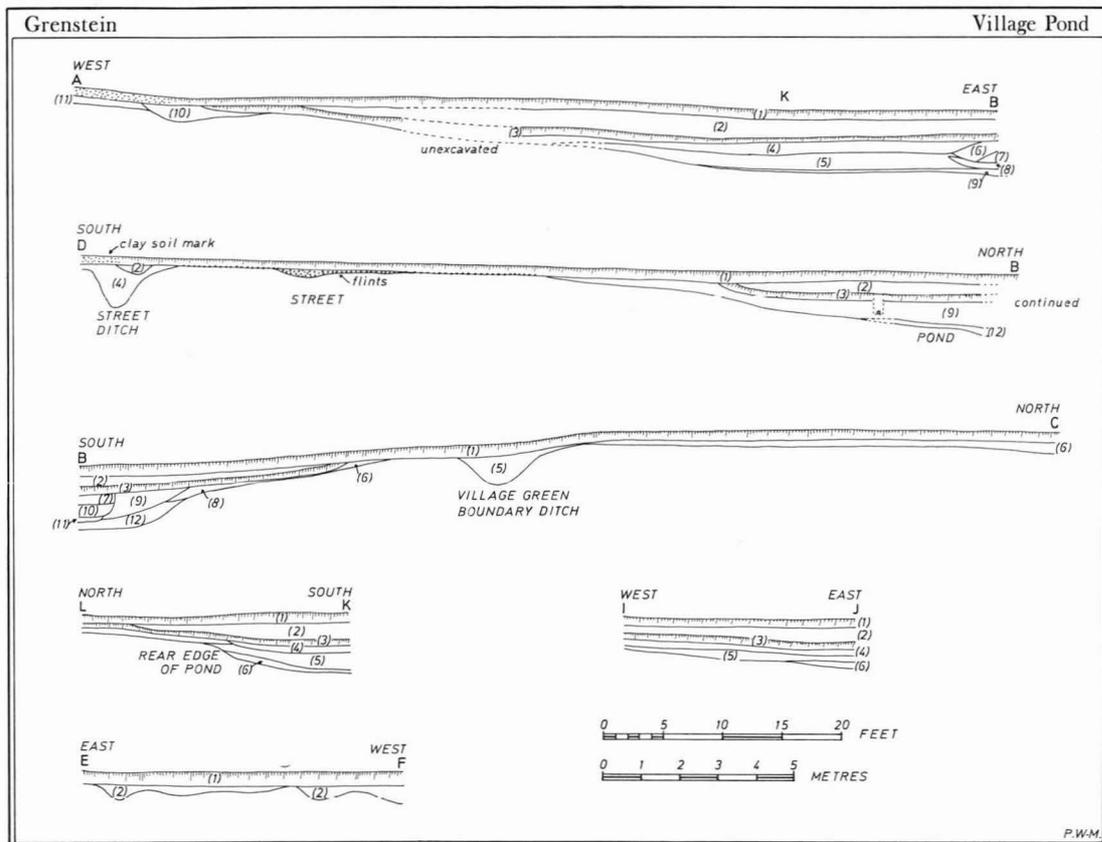


Fig. 55. Pond sections. Scale 1:200.

Key to Fig. 55

Section A-B

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Loam. Old topsoil.
4. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silt. Upper silting of pond.
5. Brown (10 YR 5/3) silt clay with ferruginous mottling. Silting of pond.
6. Light brownish-grey (2.5 Y 6/2) silt clay. Material tipped into pond.
7. Brown (10 YR 5/3) clay. Material tipped into pond.
8. Very dark grey (10 YR 5/1) silt clay. Silting of pond.
9. Grey brown (2.5 Y 5/2) clay. Lower fill of pond.
10. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/6) silty clay loam. ?Filling of ditch.
11. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay. Upcast of pond: parent material for soil mark.
12. Grey (2.5 Y 6/0) clay with pieces of chalk and flints. Lower natural: chalky boulder clay.

Section D-B-C

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Loam. Old topsoil.
4. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay loam with small snail shells. Ditch fill.
5. Light olive brown (2.5 Y 5/4) silt clay. Ditch silting.
6. Brown (10 YR 4/3) silt clay loam. Silting around edge of pond.
7. Light brownish-grey (2.5 Y 6/2) silt clay. Material tipped into pond.
8. Light olive brown (2.5 Y 5/4) clay with many chalk fragments. ?Upcast.
9. Grey (10 YR 5/1) silty clay loam, with ferruginous mottling. Upper silting of pond.
10. Brown (10 YR 5/3) clay. Material tipped into pond.
11. Very dark grey (10 YR 5/1) clay silt. Silting of pond.
12. Grey brown (2.5 Y 5/2) clay. Lower fill of pond.

Key to Fig. 55 (continued)Section L-K

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Loam. Old topsoil.
4. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silty clay loam. Upper silting of pond.
5. Brown (10 YR 5/3) silt clay with ferruginous mottling. Silting of pond.
6. Grey-brown (2.5 Y 5/2) clay. Lower fill of pond.

Section I-J

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Loam. Old topsoil.
4. Dark brown (10 YR 4/3) silt loam. Upper silting of pond.
5. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/2) clay. Lower fill of pond.
6. Greyish-brown (10 YR 5/2) clay. Lower fill of pond.

Section E-F

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Grey (10 YR 5/1) silty clay loam, with ferruginous mottling. Upper silting of pond and surrounding ditch.

THE EXCAVATION OF TOFTS 9 and 10
(Figs. 56-73)

Method of Excavation

In the summer of 1965, ploughsoil from the six seasons of ploughing following the bulldozing of the site in 1959 was removed mechanically. It was found that the plough had slid over the surface of the flint yards, but had cut into the clay floors of the buildings. After the ploughsoil was removed the remaining topsoil was taken off and the exposed surface of the flint yards and clay buildings was then trowelled (layer 2). In the toft ditches there was the modern filling below the ploughsoil, but the deep ditch along the street contained just over 50 cm of 1959 bulldozer infilling over the old meadow surface; this filling, except for two baulks, was also removed mechanically.

Plate XIV shows the extent of the main excavation, and in Plate XV this can be seen just after the upper level of structures (layer 2) had been exposed.

During the Easter of 1966 parts of toft 10 were excavated further to expose levels below layer 2. These are described as layers 3 and 4. Because the tofts were not aligned north to south, a descriptive north (which is actually north-west) has been adopted in the text. Fig. 56 shows the grid system used to record the site in 20 ft squares labelled with letters from east to west and numbers from north to south.

The village streets beside toft 10 (Fig. 58)

Almost the full width of the main street was stripped opposite the north half of toft 10 (Plate XVII). Ploughing had damaged the flint surface, particularly near the toft entrance, but it was well-preserved in a slightly sunken semicircular approach to the entrance bridge and also opposite the north side of the toft. The main street was about 6 m wide, and between the toft and the street the street ditch was 1.2 m deep below the excavated surface of the street. When the final bridge at the entrance to toft 10 was built the ditch already contained 60 cm of silt.

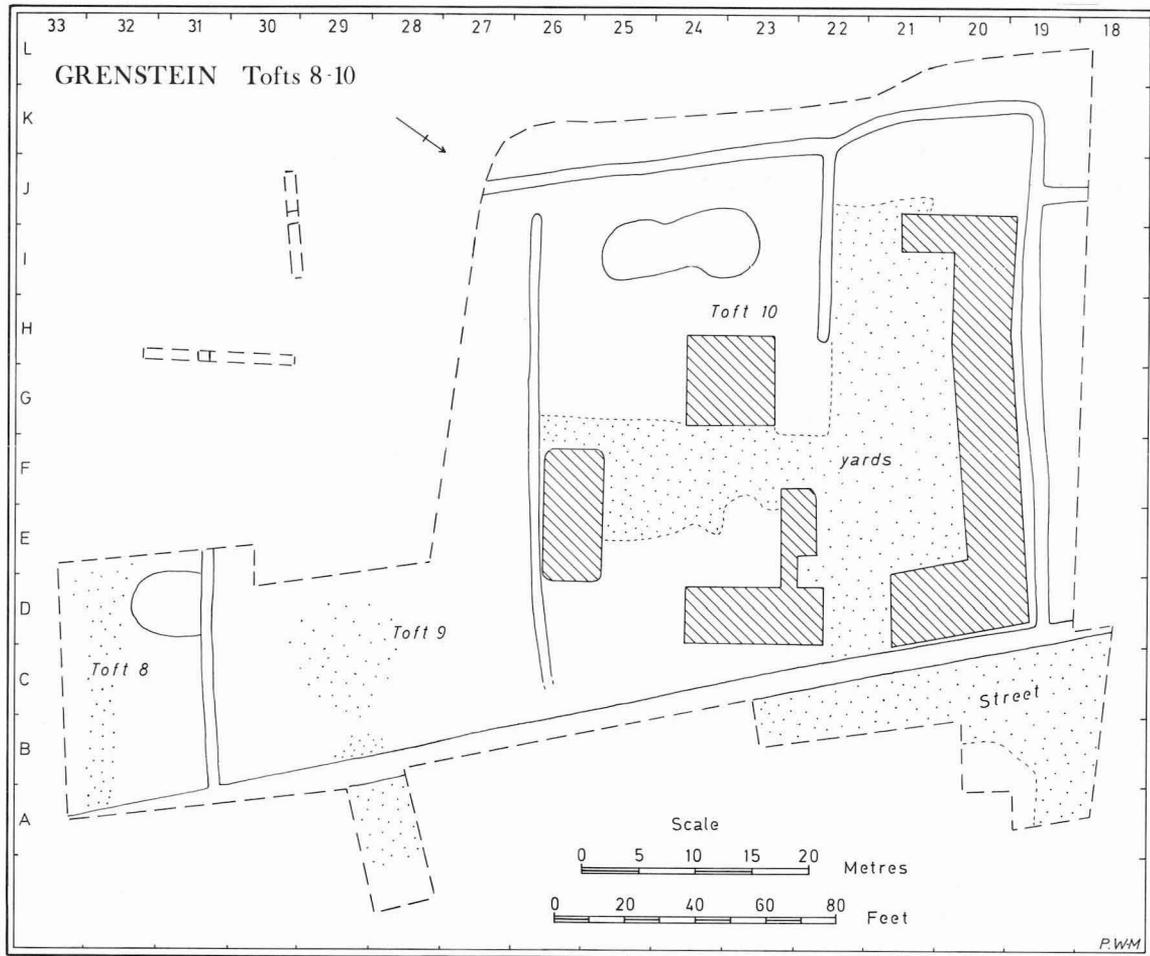


Fig. 56. Outline plan of main excavation on tofts 8, 9 and 10 showing excavation grid to which successive plans can be keyed.

The main street was surfaced with a thin layer of small angular worn flints. The surface had been heavily used, although no trace of cart ruts was seen. Scattered over this surface were larger worn flints thrown down at some time during a final attempt at road mending.

A turning off this main street was found in the excavation; the probable course of this road outside the excavation has been shown on Fig. 49. In the surface of this secondary street were a further three upstanding road mending patches. The full width of this other street was not excavated.

The entrance to toft 10 (Figs. 58 and 59)

In front of the toft entrance the street dipped gently into the upper filling of the ditch. On the opposite side, the driveway from the farmyard came right up to the lip of the ditch and then dropped sharply. In the ditch silt there was a scatter of flints which probably fell into the ditch when the bridge collapsed or when it was removed. About 30 cm lower in the ditch silt there were flint foundations, actually resting in the fill of the ditch, put there apparently to support bridge timbers. The bridge sloped down about 30 cm from the level of the toft entrance to the sunken approach to the street. The width of the entrance-way (as indicated by the sunken area of the street) suggested that previous bridges had been wider and that the southern half of the bridge fell into disrepair a number of years before the toft was abandoned.

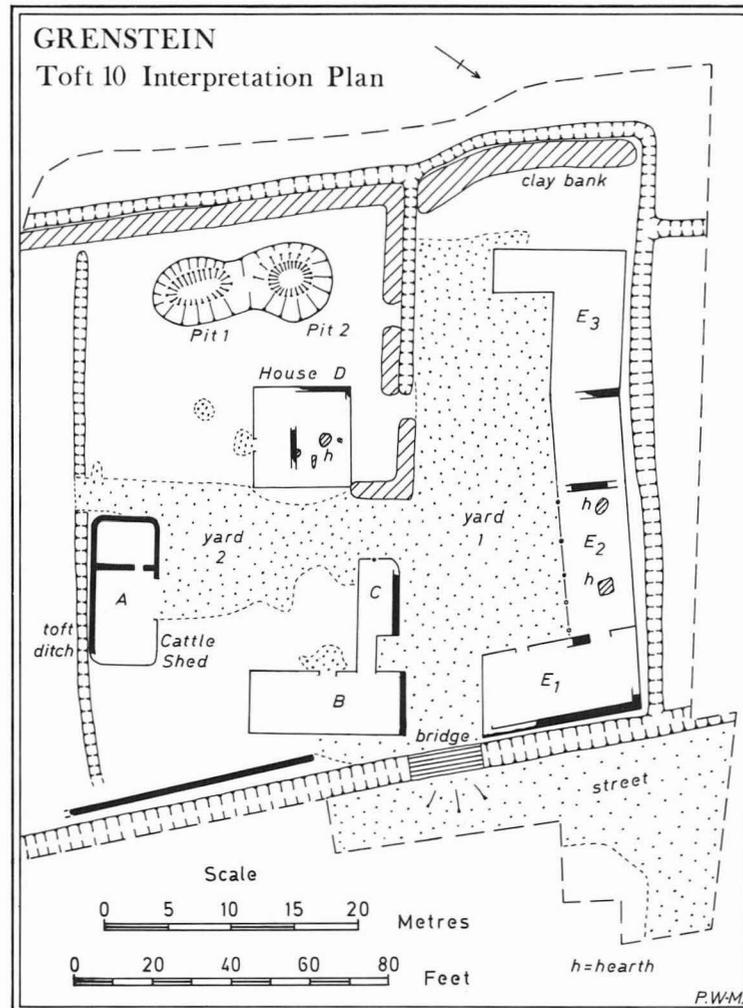


Fig. 57. Interpretation plan of toft 10, layer 2. Note: descriptive north is to the right.

The layout of toft 10 in Layer 2 (Fig. 57 and Plate XV)

Toft 10 was 43 m wide, with parallel side-ditches running roughly east-to-west set at a slightly oblique angle to the street, and 46 m long from the street ditch to the ditch along the rear. In the south-west quarter there was an area which was distinguished from the rest of the toft by its lack of flint surfacing and a bank which surrounded it. This contained Building D, interpreted as the house, and two pits, and will be referred to as the 'living area'.

The rest of the toft contained two large yards, around which were up to six outbuildings referred to as A, B, C, E₁, E₂ and E₃. The entrance way from the bridge led into the larger of the two farmyards, yard 1 (Plate XVIII). The long range of possible buildings E₁ to E₃ ran along one side, and on the other side Building C partly separated it from yard 2. Between yard 2 and the street was an apparently featureless area separated from the street ditch by a clay wall or bank. This may perhaps have been a stackyard or some similar open space.

Between Building A and the edge of the living area a track led over the infilled toft boundary ditch into the adjacent toft 9, which in the final phase seems to have become a home paddock (or pightle) for the farm and was not inhabited. (Because of the date of the pottery from the excavation it is possible that the farm exposed in toft 10 was in use at a

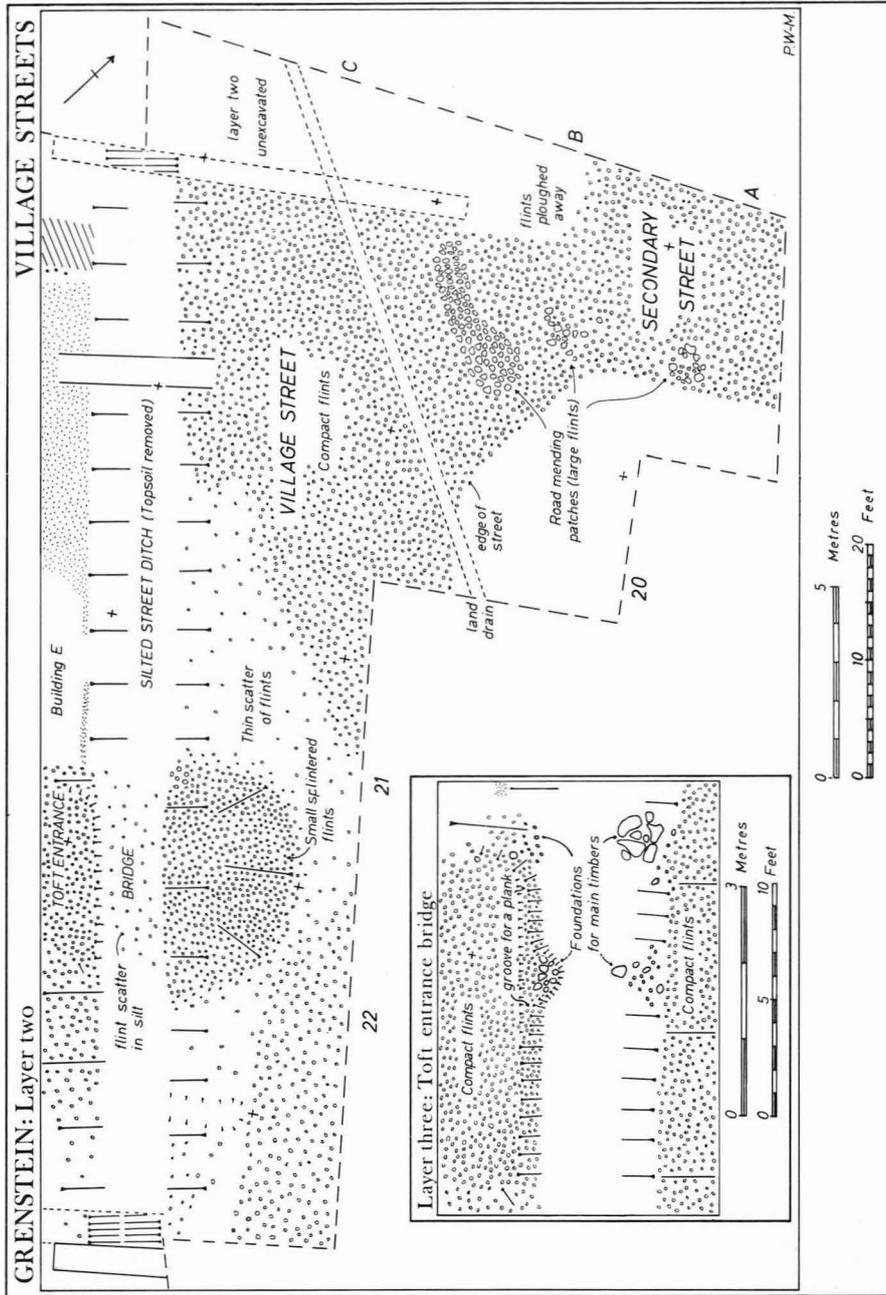


Fig. 58. Village streets and toft entrance bridge. Note: descriptive north is to the right. Scales 1:200 and 1:100.

time when the village was on the decline and some of the vacant tofts may have been taken over by the surviving occupants.)

The living area (Fig. 60 and Plate XIX)

The living area was roughly square, 22 m from north to south and about 21 m from east to west. To the east the area was bounded by yard 2; the edge of this flint surfacing was so straight that there must have been a hedge or fence defining it, even though no trace of one was found. Along the north side there was a small bank and ditch. In the north-east corner there was a clay bank or possibly a clay wall which left a soil mark visible in Plate XI. Along the ditches on the north and west sides similar soil marks of clay banks, made from the upcast of the ditches, could be seen.

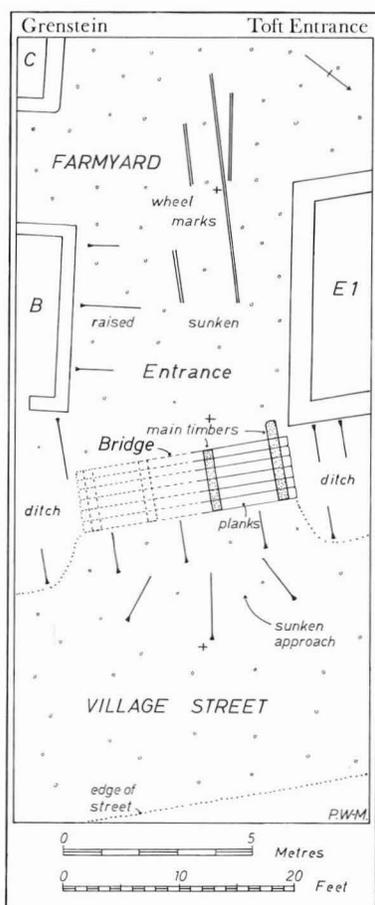


Fig. 59. An interpretation plan of the toft entrance.
Scale 1:200.

There were three possible entrances into the living area. Along the north side there were two, or at least two gaps in the clay soil marks. One was at the east end of the dividing ditch and the other was further west opposite a slight depression at the edge of yard 1. A ditch as small as this could easily be bridged by just laying a few planks on the ground. In the south-east corner there was also a small pathway leading from yard 2.

The main house stood in the front of the area. No cess pits were found in the living area, so most of the domestic waste must have been taken out with the farm manure and spread on the land.

At the rear of the living area were two large pits which were obvious as earthworks on an early air photograph (Plate IX).

Building D (Figs. 61 and 62)

This was almost certainly the main house for the layer 2 farm. It was a square building, which shows well as a soil mark in Plate XI. In front to the east was a clay platform with a curving front which projected into yard 2 (Plate XIX); the purpose of this curved front is unknown, partly because it was damaged during topsoil removal. Ploughing of the site had left only 5 cm of the chalky clay floor to be excavated; the front part of the floor was much more chalky than the area to the rear. In the front there were probably two rooms. The one at the north end contained the remains of four hearths.

The only clear evidence for an exterior wall was along part of the west side where there was a line of chalk lumps. Within the building there was also a line of chalk-speckled clay dividing the front part of the house into two parts; this overlay traces of an earlier chalky clay wall (described as 'worn chalk lumps' in Fig. 61), possibly an original rear wall of the house; the upper surface of this wall-footing was fairly smooth.

The outlines of the house were mostly traced by the vague edges of the much eroded remains of the chalky clay floor. The only possible evidence for a doorway was an area of small trampled flints outside the south wall of the house. From these very slender traces an attempt has been made in Fig. 62 to reconstruct a house with a two-part structure; a front range (of which no sign of the rear wall survived) lay alongside yard 2 with a lean-to to the rear. The building would have been too deep without such a subdivision.

Pit 1 (Figs. 60 and 63)

This pit contained a thin layer of rubbish, consisting of much pottery, sea shells and charcoal. Over this there was a layer of clay, possibly from the digging of pit 2. This is only an implicit relationship, and there was no stratigraphic evidence directly relating the two pits.

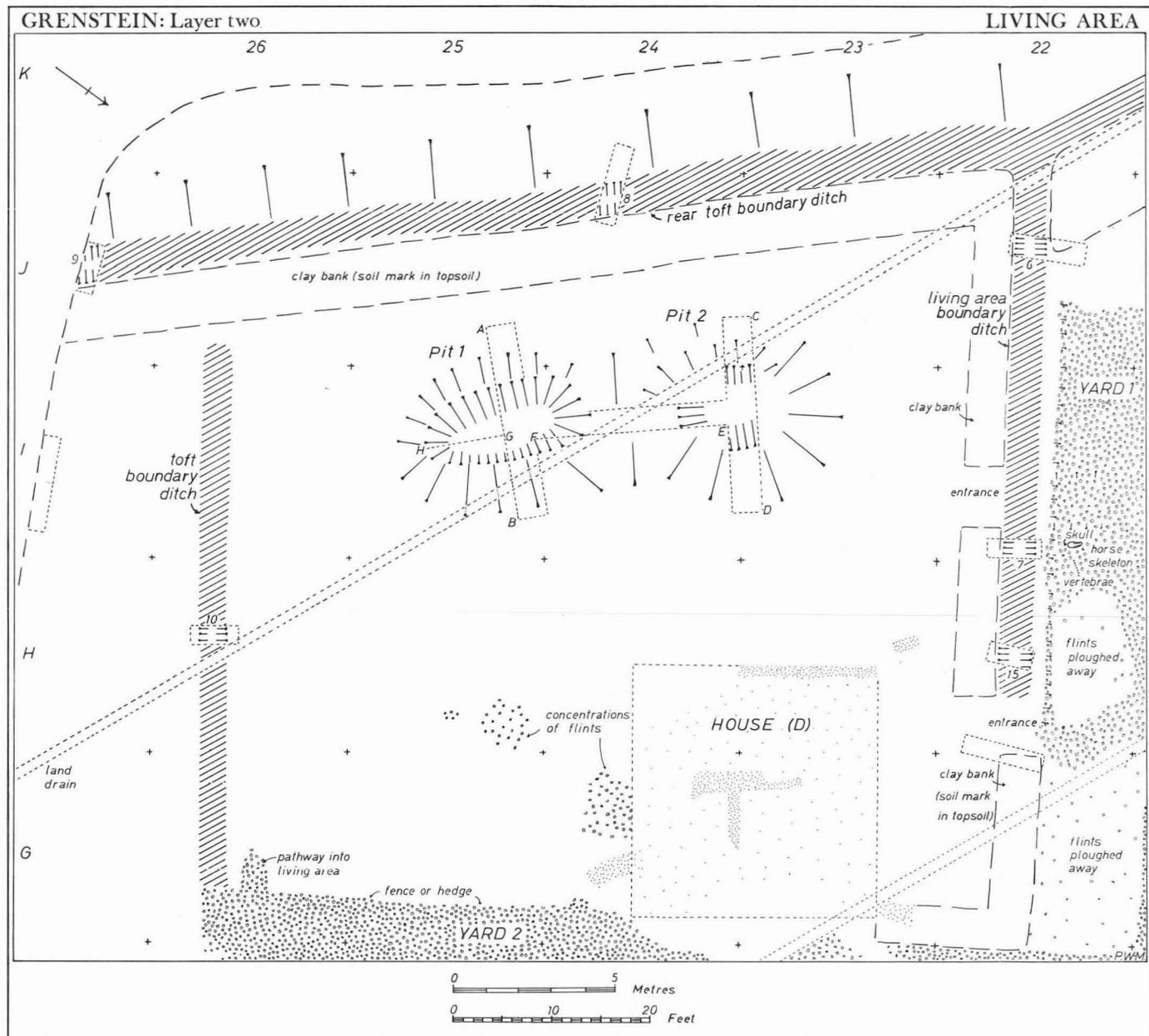


Fig.60. The features in the 'living area' including the house Building D.
 Note: description north is to the right. Scale 1:200.

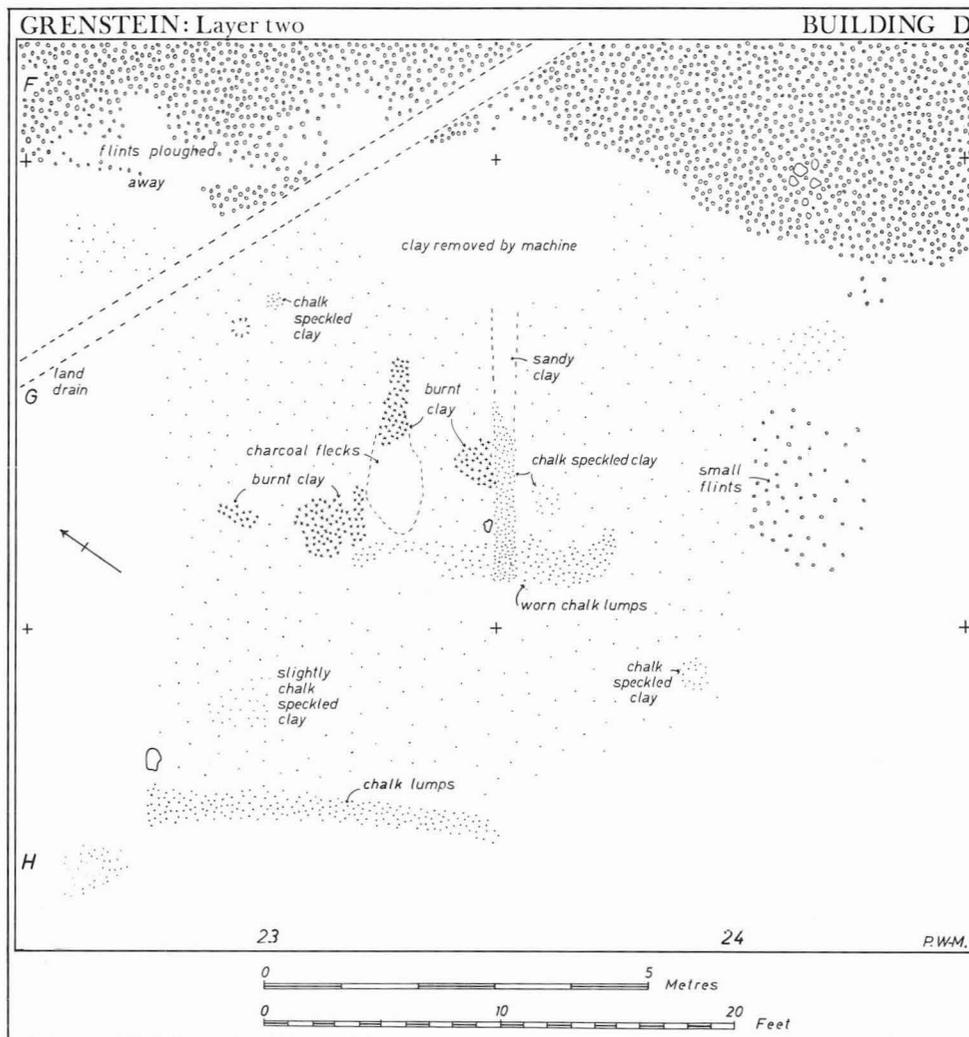


Fig.61. The house Building D. Note: descriptive north is to the left. Scale 1:100.

Pit 2 (Figs.60 and 63)

Pit 2 was much deeper, and when it was first dug it must have been about 1.5 m deep below the topsoil. There was no sign of deliberate tipping or filling. It contained so few finds that it may have been kept clean deliberately to provide a water supply for the house. The base of a large Grimston ware glazed jug (Fig.87, No.41), found near the bottom, was probably used as a scoop for collecting water. There were no definite layers within the pit - just a gradual silting right up to the top.

The importance of pits 1 and 2 is that they showed as prominent earthworks before bulldozing and ought therefore to represent the final phase of occupation of the toft. The 651 sherds from pit 1 (Fig.78) are crucial for dating this phase, and are described by Carolyn Dallas as at least no earlier than the fourteenth century (p.146).

The flint farmyards (Fig.57)

The farmyards were the most substantial features found in the excavation (Plates XVIII and XXIII). They formed the basis for the interpretation of the farm plan around which the buildings could be reconstructed. The yards were areas of tightly compact, broken and sometimes worn flints, the edges of which were at times the only clue for locating the outlines of some of the buildings. Both yards had a continuous history of

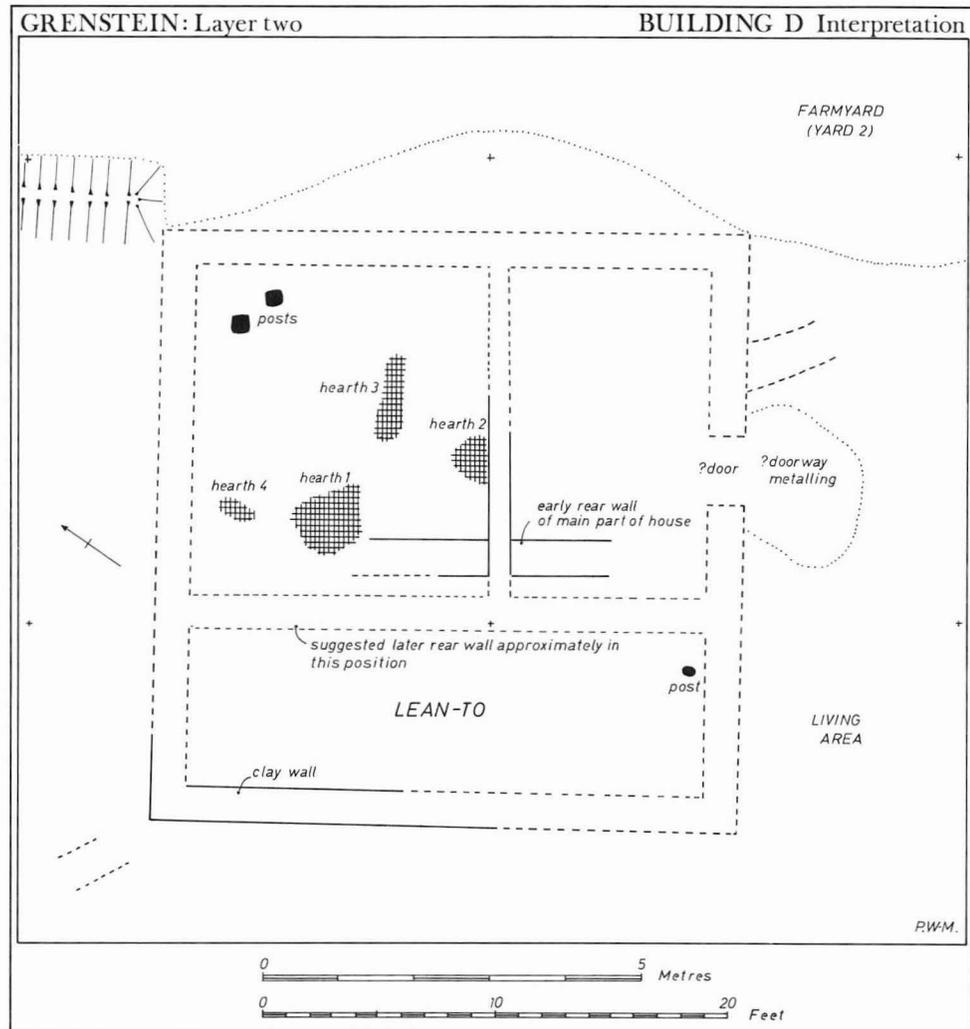


Fig. 62. Building D interpretation. Note: descriptive north is to the left. Scale 1:100.

repair. The maximum depth of this layer of flints was 15 cm, and along the side of building E₂ it was no more than 2 cm. A coin of Edward I was found on the surface of yard 1. The dating of the pottery from above and below the yards is discussed on p. 147.

Building A (Figs. 64 and 65)

This was the best preserved of the excavated buildings, with the west part of the clay floor still intact (Plate XX). The west half of the building had a pad of clay surrounded by the flint cobbles of yard 2 to the north and west and by a toft boundary ditch to the south. The east end of the building was ploughed away. The ditch was infilled adjacent to the west end of the building where the trackway led from yard 2 into Toft 9; perhaps most of the ditch was full by this stage.

Along the north wall was a line of large flints up to 30 cm across partly covered by clay. There was no clear edge to this line and the flints became smaller towards the west and where they petered out at the corner. Some of the larger flints had already been removed leaving gaps in the row.

The edges of the yard and of the clay floor showed that the north-west corner was rounded, and the edge of the floor at the south-west corner suggested a similar plan. Along the south side was a good continuous line of chalky clay from the base of a clay wall.

The Excavations

Key to Fig.63

Pit 1: Section B-A

1. Bulldozer infill and topsoil.
2. Dark brown (10 YR 4/3) silt clay loam.
3. Light olive brown (2.5 Y 5/4) clay and chalk specks. Redeposited natural clay.
4. Dark greyish-brown (10 YR 4/2) silt with organic matter, pottery and oyster shells. Rubbish layer.
5. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay silt. Silting of pit.

Pit 2: Section C-D

1. Bulldozer infill and topsoil.
2. A fairly uniform fill which graduated from dark greyish-brown (10 YR 4/2) silt clay loam near the top to yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silt clay at the bottom. Silting of pit.

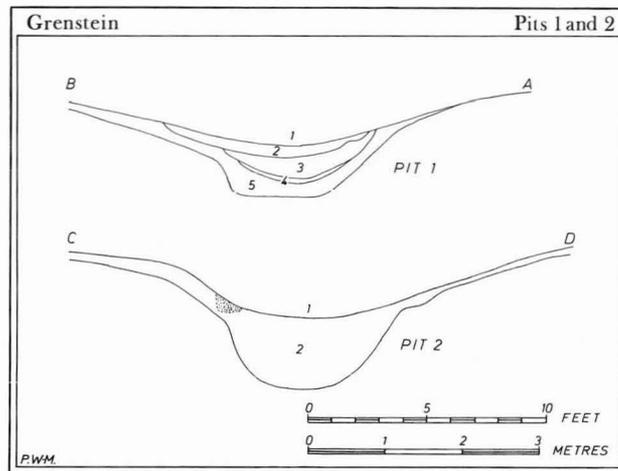


Fig.63. Sections of pits 1 and 2; for location see Fig.60. Scale 1:100.

This survived up to 15 cm deep, and it can be seen as a stippled layer in Fig.70, Nos.12 and 13.

Within the building the intact clay floor survived up to 15 cm thick at the west end, but it thinned out and disappeared towards the east, and did not show as a soil mark. The position of the east end of the building is reconstructed on the assumption that the building did not stretch much beyond the preserved east end of the southern wall footing. A wide entrance in the north wall was indicated by a spread of small flints over the floor (Plate XXI). Under the flints was a small curving gulley, possibly an infilled drain.

Across the floor was another line of chalk-speckled clay of a partition wall; in this there was a doorway of two phases: the later phase showed on the surface, and the earlier phase showed 5-10 cm below. Flint metallurgy under the floor to the east of the wall lay adjacent to the earlier opening.

As the building had curved corners at the west end it probably carried a hipped roof. This building is interpreted as a cattle shed because of the wide doorway, as shown by the width of the cobbled spread.

Building C (Figs.66 and 67)

Only slight traces remained of Buildings B and C. On the air photographs (Plate XI) the area of Building C is just visible as a dark patch surrounded by slightly lighter soil. After excavation a suggestion of a building was seen as a rectangular gap in the flint yards, with traces of a chalky clay wall only along the north side (Plate XXIII). At the west end there was a circular compact group of flints almost midway between the suggested inner face of the north clay wall and the presumed line of the south wall. It is possible that this was the base for a post. Along the south wall were traces of two similar groups of flints. The building may, therefore, have been constructed with a clay north wall with the west end and south side being made of timber.

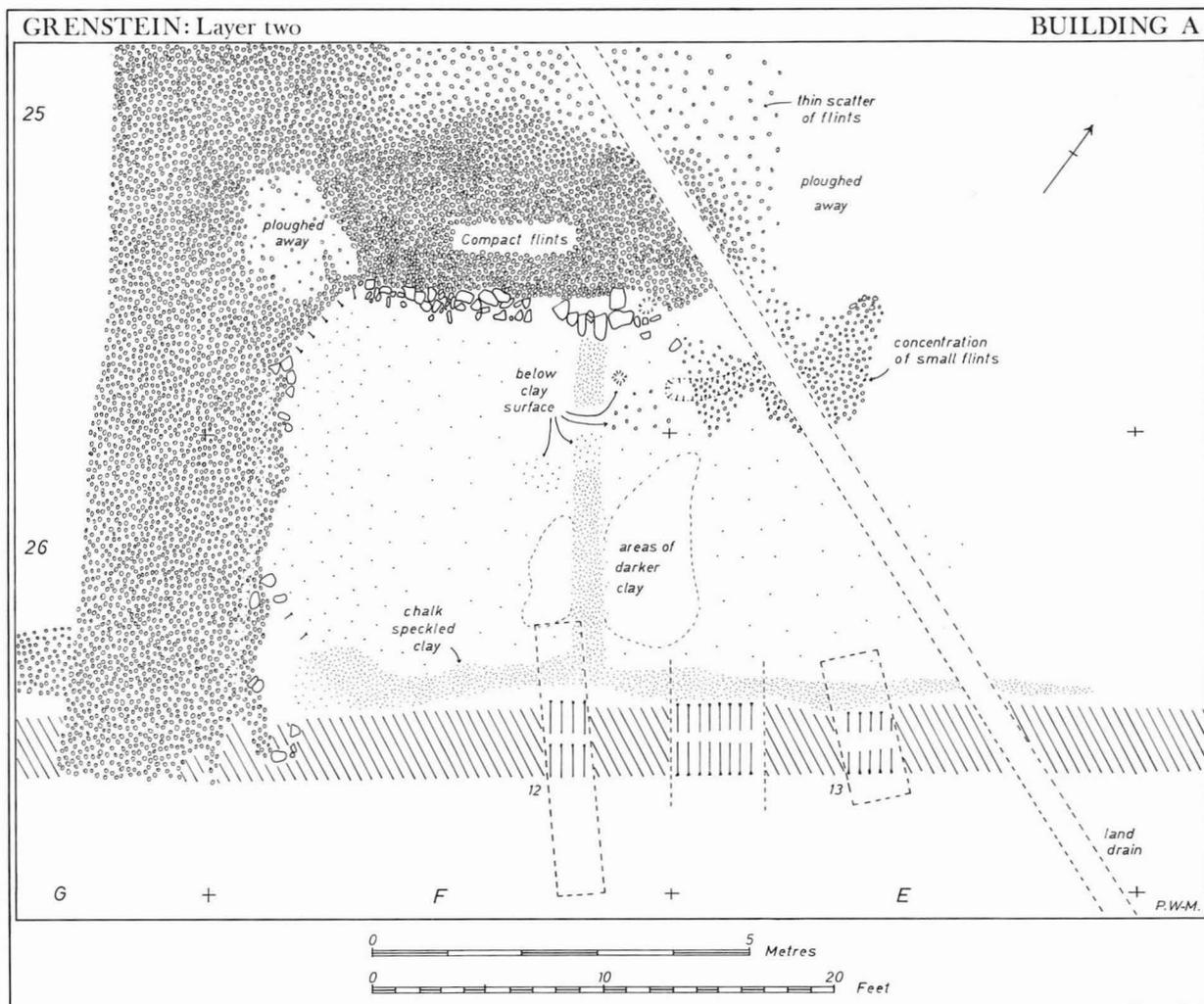


Fig.64. Building A. Note: descriptive north is to the top. Scale 1:100.

Building B (Figs.66 and 67)

The only trace of this building was a line of chalky clay which is interpreted as the north wall (Plate XXII). Against what was presumed to be the west side was a very compact area of flints sunken down the middle and sloping away from the building. This feature was taken to be a cobbled entranceway, and over these flints there was a concentration of over 500 sherds of pottery and 150 animal bones. There was a similar but slighter concentration of finds on the opposite side amongst the flints on the slope of the street ditch near the toft entrance.

Building E (Figs.68 and 69)

'Building E' consisted of a range of possibly three buildings along the north side of yard 1. Only slight traces of all these remained, and any reconstruction of them is particularly difficult.

In Building E₁ chalky clay formed the remains of the base of the east wall. In the angle between E₁ and E₂ the flint yard had been destroyed except at one point where the flints came up to the edge of the building. This lowering of the surface of the yard was possibly caused by extra wear at an entrance way. A second doorway is suggested by a slight linear concentration of small flints between E₁ and E₂.

The Excavations

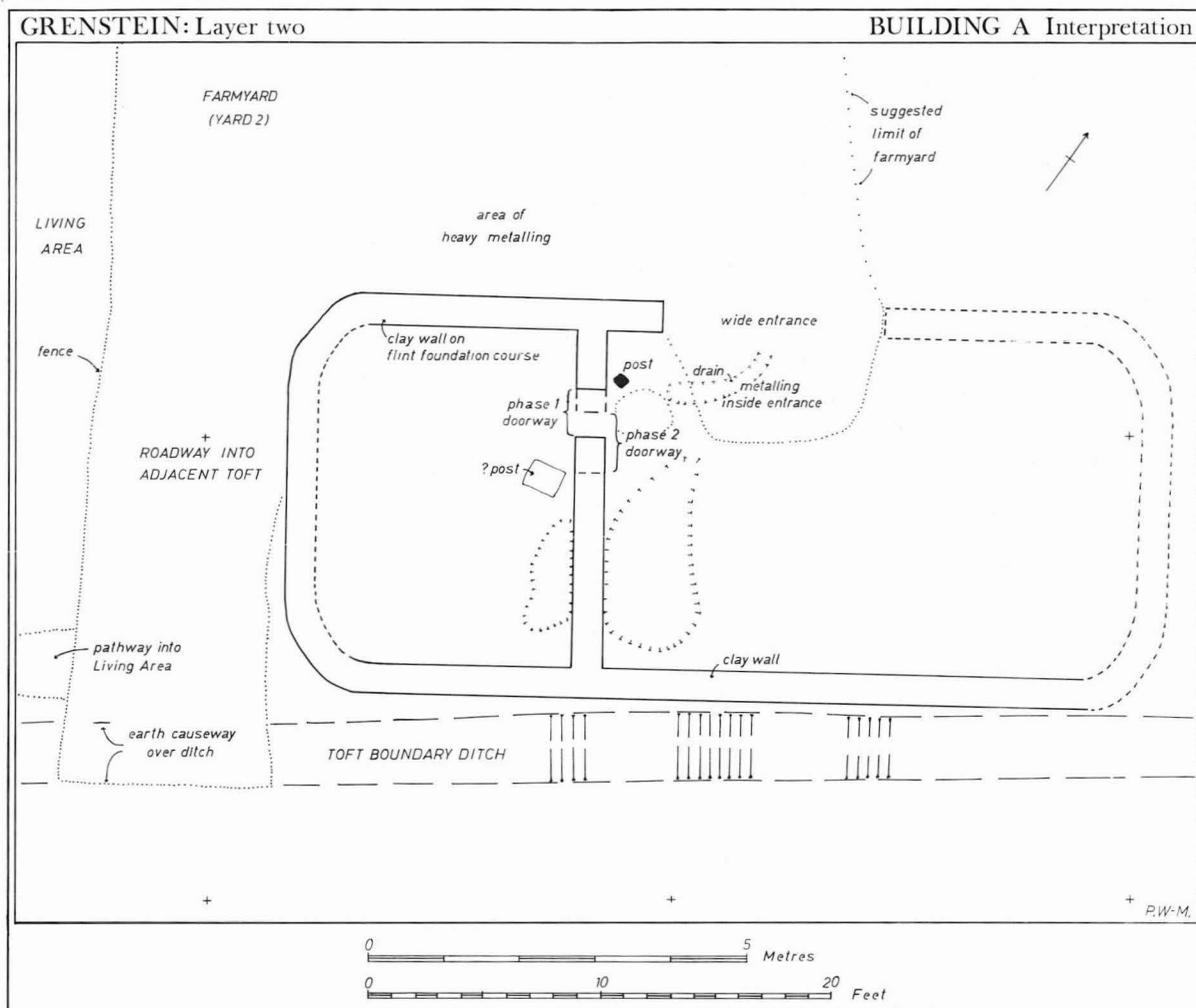


Fig.65. Building A interpretation. Note: descriptive north is to the top.
Scale 1:100.

For Building E₂ there were no clay foundations except at the west end, marked as 'clay wall' in Fig.69. On the south side the only evidence was a row of three circular chalky clay features, interpreted as clay-filled post holes. Ploughing had removed the edge of the yard here and it may also have removed other clay patches. No evidence was found for the north wall and its position had to be inferred from the alignment of the clay patches and the possible position of the north end of the west wall. A clay partition is suggested by a chalky clay feature marked as 'clay partition wall' in Fig.69, and by a change in the colouring of the clay floor; it was darker to the west of this line. Evidence for two hearths remained in the east part of the building.

Building E₃ was indicated by a rectangular gap in yard 1 and by the western edge of the chalky floor in line with the western side of the gap in the yard. However, a large part of the floor area was disturbed by pit 4 (containing no dating evidence) which seems to have been dug after the abandonment of the toft.

In the middle of the rectangular gap in the yard was a group of flints which may have formed the base for a roof post.

The boundaries of Toft 10

These boundaries were formed by ditches and banks, and there may well have been hedges planted along the banks. It might have been the line of the bank which acted as the boundary, while the ditches silted up and were cleared out periodically to improve drainage. A selection of numbered ditch sections (the locations of which are shown in Figs.60, 64 and 68) is shown in Fig.70. Their fillings were fairly uniform and uninformative.

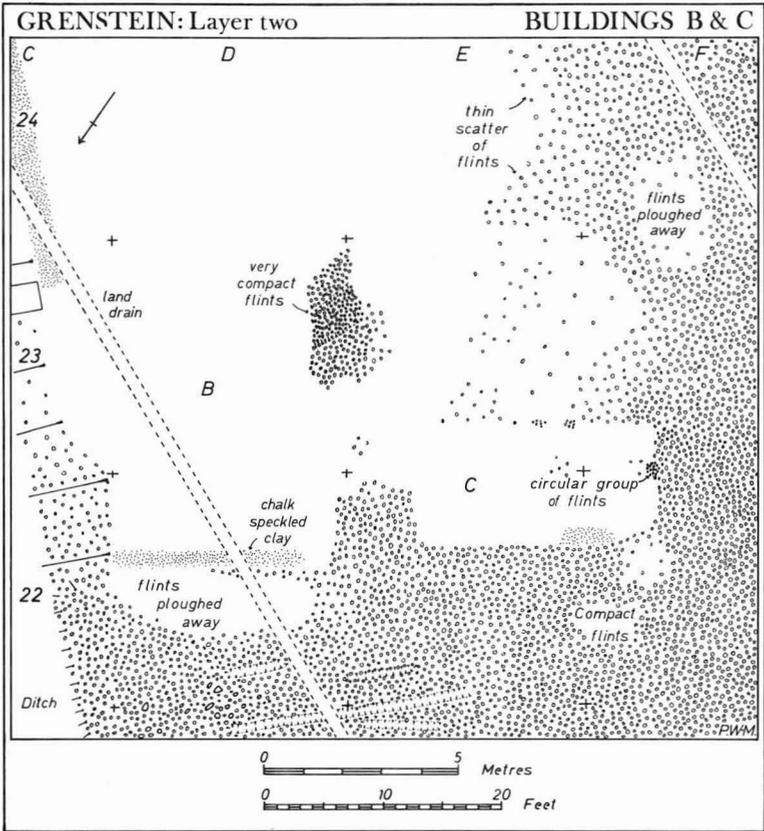


Fig.66. Buildings B and C. Note: descriptive north is to the bottom. Scale 1:200.

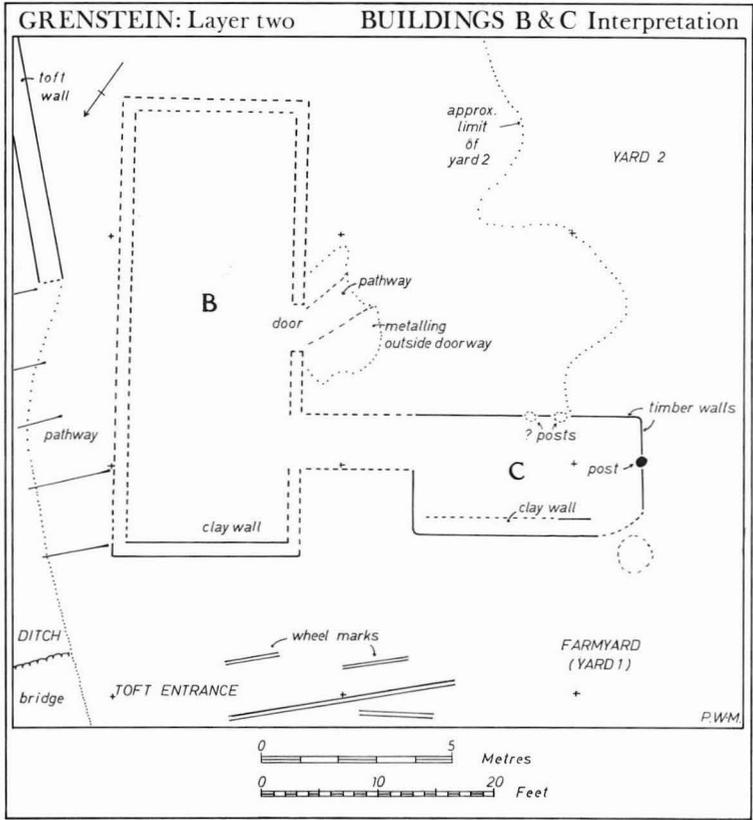


Fig.67. Buildings B and C interpretation. Scale 1:200.

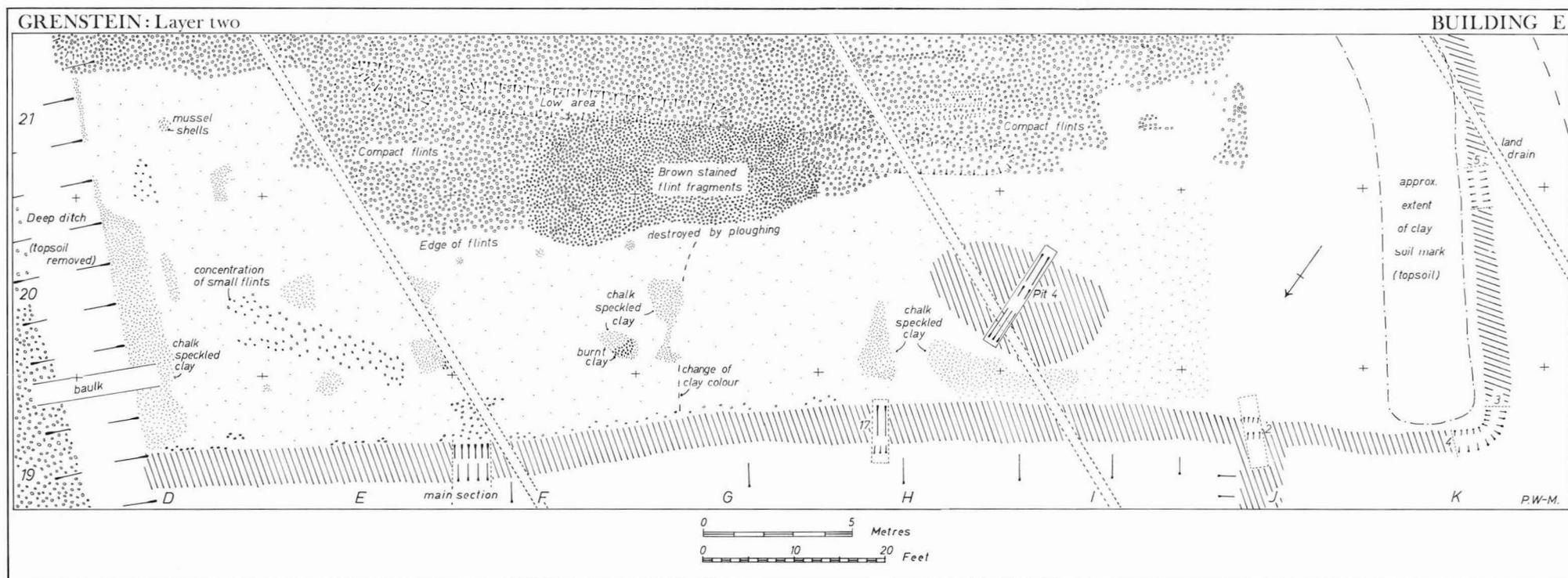


Fig.68. Buildings E₁₋₃. Note: descriptive north is to the bottom. Scale 1:200.

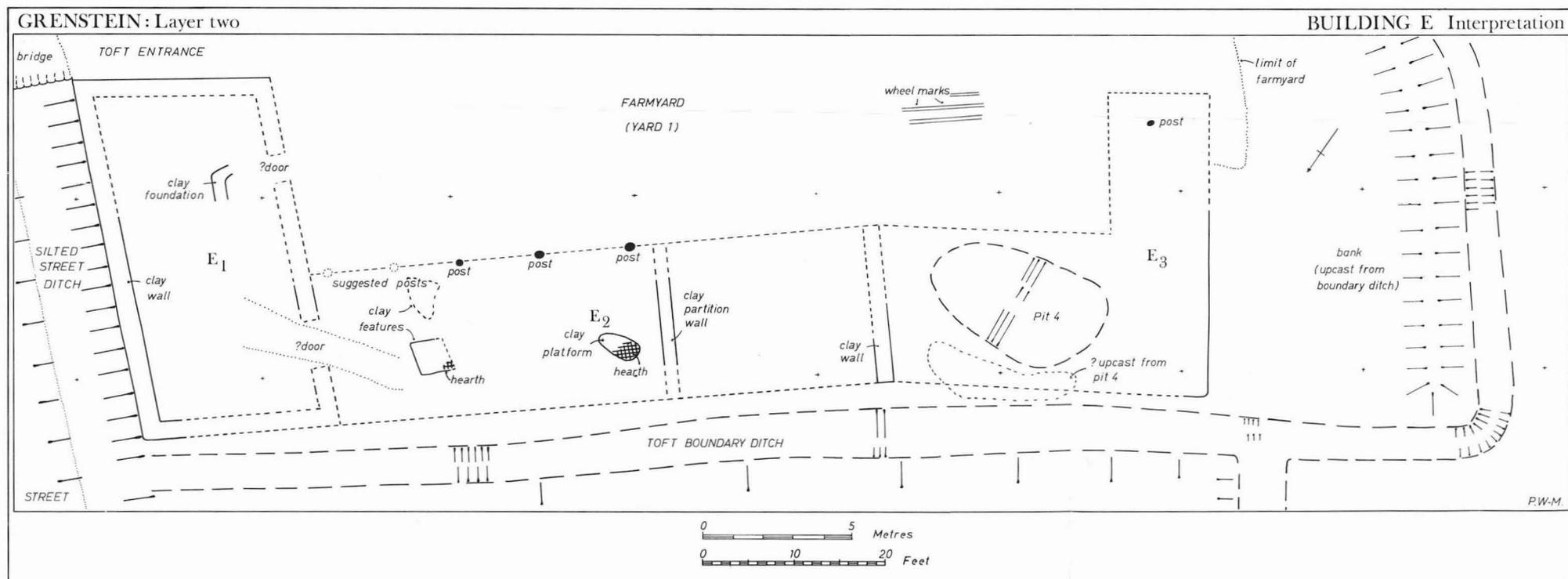


Fig.69. Buildings E₁₋₃ interpretation. Note: descriptive north is to the bottom. Scale 1:200.

The Excavations

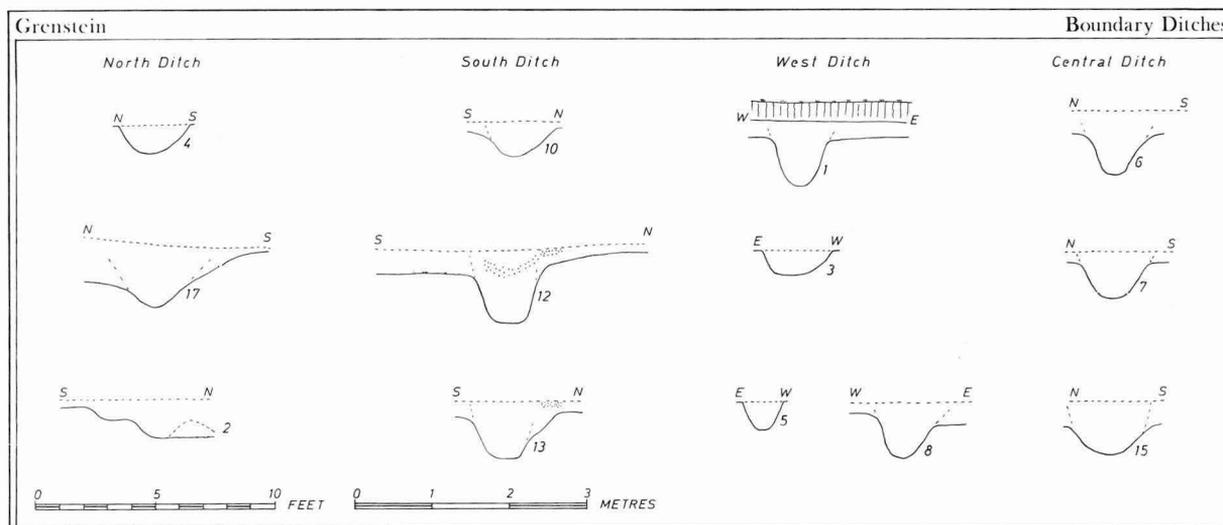


Fig. 70. Toft boundary ditch sections. Scale 1:100.

Key to Fig. 70

Selection of sections through toft boundary ditches (Numbers refer to ditch sections)

North Ditch

4. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay.
17. Grey (10 YR 5/1) silty clay with ferruginous mottles.
2. Greyish-brown (2.5 Y 5/2) silty clay with ferruginous mottles.

South Ditch

10. Brown (10 YR 4/3) silty clay.
12. Greyish-brown (10 YR 5/2) silty clay containing layer of yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay with chalk fragments: Building A wall.
13. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silty clay with patch of yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay with chalk fragments: Building A wall and material from wall.

West Ditch

1. Greyish-brown (2.5 Y 5/2) silty clay with ferruginous mottles.
3. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay.
5. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) clay.
8. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silty clay.

Central Ditch (north side of living area)

6. Yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/4) silty clay.
7. Grey (10 YR 5/1) silty clay with ferruginous mottles.
15. Grey (10 YR 5/1) silty clay with ferruginous mottles.

Layers 3 and 4

In 1966 further excavations were carried out in toft 10. It was a shorter season than 1965 and, although 1965 was wet, 1966 was exceedingly wet for the latter part of the excavation; consequently 'layer 3' (the level of the flint yards and buildings) and particularly 'layer 4' (the level between layer 3 and natural) were not examined with the same care as had been used on layer 2. The site was, for long periods, covered with large puddles of water; and consequently, only the most obvious features were recorded. Had conditions permitted, much more could have been done, particularly to examine the surface of natural clay which was only exposed in very limited areas.

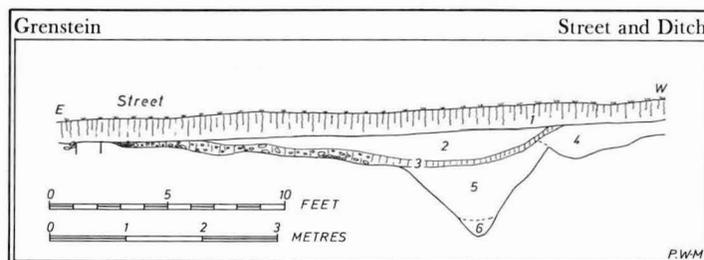


Fig. 71. Street ditch section along south side of cutting shown at north end of plan in Fig. 58. Scale 1:100.

Key to Fig. 71

Section of street ditch and part of street

1. Ploughsoil.
2. Bulldozer infill.
3. Humus and flints. Pre-1959 turf and topsoil and street surface.
4. Light olive brown (2.5 Y 5/4) clay.
5. Olive grey (5 Y 5/2) clay.
6. Olive (5 Y 5/3) clay.

Layer 3 (Fig. 72)

A depth of about 15 cm was removed from the whole of the living area; the surface was then trowelled. A slight curving line of chalk pebbles under Building D and a number of chalky clay concentrations, (possibly post holes) and a line of burnt clay in square H25 were found. However, there was no evidence for earlier buildings. A straight gully, U-shaped in section, in G25 and 26 lay on the same axis as the layer 2 features and so may well have been a drainage gully in the living area for layer 2.

Layer 4 (Fig. 73)

Only three substantial features were found: Feature F and pits 5 and 6. The main value of these features is that they provided dating material from contexts well sealed below the layer 2 yards, the outlines of which are shown in Fig. 56.

Feature F was in two parts. An eastern part was surrounded by a ditch partly filled with flints, possibly when the layer 2 yards were laid out. The soil within the features was a slightly darker clay loam compared with the lighter clay, possibly natural, on the outside. The western part was a roughly square area of clay loam and flints at least 30 cm deep with vertical south and west sides. Most of the pottery came from the top of the feature. It is possible that the eastern part was a building with a foundation trench with a yard to the west covered by occupation material. The entrance to this possible yard seems to have been on the north side.

Pit 5 contained a uniform fill of dark soil which contained pottery described on p. 146.

Pit 6 was a large rectangular pit with a series of tip lines, but with very little pottery.

Toft 9 (Fig. 56)

It had been intended to strip the adjacent toft, number 9, in addition to number 10, but this scheme had to be abandoned because of the weather prevailing during both seasons. The east side of this toft and also the north-east corner of toft 8 was exposed but not examined in detail. There was a thin scatter of flint over most of the exposed area of toft 9.

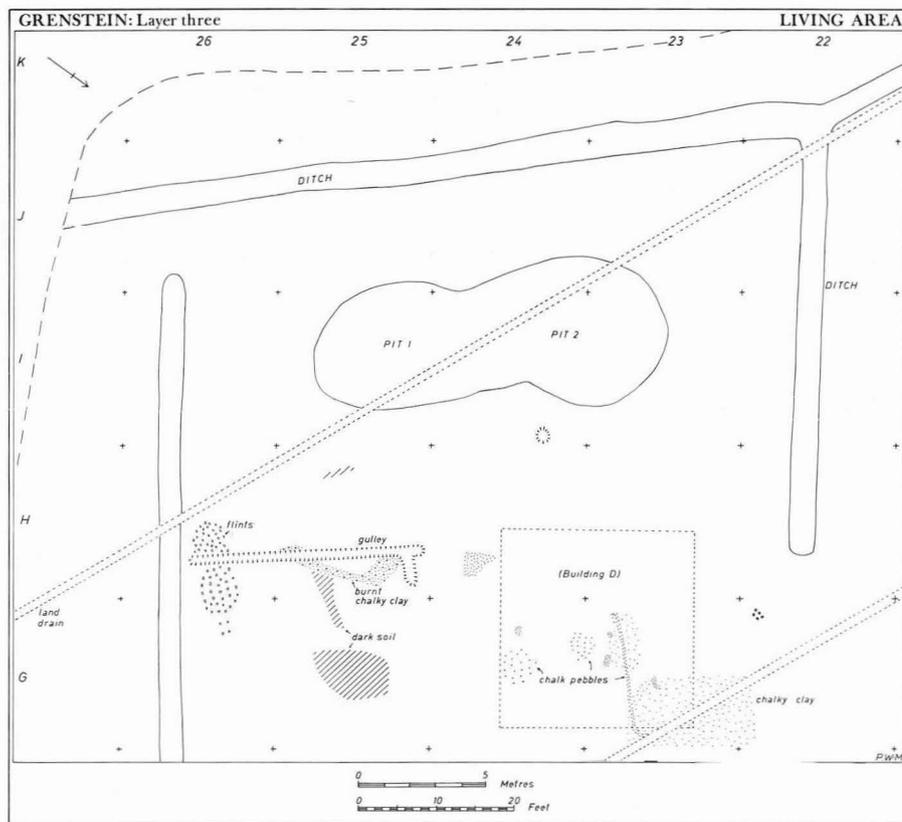


Fig. 72. Features within the living area in layer 3. Note: descriptive north is to the right. Scale 1:300.

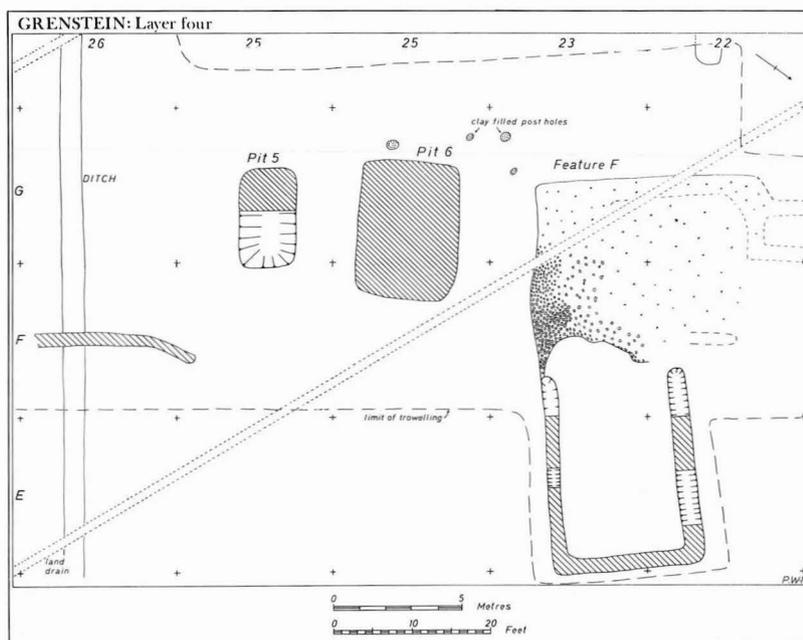


Fig. 73. Partial plan of layer 4 under area of yard 2. Note: descriptive north is to the right. Scale 1:300.

VII. BUILDING MATERIALS

Of the limited range of building materials available in East Anglia, evidence was found only of unbaked clay, timber, flint and, to a very limited extent, brick.

Traces of clay walls were found in all the excavated buildings. The excavation of structures which have clay walls, with floors of clay above a clay subsoil, does create many problems for the excavator, particularly when there has been so much plough damage. Fortunately, however, the very widespread use of flints for yards left rectangular ghosts of the buildings when the evidence for the buildings themselves was very slight. It seems that the clay used for wall building was usually dug out from clay pits, such as those seen on the air photographs in the small common near the village (Plate XIII) and at North Elmham (Wade-Martins 1980). From a depth greater than about one metre the clay is blue and chalky in colour unlike the brown, decalcified, weathered clay nearer the surface. Good examples of wall lines of this chalky clay were found in Buildings A and D (Plate XX and Figs. 64 and 61).

Cob is little known in East Anglia, where, certainly in the post-medieval period, clay was mixed with straw to make sun-dried 'clay lump' blocks (Glendenning 1948, 22). Houses were being built in clay lump in Norfolk until the early part of this century. The clay blocks were manufactured by adding straw to wet clay, and horses were used to puddle the clay into a sticky mixture which was put in four-sided wooden moulds 45 x 23 x 23 cm. As the clay dried it shrank and the moulds were then lifted off to allow the drying process to finish. No trace of mortar was found in the clay walls in the excavation. If the blocks were bonded with wet clay, the outlines of blocks would not show. The bonding clay in recent times was a mixture of clay and horse hair.

Clay lump walls, if kept dry, are strong and can last a long time; such buildings today are usually tarred or rendered. Experiments during the reconstruction of the West Stow Anglo-Saxon village in Suffolk¹ have shown that a mixture of equal parts of cow dung, sand and clay makes a very durable mixture which withstands the rain and hot sun. Perhaps something like this was applied to the outside of clay lump buildings to prevent them disintegrating.

Deeply overhanging eaves would be necessary to prevent the splash of rain water from the roofs undermining the walls around their foundations. This is where clay walls first deteriorate and why surviving examples are built on brick and flint plinths.

The origin of clay lump used as a building material in East Anglia is unknown; partly-fired blocks of straw-tempered clay were found in excavations in a Late Saxon context in Norwich near the castle in 1979 and clay lump blocks have been identified in a fifteenth-century context in Norwich (Atkin and Carter 1977, 295 and 297). It is a technique which apparently never spread much beyond East Anglia. Excavations in other parts of England have shown that there was a transformation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the construction of peasant houses from structures which were predominantly of timber to houses of stone or cob (Beresford and Hurst 1971, 93). In central Norfolk there was no suitable building stone, and clay lump may have been a substitute for stone from about the thirteenth century, when it appears that timber was no longer as plentiful. It is interesting that in the Middle and Late Saxon period the buildings excavated at North Elmham were all of timber (Wade-Martins 1980).

Flints seem rarely to have been used in buildings except as foundation courses for walls as in Building A. They were most frequently employed for the surfacing of roads and yards. Several thousand were used in the two farmyards in the excavated toft. The main source of these would have been stone-picking in the fields.



Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate IX. Aerial photograph of the main area of earthworks taken from the north in 1953. The triangular green bounded by ditches runs across the picture, and tofts can be seen on the far side. To the right a sunken way leads out of the green (Fig.50). (Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No.LF20)



Photo: Norfolk and Norwich Aero Club

Plate X. Aerial photograph of the main earthwork area taken from the north-west probably in c. 1934. Harber's Pit is on the right (Fig.47). (Print kindly donated by Dr.Eric Puddy)

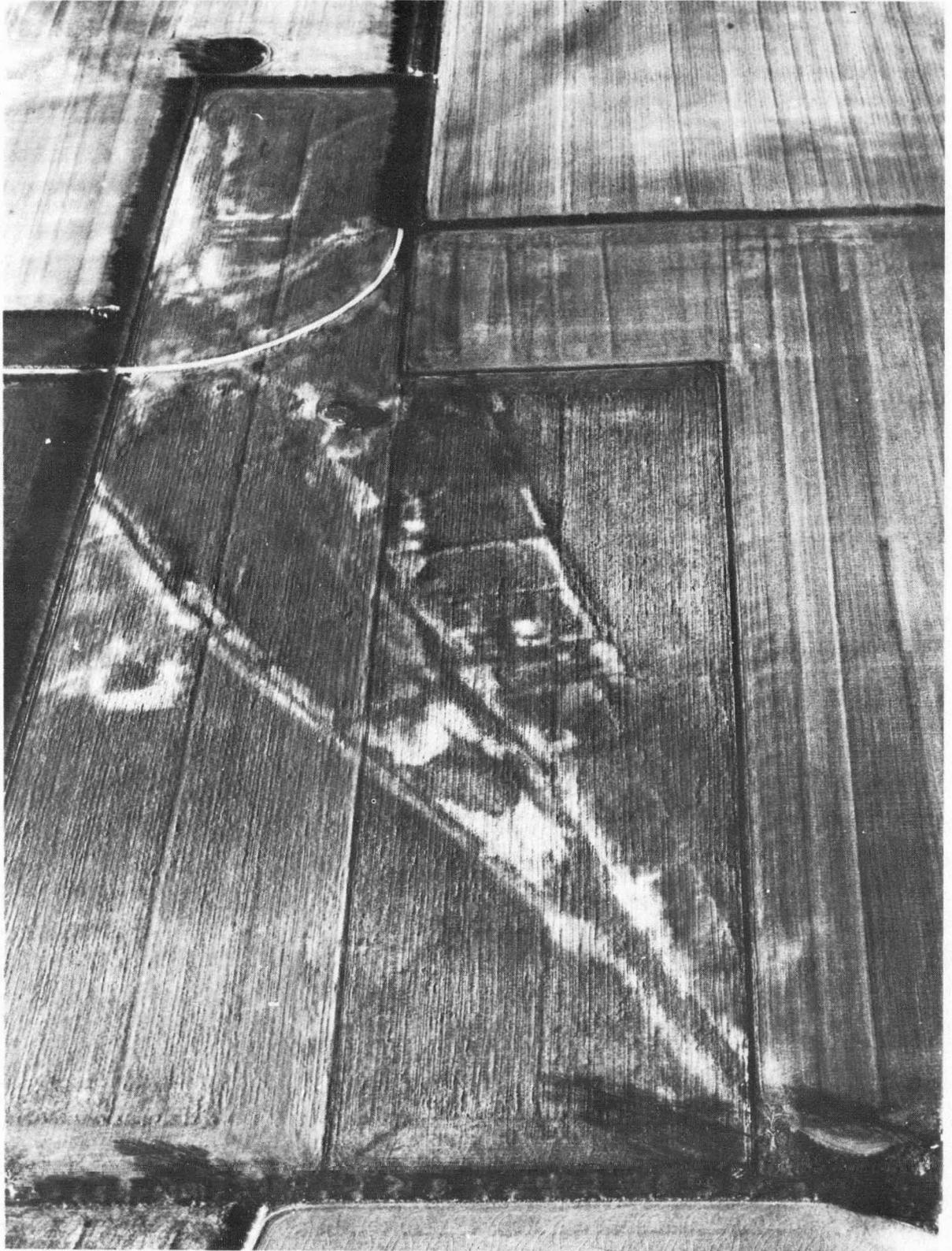


Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate XI. Aerial photograph of the soil marks around the green taken in 1960 from the north-west after bulldozing and ploughing. The lighter clay soil marks show up clearly and indicate some of the boundary banks and clay buildings in addition to the upcast from the village pond in the corner of the green (Fig. 50).
(Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No.AAQ60)



Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate XII. Aerial photograph of the moated site to the east of Grenstein taken in 1959 from the north-east. Part of an outer perimeter bank which surrounded the moat can be seen in the foreground (Fig.48). (Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No.ZP52)



Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate XIII. Aerial photograph of cropmarks of a small common between the Grenstein village and the moated site to the east taken in 1959 from the south-west (Fig.48). (Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No.ZP54)



Photo: J.K.St.Joseph

Plate XIV. Aerial photograph of the excavation and the surrounding field during the winter of 1965-6 taken from the south-west (Fig.52). (Cambridge University Collection: Copyright Reserved: No.AMU42)



Photo: Wing Commander Ken Wallis

TF 9020/F/AED 6

Plate XV. Aerial photograph of the excavation at the end of the 1965 season with layer 2 in toft 10 exposed; a near vertical view taken from the north-east. The painted scale on the excavation is in feet (Fig.57).



BBV 1

Plate XVI. View of street surface with wheel ruts in Cutting A from the north (Fig. 53).
Note: all ranging poles shown in these photographs are marked in feet.



BBV 14

Plate XVII. View of street surface and entrance into toft 10 from the south-east (Fig. 58).



BBV 38

Plate XVIII. View of yard 1 from south-west. The edge of the flint cobbles drops into the ditch forming the boundary of the living area (Fig. 60).



BBV 49

Plate XIX. View of Building D and living area from the south-east (Fig. 60).



BBV 9

Plate XX. View of Building A from north-east (Fig.64).



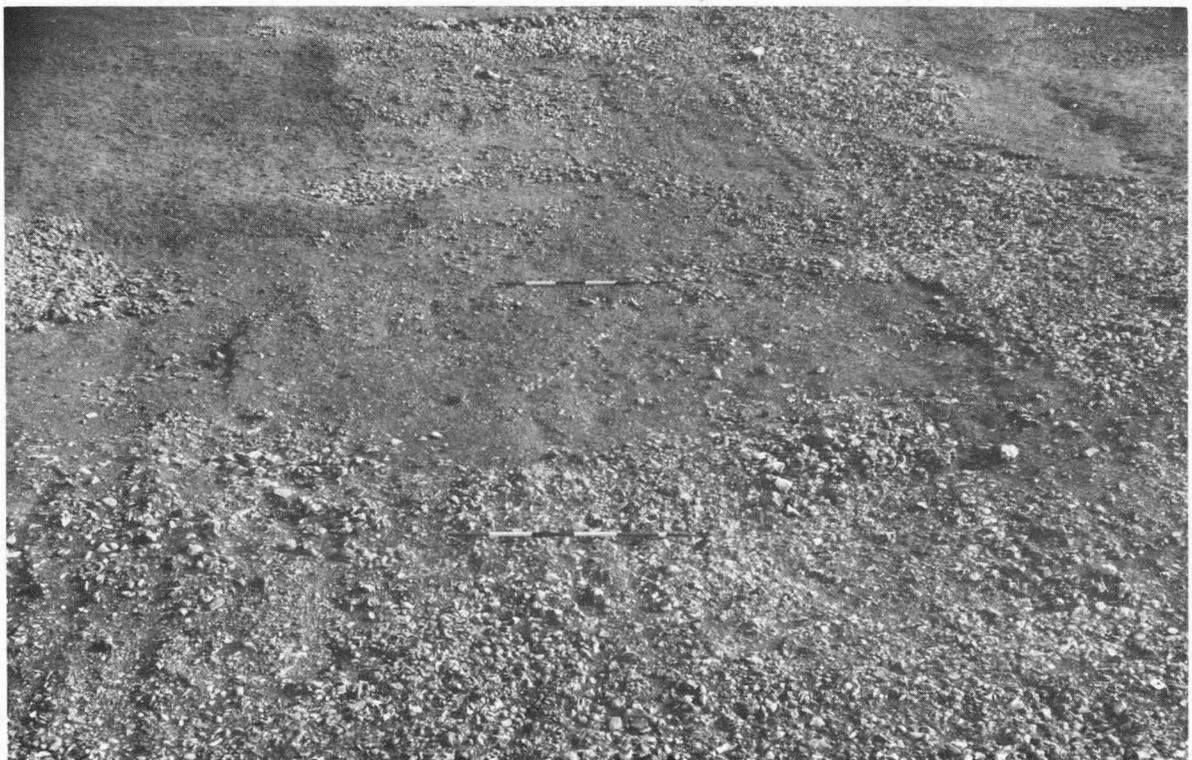
BBV 10

Plate XXI. Close-up view of north side of Building A showing spread of small broken flints over floor at doorway and line of flints forming foundation of part of north wall behind (Fig.64).



BBV 13

Plate XXII. View of Building B from north-west (Fig.66).



BBV 25

Plate XXIII. View of Building C from north-west (Fig.66).

Building Materials

Nine large and twenty small fragments of brick were found in the excavation, including examples trampled into the flint farmyards. Mortar adhered to the sides of a few of these. One piece came from the street ditch below the level of the final toft entrance bridge, and others were found in the 'living area' boundary ditch; however, the use of brick was clearly very restricted.

VIII. THE ARTEFACTS

THE COIN (not illustrated)

by Stuart Rigold

Edward I penny. Obverse: EDW R' ANGL DNS HYB (Edward Rex Anglie Dominus Hibernie). Reverse: Civitas London.

The trifoliate crown indicates that it belongs to the earlier classes - the outer fleurs being made up of three pieces. That it is later than class Ic is indicated by the Rex being abbreviated to a letter R. The wedge-shaped S also indicates that it is earlier than class 3F when the thick-centred S came into use. The crescent-shaped marks of contraction, as opposed to the later long comma-shaped ones, as well as the spearheads beside the central fleur, suggest that it belongs to class 3c. Approximately datable August 1279/ August 1280.

Found on surface of yard 2, square E24.

Note - as the coin is almost mint it may have been dropped before 1300, even though the pottery evidence suggests the toft was occupied for another century (p.147) (P.W-M).

OBJECTS OF COPPER ALLOY

by Alison R. Goodall

(Figs. 74 and 75)

- Fig. 74, No.1 Annular brooch with simple cast ornament on the ring. Small Find 8, over street, layer 2.
- Nos. 2-5 Buckles. No. 2 (SF 21, toft 8, layer 2) has the frame and buckle-plate cast in one piece; an example from Southoe Manor, Cambs. (Hunts.), was thought to be probably Norman in date (Lethbridge and Tebbutt 1939, 163, pl. I, fig. b) while another came from a late to post-medieval context in Hastings (Goodall and Rudling 1976, 172, fig. 5, no. 16). A buckle with a similar profile to No. 3 (SF 1, topsoil, east end of toft 10), but lacking the cylinder on the front of the frame, comes from Upton, Glos., and is dated to the later thirteenth or fourteenth century (Hilton and Rahtz 1966, 122, fig. 15, no. 4); the dagger-shaped pin can also probably be dated to this period. The two double-looped buckles, Nos. 4 (SF 51, unstratified) and 5 (SF 7, yard 2, layer 2), could also fall within the general date range of the site, No. 5 being a late and post-medieval type; No. 4 has remains of white metal plating.
- No. 6 Narrow strap-end made from two plates brazed or soldered together for most of their length and secured by two rivets; the outer plate has rocked-tracer ornament. SF 5, topsoil in north-east corner of toft 9.
- No. 7 Six-petalled boss with one of two peripheral rivet-holes surviving; probably a belt ornament. SF 16, over street ditch, layer 2.
- No. 8 Stud with domed head and rectangular-sectioned shank. SF 12, yard 1, layer 2.
- No. 9 Folded-over tab with rivet-hole; a rivet passes through one thickness of the folded portion and is clenched over a rectangular washer. SF 38, north edge of living area, layer 2.

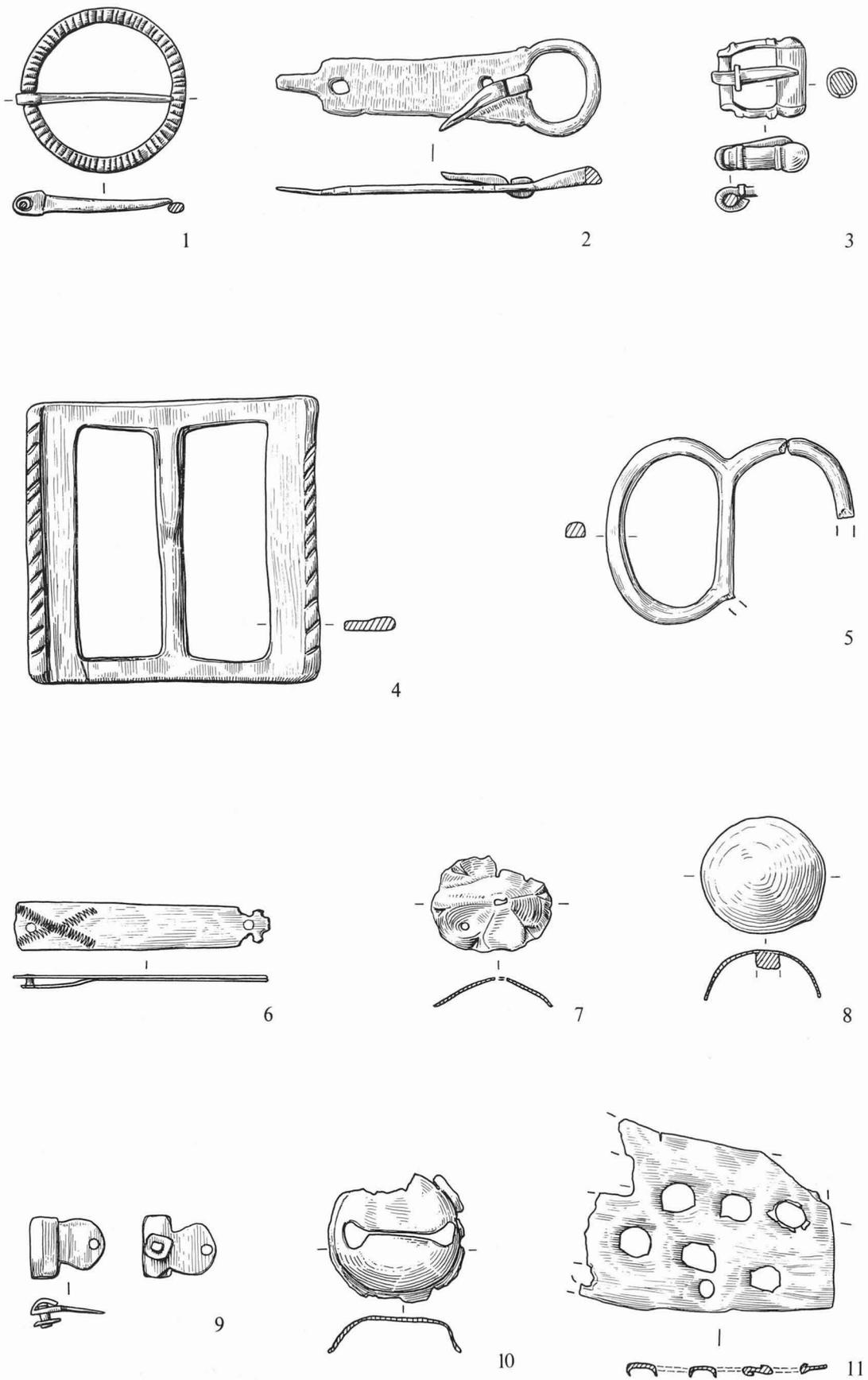


Fig.74. Objects of copper alloy. Scale 1:1.

The Artefacts

- Fig. 74, No.10 Lower half of a sheet-metal rumbler bell with dumbbell-shaped opening. Similar bells, which would have decorated clothing, dogs' collars, etc., are known from a number of medieval and later sites. SF 3, yard 2, layer 2.
- No.11 Perforated sheet. The perforations are crudely made with a rectangular-sectioned punch; one has been punched from the reverse side. There is also one smaller nail-hole and possibly another that has been broken through. SF 28, living area, layer 2.
- Fig. 75, Nos.12-14 Rings. No.12 (SF 4, yard 2, layer 2) may be from a brooch; it has been broken and the broken ends pulled apart. No.13 (SF 2, yard 2, layer 2) is irregular in section; a similarly crude ring from Wharram Percy has a cast pin and was used as a brooch (Goodall A.R. 1979, fig.56, no.1). No.14 (SF 10, yard 2, layer 2) is pen-annular with the ends butted together.
- No.15 Half of an irregular disc. SF 27, over Building D, layer 2.
- No.16 Fragment of a binding, or strap ornament, with pin-hole. Bag 25, yard 1, layer 2.
- Nos.17-18 Strip fragments. No.17: bag 14, living area, layer 2; No.18: SF 2, yard 2, layer 2.
- No.19 Sheet fragment with one long edge intact, possibly from the rim of a thin-walled vessel. Bag 11, yard 2, layer 2.
- Nos.20-24 Sheet fragments. No.20: bag 12, yard 1, layer 2; No.21: bag 110, pit 1; No.22: bag 15, over street, layer 2; No.23: bag 45, over street, layer 2; No.24: SF 39, over Building D, layer 2.
- No.25 Sheet off-cut. Bag 48, yard 2, layer 2.
- No.26 (Not illustrated). Fragment of sheet-metal buckle-plate, surviving length 17 mm. Bag 181, layer 3.

LEAD OBJECTS

by Alison R. Goodall

- No.1 (Not illustrated). Irregular patch or bung, length 44 mm. SF 33, living area, near Building D, layer 2.
- No.2 (Not illustrated). Sheet off-cut. SF 2, yard 2, layer 2.

OBJECTS OF IRON

by Ian H. Goodall

(Figs. 76-83)

All objects except nails have been X-rayed.

KNIVES 1-7, with whittle tangs originally inserted into handles, are examples of the most common type of knife in use during the medieval period. 7 is exceptional in having an inlaid cutler's mark on its blade. The less utilitarian scale tang knives with riveted handles were often more elaborately finished. 8 has non-ferrous shoulder plates soldered in place, 9 retains part of an iron end-cap but, like 10, appears not to have had shoulder plates. 11 had soldered shoulder plates, now lost, but the X-radiograph also reveals a flat tang without rivet holes but with non-ferrous plating around the edge. 12-15 are knife blade fragments.

TOOLS include several used in woodworking, particularly the spoon bit 16 with its characteristically-shaped terminal and a gouge bit 17 with tapering stem. The dividers, 18, may have been used by a carpenter in marking out, whilst one use of the small wedge, 19, would have been in securing the wooden haft of a tool such as an axe in its eye. The awl 20 with its handle held by three iron rivets and finished with a shaped end-cap is more elaborate than those normally found. 21 is an incomplete needle, 22 part of the grooved side of a spade iron.

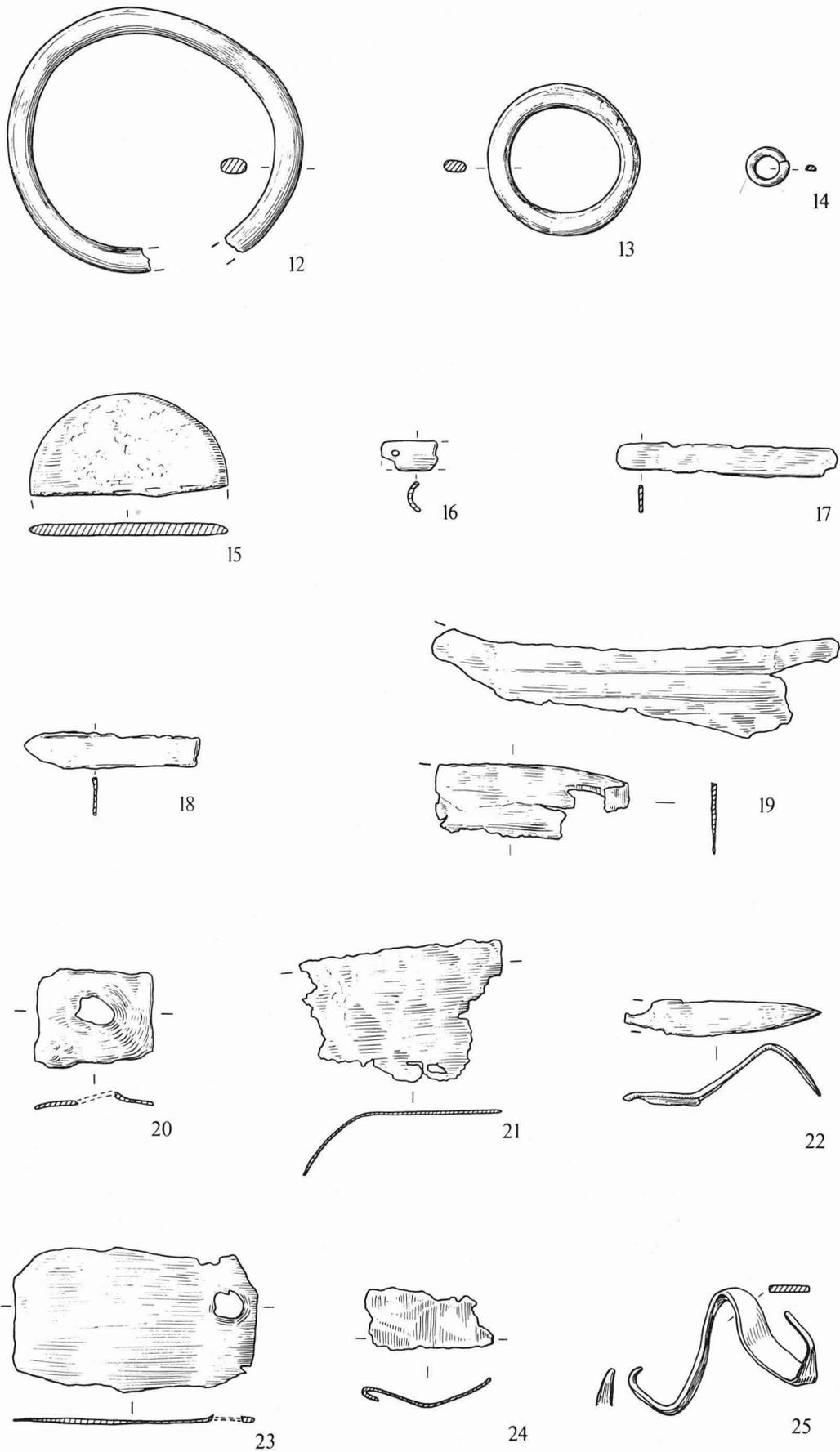


Fig. 75. Objects of copper alloy. Scale 1:1.

The Artefacts

Collars 23-4, the former originally nailed, may have bound tool handles or be items of BUILDING IRONWORK, as are the rectangular and U-shaped staples and broken angle tie 25-7. One stud, 28, with a damaged head was found. The timber nails are of six types, the majority of which come from layer 2 contexts across the whole site. All have square or rectangular section shanks.

- Type A. 29-30 Square or near square flat head, often with rounded corners. Complete nails 27-81 mm long with heads from 10-22 mm wide. Layer 1: 4 nails; layer 2: 123; layer 3: 3; layer 4: 1.
- Type B. 31 Identical to type A but with indented sides evidently intended for decorative effect. Longest 57 mm, head 13 mm square. Layer 2: 3 nails.
- Type C. 32-3 Flat rectangular head. Complete nails 37-102 mm long, heads from 10 x 6 to 23 x 16 mm wide. Layer 2: 18 nails.
- Type D. Raised rectangular head with straight (34) or indented (35) sides. Longest 70 mm incomplete. Layer 2: 3 nails; layer 3: 1.
- Type E. 36 Flat, figure eight-shaped head. Longest 51 mm incomplete. Layer 2: 3 nails.
- Type F. 37 L-shaped head. Layer 2: 1 nail.

Fittings from buildings include the hinge pivots 38-41, 38 having a clenched tip, as well as a series of strap hinge fragments of varying sizes. The most distinctive is 42, a distorted hanging eye which was originally U-shaped and nailed through the door. 43 is apparently expanding towards a shaped terminal. The other lengths of strap, 44-51, may be from hinges or have strengthened timbers. Slighter lengths of binding strip such as 52-5 and 56, the small pinned hinge with iron rivets, may come from items of furniture such as caskets as perhaps do the slender handle fragments 57-8.

Items of LOCK FURNITURE are a padlock key, 59, and two padlock bolts, 60-1. 60, with three spines each with a double leaf spring, is from a barrel padlock with shackle; 61 is an altogether less common type used with a barrel padlock with an L-shaped arm over which the ring fitted. 62 is a padlock hasp, now distorted and incomplete, but originally not unlike one from Hadleigh Castle, Essex (Goodall, I.H., 1975a, 141, fig.28, no.340). The hasp pivoted on the now broken free arm whilst the bolt of the padlock mechanism, which resembled that of 67 below, engaged the L-shaped keeper. Keys 63-4 were used with fixed locks; 63 has a broken ring bow and bit rolled in one with the hollow stem whilst 64 has a solid stem with box moulding and toothed bit. Figure-eight hasps such as 65-6 were used in conjunction with chains, staples and padlocks to secure doors, gates, etc. 67 shows one used with a bag-shaped padlock of probable post-medieval date.

The most numerous HOUSEHOLD FITTINGS are the candleholders 68-72 which, when sufficiently complete, have angled stems with inward or outward-facing sockets. An exceptional candleholder is 73 with a socket on an L-shaped base riveted through a rectangular wax pan to a long carrying and fixing handle. A similar wax pan is known from Goltho, Lincs. (Goodall, I.H. 1975b, 87, fig.41, no.105) but the form of the Grenstein candleholder recalls a copper alloy example from Writtle, Essex (Rahtz 1969, 91, fig.51, no.118). Other miscellaneous fittings, 74-7, are swivel rings, a chain link and an incomplete ring. The sheet fragments and rods 78-81 are of indeterminate use. The barbed and socketed arrowhead was probably used in hunting.

The only items of PERSONAL EQUIPMENT are the buckles, of which the four small circular ones 83-6, three retaining at least part of their wire pins, are suitable for use on hose or shoes. 86 has non-ferrous plating, and all were made by butting up lengths of wire. 87 is a flat rectangular double buckle, probably from a belt, whereas 88 is a post-medieval shoe buckle with canted frame and missing bar.

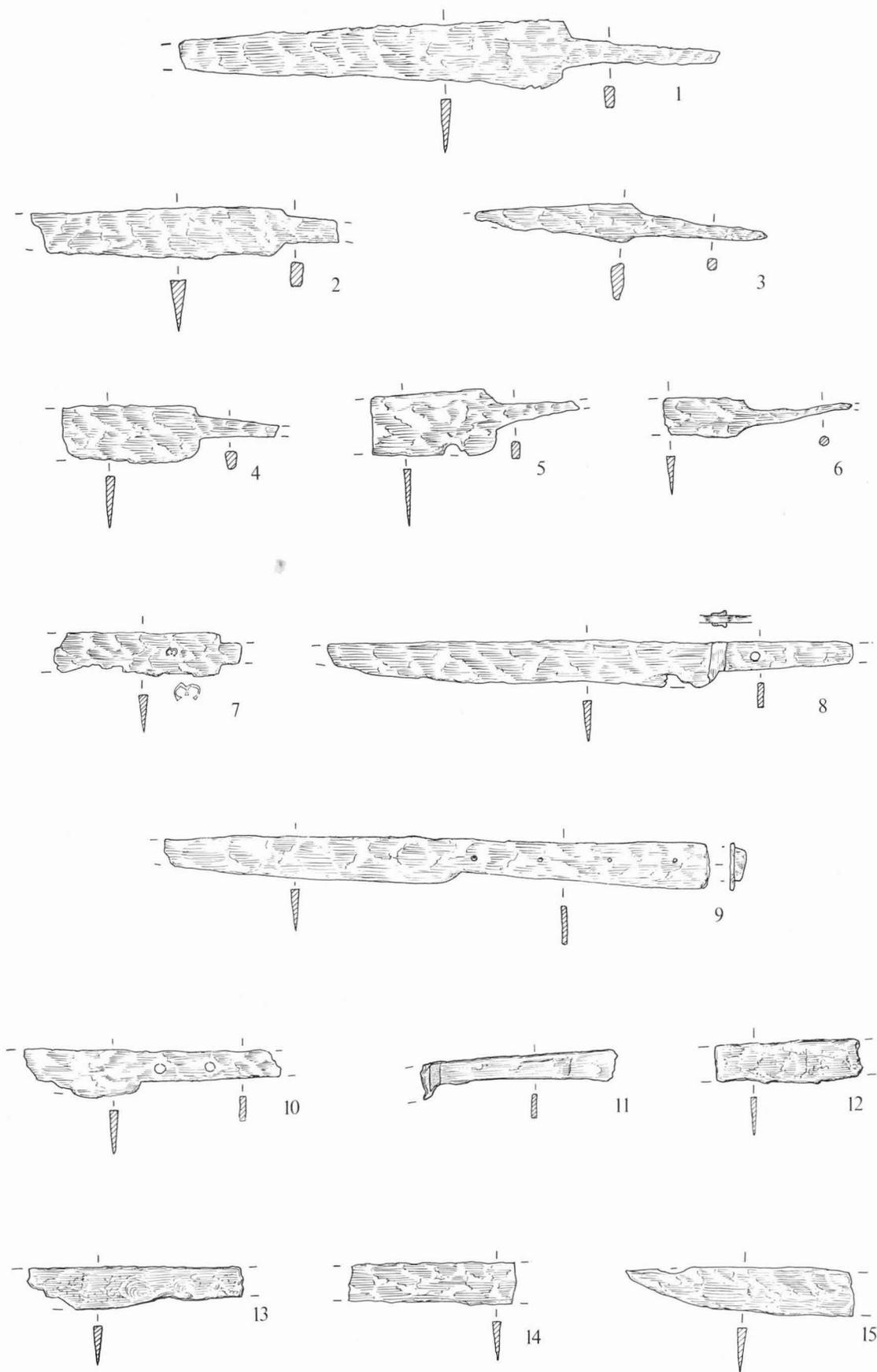


Fig. 76. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

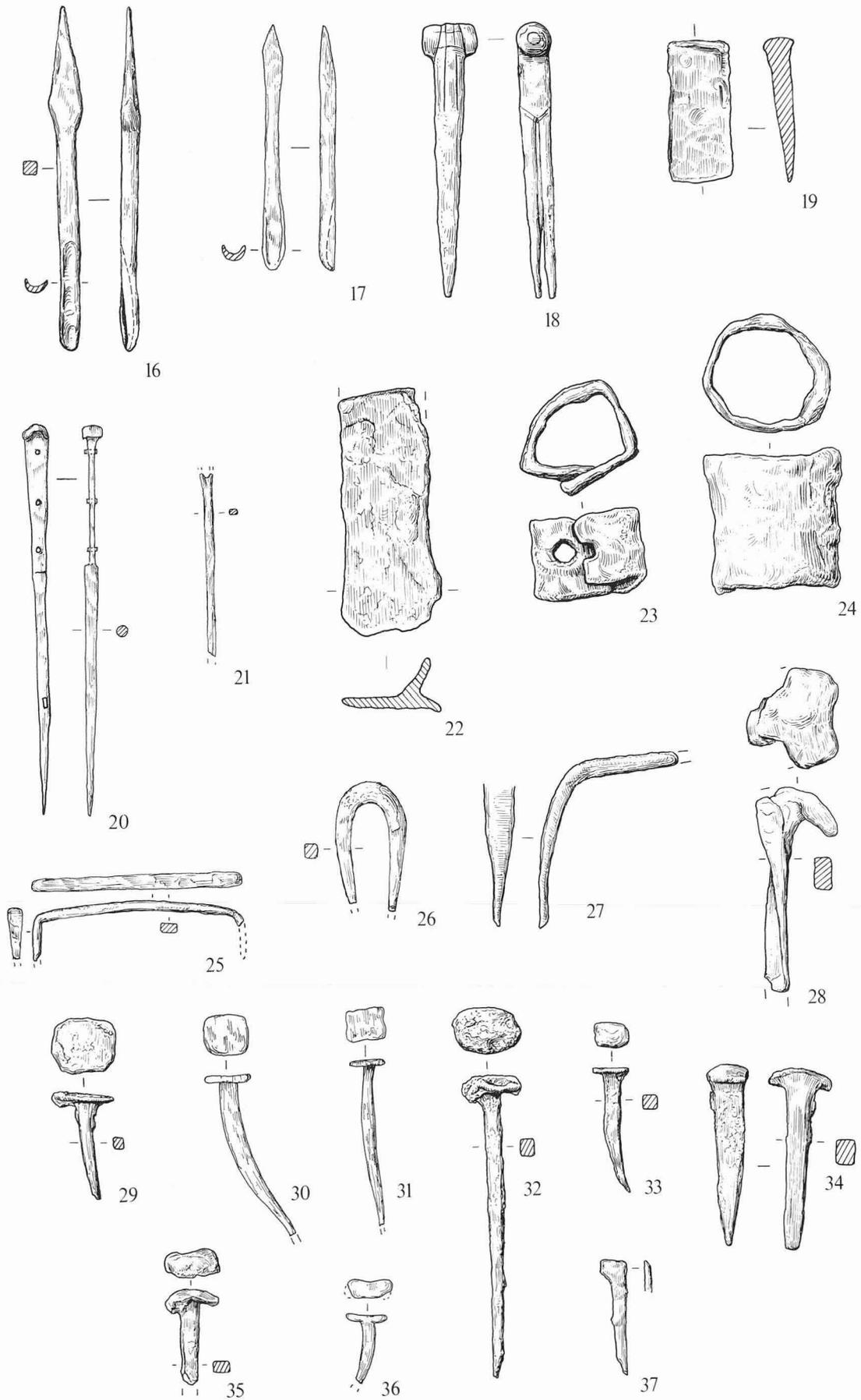


Fig.77. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

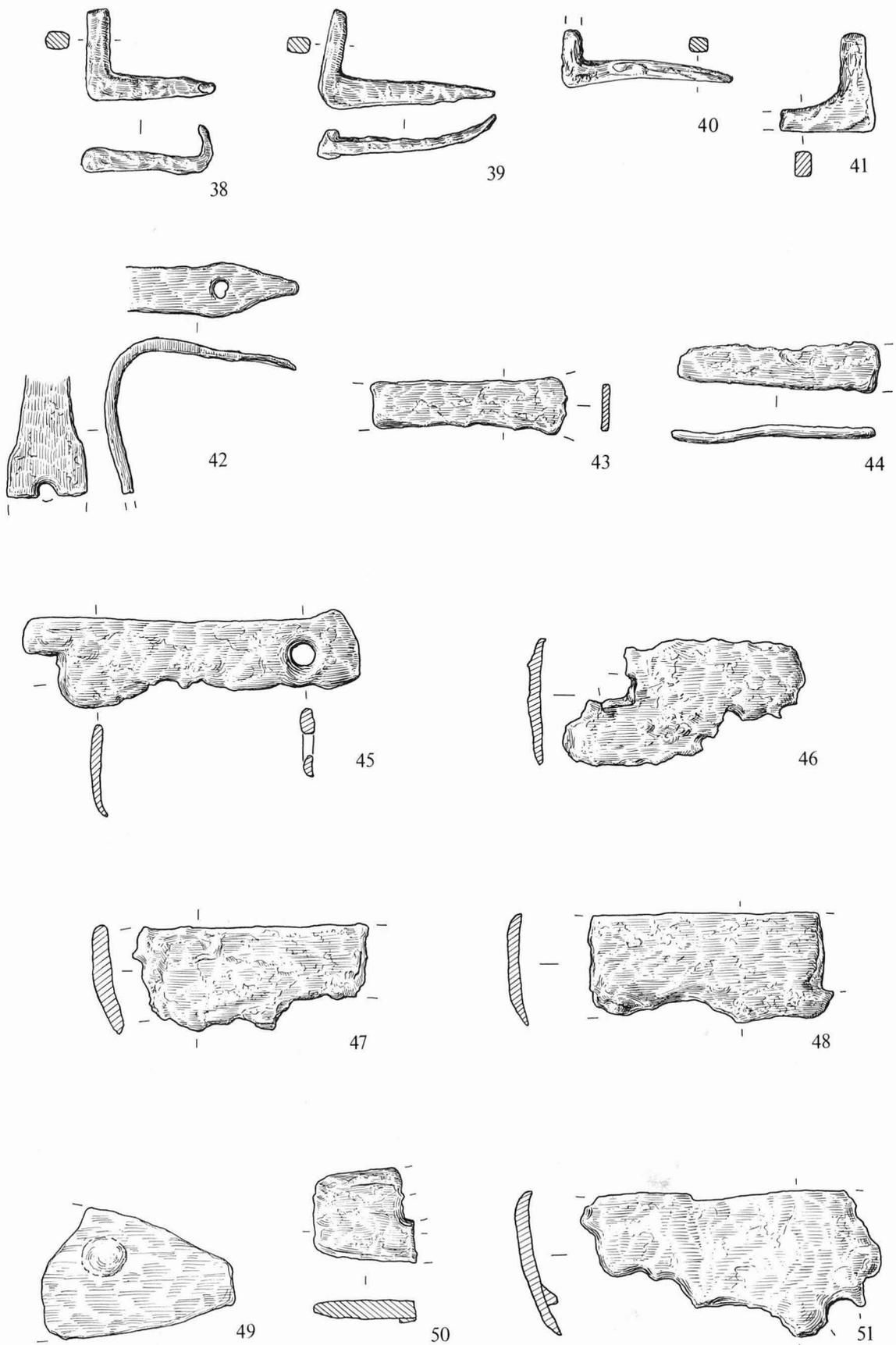


Fig. 78. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

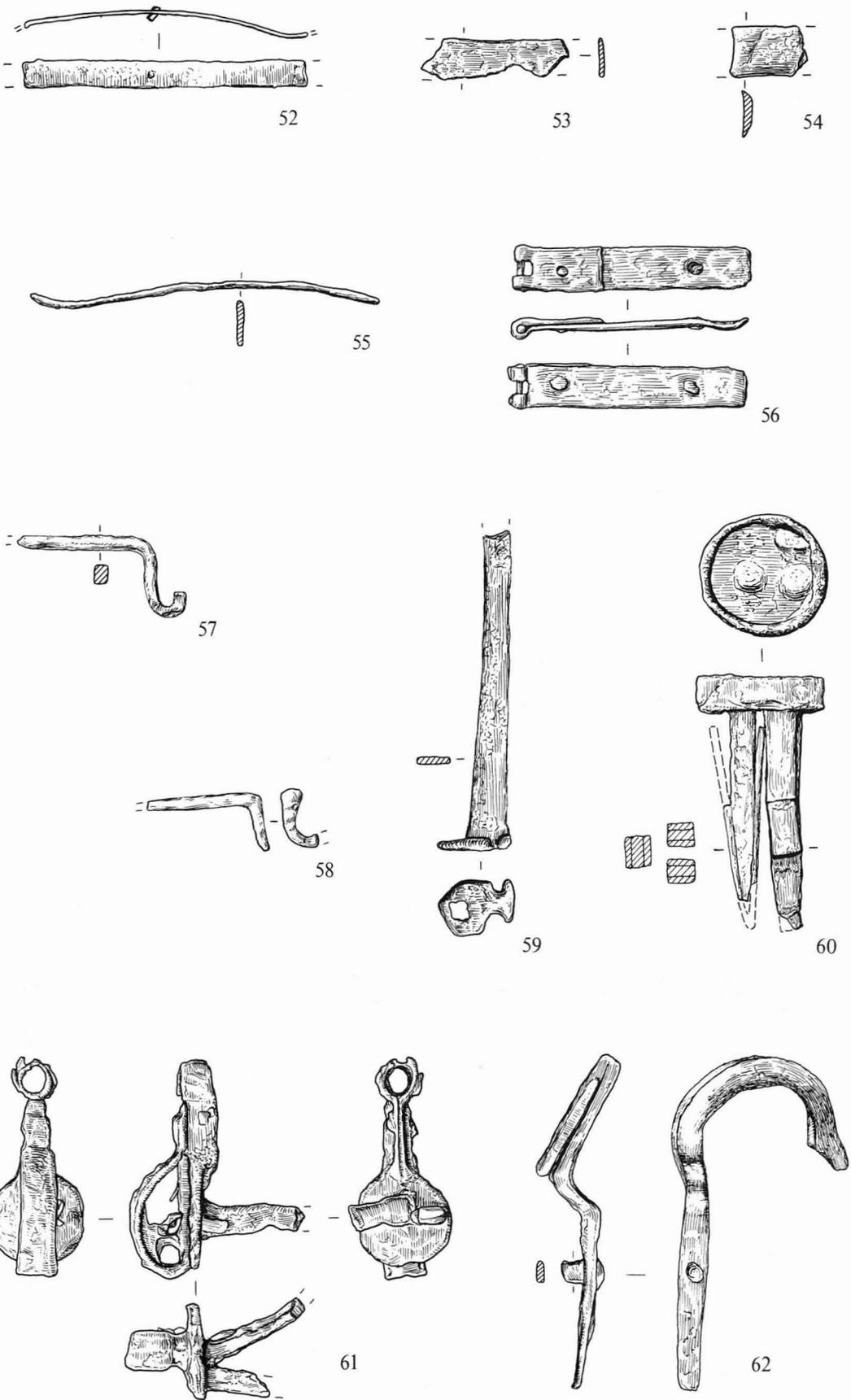


Fig. 79. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

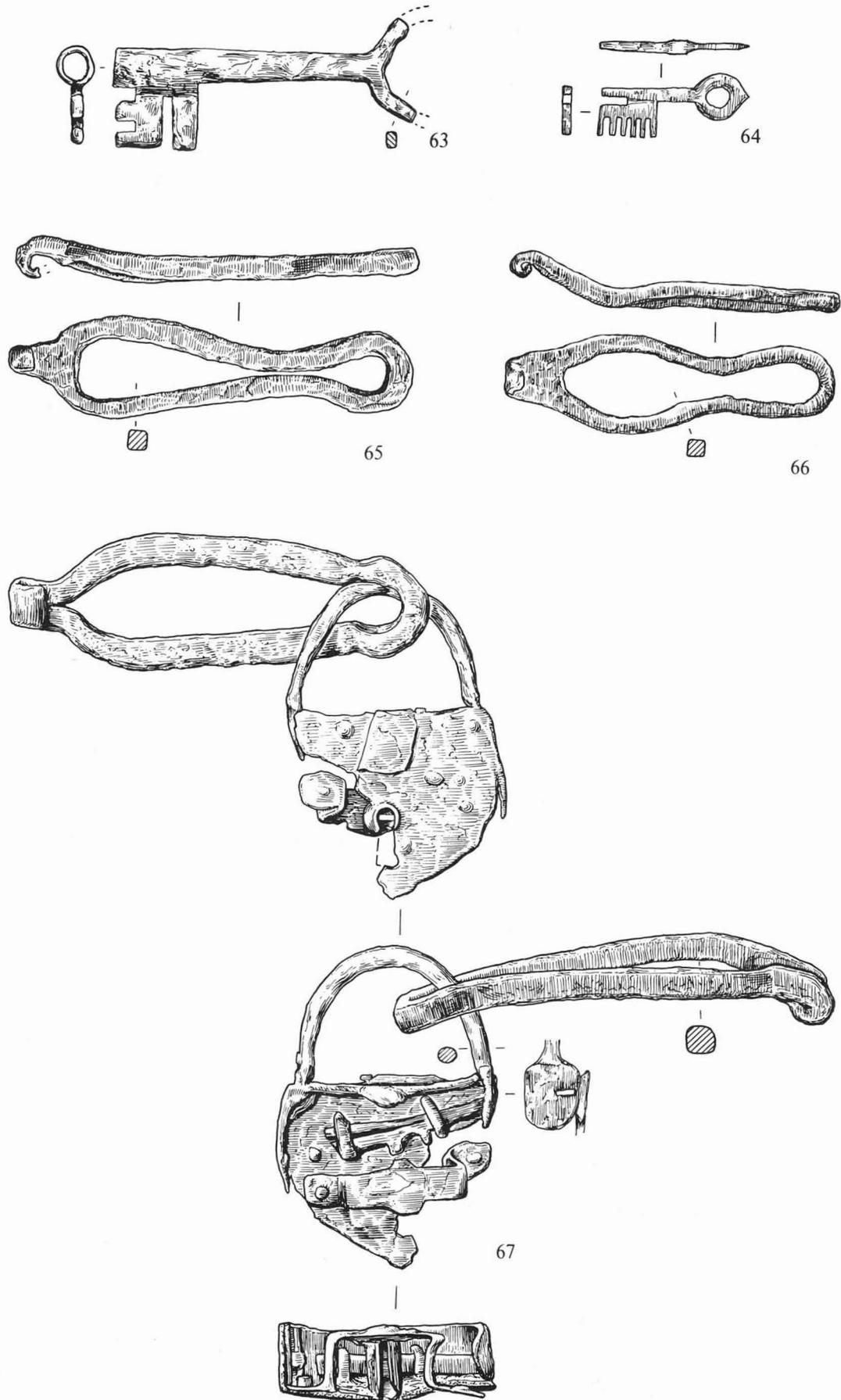


Fig.80. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

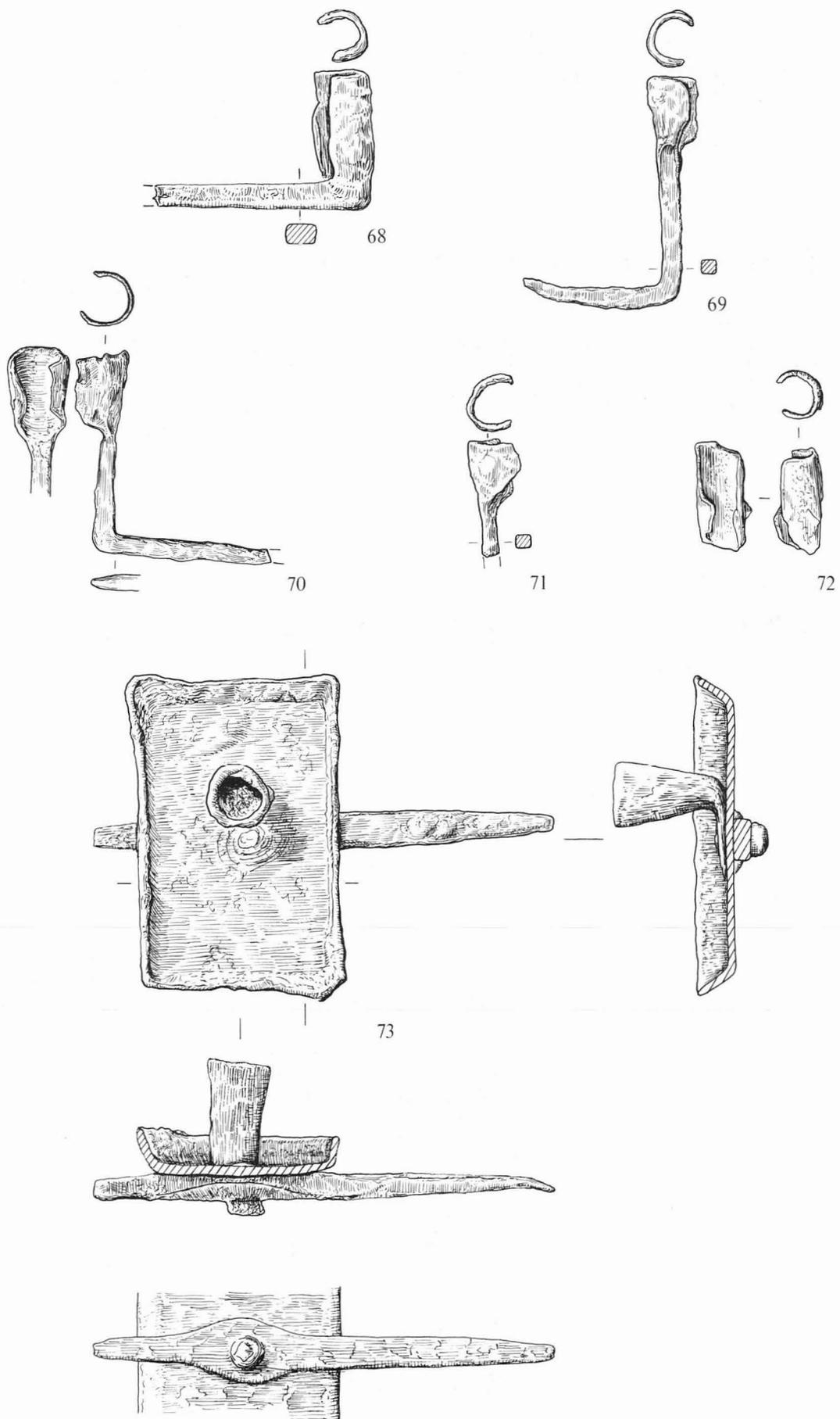


Fig.81. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

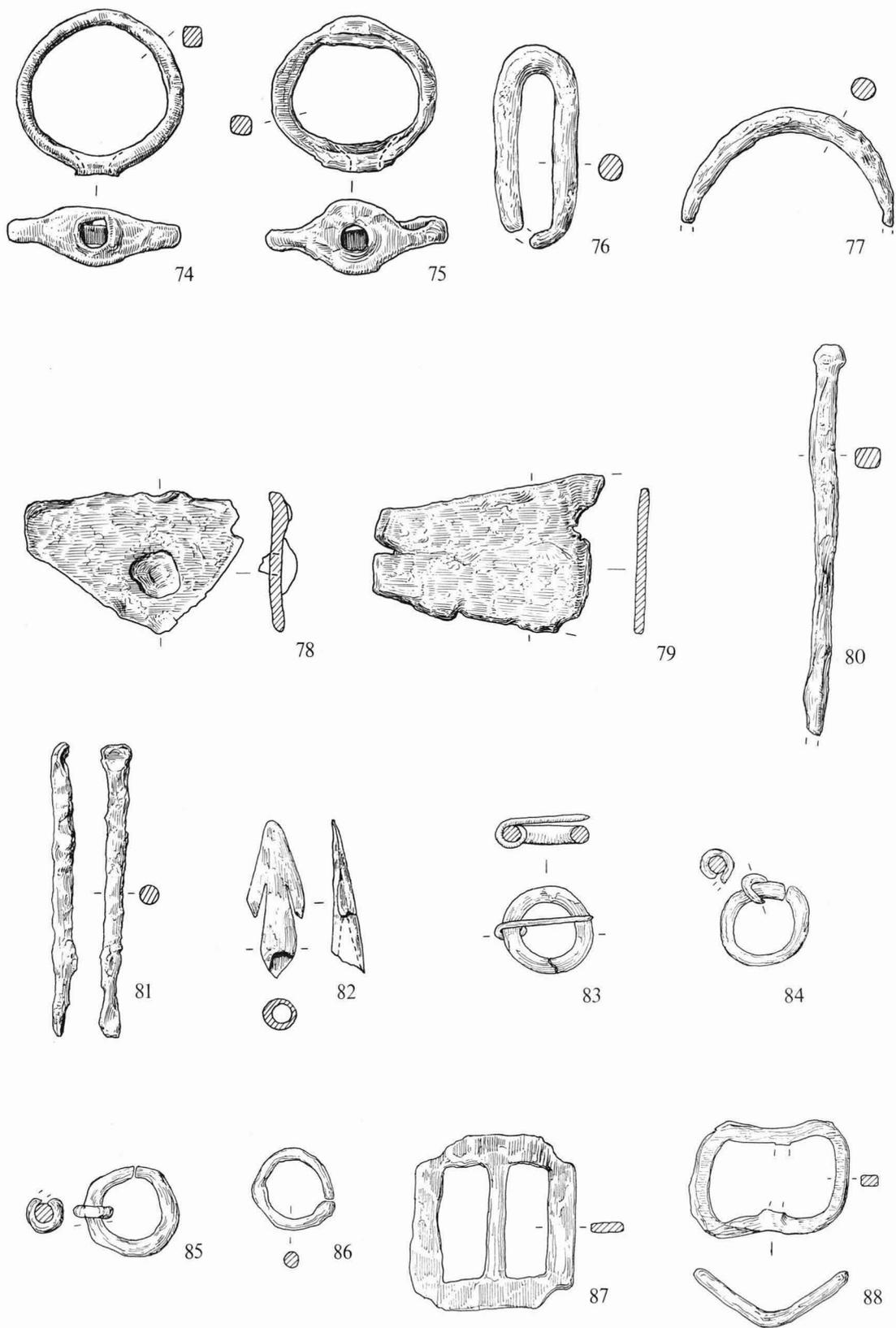


Fig.82. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

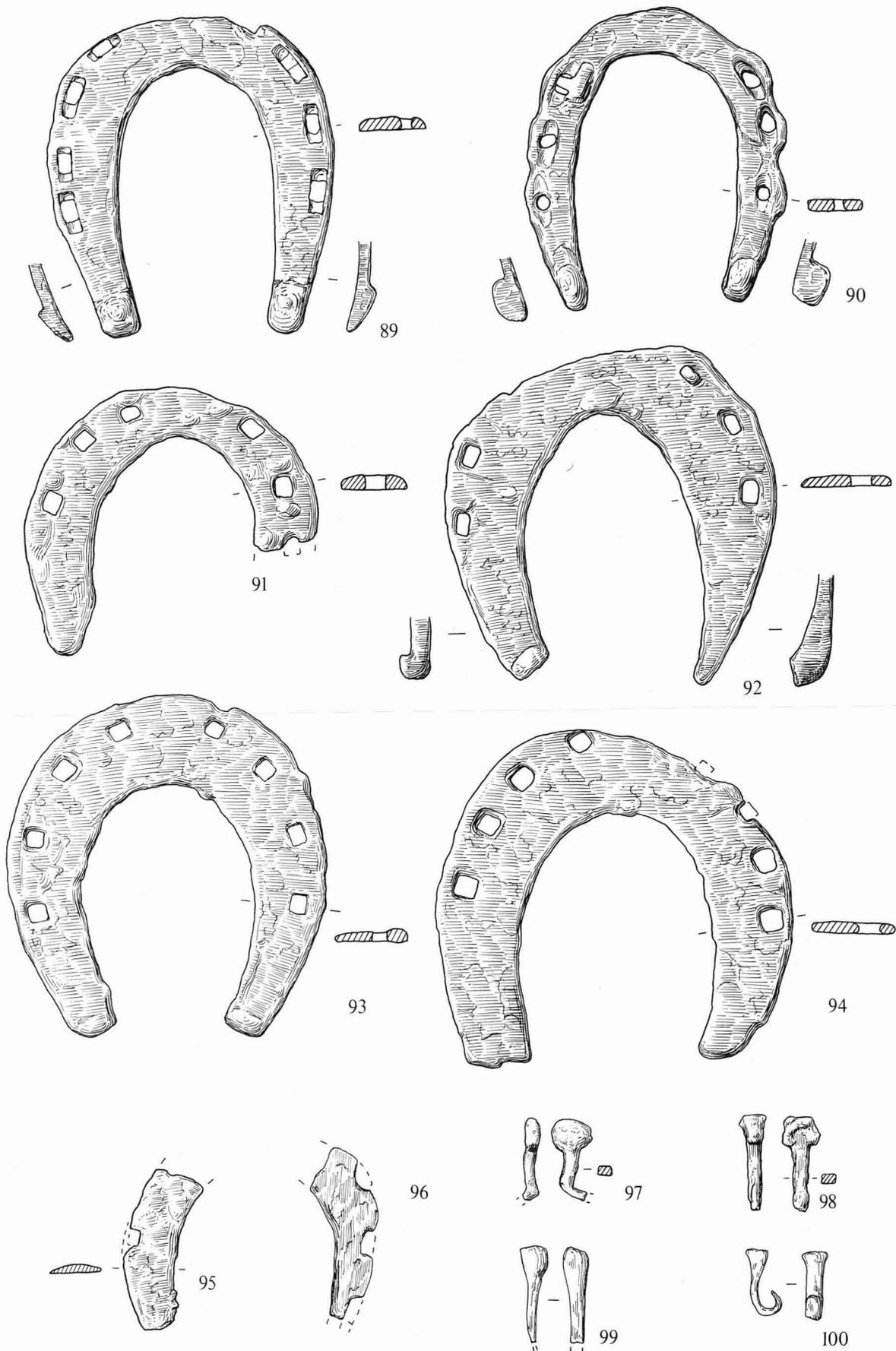


Fig.83. Objects of iron. Scale 1:2.

HORSE EQUIPMENT is represented solely by horseshoes and oxshoes, most fragmentary. Four examples of the early type of horseshoe in use until the thirteenth century and having countersunk nailholes and a wavy edge were found (89-90), three from layer 2 contexts, one unstratified. 24 examples of the later type with rectangular nailholes and plain edge (91-4) were found, fifteen from layer 2 contexts, the remainder from topsoil. Both oxshoes (95-6) are fragments and lack clips. The horseshoe nails, all from layer 2 contexts, are of four types. 97, one of five examples, is of fiddle key type used with the early type of horseshoe. The others, 98-100 (4, 4 and 16 examples respectively), were used with the later type of horseshoe and may be compared with those from Waltham Abbey, Essex (Goodall, I.H 1973, 173-5, fig.13A-D).

Contexts

1, 3-4, 21, 38-9, 48, 56, 62, 77-8, 82, 99: Yard 1, layer 2.

2: Fill of southern toft boundary ditch for toft 9.

5-6, 32, 54, 86: Yard 2, near junction with yard 1, layer 2.

7, 28, 30, 34, 44, 47, 49-50, 57, 71, 73, 85, 88, 92, 95: Over street, layer 2.

8: Living area near Building D, layer 2.

9, 19: Pit 1.

10-12, 20, 23, 43, 45, 80, 83-4: Over Building C and area, layer 2.

13, 17-18, 25, 29, 40, 42, 46, 53, 55, 100: Yard 2, layer 2.

14-15, 27, 35, 65, 91, 98: Living area, layer 2.

16, 76: Cutting A in fill of modern drain trench.

22: Toft 9 - just south of Building A, layer 2.

24: Pit 2.

26, 87: over edge of street ditch, layer 2.

31, 68: Street, layer 2.

33, 37: Junction of living area and yard 2, layer 2.

32: E23, layer 2.

41: Over Building D, layer 2.

51, 61: Over Yard 1, layer 2.

52, 69: Toft 9, layer 2.

58: Building A, floor, layer 3.

59: Over Building B, layer 2.

60, 67, 70, 72, 79: Surface of field 78.

63: In floor of Building A, layer 3.

64, 75: Ploughsoil over east end of toft 10.

66: Topsoil.

74: Fill of rear boundary ditch for toft 10.

81: Over Building B and adjacent toft entrance, layer 2.

89: To west of Building E in north-west corner of toft, layer 2.

90: Unstratified near pond.

93-4: Over Building C, layer 2.

96: Toft entrance, layer 2.

97: Over north ditch of toft 10, layer 2.

The Artefacts

OBJECTS OF STONE

Hones (Fig.84)

by David Moore

Twenty hones or fragments of hones were recovered from the excavations and from fieldwork.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Fig.84, No.1 | Worn on upper surface only. A micaceous grit conceivably a Coal Measure Sandstone. Bag 16; over Building D, layer 2. |
| No.2 | Worn on all surfaces. Norwegian ragstone (Eidsborg schist). Bag 29; over yard 1, layer 2. |
| No.3 | Much worn on one surface. Norwegian ragstone. Bag 33; over yard 1, layer 2. |
| No.4 | Many deep grooves, presumably used for sharpening needles. Norwegian ragstone. Bag 33; over yard 1, layer 2. |
| No.5 | Rather abraded. Norwegian ragstone. Bag 246; under yard 2, layer 4. |
| No.6 | Very abraded. Norwegian ragstone. Surface of field 78. |
| No.7 | More worn on the edges than the faces. Norwegian ragstone. Surface of field 78. |
| No.8 | Little sign of wear. A medium-grained ferruginous sandstone, similar to some Wealden types, and conceivably from south-east England or East Anglia. Surface of field 78. |

The unillustrated hones from the surface of field 78 consist of three pieces of Norwegian ragstone, a coarse-grained feldspathic sandstone (unknown provenance), and a medium-grained micaceous sandstone or grit conceivably a Coal Measure Sandstone. The unillustrated hones from the excavations consist of six pieces of Norwegian ragstone and one biotite-muscovite schist, conceivably Scottish and obtained from glacial deposits.

Querns (not illustrated)

Some seventy-nine pieces of Rhenish lava quernstone were recorded from the excavation. They were found particularly in the flint yards where they had been used as metalling and there was also a concentration in the living area within the vicinity of the house, Building D.

A further twenty pieces were collected in field walking, but like those from the excavation they were too fragmentary to justify illustration.

THE POTTERY FROM FIELDWORK AND EXCAVATIONS

by Carolyn Dallas

(Figs.85-89)

Of the 5864 sherds found in the excavations, 47.4% are glazed wares attributable to the kilns at Grimston in north-west Norfolk (Wade 1972), 50.7% are local unglazed wares - some of which are also likely to have been made at Grimston (Clarke 1970) - and the remaining 1.9% are regional or Continental imports and post-medieval wares (topsoil and surface material is not included in these figures).

Six sherds of Middle Saxon (seventh to ninth century) Ipswich-type ware were found; three from the excavation of toft 10 and three from the surface of field 78. No features of this date were found. The sherds consist of one pimply rim of West Group I type E (West 1963, 248) (not illustrated), three pimply body sherds and two fine sandy body sherds. At least five vessels are involved and it seems possible that there is a Middle Saxon site in the vicinity.

No Late Saxon (tenth to eleventh century) features or pottery were found in the excavations, although four body sherds and one rim of possible Thetford-type ware were found on the surface of field 78. Surface examination of field 79 produced some Thetford

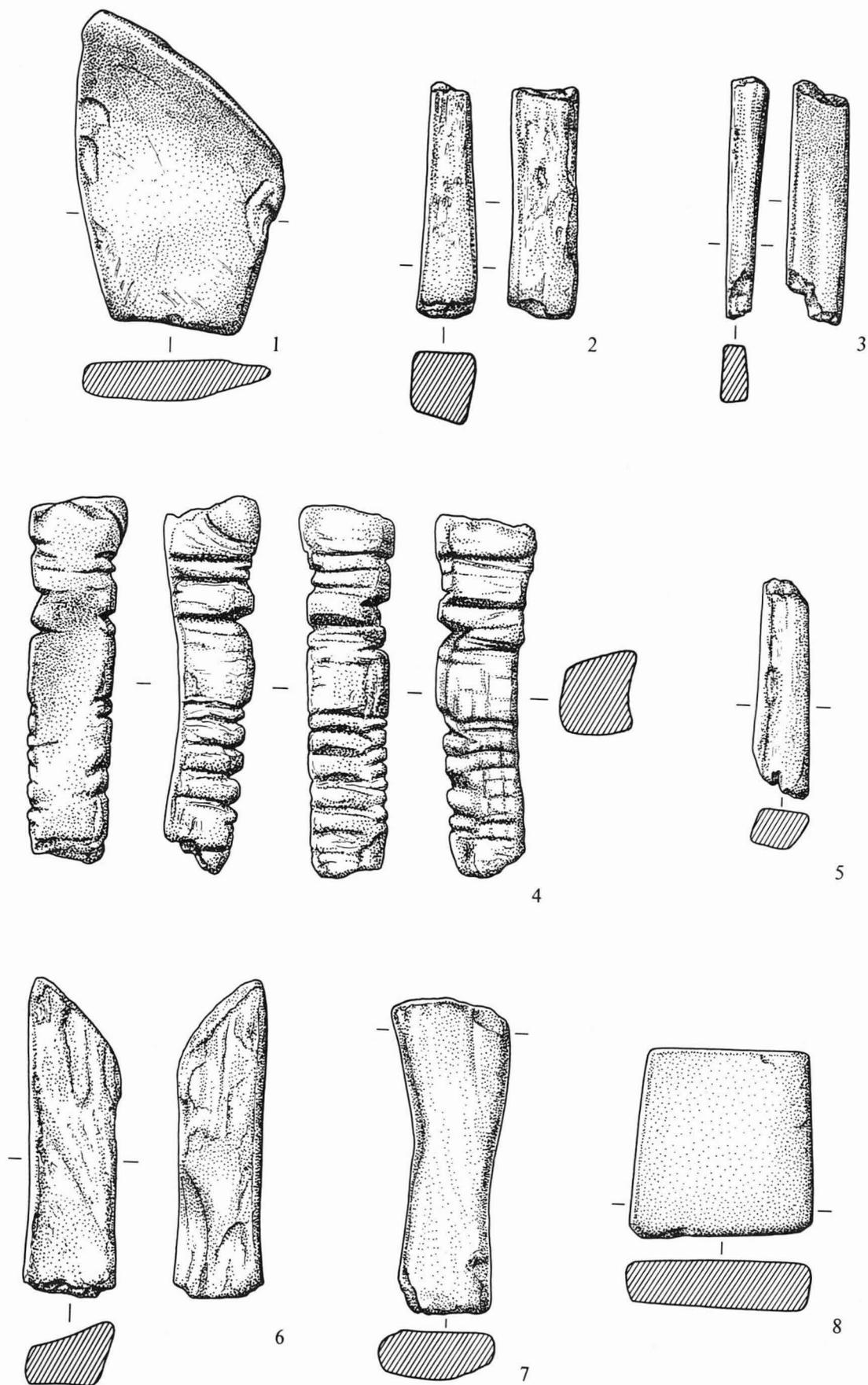


Fig.84. Hones. Scale 1:2.

type material; this comprised one storage jar rim, four cooking pot rims, one rouletted body sherd, two possible bases and five possible body sherds in a fabric resembling those from Norwich and Thetford. Rims in Saxo-Norman forms from two further cooking pots and one inturned bowl in coarse sandy fabrics, perhaps the products of some other local kiln, were also found.

COARSE WARES

These comprise both cooking pots and bowls, with cooking pots forming 70% and bowls 30% of the site total of coarse ware rims.

Fabrics:

The fabrics are all sandy and can be roughly grouped as follows:-

- a) Early Medieval type This has particles of various sizes and shapes although rounded quartz grains are the most apparent. The sherds are usually thin and often mottled red and black colours. The forms are normally plain cooking pots ((1) below) ².
- b) Sandy This fabric is also tempered with quartz sand, including dark grey ores and some non-rounded particles, but the inclusions are more regular than those in fabric (a) and smaller than those in (c). Sherds of this type usually seem to be thin, light grey or brown in colour, and where attributable to vessel type are usually from moulded rim cooking pots ((3) below).
- c) Harsh sandy The fabric is very full of sand grains producing a rough surface with a harsh feel. It is the only fabric which is soft enough to be scratched by a fingernail. The grains are rounded and include much quartz and quartzite. The particles are mainly c. 0.5 - 1.0 mm in size and are more numerous than in the other fabrics. These harsh fabrics occur in various shades of grey and brown and sometimes orange or dull red colours. They account for roughly two-thirds of the coarse wares and are not characteristic of a particular form.
- d) Grimston Thetford-type ware A coarse sandy fabric characterised by a quantity of dull red inclusions which are probably iron ore. Only a few sherds which can be fairly certainly attributed to Grimston were found.

Forms:

The range of forms and form types is rather limited. Most of the cooking pot rims can be classed as follows:-

- 1) Early Medieval type These are plain flared and sometimes thumbled. Most examples are thin-walled. The fabric is as group (a). Some sixty-four rims of this type were found in the excavations, forming at least fifty vessels of this type (Nos.16, 17, 29, 31, 46).
- 2) Plain flared These are larger, thicker-walled vessels which are usually in harsh sandy fabric (c). About forty-four rims can be placed in this group, representing approximately thirty vessels (Nos.1-5, 13, 18, 38, 52, 64).
- 3) Moulded These are upright rims with developed edges. Fabrics are both sandy (b) and harsh sandy (c). Thirty-six examples of rims were found, from about thirty to thirty-four vessels (Nos.14, 15, 26, 27, 32, 39).

The three basic cooking pot rim types therefore seem fairly evenly divided in quantity. The Early Medieval ware starts in the eleventh century and continues into at least the twelfth and possibly the thirteenth century. The flared rims probably have a similar date range. The moulded rims were originally thought to be thirteenth century specifically (Jope 1952, figs.11-12) but it seems more likely that they begin late in the twelfth century

and continue into the fourteenth century at least. It seems probable, therefore, that all three groups were in use concurrently. Other than one or two plain examples, the bowls can be classed as follows:-

- 4) Everted These have turned out or folded back rims, with a flange of varying length and angle; sometimes the rim edges are moulded. These occur in both fabrics (b) and (c). Several vessels have wavy line decoration on the top of the rim. Over twenty rim fragments of this type were found, representing some twelve to fifteen vessels (Nos. 6, 47, 51, 56, 65, 66).
- 5) Expanded top These are consistent in fabrics and colours, with a harsh sandy fabric (c) and reddish or dark brown colours. They may be a Grimston product as the fabric is similar to the Grimston types but there is no direct evidence for this (cf. Clarke 1970, figs. 31-7). They may also relate to Early Medieval types. Over forty rim fragments were found, representing just under thirty vessels (Nos. 19, 55). This is the commonest type.
- 6) Inturned About a dozen examples of these were found, and they all seem to be in Grimston fabrics such as fabric (d) (Nos. 24, 25, 67).

There may be some typological sequence in these bowl types as only one small fragment of an everted bowl rim is attributed to layers 3 and 4 and it seems possible that this is a later type than the other two. As the inturned bowls (6) derive from Saxo-Norman types and the expanded rims (5) certainly occur in the twelfth or even eleventh century, the everted rims (especially those with large flaring flanges) may be only thirteenth century or later.

GLAZED GRIMSTON WARES

Two basic fabric types occur in roughly equal quantities in the Grimston glazed wares found at Grenstein. Both are tempered with rounded grains of sand which includes much quartz and quartzite normally smaller than 1 mm in size. In one fabric, however, the grains are much smaller and finer than in the other. Both fabrics have smoothed surfaces and include particles of a soft dull red material (probably iron ore) which also occur conspicuously in the Saxo-Norman wares.

Rim sherds from nine Grimston glazed bowls and seven glazed cooking pots were found, in contrast to sixty-five jug rims, and approximately 80% of the recognisable glazed sherds on the Grenstein site are from jugs. These are externally green-glazed, and some have decoration, ranging from a simple neck cordon and faint rilling, through scale and pellet decoration, strips and brown glazed lines, to fragments from face jugs. One or two sherds have thumbled strip decoration. Although two fragments of rod handles were found on the surface of the field, all the handles from the excavations are of the strap variety. Most of them have parallel grooves and many of them are slashed or stabbed. The spouts are all of pulled lip type except for one beak spout on a face jug (No. 22). Bases are usually sagging although one or two small examples, presumably from small baluster-shaped jugs, appear to be flat. The jug bases have intermittent thumb pinching at the angle, usually between four and six per vessel. The only continuous pinching occurs on the large decorated vessel from Pit 2 (No. 41). One example with a lozenge-faceted base angle was found (No. 60). It is characteristic of these vessels to have a glaze or clay ring on the base derived from contact with other pots in the kiln. The glaze is typically thick on the neck and shoulders of the vessel but sparse near the base.

When the green-glazed jug production at Grimston began is not certain, but probably late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century continuing until the late medieval period.

The Artefacts

The bowls and cooking pots have an internal glaze (a feature so far not observed in the jugs) and the number of such vessels may be as high as a hundred. The bowls (Nos. 20 and 37) are not large and have a whitish-coloured sandy fabric and a green or yellowish-green internal glaze. The cooking pots (Nos. 8, 21, 42, 45, 53, 63) are also in sandy fabrics but the body is usually medium or light grey in colour; the glaze is thick on both surfaces and normally yellowish-green. The rim forms are usually plain or flared and some vessels have at least one handle (one illustrated No. 42). Three green-glazed body sherds with bung holes were found, so at least three storage jar type of vessels were present. The present state of knowledge of Grimston products suggests that these internally glazed wares, that is bowls, cooking pots and storage jars, are late medieval to early post-medieval in date, that is, fourteenth to fifteenth or sixteenth century.

CONTINENTAL IMPORTS

One sherd of a blue-grey ladle was found over the cobbles in yard 2, probably of twelfth- to thirteenth-century date (Clarke and Carter 1977, 230). One sherd of late medieval Saintonge ware was found in the top of the roadside ditch (No. 59). In the same ditch were two sherds of stoneware from Siegburg of fourteenth or fifteenth-century date. A Siegburg body sherd of fourteenth-century date was found on the surface of field 78 to the north of the excavation. A further seven stoneware sherds from three or four vessels were found which are probably attributable to Langerwehe and are of fourteenth- to fifteenth-century date. One came from over the street (No. 57); another was found in the roadside ditch of toft 9 in a section contaminated by a land drain; the rest are from layer 2 over the yards. One body sherd of near stoneware probably from Langerwehe and of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date was found below the cobbles in yard 1.

Nearly sixty sherds probably representing four or five vessels were found in a soft orange fabric with many fine grains of silver mica. One vessel has internal yellow and pinkish-brown glaze (No. 36). Another internally glazed vessel has a thick dark yellow glaze. External yellowish-brown glazes occur on two small vessels, one of which is faintly rilled. These vessels are all in the same fabric. It is not clear whether they are imports (perhaps from Holland) or local wares, and their date is likewise somewhat uncertain. All of the sherds are from layer 2, mainly over and around Building C (Nos. 35, 36).

REGIONAL IMPORTS

These are surprisingly few and most of them remain unattributed to a source. The only rim is from a green-glazed jug which is probably from the Midlands or Lincolnshire. About eight body sherds were found from two different pots which seem not to be Grimston products, as the sand temper includes some conspicuous elongated white calcitic particles. One of these sherds has external green glaze and sherds of the same vessel were found scattered in the southern half of the living area in layers 3 and 4 in Pit 5.

POST-MEDIEVAL

Only a few post-medieval vessels were found on the site (all in layer 2), and occupation into the post-medieval period seems unlikely. The orange micaceous vessels described above as medieval continental imports may, however, be local post-medieval wares rather than imports.

THE PITS

Pit 1 (Fig. 85) This contained a good group of 651 sherds of which 394 were glazed. A precise vessel estimate is not possible on account of the similarities of fabrics in both coarse and glazed wares, but it is most likely to be in the region of forty to sixty vessels. This is the only context on the site where there are large fresh sherds representing the same vessels. No certain imports are apparent in this pit, although there is one sparse-glazed body sherd with micaceous inclusions which is not Grimston ware.

The rim sherds represent, as elsewhere on the site, an even ratio of glazed and coarse wares, with about a dozen coarse vessels, a similar number of jugs and two fragments of glazed cooking pots. One face fragment was found (No.12), but otherwise the jugs are all plain except for neck cordons and some rilling; several have slip as well as glaze (not illustrated). The finer Grimston fabric predominates. The low vessel count and large sherd sizes in this pit suggest an immediacy of disposal, but dating is difficult. The presence of the face jug and glazed cooking pots suggest that, as with other areas of the site, this feature is no earlier than the fourteenth century in date (see p.147) (Fig. 85, Nos.1-12).

Pit 2 Only seven sherds were found other than the Grimston jug base No.41 (Fig.87). This base is exceptionally large, but in spite of the decoration, cannot be dated any more closely than to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Pits 3 and 4 produced no pottery.

Pit 5 This pit is of potential interest as it was partly sealed beneath the cobbles of yard 2 and belongs to an earlier phase of the site occupation than that investigated in detail. However, as with the other material below the cobbles, there is no significant difference in the pottery. There were 305 sherds, of which 109 were glazed. All but one of the pieces are small and abraded, so a vessel count was not attempted, but it is obviously high. Both of the glazed rim sherds are of jugs and there are several sherds of jugs decorated with brown-glazed pellets and strips. The coarse ware cooking pots consist of eleven Early Medieval type rims as opposed to only two moulded rims. The seven bow rims include expanded types and one unusually small inturned example (No.24). Three body sherds of non-Grimston ware with white calcitic inclusions were found.

Pit 6 Only ten sherds were found, of which three were glazed. The two rim fragments are both very small. They seem to be moulded-rim cooking pots from different vessels.

DISCUSSION

Grimston wares and other local wares constitute most of the site pottery even when the topsoil and surface material is included.

Little of interest emerges from examining the site dispersal pattern. Less pottery was found in field 79 to the north but the types match well with the material from the excavations.

The site pottery can be divided into the following groups of which the second is the largest:- below the yards, above the yards, the street opposite toft 10, the ditches, toft 9 and pit groups.

The pit groups are dealt with above. There are no differences apparent in these groups, such as, for example, later material over the street and ditches, and no certain internal chronological sequence presents itself in the pottery. Almost all types are present below the cobbled yards, although there is only one possible flared type of cooking pot rim (No.13), only one fragment of everted bowl of the type No.47 and none of the type of Nos.6, 51, 56, 65. As, however, the rims from below the cobbles are only about a quarter of the site total, this may not be significant. The site pottery forms a closely-knit, consistent group, with a limited range of types and many pieces from the same pots. The sherds are mainly small and sometimes widely scattered around the site. Some exceptions to this are worth noting:-

i) Pit 1 (Fig.85) This is the only place where large fresh pieces of the same pots were found and it seems likely that these vessels are a contemporary group. Pit 5, by contrast, has many small pieces as does the rest of the site.

The Artefacts

ii) In layers 3 and 4 in the living area many pieces of two vessels were found in one area (drawn sherd No.30 and fragments of a probable curfew). Presumably regarded as contemporary with the pre-cobbling phase.

iii) A general increase in quantity and variety occurs in the area over and around Building C and to some extent Building B. The possible Dutch pottery and most of the post-medieval sherds come from this area, but these represent less than a dozen vessels.

The general dating of the site material certainly spans the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Some types indicate a twelfth-century beginning: these are the pitcher No.28, inturned rim bowls (e.g. Nos.24, 25, 67), expanded rim bowls (e.g. No.19) and the Early Medieval type cooking pots (e.g. Nos.16, 17, 29, 31, 46). However, these local coarse wares have been so little studied, let alone examined in stratified contexts, that it seems more than likely that they could continue at least into the thirteenth century if not later. Occupation may, therefore, have begun late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century. The recently published sequence from King's Lynn in Norfolk (Clarke and Carter 1977) is the best source at present for dating the local wares. Here it seemed that the face jugs did not appear until the fourteenth century (p.206). Six examples were found at Grenstein, including two from under the cobbles (e.g. No.22). It also seems likely that glazed bowls and cooking pots occur late in the medieval period (pp. 233-5), and these also were found beneath the cobbles at Grenstein (Nos.20, 21). This dating is confirmed by two non-local sherds found beneath the cobbles. One is a body sherd of near stoneware from Langerwehe which is fifteenth- or perhaps fourteenth-century in date; the other is a sherd from a non-Grimston green-glazed vessel which is also likely to date to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. These diagnostic sherds all come from the area in and around Feature F beneath yard 1, and it seems possible that this feature was filled in or deliberately levelled up before the laying of the cobbles in yard 1. The earliest date at which these cobbles could have been laid is during the fourteenth century, although a fifteenth-century date is also likely. The possible early fourteenth-century desertion of Grenstein (Beresford and St. Joseph 1958, 111; Beresford and Hurst 1971, 6) does not seem, therefore, to apply to this particular croft. This conclusion is supported by the documentary evidence for desertion (p.99).

It is not clear whether the limited range of pottery types suggests a fairly short occupation or conservatism, but the latter seems more likely with a possible total date bracket for the site of late twelfth century to fifteenth century. With the exception of a post-medieval site at Babingley (Hurst 1961) no other Norfolk deserted village site has been published. Unlike the towns (Jope 1952; Hurst and Golson 1955; Hurst 1963; Knocker 1967; Rogerson 1976; and Clarke and Carter 1977), it is not known what to expect from the ceramic assemblages of a rural Norfolk site. Whether the Grenstein collection is typical or not will only become apparent with further work on comparable sites.

POTTERY CATALOGUE

Pit 1 (Nos.1-12)

1. Cooking pot, form type 2. Light grey. Harsh sandy fabric (c) with many dark grey inclusions visible.
Bags 106, 113, 117, 119; Pit 1, layers 3, 4 and 5.
2. Cooking pot, form type 2. Grey core, reddish-brown exterior, red interior. Harsh sandy fabric (c) with several inclusions 2-3 mm in size.
Bag 110; Pit 1, layer 8.
3. Cooking pot, form type 2. Medium grey core, medium brown and dark grey exterior light greyish-brown interior. Harsh sandy fabric (c).
Bags 109 and 112; Pit 1, layers 4 and 7.

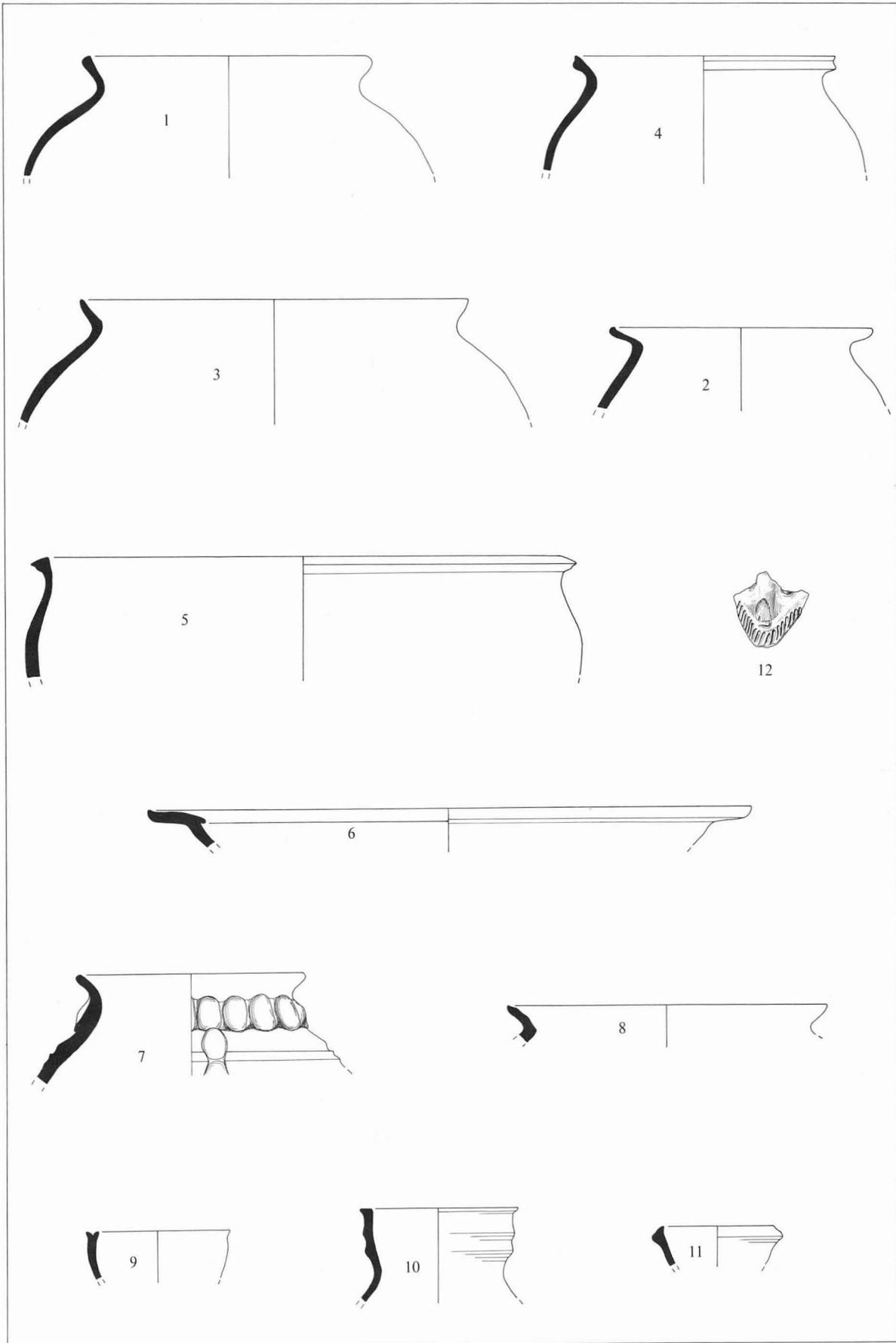


Fig.85. Pottery from Pit 1. Scale 1:4.

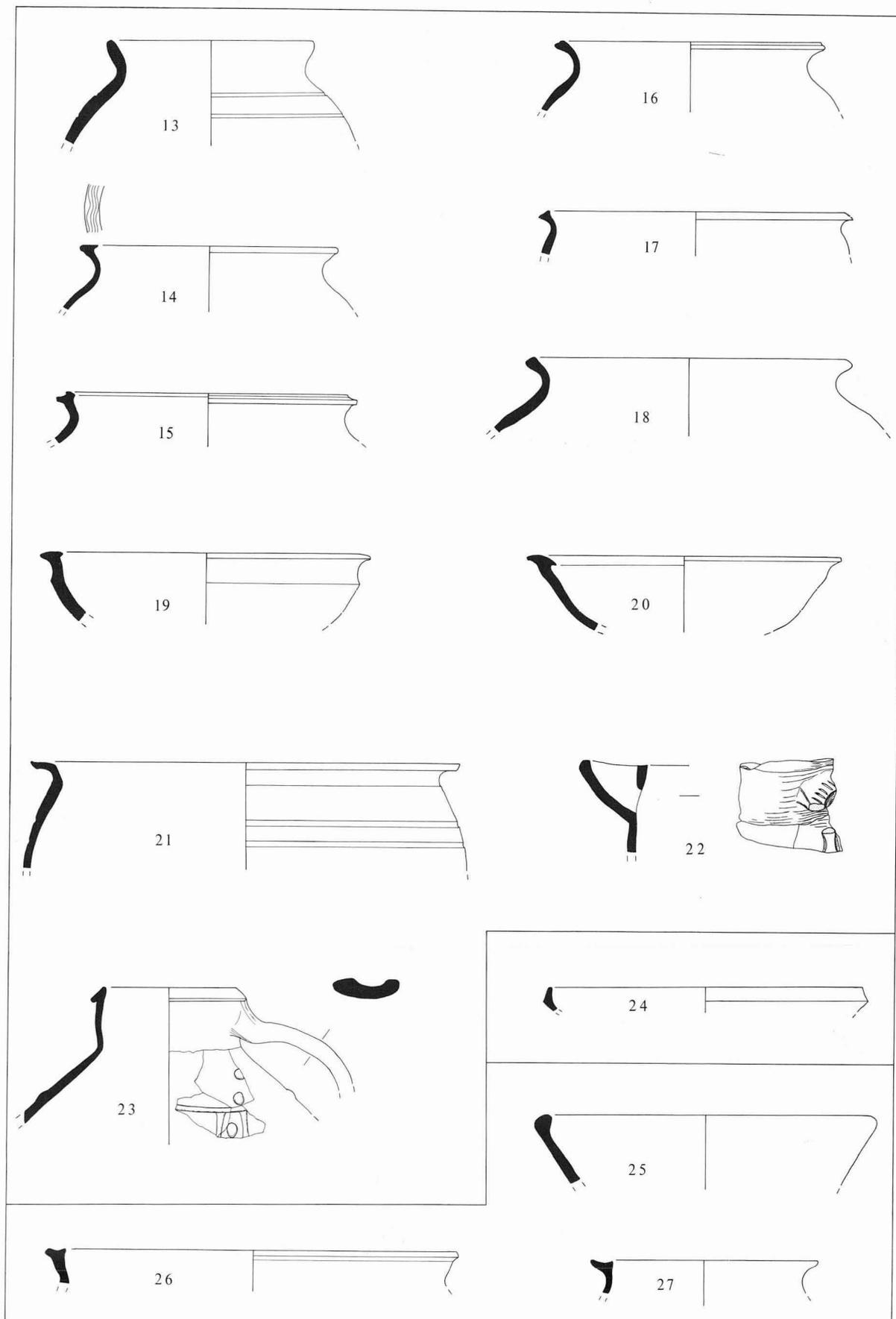


Fig.86. Pottery from below yards: Nos.13-23 Feature F, No.24 Pit 5, Nos.25-27 Layers 3 and 4. Scale 1:4.

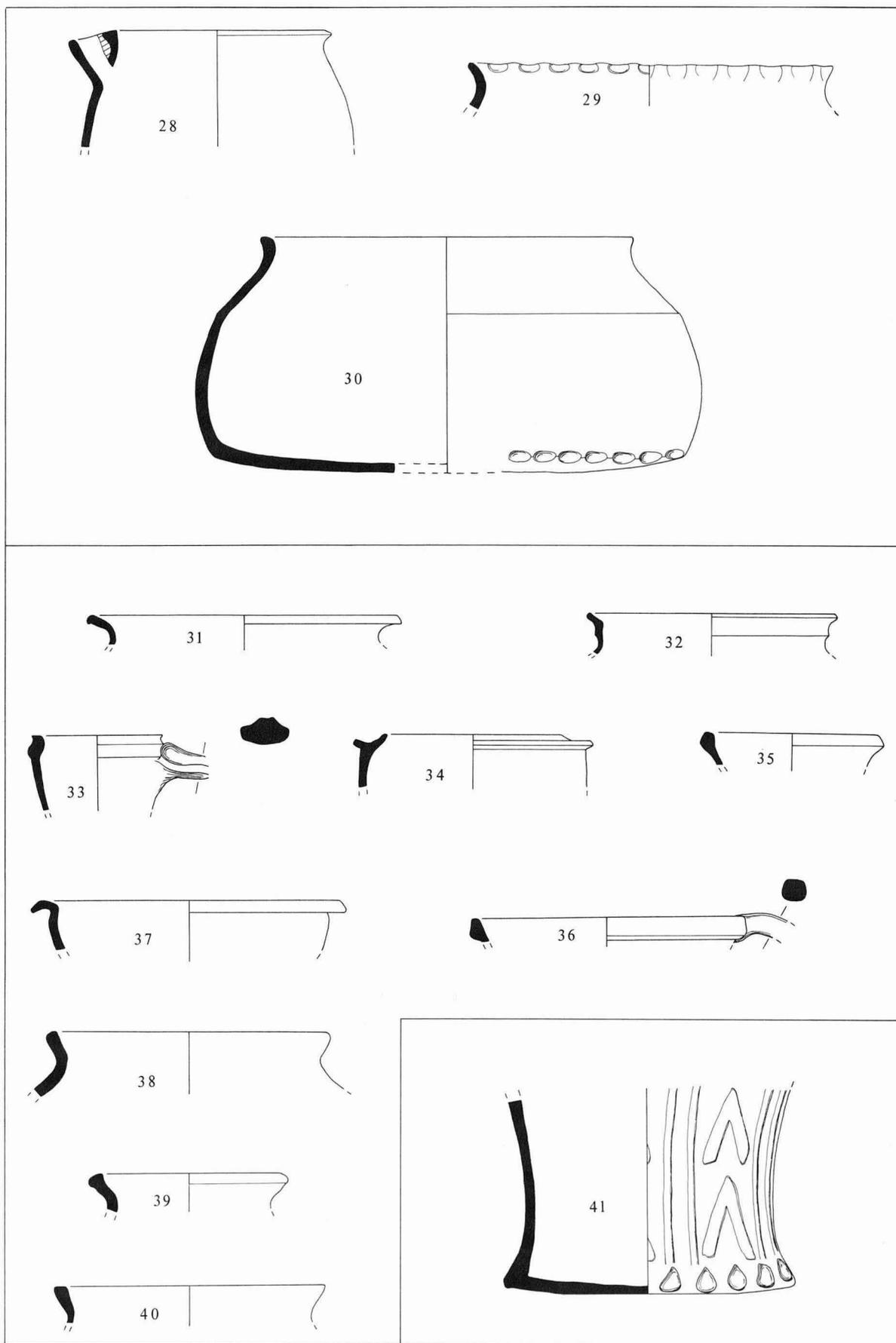


Fig.87. Pottery from below yards: Nos.28-30. Pottery from above yards: Nos.31-40 Layer 2, No.41 Pit 2. Scale 1:4.

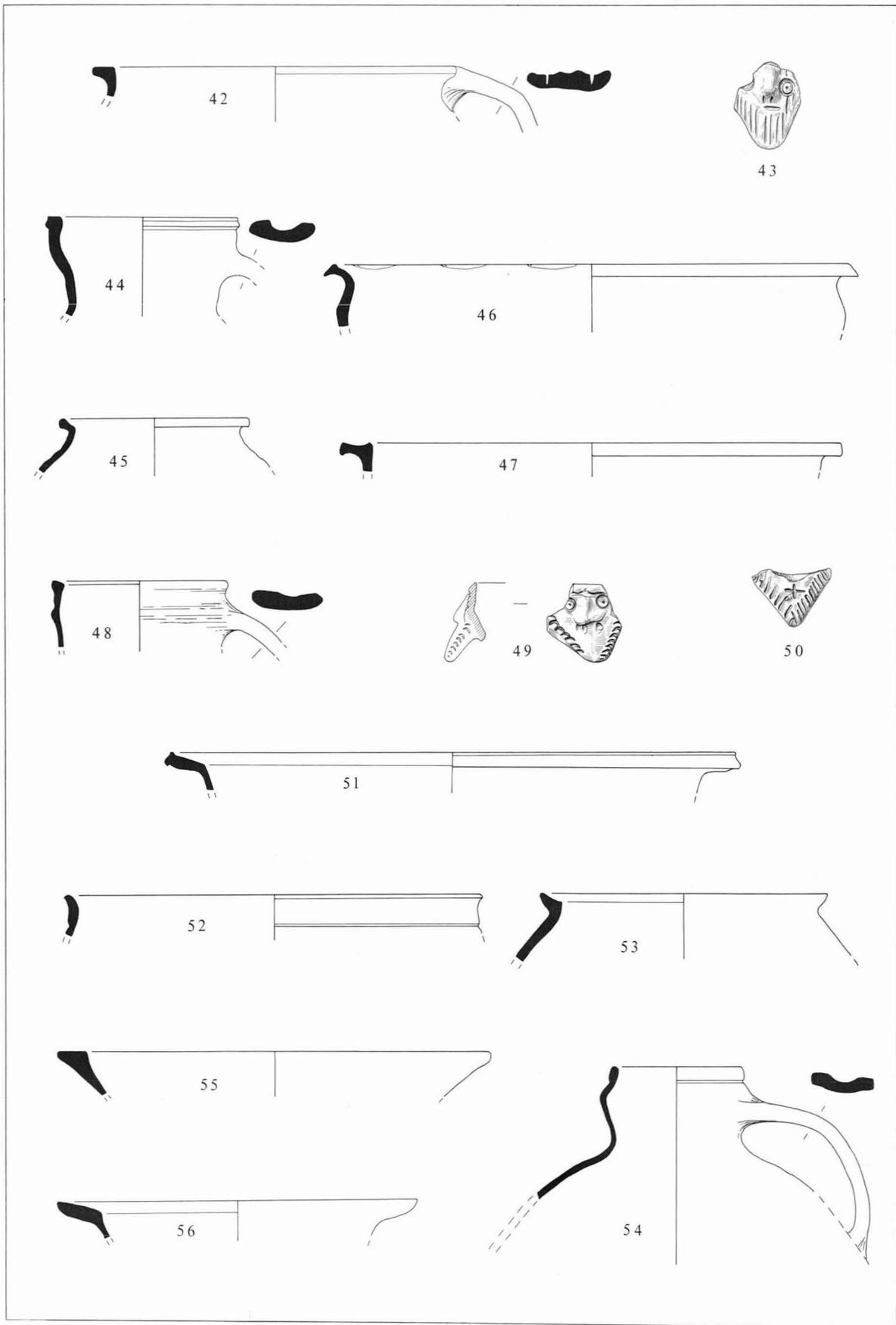


Fig.88. Pottery from above yards, Layer 2. Scale 1:4.

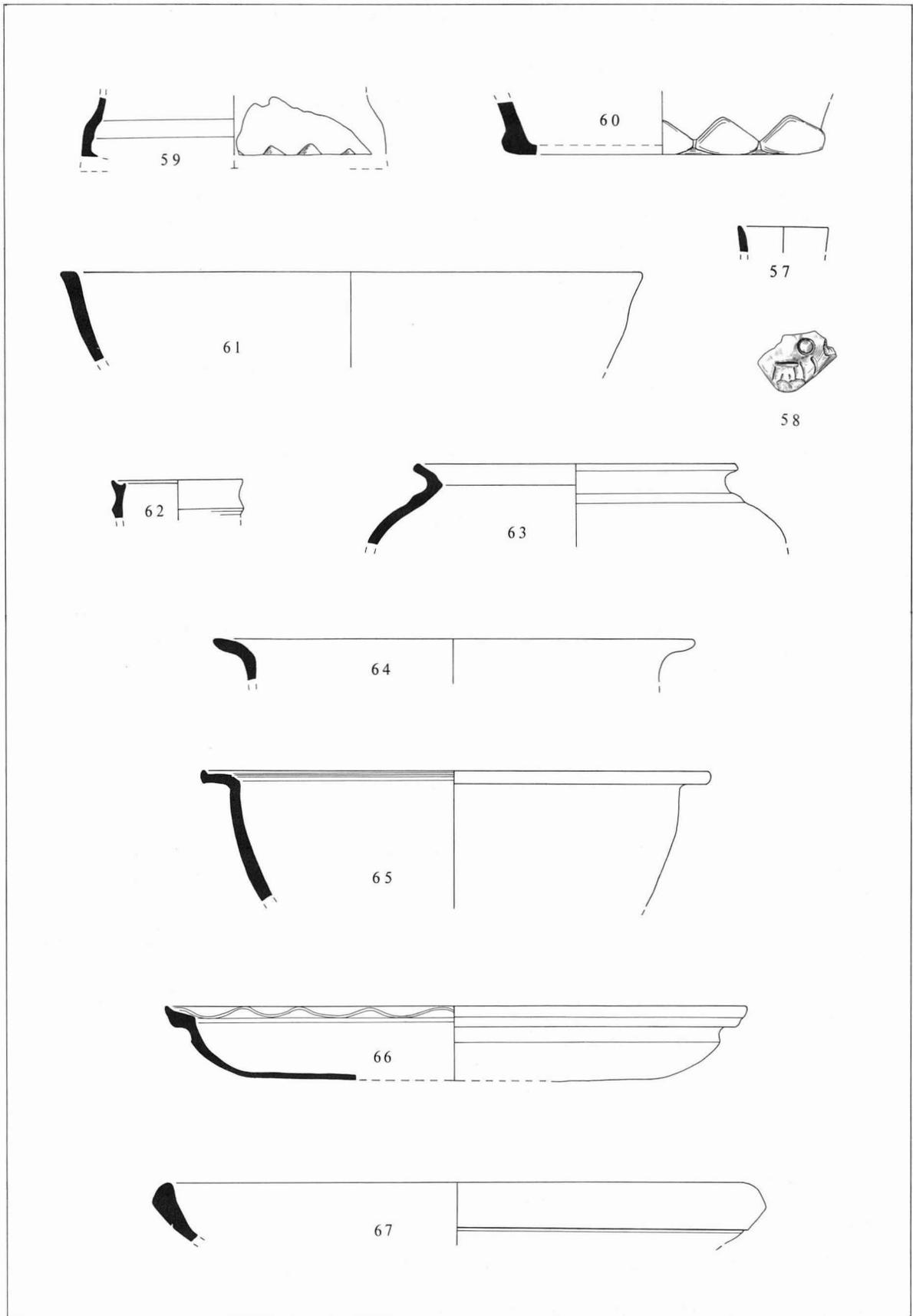


Fig. 89. Pottery from above yards, street, ditches and Toft 9. Scale 1:4.

The Artefacts

4. Cooking pot, form type 2. Dark grey. Fabric sandy to harsh sandy (b) to (c).
Bag 248; Pit 1, layer 3.
5. Cooking pot, form type 2. Dark grey to black. Fabric sandy to harsh sandy, (b) to (c) but nearer to (b).
Bags 114 and 221; Pit 1, layer 6.
6. Bowl, form type 4. Grey core, light brown margins, medium dark grey surfaces.
Fabric sandy to harsh sandy (b) to (c).
Bag 252; Pit 1, layer 3.
7. Storage jar. Light grey and buff sandy fabric, external green glaze with some sparse-glaze internally. Probably a Grimston product, late medieval.
Bag 112; Pit 1, layer 4.
8. Cooking pot. Grey sandy fabric, thick yellowish-green glaze on both surfaces.
Probably a Grimston product, late medieval.
Bag 252; Pit 1, layer 3.
9. Jug. Grey and orange sandy fabric, external glaze mainly missing but apparently thick and green, some internal green glaze inside top of rim.
Bag 252; Pit 1, layer 3.
10. Jug. Grey sandy fabric, thick external yellowish-green glaze.
Bag 109; Pit 1, layer 7.
11. Jug. Grey core and pink interior, sandy fabric, external thick green glaze and brown vertical streak.
Bag 252; Pit 1, layer 3.
12. Face fragment from jug. Dark grey, sandy fabric, orange externally on back of beard, rest of external surface green glazed. Probably made at Grimston.
Small Find 42; Pit 1, layer 3.

Layers 3 and 4 (Nos.13-30)

(Nos.13-23) are all from Feature F.

13. Cooking pot, form type 2. Light brownish-grey. Harsh sandy fabric (c).
Bag 271; Feature F. N ditch.
14. Cooking pot, form type 3. Dull orangish-red with some dark grey patches. Harsh sandy fabric (c) with inclusions up to 5 mm. Combed wavy line on rim top.
Bag 266; Feature F.
15. Cooking pot, form type 3. Light brown with black rim top. Harsh sandy fabric (c).
Bag 274; Feature F.
16. Cooking pot, form type 1. Dark grey and reddish-brown. Early Medieval type fabric (a).
Bag 278; Feature F. W part.
17. Cooking pot, form type 1. Dark grey core, brown interior, orange exterior. Early Medieval type fabric (a).
Bag 273; Feature F. E part.
18. Cooking pot, form type 2 or 1. Black core and light orangish-brown surfaces.
Fabric between (a) and (c), probably Early Medieval type but rather harsh.
Bag 273; Feature F. E part.
19. Bowl, form type 5. Dark grey core, grey exterior, dark purplish-red interior.
Fabric (a) or (c), Early Medieval type but harsh. This form begins in the twelfth, or perhaps the eleventh century. The fabric of this vessel resembles some early Grimston products but no evidence of production of this form has been found there.
Bag 273; Feature F. E part.

20. Bowl. Buff to light brown sandy fabric, internal light green glaze. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 271; Feature F. N ditch.
21. Cooking pot. Light grey sandy fabric, thick yellowish-green glaze on both surfaces, patched. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 271; Feature F. N ditch.
22. Beak spout from face jug. Dark grey core and interior, orange exterior, coarse sandy fabric. Grimston product, probably same vessel as No.49.
Bag 270; Feature F. E part.
23. Jug. Dark grey sandy fabric, thick dark green glaze externally. Decoration, except for cordon, dark brown glaze over applied clay. Probably made at Grimston.
Bag 266; Feature F.
24. Bowl, form type 6. Greyish-brown with pink exterior. Fabric sandy to harsh sandy (b) to (c).
Bag 267; Pit 5.
25. Bowl, form type 6. Core light grey and brown, interior pink, exterior greyish-brown. Fabric (d) probably a Grimston product.
Bag 246; yard 2 below cobbles near Pit 5.
26. Cooking pot, form type 3. Light grey core, and light brown margins and surfaces. Sandy fabric (b).
Bag 233; yard 2 below cobbles near Pit 5.
27. Cooking pot, form type 3. Light brown with some grey in core. Sandy, fairly fine, fabric (b).
Bag 223; junction of yard 2 and living area, layer 3.
28. Pitcher. Dark grey-black core and interior, light brownish-buff exterior. Sandy fabric. A Saxo-Norman type of vessel. Probably Grimston Thetford-type ware but fabric not very typical. Eleventh or twelfth century date.
Small Find 44; yard 2 below cobbles.
29. Cooking pot, form type 1. Dark grey with reddish exterior. Early Medieval type fabric (a). Top of rim continuously finger-pinched to form a frilled edge.
Bag 171; living area under Building D, layer 3.
30. Cooking pot, probably form type 2 but unusual. Light grey core with some pink margins, light brown interior, exterior basically light brown but with grey and black sooty patches. Surface is well smoothed. Fabric nearest to sandy fabric (b), but fairly harsh.
Bag 168; found in many pieces in the living area east of Pit 1 in layer 3.

Layer 2 over the cobbled yards (Nos.31-56)

31. Cooking pot, form type 1. Core and interior medium brownish-grey, exterior red except for dark grey rim top. Early Medieval fabric (a).
Bag 33; yard 1 over cobbles, layer 2.
32. Cooking pot, form type 3. Medium, slightly reddish-brown colour throughout. Harsh sandy fabric (c).
Bags 12 and 50; yard 1 over cobbles, layer 2.
33. Jug. Light grey and orange sandy fabric, external green glaze. Made at Grimston.
Bag 12; yard 1 over cobbles, layer 2.
34. Flanged vessel of close-mouthed form. Dark red with reddish-brown exterior. Fabric (a) or (c) Early Medieval type but harsh sandy. Two similar vessels were found in the topsoil and surface of field 78. A flanged glazed vessel was also found on the surface, (cf. Clarke and Carter fig.104; nos.2-4).
Bag 2; over Building C and area, layer 2.

The Artefacts

35. Jar. Soft orange fabric with much fine silver mica. Interior and rim top mottled yellow and pinkish-orange glaze, exterior sooted. Either a Dutch import or local post-medieval ware, cf. No.36.
Bag 2; over Building C and area, layer 2.
36. Rim fragment of jar or pipkin. Soft orange fabric with much fine silver mica, internal yellow and orange glaze, exterior sooted, cf.No.35.
Bag 5; over Building C, layer 2.
37. Bowl. Light grey core, pinkish margins and exterior, interior light grey with buff slip and light green glaze. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 2; over Building C and area, layer 2.
38. Cooking pot, form type 2. Dark grey to black. Sandy fabric (b).
Bag 9; yard 2 near junction with yard 1, layer 2.
39. Cooking pot, form type 3. Light grey core, light brown surfaces, some external soot. Sandy fabric (b).
Bag 4; Building B and area in yard 2, layer 2.
40. Cooking pot, form 2 or 3. Black core, pinkish-brown margins and surfaces, some external dark grey soot. Fabric (b) or (d), sandy with the dull red inclusions often found in Grimston wares.
Bag 18; yard 2 over cobbles, layer 2.
41. Base of large jug. Medium grey sandy fabric, external medium green glaze; decorated with vertical strips in dark green glaze, flat applied clay bands forming inverted V signs with light green glaze.
Small Find 33; from bottom of Pit 2.
42. Cooking pot. Grey core and exterior, pink interior, thick yellowish-green glaze on rim top and handle. Handle has two lines of stab marks. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 10; yard 2 over cobbles, layer 2.
43. Face fragment from jug. Dark grey with light grey and orange surfaces, coarse sandy fabric, green-glazed. Made at Grimston (cf. Clarke and Carter fig.91; no.7).
Small Find 6; yard 2 over cobbles, layer 2.
44. Jug. Dark grey core and interior, orange exterior, sparse green glaze externally, coarse sandy fabric. Made at Grimston.
Bag 48; yard 2 over cobbles, layer 2.
45. Cooking pot. Grey core, orange interior, external thick green glaze. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 14; junction of living area and yard 2, layer 2.
46. Cooking pot, form type 1. Dark grey with some brown and black patches. Early Medieval fabric (a). Thumbed rim.
Bag 14; junction of living area and yard 2, layer 2.
47. Bowl, form type 4. Dark grey core, orange margins, dark brown surfaces. Harsh sandy fabric (c) including sharp flinty fragments up to 6 mm.
Bag 86; over Building D, layer 2.
48. Jug. Dark grey core, orange surfaces, sparse external green glaze, coarse sandy fabric. Made at Grimston.
Bag 169; from the floor of Building D.
49. Face from jug. Dark grey with orange external surface, coarse sandy fabric, green glaze externally. Made at Grimston (cf. Clarke and Carter fig.91, nos.4 and 6).
Probably same pot as No.22.
Small Find 50; from living area and over Building D, layer 2.

50. Face fragment from jug. Dark grey with orange exterior, thick green glaze, coarse sandy fabric. Probably made at Grimston.
Small Find 20; from living area and Building D, layer 2.
51. Bowl, form type 4. Medium greyish-brown. Harsh sandy fabric (c).
Bag 37; living area and over Building D, layer 2.
52. Cooking pot, form type 2. Light to medium brown. Sandy to harsh sandy fabric (b) to (c).
Bag 39; living area, layer 2.
53. Cooking pot. Light grey and pink core, buff interior, external thick yellowish-green glaze, sandy fabric. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Small Find 49; yard 2 and Building A, layer 2.
54. Jug. Medium grey with grey interior orange exterior, external green glaze, coarse sandy fabric. Made at Grimston.
Small Find 48 and Bag 14; living area, layer 2.
55. Bowl, form type 5? Light brown with greyish-brown exterior. Sandy fabric (b). (cf. Clarke 1970, fig.4 2/8).
Bag 88; living area, layer 2.
56. Bowl or cooking pot with flared rim. Dark grey core, brown surface. Sandy to harsh sandy fabric (b) to (c).
Bag 39; living area, layer 2.

Street, ditches, and southern toft (toft 9) (Nos.57 to 67)

57. Rim of light grey stoneware. Exterior light brown shiny glaze with some yellowish mottlings. Interior purplish brown. Probably Langerwehe. Fourteenth to fifteenth century.
Bag 32, over street.
58. Face from jug. Dark grey core, orange surfaces, external green glaze, coarse sandy fabric. Probably made at Grimston.
Small Find 23; over street.
59. Base fragment. French jug import from Saintonge. Ken Barton has kindly provided the following notes:-

Base fragment in a buff very smooth body containing small fragments of red slip, and small water-worn pebbles of quartz. The body also contains a high proportion of mica of microscopic size. The outside of the base has been knife-trimmed and subsequently notched. There are traces of refined lead glaze giving a clear to moderate finish where applied. The body characteristics are consistent with material from La Chappelle des Pots. The form with its knife-trimming I have not seen before. Should be fourteenth century at least.
Small Find 18; from top of street ditch in layer 2.
60. Base. Medium grey with light grey exterior, external green glaze, sandy fabric. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 58; soil over cobbles in street ditch.
61. Bowl with plain rim. Red and black. Early Medieval type fabric (a).
Bag 99; toft 9, ditch beside street.
62. Jug. Dark grey core, orange surfaces, external green glaze, sandy fabric. Made at Grimston.
Bag 275; toft 9, beneath entrance flints.
63. Cooking pot. Medium grey core, internal margin pink, external margin and both surfaces light grey, external yellowish-green glaze. Probably made at Grimston, late medieval.
Bag 131; ditch of toft 9.

The Artefacts

64. Bowl or cooking pot with flared rim. Medium grey core, light brown margins and light greyish-brown surfaces. Sandy fabric (b).
65. Bowl, form type 4. Black. Sandy fabric (b). Two incised lines inside top of rim. Small Find 22; ditch of toft 9, beside road.
66. Bowl, form type 4. Dark orange core, medium dark brownish-grey surfaces. Sandy fabric (b). Wavy line inside top of rim. Bag 133; ditch of toft 9.
67. Bowl, form type 6. Dark grey core, pink surfaces, external sooting. Fabric (b) or (d), sandy and possibly made at Grimston. Probably eleventh to twelfth century. Bag 228; toft 9.

OBJECT OF BONE

(Fig.90)

Bone tool partly polished on most surfaces.
Bag 11; over yard 2, layer 1.

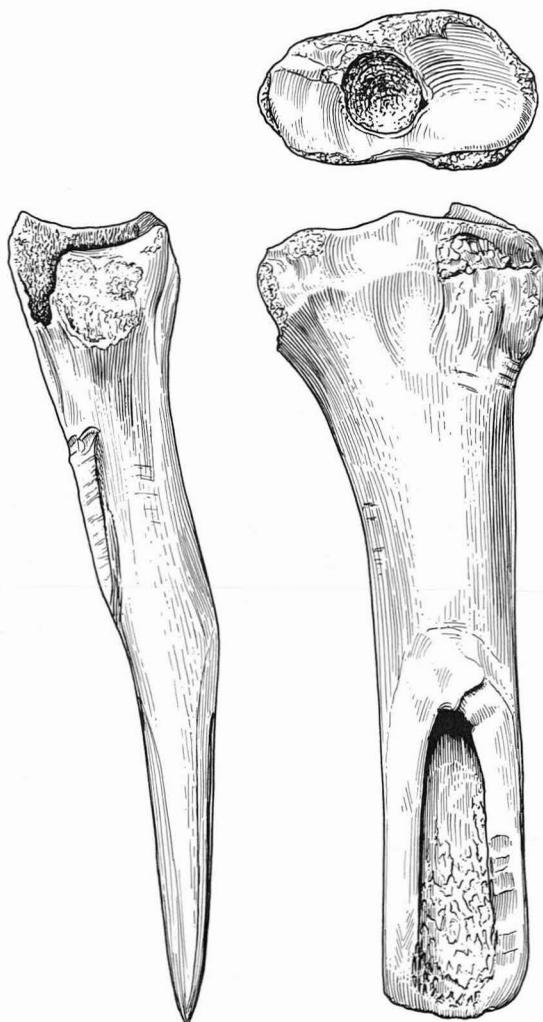


Fig.90. Object of bone. Scale 1:2.

IX. ZOOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

THE MAMMAL BONES

by Cyril Ambros

The majority of the bones from the excavation represent food-refuse except for the horse bones. The following species of domestic animals have been recorded: horse, ox, sheep and goat, pig, dog and cat (Table 1). The sheep and goat were the most numerous food animals, followed by the ox and the pig. (A detailed list of identified bones and tables of bone measurements has been lodged with the excavation records).

TABLE 1. THE NUMBER OF BONES OF MAMMALS IDENTIFIED FOR EACH SPECIES AND THE ESTIMATED MINIMUM NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FROM ALL CONTEXTS

| | Number of bones | | Minimum number of individ. | |
|---|-----------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| | | % | | % |
| Horse (<u>Equus caballus</u>) | 116 | 21.1 | 7 | 16.3 |
| Ox (<u>Bos taurus</u>) | 130 | 23.6 | 9 | 21 |
| Sheep and goat (<u>Ovis et Capra</u>) | 214 | 38.8 | 16 | 37.2 |
| Pig (<u>Sus scrofa dom.</u>) | 78 | 14.2 | 8 | 18.6 |
| Dog (<u>Canis familiaris</u>) | 5 | 0.9 | 1 | 2.3 |
| Domestic cat (<u>Felis catus</u>) | 4 | 0.7 | 1 | 2.3 |
| Hare (<u>Lepus europaeus</u>) | 4 | 0.7 | 1 | 2.3 |
| Totals | 551 | 100% | 43 | 100% |

THE BIRD BONES

by Johannes Lepiksaar

Five species of birds are represented among the bone finds from Grenstein, as shown in Table 3.

The single find of raven, a fragment of tibiotarsus, is easy to distinguish by its characteristic form (note especially the linear groove on the plantar side beneath the fibular process of the bone) and its size. It is much more difficult to distinguish between the corresponding skeletal parts of the rook and the crow, especially the bones from young individuals. The carpometacarpus found at Grenstein, however, shows the shorter and broader form of distal process with a more curved upper border characteristic of the rook. Similarly the tarsometatarsus is more slender than that of the crow and its proximalateral part is more curved. It is closer to the same bone in the rook. The rook is a common species in agricultural areas where it breeds on trees in colonies. The flesh of the young rooks is said to be quite palatable and may have been eaten at Grenstein.

It is impossible to find distinct differences between the corresponding skeletal parts in the primitive breeds of domestic duck and their wild ancestor form, the mallard, which is the commonest of the wild ducks. If the domestic duck had been kept in Grenstein, one should expect to find more of them than the single fragment of a humerus. The best guess for it seems to be the wild mallard. Finds of medieval domestic ducks are very rare.

The small primitive breeds of domestic goose are osteologically very difficult to distinguish from the larger species of wild geese (the greylag and the bean goose). The only certain difference I know is a flattened facet on the anterior articular surface on the

Zoological Evidence

TABLE 2. A SURVEY OF THE TYPES OF MAMMAL BONE BY SPECIES

| | Horse | Ox | Sheep/Goat | Pig | Dog | Dom. cat | Hare |
|---------------|-------|----|------------|-----|-----|----------|------|
| Horn-cores | | 11 | 9 | | | | |
| Cranium | 4 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 1 | | |
| Dentes super. | 15 | 21 | 31 | 3 | 2 | | |
| Mandible | 7 | 11 | 29 | 12 | | | |
| Dentes infer. | 22 | 15 | 44 | 23 | | | |
| Vertebrae | 11 | 1 | | | | | |
| Scapula | 2 | 8 | 6 | 4 | | | |
| Humerus | 1 | 11 | 14 | 6 | | 2 | 1 |
| Radius | 8 | 5 | 18 | 4 | | | |
| Ulna | 2 | | 1 | 3 | 1 | | 2 |
| Carpus | 1 | | | | | | |
| Metacarpus | 6 | 8 | 9 | 1 | | | |
| Pelvis | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | |
| Femur | 4 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Patella | | 1 | | | | | |
| Tibia | 7 | 8 | 25 | 3 | | 2 | 1 |
| Fibula | | | | 1 | | | |
| Tarsus | 4 | 5 | | 1 | | | |
| Metatarsus | 7 | 4 | 14 | 1 | | | |
| Metapodium | 3 | 1 | | 3 | | | |
| Phalanx 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | | | | |
| Phalanx 2 | 5 | | | | | | |
| Phalanx 3 | 2 | | | 1 | | | |

caput femoris in the flightless domestic geese (also in the wild individuals of anseriforms artificially made flightless in captivity). It is a pity that these parts are lacking among finds from Grenstein. In contrast to the mallard, finds of goose bones are relatively numerous. This seems to indicate the domestic form rather than the wild species.

The bones of domestic fowl indicate a rather small bird as is usual on medieval sites.

TABLE 3. THE BIRD BONES

| Birds | Number of bones |
|--|-----------------|
| <u>Wild species</u> | |
| Raven, <u>Corvus corax</u> | 1 |
| Rook, <u>Corvus frugilegus</u> | 4 |
| Mallard, <u>Anas platyrhynchos</u> | 1 |
| <u>Poultry</u> | |
| Domestic fowl, <u>Gallus gallus f. domestica</u> | 24 |
| Domestic goose, <u>Anser anser f. domestica</u> | 11 |
| Total | 41 |

X. CONCLUSIONS

In published references to this site the name Grenstein has been used throughout because this is the name on the Ordnance Survey maps. However, the medieval name was Greynston, containing the old Norse personal name Grein, an Anglo-Scandinavian hybrid not likely to be earlier than the tenth century in East Anglia. It is not recorded in the Domesday Survey and the earliest known reference dates from 1198³.

Six Middle Saxon sherds were found. This is not a very significant number in view of the amount of time spent in fieldwalking all over the site and in excavation. However, they do no doubt indicate some occupation in the vicinity, and it is particularly interesting that this should be well away from any known church site.

Most of the Late Saxon pottery collected from the surface came from a small area near the northern crossroads and this may have been the site of an eleventh-century hamlet. The early settlement grew into a village as it expanded down the hill around the triangular green in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Such a pattern of expansion corresponds well with that seen in other villages described in Part I of this report. Apparently, the village never had a church.

The village street ran down the west side of the green, and until the nineteenth century this was still in use as the shortest route between Mileham and Tittleshall. Air photographs showing the site before and after destruction and field surveys have provided many details of the village plan as it was before desertion in the fifteenth century (Fig. 49). This date for the desertion has been determined as a result of the documentary research and from a study of the pottery from on and under the yards in the excavated toft. It is later than the early fourteenth-century date previously suggested (Beresford and St. Joseph 1958).

The main street was about 0.75 km long, and it ran down a south-facing slope overlooking Mileham. There was a continuous row of sixteen tofts along the west side of the street, and it was the large toft near the centre of the row, toft 10, which was excavated in 1965-6. There are references to tofts on this side of the green at various times during the first half of the fifteenth century. On the opposite side of the green there were certainly a further three tofts and possibly more. So, there were at least twenty and possibly twenty-six properties in the village.

The excavation revealed the plan of a late fourteenth- or fifteenth-century farm with house and outbuildings arranged around yards. There is no suggestion that long-houses with humans and animals under the same roof were fashionable in East Anglia during the Middle Ages. No evidence for the types of crops cultivated was recovered, but it was presumably a mixed farm, on which horses were used.

Representations of sixteenth-century villages can be seen on parish maps (e.g. Fig. 20). Very seldom are these houses shown as half-timbered structures. They were single-storied one- or two-roomed cottages, usually without a chimney stack. No peasant houses of this type are known to survive in Norfolk. The excavated tofts at Grenstein and Thuxton and sixteenth-century maps provide us with a picture, albeit a rather hazy one, of how Norfolk villages may have looked in the Middle Ages.

This excavation has shown the value of stripping a complete toft, but it has highlighted the drawbacks of excavating a village site already damaged by the plough. The next Norfolk DMV selected for excavation ought, ideally, to be undisturbed and there ought to be sufficient opportunity to excavate the whole site sequence on a group of tofts to study village development and if possible the transition from timber to clay construction.

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1. Information from Mr Richard Darrah of the West Stow project.
2. The term 'Early Medieval ware' has been retained in this report although the most recent publication from Norfolk includes these wares with the Grimston wares (Clark and Carter 1977, e.g. figs.81-83). There is no evidence for production centres for this type of pottery and, although they are likely to outlast the early medieval period into the late twelfth and thirteenth century, to alter the terminology seems unnecessary until a more accurate term can be found.
3. Grenstein is in Keith Allison's list under 'Gramston' (p.148).
4. Accession no. NCM.233.980.

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