

## EDITORIAL

This fourth issue of the Journal is devoted entirely to the village of Wiveton. Readers may know that the Society decided to make the Glaven estuary – as it used to be – the focus for practical work. Whilst the agricultural history of the Glaven valley is important, and many people have been employed producing food from the land, it is the maritime element which gives the area its distinctive flavour. This is still true today but whereas the emphasis now is on recreation, in times gone by ships from the Glaven went to all parts of north-west Europe to trade and to fish. Jonathan Hooton's book *The Glaven Ports* gives an outline of this long maritime story but much detail is still unknown. Where were the ships built, where were the quays, what happened to produce once ashore? How did the villages of Wiveton, Cley and Blakeney develop in order to accommodate changing maritime fortunes?

With such questions in mind, the Society last year (2000) initiated a wide range of studies in Wiveton, including geophysical and other practical surveys as well as documentary research. Some of these studies have reached a point where at least interim articles can be presented – three appear in this issue and others are in preparation.

The article on the two **Wiveton bridges** (one still here, the other gone) is essentially an account of the documents that tell something of their story, but basic questions still remain and the 'definitive' account has yet to be written. Even so, this is an easier task than writing about the **flint walls** which are such a distinctive feature of Wiveton and the other Glaven villages – how old are they and what was their original function? No very useful documents have yet been found but the walls themselves may yield some information if they are closely studied. The importance of the **Wiveton Barn** excavation is that it gave a glimpse of a wall, or at least the base of one, apparently unaltered from its medieval origin. There has been much metal detecting in Wiveton in recent years and the finds are being studied to see what they can tell us about the village and its inhabitants; **tokens** are the subject of an article in this issue. Finally, two short articles continue the discussion about the **stained glass** remnants in Wiveton church – how old is the glass and when was it destroyed? To have alternative answers is a reminder that definitive accounts can rarely be written – there is nearly always room for another point of view.

If readers have reported mistakes in *The Glaven Historian* No. 3 then the Editor has mislaid the notes. However, Edwin Rose, of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, Gressenhall, has written to say that he is now rather less sceptical of the suggestion that the Chapel on Blakeney Eye was roofed with slate now that this material has been found in medieval levels of the port of Colchester. Welcome news indeed.

As always, new articles and ideas for improving the Journal to the Editor, please.